

## ***Linguistics and Literature***

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### **Lingual Worldview and Cognition**

*The systematic character of the universe and the nature of synchronic level give rise to the possibility of identifying similarities and differences between invariant and variant relations, while the diachronic level provides the possibility of defining the relationship between the system elements and the potential of historical development of the mentioned elements. Any language possesses its own style of conceptualization. Accordingly, each language creates its own worldview. The language represents the essential means of developing the knowledge about the universe. In reflecting the reality, the speaker manifests the results of the word cognition. The sum of the knowledge represented in the lingual form is considered to be “the lingual representation of the world”, in other words, “lingual world model” or “lingual worldview”.*

*Keywords: symbolic structures, lingual world, cognition, conceptualization, synchronic, diachronic.*

## *Introduction*

Our existence starts with the creation of our worldview. We need special symbolic structures (language, mythology, religion, arts, and science) to orientate ourselves in the universe. These structures regulate our existence in the universe; their unity creates a fundamental and global view that helps us to perform in the universe. Any major transformation causes changes in the regulation of human activities - ideals and principles of perception, activities, values and spiritual orientation. These regulators vary across time and space.

The indispensable condition of human existence is the rationalization of the world. The process of rationalization of the world implies the process of thinking about the threats of the universe, identifying their causes, developing the mechanisms to tackle threats, and creating the principles of communication. A worldview creates the prism through which people see the world and themselves.

We settle in the real world by naming objects, events and determining their place in the real world. The systematic character of the universe and the nature of the synchronic level give the possibility of identifying similarities and differences existing between invariant and variant relationships, while the diachronic level provides the possibility of defining relationships existing between system elements and the potential of historical development of these elements.

The problem of modeling the worldview is connected with world perception. Generally, a world model is defined as a condensed and simplified reflection of particular views existing within the premise of certain traditions.

Language is integrated into the system of culture. To analyze the relationship between language and culture we should realize the function of language in the cultural-creative process. When we speak about the relationship between

language and culture, we mean natural or national languages. The diversity of national languages is due to the fact that they are fundamental for people - this is the freedom of choice.

A definition of the language as a system of signs is an imperfect description of language. Of course, language is a system of signs but it is much more than a sign. Language is connected to the perception of the world, ideology and the way people, the creators of the language, think. Language determines not only certain fragments of culture but it also determines everything that exists in it in the form of culture. Language is the form of the existence of culture. Language is one of the main identifiers of national and cultural mentality.

Any language possesses its own style of conceptualization. Accordingly, each language creates its own worldview. Language represents the essential means of developing the knowledge about the universe. In reflecting reality, the speaker manifests the results of word cognition. The sum of the knowledge represented in the lingual form is considered to be “the lingual representation of the world,” in other words, the “lingual world model” or “lingual worldview”.

Despite the fact that the concept of "worldview" is widely used in different scientific fields (philosophy, psychology, cultural studies, linguistics), it still remains a metaphor which often lacks clear and unambiguous definition even within the premises of one particular scientific field.

In our opinion, a main problem concerning the worldview is associated with the incompleteness of the specification of the technique relevant to the problem of modeling the lingual worldview. It is also clear that by identifying the main components of the worldview, the amorphism of the mentioned concept has not vanished yet.

It should be mentioned that while sharing other scholars points of view, we admit the validity of some essential markers of the worldview. These markers are:

1. Worldview determines the peculiarity of perception and interpretation;
2. Being historically preconditioned, worldview implies a constant change of the worldview and its subjects;
3. Worldview gives impetus to values, hierarchy and thinking paradigms.

We fully agree with the following statements:

1. A man depicts the universe as an image (icon);
2. A man perceives the universe as an image (icon);
3. The universe is transformed into an image (icon);
4. Having conquered the universe, a man, conquers the image (icon).

And finally, we share the following views:

1. The number of the worldviews equals to the number of people observing the universe and interacting with it;
2. The number of the worldviews equals to the number of the versions produced as a result of world perception;
3. The number of the worldviews equals to the number of the universes under human observation.

The article aims at giving answers to the following questions:

1. How can we shape a most adequate and objective worldview?
2. What type of unit is highly effective for modelling a lingual view of the universe?

An analysis of the problem of worldview modeling is essential in terms of accessibility to the hierarchy of separate sign systems and social and historical roots of different cultures. Language symbolizes intentions of national and individual mentality. The analysis of modeling lingual worldview comprises the research of the contexts of culture, where different sign systems have been molded and developed.

We consider it reasonable to present our point of view in the form of questions and answers, highlighting the peculiarities of the problems revealed at different stages of our research.

