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Россия и Запад: диалог культур

27-28 ноября 2014 г.

Материалы
XVII международной конференции

Выпуск 17
Часть 2

Содержание

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Cultural and pragmatic correlation implied in some lexicographical units

(anthropological approach)

From anthropological point of view culture is the product of acting humans. Human nature is created by culture and is determined by it. Language is the most important part of cultural and national identity. It develops dynamically decoding traditional values and beliefs, and those connected with modern culture. Moreover, it reveals convergence or an impact of one culture over another that is generated in different languages. To compile "converged" lexical entries it is necessary to show not only how the languages encode a particular experience of the world or how extra linguistic or cultural realia is interpreted but also what fosters their differences to be leveled.

The current analysis is based on cognitive approach that can be useful to see the implicit assumption that is embedded within the mental maps or frames of norms and values of this or that culture and to view a kind of correlation in a lexical unit. Each item is supplied with a definition to reveal its semantics, pragmatics and socio-cultural sources of their generation. It is also important to discover what significant concepts are not shared by other cultural groups. To be more precise some converged items are examined diachronically and synchronically. Among them phraseological units, neologisms and even non-equivalent items are to be taken into consideration first of all.

Key words: acting linguistic personality, cognitive analysis, convergence, culture, cultural and national identity, language, pragmatics.

Баланс культурно-прагматического в значениях некоторых лексикографических единиц

(антропологический подход)

Традиции, верования, нравы, нормы поведения, так или иначе, закреплены в отдельной культуре и отражаются тем или другим способом в языке. Существующая прагматико-культурная антропологическая корреляция «человек>природа>культура» может быть истолкована и в обратном порядке, как «культура>человек>природа». При этом принцип детерминизма приобретает новую форму. В отличие от объективистской формы, в которой объект, природа, мир выступает причиной, а человек их следствием, прагматический детерминизм предполагает человека действующей причиной, которая воздействует на предмет (объект), а следствием выступает культура (язык). При этом изменяется и сам человек, его бытие, его природа. Это означает создание культуры определенным способом влияет на природу человека: «какова культура, таков и человек». Поскольку культура и язык неотделимы, данное утверждение логично перефразировать: «какова культура, таков язык». Именно в языке и с помощью языка происходит

декодирование традиционных ценностей, верований. Являясь одним из важных компонентов культурной и национальной идентичности, язык в эпоху глобализации и межкультурного общения становится средством выявления конвергенции культур, их взаимовлияния. Когнитивный анализ «культурных» лексических единиц   (без эквивалентной лексики, современных неологизмов) помогает увидеть соотношение культурного и прагматического, имплицированного в их значениях, и показать, какие знания, опыт и социо-культурные источники возникновения и формирования скрыты в них.

Ключевые слова: баланс культурного и прагматического, когнитивный анализ, конвергенция культур, культура, культурная и национальная идентичность прагматика, природа человека,   языковая личность, язык.

As is well-known, society and culture are shaped following the pattern of human nature. Culture is distinguished as production experience, on the one hand, and non-material or spiritual- on the other. Accordingly, they distinguish between the 'big C' "elements of … history, geography, institutions, literature, art, and music – and the way of life" and 'little c' which includes nowadays "culturally-influenced beliefs and perceptions,… as expressed through language, but also through cultural behaviors that affect acceptability in the host community" [Tomalin:6-7]. From the anthropological point of view, on the one hand, culture is a product of individual humans, on the other - human nature is created by culture and is determined by it. Pragmatically it can be rendered like that: what the purpose of a human's activity is; what everything is created for.

As language does not exist apart from culture it might become possible to see the following two types of correlation: acting human>nature>culture (language); culture (language)> acting human>nature. Focusing attention on a human being as a central element of this type of relationship one can say that what is important for a human being to exist, to survive, and to socialize is reflected in the language. Moreover, as a human is not only *Homo sapience* but also *Homo faber* "the tool making animal [Warner: 1] the connection between its integral parts is getting much more evident. So is its pragmatic essence: an evaluative as well as intentional/influential component implied in the lexical units of a language.

