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S.B. Urazbaev*, G.B. Madiyeva

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan
(u.sabit1999.kz@gmail.com, gbmadiyeva.kz@gmail.com)

Formation of the Associative-semantic Field «Covid-19»

This article deals with the problem of formation of the associative-semantic field “Covid-19” focuses on the peculiarities of the perception of the associative field “Covid-19”. The article describes a linguistic experiment that made it possible to identify frequency reactions to the concept of “Covid-19”, reflecting the peculiarities of the perception of this concept by different groups of respondents (the groups of the free associative experiment are divided into the following subcategories: age, gender, employment). The article presents the results of a free associative experiment, which make it possible to form the associative field of the analyzed concept and to identify the thematic dominants of the reaction field that are significant for the participants of the questionnaire. As a result of the linguistic experiment, the hypothesis was confirmed that the associative experiment reveals a change in the dynamics of association to the concept of “Covid-19”, that is, the results of a comparison were obtained: what reactions were immediately after the pandemic and how they have changed now.

Keywords: Concept, language consciousness, associative experiment, associative field, “Covid-19” pandemic.

Introduction

Language reflects all significant events taking place in society. The COVID-19 pandemic experienced by all of us could not but be reflected in the language. There are new linguistic phenomena associated with the coronavirus era. In 2020, the words coronavirus, masks, lockdown, social distancing and others became especially popular. In the article we will briefly describe the main features of Covid-19, paying special attention to new linguistic phenomena: changes in vocabulary, new ways of word formation and syntactic constructions [1].

The concept of “Covid-19”, which represents this disease, is deeply rooted in many areas of communication, and we are directly involved in the formation of meaning around it. With the name, he began to “influence” and penetrated into all fields, from popular culture to scientific articles, which proved his vitality and gradually penetrated into culture. I use the word “who-action” because “coronavirus”, although its molecules, that is, physical properties, exist in parallel in people in the form of an abstract idea, this idea “moves” the public consciousness, prompting reflection, reflection and in addition, this concept is very good for each of us: for residents of countries with a large number of infections, this is one thing, for residents of remote, almost unaffected countries, this is another matter [2].

It is very interesting to observe the changes in this effect and the formation process of this “effect” within the framework of old and new research on the coronavirus.

The relevance of the study is due to the coronavirus disease that appeared in 2020, which affected various spheres, including the linguistic picture of the human world, as a result, neologisms appeared, and there was a reassessment of the existing vocabulary. The latter arouses the interest of modern linguistic science in the study of the associative field of the concept “Covid-19”, the study of the features of this concept in the minds of modern speakers [3].

The concept of “Covid-19”, which has entered large-scale use, is similar to a virus: it is harmoniously integrated into the language and exists in accordance with the laws adopted in it. Due to the sources we use, it also has a high degree of social variability. Therefore, when we talk about a concept, we sometimes talk about something completely different: for someone, the “coronavirus” is similar to SARS, and for someone, it is like a deadly disease. In the first case, the psychological and emotional saturation is much lower than in the second case.

The most intensive changes in vocabulary are observed during periods of fundamental changes in social life. The turning point can also be called the time of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, which has become

* Corresponding author’s e-mail: *u.sabit1999.kz@gmail.com*

a global phenomenon. The introduction of pandemics and restrictive measures has led to changes in public life in various manifestations and greatly increased language productivity. Since the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic, the language has been actively responding to changes in reality, which is manifested in the use of the language's word-forming resources to create many lexical expressions. Although the number of innovations is staggering, many of these reactionary thesauruses are isolated, often the product of sublimation, necessary to relieve collective tension through language game mechanics, or embedded in the figurative structure of learning new realities through metaphors [4].

Of course, the consequences of the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic and the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 are not only individual structural and sporadic tumors, but also new and updated vocabulary that reflects objective phenomena, new meanings of previously common and specific concepts, and special vocabulary that is functionally modified.area. However, many lexical innovations do not meet the objective nominative needs, because they pursue the goal of collective creative self-realization of native speakers.

