

Language as a cultural code of a nation (on the example of the modern Kazakh language)

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Abstract. Today, linguistics is dominated by the anthropocentric direction where special attention is paid to the human factor. The anthropocentric position of the research paradigm is aimed at a deep disclosure of the cognitive and communicative function of language. In the studies of the anthropocentric direction, a human is characterized as a speaking, rational object with his own worldview. Cognitive linguistics occupies a special place in the study of human thinking and speech. Language serves a human as a means of cognition, a means of communication, it is the main way to transfer knowledge about the world, accumulated in the process of cognition of being. Language not only illuminates thought, but also leaves its mark on cognitive activity, as a result of which it participates in mental activity. In modern Kazakh linguistics, special attention is paid to the influence of language on the way of thinking and human activity, as well as the influence of man on language, the human factor in language. Speakers of the same language have a common way of thinking, which is reflected in the onomasiology (name or designation) of different objects, nature, etc. A human shows the richness of his language mainly in vocabulary and phraseology. For this, it is necessary to consider the language as a cognitive system as a whole, taking into account the requirements of cognition and communication.

Keywords: cognition, language picture of the world, cognitive direction

1 Introduction

Cognitive paradigm is one of the most sought after and addressed areas in modern linguistics. Cognitive linguistics is an interdisciplinary branch that describes language as a cognitive mechanism, a system of signs. Cognitive dimensions are explored to transfer knowledge, original language, with respect to its activities as a carrier, owner and disseminator of knowledge about true existence. In cognitive linguistics, the internal cognitive structure of language in expressing knowledge is described as a system in which the speaker and the listener process information. Therefore, it is necessary to consider language as a cognitive system at large, consistent with cognition and communication demands. Considering language-human interrelations defines human activity as a subject recognizing, naming categories, conceptualizing and incorporating it in communication activities. Thus, language is a means of communication, getting knowledge about the world, concentration of knowledge and knowledge transfer.

Recently, the picture of the world has been given a particular emphasis. The worldview contributes to language, while language streamlines the representation

of the world in human consciousness. Language is a mirror of being, a form of developing human knowledge of the universe. The information processed is a picture of the world. It contains the main signs of human knowledge of the world. Therefore, the picture of the world is considered the principal element of the human worldview.

2 Problem Statement

The consciousness of men summarizes specific signs and features constituting the being in the form of knowledge. Thus, a knowledge base is accumulated and information is received. Language is closely connected with the knowledge obtained by men as they learn about the world, the way it is displayed in human consciousness. For some concept to form in the mind, it must be expressed through a linguistic symbol. The content of the concept is mirrored in the mind on a semblance of this representation. People distinguish objects and phenomena around, relying on the signs they depict and that are clearly expressed both in consciousness and in language. When people think about something, images

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of these objects are displayed in their minds. The image of a symbol serves as the backbone for thought. Thought is expressed in words. Knowledge is first encoded in linguistic semantics. Consciousness is expressed through language and is also structured through the language. Human consciousness is closely linked with language and speech. Based on social intercourse, language and self-consciousness are forged.

The picture of the world is referred to as the totality of integrated knowledge about the being in the public consciousness of a certain nation, represented in philosophy, linguistics, literature, mythology, etc. It is the totality of human ideas about the being, life, the universe as a system of values, a paradigm of knowledge. The linguistic picture of the world is one of the most important areas in an anthropocentric paradigm. Learning a language in an anthropocentric dimension indicates the need to learn a language in connection with an individual who is a native speaker of this language, its brainpower, worldview, and national culture. The publications in this direction include those by A.Y. Aikhenvald, A. Storch [1], G. Fauconnier [2], W. Chafe [3], G. I. Barannikova [4], N.N. Boldyrev [5], U.P. Strizhak [6].

