



CULTURAL LINGUISTICS:
THEORETICAL AND APPLIED ASPECTS
ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЯ:
ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ И ПРИКЛАДНЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ

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Research article

**Associative field of the concept “fire”
in the linguistic consciousness of native Russian speakers
at the background of the Latvian linguistic culture**

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Abstract. The research is devoted to one of the modern trends in linguistics – cultural linguistics. The topicality is related to the study of the Russian language functioning as the language of diaspora in the eastern region of Latvia – Latgale. The research aims to characterize the means of expressing the concept “fire” based on modelling and analyzing its associative field in the aspect of Latvian picture of the world. Theory and practice of the associative experiment were used as a methodological framework for the research. The method of free associative experiment reveals the specific features of different cultures, as well as the functional peculiarities of the linguistic consciousness both of a separate individual – a native speaker, and of a certain ethnic or national group. The word “fire” (Latvian – “uguns”) was suggested as a stimulus word. The received reactions were analyzed according to linguistic and cultural-contextual aspects. A comparative analysis of the associative fields revealed both the specific features of the Russian linguistic picture of the world, which combines the characteristics inherent in the Russian language of the metropolis and the ones that indicate the influence of the linguistic and cultural environment, and the features and signs that coincide or are identical in the Russian and the Latvian linguistic picture of the worlds. The data processing and the analysis define the concept “fire” precisely as a full-fledged concept in the perception of the native speakers of the Russian language in Latgale, since not only the dictionary meaning is actualized in their linguistic picture of the world, but also a multi-level associative field, unique in terms of contextual connotations, is modelled.

Keywords: Russian language, Latvian language, the concept “fire”, Latvia, Latvian linguistic culture, associative experiment, national features, cultural features

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Introduction

The analysis of language consciousness makes it possible to consider the content aspect of individual language units in their relation to the psychological perception and interpretation of reality: how the semantic components of meaning are fixed in the consciousness of a certain ethnic group and individual native speakers, which components of meaning are actualized, how a certain system of meanings is built in the linguistic picture of the world of an individual. Language consciousness – is “images of consciousness that are embodied in language means... Images of language consciousness integrate mental knowledge formed by the individual mainly during speech communication, and sensory knowledge that arises in consciousness as a result of processing perceptual knowledge obtained from the sensory organs in objective activity” (Tarasov, 2003: 3). A free associative experiment makes it possible to model the associative field from the verbal reactions of the respondents to a certain word-stimulus. Such a field is a linguistic material that encircles the language consciousness, and its analysis identifies specific features of the national language consciousness. Many modern researchers use the associative experiment as a tool for researching and studying the linguistic consciousness of various nations. The modelled associative field as a result of the analysis and characterization of words-reactions to a certain word-stimulus can act as a special form of verbalizing the concept with the same name, designated in the consciousness of a representative of a specific linguistic culture. Modern linguistics uses this methodology as evidenced in a number of published studies of this kind, which were conducted in English and Tatar (Khairullina, 2009), Russian and Arabic (Abo Elela, 2018), Russian and Chinese (Ishmurzina, 2015), Russian and American (Strelchuk, Lonskaia, 2018), Russian and English (Karasiik, Milovanova, 2021) language pictures of the world and others.

It is relevant to consider the signs and semantic scope of the concept “fire” in the language consciousness of Russian and Latvian native speakers on the material of a free associative experiment, since such studies have not been conducted sufficiently in the scientific environment. The specifics of the Russian language functioning in Latvia is determined by a different language environment, as a result, the hypothesis that *the Russian language lives and develops under the influence* of the Latvian language and cultural environment seems logical.

Fire, along with water, earth and air, is the main element of the universe, the so-called primordium, which ancient people observed when mastering the world. The concept of “fire” is very important in Russian picture of the world, it has its own history and includes the real and potential amount of knowledge of Russian native speakers. It can be proved by the polysemy of the lexeme ‘fire’, numerous word-forming derivatives, which can be both independent and a component in compositing phraseological units, sayings, proverbs; synonyms to the lexeme ‘fire’ that also represent this concept. Language researchers often study the con-

cept of “fire” in the Russian language. Thus, G.V. Prikhodko explores various aspects of the image of fire in the mental space of Russians and identifies 11 groups of semes that present the concept of “fire” (Prikhodko, 2005). Elena Sirota explores the peculiarities of the concept of “fire” objectification in the Russian language on the material of phraseological units. Using the methods of observation and description, as well as reception of cognitive and cultural background interpretation, the content of the concept “fire” implemented in a significant number of language means is considered (Sirota, 2020). A.V. Trofimova studies the specific features of the linguistic representation and structuration of the concept “fire” in the modern Russian language. The paper examines the correlation of language, consciousness and culture in the framework of conceptual research (Trofimova, 2005). Such studies are conducted within the framework of the functioning of the Russian language as the language of the metropolis.

