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## THE ESSENCE OF THE CONCEPT “LANGUAGE” AS “A MEANS” IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS

**Summary.** The scientific research is devoted to the development of linguistic terminology in a historical aspect.

This article is one of a series of articles devoted to the problems of the evolution of the concept “language” in the minds of scientists over the course of 5 periods of development of linguistics.

The proposed study presents research and a detailed information analysis of the essence of the concept “language” as “a means” in the personal understanding of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (German philosophers and founders of Marxism), who worked in the 4th period of the history of linguistics (the end of the 19th – the first third of the 20th century).

The detection of the existence of the concept “language”, the phenomenon of its essence in a generalized form, with a common element of meaning inside, was made according to the Explanatory formula of concept content (EFCC) structure.

The essential features as components of the element of scientific knowledge of the concept “language” as “a means” were identified and summarized in 8 main “core” meanings (essential groups) with a general informational element inside.

According to the results of the study, a generalized and unambiguous definition of the concept “language” as “a means” in the understanding of K. Marx and F. Engels was synthesized: “language” is “a means” of communication establishing interpersonal and intergroup communication, as communicative component of human life activity and forms of communication; activity as expressing consciousness and thinking; reflecting objective and subjective reality in human cognitive activity; constructing and changing social relations for power, forming, expressing and maintaining public consciousness, and disseminating ideology; influencing the process of human communication, vital interaction with the surrounding world; human development; maintaining and confronting class differences and class struggle; expression culture.

**Key words:** language, concept, essence, information, means, explanatory formula of concept content (EFCC).

**The statement of the problem.** In all of people’s historical communities, “language” is an obligatory feature. It requires a step-by-step study of the development of its essence in historical perspective.

This study is one part of a study of the evolution of the essence of the concept “language” over the course of 5 periods of linguistics (Period 1 – 5 th – 4th centuries BC – 16th century; Period 2 – 17th – 18th centuries; Period 3 – late

18th – first half of the 19th century; Period 4 – late 19th – first third of the 20th centuries).

This study is devoted to identifying the essence of the concept “language” as “a means” in the understanding of Karl Marx (1818–1883) (a German philosopher, social and political theorist, economist, journalist, and revolutionary socialist) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) (a German philosopher, social and political theorist, journalist, businessman, and revolutionary socialist).

**The aim of the research** is to analyze and systematize the essence of the concept “language” as “a means” in the personal understanding of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels according to the structure of the explanatory formula of concept content (EFCC).

### **The main tasks of this research:**

- an analysis of the essence of the concept “language” as “a means” in the scientific works of K. Marx and F. Engels from various perspectives and taking into account all aspects;
- classification and systematization of the understanding of the essence of the concept “language” as “a means” according to “core” values (essential groups), groups of essential features as components of the element of scientific knowledge;
- generalization of the results of the analysis carried out with the aim of formulating a definition of the essence of the concept “language” as “a means.”

**The object of the research** is the concept “language” in the processes of human life and society in the 4th period (the end of the 19th – the first third of the 20th century) of the periodization of the history of linguistics.

**The subject of the research** is the identification of the main theoretical and practical approaches and the analysis of the main semantically distinctive understandings of the essence of the concept “language” as “a means” in the studies of K. Marx and F. Engels, whose scientific activity took place within the framework of the 4th period of linguistics.

**The scientific novelty of the study** is clarifying the essence of the concept “language” as “a means”, specific features are identified to identify common and different, and the presentation of a generalized classification of definitions according to essential and “core” values (essential groups), and formulating a definition of the concept.

This analysis is conducted using the structure of the *explanatory formula of concept content* (EFCC).

**An analysis of research and publications on this topic** revealed that many scholars have expressed interest in studying various aspects of the concept “language” in the scientific works of K. Marx and F. Engels:

- F. Engels as a brilliant writer and one of the best stylists in the German language [1];
- the status of ‘English’ (or ‘language’ in general) as commodity [2];
- the connection between hegemony and language in Marxism [3].

