Linguistic View of the World and Peculiar Features of Its Reflection in Newspaper Headlines

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Abstract

This article discusses one of the important topics of linguistic research of recent decades—the linguistic view of the world. The historical background to the emergence of this term is presented, as well as its specific features and differences from the conceptual picture of the world. The fundamental and significant works on this subject, published up to now, are analyzed. The role of the language in the study of the environment, as well as in shaping the image of the world in human consciousness is considered through the examples of conceptual and linguistic pictures of the world with account of the peculiarities of their bearers. The main object of the study are newspaper headlines—the most flexible linguistic structures in relation to the innovations of time, where the reflection of the linguistic view of the world not only has the ethnic-pragmatic potential, but also plays an important role in reducing distances and establishing communications between the author and the recipient. A journalist, while inventing a title for his article, tries to make it not only informative, but also corresponding to the worldview of his potential readers. The purpose of this work is to analyze the pragmatic and ethnic-cognitive potential of the linguistic picture of the world based on the non-fiction headlines. Despite the fact that the linguistic view of the world has been the subject of many scientific works, this topic requires further in-depth study. And, given the fact that the reflection of the linguistic view of the world in non-fiction titles in the pragmatic and cognitive aspects before now has not virtually taken place in modern linguistics, the research becomes quite relevant and innovative.

Keywords: linguistic view of the world, newspaper headline, pragmatics.

1. Introduction

The language is a universal means of communication and exchange of ideas between people. In addition, the language reflects the culture, attitude, and thought patterns of a certain people. The well-known English philosopher Bacon argued that "to draw conclusions about the genius and way of thinking of people and nations is possible through their language" (Bacon, 1861). Many years later, his successor Herder supporting this idea of the scholar noted that this could be seen in their language system. "Hard-working people have the abundance of verbs, while more subtle ethnic groups have a dominant number of nouns with abstract concepts" (Herder, 1812).

Later on, such statements became the basis for the formation of such a term as the "linguistic view of the world" that, in turn, caused intensive discussion of scholars from around the world and remains a relevant problem of linguistics up to now.

2. Literature Review

In this paper, we will try to review the main scientific literature on the subject of the linguistic view of the world, which includes the basic works by Humboldt, Sapir, Whorf, and their scientific followers: Gladstone, Weisgerber, Levinson, and others. We also cannot ignore the scientific papers of the recent years; in particular, we will focus on the research of Boroditsky and Deutscher.

3. Methodology

In the course of the work, we used the deductive-descriptive and analytical research methods, as well as observation, contrast, comparison, and generalization of facts. The results of the scientific work can be used in the future in linguistic studies, in the pragmatic, ethnic-cognitive, and social aspects, as well as in the field of journalism. The linguistic material also makes it possible to improve the journalistic headlines in order to achieve a certain reflection of the world or its transformation in line with the target audience.

4. Results

Results of the study, summarizing the previous scientific knowledge in this area, highlight the fact that the carriers of different languages have different ideas and concepts in the perception of the surrounding world; and especially considering the linguistic view of the world in different countries based on newspaper headlines. All this somewhat clarifies the scientific understanding of the topic and can serve both as a basis for further research, and as reference and information databases in journalism and social and pragmatic linguistics. The article is one of the few works, firstly, devoted to the study of the language perception of the world in the Kazakh society, and secondly, regarding headlines of modern journalistic newspapers as the object.

5. Discussion

Humboldt was one of the first scientists who drew attention to the close relationship between the language and the thinking. Exploring the language systems of different nationalities, he concluded that "the difference between languages is not only in the sounds and signs, but also in the outlook." According to him, the grammatical features of language systems not only reflect the pre-existing differences in thinking, but also are responsible for the formation of such differences. "The language as an organ that shapes thoughts have a close relationship between the laws of grammar and the laws of thinking. <...> Thinking depends not only on the language in general, but also to a certain extent on each individual language "(Humboldt, 1820).

Since the second half of the XIX century, differences in thinking and perception of the world of different nations started to be a vigorously debated topic and aroused the interest of many scientists. At the head of these studies was Gladstone who studied the language of the Homeric poems "The Iliad" and "Odyssey." In the course of the study, he found quite interesting and, at first glance, unexplainable peculiarities when the author described the color properties of many things. Homer could talk about the color and brightness using only the gray scale; the sea, as well as sheep in his poems were colored purple or wine; honey was green and the sky had any shades, except blue. After analyzing it and studying other literary heritage of the Greeks of that era, Gladstone concluded that Homer had had normal perception of the world, the problem was only that "the color vocabulary" of the Greek language then had been limited to a small number of colors (Gladstone, 1858). The modern humanity has experienced enormous progress in the perception of colors, and therefore the amount of color concepts of our language systems has increased significantly.

