

## **The Linguistic Picture of the World in the Linguoculturological Aspect**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*this article deals with the linguistic picture of the world in the linguoculturological aspect. In addition, author provides several feasible notions based on the topic from prominent linguists who contributed in the sphere of linguoculturology.*

Language serves as the main way of formation and existence of human knowledge about the surrounding reality. Since “each language divides the world in its own way, i.e. it has its own way of conceptualizing it” [1], the peculiarities of thinking and national culture are reflected in any ethnic language through the formation of a linguistic picture of the world. The linguistic picture of the world is understood “as a set of people's ideas about reality fixed in the units of language at a certain stage of its development, the idea of reality reflected in the meanings of language signs – linguistic division of the world, linguistic ordering of objects and phenomena, information about the world embedded in the system meanings of words” [2]. The basic unit of the linguistic picture of the world is the concept. There are a large number of scientific papers devoted to the study of both the concept of “concept” and specific concepts based on the material of various languages. Within the framework of this work, it is not possible to analyze all these works. Let us turn only to those works whose provisions are the theoretical basis of this study. Since the term concept “covers” various subject areas of research, it can be considered an “umbrella” [3]. It is generally accepted that there are two main areas of concept research: cognitive and linguoculturological. Within the framework of the first, the concept is understood as “a unit of mental or mental resources of our consciousness; an operational meaningful unit of memory, mental lexicon, conceptual system and language of the brain (*lingua mentalis*), the whole picture of the world reflected in the human psyche” - this definition, which has become a classic, is given by E.S. Kubryakova in the “Concise Dictionary of Cognitive Terms” [4]. The

researcher notes that “... conceptual analysis completes the tasks of describing the semantics of a language form at the most abstract levels of its being” [4]. According to the most well-known definition of the concept within the framework of the cultural direction, the concept is “a clot of culture in the consciousness of a person; that in the form of which culture enters the mental world of a person. On the other hand, a concept is something by which a person – an ordinary, ordinary person, not a “creator of cultural values” – enters culture himself, and in some cases influences it” [5]. The interpretation of concepts in cognitive linguistics and linguoculturology can be considered as multidirectional processes: “the concept as a mental formation in the consciousness of an individual is an exit to the conceptual sphere of society, i.e. ultimately to culture, and the concept as a unit of culture is a fixation of collective experience, which becomes the property of the individual. In other words, these approaches differ in vectors in relation to the individual: the linguocognitive concept is the direction from individual consciousness to culture, and the linguocultural concept is the direction from culture to individual consciousness... at the same time, we understand that the separation of outward movement and inward movement is a research technique, in reality movement is an integral multidimensional process” [6].

The objects of this study belong to a certain (American) linguoculture, so the direction of research can be defined as linguoculturological. The aim is to study the “specific in the composition of mental units”, the study is oriented onomasiologically, goes “from the name of the concept to the totality of the meanings nominated by it” [3].

Without analyzing the definitions of the concept, which are given by researchers within the framework of the linguoculturological direction (a similar analysis was carried out in many previous studies), we will identify the main characteristics of the concept.

A concept is a mental formation, the result of the activity of collective consciousness.

The concept is a cultural phenomenon. By this statement, concepts are associated with the mental activity of the bearers of a certain culture.

The concept has a certain structure. Let's focus on the most well-known concepts of structuring the concept.

Y.S. Stepanov's approach is based on the consideration of the history of the formation of the concept, it is a historical model. Y.S. Stepanov describes the structure of the concept as follows: “On the one hand, everything that belongs to the structure of the concept belongs to it ...; on the other hand, the structure of the concept includes everything that makes it a fact of culture - the original form (etymology); history compressed to the main features of the content; modern associations; assessments, etc...” [5]. The structure of the concept can be considered as layered. Three components, or three “layers”, of the concept are the main, relevant feature; additional (may be several), which is irrelevant, “historical”; internal form [5]. By their origin, “different layers are the result, the “sediment” of the cultural life of different epochs” [5]

Y.S. Stepanov wonders to what extent concepts exist for people of this culture [5]. Answering this question, he comes to the conclusion that “concepts exist in different ways in their different layers, and in these layers they are real in different ways for people of a given culture” [5] Concepts in their main layer are relevant for all speakers of a certain linguistic culture, in additional features – for certain social groups, in their internal form – only for researchers [5]

The model of G.G. Slyshkin's concept [7] is associative. The functioning of the concept is carried out in the process of continuous nomination and renomination of objects, while old connections between linguistic units and objects can be destroyed, and new ones appear.

The concept model of I.A. Sternin and Z.D. Popova is field-based and is described in terms of core and periphery. The core is the primary vivid images, visual and concrete. Simple concepts can only consist of a core. The periphery is more abstract, includes additional conceptual

features that can form separate conceptual layers (capable of having relative autonomy). The periphery of the concept is open for interpretation, represents the interpretative field of the concept. The scope of the concept thus includes the basic image, its cognitive features and conceptual layers.

V.I. Karasik distinguishes figurative, conceptual (factual) and value components in the structure of concepts (spiritual values) [6]. The figurative component is “a trace of sensory representation in memory in unity with metaphorical transfers” [6]. Conceptual is “a combination of two essential features of an object or situation and the result of their cognition” [6]. The value component has the greatest cultural significance.

S.G. Vorkachev adds another component - a significant one, “determined by the place that the name of the concept occupies in the language system” [5]. The significant component also includes etymological and associative characteristics of the concept name.

