SCTMG 2021

International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism»

METAPHOR AS ONE OF THE METHODS FOR CODING CULTURAL MEANINGS IN LANGUAGE

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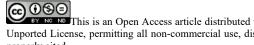*Corresponding author

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Abstract

The article analyzes the problem of cultural meanings as a reflection of ethnocultural consciousness in the language based on humorous texts. Metaphor is considered as one of the ways of encoding cultural meanings in a language using humorous texts. The concepts of code, coding, cultural meanings are revealed. The mechanisms of the emergence of cultural meanings, which are formed in the language with the help of codes, are described. Cultural meanings arising as a result of cognitive mechanisms are considered as secondary sign formations. In the process of semiotization, phenomena of the surrounding reality that are significant for a given people are recorded in the word. Cultural meanings are determined by morals and customs, language and writing, clothing, settlements, work, education, economics, socio-political structure, law, science, technology, art, religion, manifestations of the spiritual development of the people. All these areas in the language are realized in the form of a system of culture codes. One of the methods of coding is the assignment of a sign to an object or concept (representation), replacing it in thinking. Culture codes are universal, but the metaphors in which they are implemented have national and cultural specifics. In the process of cognizing the surrounding reality, concepts arise in the human mind, which are verbalized and concretized through symbols and basic metaphors. As one of the ways of coding cultural meanings, metaphor is involved in creating a holistic image of the world and storing and transmitting cultural information.

1. Introduction

The study of cultural meanings in a language has been one of the key issues in linguistics for several centuries. The problem of the relationship between language and culture was dealt with by domestic and foreign scientists from various fields: linguists, psycholinguists, ethnolinguists, philosophers, sociologists, cultural linguists, and many others. Despite the huge number of publications on this issue, this issue remains controversial.

The relevance of the research topic is due to the need for a theoretical understanding of the problem of cultural interaction in society. Due to the currently developing process of globalization, the interrelationships of representatives of various linguocultures are expanding; therefore the range of problems of a multicultural society, including the problem of losing one's own identity, is becoming the most urgent. The central issue in this aspect is the study of the peculiarities of the culture of a certain people, intercultural dialogue, in the conditions of which conflict-free coexistence of different peoples is possible. The study of the human language

> *as a universal phenomenon and national languages as systems of national linguistic world outlook, bi-, and polylingual linguistic personality today is closely connected with the formation of tolerance among speakers of different languages, with an understanding of the equivalence of native and "foreign" languages in the life of the world society.* (Khayrullina et al., 2017, p. 20)

The study of the problem of cultural meanings, coding and decoding of information, peculiarities of perception of various cultures is of particular importance. Language, as a unique cultural phenomenon, has a significant impact on its development. Language and culture are closely related. On the one hand, language is a means of communication between people and a way of knowing the world around them, on the other hand, it is a product of a culture that reflects its national specifics. Many different theories, approaches to language learning do not fully disclose their role in the process of understanding the world and human interaction with the surrounding reality. That is why, within the framework of this study, an attempt was made to analyze the problem of cultural meanings as a reflection of ethnocultural consciousness in the language based on humorous texts.

2. Problem Statement

The period from the beginning of the 19th century can be considered the most fruitful in the study of this issue in linguistics.

For the first time, the question of the relationship between culture and language was raised by Humboldt (1983), who wrote that the language expresses "the spirit of the people".

The provisions of W. Humboldt's theory were further developed in the works of Potebnya (1989) and others.

The works of Potebnya (1989) emphasizes the idea of the primacy of language concerning the knowledge of the world. The works of Whorf (1999) and Sapir (2001) play an important role in understanding the issue of language and culture. Whorf (1999) expressed the idea of the complete

determinism of culture by language, according to which the system of language models forces us to divide the world and distribute meanings in it in this way, and not otherwise. Sapir (2001) denies the causal dependence of language on culture: "Culture can be defined as what a given society does and thinks. Language is how it thinks" (p. 396). Examples from the Dictionary of the South Payute language can be cited to prove this. Representatives of this ethnic group live in a desert climate. Their living conditions allowed them to delineate in detail the features of the relief that are essential for finding water: "a narrow deep gorge", "a waterless canyon", "a canyon with a small river", "an old riverbed", "a slope of a mountain or canyon illuminated by the sun", "hilly terrain interspersed with several ridges".

