



Politics and the Theory of Language in the USSR 1917-1938
The Birth of Sociological Linguistics
Edited by Craig Brandist and Katya Chown

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Description

Ground-breaking research into the complex interrelations of linguistic theory and politics during the first two decades of the USSR.

'Examining the interpenetration of linguistics, psychology, sociology and political thought, this collection makes an excellent interdisciplinary contribution to our knowledge of Soviet cultural and intellectual history.'

—*Galin Tihanov, The University of Manchester*

Politics and the Theory of Language in the USSR 1917-1938 examines how the new Revolutionary regime promoted linguistic research that scrutinised the relationship between language, social structure, national identity and ideological factors as part of an attempt to democratize the public sphere. It also investigates the demise of the sociological paradigm, as the isolation and bureaucratization of the state gradually shifted the focus of research.

Through this account, the collection formally acknowledges the achievements of the Soviet linguists of the time, whose innovative approaches to the relationship between language and society predates the emergence of western sociolinguistics by several decades. These articles are the first articles written in English about these linguists, and will introduce an Anglophone audience to a range of materials hitherto unavailable.

In addition to providing new articles, the volume also presents the first annotated translation of Ivan Meshchaninov's 1929 'Theses on Japhetidology', thereby providing insight into one of the most controversial strands within Soviet linguistic thought.

Readership: Advanced undergraduate and graduate students and those interested in Soviet history, the relationship between language and politics, Marxism, cultural theory and intellectual history more generally.

Contents

Introduction; Soviet Linguistics of the 1920s and 1930s and the Scholarly Heritage; 'Sociology' in Soviet Linguistics of the 1920-30s; Theoretical Insights and Ideological Pressures in Early Soviet Linguistics; Early Soviet Linguistics and Mikhail Bakhtin's Essays on the Novel of the 1930s; Language as a Battlefield - the Rhetoric of Class Struggle in Linguistic Debates of the First Five-Year Plan Period; The Tenacity of Forms; The Word as Culture; Language Ideology and the Evolution of Kul'tura iazyka ('Speech Culture') in Soviet Russia; Psychology, Linguistics and the Rise of Applied Social Science in the USSR; Appendix 1. Introduction to Japhetidology: Theses, Ivan Meshchaninov; Appendix 2. Glossary of Names; Appendix 3. Contributors; Index of Names

About the Editors

Craig Brandist is Professor of Cultural Theory and Intellectual History and Director of the Bakhtin Centre at the University of Sheffield.

Katya Chown is Lecturer in Russian at Leeds University and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Sheffield.

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