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CONCEPT *GENIUS* IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND SPEECH

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of ***genius*** throughout history has fascinated academic and pop-culture authors alike[1]. Considerable attention was paid to the study of different aspects of ***genius*** in philosophy and psychology. Among main trends in the study of the phenomenon of ***genius*** are: *irrational approach*, which emphasizes the divine nature of ***genius*** and is closely related to archaic and religious ideas; *rational approach,* within which ***genius*** is seen as the innate quality of a person, which makes it possible to clarify genius as a property of the human mind and to study it in different directions in psychology and genetics, as well as to determine biological (instincts, memory, genetic heredity, innate abilities to creativity) and psychological (fantasy, imagination, inspiration, spontaneity) factors of ***genius***; *empirical approach*, according to which genius is the acquired property of a person in the process of his/her development; *socio-cultural approach*, which considers the significance and, at the same time, problematic interaction of a genius and society[2].

At the present stage of its development, cognitive linguistics has a great deal of works devoted to the study of related concepts, in particular, BRAIN, INTELLECT[3]. However, the phenomenon of ***genius*** as the highest manifestation of intellectual or creative activity of a person – who is called *a genius* – has remained beyond the attention of linguists which adds to the *relevance* of this study.

[1]Ball L.C. The Genius in History: Historiographic Explorations. *The Wiley handbook of genius*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2014. P. 3–19.

[2]Хомченкова Е.А. Феноменология гениальности: от антропной к социокультурной детерминации : автореф. дис … канд. філос. наук: 09.00.13. Омск, 2007. 20 с.

[3] Антология концептов / Под ред. В.И. Карасика, И.А. Стернина. Том 1. Волгоград: Парадигма, 2005. 352 с.

The aim of the present paper is to study the means of verbalization of concept GENIUS in the English language and speech. The theoretical premises of the work are the basics of semantic-cognitive approach to the study of concepts. According to Z.D. Popova and J.S. Sternin, representatives of the semantic-cognitive approach, *concept* is a basic unit of human mental code, which has an internal structure consisting of conceptual features; it is the result of the individual and social cognizing of the world. Conceptual features contain comprehensive information about the corresponding object or phenomenon, as well as the interpretation of information of public consciousness and the treatment of the subject or phenomenon[4]. Thus, representatives of this trend treat language as one of the main tools of cognition and conceptualization of the world. To examine a concept through the language is the most reliable way of linguistic analysis which allows to detect its conceptual features and to work out the model of the concept. The structure of a concept is manifested through dictionary definitions of the corresponding lexical units (the name of the concept and its synonyms) and through speech contexts. The linguistic embodiment of the concept under study is being considered on the basis of English explanatory dictionaries, specialized encyclopedias, biographies and publicist texts.

1. Verbalization of the Concept GENIUS in the English Language

First of all, let us consider the motivational features of the studied concept through the analysis of the etymology of the English lexical unit *genius* which comes from Latin.

" *L.* ***genius*** *the superior or divine nature which is innate in everything, the spirit, from* ***genere, gignere*** *, to beget, bring forth* ".

The Latin noun *genius for* a long time maintained links with the verbs *genere, gignere (give birth).* In a historical perspective, the term *genius* is rather problematic: it has had a long history of use, and has acquired multiple meanings, describing vastly different phenomena. The first known instance of the term *genius* being used in the English language is during the Roman Empire, where it referred to a male spiritual protector or a guardian spirit. Typically, the protection offered

[4] Попова З.Д., Стернин И.А. Семантико-когнитивный подход как направление когнитивной лингвистики. *Vita in lingua: К юбилею профессора С.Г. Воркачева*: *сборник статей* / отв. ред. В.И. Карасик. Краснодар: Атриум, 2007. С. 171–180.

by a genius was applied to individuals, families, and physical spaces. Every person, family, city, body of water, or other important physical structure had its own genius. In addition, a genius could also refer to the "spirit of the times" or *zeitgeist*. Over time, genius became more intimately connected with individuals. However, it was not until the Enlightenment when the connotations of the word obtained its present implications: *genius* referring to the superior or unique abilities of an individual person. In the second half of the XVIII century there was a turning point in the semantics of this lexical unit. Since then, *genius* has denoted not only *a special ability*, but also *a person* who has such quality. That is when there appeared numerous researches, which gave impetus to further study of this phenomenon[5].

