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**COMMON AND SPECIAL IN THE SYSTEMS OF PERSONAL PRONOUNS
ON THE MATERIAL OF COMPARISON OF THE CHINESE, CANTONESE, RUSSIAN
AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES**

Summary. The *purpose* of the article is to identify common and special features in the systems of one of the linguistic universals — personal pronouns. The research was carried out on the *material* of four languages: Chinese, Cantonese, Russian and English. The *object* of study is the personal pronoun systems of these languages. The *subject* of the study is the features that unite the systems of personal pronouns of the studied languages, and the features that distinguish each of these systems. The procedures of structural, semantic and comparative analysis methods, elements of sociolinguistic and linguocultural analysis, descriptive method were used in the research process. The *results* of the research were the identification of common and special features in the systems of the studied languages. It was *concluded* that in all the studied languages the paradigm of personal pronouns category has 6 positions caused by the categories of person (first, second and third) and number (singular and plural). However, each of the languages has its own peculiarities of the implementation of this paradigm in speech: informative, grammatical, graphical, stylistical and linguocultural.

Key words: personal pronoun, paradigm, connotation, informative, grammatical, graphical, stylistical and linguocultural differences, Chinese, Cantonese, Russian, English languages.

Formulation of the problem. Personal pronouns play an important role as universal structural ties in the global communicative space. Among the first words learned by students studying a foreign language is the paradigm of personal pronouns. In languages, all personal pronouns belong to the zero lexical minima, that is, they are among the first 500 most common words used by speakers [ex.: 1; 3]. In each language, personal pronouns are unique; they reflect their own history, culture, and development. However, when comparing them across different languages, some common universal features of their semantics and functioning patterns can be observed.

Despite the system-structural universality (with a few exceptions), representatives of the category of personal pronouns in the grammatical systems of different language families, and sometimes even in related languages, have a unique origin and distinctive functioning characteristics. Overall, words that are personal pronouns capture the attention of researchers. However, each new comparative study of such language units in one or another set of languages reveals new facets of this communicative phenomenon. When comparing the paradigms of personal pronouns in Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese Chinese, English, and Russian languages, and analyzing the similarities and differences between these paradigms, we note that each paradigm exhibits a distinct historical and cultural context that reflects the national communicative practice. Respect for each language is a necessary condition for their comparative analysis.

Task Formulation. The purpose of the article is to identify common and special features in the systems of one of the linguistic universals — personal pronouns. The research was carried out on the material of four languages: Chinese, Cantonese, Russian and English. The object of study is the personal pronoun systems of these languages. The subject of the study is the features that unite the systems of personal pronouns of the studied languages, and the features that distinguish each of these systems. The procedures of structural, semantic and comparative analysis methods, elements of sociolinguistic and linguocultural analysis, descriptive method were used in the research process.

Exposition of the main material.

1. Analysis of the paradigm of personal pronouns in Mandarin Chinese language.

In Chinese linguistics, just like in any other national linguistics, it is noted that «personal pronoun is one of the most essential categories in the Chinese lexicon; moreover, personal pronouns are quite frequently used in modern Chinese language [4, p. 76]. Mandarin Chinese, also known as Modern Standard Chinese, is the official language of China. At its foundation lies the Northern Mandarin dialect, which is based on the grammatical norms of modern spoken Chinese. The norms of Mandarin Chinese language

were officially established after the formation of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the modern Northern Chinese dialect upon which these norms are based was, according to official records, gradually formed prior to the establishment of the PRC. It is known that the norms of modern spoken Chinese, which formed the basis of the Mandarin language, became widely adopted in society only after the «May Fourth Movement.» The establishment and development of Mandarin language norms, when compared to these three other comparable languages, were the shortest.

The universality of personal pronoun paradigms is evident in their structural and grammatical identity. Personal pronouns are distinguished in the first, second, and third persons, in both singular and plural forms. In the third person, there are distinctions of gender, masculine and feminine, when referring to humans, and neuter gender when referring to animals. A distinctive feature of plural forms is their functional syncretism, as they can be used both to show respect towards an individual and to express actual plurality of someone or something when needed.