What should be reflected in a lingual worldview? – The worldview should reflect the peculiarities of human positions, ideals, and principles of perception, activities, values and spiritual orientations. Worldview, being a complex structural unity, should comprise three basic components: world outlook, perception and disposition.

Each language creates its own worldview through which a speaker organizes content of the expression. Language is a means of forming human knowledge about the universe. While reflecting reality, a human being translates perception outcomes into words. The sum total of the knowledge, accumulated through linguistic forms, is the phenomenon we call "lingual representation of the world" or "lingual worldview."

From the perspective of the anthropocentric paradigm a man perceives the universe, in other words, a man creates an anthropocentric center in his consciousness which determines his spiritual essence, the intentions of his actions and a hierarchy of values.

The human perception of the world is far from being error-free. That's why our conceptual system is constantly changing. The process of human cognition implies a process of forming the knowledge about objects. The information concerning the state of the objects existing in the world is

regarded as a "concept". We talk about concepts when it is necessary to characterize the units of a mental process. Accordingly, the process of cognitive structure, creating the concept is called conceptualization. The conceptual process aims at segmenting human experience into minimal units. A conceptual system represents the system of knowledge expressing cognitive experience of human being.

In the premises of the lingual-cultural approach, a concept presents a multidimensional mental unit including valuable, conceptual and image elements. A cultural concept differs from other types of concepts – a cultural concept is multidimensional. The formation of a concept implies the process of generalizing data derived from the cognition of reality. The mentioned process also includes the process of linking cognition data to the dominant values existing in religion, ideology and art. The functioning process of the concept implies a process of selection and usage of the language meanings.

Every direction of anthropocentric linguistics aims at studying and describing the following correlation – “a man in the language and the language in a man.” Anthropocentrism offers new challenges: anthropocentric research requires new descriptive methods and new approaches to the phenomenon of categorization.

The basic thesis of linguistic anthropocentrism is the following: the world is a unity of facts not objects and research should be centered on speakers. This means that modern linguistics tries to cross its borders, in other words, modern linguistics tries to go beyond itself.

Different directions have developed in modern linguistics within the premises of the anthropocentric paradigm. Our interest is focused on cognitive linguistics.

Cognitive Linguistics analyzes language as a cognitive mechanism involved in the process of transformation and coding the language. The aim of cognitive

linguistics is the study of the processes of the perception of the universe, categorization and classification, in other words, cognitive linguistics aims at understanding the process of knowledge accumulation.

The research horizon of complex relationships existing between language and thought is evidenced in Cognitive Linguistics. This research horizon covers the following issues: language and thought, human's role in language and the role of language for human. Cognitive Linguistics aims at describing systems of knowledge representation. Semantic frames represent the conceptual models of the structure of knowledge representation and the organization of the human memory. The basis of the human thinking process is represented by accumulated structures in his memory - frames. A frame is considered to be the unit of knowledge representation, which describes the relationship between objects and events. Semantic frames create a repertory grid, which is considered to be a matrix of knowledge. One can imagine a frame as a net consisting of certain nodes. Each node must be filled with its "mission" - in other words, with the typical characteristics of a particular situation. There are several levels in frames and they are hierarchically connected to each other. Top-level nodes are general by their nature - they are always "correct" - typical for a certain situation. The nodes of lower level are not usually filled with a "mission". These types of empty units are called terminals. They should be filled with specific data representing some possible task that can emerge in a frame of particular situation. Representing the knowledge about the world with the help of frames is an effective way to understand the essence of the mechanism of natural language.

The approaches connected to the problem of constructing semantic frames can be divided into two major types:

- a) Structural (systemic) approaches or analyses - based on the idea of decomposition. In this context each element presents one of the most important components of the entire construct;

- b) Objective approaches – connected to the idea of decomposition of objects: each object represents the element of a certain class. Objects, classes and heredity of hierarchy properties are the notions the mentioned approach is based on.

To sum up, constructing semantic frames aims at building a pyramid of knowledge comprising the concepts of hierarchical construction. The relationship existing between some concepts is evidenced within each level of the pyramid as well as between its levels. A pyramid connects all notions and relationships. One of the types of relationships is the relationship between extensional and intentional units. An extensional unit represents basic concepts and correlations, describing sets of objects, things and events in the set. An intentional unit represents particular feature of the elements, concepts and relationships relevant to the set.

At first glance, a semantic frame is characterized by almost mystical firmness and order. We have to answer the following question: Does this order limit free individuality? We will try to answer this question.

