

## LOGOEPISTEMES AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FABULOUS WORLD IN A.S. PUSHKIN'S POEM "RUSLAN AND LYUDMILA"

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**Abstract:** The article brings up the question of the possibility of considering A.S. Pushkin's poem "Ruslan and Lyudmila" among foreign language audience through the prism of the logo epistememes that exist in the communicative space of the Russians in the form of precedent texts and have a historical, cultural, linguistic and cultural value. The ability to accumulate knowledge of typical features and characteristic linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the people in a concentrated form, makes them one of the key constituent parts of the process of language learning. Meanwhile, at any stage of language learning, there arises an acute problem: to instill the skill to isolate conceptually meaningful fragments in the texts offered for reading, which can help non-native speakers to adequately perceive not only the Russian language, but also the national character and outlook of the Russians, Russian mentality and culture on the whole. The paper presents an analysis of fabulous logo epistemological nominations being the most important for each Russian speaker, having been for a long time and firmly entrenched in his linguistic consciousness and become precedent texts: "talking" names and the names of heroes, mythological and mythical creatures, loci. They found their level in the poem of A.S. Pushkin, having become a kind of measure of the poet's national character. At the same time, these images are very difficult to perceive for those who study Russian as a foreign language, because to understand them, it is necessary to have knowledge of some artifacts of culture, the recording of historical and etymological findings, the facts of the spiritual and material culture of the Russian people. In spite of the fact that A.S. Pushkin used fabulous logistic systems for imitation of folk poetry in his poem, at the same time the poet could not help but depict the elements of paganism in it, the world of the ideal; those features that were characteristic of the culture of the ancient Slavs. In turn, the acquaintance of foreign language speaker with A.S. Pushkin's "Ruslan and Lyudmila" through the prism of the logoepestemological concept allows them immersing themselves in the world of Pushkin's fairy-tale to perceive the nominations-logoepistememes as the symbols of beauty, good, evil, truth, popular morality in Russian culture and enriches them with the background knowledge, so necessary for a valuable language communication.

**Keywords:** logo episteme, precedent text, fabulous world, didactic aspect, A.S. Pushkin, poem "Ruslan and Lyudmila"

### 1. Introduction

It is known that the Russian fairy-tale as one of the main genres of folklore contains the richest historical, ethnographic and cultural background material, the analysis of which within the framework of teaching of Russian as a foreign language, allows us to make sense of the phenomenon of not only the Russian fairy-tale, but also the Russian national character. Hence, the fairy-tale becomes quite relevant linguodidactic material in the teaching of language through the penetration into the culture of the people.

Note that modern methods of language acquisition in a foreign language audience are very diverse - these are an interactive method, involving active interaction of students with each other, and various variants of working with audiovisual materials, etc. (Varlamova et al., 2016; Varlamova et al., 2014; Galiulina et al., 2016). High emphasis is also offered to place on the psychological substantiation of the methodology for studying vocabulary of the non-native language. Thus, according to a number of scholars, it is the process of learning words with which the process of mastering a "foreign" language begins, since words are a sort of folded fragments of reality, and the ability to operate with them builds a person's mental activity in a non-mother tongue (Egorov et al., 2016).

However, the learning process is not restricted only to observing the specificity of the vocabulary and grammatical structure of the language being studied, or to working out speech clichés and scenarios used in real communication.

As N.V. Tatarinova rightly says, "the knowledge of any national language by the representative of another culture at the level of the language-system, not enlarged by the mastery of the cognitive basis of this people, entails either communicative failures when a non-native speaker does not understand the meaning of phrases consisting even of words known to him, or pseudo-understanding, without being aware of the meaning comprehended in the connotations, which are obvious to native speakers and are hidden from the non-native speaker" (Tatarinova et al., 2013). At the same time, he often encounters precisely the problem of an adequate understanding of the work under study: the plot and images are perceived with great difficulty, since he has not got the so-called "background knowledge".

In this connection, the interest of linguists is turned to the search for a reasonable approach to the word, according to N.V. Tatarinova, "as a unit of description and acquisition of language" (Tatarinova, 2013). Yu.I. Koltsova defines it as a word that can provide mutual understanding in the dialogue of cultures and act "at the same time as a symbol, a signal, a sign of some artifacts. Such unit, on the one hand, belongs to language, and, on the other hand, to culture" (Koltsova, 2011).

The scholars refer logoepesteme to the terminological and methodological discovery of recent years (Koltsova, 2011), which operates at the turn of language and culture and represents, according to Yu.I. Koltsova, "the trace of reflection of the reality in the minds of native speakers as a result of the comprehension (or creation) of the spiritual values of the native and world cultures entrenched by public memory in linguistic units" (Tatarinova, 2013). They exist in the communicative space of the Russians in the form of precedent texts that mirror all the typical features and characters: both linguistic and cultural, closely related to background knowledge. The latter at the same time are an integral part of the process of language communication.