Thus, the inner form of this nomination foregrounds the irrational component of the corresponding concept.

Modern explanatory dictionaries of the English language[6] register four semes of lexeme *genius* and offer the following definitions.

" ***Genius*** 1. *A good or evil spirit, or demon, supposed by the ancients to preside over a man's destiny in life; a tutelary deity; a supernatural being; a spirit, good or bad. Cf. Jinnee "The unseen genius of the wood." We talk about the genius still, but with thought how changed! The genius of Augustus was a devotee of the demon, to be sworn by and to receive offerings on an altar as a god* ".

The first sememe refers to the genius-spirit, that affects the destiny of a person or locality, which testifies that, the original meaning of this lexical unit rooted in Latin is preserved up to now.

" ***Genius*** 2. *A man endowed with uncommon vigor of mind; a man of superior intellectual faculties and creativity; Shakespeare was a rare one genius* ".

The second sememe indicates a person with extraordinary abilities. These abilities relate to human intelligence or his/her creativeness. Such qualifiers as *uncommon, superior* emphasize the uniqueness of the intellectual and creative capabilities of a person.

"***Genius*** 3. *Distinguished mental superiority; uncommon intellectual power; especially, a superior power of invention or the generation of any*

[5] Ball L.C. The Genius in History: Historiographic Explorations. *The Wiley handbook of genius*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2014. P. 3–19.

[6] Genius. URL: http://www.thefreedictionary.com/genius

kind, or of forming new combinations; as a man of genius. "Genius of the highest kind implies an unusual intensity of the modifying power ".

The third sememe indicates this extraordinary ability, quality of a person. Again, such semes as *uncommon, superior, distinguished* emphasize the novelty of the discovery or invention made by such person.

"***Genius*** 4. *The peculiar structure of mind with which each individual is endowed by nature; that disposition or aptitude of mind which is peculiar to each man, and which qualifies him for certain kinds of action or special success in any pursuit; special taste, inclination, or disposition; a, a genius for history, for poetry, or painting*".

Finally, the last sememe denotes the natural inclination of a person to a certain type of occupation – *aptitude, disposition*, which is inherent in every person and is an individual feature – *peculiar to each man.*

Since explanatory dictionaries reflect the naïve image of the world, the following notional conceptual features of GENIUS in the English naïve world image can be singled out: **intellect** (verbalized by the following lexical units used in dictionary definitions: *intellectual faculties, intellectual power, intelligent, mental, vigor of mind);* **creative abilities** (verbalized by such lexical units: *creative power, talent, creativity);* **outstanding / highest / extraordinary** (verbalized by the following lexical units: *uncommon, superior, distinguished, highly, exceptional, extraordinary, marked superiority);* **novelty / originality** (verbalized by the following lexical units: the *power of invention or the formation of new combinations; the original work).*

Alongside with the lexeme *genius*, which nominates the given concept, they constitute the nucleus of the corresponding nominative field.

One of the stages of the analysis of the nominative field of a concept[7] concentrates on singling out the medial part of the field. In our case it is represented by several synonymic lexical units.

The first of the registered nominations is formed by compounding of two units which refer to the brain and the computer respectively:

"***Brainiac*** *(n.)"very smart person," 1982, U.S. slang, from brain (n.) + ending from ENIAC, etc. Brainiac also was the name of a comic book villain in the Superman series and a do-it-yourself computer building kit,*

[7] Колегаєва І.М. Конструювання номінативного поля концепту: етапи та одиниці. **Записки з романо-германської філології**. 2018. № 1(40). С. 121–127.

both from the late 1950s, and the word may bear traces of either or both of these";

"*ENIAC – acronym from "electronic numeral integrator and computer," device built 1946 at University of Pennsylvania by John W. Mauchly Jr., J. Presper Eckert Jr., and J.G. Brainerd. It cost $400,000, used 18,000 radio tubes, and was housed in a 30-foot-by-50-foot room*".

