

The role of antonymy in creating linguistic world picture

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Annotation: In this article, the conceptual sphere and the cognitive picture of the world are closely interconnected and the concept of "Worldview" is a set of organized knowledge about reality, formed in the most general form in the public consciousness, as well as analyzed by scientists. The communicative function of the linguistic worldview is a form of interpersonal communication. The essence of interpersonal communication is understanding and interpretation. "There is also information that understanding means the unity of language or the similarity of levels of social development, the unity of mental activity. The cognitive worldview includes the individual's perceptions and ideas about the world around him, and the conceptosphere includes the ideas and philosophical theories formed in society. Thus, the conceptosphere affects the cognitive image of the world, as it forms the ideas that underlie it. In turn, the cognitive worldview allows a person to perceive and interpret the information contained in the concept.

Keywords: conceptual, axiology, stereotype, cognitive matrix, reality.

Роль антонимии в формировании языковой картины мира

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Аннотация: В данной статье концептосфера и когнитивная картина мира тесно связаны, а под понятием «Мировоззрение» понимается организованная совокупность знаний о действительности, сформированная в общественном сознании в наиболее общей форме, а также анализ учеными. Коммуникативная функция языковой картины мира является формой межличностного общения. Межличностный Суть коммуникации – понимание и интерпретация. «Понимание единства языка или социального развития есть также сведения, что это отражает сходство уровней и единство психической деятельности. Когнитивная картина мира включает в себя представления и восприятие человеком окружающего мира, а концептосфера – сформированные в обществе идеи и философские теории. Таким образом, концептосфера влияет на когнитивный образ мира, поскольку формирует идеи, лежащие в его основе. В свою очередь, когнитивное мировоззрение позволяет человеку воспринимать и интерпретировать информацию концептуальным образом.

Ключевые слова: концептуальный, аксиология, стереотип, когнитивная матрица, реальность

Antonimiya hodisasining dunyo lisoniy manzarasini yaratishdagi oʻrni

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada dunyoning kontseptual sohasi va kognitiv rasmi bir-biri bilan chambarchas bogʻliq boʻlib, "Dunyoga qarash" tushunchasi - bu haqiqat toʻgʻrisidagi uyushgan bilimlar majmui, eng umumiy shaklda jamoatchilik ongida shakllangan, shuningdek, olimlar tomonidan tahlil qilinadi. Olam lisoniy manzarasining kommunikativ funksiyasi shaxslararo aloqa shaklidir. Shaxslararo muloqotning mohiyati tushunish va talqin qilishdir. "Tushunish tilning birligi yoki ijtimoiy rivojlanish darajalarining oʻxshashligini, aqliy faoliyat birligini anglatishi haqida ham maʼlumotlar bor. Kognitiv dunyoqarash shaxsning tevarak-atrofdagi olam haqidagi tasavvurlari va tasavvurlarini, kontseptosferaga esa jamiyatda shakllangan gʻoyalar va falsafiy nazariyalarni oʻz ichiga oladi. Shunday qilib, kontseptosfera dunyoning kognitiv qiyofasiga taʼsir qiladi, chunki u uning asosidagi gʻoyalarni shakllantiradi. Oʻz navbatida, kognitiv dunyoqarash insonga kontseptsiyadagi maʼlumotlarni idrok etish va sharhlash imkonini beradi.

Kalit soʻzlar: kontseptual, aksiologiya, stereotip, kognitiv matritsa, voqelik

Introduction

Language, as a system of signs, reflects not only the communicative needs of its speakers but also their cognitive patterns and worldview. One of the fundamental mechanisms for organizing lexical meaning is antonymy – the relation between words with opposite meanings. This phenomenon is universal and can be observed across languages and cultures, demonstrating a human tendency to conceptualize the world through oppositions: good vs. evil, life vs. death, hot vs. cold, etc. The present paper aims to analyze the role of antonymy in forming the world linguistic landscape. By "linguistic landscape," we refer to both the structural elements of language and the broader cultural and cognitive environment shaped by language use. Mentality, as a distinctive way of the psychological life of a people, is manifested through a system of views, evaluations, norms, and attitudes based on the knowledge and beliefs prevalent in a given society. These components define the hierarchy of values and belief systems. Mentality represents a specific part of the conceptual worldview; when we speak about individual or group conceptual worldviews, mentality serves as the ethno-cultural component of that conceptual landscape. In this sense, mentality appears as a cognitive-psychological reality that is reflected in people's thinking, cognitive activity, axiological system, as well as in their physical and verbal behavior. Differentiating between the concepts of "conceptual worldview" and "mentality" does not exclude their constant mutual influence and enrichment, as there are overlapping and even coinciding aspects between them. Drawing a strict line between the notions of "national conceptual worldview" and "mentality" is not justified, since both terms convey the same essence – the national and specific perception of the world shared by members of a particular nation.

