

УДК 811.1/.8'1-001.53
ББК 81.41

**В.В. Черненко,
А.В. Николаева,
Н.А. Ляшенко**

**V.V. Chernenko,
A.V. Nikolaeva,
N.A. Lyashenko**

**METAPHORICAL WORK
OF SPATIAL LINGUISTIC
COGNITION
(IN ENGLISH, LATIN AND
RUSSIAN)**

В статье рассматривается проблема использования языковых средств пространственной семантики для выражения таких понятий, как время, образ действия, цель в латинском, английском и русском языках. Задачей исследования является подтверждение гипотезы о систематическом процессе метафоризации пространственных отношений в рассматриваемых языках.

Ключевые слова: *пространственные отношения, метафора, латинский язык, английский язык, русский язык, устойчивые словосочетания, фразеологизм, время, образ действия, цель.*

DOI: 10.18522/1995-0640-2015-4-153-159

Черненко Виктория Владимировна – канд. филол. наук, доцент кафедры Мировые языки и культуры Донского государственного технического университета,
Тел.: 8-905-430-05-38
E-mail: wiser@mail.ru

Николаева Анна Владимировна – канд. филол. наук, доцент кафедры теории и практики английского языка Института филологии, журналистики и межкультурной коммуникации Южного федерального университета
Тел.: 8-929-816-83-51
E-mail: annanick@mail.ru

Ляшенко Наталья Александровна – канд. филол. наук, доцент кафедры теории и практики английского языка Института филологии, журналистики и межкультурной коммуникации Южного федерального университета
Тел.: 8-928-938-51-26

© Chernenko V.V., Nikolaeva A.V.,
Lyashenko N.A., 2015.

Spatial relations always serve as the basis for comprehending the reality. A human mind cannot understand, comprehend and imagine something out of spatial reference.

Space is the very first category recognized by a human. All the objects around us possess their shape, volume and location. All the other mental categories are perceived via the category of space. So, space serves as the universal category constituting the basis for reality comprehension. All the existing phenomena and objects somehow are located and happen in space. Space is always filled with multitude of systems and relations and has no other characteristic but to be filled. It can be characterized by different locations of its objects and their coexistence.

The problem of spatial cognition has ever occupied the minds of scientists. So, this paper investigates the ways of spatial linguistic means transformation into linguistic means expressing different concepts, naming it the metaphorical work of spatial linguistic cognition. The aim of the research is to follow the permanent and coherent metaphorical process of converting the idea of place into some other concepts such as time, manner, purpose; to analyze how the linguistic means of rendering space are used as the linguistic means of rendering other concepts like time, manner, purpose, proving that metaphorical linguistic expressions are connected with metaphorical concepts in a systematic way. The paper focuses on the English, Latin and Russian languages and traces similar

tendencies in the three languages, which should prove the universal character of the phenomenon under analysis.

Space cannot be seen separately from the objects, events and people. “Spatial cognition is a fundamental design requirement for every mobile species with a fixed territory or home base” [Levinson, Wilkins, p. 1]. Any human being connects and associates himself with some place, which can be his home, place of work, town, country, and so on. Besides, such connections often serve as the basis for both uniting and delimiting people. For example, people living in the same territory feel strong ties among themselves as they have similar customs, mentality, traditions, and even cuisine. That means that the same spatial territory, the habitat, influences the way people comprehend the reality.

The Sapir-Wharf hypothesis implied that language and thought influence each other and the way a human being sees the reality is largely dependent upon the language one speaks. We support this view as the principle of linguistic relativity has found plenty of proofs among other practical scientists and linguists. The structure of a language affects the ways in which its speakers conceptualize the world [Linguistic Relativity]. So, the habitat, usually implying the same language spoken by its inhabitants, has a great impact on the way the people comprehend the world around them and express their comprehension by the same linguistic means.

Objective spatial relations are comprehended by a human and are reflected in the human linguistic consciousness and language practice. Meanwhile, languages, being the systems of signs, build their own ways of expressing and defining the space. Many linguists, including Otto Jespersen, have tried to find something common for human speech as a whole, something based on the nature of human mind, human logics, something independent from a particular language. The notional category of space can be viewed as such something. It is universal for any human mind, it is independent, and it finds its realization in all the languages. The existence of the notional category of space does not depend on any living conditions of any nation and has always been important for any peoples in any place in the world. In spite of the fact that space is comprehended differently by different peoples and is expressed differently in different languages, the notional category of space exists in every worldview of any people.

