

Linguoamental category of relevance and the technology of its study in the organization of scientific and educational activities

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Abstract. The legitimacy of identifying linguoamental categories as a set of concepts and their verbalizing signs (linguistic units), which are characterized by homogeneity based on the commonality of a certain feature, fixing the results of human cognitive activity, has been proven. The identification of the linguoamental category of relevance is substantiated, accumulating concepts (mental signs) that are socially significant at a particular historical stage, which are represented by linguistic units that form an active vocabulary of native speakers. The definition of *actualema* – a mental sign that objectifies the category of relevance is formulated, its features are characterized, including chronological determinism, sociocultural marking, semantic versatility, dynamism. The composition of the actual vocabulary of the modern Russian language is considered. It includes: lexical and semantic neologisms of the last decades, external borrowings, internal borrowing, updated vocabulary, nominally reoriented vocabulary. On the example of the study of the actual concept of *charity* and the linguistic units verbalizing it, the effectiveness of the linguo-conceptual analysis of the *actualeme* is shown, which revealed an obvious connection between actual concepts, language and the realities of the outside world, which is relevant both for the scientific sphere and for educational activities.

1 Introduction

Cognitive techniques that allow you to streamline, systematize knowledge about the outside world are of paramount importance for different sciences – both natural and humanitarian. Here categorization and conceptualization perform particularly significant functions.

In modern philosophy, the term "categorization" is defined as the process of generalization and assignment of a cognizable referent (object, phenomenon of the external world) to a certain class. Generalizations of this kind (classes) accumulate cumulative social experience and are embodied in different ways: in the form of the nomination of

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material and non-material referents, perceptual and sensory samples, universal and national stereotypes, behavior models, communication standards, etc. [1].

Categorization, which has long been studied by the humanities and is widely used in cognitive activity, at the present stage has again come into the zone of close attention in the field of science and education. One of the reasons for the increased interest in categorization is the study of objects of the external world on the basis of a cognitive approach, i.e. from the standpoint of cognitivism [1-5].

Categorization, being one of the cognitive techniques, is actively used in epistemology, linguistics, psychology and other sciences that describe and explain cognizable referents from a cognitive perspective. Categorization makes it possible to streamline human experience and various activities based on a fundamental property of the human mind – cognitive abilities, including the ability to classify, distribute and organize knowledge in the process of scientific and educational activities.

The term "categorization" in the mainstream of cognitivism is defined as the process of perception, awareness and processing of information received by a person, highlighting the essential features of referents, resulting in the formation of mental (informative) signs – concepts [2, 6]. They are localized in social (collective) and individual consciousness, reflect reality, in their totality form the concept sphere and participate in the construction of the mental model of the world. Concepts are represented by different means, of which linguistic signs are of paramount importance – words, combinations, syntagmas, etc.

Both categorization and conceptualization, as the researchers rightly point out, are different types of cognitive activity of the human mind. Conceptualization in relation to categorization is primary, since concepts serve as the basis for the formation of various generalizations (categories). Concepts act as a kind of standard of comparison, comparison and ultimately categorization of cognizable objects, which in the process of such comparison are identified either as elements of a given category (class, category), or as representatives of another category (class, category) [1-4, 6].

We agree with the opinion of E. S. Kubryakova, who asserts that the issues related to the categorization and conceptualization of the cognized world and information coming to a person are among the key problems of cognitive science (cognitivism) [4].

The formation of cognitivism as a direction of modern science made it possible to rethink the language, its functions, nature and processes occurring in it and come to the conclusion that language performs two most important functions – communicative and cognitively representative [1].

The interaction of two processes – cognition and communication – makes it possible to consider linguistic units and categories in a new perspective, as well as to recognize the existence of linguomental categories that reflect the mental processes and cognitive abilities of a person, fixed in language units.

In classical philosophy, categories are considered as the most general concepts of scientific knowledge, reflecting generalized and significant objects, signs, connections, relations of any area (fragment, part) of the external world [7].

In linguistics, a category is understood as a non-intersecting set (group, class) of linguistic units characterized by a certain homogeneity based on the commonality of one or another semantic and / or formal feature [8].

