

# **German and Russian Fairy tales: conceptualization of positive and negative attitudes to work**

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**Abstract.** This article presents a linguistic analysis of the conceptualization of the positive and negative attitudes towards the work of the heroes of German and Russian fairy tales, as well as the identification of unity and differences in their perception by representatives of both linguistic and cultural communities. The main attention is paid to the consideration of linguoculturological and cognitive parameters of the implementation of the language of a fairy tale. The scientific novelty consists in a comprehensive approach to the study of the functional parameters of these concepts in the language of fairy tales. As a result, it was determined that representatives of both nationalities show a respectful, but not equal, attitude to work. The Russian perceives a negative attitude with a more positive connotation, and the German – subjects it to harsh criticism.

**Keywords:** linguistic and cultural concept, verbalization, fairy tale, connotative connotation, lexical unit.

## **Introduction**

Cognition of the surrounding world begins by a person from the very first days of his birth, when he takes the first steps in recognizing objects, comparing them, processing information received by consciousness and its further verbal implementation. The progressive process of human development, followed by the accumulation and structuring of the information stock about the surrounding reality, contributes to the formation of a system of concepts that is unequal in complexity. Following E.S. Kubryakova, we also note the fact of using other term combinations to represent this category in general, for example, "*conceptual picture of the world*", as well as its individual parts – "conceptual area or sphere", etc. [7]. The totality of this kind of concepts contributes to the addition of a certain mental reality, which can be recreated both in the language and in the consciousness of the recipient. The

"concept" appears in philosophy as the main idea. In cognitive linguistics, the main base of this thinking-abstract concept was developed, as you know, by the Russian philosopher S.A. Askoldov-Alekseev while working on the theory of knowledge and ethics. In his works, he considers the idea of concept as an instant and subtle flashing of "something" in consciousness, these are points of the most complex inflorescences of mental concreteness" [1]. Developing his premises, he believes that the concept is a certain semantic formation, which in the process of our thinking allows us to replace a huge set of the same kind of objects [ibid.].

It should also be noted that at present in linguistics we note the use of the terminology of related sciences to define various concepts. Moreover, some linguists tend to correlate the idea of "concept" with the philosophical category of gestalt used in gestalt psychology and denoting a visual, spatial form of perceived objects [8].

Following such linguists as S.A. Askoldov-Alekseev (1997), N.N. Boldyrev (2000), E.S. Kubryakova (2002) the idea of "concept" in our minds is represented in the form of some "education" or "construct", which can replace such terms as "concept" or "meaning".

Analysis of the works of representatives of the direction that studies theoretical knowledge [3, 7, 13], allows you to see the interpretation of the concept, which is presented in the form of an operational unit of perception, allowing you to "cleanse" and present an image without unnecessary information.

The verbalization of the "concept" in the language, as our observations indicate, is realized by a variety of means, separately taken words and phrases, such can also be sentences, phraseological units and even whole sentences.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to reveal and conduct a differentiated analysis of the features of the conceptualization of the positive and negative attitudes towards work of representatives of the German and Russian linguocultural communities.

### **Materials and methods**

In the article, on the material of the language of German and Russian fairy tales, a complex methodology is used that provides for component, contextual and comparative types of analysis.

### **Results and discussion**

Considering the texts, we see in them not only a mirror image of verbally fixed concepts, but also of national culture and consciousness. One of the examples of national

culture in linguistics can be considered folklore texts, characterized by attractiveness, anonymity and traditional stability.

The model of the linguocultural concept "labor / laziness" in German and Russian fairy tales is of interest in our research. In the center of the conceptual model "Labor/Arbeit" the image of a person engaged in physical or intellectual work is presented. The need to carry out certain work may be due to some kind of external or internal coercion, and its implementation is associated with all sorts of efforts, patience, perseverance and other subjective qualities of a person.