The analysis of the essence of the concept “language” as “a means” with the aim of synthesizing a generalized and unambiguous definition based on the scientific works of K. Marx and F. Engels remained without attention.

In our previous studies, we analyzed and systematized the essence and functional essence of the concept “language” in 4 periods of linguistics (from V–IV centuries BC to the first third of the XX century) and partly the 5th period (1930s to the present day), according to the EFCC:

1 period (V–IV BC – XVI BC): Indian linguistic tradition in early antiquity [4]; the Greco-Latin linguistic tradition [5]; Classical Antiquity [6]; the Middle Ages [7];

2 period (XVII–XVIII AD): the Renaissance period [8]; the Enlightenment Period [9];

3 period (the end of the XVIII – the first half of the XIX century) [10];

4 period (the end of the XIX – the first third of the XX century) [11; 12; 13; 14];

5 period (the 30s of the 20th century to the present) [15; 16].

#### **The presentation of the main material.**

Let us present the foundations and principles of the existence of the “essence” of the concept “language” as “a means” according to the results of the analysis of K. Marx’s and F. Engels’s research.

Explanatory formula of concept content of “Language” as “a means”.

1.2. Detection of the existence of the concept, the phenomenon of its essence in a generalized form, with a common element inside.

#### **A means.**

##### **1. A means of communication.**

Language is the most important means of human communication.

K. Marx and F. Engels did not define the term “communication”. However, the term “communication”, based on an analysis of their research, can be encompassed as a material process in which people produce and reproduce social relations, social structures, social systems, groups, organizations, institutions, society, and sociality.

##### **1.1. A means of establishing interpersonal and intergroup communication.**

K. Marx and F. Engels recognized “language” as a means of communication (contacts) of the human collective, which is formed and preserved over the centuries, arising from the need for communication in the work process.

F. Engels wrote in his work “Anti-Duhring” that only where relations between peoples are expressed in the movement of the masses, foreign languages should be learned by everyone in an easy form, depending on need [17].

##### **1.2. A means as a communicative component of human life activity that arose from practical, social activity (labor).**

Language is woven into the relationship with society, forming new ideas, new ways of communication, new needs, and a new language.

In “Capital”, studying the history of mankind, K. Marx came to the conclusion that language was the most important communicative component of the most fundamental human activity, “labor in its specifically human form” [18].

##### **1.3. A means of production of forms of communication.**

K. Marx and F. Engels in “Chapter 3: Saint Max” defined the concept “language” as the production of the very form of communication, noting its ability to socialize human activity in which thoughts in the form of words have their own content [19].

##### **2. A means of activity.**

###### **2.1. A means of expressing consciousness.**

Consciousness is created by material conditions, and language is an important means in this process. Language not only describes the world but also shapes human consciousness and perception of the world.

K. Marx and F. Engels believed that “Consciousness is therefore from the very beginning a social product and remains so as long as men exist at all” [20, p. 18].

###### **2.2. A means of thinking.**

K. Marx and F. Engels discussed the connection between thinking and language and established the inextricable link between language and thought. They always spoke about language as a whole, and not about its individual components that are capable of entering into a connection with thinking and playing a certain role in its processes. They opposed the separation of language and thought held by idealist philosophers.

K. Marx and F. Engels noted the dialectical, harmonious, and contradictory unity of language and thought. They were forced to explain language, precisely language, and only in terms of the depth of its content; there is no other way out than to speak of it primarily as language and thought. They believed that language was the means by which abstract thought acquired its own life and became a distorted language of the real world.

This contradiction between language and thought manifests in the fact that thinking without language, the fundamental component of thought, and language without thought is impossible.

##### **3. A means of reflecting reality in time and space.**

###### **3.1. A means of reflecting objective reality in time and space.**

K. Marx and F. Engels criticized idealist approaches that viewed thought as something abstract. They viewed language as the central means through which thought exists and is expressed, immediate reality: “The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life” [20, p. 13].

