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Archetypes in metaconcept structure

Arquetipos en la estructura del metaconcepto

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ABSTRACT

The history of studying the cognitive structure of our consciousness and its minimal mental unit dates back to the beginning of the 20th century and is associated with the name of the Russian scientist S.A. Askoldov, the scientific legacy of whom was not actually forgotten during the Soviet period. Appealing to the methods of representation of knowledge about the world has aroused the interest in the concept category. The basics which reflect primary human values are metaconcept. The present paper proves that the basis of the structure of the meta concept is an archetype.

Keywords: Metaconcept, concept, consciousness, language.

RESUMEN

La historia del estudio de la estructura cognitiva de nuestra conciencia y su unidad mental mínima se remonta a principios del siglo XX y está asociada con el nombre del científico ruso S.A. Askoldov, cuyo legado científico no fue olvidado en realidad durante el período soviético. Apelar a los métodos de representación del conocimiento sobre el mundo ha despertado el interés en la categoría de concepto. Los conceptos básicos que reflejan los valores humanos primarios son el metaconcepto. El presente trabajo demuestra que la base de la estructura del metaconcepto es un arquetipo.

Palabras clave: Metaconcepto, concepto, conciencia, lenguaje.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The anthropocentric paradigm of modern linguistics, which leads to research carried out at its interface with other disciplines, predetermines the interdisciplinary status of the concept category. Difficulty in determining the essence of the metaconcept as a scientific category is related to the fact that in modern science, there is still no unambiguous solution in determining the structure and typology of concept. The absence of a single, universally accepted definition of the concept indicates the incompleteness of epistemological formation of this category, which confirms the existence of its following proto-terminological analogs: “linguoculture” [Kostomarov and Burvikova, 2000, p.44-56], “myths” [Bazylev, 2000, p.134], “logo-systems” [Kostomarov and Burvikova, 2000, p. 23], by considering which it brings to the fore the “linguistic expression of the trace, fixed by public memory, of the reflection of reality in minds of native speakers as a result of comprehension (or creation) of spiritual values of the national and world culture by them” [Kostomarov and Burvikova, 2000, p.23].

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this work, linguo-cognitive analysis, lexical-semantic analysis, descriptive method and conceptual analysis methods are used.

3. RESULTS

One of the first who studied the nature of the concept was S.A. Askoldov (Alekseev). In his article entitled “Concept and Word”, published in the journal “Russian Speech” in 1928, he defines the concept as: “mental education that replaces us in the process of thinking an indefinite set of objects of the same kind”, “buds of the most complicated inflorescences of mental concreteness”, “Embryos of mental operations, which in their disclosure could take hours, days, sometimes months” [Askoldov, 1997, p.271]. D.S. Likhachev explains the formation of concepts by the limited capabilities of human memory and consciousness, as well as by the specifics of the personal perception of reality: “A person simply does not have time to grasp meaning, sometimes he cannot, and sometimes he interprets it in his own way (depending on his education, personal experience), belonging to a certain environment, profession, etc.)” [Lyapin, 1997, p.282].

A new surge of interest in the concept category is observed after the publication of the book “Constants; dictionary of Russian Culture” (1997) and a series of works by Yu.S. Stepanova. From the point of view of a scientist, concepts include semantic formations marked by linguocultural specificity, characterizing the carriers of a certain ethnic culture in one way or another: “A concept is like a clot of culture in a person’s mind, something in which culture enters the person’s mental world. And, on the other hand, concept is something whereby a person - an ordinary person, not a creator of cultural values – enters the culture itself, and in some cases influences it” [Gafarova and Kildibekova, 1998, p. 10]. A concept is an idea that includes not only the abstract, but also the emotional and evaluative signs. “Concepts are not only thought, but also they are experienced, the subject of emotions, likes and dislikes, and sometimes collisions. The concept is the main cell of culture in the mental world of man” [Gafarova and Kildibekova, 1998, p: 41].

