

ЯЗЫКИ НАРОДОВ ЗАРУБЕЖНЫХ СТРАН (С УКАЗАНИЕМ КОНКРЕТНОГО ЯЗЫКА ИЛИ ГРУППЫ ЯЗЫКОВ) / LANGUAGES OF PEOPLES OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES (INDICATING A SPECIFIC LANGUAGE OR GROUP OF LANGUAGES)

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THE ROLE OF VISUAL AND AUDITORY PERCEPTION IN SHAPING A PART OF THE LANGUAGE SPATIAL PICTURE OF THE WORLD (BASED ON ENGLISH SPATIAL ATTRIBUTES)

Research article

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Abstract

The article (written within the framework of the semantic and cognitive approach to language learning) deals with defining the role of visual and auditory perception in shaping the part of the language spatial picture of the world expressed by English spatial adjectives. The article also covers some markers of visual and auditory perception in the language. Polymodal and intersensory ways of object perception are touched upon as well. A conclusion is drawn that visual and auditory types of perception determine linguistic conceptualization of a part of space. The research was conducted on the material of the British variant of English. Modern fiction by British writers served as the sources of the illustrative material, where the English spatial attributes such as *adjacent*, *adjoining*, *bordering*, *contiguous*, *neighboring*, *close*, *near*, *nearby*, *distant*, *remote*, *far*, *far-off*, *faraway* conceptualize a certain part of space.

Keywords: visual and auditory perception, spatial attributes, intersensory and polymodal perception of objects.

РОЛЬ ЗРИТЕЛЬНОГО И СЛУХОВОГО ВОСПРИЯТИЯ В ФОРМИРОВАНИИ ЯЗЫКОВОЙ ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННОЙ КАРТИНЫ МИРА (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ АНГЛИЙСКИХ ДИСТАНЦИОННЫХ ПРИЛАГАТЕЛЬНЫХ)

Научная статья

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Аннотация

Статья (написанная в рамках семантико-когнитивного подхода к изучению языка) посвящена определению роли зрительного и слухового восприятия в формировании фрагмента пространственной языковой картины мира, объективированной английскими дистанционными прилагательными. В статье рассматриваются маркеры актуализации зрительного и слухового восприятия на языковом уровне, а также полимодальность и интермодальность восприятия объектов. Делается вывод о том, что зрительное и слуховое восприятие детерминирует языковую концептуализацию определенного фрагмента пространства. Исследование проводилось на материале британского варианта английского языка. Источниками иллюстративного материала послужили художественные произведения современных английских писателей, в которых адъективные единицы *adjacent*, *adjoining*, *bordering*, *contiguous*, *neighboring*, *close*, *near*, *nearby*, *distant*, *remote*, *far*, *far-off*, *faraway* концептуализируют часть пространства.

Ключевые слова: слуховое и зрительное восприятие, дистанционные прилагательные, полимодальное и интермодальное восприятие объектов.

Introduction

One of the main concerns of cognitive linguistics has always been the perception of the world by the sense organs and its linguistic actualization. The subject of this research is linguistic peculiarities of visual and auditory perception of some part of space, expressed by English spatial attributes. The purpose of this research is to define the role of visual and auditory perception in forming a certain part of the language picture of the world, namely, the object of perception.

1.1. Research methods and principles

We analyzed English spatial attributes in order to find out cognitive features of visual and auditory perception in their semantics. The research is based on the semantic-cognitive method of language analysis, with the use of such an auxiliary method as contextual analysis.

Main Part

Modern semantic-cognitive research is determined by the fact that the basis of cognition of the world is the perception of the world through the senses. A.V. Kravchenko defines perception as the "foundation" of human cognitive activity, on which his knowledge of reality is further "built" [6, P. 33-34]. According to this scholar, perception plays an undeniably important role in human life: it is in the process of perception that a person reveals basic ideas about the world around him, about space.

E.S. Kubryakova notes that perception consists in active interaction with the surrounding reality, since all the results of perception are comprehended and interpreted by a person. Thus, vision and visual perception can be distinguished as passive and active processes [7, P. 94]. According to O.V. Magirovskaya, perception as a cognitive mechanism of human activity is based on sensory-practical experience, which involves obtaining information through five channels of perception – through sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. Perception, as a subjective process, is always conditioned by the physiological characteristics of a person. It is a cognitive activity in which the primary conceptualization and categorization of the surrounding reality occurs [8].