**3.2. A means of reflecting subjective reality in thoughts, ideas, judgments, concepts, etc.** material, social life determines consciousness, not vice-versa, meaning philosophers

must cease analyzing abstract ideas and start analyzing the real, material conditions that produce them. In “On Language and Idealism”, K. Marx and F. Engels described “The problem of descending from the world of thoughts to the actual world is turned into the problem of descending from language to life” [19, p. 446].

### **3.3. A means of human cognitive activity for expressing thoughts.**

Language is a concrete, human, sensory activity through which thought manifests itself in the world.

K. Marx thought that the need and necessity for reflecting recognized states of being occurred in “the language in which the thinker is active” [21, p. 3] and “The element of thought itself – the element of thought’s living expression – language – is of a sensuous nature” [21, p. 4].

### **4. A means of constructing and changing social relations.**

Language permeates all aspects of social life. Language is a fundamental element of social existence and accessing and influencing. Language can be seen as a central instrument of social practice, thought, and class struggle, constantly changing throughout human history and reflecting class differences. The affirmation of the social nature of language is one of the main achievements of Marxism, as it laid the foundation for a materialist view of language, rejecting various idealistic and religious conceptions of language.

#### **4.1. A means and instrument of power.**

K. Marx and F. Engels noted the ideological aspect of language that can be used as a means and tool to strengthen or challenge power. The bourgeoisie turns language into an expression of their mercantile interests. The bourgeoisie uses language to express its ideology, influence public opinion, and justify its actions. This influence extends to the sphere of politics and culture, where the state, bureaucracy, ruling parties, nation, nationalism, war, racism, etc., pass through ideologies as natural forms of human communication and society. The way leaders use language reflects their level of social status, power, control over information, and shaping society to strengthen and maintain existing social structures, «actual private interests» [19 p. p. 310].

#### **4.2. A means of forming, expressing, maintaining public consciousness, and disseminating ideology.**

K. Marx and F. Engels considered language to be a means for expressing “ideological forms” that determine how ideology is perceived, disseminated, and implemented in society (ideas and views that determine the worldview, goals, and principles underlying the activities of social groups, classes, or the whole society), “...expressed in the language of the politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms” [20, p. 13].

#### **5. A means of influencing.**

##### **5.1. A means of influencing the process of human communication.**

Human communication is a complex, multifaceted process. It fosters interpersonal communication (development of contacts between people) and intergroup communication (communication in groups).

Language communication presupposes and encourages cooperation, driven by the needs of joint activity, and includes three processes: communication (exchanging of information as part of the material production process), interaction (action exchange), and economic perception (perception and understanding of the partner): “... the establishment of communications” [22].

##### **5.2. A means of influencing the process of vital interaction with the surrounding world.**

According to K. Marx, human practical activity is revealed in labor and presupposes active interaction with objects in the external world. Such interaction is the cause of the emergence of consciousness and the expression of the results of its activity in linguistic form [22].

#### **6. A means of human development.**

Language is deeply rooted in activity and the material intercourse among humans.

F. Engels’ thought is: “This explanation of the origin of language from and in the process of labour is the only correct one” [23, p. 455]. F. Engels pointed out the origin of language, but he did not explain how language was born in that process. As he said, “Labour begins with the making of tools”; thus the explanation of the birth of language must be closely related with that [23].

#### **7. A means of maintaining and confronting differences.**

##### **7.1. A means of protecting and maintaining class differences.**

Differences between social groups are reflected in a specific “class language” that forms a structure with lifestyles, attitudes, feelings, and politics.

Social relations greatly influence the social structure and consciousness of society, and conversely, language also plays a vital role in the construction and transformation of social relations. Language is a true reflection of social relations: the transformation of language into “... mere idealizing phrases, conscious illusion, deliberate hypocrisy” [19, p. 310].

##### **7.2. Means of implementation of the struggle.**

According to K. Marx and F. Engels, with the help of language, people struggle with the contradictions of material life, i.e., conflicts, rivalry, struggle, or opposition.

