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Language explication of the conceptualized meanings in ethno-cultural and socio-political aspects of discourse

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Abstract

The study of ethnical concept language representations in the South Ossetia discourse as the discourse of not recognized country is a new direction in political linguistics. The article is focused on revealing verbal representations and cognitive features of the ethno specific political concept '*фæндæг*'/'road' as the only highway

connecting the Republic of South Ossetia – the State of Alania with the outside world through the Republic of North Ossetia (Russia). Based on lexicographic sources, media materials, Internet blogs and data from the associative experiment conducted in three age groups, among teenagers and young people, people of the middle and older generation, the structure and content of this discursive formation were revealed.

Keywords: South Ossetian discourse, Concept, Subconcept, associative experiment, Conceptual modeling.

Explicación lingüística de los significados conceptualizados en los aspectos etnoculturales y sociopolíticos del discurso

Resumen

El estudio de las representaciones lingüísticas de conceptos étnicos en el discurso de Osetia del Sur como el discurso de un país no reconocido es una nueva dirección en lingüística política. El artículo se centra en revelar representaciones verbales y características cognitivas del concepto político etno específico 'фæндаг' / 'road' como la única carretera que conecta la República de Osetia del Sur, el Estado de Alania con el mundo exterior a través de la República de Osetia del Norte (Rusia). Con base en fuentes lexicográficas, materiales de medios, blogs de Internet y datos del experimento asociativo realizado en tres grupos de edad, entre adolescentes y jóvenes, personas de generación media y mayor, se reveló la estructura y el contenido de esta formación discursiva.

Palabras clave: Discurso de Osetia del Sur, Concepto, Subconcepto, Experimento asociativo, Modelado conceptual.

1. INTRODUCTION

Among the main directions of political linguistics is the consideration of the specifics of the functioning of the key concepts of

culture in the framework of political communication. The political concept is one of the basic units that form the linguistic picture of the political world of a people. Conceptual domain is a certain set of stereotypical mental schemes-images, representations, judgments, interpretations, opinions. The political conceptual domain in the "collapsed" form is verbally denoted by an abstract concept giving a name or a name to a certain discursive space, like the name of an archived file (CHUDINOV, 2006).

Concepts significant for a certain language and culture are actively used in the framework of political discourse, in which they acquire both their universal content and new meanings and perform special functions (PAVLIKOVA, 2018; PODYMOV et al., 2019). At the turn of the XX–XXI centuries, political discourse in the post-Soviet space develops new speech forms demanded by the political situation itself: both structural and linguistic means are involved by this structure (LEHMANN, 1999; KARASIK, 2002; CHILTON, 2004; SHEIGAL, 2004; CHUDINOV, 2006; REPINA et al., 2018; ZHELTUKHINA et al., 2018; MUKHAMETZYANOVA et al., 2018; TAMERYAN et al., 2018; 2019; ect.).

The aim of the article is to reveal verbal representations and cognitive features of the ethnospecific political concept 'фæндаг'/'road' as the only highway connecting the Republic of South Ossetia – the State of Alania with the outside world through the Republic of North Ossetia (Russia).

The theoretical basis of this research contains the theory of regular polysemy produced by Russian and European linguists in the framework of the structural-semantic description of the language (STEPANOV, 2001; CHILTON, 2004; POPOVA, STERNIN, 2006; CHUDINOV, 2006; AKISHINA et al., 2017; OBORSKY et al., 2018; GIMALIEV et al., 2018; ZHELTUKHINA et al., 2018; etc.) and the theory of conceptual metaphor that emerged in the USA as the direction of cognitive linguistics (LAKOFF, JOHNSON, 1980; ZHELTUKHINA, MIKHAYLUSHKINA, 2016; REPINA et al., 2018; MUTAVCHI et al., 2018; TAMERYAN et al., 2018; 2019; etc.) and is successfully being developed in Russia. We are witnessing the process of production of the principles of the organization of important political events, a context model constructed that formed the individual characteristics of political discourse by some politicians. Comparing the speeches of state leaders, we have the opportunity to observe the semantic variations of politicians' speeches.

