

THE LINGUO-DIDACTIC VALUE OF THE FIGURATIVE BASIS OF THE NOMINATION IN THE SLAVIC AUDIENCE

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Abstract

This article considered the inner form of a word in a linguo-didactic function. The aim was to identify the special role of the inner form of words in the related, Slavic, audience. The inner form formed by the feature of the subject is the figurative basis of the nomination. Developing this thesis, the authors prove that the figurative basis of a word not only verbalizes the result of a person's cognitive activity and acts as an explicator of linguocultural information, but also carries out a mnemonic connection between the nominee and the nominated object. This helps learners to memorize words when learning a foreign language and when reproducing them during speech. Using the comparative method (the comparison of Russian, Czech, Slovak, Bulgarian), as well as methods of seminal, component, word-formation, and etymological analysis, the authors demonstrate the significant linguo-didactic potential of the inner form of lexical units within a Slavic audience. It can be concluded that, from the point of view of Russian native speakers, even non-motivated words are found to be motivated from the point of view of native speakers of other Slavic languages. This is due to the preservation of common Slavic roots within these languages that verbalize the figurative basis.

Keywords: image of the nomination; motivational feature; inner form of the word; linguodidactics; Slavic languages.

Introduction

The cognitive approach to the study of language facts made it possible to assert that any name has a figurative basis which is linguocognitive in essence. A person's perception and impressions of the surrounding world, his impressions of the world are reflected in the semantic motivation of the names of the phenomena of the surrounding reality. The image verbalized in the name and acting as the motive of the name is the conductor of the associative connection of the nominee who already has a linguistic expression with the new object to be nominated. This associative connection is realized through a metaphorical or metonymic model. This image forms the inner form of the word providing an idea about which feature was the basis of the name. Figurativeness is a qualitative property of the content plane of language units that objectifies its cognitive component. According to V. V. Vinogradov, *“the word is an inseparable unity of sound, meaning and inner form”* (Vinogradov, 1968, p. 114).

The inner form of the word, discovered by A. A. Potebnaya and which developed the teaching of V. von Humboldt about the inner form of separate languages, is a unique phenomenon due to the complexity of the information contained within concept. It is not only a motivator of the word, an intermediary between the signified and the signifier, a language sign and an object of signification, but also a synergetic phenomenon that characterizes the peculiarities of the people's worldview (native speakers of this language). Furthermore, it is associated with their creative capabilities since it is based on the figurativeness of thinking, shows the movement of thought at the moment of nomination, and indicates possible ways of further semantic development of the word.

In addition to the subject-logical content, the meaning of the secondary nomination sign contains information about the subjective understanding of the relations in which the object of the nomination and the sign of the secondary nomination are located. *“The inner form of a word, in contrast to the concept – an objective category ... is characterized by the ability to subjectively ... represent the objects of the nomination in the linguistic consciousness of speakers of a certain*

language... In this case, we are talking about the inner form of words as a verbal-logical representation of the meaning contained in them” (Alefirenko, 2005, p. 7). “The meaning of the nomination signs, according to the expression of A. F. Losev, “depends on the semantic light that falls on it from the designated object” (Losev, 1990, p. 75). The “semantic light” falling from the subject of the nomination, in relation to the meanings of the indirect naming signs, has a special synergetic content.

The inner form of the word is formed by a feature of the object of reality chosen at the time of its name giving and reflected the initial understanding (perception, vision) of the indicated object [Bibikhin 2008]. A feature that had already been verbalized seems to give motivation for the name; therefore, it is often called *a motivational feature*, or *the motivation* of the word. The inner form of the word makes it possible to understand the motives of word creation. “What kind of impressions will form the basis of the figurative meaning of the word depends to a greater extent on the imagination of the country who has given the object a name... The connections of ideas when name giving ... are due to the action of associations caused by the connections of phenomena, a given historical background, a given national environment, in some cases even the individual psychology of people from whom they came into general use” (Bulakhovsky, 1954, p. 55). At the same time, subjective motives are a reflection of more general, objective patterns. It can be said that the process of cognition has a “characteristic” nature, and this property permeates all stages of human cognitive activity. It follows that all the objects and phenomena of the surrounding world, which have received a linguistic expression, are connected with each other by means of their inherent characteristics. Therefore, an appeal to the inner form of the word makes it possible to identify common patterns of people’s thinking, commonality and differences in associations that arise among different nations when nominating the same phenomena and objects of reality (Markova, 2011). The fact that one feature is distinguished from many others when naming, explains the significant differences between languages in the motivation of semantically similar words. Determining the ethno-specificity of the concept, the inner form of the word allows for the understanding of the essence of national mentality.