In Mandarin (official Chinese language), personal pronouns of the first person are as follows: 我 (wǒ), 我们(wǒ mén). Personal pronouns of the second person are as follows: 你 (nǐ), 你们 (nǐ mén), 您 (nín). Personal pronouns of the third person are as follows: 他 (tā), 她 (tā), 它 (tā), 他们 (tā mén), 她们 (tā mén), 它们 (tā mén). The difference between 你 (nǐ) and 您 (nín) in the second person lies in the fact that 您 (nín) indicates a respectful attitude of the speaker towards the person being addressed. This pronoun is commonly used in greeting sentences equivalent to Russian sentences like «Hello, esteemed professor.» However, when the subject is interacting with more than one individual, you can only use 你们 (nǐ mén), and not *您们 (*nín mén), because 您 (nín) does not have a plural form. Third-person pronouns in Mandarin Chinese: 他 (tā), 她 (tā), 它 (tā). They are pronounced the same but written differently, representing a male, a female, and an animal respectively. The word 她 (tā), which indicates a female person, appeared later than 他 (tā), which indicates a male person. 他 (tā) was used in both written and spoken Chinese language as far back as the Sui and Tang dynasties. The pronoun 她 (tā), indicating a female, was officially adopted in Mandarin Chinese only in the first half of the 20th century. After the emergence of the “New Culture Movement,” there was a closer cultural exchange between Chinese and Western cultures. The significant increase in translations led to confusion in the writing of the third-person female pronoun. The problem of its standardization arose. Starting from 1919, scholars actively discussed this issue. “Only in 1923 was the third-person female pronoun 她 (tā) accepted as the written form for indicating a woman, becoming the exclusive form» [5, p. 114]. When using the third-person plural form to refer to a mixed-gender group (including both males and females), in Mandarin Chinese, you should use 他们 (tā mén), where the character 们 (mén) indicates plurality. The same form 他们 (tā mén) is also used to refer to a male-only group. However, if the group consists only of females, the word 她们 (tā mén) is used. This is an example of linguistic androcentrism in the Chinese language, where the feminine form is marked strongly due to the expressed gender semantics being grammatically marked, while the masculine form loses its markedness and becomes grammatically weak. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this androcentrism reflects the cultural inertia of patriarchal societies, which persists in certain other lingual phenomena in many languages as well.

2. Analysis of the paradigm of personal pronouns in Cantonese Chinese language.

Among all the dialects spoken in China today, Cantonese is the most widespread. It holds the status of one of the Chinese languages and is often compared to Mandarin Chinese. Cantonese language enjoys significant popularity. In addition to the Chinese provinces of Guangdong and Guangxi, as well as Hong Kong and Macau, Cantonese is officially recognized as one of the languages of minority communities in Australia, Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. UNESCO has also officially recognized the Cantonese language. There has long been a debate over whether Cantonese is a dialect or a language. From a linguistic standpoint, it is an idiom of the Sino-Tibetan group within the Chinese language family. It significantly differs from Mandarin Chinese and other Chinese idioms in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and tonality. It would be more accurate to refer to it as a “highly autonomous dialect” or a closely related language to Mandarin. A similar phenomenon was observed in East Slavic languages. For example, in the second half of the 19th century, the Russian language had three major dialects (dialect groups): Great Russian, Little Russian, and Belarusian [2]. In the 20th century, each of these dialect groups was recognized as an independent language (Great Russian dialect group = Russian language; Little Russian dialect group = Little Russian / Ukrainian language; Belarusian dialect group = Belarusian language), and they are closely related languages. Undoubtedly, both Mandarin and Cantonese languages are inheritors of traditional Chinese culture; they share the same roots and develop on the same cultural foundation.