Until 1982, this nominative unit served as the name of certain cartoon characters, so probably some features of these characters are still reflected in the meaning of the word, which is defined as:

*"**Brainiac.** (Slang) A person who is highly intelligent".*

It is worth mentioning that the explanatory dictionaries used in the study indicate prototype examples of geniuses, such as Shakespeare and Mozart. Another example of the typical representative of the category "genius" is the scientist Albert Einstein whose surname became synonym to the lexical unit "genius". This case of antonomasia (*einstein*) is registered in the dictionaries.

*"**Einstein** – someone who has exceptional intellectual ability and originality".*

The definition of the next nomination contains an indication of a very smart person and the specifics of his/her activity: namely, running some important and difficult project:

*"**Mastermind.** A highly intelligent person, especially one who plans and directs a complex or difficult project".*

Another nominative unit is an example of metonymy used to denote (in colloquial English) an extremely clever person:

*"**Brain** (Informal) A highly intelligent person".*

It should be noted that these synonymous nominative units have several common features. Their definitions contain an indication of a high level of intelligence and they, as a rule, function in the colloquial layer of the English language.

The only exception here is the nominative unit *prodigy*, which has the following semantic components in its dictionary definitions: the indication of a young person with extraordinary intellectual and creative abilities:

***prodigy** – an unusually gifted or intelligent young person; someone whose talents excite wonder and admiration; "she is a chess prodigy"*"".

We treat PRODIGY as a subconcept that should be included in the medial part of the analyzed nominative field of the concept GENIUS. The

given subconcept in its turn is represented by the following lexical units: *wunderkind, child prodigy, infant prodigy, whiz kid*. The analysis of the definitions of all mentioned units enabled singling out such conceptual features as **age** (*a child or young person*); **intelligence** (*ability, intelligent*); **creative abilities** (*talent, gifted*); **extraordinariness** *(unusually, excite wonder and admiration*).

Thus, in the English **naïve picture of the world** concept GENIUS is represented by the following core conceptual features: **intelligence, creative abilities, extraordinariness, originality**, and medial ones: **age, ability to deal with difficult tasks**.

The next stage of our research deals with the analysis of conceptual features of GENIUS in the English **scientific image of the world**. The investigation is based on the material of specialized medical dictionaries[8] and encyclopedias[9].

Let us first consider the definition of the lexeme that nominates the studied concept in the given lexicographic sources.

"***Genius****: the demonstrated exceptional achievement in a person. Different theories: born with, environmental reasons, overcompensation for inferior feelings. Generally seen as a joint product of heredity and environment*"[10].

The given definition contains a short definition of the phenomenon of genius, which manifests itself in the exceptional, extraordinary achievements of a person, and gives three basic theories of the emergence of this phenomenon and its generally accepted interpretation as a combination of heredity and the environment.

Another definition in the English specialized dictionary foregrounds extraordinary abilities and creativity of a person, in particular, intelligence, with one of its indicators being the level of IQ – 140 and above:

*"**Genius**: a term used to describe a person with exceptional ability and creativity within a particular field, for instance intellect (by defining IQS of 140 + as the guideline for genius)"*.

Both the above mentioned definitions foreground such conceptual features of GENIUS as **exclusivity** (manifested by the seme *exceptional*),

[8]Genius. URL: https://psychologydictionary.org/genius/
[9]Genius. URL: https://www.britannica.com/topic/genius-psychology
[10] Genius. URL: https://psychologydictionary.org/genius/

intellectual abilities (*intellect, defining IQS of 140+*), **creative abilities** (*creativity*), **achievements that have been demonstrated** (*demonstrated achievements*).

One of main differences between the definitions of general explanatory dictionaries and medical ones is that the latter emphasize exclusively the intellectual abilities of a person-genius, while the explanatory dictionaries also mention outstanding creative potential.

Another feature of the scientific interpretation of the phenomenon of genius is the indication that it can be measured by the IQ test: according to psychologists, a person is considered a genius if his level of IQ is higher than 140. According to official statistics, such personalities make up only 1% of mankind.

