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PECULIARITIES OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

Intercultural communication is studied by numerous disciplines under different angles for its importance has proved to be vital in the recent decades. The key concepts of this phenomenon have become the agenda of cognitive linguistics as it deals with world perception and reflection, which is crucial in intercultural communication.

Culture and communication are mutually effected and language is the means and medium of their coexistence. It describes and fixes a wide range of communication processes and possible problems. The social context of the modern global world consists of individuals of different ethnic, religious, social and educational background. By means of cognitive linguistics, it is possible to seek to understand how people from different cultures perceive the world around them, communicate in their native surroundings and out of their comfort zone in unfamiliar or untypical environment.

Culture and language determine how people encode and decode messages, choose the medium of their transition and interpret the messages. It is crucial to work out the framework for effective cross-cultural cooperation, based on understanding, search for common goals and loyalty to differences.

The purpose of the article is to explore the basic concepts of modern intercultural communication and line out the prospects of further research of cross-cultural communication by means of cognitive linguistic framework. One of the main problematic aspects of communication across cultures is totalitarian discourse and propaganda which is inherent to modern information warfare. Social communication in this case is characterized by a high role of the ritual aspect when some part of the society ceases to live in a real space with generally accepted norms of behavior and is immersed in the mythical space where people worship a charismatic leader and words regain magical power. The importance of the main, denotative meaning of the word weakens and is lost, the denotative meaning is replaced by the connotative, which now becomes the leading one. At the same time, there is a process of transforming the meaning of the word, often to its antonym, which is, actually the mechanism of propaganda.

According to cognitive semantics, one of the fields of cognitive linguistics, lexical meaning is conceptual. Scientists claim that the meaning of a lexeme has no tight reference to the entity in the world we call "real". What is truly real is the concept of an object, which is based on one's experience with the entity. Approaching the problem of intercultural communication and, what is vital, understanding and effective cooperation, we cannot help dealing with differences of world perception caused by differences between languages and different types of personal and group experience fixed in a language. These differences and conceptual nature of meaning are unfortunately crafty used for destructive purposes. Cognitive linguistics enables researches of different fields, such as psychology, anthropology, philosophy, neurobiology etc., to deal with serious challenges of the modern society.

One of the founders of cognitive semantics, Leonard Talmy in his pioneering work "Toward a Cognitive Semantics" approaches the problem of conceptual material organization by means of language. The author claims that there is a set of crucial conceptual domains, such as motion and location, space and time, attention and viewpoint, causation and force interaction. These are parameters which structure conception by language. Therefore it is language what shapes and determines concepts [1, p. 12].

One of the key concepts of cognitive semantics, mental space, is the framework for intercultural communication structuring and resistance to information war patterns. Mental space is a construct suggested by Gilles Fauconnier and defined as an idealized cognitive model. The scientist claims that meaning construction processes involve building mental spaces and creating mappings among them. This is the basic idea of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's blending theory in cognitive semantics [2, p. 6].

Cognitive linguistics can deal with intercultural communication problems on the level of general perception and individual interaction. Particularly important ideas for contemporary intercultural communication understanding can be found in M. Lustig and J. Koester's work "Intercultural communication: interpersonal communication across cultures" [3] and in the book "Real Communication" by D. O'Hair, M. Wiemann, D. Mullin and J. Teven [4]. Basic concepts contained in rules and skills of cross-cultural communication on interpersonal level can be researched in numerous and various situations presented by B. Dignen in his profound work "Communicating across cultures" [1]. The author also suggests the model of flexible thinking aimed at meeting the needs of such type of communication.

Conceptual blending theory claims that relations of elements are blended subconsciously and become ubiquitous in thought and language. The problem of destructive influence on this process, revealed in information warfare, makes the search for effective cognitive defense pattern prior in cognitive linguistics.