Thus, our study of the principles of noun nomination in *-dlo/-lo* in Russian, Czech and Slovak languages gave us the reason to assert that “for the Czech and Slovak consciousness, functional features (purpose, application, methods of use) of nominees are, above all, relevant in the process of nominative activity” (Markova, 2012, p. 201), in contrast to the Russian linguistic consciousness, for which “attributiveness, orientation towards external (open, visible) features and properties of an object” are preferable in nomination (Alefirenko, 2011, p. 171).

As studies of recent decades have shown, the inner form of the word has a wide functionality, such as its typologizing, expressive-aesthetic, representative, motivating, and cognitive functions, as well as others, are identified and studied. In this regard, the inner form of the word has received its interpretation and research in different fields. These are in etymology – through the prism of the etymon, the original meaning of the word (V. V. Ivanov), in derivation – through the connection of the derivative and the producing word (E. A. Zemskaya, I. S. Ulukhanov, A. I. Fedorov), in onomasiology – through the nominative feature (V. G. Gak, M. M. Ginatulin, A. I. Fedorov), in cognitive science – through the prism of gestalt structure, conceptualization of objects of reality (T. I. Vendina, T. A. Sidorova, V. N. Telia, I. V. Khokhlova, E. E. Chikina), in linguo-culturology – based on the expression of a certain vision of the world (N. F. Alefirenko, N. G. Komlev, V. A. Maslova, T. A. Sidorova), and in the aspect of motivation – within the framework of motivology, etc. (O. I. Blinova, N. A. Ilyukhina, T. R. Kiyak, etc.).

However, the linguo-didactic potential of the inner form of the word has not yet been sufficiently researched and implemented in practice. In the view of O. P. Ermakova and E. A. Zemskaya, the inner form of the word explains the “onomasiological structure of the name” [Ermakova, Zemskaya 1985: 520]. Therefore, the image becomes a guide, a mnemonic connection, the basis of an association that helps to correlate a word and an object of non-linguistic reality,

which is relevant to the practice of teaching a foreign language. Pedagogical practice requires the development of new methods, techniques and technologies aimed at improving the efficiency of foreign language acquisition by students, in accordance with the prevailing linguistic and cognitive attitudes (Žofkova, 2004; Adamka, 2010; Kollarova, 2014; Kvapil, 2014; Korychenkova, 2016; Radkova, 2017; Korenkova et al., 2019; Markova, 2021). In this regard, the problem of researching the role of the inner form of the word in foreign language acquisition, including Russian as a foreign language, provides relevancy to building a learning model based on the concept of the inner form of the word is relevant.

Embodying the trace that a language unit leaves in a person's memory during its perception, memorization and reproduction, the inner form of the word is of great value for teaching vocabulary of a foreign language. The modern psycholinguistics research data allow us to claim that words *“are stored in our memory not in the form of sound combinations, but in the form of images that form the basis of inner forms of lexical units”* (Voronkova, 2010, p. 108). The treatment of the inner form of the word and of the figurative basis of the word provides an associative connection between the word and the real object, allows one to fix this word in memory and recall it at the proper moment of communication. This is the linguo-didactic value of the inner form of the word.

In addition to this, one of the leading functions of the inner form of the word is the system-forming function. *“As a means of expressing the motivation of words and their motivational connections, the inner form of the word creates motivational paradigms, the totality and interrelation of which form the framework of the entire lexicon of the language”* (Blinova, 2012, p. 6). It also has a linguo-methodological significance because it gives an idea of the internal system of language signs, and their internal connection and organization. Understanding this concept helps a learner to comprehend the logic of the language being studied. The transition from one coding system to another, thanks to the awareness of the inner form of the word, forms the ability to shift the image of the world and reflect on this process (Baranovskaya, 2004).

Materials and methods

The data for this study were Russian, Czech and Slovak languages with regards to the motivation of their vocabulary. The comparative method, methods of etymological analysis, cognitive analysis, seminal analysis, word-formation analysis, and the method of cultural interpretation were used in the study.

Results

The associative nature of the inner form of the word is a reason for it to be considered as the psycholinguistic foundation of teaching a foreign language. This is especially important for a closely related audience. Acting as a certain image, the inner form of the word, on the one hand, makes it possible to establish a direct associative connection between the object and the word nominating it, which helps its rapid memorization, on the other hand, it shows the features of the specific country's "vision" of the subject or situation, which contributes to switching from one code system of the vision of the world to another code system.

