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MEANING CONTENT OF SUPERSTITIONS AND PREJUDICES IN BRITISH LINGUOCULTURE

There is a good English saying: "So many countries so many customs." British people keep traditions, primary connected with national customs and ceremonies. Among people's traditions and customs, we often come across superstitions and prejudices which are still are part of our life, history and culture [2, c. 78].

Superstition is a credulous belief or notion, not based on reason or knowledge. The word is often used pejoratively to refer to folk beliefs deemed irrational, which is appropriate since irrational means "not based on reason". This leads to some superstitions being called "old wives' tales" [6, p. 6]. It is also commonly applied to beliefs and practices surrounding luck, prophecy and spiritual beings, particularly the [irrational](#) belief that future events can be foretold by specific unrelated prior events"[6, p. 5]. People have believed in superstitions and had prejudices from the dawn of time. Prejudice defined as any preconceived opinion or feeling, whether positive or negative; an adverse judgement or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge of the facts (Webster Dictionary).

Superstitious beliefs are an outcome of ignorance and lack of rational thinking, but then they are beliefs after all. Beliefs become notions, then become opinions, and eventually begin to prevail in society [1, p. 363]. For instance, many authors suggested that superstitious beliefs may develop in anxious individuals with a strong need for control, in an attempt to overcome perceived uncertainty in their surrounding, or as a coping mechanism following traumatic childhood experiences [5, p. 91].

There are different origins of superstitions: 1) professional and household superstitions; 2) superstitions of ancestors (historically developed superstition); 3) pagan rituals, traditions and legends (idol worship); 4) the fear of the unknown; 5) the fear of death; 6) animal behavior; 7) the fear to get the curse, evil eye, disease, etc.

From these sources alone must have sprung that system of crude notions and practices still obtaining among savage nations; and although in more advanced nations the crude system gave place to attractive mythology, the moving power was still the same; man's interpretation of the world was equal to his ability to understand its mysteries no more, no less [3, c. 202]. For this reason the superstitions which persist, are of special interest, as showing a psychological habit of some importance.

Linguoculture covers both superstitions and prejudices. This term can be defined as the total sum of culture information objectified in language, considering it from the viewpoint of various research aspects of culture and language. Within this approach a concept «means of speech activity» is proposed as an element of linguoculture. This notion has a very broad interpretation: in different sources linguoculture content includes images, text and precedent names, values, traditions, linguistic arsenal of tools and symbols [4, с. 368]. Linguoculture shows us ethnic picture of the world, it allows us to look at any period of history represented by written sources.

LITERATURE

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