However, linguistic representation of perception is how a person interprets what he sees. As specified by I.Y. Kolesov, perception is a process that generates cognitive models that are revealed only when they are linguistically interpreted, and are indisputably significant for language learning. Perceptual activity, therefore, is much more complicated than the simple creation of sensory images [5]. So, language reflects not only physical (psychological, personal, social) space as it actually is, but mainly the way it is perceived by native speakers. According to Yu.D. Apresyan, “in reality, it is not so much the physical properties of space and time that are important, but their perception by the speaker” [1, P. 637]. As A.V. Kravchenko notes, “perception is the foundation of human cognitive activity on which all existing knowledge systems are built” [6, P. 33-34].

Language captures, first of all, what is given to a person in his sensory, perceptual experience, and, of course, reality, including its spatial component, is reflected in the linguistic consciousness of a person. The conceptualization of a generalized visual image (object) is fixed in the language system as an element of perceived and articulated reality. The result of linguistic categorization is “the empirical experience of an individual based on physical interaction with the objective world through sensory perception” [6, P. 18]. The verbal way of encoding information about space contains a certain interpretation of visual information, which serves as a starting point for the generation of language [4, P. 153].

The linguistic representation of spatial categories mediated by perception has a number of features. Ideas about the world and its spatial and temporal component are conceptualized through a system of binary oppositions. Their set usually includes 10-20 pairs of opposable features. Oppositions related to the structure of space are – top/bottom, right/left, east/west, north/south, far/near, etc. [13, P. 6]. The opposition far/near has practically no absolute values, does not correlate with real mathematical quantities and is essentially relative and makes sense only depending on the choice of the point of the report [13, P. 10].

The reflection of spatial relations in language is human-oriented. Language has the principle of anthropocentricity, it is intended for humans, “and the entire categorization of objects and phenomena of the outside world is focused on humans. The anthropocentricity of the worldview is expressed in its orientation towards a person – each, individual, specific. This characteristic is universal for all languages” [10, P. 52]. Since the world has no dimensions without a person, and a person is the starting point and measure of everything, the conditions of “conscious human existence” determine the conceptualization and linguistic categorization of basic spatial concepts, which are axial horizontal changes “forward-backward”, “right-left”, and axial vertical measurement “top-bottom”, as well as the concept of “accommodation” [6, P. 35].

Mastering and classifying the world, a person proceeds from himself as a point of reference, applying various criteria, including the criterion of relativity. The designations of space, time and related categories are relative: they depend on where a person places himself in a certain situation. They are fundamentally subjective and can change [13, P. 16].

The object of our research is the English spatial attributes such as *adjacent, adjoining, bordering, contiguous, neighboring, close, near, nearby, distant, remote, far, far-off, faraway*. It should be noted that they play a certain role in the linguistic conceptualization of space and have their own peculiarities. At the language level, the object of perception is expressed by the complex “a spatial adjective + a noun”, where the noun nominates objects located at some distance from the subject of perception, and adjectives nominate, estimating, the distance between the subject of perception and the object [12].

Having analyzed the mentioned attributes in different contexts, we drew a conclusion that the conceptualization of objects based on **visual perception** at the linguistic level is provided due to:

a) **verbs of visual perception** in an utterance:

“What breeds you got here, Charlie?” said Hagrid, gazing at the closest dragon, the black one, with something close to reverence.

To gaze is to look at something or someone for a long time, especially in surprise or admiration, or because you are thinking about something else (Cambridge dictionary).

They paused in their preparations to watch it climb higher and higher, now black against the rapidly darkening sky, until it vanished over a nearby mountain.

To vanish is to disappear suddenly from sight (Oxford Dictionary).

Lavender Brown, Harry noticed, glared at Hermione from a neighbouring table through very red eyes and Hermione immediately let go of Ron’s arm.

To glare is to look directly and continuously at someone or something in an angry way (Cambridge dictionary).

‘Yeah,’ breathed Harry, looking up at the end of the closest row.

And then, before Phoebe could reply, he caught sight of something on the distant horizon. ‘Hello, there it is. The beloved homestead.

To catch sight is to see something only for a moment (Cambridge dictionary).

b) **verbs of movement** in an utterance:

As Madam Pomfrey led Harry to a nearby bed, he caught sight of the real Moody lying motionless in a bed at the far end of the room.

To lead – to show the way to a group of people, animals, vehicles, etc. by going in front of them (Cambridge dictionary).

Mr Weasley had therefore gone to meet the Delacours on top of a nearby hill, where they were to arrive by Portkey.

