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The theoretical and methodological foundations of the study of proverbs expressing personal spirituality

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ABSTRACT

This article outlines the theoretical and methodological foundations for studying proverbs that express personal spirituality in the English and Uzbek languages. It analyzes the linguistic nature of paremiological units, the cognitive and linguocultural structure of the concept of "personal spirituality," the potential of the comparative-typological approach, and the integration of modern linguocultural, cognitive-pragmatic, and corpus-based approaches. The study establishes the "value–norm–action" model of the proverb, as well as the "value–norm–evaluation–pragmatics" criteria matrix, as theoretical tools. The results indicate that while values such as honesty, conscience, patience, diligence, humility, goodness, and propriety form a common semantic core in the paremiology of both languages, their national-cultural encoding manifests differently.

Keywords

paremiology, proverb, personal spirituality, concept, linguoculture, cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, comparative-typological analysis, value, national mentality.

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INTRODUCTION

Proverbs are paremiological units that preserve the historical experience, moral views and social norms of the people in a concise language form. Proverbs, expressing the spirituality of a person, serve as an important tool for assessing and regulating a person's honesty, conscience, responsibility, patience, hard work, humility and attitude towards others. Therefore, their study allows us to connect linguistics with anthropocentric, cognitive and linguocultural directions. [3; 1–5-p.; 9; 3-p.]

The relevance of the topic is determined by the presence of common human values in the English and Uzbek languages, as well as their expression through different national images, social experience and communicative strategies. This issue is posed in the dissertation with the aim of conducting a comprehensive comparative study based on linguo-spiritual and linguocultural parameters. [1; 22-p.; 3; 9–16-p.]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Proverbs on personal spirituality in English and Uzbek, as well as the theoretical classification and comparative criteria formulated in the dissertation, were used as the research material. In the dissertation, the object of research is defined as the process of the functioning of proverbs in language and speech, and the subject is their linguo-spiritual content, linguo-cultural form, semantic-stylistic structure and pragmatic means. [8; 31–80-p.]

Methodologically, the methods of analysis and synthesis, definition, conceptual modeling, linguo-cultural and cognitive-pragmatic interpretation, comparative-typological analysis, content and discourse anal-

ysis, as well as frequency and percentage calculation were used. Such a comprehensive approach allows us to view the proverb not only as a stable linguistic unit, but also as a communicative-cultural mechanism that transmits spiritual values. [2; 111–137-p.; 8; 31–80-p.]

The main operational model of the analysis is the "value-norm-evaluation-pragmatics" matrix. According to it, in each proverb: 1) what value is expressed; 2) what moral norm is put forward; 3) what positive or negative assessment is given; 4) what pragmatic goal is fulfilled in the speech is determined. This model is defined as a separate criterion for the scientific novelty of the dissertation. [8; 27-p.]

RESULTS

Theoretical analysis shows that paremiological units are units that are consolidated in cultural memory, are used as ready-made templates in a communicative situation, and convey a generalized meaning in a concise form. The uniqueness of the proverb lies in its expression of a normative judgment rather than a simple image: it normalizes values and gives a general conclusion for behavior. [3; 1–5-p.; 8; 31-p.]

The concept of "personal spirituality" is cognitively manifested as a mental construct that encompasses honesty, conscience, responsibility, honor, patience, and other moral values. It is structured through binary oppositions such as "virtue–flaw", "honor–unlawful", "patience–rush" and the frame "man–society–norm–result". [1; 3–5-p.; 2; 111-p.]

In the research materials, the conceptual field of personal spirituality is divided into eight main clusters: honesty-conscience, honor, diligence, patience-contentment, goodness-kindness, language-etiquette, knowledge-wisdom and self-control. These clusters allow for a consistent description of the semantic system of spiritual values and a comparison of two language materials based on the same criteria. [3; 4-p.; 8; 31-p.]

The comparative results revealed a difference between the universal semantic core and the national linguistic-cultural profile. In Uzbek paremiology, markers such as "el", "or-nomus", "baraka", "qoni-qoshnilichil" strengthen collective norms and social control, while in English proverbs, concepts such as "self-control", "time", "privacy", "fair play" more activate individual responsibility and internal discipline. [11; 82-p.; 12; 36-p.]

In the relationship between form and content, imperative and gnome-type constructions, parallelism, ellipsis, comparative and cause-and-effect models increase the effectiveness of spiritual judgment. The dissertation proposes to express the spiritual influence of a proverb with the model T = L + S + C + P as the mutual unity of L - lexical axiology, S - syntactic conciseness, C - linguocultural code, and P - pragmatic context.

DISCUSSION

The results show that personal spirituality is formed in proverbs at three levels - conceptual, linguocultural and pragmatic. At the conceptual level, spiritual values are formed through mental models and binary oppositions; at the linguocultural level, they are associated with national realities, images and social institutions; at the pragmatic level, they perform the functions of admonition, evaluation, argumentation and social control. [1; 3–5-p.; 2; 111–137-p.]

The main advantage of the comparative-typological approach is that it allows us to identify the principle of "same value - different cultural expression". For example, honesty is manifested as a positive value in both languages, but its semantic and pragmatic profile may be different. In the Uzbek model, honesty is more broadly associated with concepts such as conscience, honor and honest livelihood, and in the English model with such concepts as honesty, trust, reputation and responsibility. These differences are explained in the dissertation through the categories of isomorphism and allomorphism. [11; 82–87-p.; 12; 36–38-p.]

It is also important to interpret the proverb not only as a lexical unit, but also as a pragmatic tool in discourse. The proverb legitimizes the speaker's personal opinion with collective experience and creates the effect of "authorless authority". In this sense, it becomes a compact tool for transmitting moral norms, evaluating and controlling social behavior. [8; 27-p.]

CONCLUSION

To study proverbs expressing personal spirituality, it is necessary to integrate paremiological, cogni-

tive, linguocultural, pragmatic and comparative-typological approaches. The study bases the "value–norm–evaluation–pragmatics" matrix as an effective tool for operational analysis of proverbs. In English and Uzbek proverbs, values such as honesty, conscience, patience, hard work, humility and goodness form a common semantic core, but their figurative, lexical, syntactic and pragmatic coding is determined by national-cultural characteristics.

Therefore, the methodological model for studying proverbs expressing personal spirituality should be built on the basis of the chain "concept → sema → evaluation → pragmatic goal", and in comparative analysis, universal and national components should be distinguished. Such an approach, while enriching the theoretical foundations of paremiological research, also creates a methodological basis for translation, language teaching and the development of linguocultural competence.

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