Although only a small part of the lexical (related to a series of innovations in the coronavirus era) may be further concentrated in the language structure, the flow of new words is interesting, and the processes associated with it have accelerated the lexical adaptation process, development, polysemy and homophony formation, etc., because during this year, the new language unit has undergone usually lasting changes, which is the result of a historical process [5].

On the one hand-material things exist in the physical world, on another hand — an abstract idea with numbers, countries, measures, data, statistics, people, emotions. The following is an example of a “large-scale failure” (pandemic), a special precedent that creates a phantom in the minds of billions of people, organizes a certain type of thinking, and the result is verbal forms and methods. See the picture in the text (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Covid-19

On another hand, the analysis of its group synonyms (synonymic clusters) demonstrates lists of diseases that form a semantic field at a deeper level of awareness:

As a theoretical justification for the existence of the semantic field “Coronavirus pandemic”, we have adopted the provisions on the structure of the lexico-semantic field, highlighted by A.A. Ufimtseva:

1) The core of the group includes a generic sema (or hyperseme);

2) The center of the field consists of units that have a common meaning with the core, and a differentiological meaning with other lexical units [6];

3) the periphery of the field consists of units that are more distant in their meaning from the core, the general supersystem is translated into categories of potential or probabilistic values. If the field is constructed according to the specific text of the work, the peripheral unit can have contextual meaning. Usually, the peripheral units of a group can communicate with other semantic fields, thereby creating the lexical semantic continuity of the language system. The structural characteristics of the lexico-semantic field pointed out by the researchers also involve the allocation of the semantic field “Coronavirus pandemic” [7].

Similar synonyms and associated sequences exist for every known concept, but not for previously unknown concepts. In bright, important historical periods, for example, during pandemics, we observed the

formation of these areas. For example, the appearance of words such as “enemy”, “war”, “isolation” or “isolation” in the context significantly expands the concept of new terms in social consciousness.

If after the pandemic is over, certain symptoms of the virus appear in the world (this is very likely), research appears, and the topic is still at the forefront of the media, then the meaning may change and be rebuilt for each of them. Now, the vocabulary-semantic and associative fields of the word “coronavirus” are being filled and saturated, as well as the stereotypes in it. Now, certain psycho-emotional components are being introduced and associative patterns are being organized [8].

We call it the “coronavirus”, thus beginning the process of its language and cognitive design. This phenomenon gradually permeates our daily lives, because the latter is increasingly dependent on it.

In any case, thinking about and understanding the word “Covid-19”, we participate in the formation of products and then consume them ourselves. We no longer talk about “simple” viruses or habitual lifestyle changes: “Coronavirus” is becoming a profound linguistic and psychological phenomenon that affects our daily communication, creativity and media.

As already mentioned, you know, you need to name things, now we are witnessing a global and unprecedented language phenomenon, creating an image that will stay in culture and history [9].

Experimental

A free associative experiment was chosen to conduct this study, since it is the simplest of all associative experiments and at the same time quite effective.

A free associative experiment was conducted among students aged 18 to 24 years. The total number of subjects was 120 people, 109 questionnaires were recognized as suitable for processing. Earlier, as part of the study, we presented the reactions of students to stimuli: coronavirus, remote control. In this article we will look at the associations to the words quarantine, mask, social distance [10].

Results and Discussion

The reactions obtained during the free associative experiment allowed us to identify associative fields of stimuli. Experiment was conducted in 2020 and 2021. The field of association is a psycholinguistic model of functional definition, including verbal associative connections defined during associative experiments. This pattern is a certain part of the process of linguistic consciousness in the formation of verbal meaning. Like any field structure, association fields have a core (the most common association is the response to stimulating words), periphery, and individual response. “The associative field of the word “certain stimuli” obtained from the experiment is a fragment of the world image of a certain nation, which is manifested in the consciousness of the “average” bearer of a particular culture, its motivation and evaluation, and therefore, in its cultural stereotypes” [11].