While the notional category of space exists in any worldview, it finds its representation in all the languages in the form of the linguistic category of space. In our paper we focus on the metaphorical work of spatial linguistic means which help follow the similar cognitive processes in different linguistic domains. In their book “Metaphors We Live By” George Lakoff and Mark Johnsen claim that metaphors do not only work inside a language, “human thought processes are largely metaphorical” [Lakoff, Johnsen, p.7]. Our research supports the idea that “the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined” [Ibid.]. Moreover, we want to prove that metaphorical processes for such universal categories, like the notional category of space, generally work similar in different languages. For our

work we will understand metaphors as metaphorical concepts. We will view only the metaphors free of context, pure linguistic ones, as the main goal is to support the idea of the universal processes of metaphorical thinking and conceptualizing the reality.

The nature of the metaphor is based on the comparison. The principle of the unity of language and thinking is the main principle which gives rise to the idea that the process of creating metaphors takes place both within the domain of thinking and within the domain of the language.

The main purpose of the metaphor is to help people learn the reality around. Without the comparison the cognitive activity is not possible as the comparison is the ground for making logical conclusions. So, metaphor is the basis for understanding, cognition and thinking. As the linguistic phenomenon the metaphor is the linguistic form of expressing the logical operations of identification and analogy.

Spatial relations being the integral part of any reality are often registered to work as the ground for metaphorical transformation into many other concepts like time, manner, purpose. Moreover, it is necessary to underline that mentally the metaphorical processes that take place in the minds of different people speaking different languages often operate in the same way. Thus, linguistically spatial relations are regularly converted into the relations of time, manner, purpose.

Besides, to exemplify the subject matter of the research it is worth mentioning the Latin word "*alibi*". "*Alibi*" was used as the adverb in Latin and had the direct meaning "elsewhere, in another place". But nowadays it is used in English and in Russian as the noun naming "someone or something that proves that someone was not in the area where a crime happened and therefore could not have done it" [Dictionary of Contemporary English]. It became the law term. So, the idea of space transformed into the abstract idea of being not guilty.

Spatial metaphors can perfectly be studied in the idioms of the three languages. As for the variety of set expressions, proverbs and popular quotations existing in the languages under the analysis, the concept of space has always been popular in expressing educative moral values:

Ibi semper victoria, ubi Concordia est (Lat.), the victory is always where harmony prevails (Eng.), Там победа, где согласие (Rus.);

Veritas in medio est (Lat.), truth is in the middle (Eng.), истина находится посередине (Rus.);

Procul ex oculis, procul ex mente (Lat.), out of sight, out of mind (Eng.), с глаз долой – из сердца вон (Rus.);

In Rome do as Romans do (Eng.);

В Тулу со своим самоваром (Rus.)

The metaphorical meaning of some idioms became the prevailing one over the spatial direct meaning of the expressions. For example, the linguistic means expressing the idea of "close distance, being located near" acquire the temporal message which is now fixed in the following idiomatic expressions: *ad manum (Lat.), at hand (Eng.), под рукой (Rus.)*.

But in English “at hand” can also express “something that will happen soon”, so spatial relations turn into time relations:

There were no curtains on the windows, and gradually the night seemed to lighten, it was not yet the dawn, but the dawn was at hand (W.S. Maugham) [Kunin, English-Russian Dictionary of Idioms].

In Russian the same idea of “something that will happen soon” finds its representation with the help of another part of a body, a nose – на носу:

– *Лето-то уж давно прошло; вот и осень приходит, вот и зима на носу (И. Тургенев)* [Kveselevich, Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary].

Another expression of the same kind in English is *around the corner*. Its first, direct meaning implies the idea of “short distance, near”, but metaphorically it can express the idea of time, “not a long time ahead”, “something that will happen soon”:

Since I had already had my first poem printed in a London periodical that week I naturally began to feel as if the Nobel prize were just around the corner (R. Aldington) [Kunin, English-Russian Dictionary of Idioms].