It is well-known that associations play a leading role in involuntary foreign language vocabulary memorization. Associations can be visual, color, linguistic (intralingual and interlingual), or even tactile. It is therefore effective to present new lexical units with the help of visual methods since in such cases a stable association between a word and an object, a phenomenon, an action, a feature denoted by it, etc., is immediately formed, contributing to the involuntary memorization of words. The use of visual representations is one of the most effective techniques of mnemonics. The analysis of the inner form of the word, which has a figurative basis, creates that stable associative connection between the object and the name, which stores it in long-term memory.

The ethno-specificity of a word sign is connected mainly with figurative components and with associations that arise among native speakers of different languages. The analysis of the inner form of a word allows us to establish an associative connection of objects and phenomena in the language studied. At the same time, the awareness of the inner form of a word of a foreign language correlates with the understanding of the inner form of the corresponding word of the native language, based on which it becomes possible to single out common or different features of these forms.

The image appears both in the process of perceiving the lexical token, providing its memorization, and in the process of reproduction. A person perceives the surrounding world in images, cognizes it figuratively and reproduces it accordingly with images. With the help of the inner form of the word, the system of thought and the language system perform reciprocal actions – encoding and decoding. The feature that served as a motive, a stimulus for word formation, brings this lexeme to life in a specific situation in accordance with the communicative intention of the speaker. The psychological aspect of the nomination is important not only for the verbal encoding of the phenomenon of reality, for sign formation, but also for the reverse process – decoding the sign, correlating it with a certain denotation, and reproducing it in speech, since the law of association is at the heart of both oppositely directed processes.

The inner form of the word embodies the internal connection of lexemes, not only within the framework of the studied language, but also with access to the native language, which, in the case of their close affinity, reveals many common, but differently expressed roots, which helps to realize the unity and specificity of the native and studied languages.

Discussion

As already emphasized, one of the cognitive, and at the same time linguo-didactic functions of the inner form of a word is the ability to motivate lexical meaning. Initially all words are semantically motivated. However, not all of them retain this motivation. Over time, the inner form of a word may cease to be recognized by native speakers, it may be “erased”. There might be several reasons for this: the obsolescence of the lexeme that motivated this name, word-formation processes (redistribution of morphemes), new stable associations that arise in the process of word functioning, etc. This allows certain scientists to distinguish the inner form of a word, realized by native speakers at a given period, as a phenomenon of synchrony, and the etymon, the original inner form of the word, as a phenomenon of diachrony (Varina, 1976, p. 243).

The linguo-didactic value of dividing vocabulary into motivated and non-motivated, into lexemes with a “transparent” inner form and with an erased inner form is that lexemes and phrasemes with a clear motivation are memorized and reproduced more easily, while non-motivated ones require more work to memorize them. The identification of the inner form of a word is of particular importance when studying the Russian language in a Slavic audience due to the presence of a large number of common roots in the native and studied languages, “scattered” in different ways in their lexico-phraseological systems (Markova, Kvapil, 2021).

For the practice of teaching the Russian language to the Slavs, the classification of words into motivated and non-motivated differs from the corresponding classification for those whom Russian is their native language, because the inner form of a word erased for Russian native speakers may be obvious and understandable for speakers of other Slavic languages, in which lexemes explicating it have been preserved. *“The specificity of studying Russian vocabulary in the Slavic audience is that the inner form of a word, unmotivated from the point of view of Russian language native speakers, is motivated from the point of view of a different Slavic linguoculture”* (Markova, 2011, p. 72), where the Common Slavic lexemes lost by the Russian language are preserved to this day. Thus, the inner form of the colloquial adjective *задрюпанный* ‘old, shabby, unfashionable’ is unmotivated, from the point of view of the modern Russian language, but speakers of other Slavic languages “recognize” the word *dpuna* from its stem (known in these

languages until now: in Bulgarian *дрпана* ‘rags, torn clothes’, ‘rag’, as well as in Macedonian, Serbo-Croatian, Old Czech *дрѣпа*, *дрѣп* ‘flap, rag’, in Ukrainian *дрпину* ‘rag’). For speakers of most Slavic languages, therefore, this Russian word has a “transparent” inner form, which helps its understanding and quick memorization.

Native speakers of the Czech and Slovak languages understand the Russian verb *распогодиться* ‘to become sunny’, which characterizes the replacement of good weather with bad weather, as well as the expression *ждать у моря погоды* ‘wait in vain for something’, literally ‘wait for the weather by the sea’, where *погода* ‘the weather’ also originally carried the meaning of ‘good weather’. The word *погода* still functions in the following languages with positive connotations: in (spoken) Czech, Slovak *погода* ‘good weather’, in Slovak *погода* ‘calm, peace, grace’, in Slovak *у походе* 1) ‘in a good mood’; 2) ‘in order’.

