THE SUBORDINATE CONCEPT ‘MARKETING’ IN THE CONTEMPORARY BUSINESS ENGLISH DISCOURSE

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The paper considers architectonics of the concept ‘marketing’ as a subordinate one to the concept ‘market’ which, alongside with other concepts, organizes the conceptual sphere of the basic concept ‘trade’. The notional, sense (sense centres), and schematic (dynamic frame) components are researched, the model of the concept inner structure is developed

Keywords: concept ‘marketing’, business discourse, notional component, sense centre, dynamic frame

1. Introduction

As has been already stated by R. Langacker [1] and V. L. Ivashchenko [2], macro-concepts are subdivided into smaller entities – sub-/ mini-concepts which, in their turn, produce smaller units. The basic concept of business discourse ‘trade’ also generates the concepts of lower level of conceptualization – sub-concepts ‘goods’, ‘market’ and ‘marketing’. Methods of study of the concept ‘marketing’ is based on the methodology developed by V. L. Ivashchenko [2], R. Langaker [1], V. A. Maslova [3], M. V. Pimenova et al. [4], Z. D. Popova et al. [5], Y. S. Stepanov [6], S. A. Zhabotynska [7] which presupposes consideration of the concept architectonics, finding out language means of its nomination, modelling of its structural components, working out the procedure of the concept analysis (in the language or discourse).

While studying the nature of professional concepts which are oriented at the rational logical, objective representation of knowledge about the reality, though not lacking emotional evaluative and imagery components, their architectonics can be represented in such mental structures: [terminological] notion, sense centres / semantic kernels, images-pictures / gestalts, I-schemes, images-prototypes, images-stereotypes, images-anthroposymbols, frames, scenarios / scripts. Thus, business concepts comprise: notional component, represented by [terminological] notion, sense component (sense centres / semantic kernels), imagery component (image-picture / gestalt, image-stereotype, image-prototype), symbolic component (image-anthroposymbol), evaluative component (evaluative stereotype), schematic component (I-scheme, frame, scenario / script). While developing a model of the concept ‘marketing’ the principle of description-modelling (the term belongs to V. L. Ivashchenko) has been applied which presumes the description of the notional paradigm of a concept, its sense organization, imagery and symbolic components, static and dynamic frames.

2. Formulation of the problem

The general problem of today’s linguistics is its fragmental studies of the basic language categories and speech phenomena. The holistic approach to the object of study can provide the apparatus to overcome the existing difficulties. The scientific observations on business English discourse induces the researcher to detect its principal concepts and investigate them from the point of view of their inner structure and language form. Thus, the aim of the paper is to consider the architectonics of one of the business concepts, i.e. the concept ‘marketing’, and to find out its verbal representations in the contemporary business English discourse. The major tasks are to study word-building, distributional and text-composing potentials and professional meanings of the concept nominator, to find out its etymon (primary meaning), to reconstruct sense centres and schematic structures and to find out their verbal correlates. The present analysis is conducted according to the procedure developed in the paper The Criteria of Determining Key Concepts of the Contemporary Business English Discourse [8], Business publications of major British and American companies on Internet sites, genre forms Business Plan, Annual Report, Business Letter are used as material of the research as well as special and encyclopedic dictionaries in economics and business.

