

Natalya Yu. Ushnitskaya
Institute for Humanitarian Research and North Indigenous People Problems, the Siberian
Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences
Yakutsk, Russian Federation
maltak84@mail.ru

Verbalization of the concept MŌ / TREE in the linguistic culture of the Evenks

Abstract

The study of concepts characteristic for endangered languages of the peoples of the North contributes into reconstructing the concept sphere of taiga nomads, hunters, and reindeer herders. It is one of the most important tasks of modern linguists and Northern Studies. This paper aims to examine verbalization patterns of the concept MŌ / TREE in the linguistic culture of the Evenks. The analysis of lexicographic data, field records of authentic texts from native speakers as well as folklore and ethnographic materials of G. I. Varlamova, G. M. Vasilevich, S. V. Bereznitskiy enabled to obtain the following results. First, it was found that the word mō 'tree' is common for the Manchu-Tungus languages, and in Evenki it is used as a stem for 23 derivatives built by means of suffixation. Second, the concept structure was presented whose semantic features include not only the meaning of tree itself but refining process, places of refining, ready-made products, professions, animals, gods / spirits, as well as its perception as an object having soul and thrifty attitude towards it. Source texts analysis showed that the concept MŌ / TREE in the linguistic consciousness of the Evenks was built under the influence of hunting and nomadic lifestyle combined with animistic view of nature. The outlook for further study will include attracting and analyzing more data on the concept sphere of the Evenks.

Keywords: verbalization, conceptual sphere, concept, Evenk language, mō 'tree'

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