

# ARCHETYPES IN METACONCEPT STRUCTURE

## ARQUÉTIPOS NA ESTRUTURA DO METACONCEITO

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**Abstract:** The history of studying the cognitive structure of our consciousness and its minimal mental unit dates back to the beginning of the 20th century and is associated with the name of the Russian Scientist S.A. Askoldov, the scientific legacy of whom was not actually forgotten during the Soviet period. Appealing to the methods of representation of knowledge about the world has aroused interest in the concept category. The basics which reflect primary human values are metaconcept. The present paper proves that the basis of the structure of the meta concept is an archetype.

**Keywords:** Metaconcept; Concept; Awareness; Language.

**Resumo:** A história do estudo da estrutura cognitiva de nossa consciência e de sua unidade mental mínima remonta ao início do século XX e está associada ao nome do cientista russo S.A. Askoldov, cujo legado científico não foi realmente esquecido durante o período soviético. Apelar para os métodos de representação do conhecimento sobre o mundo despertou o interesse na categoria conceitual. O básico que reflete os principais valores humanos é o metaconcept. O presente artigo prova que a base da estrutura do metaconcept é um arquétipo.

**Palavras-chave:** Metaconceito; Conceito; Consciência; Linguagem.

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## Introduction

The anthropocentric paradigm of modern linguistics, which leads to research carried out at its interface with other disciplines, predetermines the concept category's interdisciplinary status. Difficulty in determining the essence of the meta concept as a scientific category is related to the fact that there is still no unambiguous solution in determining the structure and typology of concept in modern science. The absence of a single universally accepted definition of the concept indicates the incompleteness of epistemological formation of this category, which confirms the existence of its following proto-terminological analogs: "linguoculture" (Vorobev, 1997, p. 44-56), "myths" (Bazylev, 2000, p. 134), "logo-systems" (Kostomarov & Burvikova, 2000, p. 23), by considering which it brings to the fore the "linguistic expression of the trace, fixed by public memory, of the reflection of reality in the minds of native speakers as a result of comprehension (or creation) of spiritual values of the national and world culture by them" (Kostomarov & Burvikova, 2000, p. 23)

## Methods

In this work, lingual-cognitive analysis, lexical-semantic analysis, descriptive method and conceptual analysis methods are used.

## Results and Discussion

### The meaning of "concept"

One of the first who studied the nature of the concept was S.A. Askoldov (Alekseev). In his article entitled "Concept and Word", published in the journal "Russian Speech" in 1928, he defines the concept as: "mental education that replaces us in the process of thinking an indefinite set of objects of the same kind", "buds of the most complicated inflorescences of mental concreteness", "Embryos of mental operations, which in their disclosure could take hours, days, sometimes months" (Askoldov, 1997, p. 271). D.S. Likhachev explains the formation of concepts by the limited capabilities of human memory and consciousness, as well as by the specifics of the personal perception of reality: "A person simply does not have time to grasp the meaning, sometimes he cannot, and sometimes he interprets it in his own way (depending on his education, personal experience), belonging to a certain environment, profession, etc.)" (Likhachev, 1997, p. 282).

A new surge of interest in the concept category is observed after the publication of the book "Constants; a dictionary of Russian Culture" (1997) and a series of works by Yu.S. Stepanova. From the point of view of a scientist, concepts include semantic formations marked by lingual cultural specificity, characterizing the carriers of a certain ethnic culture in one way or another: "A concept is like a clot of culture in a person's mind, something in which culture enters the person's mental world. And, on the other hand, the concept is something whereby a person - an ordinary person, not a creator of cultural values - enters the culture itself, and in some cases influences it" (Gafarova & Kildibekova, 1998, p. 10). A concept is an idea that includes the abstract and the emotional and evaluative signs. "Concepts are not only thought, but also they are experienced, the subject of emotions, likes and dislikes, and sometimes collisions. The concept is the main cell of culture in the mental world of man" (Gafarova & Kildibekova, 1998, p. 41).