Focused on a wider range of readers *Encyclopedia Britannica* contains an article defining the phenomenon of genius, at the beginning of which genius is specified as a person with extraordinary intelligence:

"*Genius* *(in psychology) a person of extraordinary intellectual power*".

Then the article gives the history of the theory which defines genius through intelligence tests and criticism of such researches:

"*Definitions of genius in terms of intelligence quotient (IQ) are based on research originating in the early 1900s. In 1916 the American psychologist Lewis M. Terman set the IQ for "potential genius" at 140 and above, a level exhibited by about 1 in every 250 people. Leta Hollingworth, an American psychologist who studied the nature and nurture of genius, proposed an IQ of 180 as the threshold–a level that, at least theoretically, is exhibited by only about one in every two million people".*

As seen from the given definition, another conceptual feature – **rareness of a genius** – is foregrounded here – *one in every two million people*. The article also highlights a term *potential genius*, that is, a person who has certain exceptional abilities but does not always realize them.

Psychologists who specialize in the study of gifted children, however, have observed that the *genius* designation occurs much more frequently than it should be reasonable, leading some to speculate that a "bump" has emerged, with many more geniuses appearing in the general population than seems statistically probable. There is a probability, of course, that conventional intelligence tests are ineffective in measuring intellectual ability beyond a certain point. In any case, "genius," as

determined by these tests, simply means great intellectual ability and signifies *potential* rather than *attainment*[11].

The article in *Encyclopedia Britannica* also highlights two theories concerning the phenomenon of genius. M. Terman's theory holds that genius is an exceptionally extraordinary intellectual ability. The second theory which was presented in to the works of F. Galton and which is more popular, according to the author of the article, defines genius as creative abilities that *were realized* in a particular achievement, having a long-lasting value.

"*The word **genius** is used in two closely related but somewhat different senses. In the first sense, as popularized by Terman, it refers to great intellectual ability as measured by performance on a standardized intelligence test. In the second and more popular sense, as derived from work of the 19th-century English scientist Sir Francis Galton, it designates creative ability of an exceptionally high order as demonstrated by actual achievement–always provided that such achievement is not merely of transitory value or the result of accident of birth".*

The next fragment of the Encyclopedia article considers differences between **talent** and **genius**. Here new conceptual features of GENIUS can be singled out, namely, **originality** and **possibility of discovering something new** in spheres which were not previously explored:

"***Genius** is distinguished from **talent**, both quantitatively and qualitatively. **Talent** refers to a native aptitude for some special kind of work and implies a relatively quick and easy acquisition of a particular skill within a domain (sphere of activity or knowledge). **Genius**, on the other hand, involves **originality, creativity, and the ability to think and work in areas not previously explored**–thus giving the world something of value that would not otherwise exist".*

The overview of existing theories of the nature of genius foregrounds two other conceptual features, namely, **fervor** and **work**:

"*There have been a variety of attempts to explain the nature and source of genius, as well as many investigations of the relationship of genius to madness. Galton, who inaugurated the systematic study of genius, formulated the theory that **genius** is a very extreme degree of three combined traits–**intellect, zeal, and power of working**–that are shared by all persons in various "grades." In his Hereditary Genius*

[11] Genius. URL: https://www.britannica.com/topic/genius-psychology

(1869), he put forth the idea that genius, as measured by outstanding accomplishment, tends to run in families. This became a controversial viewpoint, and, since its introduction, scientists have disagreed about the degree to which biological heredity, as distinct from education and opportunity, is responsible for the great differences in achievement between individuals".

Although the theories which associate **genius** and **insanity** are rather controversial, we consider the seme *madness* as a representation of the conceptual feature **dissimilarity**. This feature is also foregrounded in the following fragment:

"*The qualities of extreme genius may, however, be associated with unique problems. While Terman found that children of high general intelligence, classified as "gifted" or "potential genius," are on the average* ***superior*** *to other children in physique and health and in emotional and social adjustment, Hollingworth's studies (as well as more-recent investigations) showed that profoundly gifted children may suffer a variety of problems related to their clear* ***deviance*** *from their age peers"*.

