

THE CONCEPT OF “CHINA” IN THE UKRAINIAN LINGUISTIC CONSCIOUSNESS: STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION AND PECULIARITIES OF MODERN COMPREHENSION

^aOLENA HURKO, ^bVALERIA KOROLIOVA, ^cIRYNA KOLIIEVA, ^dTETIANA KUPTSOVA

^{a,b}Oles Honchar Dnipro National University, 72, Gagarina Ave., 49010, Dnipro, Ukraine

^{c,d}Dnipro National University of Railway Transport named after Academician V. Lazarian, 2, Lazariana Str., 49010, Dnipro, Ukraine

email: ^ahurko.o.v@gmail.com,

^bvaleria.korolyova2015@gmail.com,

^cirinakolieva79@gmail.com, ^dt.kuptsova@ukr.net

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Abstract: The article investigates the concept of “China” in the Ukrainian consciousness by analyzing the language means of the actualisation of the concept, its lexical components and non-linguistic factors that affect its meaning. The article is based on combining general scientific methods and linguistic research methods, particularly the method of cognitive discursive analysis, the psycholinguistic method of associative experiment, and the method of conceptual analysis. For the representation of the research sampling, statistical techniques are also applied. The concept of “China” in Ukrainian people’s linguistic consciousness has a high cultural status and significant information saturation. The concept of “China” is a territorial concept with a core word-toponym, which aims to comprehensively reflect the national interpretation of the research subject through appeals to the geographical, cultural, and historical realities of the country. The results of the analysis of the concept “China” in the Ukrainian language picture of the world must be useful for further study of actualization of this concept in the Ukrainian and English languages, for the research of the concept in other discourses. The material of the article can be employed at lectures on the course of cross-cultural communication and linguoculturology. The article describes the structural organization of the concept of “China”, represented by using informative, assessment, and associative components – identified verified by the Ukrainian native speakers. The comprehensive revealing of the analyzed concept’s content enables to determine the peculiarities of both the nationwide comprehension of China and those caused by the Ukrainian mentality.

Keywords: Artistic discourse, Linguocognitology, Linguistic conceptualization, The Concept of “China”, Ukrainian consciousness.

1 Introduction

Modern society is characterized by the processes of globalization, reorientation of universal values, and intensification of intercultural communication. These factors of social transformation increase the interest in the long-standing confrontation between East and West as tradition and modernity. Among the geographical concepts that clearly illustrate the image of the East, China comes first to mind. At the same time, it is interesting to reflect in the linguistic consciousness of the European nation ideas about the Asian country, in particular, China. In general, one of the basic universal concepts of any nation is “territory” as the primary concept that was first implemented in the language. Researchers define the territorial concept as basic in the conscience of mankind. The concept of “China” is an element of the territorial linguistic picture of the world, but it has not yet been the object of linguistic research within the Ukrainian-language material, which determines the relevance of our scientific study.

We begin our study from the origin of the concept of “China” in general and its definitions, and then present the interpretation of this concept in the Ukrainian language consciousness. An important feature of the concept is the ability to become a marker of the ethnic picture of the world, to absorb culturological (secular, religious, mythopoetic) meanings, which gives grounds to consider the concept not only a phenomenon of linguistic and cultural, but also cultural and semiotic levels, as the concept is able to reflect the “silent meanings” of cultural data of the widest range of semiotic systems, the main of which is language [33, p. 59].

In a broad interpretation, the concept is an element of the linguistic picture of the world, which allows the collective or individual consciousness to obtain, process, and store a certain

amount of information about the world. The concept is a part of the conceptual system of cognitive linguistics and linguoculturology.

Linguoculturology interprets the concept as a “conditional mental unit aimed at a comprehensive study of language, consciousness and culture” [36, p. 276]. A similar interpretation of the concept is also proposed by T. Kosmeda [16, p. 153], noting that “the concept covers the entire meaning of the word (both denotative-significant, and connotative, and more broadly – pragmatic)”.

Linguocognitology operates with a concept that mostly deals with knowledge, thoughts, and ideas of an average native speaker about a certain real or imaginary object [1, 7, 44]. The concept is perceived as a field structure, which includes the core and the periphery. The core includes a token that represents the name of the concept and its corresponding word forms [49]. The nearest periphery consists of monosyllabic formations, while the far periphery implies the features that characterize the concept in a particular interpretation of native speakers. In this case, we consider it important to distinguish the structure of the concept and its content. The field organization of the concept reflects its semantic level and the value and figurative characteristics of the concept are the basis of structural modeling.

Thus, analyzing the concept of “China,” we interpret it as an information structure of consciousness, organized in a certain way in the unit of memory that contains a set of knowledge about the object of cognition acquired through the interaction of five mental functions of consciousness and unconscious [13, p. 106]. Among the features that characterize the concept, linguists distinguish the following:

- The concept always has language verbalization;
- The concept “belongs” to all representatives of a particular linguistic culture;
- The structure of the concept consists of informational, evaluative, and associative components.

2 Literature Review

The study of toponymic concepts in the Foreign and Slavic scientific tradition is focused primarily on the names of European geographical objects. In particular, the subject of the study was toponym of the concepts of Europe [31, 43], Turkey [2], Spain [28], America [3, 48], Edinburgh [17], Kyiv [4, 11], Ukraine-France [5], London [39], America [3], Podil [45], Spanish [6], Brexit [15, 19, 24, 51], and others. The concept of “China” was studied by Shi [35] from the standpoint of psycholinguistics as a component of the Russian everyday linguistic consciousness.

The problem of geographical concepts is one of the most relevant linguistic studies as a proper perception of the features and peculiarities of a country is very important not only in terms of linguistics but also in terms of successful international communication. Choosing the geographical concept as the subject of their study, researchers try to interpret and construct it in different ways. We make efforts to explain the main directions of the linguistic study of different geographical concepts.

Considering the toponymic concept “Turkey”, Aksoi [2], brings it into correlation with the wider concepts “country”, “state”, “east”, “foreign country”, and at the same time notes that geographical concepts or cluster concepts are not to be filled only with lexicographical definitions. In such research, valuable information is that one which is directly obtained from native speakers and also from mass-media sources.

Analyzing verbalization of the concept “America” in the Ukrainian newspapers of the early 21st century [48] confirms that geographical concept takes on language actualization in

texts in two ways: by means of naming America as a country (the USA, America, United States, States, the United States of America, etc.) and by means of naming American realities (territory, population, artifacts, etc.). The researcher stresses that the concept can be realized in a text not only on the vocabulary level but also on the syntax level.

Brutian [3] proposes the other filling of the concept "America", taking the basis of the research American toponymical names as the components of the megaconcept "America," that vividly images the mentality of Americans. The scientist digs into an etymological and structural analysis of the lexical items and comes to the conclusion that verbalization of the concept "America" through toponymical names demonstrates such mental features of Americans as individualism, leadership, imperial view of life, independence, breaking of stereotypes, dynamism, mobility, allegiance to the law and truth, etc.

Following Nastenka [28], we agree that the concept verbalized by the name of a country can be represented by toponyms, which describes historical, cultural, geographical metamorphoses and authenticity of the national conceptual view of the world. The author notes that proper names enrich and contaminate the universal and national-marked concepts, expand not only the language palette of a country but also generally demonstrate cognition, sociocultural trends of the development of a society. The mega concept "Spain" analyzed by the researcher includes the names *Madrid, Barcelona, Coca, the bridge Ines, Segovia, Pinares de le-Mesa, Ebro, Zaragoza, San Marcos, San Sebastian* etc.