Based on the general scientific and linguistic interpretation of the concept of "category", a linguomental category, from our point of view, should be defined as a set of concepts (informative, mental units) and their verbalizing signs (linguistic units), which are characterized by homogeneity based on the commonality of a certain feature that fixes the results of cognitive human activities.

The allocation of linguomental categories, along with the categories of thought and categories of language, the existence of which has been unconditionally recognized by

philosophers and linguists since ancient times, we consider quite reasonable. It is the linguo-mental categories that reflect the closest connection between thinking and language, to which E. Benveniste has repeatedly drawn attention, emphasizing the integrity of the speech-thinking process [9].

Consequently, linguo-mental categories are the result of the cognitive activity of human consciousness, fixed in language units. One of the most important linguo-mental categories, as we see it, is the category of relevance.

The study of the phenomenon of relevance in the aspect of linguo-cognitive and culturological approaches is noted in Germanic and American studies (2001–2007).

We did not find any systematic research category of relevance in domestic science, in particular in Russian studies. At the same time, it should be noted that Russian researchers studying the lexical composition of the Russian language and other languages, as well as the innovative processes taking place in them, operate with such terms as *actual vocabulary*, *actualized vocabulary*, *actual lexical units*, *lexical actualizers* [10-13]. In the works of O. I. Titkova, we came across the terms *linguo-social category of relevance* and *actual concept*, with the help of which the author explains the concept of "conceptual field of recurrence" [14-16].

2 Material and methods

The material of our research is the representatives of the lingo-mental category of relevance – actualeme (actual concepts) and the means of their verbal expression.

As one of the methods for studying the category of relevance, we propose the technology of linguo-conceptual analysis of the actualeme, which includes the following stages of work.

1. Determine the actualeme to be analyzed.
2. Reveal the key word, which is the name of the actualeme and the main means of its linguistic representation.
3. To identify other lexical units (both single-root and multi-root with a key word), which also embody the actualeme and its semantic components.
4. Compile a lexicographic portrait of the keyword (and, if necessary, other lexical units verbalizing the actualeme) in the process of analyzing materials from lexicographic sources of different types and different historical periods.
5. Explore texts / contexts of different functional belonging, which contain the comprehension and interpretation of the analyzed actualeme.

The amount of material used for analysis can vary. It depends on the target attitude of the researcher, the content and structure of the actualeme, the features of its linguistic and speech representation.

3 Results and discussion

The selection of one category or another – logical, linguistic, linguo-mental and others – presupposes the definition of a categorical feature (general category meaning) that underlies this category, and signs that serve as its embodiment.

We believe that categorical for the linguo-mental category of relevance is the sign of the social significance of certain mental and linguistic units, their relevance for a particular society in a certain historical period.

The category of relevance is "a lingo-mental category that accumulates socially significant, i.e. concepts that are relevant for society at a certain cultural and historical

stage, which are objectified by linguistic units that form an active vocabulary of society" [17].

Let's note the essential features of this category:

- chronological predetermination (ambiguous filling of the category with actual signs in a certain historical period);
- socio-cultural marking (adequacy to the external world and the system of life values of society);
- semantic versatility (fixation and representation of various spheres of social life – political, economic, ideological, social, cultural, spiritual and moral, etc.);
- dynamic, evolutionary character (qualitative and quantitative change in the composition of actual meanings and their verbal signs objectifying them).

In Russian studies, the traditional terms are *active vocabulary* and *passive vocabulary*. The main criterion for classifying lexical units as an active or passive dictionary is the frequency of their use in modern speech by native speakers.

We have found that the representatives of the category of relevance in the Russian studies of the late XX – early XXI centuries are registered and described in lexicographic sources. Compilers of modern explanatory, neological dictionaries operate with such terms as *actual vocabulary*, *word actualization*, *meaning actualization*. Moreover, lexicographic sources not only record a particular linguistic sign, but also mark it with a corresponding label. In addition, in the prefaces of a number of dictionaries, the objects of lexicographic research are described in detail, and its terminological apparatus is presented.