Consider the first incentive “quarantine”. 1. Temporary isolation of infectious patients, as well as persons who have come into contact with such patients. 2. The point of sanitary inspection of arrivals from the area affected by the epidemic. 3. Plant quarantine is a special service that controls the transportation of plants, fruits, and seeds across the border. As can be seen, the first meaning corresponds to the content of the concept in the realities of the pandemic era, but it is supplemented by a broader meaning. In Kazakhstan, quarantine refers to a number of measures: the introduction of restrictions on the movement of citizens (entry, exit of people, even walking on the streets without urgent need), the establishment of roadblocks at the entrances to cities, the closure of large retail facilities, with the exception of grocery stores and pharmacies. Thus, the word “quarantine” is understood as a kind of restriction on movement. There are different approaches to interpreting the data of the associative experiment. We will present the distribution of reaction words, taking into account their positive or negative coloring, expressing the attitude or assessment of respondents. We divided all the reactions into three groups: neutral, positive and negative [12].

Neutral reactions to the “quarantine” stimulus are 53%: home (21); coronavirus (7); mask (6); virus (4); distance (3); covid (2); work (1); study at home (1); telephone (1); epidemic (1); bed (1); mushroom (1); bed (1); antiseptic (1); distance (1); isolation (1); self-isolation (1); distance 1 meter (1); remote control (1); at home (1); mask mode (1). They reflect the location (home; bed; bed), process (work; study at home), format (remote), means of communication (telephone), quarantine-related features of life and restrictions (isolation, self-isolation, mask mode, distance, etc.).

Reaction words conveying a positive assessment are expressed by associates: the possibility of development; recreation. To convey a positive assessment of the situation, mainly schoolchildren used a descriptive method: associations are mostly represented by phrases.

Emotionally colored reactions that convey a negative assessment of the situation are expressed in the following words: sorry; boredom; sad; bad; panic; I want it to end quickly; room; stay at home; sit in one place at home; do not leave the house; stay at home and do not go anywhere; do not go anywhere; without a street; prison; closed premises; closure of all shops; military. Note that positive associations make up only 8%, and negative associations make up 39% and prevail over positive ones. Please reference the figure in the text (Fig. 2).

