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## EVALUATION CONCEPT IN THE LIGHT OF ECOCOGNITIVE PRACTICE

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This piece of writing discusses the ecocognitive foundations of evaluation concept. It examines the peculiarities of language research approaches as an instrument of harmonious lifestyle of the people as well as an important means of creation of evaluative worldview. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the ecocognitive grounds of evaluation category. The paper grounds on theses and techniques of Evaluation, Cognitive ecocognitive and biocognitive theories. Ecolinguistics as a scientific field that combines ecology and linguistics studies the interaction between language, human being as a language personality and his environment. The anthropocentric and eco-centric lines may be distinguished as reasonable forms in the development of contemporary humanitarian sciences for the reason that they establish different interpretations in investigating development and outcomes of human activity. Axiological aspect of natural environment preservation has contradicted the anthropocentric outlook, as a result the principles of ecological ethics are thought to be much more important for the issue of human survival than anthropocentric ideals of value. Evaluation is a fundamental constituent of cognition, which is based on a value approach to the facts of nature and society. So, person's activity and life as a human being having different requirements, interests and objectives is impossible without estimation. The specificity of evaluative categorization and its main difference from natural categorization is that these two processes are based on different ways of perceiving the world, natural and evaluative pictures of the world.

The paper looks at the evaluation concept as the formation which consists of a nucleus, which is the custodian of the collective knowledge of a particular people, and a periphery that is filled by the subjective representations of the native speaker of that language. The category of evaluation is an important component of the conceptual worldview, as far as the notions of positive and negative, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, intelligence and dullness, hard work and laziness, moral and immoral are inherent in any culture, any social system. The evaluation concept is an independent mental formation that is culturally specified. It is considered to be the part of the conceptual and language worldview of a certain linguocultural community, and can be defined as their structural component.

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Статтю присвячено розгляду екокогнітивних основ концепту оцінки. У ній аналізуються особливості мовних дослідницьких підходів як інструменту гармонійного способу життя людей, а також як важливого засобу створення оцінної картини світу.

Метою цієї роботи є екокогнітивні підстави категорії оцінки. Дослідження базується на засадах і методах теорії оцінки, когнітивної, екокогнітивної та біокогнітивної теорій.

Еколінгвістика як дослідницька галузь, що поєднує екологію та лінгвістику, вивчає взаємодію мови, людини як мовної особистості та її оточення. Антропоцентричні й екоцентричні аспекти можуть бути виокремлені як раціональні форми розвитку сучасних гуманітарних наук, оскільки вони встановлюють різні інтерпретації під час вивчення розвитку та результатів людської діяльності. Аксіологічний аспект збереження природного

довкілля суперечив антропоцентричному світогляду, внаслідок чого принципи екологічної етики вважаються набагато важливішими для проблеми виживання людини, аніж ціннісні антропоцентричні ідеали. Оцінка – це фундаментальний складник пізнання, що ґрунтується на ціннісному підході до фактів природи та суспільства. Отже, діяльність і життя людини, яка має різні потреби, інтереси та цілі, неможливі без оцінки. Специфіка оцінної категоризації та її основна відмінність від природної категоризації полягає в тому, що ці два процеси базуються на різних способах сприйняття світу, природних та оцінних картинах світу. У роботі концепт оцінки розглядається як формування, що складається із ядра, яке є зберігачем колективних знань конкретного народу, та периферії, що заповнюється суб'єктивними уявленнями носія мови. Категорія оцінки є важливим елементом концептуальної картини світу, оскільки поняття позитивного і негативного, добра і зла, краси і потворності, розуму і дурості, працьовитості і ліні, морального і аморального притаманні будь-якій культурі, будь-якій соціальній системі. Концепт оцінки – це самостійне ментальне утворення, що вирізняється культурною специфікою. Він вважається частиною концептуальної та мовної картини світу певної лінгвокультурної спільноти і може бути визначений як їх структурний компонент.

**Problem statement.** Languages cannot exist and survive in a vacuum. They are the consequence of long accommodation with the people who speak them and the environments in which they are used. The ecological approach to language shows that the thousands of cultures and associated languages around the world are sustained and protected both by numerous levels of resourceful and efficient relations that are obvious among communities of speakers and the variable value of language itself [Wendel, 2005, p. 51]. Ecological outlook has in recent years come a long way from its origins in biology, to become a new philosophy within many branches. Its development is holistic, and focuses on dynamic, cooperative systems and the interrelationships between the object of study and its context [Van Lier, 2010; Wendel, 2005, p. 51–76]. From an ecological point of view, language is inseparable from all expressions and terms of human being's sociality, such as communication, culture, and community. Arising from this perspective are main concepts, such as patterning, predictability, and creativity, which are suggested as the source of a very different approach to linguistics. Linguists, along with everyone interested in the many aspects and sides of meaningful person's behavior, will find the thoughts presented in this paper both motivating and challenging. Language is the product of long accommodation with the individuals who speak it and the situation in which it circulates [Stibbe, 2006, p. 61–77]. The ecological approach to language covers the complex net of interactions which can be observed between reality, language and its users. The anthropocentric and eco-centric lines may be distinguished as reasonable and sensible forms in the development of modern humanitarian sciences for the reason that they establish different interpretations