In Russian the phrase “не за горами” exercises the same tendency, i.e. its first direct meaning is spatial “something that is located near, not behind the mountains” and its metaphorical idiomatic meaning is temporal “not a long time ahead”, “something that will happen soon”.

Он наступлению мечтал каждый, и, судя по всему, оно было не за горами (Е. Поповкин) [Kveselevich, Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary].

Generally the idea of space is very close to the idea of time, i.e. the concept of time is often represented in a language through spatial linguistic means. Metaphorical thinking here works in the way that time is viewed as space. Thus, spatial linguistic means often acquire metaphorical meaning of time. And it has already become the conventional way of thinking about time through the prism of space without even noticing the spatial tints of sense.

This trend is quite clearly seen in the diversity of space prepositions. Such space prepositions as *ad* (Lat.), *around* (Eng.), *около* (Rus.) serve as good examples:

expressing space relations:

Jacere ad meridiem (Lat.), to lie *around* the capital (Eng.), располагаться *около* Петербурга (Rus.);

expressing time relations:

ad vesperam (Lat.), *around* six p.m. (Eng.), *около* шести вечера (Rus.).

In the following expressions spatial prepositions also demonstrate space-time transformation in the meaning:

ab incunabulis (Lat.), *from the cradle* (Eng.), *с колыбели* (Rus.);

nil permanet sub sole (Lat.), *nothing remains under the sun* (Eng.), *ничто не вечно под солнцем* (Rus.).

The concept of aim can be metaphorically structured in terms of the concept of space. So, the concept of achieving the **aim** finds its representation in the languages by means of the metaphorical usage of the spatial linguistic means:

ad augusta per angusta (Lat.), *through difficulties to honours* (Eng.), *к высокому через трудное* (Rus.);

per aspera ad astra (Lat.), *through hardships to the stars* (Eng.), *через тернии – к звездам* (Rus.);

per crucem ad lucem (Lat.), *through the cross to the light* (Eng.), *через страдания к свету* (Rus.).

The concept of **manner** can also be expressed with the help of various metaphors of space:

sic itur ad astra (Lat.), *thus one goes to the stars* (Eng.), *так идут к звездам* (Rus.);

a capite ad calcem (Lat.), *from head to feet* (Eng.), *с головы до ног* (Rus.);

a maximis ad minima (Lat.), *from the greatest to the least* (Eng.), *от большого к малому* (Rus.);

ab exterioribus ad interior (Lat.), *from the exterior to the interior* (Eng.), *от внешнего к внутреннему* (Rus.);

in medias res (Lat.), *into the middle things* (Eng.), *в самую суть* (Rus.).

In Latin «*circa rem ambitus facere*» (Lat.) expresses the idea of «doing something not to the point, with digressions». The direct meaning of *circa* as the preposition and adverb is the spatial meaning of «around, about, on the side of, surrounding, encompassing». But in the idiom «*circa rem ambitus facere*» (Lat.) the spatial meaning gives way to the idea of «being not exact, doing something that is not what everyone expects».

In Russian the set expression «*ходить вокруг да около*» (Rus.) also refers not to the spatial idea of walking round and about, but it undergoes the same changes like the previous idiom in Latin and «*ходить вокруг да около*» (Rus.) means manner, i.e. «doing something not to the point, with digressions», ‘to beat about the bush’:

– *Ходишь все вокруг да около, – недовольно пробурчал Степка* (Т.Баженов)[Kveselevich, Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary].

The English idiom «*to go too far*» literally meaning to move to a remoted very faraway place, undergoes metaphorical changes and means «*to exceed some limit*»:

After all, even a sense of humour can go too far. It can become mere cynicism (J.Lindsay) [Kunin, English-Russian Dictionary of Idioms].

In Russian the set expression “*зайти слишком далеко*” exercises the same metaphoric work of the spatial linguistic means. While the literal translation of the set expression is spatial, i.e. “to go too far”, the metaphoric meaning of manner which is now fixed in the Russian language is “to exceed some limit”:

Генерал погорячился, но уж видимо, раскаивался, что далеко зашел (Ф.Достоевский) [Kveselevich, Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary].