Modern researchers point out that genius is always accompanied by perfect knowledge in a particular field, his skill and his autonomy, which allows not only to work alone, but also to express pioneering looks, endurance and inspiration:

"*The study of eminent men and women showed how great creative achievement cannot exist without* ***mastery of the skills and specific knowledge of a domain.*** *These can be achieved only through excellent training and access to accomplished teachers and mentors. At the same time, Csikszentmihalyi demonstrated a link between creative genius and "****flow****," a state of mind in which the creative individual experiences a sense of challenge, timelessness, and oneness with the work at hand. Finally, in studying the personalities of prominent individuals, Csikszentmihalyi identified common attributes in their psychological makeup. One such trait is* ***autonomy, which is needed for working alone and for daring to express novel or divergent points of view****. Another example is* ***endurance, which involves an ability to persist, to complete tasks, and to follow through****–a characteristic that all true geniuses seem to have"*.

Thus the definitional analysis enabled singling out the following conceptual features of the concept GENIUS in the English scientific image of the world: **exclusivity** (manifested by semes *exceptional, superior*),

intellectual abilities (*intellect, defining IQS of 140+*), **creative abilities** (*creativity*), **achievements which were proved, demonstrated** (*demonstrated achievement*), **deep knowledge of a certain sphere** (*specific knowledge of a domain*), **mastery** (*mastery of the skills*), **independence** (*autonomy, which is needed for working alone and for daring to express novel or divergent points of view*), **endurance** (*endurance, which involves an ability to persist, to complete tasks, and to follow through*), **inspiration** ("*flow*"), **dissimilarity from others** (*deviance, madness*), **fervor** (*zeal*), **work** (*power of working*), **originality** (*originality, the ability to think and work in areas not previously explored*).

2. Verbalization of the Concept GENIUS in the English Speech

Verbalization of the concept under study in the English speech has been analyzed on the material of biographies and publicist texts. In modern linguistics, several types of biographies are distinguished, among which are academic, artistic, documentary and popular scientific[12]. The given study focuses on the popular scientific biographies of such generally recognized geniuses as Leonardo da Vinci[13], Isaac Newton[14], Albert Einstein[15] and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart[16]. The target audience of these publications is the average naïve native speaker, so the analysis of their linguistic peculiarities will enable singling out conceptual features of the concept GENIUS in the English naive picture of the world.

The investigated popular scientific biographies foreground, first of all, the conceptual feature **prominence / extraordinariness**. The corresponding examples can be found in the first lines of the analyzed biographies:

"*Isaac Newton (January 4, 1643 to March 31, 1727) was a physicist and mathematician who developed the principles of modern physics, including the laws of motion, and is credited as one of the* ***great*** *minds of*

[12] Ефремова Д.А. Типы англоязычных биографий второй половины XX – начала XXI века. *Филология и культура*. 2013. № 1 (32). С. 142–145.

[13] Leonardo da Vinci. URL: http://www.biography.com/people/leonardo-da-vinci-40396#the-last-supper

[14] Isaac Newton. URL: https://www.biography.com/news/isaac-newton-biography-facts

[15] Albert Einstein. URL: http://www.notablebiographies.com/Du-Fi/Einstein-Albert.html#ixzz4WVvnakf8

[16] Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. URL: https://www.biography.com/people/wolfgang-mozart-9417115

the 17th century Scientific Revolution"; "*And because other Newton scholars have defaulted on the task of evaluating Newton's motives, such "suggestions" have stood unchallenged and unrefuted to this day–coloring the legacy and tainting the name of* ***one of history's greatest scientists***".

His work is graded as the most influential in the sphere of physics and in science in general: "*It is said to be the single* ***most influential*** *book on physics and possibly all of science. Its publication immediately raised Newton to international prominence*".

His contemporaries called his abilities extraordinary, and the scientist himself – the most prominent genius in the history of mankind: "*In August 1669, Barrow identified its author to Collins as "Mr. Newton ... very young ... but of an* ***extraordinary genius*** *and proficiency in these things*"; "*Isaac Newton's fame grew even more after his death, as many of his contemporaries proclaimed him* ***the greatest genius who ever lived***".