This scientific news caused worldwide debates about color perception. One such example is found in the work by Deutscher who with interest pointed to the fact that the Russian language has the concept of "sinii" (dark-blue) and "goluboi" (light-blue) colors, but in English, for example, they are described with one word——"blue" and light-blue is considered to be only a shade of blue. Meanwhile these two colors, in fact, differ in the wavelengths of the color spectrum (Deutscher, 2010).

Such features in the perception of colors can be found in the Kazakh culture, as well. Here, the concept "koek" (blue) is often used instead of "zhasyl" (green). You can meet in the lexical composition of the language, such words and phrases as "koek shai" (green tea), "koek alma" (green apple). It is because the Kazakhs in the past centuries leading a nomadic lifestyle every season of the year moved to a better place. And because the green grass in the "zhailau" (pasture) seemed blue from away, the two concepts began to be used together, and therefore, people started using such phrase as "koek shykty", which meant "ground cover with herbs and grass."

The theory of Humboldt was further developed in the works of Whorf and Sapir who developed the concept of linguistic relativity, which is based on two principles: linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity. According to the first principle, the language defines the way of thinking of its speakers, while the principle of linguistic relativity indicates that verbal distinctions in one language do not imply their presence in another. Sapir wrote: "In fact, the 'real world' to a large extent is unconsciously based on the linguistic norms of the given group... We see, hear and perceive the world around us all this way and not otherwise mainly due to the fact that our choice by its interpretation is predetermined by the

language habits of our society" (Sapir, 1921).

Whorf, while studying the culture and language features of the Indian tribes of America, revealed an interesting fact about time perception of the Hopi tribe: "Their language system does not have any words, grammatical forms or structures for the direct expression of what we call 'time.' This is because while we perceive time as a motion and think that tomorrow is a new day, the people of Hopi did not think of time as of motion, but something like 'becoming later,' and everything is just repetition and accumulation of what has already been done before"(Whorf, 1956).

The term "language world" was introduced by Weisgerber who believed that "every language has a specific world view of the speaker" (Weisgerber, 1993). To prove the relationship between language and thought, linguists conducted a number of experiments, one of which was performed by Levinson who investigated the spatial "reference system" of speakers of different languages. The study selected speakers of different linguistic affiliation, among whom were representatives of the "absolute" language groups. This group in contrast to the "relative" languages had no such spatial concepts as "right" and "left." To identify directions, they used the concepts of "north," "south," "east," and "west." In the course of a long research, the scientist concluded that unlike in the case of "relative" languages, the "absolute" language speakers much better oriented themselves in space. Thus, the author pointed to not only the spatial system of the language, but also to the "spatial thinking" (Levinson, 2003).

And in 1938, Boas made an observation about the role of grammar in the language. He claimed that in addition to its primary purpose, "grammar performs another important function. It defines those aspects of each language experience, which should be expressed" (Boas, 1910). And, according to him, such aspects are very different between languages. Jakobson commented on this allegation as follows: "Languages significantly differ in what they must convey rather than in what they can convey" (Jakobson, 1959).

Boroditsky when also exploring the role of language in shaping thoughts, tried in one of her studies to prove that differences in the perception of space also affect the temporal concepts. She laid pictures before the tested persons and asked to arrange them in a certain time sequence. The English-speakers laid out cards from left to right and Hebrew-speakers—from right to left: Thus, the peculiar features of writing determine the perception of the temporal organization. And Thayore-speakers (an absolute language) arranged the pictures from east to west. The picture was as follows: if, for example, they were facing south, the cards were laid out from left to right; to the north - from right to left, etc. (Boroditsky, 2011).

Also, linguistic features influence the memorization of information and its reproduction, which has been proven in an experiment, together with Fausey. In the experiment, English-, Spanish-, and Japanese-speakers were shown videos of certain events. Then, they were asked to describe random cases in the videos. The Spanish- and Japanese-speakers, in contrast to the English-speakers, more rarely described the case using agentive structures and memorized the culprit less successfully (Fausey et al, 2010). The reason for this was simple: English-speakers in everyday language prefer phrases directly pointing to the role of a particular person in the event, and the Japanese and Spaniards often use non-agentive structures.