The scientific novelty of this work lies in solving an important scientific problem – the linguistic description of the concept “fire”. For the first time, the authors analyse the associative field of the concept “fire” in the Russian language – the language of the diaspora, which does not fully realize the functions of the language of the metropolis – on base on a linguistic experiment with Russian-speaking young people living in the eastern part of Latvia.

The purpose of this study is to characterize the expression of the concept “fire” by Russian language native speakers in Latgale (against the background of the Latvian linguistic culture) analysing the simulated associative field of this concept.

Methods and materials

The research methods in this work are determined by the purpose of the study and the specifics of the material under study. To process the experimental data, the analysis of dictionary definitions, the descriptive method, quantitative and statistical analysis were used. The hypothesis was tested by the method of a free associative experiment, in which an instant reaction to the presented stimulus word is required from the participants.

The basis for the free associative experiment was the assumption that the set of associations for a specific word-stimulus forms an actual linguistic associative field that has structural, lexicographic and ontological features.

444 people took part in the free association experiment (218 Russian respondents: 80 men and 138 women; 226 Latvian respondents: 85 men and 141 women). One Russian experiment was conducted in three research paradigms: educational (one social group), age (18–24 years old), and national (Russians and Latvians). The respondents independently determined their native language for participating in the written method of the questionnaire. As a result of the experiment, 436 reactions were obtained in the group of Russian respondents and 453 reactions in the Latvian group. No one has received a single spoiled questionnaire or refusal, which may evidence of the relevance of this concept in the linguistic consciousness of the participants.

Conducting a questionnaire within the framework of an associative experiment required compliance with certain conditions such as:

- respondents' disinterest in the results of the experiment;
- voluntary participation and anonymity;
- unlimited number of associations;
- intelligibility of written associations, without reading options;
- limited task completion time.

In the experiment, the participants were asked to respond to the stimulus word *fire* in Russian and *uguns* in Latvian with any possible number of the first associations that arose, while their choice was not limited to qualitative signs, but the time was limited.

The obtained reactions were analysed from a linguoculturological point of view, and their formal and grammatical features were taken into account when processing associations from a linguistic point of view. Among the reactions, there were sentences, predicates, phrases and words. The reactions were considered from the point of view of their part of speech affiliation. The linguistic and cultural analysis revealed additional semantic components of the word *fire*, representing the concept with the same name.

Results

The results of the study confirm the hypothesis that the Russian language in Latvia lives and develops under the influence of the Latvian language and cultural environment. In addition, the free associative experiment in the contrastive aspect made it possible to analyse a certain linguistic picture of the world of Russians in Latvia and to interpret its features in comparison with the language picture of Latvians. The experiment was conducted specifically among young people, which allows us to talk about a new emerging language picture of the world under the influence of a specific linguistic, cultural and political situation. The results of the study suggest the presence of an original language model due to the special linguistic and cultural status of the Russian language in Latvia: a combination of the positions of the native language, the second language, one of the two languages (in a bilingual environment) and a foreign language. The results of the experiment were described and analysed, which reflect the similarities and differences in the perception of the concept “fire” in the language consciousness of modern young Russian speakers against the background of the Latvian linguoculture of Latgale residents in the first half of the 21 century.

Discussion

The associative field of the concept “fire” was modelled after conducting a free associative experiment among representatives of the Russian and parallel Latvian linguistic culture living in Latgale in the eastern part of Latvia. The uniqueness of the region is associated with its border position, which determined the specifics of historical development and the formation of a cultural context. In his article, F. Fedorov identifies several conditional periods in the history of the region associated with the change of the ethnic vector. As a result of these processes, the region, on the one hand, is formed by immigrants with a psychological complex of alien space and a behavioural complex of the conqueror, on the other

