Abstract – For a long time, the national specificity of the word meaning, the interdependence of the form and content of language units, the explanation of cases of subjective reasons for the nomination have been attracting the attention of scientists. The inner form of the word is one of the tools that allow considering the semantics of the word in more detail. The goal of the work is to describe the evolution of the concept of “inner form”. This review will seek to analyze and compare other linguistic concepts, partly correlated with the inner form: ideosemantic, cultural, historical, hidden memory of language. In addition, the report attempts to determine how the concepts of “internal form of language” and “linguistic picture of the world” are related. The paper also provides a brief revision of modern linguistic views on this problem. In addition, the article suggests that without the reconstruction of the original emotional-associative component, which is contained in the inner form or, otherwise, in ideosemantics, etymological analysis is not complete.

Key words – the inner form, ideosemantics, etymon, concept, language memory.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Z. Y. Karmanova, throughout the existence of linguistics, the meaning of the word remained the main problem and one of the most important goal of linguistic researches. At the same time in the existing definitions of the meaning of the word, there was no place for “semantic shades and differences <…>: that is why the word appears stiff and devoid of flexibility [1]. However, at different times representatives of different directions in linguistics attempted to expand the understanding of the meaning of the word, to explore its structure in all its diversity and depth. One of these additions, allowing you to look into the semantics of the word, is the concept of inner form. It is necessary to distinguish between the inner form of the language and the inner form of the word. The concept of “inner form” is used in linguistics, in philosophy and aesthetics.

Interest in the problems of form is already observed in Aristotle’s works. In his understanding τὸ ἔδοξον οὐ μορφή is a form “that is eternally identical essence of all things, opposes matter, and it is opposite to it in such a way that it makes not only its basis, but also its boundary” [2]. Plotinus introduced a narrower term τὸ ἔνδον ἔδοξος – an inner form or an internal image, which is located in the soul of the Creator and is a prototype of the future creation. Subsequently, J. Bruno, W. von Humboldt, W. Wundt, H. Steinthal, O. Husserl, and Marty referred to this problem, as well as Russian linguists, including G.G. Spet, A.A. Potebnya, etc.

II. INNER FORM

The inner form, the term devised by V. von Humboldt's innere Sprachform as a form of a language, is one of the important concepts that reflect the “spirit of the people” and includes the internal principle of language and its own laws. V. von Humboldt was the first who applied the concept of “internal form” to language, linking the external form of language and mental processes in human consciousness. Studying history, anthropology and ethno psychology, as well as the languages of different peoples, Humboldt suggested that the solution to the mystery of man and his character lies in his language. According to his concept, “every, even the smallest language element cannot occur without a single principle of a form that permeates all parts of the language <…> [3]. However, the language form has not only an external, sound side. There is also an inner form that defines “sensory impressions and involuntary movements of the spirit”. It is clearly manifested in the reflection of the world, vocabulary but most of all in grammar.

G.V. Ramishvili, commenting on the works of V. von Humboldt, notes that the German scholar does not give a definition of “innere Sprachform”. This was the reason for his contradictory interpretations by various linguists, psychologists and philosophers [4]. Indeed, the concept of the inner form, proposed by V. von Humboldt, was perceived in different ways by scientists in Germany and abroad, and received a different further development.

G.G. Shpet, V.I. Abaev, V.V. Vinogradov, B.A. Larin, S.D. Katsnelson and later N.F. Alefrenko, E.G. Belyaevskaya, V.I. Bolotov, A. V. Bondarko et al. also turned to the problem of the inner form. In domestic linguistics the concept of “inner form” was introduced in active scientific use by A.A. Potebnya. He meant by it the correlation between thought and consciousness, a method of nomination, based on the subjective understanding of the objective meaning of things. However, if Humboldt spoke, about the inner form of the language, then A.A. Potebnya narrowed this concept, coming to the inner form of the word. This could contribute to the example given by Humboldt from Sanskrit, where the elephant is called simultaneously drinking twice, two-toothed and one-armed. In his work “Thought and language” A.A. Potebnya wrote, “In the word we distinguish: the external form, i.e. articulate sound, content, objectified by sound, and the inner form, or the nearest etymological meaning of the word, the way in which the content is expressed.” In the opinion of A.A. Potebnya, “the word expresses not the whole idea, but just one of its symptoms.
The image of a table can have many signs, but the Russian word *stol* comes only from *silat*. The concepts of “content” and “inner form” differ from each other. Let’s take for an example the word *zhalovanie*. Russian. *zhalovanie*, lat. *annuum*, *pensio*, French *gage* have the same contents “fee”. “But there are no similarities in how the content is reflected in these words: *annuum* is something released for the year, *pensio* is something to weigh, the *gage* is a pledge, a guarantee, compensation and so on while *zhalovanie* is the action of love, a gift, but not a legitimate reward, not a consequence of the objectification of national. For non-logical activities which are not derivative words or words that seem to be such, the inner form of language products is the former activity of consciousness” [5]. A.A. Potebnya also connects the inner form with emotions: they give birth to an interjection, it turns into a word, losing touch with the feeling that provoked it, continuing to point to it. This primordial feeling or image (or the center of the image) is the inner form of the word [ibid.].

