



Prepositions Representing Space in English and Russian Proverbs

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Abstract

The article discusses the functioning of prepositions, representing space, in proverbs and sayings of the English and Russian languages. The category of space is one of the essential categories of the modern worldview and has been studied by scientists of various fields of knowledge for centuries. Space, along with time, is an integral attribute of the existence of all objects and processes of the surrounding reality, as well as one of the main categories of culture, which enables a person to perceive the world. In linguistics, spatial relationships are expressed by various means, lexical and grammatical (morphological and syntactic). This article deals with the expression of the category of space by lexical means, namely one of the service parts of speech, prepositions. The prepositions expressing the space are grouped in the article according to the meanings. Oriented and non-oriented prepositions are considered. The authors conducted a comparative analysis of the prepositions representing the space in the paroemiological fund of heterogeneous English and Russian languages, determined the universal and unique characteristics of each of the compared languages.

Keywords: Category of Space; Proverbs; Comparative Analysis; Prepositions; Paroemiological Fund.

1. Introduction

Such categories of being as time and space are fundamental to world perception and understanding of the world. The ideas of ethnos about space and time characterize it and therefore, have been the subject of study for many decades (Enninger, 1988; Winichakul, 2000).

The category of space is a complex cognitive structure that reflects the experience of human interaction with the world and knowledge about it (Deese, 1973). The category of space seems to be the most important category, which is the main form of existence of matter. Spatial meanings are fundamental to many linguistic means of designation, both at the word level and at the level of the sentence structure (Azarova & Zakharov, 2018; Pratt & Francez, 1997, 2001). The analysis of the importance of spatial language is spatial semantics, so what is to be known as 'spatial language'? The contemplation of a moment is enough to demonstrate that the answer to this question is anything but trivial, because SPACE is not a 'semantic field' that is self-contained, but rather constitutes an essential part of the context for all conceptualization and meaning (Gentner, Özyürek, Güranlı, & Goldin-Meadow, 2013; Gibson & Davis, 2011; Hayward & Tarr, 1995; Lakusta, Wagner, O'Hearn, & Landau, 2007; Landau & Jackendoff, 1991; Morgan, Herman, Barriere, & Woll, 2008; Munnich & Landau, 2003; Regier, 1996; Skubic et al., 2004; Spranger & Pauw, 2012). In addition, in Cognitive Linguistics and Cognitive Science, the word 'space' has been used all too frequently in an extended, metaphorical context, e.g., 'Space Grammar.' Therefore, an unregulated interpretation of the word "space" might lead one to conclude that all semantics are spatial semantics," a conclusion that would not be too appealing for even cognitive linguists (Bowerman & Choi, 2001; Bowerman, De León, & Choi, 1995; Moscovitch, Nadel, Winocur, Gilboa, & Rosenbaum, 2006; Sinha, Thorseng, Hayashi, & Plunkett, 1994; Tyler & Evans, 2003; Wang, Gu, Dou, & Qiao, 2018; Zampogiannis, Yang, Fermüller, & Aloimonos, 2015). It is therefore important to limit the scope of spatial semantics, and this can and has been done in at least three ways: by type class, by semantic category, and by communicative function. However, the three concepts based on such constraints do not coincide, and each leaves much to be desired. In terms of a



class of expressions, i.e., a 'form class' which specializes in spatial meaning, perhaps the most common way to describe the scope of spatial semantics is: e.g., 'spatial prepositions', 'closed-class forms', etc. An alternative is to conceptually describe spatial language, e.g., all terms that express 'spatial relations' are spatial.