From the perspective of writing and pronunciation, there are some differences between the personal pronouns in Cantonese and Mandarin. Due to the existence of several regional variants within the Cantonese language system, we will take the Guangzhou dialect of Cantonese as our basis.

First-person pronouns in Cantonese: 我 (ngo5), 我哋 (ngo5 dei6); second-person pronouns: 你 (nei5), 你哋 (nei5 dei6); third-person pronouns: 佢 (keoi5), 佢哋 (keoi5 dei6). It's important to note that in spoken language, 我 (ngo5) and 你 (nei5) differ in pronunciation from their Mandarin counterparts, but their written forms are the same in both Mandarin and Cantonese.

Yuan Jiāhuá asserts that «personal pronouns in the Cantonese dialect have a distinction between singular and plural, but unlike Mandarin, in the Cantonese paradigm, the final 哋 (dei6) is used to indicate plurality» [6, p. 351]. Comparing with English and Russian languages, it's noteworthy that the forms of plural personal pronouns in Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese languages are created by adding a final component, rather than using a different root word (compare: first person: 我(wǒ) — 我们(wǒ mén) / 我(ngo5) — 我哋(ngo5 dei6) / I(ai) — we(wi) / я(yia) — мы(my) // Second person: 你(nǐ) — 你们(nǐ mén) / 你(nei5) — 你哋(nei5 dei6) / 佢(keoi5) — 佢哋(keoi5 dei6) / (thou(θou)) — you(yiu) / ты(ty) — вы(vy) // Third person: 他(tā) — 他们(tā mén), 她(tā) — 她们(tā mén), 它(tā) — 它们(tā mén) / 佢(keoi5) — 佢哋(keoi5 dei6) / he(hi), she(shi), it(it) — they(θei) / он(on), она(aná), оно(anó) — они(aní)).

This indicates the relationship between Mandarin and Cantonese languages (Sino-Tibetan language family), as well as the relationship between English and Russian languages (Indo-European language family). Unlike Mandarin Chinese, the third-person pronouns in the Cantonese language do not differentiate between gender and animacy / inanimacy categories. For instance, 佢(keoi5) and 佢哋(keoi5 dei6) are used indiscriminately: for referring to men, women, animals, or inanimate objects. The reason for this phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that Cantonese language norms are more archaic. Cantonese has inherited and preserved traditional Chinese languocultural features to a greater extent than Mandarin. It is commonly believed, for instance, that reading ancient poetry and song lyrics aloud in Cantonese sounds more beautiful and refined than in Mandarin. In written Cantonese, traditional Chinese characters are used more frequently compared to modern literary (Mandarin) Chinese. It is well-known that the establishment of Mandarin Chinese as the official language of China is closely linked to the wave of intellectual liberation in the 1920s and 1930s. During that time, the movement for cultural renewal had a significant impact on traditional Chinese culture, particularly concerning the official national language. The Chinese vernacular, or the spoken language of the common people, gradually displaced the dominance of the ancient, more formal literary language. After the formation of the People's Republic of China, the language norms of the northern regions, spoken by the common people, were elevated to the status of the national standard language. The Mandarin language, representing the new thinking of a new era, naturally brought about changes to some old norms of traditional language and culture. On the other hand, Cantonese as a regional idiom, operating far from the capital, didn't undergo significant influence from the movement for the development of new culture. It wasn't a widely spoken language in the country, didn't attract significant scholarly attention, and some elements of traditional linguistic and cultural practices still find their place within it to this day.

3. Analysis of the paradigm of personal pronouns in the Russian language.

«Just like in other languages, Russian personal pronouns are the most typical among inflected pronouns and function most actively in speech. Russian personal pronouns include: я, ты, он, она, оно, мы, вы, они» [7, с. 30]. First-person pronouns (in the nominative case): я(yia), мы(my); Second-person pronouns (in the nominative case): ты(ty), вы(vy); Third-person pronouns (in the nominative case): он(on), она(aná), оно(anó) — они(aní).