S.G. Vorkachev defines a concept as a “unit of collective knowledge / consciousness (sending to higher spiritual values), having a linguistic expression and marked by ethnic and cultural specifics” [Vorobev, 1997, p. 70], and correlating with the plan of expression of the lexical-semantic paradigm, i.e. the entire set of heterogeneous synonymous means (lexical, phraseological, aphoristic, describing it in language) [Vorobev, 1997, p.68]. As a global thinking unit, which is a quantum of structured knowledge, they interpret the concept of Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin [Rikkert, 1995, p.18]. Concept is somewhat different when defined by M.V. Pimenova: “concept reflects the categorical and the value characteristics of knowledge about some fragments of the world. The concept contains signs that are functionally significant for the corresponding culture” [Pimenova, 2002, p.116]. S.Kh. Lyapin represents a concept as a multidimensional idealized form-building based on a conceptual basis, fixed in the meaning of a sign, and having a discrete integrity of meaning, which functions in a certain cultural space, and therefore is predisposed to a cultural broadcast from one subject area to another [Popova, 2001, p.18-19]. From the point of view of V.V. Kolesov, the concept is a component of the mental world of a person, or part of the concept of mentality: the basic units of mentality are “concepts of a given culture that, within the boundaries of a word mark and language as a whole, appear (are) in their content forms as an image, as a concept and as a symbol” [Korneeva, 2003, p.79]. According to the definition of V.I. Karasika, a concept is a mental entity with “three major dimensions - figurative, conceptual and value” [Kolesov, 1999, p.10].

Analysis of the definitions shows that the boundaries of the concept of the concept vary depending on the purpose of the study. The broadest understanding of the concept is the characteristic of S.A. Askoldov and D.S. Likhachev,

which is the substitution in the individual consciousness of any meaning; the narrowest understanding of the concept developed in the works of S.G. Vorkacheva, V.V. Kolesova, M.V. Pimenova, these are the most important culturally significant categories of the person's inner world.

The correlation of macro concept with other types of concepts.

Yu.S. Stepanov identifies three main layers:

- 1) The literal meaning (or "inner form");
- 2) A passive ("historical") concept layer;
- 3) The newest, current and active layer of the concept [Vorkachev, 2001, p.41].

In the concept, it is possible to distinguish between the informative and evaluative components that are intricately intertwined, and thus difficult to separate. Together, they represent a known integrity, which includes the following components:

- 1) Universal (universal);
- 2) National-cultural (due to the existence of a person in a particular national-cultural environment);
- 3) Social (determined by the person's belonging to a particular social (social) class or stratum);
- 4) Group (due to the belonging of a person to a certain age and gender group and / or professional group);
- 5) Individual-specific (formed under the influence of a number of various factors: psycho-physiological features of a person, his educational level, upbringing, attitude towards religion, social role, individual experience, membership in an informal group, etc.) [Kostomarov and Burvikova, 2000, p. 253].

According to N.N. Boldyrev, the structure of the concept is determined by the way of formation in the human mind:

- a) On the basis of sensory experience, that is, as a result of direct perception of the surrounding world through the senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch);
- b) On the basis of subject-practical human activities;
- c) On the basis of experimental-cognitive and theoretical-cognitive (scientific) activities;
- d) On the basis of mental activity, which is a result of reasoning, conclusions, based on mental operations with already known concepts;
- e) On the basis of verbal and non-verbal communication, when one person explains a concept to another person using language means or other means of communication: gestures, conventional signs, pantomime, etc. [Boldyrev, 2002, p.24-25].

There are simple and complex, abstract and concrete concepts. The structure of the level concept consists of one or more cognitive layers that differ in the degree of abstraction. The structure of a single-level concept includes a sensual image and one base layer, and a multilevel one – in addition to the base layer – as well as several other cognitive layers. A special variety is the combined structural types of concepts - single-level segment, multilevel segment, multilevel level-segment [Popova and Sternin, 2003, p.8-9].

A concept is a multifactorial mental unit that has a stochastic (probabilistic) structure [Popova, 2001, p. 53], defined by the method of cognition that underlies it, as a “unit of structured knowledge” [Stepanov, 1997, p.51], consists of some components (cognitive classifiers and cognitive signs).