3. Literature overview

According to our observations, the concept ‘marketing’ has not been studied in recent researches yet, so for literature overview it has been chosen the scientific publications dedicated to corresponding business concepts, i.e.: ‘material wealth’, ‘property’, ‘money’, ‘bargain’, ‘buying / selling’ considered by N. E. Agarkova [9], E. V. Babaeva [10], I. A. Mayorenko [11], T. N. Novoselova [12], A. G. Oispova [13], Y. N. Petelina [14], O. Y. Symarch [15]. All above mentioned concepts are qualified by the authors as culturally marked and are frequently compared in different cultures: Russian – German (E. V. Babaeva), English – Russian (Y. N. Petelina), English – Russian – French (I. A. Mayorenko). These concepts are primarily studied in the naive language world image as everyday ones that exist in the collective conscience of common people which is proved by the
material of study – literary and substandard lexis, set phrases, idioms, proverbs, sayings, aphorisms and maxims of well-known people, definitions in general dictionaries of English and other languages, literary texts, results of associative experiments conducted among common language bearers. The approaches to study of the above mentioned concepts reveal a certain spectrum of analyses. Thus, if N. E. Agarkova and O. Y. Szymach [9, 15] find out cognitive tokens of the concept ‘money’ (gestalt-structures in terms of N. E. Agarkova), I. A. Mayorenko [11] considers the phraseological field of nominations of the concept ‘money’ according to its kernel, near and far periphery. E. V. Babaeva and T. N. Novoselova [10, 12] are mostly concentrated on evaluative component of the concept ‘wealth’, disclosing value oppositions in the work by E. V. Babaeva [10] and axiological aspect (value, evaluation, evaluative stereotype, norm and scale of assessment) in the work by T. N. Novoselova [12]. A. G. Osipova and Y. N. Petelina [13, 14] apply frame semantics approach structuring the concept ‘buying / selling’ according to structural semantic formulas and frame components (A. G. Osipova) and the concept ‘bargain’ in the form of scenario (Y. N. Petelina). As we can see from the analysis of the above mentioned publications, they lack a complex approach to the object of study considering the concept from different angles of view in the framework of modern cognitive theories. The architectonics of he concept (including its notional, sense, imagery and schematic components) especially inherent in the professional discourse (including the business one) still avoid the attention of the contemporary researchers.

4. Reconstruction of architectonics of the concept ‘marketing’

The concept ‘marketing’ is a subordinate concept which originated on the basis of the already existing concept ‘market’. The notion ‘marketing’ came into use comparatively not long ago (end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th century) due to the development of mass production of goods and services and development of marketing techniques. In the economic theory the concept of modern marketing is build up according to the principle: ‘not to sell what is made but to make what will be bought’, is represented in ‘product-market strategy’ [16: 3–4] and is expressed in metaphoric aphorism by A. Sloan The customer is king. The content of scientific marketing is embodied in so-called marketing mix / marketing complex or 4 P’s which was developed by the American economist N. Borden in 1960-s. It includes such elements as: “product”, “price”, “promotion”, and “place”.

The mere notion ‘marketing’ which has been developed in the economic thought is defined as ‘actions of identifying, satisfying and increasing the buyer’s demand for a company’s product’ [17: 255] or ‘the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably’ [18: 180], in broader sense as “anticipating changes in demand (usu. on the basis of marketing research), promotion of the product, ensuring that its quality, availability, and price meet the needs of the market, and providing after-sales service” [19: 312]. Thus, according to its definitions the characteristic features of the notion ‘marketing’ are: ‘buyer’s demand’, ‘product’, and ‘promotion’.

Taking into consideration the fact that the substantive marketing is a derivative of the noun market, it has the same primary meaning or etymon ‘goods’. In general English the lexem marketing possesses the meanings: ‘exchange of goods for an agreed sum of money’, ‘promoting, selling and distributing a product / service’, ‘shopping at a market’ [20], in special dictionaries of economics and business correspondingly — ‘organization of selling as a scientific discipline’ [21: 304].

The importance of the notion ‘marketing’ for business communication is proved by high word-building productivity of the lexem in creating composite terms: e-marketing, ego-marketing, macromarketing, micromarketing, remarketing, synchromarketing, telemarketing etc.; big distributional potential in creation of term-collocations: attributive ones – bad / good marketing, concentrated marketing, counteractive marketing, developing marketing, domestic marketing, export marketing, effective marketing, foreign marketing, global / world marketing, industrial marketing, innovative marketing, internal marketing, international marketing, local marketing, mass marketing, national marketing, non-commercial marketing, regional marketing, test marketing, marketing opportunities, marketing procedures, marketing realization, marketing resources, also found in modern business contexts: guerrilla marketing, multi-level marketing, right-time marketing, next-best-action marketing; predicative ones – to bolster marketing etc.

The lexem marketing reveals a high text-composing potential in creation of the following genres: marketing analysis, marketing brochure, marketing plan, marketing program, marketing research, marketing service guidelines as well as their different sections: Commercial Marketing, Marketing Approach, Marketing and Dealer Operations, Marketing Strategies, Pre-Draft Marketing etc.