For example, let us refer to the "Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language at the Beginning of the XXI Century. Actual vocabulary", the authors-compilers of which are G. N. Sklyarevskaya, E. Yu. Vaulina, I. O. Tkacheva, E. A. Fiveyskaya (2007). In the preface, the compilers clearly indicated the object of the dictionary – the actual vocabulary and the representatives of the definition of this term. Lexicographers refer to the actual vocabulary of the modern Russian language lexical units that demonstrate changes in all spheres of life of the Russian society at the end of the XX-beginning of the XXI century, reflect the explicit and significant processes taking place in the language and have a significant impact on the language, its lexical-semantic system and Russian society, its mentality and linguistic consciousness.

The named vectors of the study also emphasize that the content of the linguamental category of relevance, its categorical meaning (general category meaning) is relevance, adequacy to the external world and, in a narrower sense, to the socio-cultural reality of a particular society. This categorical meaning is not limited to the individual semantics of lexical units. It corresponds to the degree of abstraction and generalization, which is carried out at the pragmatic level and is determined by the cultural and value system of society.

As you know, categories, for example linguistic ones, have specific ways of expression (lexical, morphological, syntactic), which are opposed to each other within the general category of meaning and are often correlated with each other as strong and weak members of the opposition.

Unlike linguistic categories, the linguamental category of relevance should not be considered in such specified parameters. The means of representing this category, as we see it, are mental signs, which we call *actualemes*, and their verbal correlates are *actual lexical units*.

Actualemes are actual concepts, i.e. informative (mental) signs that are at a certain historical stage in the area of close attention of a particular ethnos, reflecting vital processes that are important for it, which have relevant content and for these reasons are part of the key mental units that form the national conceptual sphere.

Linguistic signs verbalizing *actualemes* are characterized by a high speech frequency.

For example, in Soviet times, the concepts of *Soviets*, *socialism*, *communism*, *the Komsomol*, *pioneers*, *equality*, *collectivism*, *the five-year plan* and many others were among the actualemes. Their lexical representations – the words *Soviets*, *Soviet*, *in Soviet*, *socialism*, *socialist*, *communism*, *communist*, etc. – were actively used in official and unofficial discourses. Currently, these mental and linguistic signs have lost their former social significance. The focus of attention of modern Russian society is already on other actualemes – *capitalism*, *the market*, *individualism*, *success*, *money*, *comfort* and others. Consequently, the lexical units that embody them, *capitalism*, *capitalist*, *market*, etc. are actively used in Russian speech.

Among the most important signs, we consider the following as actualemes:

- reflection of referents (objects, phenomena of the external world) that are in the zone of increased attention of society in a certain synchronous cut;
- belonging to the concept sphere of the whole society, and not of its individual representatives;
- the presence of not only a nuclear zone, which contains the main semantic component, but also a powerful interpretive zone containing evaluative opinions, judgments, various kinds of interpretations, actual increments of the nuclear zone of the mental sign;
- verbalization with linguistic signs, which in their totality form a corpus (category) of actual vocabulary.

The composition of topical vocabulary of the last decades is diverse. Groups of modern topical vocabulary are presented in the table.

Table 1. Actual vocabulary of the modern Russian language

№	Types of neologisms	Examples
1.	Lexical neologisms	<i>Intra-parliamentary</i> , <i>extra-parliamentary</i> , <i>market</i> , <i>anti-market</i> , <i>commercialize</i> , <i>commercialization</i> , <i>USE</i> , <i>coronavirus</i>
2.	Semantic neologisms	<i>Criminal</i> in the meaning of "intended to combat criminal crime"
3.	External borrowings	<i>Brand</i> , <i>glamor</i> , <i>graffiti</i> , <i>PR</i> , <i>rave</i> , <i>remix</i> , <i>holding</i> , <i>chart</i> , <i>brexitee</i> , <i>hype</i> , <i>fake</i>
4.	Internal borrowing	<i>Chaos</i> , <i>cool</i> , <i>disassembly</i> , <i>hitting</i>
5.	Updated vocabulary	<i>Humanism</i> , <i>democracy</i> , <i>mercy</i> , <i>independence</i> , <i>reform</i> , <i>sovereignty</i> , <i>freedom</i>
6.	Nominally reoriented vocabulary	<i>Duma</i> , <i>governor</i> , <i>business</i> , <i>banker</i> , <i>unemployment</i> , <i>strike</i> , <i>lyceum</i> , <i>gymnasium</i>

