

Cultural Symbols And Their Influence On Anthropomorphism In The Languages

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Abstract: From a cognitive, linguistic, and cultural standpoint, this article investigates how cultural symbols impact anthropomorphism in language. The similarities and differences between anthropomorphic expressions in Uzbek and English are compared and analyzed. Anthropomorphism is understood as a fundamental cognitive process of human thought as well as a stylistic or artistic device. The study emphasizes how language, culture, belief, and historical experience are all interconnected. It also looks at contemporary examples of anthropomorphism in media, technology, politics, and advertising. The results show that anthropomorphism is a universal but culturally particular feature of human thought.

Keywords: Anthropomorphism, cultural symbols, cognitive linguistics, national mentality, metaphor, culture, language, symbolism.

Introduction: Language and culture are complex social and cognitive phenomena that are inseparable and interact with each other. The language of each people is a reflection of its historical memory, national worldview, value system and way of thinking. Therefore, it is important to study language not only as a means of communication, but also as a symbolic system that embodies the spiritual, cultural and philosophical experience of the people. Through language, society transmits its cultural heritage, historical consciousness and social values from generation to generation. In particular, symbols, metaphors, phraseological units, mythological images and anthropomorphic expressions in the language reflect the most ancient layers of human thinking. Anthropomorphism is one of such phenomena, which is derived from the Greek words *anthropos* - "human" and *morphe* - "form". It means the transfer of human qualities, actions, feelings or mental properties to animals, objects, natural phenomena, abstract concepts or divine beings. Anthropomorphism is a natural product of human thinking, in which a person relies on his own experience, emotions and forms of perception in the process of understanding the world around him. When explaining nature, phenomena or

abstract concepts, a person attributes a human form, behavior or intention to them - this is called "anthropocentric perception" in cognitive psychology. Thus, anthropomorphism arises from the natural desire of a person to make nature and existence more understandable and closer by humanizing it. This process continues from ancient mythologies to modern art, literature and popular culture.

Several scientific approaches were used in the study of anthropomorphism in this article. Using the comparative-linguistic method, anthropomorphic expressions in English and Uzbek were comparatively analyzed. Through the cognitive-linguistic approach, the relationship of anthropomorphic units with conceptual models in the human mind was studied. Cultural studies analysis revealed the relationship between cultural symbols and mythological images and national values, religion and traditions. Semantic and stylistic analysis also made it possible to identify the layers of meaning of phraseological units and their cultural motivation. Using these methods, the influence of cultural symbols on anthropomorphic manifestations in languages was scientifically substantiated.

METHOD

Anthropomorphism is widely used in the oral and written literature of the Uzbek people. Expressions such as “Mother Earth”, “Mother Nature”, “Mother Language”, “Eye of the Heart”, “Conscience Awakened” express the inextricable connection between man and nature, man and spirituality, man and language. These expressions are a continuation of the tradition of perceiving nature, language and spirituality as living, sentient beings in the folk worldview. At the same time, such expressions allow expressing the spiritual world, feelings and faith of man through language. There are similar anthropomorphic expressions in English: “Mother Nature”, “Father Time”, “Justice is blind” are widely used as cultural symbols. Through them, a person expresses his social, moral and philosophical values in language, gives life to abstract concepts. For example, the phrase “Mother Nature” describes nature as a kind, caring, but strong and independent being. Through this, a person perceives nature as both a living organism and a moral system. Cultural symbols play a decisive role in the formation and development of anthropomorphism. A symbol is a sign that has deep meaning and value in a culture. Each people create its own symbolic system based on its historical, religious, social and ecological experience. For example, in Uzbek culture, “sun” means life, love and blessing, while in English culture it represents “hope and awakening”. Animal images also have different symbolic meanings: a fox in Uzbek means cunning and intelligence, and in English - agility and cunning; a horse in Uzbek means loyalty and freedom, while in English, an “owl” is interpreted as a symbol of wisdom, and a “dove” is interpreted as a symbol of peace. Thus, anthropomorphism is formed through the semantic expansion of cultural symbols and is manifested in each culture as a unique cognitive model. The interrelationship between language, culture and thought is clearly visible through the phenomenon of anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism, as a basic feature of human thought, serves to express the relationship of man with the environment, nature and divinity. Cultural symbols, as the main carriers of this process, create semantic, cognitive and aesthetic meaning in the language system. Thus, the study of the topic of “cultural symbols and their influence on anthropomorphism in languages” is relevant not only linguistically, but also cognitively, philosophically, and culturally, and it reveals the national values hidden in the language. It reveals thinking and demonstrates the universality of human thought.

