

Russian linguistic culture: the concept of “justice” as a nuclear unit of the conceptual field of “guardianship”

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Abstract. The article considers the main language universals realizing the concept of “justice” in the Russian language picture of the world, which forms the basic component of the concept of “guardianship.” This concept realizes the idea of guardianship in the linguistic consciousness of the Russian people as a social protection for the disadvantaged part of the population. The purpose of the study is to determine the internal content of the concept of “justice,” functioning in the Russian linguaculture and being the nuclear unit of the conceptual field of “guardianship.” The object of description is the concept of “justice” in the structure of the conceptual field of “guardianship.” The methodological part of the paper is based on the dialectical connection of the past with the present and the application of the conceptual apparatus, which has been formed both in the Historical and in Social Sciences: Sociology, Philosophy, Political Science, and Linguistics. An interdisciplinary method was used, including historiographical and ideographic methods, linguistic and linguacultural analysis, which together allowed the presentation of a systematic description of an axiologically significant socio-linguistic phenomenon; an introspective method on the basis of which the basic way of presenting information reflected in the scientific works of Russian scientists is based on the principle of free interpretation of the material. The authors conclude that the linguacultural core of the linguistic picture of the world consists of concepts that are verbalized in the mind of the individual and form conceptual fields with thematic content in it. A special role in didactic purposes is played by the concept of “guardianship,” occupying a special place in the linguistic picture of the world of the Russian people, as it reveals the features of the social structure in the system of the rule of law. From the linguistic and cultural point of view, the concept of “guardianship,” as a form of manifestation of charity in the Russian conceptsphere “spirituality”, reflects the idea of social and legal protection being based, first of all, on the idea of moral justice. Linguistic analysis revealed the transformation of the internal content of the word-concept “justice” in the Russian linguistic culture. Justice as an absolute virtue, correlated with the idea of universal well-being, co-exists in society in three forms, namely moral, legal, and political.

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1 Introduction

In terms of intercultural communication, Russia's entry into a single global multicultural educational space, the issue of interaction of language, culture, and personality remains relevant. The ability of a language to simulate the ethnolinguistic and cultural picture of the world in linguistics in human consciousness is justified by the study of the internal form of the word of von Humboldt [13], the theory of linguistic relativity of E. Sapir and B. Whorf [21], and other scientific studies. The problem of the relationship between linguistic consciousness and the national mentality is solved by the efforts of different disciplinary directions of linguistics, exploring different forms of manifestation of culture in the language and personality as their concentration (namely by Vezhibitskaya, Ufimtseva, Vorobyov, Stepanov, and other domestic and foreign scientists). The interrelated study of the language of personality and culture is expressed in the linguacultural concept of language learning [20], which proceeds from the understanding of language as an information code serving as the basis for knowledge of the world, the language ability of a person, the cultural and historical environment, as well as the historical memory that form the language identity.

2 Problem Statement

The image of the world is an invariant mapping in the human mind of the objective world [11, 18], focused in the consciousness of the individual in the form of the conceptsphere through the units (stereotypes) of which the life style of a person is determined, as well as the features of his/her behavior in society. The model of the national image of the world [17] (a picture of the world), as a product of the active spiritual and material life of a person, is seen by us as a spatio-temporal scheme of the world order structure, which is fixed in the consciousness of the individual at the verbal level and reflects the features of the worldview of the ethnos in general and the individual as a representative of a particular linguistic culture. The formation of a picture of the world is carried out through two interrelated operations of thinking: (a) explication – objectification and comprehension of the realities of the objective world; (b) the creation of a new image of the world by reflecting the objects of the surrounding reality. This is a peculiar mechanism of correlating reality existing independently of human cognition and thinking and an ideal picture of the world that is the result of cognitive activity and expressed through an associative-verbalized network of semantic relationships. According to the principle of linguistic complementarity [4], the representation of reality in the mind of a person is fixed as a thinking world on the basis of a linguistic sign. Serebrennikov notes that it is necessary to remember that when forming a picture of the world, different types of thinking are involved in the mind of the individual, such as verbal, practical, figurative, etc. The sound complex, which forms the word, is not capable of any reflection. In fact, the result of reflection are the concepts; language is connected with the reality through sign correlation, that is, does not reflect reality, but only displays it in a symbolic way [22]. The language picture of the world does not just describe the structure of being, but also sets the patterns of personal and national interpretation of reality. The basic property of the language picture of the world consists in the features of the formation of strategy, stereotypes of thinking, the life activity of society as a whole and the language personality in particular. We are close to understanding the linguistic picture of the world as a model of the world's vision of the people through the prism of language - this is a verbalized model of the conceptual system of knowledge and ideas about the world. In this case, with the help of linguistic means, it is described not simply the device of the world, but the totality of knowledge and ideas about it. The language explains the content of the conceptual picture of the world with the help of certain

