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METAPHORICAL FEATURES OF THE ANIMATED NATURE OF THE CONCEPT OF EARTH IN THE KYRGYZ LINGUISTIC PICTURE OF THE WORLD

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ОБРАЗНЫЕ ПРИЗНАКИ ЖИВОЙ ПРИРОДЫ КОНЦЕПТА ЗЕМЛЯ В КЫРГЫЗСКОЙ ЯЗЫКОВОЙ КАРТИНЕ МИРА

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Abstract. The article investigates the multifaceted concept of earth (zher) within the Kyrgyz linguistic worldview. The study analyzes the internal structure of this concept, its verbal realization, and the system of metaphorical features that associate the earth with the living world. Special attention is paid to the animated and anthropomorphic interpretation of earth, which reflects culturally grounded emotional, cognitive, and axiological perceptions. Based on the analysis of folklore, literary texts, and paremiological sources, 49 figurative animated features of the concept were identified, and grouped according to their semantic nature. These metaphorical representations reveal the significant role of the earth in shaping collective consciousness and preserving Kyrgyz cultural values. The study addresses the question of how the concept of earth has been actualized in language and what place it occupies in the historical development of the Kyrgyz linguistic worldview.

Аннотация. Рассматривается многогранное понятие земля в киргизской языковой картине мира. Анализируются внутренняя структура данного концепта, способы его вербализации, а также система метафорических признаков, соотносящих землю с миром живого. Особое внимание уделяется одушевлённой и антропоморфной интерпретации концепта земля, отражающей культурно обусловленные эмоциональные, когнитивные и аксиологические представления. На основе анализа фольклорных, художественных и паремиологических источников в исследовании выявлено 49 образных одушевлённых признаков концепта, сгруппированных в соответствии с их семантической природой. Эти метафорические репрезентации раскрывают значимую роль земли в формировании коллективного сознания и сохранении культурных ценностей киргизского народа. В статье рассматривается вопрос о том, каким образом концепт земля актуализируется в языке и какое место он занимает в историческом развитии киргизской языковой картины мира.

Keywords: concept, linguistic picture of the world, earth, metaphorical features, animated nature.

Ключевые слова: концепт, языковая картина мира, земля, образные признаки, живая природа.

According to M. V. Pimenova, a concept is “*a nationally marked image, notion, or symbol expressed in language, enriched with features of individual representation*” [1].

This definition emphasizes the close connection between language, cognition, and culture, showing that concepts are not abstract mental constructs but culturally shaped formations that reflect both collective and individual experience. Building on this view, other scholars emphasize that concepts function as a cognitive bridge between language and culture, revealing national patterns of thinking, value systems, and world perception [2].

The cultural nature of conceptualization is closely related to the notion of the linguistic picture of the world. S. A. Moiseeva notes that a person does not perceive the world as a chaotic set of facts and objects; rather, the world exists in human consciousness as an ordered system shared by both the individual and the ethnos as a whole. This system forms the national picture of the world, which is simultaneously an abstract construct and a cognitive-psychological reality manifested in the intellectual activity and verbal behavior of a people [3].

The linguistic picture of the world reflects how a particular culture conceptualizes reality through language, which constitutes the material basis of the present study. Accordingly, the research is conducted within the framework of linguoculturology, examining the Kyrgyz linguistic picture of the world as culture encoded in language. The analysis of the concept of Earth is particularly significant, as it occupies a central place in the Kyrgyz worldview. Through received linguistic data, this concept reveals key cultural values, symbolic meanings, and collective perceptions shaped by nomadic life, traditional beliefs, and the historical relationship between humans and nature.

An essential role in the formation and development of concepts is played by metaphor. According to M. V. Pimenova, the metaphorical features of an idea are those that underlie the creation of conceptual metaphors, which represent a way of understanding one domain through another [4].

These metaphorical features allow abstract or complex phenomena to be comprehended through more concrete and familiar experiences. This aligns with the foundational theory of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, who argue that metaphor is not merely a stylistic device but a fundamental mechanism of human thought. As they note, metaphor permeates everyday life, influencing not only language but also thinking and action [5].

From this perspective, conceptual metaphors play a key role in organizing human experience and shaping the conceptual system of a language.

The present study is conducted within the framework of the conceptual research methodology developed by the Saint Petersburg–Kemerovo School of Conceptual Studies, founded by Professor M. V. Pimenova. This approach makes it possible to identify a comprehensive set of feature groups that form the conceptual structure of a given concept. Within this methodological framework, particular attention is paid to the metaphorical component of a concept. Metaphorical features arise from knowledge of animate and inanimate nature, as well as the material world, which function as source domains for the development of conceptual metaphors through which metaphorical meanings are realized [6].