To go is to be in the process of moving (Cambridge dictionary).

He could think of nothing to do except to crawl to a remote corner of the locker room, where he sank to the floor and assumed a foetal position, solitary, forsaken, pulling his knees tightly beneath his chin in fierce despair.

To crawl is move along on hands and knees or with your body stretched out along a surface (Cambridge dictionary).

The conceptualization of objects based on **auditory perception** at the linguistic level is provided due to:

a) **semantics of the noun** defined by spatial attributes which denotes the object perceived by hearing;

His footsteps receded and they heard a distant door slam.

A slam is a sudden loud noise (Cambridge dictionary).

The distant gunshots echo in the background of the following.

Echo is a sound that is heard after it has been reflected off a surface such as a wall or a cliff (Cambridge dictionary).

An ongoing faraway thunder threatened to ruin the day, but we couldn't care less at that point.

Thunder is the sudden loud noise that comes from the sky especially during a storm (Cambridge dictionary).

The relative hush of the spacious, gleaming marble lobby is broken only by the faint whir of the escalators and the far-off sounds of office busywork.

A sound is something that you can hear or that can be heard (Cambridge dictionary).

He thought he could hear the rustling of the trees that surrounded the lake, and the far-off hoot of an owl, but no hint of a search being made, or even (he despised himself slightly for hoping it) panicked voices wondering where he had gone.

A hoot is a short, loud, high sound (Cambridge dictionary).

The spatial attributes *adjacent, adjoining, bordering, neighboring, contiguous*, denoting "being in a touching or almost touching position" completely exclude the possibility of using auditory perception in their conceptualization due to the presence of a noun that ontologically denotes a static inanimate object that does not produce sounds such as buildings, structures, land plots, etc., regardless of their shape and size, which do not produce sounds, therefore, the possibility of their perception by hearing is excluded. Accordingly, at the linguistic level, we see the absence of perceptual vocabulary with the meaning of auditory perception. Presumably, objects are conceptualized as "*adjoining, bordering, neighboring, contiguous*" on the basis of the previously obtained perceptual experience obtained by the subject of perception. We come to this conclusion due to the absence of markers of visual perception in a sentence.

Helpers have included pupils from an adjacent school, and also handicapped volunteers.

The opportunity to buy two outstanding adjoining properties in that location was extremely rare and the Perots had the opportunity to acquire them both as a family compound.

The mosaic also lacks the accomplished interlace (which is a feature of the Withington mosaic), the bordering pieces of panels.

Trees rustled in neighbouring gardens and the mundane rumble of cars in Magnolia Crescent filled the air again.

The rich clothiers of Suffolk were unique, not matched even in the contiguous parts of Essex.

Another aspect of expressing visual and auditory perception at the language level is affected by **the polymodal nature of perception**.

The studies of auditory perception revealed the polymodality of subjective images of complex sounds i.e. features of almost all modalities are used to describe the auditory image, for example the sound of a printer was described as "distant, buzzing, soft, intimidating, dull, yellow", The actual auditory (acoustic) features constituted only a small part of them [9].

Polymodality of perception is also revealed through the type of an object. When a person visually perceives an object, it is presented not just as a visible image, but as a tangible, audible, hard, light, dangerous, smooth, etc. object. Based on the data coming through one channel of perception (vision, hearing, touch, etc.), the signal from the source can form an image of perception in several modalities. For example, a heard sound gives us information not only for recognizing a visually familiar object, but also about the size of the sound object, its spatial localization, the properties of the environment in which the sound is generated (the volume of the room, its sound-absorbing properties, the presence of obstacles to the passage of sound [3]).

And then, as they both took a fourth piece of chocolate from Madam Pomfrey, they heard a distant roar of fury echoing from somewhere above them... – Presumably, based on the context, *distant roar* suggests something large in size; located at a great distance in space, but close enough to still be loud; there are obstacles to the passage of sound, there is an echo.

As the closest bead of light moved nearer to Harry's wand tip, the wood beneath his fingers grew so hot he feared it would burst into flame. Based on the context and the semantics of the noun being defined, *the closest bead of light* suggests something visible to the eye; small in size; not static, moving; there are no obstacles to perception; has a high temperature; carries a negative connotation due to the uncomfortably high temperature.

Snow was falling softly, covering the rooftops, muffling the faraway sound of the icy sea. – based on the context and the semantics of the defined noun, *faraway sound* suggests a sound reality perceived by auditory perception, but at the same time using the characteristics of other modalities: the sound of the "icy" sea implies the presence of low temperature; the sound is not sharp, there is an absorbing obstacle – snow.