and explanations in examining development and outcomes of human activity. All ecological phenomena perceived by an individual have a definite value in our minds, that is, they can be assessed [Killingsworth, 2005, p. 359–373]. Estimation is a fundamental constituent of cognition, which is based on a value approach to the facts of nature and society. So, person's activity and life as a human being having different requirements, interests and objectives is impossible without appraisal.

The **aim** of this paper is to demonstrate the ecognitive grounds of evaluation category. Achieving this goal demands the resolution of several **tasks**: the examination of the interconnection between ecolinguistics and evaluation; analysis of the structure of the evaluative concept.

**Methods and techniques** are determined by the purposes, theoretical direction of the proposed article and are of complex nature. They integrate the fundamental statements of Evaluation theory and Cognitive theory. Theses and techniques of ecocognitive and biocognitive theories are used while studying the essential characteristics of the evaluative concept.

### **Discussion. 1. Ecology as a compulsory constituent of language**

Present-day linguistics is characterized by synchronization of different scientific opinions considering its main goal – language. In spite of the various interpretations of natural language principal directions confirm that it can be understood and elucidated only as a basic constituent of the cognitive system. It means that all language structures and instruments are aimed at ensuring cognitive and mental individual's activity.

In cognitive science the category of knowledge is considered to be the basic one. It contains and

integrates information about the world and language system. This attention on linguistic investigation makes problems of clarifying linguistic semantics in terms of categorization and conceptualization of cognitive processes and procedures of outer world predominantly vital. In spite of the importance of the notion “Ecology”, its major social role, it is not quite an object of examination in linguistic papers. This determines the **topicality** of this piece of writing.

The foundation of the conceptual content of the linguistic ecology as a scientific field represent the important value orientations related to ethical principles and codes, concepts of morality, spirituality. The subjects of linguistic ecology are the culture of thinking and speech behavior, construction of linguistic taste, defence and perfection of the literary language, identification of ways and methods of its enrichment, the clarity of speech habitat [Shevchenko, 2015, p. 114–13].

Ecolinguistics as a scientific branch that unites ecology and linguistics explores the contact between language, human being as a language individuality and his environment, which is the influence of the surroundings through the person and society on language, on the one hand and the impact of language on the moral and spiritual grade of society, on the other.

Language is viewed as a fundamental constituent of the chain connection between man, society and nature. Functioning and development of the language becomes noticeable as an ecosystem, and the world – as a linguistic concept. In recent years appeared many studies devoted to the consideration of cognitive and linguistic elements of phenomena of surrounding world, the essence of conceptualization and categorization as basic cognitive processes.

The crucial rules of cognitive field of the first generation were questioned and dominant principles of cognitive science of the second generation (as it is conventionally named by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson) [Lakoff, 2003] were worked out. Cognition is observed by scientists as the activities of the individual, carried out in the course of interaction with the environment for adaptation to the environment for further survival and reproduction.

It is very significant to note that this idea and other postulates originated by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson were exposed in biocognitive theory developed by Chilean neurobiologists H. Maturana and F. Varela. Scholars proposed an interesting idea of living systems, based on the theory that living systems are studying systems, and life is a process of cognition.

In other words, an endeavour was made to discover an explanation for the phenomenon of knowledge as an effective instrument, which permits a living organism to continue its existence in certain environment. Furthermore, scientists highlight that the centre of any knowledge is onlooker.

Onlooker is defined as a living system with a circular organization (for such system U. Maturana uses the term “autopoetic”) [Maturana, 1987]. All parts of the living system are imposed on this basic circularity and preserved it, ensuring its stability in successive exchanges in the constantly changing environment. The living system exists as long as it preserves the capability to self-reproduction and adaptation. As a result, reproduction and adaptation are the vital conditions for a solitary organism’s life and for the whole species.

Subjects surrounding the personality are an essential part of his niche, so relations with them serve his adaptation within niches. These relationships tend to have the orientation nature. One organism can modify the behavior of another one, first, when they are connected with each other in such a way that the previous behavior of one determines the succeeding behavior of another, such as courtship or in a battle, (such behavior is the basis of friendship and hostility).

