

Ethnocultural education of preschool children in the North-Eastern region of Russia: problems and ways of improving

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Abstract. The ethnocultural space of Russia currently poses a problematic area for exploring and finding major solutions heading to protect languages of indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia, and the Far East. The situation with the learning of languages and cultures of small nations is estimated as a recessionary. The purpose of the article is to study the state of ethnocultural education of preschoolers in the North-Eastern regions of the Russian Federation, as well as to determine, on the example of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), common problems and ways to improve it. The significance of this study lies in the formulation of the problem of language education of small languages and cultures of the peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East in preschool education and finding the ways of preschool education development in modern conditions. The methodological basis of the study was the collection and analysis of statistical data from reports on ethnocultural education of the preschool education departments of Siberia, the Far East and the northern regions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of the Russian Federation, as well as data from a survey conducted among parents of preschool children. As a result of the study, a comparative analysis of the situation and state of cultural education in preschool institutions of the regions of the Russian Federation was carried out. Common problems have been identified in the field of ethnocultural education of preschoolers in the north-eastern regions of Russia. On the example of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), a theoretical justification for the development of ethnocultural and linguistic education is given.

Keywords: Preschool education, ethnocultural, native language, personality

1. Introduction

Indigenous Minorities of the World

One of the problems that scientists and linguists around the world are concerned about today is the problem of preserving the languages of small peoples. Currently, in the world, there are more than 6000 languages that people still speak. Only 10% of them will survive by the end of the next century. Dozens of languages dissipate annually. Entire linguistic worlds disappear, the cultural diversity of mankind created by its collective mind is lost (Vinokurova, 2018a).

UNESCO is doing massive events of the world's small nation's languages preserving. The "Endangered Languages Program" is one of UNESCO's main work vectors. An "Atlas of the World Languages in Danger" has been published as part of this program. The atlas was compiled on the "Red Book of Endangered Languages" basis. Among 2500 languages were recorded in it, 250 of which have disappeared since 1950 (Moseley, 2010).

All languages are divided into:

- Safe: all generations speak the language, the transmission of the language from generation to generation is continuous.
- Vulnerable: most children speak a language, but its use in some areas is limited.
- Definitely Endangered: children no longer learn the language as their own home.
- Severely endangered: if only representatives of the oldest age groups speak the language, the middle generation only understands the language, and the children don't know it anymore.
- Critically endangered: if only representatives of the oldest age groups know the language, but communicate very little and rarely.
- Extinct: those that do not have a single living native speaker.

The Current Language Situation in the World and in Russia

The most vulnerable are the languages of small peoples. There are 199 languages in the world that are already spoken by less than 10 people (including 46 languages or dialects with their only native speakers), and another 178 languages spoken by 10 to 50 people (Tsybdenova, 2003). Among the leading countries by the number of endangered languages is the multinational Russian Federation (Arefiev, 2017). About 160 nations and ethnic groups live in Russia, most of which are at the stage of “ethnic frustration” and extinction. At the same time, there is no targeted state program of ethnocultural education in Russia (Nikolaeva, Neustroev, Neustroeva, Bugaeva, Shergina, & Kozhurova, 2019).

20 languages in Russia have already been pronounced dead, 22 are considered to be in critical condition, 29 – in great danger. In this regard, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 1995–2004 the first, and 2005–2014 – the second International Decade of Indigenous Peoples. 9th of August was declared the Day of Indigenous Minorities, and 2019 was declared by the United Nations the Year of Indigenous Languages (Šopova, 2019).

Depth of the Problem

All the listed problems are most characteristic of the following regions of the Russian Federation: Murmansk region, Buryatia, Trans-Baikal Territory, Irkutsk region, etc., where the teaching of the native language is at a low level. For example, in the Tomsk region, low attention is paid to the problems of the ethnocultural education of children of small nations. No normative legal acts are regulating the preservation and study of the native languages of the indigenous peoples of Siberia; there is no accounting and monitoring to indicate this process.

In the Republic of Tuva preschool education of children of reindeer herders is not organized. Children reside with their parents at camps. According to the 2010 census, there are 249,299 of Tuvinians. A special group is occupied by Tozhu Tuvinians living in the Tozhinsky district in the amount of 1,856 people. It was revealed that the Todzhi dialect of the Tuvan language is in danger of extinction since it is not studied. This problem has never been posed at any regional level: Municipality or Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tuva. There are no teachers who speak the Todzhi dialect.

