

Standard Language in Norway and Azerbaijan

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Abstract. A standard or common literary language is a cultural and historical event. This language's oral and written form is based on the artistic needs of society and created as a result of particular necessities. The norms of the language are put forward through a standard language, and a neat, grammatically and phonologically "perfect" form of speech emerges. Moreover, a particular order is created, which is applied to local authorities, the press, and education, and they are expected to follow these language rules.

Also, a standard literary language is essential for second language learners. Without a standard spoken literary language, foreigners meet difficulties in language learning. For instance, second language learners study a different form of Norwegian in the classroom. Still, they meet Norwegians who use a dialect daily, which can cause misunderstandings for foreigners. There is no official standard language in Norway. However, some linguists do not agree with this statement and associate standard language with prestige and high social status. On the contrary, Azerbaijan has an official common literary language in both spoken and written form.

Norway and Azerbaijan's official languages have undergone a series of complicated historical development stages. Norway has two official written languages, bokmål and Nynorsk. Azerbaijan has one official written language, which is called Azerbaijani. Even though Norway has no officially accepted standard spoken language, people sometimes follow standard speaking rules. However, people tend to use dialects or fail to use the standard form of language in Azerbaijan. Therefore, the analysis of the language society in these two countries is of interest.

Keywords: official written language; standard language; Norwegian; bokmål; Nynorsk; Azerbaijani.

INTRODUCTION

The standard language was polished during historical development, and various rules were engraved. V.V. Vinogradov expresses, "Changes in the functional and stylistic diversity of the language are closely related to the historical changes in the capacity, composition and sociological essence of the people as a historical category." [6, p. 43]. The nation's language formation processes and history are closely related.

Azerbaijani language is the standard means of communication for more than 50 million Azerbaijanis worldwide [1, p. 12]. In addition, the Azerbaijani language is the second mother

tongue of some ethnic groups living in the country, such as Lahij, Talish, Tat, and Kyrgyz. The Azerbaijani language belongs to the Oghuz-Seljuk subgroup of the Oghuz language group in the family of Turkic languages according to genealogical division. The Azerbaijani language is the closest to Turkic, Turkmen and Gagauz languages among the modern languages of the Turkic language family [3, p. 13].

In general, the history of the Azerbaijani language can be divided into two significant periods: 1) the period before writing (before the 12th century) and 2) the period of written standard/literary language (XIII century and later). The first period is mainly related to the spoken

language of Azerbaijan, while the second phase is primarily about the history of the written standard language. The national spoken language was pivotal in forming the written standard language, so they are studied as a unity [2, p. 8].

Moreover, the history of literary language can be divided into three periods in Azerbaijan:

1) *20th-century Azerbaijani literary language*. During this period, a decision was made about the state language during the AXP government (1918-1920), and the government adopted the Azerbaijani language, which was called the Turkish language at that time, as the official language for the first time [2, p. 19].

2) *The Soviet period of Azerbaijani standard / literary language*. In this period, an important social factor was the change of the Arabic alphabet and its replacement with an alphabet containing the phonetic features of the language. Thus, the process of improving the literary language of Azerbaijan based on the national colloquial language began. 3) *Azerbaijani literary language in the years of independence*. During the years of independence, the Azerbaijani language acquired all the powers of the state languages. There was a struggle to replace the Cyrillic alphabet with the Latin alphabet. Changes were also needed in spelling, vocabulary and other areas [2, p. 376]. Nowadays, problems related to the use of standard language have also appeared in internet language, press language, etc. These are further analysed in the conclusion section.

Norwegian is the mother tongue of about 5 million people [7, p. 210]. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of people in Norway have another mother tongue. First of all, the Sami - ethnic minorities settled in Norway speak the Northern Sami, Lule Sami and Southern Sami dialects, which are considered separate languages. Another ethnic minority living in the country is the Kven language. Also, the Romanian language has become a national minority language. In addition, many "immigrant languages" have been introduced to the country since the 1960s. However, the Norwegian language is the language of most of the population [7, p. 222].

The Norwegian language has two different official written forms: bokmål ("book language") and Nynorsk ("new Norwegian"). Bokmål is a Norwegianized version of the Danish language, and Nynorsk is a generalised variant of Norwegian dialects [7, p. 210]. Bokmål is used by

90% of the Norwegian population. This written language was formed by the Norwegian linguist K. Knudsen based on the Danish language due to gradual Norwegianization in the 1800s and 1900s. After Danish rule in 1814, the idea of creating a new language based on Norwegian dialects was supported [11, p. 2]. Thus, nynorsk's written language is formed. Nynorsk's written language is associated with the name of the Norwegian linguist Ivar Osen, the founder of Norwegian dialectology. The linguistic history of Norway can be divided as follows: *Medieval period*. In Norway, during the Viking Age and the Middle Ages, the spoken and written language of the Norwegians was Old Norse. At the same time, this language is called the Western Scandinavian language and includes the ancient Norwegian language, similar Icelandic and Faroese languages [4, p.42]. In addition to quickly assimilating into the society in the areas they settled, the Vikings also influenced the local language. For example, the ancient northern language traces can be seen in Scotland and North England's regional dialects and place names [4, p. 42]. Therefore, the period between 700 and 1050 is the historical period in which the all-Scandinavian language dominates.

