

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT "HEART" IN PAREMIOLOGICAL TEXTS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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Abstract

This article examines the linguistic analysis of the concept "heart" within paremiological (proverbial) texts in both the English and Uzbek languages. The concept of the heart holds a significant position in both linguistic cultures as a central symbol of emotion, moral character, and spirituality. By taking examples from Uzbek and English proverbs and analyzing them within their linguistic and cultural contexts, the article explores the metaphorical and semantic dimensions of the word "heart".

Keywords: Heart, paremiology, linguistic analysis, metaphor, English language, Uzbek language, semantics, culture.

Introduction

Language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a repository of cultural knowledge and collective experience. Metaphors, particularly conceptual metaphors, provide valuable insight into how different societies understand and interpret abstract concepts through concrete bodily experiences. Among these metaphors, the concept of the heart occupies a central position

across many cultures due to its association with emotions, morality, courage, and spirituality.

In both English and Uzbek linguistic traditions, the heart functions as a significant symbolic organ. However, the cultural meanings attached to this concept differ according to historical, social, and religious influences. Therefore, a comparative analysis of heart-related metaphors can reveal important aspects of national worldviews and communicative behavior.

The aim of this study is to examine the metaphorical representation of the heart in English and Uzbek idiomatic and proverbial expressions and to identify the linguocultural factors that shape these conceptualizations.

Theoretical Background

The study is grounded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980), who argue that human thinking is fundamentally metaphorical. According to this theory, abstract concepts are understood through more concrete experiences derived from the physical world. The human body often serves as a primary source domain for conceptual metaphors.

Linguistic Metaphor of the Concept of the Heart

According to the theory of cognitive linguistics, language, acting as a medium for metaphors, is considered an essential part of human cognition (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Across many languages, the "heart" serves as one of the most powerful metaphors used to express an individual's internal state and emotions. This specific metaphor expresses abstract concepts through concrete mental imagery based on traditional and bodily experiences.

The Concept of Paremiology

Paremiology is a branch of linguistics dedicated to the study of proverbs, including their functions, interpretation, and cultural significance. For many people, proverbs contain traditional enlightenment and deeply ingrained teachable values. Paremiological concepts related to the heart actively reflect the emotional and moral values held by a society.

Metaphorical and Semantic Analysis in Proverbs

As noted by Mieder (2004) and other scholars, the term "heart" expresses not only pleasant or unpleasant feelings but also qualities such as courage, loyalty, sincerity, and openness. In the Uzbek language, however, the concept of the heart is more heavily associated with spiritual purity, sincerity, and collective well-being

Data and Methodology

The data selected for this research includes the following: English proverbs and phraseological units sourced from Mieder (2004).

Uzbek proverbs and collections of folklore examples sourced from Mirziyoev (2008).

Semantic Analysis: The examination of both the primary and extended meanings of the word.

Pragmatic Analysis: The examination of the expression concerning its context and specific function in speech. Linguoculturological Analysis: The study of the deep connection between culture and language.

Comparative Analysis of the Heart Metaphor

The Semantic Field of “Heart” in English

English employs the term heart as a primary metaphor for psychological and emotional depth. Common idiomatic expressions include:

To have heart – indicating courage, determination, and resilience.

To break one's heart – expressing profound emotional pain or sorrow.

To follow one's heart – choosing emotions or intuition over rational judgment.

A heart of stone – describing a person who lacks compassion or empathy.

These expressions conceptualize the heart primarily as the center of personal emotions, inner feelings, and individual psychological experience. The metaphor reflects the importance of personal autonomy and emotional self-awareness within English-speaking cultures.

The Semantic Field of “Yurak” in Uzbek

In Uzbek linguistic culture, yurak extends beyond personal emotions and frequently embodies moral character, sincerity, and social responsibility.

Common expressions include:

Yurakdan o'tmoq – to experience something deeply and emotionally.

Yurakdan chiqmoq – to speak sincerely and honestly.

Yuragi ezilgan – to suffer severe emotional or spiritual distress.

Yurak tomon yurmoq – to act with openness, honesty, and goodwill.

Unlike English usage, these expressions often emphasize interpersonal relations and collective ethical values. The metaphorical meaning of yurak is closely associated with sincerity, compassion, and moral integrity.

Comparative Synthesis

The comparative analysis demonstrates both similarities and differences between the two linguistic systems. In both English and Uzbek, the heart functions as a metaphorical center of emotions and courage. However, the cultural emphasis differs considerably.

English expressions predominantly focus on individual emotional states, personal decisions, and psychological experiences. In contrast, Uzbek expressions place greater emphasis on social harmony, moral responsibility, and sincerity in human relationships.

Therefore, while the physiological source domain remains universal, the target meanings reflect distinct cultural priorities. English conceptualizations tend toward individualism, whereas Uzbek conceptualizations highlight collectivism and ethical interconnectedness.

Discussion

The findings support the view that language mirrors cultural cognition. The metaphorical use of the heart in English reflects a worldview in which personal feelings and individual agency occupy a central role. Conversely, Uzbek metaphorical expressions reveal a cultural orientation toward communal values, moral conduct, and interpersonal sincerity.

These differences have important implications for translation and intercultural communication. Literal translations often fail to convey the full cultural significance embedded within metaphorical expressions. Consequently, translators and language learners must consider not only lexical equivalence but also the underlying conceptual structures that shape meaning.

The study further confirms that metaphor is not merely a stylistic device but a cognitive mechanism through which societies organize and communicate cultural knowledge.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of heart-related metaphors in English and Uzbek demonstrates that both languages employ the heart as a fundamental symbol of emotional and moral experience. Nevertheless, the semantic realization of this concept differs according to cultural context.

English metaphorical expressions primarily portray the heart as a repository of personal emotions and psychological states, whereas Uzbek expressions emphasize sincerity, moral values, and social connectedness. These distinctions illustrate the close relationship between language, culture, and cognition.

Understanding such linguocultural differences contributes to more accurate translation, effective intercultural communication, and deeper insight into the cognitive foundations of language. Future research may extend this comparative approach to other body-part metaphors and additional linguistic communities.

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