In the Trans-Baikal Territory in the 90s, was developed a program “Rodnichok” for learning the Evenki language for preschool children. 25 children were enrolled in this program every year. But since 2016, Evenki language has not been studied in preschool educational institutions due to the absence of teachers with knowledge of the language.

Most of the indigenous inhabitants of Kamchatka do not speak their native language, which is explained by the unification of language policy in the 60–80s of the last century, the processes of cultural assimilation, and the lack of a language environment. Ethnic assimilation is a type of merging of one people with another, associated with the loss of one folk language, culture, national identity, resulting in a certain transformation of national psychological characteristics (Zakharova, 2018).

Koryak, Itelmen, Aleut, Aleutor, Chukchi, Eskimo languages belonging to the languages of the native peoples of Kamchatka are currently under threat of extinction. The reasons for this situation are not only globalization, cultural integration, and unification, but also the waning necessity of the indigenous representatives to study their native languages and responsibility for their survival. First of all, native speakers needed to form and desire to know and preserve the native language so the culture could have existed. A large role belongs to the family, where parents must devolve to their child native speech, traditions, customs. Loss of this function by the family leads to the separation of young people from their roots. The language of any ethnic group lives in people, it cannot be preserved without continuation. Therefore, teaching children in their native language is one of the conditions for saving languages (Ivanova, 2018; Vinokurova, 2018b).

In the Republic of Buryatia, it was identified that 73.53% of children speak Russian. Grandparents are the only native speakers, but they do not live with their grandchildren and do not have the opportunity to introduce children to the language and culture. There are 101 national preschool educational institutions in the republic with the learning of the Buryat language (the proportion of coverage of preschool organizations providing the study of the Buryat language in various forms, as of April 2020, is 50% (The State Program of the Republic of Buryatia, 2020)), but outside the classroom, the language is not used due to the lack of a language environment.

The strategies of the State national policy of the Russian Federation on the development of modern education are being formulated in the context of the globalization process. In this regard, the most important changes in the field of economy, culture and social problems in a multinational State are aimed at the formation of a person who

will respect the language and culture of both his people and other peoples around the world. Ethnocultural education is of particular importance in the inclusion of younger generations in ethnic and world culture.

Ethnocultural education (according to Russian ethnocultural concept) is a purposeful continuous pedagogical process of introducing students to ethnic culture or cultures, based on interaction with the family, cultural institutions, and the media (Shpikalova, Baklanova, & Yershova, 2016). It is an individual's awareness of being a part of his or her ethnicity that lays the foundation for building a multicultural society and the ethnic-regional division (Ivanova, 2019).

One more definition complementing the given concept: "Ethnocultural education is the ideology of positive ethnicity, intercultural competence, and tolerance, personal cultural attitudes of peace and interethnic harmony" (Yevgrafova, & Gorbunov, 2016).

The purpose of our research is to determine the state of ethnocultural education of preschoolers in the North-Eastern regions of the Russian Federation, as well as to identify, on the example of the Republic of Sakha, common problems and indicate prospects for improving ethnocultural and linguistic education.

The novelty of the study is the identification of common problems in the ethnocultural education of preschoolers and a comparative analysis of its condition in the regions of residence of small peoples of the Russian Federation.

The practical significance of the article is to describe the model of ethnocultural education in the system of preschool education in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

Ethnocultural Education in Yakutia

The most significant work on the preservation and development of languages of small peoples is carried out in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). It is the largest region of the Russian Federation. Distinctive features of the region are the vast territory of 3,083,523 km², the remoteness of settlements, harsh climatic conditions, winter frosts, polar nights in the North, sharply continental climate, human dependence on nature. All these factors determined the peculiarities of the lifestyle of the people, reflected in the traditions and culture.

Yakutia is part of the Far Eastern Federal District and is one of the historically developed multicultural regions of Russia, where representatives of over 129 peoples live and work for centuries. Primordial representatives of the population are the indigenous northern peoples – Yakuts, Chukchi, Evens, Evenks, Yukagirs, Dolgans. According to 2010 census 958,129 people of different nationalities live in Yakutia: Sakha – 466,492 (48.7%), Russians – 353,649 (37.0%), Evenks – 21,008 (2.2%), Evens – 15,071 (1.6%), Dolgans – 1,906 (0.2%), Yukagirs – 1,281 (0.13%), Chukchi – 970 (0.07%) and others (Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), 2013).

