THE METHODOLOGY OF LINGUISTIC RESEARCH IN MODERN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Victor Nikitovich STRAUSOV
Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education “Pyatigorsk State University”, Russia

Svetlana Konstantinovna STRAUSOVA
Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education “Pyatigorsk State University”, Russia

Zaur Aslanovich ZAVRUMOV
Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education “Pyatigorsk State University”, Russia

Arega Mikhailovna AKOPYANTS
Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education “Pyatigorsk State University”, Russia

ABSTRACT
The essence of research methods plays a pivotal role in the theory of knowledge. New knowledge, leading to a change in scientific paradigms, often emerges at the intersection of related sciences. These processes are particularly evident not only in the natural sciences, but also in the liberal arts and humanities, including linguistics. Central to the entire discipline of linguistics is the fact that there is one notable feature. For decades structural-semiotic methodology has not gone beyond the framework of studying the language system. There is much evidence that nowadays this methodology consolidates with structural linguistics. The article presents a careful review of this process. Increased attention to the language as a system of opposing values offers its positive and negative sides. Our major finding is that the improvement of structural analytical methods resulted in increasingly reliable knowledge of the language system, but at the same time inhibited its penetration into other areas of knowledge. The creative extrapolation of structural principles into narratology and beyond linguistics areas confirmed the hypothesis about the universal significance of binary symbols for human culture. At the same time there is a synthesis of structural linguistics ideas, as well as semantics insights, and pragmatics interpretations. At the heart of our understanding of modern semiotic systems’ research is the symbiosis of the ideas of structural and cognitive linguistics.

Keywords: variant, invariant, relations among constants, binary semantic opposition, structural-semiotic model, concept.

INTRODUCTION
Research into structural-semiotic methodology has a long history. The foundations of this approach emerged from the works describing structural linguistics which arose as a special direction in linguistics in the first half of the 20th century. Early examples of research into structural semiotics included the works by F. de Saussure (1977), L. Hjelmslev (1959), H. Uldal (1949), and V. Brøndal (1939). There is much evidence that any language in structural linguistics functions as a sign, a semiotic system, and structurally forms a network of dependencies and oppositions between the elements of the system. In its most general form, the method of structural analysis assumes a consistent division of the text into smaller and smaller parts. The division stops at the point where further indivisible language elements emerge, of which a finite number of infinite numbers of signs and texts arise.
Historically, the main research investigating the factors associated with structural linguistics and their application to the field of phonology were the works by N.S. Troubetzkoy, R.O. Jacobson and S.I. Kartsevskii. The most famous work by N.S. Troubetzkoy “Fundamentals of phonology” contains the basic concepts of structural phonology, i.e., language phonemes form a system of signs in which the semantic distinctive function of a language sound realizes itself only as a part of a phonological opposition (Troubetzkoy, 2000).

At the initial stage of development, much of the structural linguistics research was focused on identifying and evaluating the language structure. Experts developed methods and techniques in phonology and further extrapolated them to other levels and areas of the language: morphological, syntactical, and semantic. Over time, the structural-semiotic methodology penetrated various areas of linguistics and other liberal arts and humanities, i.e., literary criticism, art history, ethnology, history, sociology, psychology. As G.K. Kosikov points out, structuralism in liberal arts and humanities emerged due to the achievements of linguistics of Saussure’s and post-Saussure’s epochs (Kosikov, 2000).