E.g.: *scrutinize* conveys a mental or emotional evaluation on the part of the perceiver: to examine someone or something very thoroughly and carefully [Longman: 1280]. The object perceived is both checked and evaluated: *subject to scrutiny* (critical gaze or detailed examination). Its Russian equivalents *tshatel'no rassmatrivat', osmatrivat', issledovat'* implies the perceiver's purpose to investigate, to look into the object in question or event in relation to something. The perceiver in most cases forms an opinion of it .The English verb is mostly used in relation to the verbs of general perception but with no

references to the sudden perception of some object which has already been perceived before, while in Russian what is perceived can be either concrete or abstract. When it is abstract, visual activity is translated into intellectual activity (mental perception).The pragmatic or evaluative component in the meaning of Russian verbs is getting less evident than that of in the English verb. Thus, in the Russian equivalent the connection of vision with intellectual activity is more precise then in the English one. It is due to the degree of metaphorical understanding of vision which [Faber: 71] can be projected outwards toward the concrete world or inward towards our mind. Rather, language builds us the picture of the world that we use for thinking and communicating. As for its pragmatic side it is formed by human intentionality or the evaluative aspect reflected in imagery associative structure of language.

Linguistics knows a lot of ways to look into inner forms of words on an international scale so as to make possible a comparison of different vocabularies. To compile lexical entries of culturally and pragmatically specified units it is necessary to show how different languages encode particular experiences of the world or how extra linguistic reality is interpreted.

To begin with it is necessary to mention some methods which are based on the theories uncovering some systematic character of a linguistic unit. Among them are those of Hallig, Wartburg and G.Matoré's methods of lexicological studies. Basic to their approach is the idea of conceptual origin of some lexics. [Степанов:43,74,77]. While Hallig and Wartburg identify lexical systems with the system of concepts, G.Matoré distinguishes key words in the vocabulary, which seem to have tremendous importance in the life of society along its historical evolution.

Hallig&Warterburg's conceptual system has three main components: The Universe; Man; Man and the Universe Each of them includes several classes of concepts, and consequently words designating these concepts. Taking into consideration that language as verbal behavior affects humans' mode of perceiving the world and at the same time creates an image of the world by some universals such as those "connected with the speaker, the addressee, the time and place of speaking, the various speech acts which can be performed, the human body, various mental states, the basic coordinates of the world in which we live, basic relationships like identity, similarity …" [Dik: 78], it is possible to say that concepts appear to be accompanied by various properties or attributes experienced by human beings. Lexical units which designate such concepts have a very clear pragmatic component while those that imply some relation to the life of society, its history are in most cases culturally specified.

Lexical units that represent a kind of knowledge in a certain language at a definite period of time are studied in order to cumulate all necessary information about them and make up image schemata or frames of reference related to them. A good example is the lexical domain "*entreprenship*" or the definition of conceptually related words implied in it (*a human-consumer*) and their interpretation within the framework of higher education in Russia. Russia has been chosen for theoretical and pragmatic observation at a definite period of time

from the 1980s till nowadays. Contemporary research proves the fact that such lexical items are used to highlight the projects conducted after the 2000s when higher schools in Russia underwent the process of upgrading and reorganization. Russia has entered the Bologna system which brings not only mobility and creativity in the process of higher education but also a new notion of *entrepreneurship*. Students are considered to be *consumers* of educational service which is provided by universities. As consumers they get an opportunity to make an option in choosing subjects and material to learn, methods to be controlled and optional courses to prefer. As consequence educational process is reduced to the development of fixed knowledge and offered samples of an optional control, which contradicts Russian tradition of higher education. According to the latter, Russian students cannot be viewed as consumers. They do not request education; they get it to meet the requirements of modern society. It is evident that the pragmatic component of lexical item in the above mentioned group implies that the perceiver of the action (*consumer*) is not ready to carry it out carefully as it bears some cultural contradiction in Russia.

Quite another thing is observed in the following examples. The English word *environment* (concept the Universe) can be used to show a correlation between physical world and place or site, between ecology and surrounding, on the one hand, between natural resources and energy between fuel wood and urban communities, on the other, etc. In the same way as place or site and surrounding are mapped onto physical perception of humans' activity, energy, ecology and communities are mapped onto their mental perception. To get information about energy, ecology, communities one should acquire the mental world of ideas which they are not only transformed into, but also evaluated by. As for the cultural component of environment it is not as evident as a pragmatic one. We can reveal some traditions or causative dimension of the lexical item, its history through its etymology: "state of being environed" (see environ + -ment)); sense of "the aggregate of the conditions in which a person or thing lives" first recorded 1827 (used by Carlyle to render German Umgebung); specialized ecology sense first recorded 1956.