The perception and reflection of space are differently carried out in different cultures and, accordingly, language systems (Lavrenova, 2019). In linguistics, the spatial relationships between various phenomena and processes of the world around us are expressed by various linguistic means (Chuang, 2020; Jung & Park, 2020; Mingmei, 2020): lexical and grammatical (morphological and syntactic). The ratio of these levels in different languages is noticeably different. Depending on their grammatical structure, languages express the semantics of space in different ways (Gabdrakhmanova, Mukhametzyanova, & Shayakhmetova, 2016). The issue of whether the use of language influences spatial cognition is closely connected to theories of linguistic relativity, also referred to as the Sapir-Whorf theory, which claims that the structure of a language affects the speaker's cognitive processes. Discussions on this subject concentrate primarily on the degree to which language affects spatial awareness or whether it does at all. Research often discusses discrepancies between cultures' perspectives on spatial interactions, what they mean, and the exploration of cognitive processes that are potentially involved.

The choice of the paroemiological fund of comparable languages as research material is explained by the fact that paroemias convey the mentality and uniqueness of an ethnos. Each nation characterizes its excellent perception of reality and individual categories. The study of fundamental categories in different linguistic cultures is of great interest in terms of familiarization with the worldview of a particular nation (Bennett, 1975; Gabdrakhmanova et al., 2016; Mukharlyamova & Sulkarnayeva, 2019; Rahimova & Chupryakova, 2017; Shakirova, Kharisov, & Aitova, 2018). Cultural Linguistics is a multidisciplinary field of study that investigates the connection between language, culture and conceptualization (Frank, 2015; Jensen, 2017; G. Palmer, 2006; G. B. Palmer, 2018; Sharifian, 2016b, 2016a; Sharifian & Palmer, 2007). This area originally developed out of an interest in combining cognitive linguistics with the three linguistic anthropology traditions, namely Boasian linguistics, ethnosemantics, and speaking ethnography (Ben Salameh & Maalej, 2018; Benczes, Burridge, Sharifian, & Allan, n.d.; Bustan & Liunokas, n.d.; Dabbagh, n.d.; Ottenheimer & Pine, 2018). Cultural Linguistics has also found clear common ground with cognitive anthropology over the last decade, as both investigate cultural models related to the use of language. Many aspects of human languages, like cultural models, are rooted in cultural conceptualisations for Cultural Linguistics. In recent years, many disciplines and sub-disciplines, such as complexity science and distributed cognition, have been used by Cultural Linguistics to enrich the theoretical interpretation of the phenomenon of cultural cognition. Cultural Linguistics applications have allowed fruitful research into the cultural basis of language in a variety of applied fields, such as world English, intercultural communication and study of political discourse (Khedri & Kritsis, 2018; M Khabutdinova, I Mingazova, & Mashakova, 2019). One of the pioneers of the field of cognitive linguistics, Ronald Langacker, perhaps first used the term Cultural Linguistics in a comment he made stressing the connection between cultural understanding and grammar. The rise of cognitive linguistics can be heralded as a return to cultural linguistics, he maintained. Cognitive linguistic theories consider cultural understanding as the source not only of the lexicon, but also of grammar's core aspects.

1.1. Research Objective

This article deals with the word, by lexical means, of the category of space, namely one of the service sections of speech, prepositions. In the post, the prepositions representing space are grouped according to their meanings. There are considered oriented and non-oriented prepositions.

2. Methodology

The methods applied in the present paper are descriptive and comparative analysis; logical systematization, as well as the overall exception of the material, have been involved as well. Definition of languages, aimed at in-depth study of the languages of the world. The research of the grammar of languages by an analysis of forms, mechanisms and processes at all stages of language structure is concerned with descriptive linguistics: phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, semantics, and pragmatics (Abdulmughni, 2019; Desjardins, 2019b, 2019a; Holmstedt, 2018; Kanwit & Terán, 2020; Mahmood, 2019). It is based on data obtained for extended periods of time through fieldwork, preferably immersion fieldwork. It builds on methods of ethnography and language. As in Sapir's concept of linguistics as a discipline, languages are of strategic significance in understanding a person's history and culture and the cognitive capacities of humans.



The material for this comparative analysis comprises English and Russian proverbs and sayings with prepositions representing space. The sources for their collection are both monolingual and bilingual compilations of proverbs (Ayto, 2010; Dal, 1993; Kuzmin & Shadrin, 1989; McMordie, 1954; Speake, 2015).