METHODS
We have utilized several techniques to conduct the comparative analysis of structural-semiotic and cognitive methods analyzing the texts of different genres. The benefit of this approach is that it offers valuable data to measure the effectiveness of the points under analysis and supplies necessary data for a careful methodological review.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
What we know about structuralism in non-linguistic areas is largely based on the works by Cl. Lévi-Strauss who offered the methodological transfer of structural linguistics tools to non-linguistic material. Of much importance is his famous theoretical thesis that culture has a structure identical to the structure of language (Lévi-Strauss, 1958). However, Cl. Lévi-Strauss warns the representatives of liberal arts and humanities from literary following the linguistic method. Analyzing the system of kinship of various ethnic groups, he points out that the terms of kinship do not interrelate to phonemes. In his investigation he states that phonemes and terms of kinship have only one feature which is in common, i.e., they both form an ordered system. According to Cl. Lévi-Strauss, an ethnologist can use the linguistic data describing differential signs of kinship terms, having subsequently built them into certain oppositions. At the same time, the researcher assumes that kinship system does not exist only in words. Kinship emerges in real relations among individuals, related by kinship. The study of these relationships can essentially supplement the linguistic data of kinship terms and form the set of differential signs of kinship and the structure of oppositions that really determine the kinship system, e.g., positive rules for marriages – negative rules for marriages; I – other (different); symmetrical – asymmetrical marriages (Lévi-Strauss, 1949).

A few years later Cl. Lévi-Strauss undertook an equally successful attempt to use the structural-semiotic methodology in the analysis of myths (Lévi-Strauss, 1955; 1962). His work “Mythologiques: le cru et le cuit” (Lévi-Strauss, 2006), in our opinion, is the best example of this innovative methodological approach. As a basis for the analysis, the French anthropologist takes on one myth which is best known and typical for all members of the Borroro tribe. This is the so-called referential myth, in relation to which the researcher has described other myths of the same tribe and the myths of neighboring communities that have historical or geographical connections with the owners of the reference myth.

The primary hypothesis on which Lévi-Strauss rests is as follows – every single myth is nothing but a partial realization of an abstract scheme, a structure existing in the minds of many people who have a direct or indirect relationship to a single cultural historical process. The identification of the mental structure is only possible while “relying on the relationship of mutual explanation between many myths” (Lévi-Strauss, 2006).
According to Cl. Lévi-Strauss, myths include three components which are as follows: the message, that is, the content of the myth (the surface structure), the carcass – the totality of properties that remain unchanged in several myths, and the codes – the system of functions inherent in each myth. In one case, the code is an olfactory code (not rotten – rotten), in another – auditory (noisy – a tender address), in still other - tactile (hard - soft), etc. (Lévi-Strauss, 2006). Elementary structures of myths are binary semantic oppositions which are not amenable to further dismemberment. As a result, Cl. Lévi-Strauss concludes that the reference myth is a developed transformation of other myths and, consequently, it is possible to reduce all myths to a finite number of the simplest types. The identification of binary oppositions is the most important stage.

There is much evidence that in his ethnographic works Cl. Lévi-Strauss goes back to the principles of structural linguistics and relies heavily on observations of oppositions. There is a growing body of literature where the ethnographer reflects over dual forms of social organization of tribes and totemic classifications.

Even though Cl. Lévi-Strauss continuously reminds of the methodological principles of the study of myths, referring the reader to his previous works, one cannot fail to notice in his reflection many parallels with the methodology by V.I. Propp. We strongly believe that Propp’s “ Morphology of the Tale” marked the beginning of the structural and typological study of narrative texts of various genres long before the appearance of Lévi-Strauss’s work “Mythologies: raw and cooked”. Interestingly, V.I. Propp calls his method structural-typological for two reasons. Typological nature of the method is evident from the fact that he analyzes not one, but several dozens of Russian fairy tales to reveal their typologically relevant signs. The concept of structure does not stem from the theoretical heritage of structural linguistics. It comes from botany. Speaking on the morphology of the tale, V.I. Propp draws lines of similarity between botanic structures and tales’ structures (Propp, 1928). The researcher argues that it is possible to analyze the forms and structures of fairy tales with the same accuracy, using appropriate linguistic tools, as in case with the study of organic plants.

