CONCEPT "WEDDING" EXISTENCE IN THE RUSSIAN LINGUOCULTURE

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Abstract: The article analyzes the concept “wedding” in Russian linguistic culture. The main research method is linguoculturological, in terms of which the detailed analysis of structural units of lexical-semantic field of the concept “wedding” in Russian linguistic culture has been carried out. In the process of analyzing the factual material different methods were applied: the method of continuous sampling, the field method, the descriptive and diachronic methods. The emphasis is placed on the analysis of factual material with a glance of realization of the concept “wedding” in different sources, mainly Russian folklore, idiomatic expressions, as well as precedent phenomena existing in the conceptual view of the world of the native speakers of the Russian language. The linguistic units that realize the basic meaning of the concept in their semantic structure have been isolated, linguocultural analysis of lexical, phraseological and paremiological units and winged words and expressions has been carried out. The conducted research and careful analysis of the selected factual material indicate that, on the whole, the general idea of the wedding as a marquee event in people’s lives is preserved in Russian linguoculture, at the same time a change in the background connotation is noted, which is confirmed by linguistic facts and culture-bound terms. The main assumptions of this study may be of interest to specialists in the field of linguistic conceptual studies, the results of the linguocultural analysis of the representation of the concept “wedding” in the Russian linguistic world-image can be used as an illustrative material for training courses on linguistic studies and lexicology, as well as special courses on the specifics of the national view of the world and precedent phenomena in language and culture.

Keywords: concept, linguistic world-image, the Russian language, cultural linguistics, idiomatic expressions, precedent phenomena

1 Introduction

In the Russian cultural tradition, wedding is a very significant event in a man’s life. Russian wedding is a multifaceted phenomenon, it is accompanied by a number of specific attributes and events. The ritual of marriage is preceded by equaly important activities, such as getting acquaintance with the relatives of the bride and groom, matchmaking and so on. In addition, the wedding ceremony involves the implementation of traditional actions, both during the wedding and after it, for example, a ransom for bride, presenting the newly weds by the parents with an offering of bread and salt near the groom’s house, etc.

In the Russian linguistic world image, the linguocultural concept “wedding” takes in the whole range of ideas about this phenomenon, that is why the analysis of this concept allows us to consider both the linguistic facts and the culture-specific concepts in their development.

Linguocultural concept, as is well known, comprises three components: imaginative, conceptual and value. According to V. I. Karasik, the figurative component is “the trace of the perceptually-based representation in memory in unity with metaphoric mapping” (Karasik,1999). The scholar treats the conceptual constituent of the concept as “a set of essential features of an object or a situation and the result from the process of their cognition” (Karasik,2005). However, the value component is considered to be the dominant one in linguocultureology, since it is the most culture-significant part of it, this is noted by a number of researchers in their works (Davletbaeva et al, 2015), (Zholobova ,2015 ), (Murzina et al, 2015), (Muharlyanova et al, 2015). “In modern linguistics, language is defined as a major nationally specific phenomenon which accumulates and transfers the cultural background, traditions, world view, and the system of moral and ethical values of native speakers from generation to generation” (Alyokhina,2016).

2 Materials and Methods

The material for analysis was the dictionary articles with the analyzed concept “wedding” which is comprehended in phraseological units, proverbs and sayings, as well as the precedent phenomena existing in the conceptual view of the world of the Russian speakers.

To solve the objectives of the research, different methods were used. The main method was linguoculturological, within which we conducted a detailed analysis of the structural elements of the lexical and semantic field of the concept “wedding” in Russian linguoculture, as well as linguistic and cultural analysis of lexical, phraseological and paremiological units and winged words and expressions. To describe all the actual material collected by the method of continuous sampling, various different methods were used: the field method, the descriptive and the diachronic methods.

The whole complex of methods made it possible to draw general conclusions about the long existence of the concept of “wedding” in Russian linguistic culture (the descriptive method), its transformation depending on the cultural realities of a particular epoch (diachronic method), which was reflected in linguistic facts (the field method).

3 Results and Discussion

Modern researchers, concretizing and detailing the approach of V. I. Karasik to the concept, suggest, besides the above-mentioned, also including the components such as associative, etymological and historical into the structure of the concept (Kononova,2012), (Galieva et al ,2015 ), (Andramonova et al, 2014 ).

