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**STATIVIZATION AS A COGNITIVE AND LINGUISTIC
MECHANISM OF STATIVE INTERPRETATION**

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Abstract

Interpretation of states reveals primary and secondary realization in language. Secondary conceptualization of function of language units in order to express a state is defined as stative interpretation of knowledge about the world. The main objective of the article is to study a fundamental cognitive and linguistic mechanism of state senses forming—stativization—in contemporary English language. The paper discusses stativization as a mechanism of stative interpretation under the Cognitive Linguistics framework. Stativization is provided and accompanied with different linguistic mechanisms. The attempt to reveal these mechanisms consists in analyzing the data from British National Corpus (British National Corpus, 2018), Corpus of Contemporary American English, online versions of English mass media. The conceptual-figurative analysis of contexts with stative semantics results in pointing out such major linguistics mechanisms of stative interpretation as metaphor, metonymy and comparison. Such linguistic mechanisms as phraseological units, euphemisms and neologisms are broadly represented because of different factors, among which there is a psychological and social specificity. Revealing and describing linguistic mechanisms of stative interpretation contributes, on the one hand, to developing of the conception of stative formatting of knowledge about the world, and on the other hand, to issues of ways our knowledge about states is represented in our cognitive system.

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1. Introduction

The study of stativization as a cognitive and linguistic mechanism of state senses forming is a necessary step in our major research in progress devoted to considering state to be a form of linguistic cognition (Pavlova, 2016). So, let us make a brief overview of provisional results and highlight the logic of our discussion.

To begin with, it's absolutely necessary to ground the Cognitive Linguistics approach to the study of linguistic interpretation of states as in seeking to ascertain the global integrated system of conceptual structuring in language it inevitably "addresses to linguistic structuring of basic ideational and affective categories attributed to cognitive agents, such as attention and perspective, volition and intention, and expectation and affect" (Talmy, 2008, p. 5).

Moreover, as Cognitive Linguistics is concerned with investigating the relationships among human language, the mind, and sociophysical (embodied) experience, it takes into consideration all the data about mentioned components from other cognitive sciences. Philosophers, for example, say "today we've got a great amount of data about human cognitive system, and this information is incomparable in volume and authenticity with what was collected by humans during antecedent thousands of years" (Merculov, 2004, 36).

Accumulation and integration of new knowledge about human language, the mind, and embodied experience and their relationships result in inevitable necessity of explaining the nature of stative concept, its characteristics, and structure. Realization of this need takes place within such primary commitments of Cognitive Linguistics as cognitive and generalization. The first consists in cognitive underpinnings of language; the second provides identification of general principles that apply to all aspects of human language (Lakoff, 1990; Evans, 2017). One of the crucial principles of stative interpretation is anthropocentrism according to which stative formatting of knowledge about the world occurs in language (Boldyrev, 2015; Pavlova, 2017a).

The paper is structured as follows. In introduction sections 1.1 and 1.2 we define the stative format of linguistic knowledge, provide conceptual characteristics of stative concept, point out the state cognitive matrix and describe the prototypical structure of the category of linguistic stativity. In section 2 we state the problem by presenting different linguistic mechanisms of state senses forming, and in section 3 we discuss a great range of mechanisms of stative interpretation and argue there is a common feature that unites all of the mechanisms. In section 4 the purpose of the study is grounded. In section 5 the method of conceptual-configurative analysis is proved to reveal stativization of space, time, motion, colour. In section 6 we present the results of the research devoted to clarifying stativization to be a cognitive and linguistic mechanism of stative interpretation of knowledge about the world and in section 7 we provide a conclusion.

1.1. Stative format of linguistic knowledge

Stative format of linguistic knowledge is defined as a cohesive unity of a cognitive agent, a bearer of state, a stative concept as a result of multifaceted process of stative representation of knowledge about the world and cognitive and linguistic mechanisms of state senses forming.

The significance of stative format of linguistic knowledge to human cognitive system is undeniable. As nature of reality is not objectively given to us one and the same situation can be comprehended and verbalized differently. Once a cognitive agent perceives the situation as static it can get a primary or secondary realization in language. In our conceptual system stative format is represented by a stative concept.

Primary stative interpretation of the world leads to forming a thematic stative concept. It is defined as a knowledge structure that comprises the information about all static characteristics of objects and events. So, thematic stative concept is a result of many stative conceptualizations of the world, and in doing so it provides special schemas, called conceptual and thematic domains. They are the unity of stative concepts structured on the basis of state cognitive matrix (Fig. 1).