In his influential research V.I. Propp sets out that the simple elements of a fairy tale are the characters and their commitments and actions. In these simple elements there are constants and variables. The question raised by the study is idea that the variable elements are names of actors, their attributes, ways of performing actions. They change from a fairy tale to a fairy tale. The actions and functions of the characters remain unchanged. This function of a constant value goes unchanged from a fairy tale to a fairy tale. Therefore, to study the morphology and the structure of the tale, a researcher must pay attention to the characters’ functions and not to their names and means they use to realize their functions (Propp, 1928). In his comprehensive work, V.I. Propp proposes the idea that the researcher of a fairy tale highlights the multiplicity of characters, ways, and methods of implementing their functions. Hence, fairy tales are distinguished by their amazing diversity, colorfulness, and multiplicity. But behind this multiplicity and diversity of fairy tales there is a certain structural monotony embodied in the functions of the characters (Propp, 1928).

V.I. Propp argues that the sequence of functions in fairy tales is not accidental. It is strictly the same. Determining the regularity of the sequence of functions, the researcher, gradually restores their structure and morphology, to further determine the structure of functions. The analysis describes which tales refer to the same type of functional structures and which to different types (Propp, 1928). Analyzing a hundred Russian fairy tales, V.I. Propp concluded that all fairy tales were of the same type, since they had the same order of functions.

Now we proceed to the comparative description of research methodology used by Cl. Lévi-Strauss to describe myths and the methodology of studying fairy tales by V.I. Propp. Both researchers point out that myths and fairy tales are diverse in their content. However, they have some set of properties that remain unchanged in a variety of myths and fairy tales. Cl. Lévi-Strauss calls these constants the carcass of the myth, while V.I. Propp describes them as the functions of the characters. Cl. Lévi-Strauss concludes that the reference myth is nothing more than the developed transformation of other
myths, and their diversity is generated by a change in the characters of the myth and a system of different codes that are realized in binary semantic oppositions peculiar to this or that community. Interestingly, although V.I. Propp does not operate with the concept of a reference tale but he also believes that all fairy tales are transformations, metamorphoses, verbal versions of the same structure (Propp, 1928). The concepts of Russian and French researchers differ only in the question of what generates a variety of options. Cl. Lévi-Strauss appeals to cultural codes and metamorphoses of mythological characters, while V.I. Propp outlines the metamorphosis of fairy-tale characters and the ways of performing functions.

Some experts in the field of structural narratology tend to ascribe to V.I. Propp one more principle, i.e., the relationship among parts of the fairy tale (Bremont, 2000). For example, C. Bremont believes that the structure of a fairy tale is a set of stable relations both among individual parts of a fairy tale, and among parts and a whole (Bremont 2000). However, evidence suggests that V.I. Propp highlighted only the significance of the character’s function in the deployment of the main plot of the tale. It was extremely important for him to establish how the basic storyline of the fairy tale developed, its basic structure. He understood that in addition to the main story in tales, there were secondary storylines, which did not change the basic structure. At the initial stage of the study, they can be neglected. Therefore, V.I. Propp does not single out this principle among the basic principles of its methodology, although he concludes that the function C follows from the function B, which in turn follows from the initial function of A, that is, it establishes a linear sequence of basic functions of the basic structure. But it is this straightforward sequence of basic functions, proposed by V.I. Propp, that becomes one of the objects of criticism, coming from C. Bremont (Bremont, 2000) and Cl. Lévi-Strauss (Lévi-Strauss, 2000).

The current study has found that developing his narrative grammar (Bremont, 1973), C. Bremont refuses from a one-line fixed sequence of functions in the text. He offers a model of narration, in which there are alternative plot lines associated with secondary characters and their functions, whose actions change the initial course of the plot’s development. This experience of structural analysis of the text is also presented in the research by A.J. Greimas (Greimas, 1966). At the same time C. Bremont understood the true value of V.I. Propp’s pioneering research, noting that his “Morphology of the Tale” had the value of a theoretical source, which initiated the structural study of narrative texts. All subsequent researches in this direction either borrow the method of V.I. Propp, introducing some minor adjustments, or completely ignore it (Bremont, 2000). Cl. Lévy-Strauss did not belittle V.I. Propp’s contribution. Rejecting the assertions of Pirkova-Jacobson that he allegedly applied and developed the method of V.I. Propp in his work “Mythologies: raw and cooked,” Cl. Lévi-Strauss, however, did not underestimate V.I. Propp’s enormous contribution and did not question the priority on the discovery of the method (Lévi-Strauss, 2000).