Quite elegant one is the analysis of the concept "London" as an object with maternity beginning [39]. In this research, the concept is analyzed through the prism of "womanhood" and is connected with historical views of the English people of London as an ancestress of the English people, the centre of the English mentality.

Prykhoda [31] represents the analyses of the verbalization of the concept "Europe" in the Ukrainian language and focuses on the important aspect in considering of any concept – is wordbuilding potential. Lexical units such as *evropejskyi, evropejets, evropejstvo, evropejskist, evropejzator* the author represents as concepts-minimums, which simulate the concept-maximum "Europe." At the same time, the diachronic analysis of the perception of the concept "Europe" in the texts of the 19th century and modern periodicals is undertaken. The author comes to the conclusion about a positive axiological potential of the concept and the organic interconnection with evaluative characteristic of the concept "Ukraine."

Analysing the concept "Edinburgh," Kostanski & Puzey [17] underline the importance of the etymological premises of the conceptual analysis. Focusing attention on the lexical item "Edinburgh" as on the brand name of Scotland, the scientists analyze the possibilities of the language playing by means of using the lexical unit.

The Ukrainian geographical realities studied in the conceptual aspect are the names of the city Kyiv and western region Podillia. Vrublevs'ka [45], using five zones of the objectification of the concept "Podillia", fills the structure of the concept in the broadest way. It includes the name Podillia itself, all features of this lexical unit and onomastic names which characterize its territory and anthroponyms reflecting historical past of Podillia, and typical for this region dialectisms. The author points out that field organization of this concept is an appropriate way to interpret its meaning in proper way.

Holikova (2018), structuring the concept "Kyiv", selects a number of patterns concentrated on the key concepts of "time" and "area". In particular, it is anonym code (the names of rivers, districts, streets), architectural code (the names of cathedrals and other buildings), theosophic code (lexical units of *God, church, cross*), coloratura code (color names connected with Kyiv),

socio-regional code (social characteristic of the city), biomorphic code (characteristic of the nature of Kyiv), etc.

When applying this approach in the analysis, the concept may be actualized by whole sentences, and sometimes by the extracts from a text. We consider such extended characterization of the concept to be reasonable in the case of the limitations of the investigated material, so does Holikova [11], describing verbalization of the concept "Kyiv" in the texts of only one of the Ukrainian writers, P. Zagrebnyi.

It should be noted that in the conceptual analyses of the geographical reality, origin basis plays an important role. If the research is based on imaginative literature, the structure of the concept becomes more complicated. This fact is stressed by many scientists, so within the literary concept Skobnikova [36] distinguishes different associative connections which are divided into intra-zone (combinations of associations the concept includes) and extra-zone (combination of associations getting out of the concept).

The concept "China" is also one of the subtypes of the toponym concept as nominates the country. The concept-toponym "China" was analyzed by Shi [35], who actualized its content characteristics, language realization, and reasons affecting its formation. The study is based on the opposition scientific with ordinary consciousness, linguocultural with political concept [52]. One of the conclusions is a statement about the demonization of China in the Russian language, that is made in four ways (with the help of the national symbol – *dragon*, with the help of abstract vocabulary (*expansion*), by means of specific vocabulary (*Chinese cheapness*), by means of standard adjectives (*camming*). In his work Shi (2008) vividly demonstrated the contradiction of the concept verbalization of the concept "China" in the Russian language world views: on the one hand China is described in the positive way as economically developed country, on the other hand, China is described in the negative way as a source of the low-price goods and migrants. Furthermore, there is a range of false stereotypes concerning China as the Asian country.

Linguists rightly point out that only part of the conceptual information has a linguistic "attachment," i.e., ways of its linguistic expression, and part of it is represented in the psyche by mental representations of another pattern – images, pictures, schemes [26, 32, 41, 42]. Toponym concepts illustrate it in the best way [38].

T. Skrebczova states: "The concept is much broader in content than the lexical meaning. It, as a mental national specific formation, has all the data about the object in terms of content, and a set of linguistic means in terms of expression" [37, p. 46-47].

Comparing communication with an iceberg, the "speech"/verbal part of the toponym concept seems to be only superficial and perhaps not the most important part of it. The concept as a complex set of features has different levels of representation in language. The most informative, according to Pimenova [30], is the lexical level, so, based on it, it is possible to identify a set of groups of features that form the structure of a concept [30, p. 20].

Rzhevs'ka adheres to the same opinion, noting that the structure and content of various concepts are manifested through the meaning of language units that represent a particular concept, their vocabulary interpretation, language contexts [33, p. 61].

In modern linguistics it is proved that each individual language has its own way of conceptualizing reality, the division of the surrounding world [8, 10, 29, 40]. According to Miller [25], artistic concepts are evident in both the individual consciousness and the collective unconscious. Thus, the individualized manifestation of the concept, objectified in works of art, directly represents the conceptsphere of a nation, becoming part of it. In this case, we can talk about the specifics of the Ukrainian

verbalization of the concept of “China”, based, in particular, on the Ukrainian artistic discourse and lexicographic sources.

3 Materials and Methods

The article aims to analyze the linguistic reflection of the concept of “China” in the Ukrainian-speaking consciousness, verbalized in lexicographical works and artistic discourse. This aim involves the following tasks: to outline the specifics of the core of the concept of “China”, to identify its main figurative and associative components. The study’s source base was the prose works of Ukrainian literature of the 19th-21st centuries, which recorded verbalizers of the concept of “China” with a total of more than 300 language units, as well as the results of a free-associative experiment conducted among students of Ukraine.

Modern linguistics uses general and special scientific methods [44, 46]. The general scientific methods of our article include methods of definitive and component analysis (to establish the relationship of words and associations with the concept of “China”), descriptive method using techniques of interpretation, comparison and generalization (in the interpretation of verbal means of verbalization of the concept). A separate group of the applied research methods are statistical methods to characterize the relationships between language elements, to identify trends in their functioning. In our article, statistical methods were used to fill the conceptsphere and build a representative sample of the study.

The special scientific linguistic method, i.e., the method of cognitive discursive analysis, makes it possible to study the meaning of language units in their relationship and during the study of verbalizers functioning of the concept of “China” in context. This method includes:

1. Selection of non-textual information and stylistic terms of the text formation influencing the basic component of the concept.
2. Discourse interpretation of the concept in terms of its dependence on the context of the text researched.
3. Semantisation of the language units which objectify the cognitive structure of a text.
4. Defining the meaning diversification of the lexical units and idioms referred to analyzed conceptsphere.
5. Linguocultural and pragmatic generalization of the obtained data for a holistic comprehension of the analyzed concept.

The psycholinguistic method of free associative experiment provides the necessary results to establish the cognitive features of the concept, and also verification of the language material reducing some subjectivity of the researchers while describing language expressions of the concept, establishing its actuality in modern society. The method of associative experiment makes it possible to define individual and collective (common language) associations, describe syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of the conceptual framework, determine associative meaning of the concept “China.”

