

The English language dominance in Mexico

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Mexico is a country well known for its rich and impressive past. The existence of dozens of native groups signifies the existence of dozens of cultures and also languages which have been spoken there since the pre-Hispanic period. However, it's not possible to say how many languages are spoken there. Moreover, there are hundreds of native languages that are thought to belong to the group of minority languages. Their most visible common characteristic is that all of them are endangered. That's why it's essential for people to understand the significance of preserving cultural and language identity of native languages in Mexico in the era of globalization [1], [6].

This situation is the result of language policy in Mexico. For the last 200 years Mexican politicians have been using various strategies to integrate minority native groups into the majoritarian Mexican society. Almost 200 years of intensive hispanization has rooted Spanish so deeply in native Mexican societies that in general we can say that there is almost no Indian in contemporary Mexico who does not speak Spanish [2], [4]. Therefore, the declaration of Mexico did not in fact guarantee conservation of native languages in a situation when the process of hispanization seems to be irreversible.

The presence of a powerful neighbor to the north (USA) has led to a new language situation. Instead of preserving their mother languages native people happen to desire to learn English as a means of escaping from poverty and reaching prosperity [5]. However, English has not become the dominant language as we could expect. The role of language of globalization still belongs to Spanish and Mexican people cannot master the English despite their migration to the USA [3], [5]. For several reasons the position of English as the principal global and most extended language is very weak in Mexico and the position of Spanish in Mexico is analogical to the position of English in the global context.

Firstly, Spanish represents the dominant language not only in Mexico but in most of Latin America in general, so there is no competition between Spanish and native languages. Secondly, parents prefer their children to learn English instead of native languages because they assume their children will cross the northern border one day to find a job, therefore it seems to be strong motivation to learn English [5]. That is how relationship between native languages and English can be described. Speaking about competition between English and Spanish, it must be mentioned the traditionally strong position of Spanish due to the colonial past. Because of several reasons it is difficult to talk about expansion of English language, it is an illusion on the contrast to dominance of Spanish language in Latin America and its expansion even to the USA. However, that situation can change in the future with the help of parents who want their children to speak English.

To conclude, linguistic globalization in Mexico strengthened the position of Spanish instead of English and weakened the position of native languages. Historical reasons led to indisputable dominance of Spanish. For those reasons, it is irrelevant to speak about English as a universal language in the case of Mexico and Latin America in general, at least for now [1], [4], [6].

Источники и литература

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