

Linguocultural Features Of The Concepts Of “Good” And “Evil” In Languages Of Different Systems

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Abstract: This article analyzes the linguocultural features of the concepts of “good” and “evil” in Russian, English, and Karakalpak languages on the basis of paremiological materials. The study identifies the semantic fields, metaphorical models, and national-cultural characteristics of these concepts. Particular attention is paid to the role of proverbs and sayings in reflecting the mentality, ethical values, and worldview of different peoples. The comparative analysis demonstrates both universal and culture-specific aspects of the concepts under investigation.

Keywords: Linguoculturology, concept, paremiology, good, evil, semantic field, metaphor, comparative linguistics.

Introduction: The relationship between language and culture has become one of the central issues of modern linguistics, especially within the framework of anthropocentric and linguocultural approaches. Language is not only a means of communication but also a unique mechanism for preserving and transmitting the historical experience, cultural memory, ethical values, and worldview of a nation. Every linguistic unit reflects a particular perception of reality and embodies the mentality of the people who use it. In this regard, the study of linguocultural concepts occupies an important place in contemporary comparative linguistics and cognitive studies. Among the numerous concepts represented in language, the concepts of “good” and “evil” are considered universal moral categories that have accompanied humanity throughout its historical development. These concepts form the ethical foundation of social life and determine people’s understanding of morality, justice, human behavior, and interpersonal relations.

The concepts of “good” and “evil” are deeply rooted in national cultures and are reflected in folklore, literature, religion, and everyday communication. One of the richest sources for studying these concepts is paremiology, which includes proverbs and sayings preserving collective wisdom and traditional moral principles. Proverbs are significant linguistic

phenomena because they accumulate centuries of cultural experience and represent stable evaluations of human behavior. Through paremiological units, societies express their attitudes toward kindness, honesty, generosity, cruelty, selfishness, and injustice. Therefore, the analysis of proverbs makes it possible to reconstruct fragments of the linguistic worldview and identify the cultural specificity of moral concepts.

In modern linguistics, the comparative study of ethical concepts in languages of different systems is particularly important due to the expansion of intercultural communication and globalization processes. The interaction between representatives of different cultures requires deeper understanding of national value systems and cultural stereotypes reflected in language. Russian, English, and Karakalpak languages belong to different linguistic and cultural traditions; consequently, the concepts of “good” and “evil” acquire specific semantic, evaluative, and metaphorical features in each of them. Russian linguoculture traditionally emphasizes spirituality, collectivism, compassion, and moral duty. English linguistic consciousness is characterized by pragmatism, individual responsibility, and rational evaluation of actions. Karakalpak culture reflects national ideals connected with bravery, hospitality, respect, generosity, and social solidarity.

The theoretical basis of the study is connected with the works of V.I. Karasik, V.A. Maslova, Yu.S. Stepanov, V.N. Teliya, G. Lakoff, and other scholars who investigated the interaction between language, culture, and cognition. Their studies demonstrate that concepts are complex mental formations combining semantic, emotional, and cultural components. The analysis of metaphorical models, semantic fields, and paremiological representations helps reveal both universal human values and national-cultural peculiarities. In particular, the opposition between light and darkness, warmth and coldness, harmony and destruction serves as a universal cognitive mechanism for conceptualizing good and evil in many languages.

The relevance of the present research is determined by the necessity of comparative investigation of moral concepts in different linguistic systems and by the increasing importance of intercultural dialogue in modern society. Despite numerous studies devoted to linguocultural concepts and paremiology, the comparative analysis of the concepts of “good” and “evil” in Russian, English, and Karakalpak languages remains insufficiently explored. The novelty of the research lies in identifying the linguocultural, semantic, and metaphorical characteristics of these concepts through the analysis of paremiological material. The purpose of the study is to determine universal and national-cultural features of the concepts of “good” and “evil” in the linguistic worldview of different peoples.