The knowledge base, accumulated in everyday life and transferred across generations, passes through a language sieve, a kind of linguistic selection. The basic structure of knowledge is reflected in the language. It also reflects the knowledge of man, the impact of the environment on man. Language, along with the representation of knowledge, is a means of expressing thoughts, therefore, cognitive activity can also be determined by studying the language. Language does not exist outside of a person, reality is reflected in our consciousness, in our memory. The linguistic picture of the world is a product of consciousness, which is formed resulting from thinking, the interaction of being and language as a means of expressing thoughts about the universe, encoded in the language system, i.e., in vocabulary and grammar.

The package of concepts and knowledge in a particular language community is displayed and stored in the language. The linguistic picture of the world is permanent. That is, knowledge about the world is specifically structured and is handed down from generation to generation, the linguistic consciousness of the speakers, the way of thinking is transmitted and preserved by traditional categories. The linguistic picture of the world is a set of people's ideas about being, expressed in linguistic symbols and meanings, a representation of information about the universe, specifically arranged in the systematic meanings of words. Vocabulary takes a special place in the linguistic picture of the world, thereby capturing the national worldview.

3 Research Questions

Language is used to determine the level of knowledge. Once reflected in the language, knowledge conveys the outputs of human mental activity. Mental activity is

conveyed through language, our thoughts enter the world through language and are transmitted to others. Thus, language represents a person's worldview. The linguistic picture of the world is subjective, because it reflects the vision, worldview of a particular person. It generates a certain code through a system of categories transmitted from father to child, and is accepted ready-made [7]. Subject to national, cultural drivers, words acquire additional meanings in individual languages. In the Kazakh worldview, white is characterized as a symbol of goodness, mercy, humanity, chastity, whereas black as a symbol of evil and sadness.

Language is a system that accumulates, stores and transmits across generations information gathered by the cumulative consciousness. Learning processes characterize not only the subject as such, but also its inbeing. Reflecting on whether it is impossible to clearly indicate the features of a conceptual system, E.S. Kubryakova says: "It (the conceptual system) is a certain mixture that controls and manipulates a person in his/her speech-thinking activities as it does with specific ideal entities (concepts)" [8, 9]. She argues that, compared with the semantic system of the language, the conceptual system is much richer and more sophisticated. To conceptual system E.S. Kubryakova refers "opinion, knowledge, evaluation, awareness of the purpose of learning process, its various methods, possibilities of acquiring accurate data about the universe, desires, needs." She claims that the conceptual system should not be confused with consciousness, memory, mental lexicon or information thesaurus.

Conceptual content and language have a two-way relationship. Conceptual content cannot be described without the aids of language. Hence, language alone can symbolize phenomena in consciousness. In this regard, A. Baitursynuly writes: "The Kazakhs have a saying: "Өнер алды – қызыл тіл, *Oner aldy – kyzyl til*". The Kazakhs know the value of words. No matter what architectural palaces are, no matter how graceful, imaginative paintings are, no matter how beautiful kyui songs are, everything can be described in words and imagined. But no other art can convey what a language conveys" [10].

The picture of the world is derived from information processed and perceived by the human consciousness with various senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste). During historical development, two types of knowledge were formed – sensory and logical. In his instructions, Abai Kunanbayuly clearly designates sensory knowledge and logical knowledge. The thinker explicitly distinguishes sensory knowledge: "Hearing with their ears, seeing with their eyes, touching with their hands, tasting with their tongue, sniffing with their nose, people assemble a picture of the world around. The feelings received, whether pleasant or not, perceived by the five above senses, being arranged in the memory in a given pattern, create a certain imagery. To get a pleasant impression from the good and to turn away from the bad is the natural ability of the soul" [11]. The thinker calls sensory knowledge "natural ability of the soul"; logical knowledge – "professional ability of the soul." Thanks to the natural ability of the soul (seeing with one's eyes,

hearing with one's ears, touching with one's hands, tasting with one's tongue, sniffing with one's nose), a person cognizes the world. That is the way the picture of the world is shaped. Thus, information perceived by various human senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste) forms the picture of the world. The person realizes the information perceived.