The associative meaning is the meaning identified by the analysis of distribution of the associative reactions on the word-stimulus. The main method of research of the concept is the conceptual analysis directed at the reconstruction of various structures of knowledge (representations, associations, beliefs) which are a part of its maintenance. The model of the conceptual analysis is the following:

- To determine referent situation the concept belongs to;
- To describe the place of the concept in the language view of the world and language consciousness of a nation through vocabulary (vocabulary definition is a core of the concept);
- To take into account etymological peculiarities of the conceptual core;
- To use literary contexts of different historical periods;

- To compare results with the analysis of the associative relations of the analyzed lexical unit.

4 Results and Discussion

Analyzing the concept of “China” in modern literature, we took into account such a correlated component of its structure as “the geographical name of the country” [20, 22, 27, 46]. The token “China” is the core of the analyzed concept. Referring to lexicographic sources regarding the meaning of the word “China,” its limitations are clear. In modern Ukrainian dictionaries, the token “China” (as well as other geographical names) according to lexicographic practice remains undescribed.

Modern dictionaries of the Ukrainian Language [18, 49] record a number of derivative words associated with China as a geographical name. These are words like *kytaiskyy* ‘Chinese’ – 1. *Prykmetnyk do kytaitsi y Kytai* ‘An adjective to Chinese people and China.’ 2. *Uzhyvaetsia yak skladova chastyna deiakyykh botanichnykh nazv* – ‘Kytaiska aistra’, ‘Kytaiskyy chai’ – is used as an element in some botanical names - China aster. Chinese tea;

kytaitsi ‘the Chinese’ – *narod, shcho stanovyt osnovne naseleння Kytaiu* ‘the people who are the main inhabitants of China’;

kytaicha ‘a Chinese child’ – *dytyna-kytaiets* ‘a Chinese child’; *kytaichuk* ‘a Chinese boy’ – *khlopets-kytaiets* ‘a Chinese boy’; *kytaiianochka* ‘a Chinese girl’ – *zmensheno-pestlyve do kytaiianka* ‘diminutive form to a Chinese girl’;

kytaieznavets ‘specialist in Chinese studies’ – *fakhivets iz kytaistyky*; *kytaist, synoloh* ‘specialist in Chinese studies; sinologist’;

kytaist ‘sinologist’ – *the same, shcho kytaieznavets* the same as ‘sinologist’;

kytaistyka ‘synology’ – *sukupnist nauk, shcho vyvchaiut kytaisku movu ta kulturu*; *synolohiia* ‘a set of sciences that study the Chinese language and culture; sinology.’

At the same time, it should be noted that certain lexical units have lost their connection with the name China in the geographical sense. For example:

kytaika, ‘nankeen’ – *pervisno – gusta, perevazhno synya shovkova tkanyna, yaku zavozyliz Kytayu; potim – bavovnyana tkanyna, yaku vyroblyaly v Rosiyi; originally – thick, predominantly blue silk fabric, which was imported from China; later – cotton fabric, which was produced in Russia’;*

kytaika, ‘nankeen’ – 1. *Morozostiikiy sort yabluni z nevelykymy plodamy. ‘Cold-hardy apple variety that has small fruits.* 2. *Dribni plody tsiei yabluni. Varennia z kytaiky. ‘Small fruits of this apple tree. Jam made of nankeen.’*

In Ukrainian literature, the lexical unit ‘China’ and its derivatives were actively used as early as during 19th-20th centuries in the works of I. Nechuy-Levytsky, I. Franko, V. Maluk and others. The words *Kytai*, ‘China’, *kytaiskyy*, ‘Chinese’, *kytaicha*, ‘a Chinese child’, *kytaika*, ‘nankeen’, *kytaiianochka*, ‘a Chinese girl’ are recorded in the dictionary of Boris Hrinchenko [12]. Namely during this period certain stereotypical features of the analyzed concept are formed. First of all, it is a perception of China as something exotic, distant, for example: *Vin rozpochav velyke pysannia pro filosofiū Kytaiu, nache filosofiia kytaiskoho Konfutsiia y Lao-Dzy bula tsikavishoiu dlia yoho od ridnoho kraiu, od Ukrainy.* ‘He began a great writing about the philosophy of China, as if the philosophy of Chinese Confucius and Lao Tzu was more interesting for him than native land, than Ukraine’ (I. Nechuy-Levytsky); *U Kytaiskomu tsarstvi ye baraban, shcho yak u noho byty, to vyskakuiut ozbroieni kozaky. ‘In Chinese Kingdom there is a drum, and when it is beaten, armed Cossacks jump out’*

(I. Franko); *Koly rokiv piatdesiat chy shistdesiat tomu vasha orda pryshla z Sybiru chy z Kytaiu, urusy dozvolily poselyrsia vam po tsei bik Volhy z tym, shchob vy zakhyshchaly rubezhi Moskovskoi derzhavy, a ne pidavalysia turetskomu sultanu.* 'Fifty or sixty years ago, when your orda came from Siberia or China, the Russians allowed you to settle on this side of the Volga so that you could defend the borders of the Tsardom of Muscovy and not succumb to the Turkish sultan' (V. Malyk).

The specificity of toponymic concepts is that their names are proper names, which, unlike common names, bear significant cultural and historical information for native speakers, that is why the toponymic concept is closely associated with different conceptual areas [9, 14, 21, 47]. Another important feature of the toponymic concept is its subjectivity, because "onomastic information is largely subject to subjective processing" [34, p. 91].

However, it should be noted that the evaluatively neutral informative component of the concept "China" is primarily related to the geographical concept. Summarizing the literary heritage of several centuries, we note that the integral conceptual name is mainly verbalized in the studied texts by the proper name "China" with the meaning "country", e.g.: *Bo vin mav dyplom toho universytetu, vyvchav u Stenfordi heolohiiu ta hirnychu spravu i zghodom, yak hirnychiy inzhener, poklav pochatok svo yemu kapitalu v Avstralii y Kytai.* 'Because he had a degree from this university, studied geology and mining at Stanford and later started his capital in Australia and China as an engineer' (O. Dovzhenko); *Kozhnomu kytaitsevi, shcho vykhav z Kytaiu, ale vsiake slovo "Mao" berezhe i pamiatiae, skladno uzhyvatysia shchodnia z kapitalizmom, i z narodnym inorodnym vydatnym alkoholizmom.* 'Every Chinese person who has left China, but keeps and remembers every word "Mao," finds it difficult to get along with capitalism and folk foreign prominent alcoholism' (S. Zhadan); *Stalosa kilka zemletrusiv – u Yaponii na ostrovi Hokkaido, u Kytai.* 'There were several earthquakes – in Japan on the island of Hokkaido, in China' (L. Kostenko); *A shche tsikavish, shcho v horakh Shveitsarii, v zatyshnomu shale, z yakoho vydno shapku Monblanu, zibralasia sobi druha nevelychka, ale takozh chesna y tsilkom pryvatna kompaniika z Yaponii, Kytaiu, Indii, Avstralii, Afryky.* 'And it is even more interesting that in the mountains of Switzerland, in a cozy chalet, from which you can see the top of Mont Blanc, there another small, but also honest and completely private company gathered from Japan, China, India, Australia, Africa' (V. Vynnychenko).

