

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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METAPHORICAL TERMS IN ENGLISH TERMINOLOGY OF NATURE CONSERVATION

Research article

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Abstract

From the cognitive perspective, the terms of the special field of nature conservation in protected areas formed metaphorically are looked into. The analysis of metaphorical terms in the researched terminological system has shown that their proportion to other terms is higher in the blocks, which are more addressed to general public, namely in the blocks of biodiversity conservation, environmental education, and sustainable development. Several source domains of metaphoric terms are identified, the most productive of them are distinguished: names of constructions and their parts, personal possessions, parts of human body, natural objects and phenomena. Terms-metaphors enable verbalization of complicated special concepts with the help of simpler and clearer image associations.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, terminology, metaphorical terms.

МЕТАФОРИЧЕСКИЕ ТЕРМИНЫ В АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОЙ ТЕРМИНОЛОГИИ ЗАПОВЕДНОГО ДЕЛА

Научная статья

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Аннотация

С позиций когнитивной лингвистики рассматриваются термины специальной области «заповедное дело», образованные метафорическим способом. Анализ метафорических терминов в исследуемой терминосистеме показал, что соотношение их с терминами, образованными другими способами, выше в тех разделах терминосистемы, которые более обращены к широкой аудитории, а именно – сохранение биоразнообразия, экологическое просвещение, устойчивое развитие. Выделены несколько областей-источников метафорических терминов, определены наиболее продуктивные из них: наименования построек и их частей, личных вещей, частей человеческого тела, природных объектов и явлений. Термины-метафоры позволяют вербализовать сложные специальные понятия с помощью более простых и понятных образных ассоциаций.

Ключевые слова: когнитивная лингвистика, концептуальная метафора, терминология, метафорические термины.

Introduction

In cognitive linguistics, metaphor is viewed as a mental mechanism of conceptualization presenting basic features of human thinking. The interpretation of metaphor by Lakoff has become classic in modern linguistic science: “the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined. Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person's conceptual system” [5, P. 7]. “Metaphors are mappings across conceptual domains.” “Each mapping is a fixed set of ontological correspondences between entities in a source domain and entities in a target domain” [6].

Metaphorical terms are nowadays under intense attention of linguists because their formation, structure and functioning can open some interesting information about cognitive processes going on in languages for special purposes (LSP).

Research methods and principles

The analysis of metaphoric terms in the sphere of nature conservation in protected areas (PAs) was done on the basis of the terminological dictionary containing 2,306 terminological units [10]. The terms were collected with the help of continuous sampling method. In the special terminology under study, 54 metaphorical one-word terms or head elements in terminological phrases were identified, which amounts to 2.3% of the total number of terms.

Main results

Nature conservation in protected areas is a complex, multi-functional field of special activity; within its terminology seven semantic blocks were differentiated that reflect various aspects of this professional sphere – biodiversity conservation, research and monitoring, ecotourism and recreation, environmental education, sustainable development, legal support of nature conservation, management of PAs. Metaphoric terms were found in four of these blocks - biodiversity conservation, research and monitoring, environmental education, sustainable development.

Noteworthy that the greatest share of metaphors is found in the blocks nominating the notions of environmental education (8%), biodiversity conservation (5.8%), and sustainable development (5.6%). The block “Research and monitoring” holds a much less proportion of all the metaphoric terms - 2.2%. This proportional differentiation is exactly opposite to the quantitative composition of these blocks – the blocks with the least numbers of terms have the highest percentage of metaphoric units, while the largest in number block has the least amount of metaphors. The block of research and monitoring is based on the

biological scientific terminology and presents the terminological foundation of the domain of nature conservation. The biological terminology is one of the oldest LSPs. This fact seems to prove the opinion that in old terminologies metaphorization as a means of term-formation is scarce, while in younger LSPs it is productive [1, P. 104]. To my mind, this is also connected with the degree of common usage of the terminologies: if a terminological system is strictly scientific, used only by specialists of the corresponding scientific field, there are few metaphoric terms in it; and vice versa – if a terminology is used broadly in society and strongly oriented to most of the people, then the share of metaphors among its terms is larger.