The study of the concepts of “good” and “evil” within the framework of linguoculturology is based on the idea that language reflects not only objective reality but also the cultural and moral experience of a nation. Linguocultural concepts are regarded as mental formations that combine semantic meaning, emotional evaluation, historical memory, and national-cultural associations. According to modern cognitive linguistics, concepts are preserved and transmitted through linguistic units, among which paremiological expressions occupy a special place. Proverbs and sayings represent condensed forms of collective wisdom and function as important carriers of moral and ethical norms. They reflect social ideals, behavioral standards, and traditional value systems formed during the historical development of society.

In Russian, English, and Karakalpak linguistic cultures, the concepts of “good” and “evil” are among the most frequently represented ethical categories. Comparative analysis demonstrates that despite the universality of these concepts, each language interprets them according to its own cultural priorities and worldview. In Russian linguoculture, the concept of “good” is strongly associated with spirituality, sincerity,

compassion, and collective solidarity. Proverbs such as “Доброе слово и кошке приятно” and “Добро помни, а зло забывай” emphasize emotional warmth, kindness, and moral responsibility toward other people. Russian culture traditionally perceives good as a spiritual value connected with mercy, patience, and mutual support. Such paremias reveal the collectivist orientation of Russian mentality, where human relations and moral harmony occupy a central position.

In English linguistic culture, the concept of “good” acquires more pragmatic and rational characteristics. English proverbs often underline individual responsibility, self-control, and practical wisdom. Expressions such as “Good fences make good neighbours,” “Virtue is its own reward,” and “A good example is the best sermon” demonstrate that good behavior is interpreted through social discipline, personal initiative, and ethical responsibility. Unlike Russian culture, where kindness is frequently connected with sacrifice and emotional involvement, English culture tends to associate good with rational choice and social effectiveness. This reflects the influence of individualistic values characteristic of English-speaking societies.

The Karakalpak linguistic worldview combines both collective and individual features in the interpretation of good. Karakalpak proverbs describe kindness through bravery, generosity, hospitality, and respect for people. Proverbs such as “Jaqsılıq jerde qalmas,” “Jaqsılıqqa jaqsılıq – hár kisiniń isi, jamanlıqqa jaqsılıq – er kisiniń isi,” and “Saıyadıń qolı ashıq” demonstrate that goodness is closely connected with honor, social solidarity, and moral dignity. In Karakalpak culture, a good person is often characterized as open-hearted, courageous, and ready to support others. Hospitality and generosity are regarded as essential ethical qualities reflecting traditional national values.

The concept of “evil” also reveals both universal and culture-specific features. In Russian linguoculture, evil is frequently represented through emotional and psychological characteristics. Proverbs such as “Злая душа и в добре беду найдёт” illustrate that evil is connected with envy, anger, and spiritual corruption. Russian paremias often portray evil as a destructive force capable of ruining social harmony and personal morality. Emotional intensity and moral condemnation are especially strong in the Russian representation of evil.

In English culture, the concept of “evil” is commonly associated with moral responsibility and the consequences of human actions. Proverbs such as “Evil begets evil,” “What goes around comes around,” and “The road to hell is paved with good intentions”

emphasize the principle of causality and ethical accountability. Evil is interpreted not only as immoral behavior but also as a violation of social balance and justice. English paremias frequently contain pragmatic warnings about the negative outcomes of harmful actions, which reflects rational moral evaluation characteristic of English-speaking societies.

Karakalpak proverbs represent evil mainly through social relations and behavioral norms. Expressions such as “Jaqsıdan sharapat, jamannan kesapat” and “Jaman aytpay jaqsı joq” demonstrate that evil is perceived as destructive behavior bringing harm to society and interpersonal relations. In Karakalpak linguistic consciousness, evil opposes unity, respect, and mutual support. Negative human qualities such as greed, dishonesty, and disrespect are strongly condemned because they threaten communal harmony and traditional ethical values.

An important aspect of the research is the analysis of metaphorical models used in the conceptualization of good and evil. Cognitive linguistics considers metaphor one of the principal mechanisms through which abstract concepts are understood. In all three linguistic cultures, good is metaphorically associated with light, warmth, purity, and life, whereas evil is connected with darkness, coldness, destruction, and chaos. Russian expressions such as “Доброе сердце — что солнце” compare kindness to sunlight and warmth. English expressions like “Good news travels fast” and “Bring to light” associate goodness with openness and positivity. Karakalpak proverbs also employ positive natural imagery to describe kindness and moral purity.

