AUTOPOIESIS OF THE SYSTEM OF ETHICAL CATEGORIES
IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: LINGUOSYNERGETIC APPROACH

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The paper represents the results of ethical categories study on the material of the English language from the linguo-synergetic approach. The aim of the paper is to address the issue of self-organization of the system of English-language ethical categories in diachronical perspective. It also highlights the principles of autopoiesis of language systems, inventorizes the lexical verbalization means of the target ethical categories, reveals the etymological images that underpin ethical categories verbalizers, explains the cognitive connections among the categories in the process of self-organization. The employed methods include semantic analysis, which reveals the meaning of the analyzed words; etymological analysis, which unravels the inner form of the lexicalization units; cognitive reinterpretation, which explains the mental associative connections between the meanings; synergetic analysis, which explains the process of self-organization of the system of ethical categories. The paper draws a borderline between ethical categories and values and argues that ethical categories appeared as a result of generalizations when, for example, a good deed of recurring character was conceived as something good in general, or an obligation in a particular situation was generalized to an all-embracing duty etc. The synergetic properties of language systems are revealed and they include complex hierarchical organization, being open and dynamic, instability and non-linearity. The paper reveals the etymological images that underlie the analyzed categories. The process of self-organization of the corpus of ethical categories consists in the fact that the most primordial moral category being reinterpreted gave birth to all other ones. The most primary cognitive trait is "whole" which underlies the category GOOD, while the antagonistic category EVIL is based on the cognitive feature "split", which proves the polar perception of these categories on the cognitive level in diachrony but not only on the level of current lexico-semantic variants. The autopoiesis of the system of linguoethical categories in the English language has a complex non-linear character, since the connections between the images, which underlie them are multifaced.
Key words: *cognitive feature, diachrony, etymological image, non-linearity, self-organization.*

АВТОПОЕЗИС СИСТЕМИ ЕТИЧНИХ КАТЕГОРІЙ В АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ:
ЛІНГВОСИНЕРГЕТИЧНИЙ ПІДХІД

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У статті представлені результати дослідження етичних категорій на матеріалі англійської мови з позицій лінгвосинергетичного підходу. Метою статті є викладення проблеми самоорганізації системи англомовних етичних категорій у діахронії. У роботі розглядаються принципи автопоезису мовних систем, здійснюється інвентаризація лексичних засобів вербалізації аналізованих етичних категорій, викладаються етимологічні образи, що покладені в основу вербалізаторів, пояснюються когнітивні зв'язки між категоріями в процесі самоорганізації. Застосовані методи містять семантичний аналіз, етимологічний аналіз, когнітивну інтерпретацію, синергетичний аналіз. У статті здійснено розмежування між етичними категоріями й етичними цінностями й зроблено висновок, що етичні категорії з'явилися в результаті узагальнень, коли, наприклад, повторення певного доброго вчинку стало осмислюватися як щось хороше в цілому або обов'язок у конкретній ситуації був узагальнений до всеосяжного обов'язку тощо. Схарактеризовано синергетичні властивості мовних систем, до яких належать складна ієрархічна організація, відкритість, динамічність, нерівноважність і нелінійність. Було визначено, що між цими параметрами існує кільцева залежність, зміна одного з них веде до зміни всіх інших. У статті розкриваються етимологічні образи, що покладені в основу аналізованих категорій. Викладено процес самоорганізації корпусу етичних категорій, який полягає в тому, що найбільш первинна етична категорія внаслідок когнітивного переосмислення стала основою для утворення інших, що цілком корелює*

з принципом метафоричності людського мислення. Найбільш первинною когнітивною рисою є «цілісність», яку покладено в основу категорії ДОБРО, тоді як антагоністична категорія ЗЛО базується на когнітивній ознаці «розкол», що доводить полярне сприйняття цих категорій на когнітивному рівні в діахронії, а не лише на рівні сучасних лексико-семантичних варіантів. Автопоезис системи лінгвоетичних категорій в англійській мові має складний нелінійний характер, оскільки зв'язки між образами, які покладено в їх основи, є багатоплановими.

Ключові слова: *діахронія, етимологічний образ, когнітивна риса, нелінійність, самоорганізація.*

1. Introduction

The term *ethics* comes from Greek *ethik* meaning "*study of morals*". It correlates with the term *morality* originating from Latin *moralis* "*proper behavior of a person in society*" (Vdovichenko, 2015: 34). Though these two terms have common etymology they are differentiated. Morality is considered to be the set of rules, which bear prescriptive character and tell what a person may do and what is forbidden. It is the object of research of ethics, which is a set of values that explain the rules of morality.

