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Cognitive Features of the Concept "ATTITUDE" in the opposition "HAPPINESS – UNHAPPINESS" in Chinese idioms

Abstract

The new vector in Russian-Chinese relationship determines the necessity of a deeper understanding of the Chinese language and culture specifics that are so different from the Indo-European model. Phraseological units are the best to reflect these specifics. The current paper aims to describe the cognitive feature of ATTITUDE in the "HAPPINESS – UNHAPPINESS" opposition. 243 Chinese idioms expressing the feature comprised the material for the study. The tokens were selected by continuous and directed sampling from phraseological dictionaries and Chinese corpora (Beijing University Corpus and Modern Chinese Corpus). Further processing enabled to classify the idioms into 7 pairs of opposites: *quietness – anxiety, pleasure – dissatisfaction, joy – sadness, cheerfulness – weakness, optimism – pessimism, carefulness – carelessness, generosity – callousness*. The results of analyzing the typical contexts of the idioms' functioning show that ATTITUDE is the basic cognitive category of the "HAPPINESS – UNHAPPINESS" opposition which forms a person's mental space and is widely represented by idioms.

Keywords: opposition, idioms, cognitive feature, the Chinese language, phraseology