Depending on the features of the empirical experience of the subject of perception, the polymodality of attributes can vary significantly.

There the white rind of the new Moon could sometimes be seen glimmering in the remote lakes. Remote lakes in this case can be sensed differently depending on the subject of perception: for one they can be located further in space than for another, they can be different in size, shape, water temperature, etc. All these characteristics will vary depending on the perceptual experience of the subject.

Within **perception** there is another **modality**, namely, **synesthesia (intermodality)**.

In psychology, synesthesia (from the Greek *synaesthesia* – mixed sensation) is understood as the unification of qualities of different spheres of sensitivity, in which the qualities of one modality pass to another, in other words, they are mixed (synthesized) [2].

From the point of view of linguistics, synesthesia is the use of a word whose meaning is associated with one sense organ, in a meaning related to another sense organ. For example, *soft light*, *sharp sound*. Synesthesia and intermodality in linguistics are interchangeable concepts. In synesthesia, researchers can always clearly identify the primary sensation, on the basis of which other, secondary sensations will be considered (for example, in the case of *soft light*, the primacy of the tactile sensation is obvious and this expression can be considered to be a metaphor) [2].

He's an amazing man, Gharr,' she said in a soft faraway murmur. an example of synesthesia; *faraway* in the meaning of "dreamy or absent-minded", the meaning of position in space also plays a large role in the final designation of this linguistic unit, *soft* is usually perceived by touch.

Intermodality of object perception based on a distance feature can be observed in combination with other modes of perception.

'So ends the famous Harry Potter,' said Riddle's sharp distant voice. – *distant* in the meaning of "not very emotional, not friendly", *sharp* is usually perceived by touch.

'I have been crystal-gazing, Headmaster,' said Professor Trelawney, in her misty faraway voice, 'and to my astonishment, I saw myself abandoning my solitary luncheon and coming to join you. Faraway, in the meaning of "dreamy or absent-minded", misty is usually perceived visually.

'I know what will happen to all of us after everything's over,' said Ron in a remote light murmur, as if he was only talking to himself. Remote, in the meaning of "distant in manner, aloof", light is usually felt kinesthetically. As can be seen from all the examples given, only distant adjectives with the meaning of far (here – faraway, distant) can be used in a situation with intermodal meaning. In these examples the semantics of the nouns was special – it denotes sounds made by a person (voice, murmur).

Conclusion

In conclusion, we would like to sum up the results of the conducted research of the peculiarities of linguistic conceptualization of visual and auditory perception on the basis of spatial attributes. The research allowed us to obtain valuable information regarding the markers of conceptualization of objects based on **visual perception** at the linguistic level, which are:

- 1) semantics of the noun defined by spatial attributes, which reflects the object of perception;
- 2) verbs of visual perception (hear, see, etc.) in an utterance;
- 3) verbs of movement in an utterance.

The markers of **auditory perception** of objects are semantics of the noun defined by spatial attributes, which denote the object of perception sensed by hearing.

If at the linguistic level the object of perception is expressed by a noun (specified by the spatial adjectives *adjacent*, *adjoining*, *bordering*, *neighboring*, *contiguous*), the possibility of their perception by hearing is excluded. Ontologically such a noun denotes a static inanimate object that does not produce sounds such as buildings, structures, land plots, etc., regardless of their shape and size, which do not produce sounds. Presumably, some objects are conceptualized as "*adjoining*, *bordering*, *neighboring*, *contiguous*" on the basis of the previously obtained perceptual experience by the subject of perception. We come to this conclusion due to the absence of markers of visual perception.

Another aspect of expressing visual and auditory perception at the language level is affected by the **polymodal** nature of perception. The polymodality of perception is revealed through the type of object; depending on perceptual experience, the subject can form an image of perception in his own, different from others, modalities; for example, based on information received through one sensory channel, a signal from an objective source can form an image of perception in all modalities (*a distant roar of fury*).

We have also found out that the object of perception, expressed at the linguistic level by a spatial adjective in combination with a noun, can be perceived **intermodally**; profiling of other perceptual features is possible. Attributes whose meanings are associated with one sense organ can be used in meanings related to another sense organ (*a soft faraway murmur*).

To sum up, the carried out research has allowed us to establish the importance and relevance of visual and auditory types of perception in shaping linguistic conceptualization of a part of space.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

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Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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