

THE CONCEPT OF “AGE” FROM A LINGUISTIC-CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SPANISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract: This article analyzes the linguistic interpretation of the concept of "youth" in Uzbek and Spanish cultures using linguacultural and axiolinguistic approaches. The study explores how the concept of "youth" is expressed in the national worldviews, value systems, and cultural traditions of both peoples, as well as its semantic structure in language and conceptual features. The article analyzes the expression of the concept of "youth" through paremiological units, phraseological units, and metaphors, and determines its place in the unity of language and culture. A comparative analysis also highlights the mental and symbolic meanings formed in the consciousness of people through lexical units associated with the concept of "youth" in the Uzbek and Spanish languages.

Keywords: age concept, linguaconceptology, linguacultural landscape, linguacultural studies, axiolinguistics, comparative analysis, national values.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o'zbek va ispan madaniyatida "yosh" konseptining lisoniy talqini lingvokulturologik va aksiolingvistik yondashuvlar asosida tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda har ikki xalqning milliy dunyoqarashi, qadriyatlar tizimi va madaniy an'alarida "yosh" tushunchasining qanday ifodalanishi, uning tildagi semantik tarkibi hamda kontseptual xususiyatlari ochib beriladi. Maqolada "Yosh" konseptining paremiologik birliklar, frazeologizmlar va metaforalar orqali ifodalanishi tahlil qilinib, uning til va madaniyat birligidagi o'rni belgilab beriladi. Shu bilan birga, o'zbek va ispan tillaridagi "Yosh" tushunchasiga oid leksik birliklar orqali xalq ongida shakllangan mental-simvolik ma'nolar qiyosiy ravishda yoritiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: yosh konsepti, lingvokontseptologiya, lisoniy-madaniy manzara, lingvokulturologiya, aksiolingvistika, qiyosiy tahlil, milliy qadriyatlar.

Аннотация: В данной статье анализируется лингвистическая интерпретация концепта «Возраст» в узбекской и испанской культурах на основе лингвокультурологического и аксиолингвистического подходов. В исследовании раскрывается, как концепт «молодёжь» выражен в национальном мировоззрении, системе ценностей и культурных традициях обоих народов, его семантическая структура в языке и концептуальные особенности. В статье анализируется выражение концепта «молодёжь» посредством паремиологических единиц, фразеологических единиц и метафор, определяется его место в единстве языка и культуры. Одновременно с этим в сравнительном анализе освещаются ментально-символические значения, формируемые в сознании народа посредством лексических единиц, связанных с концептом «молодёжь» в узбекском и испанском языках.

Ключевые слова: концепт возраста, лингвоконцептология, лингвокультурный ландшафт, лингвокультурология, аксиолингвистика, сопоставительный анализ, национальные ценности.

Introduction: In the context of contemporary globalization, the study of the relationship between language and culture and the analysis of key concepts formed in the national consciousness constitute one of the important areas of research in linguoculturology. Language is not merely a means of communication; it is also an important factor that reflects a people's cultural heritage, system of values, and worldview. From this perspective, one of the concepts that occupies an important place in the culture of every nation is the concept of "age".

The concept of "age" encompasses not only biological age but also the stages of a person's physical, spiritual, and social development. It is closely associated with a people's mentality, traditional values, and philosophy of life, and carries specific meanings and symbolic connotations in each culture. In Uzbek and Spanish cultures, the concept of "age" is manifested through various linguistic means: proverbs and sayings, phraseological units, literary works, and examples of oral folklore contain numerous perceptions, comparisons, and attitudes related to human age. These linguistic units reflect the system of values embedded in the collective consciousness, society's attitude towards youth, and the national worldview.

This article analyzes the linguistic representation of the concept of "age" in the Uzbek and Spanish languages from linguocultural and axiological perspectives. The study thereby identifies the similarities and differences in the meanings and value systems associated with the concept of "age" in the two cultures.

Main Part: The term "conceptosphere," which is considered important in cognitive linguistics, refers to the totality of national concepts. It emerges through the full range of conceptual possibilities possessed by speakers of a particular language. The conceptosphere of a people is broader than the semantic sphere conceptualized and represented in language. The richer a nation's culture, oral folklore, science, and literature are, the broader and more extensive its conceptosphere becomes.

The concept of "concept" (from the Latin *conceptus* – "notion" or "understanding") refers to a mental formation that encompasses the essential characteristics of an object or phenomenon, as well as the notions associated with that phenomenon. In philology, the concept of "concept" refers to the verbal content and essence of a particular feature.

- ✓ *Lingvokontseptologiyada kontseptsiya lingvistik shaklda qayd etilgan semantik bo'linishga ega bo'lgan aqliy shakllanishdir.*
- ✓ *In linguoculturology, a concept is a mental formation characterized by semantic structuring, national and cultural features, and its fixation in linguistic form. It is synonymous with the notion of a linguocultural concept.*

In philosophy, a concept refers to the content of a notion and the semantic meaning of a name (sign).

Can the terms "notion," which is the product of logical activity, and "concept" which is widely used in cognitive linguistics, be used interchangeably? Undoubtedly, both phenomena manifest themselves as units of thought. The starting point for both is related to the perception and mental representation of an object or phenomenon in reality.

The sensory image that emerges initially takes an individual and subjective form in each person. For example, for one person, the concept of "tree" may be associated with a poplar, for another with a fir tree, and for yet another with fruit trees.