It is impossible not to notice that German fairy tales abound in such lexical units as *treu dienen; fleißig sein; sich alle Mühe geben; vor Freude immer größere Stiche machen; j-m sein Leben lang treu sein; die Arbeit von Herzen tun, in großer Freude eine Arbeit tun*, with reflective positive connotative tone: *Die Frau Holle sagte: «Es gefällt mir, dass du wieder nach Haus verlangst, und weil du mir so **treu gedient** hast, so will ich dich selbst wieder hinaufbringen.» Sie nahm es darauf bei der Hand und führte es vor ein großes Tor* [Brüder Grimm. Frau Holle].

*Госпожа Метелица сказала:*

*– Мне нравится, что тебя тянет домой, и так как ты мне хорошо и прилежно служила, то я сама провожу тебя туда. – Она взяла ее за руку и привела к большим воротам* [transl. G. Petnikov].

A significant place in German fairy tales is also occupied by vocabulary with a tone, for example: *es hat sich müdgearbeitet; alle Arbeit tun; so viel Spinnen, dass ihm das Blut aus den Fingern sprang; eine immer größere Last aufbürden; schwere Arbeit auflegen; das tägliche Brot schaffen; wer Brot essen will, muss es verdienen; von Morgen bis Abend schwere Arbeit tun* and etc., for example: *Sie (Die Witwe – A. P.) hatte aber die hässliche und faule, weil sie ihre rechte Tochter war, viel lieber, und die andere musste alle **Arbeit tun**...* [Brüder Grimm. Frau Holle].

*Но мать больше любила уродливую и ленивую, а той приходилось исполнять всякую работу...* [transl. G. Petnikov].

For many Russian fairy tales, according to our observations, a wide range of vocabulary with a positive connotative tone is also inherent: *без дела не сидеть, управляться с легкостью дома, ладить с работой, у него работа горит в руках, недаром хлопотать, служить верой-правдой, работа не минует чьих-то рук, в поле возиться подпеваючи, уж как взялся за гуж, на все дюж* and etc., for example: *Вот как-то говорит она (Vasilisa - A.P.) старушке:*

– *Скучно мне сидеть без дела, бабушка!* [Vasilisa the Beautiful]

The specifics of the concept of "laziness / Faulheit", its interpretation, as well as the attitude towards it worried and continues to do so up to the present time, the minds of writers, scientists, philosophers, sociologists and representatives of many other professions. In various kinds of reference sources, such interpretations of it are presented as "lack of desire to act, work, love of idleness" [11, p. 276], «Отсутствие желания действовать, трудиться, склонность к безделью [BTSRY 2000 Comprehensive Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language, edited by S. A. Kuznetsov], *Faulheit – das Faulsein; Unlust, sich zu betätigen. Beispiel: er hat es aus reiner Faulheit nicht getan*» [15]. It is known that the image of a "lazy person" is reflected in sufficient detail in many fairy tales.

Folk wisdom in this kind of genre focuses not on magical objects, not on animals, frogs and fish that speak human language, but on sons, who, thanks to them, are able to idly lie on the stove or receive untold riches. True, it is typical for a Russian fairy tale that "laziness" in them is absolutely harmless, there is no aggression in it, and in many cases it ends with something unexpected and even useful. An example of this can be a flying carpet, a self-assembled tablecloth, a plate showing everything, an instrument that itself works, etc., have been and continue to be implemented in many modern gadgets and devices [12].

It is also noteworthy that in the concept of "laziness" one can see a lack of desire to work, enjoying idleness, and even in such a particular way as passivity and its characteristic attributes such as *loitering around, doing trifles, putting off all things for later, distracting yourself from anything, to hesitate with something, etc.* At the same time, we agree with the statements of A.A. Zaliznyak, I.B. Levontina and A.D. Shmeleva that *laziness* always acts as a kind of brake in certain situations, constantly plunges the subject into doubts about the expediency of spending efforts on the implementation of something conceived [6].