KARASIK points out the multicomponent structure of the concept, distinguishing the conceptual, figurative and value component in it. The conceptual component is the language fixation of the concept, its designation, description, feature structure, definition, comparative characteristics of this concept in relation to a particular series of concepts never exist in isolation, their most important quality is holographic multidimensional integration into the system of our experience (KARASIK, 2002, p. 10).

"The structure of the concept includes everything that makes it a fact of culture that is the original form (etymology); modern associations; assessments, etc." (STEPANOV, 2001, p. 41). STEPANOV distinguishes three components in the structure of the concept, they are: "1) basic, actual feature, 2) additional, or several additional, "passive" features that are no longer relevant, "historical", 3) inner shape, usually not conscious, are sealed into external verbal form" (STEPANOV, 2001, p. 44). The structure of the concept is considered as a field consisting of the core and periphery.

Political discourse, as a type of institutional discourse, is characterized by certain basic concepts such as politics, power, people, state, democracy, patriotism, prosperity, crisis, President, solidarity, enemy, terrorism and others (SHEIGAL, 2004).

2. METHODOLOGY

Field method in linguistics is a method of systematic analysis of language units of different levels at which data units are grouped in an orderly manner around a central value or a name / term (denote the corresponding object of reality), depending on the degrees of relatedness with this aspect of the value or characteristics of the denotation (LEHMANN, 1999).

Based on the principle of frequency of associations identified during the experiment the method of associative experiment allows to identify not only the core, periphery and content component of the concept under consideration, but also to build up the features of the concept according to their degree of importance. Respondents provide their associative array to the designated "word-stimulus", which subsequently formed the associative field, which is

A fragment of an image of the world of a particular ethnic group, as reflected in the consciousness of the "middle" of the bearer of a culture, his/her motivations, and therefore his/her cultural stereotypes (UFIMTSEVA, 2000, p. 140).

The associative field of a word is a set of reactions to a word-stimulus.

Associative field has the core (most frequent response) and the periphery (a single reaction). One can distinguish between individual and collective associative field. Collective associative field is revealed in free associative experiment, usually called the associative norm (GOROSHKO, 2001, p. 28).

The associative experiment in our research acts as a mechanism for verifying of the concept. Associative experiment is an effective tool for the study of memory, vocabulary, mechanisms of generation and perception of speech, the study of national and cultural specifics of language consciousness.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The bilingual peculiarity of the formation of the language of Ossetian political communication is aimed at solving the issues of domestic political and national-cultural development. The development of bilingualism in different regions of Russia and in the Transcaucasian republics manifests itself in different ways. The specifics of bilingualism development depends on many factors such as social functions of Russian and ethnic languages, language contacts, as well as functional distribution of these languages in a particular community.

In the territory of the former Soviet Union, which the Republic of South Ossetia belongs to, most of the population has South Ossetian and Russian citizenship, many of them study and work in North Ossetia and Russia, maintain ties with numerous relatives. Besides, the Russian Federation is the most important partner of South Ossetia in the political, economic and military spheres, as the functioning of its economy strongly relies on the assistance from Russia. The Russian language is not only the second state language in the Republic. It has a significant impact on the formation of all levels of the Ossetian language, primarily on the process of formation of the vocabulary in specific areas of communication, when units of the Ossetian and Russian languages function as a single lexical fund at both levels of speech and language.

The presence of everyday bilingualism in the speech of politicians is a means of manipulative influence on the audience, which especially often manifests itself as the wedging into the Russian-speaking speech of units in the Ossetian language and vice versa. The research is carried out within the framework of linguistic pragmatics, according to which the meaning of expression depends on a specific communicative situation. Functional distribution of Russian and ethnic languages depends on the type of target audience.

Mixed bilingualism manifests itself when both languages equally meet communicative goals in a certain situation of communication, but in this case, multilingual speech-generating mechanisms interact (VERESHCHAGIN, 1969, p. 27-28).

South Ossetian political discourse is being developed according to the model of Russian political discourse. Political communication and office work in the Republic are carried out in both the Russian and Ossetian languages. Communication within the framework of institutional discourse is carried out mainly in Russian. Cases of interference or intercalation are usually observed within the framework of semi-institutional discourse during meetings with the population of rural areas or professional groups.

