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Concept “health” in the English and Ukrainian languages

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The article focuses on the investigation of the ways of the concept “Health” verbalization in English and Ukrainian, the analysis and description of the semantic features of the language means that represent the nominative field of the concept “Health” and their cognitive interpretation.

Key words: concept, cognitive linguistics, cognitive interpretation.

Романишин Н. І., Шерстньова О. В. Концепт “Здоров’я” в англійській та українській мовах. Статтю присвячено дослідженню особливостей вербалізації концепту “Здоров’я” в англійській та українській мовах, аналізу семантичних особливостей мовних одиниць, що становлять номінативне поле концепту, та їхньої когнітивної інтерпретації.

Ключові слова: концепт, когнітивна лінгвістика, когнітивна інтерпретація.

Романишин Н. И., Шерстнёва О. В. Концепт “Здоровье” в английском и украинском языках. Статья посвящена исследованию вербаллизации концепта “Здоровье” в английском и украинском языках, семантических особенностей языковых единиц, составляющих номинативное поле концепта, и их когнитивной интерпретации.

Ключевые слова: концепт, когнитивная лингвистика, когнитивная интерпретация

The general theoretical outline of the problem. The drastic changes in the scientific paradigm of the modern linguistic fosters the study of all language facts as a complex, multifold phenomena that exceeds the boundaries of the language system. In the result of this the language has become the key to the perception of the human cognitive processes, the comprehension of the nature of the individual and national conceptual structure [3–6]. Alongside with the traditional language branches the modern linguistic experiences the rapid development of cognitive linguistics, linguo-cultural studies, that focus on the concept as a main linguo-cognitive unit.

The concept is the sense that operates in the process of thinking and that reflect the result of human perception of the world [5, 90]. The conceptional direction in the linguo-cultural studies [1, 18] is represented by the description of the concept existing in the national culture and language as the model of the cultural dominants that are represented in language units of different language layers.

Analysis of theoretical scientific literature on the questions of the concept “Health” as constituent of anthropocentric concept system shows that this concept practically was not addressed in national and foreign linguistics, especially, concerning its actualization at the level of discourse.

The survey of linguocultural works enables to treat the concept of “Health” as one of the basic anthropocentric concept, among which the notion of Human is the central meaning and which is studied in linguo-cultural studies is regarded in the unity of all of physical, physiological, spiritual and social features [2]. “Health”, as well as other anthropocentric linguo-cultural concepts, is characterized by accentuating of the aspect of life value. The satisfactory state of Human body and consciousness is both a value, and a goal on the different levels of human activity and existence: individual, familial, domestic, socio-economic, etc. [1, 12]. All mentioned above determines the topicality of the research.

The research object is concept “Health” in the English and Ukrainian languages. The research subject is the linguo-cognitive structure of the concept “Health” represented in the English and Ukrainian language. The aim of this paper is to study and describe the structure of the concept “Health” in the English and Ukrainian languages.

Nominative field of the concept “Health”. The key lexical unit that nominates the concept in English is the noun HEALTH and its synonyms – nouns wellness and wellbeing; the adjective HEALTHY and the derivatives: healthily healthiness, healthful. In Ukrainian the noun ЗДОРОВ’Я, and the adjective ЗДОРОВИЙ.

The nucleus of the nominative field of the concept has been further extended and analyzed on the basis of the lexical meanings of the key words: *haleness, wholeness, fitness, robustness, vigour, vitality, well-being, strength, mightiness, force, stoutness, brawn, muscle, sinew, energy, in good, fine fettle, in fine [splendid] fettle in good shape, in good health, whole, robust, hale, hearty, sturdy, strong, vigorous, thriving, flourishing, in the pink, wholesome; able-bodied (man, woman), capable of working, able to work, able, sane, normal, of sound mind, rational, right in the head, all here, well balanced, right-minded; дужий, квітучий (здоровий, свіжий), сильний, міцний, м'язуватий, мускулістий, мускулястий, кріпкий, повносилий (повний сил, енергії).*

The further analysis of the main ways of the concept nomination (that include stable word combinations, collocations and idioms) allows to state that the key lexical units, their synonyms and antonyms can be ranged according to the degree of the quality they describe into those representing the norm and those representing the positive or negative deviation from the norm, which can be graphically displayed by means of the scale divided into the neutral, positive and negative zones.