This means that the lexical unit "China" is used in the texts only to denote the country without having any additional connotations. A similar meaning of the concept "China" is the name with an emphasis on the fact that it is an Asian country, e.g.: *Bytu kishku prodaiut tak tsilkom des u Kytai, z kyshkami i z pechinkamy.* 'A beaten cat is sold somewhere in China, with intestines and livers' (I. Bahrianyi); *Soia, prosto perenesena z Yaponii chy z Kytaiu v ukrainskyi step, z subtropichnoho v kontynentalnyi klimat, zvychaino zh, absurd.* 'It is of course absurd to simply transfer soybeans from Japan or China to the Ukrainian steppe, from subtropical to continental climate' (P. Zahrebelnyi); *Bazel nauchyv yoho alkhimichnii nauksi, yaku Yung pryviz iz Kytaiu.* 'Basel taught him alchemical science, which Jung brought from China' (H. Tiutiunyk).

In a neutral sense, we also fix a circumnuclear lexical unit "Zhongguo" to denote the self-name of China: *Kytaianka ridko zghaduvala davniu mudrist Chzhun-ho. Tilky todi, koly bachyla shchos zrozumile yii i nezbahnenne dlia yevropeitsiv.* 'A Chinese woman rarely mentioned the ancient wisdom of Zhong-guo, but in cases, when she saw something understandable for her and incomprehensible to Europeans' (V. Yeshkiliev).

The far periphery of the concept "China," which is represented by the names of the capital and other cities of this country, has a neutral coloring as well: *A shche v tsei den vidbudetsia vidkryttia litnoi Olimpiady v Pekini.* 'And on this day, the opening of the Summer Olympics in Beijing will take place' (S. Talan);

Shumnyi Shankhai nyzko nad vodoiu dyvytsia v more velykymy budynkamy. 'Close to the water, noisy Shanghai looks into the sea with large houses' (Yu. Yanovskyi); *Astroplan "Misiats-2" buv obladnanyi naisuchasnishymy avtomatychnymy ustanovkamy, skonstruiovanyymi v naukovykh instytutakh Moskvyy, Leninhrada, Kyieva, Pekina, Shankhaia, Varshavy, Budapeshta, Prahy i Sofii.* 'Astroplane "Moon-2" was equipped with the state-of-the-art automatic mechanisms designed in the scientific institutes of Moscow, Leningrad, Kyiv, Beijing, Shanghai, Warsaw, Budapest, Prague and Sofia' (V. Volodymyr).

Toponyms perform the identification function and contribute to the revival of the background knowledge about China in the minds of individuals.

In addition, we come across the names of rivers and mountains of China, which also capture mainly the geographical reality without evaluative connotations, e.g.: *I tekly velevodni Yantszy y Khuankhe.* 'And the Yangtze and the Yellow Rivers flowed' (T. Havryliv); *Nastupnoho razu tse – ne futbol, a misto – trapylosia meni pid samu zaviazku 70-kh, vzhe maizhe na yikhni mezhi z 80-my: studentska praktyka, sny naiavu (z polotamy), kolektyvne zhyttia, zokrema y stateve, v hurtiazii Kharchopromu, a takozh Hidropark i kupannia v zhovtuvatomu, niby yakas tam Khuankhe, Dnipri.* 'The next time it – not a football, but the city – happened to me in late 1970s, close to the turn of 1980s: student internship, wakingdreams (with flights), collective life, including sex, in a dormitory of Food industry, as well as the Hydropark and swimming in the yellowish, as if it were the Yellow River, the Dnipro' (Yu. Andrukhovych); *Vid pidkorennia Dzhomolunhmy meni anitrokhy lehshie ne stato.* 'Climbing Jomolungma didn't help at all' (M. Mednikova).

In this case, the concept predominantly plays descriptive-qualifying rather than figurative-empirical role. China's territorial remoteness, its significant cultural and religious difference from Ukraine – all this influence the way lexical units-verbalizers of the concept are used in the literary text. Even a neutral toponym fixed in the text gives exoticism and emphasizes a certain artistic passage.

Among the anthroponyms that constitute the peripheral zone of the concept, we notice the names of Chinese philosophers and politicians: *A mozhe, yoho zaklykav ktos iz tykh, kto chasto zivliavsia i do noho, i do yoho dida, i tata pislia kilkokh hlechykiv moravskoho vyna – Khrystos, Fridrikh Velykyi, Lao Tszy.* 'Or, maybe, he was called by one of those who often appeared to him, and his grandfather, and father after a few jugs of Moravian wine – Christ, Frederick the Great, Lao Tzu' (T. Prohasko); *Tse Konfutsii razom z Kantom vvazhaly, shcho liudyna po svoii pryrodi zla, i tilky zusyilia rozumu, kultury, osvity robliai yii dobroiu.* 'It was Confucius and Kant who believed that man was evil by nature, and only the efforts of reason, culture, and education make him good' (A. Sirenko); *Velykyi kermanych Mao Tzedun, nasliduiuchy «batka» Stalina, vyryshyv zbuduvaty komunizm shliakhom viddavannia nakaziv.* 'The great leader Mao Zedong, imitating "father" Stalin, decided to build communism by giving orders' (H. Pahutiak).

Thus, the concept of "China" is a territorial concept with a pivotal word-toponym, which aims to reflect in its entirety the national interpretation of the subject of study through appeals to the geographical, cultural, and historical realities of the country.

Usually, the core of the concept "China" is evaluative-neutral, without axiological connotations. However, stereotypical associations of China with wisdom, ancient history and traditions layer evaluative characteristics on the content of this concept. The concept acquires evaluative meaning during verbalization in the language when surrounded by evaluative vocabulary. In other words, being in the evaluative-neutral lexical-grammatical field "China," evaluative vocabulary is able to change its neutrality, giving it either a positive or negative meaning. In this case, there is an expansion of the

conceptosphere. The nuclear lexical unit “China,” when adjectively distributed, forms a circumnuclear zone.

The image of China is revealed through the combination of the name of the concept with various adjectives, which confirm mainly positive or neutral perception of the studied concept, that is realized in artistic discourse, e.g.: *Dlia choho ty pryishov siudy z pidnebesnoho Kytaiu.*

‘Why did you come here from **Heavenly China**’ (R. Ivannychuk); *Hipokrat i Dzhivaka, Halen i Avitsenna, likari drevnoho Kytaiu, Yehyptu, Vavilonu, – naivydatmishi diachi bahatovikovooho svitanku liudskoi kultury, – buly predstavleni v bibliotetsi hrubezyny foliantamy.* ‘Hippocrates and Jivaka, Galen and Avicenna, physicians of **ancient China**, Egypt, and Babylon, – the most prominent figures in the centuries-old dawn of human culture, – were represented in the library by huge folios’ (L. Denysenko); *Todi brytanske admiralteistvo vyrishylo stvoryty na tsomu arhipelazi bazu dlia postachannia boiovykh korabliv, yaki vyrushaly do berehiv velychnoho Kytaiu.* ‘Then the British Admiralty decided to create a base in this archipelago to supply warships that went to the shores of **majestic China**’ (H. Tarasiuk).