In accordance with this approach, the paper focuses on the metaphorical features associated with the animated nature of the concept earth in the Kyrgyz linguistic picture of the world. The research material includes linguistic data from Kyrgyz literary texts, proverbs and folklore, the Kyrgyz National Language Corpus, and relevant scientific articles. The analysis concentrates on lexical units verbalizing the concept of earth (*zher*), with special attention given to their linguistic and cultural significance, which constitutes the core empirical base of the study.

In Kyrgyz culture, the concept of earth (*zher*) is often portrayed as alive and human-like. This is evident in the language, where the earth is described using figurative language that falls into four main categories: vital, vegetative, zoomorphic, and anthropomorphic. These descriptions collectively

create a picture of the Earth as a living being that reacts to events, feels emotions, and plays an active role in human life, rather than simply being a passive background.

Vital features constitute the most productive and semantically rich group. They reflect the conceptualization of Earth as a living being endowed with life, movement, perception, and physical responsiveness. In the Kyrgyz linguistic picture of the world, Earth is not static matter; it lives, reacts, suffers, and renews itself. The life-giving capacity of Earth is verbalized through verbs such as “zhasharuu” which means “to revive”.

Vegetative features are conceptual characteristics that present the Earth as a living, plant-like entity capable of growth, fertility, nourishment, renewal, and organic development.

In the Kyrgyz linguistic picture of the world the concept of earth (zher) represents the vegetative feature of “flower” (gul), which is expressed through the verb “guldoos” meaning “to bloom”

Zoomorphic features of the concept *жер* are semantic traits that represent Earth through animal-related qualities as shown in Kyrgyz linguistic data: “cow”.

Anthropomorphic features refer to the attribution of human physical, psychological, or emotional qualities to non-human entities, abstract concepts, or phenomena. Within the cognitive framework, this group of features encompasses several interrelated subfeatures, including somatic, gender-based, and emotive anthropomorphic characteristics.

Table

METAPHORICAL FEATURES OF THE ANIMATED NATURE
 OF THE CONCEPT *EARTH (ZHER)*
 IN THE KYRGYZ LINGUISTIC PICTURE OF THE WORLD

№	Metaphorical features of animated nature	Earth (zher)	%
I.	Vital features		36.8%
1.	to revive	+	
2.	to live	+	
3.	to die	+	
4.	to give birth	+	
5.	to speak	2	
6.	to hear	+	
7.	to swallow	3	
8.	to absorb	+	
9.	to consume	+	
10.	to be satisfied	+	
11.	to be tired	2	
12.	to kiss	+	
13.	to see	+	
14.	to be thirsty	+	
15.	to curse	+	
16.	to tremble	+	
17.	to shake	+	
18.	to groan	+	
	Vegetative features		12.2%
II.	flower	+	
19.	grass	3	
20.	fruit	2	
21.	pine	+	

№	Metaphorical features of animated nature	Earth (zher)	%
22.	root	+	
	raisins	+	
III.	Zoomorphic features		6.1%
23.	cow	+	
24.	cow horn	+	
25.	goat	+	
	Anthropomorphic features		
IV.	Somatic features		22.4%
26.	liver	+	
27.	palm	+	
28.	navel	+	
29.	ear	2	
30.	chest	+	
31.	bosom	+	
32.	eye	+	
33.	body	+	
34.	chin	+	
35.	mouth	+	
36.	spine	+	
V.	Gender features		10.2%
37.	mother	+	
38.	stepmother	+	
39.	husband	+	
40.	boy	+	
41.	father	+	
VI.	Emotive features		16.3%
42.	offended	+	
43.	gloomy	2	
44.	to love	2	
45.	to smile	+	
46.	embarrassed	+	
47.	to rejoice	+	
48.	to cry	+	
49.	to be tense	+	
	Total: 49		100%

In the Kyrgyz picture of the world the concept *жер* has following somatic features: “liver”.

The concept of Earth is also characterized by gender features that are significant in Kyrgyz linguistic culture. In the Kyrgyz worldview, the concept *earth* is associated with both feminine and masculine qualities. Feminine qualities include “mother”.

Emotive features of the concept Earth in the Kyrgyz linguistic worldview reflect its capacity to experience and express human-like emotions — such as joy, sorrow, love, embarrassment etc. The following emotive features of the concept Earth are identified: “offended”.

In the Kyrgyz linguistic picture of the world, the concept of earth is richly anthropomorphized and animated, revealing a complex system of figurative features that reflect cultural, emotional, and cognitive perceptions of the earth (*zher*). The Kyrgyz concept *earth (zher)* reveals 49 figurative animated features based on the collected linguistic materials. The predominance of vital (36.8%),

somatic (22.4%), emotive (16.3%), and vegetative features (12.2%) demonstrates a strong tendency to conceptualize Earth as a living, feeling, and responsive entity closely connected to human existence. Less frequent gender (10.5%), and zoomorphic features (6.1%) further complement this image, adding symbolic depth without dominating the conceptual structure. Overall, the diversity and productivity of these metaphorical features confirm the high semantic potential of earth(zher) and its central role in shaping the Kyrgyz linguistic picture of the world.

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