The linguistic view of the world has its own specifics, which can be easily seen in the culture of the people. For example, the Kazakhs and many Eastern nations consider the Moon as the standard of woman's beauty, which is evidenced by the abstract from the lyric-epic poem "Kyz Zhibek": *"A sama, sama ona –slovno polnaia luna, kak serebrianyi sazan, razygravshiisia v vode, gnet ona svoi gibkii stan"* (And she is like the full moon, like the silver carp playing in the water, she bends her supple figure) and the prevalence of female names with the root "ai" ("Moon") (Dzhanibekov, 2008). Whereas in the folklore of the Russian people one can hardly find such a metaphor: the standard of woman's beauty here often are berries, such as viburnum, mountain ash, and blackberries. For example: *"Zagorelas' vo pole kalina, Zabolelo u molodtsa serdtse Na chuzhuiu zhenu moloduiu*", "*Kalina krasnaia, kalina vyzrela, ia u zaletochki kharakter vyznala..."* (A viburnum is burning in the field. The heart of the young man longs for another man's young wife", "Red viburnun has ripened, I have learned the nature of the newcomer...) (Deviatko, 2011). With regard to other people, as noted by Maslova: "If the Russians compare a woman with a birch, flower, mountain ash; the Belorussians—with a viburnum; and the Lithuanians cannot compare a woman with a birch, for the gender of a noun affects the formation of the symbol, and in Lithuanian, birch is masculine. Chingiz Aitmatov compared a woman with a mare "(Maslova, 2001).

We may not ignore the dual nature of the linguistic view of the world: it reflects the conditions of human life and the environment, which directly determine their behavior, consciousness and identity, while at the same time, the process of perception of the world by the human takes place directly through his native language, pre-empting, in turn, his way of thinking.

In any case, we cannot refute the fact that the language and culture of a particular nation forms their thinking, and that the worldview of the speakers of different languages differ from each other.

In this article, we will consider the reflection of the linguistic picture of the world in perhaps the most flexible in

relation to innovations of time language structure—the journalistic headline.

A newspaper headline is one of the most important structures of a journalistic text. Its main functions are informativeness and relevance to the content. That is to say, whether the recipient reads this or that article, flipping through the pages of the newspaper, is mainly dependent on its headline.

With the development of journalism and the rise of periodicals, journalists began to pay more attention to in order to giving the most imaginative, intriguing title to articles to induce the readers to read it completely. An important role in this matter is played by the reflection of a linguistic view of the world.

"With the mastering of the native language, a gradual, but intensive transformation of the genetic language into the individual version of a particular ethnic dialect takes place. Thus, one of the most important aspects of the linguistic personality is the determination of typical national "markers" and stereotypes" (Bazylova et al., 2015). These national stereotypes are predetermined by the national specificity of thinking. Representatives of different ethnic groups use different lexical and grammatical linguistic units when expressing the same semantic content. For this, we will consider the journalistic headlines of popular periodicals of different countries, dedicated to, for example, the Kazakhstan boxer Gennady Golovkin: *"Golovki"nning kezekti jengisi"* ("Egemen Qazaqstan", hereinafter "EQ" – 21.10.2014), *"Qarsi'lasi'n shalqasi'nan tu'sirdi* "(Ana tili – 23.10.2014), *"Sti"vensti sabadi"* ("Sari'arqa samali", hereinafter "SS" – 05.11.2013), *"Kazakhstanskii bokser Golovkin v dvenadtsatyi raz zashchitil titul chempiona mira"* ("Argumenty i Fakty", hereinafter "AiF" – 19.10.2014), *"Gennadii Golovkin v boiu s Denielom Gilom zashchitil titul WBA"* (AiF. - 27.7.2014); *"Nothing can stop Gennady Golovkin, not even a punch to the face"* (Washington post – 27.07.2014), *"Runyonesque Flurry Spans Two Arenas"* (New York Times – 22.07.2014).

As we can see, the headlines in the Kazakh language are built usually in the form of denominative statements or using literary and figurative words providing the headline of the article with expressiveness, while Russian headlines just convey the information in a "who did what" manner. American journalists were more generous when describing victories of foreign fighters using hyperbole and imagery techniques, thereby giving great attention to the grammatical structure of the headline.