verbally expressed signs – concepts, which form the conceptual sphere of the language as a multidimensional and multifaceted structure, since the elements reflected in it are an attribute not only of language but also of national culture. The conceptual sphere of the language is an information and cultural space, i.e. it is the form and mechanism of the existence of a national culture in the linguistic consciousness of the individual.

The core of the conceptsphere consists of concepts as a result of the argumentation of the linguistic and cognitive activity of a person, committed in certain historical, cultural, and pragmatic conditions [8]. The didactic aspect of the concept is manifested in its ability to connect the meaning of reality with the sign in the process of conceptualization and categorization of the world. Studying the concepts, a person becomes attached to the national and universal culture and shapes his/her own national worldview. A special role in this process is played by the concepts of spiritual values, as the identifiers of culture, in which, according to the typology of human needs, the feeling of deep roots and the desire for assimilation. In modern linguistic and cultural studies, values are formed in the linguistic consciousness of a person with the help of linguistic units representing a certain metaphorical image (if we are talking about spiritual values – abstract representations); this is an ideal formation that represents the importance of objects and phenomena of reality for society and human, expressed in the form of verbal models [7] and determined by the choice of linguistic means and methods of speech-activity [1, 26].

One of such spiritual values in Russian culture is the conceptsphere of “guardianship.”

The history of charity in Russia dates back to the 10th century. But only at the turn of the 17th-18th centuries, the state organizational form of guardianship and charity gradually began to take shape, which finally developed in the nineteenth century. It was during this period that a unique model of government care was laid in Russia as a form of public service and a social institution fixed by normative and legal documents: in the first half of the nineteenth century and for the first time, an institution of honorary guardians, caretakers, and guardians from representatives of the nobility, merchant class, industrialists for the care of schools and gymnasiums in economic and moral relations, headed by the governor, whose duties included two functions – the guardian and the supervisor. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Emperor Alexander II and the government develop partnership relations with business and the public and become guarantors of custody in various spheres of public life, especially in the sphere of public education, which means the historically established national system of educational and training institutions and their governing bodies, in the interests of upbringing the younger generations and being responsible for the socialization of children.

The history of the development of guardianship in Russia was reflected in the scientific works of a number of researchers. Thus, in 1899 a collection of works by the Russian historian, jurist and publicist Kavelin was published, where in the section “Science and Universities” (Volume 3) the essence of guardianship was precisely defined: “The trustee is the government body concerning the university, which, through its institutions and officials, is given the authority to manage its own affairs” [15].

The history of guardianship about public education is set out in a number of fundamental works devoted to leading universities in Russia [10]. The ideas of Professor V. I. Gerier [12] on increasing the role of the government in creating a coherent system of guardianship of public education is based on legislative acts. V. S. Ikonnikov [14] considered the custody as a progressive mechanism for the participation of the state and society in the management of universities.