In the mentality of South Ossets concepts 'road' and 'фæндар'/'road', implemented in the Russian and Ossetian languages, occupy a special place, taking many connotation semantic layers. The

people's ethno-cultural specifics of the concept 'фæндар'/'road' is reflected in the lexico-phraseological system of the Ossetian language and is based on folklore, mythological, religious and historically formed attitudes to the road.

The lexeme 'road' in the Russian language is derived from the verb 'to pull' and means "torn in the forest space"; the word etymologically dates back to the Indo-European \square dorgh- (FASMER 1987, p. 530).

SHANSKY and KRYLOV consider the word 'road' to be Slavic in origin, it is related to the words 'wood' and 'turf', as derived from the general framework 'дор' "cleared area"; it goes back to the verb 'to tear' (SHANSKY, 1973, p. 48; KRYLOV, 2005, p. 118).

The lexeme 'road' is fixed in the XVII century in the meaning of "place for passage, passing", and a century earlier it meant 'ride' and 'journey' (DICTIONARY OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE XI-XVII, 1977, p. 323). The word 'path' of earlier origin is known from the beginning of the XI century in the meaning of 'path, duct, channel' (DICTIONARY OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE XI-XVII, 1977, p. 64). 'Road' according to DAL's dictionary is "mount strip; rolled or deliberately prepared in various ways for driving, of passage; a way, path; the direction and the distance from place to place" (DAL, 2008, p. 176)

Modern semantic structure of the word 'road' in the Russian language is presented in the explanatory dictionaries as following:

1. The strip of land intended for movement, the way of communication. 2. Place that is necessary to walk on or drive. 3. Travel; stay on the road. 4. Figuratively. Actions, activity (OZHEGOV, SHVEDOVA, 2006; EVGENIEVA, 2003). According to V. I. Abaev the word 'fændag' "the road" in the Ossetian language has Indo-European origin: it comes from the Iranian pantā with the accretion -g – fænd "plan, plan, intention, desire." One should pay attention to the semantic proximity of expressions such as "chart the way", "plan", etc. (ABAEV, 1989, p.445).

In the Ossetian-Russian dictionaries, 'fændag' is defined as "the way, the road" (BIGULAEV et al., 2004, P. 444; GURIEV, 2004, p. 444).

The paremiological aspect of the concept 'fændag' is presented by 243 representations (GUTIEV, 1976; AYLAROV et al., 2006).

The number of synonymous lexemes of 'fændag' is represented by к̄бахвæд, к̄бахнад "trail", цалхвæд "track", здæхт, арæзт "direction"; цæуæн "path" in the dictionaries (ABAEV, 1989; GURIEV, 2004; BIGULAEV et al., 2004).

These etymological dictionaries allow us to trace the cognitive basis of the formation of nominations in the Russian and Ossetian languages. In the Russian language consciousness, the decisive factor was the way of paving the road by clearing the site for the intended movement, while in the linguistic consciousness of the Ossets, ideas about the way to do something with the intention and to go. In addition, an important cognitive characteristic is the width of traffic lanes in a mountainous area of Ossetia: in high altitude conditions in the rural areas of the road, animal-drawn transport is used at present.

Thus, the formation of derived lexemes of 'фæндаг'/road' is made according to cognitive characteristics.

1. "Road width": къахвæндаг 'trail' is derived from къах "leg" and 'fændag' "the road" (hereinafter comes from the alternation of consonants of the root f- and v-); къахвæд, къахнад "trail" is derived from къах "leg" and фæд/вæд "trace"; фистæгвæндаг "narrow pedestrian footpath" from фистæгæй "on foot" and фæндаг); мыствæндаг "mouse trail", an extremely narrow trail in the mountains, from 'myst' "mouse" and фæндаг); галвæндаг "mountain road, which runs a cattle and oxen in harness," from гал "bull, ox" and фæндаг; бæхвæндаг "footpath, horse trail", from бæх "horse, horse" and фæндаг; цалхвæд "track", from цалх "wheel" and вæд "trace"; уæрдонвæндаг "road", from уæрдон "cart" and фæндаг.