hand, the border position and remoteness from the centre contributed to the formation of a multicultural model: “The last third of the 19 century – a decade and a half of the pre-war 20 century was an era of not only rapid development of Latgale, but also the formation of the ideology of a single life, a multinational, multi-confessional, multicultural space” (Fedorov, 2008: 19). The positions of the Russian language in the region and the status of the Russian language seem to be a multifaceted phenomenon. We can talk about at least three statuses of the Russian language in the current geopolitical situation in Latvia. First, according to the fifth article of the “Law on the State Language”¹ of 1999, all languages except Latvian and Livonian are considered foreign, thus, the Russian language in Latvia officially has the status of a foreign language. On the other hand, Russian is the native language for almost a third of Latvians, but their number is gradually decreasing, as evidenced by the data of the Latvian population census. But the Russian language in Latvia, and in particular in Latgale, is the native language not only for the majority of Russians, but also for Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, Jews and other nations who live on the territory of modern Latvia. And, thirdly, according to official statistics, 37% of marriages in Latvia are mixed². Children born in such families, as a rule, become bilinguals from birth, and for them the Russian language may have the status of a non-native language or a household language. It is also interesting that some of the Latvian speakers in Latgale speak Latgalian, which some linguists consider the third living Baltic language along with Latvian and Lithuanian, as well as Russian and Polish. Russians and Latvians use their language to create their own linguistic pictures of the world, preserve and broadcast their culture and traditions. But it should be noted that Russians in Latvia create a special linguistic picture of the world against the background of the Latvian linguistic culture. Every person who has mastered not only the language of his native culture, but also another linguistic culture, has a certain mechanism of thinking and a view of the world. Such features of linguistic and cultural diversity are inherent for the participants of the free associative experiment – the young people from Latgale.

According to the results of the free associative experiment, the associative field of the *fire* stimulus was obtained in the Russian language consciousness and in parallel in the Latvian one. The word-incentive *fire* for Russians and *uguns* for Latvian respondents are familiar and understandable and have common features. The Russian and Latvian words refer to the same part of speech (nouns), they are polysemic, have more than two lexical and semantic variants, can to form syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations and represent national and cultural information.

All the associations obtained during the experiment were considered in the associative field, including the following:

¹ Valsts valodas likums. Retrieved May 12, 2021, from <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/14740-valsts-valodas-likums>

² The data are obtained from the official information of the Central Statistic Department (Centrālā statistikas pārvalde), the code of the table in the database ILG020. Retrieved May 12, 2021, from <https://www.csb.gov.lv/lv/statistika/statistikas-temas/iedzivotaji/laulibas/tabulas/ilg020/noslegto-un-skirto-laulibu-skaitis-statistikajos>

- association in English (in Latvian *fire*);
- a non-existent word (in Russian *ugon*);
- association-abbreviation (in Latvian *VUGD*);
- grammatical forms of words that are considered to be different reactions (in Russian *jeh* – burn, *jjet* – burns, in Latvian *goret'* – burn, *gorit* – burning).

The associative field (AF) in both groups can be called diverse in terms of lexical and grammatical features of the reactions. It should be noted that in the simulated Russian AF, reactions-words (or word forms – 99%) prevail, and other reactions (predicates, phrases and sentences) are rare. Recollecting individual and collective life experience, native speakers identify and verbalize various characteristics of fire, which are expressed in Russian by names (nouns – 65% and adjectives – 22%), adverbs (7%) and verbs (5%). This distribution of types of reactions to the stimulus word “fire” was most likely influenced by the form of the task, which was performed in writing (the respondents had to write the first words that come to mind on the proposed word), and one of the reasons may be the lexical and grammatical features of the stimulus word (a noun in the nominative case, masculine, singular). 99% of the respondents fully observed the task, but 1% of the responses-reactions are a kind violation of the task condition. Such a violation cannot be explained only with proper linguistic criteria without taking into account psycholinguistic and psychological ones (Martinovich, 1997). The analysed material shows that such reactions in the AF do not indicate the non-stereotypical nature of such a reaction, but characterizes semantic, grammatical and associative connections in the simulated AF, which reflect the individual perception of the concept “fire” of a native speaker of the Russian language.

The associations – reactions in the associative field of the word-stimulus *fire* reflect mainly the paradigmatic connections that prevail in the linguistic consciousness of Russian and Latvian native speakers. For example, word-forming associations (in Latvian *fire*, *firefighters*), synonymous (in Russian and Latvian *flame*, *light*), selectional (in Russian *red*, *large*, in Latvian *bright*, *strong*), phraseological (in Russian *play with fire*, *Eternal fire*, in Latvian *run like from fire*), thematic (in Russian *spark*, *heat*, in Latvian *smoke*, *ash*), emotional (in Russian *passion*, *love*, *ardent*, *obsessive*, in Latvian *passion*, *pain*, *fear*, *disaster*). There are also linguistic and cultural associations (in Russian *Ligo*, *hell*, *Eternal fire*, in Latvian *Jan's day*, *Fire and Night*, *Phoenix*).