RESULTS

The analysis's findings demonstrated how anthropomorphism is ingrained in each people's historical, religious, and social experiences and how it

is formed in languages through cultural symbols. By using anthropomorphic expressions, each language develops its own model of human thought while also showcasing a person's capacity to perceive, comprehend, and give meaning to their surroundings. In reality, anthropomorphism results from the interplay between national cultural traits and the universality of human thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010). In the Uzbek language, natural phenomena, emotions, social concepts, and religious ideas are frequently conveyed through anthropomorphic expressions. For instance, phrases like “The sun laughed,” “The river was angry,” “The mountains were silent,” “The heart was sad,” and “The conscience was torn” infuse them with vitality, spirituality, and emotional depth by attributing human feelings to non-human elements. These expressions illustrate the deep connection between people and nature, viewing each element as a living, sentient entity (Nurmonov, 2005).

In the Uzbek language, the concept of “mother” serves as a prominent anthropomorphic symbol. Phrases like “Mother Earth,” “Mother Nature,” and “Mother Fatherland” illustrate nature, land, and life as embodiments of human love, care, and selflessness. In this context, the term “mother” transcends its biological meaning to embody a spiritual symbol, reflecting the values of kindness, loyalty, and selflessness inherent in the national mentality (Sharifjonova, 2020). The symbols of anthropomorphism in the Uzbek language are directly connected to the religious and moral perspectives of the people. Expressions like “Fate has decided,” “Sin has crushed the heart,” “Heart has shone,” and “Heart has been enlightened” convey spiritual and religious significance in articulating a person's inner experiences or life events. By employing these anthropomorphic expressions, an individual aligns their emotions with the external environment, symbolically utilizing the capabilities of language to convey mental processes (Vahobova, 2012).

A comparable process can be seen in English; however, the anthropomorphic expressions in this language possess a more poetic, aesthetic, or literary quality. For instance, phrases like “The wind whispered,” “The sky is crying,” “The sun smiled down on us,” “Time flies,” and “Death knocked on his door” enhance expressiveness by attributing human characteristics and actions to natural elements or abstract ideas (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010). In English culture, nature is viewed as an anthropomorphic entity — a vital aspect of human existence while also being an autonomous power. The phrase “Mother Nature” embodies nature as a life-giving force, a representation of beauty and nurturing, aligning semantically with the

Uzbek phrase “Ona Tabiat.” In contrast, English expressions highlight individuality, independence, and the uncontrollable aspects of nature, whereas Uzbek emphasizes the spiritual and moral bond between humanity and the natural world.

In English culture, anthropomorphic expressions serve as aesthetic and metaphorical devices, whereas in Uzbek culture, they fulfill moral, religious, and didactic roles. For example, in English, the phrase “Fate decided” conveys a sense of randomness and the lack of control over life, whereas in Uzbek, the phrase “Taqrir hukm qildi” is rooted in the idea of divine justice and trust (Barrett, 2000). Simultaneously, religious anthropomorphism holds significant importance in both languages. Expressions such as “God sees everything,” “God’s hand is upon us,” and “The Lord is my shepherd” in English describe God through human feelings and actions, which are semantically compatible with expressions such as “Alloh mehribon,” “Xudo ko’radi,” and “Tangri rahmli” in Uzbek. Although religious anthropomorphism is used in both languages to comprehend the divine through human emotions, there are some distinctions: Uzbek expressions are more connected to the collective spirit, religious unity, and moral education, whereas English expressions are more biblical and grounded in personal and individual faith (Guthrie, 1993; Barrett, 2000). Additionally, the primary source of semantic expansions in anthropomorphism is cultural symbols. In Uzbek, for instance, a fox is a symbol of cunning, a horse of loyalty, and a lion of courage. In English, however, these symbols are slightly different: a dove is a symbol of peace, an owl is a symbol of wisdom, and a fox is a symbol of cunning (Vahobova, 2012). The historical evolution of cultures, their social values, and their interactions with nature are the causes of these variations. In Uzbek folklore, anthropomorphic images are more likely to convey ideas of justice, kindness, and collective values than in English folklore, where they frequently symbolize personal moral decisions (Orwell, 1945; Blake, 1793). (Sharifjonova, 2020). As a result, anthropomorphism is a product of human thought that manifests in all languages, although its form, meaning, and purpose vary depending on the culture.