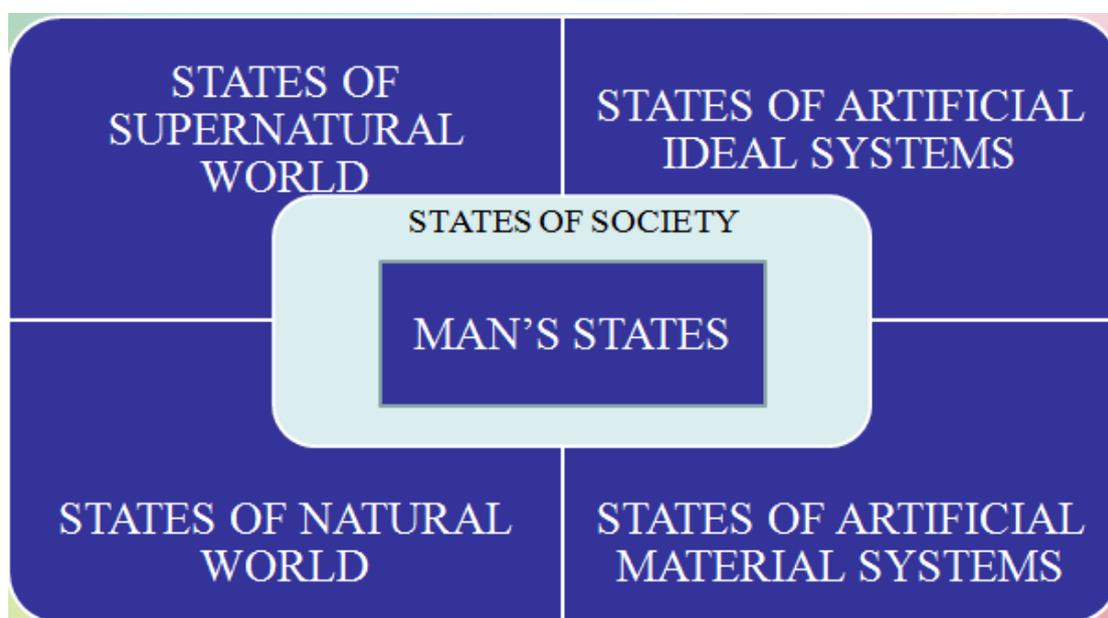


Figure 01. State cognitive matrix

The nominations and positions of main component parts of state cognitive matrix follow the structure of the world and reflect linguistic interpretation of its states. The central position of state cognitive matrix belongs to the concept MAN'S STATES. It is explained by the crucial role of a cognitive agent in stative formatting the knowledge about the world. It is manifested in the highest degree of detailization of this stative concept, extended typology of human states and rich nominative representation in language. Together with this central stative concept the rest five contain encyclopaedic knowledge about states of the world. Each of them reveals its specific structure and content thus forming particular cognitive matrixes. They form the basis for the secondary interpretation of knowledge about the world with the aim to express states.

1.2. The category of linguistic stativity

In language the results of primary and secondary stative interpretation are fixed in the category of linguistic stativity.

The central place in this category is taken by the words of category of state which realize such prototypical characteristics, as stability and passivity of the bearer of state. Antecedence of realization of

stative function is of crucial importance for considering the words of category of state being central. These words are not numerous, they represent such semantic categories as *emotional and mental states* (ablush, aflutter, afraid, aghast, agog, ashamed, aware), *physical state* (akin, alive, asleep, awake), some *specific states* (ablaze, abloom, afire, aflame, aglow, alight), *location in space, the state of motion, the state of activity* (aground, ajar, askew, adrift, afloat, astray, astir).

So, grammaticalization of stative meaning makes the words of category of state unable to function as attributes, thus, unable to represent other categories. The central place in the category of linguistic stativity is determined by such syntactical prototypical characteristic as functioning as predicatives only. (Pavlova, 2017b).

Cognitive space of stativity reveals the zone of close periphery which is structured by significant and function words with stative semantics. As for far periphery, it is formed by affixes expressing states (-dom, -ship, -ment, -ity, -ty), portions of discourse with stative semantics represented by parts of complex sentences, absolute constructions, etc.

2. Problem Statement

Functional character of stative concept is crucial not only for revealing the prototypical structure of linguistic stativity but is the key point in investigating secondary linguistic interpretation of states. It consists in the possibility of language units with special, temporal, colour semantics to express different states. It happens in case these language units take the stative function. So, secondary conceptualization of function of language units in order to express a state is defined as stative interpretation of knowledge about the world.