The relevance of the study of the problem under consideration is confirmed by a huge number of publications to date. An important place in the study of the problems of intercultural communication is occupied by works describing the peculiarities of national and cultural specifics. The central place in contrastive studies is occupied by various linguistic phenomena and facts: for example, the system of phraseological images as an expression of the national worldview, the development and functioning of national languages in a multicultural environment in the media. At present, the problem of studying cultural meanings in a language is considered in close connection with ethno-linguistic consciousness.

The work of philosophers, mathematicians, logicians are devoted to the problem of language codes and the coding of cultural meanings in a language, anthropologists and ethnologists, psychologists, linguists.

The scientific works of these authors are the basis for a comprehensive study of the mechanisms of coding cultural meanings in the Russian language in the linguoculturological and ethnolinguistic aspects.

3. Research Questions

The subject of consideration of scientists in the ethnolinguistic and linguistic-cultural aspects are those elements of the lexical system of the language that is associated with certain cultural and historical complexes. Language, in the understanding of ethnolinguists, is a phenomenon that permeates all levels of culture and serves as a tool for the mental ordering of the world, as well as reflecting the peculiarities of the ethnic worldview.

This article analyzes the problem of cultural meanings as a reflection of ethnocultural consciousness in the language since humorous texts. Metaphor is considered as one of the ways of encoding cultural meanings in a language using humorous texts. The concepts of code, coding, cultural meanings are revealed. It describes the mechanisms of the emergence of cultural meanings, which are formed in the language with the help of codes.

Cultural meanings arising as a result of cognitive mechanisms are considered as secondary sign formations. In the process of semiotization, phenomena of the surrounding reality that are significant for a given people are recorded in the word. Cultural meanings are determined by morals and customs, language and writing, clothing, settlements, work, education, economics, socio-political structure, law, science, technology, art, religion, manifestations of the spiritual development of the people. All these areas in the language are realized in the form of a system of culture codes. One of the methods of coding is the assignment of a sign to an object or concept (representation), replacing it in thinking. Culture codes are universal, but the metaphors in which they are implemented have national and cultural specifics. In

the process of cognizing the surrounding reality, concepts arise in the human mind, which are verbalized and concretized through symbols and basic metaphors. As one of the ways of coding cultural meanings, metaphor is involved in creating a holistic image of the world and storing and transmitting cultural information.

4. Purpose of the Study

The work aims to study the role of metaphor as one of the ways of encoding cultural meanings in a language based on humorous texts in creating a holistic image of the world and storing and transmitting cultural information.

5. Research Methods

This study presents a characteristic of the essence of cultural meanings and describes the features of their coding in the language using a metaphor based on humorous texts. The study uses the synthesis method to analyze works of domestic and foreign authors on the problem of interaction between language and culture. The use of analytical and systemic methods made it possible to identify the peculiarities of the coding of cultural meanings in the language. The formalization method allowed defining the key concepts of this study and interpreting various concepts and theories.

The linguocognitive method was used to identify and describe the features of cognitive processes occurring in linguistic consciousness in the process of communication. The linguoculturological method involves the study of linguistic consciousness in their close interaction with the culture of peoples, their bearer, to identify the universal and ethnic in the linguistic consciousness, as well as to describe the process of linguistic modeling itself.

6. Findings

The study of the mechanisms of coding cultural meanings in a language presupposes, first, an understanding of the essence of the terms language, culture, code, meaning, and cultural meaning.

Language is a sign system, the most important element of the life of a culture. With the help of signs and their combinations, languages represent and construct the world.

Language is a symbolic structure that unites and preserves all the achievements of a given society. Information is encoded with the help of the language. Language is a way of reflecting a special attitude.

In semiotics, the concept of "language" is in direct connection with the concept of "code", which in linguistics was first used in the works of Ferdinand de Saussure, R. Jacobson, V.V. Ivanova, N.B. Mechkovskaya, B.A. Uspensky. It is customary to consider the code as linguistic formations, as variants of the language used by the participants in this communicative process.

One of the key works in the study of the problem of information coding is the book by Zhinkin (1964) "On code transitions in inner speech", in which the code is understood as a system of material signals. It is in this system that "some specific language can be realized". It identifies alphabetic, sound, speech-motor, subject, subjective, and subject-pictorial codes.

In the process of perceiving the understanding of information, there is transcoding from "someone else's" code to "our". The assimilated "alien" code is perceived by a person and joins his "own'. Let us consider what the codes of culture are, what are the mechanisms of coding cultural meanings in the language.