Ethics is a part of philosophy and is closely connected to axiology – the study of values. The difference lies in the fact that the object of axiology are any values: aesthetic, economic, pragmatic etc., while ethics focuses on moral values. Ethics is also highly related to moral branch of philosophy – deontology, which is study of moral obligation, that is the prescriptive rules that a person must follow.

In ancient times ethical issues were first tackled by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Later, ethical concepts became the object of research of many philosophers, anthropologists. Presently it also became the object of linguistic studies, since language is the main instrument that objectifies the world picture. Given that morality is an immanent feature of human consciousness one can argue that it is depicted in the language. Since concepts are objectified by means of lexical units, moral categories and concepts are not exception and they are also verbalized by language means.

For the time being different ethical concepts have got into the focus of linguistic researches, like JUSTICE (Vorcachev, 2011; Butova, 2013), DUTY (Mirzoeva, 2014), GOOD and EVIL (Mironova, 2011; Tseeva, 2012; Orlova, 2016), etc. It should be mentioned though, that different ethical concepts were treated in linguistics separately and up to the time being there are no works that describe them as a system, not to mention as a system with synergetic properties. Therefore, the **aim** of the paper is to reveal the synergetic autopoiesis properties of the English-language system of ethical categories. Given the aim, it is necessary to carry out the following **objectives**: to highlight the principles of autopoiesis of language systems; to inventorize the lexical verbalization means of target ethical categories; to reveal the etymological images that underpin ethical categories verbalizers; to unravel the process of self-organization of the target categories.

The issue what ethical categories and values are most important is a complex one and it is extensively described in (Kinnier, 2000). Being limited by the framework of the given paper we suggest analyzing such ethical categories as GOOD / EVIL, JUSTICE, DUTY, RESPONSIBILITY, CONSCIENCE, which make up the **object** of research, while the **subject** is their autopoiesis in the system of English language. Accomplishment of the above-mentioned objectives required the following research methods: semantic analysis, etymological analysis, cognitive reinterpretation, synergetic analysis.

2. Appearance of ethical categories

It is a controversial issue whether real objects are prior to abstract generalizations about them or vice versa. This controversy is rooted back to the thesei / physei argument, which later on transformed into dispute between nominalism and realism, the latter with its moderate version – conceptualism.

A portion of information or a concept referring to any phenomenon of the outer world stored in the individual's mind is the result of its subjective refraction through the prism of abstraction, generalization, imagination (Bolsunovskaya, 2016) and according to our opinion categorization. We argue that ethical categories appeared as a result of generalizations when, for example, a good deed of recurring character was conceived as something good in general, or an obligation in a particular situation was generalized to an all-embracing duty. We posit that in this way there appeared a number of generalized mental images that bear very salient evaluative component and are used as mental templates in classification of the new phenomena and objects. Such type of templates are called categories, which comprise a number of intrinsic classificational features.

The empirical data obtained through experience of contact with the environment and with the other humans were subject to assessment in terms of desirable / undesirable, which stipulated human mind to elaborate concepts and categories bearing the highest level of abstraction. They

referred to the desired attainable state of matters in human life and its opposite. To put it in other words human conscience produced mental generalization of things based on evaluation in terms of desirable / undesirable. The desirable state of affairs is perceived as the one, which is craved for and therefore, it has the apparent purposefulness to be attained.

In philosophy this conception is known under the name *teleonomy* (telos ("end, purpose") and nomos ("law") which literally means "purpose-law". The essence of teleonomy is revealed in (Curio, 1973). From moral perspective the efforts to build up and sustain the positive moral qualities can be called teleonomic process of self-organization of human society and therefore positive moral qualities can be called "teleonomic". Since language depicts the environment in which it functions, self-organization of society and environment is depicted in the self-organization of the lingual world picture. Therefore, self-organization of human life in terms of morality is depicted in the language system in terms of self-organization of the linguoethical world picture. Under this term we understand the system of ethical categories objectified by a particular language. Self-organizing nature of linguoethical system can be revealed through the analysis of interconnection between the particular ethical categories.

The question what ethical values should be regarded as the most principle and universal is disputable. Based on the results of (Kinnier, 2000) and on the experience of our own investigation we suggest discussing the following ones: GOOD / EVIL, JUSTICE, DUTY, RESPONSIBILITY, CONSCIENCE.

3. Linguosynergetic principles

The principles of synergetics can be applied to systems that are complex hierarchically-organized open dynamic unbalanced and non-linear. Thereby the application of synergetic methodology to description and explanation of processes, which occur within a language system can be only on condition that language system meets all the above-mentioned parameters, which needs to be proven.