It is based on different cognitive and linguistic mechanisms. As our analysis of contexts with stative semantics show there is at least a dozen of mechanisms which take part in forming of state senses. So, to found out what these mechanisms are we collected the data from British National Corpus (British National Corpus, 2018), Corpus of Contemporary American English (Corpus of Contemporary American English, 2018), online versions of English mass media with stative semantics. The representative selection of more than 2,000 examples gives us opportunity to reveal the following mechanisms of stative interpretation.

The most common mechanism is, no doubt, metaphor. The sources of metaphoric interpretation of states are language units representing the knowledge about space, action, colour, time, quantity, etc. E.g.:

- (1) *A future where robots are as common as cars and cheaper – is **on the way*** (BNC).
- (2) *Christmas is not a time nor a season, but **a state of mind**. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas* (BNC).
- (3) *His **sore gums nagged at him** but he couldn't help boasting* (COCA).
- (4) *Are you okay, man? You look a little **green*** (COCA).
- (5) *... she **looked** entirely **at sixes and sevens**, although the man with the courage to tell her this to her face* (COCA).

The leading conceptual domain in metaphoric interpretation of states is SPACE. It is easily explained as space is a fundamental characteristic of existence; space fixes its form and extension, it is considered to be the basic category of scientific and common cognition (Chilton, 2014; Evans, 2010; Tenbrink, 2007). Metaphoric interpretation of states is based on different spatial characteristics, which are verbalized in the result of primary spatial interpretation of the world (1).

Our representative selection of contexts with stative semantics makes it possible to classify spatial characteristics relevant for construing state senses. The idea that SPACE domain can be a source for STATE domain is developed by revealing cognitive metaphoric models. According to dimensions of space three cognitive models are revealed: vertical, horizontal and egocentric. Vertical model, let us call it UP-DOWN model, is represented with such examples as *be in high spirits, on cloud nine, be down*

with the *fluetc.* Horizontal model, or IN-AT-ON model, is represented with such examples, as *bein love / pain / shock / despair / peace / trouble / debt / milk / banking, on alert / the run / duty / sale, at loggerheads, at war, etc.* And egocentric model presupposes a man in the centre of metaphoric interpretation of spatial characteristics. Such model includes several variants, e.g. LEFT-RIGHT model, FAR-NEAR model, etc. according to the position of a man in space.

The second place in metaphoric interpretation of states is given to ACTION. The primacy of movement for a man is well-grounded by psychologists, and movement is in the basis of any action which presupposes activity of a cognitive agent, that is why “an active doer” is a conceptual characteristic of any action. Secondary stative interpretation of actions leads to replacing this conceptual characteristic with “a passive bearer of state”(3).

Another fundamental characteristic of existence is time. Geometry of time prevailing in our temporal conceptualization is based on such conceptual characteristics as a segment, period of time during which something happens, which is full of events, which can be long or short and a point, a moment of time specified with minutes, hours, or days. Secondary stative interpretation of a segment, period of time with strict boundaries (seasons, holidays, parts of human life, etc) can lead to verbalization of different states of mind (2).

One more prolific source domain of stative interpretation is COLOUR. The study of colour cognition results in forming a list of several basic colours - *black, white, red, blue, yellow, green, brown, pink, orange, purple, grey.* Each of them has a traditional to certain society and culture interpretation based on natural objects and artifacts of corresponding colours. As our example shows (4) when you are unwell, the colour of your complexion is different from healthy light pink. If we look at the spectrum of colours, the opposite to red part of spectrum is green. So, metaphoric interpretation of green colour leads to forming a stative sense of ‘be unwell’.

The result of the quantitative analysis of source domains of stative interpretation is presented in diagram (Fig. 02)

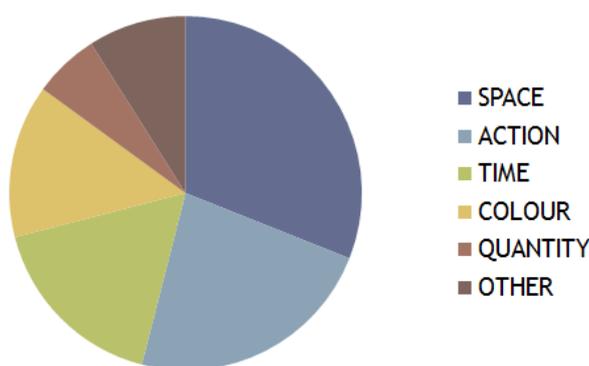


Figure 02. Source domains of stative interpretation

Among other well represented cognitive and linguistic mechanisms of stative interpretation are comparison, metonymy, euphemisms, and neologisms. The cognitive mechanism of comparison is consisted in transferring most appropriate characteristics for stative interpretation from source to target domain. It's important to mention that only stereotyped characteristics are mapped. E.g.:

(6) “*We’d be as happy as the birds in spring,*” sighed Blake (BNC).