Since the logoepestemes are similar to the set national verbal image (Kostomarov, 2001), they can represent the world of the Russian fairy-tale in a concentrated form. In turn, at any stage of the language learning, there arises an acute problem - to inculcate the skills to mark out the most important, conceptually significant fragments in the texts offered for reading which can help a foreign national to adequately perceive not only the Russian language but also the Russian national character.

The purpose of this article is to show the historical-cultural and linguistic-cultural approach to A. S. Pushkin's poem "Ruslan and Lyudmila" through the prism of the logoepestemological concept. The practical significance of such conceptual approach to the poem is more than obvious: the analysis will excite a sincere interest of foreign students not only in Russian fairy-tale, but also in the Russian language learning, which is important for the actualization of its role "as an ethno-consolidating factor in a multiethnic, social and educational space" (Palekha, 2016).

### 2. Materials and Methods

The material for the study was the nominations-logoepistememes in A.S. Pushkin's poem "Ruslan and Lyudmila". The main method of investigation was linguopestemiological analysis. The methods of historical and etymological description, contextual and conceptual analysis were also applied.

### 3. Results and Discussion

So, firstly, the group of nominations-logoepestemes comprises the names of the main protagonists of the poem (brave prince *Ruslan, Prince Vladimir-the Sun* and his daughter *Lyudmila*). Considering the poem as one, in our opinion, of the most successful examples, allowing the teacher to give an insight at least in a general outline of the ancient Russian culture (it is not a secret that the foreign nationals begin their introduction to Russian literature precisely with works by A. S. Pushkin), it is indispensable to say about the role of Prince Vladimir in the history of the formation of Ancient Rus. It is he whom the researchers of Russian epic literature refer to the possible historical prototype of the collective character of the folk-epic songs of Vladimir Krasnoye Solnyshko (Vladimir Gorgeous Sunshine). In addition, the historical data about Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavovich can be supplemented with the information about his role in the formation of the Kyiv State and the religious life of Ancient Rus, including its christening. Having attributed the epithets *the sun* and *the great* to the prince, A. S. Pushkin confirms his might and grandeur.

Secondly, the group of nominations-logoepestemes comprehend the names of secondary characters and various objects, in particular:

- 1) the names of mythological and mythical heroes: *Bayan, Lel, Chernomor, Finn, Baba Yaga, Kashchei*;
- 2) the names of various wonderful helpers: magical objects of living nature (*the learned cat, the head of Chernomor's brother, the brown wolf*, etc.) and of inanimate nature (*powerful sword-kladenets, hat of darkness, stupa*);
- 3) the names of demons: *goblin of the woods, water-nymph, magician, evil spirits, demons*;

So, analyzing the nominations-logoepestemes of this group, it is necessary to take a look at the fact that the spirit of the fairy-tale, the Russian epic literature is present in the choice of the names that have already become mythological and mythical, *referring the readers* to paganism, poetic images of the fairy tales of the Russian people: *the Slavic god of love and marriage Lel; wizard terrible Chernomor; tsar Kashchei; a delightful singer, prophetic Bayan; Baba Yaga*. When meeting with them, it is important to determine the historical and cultural context in which they existed.

Thus, the first records of legendary singer and narrator of Ancient Rus *Bayan* can be found in the first written monument of the Slavs "The Word of Igor's Host", however, according to the criticism of V.G. Belinsky, this image in the poem of A.S. Pushkin is rather nominal and is understood as equivalent to the words: "skald", "bard", "minstrel", "troubadour", "minnesinger" (Belinsky, 1981).

The image of *Lel*, the Slavic god of love and marriage, that helps the lovers to enter into a marriage and brings love and happiness to people, is commonly thought in Russian literature as a cross, a kind of archetype that occurs not only in A. S. Pushkin's "Ruslan and Lyudmila", but also in the "Snegurochka" ("Snow Maiden") by famous Russian playwright A.N. Ostrovsky and others.

We believe that the history of the origin of the name of *Chernomor* can be very interesting for foreign-language speakers. Thus, we can offer them an etymological analysis of the word «море» / "sea", during which they will learn that it goes back to one of the archaic lexical elements of the parent language *mr*. It forms the sacred name of Mount Meru, which, according to the legend, was situated at the North Pole and surrounded by the seven heavens where the celestials inhabited. The word «море» ("sea"), closely related to the concept «смерть» ("death"), became the name of the goddess of death among the Slavs - Morena, Mara. Especially Chernomor is a

typical image used to describe the appearance of a person who resembles this character (for example, he is old, has a big long beard, is endowed with power, wears the helmet and chain armour being traditional for Russian heroes) (Cherneva, 2016).

Another mythological character of the poem *Kashchei*, that is very difficult for non-native speakers to realize, is a concept in Russian culture. As Yu.S. Stepanov notes, the main concept of *Kashchei* is connected with «кость» ("bone"): the word *кошчей* (*kashchei*) comes from the word *кость* (*bone*), which goes back to the adjective «костлявый, худой» ("bony, lean") (Stepanov, 2017).