Among the adjectives, which are recorded in literary texts, the most commonly used are the following: *bahaty* ‘rich,’ *bahatomilionnyi* ‘multimillion,’ *veletenskyi* ‘giant,’ *velychnyi* ‘majestic,’ *dalekyi* ‘distant,’ *drevnii* ‘ancient,’ *zhovtyi* ‘yellow,’ *zolotyi* ‘gold,’ *imperatorskyi* ‘imperial,’ *komunistychnyi* ‘communist,’ *mudryi* ‘wise,’ *nezbahnenyi* ‘incomprehensible,’ *neprobudymyi* ‘unawakened,’ *pivdemnyi* ‘southern,’ *pidnebesnyi* ‘celestial,’ *sotsialistychnyi*, ‘socialist,’ *starodavnii* ‘ancient,’ *torhovyi* ‘trade,’ *tsyvilizovanyi* ‘civilized,’ etc. The adjectively widespread nomination of China gives a rather comprehensive description of this country and focuses mainly on several realities of the state:

1. The political system of the country: *Vona pochala rozpovidaty pro podvyhy svoho cholovika, yaki svoho chasu zakhyschav batkivshchynu sotsializmu vid sotsialistychnoho Kytaiu ta pryscheplyuvav komunizm voleliubnym uhorstiam.* ‘She began to talk about the exploits of her husband, who once defended the homeland of socialism from **socialist China** and instilled communism in freedom-loving Hungarians.’ (Kapranovbrothers); *Yakshcho v 60-ti khipuvaly, bo tak mozna zminyty svit, to v 70-ti khipuvaly, bo svit zminyty nemozhlyvo – vse beznadiino: i na vichno kryzovomu Zakhodi, i v zahnyvaiuchomu dehraduiuchomu sovku, i marazmatychnomu maoistskomu Kytai.* ‘If, in the 60’s, they hippied because it was possible to change the world, in the 70’s, they hippied because it was impossible to change the world – everything is hopeless: in the eternally crisis-ridden West, in the rotting degrading scoop, and in the marasmic **Maoist China**’ (A. Sirenko); ‘*Velykyi strybok*’ u *komunistychnomu Kytai* pryzviv do velykoho holodu, shcho zabrav na toi svit 43 miliony liudei. ‘The “big leap” in **communist China** has led to a great famine that has claimed 43 million lives’ (G. Pagutyak).
2. Geographical characteristics: *Tse liudske bezmezhhzia take mohutnie, shcho navit hory v malovnychomu Kytai ne taki, yak u vsomu sviti, – vony tut zaokruhleni, tak niby y mertva pryroda pidalasia ne tilky alehorii sontsia, vitriv i vod, ale y alehorii liudskoi dumky, liudskykh prystrastei i fantazii.* ‘This human infinity is so powerful that even the mountains in the **picturesque China** are not like the rest of the world – they are rounded here, as if still life has succumbed not only to the allegory of the sun, winds, and waters, but also to the allegory of human thoughts, human passions and fantasies’ (P. Zagrebely); *Davno kolys, shche do revoliutsii, tikaiuchy vid zlydniv, zabriv Ivan Ivanovych siudy z Pivdennoho Kytaiu v poshukakh zhen-shenia ta tak i lyshyvsia.* ‘Long ago, before the revolution, fleeing poverty, Ivan Ivanovich wandered here from

southern China in search of ginseng and remained’ (O. Dovzhenko).

3. Country with an ancient history: *Mozhna bude zainiatysia musulmansvom, istoriieiu Vizantii, starodavnim Kytaiem, Afrykoiu abo keltamy na krainiak.* ‘You can study Islam, the history of Byzantium, **ancient China**, Africa or the Celts to the extreme,’ (V. Vynnychenko); *Nyvy v silskii hromadi starovynnoho Kytaiu rozpodilialysia tak, shchob n eporushuvavsia zakon Deviatky.* ‘Fields in the rural community of **ancient China** were distributed so as not to violate the law of the Nine’ (M. Rudenko).
4. Apopulouscountry: *Prote pozysyii marksyzmu poky shcho sylni v chotyrmyliardnomu Kytai.* ‘However, the position of Marxism is still strong in China, which has a **population of four billion**’ (V. Savchenko); *Bezsyllia vynykaie todi, koly ty lyshaieshia naodyntsi z kupkoiu takykh samykh pereliakanykh liudei u mistsi, zvidky nemozhna vybratys, khai tse navit tsila kraina, taka, yak nasha Ukraina chy shche bilshyi Kytai.* ‘Powerlessness arises when you are left alone with a handful of the same frightened people in a place from which you cannot get out, even if it is a whole country, such as our Ukraine or even **greater China**’ (G. Pagutyak); *Chynhiskhan i yoho orda vzhe pidkoryly Koreiu, Tybet i veletenskyi Kytai, rozpanakhaly Vietnam i Birnu.* ‘Genghis Khan and his horde have already conquered Korea, Tibet, and **ancient China**, and raided Vietnam and Burma’ (O. Dovzhenko).

At the same time, we should note, that the lexical unit “China” is available in the “Dictionary of connotative proper names” of G. Lukash with the following meaning:

Kytai – derzhava u tsentralnii ta skhidnii Azii. Ofitsiina nazva – Kytayska Narodna Respublika. Naibilsha za chyselnistiu derzhava. Chasto sluhue urbanonimom, poznachaiuchy shchilno zeseleni raiony. ‘China is a country in Central and East Asia. The official name is **the People’s Republic of China**. The largest state is often serving as an urbanonym, denoting densely populated areas’ [23, p. 141].

The connotative emphasis is made on the population of the country, which can be confirmed on the base of the Ukrainian-language artistic discourse: *A cherez te shcho tut u rodynakh vodytsia ne tilky po shestero, a y po shistnadtsiatero ditei, to v nas shche y dosi Tesy nazyvaiut Kytaiem.* ‘And due to the fact that there are not only six, but also sixteen children in families, we still call Tessa **China**’ (M. Stelmah).

Another evaluative feature used by writers is the distant location of China from Ukraine, for example: *Stanom na veresen 1981 roku Leninhrad buv moim Kytaiem, tobo kintsem svitu.* ‘As of September 1981, Leningrad was my **China**, the end of the world’ (Y. Andrukhoanych).

Modern Phraseological Dictionary of Ukrainian [50] fixes a number of idioms with the component “Chinese,” which expands the figurative sphere of perception of the concept “China,” particularly:

kytayska hramota – shchos nedostupne dlia rozuminnia, take, v chomu vazhko rozibratysia; nezrozumile ‘Chinese literacy is something that is difficult to understand, something that is difficult to perceive; incomprehensible’;

do kytayskoi pasky – ironichne znachennia – nikoly ‘to the Chinese Easter cake – ironic meaning – never’;

kytayska stina (kytayskyi mur) – nezdolanna perepona, velykyi barier, shcho pereshkodzhaie rozvytku choho-nebud, zumovliiie tsilkovytu izolovanist choho-nebud ‘the Great Wall of China (Chinese wall) is an insurmountable obstacle, a large barrier that prevents the development of something, causes the complete isolation of something.’

