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**VERBALIZATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "SIN" IN ENGLISH  
DISCOURSE**

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**ABSTRACT**

Traditional linguistics focused on the study of linguistic units only from the form side. Language is divided into fixed levels, each of which is treated as a closed system. The relationship of linguistic units with the objective entity they represent has been neglected. Later, it became clear that such a study of the language is one-sided, that the form cannot be separated from the meaning. As a result, attention to the meaning side of linguistic units increased. Key words: Pragmatics, linguistic sign, linguistic, semiotic, dynamic, concept, verbal, nonverbal, semantics, context, procedural, aspect.

**Key words**

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One of the most important cultural constants [Stepanov 1997: 685–690], the concept of SIN is an object of study in philosophy [Berdyayev 1989; Bulgakov 1994; Gak 2000; Karsavin 1919; Kierkegaard 1993; Lossky 1991; Nietzsche 1990; Soloviev 2010; Florensky 2003; Frank 1992; Habermas 2002; Shabalin 2010], psychology [Wundt 1912; Freud 1997], sociology [Fromm 2000], theology [Abelard 1959; John Chrysostom; Niebuhr Reinhold 1996; Augustine of Hippo 1887; Gregory of Nyssa 1893; Origen 1885; Thomas Aquinas 2008].

In linguistics, depending on the dominant paradigm, the analysis of SIN on the material of various languages is carried out within the framework of lexicology [Gartman 2002; Kozina 2003; Malevinsky 2006; Panova 2000; Yakushkina 2004; Wierzbicka 1996] (including phraseology [Brileva 2007; Dzhenkova 2002; Zubko 2009; Kozina 2003; Augustine of Hippo 1887]), stylistics (based on folklore [Brileva 2007]), discourse analysis [Bobyreva 2007; Brileva 2007; Bushakova 2010; Karypkina 2003; Semukhina 2008; Siletsky 1991], linguistic cognitive science [Brileva 2007; Bushakova 2010; Karypkina 2003; Kozina 2003; Semukhina 2008]. In the latest cognitive-discursive paradigm of linguistics, the study of the concept SIN has begun as an English concept [Wierzbicka 1996], German [Dzhenkova 2002; Zubko 2009], French [Semukhina 2008], Italian 19 [Panova 2008] and Russian [Brileva 2007;



Jenkova 2002; Zubko 2009; Kozina 2003; Panova 2000; Semukhina 2008] linguocultures. However, there is still no comprehensive description of the concept SIN in the unity of its content parameters and verbal representation in the English language: the semantic characteristics of lexemes naming this concept, its structure, means of metaphorical and metonymic nomination, cognitive specificity in the English-language secular discourse of different historical periods remain insufficiently studied. The relevance of this study is determined by the fact that in the positions of the dominant cognitive-discursive paradigm of modern linguistics, the historical invariant of the concept SIN, verbalized by means of the English language, is revealed, which has enduring significance for the Christian cultures of Great Britain and the USA, in the unity of its linguistic and discursive implementation; the historical dynamics of the cognitive properties of SIN are revealed. The work contributes to the solution of one of the most important scientific problems of anthropocentric linguistics - identifying the connection between language and individual fragments of the picture of the world at certain historical stages; contributes to the development of historical cognitive linguistics. The purpose of the study is to determine the content and structure of the concept of SIN as a component of the English-speaking Christian picture of the world, its historically constant linguistic and cognitive characteristics, and the features of historical dynamics in the secular discourse of the 14th–21st centuries. The object of the study is the concept of SIN, verbalized by lexical means of the English language. The subject of the analysis is the linguistic-cognitive characteristics of the concept SIN, verbalized by direct and indirect means of the English language, and the historical dynamics of these characteristics in the English-language secular discourse of the 14th - 21st centuries. The research material was 137 lexemes naming SIN, selected from lexicographic sources using the continuous sampling method. The research body consists of 15,000 fragments of English-language secular discourse, objectifying the concept of SIN, drawn from works of art and journalism in Great Britain and the USA of the 14th - 21st centuries, presented in printed and electronic sources.