In Yakutia, there are also five official languages of the indigenous peoples of the North: Even, Evenki, Yukagir, Chukchi, and Dolgan (Shirobokova, 2016). According to the public report of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in 2016, studying in Russian was carried out in 44.8% of schools, in which 60% of all students studied. Teaching in the Yakut language was carried out by 63.5% of schools, where 40% of schoolchildren received an education. The Yakut language as a subject was studied in 134 schools (23.5% of people), Evens – in 13 (847 people), Evenki – in 9 (394 people), Yukagir – in 2 (88 people), and Chukchi – in 1 (17 people). Teaching the Dolgan language was optional at one school (Sokolova, 2017).

Legislation

The main directions of the language policy of the republic are determined by the laws of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia): "About languages in the Republic of Sakha 1992" (2017), "On the status of indigenous languages of the North of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) 2004" (2019). The Concept of state national policy of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is a system of principles and priorities of state policy in the field of interethnic relations and the ethnocultural development of the inhabitants of the republic.

The Concept was developed following the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Strategy of the state national policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, the Constitution of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) 1992 (2016). The Concept of renewal and development of the national school, the Concept of preschool education of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Concept of school language education of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and several other acts regulate ethnonational problems of education in the republic.

To ensure the interaction of public authorities with civil society institutions under the President of the Republic, an advisory body has been created – the Language Policy Council by Department for the Affairs of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia). To preserve and develop the legal status of the indigenous peoples of the republic and the revival of their languages and cultures, Presidential Decrees of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) were sent to conduct the national holiday Ysyakh, Reindeer Herder Day, the holiday of the northern peoples “Bakaldyn”, Day of the Native Language and Writing, Day of Olonkho, Day of Khomus, Day of the Hunter, Day of the People’s Master, etc (Chekhorduna, 2015).

The Northeast Federal University is a leading university in the North-East of Russia, training personnel in all specialties for the life support of the republic. Great attention is paid to ethnocultural education and training for rural and northern districts of the republic. The university prepares specialists for the entire North of the country and seems to be as large investment and innovative university in the unique integrated international study programs of North studies. Institute of Languages and Culture of the Peoples of the North-Eastern Federal University provides training in Yakut, Even, Evenk, Yukagir, Chukchi, Dolgan languages and in the specialty of Folk Art Culture (Mikhailov, 2018; Oganisjana, Svirina, Surikova, Grinberga-Zälite, & Kozlovskis, 2017).

Thus, the most pressing problem is the preservation of the languages and cultures of the indigenous small peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East. Recent studies have found a crisis in the issue of preserving the world’s smallest languages. With the processes of urbanization and globalization, exist the high danger of extinction of many languages of small nations. We consider it important to learn the native language from an early and preschool age, as the first language of the child from birth is the native language of the mother (Randalov, & Dashibalova, 2009).

2. Method

The main research methods were the collection of information and the analysis of statistical data of reports about ethnocultural education, in which the preschool education departments of the northern districts of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Siberia, and the Far East of the Russian Federation took part. Also used were methods of analysis and systematization of subject literature, observation, interviewing parents of preschoolers, questioning, modeling, and mathematical methods.

The study was carried out sequentially and included four stages:

- I. A theoretical and methodological analysis of philosophical, ethnographic, ethnopsychological, ethnopedagogical, and methodological literature; substantiation of the main objectives of the study; development of a research plan, including content design; the study of the state of the investigated problem.
- II. Definition of methodological grounds for the further development of the problem of preschool ethnocultural education; clarification of the conceptual apparatus; determining the prospects for the further development of linguistic and ethnocultural education.
- III. The conduct of the experiment, in particular the preparation and conduct of the survey, the collection, and processing of data, their analysis; description of the model of ethnocultural education in the system of preschool education in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).
- IV. Generalization and description of research work; a comprehensive analysis of the legislation in the framework of the study; assessment of the effectiveness of scientific research, refinement and adjustment of theoretical principles, clarification of conclusions.