Many explanatory dictionaries, such as the dictionary by Ozhegov, the dictionary by Dahl, the dictionary by Ushakov, treat the meaning of the word свадьба / wedding as ‘a marriage rite, as well as celebrations on the occasion of marriage’ (Explanatory Dictionary by Ozhegov,2017).

The word свадьба / wedding originates from the Slavonic languages and, accordingly, has the same etymological root: Ukrainian свадьба, світ, Belarusian свадьба, Old Russian, Russian-Church Slavonic свадьба, Bulgarian сватба, Serbian сватба, Slovenian svadba, Czech, Slovakian svadba, Polish svadba, н.т.ж. свати, сватуй. The word is derived from сматреть (see, in fact ‘сматрение’). The Etymological Dictionary by M. Fasmer points out that the word сватьба / wedding correlates with сватою under the influence свататися "свататися / ‘quarrel’ (Fasmer,1996).

It should be noted that the last remark is very important in a holistic view of the concept of “wedding”, because, as the material of the paraemae shows, sometimes the marriage is not always associated with positive emotions and feelings. Marriage is a very important step on the part of both the newlyweds, since life as a couple requires certain efforts and obligations from each of them. Often people are not in a hurry to get married, which is reflected in proverbs and winged expressions. Let’s give some examples.

Жениться – беда, не жениться – другая, а прематъ беда – не охоту за меня. / To marry is a disaster, not to marry is another, and they will not give in marriage to me is the third trouble.
Венчай трех присутьства (Proverbs and Sayings of the Russian People: V. I. Dahl – M.: Pravda, 1987) / To cover up sin by wedding

Жениться не наася, да как бы, женившись, не пропасть. / Marry in haste and repent at leisure.

Горе женится, нужды зауже идет / Woe marries, need gets married (Zhukov, 1991)

Если к другому уходит невеста, то нечестно, кому повезло! / If the bride leaves you, no one knows who is fortunate (Serov, 2005).

In Russia, a married woman’s life was very difficult - she joined someone else’s family and found herself in complete dependence on her husband. According to the old Russian customs, before the wedding, the bride’s friends, weeping, unplaited her hair (a married woman could wear only two plaited plaits that were arranged around her head), and she bid farewell to a careless girlhood which was bewailed with special ritual songs. The lyrics of these songs are still extant:

Уж как к часу минуется,
Скоро воля коротается,
Трубчата коса да расплетается,
Не гора ли рассыпается,
С подневолюшкой спознаюсь.

In many works, the authors emphasize the importance and solemnity of the wedding ceremony. In addition, the preliminaries immediately before the wedding are accompanied by the whole complex of feelings, thoughts, doubts of young people being on the threshold of married life. In our opinion, it couldn’t be better described in novel by L. Tolstoy “Anna Karenina”, in novel “War and Peace” (wedding of Levin and Kitty); in the comedy by N. Gogol “Marriage”; in the stories by A. P. Chekhov, M. M. Zoshchenko, Y. Mameliev that have the same title “Wedding”. Since the title is a strong position of the text, the fact that the writers titled their works with the word “wedding”, which is also the name of the concept under consideration, confirms its reality and significance in Russian linguistic culture once again.

The concept of “wedding” is very vividly represented in Russian literature. We have repeatedly come across a description of this celebration in the works of both Russian classics and contemporary literature. So, the wedding is depicted in the poem “Ruslan and Lyudmila” and in the narrative “The Snowstorm” by Alexander Pushkin; in Lev Tolstoy’s novel-epic “War and Peace” (wedding of Levin and Kitty); in the comedy by N. Gogol “Marriage”; in the stories by A. P. Chekhov, M. M. Zoshchenko, Y. Mameliev that have the same title “Wedding”. Since the title is a strong position of the text, the fact that the writers titled their works with the word “wedding”, which is also the name of the concept under consideration, confirms its reality and significance in Russian linguistic culture once again.

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everything came over him. “What if she does love me? What if she marry me just to marry?” What if she does not know her own mind what she is doing? - asked he himself. She can come to her senses and, only after having got married, that he does not love and could not love me.” And strange, worst thoughts about her began to capture him” (Tolstoy, 2017).