Proverbs, sometimes considered in a language to be "traditional folklore items," possess their own generic and linguistic properties. In order to describe a proverb, several attempts have been made. Therefore, its properties should be taken into account in order to include a correct understanding of what proverbs represent, as well as to justify their meaning. The field of linguistics that deals with the study of proverbs is called paremiology, to begin with. The word "proverb" will also be used interchangeably with "aphorism," "maxim," "gnome" and "adage." Whatever synonymous word we want to use, proverbs continue to reflect "the condensed good sense of nations," and if we are adamant that "time passes, but the statements remain," their longevity is not jeopardized (Akhmatshina, Hana, & Mokrushina, 2018; Masenya, 2020; Mieder, 2008; Seliverstova, 2020; Valentonis, 2020). One of the key paradoxes of proverbs is that common sense and simplicity are generally regarded as epitomizing them, but it seems that they are both complex and difficult to describe. Although most individuals are able to offer numerous interpretations of proverbs, few of them can reliably describe what basically makes them proverbial. For hundreds of years, proverbs have questioned authors, and hundreds of distinct meanings have been strengthened. There is a common misconception that the smallest folklore genre is proverbs, which are verbally mediated. They can however, also be studied as linguistic units. In regular voice, slogans, fiction, journalism and other means of communication, the use of proverbs is multidimensional. We seek to reinforce our points, communicate general concepts, postulate generalisations about a certain concept and transmit a meaning by using proverbs in conversation. In the following paragraph, the grammatical markers of the proverbs will be drawn up in English and Russian. A sentence is the linguistic frame in which a proverb operates. "The form of the sentence is set and two elements are included in the smallest proverb, as in "Time flies" and the Russian version "Вре зя лелии". In proverbs, one of the most obvious grammatical indicators is that they indicate a temporal category that refers to an action that can occur at any time. This applies to the "past is always future and always ready to be present" in proverbs. The use of phonic devices or rhythmic features is another valuable characteristic that is prevalent in proverbs. Rhyme, alliteration, assonance, repetition, etc. are included. The proverb becomes more memorable and understandable by using them. It can be argued that they are responsible for the universal popularity of proverbs in all worlds, regardless of time, place, language or culture, since the phonic devices contribute greatly to the proverbial utterance.

3. Results and Discussion

As it is known, it is the vocabulary that most accurately reflects the perception of a particular category by the human mind, and the linguistic picture of the world is most objectively and fully described by lexical units, and its knowledge makes it possible to learn the mentality of a people. In this regard, the analysis of lexical means of representing space seems relevant.

Among the lexical means of expressing the category of space, one of the main ones is such a service part of speech as a preposition. Prepositions are units that differ in polysemy and rich metaphors (Cowie & McCaig, 1993; Shayakhmetova, Shayakhmetova, Ashrapova, & Zhuravleva, 2017).

In English, the relative position of objects is conveyed by prepositions indicating the location of the object, as well as the location of the action. The Russian language is distinguished by the presence of cases, which to express the category of space form prepositional-case constructions. In other words, in the Russian language, case endings are used along with prepositions to express spatial relations (Ayupova, Bashirova, Bezuglova, Kuznetsova, & Sakhbullina, 2014).

Such prepositions of the Russian language as *nad*, *pod*, *pered*, *za* (above, below, before, behind) are oriented, i.e. when determining the localization of an object, and they take into account not only the relative position of the object and the localizer but also their position relative to some third subject or relative to the speaker. Prepositions *v*, *na* (in, on) are non-oriented (Antoniak, 2011; Jaszczolt, 2020).

The prepositions "at, on, in" in English indicate the location of objects and are characterized as undirected prepositions, in contrast to all other prepositions containing oriented components, such as, for example, *before*, *near*, *around*, *after*, *opposite*, *between*, *along*, *round* which are characterized as oriented or relative prepositions.

Each preposition is characterized only by its inherent set of meanings. The meanings of the preposition make up its semantic structure.