Analysis of the Region

The study analyzed the state of ethnocultural education in the preschool education system in the following regions of the Russian Federation (Figure 1):

1. Northwestern Federal District – Republic of Karelia, Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Murmansk Region.
2. Ural Federal District – Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug.
3. Siberian Federal District – the Republic of Altai, Republic of Buryatia, Transbaikal Territory, Irkutsk Region, Krasnoyarsk Territory, Tomsk Region, Republic of Tuva.
4. Far Eastern Federal District – Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Kamchatka Territory, Khabarovsk Territory, Amur Region, Magadan Region, Sakhalin Region, Chukotka Autonomous Region.



FIGURE 1. Map of North-Eastern regions of Russia

The study was conducted in 2018. It was held on the basis of the municipal budgetary preschool educational institution Child Development Center – Kindergarten No. 3 “Katyusha” in Yakutsk, the Republic of Sakha. The study covered 229 children of preschool age (4 senior groups and 4 school preparation groups): one parent of each of the children was interviewed. To determine the globality of the problem of the ethnocultural education of children, their parents were asked: “What language do you speak at home?” With the assistance of the educators of the research groups, the survey was conducted in person or by telephone.

The ethics of the study is a collection of principles, requirements and standards of behavior of researchers. Basic ethical principles:

- competence (maintaining high standards of competence);
- decency (benevolence and respect for others);
- professional and scientific responsibility (support of professional work standards and responsibility for their professional and scientific activities);
- respect for human rights (respect for fundamental rights, honour and the dignity of all human beings);
- focus of research activities on ensuring the well-being of groups of people.

The assimilation of these principles and the analysis of their applicability should form in the researcher an ethical professional consciousness in the form of a general moral attitude. Data collection is planned and carried out in accordance with ethical rules. Participation as a respondent in data collection is voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity of respondents are ensured. No personal information will be associated with survey responses. Information is collected in accordance with laws protecting human rights.

When conducting a survey, the interviewer must:

- perform all the peculiarities of this study methodology
- be responsible for the reliability of the data;
- be impartial;
- Strictly observe the timing of the survey;
- be responsible for the confidentiality of the information received.

The main ethical duties of the researcher are respect for the individual, benevolence and justice.

3. Results

A survey of parents of children of older preschool groups showed the following results (Figure 2) in families:

- 115 study participants speak Russian,
- 27 children are brought up in an environment dominated by the Yakut language,
- 87 parents replied that they used both languages equally.

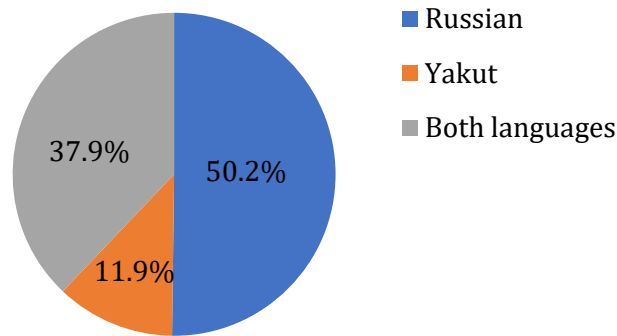


FIGURE 2. The prevalence of Russian and Yakut languages among preschool children

Thus, the results of the survey showed that the place occupied by the Yakut language in the socio-communicative system of society does not correspond to the declared status. It practically does not perform the functions of the state language, since it does not function in the main spheres of the life of society. The Russian language has a monopoly function in all major areas while the Yakut language has an incomplete, complementary function. Therefore, parents are not interested in learning their mother tongue.

To assess the general situation and problems with the study of the native language and culture among the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia in 2018, data were collected and analyzed for the following nominations:

1. The total number of preschool children.
2. Quantity of preschool children from the general number of indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East of the Russian Federation.
3. Quantity of preschool children from the number of indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East of the Russian Federation covered by preschool education.
4. The number of preschool children of indigenous minorities studying their native language as part of the primary and additional educational programs of preschool education.
5. People in the conditions of a nomadic lifestyle.
6. The number of educational organizations implementing educational programs in places of traditional residence of the indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation.
7. Number of educationalists in the system of preschool education teaching the native language of indigenous peoples.
8. The number of educational publications exploring the native language and culture of the small peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East for preschool children.