2. Principles of analysis of the concept of SIN. The concept of SIN accumulates basic values in the field of philosophy, religion, and morality that have developed during the development of civilization. Deeply rooted in Christian culture, the concept of sin - a violation of a socially and culturally determined measure in the sphere of the human spirit - is neotological, since it is through the awareness of the measure corresponding to a given spirit that the relationship between the spirit and sin as its internal destruction is realized [Shabalin 2010]. Historically, the awareness of SIN is carried out in accordance with the understanding of the spirit itself. Thus, in mythology, SIN is understood as a violation of 20 taboos and has almost no ethical load [Wundt 1912; Tolstaya 2000;



Freud 1997; Ethics 2001, etc.]. In Christianity, the concept of sin is predominantly biblical: based on the idea of man's religious autonomy, his freedom of will [Berdyaev 1989; Bulgakov 1994; Karsavin 1919; Kierkegaard 1993; Lossky 1991; Reinhold 1996; Nietzsche 1990; Soloviev 2010; Florensky 2003; Frank 1992], SIN stems from the idea of an inextricable connection between man and God [Abelard 1959; John Chrysostom; Augustine of Hippo 1887; Gregory of Nyssa 1893; Origen 1885; Thomas Aquinas 2008] and already in the New Testament has an exclusively moral meaning, implying, first of all, a violation of the moral law given by God [Hartman 2002]. Theology has developed in detail the concept of original sin and the classification of personal sins arising from it [John Chrysostom; Augustine of Hippo 1887; Thomas Aquinas 2008], the nomenclature of which continues to evolve today. In religious philosophy there is no generally accepted understanding of SIN; its interpretations are based on various ontological and methodological foundations. In particular, SIN, associated with the concepts of reason and free will, moral choice and feelings of religious guilt [Kierkegaard 1993], alienation, egoism, separation of man and the world [Fromm 2000], is considered not only as an obstacle on a person's path to God [Berdyaev 1989; Bulgakov 1994; Lossky 1991; Soloviev 2010; Florensky 2003; Frank 1992], as a measure of the height and depth of a person's spiritual world [Reinhold 1996], but also as a natural manifestation of true human nature [Nietzsche 1990]. A critical generalization of religious and ethical interpretations of SIN indicates the fundamental similarity of its understanding in Catholicism and Protestantism - the main movements of Christianity in the UK and the USA. In linguistics, the analysis of SIN is carried out on the material of various languages: English [Karypkina 2003; Siletsky 1991; Wierzbicka 1996], German [Dzhenkova 2002; Zubko 2009], French [Semukhina 2008], Italian [Panova 2000] and Russian [Bobyreva 2007; Brileva 2007; Bushakova 2010; Gak 2000; Hartman 2002; Zubko 2009; Kozina 2003; Malevinsky 2006; Semukhina 2008; Yakushkina 2004 and others]. Linguistic interpretations of SIN [Bobyreva 2007; Bushakova 2010; Semukhina 2008] emphasize its universal nature, religious-ethical nature and cultural determinism, suggesting variation in the content of SIN in the religious and secular segments of the Christian picture of the world. The picture of the world is the initial global image of the world that underlies the human worldview, representing the essential properties of the world in the understanding of the bearers of this picture of the world and is the result of all spiritual activity of a person [Postovalova 1988: 21]. The picture of the world is a complex formation: the conceptual picture of the world consists of concepts - 21 operational content units of memory and thinking, "quanta of structured knowledge" [Kubryakova 1996: 90] "of different levels of complexity and abstraction, formed in various ways" [Boldyrev 2001: 23]. The conceptual picture of



the world as a “global dynamic image of the world in the minds of people” [Bondarenko 2009: 25] includes a linguistic picture of the world - the sum of a person’s verbalized knowledge about the world and about himself [Kubryakova 2004]. Realized in linguistic form, the specificity of the consciousness of culture bearers at a particular historical cross-section is built into a model that reflects the dynamics of the collision and/or coordination of different types of values [Slyshkin 2004: 284]. Thus, the concept exists not as a frozen information “clump” transmitted from generation to generation, but as an ongoing process of association and nomination of phenomena of reality reflected by consciousness [ibid.], the concept presupposes historical variability, the analysis of which, as defined by I.S. Shevchenko, is aimed at recreating the corresponding fragment of the value picture of the world in the minds of culture bearers at a certain historical stage [Shevchenko 2011; also see: Bondarenko 2009; Polina 2004; Stepanov 1997; Schwab 2006]. The study of SIN in the direction from culture to individual consciousness is based on the disclosure of its pre-conceptual basis - an immediate mental reality, rooted in cult thinking and not yet materialized in words [Belekhova 2004: 6; Polina 2004: 26]. The concept of SIN, universal for all human communities, is based on the psychological archetype SHADOW (in the terminology of C. G. Jung [Jung 2010]): There was something horrid and absurd in their way of sinning, for it was all a force even upon themselves; they did not only act against conscience, but against nature /D. Defoe/, whose susceptibility to transformations determines the simultaneous expression in the concept of SIN of the motives of the SELF archetypes: my fallen nature got the better of me I get the better of my fallen nature /W. Collins/ and ANIMA: this pain is our natural lot nothing pure whether for good or evil: and my husband, like myself and all the rest of us, only a poor, kind-hearted sinner, striving for the better part /R.L. Stevenson/. The pre-conceptual basis of SIN is fixed by the archetypal symbols DARKNESS, DEVIL, DEATH, SNAKE, etc., which, embodying genetically fixed, primary images and ideas that are the property of the cultural unconscious [Jung 2010], carry the same or very similar meanings for all humanity. The archetypal nature of the concept of SIN predetermines its historical and modern existence in the English-speaking cultural space. In particular, the expansion and variation of the content and assessment of SIN in the process of changing the cultural environment is determined and explained by the ambivalence of the underlying archetypes: Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall /W. Shakespeare/. 22 The archetypal prototypes of SIN are objectified in the mythological picture of the world, where they receive a name and acquire the status of a concept so that in the future, once turning back, determine the vector of cultural development as a whole. The unit of mythological consciousness, the archaic SIN, has practically no ethical load, as evidenced by the