The same concerns the word *change*. A meaningful activity connected with its image schemata might be *erosion, break-up, innovation, development*, etc. which can be used to reflect any change both physically and mentally. As for its cultural component it comes from the etymology of the word: "act or fact of changing," from Anglo-French *chaunge*, Old French change "*exchange, recompense, reciprocation,*" from *changier* . [Online Etymology Dictionary]. Historically it dates back to the times of the Norman Conquest which was famous for a great number of changes in the court and government, and for introduction of Norman French as the language of the elites. Some changes took place in the composition of the upper classes, as William enfeoffed lands to be held directly from the king. Thus, the word *change* is not only pragmatically but also culturally connected with English history and French [Wikipedia].

In another instance, a pattern and order to actions, perceptions and conceptions so as to comprehend meaningful experience implied in the lexical unit *international business* are expressed by the following entities:

… business activities that involve the crossing of national boundaries, these include:

• import and export of commodities and manufactured goods;

• investment of capital in manufacturing, extractive, agricultural, transportation and communications assets;

• supervision of employees in different countries;

• investment in international services …;

• transactions involving copyrights, patents, trademarks and process technology [Taggart, McDermott: 4].

The pragmatic essence of the unit is precise. As for its cultural component it can be also retrieved from the mental map (concept) of its historical background. The concept "*trade*" includes the idea of getting profit from international business since the earliest times: over 2,000 years B.C. from Mesopotamia, Greece and Phoenicia and Italy (the Roman Empire) to England, France, Holland, Spain and Portugal. The dominance of the United Kingdom and the United States in international capital movement and investment portfolio of the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries decreased and since the twentieth century firms from Europe, and Asian countries have become an important source of direct foregn investment [Taggart, McDermott: 1-3]

Lexical items like *business, import, export, investment* and others making up the concept *international business* belong to the "converged" lexical entries by their essence as they serve to show not only how different languages encode a particular experience of the world but also what fosters their cultures to be leveled. The words *trade, capital movement, direct investment* belonging to the same concept are considered to be attributes or various properties experienced by human beings from different cultures.

The existence of some kind of balance between cultural and pragmatic components is also clearly demonstrated by the cognitive analyses of some non-equivalent items, neologisms, and culturally dependent phraseological units. One can notice that most of these lexical units belong to the concept Man or to its subclass Social organization [Hallig and Wartburg: cit.Chiţoran:121]

The words like *Russophobia* refer to the products of specific aspects of social life or to a diverse spectrum of *prejudices, dislikes or fears* of. In modern international politics this term is used more specifically to designate *stereotypes* going back to the times of the Cold War. First of all they are *prejudices*, introduced as elements of political war against Russia. They originate from various components of culture, politics and social life. This is the pragmatic component which is implicit in a conceptual framework - linguistic values of someone's communicative intention, verbalization of their minds, and experience. As for its cultural aspect it is mainly connected with emotions as any product of culture is.

According to Warner [2007:1-85] some words appear first of all due to "human technology" through emotions when people "confer upon technology a merely instrumental role by understanding … face to face communication" [Warner:2].These are emotions that bring 'life' to the experience of those who hear or receive some lexical innovation. If the sound form of a new word does exist in the language it fosters communicators to identify and compare its meaning with those familiar to them. Its improper context gives rise to the ambiguity of the innovation which in its turn requires, first, its wider context and then its conceptualization. It is acknowledged that extralinguistic reality knows only imperceptible gradations. Language is what creates distinctions within a reality that has no boundaries, each in its own way. Nevertheless, they have something in common: ambiguity, the requirement of wider context and then conceptualization. Ambiguity produces different effects on the communicator. On the one hand, it might be misleading, especially when old meaning 'coexists' with the new meaning and the latter not only doubles his attention but also lures him to look into the context, and helps to relate the new word to a specific field. On the other hand, it enriches his perception, and shows whether he has enough knowledge and linguistic awareness to understand the true sense of a new word or expression.

Consider e.g. *Frag*. The word *'fragment'* originated from Latin 'fragmentum' which means 'a *fragment, a remnant'*. The verb 'frag' was first attested in 1970 as the US military slang.

E.g. "Fragging is a macabre ritual …. to murder their superiors …" (*Saturday Review*, January 8, 1972).