Based on the collected data, a table was compiled (Table 1):

Table 1. The situation with studying of native languages and culture of indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East (2018)

№	Northwest Federal district	Ural Federal district	Siberian federal district	Far Eastern Federal district	Subtotal
1	51,358	39,021	180,178	284,297	554,854
2	1,689	7,263	2,170	3,170	14,292
3	324	666	1,555	2,867	5,412
4	441	6,537	767	2,264	10,009
5	-	18	23	61	102
6	64	130	18	573	785
7	16	28	21	106	171
8	3	0	55	14	72

Analysis of the data collected in the table shows that the general state of ethnocultural education in the regions of the Russian Federation is characterized as unstable. The insufficient attention of municipal and regional departments of some regions to the issues of preservation and development of the languages of small nations of the North, Siberia and the Far East has been identified, there is a shortage of teachers with knowledge of the

languages of small nations. There is a lack of educational publications and teaching aids for learning the native languages of small nations in many regions. Languages of indigenous minorities have lost their social function in the socio-communicative sphere of society, which leads to low motivation for learning it, which poses a danger to the disappearance of some languages.

Ethnocultural education Model

In each educational model, when certain conditions are met, interested educational actors can satisfy their educational needs. In order for each child to receive an ethnocultural education, it is necessary to choose the right model of education that meets the needs and capabilities of the subjects of the educational organization (Borodina, & Nikolaeva, 2019).

We would like to introduce a model of ethnocultural education using the example of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

This model includes the following directions:

- **“I am the representative of my people”**. In this direction, the student studies the language, customs, traditions of his native people, the methodology of introducing children to folk culture, to the language, instilling respect for his people, responsibility for the preservation and development of his native language and culture. Ethnopedagogy, ethnodidactics, pedagogy of Olonkho are the conceptual foundations of the spiritual and moral education of students on the ethnic traditions of their native people.
- **“I am Russian”**. Russian is the official language of the peoples of Russia. In this direction, work is carried out to familiarize with the cultures of other peoples living in Russia, the formation of Russian identity through acquaintance with basic national values and by patriotic education of the Russian citizens.
- **“I am a citizen of the world”**. In this direction, students learn a foreign language, get acquainted with the culture of different countries, with the theory and practice of intercultural communication. The pedagogy of tolerance is aimed at creating a respectful attitude towards the peoples and cultures of the planet, identifying oneself as a part of the world, self-awareness as a citizen of the world.

The ethnocultural education model is shown in the following figure (Figure 3):



FIGURE 3. Ethnocultural education model

The presented model of ethnocultural education has versatility and can be used in kindergarten, school or university.

The development of ethnocultural competence of a preschool child will be successful if the following conditions are met:

1. Familiarization of children with cultures of different nationalities that contribute to the formation of ethnological tolerance of the child as the most important quality of a person living in a multicultural society.
2. Professional competence of teachers of preschool educational institutions in the field of multicultural education of preschool children.
3. Interaction of a preschool educational institution, family and cultural centers for ethnocultural education of preschool children, ensuring the creation of a single educational space in a multicultural society (Kiriutkin, 2016).

4. Discussion

State of Ethnocultural Education in the World

The process of introducing peoples to global culture has contributed to crowding out elements of ethnic culture. In the modern world, there are practically no pure ethnic cultures left. In this regard, the promotion and protection of the values of its traditional ethnically individual spiritual and material culture is necessary for a certain country and its people, because it mobilizes its national pride and self-respect, a consciousness of the high value of what this people created on their historical path.

The problem of preserving the small languages of the world, in the context of globalization, makes it urgent to find ways to support and improve ethnocultural education. The ethnocultural experience of each ethnos contains a unique educational potential that can be successfully realized through the educational system (Kharisov, 2007).

As an example of the preservation of national identity through the development of ethnocultural education in the modern world, we should mention China. The leadership of this country officially proclaimed that traditional culture is becoming part of China's national power, providing the country with not only arguments for external propaganda but also protection from unwanted entry from outside. An important role is played by the fact that the Chinese language is built on hieroglyphics, not phonetics, and therefore crowding out native vocabulary is unlikely to seriously threaten it (Andreeva, & Kern, 2017).

Among the representatives of the indigenous peoples of different countries there is a great interest in folk songs and tales. Children "bring with them an ethnic and cultural heritage, which in combination with preschool culture creates a unique experience for them" (Sanders, Molgaard, & Shigemasa, 2019). For this reason, the publication of children's literature in ethnic languages is a prerequisite for maintaining children's interest in their native language and, therefore, for preserving the language. Abroad, children's books in the ethnic languages of indigenous peoples are published by major publishing centers. In Canada, those are Theytus Books and Pemmican Press, in Norway – Davvi Girji, in the People's Republic of China – China Children's Press & Publication Group (Arefiev, 2015).