Secondly, one organism can orient the behavior of another organism on part of his fieldwork, which is different from the part that incorporates this communication. This takes place only if the interaction spheres of organisms correspond. The second type of orienting interaction is the initial point for any language behavior.

The development of anthropocentrism in linguistics has contributed to the appearance of a new scientific direction – linguistic axiology, which studies the set of values of the ethnos and means of its representation in the language and cultural dimension. In the process of perception of the surrounding reality, an individual regulates his approach to the world, assessing notions, facts, and events.

Considering the above mentioned, we can refer to the study of the role of evaluative phenomena human’s life.

## 2. Appraisal and Values

It is known that the chief essence of the category of evaluation is enlightened by the theory of value orientation of person’s activity and perception, and the range of its characteristics embraces all that is given by the physical and mental nature of man, his being and feeling [Ananko, 2017, p. 128–130; Myroniuk, 2017, p. 103–105]. Estimation is a type of cognitive activity, as in epistemological terms, any cognitive act states the attitude of the speaker to the object described, that is, contains an act of estimation. The evaluative moment is nothing but a person’s mental technique held on the subject of utterance (perception, understanding, synthesis, conclusion, etc.), which is an assessment in its broadest sense.

All environmental phenomena perceived by a person have a definite value in our minds, that is, they can be appraised. Evaluation is an essential constituent of cognition, which is founded on a value

approach to the phenomena and objects of nature and society. So, person's activity and life as a human being having varied needs, interests and objectives is impossible without evaluation.

People assess their history and present times, appearance, behavior and manners of the individual, the shape and size of different subjects, things, duration and regularity of events, the level of complexity of tasks, etc. Evaluative clarification of circumstances, issues is one of the most important types of mental-speech activity in everyday life of a human being.

As a result, the objective reality is observed by an individual from the angle of its evaluative character – good and evil, truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, benefit and harm, beauty and ugliness.

Origin of the concept of “value”, if we resort to reconstructing it on the ground of the etymology of the words it is named, fixes in it at least three vital components: the characterization of the external properties of objects and things as phenomena of evaluative attitude to them; psychological qualities of the individual as a subject of this attitude; relationships between people, their communication, due to which values acquire a generalized sense.

Each of the classes of values unites the basic meaning of assessment its material purpose, psychological and social significance. By identifying the common properties of objects and reproducing their value, a person reveals certain characteristics of social relations, because the significance of a thing or phenomenon is determined mainly by the social attitude towards them.

There exist universal values and individual ones. Being a determined expression of the experience of the vital activity of a certain social community values form a definite structure, which a human being as a member of this society sticks to in the course of self-evaluation.

Private values are an individual manifestation of group or universal and general values. They are rather special in different people, due to the elucidation of their content and the transfer of emphasis. The choice, assumption and adaptation of social values by an individual are determined by his social identity and the values of the small contact groups referenced to him.

The subject of evaluation acts in these cases as a mental or physical receptor, assessing event, situation and thing in different varieties: ethical appraisal, emotional, intellectual, utilitarian and psychological. It highpoints the most important quality of the semantics of evaluative words, their diffuse meaning, chiefly due to the ability to denote and signify assessment in terms of different grounds.

### **3. Pragmatic and cognitive character of evaluation**

Human being's activity is a pragmatic notion. It is appropriate only when it is aimed at those phenomena

and properties from which it is possible to get something advantageous, profitable and valuable. The essence of the evaluation always is in contact with the nature of a person, because we appraise only what is needed and necessary to any man [Byessonova, 2012; Myroniuk, 2017].

Evaluation can be termed as speaker's objective or subjective attitude to a definite object, which is explicitly or implicitly conveyed and expressed by language means [Prihodko, 2016, p. 17].

Assessment is always cognitive in its nature, and therefore logical-subject. Evaluative and epistemological aims of the language are closely interrelated and interconnected. In addition, at the same time, they are equal, as in the course of appraisal, cognition is transformed, and in the course of cognition, estimation always occurs.

The connection between cognition and evaluation is very multidimensional. It belongs to the sphere of cognitive linguistics, the problems of which cover the quintessence of the procedures that control and form and structure the speech perception. As a result, the cognitive approach based on the contact of language and thinking is the most appropriate for the study of the category of evaluation, because it considers it in the context of human cognitive activity.

Assessment is a process that is typical of any science. This is demonstrated by the fact that value course in many cases contributed to the progress of a whole variety of directions not only in the linguistic domain, but also in computer technology, genetic engineering, and many other spheres. It displays constant integration of scientific knowledge within the cognitive paradigm that was formed as interdisciplinary (cognitive) science.