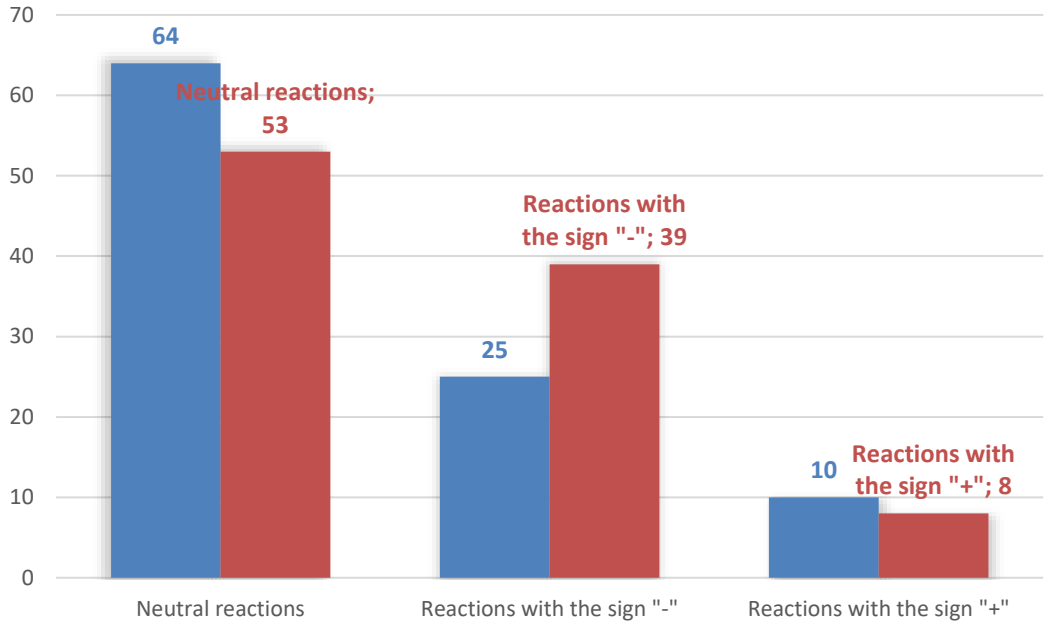

Figure 2. Reactions to the “quarantine” stimulus

It is possible to make a conclusion that more than 8% of respondents find the positive moments of quarantine, associating it with rest, the opportunity to develop due to the free time and a fairly measured leisure, with which you can, without haste, watch long TV series. Another 39% of respondents perceive quarantine as a phenomenon that restricts freedom of movement. This is evidenced by a number of reactions, firstly, of general importance.

The “mask” incentive is directly related to the respondents, since the 4th quarter of 2021, students have entered the traditional learning format, but this was due to the implementation of a number of mandatory precautions, including wearing protective masks in educational institutions. For students, as well as for other participants in the educational process, this is a completely new experience, therefore, in our opinion, it caused an ambiguous reaction among schoolchildren.

Unappreciated, or neutral reactions to this stimulus amounted to 57%. They reflect a reference to the reason for wearing (virus (7); coronavirus (7); quarantine (4)), places where it is necessary to put on a mask (school (3); bus (1);) the function of masks (protective (8); protection from virus (3); wear (2); put on (1); cover the face (1);), the color and material from which it is made (blue (1); blue (1); fabric (2);), types of masks (reusable (1)), who needs to wear (person (1); max (1); Nikita (1), where to wear (face (1); nose (1);), with which organs and body function is associated (lungs (1); breathing (3), with which symptoms should be worn (cough (1);), how to wear (need to be changed (1); spare (1);), where to buy (pharmacy (1);), what prevents (air (2);), what field of science does (medicine (1);), what protective equipment is associated with (gloves (1); antiseptic (1);), how to pay for a mask (money (1);), with what symbols are associated with (Anonymus mask (1).

The reaction words conveying a positive assessment are expressed by the associates: it is always worth putting on (1); it is necessary to put on (1); saves life (1); protection (14); no-danger (1); health (1) and account for 17% of the total number of reactions.

Emotionally colored reactions associated with the transmission of a negative assessment of the situation are expressed in the following words: uncomfortable (2); hinders breathing (2); no air (1); infuriates (1); virus to swallow (1); bad skin (1); stuffy (1); game mask (1); gas mask (5); irritation (4); inconvenience (3); illness (1); no limit (1); difficulty (1); muzzle (1); rag (1), just a face mask (1). This group is 26%. Words with a

negative meaning outnumber positive reaction words and indicate disapproval of such a measure of protection. Please reference the figure in the text (Fig. 3).

