

Olga Belova (Moscow)

"Majority" or "minority"? About some features of the language strategy in the contact regions of Slavs and Jews (on the field materials from Podolia, Bukovina and Bessarabia)

In some previous works we have analyzed Slavic folk views on the language of ethnic neighbors (as in the Slavic language continuum, so from the point of view of the Slavs' and non-Slavs' language contacts). These views are largely mythologized, associated with the archaic ideas of the foreigners as the representatives of the "other world". The second integral part of the research was the study of communication principles and strategies in a situation of poly-ethnic neighbourhood, formed in process of direct linguistic communication.

In the Russian Empire formally the Jews did not belong to the titular nation (they were ranked in the category of *inorodtsy*), in fact in the settlements within the Pale the Jewish population constituted ethnic and religious majority. This fact had an impact on the language situation in the regions of the Pale in general and the specifics of language communication in particular. Traces of this phenomenon are clearly visible in the current linguistic situation of the former Jewish towns of Ukraine and Bessarabia.

The report covers the following aspects: the creation of an image of a foreign language (Yidish language in the speech of the Slavic society; Jewish as "professional" language in the Slavic environment; the Slavic languages spoken by Jews); "quotation" of the ethnic neighbors' speech in oral narratives; mythologized understanding of the relationship of German and Jewish languages in the Slavic and Jewish environment; sacral language (Hebrew) in everyday communication and the sacralization of spoken dialects in the Jewish community; Jewish religious vocabulary in Slavic folk literature.