##### **7.3. A means of carrying out the life and class struggle.**

Because “an existing language and dialects” [19, p. 150]) is closely connected to and dependent on specific living conditions and class relations, every word, every utterance carries a specific ideological charge, reflecting the interests of a specific social class and expressing its interests, worldview, and ideals.

K. Marx and F. Engels noted the role of the language of the educated classes and the literary language, which is opposed to the vernacular language and local dialects.

Therefore, K. Marks considered language as an indispensable weapon of class struggle: “... the proletariat is quite justified in replying in the same language that, on the contrary, his task is to overthrow the entire bourgeois system” [19, p. 288].

#### **8. A means of culture.**

##### **8.1. Common culture.**

Culture and language are two different concepts. Language, being an element of spiritual culture, like all other social

phenomena, is unthinkable in isolation from materiality. It is connected to culture and is unthinkable without culture, just as culture is unthinkable without language: Language represents and supports a common culture, including language [24],

### 8.2. National culture.

K. Marx and F. Engels recognized the right of nations to independent existence and the preservation of national culture [24], including language,

**Conclusion.** According to the results of the study, it can be concluded that K. Marx and F. Engels (scientists of the 4th period of the history of linguistics) understood the concept of “language” as “**a means**” of *communication* establishing interpersonal and intergroup communication, as communicative component of human life activity and forms of communication; *activity* of expressing consciousness and thinking; *reflecting* objective and subjective reality in human cognitive activity; *constructing and changing* social relations for power, forming, expressing, maintaining public consciousness, and disseminating ideology; *influencing* the process of human communication, vital interaction with the surrounding world; human *development*; *maintaining and confronting* class differences and class struggle; *expression culture*.

**Perspectives and future research opportunities.** We consider the following as a prospect for further research: the need to analyze and systematize the functional essence of the concept “language” in the understanding of K. Marx and F. Engels, according to the structure of the *Explanatory formula of concept content* (EFCC).

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### Солдатова Л. Сутність поняття «мова» як «засіб» у розумінні Карла Маркса та Фрідріха Енгельса

**Анотація.** Наукове дослідження присвячене розвитку лінгвістичної термінології.

Ця стаття є однією із серії статей, присвячених проблемам еволюції поняття «мова» у свідомості вчених протягом 5 періодів розвитку лінгвістики (від античності до наших днів).

У запропонованому дослідженні представлено дослідження та детальний інформаційний аналіз сутності поняття «мова» як «засіб» в особистому розумінні Карла Маркса та Фрідріха Енгельса (німецьких філософів та засновників марксизму), які працювали в IV період історії лінгвістики (кінець XIX – перша третина XX століття).

Виявлення існування поняття «мова», феномену його сутності в узагальненому вигляді із спільним елементом значення всередині було здійснено відпо-

відно до структури Тлумачної формули змісту поняття (ТФЗП).

Суттєві ознаки як складові елемента наукового пізнання поняття «мова» як «засіб» були визначені та узагальнені у 8 основних «ядрових» значень (суттєвих групах) із загальноінформаційним елементом всередині.

Згідно з результатами дослідження було синтезовано узагальнене та однозначне визначення поняття «мова» як «засіб» у розумінні К. Маркса та Ф. Енгельса: «мова» – це «засіб» комунікації, який встановлює міжособистісну та міжгрупову комунікацію, як комунікативний компонент життєдіяльності людини, та форми спілкування; діяльність як вираження свідомості та мислення; відображення об'єктивної та суб'єктивної реальності в когнітивній діяльності людини; конструювання та зміна соціальних відносин заради влади, фор-

мування, вираження та підтримка суспільної свідомості та поширення ідеології; вплив на процес людського спілкування, життєво важливу взаємодію з навколишнім світом; розвиток людини; підтримка та протистояння класовим відмінностям та класовій боротьбі; вираження культури.

**Ключові слова:** мова, концепт, сутність, засіб, тлумачна формула змісту поняття (ТФЗП).

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