At the higher stages of emotional and cognitive activity, the individual image gradually moves away from the concrete object and transforms into an essentially logical (mental) phenomenon. The uniform perception and conceptualization of reality in this manner, together

with the emergence of a generalized and partially abstracted image, gives rise to a common code - a symbolic sign shared by all individuals. Psychologist N. I. Zhinkin proposed referring to this type of logical structure as the “Universal Subject Code (USC)”. The scholar regarded the emergence of this phenomenon as one of the hereditary and innate characteristics of the human brain.

According to his view, intellectual ability “creates concepts and judgments. It arrives at various conclusions and considerations in order to represent reality and identify the causes of human activity. The performance of these logical operations does not depend on which language an individual speaks. Therefore, the intellect performs a general regulatory function, which constitutes coding in the form of the Universal Subject Code” (Zhinkin 1982: 88).

Results and Discussion: The concept of “concept” can be viewed as a relation to a word; at the same time, since it is an abstract phenomenon, it can be regarded not as the existence of a particular unit with a material form, but rather as a set of meanings generated through our consciousness and cognitive processes. In this regard, M. Rakhmatova states: “As the knowledge accumulated in the course of human activity is reflected in the consciousness, such mental representation constitutes a reflection of national and cultural activity” [7, 13].

However, we should not overlook the fact that the term “concept” can be considered alongside phenomena such as “meaning” and “notion,” while at the same time these phenomena are not identical. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish their common and distinctive features. In this regard, the linguist Sh. Safarov expresses the following view: “A complete answer to these questions has not yet been found, and it is doubtful whether such an answer can be found. There are, of course, reasons for such doubts.” In Uzbek linguistics, T. Mardiyev, in nearly thirty of his scholarly works, also addresses definitions, conclusions, and theories concerning the notion of “concept.” According to the scholar:

“Concepts are generally aimed at structuring certain notions related to human life into specific patterns and determining their linguistic and cultural existence. A particular concept is considered to have a distinctive formation in each linguoculture. Concepts, in turn, are interpreted more broadly than word meanings and possess a complex typological structure” [6, 36–44].

There are numerous studies devoted to the concept and related issues; however, it should be noted that research conducted in this field in Uzbek linguistics is not yet sufficiently developed. Our observations of online resources have also shown that a considerable number of studies have been conducted in Russian linguistics. The definitions, theories, and classifications proposed by Russian scholars may serve as a theoretical foundation for future research in conceptology.

In Uzbek linguistics, the term “concept” began to be used as a term of analysis and interpretation from the 1990s onwards. Although many scholars have conducted research in this area to date, no universally accepted and precise definition of the concept has yet been established. Concept is an evolving field of research that is developing as a core area of modern linguistics. It is a process directly associated with human consciousness and cognition and manifests itself as a product of higher-order thinking.

Numerous scholars have proposed their own definitions of this notion. Although this is considered a relatively new field of research, the scope of studies devoted to it in Uzbek linguistics is also expanding. In this regard, the research of scholars such as Sh. Safarov, N. Mahmudov, T. Mardiyev, E. Mamatov, M. Rahmatova, O‘. Yusupov, and G. Hoshimov deserves particular attention.

In addition, T. Mardiyev has conducted scholarly research on the concepts of “Friend”, “Misfortune”, “Love and Affection”, and “Heart”. In the course of his research, he comparatively examined materials from the Uzbek and English languages and provided a linguocultural, lexical-semantic, and ethnocultural analysis of these concepts.

In the same field, the title of M. M. Rahmatova’s PhD dissertation in Philological Sciences is “Linguistic Features of the Concept of “Beauty” in English, Uzbek, and Tajik National Cultures” In this study, the scholar substantiates the axiological features of prototype meanings of beauty reflected in proverbs of the English, Uzbek, and Tajik languages within the conceptual domain of “beauty”, including inner beauty, outward beauty, the beauty of the environment, phenomena, and objects.

The linguist O‘. Q. Yusupov, reflecting on the concept, defines it as follows: a concept is “a body of knowledge in our consciousness about something or some phenomenon in the external or internal world, the images associated with it, and our positive, negative, or neutral attitudes toward it, that is, our evaluations. The relationship between a concept and a notion can be compared to an iceberg. If the concept is an iceberg, the part visible above the water is the notion” [13, 49].

This view can also be supported, since the part of an iceberg visible above the water is considerably smaller than its submerged part. Accordingly, when a particular word is subjected to conceptual analysis, its linguistic realization may initially be regarded as a notion; however, when it is interpreted at a deeper cognitive level, a much broader range of meanings is revealed.

A concept analyzes a word not merely according to its denotative meaning, but through a cognitive interpretation that encompasses all the notions it represents in reality, aspects related to human cognition, and its linguocultural manifestations. Conclusion

In conclusion, regardless of the circumstances, the language system serves as the primary means through which acquired knowledge is formed and systematized. The linguistic realization of a concept, which emerges as a unit of thought and a mental phenomenon, is likewise a product of speech-thinking activity. The emergence and development of new approaches and directions in linguistics in recent years demonstrates that modernization within this field is progressing at an increasingly rapid pace.

A review of developments in world linguistics shows that the growing interest in the conceptual nature of language, as well as the studies and theories conducted in this area, underwent considerable criticism by the 1980s. Over time, however, the scope of research has expanded, while interest in and demand for the study of concepts and the conceptosphere have continued to increase.

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