In the biographies of Leonardo da Vinci the given feature is verbalized with the help of such lexical units as *leading, great*:

"*Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519) is one of the world's* ***greatest*** *thinkers, artists and philosophers*"; "*Leonardo da Vinci was a* ***leading*** *artist and intellectual of the Italian Renaissance who's known for his enduring works "The Last Supper" and "Mona Lisa."*"".

An interesting, however, unreliable fact of his biography is the reaction of his teacher, the artist Verrocchio, to the abilities of the student. He was so impressed with the works of da Vinci, that he gave up painting:

"*According to "Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects", written around 1550 by artist Giorgio Vasari, Verrocchio was so humbled by the* ***superior talent*** *of his pupil that he never picked up a paintbrush again*".

This context also verbalizes the feature of extraordinary creativity. The next conceptual feature, which is verbalized in these biographies, is **intellectual ability**. For example, Newton's uncle insisted on his entering the university, understanding his innate mental abilities:

"*Perhaps sensing the young man's* ***innate intellectual abilities****, his uncle, a graduate of the University of Cambridge's Trinity College, persuaded Newton's mother to have him enter the university*".

The lexical unit *leading* in this fragment also underlines his extraordinary intellect:

“*It also cemented his position as* ***one of the leading minds*** *of his age*”.

The conceptual feature **intellect** can be also verbalized with the help of nominative units *inventive, curious, keen*:

“*Using his* ***inventive mind****, da Vinci sketched war machines such as a war chariot with scythe blades mounted on the sides, an armored tank propelled by two men cranking a shaft and even an enormous crossbow that required a small army of men to operate*”; “*Possessor of a* ***curious mind and keen intellect****, da Vinci studied the laws of science and nature, which greatly informed his work as a painter, sculptor, architect, inventor, military engineer and draftsman*”.

As for the biography of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, they are characteristic of the widespread use of the nominative unit *prodigy* and its derivative *prodigious*:

"*The composer." Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) led a life that was dramatic in many respects, including his career as a* ***child prodigy****, his struggle to achieve personal independence and establish a career, his brushes with financial disaster, and his death in the course of trying to complete his Requiem*"; "*Born in In Salzburg, he showed* ***prodigious ability*** *from his* ***earliest childhood****. Already competent on keyboard and violin,* ***he composed from the age of five*** *and performed before the European royalty* ".

In addition, the age in which he achieved success is strongly emphasized:" *Mozart wrote his* ***first*** *symphony when he was* ***eight years old*** ".

Thus, the conceptual feature **age** of the investigated concept is foregrounded by such lexical units as the *earliest childhood, the age of five , eight years old.*

The extraordinary talent of Mozart is emphasized, in particular, in the memoirs of his sister who wrote that their father began teaching little Amadeus to play as an entertainment, but the boy showed unusual abilities:

"*In the fourth year of his age, his father, for a game, as it was, began to teach him a few minutes and pieces at the clavier .... He could play it faultlessly and with the greatest delicacy, and keeping exactly in time .... At the age of five, he was already composing small pieces, which he played to his father who wrote them down*".

The feature of extraordinary giftedness is also emphasized by the fact that the little boy became a composer before he could write down his own compositions, and his father was doing it for him for some time. Mozart's success became such a big surprise to his father and teacher at the same time that he even ceased to write music himself:

"*In his early years, Wolfgang's father was his only teacher. There is evidence that Mozart was keen on progress beyond what he was taught. It came as a surprise to Leopold,* ***who eventually gave up composing when his son's musical talent became evident***".

A similar example of hyperbolized actualization of the conceptual feature of **extraordinary creative abilities** is registered in the investigated biography of Leonardo da Vinci.