Nowadays there are many expressions in the languages which are based on the concept of space but due to the metaphorical transformations acquire completely different sense. What is worth mentioning is that such metaphorical processes of thinking were registered long ago. For example,

the English «*to go west*» implies the idea «*to die*». This expression has been ascribed to a Native American legend that a dying man goes to meet the setting sun. However, it was first recorded in a poem of the early 1300s: «Women and many a willful men as wind and water have gone west» [Ammer, *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*]. So, nowadays this idiom is registered by Cambridge Idioms Dictionary as old-fashioned. Together with it this dictionary as the first definition of «to go west» gives «if something goes west, it is destroyed or lost. My watch went west when I accidentally dropped it on a concrete floor. That's my chance of seeing the game gone west!» [Cambridge Idioms Dictionary].

Many Latin proverbs and sayings demonstrate metaphorical comprehension of the reality by the ancient Romans which proves that metaphorical thinking was one of the characteristic features of their cognition.

Thus, the process of metaphorical conceptualizing of the reality has deep roots in the history of human languages. That supports the fact that the human mind tends to metaphorical thinking disregarding the language a person speaks. Moreover, such universal notional category as the concept of space has always served as the ground for metaphorical thinking. It can be explained by the fact that space is the main category for both the reality and the linguistic cognition in general. A language finds expressions for any other non-spatial ideas through the prism of space, through placing these ideas into space. This results in appearance of many metaphors, new meanings of lexical units, which in the end drive the language ahead. So, spatial relations provide a language with a tool for expressing various relations and correlations which exist in the objective reality.

So, as the language is a form of mental activity of a human being, it embraces all the individual and social spheres of life of a person. And the surrounding reality in its turn is analyzed and comprehended through the forms and categories of the language. Spatial relations often form the basis for metaphorical thinking which leads to the appearance of numerous set-expressions and idioms which express the concepts of time, purpose and manner with the help of various spatial linguistic means. The similar trends take place in the Latin, English and Russian languages that confirms the universal nature of the metaphorical processes which take place both while comprehending the reality and while rendering the thoughts by means of a language.

Works Cited

- Ammer C.* The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2003.
Cambridge Idioms Dictionary: 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press, 2006.
Dictionary of Contemporary English. Longman Group Ltd. 3-d edition. 1995
Kunin A.V. English-Russian Dictionary of Idioms. Moscow, 1998
Kveselevich D.I. Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary. Moscow, 1998
Lakoff G., Johnsen M. Metaphors We Live by. The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Levinson S.C., Wilkins D.P. Grammars of Space. Explorations in Cognitive Diversity. Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Linguistic Relativity // URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic_relativity (дата обращения 07.08.2015)

Vocabularium Latinorussicum Magnum// URL: [http:// www.linguaeterna.com](http://www.linguaeterna.com) (дата обращения 07.08.2015).

Chernenko V.V., Nikolaeva A.V., Lyashenko N.A. (Southern Federal University, Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation)

Metaphorical work of spatial linguistic cognition (in English, Latin and Russian)

The paper focuses on the metaphorical thinking and conceptualizing the reality on the basis of the spatial linguistic means for expressing various concepts such as time, manner, purpose. The research is based on the analysis of different idioms and set expressions in the Latin, English and Russian languages. The main aim of the paper is to support the idea of the systematic process of creating metaphors on the basis of spatial relations. The paper includes the introductory part which dwells upon the subject of universal character of the notional category of space and spatial cognition. The body is devoted to the analysis of different idioms in the three languages which demonstrate the systemic character of the metaphorical processes built on the spatial relations. The conclusion encompasses the ideas that universal category of space is one of the main grounds for metaphorical thinking.

Key words: *spatial relations, metaphor, Latin, English, Russian, set expression, idiom, time, manner, purpose.*

Chernenko Victoria – PhD, associate professor of the chair of World Languages and Cultures Don State Technical University. Ph.: 8-905-430-05-38; e-mail: wiser@mail.ru

Nikolaeva Anna, PhD, associate professor of the chair of Theory and practice of the English Language, Institute of Philology, Journalism and Cross-cultural Communication, Southern Federal University. Ph.: 8-929-816-83-51; e-mail: annanick@mail.ru

Lyashenko Natalia, PhD, associate professor of the chair of Theory and practice of the English Language, Institute of Philology, Journalism and Cross-cultural Communication, Southern Federal University. Ph.: 8-928-938-51-26