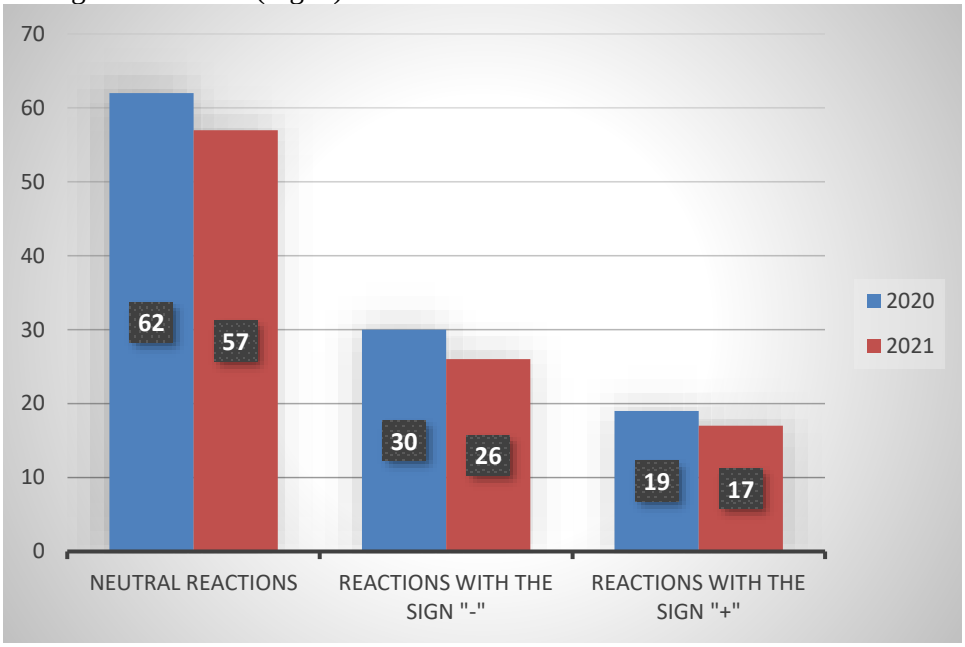

Figure 3. Reactions to the “mask” stimulus

The received reactions to the word-stimulus “mask” reflect a neutral attitude to the need for mandatory wearing, which can be considered as the adoption of this measure, which is shown by the majority of respondents. We also see that 17% of respondents have a positive attitude to this measure and note that it should always be worn, as it protects, gives a sense of security, helps to preserve health and, finally, saves lives. Unfortunately, there were more negative respondents. The respondents note the negative aspects associated with wearing a mask: they focus on the inconvenience of wearing, interference with breathing, note that the mask is stuffy, there is no air, that it does not prevent the penetration of the virus, that wearing a mask is difficult. Also, the mask is associated with bad skin, irritation, some believe that it is just a face mask, a rag that does not perform any vital functions, a negative attitude is realized in reduced rude vocabulary: infuriating, muzzle, lawlessness, gas mask, which ultimately do not prevent the spread of the disease [13].

Another important word-incentive was the term of the pandemic era “social distance”. This term, as noted by the authors of the Oxford English Dictionary, became widely used during the pandemic. The World Health Organization on its official website gives recommendations regarding social distance: “Keep at least 1 meter away from people, especially if they have a cough, runny nose and fever. When staying indoors, it is necessary to observe an additional distance. The more distance you stay, the safer it is”. This measure also affected schoolchildren, since during the period of returning to the traditional format of education, compliance with this requirement is mandatory. For this purpose, pointers on social distance have been installed in all educational institutions of the country [14].

Let's analyze the associative field of the stimulus in question. As we noted above, the “social distance” incentive directly concerns respondents, since the established measure had to be strictly observed within the offline format. Reaction words to this stimulus are represented by both neutral and vocabulary expressing an emotional and evaluative attitude.

Neutral reactions to this stimulus were 67%. They are grouped into the following thematic groups:

– the gap between objects (meter; 1.5 meters; 1-2 meters; 2 meters; meters; kilometers);

– places and conditions under which distance must be observed (public place; shopping center; offline training; lessons);

– clarification of the concept (distance; a certain distance; distance; distance from each other; do not approach each other; have a distance with a person; keep a distance; stay away; do not approach; quarantine measures; compliance with measures);

– distance (distance; reduction; proximity);

– other protective measures (mask; antiseptic);

– causes of the measure (virus, covid not to get sick; infection).

Outside of thematic groups reactions: social networks; hugging; online; car.

Reaction words that convey a positive assessment account for 16% of the total number of reactions and are expressed in the associates: safe distance (6); safety (4); can save our lives (1); protection of ourselves and others (1); normal (1); good (1); pledge of life (1); protection (1); comfort (1). Reactions associated with the transmission of a negative assessment of the situation are expressed in the following words: far away (7); moving away from someone (3); uninteresting (1); not observed (1); violation is always (1); inadequate (1); inconvenience (1); isolation (1); stupid (1); renunciation (1). This group is 17%. It can be noticed that reactions with a negative meaning slightly outnumber positive reaction words. The relation of the reaction words is presented in the diagram. Please reference the figure in the text (Fig. 4).