2. "The type of terrain and the peculiarity of starting the road": дæлзæхх "tunnel that runs under the ground" is derived from дæл "under" and зæхх "earth"; дæлхох фæндаг дæл "the tunnel, cut through the mountains" from дæл "under" and хох "hill"; донуайæн фæндаг "ford" from дон "water" and уайæн "course, passage"; куырф фæндаг "road to hollow" from куырф "cavity, hollow" and фæндаг; лæгæтыфæндаг "the road near the cave" from лæгæт "cave" and фæндаг; рæггы фæндаг "the road that goes through a ridge" from рæгъ "ridge" and фæндаг; Зары фæндаг "Zar road" from the name of village through which this road is paved; царды фæндаг "road of life" is a bypass road through the village of Zar, or the Transcaucasian highway, the only road linking South Ossetia with Russia), etc.

Moving around in the mountains of South Ossetia is difficult and dangerous, especially in winter, so the roads linking South Ossetia with other countries were so important for South Ossets.

In the traditional picture of the world of Ossets, 'фæндаг'/'road' does not only mean the movement on a particular route, it is filled with ritualized meanings. In the Ossetian pantheon main deity, the patron of men and travellers is Уастырджи. His name is a taboo for women who are allowed to mention him as Лæгты дзуар "patron Saint of men." His epithet is the word fændagsar "leader" derived from фæндаг "the road" and сар "the one who is being followed" (АБАЕВ, 1989, p. 55). The prayer at the traditional Ossetian table with three pies always turns to Фæндагсар Уастырджи in the hope of his patronage, help and

protection while travelling: "Фæндагсар Уастырджи, табу дæхицæн! Нæ гыццыл Ирыстоны фæндæгты æнæфыдбылыз, æнæмаст куыд уой, хæстон машинаы цалх съл куыннæ тула ахæм арфæ дæ курæм" – "Oh, Protector of travellers, Уастырджи! Grant us such grace, as the wheels of military vehicles do not touch the roads of Ossetia" (AGNAEV, 1999, p. 147).

Thus, the representations of the concept 'фæндаг'/'road' not only mark the ethnic peculiarity of the region, ritual specifics of the cultural tradition of Ossets. The combinatorial possibilities of objectivation of the concept allow to convey multiple layers of meaning, revealing the various sides of a communicative situation.

The above-mentioned statements substantiate the special axiological and socio-political significance of the concept "road" in the language picture of the world of South Ossets. The change in the socio-political context in the mountainous Republic can be traced in the press from 1960 to the present. 4540 fragments reflecting the dynamics of the development of concepts of 'фæндаг'/'road' in the Russian and Ossetian languages were analyzed.

A representative sample of journalistic materials during the above-mentioned period showed that the concept of 'фæндаг'/'road' in the South Ossetian political discourse is manifested mainly as a transport infrastructure or direction of movement.

The analysis of text fragments shows that in the period under consideration the concept is objectified only at the conceptual level represented by lexemes: road, road surface, roads, railway, and road objects. The identified implementations are based on such cognitive features of the concept as "movement" and "roadbed»:

During a long period of time the urgent problems in the industry, despite of its outward appearance, were not solved such as the construction of new production capacities, but <...> improve the condition of roads <...> (SOVIET OSSETIA, 1988, No 113);

There is no clear program of improvement of economic mechanism in capital road construction (Soviet Ossetia, 1988, No 29);

Бындурон фæндæгтæ экономикæйы "the main directions in the economy, the situation on road facilities, roads in villages" (SOVIET OSSETIA, 1985, No 128);

In our area, where the car is almost the only means of transportation, roads must meet the requirements <...> (SOVIET OSSETIA, 1970, No 78).

4. CONCLUSION

The ethnospecific concept 'фæндаг'/'road' was formed as a basic element of socio-political discourse of the last decades in the language

consciousness of the citizens of the Republic of South Ossetia. Its dynamics reflects important aspects of the cultural, historical and socio-political context. The development of the concept proceeded from conceptual and imaginative-perceptual analysis; further the metaphorical and emotional-evaluative meanings were showed, before the appearance of a symbolic component in its structure. Thus, the ethnic image 'фæндар'/'road' as the path to freedom, salvation, entering the international level arose.

The subconcept 'Transkam' was identified as relevant discourse based segment, objectivized in historical and political, military and strategic, functional and pragmatic aspects. The Ossetian and Russian objectivity features of the concept 'фæндар'/'road' in bilingual language consciousness of the Ossets often get duplicate forms.

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