(7) “*The poor man at the gate,*” that's you, living here *happy as sparrows pecking up the crumbs from his excellent table* (BNC).

Some stereotyped situations have got a stable representation in language and classified as comparative phraseological units. E.g.:

(8) *I feel like a bull in a china shop, with all these young women gawping* (BNC).

Metonymic interpretation of states is the next to be described as it is also well represented in our representative selection of contexts with stative semantics. The brightest example of metonymic interpretation of states is the category of medical condition where all symptoms represent some illness, disease, indisposition, etc. Our representative selection of contexts with stative semantics provides the following cognitive models of metonymic interpretation of states: a state of a cognitive agent – the state of its part of a body or organ (*sadeyes, livid rings, rednose, paleskin, runnyeyes/nose*), the state of a cognitive agent – his action (*cry, smile, whisper, tremble*), state – time (*onholidays, atnight*), state – place (*atwork, inprison, atschool*).

As a result of political correctness which is widely spread for the last time and its connection with different negative states there appeared a lot of euphemisms. They are created for lessening negative state sense. E.g.:

(9) *People who **are visually impaired** will often use a cane to feel out their surroundings* (COCA).

(10) *A research project is going on to improve the acoustical quality in living rooms and work spaces for **mentally challenged** people* (COCA).

Onemorelinguistic mechanism of stative interpretation which is worth paying attention to is neologisms with stative semantics. Thedevelopmentofscienceandtechnology, appearanceofnewproductsofourindustry, implyingupdating of processes and systems, changing of political leaders, wars and immigration is noninclusive list of reasons for neologisms with stative semantics to appear. E.g.:

(11) *Can Macromania be explained linguistically?* (Stroebel, 2018).

(12) *German ambassador: second world war image of Britain has fed Eurosepticism* (Guardian, 2018).

Many neologisms with stative semantics are not so widely spread, consequently, they are not fixed in corpora, e.g. *adultolence*. The blending of “adult” and “adolescence” forms the nomination of state, when a man is “between” two periods of his life (thepersonisstuckbetweentheadultworldandadolescence (Neologisms, 2018). Some neologisms are rather special and are used in certain professional areas, e.g. *carpocalypse* – atermdescribingtheabysmalstateoftheautomotiveindustry.

3. Research Questions

Taking into consideration the definition of a stative format of linguistic knowledge which highlights all its component part (a cognitive agent, a bearer of state, a stative concept as a result of multifaceted process of stative representation of knowledge about the world and cognitive and linguistic mechanisms of state senses forming) and after discussing all the aspects of stative interpretation of knowledge about the world we suggest that there should be a fundamental cognitive and linguistic mechanism of state senses forming. So, the main research question consists in what this mechanism is.

4. Purpose of the Study

So, this study aims at revealing and describing the main fundamental cognitive and linguistic mechanism of stative interpretation in contemporary English language – stativization.

5. Research Methods

Our representative selection of contexts with stative semantics provides us with idea that all linguo-cognitive mechanisms of stative interpretation form configurational structures which express states. Thus, the procedure of conceptual analysis superimposes with analysis of configurational deployment and results in conceptual-configurational analysis.

6. Findings

The conceptual-configurative analysis of stative interpretation in contemporary English language reveals the fundamental cognitive and linguistic mechanism of state senses forming. Different linguo-cognitive mechanisms are aimed to form linguistic units to express states, so this mechanism can be called stativization. It is supposed to take place on the bases of all mentioned mechanisms of stative interpretation.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the results of the study devoted to grounding stativization as a linguo-cognitive mechanism of stative interpretation help conclude that, firstly, stativization is most widely represented in metaphoric interpretation of states; secondly, psychological significance and stable interconceptual relations determine such stativization mechanisms as comparison and phraseological units; thirdly, a stative concept is an open, constantly developing knowledge structure, that in language is manifested in stative neologisms and euphemisms.

Revealing and describing linguistic mechanisms of stative interpretation contributes, on the one hand, to developing of the conception of stative formatting of knowledge about the world, and on the other hand, to issues of ways our knowledge about stasis is represented in our cognitive system.

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