According to the findings, anthropomorphism is a cognitive and cultural phenomenon that reflects how each people view the world. It enhances language imagery, strengthens the bond between people and their surroundings through linguistic symbols, and is a primary means of expressing national thought and spirituality (Nurmonov, 2005; Kövecses, 2010; Goleman, 1995).

DISCUSSION

According to the analysis of the results, anthropomorphism is not only a means of metaphorical expression in language, but also a deep cognitive mechanism for understanding human thought and culture. Each people perceive the world through its own language, assigns meaning to it, and through it expresses human experience. Anthropomorphism is at the heart of this process, because it symbolically expresses the connection between man and nature, man and society, and man and divinity. Anthropomorphic expressions in English and Uzbek have similarities and differences, and their roots lie in common human experience. For example, in both languages, expressions such as “Mother Nature” and “Ona Tabiat” describe nature as a caring, life-giving, maternally loving entity. This similarity stems from humanity’s ancient spiritual connection with nature, from the perception of nature as a living and sentient force. However, despite this commonality, anthropomorphism in each language is based on its own national and cultural foundations. In the Uzbek language, anthropomorphism is deeply connected with religious, moral and family values: expressions such as “Taqrir hukm qildi”, “Kon’gil yorishdi”, “Ona Vatan”, “Vijdon koyidi” express the inner world, faith and spiritual world of a person. In these expressions, human qualities - values such as love, loyalty, care, justice, patience - occupy the main semantic place. Thus, the Uzbek language uses anthropomorphism as a means of strengthening spiritual worldview, faith, morality and collective values. In English, anthropomorphism has a more individualistic and aesthetic character. For example, expressions such as “The wind whispered”, “The sky is crying”, “Time flies”, “Death knocked on his door” transfer human emotions to natural phenomena, raising them to the level of poetic images. For the English language, such expressions are used as an aesthetic tool in the fields of literature, art and media, while for the Uzbek language they have a moral-didactic meaning. In other words, the English language uses anthropomorphism to enhance emotional impact and figurative power, while the Uzbek language uses it to convey a spiritual idea, teach a lesson or express faith. Cultural symbols play an important role in the formation of anthropomorphic thinking. In the Uzbek language, such images as “fox – cunning”, “lion – courage”, “horse – loyalty” arose from the historical and cultural experience of the people, their observations of the animal world. In English culture, these symbols are interpreted somewhat differently: expressions such as “owl – wisdom”, “fox – cunning”, “dove – peace” were formed through folk oral creativity and religious symbols. At the same time, in both cultures, animals, natural phenomena and objects are associated with human qualities, which indicates

the universal cognitive root of anthropomorphism. Religious symbols also occupy a special place in the system of anthropomorphic expressions. In English, expressions such as “God’s hand is upon us”, “The Lord is my shepherd”, “God sees everything” explain God through human feelings and actions. In Uzbek, expressions such as “Alloh rahmli”, “Tangri hukm qildi”, “Xudo ko’radi” convey a similar idea, but they more strongly express collective faith, religious unity and the strength of faith. In this case, anthropomorphism acts as a semantic mechanism for explaining divinity through human language.

