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Conceptual area of English infant discourse

Abstract: The article is devoted to system of representation of the world picture of a preschool aged child. The researches of native and foreign scientists in “concept” sphere are analyzed and the structural and hierarchical system “hyperconcept-hypoconcept-mezoconcept” with the main hiperconcept is developed. Furthermore, it is distinguished the main hyperconcepts of infant discourse such as Person, Household, Nature, Entertainment and Society.

Keywords: infant text, infant discourse, concept, hyperconcept, hypoconcept, mezoconcept, linguistic world picture.

The development of any language is densely related to the development of verbal folk. The current relevance of the article is in complex linguistic and conceptual research of English-language poetic infant discourse — the discourse of preschool aged children on the basis of English infant poems (countings, riddles, action songs, tongue twists and nursery rhymes). In fact, previous researches of scientists are executed in the aspect of not linguistics, but literary criticism and there scientific works are fragmentar (Atroshenko G. I. [1], Rusanivskiy V. M. [10], Bicknell T. [12], Hasan R. [13] etc.). First of all,

multidimensional researches of speech picture of the world of child and its conceptual filling in infant texts (literature for the children of preschool age and child’s literature) are needed to solve this task. The infant discourse is the object of this scientific work. The aim of the research consists of such items as to find out conceptual dominants in perception of the world of a small recipient on the basis of English-language poetic infant texts, and the object is concepts that are most important for child’s mind. The world view of a child depends on the basic ideas about the role of the language in life of each person. A language is the reflection

of folk culture, history, political system etc. The language helps a child to capture the world, to understand the phenomena, words, associations and others. With forming of language presentations a person has a language picture of the world of a man, people and society in general.

The language picture of the world is represented in leading words — concepts. The term “concept” in linguistics is simultaneously old and new. Only in 80th of XX century a notion “concept” appears as the term that is to explain units of psychical and psychological processes of our consciousness.

E. S. Kubriakova offers such determination of concept: “Concept is an operative unit of memory, mental lexicon, a conceptual system and a language of a brain, all picture of the world, quantum of knowledge. Major concepts are shown in a language” [5, 90–92].

B. I. Karasik presents a number of notions of concepts that are developed by different scientists: a concept is the personal comprehension, the interpretation of the objective value and a notion as a rich in content minimum of meaning [6, 412]; a concept is an abstract scientific notion that is created on the basis of certain vital notion [11, 246]; a concept is the essence of a notion, phenomenon in the semantic forms — in the character, meaning and in a symbol [4, 19–20]; concepts are original cultural genes that are included in the genotype of the culture, self-organized integrative functional and systematic multidimensional (at least three-dimensional) idealized form-buildings that are based on a notional or pseudo-notional background [7, 16–18]. B. I. Karasik characterizes concepts as “mental formations that present themselves as meaningful realized typified fragments of experience, that are kept in the memory of a man” [3, 59].

A. A. Zalevskaya determines a concept as an objectively existing, perceptive, cognitive and affective formation of a dynamic character in consciousness of a person unlike notions and values as products of a scientific description [2, 39].

Continuing researches of the phenomenon “concept”, scientist A. N. Prihodko structures hierarchically the types of concepts: macroconcept → hyperconcept → hypoconcept → mezoconcept → cataconcept. The scientist determines a macroconcept as “category mental units, that present common to all mankind notions” and marks that macro- and hyperconcepts are not marked with national specificity. The ethnic and cultural feature is found out the lower level ranks of abstraction — hypoconcepts [9, 183–184].

Ju. S. Nakonechna asserts that the main concepts in the language pictures of the world of folklore and modern

American written poetry discourse for children are concepts of daily occurrence: **Social Strata, Household, Entertainment, Music and Holiday**; emotional concepts: **Joy and Sorrow, Fear and Anger**. Concept **Social Strata** is divided into *high stratum, middle stratum* and *low stratum*; **Household** consists of *food, household items* and *household works*; **Entertainment** is structured by *games and tricks*, **Music** is represented by *talent for music, sounds, musical instruments*; **Holiday** — *holiday nominations, holiday attributes*. Emotional concepts **Joy and Sorrow, Fear and Anger** consists of the same items: *stimuli, subjects, reactions* [8].