Farabi's publications are also concerned with some discourses about the universe, studies of a cognitive orientation: "The sensory power is considered to be both dominant [power] and nourishing [power]. The last embraces the five senses that are commonly known: the senses divided among the eyes, ears and other organs. Each of these five senses realizes its own intuition. The [sensory] dominant power is the [power] that unites all the five senses acting as its observers and messengers for a certain type of novelty in each area of the kingdom. Thus, the dominant [power], as a ruler, gathers the news brought by these envoys from all areas of the kingdom".

Whereas sensory knowledge is associated with the function of perception, through the human senses, logical knowledge is aimed at determining the essence, specificity, patterns of certain phenomena resulting from reasoning. A. Baitursynuly's articles contain all the human senses: "There are two kinds of matter: one is visible, audible, olfactory, palpable, tangible, the other is invisible, inaudible, not olfactory, not palpable, insusceptible data, abstract objects that a person knows only mentally. The words denoting the names of these data and abstract objects otherwise referred to as "noun" [10]. We believe that A. Baitursynuly's classifications related to human sensory perception should be included by the authors into textbooks and address all the senses in the groupings of concrete and abstract nouns.

Language is not only a means of communication between people, but also a universal value that characterizes the being, worldview, and way of thinking of each nation. Human reasoning will depend on the language of a certain ethnic and cultural community. Language is the spirit of the nation, the spirit of the nation is conveyed through the language. Therefore, the language and culture of each nation will be unique. Culture and language will depend on some general patterns commonly found in a particular ethnic group. The fate of language and ethnicity are inextricably linked. In this regard, A. Baitursynuly writes: "If the word disappears, the people at large will disappear" [10].

The knowledge base resides in the semantics of the language and encapsulates the national, cultural experience of a particular language community. Therefore, the words used to express the universe render national features of the worldview. The picture of the world appears in different languages in different ways. A person passes down the acquired knowledge, worldview through language from generation to generation. Each nation forms its own picture of the world and each nation has its own ideo-ethnic picture of the world. Therefore, the linguistic picture of the world is universal and national. The national picture of the world is seen in the vocabulary as a national feature of the language. The language embraces and modifies the knowledge about national identity, public place, history – the universe.

Therefore, culture and language are inextricably linked with mentality and worldview. Language is employed to grasp the features of the national language. Lexical items that have been named to denote a certain thing not only imply that realities exist in the mind of the speaker, but also indicate that they have fallen into a certain system in objective life. In this regard, K. Zhubanov notes: "... Other peoples do not have words like *ісек*, *тұсақ*, *құнан*, *құнажын*, *дөнен*, *дөнежін*. The Kazakhs call the colors blue, light blue, green *көк* ("blue"). The Adays and the Arabs have many names for camel species; Kazakhs of the Volga and Caspian regions know many names of fish species. Hence, there is no name for an unused substance. As soon as the conditions of life began to differ between peoples, the names that were given to each object were also different. Language is created for a long time, does not change immediately, its change is connected with everyday life" [12]. The linguistic picture of the world characterizes and explains its specific uses, as well as language acquisition.

Language contributes to the development of culture. Culture is a complex system of values and ways in which a person learns both the world and himself. One of the scientists who first came to the conclusion about the relationship between language and culture is W. von Humboldt. He describes the language as a treasure trove keeping the spirit of the people and culture, noting that "through the language, one can determine the relationship between man and the universe" [13]. Culture resides in the vocabulary of the language. Changes in culture show up in language as well. It is known that in the early twentieth century, triggered by various societal changes and innovations, many new concepts were formed, many new words appeared in the fields of science, art and education, like *airplane*, *joint-stock company*, *cinema*, *resolution*, *instruction*, *progress*, etc. Given that the culture changes dramatically, the language develops rapidly. It does not change drastically, though. In this regard, K. Zhubanov writes: "A socially valuable objective is to explain the language of one generation to another... If the language changed faster than now, we would not understand the language of the generation that we created 10 years ago. Rarely do such changes develop, enrich the language" [12].