When analyzing this logoepesteme it is necessary to draw the students' attention to its typicality in Slavic mythology: the evil sorcerer gets rid of death not forever, and his death is deeply concealed in various animals and objects that are in closed in each other: «На море на океане есть остров, на том острове дуб стоит, под дубом сундук зарыт, в сундуке – заяц, в зайце – утка, в утке – яйцо, в яйце – смерть Кошея» / ("At sea on the ocean there is an island, on that island an oak stands, under the oak chest is buried, in the chest - a hare, in the hare - a duck, in the duck - an egg, in the egg – Koshchei's death").

One often finds the nominations-logoepestemes of *Baba Yaga* in Russian fairytales as well. However, it is very important to emphasize that in Russian folk legends this image is ambivalent: she is a kind presenter (she gives a horse as a gift), and she is an ugly, evil old woman, an enemy of positive characters. It should be noted that *Baba Yaga* is an image so ancient that the scholars cannot convincingly define the representations of the very name «Яга» / "Yaga", which is characteristic only of the Eastern Slavs.

A.S. Pushkin, setting a stress on the close connection of his work with Russian folklore, very delicately weaves the other well-known images of Slavic mythology into the texture of his work as well, which, like *paremias*, can act as an archetypal method of cognizing the world, "preserving its significance in the normative-value space of modern culture" (Bochina, 2015).

One of them the fairy-tale character of the poem A.S. Pushkin is *Ком ученый / the Learned Cat* who goes back to *Ком Баюн / Cat Bayun* (баюн from баить – *говорить, болтать* / "talk, chatter" (Dahl V. 2003)) who is well-known in Slavic mythology and widely spread in Russian fairy-tales, the companion of deity Veles being famous in the ancient pagan pantheon, the protector of the magicians, wisemen, poets. By starting his songs and telling tales, a good storyteller, *the learned Cat* carries the readers with the special world of mystery and magic, on the one hand, and with the world of the victory of good over evil, etc., on the other hand. It should be noted that *Ком ученый / the Learned Cat*, having been for a long time outside A. S. Pushkin's poem, and he himself has already become an independent part of the Russian picture of the world. In support of the fact that it can serve as a base for constructing associative texts there is a fragment from Victor Astafiev's story "Tsar-Fish", in which we find an example of the personification of the steamer "Angara" with the wise and experienced Pushkin's character:

*«Он пережил целую эпоху и остался единственным в мире. Трудились когда-то туеры на Миссисипи, на Замбези и на других великих реках—помогали судам проходить пороги, точнее, перетаскивали их через стремнины, дрожащих, повизгивающих, словно собачонок на поводке. Туер, что ком ученый, прикован цепью к порогу»* (National Corpus of the Russian Language: information-search system. – URL: <http://www.ruscorpora.ru/search-main.html> (access date 19.05.2017)). (*"He has outlived the whole era and survived the only one in the world. The tuers worked once on the Mississippi, the Zambezi and other great rivers - helped the ships pass the rapids, or rather, dragged them through the chutes, trembling, squealing like a dog on a leash. Tuер, like the learned cat, is chained to the rapids"*).

Therefore, it is important to show how such logoepestemes function in modern speech, in what situations foreign students may encounter them, where non-native speakers have a loss of meaning or misunderstanding.

We believe that it is necessary to make foreign language learners draw attention to the important role of the objects of inanimate nature in the poem of A.S. Pushkin, which are also often found in fairy tales, myths and legends. So, Ruslan manages to get *the powerful sword-kladenets* / *богатырский меч-кладенец* thanks to his strength and agility, as well as the heroes of folk tales: he was victorious in the battle over a gigantic head that turned out to be the brother of Chernomor, but the head does not take away the magic sword but gives it to the hero, etc.

In addition, in the prologue of the poem there are the mythological characters that have become habitual for a native speaker and at the same time not quite under standable for a foreign-language speaker, like *леший* / *the wood goblin* and *русалка* / *the water-nymph*. Here, in our opinion, it would be quite appropriate to make a linguistic and cultural excursus to the pre-Christian history of the Slavs, in whose conception *leshy* / the wood goblin - the master of the forest, was a very contradictory being: he lived either in depths of the forest or in a waste area; as described by V. Artemov in his book "Slavic Mythical Creatures", in outward appearance looked either a decrepit old man, or a shaggy monster with goat legs, horns and beard (Artemiev, 2017). Yes, and his actions were also contradictory: he behaved toward good people well, helped to come out of the forest, towards not very

#### 4 Summary

Thus, logoepestemes as special means of nomination of the world of fairy-tale allow infant-students to see the Russian picture of the world. Certainly, A.S. Pushkin, using fabulous logoepestemes, seeks to recreate the "Russian spirit" and the images of the folk art of the Slavs.

#### 5 Conclusion

So, the logoepestemes are similar to the "stable national literary image" (Tatarinova, 2016), and therefore are able to represent the world of the Russian fairy tale in a concentrated form. In turn, the analysis of logoepestemes in the study of A.S. Pushkin's poem "Ruslan and Lyudmila" by infant-students allows them, together with the teacher, to consider these units not only as symbols of beauty, goodness, truth, etc., but also as the means of teaching the non-Russians to language and culture, thereby providing background knowledge which is conducive to the interpenetration of cultures.

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