The concepts of WAR and PEACE are, as a rule, not divided in political discourse, aimed at information warfare and totalitarianism, the concept FREEDOM is endowed with features that are not part of its structure at all. This type of discourse is close to religious as it is based on religious archetypes of consciousness such as "sacrifice", "faith in bright future", "worship of the deity" etc. and misuses them for destructive reasons. A political leader is perceived as a deity, endowed with supernatural powers and outstanding qualities and at the same time unattainable for dialogue. In modern democratic discourse, the distance between the leader and the masses is reduced, while in the totalitarian regimes, this political distance deepens and thus predetermines the authoritarian nature of conceptualization, which underlines the unquestionable authority of its author. The purpose of this discourse is to make psychological pressure on communication

partners, which includes verbal and extra-linking components of communication, and is usually accompanied by violation of the principle of courtesy, which points to authoritarianism of the discourse [6, p. 97].

Important features of all concepts of destructive political discourse are abstractness, blurry of semantic meaning, the ability to rethink and replace other concepts by means of conceptual blending violation. With the help of content and conceptual analysis it is possible to highlight basic concepts such as STRUGGLE and OUR CIRCLE. The concept of STRUGGLE is actualized by lexemes “fight”, “battle” and “war”.

The concept STRUGGLE is structured by constructing the opposition “native-stranger”, which is one of the basic cognitive categories in the discourse. The division of the world into “native” and “strange” has always been one of the most important cognitive operations in the process of human world comprehension. The role of the basic archetypal opposition, such as “good-evil”, “light-gloom”, “life-death” still remains extremely significant and widely used.

Hence it becomes clear that violations in meaning structuring, strongly enhanced by possibilities of modern global communication system, should be dealt with. Researches face the challenge of interdisciplinary studies of complex problems of linguistic and psychological nature. The connection between cognitive linguistics and psychology reached another level in 2003 when D. Gentner and S. Goldwin-Meadow published “Language in mind. Advances in the study of language and thought” [7]. Typology and language acquisition turned out to be companion processes because of language variation, which provides valuable perspectives that support the framework of cognitive linguistics.

Therefore the study of intercultural communication peculiarities from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics suggests a set of complex tools for interdisciplinary research and prompts to analyze key concepts of modern information war in order to find effective solutions of difficult conceptual and communication problems.

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Анотація

О. КРАЄВСЬКА. ОСОБЛИВОСТІ МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОЇ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ З ТОЧКИ ЗОРУ КОГНІТИВНОЇ ЛІНГВІСТИКИ

У статті розглядаються особливості та проблеми сучасного міжкультурного спілкування з точки зору когнітивної лінгвістики. Особлива увага приділяється проблемам інформаційної війни та перспективам досліджень із когнітивної семантики в пошуку ефективної моделі когнітивного захисту від порушень у концептуальних поєднаннях. Окреслено засоби створення сприятливого ментального простору для ефективного міжкультурного спілкування.

Ключові слова: міжкультурна комунікація, когнітивна лінгвістика, інформаційна війна, концептуальне поєднання.

Аннотация

О. КРАЕВСКАЯ. ОСОБЕННОСТИ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ С ТОЧКИ ЗРЕНИЯ КОГНИТИВНОЙ ЛИНГВИСТИКИ

В статье рассматриваются особенности и проблемы современного межкультурного общения с точки зрения когнитивной лингвистики. Особое внимание уделяется проблемам информационной войны и перспективам исследований когнитивной семантики в поиске эффективной модели когнитивной защиты от нарушений в концептуальных сочетаниях. Определены средства создания благоприятного ментального пространства для эффективного межкультурного общения.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная коммуникация, когнитивная лингвистика, информационная война, концептуальное сочетание.

Summary

O. KRAIEVSKA. PECULIARITIES OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

The article deals with peculiarities and challenges of modern intercultural communication from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics. Special attention is paid to information warfare problems and prospects of cognitive semantics studies of search for effective cognitive defense pattern to conceptual blending violations. The means of favorable mental space creation for effective intercultural communication are outlined.

Key words: intercultural communication, cognitive linguistics, information warfare, conceptual blending.