The German linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt (1836) in his work *"On the Inner Form of Language"*, revealed the major historical and philosophical aspects of the development of the concept of the "linguistic picture of the world." Based on Humboldt's research, the German scholar Leo Weisgerber later developed the theory of the linguistic worldview and introduced the term "linguistic picture of the world" into scientific discourse for the first time. All classical philosophical concepts developed within the framework of a contemplative worldview. The final stage of its dominance is represented by German classical philosophy, which simultaneously served as a transitional phase

toward an activity-based worldview. The fundamental distinction between the contemplative and the activity-based worldviews lies in the fact that the former does not take into account the reciprocal influence of the subject's activity on the world being comprehended. The methodological foundation of classical philosophy is the principle of "linear ontologism," i.e., the world is viewed as an objective reality that can be known as it exists in and of itself, independent of human activity. Another characteristic of this worldview is the recognition of the dominant role of reason in understanding the surrounding world. Classical philosophy maintains a fundamentally rational view of the world, placing special emphasis on the forms of rational cognition and the capabilities of human reason, while the irrational remains peripheral to its research interests.

N.M. Lebedeva (2004) writes: "Our personal culture establishes for us a cognitive matrix (template) for understanding the world, called the "picture of the world." The national cognitive picture of the world is a general, stable, and repeated image of individual representatives of the people in the world. Thus, the national picture of the world is, on the one hand, a specific abstract, and on the other hand, a physical and verbal cognitive-psychological reality in the mental, cognitive activity of people, in their behavior. The national picture of the world is found in the uniformity of people's behavior in stereotypical situations, in their general ideas about being, in common thoughts, in proverbs and sayings, and in aphorisms.

This worldview is also encoded in the conceptual structures, semantic fields, and cognitive metaphors inherent in a language. Such cultural-linguistic nuances highlight how different worldviews are embedded within the very structure of a language. Consequently, the national cognitive picture of the world serves as a vivid illustration of the deep interconnection between language and thought. It is a core subject of study in fields such as cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, anthropology, and sociolinguistics. Each nation's unique worldview is shaped by its historical development, social structures, spiritual beliefs, and core values – all of which leave a lasting imprint on its language. Traditionally, in linguistics, the category of "opposition" has been considered within the contemplative worldview. In explaining this concept, Hegel's theory of dialectics is often employed. His concept serves as a transitional and linking element between contemplative and activity-based worldviews, grounded in the principle of universal contradiction. According to dialectics, everything that exists develops through internal contradictions, formed by the unity and struggle of opposites. In the process of understanding the world, humans inevitably encounter opposing forces and tendencies in phenomena – both external and internal.

The linguistic picture of the world is constructed through various expressive means such as mythologemes, figurative and metaphorical expressions, similes, connotative vocabulary, cultural stereotypes, symbols, and more. Every language encapsulates a unique system of national and culturally specific features that reflect its speakers' worldview and shape their conceptualization of reality.

In English-speaking cultures, a pig often represents gluttony or filth. However, among Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, and other Muslim communities, the word pig is associated with extreme religious offense and taboo. In Vietnamese culture, on the other hand, the pig is commonly used as a symbol of foolishness.

These differing associations illustrate how one and the same lexical item can carry divergent cultural meanings depending on the national worldview. This, in turn, highlights the unique metaphorical thinking and conceptual frameworks that underpin each culture's linguistic worldview.

The existence of opposing sides in phenomena of reality and their perception by humans are recorded by means of language. Thus, researchers who argue for the determinacy of linguistic relations by extra-linguistic oppositions are justified. Language contains various means of expressing the category of "opposition," (Lebedeva, 2004) with lexical antonymy being its primary correlate. Scholars note that antonyms reflect essential differences and are characterized by relations of mutual complementarity and mutual exclusivity, corresponding to the reflection of real-world connections between opposite sides of objects and phenomena. In studying antonymy, one must, on the one hand,

take into account specific logical criteria, but on the other hand, such criteria are insufficient to define all antonymic relationships and cannot account for the full range of oppositions perceived by speakers as oppositional. To reflect the modern relationships between humans and the world, antonyms must be studied in the context of antinomy, which corresponds to the activity-based worldview.

