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Expression of the concept “thick” in Buryat and Chinese: Perceptive aspect

Abstract

The article discusses the patterns of expressing the concept "thick" in two typologically and genetically unrelated languages – Buryat and Chinese. The research of different concepts manifestation in unrelated languages has recently become widespread, and the comparative study of Buryat and Chinese in this regard is conducted for the first time. Translation dictionaries and electronic corpora of the languages were taken as sources for the material from which the necessary tokens were selected using continuous sampling method. To interpret the obtained examples in various contexts, we applied a general scientific method and comparative analysis techniques. As a result, it was discovered that despite the difference in the genesis and typology of Buryat and Chinese, common patterns in the concept expression were found. The common pattern is the differentiation by "topological type", which dictates the use of synonymous words to denote the thickness of objects with different geometric parameters. According to the topological parameter, the objects can be classified as relatively flat (*zuzaan*, Chinese 厚 *hou*) or relatively cylindrical (*buduun* and 粗 *si*), and this can also be applied to the parameters of the human body. Another common feature is the expression of human fatness (fat) in correlation with domestic animals' fatness degree: *targan* and 肥 *fei*. In this context, the definition of fatness has negative connotation.

Keywords: Buryat language, Chinese language, concept, topological type, synonymy, semantics, equivalent, thick.

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