Anthropomorphism has not lost its significance in modern times, but on the contrary, it is actively used in new contexts - in politics, advertising, technology and the media. For example, in advertising, products are described with human qualities: expressions such as “Our car loves the road”, “This phone understands you”, “Your skin smiles again” are used to evoke an emotional connection in the consumer. There are similar cases in Uzbek advertisements: expressions such as “A brand that thinks of you”, “Technique that loves your home”, “Natural beauty awaits you” attract the audience through anthropomorphic effect. Anthropomorphism is also used as a powerful rhetorical tool in political speeches. For example, expressions such as “The homeland is calling us”, “Justice has triumphed”, “Peace must not sleep” serve to strengthen the national spirit, create emotional unity and increase ideological motivation. There are also such phenomena in political discourse in English: expressions such as “Democracy is dying”, “Freedom speaks”, “History will judge us” make abstract concepts impressive by giving them human qualities. Also, technological anthropomorphism is increasingly widespread in modern society. In the process of interacting with digital technologies, artificial intelligence and robots, people attribute human qualities to them. For example, when communicating with virtual assistants such as Siri, Alexa or ChatGPT, users refer to them as humans, giving them qualities such as “she understands”, “she helped”, “she hurt”. This is a reflection of the human mind reflects the natural anthropomorphic nature of language — that is, a person tends to perceive objects that are different from him in a human form. Phrases such as “My computer hates me” or “The car doesn’t want to start” in English, similar to phrases such as “Kompyuterim menga pand berdi” and “Mashinam erkalayapti” in Uzbek, attribute human behavior to technical objects. This phenomenon, in fact, shows the strong interrelationship between language and thought, and the symbolic humanization of man’s world through language. As a result, anthropomorphism, in addition

to being a means of poetic, religious, or metaphorical expression in language, is also a deep cognitive model of culture. Through it, man interprets his world, nature, technology, and even divinity in a humanistic way based on his own experience. Although the source of the similarity of anthropomorphic expressions in English and Uzbek is common human experience and emotions, their differences are determined by national thinking, historical development and social values. While the Uzbek language expresses collectivity, kindness, morality and spirituality in anthropomorphic forms, the English language puts forward individuality, creativity and aesthetics. Therefore, anthropomorphism is manifested in its own way in the cultural code of both languages, and by comparing them, one can understand the universality of human thinking and the diversity of cultures more deeply.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, cultural symbols play a decisive and guiding role in the formation of anthropomorphism in language, because through them people understand the world around them - nature, divinity, technology and society - through familiar, that is, human experience. Anthropomorphism reflects not only the artistic or metaphorical aspect of language, but also the deep cognitive mechanism of human thinking. Culture, history, beliefs and national thinking determine the way a person perceives the world, therefore, anthropomorphism in each language acquires its own semantic and emotional colors. In the case of the Uzbek language, this situation is based on the religious, moral and family values of the people, and such expressions as “Mother Nature”, “Fate has decided”, “Heart ached”, “Justice does not sleep” express the spiritual connection between man and the world. In English, anthropomorphism is more individualistic, poetic, and technological in contexts—expressions like “The wind whispered,” “Time waits for no one,” and “My phone knows me well” demonstrate the emotional and aesthetic orientation of the language. Religious anthropomorphism is also central in both cultures: through expressions like “Alloh rahmli,” “Xudo kechiradi” in Uzbek, or “God sees everything,” “The Lord is my shepherd” in English, people bring the divine closer to their own experience. The influence of cultural symbols on anthropomorphism is, in fact, related to the human instinct to see oneself as the center of the universe. This trend extends from mythological and religious thought to modern advertising, political discourse, and technological communication. Giving products a “human voice” in advertisements — phrases like “The phone that thinks of you,” “The insurance that knows your worries,” “The brand that brings joy to your home” — directly affects the consumer’s emotions.

This shows the communicative power of anthropomorphism. This phenomenon is also widespread in English culture: phrases like “Your car loves the road,” “This coffee hugs you in the morning” serve to strengthen emotional connection through language. Technological anthropomorphism is also one of the most actively developing manifestations in modern times. When communicating with artificial intelligence, digital assistants, and robots, people perceive them as conscious beings. For example, when a user says, “Siri doesn’t understand me,” or “Alexa seems upset,” this is not just a joke, but a manifestation of anthropomorphic thinking hidden in the subconscious.

Thus, anthropomorphism is an important expression of the interaction between language and culture. It reflects a universal, yet culturally distinct aspect of human thought. An analysis of the Uzbek and English languages shows that the main purpose of anthropomorphism in both languages is to adapt the world to human experience, to make it emotionally and spiritually understandable. At the same time, this phenomenon is closely related to the constant evolution of human thought: from ancient myths to modern technologies, anthropomorphic expression changes its form, but retains its essence - the human desire to enter into dialogue with the world. Therefore, the study of anthropomorphism is relevant not only in linguistics, but also in the fields of cultural studies, psychology, sociology, and communication, as it allows for a deeper understanding of the symbolic and emotional foundations of human thought.

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