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**ON STUDYING ACTUAL LANGUAGE CONSCIOUSNESS
IN SOCIAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES**

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Abstract

These are dictionary and texts that traditionally provide data to analyze relevant representations expressed by language. While performing a synchronic monolingual comparative analysis of a word meanings registered in dictionaries of various types, one can reveal significant qualitative differences between these meanings. More specifically, such a picture is typical of materials from explanatory and associative dictionaries are compared. The latter dictionaries open the pathway to obtain data on meanings for one and the same word in different regions of Russia thus identifying trends shaped due to the influence of the regional factor. Based on the results of experimental studies conducted in the European part of the Russian Federation and in the Republic of Crimea, some discrepancies were registered in the associative meanings of the word *bespredel*, lawlessness. The content of both gestalts is the correlation of the ‘bespredel’ concept with two spheres: home and politics. Judging by the data, the former concept is the most expressed in EURAS. The principles used to classify word-reactions, namely the grouping of associates by semantic zones, help us to identify the key associative strategies of respondents when reacting to a word stimulus. The associative meaning of a socially significant word-concept comes as actual knowledge in the ordinary linguistic picture of the world.

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Keywords: Linguistic picture of the world, associative experiment, semantic gestalt.



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1. Introduction

For years, the study of the linguistic picture of the world and its fragments has been relevant, since the society's attitude towards existing and emerging social relations and institutions, including power, is constantly changing. Such relations can be identified by analyzing the actual meaning of words thematically related to these areas.

2. Problem Statement

The word *bespredel*, lawlessness, that the traditional dictionary explains as arbitrariness and lawlessness, is also described as colloquial and stylistically deflated (BTS, 2000, p. 74). In the text, the given unit demonstrates a frequency connection with the word 'power': *unlimited power; thieves' power in Russia: will there be an end to lawlessness regime; Lawlessness! The authorities are hiding* (https://pikabu.ru/story/bespredel_vlasti_skryivayut_5491790); *Lawlessness or power against the people* (<http://ecolimp.livejournal.com/519564.html>) (search queries in Yandex) (date of retrieval 02.03.2020), etc. The meaning and functioning of the word and concept were investigated in both linguistic and legal spheres (Belyakova, 2016; Demin, 2018; Fatyanova, 2016; Fedorova, 2007; Kostomarov, 1995; Krasnova, 2018; Petrukhina, 2018; Stephenson, 2019; Volkova, 2019; Vorkachev, 2011).

3. Research Questions

The associative dictionaries data allow identification of a number of relevant components in the word meaning. They reflect the change in public concepts. Also, the data demonstrates the new associations that appear and how this change can ultimately determine the understanding of texts containing a keyword. In addition, associations given by ordinary native speakers to a word denoting a socially significant concept may be different due to linguistic, territorial, gender, and other factors, see, for example (Balyasnikova, Ufimtseva, & Cherkasova, 2016; Regional linguistic consciousness..., 2017; Ufimtseva & Balyasnikova., 2019).

4. Purpose of the Study

The current study is aimed at describing the associative meaning of the '*bespredel*' language unit and identifying discrepancies in the structure and content of associative meaning due to the regions where respondents live.

5. Research Methods

The associative experiment is a traditional psycholinguistic method to obtain data from subjects, native speakers of the Russian language. The experiment was carried out in 2019 in the Republic of Crimea following the traditional procedure. Some 300 subjects, males and females, in equal proportions took part in the experiment. Based on the research results, a semantic gestalt of the following type was developed (Regional linguistic consciousness..., 2017) with several semantic zones.