Frequency associations can be defined as words-reactions that occur in the language consciousness of many native speakers. In the Russian associative field of the word-stimulus *fire* the most frequent reactions are as follows: *flame* – noted by 19% of respondents, *fire event* – 17%, *heat* – 11%, *water* – 8%, *campfire* – 8%. Among the Latvian reactions of the word-stimulus *fire*, the frequent responds are: *hot* – 14%, *flame* – 12%, *warm* – 10%, *heat* – 7%, *campfire* – 7%, *water* – 5%. There are also individual associations in the AF that mentioned only once in the responses of the respondents: for example, *abyss*, *stove*, *dacha*, *barbecue*, *picnic*, *woman* in Russian and *sin*, *the sun*, *the earth*, *life*, *dance*, *death* in the Latvian language. It should be noted that among the associations there are also

concrete and proper nouns with linguistic and cultural connotation. So, in the AF, such individual reactions are mentioned:

- “Fire and Night” – the title of a play by Rainis, published in 1905, which is based on the epic of Andrei Pumpurs “Lachplešis”³;
- “Liesma” – (Russian *flame*) is a Riga book publishing house that specialized in fiction. It was founded in October 1944 and closed in June 2001;
- Linda is a female name. There are about 7510 people with this name living in Latvia;
- The Eternal Flame is an unquenchable torch, a symbol of the solemn memory of the people about the perished heroes and fighters for freedom, for their Homeland during the war. It should be noted that in the ideological context, the Eternal Flame in the cultural space of Latvia is perceived as a marker of the Russian-Soviet identity, and is associated with the commemoration of the events of the Second World War. It is possible to assume that in the minds of Latvians, the Eternal Flame is associated with the Russian culture, but not in an ethnic, but in a political context.

The reaction *Ligo* among Russians and the reaction of Latvians *Jan Day* are interesting. Although both nominations are Latvian names of the holiday, they are examples of associative divergence, which demonstrates the distinctive segments of the two linguistic cultures. This is how respondents call the same ancient Latvian holiday in different ways, which acquired a special significance in the 1930s (the first period of Latvia’s independence) as a holiday aimed at uniting the nation and developing the idea of national identity. The holiday is built at the intersection of Pagan (summer solstice) and the Christian tradition (John the Baptist) and traditionally celebrated on the night of June 23–24. The culmination of the holiday is the night (hence the special significance of the fire). June 23 is the day of preparation for the holiday, and in this connection the holiday gets one more name, less popular and therefore less often used – the Herbal Day. On this day, it is customary to collect flowers and medicinal herbs, and the process of collecting herbs has a ritual character. This day is also called the Ligo Day (*Liga* is a Latvian female name). It is considered one of the biggest and most popular Latvian holidays, and it is also included in the Cultural Canon of Latvia.

As a result of the associative experiment, the main meanings of the Russian word *fire* were restored. In the New explanatory and word-forming dictionary of the Russian Language, the word *fire* is characterized by polysemicity: 1) a) incandescent luminous gases released in the process of burning; flame; b) something burning, *lit.*; 2) figurative, colloquial. High body temperature; fever; 3) *figurative*. Inner feeling, passion; 4) light from lighting devices or from something burning; 5) *figurative*. Combat shooting⁴. When comparing the dictionary and associative articles in the Russian AF, the associates to the first three meanings of the lexeme were identified. The perception of fire as ‘shooting’ or ‘light from lighting devices’ is slightly represented in the associative field of Russians, this may evidence

³ Rainis, J. (1953). *Fire and night*. Riga: Latvian State Publishing House.

⁴ Efremova, T. (2000). New dictionary of the Russian language. Explanatory and word-forming dictionary. Moscow: Ryssky Yazyk. Kursy Publ. Retrieved April 12, 2021, from <https://www.efremova.info/>

of a incongruity between the real meaning of a word that is not relevant in the linguistic consciousness of native speakers, and its lexical meaning.