According to Gudkov (2003) and Krasnykh (2003), culture codes are the transfer of material and spiritual experience developed by humanity during the period of real history, i.e., history, materially confirmed and having evidence (artifacts and descriptions, letters, chronicles, diaries, reviews of travelers).

Cultural meanings are determined by morals and customs, language and writing, clothing, settlements, work, education, economics, socio-political structure, law, science, technology, art, religion, manifestations of the spiritual development of the people. All these areas in the language are realized in the form of a system of culture codes (Kolesov & Pimenova, 2016).

Under the culture code, Kolesov and Pimenova (2016) examine a macrosystem of characteristics of objects of the surrounding world, which are united by a common categorical property. It is a part of the conceptual grid, with the help of which a native speaker categorizes, structures, and evaluates the world around him. When characteristics are transferred from one code to another, a metaphor or metonymy arises in the language.

Culture codes create a coordinate system that forms cultural standards. They are universal, but the metaphors in which they are realized have national specificity and are conditioned by a certain culture.

It should be noted that in the process of studying the mechanisms of coding cultural meanings, we are considering secondary sign formations. As a result of the study of semantic processes of secondary origin, cultural meanings are formed. In the process of semiotization, phenomena of the surrounding reality that are significant for a given people are recorded in the word. One of the methods of coding is the assignment of a sign to an object or concept (representation), replacing it in thinking.

"Linguosemiotic thinking - considers Alefirenko (2003) - based on the subject-technological, activity principles, significantly expands and enriches pre-verbal semantic structures due to communicative-pragmatic increments" (p. 63). According to the scientist, at the level of communicative relations, thinking becomes more and more verbal, acquires linguistic forms, and, later, obeys them. After verbal designation, the object becomes a denotative element of linguistic consciousness and is included in the processes of linguistic thinking. He connects linguistic thinking with value-semantic relations that arise in special situations. A "special semantic space is created in which human connections, assessments, and forms of regulation and motivation of actions and life behavior are formed" (Alefirenko, 2003, p. 77). At this stage, secondary semiotization takes place, when code elements move in the semantic structure of the sign, "the extinguishing of the subject-practical meanings and the generation of meanings arising in the system of vital relations between a person and his environment" take place (Alefirenko, 2003, p. 85).

Cognitive mechanisms occur in several stages: first images appear, after their appearance – the development of concepts. All metaphors in the language (which are always based on a certain image) can be formalized in the form of a limited number of categories. Metaphor, along with metonymy, is one of the ways to actualize certain features in a language.

In linguistics, there are various ways of describing language categories. Today the problem of categorization is very relevant. Human memory is arranged in such a way that the linguistic elements stored in it are ordered in a certain way, the basis of such ordering is precisely the linguistic categories.

The categories of culture leave their mark on the consciousness of the native speaker, which is sure to be reflected in the language.

Let us consider how the processes of conceptualization of the world take place and how cultural meaning arises. Considering the processes of categorization and conceptualization of the surrounding world, it should be noted that there are universal and nationally specific categories. The system of universal categories is characteristic of different languages. Each language has its system of specific categories. The basis of universal categories is the psychophysiological way of perceiving the world; specific ones are the subjective process of imposing conceptual structures on the perceived fragments of the world. These cognitive processes are reflected in the linguistic form, which fixes different cognitive categorizations of objects and phenomena or two types of knowledge: direct (phenomenological) and mediated (structural). Phenomenological knowledge arises in the process of identifying objects, events, phenomena of the surrounding reality in a certain system of spatial and temporal coordinates. Between these identifiable objects and phenomena and fragments of the world, certain connections and relationships are established, which in language are fixed in predicates. The starting point constituting the "cognitive content of the meaning of linguistic units" is, according to Kolesov and Pimenova (2016), the subject of perception. The form of categorization of information, obtained in the form of a generalizing result of cognitive-evaluative human activity, scientists call structural knowledge, which is fixed in the language in the form of conceptual categories.

The conceptual grid, the cells of which can be divided into three types (images, concepts, symbols), can be "likened to a certain map that is superimposed on the world" (Kolesov & Pimenova, 2016, p. 101).