The linguistic interpretation of the concept of “guardianship,” which forms the nucleus of the eponymous concept-sphere, has been examined in sufficient detail in a great number of articles. The linguaculturological analysis of this socio-cultural and cultural phenomenon, as well as all the synergetic approach to its study, revealed that as a result of

the expansion, social practice has transformed the meaning of the word-concept “guardianship”, and as of today it is nothing more than a social institution within the framework of public administration and self-government to protect the poor and incompetent persons on the basis of civil and family legislation of the Russian Federation.

One of the basic conceptual concepts of guardianship is the socio-cultural concept of “justice,” the study of which is devoted to the work of both domestic and foreign scientists.

In the framework of our study, the following:

1) E. Yu. Leontief, G. M. Muntean in the article “Justice as a social concept” proposes to use “social justice” in relation to “justice,” since this cultural phenomenon has a broad subject (denotative) field that allows to update its ontological component [34];

2) O. V. Kryakhtunova in the dissertation research titled “Shifter linguacultural concept of “justice” (on the material of the Russian linguistic culture)” considers the concept of “justice” as a cipher linguacultural phenomenon, which is a mental formation, the structure of which consists of two polar appraisal zones (positive and negative) axiologically and is characterized by a situational reversal of the reference [35];

3) I. S. Modest and V. A. Vorobyova in the psychological study “The concept of “justice” in the Russian linguaculture” analyze the concept of “justice” in terms of the genotype of the Russian culture [36];

4) T. Yu. Yakusheva in the article “Conceptualization of “justice” in the Orthodox culture” comes to the conclusion that in the Russian Orthodox culture, the concept of “justice” forms a peculiar semantic gap that is filled in situationally, when assessing the situation. Neither the custom, nor the church commandments, nor the laws can claim the role of the standard as the starting point is the initiating action [37].

The scientific novelty of our research is a synergetic approach to the linguistic and cultural description of the inner content of the sociocultural word-concept “justice” as a nuclear unit of the conceptual field of “guardianship”.

The theoretical significance lies in the development of linguacultural conceptology as applied to the study of the words of concepts as sociocultural values.

3 Research Questions

The paper aims to (a) justify the concept of “justice” as a nuclear, axiologically conditioned unit of the conceptual field of “guardianship” and (b) describe the features of the value of lingvocreative content of the concept of “justice.”

4 Purpose of the Study

Political stability and spiritual-cultural development of the country directly depends on the formulation and implementation of a well-thought-out and scientifically grounded social policy, in the center of which there is guardianship. Each year, for various reasons, the number of the most vulnerable part of the population (orphans, invalids, children with various incurable or severe diseases, pensioners, migrants and antisocial elements of society) increases. All of them need social protection, which is a set of guardianship measures and means to create an accessible environment for their life.

The purpose of the study is to determine the internal content of the concept of “justice,” functioning in the Russian linguistic culture and being the nuclear unit of the conceptual field of “guardianship.” The object of description is the concept of “justice” in the structure of the conceptual field of “guardianship.”

5 Research Methods

The methodological basis of the research is based on the dialectical connection of the past with the present and the application of the conceptual apparatus, which has been formed both in the Historical and in the Social Sciences: Sociology, Philosophy, Political Science, and Linguistics. The methodological dominant is the socio-cultural phenomenon in the value-semantic space of the language. This necessitated the involvement of methods and categories of the sciences, and, therefore, an interdisciplinary method was used, including, first of all, historiographic and ideographic methods, including linguistic and cultural analysis, which together allowed the presentation of a systematic description of an axiologically significant socio-cultural and cultural phenomenon; second, there is the introspective method, on the basis of which the basic way of presenting the information reflected in the scientific works of Russian scientists is constructed, is the principle of free interpretation of the material.