The global reorientation of worldview – that is, the shift from the contemplative to the activity-based type – was a consequence of the Industrial Revolution at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. Its main result was the tremendous increase in human productive power, comparable to and often exceeding the forces of nature. As a result of scientific and technological progress, it became possible for humans to intervene in the fundamental foundations of being: nuclear physics, genetic engineering, and so on.

Accordingly, the place and role of humans in the universe have changed: the social subject must now account for the impact of their activity on the surrounding world and assume full responsibility for its consequences. In classical philosophy, human activity was virtually disregarded, whereas in modern philosophical paradigms, the active cognitive and transformative role of the social subject has become central.

O.V. Rtishyeva (2007) comparing the linguistic and scientific picture of the world, identifies similarities and differences between its two different representations: “Common features: the general structure of space and time; a reflection of the world of the same material objects; playing the same role as an intermediary between the subject and the object of knowledge. Specific features also include various universals, which in the history of knowledge entailed a change in the scientific landscape of the world. The interconnection of linguistic and scientific representations of the world can be realized through metaphors, translating meanings from language into a scientific image.” (Rtishyeva, 2007)

Thus, the following are the main ideas of the concept of the linguistic picture of the world:

- the picture of the world offered by a language differs from the “scientific” one (in this sense the term “simple picture” is also used)
- each language paints its own picture, reflects reality in a slightly different way compared to other languages.

Linguistic semantics studies the linguistic picture of the world in two directions. On the one hand, “on the basis of a systematic semantic analysis of the vocabulary of a given language, the entire system of expressions reflected in a given language is reconstructed, regardless of its dependence on a specific language or universality, as opposed to the “scientific” one, reflecting a “simple” view of the world.” (Pustejovsky, 1995)

A so-called “expanded ontology” is being developed, which includes the domain of “psyche-consciousness.” Thus, the key category becomes “activity,” and the world as a whole is perceived as an objective-subjective reality, transformed by human activity. A core feature of the activity-based worldview is the necessity for modern humans to be fully aware of their responsibility for the decisions they make and the outcomes of their actions. Another feature of the activity-based worldview is an increased scholarly interest in the irrational. Emphasis is placed on the impossibility of understanding the being of the social subject solely through rational means, as it includes, alongside rational components, irrational ones such as intuition, mystical experience, and spiritual-moral values. The implementation of the activity-based worldview is grounded in dialectical methodology, without which it is impossible to study the activity of the subject. However, the understanding of dialectics acquires a qualitatively new character. As O. D. Masloboyeva (2006) notes, dialectics is revealed on a new level not only as a rationally mastered theory but also as an art of creative and constructive resolution of contradictions, mastered through the unity of rational and irrational elements of human activity.

According to dialectical methodology, defining the fundamental contradiction of a given process under investigation is crucial. Within the activity-based worldview, this is the dialectic of subjective and objective factors. The essence of this contradiction lies in the relationship between

what depends on the individual in the course of their life activity and what does not. The subjective factor is understood as "a free, purposeful activity of a social subject based on the functioning of consciousness, integrating both theoretical and practical aspects of social development;" (the objective factor refers to the laws of nature and society and the conditions that are beyond the will and consciousness of the social subject, determining the boundaries and direction of their life activity. In relation to our research, it should be specified that antonyms are traditionally conceptualized within the framework of the contemplative worldview.

As for the activity-based worldview, within its context, antonyms are viewed as antinomies. In this capacity, both linguistic or classical antonyms and speech-based antonyms may function, the latter of which emerge from specific communicative situations. In philosophy, antinomy is understood as a form of the existence and development of contradiction within cognitive and practical activity. This contradiction is formed by two propositions, each of which is acknowledged as true. Antinomies convey the dynamic nature of being, revealing the directionality of human activity, which can only be investigated in the context of the interplay between subjective and objective factors. Thus, while antonyms reflect the duality of the world in a purely contemplative manner, antinomies express the same contradiction of existence within an activity-based context, presenting the individual with fundamental alternatives:

- development – stagnation;
- elevation – simplification;
- freedom – determinism;
- creation – destruction;
- life – death.

These oppositional pairs do not merely represent abstract differences, they embody existential tensions that define human choice, action, and responsibility. Understanding antonymy as antinomy thus shifts the focus from static semantic oppositions to dynamic ontological conflicts that are lived and experienced, positioning language as a tool not only for representation, but also for transformation of reality.