Among the specific features of the Russian personal pronoun system, the following can be mentioned. The first-person and second-person plural pronouns, unlike their counterparts in Mandarin and Cantonese, are not etymologically related to their singular forms. The second-person plural form (вы) is used not only in its direct indicative sense to address multiple people, but also to address a single person as a sign of respect, similar to the Chinese word 您(nín). Usually, in this case, in written language, the pronoun is capitalized: Вы(You). More details about this см. [8, p. 28]. In the case of respectful singularity of the subject expressed by the pronoun Вы(You), the conjugated verb, acting as the predicate of this subject, is coordinated in number formally. This means it takes the plural form, just as when the subject is plural. Russian third-person singular personal pronouns are very distinctly differentiated by grammatical gender in both written and spoken language. However, in the plural form, the category of gender is not expressed (similar to the Cantonese language), just like in all forms of the first and second person. In Mandarin Chinese, on the other hand, gender distinctions are only expressed in writing, but they exist in both singular and plural forms. In Old Russian language, the forms of the third-person personal pronouns served the role of demonstrative pronouns, corresponding to modern pronouns. *мом, ма, мо — me*. As a result, unlike the forms of the first and second person, the third-person forms have gender distinctions. Additionally, these forms preserve the ancient gender endings of the nominal declension when it was the same for both nouns and adjectives, that is, before the emergence of full adjectives.

In one-component definite-personal sentences, personal pronouns (first and second person) are omitted, which allows for the application of the economy principle of language resources / efforts. The reason lies in the presence of endings in the corresponding conjugated verb forms, by which the subject of the action, process, or state expressed by the verb can be easily determined. For example: *пишу письмо (= я пишу письмо), пишешь письмо (ты пишешь письмо), пишем письмо (= мы пишем), пишете письмо (= вы пишете письмо)*. If a sentence lacks a subject or any indication of it through pronouns, and the verbal predicate has the form of the third person singular, it is considered a two-component incomplete sentence. In such sentences, the subject is inferred from the context. For example:

1) [*Я выгоняла его дважды*]. *Опять приходит* (= *Он опять приходит*). 2) [*Я выгоняла её дважды*]. *Опять приходит* (= *Она опять приходит*). 3) [*Я выгоняла их дважды*]. *Опять приходят* (= *Они опять приходят*). Similar usages are consistent in other modal-temporal aspects of expressions. There are also one-component indefinite-personal and generalized-personal sentences, where the meanings of conveyed relationships are embedded in the verb endings, and the use of a subject in the form of a personal pronoun that correlates with that ending would be incorrect. For example: 1) indefinite-personal sentence — *В парке красиво поют* (= *В парке кто-то красиво поёт*); 2) generalized-personal sentence — *Когда идёшь по лесу, встречаешь много интересных явлений* (= *Когда любой из нас идёт по лесу, он встречает много интересных явлений*). Therefore, when teaching Russian as a foreign language, it is undesirable to omit third-person personal pronouns in sentences of any modal-temporal aspects. Finally, one of the significant differences between Russian personal pronouns and Chinese ones is due to the typological distinctions between the Russian and Chinese languages. The Russian language is an inflectional fusional language, which means that grammatical meanings are typically expressed through affixes and inflections. On the other hand, Chinese languages are isolating, so grammatical meanings are conveyed through separate words and the order of their arrangement. Exactly, due to the typological differences between Russian and Chinese languages, in Russian, words of all parts of speech, including personal pronouns, have grammatical cases. This is in contrast to Chinese personal pronouns which are not inflected, meaning they do not change forms based on grammatical cases.

4. Analysis of the paradigm of personal pronouns in the English language.

«In the English language, personal pronouns are one of the most common and frequently used word classes. According to their grammatical function, they can be used as subjects, objects, predicates, attributive elements... and can be used multiple times in the same sentence, replacing each other.» [9, p. 106].