As explicators of such a concept in the domestic linguocultural community, we note lexemes of the type: *ленивый, лентяй, разлентиться, ленивец, лодырь, лоботряс, лениво* and etc. Similar can be observed in German: *Tagedieb, faul, Faulheit, faulzen, Nichtstun, Faulenzer, Faulpelz, Nichtstuer* and etc, that is, the lack of desire to act, work, a tendency to idleness [Ozhegov 1985]. The considered sets of vocabulary in both languages and the presented definitions of this lexeme indicate its negative characteristic, which creates certain obstacles for many people and interferes with their self-realization. However, one cannot fail to note a certain positive connotation, characteristic, for example, of the word *ленивец*, which is integral to this concept.

Immediately, we note that German fairy tales are characterized by the presence of such a concept as *Schlaraffenland* / *country of lazy monkeys*, originating from Middle High German *sluraff* – lazy person, *Affe* – monkey and *Land* – land. This motive has been known since ancient times. In Germany, this term was first used by Sebastian Brant in his satirical works "Ship of Fools / *Das Narrenschiff*" - a synonym for "Country of Fools" [16]. Moreover, in the content of German fairy tales, we note a number of lexical units or combinations that imply the concept of *laziness*: *Langeweile haben; du, in der Ecke, du musst auch was lernen; an dir ist Hopfen und Malz verloren; war vergnügt und spielte vor ihm herum; sie fing an zu faulenz; in Saus und Braus leben* and etc., for example: *...so ging das Königskind hinaus in den Wald und setzte sich an den Rand des kühlen Brunnens – und wenn sie **Langeweile hatte**, so nahm sie eine goldene Kugel...* [Brüder Grimm. *Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich*]. / *...и вот в жаркие дни младшая королева выходит в лес, садилась на край студёного колодца, и когда становилось ей скучно, она брала золотой мяч...* [transl. G. Petnikov].

*...am zweiten Tag aber fing sie (Die Faule – A.P.) schon an zu **faulenz*** [Brüder Grimm. *Frau Holle*]. / *Но на второй день стала она [Lazy woman - A.P.] полениваться...* [transl. G. Petnikov].

The texts of Russian fairy tales are also replete with similar lexical units: *сидеть у ворот, прикорнуть в уголке, глядеть на улицу, спать беспробудным сном, скоро сказка сказывается, да не скоро дело делается, все время лежать на печи, перегребал сажу и спал по несколько суток непробудным сном, сидеть на печи да гложит кирпичи, как сыр кататься в масле, ничего не делал, только на печи в углу сидел да сморкался, дурак ничего не делал, все на печке сидел да мух ловил, что же ты не учишься, али целый век хочешь дураком изжить, сидит на завалинке, греется на солнышке* and many others, for example: *Пошла с сиротой Одноглазка в лес, пошла с нею в поле; забыла матушкино приказанье, **распеклась на солнышке, разлеглась на травушке...*** [Afanasyev. *Tiny-Khavroshechka*]. *Покуда мать закручинилась так – то, Иван сидел на завалинке и ни о чем не горевал* [Afanasyev. *Elena the Wise*].

### **Conclusion**

Thus, the linguistic analysis of the concepts of "Arbeit / Faulheit" in German and Russian fairy tales allows us to note that this genre of oral folk art has been formed over a long time from many legends, tales, sagas into a special genre of epic character and refers to oral or written folk art. At its core, this genre of oral folk art is multidimensional, and reflects not only the social organization of a society distant in time from us, but also its aspirations,

beliefs and customs. This can be confirmed by the fact that the motives of this genre are determined by ancient myths and rituals of folklore genres, and its multi-level content-semantic space includes matrices of cultures of different peoples. An attempt made in this work to present the concepts "Arbeit / Faulheit / Labor / Laziness" by different-level linguistic means, as well as to identify the unity and difference in their perception by representatives of the German and Russian linguocultural communities leads to a very interesting conclusion. In German and Russian fairy tales, we note a respectful attitude to work on the part of both linguocultural communities. The German, with his permanent material interest, correlates wealth and prosperity directly with conscientious work, and he severely criticizes his unwillingness to work. For the Russian fairy tale, the concept of "Laziness" is characterized by a "softer" shade, since its perception is seen as a kind of weakness, and not a terrible vice.

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