According to the majority of researchers who addressed this subject, the inner form is an important component of the nomination. V.V. Vinogradov wrote, that cognitive function of the inner form of the word “is that it was involved in the understanding of new perceptions with the help of those that are stored in the depths of intelligence products of the former activity of consciousness” [6].

There is a question about the inner form and its nature. How do the inner form, the picture of the world and the concept and, at the same time, the inner form, the etymology of linguistic units and etymon correlate? N.F. Alefrienko gives the following definitions of the inner form: “the inner form is the center of the etymological image and the semantic center of the concept image. It becomes a feature of the etymological content” [7]. However, as L. P. Dronova notes, we understand the inner form this way, it can be identified with the etymon – the initial motivational feature of the nomination, while in the traditional diachronic linguistics is not quite so. The etymon is only the basis for the image, i.e. the inner form. At the same time, the same etymon, or initial motivational feature, can generate different etymological images. For example, the etymon *’drag, pull, drag’* is represented in the Latin with the verb *trahoe, traxi, tractum, trahere* and its sequels (for example, lat. *tragere, *traginare >French. *trainer ‘drag, pull, drag’, *traine ‘drag, train’, in Vulgar Latin. *tractiare (lat. *tractus), continued in French. *tracer ‘draw a line, draw’*, where the original image actualizes a certain method of movement (on the surface)” [8].

L. Weisgerber linked the concept of “inner form” and “picture of the world”. He wrote: “The concept of the linguistic picture of the world also includes the dynamic, which V. Humboldt saw in the inner form of language, the influence of the forming force, which in accordance with the conditions and possibilities of the human spirit helps being (in the broadest sense) to become in each language a conscious being <...>” [9]. However, after Potebnya’s and Spet’s works due to the clarity and unambiguity of their definition of the inner form it prevailed in linguistics and now the inner form of the word for the derived word is understood as the idea of the generating word (the atomist – “man related to the atom”). For non-derivative words or words that seem to be such, the inner form, which is not obvious for modern native speakers, is clarified by researchers with the help of etymology.

III. SOME OTHER TERMS

It should also be noted that in this understanding, the inner form of the word is closely related to its motivation and, accordingly, to the motivology, a linguistic discipline that studies the specific manifestations of vocabulary in the interaction of language form (sound) and meaning. O.I. Babinova uses the definition of the inner form of the word proposed by V. V. Vinogradov as morphosemantic structure that allows explaining the relationship of its sound and meaning” [quoted after: 10]. The researcher also notes that the inner form is multifunctional and it is an essential element of the linguistic picture of the world and speech culture. At the same time the motivation that connects the consciousness of the native speaker with the sound and meaning of the word [ibid] materializes. V. Kuznetsov emphasizes the same idea, believing that in modern linguistics the issue of motivated speech is considered within the framework of the inner form of the word. Commenting on the scientific views of V. Humboldt, the author notes that Humboldt’s teaching is based on “the thesis of human creative activity, which is manifested in the nomination of subjects” [11]. The etymology of the word in some cases is partly reduced to determining the motivation of its name. In this case, the very meaning of etymological analysis is almost lost. It is realized by many linguists, “the relationship between motivation and the meaning of the word has historically changed and can even lead to contradictions between them” [12].

In the works by N. Chomsky the concept of “inner form” is replaced by a “deep structure” that generates further speech patterns, and the entire semantic load is transferred to it. At the same time, according to V. B. Medvedev, the deep structure is basically international, while the inner form, on the contrary, is absolutely national and individual for different languages. “The removal from the study of the inner form of language due to the deep structure and the representation of it only as a coherent mechanism of cloning of language structures could not deprive it of expressiveness” [13, 14].