These phraseologies also occur in modern Ukrainian literature and sometimes become the elements of the language game: *Vona vidrazu peretvorilasja na nekontrolovanyi sniad, yakyi v stani protaranyty bud-yaku Kytaisku stinu*. 'It immediately turned into an uncontrolled projectile, which is able to ram any Chinese wall' (K. Skriabin); *Vony keruvaly velycheznoiu imperiieiu, ale robyly tse navpomatsky, zi starechoiu vperstistiu hmuly svoiu liniuu partii, pidminiaiuchy kytaisku mudrist ta stratehiiu kytaiskoju hramotoiu*. 'They ruled a vast empire, but did so by touch, bending their party line with senile stubbornness, replacing Chinese wisdom and strategy with Chinese literacy' (N. Snyadanko). The author creates an antithesis in the last example, contrasting Chinese wisdom with Chinese literacy in the phraseological sense.

The information space of the concept "China," in addition to the actual geographical name, expands the nominations related to the life, history, traditions of this country. In particular, the Ukrainian-language artistic discourse offers the following verbalizers of the concept "China," used with the adjective "Chinese": *stina* 'wall,' *mova* 'language,' *tseremoniia* 'ceremony,' *imperator* 'emperor,' *provintsiia* 'province,' *filosof* 'philosopher,' *portseliana* 'porcelain,' *rukopys* 'manuscript,' *horoskop* 'horoscope,' *likhtaryky* 'lanterns,' *khroniky* 'chronicles,' *hraviura* 'engraving,' *chai* 'tea,' *suputnyk* 'satellite,' *kordon* 'border,' *calendar* 'calendar,' *shovk* 'silk,' *restoran* 'restaurant,' *kvartal* 'quarter,' *honh* 'gong,' *parasolka* 'umbrella,' *kylym* 'carpet,' *sup* 'soup.' *Kachka* 'duck.'

These and other nouns form the far periphery of the concept of "China", for example: *Bude «Milenium na Khreshchatyku» y «Mystysiacholit», flesh-lampy y prozhektory, kytaiski likhtaryky i svitlodiodnyi dyzain*. 'There will be "Millennium on Khreshchatyk" and "Bridge of the Millennium," flash lamps and floodlights, Chinese flashlights and LED design' (Lina Kostenko); *Nevzhe vazhko zdohadatytsia, shcho koly z kamery smertnykiv liudynu vezut za trydeiat zemel, to napevne ne dlia toho, shchob vona vyvchala numizmatyku, ikhtiologiiu chy starodavni kytaiski rukopysy!* 'Is it really hard to guess that when a person is transported from the death cell to thirty-nine lands, it is probably not for him to study numismatics, ichthyology or ancient Chinese manuscripts!' (O. Danchenko); *Temni linii mostu na tli miakyykh obrysiv hir nahaduvaly kytaisku hraviuru, i chym vony stavaly tonshymy, tym raziuchishoiu bula podibnist*. 'The dark lines of the bridge against the soft outlines of the mountains resembled a Chinese engraving, and the thinner they became, the more striking the resemblance' (V. Nestaiko); *De ta kytaiska stina, shcho mohla by vidhorodyty tsyvilizovanu Yevropu vid dykoho Skhodu*. 'Where is the Great Wall of China, which could separate civilized Europe from the Wild East' (V. Slapchuk); *U turystychnykh putivnykakh mozna prochytaty, shcho nazva tsia poiasniuietsia narodzhenniam zasnovnyka u rik Tyhra, khocha bilshist turystiv i sumnivaetsia, shcho na toi chas kytaiski horoscopy vze vstyhly dosiahnuti takoi popularnosti*. 'In tourist guides you can read that this name is due to the birth of the founder in the year of the Tiger, although most tourists doubt that at that time the Chinese horoscopes have already achieved such popularity' (N. Snyadanko).

The periphery of the concept of "China" can include the concepts that denote the cultural and historical features of the country. Among them, there are Chinese Feng Shui, Wushu, Wok, Qigong, Yin and Yang, etc., for example: *Tse – «kutochok slavy» po fen-shui – Pet-Pet neshchodavno zakhopyvsia tsieiui teoriiu*. 'This is the "corner of glory" according to Feng Shui – Pet-Pet recently became interested in this theory' (I. Rozdobudko); *Bozhe, yakby yomu kto ranishe skazav, shcho os tak zakadryt yoho tsia "in" (zhinoche, nehatyvne nachalo za kytaiskoju filosofiiu), vin takoho poslav by delikatno pid try chorty, a vulharno – to y znachno dali*. 'God, if someone had told him earlier that this was how that "yin" (feminine, negative principle according to Chinese philosophy) would pick him up, he would have delicately sent them to hell, and vulgarly - even much further.' (B. Antonenko-Davidovich); *Zaraz Vani tezh ne bulo – razom zi svoim bratom Yehoram vony zakhopylytsia*

kytaiskoju himnastykoju tsyhun. 'Now Vanya was also gone - together with his brother Yegor, they became interested in Chinese qigong gymnastics' (L. Deresh); *Obydvi yoho chastyny – zhinocha i cholovicha, liva i prava, in i yan – pochaly movchazni liubovni perehovory*. Both his parts - female and male, left and right, yin and yang- began silent love talks (L. Klimentko).

The only negative connotation is characterized by the concept of "China" in terms of production of low-quality goods. For example: *I shkandybala cherez nabyti turetskym, kytaiskym nepotrebom salony mahazyni*. And was dragging through the Turkish, Chinese salons of shops filled with useless things (G. Tarasyuk); *Ale na te ukrainizovani kytaiski futbolky z imitatsiamy vyshyvky, yakii koshtuiut nedoroho i ne potrebuut prasuvannia*. But for that Ukrainianized Chinese T-shirts with imitation of embroidery, which are inexpensive and do not require ironing (Y. Kononenko); *Ya zaishov na zapravku i vybrav naideshvshkytaiske himentse z nazvoiu "Zoloty Kin"*. I went to the gas station and chose the cheapest Chinese shit called "Golden Horse" (K. Skriabin).

The evaluative marking of this part of the informative conceptual space depends on the depicted epoch: the more modern the events depicted in the work, the more negative axiological characteristics the concept has. If the text reflects the events of the middle of the twentieth century, the Chinese products have a positive assessment, for example: *Termo! Fabrychnyi Kytai! Bilsh nide takyyh klasnykh ne znaidete*. 'Thermo! Factory-made China! You will not find such cool things anywhere else' (Luko Dashvar); *U yakisnykh kytaiskyykh pukhovyykh, vovniannykh shpakhakh ta khustkakh – nemov lytsari u boiovykh obladunkakh*. 'In high-quality Chinese feather jackets, woolen hats and headscarves – like knights in battle armor' (I. Rozdobudko).

In general, in modern literature, we can see the opposition of the concepts of "China" (as an illustration of Asia) and "Europe" (or any European country), for example: *A maiuchy v svoiemu rozporiadzhenni vsi resursy Kytau, my pochmemo zavoiuvaty Indiiu, Malu Aziiu, Tsentralnu Aziiu i navit Yevropu*. 'And having all the resources of China, we will begin to conquer India, Asia Minor, Central Asia, and even Europe' (O. Donchenko); *Saryi hraf movchky sydyt u foteli, vazhko zvisyvsy ruku z poruchchia Yepyoskop uratyv svoiu povazhnist i vrochystist, vin mitsno trymaie kutsentskoho hertsaha za hudzkyu y serdyto dovodyt yomu, shcho kytaiska cherva ye zahroza vsii yevropeiskii kulturi*. 'The old count sits silently in an armchair, his hand hanging heavily from the railing. The bishop has lost his respect and solemnity, he holds the little duke by the button and angrily proves to him that the Chinese worm is a threat to all European culture' (V. Vynnychenko); *Use-taky dyvovyzhni liudy tsi kytaitsi: vony zdobuly sobi slavu tym, shcho ne linuvalytsia zapysuvaty, ukrainsi zh ne zavdavaly sobi takoho klopotu – yakshcho y peredavaly svoim nashchadkam yakus mudrist, to zazvychai usno*. 'After all, these Chinese are amazing people: they gained fame by not being lazy to record, while Ukrainians did not cause themselves such trouble - even if they passed some wisdom to their descendants, it was usually orally' (V. Slapchuk); *Na tykh novykh liudei ya dyvlyusia, yak yevropeiets na kytaitsiv, ne rozrizniaiuchy yikhnykh oblych*. 'I look at those new people as a European to the Chinese, not distinguishing their faces' (R. Ivanychuk).