Complexity and hierarchical organization of a language go in a bundle, so they are treated together. Lingual system has multidimensional character as it consists out of a number of levels, that is phonemic, morphemic, lexical, derivational (often treated as functional sub-level), syntactical. Every next level comprises the previous one, which reveals the hierarchy principle. Therefore, changes on one level trigger changes on the other ones, which is an integral feature of a complex interconnected system.

The openness of a language system means that it can never be considered totally complete and it can always admit something new and get rid of something useless. Therefore, in terms of synergetics there is a constant exchange of matter and energy between language system and extralingual environment. In the lingual system we discern energy and matter in the following way. Energy can be of two types: informational one – that is the semantic space of a language – the whole scope of meanings of its units; and the creative one – that is the intrinsic mechanisms of word derivation or word-building. Under matter we understand formal plane of language, the constituents of which are morphemes and phonemes if we speak about graphic or acoustic aspect respectively.

It is commonly known that language normally accomplishes two main functions – that is of cognition and communication. They are the two paramount activities that never cease in human life. Therefore, language together with human consciousness create a metasystem – "environment – consciousness – language". Consciousness comes first as it is considered to be prior to language and they both create a single consciousness / language system. Their interconnection is traced from the fact that the latter cannot exist without the former, as it is a part of it, while the former cannot dispense with the latter. This view correlates with the ideas of linguistic relativity, elaborated by E. Sapir and B. Worph. For this reason, the language system is oriented at satisfying cognitive and communicative requirements of its users. And from the synergetic perspective energy-matter flow in the language goes on in the following way as described below.

A new object, phenomenon, its property or a process from the objective reality (environmental matter) gets into the focus of cognition inducing the appearance of a mental image in the consciousness of the speaker (new environmental energy). If this mental image (idea or concept) becomes communicatively relevant (needs to be verbalized) the balance between communicative demand and verbalizing potential of the language is broken. Since every system strives to achieve homeostasis, the language system tries to organize itself in order to attain such equilibrium. So, the new mental image penetrates into the informational space of the language system (a portion of environmental energy) and triggers the creation of new lexical unit (new language matter) with the new meaning (language infor-

mational energy) by means of word-formation (lingual creative energy).

In this way, the state of language system synchronizes with the demands to it and the balance is retained. Such constant flow of matter and energy stipulates permanently dynamic state of the system because in reality, there occur many coinages of new lexemes for verbalization of new senses at a time, since the process of cognition and communication is a very complex one and in fact, it never ends. In this respect, language is not a balanced system, as it has been viewed for a long time within the framework of traditional linguistics, but a non-balanced network system. Each of the synchronous profiles of a language does not fully correspond to the communicative need but only craves for this. Language system is constantly adjusting its scope of means to the demands of speakers, which impels its everlasting development.

Such evolution has a non-linear character. By this, we mean that the "line" of language development cannot be 100% predicted, as language is not a set of constant constituents but rather a multidimensional complex of relations with many variables, so at any time there can be any vector of evolution. (One can draw a parallel with the uncertainty principle in physics offered by W. Heisenberg in 1927). The new meaning may be developed in the semantic neologism formed by means of semantic derivation or anchored to the lexical neologism. Also, the neologism may retain its meaning and get into the sphere of common use or it may lose its actuality

and disappear. Regarding the abovementioned facts language proves to be a synergetic system prone to autopoiesis.

4. Autopoiesis of ethical categories from the linguistic perspective

Prior to the analysis of the peculiarities of autopoiesis of the ethical categories in the English language it is necessary to reveal the diachronically prior cognitive traits lexicalized by their etymons, which is possible through etymological analysis. The table given below represents the results of such analysis based on the data, retrieved form (Etymology Dictionary).

The process of self-organization of the corpus of ethical categories consists in the fact that the most primordial moral category being reinterpreted gave birth to all other ones. The primordial awareness that something *whole* is *good* and can be achieved triggered the appearance of category JUSTICE, which implies the condition when the state of affairs was *whole* (good) for particular beneficiaries like person itself, group or the whole society either in a particular case or generally in the long run. The *good state* was taken subconsciously for granted and was thought of as the one that a person deserves or does not deserve if he misbehaves (doesn't do things that lead to *wholeness*). Realization that the perfect state of "*wholeness*" can be achieved, further lead to the formation of the category DUTY, under which was understood the required actions to be taken to restore good state. People, who were granted rights to perform *justice* felt that they need to look up to the expectations