The change of meaning of the word happened due to the development of computerization. It has been extended and applied to the field of computer games. It is now used both as a noun and a verb to kill someone's character in any fashion or with a fragmentation grenade.

As we can see emotive connotation associated with the word *frag* brings the observer back to the experience suggesting a direct mapping of similarities between a bomb when it explodes and a fragmentation grenade or exactly its "consequences" in the video game. The importance of the relationship between the two notions (bomb, grenade) cannot be overstressed, and is actually in direct correlation with the fact that the source of information is outside the world which has to be processed and made sense of .

The example given above proves the fact that sometimes it is enough to compare the meaning of the word with those that already exist in the language – a metaphorical origin of linguistic innovation. In order to understand such lexical units it is necessary to investigate their 'systematicity' as one comprehends them in terms of existing rules (systems). As for emotions they are created by the process of metaphorization and by including the observer in the process who will be able not only to indicate the direction and symmetry of the metaphor but also identify the difference. Pert argues:

"This is a very important concept in information theory, because including the observer in the equation admits a new level of intelligence to the system. In

the old metaphor, we ignored the observer in an attempt to avoid any taint of subjective interference in determining reality. In the new metaphor, the observer plays an important role in defining the reality, because it is the observer's participation that makes the difference!" [Pert :257]

Neologisms may also belong to something less comprehensive, therefore their origin cannot be processed without a wide context or without consulting special dictionaries. Let us consider the following examples: *a frog hair* (money spent on election campaign) and *a walking corpse* (a looser). This kind of neologisms leads us to argue that innovation does not always evoke or invoke an immediate experience of the world, but reinvents imagination by breaking down intuitions and giving it a new order. That kind of "reconciliation" of the contraries (a 'frog' and 'hair', on the one side, and 'walking' and 'corpse', on the other) produces some images independently and making the observer through the displacement of one opposition by another express a new idea, which is not as it is, at first, the property of the external world until it enters the word-stock of the language. Moreover, in different languages they may correspond to different ideas, images.

The exact translation of the unit *a walking corpse* into Russian is *khodjatchy trup*, *khodyatchaya tenj*. As it is shown, they do not correspond to each other. In Russian it does not mean 'a political or any other looser' but 'a very sick or thin person'. Although, it is important to see that in both languages the units are emotionally colored, and their difference lies in the experience. Moreover, if we consider it from the point of view of cultural and pragmatic correlation we might observe that the former is created by metaphorization of someone's activity (pragmatic) while the latter – by describing someone's state (health, unusual appearance, etc.)- cultural evaluation: a very thin person is what contradicts the Russian tradition.

The observation of this kind enhances sensitivity to language and its users and can give insights into such issues as national stereotypes and cultural identity, revealed by different sort of correlation: pragmatic or cultural.

We might say that language is not only words people speak or a particular experience of the world encoded in image schemata but also linguistic and national identity of humans. The concept "acting personalities" , "acting humans" implies individuals with their pragmatic needs in discourse, intentions to communicate, to act and gain experience.

E.g.: *under the rose* implies "not to be mentioned; strictly between ourselves". The concept includes not only the custom of the Germans at a feast to suspend "a rose from the ceiling as a reminder that whatever might be said about people at the feast should not be repeated" [Radford: 206] but also the legend, giving rise to the custom that the rose was the flower of the Venus which Cupid consecrated to Hippocrates, the God of Silence and it became the emblem of silence [Radford:206]. The set of pragmatic rules which are given in the lexical unit seems to be all embracing, interpersonal and cultural as well. It proves the fact that being originated from the sources of different cultures some lexemes implicitly level off their peculiarities and enter the word stock of

another language (culture). It also brings into being how language reflects an impact of one culture over another.

Thus, "acting linguistic personality" is considered as linguistic values of someone's communicative intention, verbalization of their minds, and experience. This type of intention may be conceptualized as the product of human activity realized within some social and cultural environment. Its paradigm includes an algorithm of interlocutors' intentional and motivated behavior embodied in discourse with essential elements of communication. People irrespective of their social status choose everyday language to communicate and to present even their scientific ideas while targeting their intention [Котарбинский : 42]. It goes without saying that their activity is determined by pragmatics of a language as the main humans' means of communication, of their existence, and verbalization of their experience [Полюжин:441]

As for the concept "human activity", it is also meaningful by its essence as it is based on human stimuli and intentionality [Ильин: 20].

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