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LINGUISTIC SPECIFICS OF THE LANGUAGE PICTURE OF THE WORLD

Abstract

Within the latest research in the field of linguocultureology we have studied the English vegetative linguocultural code for the purpose of detection of the main characteristics which find the expression in a language picture of the world of native English speakers. We proceed from the provision that "the world which is given us in our first-hand experience, remaining the same everywhere, is comprehended in a different way in various languages, even by those groups of people who are considered to represent the cultural unity [7, P. 149]. The hypothesis that each language forms the certain image of the world presented by the semantic complex of concepts characteristic of the language of its carriers is the cornerstone of our research: the difficulties arising in cross-cultural communication and when translating prove it. Structural-semantic and pragmatic characteristics of the English vegetative linguocultural code give an idea of how common cultural categories (life, death, beauty, ugliness, marriage, loneliness, femininity, masculinity, kinship, foreignness, happiness, grief, etc) are implemented in English speaking culture by means of phraseological units with a vegetable element.

Keywords: linguoculture, an ethnocultural component, linguocultural code, linguistic reality.

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I. Introduction

Human activity is closely connected with the need for symbolization which makes a boundary between the biological and the cultural. The various objects involved in the sphere of social and cultural reality have the axiological (valuable) importance which forms the basis of their functioning in the society. As a result, the image of an object gets characteristics of independent phenomenon in the consciousness of people. The last several decades the problem of interrelation of culture, language and consciousness has been widely discussed.

Following the latest tendencies in linguocultural studies we agree that to model linguacultural specifics of a community, the concept of a picture of the world – mapping of the world, in particular, is considered to be rather informative. The set of knowledge gained in the course of development of the world and imprinted in a language form represents so-called ‘the language intermediate world’, ‘language representation of the world’, ‘language model of the world’, ‘a language picture of the world’. The last term is most distributed.

Method

The language picture of the world “somewhat supplements the objective knowledge of reality”, often distorting it [1, P. 58]. In this regard it should be noted that in reality specific features of the ethnoculture and in which unique socio-historical experience of a certain ethnic community is recorded create not the distorted, but specific coloring of the world for native speakers caused by the ethnocultural importance of objects, phenomena, processes, the selective attitude towards them which is generated by specifics of activity, a way of life and culture of this ethnos.

We see the ethnoculture as a set of different linguocultural codes which are systems of the symbols united by a thematic community, having a uniform figurative basis, performing sign function and assigned to the language designator united in the lexicological and phraseological field [4, P. 170]. As we found out the elements of the vegetative linguocultural code are represented in everyday English and confined to a pragmatic situation (e.g. daisy chain – rus. венок из ромашек; тех. последовательное подключение)

The ethnocultural component of the language reflecting the language picture of the world as the fact of ordinary consciousness is perceived fragmentarily in lexical and other units of language; however, language directly doesn’t reflect this world. It reflects only a way of representation (conceptualization) of this world by the ethnic language personality. The theory of linguocultural codes allows to describe a language picture of the world in detail.

Discussion

As K. Lévi-Strauss noticed, language is both a culture product, and its important component, and a condition of existence of culture. Moreover, language is a specific way of existence of culture, a factor of formation of cultural codes [5, P. 212]. The linguocultural code represents a result of
expansion of a cultural code into a natural language. The semantic density of separate fragments of the language picture of the world is rather high that is the most important objective indicator of the importance of this or that sphere of reality for the community. It is about allocation of the signs testifying to an ethnocultural originality of the people. In this sense, the vegetative linguocultural code has turned out to be quite dense semantically in the speech of rural communities (sayings, omens, superstitions, etc.).

Also, we need to say that linguocultural codes (vegetative linguocultural codes in particular) have gained ability to perform a symbolic function of culture serving as means of representation of the main installations of culture (e.g. poppy wearing etiquette (Br.), English rose (Br)). For this reason language is capable to display ethnocultural mentality of its carriers. Each language has its way of conceptualization. According to the English folklore, a baby girl is usually found in a parsley bed while a baby boy is in a gooseberry shrub. Traditionally parsley was associated with the underground world as well as a female supernatural power. The gooseberry was a symbol of a typical male character. These are the examples how the language comprises a special picture of the world. This shows the ethnic perception of the world recorded in the language.