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underlying etymological layer (term by Yu.S. Stepanov [1997]), formed by the internal form of the name of this concept - the lexeme *sin* (n.) - and consisting of meanings 'inconsistency with the norm (in the ancient period - everyday life, later - religious, ethical)' (proto-German \**sundjo*, OE *synn*); 'imperfection'; 'movement from the center / to the north' (Old Upper *Sind*); 'error', 'that which is real, existent, worldly, perishable' (ancient German *sanP-* / *sunð-* from Indo-European \**ost-*) in contrast to the ideal, sacred, spiritual or imaginary. These meanings are embodied in the form of nouns and connect SIN with the category of objectivity. The cognizing subject - the bearer of cognition - is an active principle that generates the meanings of expressions, and does not take them ready-made from nature [Kubryakova 1996: 74]. The medium for constructing meanings is discourse [Shevchenko 2005]. The ethical concept of SIN does not exist as an ontological entity, but is the result of epistemological operations of construction in a specific situation of discourse in accordance with the communicative competence of the speaker, culture and society at a certain time point: Academics regard bias as a sin, but others may regard it as a virtue /BNC /. The epistemological (modeled) essence of SIN as a culturally determined phenomenon is revealed, on the one hand, as an intercultural difference in ideas about SIN: Japan, where love was no sin /K. Grahame/ and, on the other hand, how their historical variability within one culture: changing the nature of the assessment: 'Twas sin before, but now'tis charity /W. Shakespeare/ and changing the nomenclature of sins: Abortion, divorce, premarital sex, and drug trafficking are listed as serious sins /BNC/. As an extremely broad concept, SIN is a linguistic and cultural concept (in the interpretation of V.I. Karasik [2009], Y.S. Stepanov [1997]), the content of which is determined by the ethno- and sociocultural specifics of the picture of the world of which it is a part. The linguocultural concept, structured by conceptual, value and figurative components [Karasik 2009], "belongs to consciousness, is determined by culture and is objectified in language" [Slyshkin 2004: 9]. The social significance of ethical norms defines SIN as a sociocultural regulatory concept (term by V.I. Karasik [2009]), in a concentrated form containing the evaluative code of a particular linguistic culture. SIN, being the result of a cognitive assessment procedure, has a gradual character (We are constantly committing sin, but some kinds of sin are more disturbing than others /BNC/): the content and assessment of SIN depend on the cultural, social, psychological aspects of the picture of the world in unity higher (I did not compound my sinful life by the stain of a murder /SOSA/) and private, culturally (sexual activity is culturally viewed as sinful /SOSA/) and individually (something which he had been taught to regard as sinful /BNC /) conditional values, which indicates the inseparability of the conceptual and value components in the structure of the concept of SIN. The ethical concept of