The approaches to structuring a linguocultural concept described above, I. V. Kononova identifies figurative, associative, conceptual, value, etymological and historical components in its structure [8]. The etymological component of the concept is determined by the internal form of the word, which is the key representative of the concept, and serves as a means of additional motivation of its value component. The associative component of the concept is represented by the most frequent associative relations of names that have an extra-contextual connection with the concept. The conceptual component of the concept intersects with the associative one, but its content is based on generic characteristics, and national-cultural meanings are not included in it.

The figurative component of the concept includes a visual-sensory representation (a “mental picture”, a perceptual image), as well as a combination of conceptual metaphors derived by a native speaker from the compatibility of the name objectifying the concept in the language. The value component of the linguocultural concept is understood by I.V. Kononova, as a component decomposable into two aspects: relevance and evaluability. Evaluativeness is expressed in the presence of an evaluative component in the meaning of a linguistic unit (the name of the concept) and in combination of this unit with evaluative epithets. Relevance is characterized by the number of linguistic units that are the means of appeal to this concept. The historical component of the linguocultural concept includes the most significant features of the associative component of the concept, which were included in its structure at earlier stages of existence in the conceptual sphere of the ethnos. The signs become historical as the concept is enriched with new signs.

The present study is based on the model of I.V. Kononova with some refinements. Concepts are considered in synchrony. The research is based on the method of associations. When using it, all units and visual objects obtained as a result of the experiment should be recognized as relevant. This means that the units (which appeared in the answers of the subjects) that have a history of existence within the framework of this concept are not considered as belonging to the historical component of the concept. Where necessary, historical explanations of the interpretation of individual features of concepts will be given.

In synchrony, the concept has conceptual, figurative, value, etymological and associative components. These components do not exist in isolation, there are areas of intersection and overlap. For example, rational evaluation refers to both the conceptual and the evaluative component. The associative component of the concept occupies a special place.

Associations can have a conceptual, figurative (especially graphic) or value character. At the same time, an area of intersection of associative and conceptual/figurative/value components is formed. The same applies to the etymological component, the constituents of which, being “initial”, “primary” in time, can also be attributed to the conceptual, figurative or value component.

The concept has no clear boundaries, it is open to change.

Based on the previous provisions, it can be argued that there is a constant formation (“restructuring”, “re-formation” - the terms of the dissertation) of the concept, some part of it becomes irrelevant (passes from the first layer to the second), and at the same time new meanings are actualized, which is caused by the development of society. At the same time, the concept as a phenomenon remains itself, which has received the designation “continuity of concepts” [5]. This is explained by the fact that “the concepts themselves consist of successive layers; continuity is contained in the concepts” [5]. In diachronic terms, concepts form semiotic series, between the members of which “special relations of continuity of form and content are immediately revealed, thanks to which something from the old stage of the concept becomes a sign in its new stage” [5]. N.N. Boldyrev notes that “the volume of the concept increases due to new conceptual characteristics is enveloped in new layers” [9]. I.S. Kononova describes the transition of a number of features of the concept (losing relevance and intensity of evaluation) into historical ones, noting at the same time that these features do not disappear, but pass into a latent state and in certain cases can be actualized [8].

The concept can be objectified (represented, etc.). Different terms are used for this action, but the essence remains – the “translation” of the mental essence into a form perceived by the human senses.

The main form of objectification of the concept is verbalization. However, this is not the only form. A concept may have content that is difficult/impossible to verbalize. In this case, only a part of the entire volume of the concept can be verbalized. The following types of relations are possible between a word and a concept: 1) there is a word in the language as the main, although not the only way to actualize a concept; 2) the word available in the language partially corresponds to the concept. Thus, subject and conceptual entities are easily conceptualized, but emotional-evaluative mental formations are often blurred, so it is difficult to establish the boundaries of representations of this concept; 3) there is a concept, but there is no one-word representation of this concept (example of Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin: there are newlyweds and there are people who have been married for a long time); 4) there is a verbal shell, behind which there is no concept [6].

Y.S. Stepanov speaks of a “conceptualized subject area” in language and culture, by which he understands “such a sphere of culture where words, things, mythologems and rituals are united in one common representation (cultural concept)...” [5]. All these components within the same conceptualized area can be combined in a special way, replacing (symbolizing) each other. Y.S. Stepanov calls this process of conceptualization in the sphere of culture “synonymization of things and words” [5].

The concept has conscious and unconscious layers, it is not only thought, but also experienced [5], which partly explains the complexity of verbalization. Y.S. Stepanov notes that the concept is the subject of “emotions, likes and dislikes, and sometimes collisions” [ibid: 41]. Verbalization is associated with awareness, so the unconscious often remains outside its scope.

Concepts can be reconstructed. Y.S. Stepanov notes that due to the layering of the concept, the method of studying it cannot be one, it must be a combination of several methods [5]. “To call something an X – concept means to set the task of reconstructing the meaning of this X for a specific spiritual culture. Considering, for example, the question of the concept of beauty, truth, friendship, etc., they try to reconstruct the essence that stands behind the words beauty, truth, friendship, etc. in the usage” [5].

The figurative component of the concept is determined by the presence of a perceptual image and metaphors in its composition (which should be analyzed).

The associative component should be formally investigated by analyzing the associations caused

by the stimulus – the name of the concept. However, this component was not singled out separately in this work, since all the associations obtained during the experiment belong to it.

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