The qualities located in the neutral zone represent the state of the living body through its ability to perform the basic vital functions or conditions favourable for the living organism and are evaluated as good health or healthy. The qualities located in the negative or positive zones represent the state of the living body through its disability to perform the basic vital functions or conditions unfavourable for the living organism and are evaluated as bad or poor health or unhealthy. The degree to which they diverge from the norm is characterized by different intensity ranging from weak health to illness. The ways of the concept verbalization are based on the evaluation of personal appearance, feelings, aesthetic impression, physical and mental state, behavior, emotional manifestations, psychological comfort, attitude to the life and surrounding: poor, *bad, ill health, good health, perfect health.*

Lexical units that represent the periphery of the nominative field are grouped according to the common semantic component which can be defined as “process of improving or losing one’s health”. The selected lexical units are also allocated at the zone of the norm (for they bear the common semantic component “to achieve the normal state of the living organism or to approach the normal state of a living organism”) and at the negative zone (due to the common semantic component “to pass into the state of illness”).

Analysis and description of the semantic features of the language means that represent the nominative of the concept “Health” and their cognitive interpretation. At this stage of the analysis the semantics of all language means that represent the concept “health” is analyzed on the basis of the dictionary definitions and contextual analysis of all lexical units that constitute nominative field of the concept “Health” in order to define the main semantic components that characterize the concept. At this stage each lexical unit representing the concept is subjected to the comprehensive semantic analysis .

The analysis includes direct nominations of the concept health and the lexical units that represent different manifestation of the concept in both languages and their associates allows us to define the following basic semantic components: a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being – *haleness, wholeness, fitness, vitality, well-being, wellness*; the general positive or negative evaluation of condition of a person in all aspects, functional efficiency of a living organism – *well, fit, trim, in good, fine fettle, in fine [splendid] fettle in good shape, in good health, whole, hale, hearty, sturdy sane, normal, well balanced, as fit as a fiddle, as sound as a bell, sane, insane, здоровий як хрін, здорова як вода. etc.*; strength/weakness – *strong, weak, дужий, сильний, міцний (який відзначається великою фізичною силою), as strong as a hoarse, etc.*; general constitution – *robust, stoutness, brawn, muscle, sinew, м'язуватий, мускулістий, мускулястий, жиливий (який має розвинені м'язи), шкура та кості, fragile, well-built, etc.*; vitality, energy, ability to work – *vital, robust, elated, as lively as a cricket, alive and hearty, ability, of great endurance, працездатний, спроможний, витривалий, disability, invalid, debilitating, disabled, інвалід, непрацездатний, недієздатний, tired, exhausted, fatigued, crimpy, unhappy, sad, down, depressed, etc.*; processes and manifestations of the changes (favourable or unfavourable) in human conditions – *to recover, to get (to grow) well (better, stronger), to be on the way to good health, to mend; to pick up; to improve one’s health, to lose one’s health, to fall ill, to be ill, to be sick, захворіти, злягти, видужувати, поправлятися, put someone right, bring someone round, turn the corner, come back from the death’s door, on the road to recovery, take a turn for the worse, etc.*

Imaginary content of the concept “Health” nominations. The imagery content of the concept integrates the imaginary interpretation of the human individual perception and evaluation of one’s physical

state and is crystallized in the form of metaphors, similes, epithets etc. Phraseological units and idioms that represent the idea of positive state of the human organism and describe good health, energy activity, attractiveness and joy of living are generally visual, acoustic or cognitive images. The majority of the images of this type are based on similes, metaphors and epithets in which good state is compared to the natural phenomena, plants, strength of beasts and animals or are associated with the notions that have strong positive evaluation in social cognition.