Sadly enough, for a long time V.I. Propp remained unnoticed and unclaimed. Only after the publication of another classic work “Russian Agrarian Holidays”, dedicated to the Eastern Slavic rituals of the calendar cycle (Propp, 1995), his method of structural analysis of folklore narratives became the subject of a wide scientific reflection. In this book V.I. Propp applied the same method as in the “Morphology of the Tale”, however, using ethnographic materials this time. The researcher convincingly proved that the Russian agrarian holidays also partly consisted of constants, similar elements, sometimes identical, sometimes decorated differently in this or that description of the holiday (Propp, 1995).

Since this time, the structural-semiotic method flourished in many areas of liberal arts and humanities, including the analysis of small forms of folklore – spells, superstitions, proverbs, sayings, riddles (Etnolingvistika tekstа 1988). There is a growing body of published theses and preliminary materials of scholars such as V.N. Toporov, E.M. Meletinskii, A.K. Baiburin, T.A. Agapkina, S.M. Tolstaia. Of much importance is the article by Vyach.Vsev. Ivanov, in which he describes the synthesis of structural research proper and research in the field of semantics, the theory of speech acts and pragmatics, and cognitive linguistics (Ivanov, 1988).
Of great interest to us is the structural-semiotic methodology of studying small forms of folklore, used in the works by G.L. Permiakov. In his study of proverbial signs, he makes almost no references to V.I. Propp. Of course, the structural-semiotic approach cannot refer to proverbial signs to the same degree as to fairy tales, rites, and myths. But some common, basic principles unite them.

G.L. Permiakov proceeds from the fact that proverbs and sayings of different peoples of the world are signs that indicate certain relations among real things (Permiakov, 1988: 21). According to his wide-ranging research, the external imagery of proverbial utterances, lexical fulness, underlying their infinite diversity, are not so important for structural classification of proverbs. For example, proverbs “strike the iron while it’s hot” and “mold from the clay, while it’s raw” despite different images of the material given in them, represent the same sign of the real situation. The following formula expresses their logical invariant: the state of a thing or object (hot iron, raw clay) determines the time of its (its) processing (forging, modeling).

Our major finding is that the first step that a proverb researcher must do is to establish the themes of a proverb. Another important observation here is that the realities in proverbs do not determine the content of the proverb. Evidence suggests that the true theme of proverbs and sayings is invariant pairs of opposing entities (Permiakov, 1988). So, for example, the theme of the proverb “good things come in small packages” is not “a package” but different qualities of the same thing. This brings us to an essential assumption that one can determine the invariant thematic pair of the proverb which is as follows: the size (things) – the significance (things). Next, you need to establish the relationship between the size and the significance. Obviously, in this case we deal with the ratio of discrepancy, since the size of the thing is small, and its significance is high. The most essential finding to emerge from the study is the idea that in total, experts identify twenty-eight types of relationships of opposing pairs: integrity – incoherence, inalterability – variability, emanation – termination, changeability – unchangeability, overcoming – forfeiture, etc. (Permiakov, 1988). These pairs are called forming invariant pairs. This assumption brings us to an important conclusion that on the “intersection” of forming invariant pairs and thematic invariant pairs, specific proverbial notions emerge. For example, the proverb “how cities how suburbs” refers to the thematic group “whole – part”, where the city is a whole unit, while the suburbs are a part of the city. Simultaneously, it belongs to the formative group “qualitative conformity – inconsistency (whole and parts).” In this case, an opposition member of the pair “quality conformity” is realized. G.L. Permiakov compares thematic pairs with the lexical elements of the language. Alternatively, he refers to the types of relations among thematic pairs and the formative pairs as to the grammar of the language (Permiakov, 1988).