Studying world examples in the field of ethnicity, we observe that, for example, in Asia, the ratio of global and traditional culture varies significantly from country to country. Thus, the population of Japan, both urban and rural, has almost completely absorbed all aspects of the global (western type) culture, but at the same time almost completely preserved all the components of its ethnic culture (for example, depending on the situation, standard or traditional clothes are used). Also in education: the Japanese language is of paramount importance, although knowledge of foreign languages is a huge advantage (Skvortsova, & Lutskii, 2019).

Steps towards Ethnic Preserving

The need to develop the education of the indigenous peoples inhabiting Russia is determined by the threat of their disappearance. The preservation of cultural diversity and the development of the peoples inhabiting the country, in the twenty-first century, requires the integration of the whole society and the mobilization of its resources. However, insufficient ethno-pedagogization of the educational process and teacher training prevent the younger generation from getting acquainted with the culture and traditions of their own people.

The language situation in relation to the languages of small-numbered indigenous peoples is rather complicated: the number of native speakers of ethnic languages decreases, the younger generation prefers to speak the languages which are in demand in modern society, Russian in particular. As an additional language, young people are interested in learning English and Chinese. Therefore, in order to preserve languages that are on the verge of extinction today, the practice of "artificial" preservation of such languages becomes especially relevant. This includes publication of modern textbooks, relevant children's literature in the languages of indigenous peoples, the continuation of the practice of linguistic documentary recording of ethnic languages, including the

description of the features of phonetics, grammar, morphology, syntax, and the use of modern information technology to preserve the language, including the creation of Internet portals devoted to the language and culture of indigenous peoples (Seredkina, & Koptzeva, 2018).

According to the population of indigenous people, the Khabarovsk Territory takes 3rd place in the Russian Federation. The languages of the small nations of the region – Nanai, Nivkh, Negidal, Ulchi, Udege, Evens, Evenks are sustainably studied in schools. Teachers of native languages created a regional innovation complex for the creation and implementation of a pedagogical project “Formation of the Linguistic Environment of Indigenous Minorities of the Khabarovsk Territory, facilitating to the Establishment of Ethnic and Social Identity in the condition of the Introduction of the Federal State Educational Standard”, aimed at creating ethnocultural authority of students, preserving culture, expanding linguistic environment of the indigenous peoples of the Khabarovsk Territory (Kravchenko, 2017). Due to the process of project implementation, normative documents, teaching aids were developed. Various competitions are held, familiarity with traditions and customs, national sports. For example – the Mergen Path contest, the Kindred Meeting, online classes in native languages, Olympiads, etc.

Specialists are being trained to teach the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North in the Yamal-Nenets Okrug (Borgoiakov, 2017). An innovative project is successfully implemented in the region to create a model of a nomadic kindergarten for children of reindeer herders, fishers, and hunters living in the conditions of nomadic lifestyle. A key component of the model is the educational program “Jamal’s Childhood” (Novitskaia, & Yafizova, 2018).

Options for Solving the Problem

Ethnocultural education, based on the creative development and translation of ethnic values (language, literature, history, culture and spiritual heritage), as an organic part of the national education of multinational Russia, is implemented in its North-Eastern part, including in Yakutia.

An interregional scientific and educational project “Pedagogy of the North” is being implemented in the republic, which ensures arranging of various national conferences: “educational resources in the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North”, “partnership in the name of the child”, “integration into a single educational space”. These activities are aimed at contributing to the achievement of the goals of the Second International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People in the Russian Federation and the generation of scientific and managerial approaches to ensuring the quality of life and education of indigenous children of the North, Siberia and the Far East.

Since September 2012, the Pedagogical Institute has opened a new combined baccalaureate profile “Primary Education and Tutoring in the Main Ungraded (Nomadic) School of the North”, as well as a master’s program under the “Pedagogical Support of Childhood in the North” program. Modern nomadic schools and kindergartens show new models of mobile educational institutions that adapt the educational system in the conditions of nomadism using innovative distance learning technologies. Nomadic schools and kindergartens require specially trained wide profile specialists who can work in tribal communities in nomadic conditions (Neustroev, 2015).

At the North-Eastern Federal University Department of Preschool Education works a scientific and pedagogical school “Scientific and methodological support for the development of the system of preschool education in the North”.

