

The Study Of Somatic-Component Proverbs In Linguistics

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Abstract: This article examines the active and passive use of human body parts in proverbs belonging to different language systems and outlines the scope of their study. It analyzes in what aspects proverbs formed on the basis of somatisms have been investigated in Uzbek, English, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Russian, as well as their significance. Furthermore, it is emphasized that in the process of studying proverbs with somatic components from a linguo-cognitive perspective, such issues as concept formation, the emergence of mental structures, and the development of cognitive models should be explored in depth.

Keywords: Proverbs, concept, linguocognitive aspects, metaphor, metonymy, figurative meaning.

Introduction: When looking at major collections of proverbs worldwide, one can find numerous examples involving the human body and its various parts such as the eyes, feet, hands, head, heart, mouth, and nose. Such proverbs have been studied in many research works across different languages. The findings of these studies indicate that somatic proverbs have been analyzed in world linguistics from structural, semantic, sociological, etymological, pragmatic, and cognitive perspectives. Examining proverbs that include human body parts specifically from a linguo-cognitive aspect makes it possible to draw scientific conclusions about human mental activity and, beyond the individual, about the general worldview, mentality, culture, and daily life of an entire people.

METHODOLOGY

The research is aimed at examining the scientific investigations of Uzbek and foreign scholars concerning somatic proverbs. The methodological basis of the study relies on several interrelated approaches. The methods of description, comparison, linguocognitive analysis, and statistical analysis play an important role in substantiating this work. Accordingly, it describes which scholars have studied somatic proverbs in different language systems. Based on the collected material, attention is given to the aspects of proverbs containing somatic units that have been investigated,

as well as to their general and specific features. Through the identified common and particular linguistic characteristics, conclusions are drawn about the extent to which proverbs have been studied across languages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Somatic proverbs in English have been studied from various perspectives. For instance, W.Mieder has investigated the features of the use of somatic units in modern American proverbs [Mieder 2020]. According to his research, paremiologists have often neglected modern proverbs in the process of collecting and analyzing proverbs. As human life changes, new facets of culture emerge, and the political environment shifts, new proverbs have begun to appear in communication. Modern people have started to place greater emphasis on physical appearance and health, which has given rise to new versions of somatic proverbs. For example, instead of the proverb beauty is only skin deep, which was used among the ancient Anglo-American peoples, the version beauty is only skin began to be used in the mid-19th century. According to W.Mieder, some somatic proverbs started to be employed in forms that contradict their earlier variants. For example, a closed mouth catches no flies (meaning a person who speaks little remains out of trouble). Another variant, a closed mouth catches no feet, conveys the idea that remaining

silent may also bring about certain disadvantages. Some somatic proverbs have been used in political spheres for various purposes. For instance, based on the English formula *my X, my Y* (*My problems, my solutions*), the somatic proverb *my body, my choice* emerged, which was adopted in feminist movements as a slogan to defend abortion rights. On January 22, 1989, demonstrators in Orlando carried placards reading *my body, my choice*; on April 21, 1989, Catholic students in Chicago held up the phrase *my body, my choice, my right* during President Bush's speech; on March 24, 1992, at a fashion demonstration in Indianapolis, clothing was decorated with the phrase *my body, my choice*; and on January 8, 2002, in Hannover, the expression *my body, my choice* was also used as an argument against vaccination [Mieder 2020, 4].

Somatic proverbs in Arabic linguistics have been studied by M. A. Aladel. In his research, the relationship between proverbs and related phenomena, as well as the use of metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony in proverbs, are examined in depth, with particular attention to the employment of human body parts such as the head, face, nose, tongue, hand, and foot in Arabic proverbs and their figurative meanings [Meshael 2023, 417]. In particular, it is emphasized that the lexeme *head*, since the entire body is controlled by the organs located in the head, has served as the basis for the formation of many proverbs in Arabic symbolizing freedom, obedience, and dominance. The

hand component in Arabic proverbs is used as a symbol of generosity, assistance, regret, control, and skill. The foot component, on the other hand, is employed in meanings related to movement, opportunity, and old age.

Among Arab linguists, A. Halifa and L. Rababah have studied Jordanian folk proverbs involving human body parts [Khalifeh, Rababah 2022, 21–31]. For their research, 40 proverbs commonly used among the Jordanian people were selected and proposed to be analyzed within the following five groups:

proverbs and expressions reflecting advice regarding relationships with relatives and marriage;

proverbs and expressions related to relationships with friends and strangers;

proverbs and expressions describing personal character traits;

proverbs and expressions concerning admonition and contentment with livelihood;

proverbs related to food and body parts.