6 Findings

Guardianship as one of the forms of manifestation of mercy originated in the days of the Russian princes Vladimir the Saint and Yaroslav the Wise: public organizations began to appear, providing guardianship services that bear the names of brotherhoods and fraternal unions. These parish organizations acted on the basis of self-government, set up educational organizations, print shops, translated textbooks, and took care of opening schools for children in the spirit of Orthodoxy. In the era of Peter's reforms, the state organizational form of guardianship had been gradually formed, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, Russia already had a unique model of government care as a social institution, which goal was to provide reasonable assistance to the needy and fight against poverty. This model existed before the 1917 October Revolution [10].

Guardianship as a form of charity is an integral part of the Russian language picture of the world, in particular, one of its components, the conceptsphere of "spirituality." For the Russian people, the concept of "spirituality" is particularly significant. As a system of moral values, it is initially revealed in the texts of Holy Scripture, the Traditions of the Holy Fathers. So, in the Bible, the basic universal human values of the universe are singled out, namely the words-concepts of love, truth, evil, beauty, peace, guilt, sin, and so on. In the sources of ancient Russian literature, in the Instruction of Vladimir Monomakh for example, there are such concepts of spirituality as beauty, peace, harmony of the universe, love, compassion (mercy), reason.

Philosophers and scientists of 19th and 20th centuries in spirituality consider the basis of the objective world and the most important dominant of cultural values that form the national mentality of the language personality. Among the main dominants of the Russian spirituality, they first of all refer to humanity (mercy) bring manifested in love, tolerance for one's neighbor and justice [23].

In the framework of the research, we would like, first of all, to emphasize the notion of "justice" as a nuclear component of the linguacultural phenomenon of "guardianship" in the Russian language picture of the world, which we consider as a social institution for interaction of people for legal protection or charity. Justice is one of the basic spiritual values of the Russian national mentality and the basic property on which a system of guardianship in Russian society is built on.

V. I. Dal connects the semantics of the word with truth, justice; correctness, what has been done in truth, is in conscience, in rightness [38, p. 377]. However, the very word justice in the dictionary is not fixed. In the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Brockhaus and Efron, fairness is interpreted as an element of legal consciousness, the highest principle of

mutual, primarily legal, relations between people, whose idea, according to Spencer, is to recognize for each person the right to unimpeded activity and to use those benefits that it brings. Spencer points to the dualism of justice – the idea of equality and inequality in the distribution of cultural and material values created in society [39]. The idea of justice in this case is connected with the concept of equality, but in no way is identical to it. According to the modern dictionaries of synonyms of the Russian language, the lexeme “equality” is identical to such words as equal rights and comes from the Old Russian *ravine*, which means “smooth”, “similar.” In Russian, the word appeared in the eleventh century. It originated from the primordially Russian form “equal: (in Polish – *rowny* (equal), in Slovak – *rovny*, which also stands for “equal”). It form with the initial “ra”, which is Old Slavonic in its origin [23, 26]. Equality provides for “similar” but not identical social status of people (compare: similar – similar to anyone, something, the same – absolutely similar [40].

The link between justice and the notion of law is indicated in the dictionary article of the Encyclopaedic Dictionary of the Russian Bibliographic Institute “Granat”: “the law is called the same as that which regulates in a well-known way the reciprocal relations of people united in societies, and what individuals are granted or provided with this regulation, and that in this regulation is considered the most correct or appropriate justice [41]. And in this case, the concept of “justice” can be defined as a correspondence between people’s activities and their social position, between their rights and duties, including the distribution of goods in accordance with the ideas of justice or injustice.