Visual images: *to look like a million dollars, a picture of health, виглядає на всі сто*. The visual image of good health is strongly associated in both languages with good complexion – *high colour, ruddiness, roses, healthy glow, bloom of youth; здоровий рум'янець, рум'янець молодості, etc.* Acoustic images: *fit as a fiddle, sound as a bell*. The ground for these acoustic images lies in the interpretation of good health as harmony and concord of all biological processes and functions similar to the harmony and concord of music, or perfection, clearness of an attuned musical instrument. Cognitive images: strong as an ox/a hoarse/a bull, eat like a wolf, sleep like a god, fit as a flea, sound as a roach, as lively as a cricket *здоровий як бик/кінь/віл, здоровий як вода/земля, здоровий як хрін, сильний (міцний) як дуб, рум'яний як яблучко, шкіра як персик, etc.* The cognitive images that represent the idea of recovery are metaphors that have in their structure lexical units with the semantics of movement: turn the corner, come back from the death's door, on the road to recovery, etc. In the English cognitive images that actualize the concept "Health" the ground of imagery perception lies in the comparison of health with the strength, endurance, energy, liveliness of the living creatures whereas in Ukrainian nominations there is prevalence of the names of plants and natural phenomena. It is also worth attention that in English we have the idiom "as right as a trivet" in which the ground of comparison is the idea of firmness and stability; and the idiom "full of beans" where the idea of healthiness is represented through the idea of fruitfulness and ripeness. There is no similar idioms in Ukrainian.

Phraseological units and idioms that represent the idea of negative state of the human organism and describe bad/poor health, lack of energy, illness are generally visual and cognitive images. This type of images are usually metaphors and metonymies in which bad health is associated with downward movement, grave, death, earth, ground or with the notions that have general negative value in the social cognition.

Visual images: deathly pale, as lean as a rake, as thin as a lath (as a herring), bag of bones, худий як скіпка, шкіра та кістки. Cognitive images: to go downhill, take a turn for the worse, run oneself into the ground, однією ногою в могилі, etc.

The imagery potential of the concept "Health" also reveals itself in the possibility of figurative transference of the words 'health' and "healthy" to denote success and efficiency of something such as an organization or a system (for example: *the health of the economy, the healthy society, the future health of the banking industry, etc*) or to measure the moral, utilitarian, pragmatic aspect of behavior, actions, activity (for example: *здоровий підхід до справи, здоровий інтерес etc*).

The associative field of the concept "Health". The associative field of the concept "Health" in both languages includes lexical units that have the following semantic components in their semantic structure the:

1) to have or cause a healing effect, to cause the improvement of one's physical or mental conditions, directed to the improvement of health: *to cure, curative, therapeutic (effect, therapeutic physical training); medicative, medical; лікувальний; лікувально-діагностичний, лікувально-профілактичний, лікувально-оздоровчий; цілющий, оздоровлювати, оздоровчий;*

2) basic factors of good health: *healthy living, healthy lifestyle, balanced diet, nutritious food, healthy environment, coping with stress, to cope with stress; здоровий спосіб життя;*

3) processes and phenomena related to human health or reflecting social concern about health: *Health and Safety at Work Act, health authority, health and wealth, health benefit, health bill, health care, управління охорони здоров'я (орган), охорона здоров'я, медичне страхування, законодавство з питань охорони здоров'я, медичне обслуговування*

It should be mentioned that this set of nominations of concept aspects represent factors or processes that are marked with strong positive evaluation, for most of the presented lexical units do not allow antonyms. The set of negative nominations of this type is restricted: *to harm, to injure, to hurt; to be injurious (to); to damage; (to affect) one's health, to be injurious to health; destructive, disastrous; ruinous, noxious, hurtful; to age in the meaning: to seem to be much older and less strong or less alert or to cause untimely aging: згубний (який загрожує смертю, нещастям чи веде до них), шкідливий (який шкодить*

комусь, чомусь, перев. здоров'ю, погано впливає на когось, щось), нездоровий, отруйний, тлінний. зістарити, зістаритися, одряхліти, одряхнути (стати немичним у старості); відцвісти (стати старим, старим, втрачаючи красу), *unhealthy living, unhealthy food, harmful (climate, food), bad habits, etc.*

Analysis and description of the semantics of the language means that represent the associative fields of the concept “Health”. At this state of the analysis the semantics of all language means that represent the concept “health” is analysed on the basis of the dictionary definitions and contextual analysis of all lexical units that constitute the associative field of the concept “Health” in order to define the main semantic components that characterize the concept. At this stage each lexical unit is subjected to the comprehensive semantic analysis. The analysis includes direct nominations of the concept health and the lexical units that represent different manifestation of the concept in both languages and their associates allows us to define the following basic semantic components: **efficiency, purpose, benefit and function** – health care, health insurance, health laws, health protection, medical service, a medical centre, hospital; polyclinic, socialized medicine, охорона здоров'я, медичне страхування, законодавство з питань охорони здоров'я, медичне обслуговування, медичний огляд, лікарський огляд; медичне обстеження.