Examining the small-format genres of English-language infant texts for children of preschool age, it is essential to distinguish such conceptual dominants of the world view of child of the English linguistic culture, that are joined in hyperconcepts: **Person, Household, Nature, Entertainment and Society**. Each of the presented hyperconcepts is divided into the row of hypoconcepts:

Person consists of **Face and Body, Feelings and Emotions, Relations, Names**: *Mother, father, /Sister, brother. /One, two, three, four, /We're the family of four* [14]!

A basic hyperconcept in perception of the world of child of preschool age is **Person** as on the early stages of the development a child begins to cognize himself/herself, the body, the family and family mutual relations, to get acquainted with same-aged people and emotionally perceives every new experience of own life. In the above-mentioned illustration material a lot of nominatives are used by a child: “Mother”, “father”, “Sister”, “brother”, “the family of four”, that verbalize the marked hyperconcept.

Household includes **Work, Food, Wardrobe, Household Items**: *One slice of onion, /Two slices of bread, /Three slices of sausage — /It won't be bad* [14]! In this counting rhyme hyperconcept of **Household** is shown and that is presented in the lexemes of hypoconcept **Food**: “slice of onion”, “slices of bread”, “slices of sausage”.

Nature is presented by hypoconcepts **Natural Phenomena and Element, Flora, Fauna**: *One, two, three, four, five, /Five fish like to dive. /One fish told me, /«Let's play in the sea!»* [14]. In the material over the hyperconcept **Nature** is verbalized in the phrases “fish like to dive”, “in the sea”, describing a place and acts of marine habitants.

Entertainment is represented by hypoconcepts **Sport and Games, Art, Holidays and Traditions**: *Xmas pudding, Xmas tree, /mas time is gay and free. /mas bells sing «ding-dong», /t's a merry Xmas song* [14]!

The English celebration of Christmas is highlighted in the example. So, a child describes traditional meals,

sceneries, mood during a holiday: “Xmas pudding”, “Xmas tree”, “Xmas time is gay and free”, “Xmas bells”, “a merry Xmas”. Thus, in the picture of the world of a child the bright remembrances abandon such events, and that is why the hyperconcept **Entertainment** occupies an important place.

Society consists of **Religion, Government, Economy: Kings and queens may cling to power/**and the jester’s got his call/But, as you may all discover,/the common one outranks them all [14]. The riddle contains the phrase “Kings of and queens may cling to power”, that gives a case to understand how power, rulers and the obligations of government are represented in imagination of the English-language child. These lexical units nominate the hyperconcept **Society**.

To sum up, it should be marked that an idea about the world for a man is formed from early years, from the beginning of life. An inalienable role is played by a language, which represents in itself the events of history, culture and other. Thus, language presentations and language picture of the world appear which are represented in

concepts. Concept is an abstract notion, which is created on the basis of the personal comprehension of the purchased experience that contains cultural character and has subjective, emotional, estimating features. Concepts have a hierarchal structure, and are distributed on hyperconcepts, hypoconcepts, mezoconcepts and cataconcepts. The main place in the consciousness of a preschool aged child is occupied by hyperconcept **Person** with its hypoconcepts **Face** and **Body, Feelings** and **Emotions, Relations, Names; Household**, which consists of hypoconcepts **Work, Food, Wardrobe, Household Items; Nature**, which include hypoconcepts **Natural Phenomena** and **Element, Flora, Fauna; Entertainment**, which consists of hypoconcepts **Sport** and **Games, Art, Holidays** and **Traditions; Society**, which is divided into **Religion, Government, Economy**.

The perspective researches are the further detailed scientific work in the field of the study of separate hyperconcepts and their constituents on materials of English-language poetic infant works for the children of preschool age.

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