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«JANGAR» HEROIC EPIC IN MIRROR OF LANGUAGE, CULTURE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: THEMATIC DICTIONARY

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Abstract

The treasure of the Kalmyk folklore is «Jangar», the epic narration about Bumba, the country of happiness and prosperity, and heroic deeds of its warriors. «Jangar» epic, named for its main character, is a cycle of epic songs, poems about the exploits of the heroes of the epic country Bumba in the name of independence and prosperity. The article outlines the range of problems associated with the creation of the thematic dictionary (TD) of the Kalmyk heroic epic "Jangar". From the point of view of linguistics, a dictionary is a representation of a lexicon. The study of lexical resources of folk language recently become very relevant. This paper seeks to analyse what contribution bilingual dictionary might make to proper and adequate understanding and translation of the «Jangar» epic into different languages. The paper provides a description of the epic lexicon, and examines the data provided by concordance lines. Kalmyk epic words included in conventional dictionaries did not get an adequate description, so specialized epic language dictionary, built entirely on the epic material in accordance with certain principles, aims to fill one of the gaps of the Kalmyk lexicography. This dictionary, accumulating information about the lexical richness of the epic, will give an objective picture of the lexicographical portrait of epic words.

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Keywords: "Jangar" heroic epic, dictionary, thematic groups, vocabulary, etymology, semantics.

1. Introduction

As is well known,the «Jangar» epic was first told to the world by the German traveler Benjamin Bergmann at the beginning of the 19th century. He first recorded from an unknown Kalmyk dzhangarchi passages of the «Jangar» epic and published them in the book, as well as the legend about dzhangarchi. He noted in his records that about five hundred rhapsodes can be found on the Volga (Bergmann, 1804). Later, in 1855, the Russian mongolist A. Bobrovnikov translated one of the epic songs into Russian language.

The Kalmyk «Jangar» entered in the "History of World Literature". As is known, Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation confirmed a reading list "100 books" in history, culture and literature of the nations of Russia for schoolchildren. Among the samples of national folklore are «Geser» and «Jangar».

«Jangar» has a special place among the texts of the folklore corpus, as it is considered to be the basic epic text of the Oirat-speaking ethnoses, having both regional and local versions (Bawden, 1980; Chao, 2001; Heissig, 1996). So, the analysis of the lexical structure of the Kalmyk version of the epic is of great interest (Omakaeva, 2009; Omakaeva, 2015). Todaeva (1976), Pyurbeev (1993) published a number of works on the linguistic description of the epic "Jangar". Although the need for the creation of the epic language dictionary was voiced in the literature, researchers have not explicitly set a particular problem of the lexicographical description of the Kalmyk epic thesaurus for a long time.

2. Problem Statement

The study of the epic has become today a qualitatively new outline. The notion of the epic and the epic text has changed in the light of new approaches and the latest achievements of modern Humanities. In this connection new, more extended treatment of the folklore text as a multidimensional phenomenon, as a cultural text is more fruitful. It replaces the traditional philological understanding, based on the verbal code and aesthetic evaluation criteria.

3. Research Questions

Epic image of the world that exists in the minds of narrator-dzhangarchi can be reconstructed on the basis of language, primarily lexical means. This article considers the theoretical and methodological basis for the creation of electronic lexicographical database of epic language dictionary, describes the stages of development of the dictionary structure, and defines criteria for the formation of the components of a dictionary entry.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is a systematic analysis of thematic groups such as terms of kinship, names for parts of the human body, colour terms, military terms and so on. It is important to identify linguistic studies potential of the studied units of the thematic groups and comment them.

5. Research Methods

Statement of the problem of the dictionary perhaps first and foremost for description the language of folklore is based on certain principles, relating both to the described object (folklore vocabulary), and the character of a dictionary (bilingual). Key issues of folklore lexicography and the range of problems associated with the creation of such dictionary were briefly outlined in our previous publications (Omakaeva, 2009, 2015). The basis for uniting words into thematic groups are relations of the objects in the real world. The study uses the method of continuous sampling, vocabulary definitions, component analysis, comparative, quantitative (statistical) techniques. Creating thematic dictionary of the epic language is associated with the development and introduction of new methods and principles of lexicography, including computer technologies.

6. Findings

We launched a lexicographical project on compiling a thematic dictionary of the language of the Kalmyk heroic epic "Dzhangar". All presently known 28 epic songs from the earliest (Madolerbet, Bagatsoxur versions, XIX century) to the entries in the twentieth century (Eelyan Ovla, Basanga Muközvün, Shavalin Dava, Obushinovin Badm, Baldryn Nasnka) were taken as a material for the study. The base of the epic text is characterized by unity of place and time of fixation (ulus Ikibuhus, aimag Maloderbet, dzhangarchi Eelyan Ovla, in the early 20th century).

This dictionary will be of practical importance in solving practical problems, to optimize the teaching of the Kalmyk language and the translation work.

The scientific novelty of the project lies in the fact that this is the first systematic study of epic vocabulary using computer technology, which will reveal the features of semantics and functioning of the oral poetic words in the text. Given the advantages of computer-based approach to such a dictionary, we worked out a model of a thematic dictionary, implemented with the help of a special program.

Our dictionary is characterized by a certain didactic orientation. It is important to explain the meaning of the words occurring in the epic text, incomprehensible to today's destination, especially school students. Sometimes it is very difficult to understand the text because there are allegories, metaphors, symbols, epithets, and the language is often obscure.

Obviously, vocabulary related to a particular genre must have its own specifics. These features relate to different aspects and levels of lexicographical presentation epic words in dictionaries, starting with a glossary and ending with the model description of the entry and its textual interpretation.