The ideas and principles of environmental education, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development are widely discussed nowadays in all layers of modern society. Being extremely significant for the humanity, they permeate almost all spheres of contemporary life. That is why the terms of these fields should be easy to understand, lucid for the public. Terms-metaphors meet these requirements well enough. They reveal the contents of a special word, as well as a concept standing behind it, in simpler and more tangible images. E.g. the phrase “*standstill*” *principle* is in the block “Sustainable development”. It consists of a general scientific word *principle* and a word taken from common English that is used metaphorically because the original meaning of this word denotes the upright motionless position of a human body; then the meaning of the word has expanded to the motionless state of any object or situation, thus “Longman Active Study Dictionary of English” gives the following definition: ‘a condition of no movement or activity’. On the basis of this common meaning, a person who comes across this phrase for the first time can deduce at least the general meaning of it as some rule for keeping the state of things without any actions or changes. In the special language of nature conservation, the phrase means the principle according to which degradation of the environment should be especially avoided in zones with little pollution.

Several source domains of metaphorical terms in the language of nature conservation have been distinguished. The most productive of them appears to be the domain of constructions and their parts. Here are metaphorical terminological units formed with the help of this source: *greenhouse gas*, *threshold effect* (+*threshold instruments*, *threshold character*), *animal corridor* (+ *green corridor*, *habitat corridor*), *natural monument*, *ecological / environmental niche* (+ *feeding / food niche*, *trophic niche*, *spatial niche*), *species barrier*, *buffer zone*. The predominance of this source domain is quite logical: the main conceptual category of the special field under discussion is the category of space, as all the activity is bound to establishing, functioning and managing protected nature areas. So the lexical units corresponding to the category of space, such as *area*, *zone*, *site*, *spot* are numerous in the terminology. And the image of building and organizing a living space is very close to the activities in nature areas.

However, some of the metaphoric terms are widely used in a number of other LSPs, they are *threshold*, *niche*, *barrier*. The word *buffer* in the common language denotes a person or thing that serves to lessen shock or prevent sharp impact [2]. The terminological phrase *buffer zone* is found in such unrelated spheres, as psychology, military science, international affairs, etc. “From environmental to military disputes, buffer zones are often used to defuse or avert conflict. However, different terms are used to describe what may generally be considered buffer zones. For instance, a great deal of psychological literature discusses the importance of “personal space” as a type of buffer zone, while those involved in militarized conflicts may refer to “demilitarized zones.” What is common among these concepts, and the defining aspect of buffer zones, is the existence of a physical area that separates opposing forces, wherein certain rules are to be respected by all parties to an existing or potential conflict in order to avoid escalating hostilities” [9]. In environmental protection, buffer zones are “established to provide physical areas between social developments and environmental preserves that help limit human influence on ecologically valuable areas” [9]. And in the field of nature conservation the meaning of this phrase is even more specified: “territories adjacent to PNAs, allocated by law, where the most dangerous for nature economic activities are limited in order to prevent adverse anthropogenic impacts”.

The next in productivity are the source domains of personal possessions, parts of human body, and natural objects/phenomena.

The domains of personal possessions and parts of human body belong to anthropomorphic metaphors. “A number of scholars believe that anthropometricity is a generally valid and in the highest degree typical indicator of metaphor” [1, P.106].

The terms formed by transfer from the domain of personal possessions: *key* (*key ornithological area*, *key site method*, *key species*, *key substance*), *interdisciplinary monitoring net* (+ *regional environmental monitoring net*), *network* of root (+ *channel network*, *communication network*, *environmental network*), *green belt* (+ *park belt*, *spawning protection belt*, *altitudinal belt*, *arid belt*, and 8 more combinations), *umbrella approach*, *saddle*.

The concepts of the domain “Parts of human body” are employed in the formation of such terms, as *core zone*, *headwater*, *neck*, *scar*, *eyeballing*.

The use of the concepts of nature in the sphere directly connected with nature protection is perfectly clear and understandable. The terms of this source are *grassroots*, *horizon*, *tree name*, *shadow price*, *dead-water* (+ *deadwood*, *deaden*). It should be noted that the lexeme *horizon* is used metaphorically in the meaning ‘layer or level’, e.g. *water-holding horizon*. Similarly, in the phrase *tree name*, the first component is used in the metaphorical meaning of ‘hierarchical’.

Conclusion

The research has shown that metaphoric terms in the special field of nature conservation in protected areas are proportionally more numerous in the semantic blocks the concepts of which are those of topical universal concern and, therefore, are more addressed to general public. These are the issues of environmental education, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development.

The predominant source domains for metaphors in nature conservation are constructions and their parts, personal possessions, parts of human body, natural objects/phenomena.

Metaphoric terms fulfill the function of presenting special concepts in the form of a simpler and clearer image. In the investigated terminology they occupy a certain position and serve the purpose of conveying complicated special meanings.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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