The cognitive process of appraisal, counting in the general program of human activity, is decision-making-oriented, and is the source of the choice of practical actions. A person as a subject of linguistic activity is an individual who perceives and comprehends the world, and is capable of estimating speech facts in his day-to-day speech practice. The aesthetic experience of the personality is mainly documented in the evaluative definitions of words [White, 2015].

The communicative goal put forward by the speaker is to deliver to the listener his point of view, to convince him of the possibility and legitimacy of exactly this, and not another idea of the word in the best possible way [White, 2016, p. 79–82]. The appearance of the word, which is stored in the linguistic consciousness of the individual, is uncovered in emotional and aesthetic valuations. This method is based on relations, triggered by the fact reflected in the word, or by its sound shape.

Evaluation is anthropocentric by its nature. While appraising an object or thing, an individual

should pass its signs through his consciousness. The substance of the assessment reflects the character of the person. We always evaluate only those things that are essential for us. Estimation represents a person as an objective, showing the progress from the area of systems to the center of all these systems, to a person, as a language character.

The close tie between the speaker's evaluation and his knowledge of the world is corroborated by the fact that in the statement an assessment can find its manifestation in the characterization and description of certain events, objects, phenomena that have a positive / negative evaluative significance for a particular social group or society as a whole.

The linguistic characteristic of the category of assessment includes the whole set of means and methods of its expression. They are phonetic, morphological, syntactic, mental, etc., which reveal the elements of the evaluative situation.

Functional orientation of estimating utterances is caused by the fact that the speaker makes use of language means as a device for his own interference into a speech act, as an display of his thoughts, opinions, judgments, his position and his appraisal, the expression of relations he sets up between himself and the listener. It is the evaluative-communicative function of the language, which is opposed to the conceptual one. The speaker in this way expresses either the manifestation of the will or conclusion of the values of the phenomenon.

Functional principle permits considering estimating utterances in their actions, reproducing positive or negative values, attributed to the subject or the object of appraisal. Based on the tasks of Evaluation theory – the development of the dynamic aspect of functioning of language units in interaction with components of different levels of language, which participate in expressing the meaning of the utterance, linguists try to consider comprehensively the semantics of evaluation and means of its expression in modern linguistic studies.

The explanation and clarification of the evaluation as a super-category of intellect and language reveals the problematic and incongruous nature of the evaluative semantics, which consists in generalizing reference of the assessing task, secondariness of its nomination, the choice of the communicative aim, which reflects the objective properties of information instantaneously.

We can understand the estimation as an expression of the evaluative attitude of the speaker to the subject of speech, achievable at all levels of the language, which is the result of abstract work of the speaker's consciousness and logical reasoning.

The notion of "valuation" has become an obligatory part of the conceptual system of present-day linguistics, which evidently displays the fact that

it is impossible to study a language without resorting to its most significant purpose, its creator, exporter, user, specific linguistic personality, an individual.

The evaluation, for that reason, should be studied comprehensively and deeply as a category of high level abstraction as one of the categories given by the social, physical and mental nature of a person, which determines his relation to other individuals and objects and things of the surrounding reality.

**Results.** The states and conditions of activity of the nervous system, resulting from the interaction with an object is qualified as basic representations. Demonstrations of all potential connections with a particular object or with similar objects as well as interactions with different objects (but at the same time and in similar situations) are united into complex representations.

This many-sided depiction is regarded as a structural unit of the experience, or concept. In other words, ecological concept is a set of illustrations of connections with the object or objects (non-linguistic and linguistic), characterized by the causative dependence and supports effective adaptation of the organism to its environment.

Based on the abovementioned, the evaluation concept is a multifaceted cognitive category. In its structure the following elements can be distinguished: a graded axiological scale of values, which correlates with events and facts of reality that are conceptualized, the linguistic means of expressing the consequences of this relation, two poles of assessment – positive and negative and the so-called equator of neutrality. The evaluation concept acts as a filter of fixation of reality, that is, as a tool of connection of facts and events of real world with the arranged axiological scale of the individual, resulting in evaluative decision.

The configuration of the evaluation concept of a language can be represented as a core, which is the keeper of the collective knowledge of a particular people, and a periphery that is filled by the subjective illustrations of the native speaker of that language. The substance of the evaluative content is determined by the implementation of the central or peripheral characteristics. In the first case, collective knowledge is at the core of a definite evaluative nomination. The correlation of the object with the periphery is based on subjective, specific knowledge.