Although the need to search for the inner form of the word is questionable for some linguists, the concept of it has become firmly established in linguistics. E. E. Chikina defines the concept of “inner form” even more widely, applying it not only in relation to words and phraseological units, but also to any texts. The author sees in it the “reference point” of the text existence and the guarantee of its further existence in the individual and national picture of the world [15].

N.F. Alefrienko attaches great importance to the inner form. Considering the stages of verbalization of the concept, he emphasizes its role in “objectification of national-specific content of extra-linguistic meaning”. Through the universal-subject code, the so-called “subject frame” (the idea or goal of the speaker, understanding what impact he wants to achieve) and the inner form the preverbal meaning is transformed into a verbal image [16].

Yu. S. Stepanov, speaking about the structure of the concept, identifies in it the following components (layers): primary, the actual attribute meaning, i.e. the subject or subjects to which this word is applicable; further, the passive characteristic or characteristics, which has lost its relevance and
became a fact of history; the inner form (the literal meaning). The author also indicates the connection of the inner form and the text. If this or that text that is a precedent-setting for this culture, then, within the framework of the concept structure proposed by Yu.S. Stepanov, the inner form of this concept will coincide with the body of the text itself, determining the subsequent development of the actual layer and core [17].

In the 20th century to describe the concepts that are more or less close to the inner form let us use some other terms such as ideosemantic (V.I. Abaev), cultural memory of language in application to the semantics of a word (E. Yakovleva), hidden memory language (T.M. Nikolaeva), a historical memory of language (I.G. Dobrodomov), language picture of the world – the notion, widespread among many scientists working in the field of cultural linguistics. None of these terms, related in some aspects to the inner form and denoting the ability of language to fix the oldest imaginative representations, coincides with it. «Ideosemantics is a sum of cognitive and emotional representations, which reflect the complex inner life of the word in its past and present” [18].

According to V.I. Abayev, languages tend to “technization”, i.e. to the gradual transition of the shell into the sphere of the nucleus. It explains the phonetic changes in the language and the consistent movement of the languages towards analyticism. V.I. Abaev distinguishes two semantics – smaller one and larger one. The first of them represents the obligatory minimum of semantic functions defining modern communicative use of the word. The second is the sum of those accompanying cognitive and emotional representations, which reflect the complex inner life of the word in its past and present. The second phenomenon is called “ideosemantics”. The author himself notes that the concepts of “ideosemantics” and “inner form” are similar, being both related to the ideological side of language. However, there are differences between them. The inner form in V. von Humbold’s understanding closes the languages within itself, or, following his own metaphor. It “delineates around the people a circle, which can be accessed only by entering the circle of another language” Ideosemantics, by contrast, brings the language, as connected with the common social structure and worldview [18].

V. I Abaev believed that ideosemantics found through etymological analysis gives a deeper understanding of the historical realities which were the basis of it. In the Ossetic language, wacajfrag means ‘the prisoner. It was formed with the suffix –ag, ‘destined for something’ from Pehl. vacar ‘trade’. It means that we can assume that ideosemantics of Ossetic wacajfrag is ‘held for trading. On the other hand, ideosemantics itself may help in determining the etymology of the word. Assuming that ideosemantics of words must be the same for the languages of the peoples being in a similar stage of agriculture, the author concludes that the name of the spike must be associated with the concepts ‘sharp’. As a result, knowing the ideosemantics of the Ossetic oefis and knowing historical phonetics of the Ossetic language, we can guess the original form of the word for the Ossetian word: *SREG ‘edge’, Middle German Speer, lat. sparus – ‘spear’, gr. σπάρος – assumption. dorado (‘barbed fish’ etc. [ibid].

The phenomenon that might be called “ideosemantic component” is most often present in the words, but the term “ideosemantics” itself appears in scientific research quite rare. The issue of the journal “Issues of linguistics” where two articles dedicated to the centenary of V.I. Abaev, in reviewing his articles and discoveries, does not mention the ideosemantics [19, 20].

