CONCEPT AND ITS STRUCTURE

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Abstract: *The article discusses the notion of the concept and its structure based on the ideas of different famous scholars. In the article according to the emphasized points, examples are provided to the three layers of the concept. The relation and importance of the concept are shown from theoretical and empirical points of view. Numerous definitions of famous scientists and scholars for the term concept are covered in the article.*

Key words: *concept, structure, cognitive linguistics, perception, cognition, figurative, comparative, notional components.*

A concept can be refracted in the human thought as a basic structured unit as a result of understanding of various events and phenomena of reality, keeping in view the personal and social experience, the specific space, time, location, historical, and cultural environment, as well as based on the mode of thinking that exists in any specific situation. The outcomes of a person's whole cognitive activity are associated with the construction of a system of ideas representing the real or imaginative status of objects in the world. At that point, the individual utilizes the adaptive, regulatory, communicative, perceptual, and nominative tasks of information processing in conjunction with the linguistic action.

The term "concept" is used in a variety of scientific spheres due to its interdisciplinary, but it is especially important in cognitive linguistics. The study of language as a cognitive mechanism, i.e. as a tool for human understanding of the world, is called cognitive linguistics. Cognition is an expression of a person's mental and intellectual capabilities. It contains information of person how he perceives oneself and the universe around him - all of which serves as the foundation for logical and meaningful individual behavior. The notion of concept was studied by many foreign and Russian scholars like G.V. Alefirenko, E.S. Kubryakova, G. Lakoff, N.D. Arutyunova, A.P. Babushkin, V. A. Maslova, A.D. Shmelev.

The term "concept" can be a synonym for the word "notion". However, concepts are felt and notions inform. Nevertheless, in linguistics ideas are distinguished from conception as some components of concept are not found in notions. And it can be said that the concept is wider than notion. Words, derivatives, phraseological units, proverbs, aphorisms, and even texts can be used to represent concept.

According to Solonchak the concept varies from the notion (especially the scientific one) and the meaning (as a linguistic essence) in that it reflects a basic perceptual, cognitive, and emotive unit of dynamic nature that is obedient to the norms of a person's mental existence. "This approach to understanding of the phenomenon of a concept is somewhat different from the linguocultural one, which foresees that concepts are

characterized as primary cultural units that express the objective contents of words, have their meanings and are thus transmitted to various fields of human existence, in particular, in the spheres of notional, figurative and activity learning of the world" (Pesina, Solonchak, 2014)

The concept is deeply connected with the language, in which it is communicated, with culture as a system of national values and ideas, and an individual's awareness and behaviors. Moreover, it clearly shows that the substance and structure of the concept are highly complicated and multidimensional. According to Kubryakova "concept" is interrelated with other internal and external linguistic fields like "Cognitive psychology", "Cognitive linguistics" which focuses on perception and cognition, "Linguoculturology" which studies the influence of language on culture or vice versa.

For the comprehension of this term, there are three main approaches. First, E.S. Kubryakova mentions that "Concept" (lat. conceptum) is "an operational meaningful unit of memory, mental lexicon, conceptual system of the language, the full image of the universe mirrored in the human mind."

The second approach belongs to another scholar Stepanov who thinks that "the concept exists in a person's mental world not in the form of clear notions, but as a group of ideas, knowledge structure, associations, and experiences that accompany the word; the complex structure of the concept includes both what belongs to the structure of the concept and what makes it a cultural factor." The concept is a root of culture in a person's mind, by which culture enters a person's overall surrounding and similarly, through which a person enters culture.

N.D. Arutyunova and A.D. Shmelev being the representatives of the third approach, claim that in cognitive linguistics, the semantics of a linguistic sign must be used to define the notion of the "concept."

V. A. Maslova provided a simple description of the concept. The concept is a semantic creation that is characterized by the cultural peculiarity of the language and, in some way, describes the carriers of a given ethnic culture, reflecting the people's thinking. The idea does not exist because it reflects the lexical meaning of the term; rather, it appears when the dictionary meaning of the word collides with a person's experience, and therefore the concept is colored emotionally, carrying assessment and expression (Maslova, 2004, p.27).