Sometimes such an opposition, the difference between Europeans and Asian nations becomes a stylistic device in the literary text. For example, in the work "Hieroglyph of Love," L. Klimentko saturates the text with Asian words, including Chinese anthroponyms, in order to convey the difficulties of the main character who works in an Asian bank in communication with his colleagues:

Dlia Khrysti bulo velykym chelendzhem rozrizniat ysvoikh spivrobotnykiv na oblychchia, a zapamiatovuvaty yikhni imena – y pohotiv bulo spravoiu nerealnou, tomu vona kozhnomu davala pryzvykska vidpovidno do toho, yakii asotsiatsii vony u nei vyklykaly. Tak, u nei v banku vze buli i svii Mao Tzedun, i

Lao Tszu, *i Vasabi*, *i Bonzai*, *i navit Vietnamska Zirochka*. Tak, u zapamiatovuvanni imen vona bula bezporadna, zate na tsyfry u nei bula fenomenalna pamiat. It was a great challenge for Hrystia to distinguish her employees by their faces, and to remember their names was impossible, so she gave everyone nicknames according to the associations they evoked in her. Yes, she already had her own **Mao Zedong**, **Lao Tzu**, Wasabi, Bonsai, and even the Golden star balm in the bank. Yes, she was helpless in memorizing names, but she had a phenomenal memory for numbers (L. Klimenko).

The difference between the Chinese and European nations affects the fact that ideas about the toponymic concept "China" due to metaphorical conceptualization is connected in the associative aspect primarily with the following concepts:

1. China as a farness: *V dalekim Kytai, pid chuzhym nebom?* 'In distant China, under the strange sky?' (O. Dovzhenko); *Ocholiui nas i vedy iz pohanoi tsiiei zemli v daleku Pidnebesnu imperiiu – u Kytai*. 'Head us and lead us from this bad land to the distant Celestial Empire – to China' (M. Vingranovskiy).
2. China as a difference (of the culture, the religion, traditions): *Sohodni liudstvo znaie zahadkovyi aromat kytaiskoi kultury*. 'Today, mankind knows the mysterious aroma of Chinese culture' (P. Zagrebelyi); *Tse zakon, tak samo ochevydnyi i bezimennyi, yak ote kytaiske dao, yake ne mozhe buty nazvane slovamy, bo nazva ne dao – uzhe ne dao*. 'This is a law as obvious and nameless as the Chinese Tao, which cannot be called in words, because the Tao is no longer Tao' (K. Moskalets).
3. China as a wisdom: *Kytai planuie na sto rokov upered*. China plans for a hundred years ahead (L. Deresh); *Mozhlyvo, poiednannia paleoaziiskikh elementiv, altaiskikh nomadiv ta avstraneziiskikh "narodiv moria" Patsefidy i porodylo tsiu patriarkhalnist (na protyvahu izolovanosti Yaponii z yii perezhytamy matriarkhatu ta zanadto vzhe davnoi tsyvilizovanosti Kytaiu)*. 'It is possible that the combination of Paleo-Asian elements, Altai nomads and Austronesian "peoples of the sea" of Pancephida gave rise to this patriarchy (as opposed to the isolation of Japan with its remnants of matriarchy and China's long-ago civilization)' (A. Sirenko).

All these figurative components are differential parts of the concept of "China," which allow verbalizing the dominant meaning of "country." Expanding the analyzed conceptsphere, we can name the concepts with which the nuclear component is most closely correlated – the token "China," in particular: religion, philosophy, food, medicine, e.g.: *Pann atsytuvala yomu Nitsshe, Dzheffersona i Vashynhtona, Hrushevskoho iPetliuru, kytaiskikh filosofiv*. 'The young girl quoted him Nietzsche, Jefferson and Washington, Hrushevsky and Petliura, Chinese philosophers' (G. Tarasyuk); *Mozhlyvosti naukovoii medytyny vycherpani, to chy ne dopomozhut empirychni metody narodnoi medytyny Kytaiu?* 'The possibilities of scientific medicine are exhausted, so will not the empirical methods of Chinese folk medicine help?' (M. Dashkev); *Abozh koly u kytaiskomu restorani trapylasia vahitina ofitiantka z sylnym toksykozom, yaka nemohla navit dyvytysia na stravy*. 'Or when a pregnant waitress happened to be in a Chinese restaurant with severe toxicosis, who could not even look at the food' (the Kapranov brothers).

The analyzed texts made it possible to speak about the dominance of the cultural component of China's perception over the political one. Modern texts reproduce mainly the cultural space of the conceptual sphere "China," ignoring the neutral layer of the concept, verbalized by its political component of meaning.

The name of the people living in China also contributes to the expansion of the analyzed conceptsphere. The tokens "Chinawoman," "Chinaman," "Chinese" belong to the closest

periphery of the concept of China, e.g.: *U svoiemu viddili v Zhenevi vin pratsiuuvav bich-o-bich z kytaitem, vid yakoho, mabut, pereiniav deiaki mimichni tradytii tosho velkykoho vvichlyvoho narodu*. 'In his department in Geneva, he worked side by side with a Chinaman, from whom he apparently inherited some facial expressions of these great polite people' (V. Slapchuk); *V tsomu charivnomu prymorskomu mistechku ya poznaiomysia z kytaiankoiu Li Tszian*. 'In this charming seaside town, I met Chinawoman Li Jiang' (V. Nestaiko); *Kytaitsi – nashchadky naidavnishoi tsyvilizatsii, a tse oznachaie, shcho vony znaiut, chym use tse skinchytisia*. 'The Chinese are descendants of the most ancient civilization, which means that they know how it will all end' (O. Mikhed).

Quite often these peripheral elements make it possible to outline the figurative perception of the analyzed concept, introducing Chinese folk aphoristic sayings and proverbs into the texts: *Nu, dali, ya kkazhu kytaitsi, "chym vyshe pidimaieshia v horu, tym bilshhe vona stae"*. 'Well, then, as the Chinese say, "the higher you go up the mountain, the bigger it becomes"' (D. Bilyi); *Sorok sorokiv tvortsiv sorok lit pysatymut svoi hrubezni tomy, ale ne skazhut u nykh pro chas chohos znachymishoho, anizh davno skazaly drevni kytaitsi: "Shvydko plyne zemne zhyttia, proplyve u myt vono."* 'Forty creators will be writing their huge volumes for forty years, but they will not tell them about the time of something more significant than the ancient Chinese said a long time ago: "Earthly life is fast flowing, it will instantly pass"' (V. Drozd).