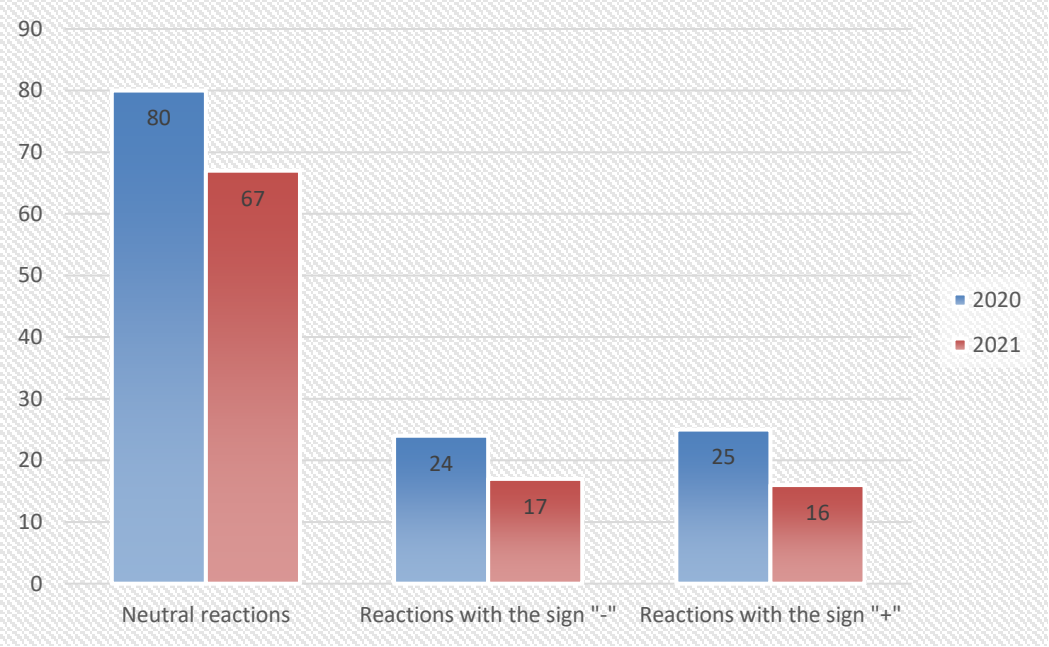

Figure 4. Reactions to the “social distance” stimulus

Thus, the data obtained reflect children's ideas about social distance. It can be seen that this measure is perceived mostly neutrally, positive and negative reactions are almost equal, which indicates an understanding of the importance of compliance with this requirement. We also see that 16% of respondents have a positive attitude to distancing, perceiving it as a guarantee of safety, protection of themselves and others, a measure that can save lives. Respondents also note that this measure is quite normal, they feel good and comfortable. Respondents who gave reactions with a minus sign, note the negative aspects of this measure. They point out that this alienates them from others, isolates them, causes a sense of renunciation, inconvenience, and also emphasize that this measure is not being observed. 3 respondents rate this measure as uninteresting, inadequate and stupid [15].

Conclusion

After analyzing the informants' reactions to the proposed stimulus words, we saw a different attitude to the key moments of the pandemic, which are presented in Table.

T a b l e

Informants' reactions

The incentive word	Neutral reactions		Reactions with the sign "-"		Reactions with the sign "+"	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Quarantine	64%	53%	25%	39%	10%	8%
Mask	62%	57%	30%	26%	19%	17%
Social distance	80%	67%	24%	17%	25%	16%

The research carried out on the basis of the associative experiment made it possible to reconstruct the content and structure of the associative fields of linguistic consciousness associated with words. During the experiment, it turned out that the words quarantine, mask, social distance had changes in associative fields. This demonstrates the instability of the internal meaning of tokens. In the words quarantine, mask, social distance, there was a slight field dynamics, due primarily to social, political, socio-cultural factors. The words quarantine, mask, social distance show the impact of the pandemic of Covid-19 on the composition of the associative field. Based on the results obtained, the following conclusions can be drawn: the internal structure of most words has changed, the pandemic of Covid-19 has affected people's consciousness to a greater extent. The hypothesis put forward that dynamics occurred in the associative fields of these concepts under the influence of Covid-19 pandemic in native English speakers was confirmed during a practical study and a slight change in the words quarantine, mask, social distance is visible [16].