Theoretical Framework and Definitions

Antonymy is traditionally defined as a semantic relation of opposition between lexical units. This phenomenon is one of the most fundamental and universally recognized types of lexical relations in natural languages. Antonyms are typically understood as words that express opposite or contrasting meanings. There are several main types of antonyms, each reflecting different aspects of oppositional meaning:

1. Gradable antonyms (e.g., *hot–cold*, *big–small*): These are antonyms that exist on a continuum or scale. The opposition is not absolute, and intermediate values are possible. For instance, between *hot* and *cold*, one may describe something as *warm* or *cool*.
2. Complementary antonyms (e.g., *alive–dead*, *male–female*): These are pairs with mutually exclusive meanings. There is no middle ground – an entity must belong to one or the other category.
3. Relational antonyms (e.g., *buy–sell*, *parent–child*, *teacher–student*): These are pairs that imply a reciprocal relationship or perspective shift. One term presupposes the existence of the other, often within a specific context.

In modern linguistics, antonymy is studied within various subfields such as lexical semantics, cognitive linguistics, and pragmatics. Each of these approaches provides distinct insights into how antonymic relations function in language and thought. From a lexical-semantic perspective, antonymy helps organize the mental lexicon by categorizing concepts based on contrast. Oppositional pairs contribute to the structure of semantic fields and aid in the efficient retrieval of lexical items. From a cognitive linguistic viewpoint, antonymy is seen not only as a matter of language but also as a reflection of conceptual structures. Opposites are conceptualized as part of our mental image schemas,

which we use to interpret the world around us. This view emphasizes that antonyms are not merely linguistic opposites but mental constructs shaped by human experience and embodiment.

From a pragmatic standpoint, antonymy can be context-dependent and dynamically constructed in discourse. Sometimes antonymic relations arise not from fixed dictionary meanings, but from the way language is used in specific communicative situations. For example, in certain rhetorical or ironic contexts, speakers may invoke unconventional or contextually determined oppositions. Furthermore, recent studies have explored antonymy as antinomy – especially in philosophical and conceptual frameworks. In this view, antonyms are not just opposites but represent deeper contradictions that reflect dual aspects of reality or human existence, particularly when analyzed through the lens of activity-based worldviews. Thus, antonymy serves as a vital tool not only in the structural organization of language but also in shaping how individuals perceive, categorize, and interact with the world.

The Role of Antonymy in Language and Thought

Antonymy plays a multifaceted role in shaping human cognition, communication, culture, and linguistic development. Far beyond being a mere linguistic device, it reflects how individuals conceptualize reality and interact with it through language.

5. Cognitive Function: Antonyms reflect how humans perceive and categorize the world. The binary logic of opposites – *light vs. dark*, *life vs. death*, *success vs. failure* – helps structure thought processes and reduces the complexity of reality into manageable, contrasting categories. These oppositional structures serve as cognitive shortcuts that aid in organizing experience, enabling more efficient reasoning and problem-solving. In cognitive linguistics, antonymy is viewed as a reflection of mental image schemas and embodied experiences that are universally shared, though culturally modulated.
6. Communicative Function: Antonyms enhance expressiveness and stylistic contrast in both spoken and written communication. Their use sharpens meaning and emphasizes distinctions, creating rhetorical power and emotional resonance. Antonyms are prevalent in:
 - a. Slogans and advertising: Less talk, more action; Soft on skin, tough on dirt
 - b. Headlines and journalism: Hope and fear at the polls
 - c. Proverbs and idioms: Better safe than sorry, The higher you climb, the harder you fall
 - d. Literary texts: Writers frequently use antonymy to create dramatic tension, irony, or thematic contrasts, contributing to narrative structure and character development.
- Cultural and Ideological Function: Antonymy reflects not only linguistic structures but also the value systems and ideologies of a given culture. Binary oppositions such as *good–evil*, *pure–impure*, *heaven–hell*, and *male–female* are often foundational to religious, philosophical, and social systems. These pairs shape moral judgments, ethical codes, and social norms. Additionally, in different cultures, the semantic boundaries and evaluations of these oppositions may vary, revealing underlying worldview differences. For instance, while *silence* may be viewed negatively in some cultures, others may value it as a sign of wisdom or respect.
- Language Acquisition and Lexicography: Antonymic pairs are essential tools in language teaching, especially for vocabulary acquisition. They help learners understand meanings through contrast, which is often easier to grasp than through abstract definitions alone. Antonyms are commonly found in children's books, educational materials, and language games. In lexicography, antonymic relationships are foundational to the structure of dictionaries, thesauruses, and semantic databases. Listing antonyms alongside synonyms gives a fuller picture of word meaning and usage, contributing to deeper language competence and nuanced understanding.
- Logical and Philosophical Implications: In logic and philosophy, opposites serve as tools for dialectical reasoning and conceptual clarity. Classical logic often relies on dichotomies (e.g., *true–false*) to construct arguments and identify contradictions. In dialectical philosophy, particularly in Hegelian and Marxist traditions, contradiction between opposites is seen as the