SIN is an element of the religious and secular segments of the English-speaking picture of the world. The biblical concept of sin, remaining virtually unchanged in the religious segment of the Christian picture of the world, is prototypical for secular discourse: the set of characteristics of SIN, presented in religious texts as precedent (The Holy Bible), is the semantic starting point for culturally and socially conditioned diachronic variation of the characteristics of this concept in secular discourse of the XIV – XXI centuries. 3. Conceptual and value component of the linguocultural concept SIN. The concept of SIN in English is represented by multi-level means of nomination. At the word level, the verbal representation of SIN is carried out by the name of this concept - the lexeme sin (n.) and its synonyms atrocity, corruption, crime, criminality, deficiency, defilement, delinquency, demerit, depravity, deviation, disobedience, error, evil, evildoing, fault, guilt, ill, immorality, imperfection, impiety, impiousness, iniquity, misbehaviour, misconduct, misdeed, offence, peccability, peccadillo, peccancy, shortcoming, sinfulness, transgression, trespass, ungodliness, unrighteousness, vice, viciousness, violation, wickedness, wrong, wrongdoing, etc., which demonstrate direct meaning, and by means of secondary nomination - metaphor and metonymy. The meaningful structure of the concept SIN is formed by the meanings of the lexeme sin (n.): 'violation of the Divine law': sin against the Holy Ghost /BNC/, 'violation of the norm of morality': he regards unpunctuality almost as a mortal sin /BNC/, 'violation of the norm of law' : Poison and treason are the hands of sin /W. Shakespeare/, 'violation of the norm of existence': It's a wicked sin to let good food get cold /BNC/, united by the integral seme 'violation' and accompanying evaluative seme 'bad'. The diffuseness of the meanings of the lexeme sin (n.), the most frequent in discourse, confirms its gestalt semantics. The concept of SIN is characterized by a high index of nominative density and is structured by the lexical-semantic field "Sin", the values of the dominant of which - the lexemes sin (n.) - determine the semantic structure of SIN as the unity of the hypersemes 'violation of the Divine law' and 'moral / legal / existential violation', the first of which is motivated by the religious experience of SIN, and the second combines three semes motivated by its secular experience. Accordingly, the lexical-semantic field "Sin" is organized by two microfields, where the hyperseme "violation of the Divine law" motivates the microfield "Ungodliness", and the hyperseme "moral / legal / existential violation" - the microfield "Wrong", each 24 of which unfolds according to the principle of the center - periphery and has extensions, i.e. separate central-peripheral semantic structures. The semantic center of the microfield "Ungodliness" - the hyperseme 'violation of the Divine law' - is determined by the synonymous pair ungodliness - godlessness: the world of vice and ungodliness /SOSA/, the godlessness of society /BNC/; its periphery is formed by the semes



“atheism” (lexeme impiety), “wickedness” (impiousness), “willfulness” (blasphemy), “choice of evil or intermediate (imaginary, untrue) good” (evil), “deprivation of Divine grace” (damnation) , 'awareness of one's own guilt before God' (guilt). The microfield “Ungodliness” has one semantic extension “Sinfulness”, designated by the seme ‘imperfection of human nature’ (the lexeme sinfulness): we know the reality within us of sinfulness /BNC/. The hyperseme 'moral / legal / existential violation' (the lexeme wrong (n.)) is the semantic core of the polycentric microfield (term by A.V. Bondarko) "Wrong" and motivates three semantic extensions: the extension "Immorality" is motivated by the seme 'violation of moral norms' : the immorality of prostitution /BNC/; “Crime” - this is ‘violation of the rule of law’: he did not repent of his crime /BNC/; “Deviation” - this is ‘violation of the norm of existence’: Deviation from normality was a sin against the Emperor /BNC/. The structure of the lexical-semantic field “Sin” organizes the semantic space of SIN nominations (microfields “Ungodliness”, “Wrong”) in the form of conceptual domains (see [Zhabotinskaya 2009; Langacker 2000: 147, 488, 547]), corresponding to two types of SIN experience , where his religious experience (the “Ungodliness” microfield) structures the RELIGIOUS domain, and his secular experience (the “Wrong” microfield) structures the SECULAR domain. Profiling the concept SIN within two domains that are opposite in type of worldview actualizes the different meanings of its representative lexemes. Thus, the semantic space of SIN nominations is structured by a network of concepts profiled within the RELIGIOUS and SECULAR domains. The schematic representation of the concept SIN (Fig. 1) corresponds to the relationships of specification and causation (see [Zhabotinskaya 2009]) between concepts profiled within the corresponding domains. The RELIGIOUS domain is ordered by the relations of specification and causation between the concept IGODITY (sin is whatever opposes God /BNC/) and the concepts SINNIFICITY, UNHOLY, GUILT, IMPERFECTION, ETERNAL TORMENT, SELF-WILL, etc. The SECULAR domain is ordered by the relations of specification and causation connecting the concepts IMORALITY (Im morality remains a wholly private matter /BNC/), CRIME (Crime is a moral category /BNC/) and INCORRECTNESS (moral tale of wrongdoing /BNC/) with the concepts ERROR, DEFECT, BAD TASTE, INPRUDENCE, MORAL DEPOSITION, WRONGDOING, LAWLESSNESS, etc. .

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