People take life experiences over from an ethnocultural community, domesticating the knowledge base accumulated before. In cognitive activity, people try to learn the world, to comprehend the environment and to understand their role in the world. Language is a tool that reflects the characteristics of the speaker's worldview, an indicator of a special national mentality, the basis of culture. Therefore, M. Balakaev writes: "People receive knowledge, education and edification through the language. The teach culture, art, science, technology through language. Language is one of the characteristics of a nation, a nation is one of the forms of culture. Therefore, it preserves the goals of national self-consciousness, the way of thinking, the behavior of each nation. Such features, culture, customs, literary heritage of people, their mental posture are transmitted through the language across generations" [14].

In the course of cultural and historical development, each nation accumulates and preserves knowledge about the world in close contacts with the environment, transmits it from generation to generation through verbal consciousness, language in the form of a special cultural code. Consequently, the language forges the speaker, determines his/her traditions, worldview, mentality, national character. The culture, knowledge and experience of a certain ethno-speaking community are expressed in the language and form its mentality. Subsequent upon cognitive activity, the language conveys the research thoughts of the population and preserves the picture of the world formed in the cumulative ethno-cultural consciousness of the people.

4 Purpose of the Study

The paper aims to determine the way the world is perceived, categorized, classified and comprehended, the way knowledge is accumulated, to show language as a cognitive mechanism for the development of human knowledge about the world, to study the nomination process as a process of cognition of the world, to show the way meaningful information acquired in human cognitive activities and which has become a product of processing, finds its expression in linguistic forms.

5 Research Methods

The paper relies on the cognitive-representative method, the description method, general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, contextual, structural-semantic analyses, and comparative analysis.

6 Findings

The studies in the cognitive direction identifies important ways of processing information by a person through the language system. Language is an integral part of culture, a manifestation of the national spirit. Through the language, the features of the national mentality are shown. In addition, language is one of the channels that objectifies culture and transmits it. Conceptualization will involve the assimilation of information, the classification of objects and phenomena in a conceptual form. Most of these concepts are fixed in the language through the meaning of the word, thereby promoting knowledge and handing it down from generation to generation.

Language reflects the outputs of conceptualization. Language affects the formation, accumulation, structuring of knowledge about the universe (i.e. the process of conceptualization), as well as the formation, expansion of the conceptual system. This is due to semantics being bilateral, i.e., referring to both the conceptual system and the language system. Therefore, semantics is viewed as a bridge between the language system and the conceptual system. The language forms a kind of system that shapes the worldview and forms a picture of the world. The worldview is reflected in the

language. It serves as the basis for all cultural stereotypes.

7 Conclusion

The knowledge accumulated by a person through the knowledge of the world is reflected in linguistic semantics, in the linguistic picture of the world. Over time, knowledge is arranged and systematized as a set of views, a common cumulative worldview. It is common to all speakers of a particular language. Its anthropocentric character is clearly seen in the lexico-semantic system. These units serve as a cultural code and are referred to as knowledge, stereotypes. Having studied its vocabulary, it is possible to identify the main values reflected in the language. Language semantics characterizes the culture typical of a particular language community and individual speakers.

Performing an important function in human life, knowledge becomes a particle of culture. A pool of knowledge accumulated over many centuries is becoming increasingly ethnic aligned with a certain cultural hierarchy of customs, skills, features of thinking, worldview. In the linguistic consciousness, a national picture of the world is shaped, national, stereotyped ideas about being are reflected, and the national specificity of the language community is expressed. A universal consciousness is formed by getting knowledge of the world. Along with universal values, the language also reflects national worldview features. Language is an integral part of culture, a manifestation of the national spirit. Through the language, the features of the national mentality are manifested. In addition, language is one of the channels that objectifies culture, transmits it. Language as a particle of culture is based on the experience of people. Having mastered the language, the speaker speaks this language and adopts the worldview characteristic of this culture.

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