The research toolkit of the linguo-mental category of relevance is diverse. We consider the technology of linguo-conceptual analysis of the actualeme to be effective, which can be used in the organization of both scientific and educational activities.

As an example, we will demonstrate the technology of linguo-conceptual analysis of the actualeme *charity* and its lexical representatives, examining their content, structure and ambiguous understanding at different historical stages of the life of Russian society.

Actualeme *charity* is one of such mental units as *responsiveness*, *cordiality*, *hospitality*, *compassion*, *mercy*, revealing the breadth of the Russian character as a specific national trait.

In the pre-revolutionary period the actualeme *charity* was represented by various lexical units that reveal its content. Many of them are registered in the "Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian Language" by V. I. Dahl: *goodness*, *charity*, *beneficent*, *benefactor*, *philanthropist*, etc. [18].

During the Soviet period, charity began to be viewed as a bourgeois phenomenon, which was reflected in the lexicographic sources of that period. Let us quote the 1985 "Dictionary of the Russian Language" (Small Academic Dictionary): *charity* – "in bourgeois society: the provision of material assistance by private individuals to the poor; philanthropy".

The lexeme *charity* and words with the same root in that period were used with a tinge of disapproval along with the words *tolerance*, *pity*, *indulgence*, *handout*.

At the end of the 20th century, Russian national traditions began to return from the pre-revolutionary past, including charity and patronage. At the turn of the XX–XXI centuries the actualeme *charity* and the linguistic signs verbalizing it lost their ideological connotations (de-ideologized) and changed their evaluative meaning – from negative to positive. The traditional semantic components "help", "care", "support" and "attention" have again become significant for the Russian society in the content of the actualeme.

Such axiological changes are reflected in the semantics of the lexeme *charity* – the name of the actualeme. Let us quote the –Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language of the End of the 20th Century. Language changes" (1998): *charity* – "disinterested provision of material assistance to needy individuals and organizations".

In modern speech, the lexical units that represent actualeme charity have positive connotations. For example:

The Committee for Culture, the construction company "Peter the Great", the firm "Soyuzkultmontazh" and many other organizations that provided us with charitable assistance immediately responded to the call for help (Rush Hour. 2003. 29.01.2003–04.02.2003);

Examples of patronage over orphanages, ...charitable actions can be found in any region of Russia (Ogonyok. 2003. No. 8).

Thus, we can state that in the post-Soviet period there has been a de-ideologization (ideological neutralization) of the actualeme *charity* and its linguistic representatives. The main reason for this is a change in one of the value modes of the mental picture of the world of society – ideology.

4 Conclusion

There are sufficient grounds for recognizing the relevance as a linguo-mental category that occupies a separate place in the conceptual and linguistic picture of the world.

In the cognitive aspect, the basis for identifying this category is a sign of social significance, the relevance of meanings in the cultural and value system of society. In the functional and semantic aspect, the category of relevance concentrates linguistic means that serve to represent actual meanings (actual) and, therefore, are widely used in speech practice.

There are a variety of cognitive techniques that allow you to explore and describe the lingo-mental category of relevance in the organization of both scientific and educational activities. The effectiveness of the lingo-conceptual analysis of the actualeme demonstrated by us is manifested in the identification of an obvious connection between actual concepts, language and the realities of the external world. The composition of the corpus of the actual and the linguistic signs representing them is determined by external (political, economic, sociocultural) factors.

The study of ambiguous interpretation is relevant through the prism of semantic-pragmatic processes and synchronous-diachronic changes in the language, from the standpoint of linguistics, to trace the dynamics of public consciousness and the evolution of the national conceptual sphere.

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