The boom of marketing technologies promotes scientific rethinking of this notion in the scientific discipline which is called marketology (science about marketing) and economic theories marketing concept, marketing mix / complex, relationship marketing (1960s), business / industrial marketing (1980s), social / societal marketing (1990s), holistic marketing (21st c.), internet / online marketing (21st c.), digital marketing (21st c.) as well as in theoretical studies: Kotler P. Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning and Control (1967), Kotler P., Zaltman G. Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change (1971), Kotler P. Kotler on Marketing: How to Create, Win, and Dominate Markets (1999), Kotler P. Et al. Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit (2010), Kotler P. Marketing Insights from A to Z (2003), Kerin R. et al. Principles of Marketing (Marketing 431) (2010) etc. The recent economic research provokes abundant economic terminology, i. e.: horizontal marketing, marketing complex / 4Ps of marketing, marketing concept, marketing functions, marketing management, marketing policy, marketing strategy, marketing structure, marketing system, marketing tactics, conversion marketing, differential marketing, direct mar-
marketing, price marketing, segment marketing, vertical marketing etc.

The further conceptualization of the notion ‘marketing’ takes place in image-bearing nominations, metaphoric and metonymic transferences. In business discourse there exist nominations in a form of: imagery epithets of the term marketing – aggressive marketing, guerrilla marketing; metaphorical names – marketing basket, marketing bubble, marketing warfare strategies; metonymy – next-best-action marketing.

Sense centres / semantic kernels of the concept ‘marketing’ have been detected by method of cognitive interpretation of the names-representatives of the concept from lexicographical sources [17–19, 22–23], genre forms Annual Report, Business Plan and business publications of major British and American companies on Internet sites: ‘marketing is product’, ‘marketing is selling’, ‘marketing is promotion’, ‘marketing is manipulation’.

Sense centre “marketing is product” is revealed in word combinations with the term marketing which nominate the object of selling and buying goods: brand marketing, generic marketing, mass marketing, product marketing, service marketing; scientific definitions: “Marketing is the process of communicating the value of a product or service to customers, for the purpose of selling that product or service” [24]; corresponding business contexts: Several marketing strategies emerged as the result of an overall reexamination of existing corporate strategies. The area receiving initial attention was the product line (Mary Kay Cosmetics, Inc.).

Sense centre ‘marketing is selling’ is revealed in word combinations with the term marketing which nominate the means of selling goods: catalogue marketing, commercial marketing, database marketing, digital marketing, direct marketing, electronic marketing, in-store marketing, marketing on-line, telemarketing; propositional structures: Specifically, these will be the women we target vigorously with our marketing and offerings (Retail Clothing BP 1993).

Sense centre ‘marketing is promotion’ is revealed in word combinations with the term marketing which nominate the means of stimulating demand among the customers: development marketing, remarketing, stimulating marketing, synchromarketing; propositional structures which describe means of informing customers about goods or services: A combination of local media and event marketing will be utilized at each location (Dorma BP 1996), corresponding business contexts: Another marketing avenue we will explore is contacting the local art clubs at high schools and colleges. The object of an art club promotion will be to teach people how to use the process efficiently. That would in turn help to make repeat customers out of them (Retail Clothing BP 1993).

Sense centre ‘marketing is manipulation’ is revealed in word combinations with the term marketing which nominate the ways of manipulation of human conscience and means of influence on customer’s behaviour: market / marketing manipulations, manipulation pyramid; stylistic devices in a form of antithesis: manipulation or good marketing?; scientific definitions which describe the tricky side of marketing techniques: ‘Market manipulation is a deliberate attempt to interfere with the free and fair operation of the market and create artificial, false or misleading appearances with respect to the price of, or market for, a security, commodity or currency’ [25]; evaluative judgements of specialists: People are more likely to view a marketing practice as manipulation if the marketing influence is directed at the core of the product or service (Manipulation or Good Marketing?); aphorisms of business gurus: One man’s good marketing is another man’s manipulation; descriptions of the results of market research: In the most ‘manipulative’ cases (vitamin water and pink salmon) or the best “good marketing” case (rich Gorinthian leather), there were opinions on both sides. I was expecting more polarized opinions, with everyone agreeing on either marketing or manipulation. But in all the cases, there around a quarter of the people who didn’t agree with the majority. Of the millions of marketing practices only a small percentage will likely fall into the “manipulation” category (Manipulation or Good Marketing?).