"The linguistic view of the world reflects not only the traditional elements of the language (phrases, proverbs, and sayings), which are inherent to the whole society, but also ideolectical unconventional combinations, and last but not least, extra-linguistic facts, i.e. the facts that come from different spheres of knowledge about the world" (Pajdińska and Tokarski, 2010).

One can notice a particular difference between the linguistic views of the world when flipping through periodicals in Russian, published in Russia and Kazakhstan. The long life in the same country with local Kazakhs, the interaction of cultures and mentality could not have failed to affect the thinking and perception of the world of the ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan. Let us consider the following examples: *"My zhdem medalei ot nashikh paluanov: V Londone nashu stranu budut predstavliat' sem' bortsov vol'nogo stilia"*(We expect medals from our wrestlers (paluan - in Kazakh): In London, our country will be represented by seven freestyle wrestlers) (KP –"Kazakhstanskaia Pravda" – 28.06.2012), "Etnoaul u "Khan Shatyra" (Ethno village (aul in Kazakh) at the "Khan Shatyr") (KP – 07.07.2012), *"Da budet toi! Torzhestva i korporativy glazami artistov"* (Let there be celebration (toi in Kazakh)! Celebrations and corporate events through the eyes of artists) (Karavan – 28.11.2014). In these headlines, the authors used the words of the Kazakh language, despite they had equivalents in Russian.

Also, the titles of articles often contain gaps—the words that have no equivalents in the translated language. This also is explained by the close relationship between the two peoples' cultures. For example: *Kurt s pristavkoi* **"***bio* **"***(Kurt with the prefix "bio")* (KP – 16.08.2012),"*Baiga! Kak mnogo v etom slove (Baiga! How much in this word* ...") (KP – 20.05.2011).

Journalists of Kazakhstani periodicals often resort to the language game through the use of Kazakh words and their translation or close concepts in Russian in the same headline, for example: *"Korruptsii – "jol joq""* *(No way for corruption) (KP* – 11.08.2012) ("jol joq" means "no way for the existence of something")," *Bolashaq" – ustremlennyi v budushchee"* (Bolashak - heading to the future)(KP – 17.04.2013) ("bolashaq" – "future"), *"Shekteu"* will limit debtors "(KP – 27.10. 2011) ("shekteu"-"to limit"). Not everyone can notice this syllogism of the author. Rather, to understand its essence, you need to have the same linguistic view of the world, as an ethnic Russian in Kazakhstan.

The use of such words by journalists in headlines is due to the fact that, while reading and understanding them, the recipient subconsciously feels his belonging to this society, and that he, like the other its members, understands the meaning of these words. In contrast to the Russians of Russia, he feels that he is "at home" and can easily overcome the existing language barriers. Thus, the author "inadvertently" gives you the opportunity to feel like "at home among strangers," a universal language personality.

Sometimes, the linguistic view of the world typical of a certain nation can be reflected in other countries. Take for

example, the Russian newspaper "Mosckovskaia Komsomolskaia Pravda," which published the article *"Nazarbayev again elbasy*"* (KP —26.04.2015). In Kazakhstan, honoring and respecting President Nursultan Nazarbayev, they call him "Elbasy," which literally is translated as "the head of the people." This concept is so deeply ingrained among not only the Kazakhs, but also other ethnic groups in Kazakhstan that it is understood by residents of other countries. In journalism, not every journalist is ready to make such a move, nevertheless, hoping that readers know and understand this word (and for those who still may not know the explanation is provided at the end of the text, highlighted with an asterisk) to use it in headlines of his articles and reiterate the close relationship of the two neighboring states, and to open the "window" into the linguistic view of the world of another nation.

6. Conclusion

The reflection of the world in human consciousness is closely related to the "tool" of research—the language. The differences in the perception of the world and thinking of different nations are primarily due to their language and unique culture. On top of that, people of the same nationality and language group, but living in different geographical locations, can also have differences in the worldview. This once again proves the direct link between thinking and perception of the world, on the one hand, and the linguistic activities of a particular social group, on the other.

The linguistic view of the world is also reflected in newspaper headlines. Journalists try to make them not only informative and imaginative, but also relevant to the worldview of their readers, as evidenced by examples of headlines of Kazakh and Russian newspapers, which, although written in the same language, have differences in the lexico-semantic and ethnic and pragmatic level. Thus, reading modern newspapers, we can make sure that the headline is a special lexico-grammatical structure of the journalistic text, which not only informs the reader about the content of the article, but also has an additional function, demonstrating the specificity of the ethno-cultural perception of the world.

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