In the modern explanatory dictionary of the Latvian language, the following meanings of the lexeme ‘fire’ are noted: 1) visible radiation of light and heat produced by a substance, a material, usually flammable, heated to an appropriate temperature; also a flame // *figurative*. A feeling of heat, as well as a feeling of activity, an increase in strength // *figurative*. Passion (1) // *figurative*. Strong emotional state; great enthusiasm, zeal // *figurative*. A person who is characterized by great enthusiasm, zeal, active activity // *figurative*. Rapid, active development (of a phenomenon in society) // means (for example, matches, lighters) for igniting and striking a spark; a burning object used for ignition; 2) the light emitted by any source // light rays, illuminated areas, etc., caused by light sources; switched on light sources, objects reflecting light // *figurative*. Shine, radiance (in the eyes) caused (usually) by an emotional state // *figurative*. Bright light; bright colour; 3) shooting, firing; volleys of shells, cartridges⁵.

As a result of processing the data of the associative experiment, many meanings of the name under consideration were restored. The conducted analysis makes it possible to assume that for the naive linguistic consciousness of Latvian linguistic culture representatives, the light and heat that fire gives, as well as the possible threat to life coming from a burning flame, are important. One of the meanings of the lexeme *fire* – ‘shooting’ – is not fixed in the minds of Latvian respondents.

The semantic volumes of these words in the Russian and Latvian languages do not fully correlate. There are 5 meanings of the lexeme ‘fire’ in Russian, and 3 in Latvian, but due to the large number of figurative meanings in the Latvian language, the semantic volume of the lexemes under consideration is quite comparable.

In the Latvian AF, fire is multicolored: red, scarlet, yellow or orange, but in the Russian consciousness, the fire is only red. The characteristic of fire in terms of the expected temperature varies from cold, warm, hot to incandescent and scalding, i.e. from absolute temperature to high, which is associated with signs of illness or burn: cf. in Russian and Latvian *burn, fever, pain*. In the consciousness of a modern native speaker of the Russian language, knowledge of the law related to fire is preserved – this is the association of *starnik*, which is also noted in the Latvian AF. Note that the Russian respondents designated this reaction as *kula* (cf. Latvian *kūla*), using the Cyrillic alphabet for writing the Latvian lexeme. It should be noted that transliterated lexical units are quite frequent in the modern Russian language of Latvia, which indicates the formation of an original set of vocabulary. It is forbidden to set fire to last year’s grass (*starnik*) in Latvia – and this act is punishable. Fire starters harm not only the nature and real estate of other people, but also endanger their lives and health. Violators are fined up to 700 euros. Nevertheless, in Latgale, the arson of *starnik* remains a common phenomenon, which is reflected in the language picture.

⁵ Latviešu literārās valodas vārdnīca (LLVV). (1972–1996). Rīga : Zinātne. Retrieved May 10, 2021, from <https://tezaurs.lv/llvv/>

In both linguistic cultures, the axiological characteristic of the fire element is noticeably influenced by stereotypes. The respondents perceive fire both negatively (in Russian *disaster, trouble, fear, hell, danger, destruction* and in Latvian *horror, death, misfortune, hatred, anger*) and positively. Positive reactions of the Russian respondents are associated with pleasant memories and moments in life: *romance, barbecue, picnic, cottage, warmth, happiness*, as well as with the house: *stove, comfort, fireplace, firewood, light, calm, love, peace*. Only Russians can understand this, because in Russian linguistic consciousness, fire was not only one of the elements of the objective world, but also a sacred one. In Russian mythology, the cult of fire was closely connected with the concept of home – a Russian stove, without which a Russian hut was unthinkable. The linguistic consciousness of Latvians, unlike Russians, in this experiment associates fire with *lightning, the sun, the earth, the elements, sin, sinfulness, hell*, and this is associated with the oldest mythological beliefs of the Balts, including the Latvians. “All the Baltic peoples have a developed and ancient cult of fire. Fire was worshipped and considered immortal. On the high mountains and on the river banks, there were official tribal sanctuaries, where fire burned, guarded by priests. In each house there was a sacred hearth, where fire was constantly maintained. Only once a year, on the eve of the summer solstice, it was symbolically extinguished and then rekindled. Fire, by analogy with the Sun, was considered a deity requiring sacrifices. Latvians called the flame ‘the mother of fire’ (*uguns māte*). It was ‘fed’ and carefully protected. Fire was considered a purifying element and a symbol of happiness” (Gimbutas, 2004: 214).