The prepositions expressing spatial relations in the material collected and analyzed by us can be grouped in accordance with their meanings:

– placement on the surface of a spatial landmark:

Eng.: *on*. All lay load **on** the willing horse. Agues come **on** horseback but go away on foot. The grass is always greener **on** the other side of the fence. In late winter it is forbidden to knit **on** the doorstep, as that is known to lengthen the winter; Rus.: *na, po*. **Na** nemilostivyh ad stoit. Prishlos **na** pechi sidet svate: zastala zima v letnem plate. O chuzhoj golove bitsya – svoyu **na** kon stavit. Ego pozdno uchit: raspashonka **na** nem uzh ne sojdetsya. Slyvet Nizhnim, da stoit **na** gore. Chestno velichat, tak **na** poroge vstrechat. Vo zle zhit – **po** miru hodit. **Na** yazyke med, a pod yazykom led. Sam **na** lavku, a nogi (hvost) pod lavku. Kogda net kota v domu, to igrayut myshi **po** stolu.

– location inside or movement inside a spatial landmark:

Eng.: *into, in*. Girls who carry a lamp to a spring of water on Halloween night can see their future husband **in** the reflection.; Rus.: *v*. Klevala vorona hleb v osen, a zimoy i sama popala v osil. Vesennej ozimi v zasek ne syplyut. Kolokol v cerkov lyudej zovet, a sam nikogda ne byvaet. U nego chert v podkladke, satana v zaplatke. S toboj voditsya – chto v krapivu saditsya. Mnogo dokuki, da nechego v ruki. Skolko ni vertetsya, a nekuda detsya: na nebo vysoko, v vodu gluboko. Ne bej v chuzhie vorota pletyu; ne udarili by v tvoji dubinoj (ili: obuhom). Ne suj nosa v chuzhoe proso. U kogo zhelch vo rtu, tomu vse gorko.

– movement to a spatial landmark:

Eng.: *to*. An ass loaded with gold climbs **to** the top of the castle. All roads lead **to** Rome. All is fish that comes **to** his net. All are not saints that go **to** church. Early **to** bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. Everything comes **to** an end; Rus.: *K. Novyj god – k* vesne povorot. V gosti hodit – nado i **k** sebe vodit.

– accommodation in the immediate vicinity of the spatial landmark:

Eng.: *before, under, over, after, behind*. Sweep **before** your own door. The beggar may sing **before** the thief (**before** a footpad). It is no use crying **over** spilt milk. If you run **after** two hares you will catch neither. He is a good friend that speaks well of us **behind** our backs. The devil lurks **behind** the cross. The darkest place is **under** the candlestick. What is got over the devil's back is spent **under** his belly; Rus.: *u, nad, pod, za, pered*. Bystro taet oktyabrskij den – ne privyazhesh **za** pleten. Ty, Isaj, naverh stupaj; ty, Denis, idi na niz; a ty, Gavriilo, poderzhis **za** molotilo! Hot **za** nizhnim koncom, da **za** tem zhe stolom. Ne beri **u** popa deneg vzajmy: **u** zavistlivogo ruka tyazhela. **Pered** zloj zhenoj satana – mladenec neporochnyj. **Po** dymu nad banej paru ne ugadaesh. Serdita kobyla na voz, a pret ego **pod** goru i v goru. U kogo sovest' chista, u togo podushka **pod** golovoj ne vertitsya. **Pod** lezhachij kamen voda ne techet. Nichto ne vechno **pod** lunoj. Iz vysokih dvoryan, chi terema **pod** nebesa ushli.

– placement outside a spatial landmark:

Eng.: *about, between*. **Between** two stools one goes (falls) to the ground. The furthest way **about** is the nearest way home. **Between** the cup and the lip a morsel may slip. Put not your hand **between** the bark and the tree. A hedge **between** keeps friendship green; Rus.: *okolo, mezhdru, cherez*. Plohoj to vor, chto **okolo** sebya ogrebaet. **Okolo** svyatyh cherti vodyatsya. **Okolo** pechi nelzya ne nagretsya. I lisa **okolo** svoej nory smirno zhivet. **Mezhdru** zhenskimi da i net – ne prodenesh igolki. Kogda **mezhdru** druzyami izgorod, to i družba dolshe. **Mezhdru** slepyimi i krivoj korol. Terpit braga dolgo, a **cherez** kraj pojdet – ne ujmesh. Koza vo dvore, tak kozel **cherez** tyn glyadit. Tak pyan, chto cherez gubu ne plyunet.