engine of development and change. When applied to language, antonymy thus serves as a mirror of both logical structure and philosophical inquiry.

- Cross-linguistic and Typological Perspectives: Antonymy exists in all known languages, though its expression may differ depending on grammatical structure, lexical availability, and cultural salience. Some languages express certain oppositions morphologically (e.g., *happy-unhappy*), while others use entirely separate lexical roots. Comparative linguistic studies of antonymy provide valuable insights into universals and variations in human conceptualization and language structure.

Antonymy Across Languages

Antonymy is a cross-linguistic and universal phenomenon, present in all natural languages, although its realization and representation vary according to linguistic, cultural, and cognitive factors. The semantic opposition between lexical units plays a central role in how different speech communities conceptualize and structure their understanding of the world. While specific antonymic pairs may differ in lexical form or nuance from language to language, the underlying cognitive principle of contrast and duality is consistent. Languages across the globe encode oppositions such as *life-death*, *light-dark*, *good-evil*, and *war-peace*, though the exact expressions and cultural implications may shift.

- Cross-linguistic Similarities and Variations
 - a. In English, *old-young*, *love-hate*, *rich-poor* are typical gradable or binary antonyms.
 - b. In Russian, opposites like *день-ночь* (day-night), *жизнь-смерть* (life-death), *добро-зло* (good-evil) mirror universal concepts, but often carry distinct cultural connotations influenced by Orthodox spirituality and philosophical traditions.
- 2. Antonymy in Phraseology and Idioms: Antonymic contrast frequently appears in idiomatic expressions and proverbs, where culturally specific values and experiences are encoded:
 - English: *From rags to riches*, *Better the devil you know than the angel you don't*
 - Russian: *Не было бы счастья, да несчастье помогло* (There would be no happiness if misfortune didn't help)

These expressions show that antonymy is not only grammatical or lexical but deeply integrated into the cultural worldview and value systems.

3. Cultural Metaphors and Worldview: Antonymy often reflects metaphorical thinking tied to cultural cognition. For instance:
 - In Western cultures, *light* is often metaphorically linked to *knowledge*, *purity*, and *truth*, while *darkness* implies *ignorance*, *evil*, or *secrecy*.
 - In many Eastern traditions, *darkness* (e.g., *yīn*) is not viewed negatively but as a necessary counterpart to *light* (*yáng*), reflecting an integrated and cyclical view of existence.
4. Typological and Structural Considerations: Languages may use different grammatical strategies to express oppositions:
 1. English: affixation (*happy-unhappy*), completely different roots (*buy-sell*)
 2. Turkish: *iyi-kötü* (good-bad), with no morphological marker
 3. Swahili: oppositions sometimes expressed through prefix variation (e.g., *mzuri-mbaya*, good-bad)

Cross-linguistic analysis of antonymy highlights the interplay between universality and cultural specificity, offering valuable insights into human cognition, perception, and the nature of language itself.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of antonymy plays a crucial role in structuring both language and thought. It contributes to the organization of lexical fields, enhances communication, and reflects cultural values. By studying antonymy, we gain insight not only into linguistic structure but also into the conceptual models that different cultures use to understand the world.

Thus, antonymy is not just a semantic relation – it is a key component in constructing the world linguistic landscape. The worldview has collective and individual aspects developed in the human psyche. Everything that is connected with the reflection of reality in the human psyche is called the cognitive world. There is a cognitive world of culture and a cognitive world of the individual. The content of this world is a collective and individual picture of the world, divided into concepts. The basis for the formation of the worldview is the cognitive activity of a person.

Not only the process of cognition is important, but also its result. It follows from this that a person perceives the world as a landscape. Through the linguistic and cognitive picture of the world, the content of the conceptsphere - the field of knowledge consisting of concepts - "opens" the way. The concept of "worldview" is widely used today in various fields of the humanities, since it is one of the main concepts characterizing human existence.

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