The study sets out the key points of the proverbial utterances’ structural-semiotic methodology, i.e., the establishment of invariant thematic pairs and the relationship between these thematic pairs. Despite the originality of the structural-semiotic approach to the analysis of proverbs, proposed by G.L. Permiakov, it is obvious that this approach contains certain characteristics typical of the structural-semiotic methodology, regardless of the field of its application, i.e., the isolation of invariants and the establishment of relations between constants. The relations emerge in binary semantic oppositions. The methodology by G.L. Permiakov has several shortcomings, i.e., binary semantic oppositions are determined twice: in determining the thematic pairs and in determining the relationship between them.

The structural-semiotic approach to the study of proverbs and sayings initiated the structural and logical study of people’s perceptions (E.G. Pavlova, A. Dundis, O.B. Khrystoforova). In many works related to different areas of linguistics, the object of study of which are signs, beliefs and superstitions, structural methods are very useful (M.A. Kulkova, I.A. Cherginet, E.E. Tonkova, T.S. Sadova). The authors of the paper aim to demonstrate the principles of structural-semiotic methodology in their analysis of superstitious beliefs (Strausova et al., 2017a), (Strausova et al., 2017b). Our greatest finding is that our experience has shown that some details of the methodology needed to be refined and improved, but the results were effectively convincing, especially in reconstructing deep models of
superstitious beliefs. As in any cultural object in superstitious beliefs, it is possible to distinguish variable values (variants) and constants (invariants). Evidence suggests that the relations among the invariants of the event part and the superstitious beliefs form a structural-semiotic model, along which numerous signs come into construction. The study determines that it is possible to qualify deep models as mental structures of knowledge.

Research into structural semiotic methodology has a long history. R. Bart is a prime example of the scholar who made the greatest influence on the formation of semiotic ideas. However, his ideas stem from the works by F. de Saussure (1977), L. Hjelmslev (1959), R. Jacobson (1963) and N.S. Troubetzkoy (1949). This influence is especially obvious in his works “The Foundations of Semiology” (Bart, 1975) and “The System of Fashion” (Bart, 2004). In the latter R. Bart laid out his understanding of connotative semiotics. The object of this study is very far from the idea to study the linguistics of large and small folklore forms. But our modest objective adds value to our research, since it makes it possible to compare the approaches and methods of the structural-semiotic analysis of different genres’ narratives.

We proceed to the description of structural-semiotic approach to the ideas connected with the world of fashion. Serious discussions and analyses of fashion semiotics emerged with the works of R. Bart. In the system of the vestimentary fashion R. Bart identifies three varieties of semiotic systems: clothing-images (photographs of clothing); the description of tailoring technological operations; the description of clothing. It is only the description of clothing which has a complex sign-system and is saturated with connotations (Bart, 2004).

To explain the appearance of connotations, R. Bart introduces the notion of a vestmentary matrix, the smallest unit of analysis having a three-member structure: an object, a support, and a variant. There is much evidence that at the verbal level this triad corresponds to a sentence structure, e.g., *a cardigan with a closed collar*, where *a cardigan* is an object (a logical subject), *a collar* – a support, and *closed* is a variant. The phrase “closed collar” forms a predicate group. A pair “support – variant” is a special category of fashionable clothing. It is in this part of the reference matrix where the process of connotation origin takes place (Bart, 2004). Closeness or openness of the collar in addition to the denotative value carries additional meanings of *elegance / non-elegance, sportiness / non-sportiness*, etc. The variant of the matrix is the driving force of the fashion system. Its function is to add connotations to the image (Bart, 2004). The reconception of the image always emerges in a complex system of semantic oppositions: *sporty/elegant, day/ evening, classical/naughty, restrained/cheerful, etc.* A set of binary semantic oppositions stems from the variational part of the reference matrix. Setting himself the task of revealing the process of connotations in the translation of signs of clothing into the signs of language, R. Bart comes, in fact, to the recognition of the leading role of binary semantic oppositions in the construction of vestimentary matrixes. The same process emerges insupporting connotations and creating new sign connotations of the verbal semiotic fashion system signs.