In Pushkin’s “Ruslan and Lyudmila”, the wedding feast and fun are painted in bright glowing colours, and the story of the bride’s kidnapping from the genital bed and subsequent quest of her is nothing less than the echoes of ancient nuptialities with the compulsory difficulty tasks for the sake of the future wife.

Many writers play up the situations connected with marriage, which are perceived as being negative and usually condemned in the society. It is a marriage of convenience, masquerade, hasty marriage and so on. At the same time, such situations are often presented in a comic manner. For example, in the novel “The Twelve Chairs” by I. III. and E. Petrov, the authors wishing to draw the attention of the readers to the age of Oстап Бендер’s bride far from young, who is getting married to a hardly familiar person, use a pun: “Молодая была уже не молодая / The bride was not young” (III. I. and Petrov, 2017).

“No wedding without miracles (without tricks or without marvels)”, - we read in the dictionary by V. I. Dahl (13). However, even in literary works, the authors describe wedding “miracles” being carried to the point of absurdity. So, in Yuri Mamleev’s story “Wedding” the bride, for whom “it was all the same who to get married to, if only the groom’s face were nice-looking and not too sad” (все равно было, за кого выходить замуж, лишь бы женюсь был на чисто привлекательном и не слишком грустном) (23), with the guests proceeded with celebrating and having fun even after her bridgroom’s having died at the table. And the explanation for this is quite “logical”: “Ведь и занавесь остался еще на столе необъяснённо, к тому же уходить неловко и не хочется” (“There were vodka and appetites in abundance on the table, besides, no one wanted to leave.”) (Mamleev, 2017).

Mikhail Zoshchenko describes an equally implausible situation in his story “Wedding” and, when the bridgroom cannot recognize his bride, since he knew her for only three days: “Возьмешь, можно сказать, таком и не разглядел своей невесты. Он, по совести говоря, без шляпки и без пальто ее и не знает / Volodka, one can say, did not see his bride clearly. He, to be quite honest, never saw her without a hat and without a coat.” (Zoshchenko, 2016). Therefore, indignation of the protagonist roused, responding to the words of accusations for him about his having confused his bride with another woman: “А не вовсе разберет! Насаджены разных баб, а мне разбираться! / And the devil only knows! They drew different women to seat, and I have to discern them” (Zoshchenko, 2017).

The precedent utterances about the wedding, often used by Russian native speakers, also indicate the reality, importance and relevance of the concept under consideration. The expression «У вас своя свадьба, у нас – своя / ‘You have your own wedding, we have our own’ from the popular in the mid-70s - early 80s television series “Shadows Disappear at Noon”, shot by directors V. Uskov and V. Krasnopolsky on the novel by Soviet writer A. Ivanov is used as a facetious reply not to interfere with other people’s affairs (Serov, 2005).

“Эй, как бы не дождись бы ты сестры-женитьбы! / “Oh, if I could live to see my wedding-marriage!” - this joking expression of the desire to arm oneself with patience and wait for the coming of a certain time, the date from the song “Oh, If I could live to see”, composed by Nikita Bogoslovsky on the verse by poet Yevgeny Dolmatovsky for the movie “Alexander Parkhomenko” (1942) is still actively used in everyday speech situations (Serov, 2005).

4 Summary

The analysis of the concept “wedding” showed that its frequency and significance in Russian linguoculture are very relevant. This is indicative of, firstly, a large number of paroemiae associated with the nuptials; secondly, the writers’ repeated reference to the theme of the wedding and its detailed depiction: thirdly, the functioning of a set of expressions and precedent phenomena in the modern Russian language that directly convey the attitude to a phenomenon such as wedding. It is important to clarify that along with the idea of wedding as a celebration, festivity, there is also a heavy burden of responsibility of both spouses when they marry. The versatility of the phenomenon confirms its conceptuality in the Russian linguistic world image.

5 Conclusion

Thus, the conducted research and analysis of the selected factual material indicate that, on the whole, the general idea of the wedding as a marquee event in people’s lives is preserved in Russian linguoculture, while a change in the background connotation is noted, which is confirmed by linguistic facts and cultural realiae. The main points of this study may be of interest to specialists in the field of linguo-conceptual studies, the results of the linguocultural analysis of the representation of the concept “wedding” in the Russian linguistic world image can be used as an illustrative material for training courses in linguoculturalology and lexicology, as well as special courses on the study of the specifics of the national view of the world and precedent phenomena in language and culture.

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