– movement from inside, from spatial landmark:

Eng.: *out of*. He got **out of** bed on the wrong side. The falling **out of** lovers is the renewing of love. Truth comes **out of** the mouths of babes and sucklings. **Out of** sight, **out of** mind. Do not halloo till you are **out of** the wood; Rus.: *ot, iz, s*. Vse v svoj srok: pridet vremekhko, vyrastet **iz** semechka. Vesennij dozhd – **iz** tuchki, osennij – **iz** yasenii. Veshnij veter **iz** temeni, osennij – **iz** yasenii. Hudaya trava **iz** polya von. Bodlivuyu korovu s polya doloj (ili: **iz** stada von). **Ot** cherta

krestom, ot svini pestom, a ot lihogo cheloveka – nichem. Ot nego ni krestom, ni pestom ne otdelaeshsya. Ot nego ni otmolitsya, ni otbitsya. S glaz doloj — iz serdca von. Est kus, tak gostya net; net ni korki, a gosti s gorki.

In the languages we compare, there are prepositions that, along with the representing space, can also express temporary relationships. For example, prepositions *in* (*An hour in the morning is worth two in the evening. A fool may ask more questions in an hour than a wise man can answer in seven years*), *before* (*Never spend your money before you have it; Before you choose a friend, eat a bushel of salt with him*), *v* (*Rodil by raz v godu, chtob den za den ne britsya.*), *pod* (*Voeval molodoj, a pod starost otpustili domoj. Ni smolodu molodec, ni pod starost starik.*), *posle* (*Posle obeda polezhi, posle uzhina pohodi! Test za zyatya daval rubl, a posle daval i poltora, chtob sveli so dvora.*), *na* (*Edesh na den, beri hleba na nedelyu. Na chas uma ne stanet, a na vek durakom proslyvesh.*).

4. Conclusion

Thus, prepositions can determine the scene and point to a time period. They are actively used to express the semantics of space in the paroemiological fund of comparable English and Russian languages. Prepositions can indicate placement on the surface, and inside the spatial landmark, the movement to and inside the spatial landmark, movement from the inside, away from the spatial landmark, and also indicate placement in the immediate vicinity and outside the spatial landmark.

Overall, the survey aims at prepositions' functioning, designing space, proverbs, and statements of the English and Russian languages. In the language, those figurative expressions are fixed that is associated with national-cultural stereotypes and, while used in speech, reproduce a particular linguacultural community's mentality characteristic. This permits us to estimate the mechanisms of forming the central cultural stereotypes and cultural components of linguistic significance based on paroemias.

The category of space is one of the universal types being in different structural languages and executed at various language levels: verbal, phraseological, morphological, syntactic, and associative (associative reactions of native speakers to words with the semantics of "space," which are a fragment of speech activity).

Each language possesses individual and universal means of representing space. We have conducted work to identify lexical units expressing the category of space in English and Russian. As a consequence of the study, we came to realize that in the languages being compared, prepositions are actively utilized to express spatial relations, and there are prepositions with Spatio-temporal semantics. It is worth mentioning that the Russian language uses prepositional-case constructions along with prepositions.

4.1. Contribution

A comparative study of the prepositions representing space in the paroemiological fund of heterogeneous English and Russian languages was carried out by the authors, and the universal and special characteristics of each of the languages compared were determined. The study material was the paroemiological basis of heterogeneous language systems since the individuality of the people is stored in the proverbs and sayings.

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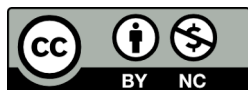
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