In the cognitive linguistics various types of concepts are considered. Microconcepts (or concepts), macroconcepts, super concepts, and metaconcepts are distinguished. Microconcepts are oriented to the lexical meaning of a separate lexeme, have a small semantic scope, and perform an identifying function. Vast areas of meaning are concentrated around the macro-concepts. The superconcept consists of a variety of syntactic constructions expressing different types of situations associated with the basic concept [Gafarova and Kildibekova, 1998, p.117].

Following A.Yu. Bolshakova, we will define metaconcept as the strongest, “unifying the multitude of individual manifestations of a particular entity, as well as the most stable in historical changes and defining the structure of the worldview (personality, nation, people)”, they “stand out from the general composition of concepts / constants: cultural metaconcept and can be defined as “the archetypes of the cultural unconscious”. The metaconcepts include value-relevant mental units, such as: “family”, “gender”, “mother”, “father”, “man”, “woman”, “marriage”, etc., which are the archetypes of culture.

The question of the definition of the concept of “archetype” and its relationship with the concept of “concept” remains controversial in modern scientific literature. Yu.S. Stepanov defined the archetype as an “archaic deep concept”, and such a definition of an archetype through a concept can be found in a number of other studies. At the first glance, such a definition does not allow one to sufficiently and accurately distinguish between the concepts of archetype and concept. But a deeper study of the views of Yu.S. Stepanova gives a clearer picture of the nature of the archetype. In accordance with the theory of Yu.S. Stepanova, archetype is not identical to the concept. The archetype, in contrast to the concept, possesses deep invariance, and therefore, is a kind of constant that acts as a basic stable concept. In the series of various constants, the archetype is a primary concept that has a determining influence on the development of human civilization. The concept of the archetype is not limited to the concept. If concepts are able to manifest themselves more specifically, then archetypes express more general, fundamental properties.

On the other hand, in a number of scientific studies, archetypes are presented as psychological symbols that not only preceded the emergence of concepts and the concepts themselves, but also, they became the basis for their formation, reflecting the dynamics of the formation of culture in a verbal form. At the same time, archetypes approach the concept of mentality are considered as a means of access to it: “... the nature of an archetype is of interest as far as knowing about it will help comparing it with a mentality to understand the content of the latter more deeply” [Karasik, 2001, p.157]. Comparing the concepts of mentality and archetype, scientists believe that “both of them are group images, people’s ideas about the world and about themselves; their content is immersed in the deep subconscious psychic structures of a person, and therefore cannot be realized by him” [Popova and Sternin, 2003, p. 157]. The difference between the archetype and the mentality is that the mentality is changing, and the archetype, according to Jung, is a certain original, unchanging image of the world inherited from primitive ancestors. That is, the archetype is a mental system of collective universals. Archetypes are attributed to the kind of “intelligible things” (*cosa mentale*), which possess quasi-existence, and open new possibilities of spiritual-practical activity to a person [Lyapin, 1997, p.122-124]. Archetypes grow out of the “soil of the unconscious” [Averintsev, 1980, p. 54]. Archetypes reflect both universal (universal) knowledge, and national-cultural, social, individual and group. In human consciousness, archetypes are formed in the process of perceiving the world through the senses, in the process of cognitive activity that accompanies the socialization of the individual.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Summarizing the above, we note that meta concept is a linguistic mental unit of consciousness. Meta concept represents the cultural-national mentality of its carriers, and therefore, it functions as an instrument of consciousness. This allows us to consider the category of concept as a way of interpreting the world, reflected in the language, inherent in one or another type of consciousness.

Meta concept are semantic formations that include the concept of an archetype. These complex mental units of the collective consciousness are part of the meta-languages of culture, and reflect universal human values.

The content of the meta concept is much wider and deeper than the lexical meaning of a word, as it includes not only semantic components relevant to consciousness, but also the information reflecting a person’s common information base, and his encyclopedic knowledge of a subject or phenomenon, which may not be found in his speech.

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