Many concepts form, first, on the object-image visual foundation as a clear empirical image of an object or a phenomenon (e.g., image of a flower, a car, or a family) in the context of social activity. Later when the initial content of the concept becomes more complicated as a result of information gained via other types of cognitive activity, these visuals continue to serve as the most illustrative representative of this concept in perception and understanding.

The concept finally transforms from a sensuous image to a mental image as the number of qualities ascribed to it rises and the level of generalization increases. However, figurativeness and sensuality coincide with linguistic nature. The concept continually

interacts with the word, is realized in it, and is corrected by the language, making language one of the most essential techniques of concept development in human awareness. Language is not simply a tool; it is also a universal need for our thinking. Thinking can go from the lower point of development, where it is directly related to perceiving, but cannot express itself, to the spiritual maturity stage, i.e., to the right conceptual thinking stage.

As it was previously said the concept's structure is uncommonly complicated and complex, and so there is no clear method of its investigation, as well as of the concept's very description. In concept theory, there is another initial point of concept structure. There are several points of view and approaches to this problem.

Some scholars, besides Frumkina, classified the structure of concept in three forms or layer and their divisions were named differently. If to simplify their views, the structure of the concept is like its level of understanding. As the level grows, the complexity also rises.

Each layer may have figurative, comparative, and notional components. The figurative side of the concept includes visual, audial, tactile, taste, and smell characteristics of objects, phenomena, and events reflected in our memory; the notional side of the concept includes linguistic formation of the concept, its classification, description, structure of attributes, definition, and comparative characteristics of this concept with relation to a certain series of concepts that never exist in isolation; and the value side of the concept includes the importance of this psychic formation both independently and collaboratively (Solonchak, p. 353).

Special attention should be paid to Stepanov's arguments about the concept's structure, according to which the structure of the concept includes everything that transforms it into a cultural fact: etymology, history in the form of the main features of content, representation, evaluation, and so on. In addition, he observes that the concept has a "layered" structure, with each "layer" the consequence of different periods of cultural life; that is the concept is made up of historically distinct layers, each with its own etymology, time of creation, and meaning.

Yu. S. Stepanov represents the structure of the concept in three lawyers;

1) The main layer, which is familiar to each representative of culture (fundamental for all native speakers of a language and culture that, verbally, is a form of communication for representatives of a certain group.)

2) The additional layer concerns historically relevant information (passive indication)

3) The inner layer, which is known only to a special group of people (etymological)

According to Stepanov's structure, the classification of the word "Eid" can be a good example. The main layer, which is known for everybody; Eid is canonical festivals of Islam, which is celebrated by Muslims twice a year (generally known layer).

The additional layer, is that there are two types of "Eid": Eid – al Fitr (Ramadan) and Eid – al Adha (Qurban). Ramadan that is celebrated after thirty days of fasting. In addition, Qurban Hayit, which is celebrated seventy days after Ramadan Hayit, marks the end of the Hajj.

The inner layer, is connected to the history of Qurban Hayit when prophet Ibrahim was asked to sacrifice his own son Ismail. As the fact, in this layer the concept of "Eid" (Hayit) demonstrates deeper information than other twos and only some group of people know about it.

Another scholar R.M. Frumkina categorizes the concept in two types:

a) the core (notional characteristics that identify a concept)

b) the periphery, (pragmatic, associative, connotative, figurative, expressive features of the concept (Frumkina, 1996).

Personal observation revealed in the concept content gives it an individualized character, because the concept is a knowledge unit that involves consequences not only of public, theoretical, but also of everyday learning. As a result, every concept operates knowledge structure continuously and is updated in its numerous fundamental components and aspects that interplay with other concepts. Someone can argue that the concept core contains of the most important invariant components; however, the concept of a specific object demands figurativeness as well. To a lesser extent, the core covers notional and figurative information; the periphery includes the unclear components that serve as a transitory zone to other concepts. For example, thoughts about such fundamental abstract notions as culture, freedom, hope, religion and so on might differ among cultures and can be completely contrary, causing conflicts. Evidently, for successful communication, the most general knowledge of related abstractions, which contains mostly universal semantic components, may be acceptable.

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