6. Findings

Table 01. The associative field for the stimulus **bespredel**, lawlessness

EVRAS, Regional Dictionary (2018)	Associative %	Regional Dictionary, Crimea	Associative %
Objects and culture specific concepts			
Haos (chaos) 59 (19,9) anarkhia (anarchy 12) (4,1), besporyadok (disorder 17) (5,7) bardak (mess 9) (3,0), razboj (robbery 8) (2,7)	35,4	Haos (chaos) 27 (24,6) anarkhia (anarchy) 7 (6,4), besporyadok (disorder) 5 (4,5), bardak (mess) 3 (2,7), razboj (robbery) 3 (2,7)	40,9
Kriminal (crime) 9 (3,0), bezzakonie (lawlessness) 6 (2,0), neporyadok (disorder) 5 (1,7) razgrom (mayhem) 4 (1,4) prestupnost' (delinquency) 3 (1,0) bandit (bandit) 4 (1,4) turma (jail) 4 (1,4)	11,8	Narushenie (offense) 6 (5,5)	5,5
Militsiya (militia) 3 (1,0)	1,0	Politsia (police) 5 (4,5)	4,5
Shum (noise) 3 (1,0)	1,0	Shum (noise) 4 (3,6)	3,6
Draka (fight) 10 (3,4) khuligantstvo (rowdyism) 3 (1,0)	4,4	-	0
Politika (politics) 2 (0,7)	0,7	Politika (politics) 3 (2,7)	2,7
Vlast' (power) 5 (1,7) vlasti (authorities) 3 (1,0)	2,7	vlasti (authorities) 3 (2,7)	2,7
<i>Total</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>59,9</i>
Characteristic			
Polniy (total) 34 (11,5)	11,5	Polniy (total) 7 (6,4)	6,4
Zhestky (tough) 3 (1,0)	1,0	-	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>12,5</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>6,4</i>
Locus			
Na ulitse (in the street) 14 (4,7) ulitsa (street) 7 (2,4) na ulistakh (in the streets) 5 (1,7)	8,8	Na ulitse (in the street) 4 (3,6) ulitsa (street) 3 (2,7)	6,4
	0	V golove (in the head) 4 (3,6)	3,6
Vokrug (around) 3 (1,0), povsyudu (everywhere) 3 (1,0) vezde (all around) 12 (4,1)	6,1	Vokrug (around) 3 (2,7), povsyudu (everywhere) 3 (2,7) vezde (all around) 2 (1,9)	7,4
V strane (in the country) 6 (2,0)	2,0	V strane (in the country) 4 (3,6)	3,6
Rossia (Russia) 5 (1,7)	1,7	Ukraina (Ukraine) 3 (2,7) gosudarstvo (state) 3 (2,7)	5,5
<i>Total</i>	<i>18,6</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>26,5</i>
Action			
tvoritsya (to happen) 4 (1,4)	1,4	'tvorit' (to make to happen) 3 (2,7)	2,7
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,4</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>2,7</i>
Evaluation			
Uzhas (dismay) 14 (4,7)	4,7	Uzhas (dismay) 5 (4,5)	4,5
Plokho (bad) 6 (2,0) koshmar (horror) 4 (1,4) naglost' (boldness) 4 (1,4) zlo (evil) 3 (1,0)	5,8		0
<i>Total</i>	<i>10,5</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>4,5</i>

It is evident in Table 1 that the associative core of the word does not depend on the territory. The most typical associative strategy is the selection of quasi-synonyms represented in the object zone. In EURAS, the connection between **bespredel** and crime is more evident. In this zone, *bespredel* is not significantly associated with power and politics: 3.4% (EURAS) and 5.4% (Crimea). The locus zone is the second semantically spread one. Despite similarity in the meaning, the Crimean segment boasts more reactions that refer to statehood (9.1%), in EURAS there are 3.7% of such reactions. The evaluation zone goes the third, with a frequent response ‘dismay’. In EURAS, there are also 5.8% of other evaluation reactions. The semantic zone of characteristic contains the frequent attribute – ‘full’. The action zone, with very few reactions, is of interest as EURAS registers the reflexive verb ‘*tvoritsya*’, to occur, and the Crimea fragment contains the active verb ‘*tvorit*’, to make to happen.

7. Conclusion

What is common about the content of both gestalts is the correlation of the ‘*bespredel*’ concept with two spheres: home and politics. However, judging by the data, the former concept is the most expressed in EURAS, whereas the latter belongs to the experiment conducted in the Republic of Crimea. Differences are manifested in the peripheral zone of the associative field, since the frequency and most strong associative structures reflect the very fact that respondents speak one and the same national language. The indicated tendency, reflecting the regional aspect of the problem, can be detected on a more representative material.

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