Imagery component of the concept ‘marketing’ which is usually represented by images-pictures / gestalts, images-stereotypes or images-prototypes has not been detected in the researched material which proves the absence of these structures in the collective professional conscience of English language bearers.


Slot 1 – “idea of the product” is filled in with nominative phrase Idea: luxury diet coleslaw.

Slot 2 – “possibility to realize it” is filled in with speech act-reflection: Can it be made? and speech act-representative: A special department called the research and development department will find out whether the product can be made.

Slot 3 – “studying of the demand” is filled in with the text-description under the title in a form of speech act-questitive: Does the customer want it?: Members of the marketing department will tell a market research agency about your idea, specifying the sort of person they are aiming at. The market researchers then produce a questionnaire which they ask a selected number of people to answer. From this they can gauge the amount of interest there is in the idea, and what sort of demand there may be for it. They will find out information such as how much customers may be prepared to pay for it, and what sort of packaging they prefer.

Slot 4 – “making a prototype” is filled in with the text-description under the title in a form of speech act-directive: Define the product: The marketing people now instruct artists to work on designs for the packaging of the product. They also inform an advertising agency about the product, letting it know the market they are aiming at, what image they are trying to present, what competition there is and why this product is better, and a rough price for it. This gives the advertisers time to prepare campaigns informing the public about the new product.
Slot 5 – “calculating the price” is filled in with the text-description under the title in a form of speech act-questive: Is the price realistic?: The research and department team can now come up with samples and rough costs and the marketing people estimate how many they can sell in a five year, three year or one year period. They then calculate a shelf price for the product taking into account their company’s profit and the retailer’s mark-up. After comparing this with their competitors’ prices they can see whether it is realistic.

Slot 6 – “probing selling” is filled in with the syntactic unity with general illocutionary intention of quesitive: Does it live up to expectations?: The market research presents a group of people in the same category as the first group with samples of the actual product. They may have liked the idea of the product – but do they like the actual thing? Will they still want to buy it?

Slot 7 – “promotion” is filled in with the text-description under the title in a form of speech act-directive: Proceed to launch: The marketing department then arranges for the production team to make the right number of tubs of coleslaw to fit in with their sales forecast. The marketing people inform sales reps about the product and the market it is aimed at. They decide on any promotional material they would like to support it in the shops, such as free offers, competitions etc.

Slot 8 – “launching the product” is filled in with a complex representative speech act and the title in a form of a nominative sentence: Launch: The sales reps sell the new product to retailers, and the marketing team ensures that it is delivered to them at the right time.

As a result of the conducted research the architectonics of the subordinate concept ‘marketing’ can be represented in a form of a three-component Fig. 1:

Fig. 1. The architectonics of the subordinate concept ‘marketing’

5. Conclusions

Thus, the subordinate concept ‘marketing’ is formed on the basis of the concept ‘market’ and acquired the status of independent concept relatively not long ago (end of the 19th – beginning of the 2-th century) due to the origin of mass production of goods and services and development of marketing techniques. Having originated in the economic theory the terminological notion ‘marketing’ reveals such characteristic features as: ‘buyer’s demand’, ‘product’, and ‘promotion’. The verbal noun marketing reveals its word-building potential in the ability to produce compound terms; its distributional potential – in creation of attributive and predicative term-combinations. The concept ‘marketing’ organizes such sense centres: ‘marketing is product’, ‘marketing is selling’, ‘marketing is promotion’, ‘marketing is manipulation’. The researched material has not revealed the imagery component of the concept ‘marketing’ in a form of images-pictures / gestalts, images-stereotypes or images-prototypes which can be explained by absence of these structures in the collective professional conscience of English language bearers. The schematic component of the concept ‘marketing’ is structured in the dynamic frame with the top ‘marketing’ and slots-stages: ‘idea of the product’, ‘possibility to realize it’, ‘studying of the demand’, ‘making a prototype’, ‘calculating the price’, ‘probe selling’, ‘promotion’, ‘launching the product’. 

Further research presupposes the study of the subordinate concept ‘goods’ which alongside with the already structured concepts ‘market’ and ‘marketing’ will give the opportunity to reconstruct the lingua conceptual sphere of the basic concept ‘trade’.

References

References

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