S.G. Vorkachev defines a concept as a "unit of collective knowledge/consciousness (sending to higher spiritual values), having a linguistic expression and marked by ethnic and cultural specifics" (Vorkachev, 2001, p. 70), and correlating with the plan of expression of the lexical-semantic paradigm, i.e. the entire set of heterogeneous synonymous means (lexical, phraseological, aphoristic, describing it in language) (Vorkachev, 2001, p. 68). As a global thinking unit, which is a quantum of structured knowledge, they interpret the concept of Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin (Popova & Sternin, 2003, p. 18). The concept is somewhat different when defined by M.V. Pimenova: "concept reflects the categorical and the value characteristics of knowledge about some fragments of the world. The concept contains signs that are functionally significant

for the corresponding culture” (Pimenova, 2002, p. 116). S.Kh. Lyapin represents a concept as a multidimensional idealized form-building based on a conceptual basis, fixed in the meaning of a sign, and having discrete integrity of meaning, which functions in a certain cultural space, and therefore is predisposed to a cultural broadcast from one subject area to another (Nikitin, 2004). From the point of view of V.V. Kolesov, the concept is a component of the mental world of a person or part of the concept of mentality: the basic units of mentality are “concepts of a given culture that, within the boundaries of a word mark and language as a whole, appear (are) in their content forms as an image, as a concept and as a symbol” (Kolesov, 1999, p. 79). According to the definition of V.I. Karasika, a concept is a mental entity with “three major dimensions - figurative, conceptual and value” (Karasik, 2001, p. 10).

Analysis of the definitions shows that the boundaries of the concept vary depending on the study’s purpose. The broadest understanding of the concept is the characteristic of S.A. Askoldov and D.S. Likhachev, which is the substitution in the individual consciousness of any meaning; the narrowest understanding of the concept developed in the works of S.G. Vorkacheva, V.V. Kolesova, M.V. Pimenova, these are the most important culturally significant categories of the person’s inner world.

### The structure of the “concept”

The correlation of macroconcept with other types of concepts.

Yu.S. Stepanov identifies three main layers:

- 1) The literal meaning (or “inner form”);
- 2) A passive (“historical”) concept layer;
- 3) The newest, current, and active layer of the concept (Constants, 1997, p. 41).

In the concept, it is possible to distinguish between the informative and evaluative components that are intricately intertwined and difficult to separate. Together, they represent known integrity, which includes the following components:

- 1) Universal (universal);
- 2) National-cultural (due to the existence of a person in a particular national-cultural environment);
- 3) Social (determined by the person’s belonging to a particular social (social) class or stratum);
- 4) Group (due to the belonging of a person to a certain age and gender group and/or professional group);
- 5) Individual-specific (formed under the influence of several various factors: psycho-physiological features of a person, his educational level, upbringing, attitude towards religion, social role, individual experience, membership in an informal group, etc.) (Korneeva, 2003: 253).

According to N.N. The way of formation determines Boldyrev, the structure of the concept in the human mind:

- a) based on sensory experience, that is, as a result of direct perception of the surrounding world through the senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch);
- b) based on subject-practical human activities;
- c) based on experimental-cognitive and theoretical-cognitive (scientific) activities;
- d) based on mental activity, this is a result of reasoning, conclusions based on mental operations with already known concepts;
- e) based on verbal and non-verbal communication when one person explains a concept to another person using language means or other means of communication: gestures, conventional signs, pantomime, etc (Boldyrev, 2002, p. 24-25).

There are simple and complex, abstract and concrete concepts. The level concept structure consists of one or more cognitive layers that differ in the degree of abstraction. The structure of a single-level concept includes a sensual image and one base layer, and a multilevel one – in addition to the base layer – and several other cognitive layers. A special variety is the combined structural types of concepts - single-level segment, multilevel segment, multilevel level-segment (Popova & Sternin, 2001).

A concept is a multifactorial mental unit that has a stochastic (probabilistic) structure (Nikitin, 2004, p. 53), defined by the method of cognition that underlies it, as a “unit of structured knowledge” (Rudakova, 2004), consists of some components (cognitive classifiers and cognitive signs).