The metaphorical representation of evil demonstrates universal symbolic associations with darkness and destruction. English expressions such as “The road to hell is paved with good intentions” and Russian proverbs describing evil as darkness or coldness reveal the negative evaluative nature of the concept. However, cultural differences remain evident. Russian metaphors intensify emotional suffering and spiritual conflict, English metaphors emphasize practical consequences and rational morality, while Karakalpak imagery reflects collective ethics and social stability.

The semantic field analysis further confirms the national specificity of the investigated concepts. In Russian, the root “добр-” forms a broad derivational network including words expressing kindness, goodwill, and moral virtue. English lexical units related to “good” possess wide collocational productivity, as seen in expressions like “good manners,” “good-hearted,” and “good will.” Karakalpak lexical representations of kindness preserve close connections with traditional moral ideals and social behavior. The lexical realization

of evil also differs across languages: Russian “зло” carries strong emotional connotations, English “evil” maintains religious and ethical semantics, while Karakalpak “jaman” is closely related to everyday moral evaluation and communal relationships.

The comparative analysis proves that proverbs and sayings function as important linguistic mechanisms for preserving cultural memory and transmitting ethical values from one generation to another. Through paremiological material, languages reveal different ways of conceptualizing morality, social behavior, and human relations. Therefore, the concepts of “good” and “evil” should be regarded not only as universal moral categories but also as culturally marked elements reflecting national identity and worldview.

The conducted comparative analysis demonstrated that the concepts of “good” and “evil” represent universal moral categories existing in all cultures and linguistic systems, yet their semantic interpretation and cultural realization differ significantly according to national mentality and historical traditions. Proverbs and sayings serve as valuable linguocultural material because they preserve collective wisdom, ethical norms, and stable evaluations of human behavior formed over centuries. Through paremiological units, different nations express their understanding of justice, kindness, responsibility, morality, and interpersonal relations.

The study revealed that Russian linguoculture mainly associates the concept of “good” with spirituality, emotional sincerity, compassion, and collectivism. Russian proverbs emphasize moral duty, kindness toward others, and the importance of inner purity. At the same time, the concept of “evil” in Russian linguistic consciousness often possesses emotional and psychological characteristics and is represented as a destructive force opposing social harmony and spiritual balance. The English linguistic worldview demonstrates a more pragmatic and rational interpretation of good and evil. English proverbs frequently connect good with individual responsibility, practical wisdom, personal initiative, and social order. Evil in English culture is commonly interpreted through moral consequences and cause-and-effect relations, reflecting ethical responsibility for one’s actions. In Karakalpak linguoculture, the concepts of “good” and “evil” are closely related to national traditions, social solidarity, bravery, generosity, hospitality, and respect for others. Karakalpak paremias present kindness not only as a moral category but also as an important social value strengthening communal relations and preserving cultural identity.

The analysis of metaphorical models showed that the

conceptualization of good and evil is based on universal cognitive oppositions such as light versus darkness, warmth versus coldness, and harmony versus destruction. However, each culture enriches these universal models with specific national meanings and emotional associations. Russian paremias intensify the spiritual and emotional dimensions of moral concepts, English expressions focus on rational and pragmatic evaluation, whereas Karakalpak proverbs reflect collective ethics and traditional social ideals.

The semantic field analysis confirmed that lexical and phraseological representations of good and evil differ in productivity, emotional coloring, and associative potential across languages. Russian lexical units reveal rich emotional and derivational structures, English expressions demonstrate wide pragmatic usage, and Karakalpak linguistic units preserve strong connections with traditional ethical values and everyday social relations. These distinctions illustrate how language reflects different ways of perceiving reality and organizing moral experience.

Thus, the concepts of “good” and “evil” function not only as linguistic categories but also as important cultural markers reflecting the worldview, mentality, and value orientation of different peoples. The results of the research contribute to the development of linguoculturology, paremiology, cognitive linguistics, and comparative studies. Furthermore, the findings may be applied in translation studies, intercultural communication, language teaching, and further investigations devoted to the interaction between language, culture, and national consciousness.

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