Thus, the reality is reflected in consciousness in the form of the world picture which is structured with the help of the world model represented by means of secondary sign systems, in particular, of the language. This is the language model of the world. Owing to this fact the linguistic reality is not an ontological reality. Therefore in the language not only objects, but also pragmatic and emotional characteristics are reflected. “Language couldn't carry out a role of the transmission medium of information and the means of communication if it wasn't connected with a conceptual picture of the world not only in a sense of conceptualization, but also with the most substantial structure” [5, P. 213].

The meaning of language units contain a considerable part of human experience, those ethnocultural behaviour models followed by the person consciously and subconsciously. Respectively, the development of reality in the cultural, language and symbolical sense can't be the same in different cultures. The mechanism is that signals of the outside world are grouped in the way on the basis of culturally determining cognitive categories. For example, the English “bunch” corresponds to the Russian “букет», «кисть» (e.g. bunch of roses – букет роз, but bunch of grapes – кисть винограда). Such categories aren't immanently inherent in human thinking, but are perceived in the course of penetration into another culture.

Along with A. Gurevich we define the world model as “a grid of coordinates which helps people perceive reality and build the world image existing in their consciousness” [2, P. 15]. Versatile phenomena can act as modeling symbolical structures: language, mythology, religion, art, science acting as regulators of personal activity.

So, in his consciousness the person is “couplings of concepts which are approved by a natural language and the semantic structure inherent in it, a conceptual structure of the cultural period and the type to which the interpreter of the text belongs, and, at last, to all structure of art constructions, habitual for it” [6, P. 241]. This statement of Y. Lotman can be interpreted as attempt to present cultural experience in the form of experience of existence within semiotics and communicative structures, or, more widely, within the cultural consciousness and metasystems constructed by it for the description and the organization of the semiotic communicative functioning, and, at last, in the form of experience of existence within communicative mechanisms of culture which are adjusted, on the one hand, by the codes stabilizing the system, and, on the other hand, codes, destabilizing it.

Results

The basic provision of ethnolinguistics about the integrated character of a traditional symbolical picture of the world which can be reconstructed according to various codes does not exclude distinctions between codes in selecting ethnocultural information transferred by them.

Therefore, it is very essential to compare a cultural and language component of portraits which finds, on the one hand, the general motives presented at the same time in several codes. On the other hand, there are motives, explicit in a folklore text or in a ceremony, which find no reflections in the language. “Valuable picture of the world – the part of a language picture of the world modeled in the form of the estimated judgments correlated to the legal, religious, moral codes” along with common sense, typical folklore, literary plots; valuable dominants – the meanings, most essential to this culture, which set forms of the certain type of culture supported and kept in the language [3, P. 40].

With all external randomness of images and emotive characteristics of situations in linguoculture the system of signs of special nature is allocated and verified – that of figurative symbols. Our study of the vegetative linguocultural code and its figurative symbols proves the statement about the movement from mental, everyday phenomena towards their variable fixing in the language.

Conclusion

Thus, we see that the model of the world acts in four plans: 1) as structure; 2) as the complete global image of the world which is a result of all spiritual activity of the person during all his contacts with the world 3) as principle of a picture of the world and 4) as its realization.

The picture of the world functions the following way:

- mediates all acts of human world perception and its understanding;
- generates the information mentioned above;
- promotes close connection and unity of knowledge and behaviour of people in a group.

We can state that the generalization assumes a tendency to unification of a pluralistic vision of the reality which is carried out within the codifying activity/ using various linguocultural codes. The study of the vegetative linguocultural code elements has proven the movement from mental, sociocultural phenomena towards their variable fixing in the English language.

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