Thus, the field organization of the concept "China" is the best way to reveal the meaning of the concept, structuring its linguistic objectification by several zones (nucleus – token "China," sub-nuclear area – adjective phrases with a dominant "China," near periphery – tokens "Chinaman," "Chinawoman," "Chinese," far periphery – the historical and geographical realities of the country, Chinese, phrases with the adjective "Chinese").

To outline the associative component of the concept of "China," we conducted a directed associative experiment, which aimed to capture the associations in the linguistic consciousness of diverse gender individuals on language activity. To obtain the data, 150 females and males who are students of Oles Honchar Dnipro National University have been interviewed. The experiment period was October-November 2019. Respondents were asked the questions "Give the first three associations to the stimulus word 'China' and give your definition of what China is." As a result, 873 reactions have been obtained from the respondents, which have been analyzed statistically and expanded the associative conceptsphere of "China." The analysis of the most frequent answers, which have been thematically grouped, has made it possible to identify and analyze the following aspects of the concept of "China":

1. Populated country: *velyke naseleattia* 'large population,' *bahato liudei* 'many people,' *huste naseleattia* 'dense population,' *tma* 'mass,' *mehapolisys* 'megacities,' *murashnyk* 'anthill,' *more liudei* 'sea of people.' Let us note that respondents do not perceive a significant number of the Chinese population as something negative, in contrast to the Russians. A study by Shi [35], which is based on a similar survey of Russians, found that such a large Chinese population is perceived negatively by most Russian respondents [35, p. 137].
2. High level of the development of the country: *masshtabnist* 'scale,' *potuzhnist* 'power,' *teknolohii* 'technologies,' *bahatstvo* 'wealth,' *rozvytok* 'development,' *innovatsiia* 'innovation,' *potuzhna ekonomika* 'powerful economy,' *promyslovist* 'industry,' *khmarochosy* 'skyscrapers,' *vyrobnytstvo* 'production,' *teknika* 'equipment,' *suchasnist* 'modernity,' *liderstvo* 'leadership,' *potuzhna derzhava* 'powerful state,' *hroshi* 'money,' *kolosalnyi potentsial* 'colossal potential.' Again, this associative link gives a positive characterization of the concept.

3. Cultural characteristics of the country: *chervonyi kolir* 'red,' *'kraina pidnebesia* 'the country of heaven,' *kytayskyi novyi rik* 'Chinese New Year,' *davnia kultura* 'ancient culture,' *festival* 'festival,' *panda* 'panda,' *kolorytnyi odiah* 'colorful clothes,' *lokshyna* 'noodles,' *rys* 'rice,' *hierohlify* 'hieroglyphs,' *drakon* 'dragon,' *chai* 'tea,' *kham* 'temple,' *pahoda* 'pagoda,' *likhtaryky* 'lanterns.' Some of these reactions may verbalize the broader concept of "Asia" and relate to Asian exotics in general.
4. Characteristics of the Chinese as a nation: *pratsyovytist* 'hard work,' *dystsyplina* 'discipline,' *vuzki ochi* 'narrow eyes,' *spokiini* 'calm,' *chorne volossia* 'black hair,' *malenki* 'small,' *nyzkyi zrist* 'short,' *modni* 'fashionable,' *rozum* 'intelligence,' *chemnist* 'courtesy,' *priyemni* 'pleasant,' *odnomanitnist* 'monotony,' *vyvazhenist* 'balance,' *mudryi narod* 'wise people,' *tytanichna pratsia* 'titanic labour,' *vykhovanist* 'decency,' *vvichlyvist* 'politeness,' *posmishka* 'smile.' Among their own names, only a few were associative: *Pekin* 'Beijing,' *Shaolin* 'Shaolin,' *Dzheki Chan* 'Jackie Chan,' *Velyka kytayska stina* 'the Great Wall of China,' *Shankhai* 'Shanghai,' *Aziia* 'Asia,' *Ali Express* 'Ali Express.'

Some reactions to the word-stimulus "China" of the respondents, who confused it with another Asian country, are erroneous, e.g.: *kimono*, *geisha*, *sushi*, *sakura*, *anime*. Thus, the associative layer of the concept is represented by common and proper names associated by Ukrainian speakers with China.

The second question in the survey concerned the definition of China. Analysis of the texts with answers showed the presence of different interpretations of the name "China," in particular:

1. Geographical (state in East Asia);
2. Demographic (largest country in terms of population);
3. Economic (highly developed country);
4. Evaluative (a state with ancient traditions, high culture). In this case, the second and third perceptions of China prevail. Here are some answers of respondents (in parentheses the sex and age of respondents are indicated):

Kytai – tse aziiska rozvynena krain az vysokym zrostanniam ekonomiky, velykoiu kilkistiu naselennia, davnoiu kulturoiu. 'China is an Asian developed country with high economic growth, large population, ancient culture' (male, 21 years old).

Kytai – tse kraina u Skhidnii Azii, de vysoki tekhnolohii poiednuitsia zi starodavnimy tradytsiiamy. 'China is a country in East Asia, where high technology is combined with ancient traditions' (female, 20 years old).

Kytai – tse suchasna vysokorozvynena kraina z naibilshoiu kilkistiu naselennia. 'China is a modern highly developed country with the largest population' (female, 22 years old).

Kytai – tse shvydkyi rozvytok, poshyrenist usim svitom, kraina, de liudy vpevneni u s voiemu maibutnomu. 'China is a rapid development, a worldwide spread, a country where people are sure of their future' (female, 20 years old).

Among the evaluative characteristics, we observe only positive connotations, which in some places are quite subjective and figurative:

Kytai – tse prekrasna skhidna kraina z osoblyvoiu kulturoiu, etnohrafiiu, shcho ne skhozha na sloviansku, spovidnie vykhovannia vysokoho patriotyzmu sered molodi (cholovik, 22 roky). 'China is a beautiful eastern country with a special culture, ethnography, not similar to the Slavic, professes the education of high patriotism among young people' (male, 22 years old).

Kytai – tse kraina, de skhodyt sontse, kvitnut kvity y pakhne svobodoiu. 'China is a country where the sun rises, flowers bloom and it smells like freedom' (female, 20 years old).

Kytai – tse moia mriia, tse kraina, de harmoniino spivisnuit liudyna i pryroda, tradytsii ta innovatsii, mynule y maibutnie. 'China is my dream, it is a country where human and nature, traditions and innovations, past and future coexist harmoniously' (female, 23 years old).

5 Conclusion

Thus, the verbalization of the spatial concept of "China" in the Ukrainian language consciousness is caused by the peculiarities of China's general perception and the actual Ukrainian mentality. The structural organization of the concept "China" is represented by informational, evaluative, and associative components-identifiers, verified in native speakers of Ukrainian and aimed at comprehensive disclosure of the analyzed concept's content.

The concept of "China" in Ukrainians' linguistic consciousness has a high cultural status, mostly positively colored, is characterized by significant information saturation. At the same time, China remains unknown and distant to Ukrainians, which is confirmed by the results of an associative experiment in which some respondents confused the realities of other Asian countries with Chinese ones. The Ukrainian youth also demonstrates the negative connotation associated with the quality of Chinese goods present in artistic discourse.

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