To our mind, scenarios of mental models create a predictable, safe and orderly-arranged universe. Freedom and necessity are correlative notions in semantic frames. The mentioned elements are characterized by coexistence of individual and non-individual aspects in them.

A combination of elements verbalizing the concept represents the nominative - lexical- semantic field - of the concept. The scientific situation related to the theory of a lingual field provoked some definite questions:

Do the three terms used in linguistic literature as synonyms (field, thematic group, and synonymic set) serve to only create an abundance of terminology?

Or may be:

Different types of lexical – semantic groups really do occur in the language;



If this is the case, what is the source of their difference and can the above-mentioned terms be applied to the different types?

To answer these questions, we constructed several groups of lexical units denoting different contents and tested these groups from the following points of view:

From the point of view of their structure, i.e., the type of semantic relationships between the word-identifier of the group and the elements comprising this group;

From the point of view of the casual relation between the nature of the content of the group word-identifier and the type of the group structure.

Some definite regularity has been observed:

The causal relation between the nature of the content of the group word-identifier and the type of the group structure is evident;

Specificity of the group structure is the immediate result of the nature of the word-identifier's content, namely its subjectivity in one case and objectivity in another.

This characteristic is relevant to the type of structure, since the integral feature of the subjective content is, so to say, graduality and non-graduality, on the contrary, being the integral feature of the objective content.

The lingual expression of the graduality of the word-identifier's content is considered to be its dynamism.

A word-identifier is dynamic if it changes its value, i.e., the status of the main components of meaning in the semantic structure of some group elements.

The word-identifier is considered to be static if its value is stable in the semantic structure of all of the group elements.

The dynamism of the word-identifier, being the lingual expression of its content's graduality, conditions the variety of semantic relations. In other words, the inequalities of the distance between the word-identifier and different elements of the group result in the graduality of the structure, more precisely, in the existence in the group structure of dominant segments (with respect to one another and to the word-identifier) – center, transitional sphere, periphery.

We consider this, and only this, type of a structure to be the lexical-semantic field.

However, the non-dynamism of the word-identifier, being the lingual expression of its content's non-graduality, conditions the uniformity of the semantic relationship, in other words, the equality of the distance between the word-identifier and the group of elements which, in its turn, results in non-graduality – a linear structure (its two variants: one-linear or two and three linear structure), more precisely, in the non-existence in the group structure of dominant segments with respect to one another and to the word-identifier.

We believe such a structure is not identical to its gradual counterpart - to the field structure - hence, denoting both of them by one and the same term – field, thematic group, synonymic set - cannot be justified: the term “synonymic set” denotes one-linear variant of non-gradual structure, where the relationship between the word-identifier and each lexical unit is synonymic, while the term “thematic group” denotes two and three-linear variants of a non-gradual structure, where the relation between the word-identifier and each lexical unit is based on the relation called “thematic analogy”.

There are many problems concerning the theory of lingual fields; there are many questions to be answered but we have singled out the following question: What type of unit ensures adequate modeling of lingual worldview?

- We believe that:

1. The unit should reflect the system of images (icons) and interconnection between the images (icons);
2. The unit should reveal the specificity of event perception and interpretation;
3. The unit should combine linguistic and extra linguistic synthesis;
4. The unit should represent the construct formed on the basis of perception, where numerous world "images" (icons) are coded;
5. The unit should involve components, such as: linguistic knowledge; extra linguistic knowledge (knowledge about the situational context and recipient); general knowledge. Integrity of the mentioned types of knowledge and the total sum of all the aspects of human perception create the unit being of individual and social nature.

What are the basic fundamental principles for conceptual field modeling? - We have identified the following principles:

1. Meaning should be derived from the regularity of the entire structure;
2. Each element, being the member of the value system, should be determined by other elements, in other words, the system should determine its elements;
3. A conceptual field should be regulated by the law of organic separation;
4. The members of the organic entity should affect each other.

Is the analysis of the word semantic structure sufficient for forming entity? - The answer is definitely negative: the mentioned type of analysis doesn't

focus on identifying the concepts that determine the existence of cognitive structures. At first glance, conceptual analysis seems to be similar to semantic analysis, but the objective of semantic analysis is to explain a word's meaning, while the conceptual analysis deals with representation of the knowledge about the universe. Adequate and objective modeling of lingual worldview is possible only through the paradigm synthesis.

A complex correlation is observed between the world image and lingual image of the world: the borders seem to be unsustainable and vague. Lingual world images precede conceptual images and helps to shape them. A man can perceive himself and the universe by means of a language. It is language that preserves historical experience.

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