Personal pronouns in the first person in the English language: *I (ai)*, *we (wi)*; second person pronoun: *you (yiu)*; third person pronouns: *he (hi)*, *she (shi)*, *it (it)* — *they (ʒei)*. Similar to the Russian language, English personal pronouns have a declension paradigm; however, it is not as rich as in the Russian language, as the retained and actively used indirect forms of some personal pronouns (*me, us, his, him, her, them*) are language remnants of Old English, where all words of nominal parts of speech used to be inflected by cases. The English language has transformed from an inflective, affixing language into an isolating one with some remnants of its former state. As a result, English personal pronouns are not invariant, except for "you"; however, their indirect forms are less diverse than in the Russian language, where each personal pronoun, both in singular and plural, has six case forms. In English, there are no more than two such forms. Coordination by person, which means the formal agreement of the verb predicate with the subject, is possible in the English language only with subjects expressed by third-person singular pronouns. Compare: *I want / We want / You want* — *He wants / She wants / It wants* — *They want*.

Another language feature is the use of additional words with the undifferentiated second-person pronoun "you" to specify the actual singularity or plurality of the addressee. Thus, if one person is speaking to two interlocutors (John and William) but addressing only one of them, they should insert one of the names into the sentence, for example: *John, you...* — или *You, William,...* If addressing both, one usually needs to add the collective numeral "both" or both names, along with some other specifying words. For example: 1) *You both are smart, but our jury must choose one of you.* 2) *John and William, you are smart students, but our jury must choose one of you.* The absence of the second-person singular personal pronoun in modern English speech is linked to the history of the English language. Occasionally, in poetic speech, authors use the pronoun "thou," which has evolved from its originally stylistically neutral usage.

Conclusions. Thus, the comparative study of personal pronoun systems, carried out with the material from four languages: Chinese, Cantonese, Russian, and English, indicates that in all the languages under study, the paradigms of the personal pronoun category have 6 positions determined by the categories of person (first, second, and third) and number (singular and plural). However, each of the languages has its own peculiarities of the implementation of these paradigms in speech: informative, grammatical, graphical, stylistical and linguocultural. We see the **prospect** of further research on the problem of the formation and functioning of personal pronoun paradigms in typologically identical and different, genetically related and unrelated languages, put forward and partially studied in a comparative aspect, in the deepening of linguoculturological, stylistic and some other aspects.

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СПІЛЬНЕ Й ОСОБЛИВЕ В СИСТЕМАХ ОСОБОВИХ ЗАЙМЕННИКІВ НА МАТЕРІАЛІ ЗІСТАВЛЕННЯ ОДИНИЦЬ КИТАЙСЬКОЇ, КАНТОНСЬКОЇ, РОСІЙСЬКОЇ Й АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВ

Анотація. Метою статті є виявлення спільних і особливих рис у системах однієї з мовних універсалій — особових займенників. Дослідження виконано на матеріалі чотирьох мов: китайської, кантонської, російської й англійської. **Об'єктом** вивчення є системи особових займенників цих мов. **Предмет** дослідження — риси, які об'єднують системи особових займенників досліджуваних мов, і риси, що виокремлюють кожну з цих систем. У процесі дослідження було вжито процедури **методів** структурного, семантичного та зіставного аналізу, елементи соціолінгвістичного та лінгвокультурного аналізу, описовий метод. **Результатами** дослідження стало виявлення спільних і особливих рис у системах досліджуваних мов. Зроблено **висновки**, які полягають у тому, що парадигма категорії особових займенників у всіх досліджуваних мовах має 6 позицій, спричинених категоріями особи (перша, друга і третя) і числа (однина й множина). Однак кожна з мов має свої особливості реалізації цієї парадигми в мовленні: змістові, граматичні, графічні, стилістичні та лінгвокультурні.

Ключові слова: особовий займенник, парадигма, конотація, графічні розбіжності, китайська, кантонська, російська, англійська мови.

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