In Persian, special attention should be given to the studies of scholars such as M. Aliakbari and Z. Karimi on the use of human body parts in proverbs and the formation of conceptual meanings [Aliakbari, Karimi 2021, 5]. These scholars emphasize that, out of 10,000 Iranian folk proverbs, 1,150 contain the lexeme *foot*, which they categorize in the following table:

Psychological	Number	Intellectual	Number	Personality-related	Number
Motivation	55	Thinking / Reflection	48	Mood	101
Confidence	67	Memory and Consciousness	26	Character	13
Despair	47	Mental Activity	17	Stable Temperament	15
Hope	61	Doubt and Hesitation	38	Betrayal	32
Depression	87	Regret	26	Intimidation	17
Self-confidence	30			Deception	29
Feelings and Emotions	110			Patience	18
Like and Dislike	129			Personal Trait	71
Anger, Rage	69				
Offense (Feeling hurt)	57				

As can be seen from the table, proverbs in Persian containing only the foot component are classified according to psychological, intellectual, and personality-related factors. Somatic proverbs have also been thoroughly studied in East Asian languages. In particular, F. A. Mansur and R. Said have investigated Indonesian proverbs involving human body parts from a cognitive-semantic perspective [Mansur, Said 2019, 265]. According to their findings, the cognitive mechanisms in the proverbs of the Volio people, speakers of Indonesian, are derived from body parts based on the principle SPECIFIC REPRESENTING THE GENERIC.

Elif Arika Akko'k has studied issues such as the use of the head somatism in Turkish proverbs and its conceptualization [Akko'k 2024, 150]. According to her research, 97 proverbs containing the head component, which is actively used in Turkish, were selected for analysis and examined within the framework of G.Lakoff and M.Johnson's Great Chain Metaphor theory. The results show that in 47.4% of the analyzed proverbs, the head somatism is transferred as a representative of the person. In addition, it is conceptualized as the center of emotions, the locus of mental activity and a symbol of strength.

In Russian, proverbs involving human body parts have been studied by N.G.Arhipova and M.A.Kuroyedova [Arhipova, Kuroyedova 2020, 86]. According to their views, within the Russian linguo-cultural context, the human body is divided into upper and lower parts: the organs representing the upper body are symbolized as notions of purity, openness and light, while the lower parts are interpreted as vulnerability or inferiority. Therefore, it is emphasized that in Russian folk proverbs, upper body parts such as the hand, head and shoulder are more frequently used. Internal body organs in Russian, however, are mainly interpreted as expressions of both positive and negative emotions.

In Uzbek linguistics, a number of scholars have conducted research on somatic proverbs, most of which have been carried out from a comparative perspective. For instance, M. Gadoyeva has studied the semantic-pragmatic features of somatisms in Uzbek and English [Gadoyeva 2022]. In her research, Uzbek and English proverbs are analyzed thematically under such categories as diligence, honesty, idleness, bribery, greed, friendship, enmity, wisdom, ignorance, knowledge, and lack of knowledge. Furthermore, the scholar examines proverbs from a diachronic perspective, emphasizing that somatic proverbs are also found in M. Kashgari's medieval work *Devonu lug'otit-turk*.

G. Kh. Khamdamova has conducted a comparative

study of the cognitive-semantic and structural aspects of proverbs formed on the basis of somatisms in Uzbek and English [Khamdamova 2023]. Her research demonstrates that somatisms within proverbs play a significant role in the conceptualization of the paremiological worldview. In addition, the quantitative indicators of body parts involved in the formation of proverbs in Uzbek and English are compared. According to the analysis, 37 different somatisms are used in Uzbek proverbs, while 31 somatisms are employed in English proverbs. The syntactic-structural features of somatic proverbs are also examined, with emphasis on the fact that most of these proverbs are declarative in nature. For example, in Uzbek: *Ayiq o'z tovonini yalab jon saqlaydi* ("A bear survives by licking its paw"); *Do'st otgan tosh bosh yormas* ("A stone thrown by a friend does not break the head"); and in English: *The camel going to seek horns lost his ears*; *A heavy purse makes a light heart*. Moreover, it is noted that in terms of structure, the number of simple-sentence somatic proverbs exceeds 500 in Uzbek, compared to 118 in English.

CONCLUSION

In languages belonging to different systems, human body parts have served as an important conceptual source in the formation of proverbs. Humanity conceptualizes its experiences and life phenomena through various objects and elements of the surrounding world. This process has led to great interest in the study of somatic vocabulary within linguistics. A number of studies in world linguistics have analyzed the structural, semantic, stylistic, linguocultural, pragmatic, and cognitive features of body-related lexicon used in proverbs.

According to modern linguistic tendencies, the relatively new anthropocentric approach in the study of linguistic units makes it possible to reveal the essence of the phenomenon more deeply. In particular, a broad investigation of the linguo-cognitive features of somatic proverbs allows us to identify how they form concepts, shape mental structures, and give rise to cognitive models. This, in turn, contributes to a deeper understanding of human worldview, national modes of thinking, and cultural values.

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