The concepts, according to Meshchaninov (1945), are not described with the help of language, but "are revealed, in its vocabulary and grammatical structure. Those conceptual categories that receive their syntactic or morphological form in the language become ... grammatical categories. Subject and predicate will be conceptual categories. When they emerge in the syntactic structure of a sentence, they become grammatical concepts of subject and predicate" (p. 92). He believes that any concept that exists in the mind of a person can be conveyed by description, by the meaning of a single word, or can, in the process of linguistic transmission, form a certain system in it. In this case, one can speak of a conceptual category that is transmitted "not through language, not only by its means but also in its very material part" (Meshchaninov, 1945, p. 163). Scientists classify the subject; predicate (I.I. 163–164).

The language system, the generation, and perception of meaning in speech have a conceptual basis. Kobrina (2000) identifies three main categories: 1) categories that represent the reflection of reality in the form of forms and objects of thought (i.e, coincide with "concepts" in philosophy); 2) category-parameters (signs, characteristics, such as mental referents of the categories of type and time, voice, mood, number, case); 3) categories are relational, or operational, i.e., those that underlie the implementation schemes. The main task of concepts in the process of cognitive activity is categorization, which allows you to group objects with certain properties into classes.

The need for a cultural code arises when there is a transition from the world of signals to the world of meaning. Signals are a world of separate units calculated in bits of information, and meanings are those significant forms that organize a person's connection with the world of ideas, images, and values of a given culture. Thus, in cultural languages, the code is what makes it possible to understand the rules for the formation of several specific messages, their meaning. All codes can be compared with each other based on a common code that is simpler and more comprehensive. A message or a cultural text may undergo different readings depending on the code used. It allows you to penetrate the semantic level of culture, and without knowing the code, the cultural text will be closed, incomprehensible.

Thus, the codes of culture are manifested in the processes of the categorization of the world. The categories themselves are formed in consciousness following the specific requirements of the environment, environment. In this work, metaphor is of particular interest as one of the ways of encoding cultural meanings.

In modern society, in most cases, the perception of the world is projected through a metaphor. In humorous fiction, authors have used metaphor to enhance the comic effect. Depicting reality, the authors latently moved to the schemes with which a person thinks. Metaphor in the text plays the role of substitution, thereby revealing our opinion about the subject. Thanks to the metaphor, the authors in their works reflect a new idea of the described objects and phenomena, reflecting the system of cultural and national values. The semantic duality of the metaphor is the main meaning of this pictorial means. The key subtext is contained in a figurative meaning and reflects the linguistic picture of the human world. A humorous metaphor helps the recipient to perceive the inner meaning of the path, which does not contain new knowledge but relies on the experience gained earlier from various layers of the national corpus of the language.

The basis for the formation of a metaphor in the humorous texts of Zadornov (2005) is the transfer of the sign of a living face to an inanimate object. For example, in the story "Silence! I am buying a house", an expressive metaphor is used that contains the personification "From under the trousers one can see the socks eaten by the shoes, and a strip of unburned strong northern legs glows between the socks and trousers". In this passage, the author, with the help of pictorial and expressive means, describes the main character and at the same time expresses his attitude towards him and the era (we are talking about the early 90s) as a whole. The role of metaphor in creating an artistic image emphasizes the mentality of the people. Perestroika in the country was reflected in the speech of the people, and actions, and appearance. The satirist with the phrase "socks eaten by shoes" vividly characterized the transition period in Russia from the Soviet era to the era of the future. We see a person who has a full backpack of money behind him, and at the same time, being abroad, he does not correspond to the image of a wealthy person. It is given by the appearance, emphasized by the author in just one detail with the help of a metaphor. In his texts, M. Zadornov uses extensive metaphors, which enhances the comic effect: "a strip of unburned ... legs glows". Besides, the author uses contamination: "On the cheeks and stomach, one could conclude that he was saving some of the money that had fallen on his head, and the other hour he honestly tried to eat up, investing, as they say in such cases, in the most reliable – in himself" (Zadornov, 2005, p. 311). In this example, we observe the euphemism "on the cheeks and stomach, one could conclude", where the author does not say directly that the characters are very fat and their cheeks are shiny, but with the help of

metaphor brings the reader to this idea. The idiom "money that has fallen on his head" shows how the hero got rich, M. Zadornov reveals the level of the era, which contains the cultural code, with the help of which an integral image of a certain stratum of society is recreated. Involuntary associations cause laughter: the hero honestly tried to eat through, but there is no mention that he honestly earned them and investing in the most reliable in the mind of the recipient is associated with banks and financial transactions, and in the text "in himself", which is due to the author's intention.