As we know, the background knowledge that enters the linguistic consciousness of native speakers of a particular national language is only partially fixed in the lexicographic interpretation of the word. It is obvious that the analysis of the results of the free associative experiment made it possible to identify some characteristics that are important for a more complete understanding of the semantic side of the concept “fire”. So, the fire in two AF is:

- 1) home hearth: *oven, stove, barbecue, fireplace, cottage, picnic, campfire, frying pan*;
- 2) danger, destructive force (in the minds of respondents, fire is associated with *misfortune and death, pain and fear*);
- 3) duality: *heat – ice, horror – beautiful, hot – cold, angel – hell*;
- 4) life values: *life, love, hate, death, eternity*;
- 5) ordeal: *horror, pain, burn*;
- 6) symbol of respect and worship: *Eternal flame, sacred, Ligo, Jan day*;
- 7) a living being: *dancing, running, a ram*.

The concept of “fire” in the Russian language consciousness includes some additional features: 1) feminine: *woman, Ligo, Linda*; 2) intensity and size: *bright, all-absorbing, big, huge*; 3) comfort and pleasure in everyday life: *warm, romance, beautiful, happiness*; 4) inner feelings: *calm, tranquility, fascinating*. In the Latvian language consciousness, the distinctive features are: 1) fire is an action: *burns, warms, glitters, shines, smoulders*; 2) feelings and emotions: *cute, passion, anger, exciting*.

Conclusion

So, the processing and analysis of the results of the experiment allow us to define fire as a full-fledged concept, this is confirmed by the fact that the concept in the language picture of the world is not limited to the denotative meaning given in dictionaries. According to its content, the concept “fire” is much broader and more detailed than a dictionary language unit, as evidenced by a fairly large number of different associations identified during a free associative experiment. The concept “fire” in the language consciousness of the Russians of Latgale is endowed with a multi-level associative field, showing various kinds of its interpretations. The results of the analysis of the obtained associative reactions characterize the simulated associative field as active and mobile, and also help to determine its unique national and cultural features. For example, respondents noted the similarity of fire with an animated being. In the linguistic consciousness of the respondents, fire is perceived as a living, active being, and this was expressed in the associations, indicated by verbs of active action, as well as lexemes used with animated nouns (*fire runs, fire rage, all-absorbing fire, fire dance*). The use of various epithets to characterize fire proves that fire is perceived by modern native speakers of the Russian language as a force combining the characteristics of a living and aggressive being: *dangerous, destructive, hostile, belligerent, fast*.

The prospects of the conducted research can be designated as:

- identifying the main features of the linguistic picture of the world of the Russian youth of Latgale through the analysis of the concepts of the four elements: fire, earth, air, water, which will allow to talk about a certain linguistic interpretation of the spatial model;
- considering the dynamics of changes in the perception of the concept “fire”: conducting test monitoring experiments with a certain time interval;
- comparative analysis of the associative field of the concept “fire” in the Russian language of the diaspora (on the example of Latgale) and the language of the metropolis. The border zone (Pskov Region) and one of the central regions can be studied. This will allow to emphasize the specific model of the linguistic picture of the world in the diaspora, its differences from the basic model, as well as to determine the regularity of the influence of contextual linguistic culture.

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Научная статья

Ассоциативное поле концепта «огонь» в языковом сознании носителей русского языка на фоне латышской лингвокультуры

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Аннотация. Исследование выполнено в рамках одного из современных направлений в лингвистике – лингвокультурологии. Актуальность заявленной темы связана с изучением специфики функционирования русского языка как языка диаспоры на примере восточного региона Латвии – Латгалии. Цель исследования – охарактеризовать способ выражения концепта «огонь» в языковом сознании носителей русского языка на

основе моделирования и анализа его ассоциативного поля с позиций латышской лингвокультуры. В качестве методологической базы использована теория и практика ассоциативного эксперимента, позволившего выявить специфику различных культур, определить основные черты функционирования языкового сознания конкретного носителя языка и группы, принадлежащей единому культурному пространству. В качестве слова-стимула предлагалось слово «огонь» (лат. uguns). Полученные реакции проанализированы по лингвистическим и культурно-контекстуальным признакам. Сравнительный анализ ассоциативных полей помог выделить как специфические особенности русской языковой картины мира, в которой сочетаются и характеристики, свойственные русскому языку метрополии, и характеристики, указывающие на влияние лингвокультурной среды, так и черты и признаки, совпадающие или тождественные в русской и латышской языковой картине мира. Обработка и анализ данных позволяют определить концепт «огонь» как полноценный концепт в восприятии носителей русского языка Латгалии, поскольку в языковой картине мира актуализируется не только словарное значение, но и моделируется многоуровневое ассоциативное поле, уникальное в плане контекстуальных коннотаций.

Ключевые слова: русский язык, латышский язык, концепт «огонь», Латвия, латышская лингвокультура, ассоциативное поле, национально-культурные особенности

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