The conceptual feature **originality** can also be singled out on the material of the studied biographies:

"*Sometimes called the father of modern science, Isaac Newton* ***revolutionized*** *our understanding of our world*"; **"*Long before his breakthrough work Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica was published, Newton was considered one of England's leading thinkers*".**

Another interesting fact is that Albert Einstein believed that Isaac Newton was ahead of his time, which also foregrounds novelty as a conceptual feature of the concept under study:

"*Einstein credited Isaac Newton, the father of physics and arguably the founder of scientific certainty, with "the* ***greatest advance in thought*** *that a single individual was ever privileged to make." The compliment is not hyperbole: In his Principia and the discoveries that preceded it, Newton single-handedly deciphered more of the universe's enigmas than perhaps any other scientist in history. He* ***revolutionized*** *mathematics, integrated the previously disparate fields of mechanics and astronomy, and thus opened the door to the science of force and motion as we know it*".

The biography of Leonardo da Vinci also underlines that he was ahead of his time and even prophesized the future:

"***A man ahead of his time****, da Vinci appeared to* ***prophesize the future*** *with his sketches of machines resembling a bicycle, helicopter and a flying machine based on the physiology of a bat*"; "*In several different fields, from science to astronomy, he proved to be both* ***innovative and several centuries ahead of his contemporaries***".

The conceptual feature of **originality** is often verbalized by the lexical unit *pioneer*, which foregrounds the fact that da Vinci was the first to use certain techniques in painting etc:

"*His painting of the "Virgin of the Rocks," begun in 1483, demonstrated his **pioneering** use of chiaroscuro – a stark contrast between darkness and light that gave a three-dimensionality to his figures and sfumato – a technique in which subtle gradations, rather than strict borders, infuse paintings with a softer, smoky aura*"; "*He also **pioneered** the use of Chiaroscuro*".

Lexical unit *invent* also foregrounds the conceptual feature of **novelty**: "*He '**invented**' the bicycle, airplane, helicopter, and parachute some **500 years ahead of their time***".

The wide range of interests and trends of da Vinci's works is underlined with the help of hyperbole in the following fragment: "***There seemed to be no limit** in the scope of his interest and work*".

The artist's works are considered valuable as a part of human culture:

"*Today, the "Mona Lisa" hangs in the Louvre Museum in Paris, France, secured behind bulletproof glass and regarded as **a priceless** national **treasure** seen by millions of visitors each year*".

Thus, the following conceptual features of GENIUS have been singled out in the naïve picture of the world (on the material of the analyzed biographies): **extraordinariness** (*greatest, extraordinary*), **intellect** *(innate intellectual abilities, leading mind*), **creative abilities** (*keen on progress beyond what he was taught*), **age** (early childhood), **originality** (***breakthrough,*** *advance in thought*), **value of the results of his work** (*priceless treasure*).

The **scientific picture of the world** is represented in our investigation by the articles in *National Geographic,* the official magazine of the National Geographic Society which focuses on geography, world history, culture etc.

Informative and appealing functions of publicist functional style found their reflection in the headlines of the studied articles, for example, *What makes a genius?, What made Leonardo da Vinci a genius? Can you name these 13 geniuses?, Do you have the traits of a genius?*. Interrogative form of the headlines intensifies attracting of the readers' attention.

First of all, the conceptual feature **extraordinariness** is verbalized here with the help of such lexical units as *exceptional, rare, soar above the rest of us, stood out*:

"*Some minds are so exceptional they change the world. We don't know exactly why these people soar above the rest of us, but science offers us clues*"; "*Throughout history rare individuals have stood out for their meteoric contributions to a field*".

The next conceptual feature – **novelty, originality** – is verbalized here with the help of lexical units *revolutionized, changing the world, scientific breakthroughs*:

"*Einstein* ***revolutionized*** *our understanding of the very laws of the universe*"; "*Instead we can try to understand it by unraveling the complex and tangled qualities – intelligence, creativity, perseverance, and simple good fortune, to name a few – that entwine to create a person capable of* ***changing the world****"*; *"****Scientific breakthroughs*** *like Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection would be impossible without creativity, a strand of genius that Terman couldn't measure*".

Besides, these fragments mention other features of GENIUS – **intellect, creativity, perseverance**.

An interesting explanation of the nature of GENIUS is offered in the following excerpt, according to which the phenomenon of genius is closely connected with the diversity of a person's interests:

"*In all those books, I've noticed that creativity comes from connecting art to science. To be really creative, you have to be interested in all sorts of different disciplines rather than be a specialist. Being curious about everything and curious just for curiosity's sake, not simply because it's useful, is the defining trait of Leonardo"*.