The word *коло* ‘wheel’, lost in modern Russian, has been present in other Slavic languages since the Common Slavic period (e.g., in Czech, Slovak *коло* ‘wheel; bicycle’) and composes the inner form of certain Russian derived lexemes such as *колесо* ‘a wheel’, *кольцо* ‘a ring’, *колея* ‘a track’, *около* ‘near’, *колоб* ‘a round bread’, *колобок* ‘a round loaf’, *калач* ‘small (padlock-shaped) white loaf’, the low colloquial verb *колобродить* ‘to wander around, interfere with everyone’, is also present as a component of the inner form in phraseological units *нести окоlescицу* ‘talk through hat’, *идти окольными путями* ‘go roundabout ways’.

It is possible to distinguish different types of inner form of the word: semantic, formed by the semantic feature of the nominated object (*черника* ‘bilberry’ ← *черная* (*ягода*) ‘a black berry’); word-forming (*школьник* ‘schoolboy’ ← *школа* ‘school’); epidigmatic (*нос* ‘snout of a ship’ ← *нос* ‘a nose’ (part of human body)); *осёл* ‘a fool’ (“a stupid person”) ← *осёл* ‘donkey’ (an animal). Among the latter, the most common, for example, is the inner form of the word based on metaphors: “object” → “person” (for example, *звезда* ‘a star’, *золото* ‘gold’, *клад* ‘treasure’ with positive connotations and *дубина* ‘club’, *шляпа* ‘a hat’, *мешок* ‘a sack’, *колода* ‘a pack’, *валенки* ‘kind of felt boots’ with negative connotations); “plant, tree” → “person” (*дуб* ‘oak’, *пень* ‘stub’, *лопух* ‘burdock’, having negative connotations and being low colloquial).

There are many words among those in the Russian language that have a “transparent” inner form, a clear motivation in a different Slavic environment. Combined into one lexico-phraseological family, they are well memorized due to their inner connection. Many somatic words that were lost in the Russian language have been preserved as motivators of a number of derivatives. As a result, the noun *челка* ‘fringe’, the historicism *челобитная* ‘a request, complaint’ (from the word combination *бить челом* ‘to bow’) are motivated by the Common Slavic *čelo* / *čelo*, known in Czech, Slovak, Bulgarian. The lexemes *очки* ‘glasses’, *окулист* ‘oculist’, *окуляр* ‘eye-glass’, *окно* ‘a window’, *очевидно* ‘obviously’, *очно* ‘in person’, *заочно* ‘in absentio’, and the phraseme *очная ставка* ‘face-to-face interrogation’ are based on a feature verbalized by the word *око* ‘an eye’, which has become an obsolete traditionally poetic word in the Russian language, but has been preserved in most Slavic languages as the name of the organ of sight. The somatism *уста* ‘mouth’ (a synonym for the modern *рот* ‘mouth’), preserved in the derivatives *устье* ‘the mouth of the river’, *устно* ‘orally’, *наизусть* ‘by heart’, *челюсть* ‘jaw’ (which, according to etymologists, consists of the words *щель* ‘a chink’ and *уста* ‘mouth’), as well as in phraseological expressions *из уст в уста* ‘by word of mouth’; *вложить в уста* ‘put into mouth’; *из первых уст* ‘firsthand’; *у всех на устах* ‘on everyone's lips’; *вашими бы устами, да мед пить* ‘if only you were right’ has also been lost in general use in the Russian language. The word *перст* ‘a finger’ (a synonym for the modern *палец* ‘a finger’), obsolete in Russian, but preserved in other Slavic languages, became the motivator of derivatives such as *перстень* ‘signet-ring’, *наперсток* ‘thimble’, *перчатки* ‘gloves’ (‘a type of clothing for hands with compartments for each finger’), and in phrasemes *указующий перст* ‘a pointing finger’; *перст судьбы* ‘the finger of fate’. Due to the preservation of the words *чело* ‘forehead’, *око* ‘an eye’, *уста* ‘mouth’, *перст* ‘a finger’ in other Slavic languages, all the listed lexemes and phrasemes have become motivated and easily memorized in the Slavic language environment.

