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Actualization of the opposition "friend – foe" in paroemias (Based on Chinese political media discourse)

Abstract

The article aims to study the language means to express the "friend – foe" opposition and develop a system of cognitive features representing this opposition in the Chinese language. The focus is made on paroemias and phraseological units. The material was obtained from phraseological dictionaries, media articles and politicians' reports found the Chinese language corpora. Continuous sampling was used to select the tokens and contexts for analysis, the data were further processed using semantic and contextual analysis as well as descriptive method. As a result, eight cognitive classification features forming the opposition were defined each of them specified by a number of relative features. Positive and negative evaluative characteristics were identified. The "friend – foe" opposition was found to be the basic cognitive category of consciousness widely represented in the form of proverbs forming the mental space of a person. The data demonstrate that individuals, phenomena, as well as a nation, state or system can act as both "friends" and "foes". The binary opposition of "friend – foe" is organized on a value basis: "friend" is most often "good", "corresponding to accepted standards", and "foe" is "bad", "inappropriate". This reflects the patterns of conducting political communication whose purpose is to influence the addressee's picture of the world and maintain the "rules of the game" of the political elite.

Keywords: the Chinese language, "friend – foe" opposition, paroemia, phraseological unit, cognitive feature, categorization, political discourse