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С.Б. Уразбаев, Г.Б. Мадиева

«COVID-19» ассоциативті-семантикалық өрісін қалыптастыру

Мақалада «COVID-19» ассоциативті-семантикалық өрісінің қалыптасуы қарастырылған, «COVID-19» ассоциативті өрісін қабылдау ерекшеліктеріне назар аударылған. Авторлар респонденттердің әртүрлі топтарының осы тұжырымдаманы қабылдау ерекшеліктерін көрсететін «COVID–19» сөзіне жиіліктік жауаптарды анықтауға мүмкіндік берген лингвистикалық эксперимент (еркін ассоциативті эксперимент топтары келесі ішкі санаттарға бөлінеді: жасы, жынысы, жұмыспен қамту) деп санайды. Еркін ассоциативті эксперименттің нәтижелері талданатын сөздің ассоциативті өрісін құруға және сауалнамаға қатысушылар үшін маңызды реакция өрісінің тақырыптық доминанттарын бөлуге мүмкіндік береді. Осы лингвистикалық эксперименттің нәтижесінде ассоциативті эксперименттегі ассоциация динамикасының «COVID-19» сөзінен өзгеруі анықталады деген гипотеза расталды, яғни салыстыру: ол бұрын қандай болған және қазіргі сәтке дейін қалай өзгерді, саналы және бейсаналық қатынас. Бұл

қатынастар тілдік құралдармен көрінеді және әлемді түсінуді, оның тұжырымдамасын, сондай-ақ жеке адамның қарым-қатынасы мен сөйлеу стратегиясын көрсетеді.

Кілт сөздер: тұжырымдама, тілдік сана, ассоциативті эксперимент, ассоциативті өріс, COVID-19 пандемиясы.

С.Б. Уразбаев, Г.Б. Мадиева

Формирование ассоциативно-семантического поля «Covid–19»

В статье рассмотрен вопрос о формировании ассоциативно-семантического поля «Covid–19», сделан акцент на особенности восприятия ассоциативного поля «Covid–19». Авторы считают, что лингвистический эксперимент, позволивший выявить частотные отклики на слово «Covid–19», отражающие особенности восприятия данного концепта разными группами респондентов (группы свободного ассоциативного эксперимента будут разделены на следующие подкатегории: возраст, пол, занятость). Результаты свободного ассоциативного эксперимента позволяют сформировать ассоциативное поле анализируемого слова и выделить тематические доминанты реакционного поля, важные для участников опроса. В результате данного лингвистического эксперимента была подтверждена гипотеза о том, что ассоциативный эксперимент выявляет изменение динамики ассоциации от слова «Covid–19», то есть сравнение: каким оно было раньше и как оно изменилось до настоящего момента, причем связь бывает осознанной и бессознательной. Эти отношения выражаются языковыми средствами и отражают понимание мира, его концептуализацию, а также стратегии общения и речевого существования индивида.

Ключевые слова: концепт, языковое сознание, ассоциативный эксперимент, ассоциативное поле, пандемия «Covid–19».

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Information about authors

Urazbaev, Sabit Bakhtiyaruly — Master student, Department of Turkology and Language Theory, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan. E-mail: u.sabit1999.kz@gmail.com;

Madiyeva, Gulmira Bayanzhanovna — Doctor of philological sciences, Department of Turkology and Language Theory, Acting professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan. E-mail: gbmadiyeva.kz@gmail.com.