Let's consider the micro- and macrolevels of lexicographical description (Agrikola, 1984). The core components of the dictionary are macro- and microstructures with their peculiar features. Under macrostructure we understand the overall structure of the dictionary as a whole (the aggregate of all dictionary entries, introduction or preface, and application).The preface provides different kinds of information including the purpose of the dictionary, the intended user-group, the data that the dictionary is based on (a corpus of published and unpublished texts). The user's guide deals with the the macrostructure, the principles of lemmatization and the selection of lemmas, the microstructure and its components.

The most difficult problem is the development of the microstructure of a dictionary as an aggregate in a given order of zones, each of which contains a certain type of linguistic information about the word. Each individual entry is a lexicographic portrait of the lexical unit.

The study of the phenomenon of the entry in terms of text linguistics has not previously been carried out in Kalmyk lexicography. It is therefore quite natural that the entry should be studied not only from "inside", in terms of its components, but also from "outside" as a part of the whole text.

The main principles of the organization of lexical material in the Dictionary are systemic principle, the principle of integrity, the principle of variation and the principle of uniformity of description.

We prepared special instructions where the basic stages of work are formulated. In the initial stage we have studied the experience of compiling the dictionary of language of epic texts of other nations, in particular, Russian epics language, and defined source base. We carried out extensive textual and editorial work on the texts of the Kalmyk epic version (reconciled with the original design of punctuation, etc.).

In parallel with the verification and editing of epic texts we have worked out the concept of bilingual thematic dictionary, its microstructure, that allowed to begin a new, the most difficult stage. Such components of the structure as entry and entry list are central to the idea of a dictionary.

A word, listed with its definition or explanation in alphabetical order, is an entry head (the lemma), which is a part of the macrostructure as well as of the microstructure and therefore assumes a pivotal role. The basic structural unit of the dictionary is a dictionary entry, which is a microtext, starting with an entry head, containing the basic characteristics of the latter (pronouncing, morphological, syntactic, stylistic). The results of this work made up a base of next stage.

According to Scherba (1974), "every little bit difficult word in essence should be the subject of a scientific monograph" (p. 45). Word is known as a base unit of language. At different levels of language it appears in various forms: word form in morphology, lexem in lexicology, lemma in lexicography, and only word is represented as the collection of all its properties.

The need to identify a link connecting the mental structure (the structure of knowledge) and the structure of language becomes more apparent. So a bridge is the semantics of the word.

We have developed an algorithm of the interpretation of the word.

The first stage is the definition of the semantic structure of the input word, i. e, the number of values. In most cases, the epic word has many meanings which, unfortunately, were not sufficiently highlighted in the existing dictionaries and translations of the epic into Russian. For example, a compound word *xorn shu* means 'alkaline poison' in the Kalmyk language and in Russian translation (Chapter 1 of the epic) it is not reflected. It is necessary to clarify the interpretation of the meanings of words associated with the designation of the traditional household items.

The second stage is to check the grammatical and stylistic litters, evaluation of frequency, etc.

The third stage is the selection of epic illustrative examples from different songs that demonstrate the use of the word in this meaning in the epic text. Examples in the form of sentences should be informative to confirm the interpretation of the word.

Semantization of the word is traditionally considered as the most difficult part of the work of the lexicographer (Apresyan, 1995). The entry word in its basic form presents a lexical unit in a lexicographic work and it is highlighted graphically. The structure of a dictionary entry reveals the width of meanings of

the word. So it is extremely important to develop an algorithm, the method of determining the values of vocables, to describe the possible types of interpretation of the word according to its part of speech, to formulate a special meta-language of interpretation, to consider other properties of the entry words.

The dictionary entry as a basic unit of the Dictionary has a number of zones. The first zone is vocable, which is the entrance (Kalmyk word in bold, so-called "black" word). Then the quantitative characterization of the word and grammatical characteristics of words (part of speech) are presented; after the grammatical information there is a zone of stylistic litter, which is followed in accordance with the interpretation and highlighting of values (direct, portable) by illustrations (some examples of use), showing the operation of the word in a real context.

We consider the algorithm for determining the semantics of words a step by step procedure: the identification of all contextual values of lexicographically described words using component analysis; forming groups with similar contextual meaning of the word; determining the number of meanings of the word (polysemant or monosemant).

The result of identifying the semantics of lexical units is recorded in the area of interpretation: semantics of the word is explicated by dictionary definition, including information on the semantic roles, as well as relations with other words (synonyms, antonyms, etc.).

Experience shows that the epic word has a complex semantic structure. Particular attention should be paid to the lexical diversity, the percentage of words of different parts of speech and thematic clusters. Key segments of the epic worldview, forming a semantic space of the epic text, are the meanings of primary lexical groups allocated on grammatical grounds, traditionally known as "parts of speech". We believe that the words, which are fixed in more than 15 contexts, are the frequency words, that are used most often. Comparison of the most frequent words of different chapters of the epic cycle will identify the common "lexical nucleus" of the «Jangar» epic.

It should be noted that some words have semantically transparent meanings, whereas others bear rather deep and often non-obvious meanings, some of which are hard to understand owing to the intention of the creators of the epic itself. In addition, the major stratum of the lexis is composed of borrowed words coming from Sanskrit and the Tibetan language, which have gone through the process of phono-morphological assimilation and have been adjusted to the graphic and spelling norms of the receiving language.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, we emphasize that the creation of epic language vocabulary requires a fine knowledge of the language and the linguistic worldview, which is "behind the text", and presupposes that the lexicographer must have fine linguistic intuition, special lexicographical skills, know the theory and practice of the creation of dictionaries. The need to develop an epic lexicography is due to the desire to present in a compact form the linguistic richness of the «Jangar» epic, on the one hand, and to provide the necessary basis for further research, on the other hand, as any dictionary is both a result of the work, and an effective research tool.

Acknowledgments

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