Some Russian linguists, for example, O.N. Trubachev, S.A. Sorokin and others, mentioned ideosemantics only in connection with the works of V.I. Abaev. In most cases, speaking about deep figurative component in restoration of the historical semantics of the word, the authors use the terms “inner form”, “linguistic picture of the world” or “semantic reconstruction”. O.N. Trubachev in his article “Methods of semantic reconstruction” talks about “in-depth understanding of the meaning”, which, in his opinion, “is already its reconstruction”. The word contains some additional information kept by our consciousness, and it can be restored in speech [quoted after: 21]. Perhaps it is consistent with what V.I. Abaev called ideosemantics. The researcher refers to the Austrian linguist W. Roider. She studying the semantic cliché inside of a series of Ind. dhunah ‘smoke’, lat. fumus ‘smoke’ and Hitittle tuhtima – ‘shortness of breath, suffocation’, “reconstructs not only the obvious direction of semantic development ‘smoke’ > ‘courage, rage’, but also a fragment of the corresponding conception of the ancient Indo-Europeans of courage or rage as an internal fire, kindled in the body bile and inflated bellows of the lungs. The following conclusion of W. Roider is much more important: “The work of reconstruction is facilitated by the fact that the faded picture of the world (verblasste Weltbilder) <...> continues to live in speech for a very long time, sometimes for thousands of years” [ibid].

At the same time, the concept of “ideosemantics” is sometimes used by authors without mentioning the name of V.I. Abaev, who proposed this term or without detailed explanations, which actually is ideosemantic. For example V.H. Untlokov in one of his articles writes about ideosemantic parallelism, which is usually taken to mean the convergence in the paths of language and thought, awareness and choice of the nominative strategy of verbalization of objects and phenomena of reality, we find in different language <...>. At the same time, there are no references to V.I. Abayev in the article [22].

One of the concepts, partly overlapping with ideosemantic is cultural memory of language. It was suggested by E.S. Yakovleva. In her opinion, even after the original meaning of the word has been obscured, it motivates the use of the word, forcing the speaker to make a choice in favor of one of the synonyms or single-root words. So, after the collapse of Church Slavonic-Russian bilingualism for Slavisms entrenched abstract or grand style poetic meaning, that they did not have before. Thus detishe, originally ‘a baby, a boy, a child’ in modern language means ‘the fruit of creative, intellectual, mental activity’ [23]. The memory of a word can also affect its semantic evolution. In the modern Russian literary language, the word gryadushchee (participle of the verb gryasti ‘go, walk’) is used as a book-knowing synonym for the future that is associated with the dual semantics of a word in some contexts of the Bible. Gryadet “refers to the spatial and goes to a “real”
prophetic insight, and temporal — is approaching and will inevitably come in the future”. This verb does not have the perfective aspect. This fact has become a prerequisite for the understanding of the word *gyradschhee* as the future. In addition, the verb *gyrasti* has a specific stylistic color and is often used in relation to the coming of Christ, which made it possible to change the meaning of the word. “The question of the “cultural memory” of the word arises when it “remembers” or, on the contrary, “forgets” (or perhaps reconstructs) some significant ideas and concepts in the cultural tradition of native speakers. “Cultural memory” does not necessarily imply a direct and rigorous inheritance of the primordial semantics of the linguistic unit. The word can “remember” the fact that is important in terms of new language relations” [ibid]. E.S. Yakovleva never uses the word “ideosemantics”. However the term “cultural memory” that she proposed implies the ability of words to maintain their original stylistic, imaginative and grammar use as ideosemantics could do.

In 2002, I.G. Dobrodomov in his article writes about the historical memory of the language. In his opinion, this phenomenon can explain some of the use of words. So, on his remark, L.V. Scherba paid attention that the verb *kushat*’ is used only in imperative mood in meaning “eat, eat”, or in the 2nd person of plural. The third person singular is used solely as an expression of politeness or to speak about a child. I.G. Dobrodomov proposed that such a peculiarity in the use of the word is due to the historical meaning of the verb *kushat*’ “to taste”. The memory of it has been preserved in the dictionary by V.I. Dal’: “kushat’ means to enjoy” [24]. Indeed, active eating can hardly be called a tasting, but the invitation to eat, to try it is fully consistent with etiquette [25]. However, it seems to us that the fact that the word *kushat*’ in Russian is associated with biting – “taste, taste” can be and explains the inability to use it in the first person or in stylistically neutral everyday communication. But the semantic connection between eating and biting, and therefore the concept of historical memory of the language proposed by Dobrodomov, does not explain why the word *kushat*’ is applicable to young children only.

