

The Image of Space in English and Russian Linguacultures (on the Basis of Proverbs and Sayings)

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Abstract: The present paper deals with the image of space on the basis of proverbs and sayings in the English and Russian languages. The most frequently used lexical means, denoting the image of space, have been identified and analyzed.

Keywords: linguaculturology, linguacultural image, space, language picture of the world, proverbial picture of the world.

Образ пространства в английской и русской лингвокультурах (на материале пословиц и поговорок)

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Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются различные способы репрезентации образа пространства на материале пословиц и поговорок английского и русского языков. Анализируются наиболее частотные лексические средства, используемые для репрезентации данного образа.

Ключевые слова: лингвокультурология, лингвокультурный образ, пространство, языковая картина мира, пословичная картина мира.

Every individual is a part of culture that includes national traditions, language, history and literature. The recent activation of cultural studies turned the spotlight on linguaculturology. Linguaculturology is a branch of linguistics that arose at the intersection of linguistics and culturology and studies manifestations of the culture of the nation, which are reflected and entrenched in the language.

Despite the fact that linguaculturology is a relatively new trend, rapid development of it has led to a significant expansion of the terminology base. In less than a few decades, linguistics has adopted several terms, which are now actively used in various scientific studies. Among them there is the language picture of the world, the conceptual picture of the world, mentality, concept and image. The present article deals with the latter.

In modern linguistics, linguacultural image is interpreted as a mental perception and reflection of phenomena and facts that take place in the world, including an individual's attitude to these phenomena. The most important property of an image is to reflect the world in the process of its practical creation, that is, an image is a certain model of reality that restores information received from reality in a new entity [2, c. 46].

The linguacultural image is studied exclusively as an object of language, consciousness and culture which are treated in unity. In addition, the linguocultural image carries national and cultural features and characteristics that are important exceptionally for the linguacultural community where it is formed. Thus, the linguacultural image has national and cultural specificity and stereotyped characteristics that are realized in the language.

The present paper deals with the image of space in English and Russian linguistic cultures on the basis of proverbs and sayings. The analysis has proved that the primary meaning of this image is predominantly geographical space. This meaning is generally verbalized by nouns.

For a more detailed analysis of nouns with a spatial meaning that function in proverbs and sayings of both languages, we have divided them into several lexico-semantic groups (LSG).

LSG 1 is “Indoor space”. In the Russian culture, this LSG reflects a house, or a part of it, and represents the image of the so-called "closed" space. The image of a house is an image of the safest place, something that needs to be protected and guarded: «*Дома стены помогают*», «*Лучше дома своего нет на свете ничего*», «*Мой дом — моя крепость*» [1]. In the English culture, a house is also the safest place and leaving it is equivalent to leaving a psychological comfort zone. This space is the center of everything around: «*Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home*», «*Far from home is near the harm*», «*There is no place like home*», «*East or West — home is best*», «*Every bird likes its own nest*» [4].

LSG 2 is “Outdoor space”. In this lexico-semantic group, the image of space is conveyed through such lexemes as "forest", "field" and "mountains".

In most English and Russian proverbs and sayings, the image of a forest implies a certain danger: a forest is a place to beware of: «*Ходить в лесу — видеть смерть на носу*», «*Не насвистывай, пока из леса не выбрался*», «*В лес ведет не одна дорога*» [1], «*He that fears leaves, let him not go into the wood*», «*Hunger drives the wolf out of the wood*» [4].

The image of a *field* is especially remarkable in Russian proverbs. It is, on the one hand, a neutral characteristic of the landscape, and on the other hand, a direct participant in the action. In the Russian culture a *field* is associated with growing crops: «*Что в поле ни родится, все в доме пригодится*», «*Поле труд любит*», «*В июле на дворе пусто, а в поле густо*», «*В поле за ветром не угонишься*», «*Не печь кормит, а поле*» [1], but on the other hand, a *field* is an image of the entire native land: «*В поле за ветром не угонишься*», «*Жизнь прожить — не поле перейти*», «*В чистом поле четыре воли*», «*Было б поле — найдем и сошку*» [1]. In English culture, the image of a *field* is generally a characteristic of the area, a landscape, as in the proverb «*A bad bush is better than the open field*», although it may be associated with work as well: «*A field requires three things: fair weather, sound seed, and a good husbandman*» [4].

The image of a mountain in both Russian and English cultures stands for a difficulty, a task that needs to be overcome: «*На гору десять тянут, под гору один*

толкнет», «С горы виднее», «Под гору съедем, в гору взвезем, а по гладкому покатимся» [1], «He that stays in the valley, shall never get over the hill», «He that comes first to the hill may sit where he will» [4].

LSG 3 is “Waterscape”. Speaking about Russian culture, within the framework of this LSG, the image of a *river* is the most common one. In Russian culture, a river is generally associated with life, change, a constant flow and current: *«По которой реке плыть, ту и воду пить», «Всего не перенять, что по реке плывет», «Нельзя перейти реку в половодье», «Где река глубже, там меньше шумит» [1].* The image of a river in English-speaking culture implies a certain path, a bridge over it: *«Cross the stream where it is shallowest», «Follow the river and you'll get to the sea» [4].*

In the English culture, the image of a *sea* predominates due to the fact that this geographic parameter is especially relevant for an island state. The sea has tremendous beauty: *«The voice of the sea speaks to the soul»*, on the other hand, you can admire it only at a certain distance, you should not go deep into sea because it carries danger, fear, horror and death: *«Praise the sea but keep on land», «Between the devil and the deep (blue) sea», «He that will learn to pray, let him go to sea», «A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner» [4].* The image of the sea is very strong and the most important one for the English culture.

Contrary to English, in Russian culture the image of the *sea* takes the second place. This image implies rather ambivalent associations. The sea is always vast and mysterious: *«Море веслом не расплещешь»*, and is often associated with tragic events: *«Кто в море не бывал, тот и горя не бывал», «От горя хоть в море, от беды в воду» [1].* It is worth mentioning that the images of the river and the sea in Russian culture also carry the meaning of a border. "Beyond the river", similarly to "beyond the sea", denotes "far away", outside the immediate individual's space.

To sum up, the number of lexico-semantic groups that reflect the image of space in Russian and English proverbs and sayings is the same. However, the differences lie in the number of proverbs and lexemes inherent to this or that lexico-semantic groups.

In the English proverbial picture of the world lexemes belonging to the lexico-semantic group “Indoor space” prevail, consequently, the phenomenon of “closed” space predominates in English culture.

In the Russian proverbial picture of the world the image of “open space” is more common. Furthermore, the image of space has a more detailed coverage in Russian, which is reflected by a larger number of proverbs, where the parameters representing space are found, as well as by a variety of parameters themselves.

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