The semantic field of the evaluation concept can comprise many components. The comparative analysis of verbalization of evaluation concepts by means of different languages can solve the following very important task: to identify which constituents belong to the core of the concept, therefore, they are central and contain collective representations of speakers of the same language, and which are located on the periphery and are subjective ones.

Features belonging to the core do not need explication and are understood by each native representative of specific linguoculture. Peripheral characteristics are often conditioned by personal experience, individual perceptions of the speaker, and the pragmatic side of realizing the values, leading to the need for their explication through linguistic means.

During all his life an individual cognizes surrounding reality, gains and increases new knowledge about the world, organizes and categorizes this information in a certain way and correlates it with the already known facts. So, the processes of conceptualization and categorization are of particular importance for systematization and updating the obtained knowledge, for its effective presentation and use in different situations.

Specific nature of conceptualization is to comprehend and realize the information received for the construction of mental objects and phenomena leading to the creation of definite beliefs about the world, while the categorization is a psychical act, that organizes, systematizes, arranges and sorts illustrations of interactions in the person's mind, which lessens the infinite diversity of the person to evident number of units. Together they denote and symbolize a complex mental process, aiming at the successful and effective integration of a human being into the surrounding environment.

Conceptualization from the assessing point of view is the appraisal of understanding of objects of the world around us and the creation as a result of these evaluation concepts in our mind. Evaluative categorization is a combination of objects and phenomena by the character of their assessment according to the evaluative classes and categories, as well as the mental correspondence of an object with a certain evaluative category.

The objective of the evaluative concepts is to provide a vision for the categories and to serve as a cognitive basis for their creation, which is largely determined by the system of quantitative and individual values of a person. The specificity of evaluative categorization and its main difference from natural categorization is that these two processes are based on different ways of perceiving the world, natural and evaluative worldview.

Each person has a unique and exclusive experience of adaptation to the environment; as a result, the set of illustrations and concepts of causal relations is also to some extent unique. In this connection, it is possible to speak about the specific level in the structure of the concept. In addition, a person lives in a certain society, which is a part of his niche.

The existence of an individual directly depends on the connections with other individuals, as they orient him on his effective and active behavior in a certain

situation. In this regard, it is possible to speak about social and national levels of concept. Regardless of the great diversity of niches, some objects are common to all, such as macro-niches 'Earth', 'Space'. Concepts-universals are the product of contacts with such objects.

Cognitive prototypes that exist in the person's mind, are different according the channels of incoming information, or, in terms of the biological approach, they are formed because of diverse types of interactions with elements of the niche. So, we can discriminate the concepts of sensory perception of the world and concepts of intervene knowledge.

The chief characteristic of the human's mind is a capability to react not only to direct motivation, but also to the sound stimulus – a word. Due to the language, a person identifies and feels the outer reality in a different way than an animal – he studies it in the course of communication [Prihodko, 2020, p. 16]. From the point of view of the biological conception of language, its principal function is to increase the cognitive field or the area of individual's connections.

From the position of ecocognitive approach, conceptual worldview can be defined as the complex of concepts or manifold representations present in the mind of the individual reflecting collective experience of the direct and indirect relations with the environment. This conceptual system itself is the object of interaction.

Linguistic ecology dynamically discloses natural changes of linguistic conceptualization of the world, the interactions between social, cultural and linguistic processes. In this regard, it should be noted that this field has brightly marked interdisciplinary character, incorporating varied knowledge of humanitarian nature [Wijayanto, 2005, p. 82–92].

In linguistic ecology functions a great amount of interdisciplinary phenomena and their respective terms, which are in a state of continuous connection and intersect with different linguistic areas of terms. Henceforth, linguistic ecology relates to the field of complex and multifaceted ideas of culturological and humanitarian character.

**Conclusions.** The category of evaluation is an significant constituent of the conceptual worldview, as far as the notions of positive and negative, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, intelligence and dullness, hard work and laziness, moral and immoral are inherent in any culture, any social system. At the same time, in the mind of the native speaker of each language, the image of the world is created by a set of linguistic universals and special functioning of linguistic signs that reveal the national outlook.

Language worldview is a symbolic technique of understanding objects of reality in which the essential fragments of the world are fixed. In this case, the objective world itself, and conclusions about it, its

evaluative characteristics and special attitude to it by members of this society are exemplified in the interaction of the means of language expression.

So, we consider the evaluation concept as a sovereign mental creation that is culturally specified. Being verbalized, this concept is regarded to be the fragment of the conceptual and language worldview of a certain linguocultural community, and can be defined as their structural constituent. The reason for this is that the evaluation, being a factor essential in any culture, takes part in shaping the value worldview.

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