Such conceptual features as **creativity** and **curiosity** can be singled out in the given fragment.

But to become a genius it is necessary to realize one's potential which feature is verbalized by the lexical units: *achievement, contributions*:

"*But monumental intelligence on its own is no guarantee of monumental achievement, as Terman and his collaborators would discover*". "*Throughout history rare individuals have stood out for their meteoric contributions to a field*".

The irrational approach to the nature of genius is reflected in the following conceptual feature, namely: **the unknown power**, as in the

case of a well-known jazz pianist who cannot explain his emotional and psychological state during the performance:

"*This may help explain the astounding performances of jazz pianist Keith Jarrett. Jarrett, who improvises concerts that last for as long as two hours, finds it difficult–impossible, actually–to explain how his music takes shape. But when he sits down in front of audiences, he purposefully pushes notes out of his mind, moving his hands to keys he had no intention of playing. "I'm bypassing the brain completely," he tells me. "I am being pulled by a force that I can only be thankful for*".

The importance of socio-cultural component in the development of a genius is foregrounded in the following context with the help of lexical units *nurture, social and cultural influences*:

"*Genetic potential alone does not predict actual accomplishment. It also takes nurture to grow a genius. Social and cultural influences can provide that nourishment, creating clusters of genius at moments and places in history: Baghdad during Islam's Golden Age, Kolkata during the Bengal Renaissance, Silicon Valley today*".

Thus, the analysis of the publicist texts enabled singling out the following verbalized conceptual features of GENIUS in the English scientific image of the world: **extraordinariness** (*exceptional, rare, soar above the rest of us, stood out);* **originality** (*revolutionized, changing the world, Scientific breakthroughs);* **creativity** (*creative, creativity),* **curiosity** *(curious, curiosity);* **intellect** *(intelligence);* **achievement** (*achievement, contributions);* **an unknown force** (a force); **socio-cultural influence** (*nurture, social and cultural influences*).

CONCLUSIONS

The study of a concept through the language is the most reliable way of linguistic analysis which allows to detect conceptual features and to work out the structural model of the concept. The structure of a concept is manifested through dictionary definitions of the corresponding lexical units and through speech contexts. The linguistic embodiment of the concept GENIUS was considered on the basis of English explanatory dictionaries, specialized encyclopedias, biographies and publicist texts which represent two variants of the English picture of the world, namely, naïve and scientific. The following conceptual features have been singled out: **exclusivity, extraordinariness, intellectual abilities, creative abilities, achievements which were proved, demonstrated, deep**

knowledge of a certain sphere, mastery, independence, endurance, inspiration, fervor, work, originality, young age, force, socio-cultural influence. Such conceptual features as ***extraordinariness, intellect, creativity*** and ***originality*** should be considered ***nuclear*** conceptual features of the concept GENIUS as they are verbalized in all the analyzed sources. Comparing the obtained results (namely the list of cognitive features) with the analysis of the linguistic embodiment (both in language and speech) of the concept under study, we conclude that there is a significant expansion of conceptual features in speech contexts (mainly in scientific discourse).

The prospect of further research is seen in consideration of the verbalization of concept GENIUS in the English artistic discourse.

SUMMARY

The article is dedicated to the investigation of the peculiarities of verbalization of the concept GENIUS in the English language and speech. The research presents main aspects of the study of the phenomenon of ***genius*** in philosophy and psychology. It analyzes definitions of the lexical units *genius* and *prodigy* in the English explanatory dictionaries as well as in specialized encyclopedias. The research singles out conceptual features of the analyzed concept in the popular-science biographies and in articles from *National Geographic*. These sources represent two variants of the English picture of the world, namely, naïve and scientific. The following conceptual features have been singled out: exclusivity, extraordinariness, intellectual abilities, creative abilities, achievements which were proved, demonstrated, deep knowledge of a certain sphere, mastery, independence, endurance, inspiration, fervor, work, originality, young age, force, socio-cultural influence. The nuclear conceptual features proved to be *extraordinariness, intellect, creativity, originality.*

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