In modern explanatory dictionaries of the Russian language [19, for instance], “justice” is 1) what corresponds to the impartial, i.e. being performed in accordance with the truth, actions, 2) unbiased (without prejudice), an honest attitude to someone/something, 3) the correspondence of human relations, laws, orders being established by society with norms, requirements. Justice is associated as a kind of manifestation of altruism, i.e. readiness for disinterested action for the benefit of other people being usually in need of protection and assistance. And this is moral (ethical) justice, implying “proportionality in the distribution of the benefits and burdens of people’s joint life” [30, p. 537]. Moral justice regulates relations in society, since it presupposes, first of all, the equality of all members of society to be happy and to possess the necessary benefits for this. The etymology of the word also indicates the predominance of the moral aspect. Russian “justice” goes back to the common Slavonic noun “truth” (*pravda*) [24; 29; 31, etc.]. According to the materials of the dictionary by A. A. Gruzberg, in the sources of the 16th-17th centuries, it is registered in the diplomatic correspondence of the Moscow and Polish-Lithuanian states; although, in comparison with the word “truth,” it is still used much less often (259 cases to 10). Later in business and scientific texts, the word “justice” is used in the sense of “truth,” “accuracy.” Then the word “justice” also develops the meaning of “paying tribute” [42]. The word is formed from the adjective *c-pra-ved-liiviy*, which, in turn, consists of two roots-right (true-right-true-true) and *-behave* (know). It is no accident that the word justice is used in Russian as a synonym for “right,” “true.” This linguistic fact is also indicated in the Church Slavonic Dictionary of the Russian Language and others. As we know, by rule, our distant ancestors called the Divine Peace, the moral law governing humanity. And it was the Slavs who emphasized the identity of the terms “justice” and “rule” (in this case God), which must be known [43].

N. A. Berdyaev points out that it was always natural for a Russian person to seek justice on Earth [3], i.e. the absolute truth. The truth is a relative reality, recreating a holistic picture of the world in which a person, through experience, seeks “justice and righteousness.” Truth as a property of human cognition is a kind of ideal of righteousness and perfection, it is the transfer in a generalized form of ideas about ideal social relations [2, 32], and consequently, about moral justice, which is correlated with the concept of “conscience,” which is responsibility for one’s behavior towards the surrounding people,

society. It is “conscience” that obliges a person to give himself to serving certain spiritual values (kindness, mercy, justice, etc.). In this case, justice is expressed in a person’s need to assess both their own and others’ actions according to the existing in society concept of the distribution of benefits and punishments (i.e. to act in justice, seek, establish justice, come to justice, etc.).

Second, legal aspect of justice is due to the influence of the Western European culture. The etymologically Latin *justitia*, which underlies the West European concept-word “justice,” goes back to *jus* (right, law). In the legal aspect, justice is a set of regulatory rules governing public, including civil, relations. This form of justice is primarily connected with the law as a system for protecting the rights of members of the society aimed at cooperating their activities and eliminating social and legal conflicts in society; legal justice is based on the idea of pure reason [33], that is, a priori knowledge. Hence, there are two forms of legal justice interconnected in society (distinguished in the ancient world by Aristotle): first, distributive justice (to everyone equally, to each according to merit, to each according to needs); second, there is equalizing justice (distribution of benefits and punishments regardless of social, property, and other status in society). M. Klimenko [16] emphasizes that the appeal of humanity to the problem of justice, as a rule, was associated with periods of aggravation of the social situation, when it was required to find a way out of the created tense conditions of society. This is the way out and the idea of guardianship as a social institution, whose work is aimed at the implementation of legal protection and charitable assistance to the poor.

The interrelation of moral sanctions with the legal aspect of justice is clearly represented in modern definitions used in various scientific fields.

In the Dictionary of Terms for General and Social Pedagogy (Yekaterinburg, 2006), justice is correlated with the idea of creating equal social opportunities for all members of society to realize their abilities and satisfy their vital needs [44].

In philosophy, the concept of “justice” is defined as the general moral sanction of the joint life of people, which determines the way of justifying and distributing desires, interests, and responsibilities between them; it is “a moral principle that means punishment for the evil and reward for the good” [45].

In jurisprudence, it is a universal principle of interstate and social relations, serving as a moral guide in law-making, law enforcement, and law-applying forms of human activity [46].

