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Народные британские концепты как основные единицы британского мировоззрения в когнитивной лингвистике

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National British concepts as basic units of the British worldview in cognitive linguistics

Когнитивная лингвистика занимается проблемой взаимоотношения языка и мышления. За основу берутся когнитивные единицы или концепты.

Концепт это принадлежность сознания человека, глобальная единица мыслительной деятельности. В данной статье рассматриваются некоторые британские концепты с целью углубленного понимания менталитета британцев

Ключевые слова: когнитивная лингвистика, концепт, язык, восприятие, менталитет

Cognitive linguistics investigates the problem of the relationship of language and a human way of thinking. Cognitive units or concepts are presented as basic units. The concept is the affiliation of human consciousness, a global unit of mental activity. This article discusses some British concepts for the purpose of deep understanding of the mentality of the British

Key words: cognitive linguistics, concept, language, perception, mentality

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Cognition is a very important notion in cognitive linguistics. It includes knowledge and thought of a man through language means. Cognitive linguistics appears within the boundaries of modern anthropocentric paradigm which helps to enhance the horizons of linguistics investigations. A man receives information through different channels but the subject of our interest in cognitive linguistics is that part of information which is reflected and fixed in language forms. There are three levels of psychic insight of the world: emotional perception, formation of generalization and abstractions and process of speaking. The system of concepts includes all this information. The aim of cognitive linguistics is to understand how the process of perception of the world is realized, how knowledge is gained, what system provides successful activities with information. We may speak about the process of perception and acquisition of the world directed to a man, i.e. this process is called anthropocentric way of cognition of the world. Through national concepts we can define the perception of the world by the people through their conceptual and national world view.

Any man enriches his conceptual system not only through personal experience but to a language in which historical and national experience is fixed. We may speak about specific peculiarities of languages in different levels. Ethnic peculiarities are reflected in the semantic world of the world view. The analysis of world view behind the language helps much to understand how different national cultures differ, how they contribute each other.

Some of the universal and national concepts of British people are the concept of home, freedom, private life, common sense, reason, and sense of humour.

The concept of "home". It is well-known that the concept of "home" plays an important role in the English culture. Home is closer to a Russian concept "motherland" and English "homeland". The fact that native land is associated in English with home is significant. This is proved by numerous proverbs and phrases: "Home, sweet home", "East or West, home is best", "An Englishman's home is his castle" and etc. there are a lot of compound words "home-keeping", "home-coming", "homesickness", "homey", "homeliness", "homeward" etc.

M. V. Tsvetkova states that home for an Englishman is not a place where he or she lives, but the entire atmosphere which is created by the people living there [1]. For the majority of Englishmen home is a brick house with rooms on the first and second floor. Near the house there is a garden which is hosts' pride. On the whole, the English home is a mini model of an island: solid fence, and a small piece of cultivated land. In the origin of the English concept of "home" we can notice its connection with geographical position of the country, the idea of isolation, remoteness from the other world. That is why Englishmen are so attached to their homes.

The concept of "freedom". The concept of "freedom" is also connected with geographical and historical factors. The country is located on the island which is isolated from the land, independent of the continent. The first political freedom in England appeared in the XVII century. That time journalists were permitted to be present at parliamentary sittings and to publish materials about those sessions in their journals. People began to form so-called "conversation clubs", where burning political questions were discussed. English freedom is inseparable of independence. Today Englishmen are proud of their mass media and think that they can get the most objective facts of the events in the world. One of the most popular English papers is called "Independent". It is independent from political parties.

English notion of freedom is connected with "to do what you want". "Liberty" is another word which means freedom. The word "liberty" is used rarely and it has negative connotation. For example, in phrases like "to take the liberty of..." – presume to do something; "to take liberties with somebody" – to say or act in an unceremonious manner. "Freedom is connected with personal rights of a person, personal space, personal independence, privacy.

The concept of "private life" (or "privacy"). For the English national conscious mind private life, privacy and freedom are connected and defined separately. Privacy is a reaction to protect one's private space, which Englishmen feel very well. There are a lot of phrases with such a concept: "private life", "private means", "private property", "in private". Concept of "privacy" is connected with the concept of "home". The term "privacy" helps us to understand the English moderateness which doesn't mean the

absence of emotionality but the tendency to keep comfort in any communicative situation. An Englishman is limited by rules of etiquette, always does his best to get home in order to relax in a private place.

The concept of "common sense". The word "sense" has a lot of dictionary meanings in the English language. The first meaning is "feeling, mental perception, understanding". Also the verb "to sense" connects three meanings: "to feel, to perceive, to understand". Here we can see the tendency to empiricism.

There is an Empirical approach in different spheres of English culture: philosophy, law, language. That empiric attitude to life is encoded in their mentality. There are a lot of structures in the English language which show specific "attachment" of the British people towards factual evident: "it's a fact", "in actual fact", "as a matter of fact", "actually", "really", "exactly", "obviously" and etc.

"Reason" is connected with the concept of "sense" which means not only "mind, intellect" but the ability to think, understand, and forms notions and judgments on the basis of facts. "Reason" can be explained through the notion "sense" – "good sense". "Reasonable" in the English conscious mind is an antonym to "rational". In the countries adjacent to England, state structures were based on "rational" but not on "reasonable" start. That is why the British government institutions based on good sense were long-lived. That is why the English political structure is characterized as "politically and socially reasonable, not intolerable to men of sense". The phrase "reasonable man" has acquired shades of meanings, and means a man, whose behaviour is strictly regulated by social and moral rules. "Common sense" became one of the main principles of gentleman's behaviour. So, the concept under consideration proves the fact that British people are law-abiding and conservative citizens. "Common sense" is connected with many other concepts: "gentleman", "moderateness", and "traditionalism".

The concept of "a sense of humour". The English sense of humour is an important trait of national character. The word "humour" can mean not only "humour", but also "temperament" and "mood": "to be in good/out of humour"; "good/ill-humored". "Humour" is connected with the word "sense" which has an idea of sensory perception. That is why a sense of humour for an Englishman is natural and an important way of world perception such as seeing, hearing, sense of smell, taste and touch. Other meanings of the word "sense" – meaning, mind, and awareness. It means that sense of humour is understood as conscious and a mentally cultivated trait. The most important role in the English sense of humour plays irony and wit. It is the most distinctive trait of the English sense of humour. This humour is less connected with comedian situation. This humour is intellectual, based on the phenomenon of words. The sense is always in the subtext. The English language structure has a lot of homonyms: "What is black and white and red/read all over? – A newspaper." Another favourite method is literal interpretation of idiomatic expressions: "Doctor, doctor, I feel like a pair of curtains. – Pull yourself together!" Humour, based on irony and wit, helps an Englishman to correct passion inside his soul. The ability to laugh at themselves is considered as one of the most important trait of any civilization.

We may speak about specific world views with people speaking different languages, but at the same time we may speak about individual personal world view behind the language which is different among different people. We may conclude that the

world behind the language is closely connected with the conceptual system and the language itself.

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