A key concept which is essential to our research is the idea that in cultural semiotics, or ethnical semiotics there is the fundamental work “Slavic antiquities” composed by Russian authors which is equally important to Western works belonging to the same field. The authors of the research are distinguished national linguists S.M. Tolstaia, E.E. Levkievskaya, T.A. Agapkina, A.L. Toporkov, V.V. Usachev, E.S. Uzeneva and others working under the leadership of N.I. Tolstoi.

The creators of the “Slavic antiquities” emphasize the continuity between the methodology of work on the vocabulary and the ideas of structuralism and semiotics. It is primarily the idea that complex cultural objects can be decomposed into simple elements and these simple elements are of repetitive nature either within the same culture or in the intercultural space (Tolstoi & Tolstaia, 1995).

The basis for identification and mutual correlation of cultural codes was the principle of meaningful unity of different semiotics, which allowed one to relate different cultural exponents to each other.
through a meaningful plan for them (Ibid.). For example, such cultural exponents as a belt, a circle, a ring, a horseshoe, etc., despite their differences, appear in different rituals as apotropaion, so they perform the same function.

Functional invariants of customs, superstitious beliefs, rituals have a different degree of cultural prominence because the language of culture selectively approaches the semiotic identification of objects in the real world (Tolstoi & Tolstaia, 1995). The high recurrence of the sign in various rituals attests to its important role in the semiotic cultural system. Therefore, the core of the dictionary comprises those codes that have a high degree of cultural prominence. We believe that the principles of the same function performance and cultural prominence of simple repetitive elements in some ways resonate with the principle of the functionally marked structures of fairy-tale characters’ in the theory by V.I. Propp. But they serve to solve a fundamentally new problem.

Finally, it is important to conclude that while compiling a dictionary the authors of it try to establish binary semantic oppositions which contain many realized culturally marked functional invariants. Binary semantic oppositions of functional invariants are not so numerous. In turn, the system of binary semantic oppositions contains a nucleus and periphery, representing a deep level of culture of customs, beliefs, and rituals.

A huge contribution to the development of structural-semiotic methodology emerged from numerous works by Vyach. Vsev. Ivanov and V.N. Toporov. In the preface to their monograph “Slavonic Language Simulation Semiotic Systems” they emphasize the importance of the task of further detailed structural and typological research in various areas of human knowledge to identify common binary semantic oppositions that contribute to the creation of a universal metalanguage for the description of semiotic systems (Ivanov & Toporov, 1965).

In this research they used the texts on Eastern Slavic religious systems and on religious systems among the Baltic Slavs for reconstructing a collection of abstract and, to a lesser extent, specific classifiers of ancient cultures. The methodology of analysis stems from two fundamental structural-semiotic principles: the identification of different levels’ religious elements and the establishment of relations among these elements.

When reconstructing the content aspect of the ancient Slavic religious system, the researchers established that its structure comprised four groups of binary oppositions involving two oppositions of the most general nature. One of them corresponded to the pragmatic aspirations of society: positive – negative. Another opposition separated the sacred from the secular.

The first group of binary oppositions does not have spatial, temporal, and social localizations: happiness – misfortune; life – death; odd – even. One part of the binary oppositions of the second group gives a characterization of spatial relations horizontally: the right one – the left one; the East – the West; the North – the South; sea – land. Another part of the oppositions of this block characterizes vertical spatial relations: top – bottom (heaven – earth; earth – hell).

The third group includes oppositions related to time, color, or elements: day – night; spring – winter; the sun – the moon; light – dark (white - black, red – black); fire – water; dry – wet; earth – water. Oppositions of a social nature represent the fourth group: one’s own – a stranger; close – distant; house – forest; male – female; senior – junior; main – non-principal; ancestor – descendant. As a rule, the first member of binary oppositions is marked positively, and the second – negatively. The frequency of semantic inversion in binary oppositions is variable. Some oppositions are not at all subject to semantic inversion (life – death, happiness – unhappiness). In others, the second member of the opposition is least marked negatively (senior – junior, chief – non-principal, ancestor – descendant). There is also a link between many binary oppositions (Ivanov & Toporov, 1965).
Comparing the obtained data with the data of structural anthropology, Vyach. Vsev. Ivanov and V.N. Toropov made an unprecedented in their significance typological conclusion. The identified set of binary semantic oppositions is so often encountered in studies on structural anthropology that one can speak of a kind of stencil consisting of binary oppositions, with which an ancient person modeled, and classified the world (Ivanov & Toporov, 1965). The idea of the universal significance of binary symbols for human culture led Vyach. Vsev. Ivanov to the hypothesis that the asymmetric structure of human sign systems stemmed from the asymmetry of brain functions (Ivanov, 1978).