Two children are also figuring similar to them, a sort of backpacks with strong legs, with which they confidently clung to the ground like roots (Zadornov, 2005). In this example, we see a layering of tropes that reinforce the humorous connotation in the mind of the recipient. The author uses the comparison f*igures like them clung to as roots*. The cultural experience of the reader helps him to understand the encoded information with the help of basic metaphors of *backpack with strong legs* – fat children like their parents, whom the author compared to backpacks. Suffix formants with a diminutive meaning in the lexemes *figurines, backpacks* are used for additional humorous characteristics. In this text, the lexeme *backpack* is ambiguous: *I came with my family and ... a backpack* (Zadornov, 2005). It is used in its direct meaning with a familiar connotation and is characterized by emotional coloring, and when describing children, the author compares them with backpacks, thereby expressing an emotional value attitude to what is happening, where the backpack is a symbol for the main meaning. Thanks to this, the text becomes expressive; images are verbalized in the mind of the recipient: *The house trembled, throwing off the drops of morning dew. The wife smiled, the children sobbed* (Zadornov, 2005). In this metaphorical context, the author uses a figurative description of reality with a poetic tinge; there is a semantic collision, which in this situation is comic. We also see the layering of tropes: the antithesis *the wife smiled; the children sobbed* is added to the metaphor. The author sneers at his hero, the house trembled not only from the blow, but everyone should also have experienced trembling from the sight of the protagonist, from his goals, thereby the author tries to emphasize social reality.

In the text "You will be an oilman!" the following metaphor is encountered: *Russia was knocked down from the shock of Gaidar's reforms* (Zadornov, 2005). In the phrase *knocked down*, the author uses a sports term that in boxing refers to the temporary incapacitation of a boxer as a result of a punch. This example illustrates the author's ironic attitude to political events taking place in Russia. The metaphor gives the text an emotional and evaluative contrast, which is emphasized using the lexeme *shock*. In a figurative sense, it is interpreted as being in a depressed state; here the contextual meaning expresses the author's idea. The author specifically conveys an ironic modality, he reflects the era of time in which the hero is. In this text, the author vividly describes, with the help of metaphors, the development of the economy and the holding of *business receptions in the bathhouse with laid tables* (Zadornov, 2005). It is this trope that allows the author to express his attitude to what is happening in the country, to show the reader in an ironic form all the ideas that he tried to reflect in the text. *Sometimes in such buffets, kefir was a stray product. Our kefir, which falls out of the bottle in lumps* (Zadornov, 2005). Each word in the passage reflects the culture and timing of the event. The period when everything was in short supply, *a stray product* and not the best quality *falls out of the bottle in lumps*. With the help of an expressive metaphor, the author shows the history and national characteristics. Thanks to the imagery, the reader's imagination present a picture of what is happening, reveals the author's intention (Fefelova, 2019).

Selective analysis of some metaphors allowed us to reveal its key role in a humorous text. The understanding of a certain subject, established in the mind, passes into another plane, which allows the author to go beyond the conventional. Metaphors are by nature ambiguous and allow you to look at things from a new angle. Being a cultural code, the metaphor emotionally affects a person and thanks to this, a new image of the world view is created, which the author tried to convey, it also contributes to the understanding of the implicit information provided in the text.

7. Conclusion

Thus, metaphor plays an important role in the processes of meaning formation, helps to better understand the initial meaning of many concepts and the history of their origin.

In this work, we have considered metaphor as one way of encoding cultural meanings, since they include the following characteristics of the code. Firstly, generalized information is conveyed with the help of metaphor. Secondly, it allows information to be presented by combining elements (in this case, words) into a holistic formation. Thirdly, the metaphor participates in the storage and transfer of existing knowledge, does not open new information, and has a hierarchical way of constructing knowledge.

In the process of cognizing the surrounding reality, concepts arise in the human mind, which are verbalized and concretized through symbols and basic metaphors. Symbols reflect basic cultural meanings. The metaphor unites all objects and phenomena of the surrounding world into a single picture. At the same time, an integral picture of the world is created by transferring and assimilating.

As one of the ways of coding cultural meanings, the metaphor participates in the creation of a holistic image of the world, performing the function of "tuning consciousness", provides "readiness for perception", "readiness to see". Of course, one of the most important functions of a metaphor can also be considered the ability to translate existing social and cultural experiences and create new knowledge. Metaphor, being one of the codes of culture, plays a key role in the storage and transmission of cultural information.

Acknowledgments

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