Table 1

Diachronically primary cognitive features of basic ethical categories

Ethical category	verbalizer	Etymon with the meaning	Cognitive feature
GOOD	good	Gōda – "to unite, to be associated; suitable"	"united", "suitable", "desired"
EVIL	evil	Yfele – "anything that causes injury, morally or physically"	"split"
	bad	Bædlin – "effeminate man, hermaphrodite, pederast" Bædan – "to defile"	"unnatural homosexual relations", "physical defiling"
	disease	Desaise – "lack, want"	"split"
	corruption	Corrumpere – "to destroy; spoil, break"	"split", "broken"
JUSTICE	justice	iustus "upright, righteous, perfect, complete"	"united", "vertical", "straight"
DUTY	duty	Debere – "keep something away from someone"	"owned"
RESPONSIBILITY	responsibility	Responsabilis – "promise in return"	"promised"
CONSCIENCE	conscience	Conscientem – "to be (mutually) aware"	"shared awareness"

of the society that is to do their *duty* to restore *justice*.

Performing the duty in return to the power allocated upon people by society was actually the "*response*" of that people to the members of society, which underlay the appearance of the category RESPONSIBILITY. To be able to tell *good* from *bad* meant to be able to estimate what is good or what is bad according to the criteria *shared* by someone else rather than subjective ones. They can be shared either by other members of society which gave the proof of judgement or by God (see etymology of *responsibility*), who is the most plausible confirmation. This state got its actualization in language by the appearance of the category CONSCIENCE.

Analysis of the verbalizers of the antagonistic category EVIL proved that its main classifier is the opposite to "*being whole*" – that is "*being split*". The derived classifier appeared as the result of generalization of concrete instances of bad that occurred in society, that is unnatural homosexual relations (classifier "*physical defiling*") or *corruption* and *disease*.

The interconnection between ethical categories has non-linear character which fully confirms the synergetic properties of this system (see figure 1).

5. Conclusions

The autopoiesis of the system of linguoethical categories in the English language has a complex non-linear character, since the connections between the images, which underlie them are multifaced. The most primordial ethical category GOOD has cognitive feature "whole", metaphorical reinterpretation of which yielded the lingual images that underpin the other categories like JUSTICE, DUTY, RESPONSIBILITY and CONSCIENCE. The non-linearity of self-organization process consists in the fact that along with the cognitive reinterpretation of the dominant feature "whole", derived cognitive features of other categories were further metaphorically reinterpreted establishing the complex network of connections. The antagonistic category EVIL has the opposite cognitive etymological feature – "split", which confirms the hypothesis that the antagonistic ethical categories have opposite underlying images on the etymological layer in diachronic perspective, not only on the synchronic level, which is apparent and taken for granted by the speakers. The **perspective** of further research can be analysis of cognitive interpretation mechanisms, involved in the process of self-organization.

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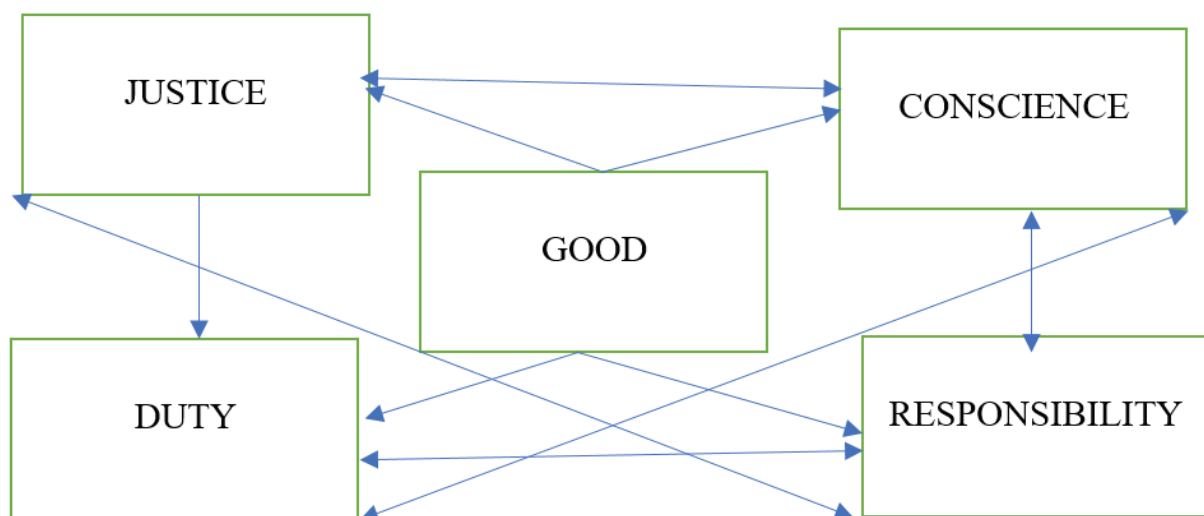
Figure 1. Non-linear model of ethical categories self-organization

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