Cognitive interpretation of the proverbs and sayings that actualize the concept “Health”. The analysis of the proverbs and sayings allows to define those characteristics of the concept which are considered as the most important, significant, distinctive, that represent the concept as the object of personal and social evaluation and discussion. It is aimed at the revealing of their culturally significant content and identification of its place in the national picture of the world. The analysis of the proverbs and sayings makes it possible to classify them according to the key conceptual feature ascribed to the concept health.

Health is a great value. Health is wealth, possession that cannot be measured materially: *Health is great riches. Найбільше багатство – здоров'я. Здоров'я всьому голова.* Health is the result of strong spirit, good humour and wisdom: *У здоровому тілі – здоровий дух. The healthful man can give counsel to the sick. Sickness in the body brings sadness to the mind.* Health is the matter of personal responsibility: *You are what you eat. Люди часто хворіють, бо грядіть не уміють. Береженого Бог береже.* Health is specifically related to activity and labour: *Праця – здоров'я, лень – хвороба.*

The other proverbs actualize the different types of relations between human health and age, appearance, living conditions, nourishment, etc.

The analysis of spoken and conversational formulas, greetings, congratulations and wishes allows us to define the following semantic characteristic of the concept “Health”: Health is the object of personal concern, communicative interest, good wishes and friendly feelings towards somebody: *to enquire (ask) about somebody's health, to pay for somebody's health, for the good of somebody's health, to wish to be in the best of one's, to wish everlasting good health, your health!, цікавиться чиймось здоров'ям, як ваше здоров'я?, (за) ваше здоров'я!, здраслуй (здрасуйте), доброго здоров'я.*

The defined cognitive features obtained in the result of the analysis of the content of proverbs, sayings, conversational formulas, greetings and wishes are regarded as the main cognitive features of the concept “health” in both languages and constitute the basis of the cognitive interpretation and description of the concept content.

Cognitive interpretation and description of the concept “Health” content. The complex content of the concept “Health” in both languages integrates:

a) objective, direct and subjective, figurative representation of physical and mental state verbalized by words, collocations and idioms;

b) the didactic interpretation of different aspects of the concept that mirrors the generalization and evaluation of the social everyday experience, social and individual perception and evaluation of one's behavior crystallized in the form of lexical units proverbs and sayings;

c) generalized information about basic factors of good health and processes and phenomena related to human health or reflecting social concern about health; habits that are beneficial or harmful for the health; basic behavioural norms and stereotypes, way of living;

d) description of attitudes towards one's own health, healthy lifestyle, medicine as a means of restoring, preservation or on the contrary hampering of the health;

e) exposition of the role of medicine and medical care for individual health and health of the society in the whole;

f) the idea of the value of health in human life.

Consequently, according to the results of the conducted research we consider it is possible to represent the cognitive interpretation of the concept “Health” in English and in Ukrainian as following: Health is a mental and physical state of a living organism its functional efficiency *which manifests itself in general physical appearance, actions, behavior, abilities, subjective sensations, etc.; depends on/or is affected by different factors both of natural and social character; liable to predictable/unpredictable changes*. Health is valuable possession, wealth, benediction. Health is the object of personal, social, legal responsibility and protection. 4. Health is the topic of human social intercourse actualized in greetings, congratulations, good wishes. Health is usually ascribed to young age. 6. A person who is healthy *looks, feels and acts in a way that manifest his/her good/perfect physical and mental condition; is usually physically strong, well built, energetic, able to work; is in good humour; has good digestion; does not need any medical treatment and does not resort to any medicine*. To be (remain) healthy a person should keep *to healthy lifestyle, healthy diet, be active and think positively*.

Perspectives of further investigation. The results of the conducted analysis of the concept content makes it possible to state that in both languages the number of defined cognitive features and their actualization by certain language means coincide. This fact proves the assumption that the content of the concept “Health” as a universal human value has a complex structure which has similar ontological, evaluative, imagery, behavioral, aesthetic representation in the national conceptual sphere of both lingual-cultural societies. The study of the concept “Health” actualization in different types of discourses (media, internet resources, etc.) can be considered as a subject of further investigations.

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