T.M. Nikolaeva proposed another concept – “the hidden memory of the language. The author gives an example with a choice between words *hotya* and *hot* (in old Russian there was still the third form – *hoti*). These words are similar in meaning, but the native speaker intuitively prefers in different contexts either one or the other of them: *hot*’ (though) you did with me piggishly, but I'm not angry (hardly *hotya*); He stayed at work for a long time, *hotya*’ (although) he had a computer at home (hardly *hot*). With this assumption it is possible to disagree – it seems, that in these examples the words *hot* and *hotya* could easily switch places. As the author writes, according to the Old Russian language, *hotya* it combines simultaneous events, and *hoti* is comparable to the modern *hot*; the similarity of their functions led to the subsequent displacement of the first of these words. *Hotya* in its origin is an adverbial participle, and *hoti* is the imperative of the second person singular from *hotetl*. The adverbial participle, even being a particle or conjunction, “remembers its origin and retains the ability to relate events occurring simultaneously. *Hot*”, on the contrary, “remembers” that it was not an adverbial participle, and it is easily found out “in expressions like *hot* kol na golove teshi (he's as stubborn as a mule); *hot* sharom pokati (not a thing), where it is impossible to use *hotya*” [26].

T.M. Nikolaeva compared ideosemantics and hidden memory of the language. The first of them is the understanding of language as ideology, and correlates with the modern concept of “picture of the world”, although the similarities and differences between these terms are not fully explained; the hidden memory of the language is not “desemantized” and is not represented by “scrapes and shreds”, and somewhere secretly affects speech activity [ibid].

Since ideosemantics is able to preserve the original meaning of the word and even influence its context, it turns out that all the three terms named are associated with it. According to E.S. Yakovleva, cultural memory of the language, preserving the original meaning and origin of the word, can contribute to the intuitive preference for one of the two synonyms by a native speaker. I.G. Dobrodomov names the historical memory the ability of the word “to remember” its original meaning, while T.M. Nikolaeva calls “the hidden memory of the language” the ability of the word to fix lost morphological characteristics of the word, for example, part-speech belonging.

All the three phenomena – “cultural memory of the language”, “hidden memory of the language” and “historical memory of the language” allow to explain the use of some words or help a native speaker to make the right choice between several possible options in a particular context. The problem of correlation of concepts “ideosemantics”, “inner form” and “linguistic picture of the world” requires further consideration. Much has been said about the fact that the inner form and ideosemantics correspond to each other in many points. V. A. Panchenko makes the assumption that the inner form – subjective-national (ideoethnic) component reflects - the world from the point of view of native speakers, which allows us to speak about a specific linguistic picture of the world [27].

IV. CONCLUSION

Thus, there are a number of terms which describe the deep-seated, emotionally loaded ideas, which are the basis of nomination – the inner form (the words), ideosemantics, hidden, cultural, or historical memory of the language. All of them at the same time in part are related to motivation, concept, the etymon and the language picture of the world and reflect the subjective, unique to only one language. They may persist during an extremely long period of time. However, there are still significant differences between these terms. Some of these differences have already been mentioned.

Etymon is a pure motivational sign, only the basis for the inner form, which is quite clearly recognized by native speakers, if we are talking about a derivative word: e.g. Russian *zmeevik* ‘a snake-colored stone’ or Eng. *silkworm*. Phenomena saved by the memory of language are not always so obvious (cf. the comments about differences between *hotya* and *hot*’ or nuances in the use of the word *kushat*’ in the modern Russian literary language. Perhaps the memory of the language and the word usage caused by it are dictated by the tradition, and the habit of native speakers to use some lexical elements in a certain context.
The problem of the relationship between the terms of “inner form” and “concept” is all the more complex because the last one has not yet received a clear definition. If we follow, for example, the definition of Yu. S. Stepanov, the concept is explained as “a clot of culture in human consciousness”, “a bundle” of ideas, concepts, knowledge, associations, and “the basic cell of culture in the mental world of man.” V. I. Karasik interprets concepts as primary cultural formations. They are the expression of the objective content of words that have meaning and are therefore translated into various spheres of human existence, in particular, in the sphere of conceptual, figurative and activity development of the world [28]. Apparently, if we try to sum up at least these two definitions, the concept turns out to be a much broader and essential for culture. The inner form will be included in the concept together with the necessary etymological information and. At the same time a much larger number of words will have an inner form than will be concepts. However, this problem deserves much more detailed consideration.

Ideosemantics and an inner form also converge in many aspects. However, V.I. Abaev himself stresses a significant difference between the two phenomena; the inner form is specific to each individual language, enclosing it within itself. Ideosemantics is based on the similarity of social structure and worldview and tends to unite languages but not to divide them. However, with the similarity between these two concepts, the “inner form” seems to be more successful because it is more transparent. Perhaps that is why it is much more popular in linguistics.

References