The Russian names of berries also have a transparent inner form: *черника* ‘bilberry’ ← *черная ягода* ‘a black berry’, *голубика* ‘blueberry’ ← *голубая ягода* ‘a blue berry’, *земляника* ‘wild strawberry’ ← *земляная ягода* ‘a ground berry’ (which emphasizes its nearness to soil), and *ежевика* ‘bramble’ ← *ежовая ягода* ‘a hedgehog berry’ (similar to a hedgehog due to the presence of needles). The actual Russian name *клубника* ‘strawberry’ was the result of the actualization of the external features of berries – their shape is found in the form of a tuber and has the same root as the words *клуб/клубы* ‘something round or gathered together’, *клубок* ‘a clew’, *клубень/клубни* ‘a tuber/tubers’, known in other Slavic languages (in Czech *kloub* ‘hinge, joint’, in Bulgarian *кълбо, кльбо*, etc.). The lexemes *белье* ‘linen’, *лебедь* ‘a swan’, *лебеда* ‘an orach’ are motivated by the adjective *белый* ‘white’, known to all Slavs. The same is evident vice versa; many adjectives are motivated by the names of berries or flowers: *малиновый* ‘crimson’, *вишневый* ‘cherry-colored’, *васильковый* ‘cornflower blue’, *сиреневый* ‘lilac’, *брусничный* ‘cowberry-colored’, and *голубой* ‘light blue’, etc.

From a linguo-didactic perspective, it seems appropriate to group vocabulary in Russian language textbooks for native speakers of other Slavic languages in a special, additional way compared to the existing grouping in the textbooks of the Russian Language (Bronec 1982; Budovičová 1983; Havlová 1999; Rozboudova et al. 2019) which is in accordance with the commonality or difference of their inner form and the presence of a motivator word in their native language. Grouped into a single word-formation family with an inner form “transparent” for native speakers of Slavic languages, these lexemes are easily memorized by Slavs when learning the Russian language. Thus, the verbs *рушить* / *разрушить* ‘to destroy’, *нарушить* ‘to infringe’, *порушить* ‘to abolish’, *рухнуть* ‘to collapse’, nouns *разруха* ‘violation, disorder’, *рухлядь* ‘old, dilapidated, worn out household items, clothing’, and the adjective *рыхлый* ‘crumbly, loose’ have a common motivation. This is understandable for the Slavic audience due to the presence in Slavic languages of the lost Russian word *рух* ‘movement’: in Czech *ruch* – ‘movement’, in Czech *ruchadlo* ‘plow’ – ‘a tool for loosening the earth’, or in Slovak *roucho* ‘headdress’, ‘appearance’. Russian lexemes *крыша* ‘roof’ (of a house), *крышка* ‘a lid’ (of a pot), *укрытие* ‘a shelter’, *покрытие* ‘top layer’, *покрывало* ‘a bedspread’ (‘fabric covering the bed’), and *покрышка* ‘a tire’ (‘top layer of rubber at the wheel of a car or bicycle’) are all motivated by the verb *крыть/покрыть* ‘to cover’ (known, for example, in the Czech language, for comparison: *krytba* ‘covering’, *kryt* ‘a shelter’, *pokryvka* ‘a blanket’).

The aim of learning the inner form of foreign language words can affect the psychological characteristics of students: it increases their cognitive interest, their motivation to learn another language, their creativity and communicative competence, as well as improving short-term and long-term memory and leading to an increase in the level of self-awareness, independence and freedom in mastering a new cognitive and communicative system (Rozboudova et al., 2019). Under this approach, speech construction in a foreign language requires not the translation of the words of the native language into another language, but the transition from the point of view of one system of “worldview” to the point of view of another system.

Conclusions

Being the center of the etymological memory of the word, a sign of its initial conceptual understanding, the keeper of its original idea, and a form of representation of the cognitive content, the inner form of a word serves at the same time as an associative “bridge” not only between different concepts and objects of reality, but also between the object and its nominee. This “bridge”, a mnemonic code with a figurative basis, manifests the peculiarities of the national “vision” of objects, opens a different picture of the world, and helps to memorize words, which proves not only its linguocultural, but also its linguo-didactic value.

From a psychological perspective, the transition from one language to another can be considered a transition from one coding system to another. Attention to the inner rather than to the external form of the language makes it possible to acquire a foreign language as a new system

of encoding and decoding information. At the same time, speech construction in a foreign language does not require the translation of native language words into another language, but the transition to a different ethno-cultural position, a different focus of vision, the formation of new ideas, and a different image of the world.

Studying the inner form of words when acquiring a foreign language, especially in a closely related language environment due to the “transparency” of the inner form of many lexemes, allows a qualitatively new level of language learning to be reached in which there is not such a high level of mechanical memorization of vocabulary, phraseology, grammar and other aspects of the language being studied, but the comprehension of new ways of encoding information. In this case, a foreign language becomes not only a way of communication, but also a means of perceiving and studying a new culture [Kollarova 2014], which helps to implement the principle of “Language through culture and culture through language”.

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