Romanticism era. During the Romanticism period, Danish gradually gained a superior position as a written language and eventually became the written language of Norway, and the ancient Scandinavian writing norms disappeared [7, p. 199]. After the period of Danish sovereignty ended in 1814, many considered the use of Danish as a written language unacceptable. Thus, bokmål and bynorsk languages were formed.

Independence period. In modern times, Norway has no officially accepted standard literary colloquial language. Bokmål, created under the influence of the Danish language and considered a Norwegianized Danish language, is regarded as the language of entertainment and music in modern times. In contrast, Nynorsk, developed based on dialects, is considered the language of literature [7, p. 212].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

There is an official standard language in Azerbaijan. The norms and styles of this language have been determined, and books, textbooks, and the press should operate based on these norms.

Nevertheless, the rules of the literary language are violated in several cases, which is closely related to the development trend of the modern era. Thus, the internet, one of the main requirements of the modern era, has significantly influenced the spoken and written language of the young generation. In many cases, this effect can lead to a violation of literary language norms. Short answers and informal writing styles are examples of this. Some linguists claim that the language of the press in modern times does not correspond to literary norms [2, p. 21].

On the contrary, there is no official literary language in Norway. Nevertheless, the debate about the existence of the Norwegian language or a standard literary language was still debated in the 1980s. [7, p. 26]. Norwegian linguist B. Mæhlum defended the idea of a standard spoken language in Norway, although it is unofficial, while H. Sandøy claimed the opposite of this opinion [7, p.27]. According to B. Mæhlum, some language variations are related to forms of prestige, high status and elite level. The linguist believes that the Oslo variation, close to bokmål or the dialect of southeast Norway, is at the highest level in this prestige hierarchy because it relates to the capital. Since the standard spoken language developed in close connection with the written language, the terms "spoken bokmål" and "spoken nynorsk" are usually used in Norway [8, p. 13].

Although the main language form is not clearly stated in the curriculum, a standard language is used to teach Norwegian as a second language. Norwegian linguist O. Husby believes that the tradition of using a common language can be explained by the fact that books written in bokmål are usually used in the classroom. This leads to teachers using a spoken language close to bokmål. This is practical for teachers because teaching oral language skills without the support of books can lead to misunderstandings. Learning a spoken language near a written one is also more accessible for new language learners. Since bokmål dominates both textbooks and media, it is more appropriate to teach a spoken language that is similar to written language [9, p. 82].

Thus, although there are lexical, grammatical and phonetic differences between bokmål and Nynorsk, the number of people who refer to both written languages in modern times is sufficient. Nevertheless, bokmål is the first choice of

Norwegian learners [11, p. 3]. Bokmål and Nynorsk must also be represented at the official level in Norway. It means state and regional administration, health care, and educational institutions must use official written languages in Norway [7, p. 219].

So, Norwegian and Azerbaijani languages have historically gone through similar processes. The dominant country ruled both, and the language of that country became the language of government. For example, as a Soviet Socialist Republic, the state language of Azerbaijan was Azerbaijani. Still, that language was used only at certain levels (village, district, and even some central institutions and organisations). However, the government utilised the Russian language to establish relations between the upper government and state departments, countries and nations [2, p.10]. Also, during the reign of Denmark, the "dark 400 years", as Norwegians called it, Danish was the primary language of government, the elite class, the media, and science. Thus, the language was in danger of being forgotten.

The problems of the standard language in Azerbaijan arose related to the language freedom exercised by the private sphere during the period of independence. For instance, business people gave foreign names to their private organisations, such as International Service, Vitomax, Crystal Water Company, etc., which undermined the terminological system of this national language. The Terminology Committee was established, and this situation was controlled [2, p. 376-378]. Despite this fact, there are still enough names of companies and shops in foreign languages.

The absence of a standard spoken literary language in Norway makes the language situation hard for foreigners. Second language learners get firstly familiar with bokmål in the classroom. However, they most likely encountered a dialect used in Norway. In some cases, Norwegians normalise their speech; in other words, they use "spoken bokmål". As stated before, the standard Norwegian language can be understood as a language close to the bokmål written language and contains features of the eastern dialect in terms of phonology and prosody [7, p. 3-6]. However, in other cases, the language input different from "spoken bokmål" can cause misunderstandings.

Although Norway is called a "dialect paradise", according to many linguists, there is a standard spoken Norwegian language similar to bokmål combining the phonological features of the eastern dialect, the western Oslo dialect. However, this cannot be considered a factor limiting the area of use of dialects. For example, Norway's state television, NRK, is one of the instances where there is an official language norm [5, p. 10]. These language rules apply only to NRK news programs and program information. However, in other programs, primarily regional news, the local dialect is preferred [10, p. 11].

CONCLUSIONS

Meanwhile, Azerbaijani law on the state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan states that the presenters of the television and radio channels

broadcasting in the state language must ideally acquire the state language and be able to speak it fluently. Films and programs dubbed on television and radio channels must be adapted to the language norms determined by the state and the literary language. Undoubtedly, these law requirements are being followed only to some extent in those media. In particular, programs are shown on television channels where the norms of the literary language of Azerbaijan are not correctly followed [2, p. 21].

It can be concluded, therefore, that an unofficial spoken standard language exists in Norway, while it is official in Azerbaijan. Foreign language learning and striving to preserve language stability are the reasons for supporting standard spoken language. However, the internet, mass media, and the desire to sustain other language varieties can be incentives for not obeying the standard language's norms.

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