The leading activities of the school are:

- a) development of the theoretical foundations and methodology of ethnocultural aspects of education;
- b) scientific and methodological support of innovative, experimental and research activities of preschool teachers;
- c) vocational training of teachers for the implementation of ethnocultural education in preschool education and elementary school (Grigorieva, Nikolaeva L., Mazimova, Makarova, & Nikolaeva A., 2016).

Due to following directions, the organization of scientific research is based on the implementation of fundamental and applied research aimed at solving problems in the field of the regional preschool education system. The activity of the scientific and pedagogical school is carried out through the research work of applicants, graduate students, doctoral students and research work of students, among which there are many studies on ethnocultural topics. So, in 2019, master’s A. Semenova defended her thesis on “Organization of the educational process in a nomadic group in the conditions of life of the indigenous peoples of the North”. 4th-year student N. Fedorova took part in the regional Olympiad in Vladivostok, where she presented the project “Journey to Olenek” as well as in the International Student Conference of Moscow State University “Lomonosov 2019” with the theme “Model of a nomadic kindergarten in the Arctic.”

Olonkho's pedagogy is aimed at introducing children to the heroic epos of olonkho. In 2005, Olonkho was recognized as a masterpiece of the world's spiritual and artistic culture. The olonkho pedagogical system is a transformation of worldviews, a holistic picture of the world, moral and ethical values, translation of keywords and concepts of the epos into modern forms, methods, and ways of education. The folklore texts of the epic reveal not only the historical image of the state but also educate people (Ingle, 2011). It should be noted that the pedagogy of the heroic epic is also actively being introduced in the ethnocultural education of the Republic of Mordovia, particularly in the epic "Mastorava." (Minichkina, & Ruskina, 2019).

5. Conclusion

Thus, the problem of preserving the languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East actualizes the need to study the native language from preschool age. A comparative analysis of the state of ethnocultural education in preschool institutions in the North-Eastern regions of the Russian Federation revealed the existence of common problems (insufficient attention of local authorities, lack of teachers with language skills and lack of teaching aids) in ethnocultural education, as a way of introducing younger generations to ethnic and world culture. Analysis of the state of ethnocultural education in preschool institutions of the regions of the Russian Federation made it possible to identify common problems, recognize the danger of the disappearance of languages of small peoples, the importance of preserving languages, the need for radical interventions to improve the situation (Tahokhov, 2018).

The study of linguistic and ethnocultural education, using the example of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), allows us to identify characteristic problems and identify ways to further develop and improve it. The importance that the Ministry of Education of Yakutia devotes to the study of native languages, including the printing of new textbooks, colorful books and fairy tales in the languages of the indigenous peoples of the North, contributes to the preservation of the languages of national minorities. At the same time, as the results of the study show, the Russian language in all main areas occupies a monopoly position, while the Yakut language performs a complementary function in the socio-communicative system of society. Parents' lack of interest in the study and translation of their mother tongue in the family, which does not correspond to the State's declared status, poses a risk of disappearance.

In this regard, preschool institutions in regions with small indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation have a special role in the ethnocultural education of younger generations. The implementation in these institutions of a model of ethnocultural education aimed at preserving the language of minorities contributes to its transmission, functional enrichment and subsequent introduction into human life.

Within the framework of the scientific laboratory, a new area of science has been developed – ethnodidactics and the production technology of Satabyt. Teachers of the department of preschool education are the supervisors of the experimental sites of early childhood education institutions, introducing ethnocultural technologies of education.

The presence of ethnocultural content in education does not decrease but rather increases the level of civic responsibility among school children and students, encourages personal development, and forms interest in other languages and cultures. In addition, negative ethnic stereotypes are subdued and overall interethnic tension is reduced (Tishkov, & Stepanov, 2017).

As a result of the study, we developed recommendations on what is needed:

- organize work to preserve the languages of small peoples at the level of municipal and republican departments of the regions;
- To promote harmonious bilingualism "Russian and native languages";
- provide all possible support to preschool and school educational institutions in the implementation of the native language practice;
- set the task of training specialists and providing printed products;
- organize work with parents of indigenous children to increase motivation to learn their native language, familiarize children with the mother language;
- actively involve old-timers, native speakers in the process of preserving languages and cultures;
- develop projects, organize research and expeditions to collect folklore materials of endangered languages and cultures.

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