In cognitive linguistics, various types of concepts are considered. Microconcepts (or concepts), macroconcepts, super concepts, and metaconcepts are distinguished. Microconcepts are oriented to the lexical meaning of a separate lexeme, have a small semantic scope, and perform an identifying function. Vast areas of meaning are concentrated around the macro-concepts. The superconcept consists of a variety of syntactic constructions expressing different types of situations associated with the basic concept (Gafarova & Kildibekova, 1998, p. 117).

Following A.Yu. Bolshakova, we will define metaconcept as the strongest, “unifying the multitude of individual manifestations of a particular entity, as well as the most stable in historical changes and defining the structure of the worldview (personality, nation, people)”, they “stand out from the general composition of concepts/constants: cultural metaconcept and can be defined as “the archetypes of the cultural unconscious” (Bolshakova, 2012). The metaconcepts include value-relevant mental units, such as: “family”, “gender”, “mother”, “father”, “man”, “woman”, “marriage”, etc., which are the archetypes of culture.

### **Macroconcept and its correlation with other types of concepts**

The definition of the concept of “archetype” and its relationship with the concept of “concept” remains controversial in the modern scientific literature. Yu.S. Stepanov defined the archetype as an “archaic deep concept”, and such a definition of an archetype through a concept can be found in a number of other studies. At first glance, such a definition does not allow one to sufficiently and accurately distinguish between the concepts of archetype and concept. But a deeper study of the views of Yu.S. Stepanova gives a clearer picture of the nature of the archetype. According to the theory of the Yu.S. Stepanova, the archetype is not identical to the concept. In contrast to the concept, the archetype possesses deep invariance, and therefore, is a kind of constant that acts as a basic stable concept. In the series of various constants, the archetype is a primary concept that has a determining influence on human civilization development. The concept of the archetype is not limited to the concept. If concepts are able to manifest themselves more precisely, then archetypes express more general, fundamental properties.

On the other hand, in many scientific studies, archetypes are presented as psychological symbols that preceded the emergence of concepts and the concepts themselves. They also became the basis for their formation, reflecting the dynamics of culture formation in a verbal form. At the same time, archetypes approach the concept of mentality are considered as a means of access to it: “... the nature of an archetype is of interest as far as knowing about it will help to compare it with a mentality to understand the content of the latter more deeply” (Veremieva, 1996, p. 157). Comparing the concepts of mentality and archetype, scientists believe that “both of them are group images, people’s ideas about the world and about themselves; their content is immersed in the deep subconscious psychic structures of a person, and therefore cannot be realized by him” (Vorobev, 1997, p. 157). The difference between the archetype and the mentality is that the mentality is changing, and the archetype, according to Jung, is a certain original, unchanging image of the world inherited from primitive ancestors. That is, the archetype is a mental system of collective universals. Archetypes are attributed to the kind of “intelligible things”, which possess quasi-existence, and open new possibilities of spiritual-practical activity to a person (Likhachev, 1997, p. 122-124). Archetypes grow out of the “soil of the unconscious” (Averintsev, 1980, p. 54). Archetypes reflect both universal (universal) knowledge and national-cultural, social, individual, and group. In human consciousness, archetypes are formed in the process of perceiving the world through the senses, in the process of cognitive activity that accompanies the socialization of the individual.

## Conclusion

Summarizing the above, we note that metaconcept is a linguistic mental unit of consciousness. Metaconcept represents the cultural-national mentality of its carriers, and therefore, it functions as an instrument of consciousness. This allows us to consider the category of concept to interpret the world, reflected in the language, inherent in one or another type of consciousness.

Metaconcept are semantic formations that include the concept of an archetype. These complex mental units of the collective consciousness are part of the meta-languages of culture and reflect universal human values.

The content of the metaconcept is much wider and deeper than the lexical meaning of a word, as it includes not only semantic components relevant to consciousness, but also the information reflecting a person's common information base, and his encyclopedic knowledge of a subject or phenomenon, which may not be found in his speech.

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