Finally, we would like to turn to the work by J. Lakoff and M. Johnson, recognized by experts in the field of cognitive linguistics as a masterpiece of the cognitive approach to metaphor (Lakoff, 2004). At first glance, it may seem that cognitive linguistics has no points of contact with structural-semiotic methodology. This is not quite true. It is not accidental that J. Lakoff notes in words of gratitude that “the ideas about the connection between metaphor and ritual emerged from the anthropological tradition of B. Malinovsky and Cl. Lévi-Strauss” (Lakoff, 2004).

The metaphor, according to the authors of the scientific best-seller, is one of the universal mechanisms of language modeling of reality. Most cognitivists without any doubt sustain the belief that this brilliant idea belongs to J. Lakoff. We do not fully share their conviction, since, in our opinion, the first thought in this direction appeared in the works by A.A. Potebnia at the end of the 19th century. He believed that everything that was imprinted in folklore in the form of mythical images and acts was nothing more than metaphors of real events. They, acting as a tool for organizing human experience, structured people’s knowledge about reality (Potebnia, 1989).

Moreover, A.A. Potebnia anticipated another, equally important thought of Lakoff that metaphorical concept allowed us to comprehend reality in terms of another phenomenon, the preceding concept. For example, the concept of “controversy” in everyday modern English is represented by several expressions: he attacked every weak point in my argument; his criticisms were right on target; I demolished his argument, etc. Their collection testifies that “we are talking about a dispute in terms of war” (Lakoff, 2004). Evidently, there is a conceptual metaphor for a dispute, i.e., “a dispute is a war”. Similar examples abound in the book by AA. Potebnia “The Word and the Myth”. Crossing the water in the folklore of not only the Slavs, but also other ethnic groups is a conceptual metaphor for marriage. Nomination of age is possible in terms denoting the phenomena of plant life (flowering years, rotten stump, offspring, stepchild, growth) reality (Potebnia, 1989). Other conceptual metaphors are as follows:

- the human age is a space: to live a century – is not as easy as to cross a field; you will not survive doing the same thing; you cannot travel with a hard heart;
- the ancestors are the roots: cut down to the root; good / rotten roots; cut under the root reality (Potebnia, 1989).

A.A. Potebnia and J. Lakoff use different factual material. The first refers to the mythological metaphor, resorting to a deep etymological analysis of key lexemes, while the latter explores the metaphor of everyday modern English. Nevertheless, the methodology of working with the mythological metaphor is almost the same as the method of working with the ordinary metaphor. It represents two stages of the structural-semiotic analysis of linguistic material. In the first process, duplicate elements are set. In the second stage, one or another type of conceptual metaphor is structured from a set of recurring linguistic elements: “a dispute is a war”, “arguments are structures”, “ideas are food”, “human age is a space,” “ancestors are the roots” etc.

Of much importance to J. Lakoff are orientationally-focused metaphors. They do not structure one concept in terms of the other, but are related to the orientation in space: top-bottom, inside-outside, front-rear, deep-small, central-peripheral, etc. Happiness corresponds to the top and sadness to the bottom: I’m feeling up, that busted my spirits; I’m feeling down; He’s down these days, etc. J. Lakoff is inclined to believe that the scope of such conceptual metaphors is very limited. However, for some
reason, he paid no more attention to the fact that ontological metaphors had all the same binary oppositions. Following the logic of the scientific presentation of J. Lakoff, consider the following utterances:

-I am burning with the desire to kiss him; at the thought of her, my heart began to beat violently; love is not a fire, but it will ignite you and you will not extinguish it. Such metaphors should be qualified as an ontological conceptual metaphor love is fire. But the very metaphor of love is fire, like the verbal options on which it is built, is based on the binary opposition hot-cold. We in no way claim that the concept of “love” is described exclusively in terms of the concept of “fire”, and the concept of “hatred”—exclusively in terms of the concept of “cold”. It is possible to imply other binary oppositions here. The oppositions cited below refer to the conceptual metaphor of “love is a journey” (Lakoff, 2004):

a) near – far: look how far we’ve come;
b) whole – shattered: our marriage is on the rocks;
c) bottom – up: this relationship is foundering;
d) forward – backward: we cannot turn back now.

Many verbal variants of the conceptual metaphor of an idea function in the similar way, i.e. idea is a food (Lakoff, 2004):

a) bad – good: what he said left a bad taste in my mouth;
b) raw – boiled: all this paper has in it are raw facts; we need to let that idea percolate for a while; let me stew over that for a while; let's let that idea simmer on the back burner for a while;
c) soft - hard: now there’s a theory you can really sink your teeth into.

And one more important observation about the structures of conceptual metaphors. All of them, without exception, emerge as binary structures, i.e., “love is a journey”, “ideas are food”, “love is fire”, “a dispute is a war”, “arguments are structures” etc. In the metaphorical conceptualization of the same reality, we can refer to various objects of the mental essence: “love is a journey” (an appeal to the concept of “journey”); “love is fire” (an appeal to the concept of “fire”); “Love is the upper hand” (an appeal to the concept “top”), etc. In fact, J. Lakoff synthesizes the methods of structural and cognitive linguistics in his theory of cognitive metaphor.

We dare not insist that most verbal variants of conceptual metaphors can be decomposed into appropriate binary oppositions. This is a very promising topic for a separate monographic study. The obvious idea is different. If the metaphor is unequivocally recognized by cognitive linguistics as one of the most constructive means of modeling reality, then binary oppositions, even with their minimal participation in the actualization of metaphors, must be included a priori in the body of cognitive mechanisms.

CONCLUSION

New methods of linguistic research acquire special significance in modern educational environment. They form new areas of research and at the same time improve the educational process. The structural-semiotic methodology of research is not only a means for reconstructing the structure that underlies a multitude of cultural objects, but also a key to understanding the cognitive mechanisms of modeling reality. With all its diversity of goals, approaches, and methods of analysis, it stems from the following fundamental principles:

– it is possible to decompose complex cultural objects into simple elements that repeat within the same culture and intercultural space;
– simple recurrent elements contain quantity variables, variants and magnitudes’ constants, invariants;
– the relationship between invariants determines the semiotic structure of a complex cultural object.

These principles can be successfully extrapolated to the analysis of people’s perceptions. They are not as voluminous and complex in form, structure and content as myths, fairy tales, superstitious beliefs,
fortune telling stories and rituals. But the fact that they are complex linguistic signs, does not cause any doubt. There is much evidence that they contain an event part and a prognostic part. In the event and prognostic parts of the process, variables (variants) and constants (invariants) emerge. The relations between the invariants of the event part and the forecast part form a structural-semiotic model, within which numerous signs function. The study of structural-semiotic models of beliefs, in turn, creates real prerequisites for the study of cognitive structures of consciousness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The article was implemented with the financial support of the Russian Foundation of Fundamental Research (project No. 18-012-00058-a).

REFERENCES
Ivanov, V.V. and Toporov V.N. (1965). Slavianskie iazykovye modeliruiushchie semioticheskie sistemy (drevnii period) [Slavonic language modeling semiotic systems (ancient period)]. Moscow: Nauka.
Strausova, S.K., Akopiants, A.M. & Strausov, V.N. (2017b). Osobennosti formirovaniia narodnykh primet s kulturnym kodom, vkluchaiushchim v sebia atributivnyi komponent "pervyi (poslednii)" [Features of the formation of people’s superstitions with a cultural code that includes the attributive component “first (last)”]. Vestnik PGU, 2, 129-133.