From an economic perspective, justice is the basic concept of a welfare economy, where it is understood as being impartial or disinterested (fairness). This understanding of justice was named after Rawls, its author. In his book *The Theory of Justice*, he argues that justice is a sign of a system of society that individuals would choose if they were not influenced purely by personal interests. In this disinterested state, they seem to conclude an agreement on the nature of society and its economic structure. “Ignorance” of their interests does not allow them to know that position (defined by the abilities, gender, race) that they occupy in this society. In this case, a society with four properties will be chosen and these properties can be considered as properties of justice [47].

In political science, justice is defined, which implies the implementation of natural or normative relations between political parties, social institutions, and citizens, the state apparatus and the population [48]. And in this case, it is possible to designate the third aspect of justice, political one, depending on such factors as the form of political organization, the maturity of political culture, and hence the political regime, the distribution of public and political interests.

From the above definitions, used in various spheres of public life, it is clear that in the contemporary Russian linguaculture, the inner content of the concept of “justice” is a

combination of three aspects – moral, social, and socio-political regulation, which allows us to identify in its internal structure the following basic elements:

1) Morality as norms and rules of human behavior, based, first of all, on such moral qualities as conscience and truth;

2) The right, as provided by the laws of the state, to distribute public goods and punishments on the recognition of the moral value of people, regardless of the situation and specific characteristics;

3) Political coloration, i.e. being related to the implementation of policies and based on state-legal relations;

4) The law as a universally binding and immutable rule in the system of social and legal relations;

5) Impartiality as a characteristic of decisions and actions taken and performed solely on the basis of principles, regardless of preferences and interests that are satisfied or infringed upon.

Thus, the concept of “justice” has a complex internal structure, which reflects the idea of applying the same measure (in conscience and law) to all people despite their social affiliation. “The highest justice for all” reflects the essence of the Russian justice and only borders on the concept of legal justice, which is the consequence of the formation of state and legal institutions. Justice is a moral and value phenomenon of social life, and legality is a political and legal one [43].

7 Conclusion

The study describes the main language universals that implement the concept of “justice” in the Russian language picture of the world, which, being a moral and legal regulator of social and legal relations, constitutes the basic component of the “guardianship” concept. This concept realizes the idea of guardianship as a social protection for the disadvantaged part of the population in the linguistic consciousness of the Russian people.

As a result of the research, we came to the following conclusions:

1. The linguacultural core of the linguistic picture of the world consists of concepts that are verbalized in the mind of the individual, which form conceptual fields in it with thematic content. From the point of view of linguodidactics, the conceptsphere corresponds with the thesaurus of the linguistic personality, its lexicon. Therefore, in order to understand and study the sociocultural space, to become its full-fledged member, one must learn to use the language as a tool for modeling the image of the world.

2. A special role in didactic purposes is played by the concept of “guardianship”, occupying a special place in the linguistic picture of the world of the Russian people, as it reveals the features of the social structure in the system of the rule-of-law state.

3. From the linguistic and cultural point of view, the concept of “guardianship” as a form of mercy in the Russian conceptsphere of “spirituality” reflects the idea of social and legal protection, based primarily on the idea of moral justice. Linguistic analysis revealed a transformation of the internal content of the word-concept “justice” in the Russian linguistic culture.

4. Justice as an absolute virtue, correlated with the idea of universal well-being, co-exists in society in three forms, namely moral, legal, and political one. The idea of moral and legal justice lies at the heart of the Russian custody as an institution of social relations, playing in it the role of a social regulator that provides moral and legal, or legally formalized, protection of the underprivileged layers of the population. If we take into account the fact that justice is based on the idea of universal well-being and equality in the distribution of all benefits, then guardianship as a form of mercy reflects the same idea, being refracted through the prism of a social world order built on protection and law.

The results of the study can be used in reading university courses “such as Linguaculturology,” “Intercultural Communication,” and “Cognitive Linguistics.”

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