


Representation Features in the National Cultural Content of Concepts Good and Evil

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the analysis of verbal representations in the concepts of good and evil in Russian and Kyrgyz linguocultures. Proverbs, as one of the basic units of the culture of the people, allow analyzing basic concepts, which precisely explain concepts of good and evil. In most occasions, the concepts of good and evil are same among all people understanding in the world. Some differences can arise in the cultural and historical traditions of the ethnos: lifestyle, historical development, religion, culture and mentality. These differences make it possible to explore specifics in a particular ethnic group, to penetrate mentality, to determine priorities and stereotypes. Of course, this is revealed only in comparison with the linguistic material of other people. The conceptual analysis allows us to make detailed descriptions of concepts in different languages. We believe that a person is initially inclined to do good, about which paremias in all nations are talking about. Humankind can create evil under the influence of any circumstances or difficulties. The borderline between good and evil is rather arbitrary: what is good for one person may turn out to be evil for other people. We believe that good and evil are not two opposed concepts, but one antonymic concept, where the corresponding concepts are not always strictly delimited. Most of the proverbs based on people's ideas are about good and evil. Over time, new values appear in the consciousness of a person and society. What was good a hundred years ago may be evil today. Each person has his scale of values, which is determined by belonging to a particular nation's mentality. The values and priorities of nomadic people often do not coincide with the values of sedentary tribes. Proverbs can also become outdated. The basic fund of paremias remains unchanged since universal hu-

man concepts of good and evil are one and eternal, they are dictated to us by the concepts of culture, religion and ethics.

Keywords

Paremiyas, Proverbs, Sayings, Concepts, Good, Evil, Representation, Ethics, Mentality

1. Introduction

Modern linguistics is characterized by the growing role of anthropocentric, cultural and cognitive approaches in language studies (Alefirenko, 2008; Bender & Beller, 2013; Yanmurzina, 2014), which acts as a source of information about the conceptual structures of the consciousness of an ethnic group.

Concepts can get different representations in the language using words, phrases, sentences and texts. Proverbs and sayings, representing a structurally and semantically organized system and identifying the peculiarities of the worldview and culture of the people, determine the system of assessments of the surrounding world and are the units that make it possible to isolate and analyze basic concepts. Proverbs are important in the national and cultural identity folklore cognition, i.e. “popular wisdom” in particular ethnos (Orlova et al., 2018).

Attention to proverbs and sayings has always been enormous since they enrich our life understanding, characters, worldview and system values of this or that nation. These small genres of folklore express folk wisdom, the life experience of an ethnic group, which is in general common to most people’s worldview. In Russian linguistics, this topic was addressed in their works by F.I. Buslaev, A.N. Afanasyev, A.A. Potebnya and others. In modern linguistics, the anthropocentric direction is a methodological basis that combines cognitive and linguocultural paradigms. I.V. Dahl noted that the proverbs are “means and sighs, crying and sobbing, joy and fun, grief and consolation in faces” (Dahl, 1957: p. 4).

In the Kyrgyz language, such prominent scientists as academician K.K. Yudakhin (Davletbakova et al., 1997), prof. Liss A.N., prof. Zulpukarov K.Z., Tanaev T., Zakirov S., Abdyl daev E. The topic of proverbs and sayings has been studied in sufficient details. Using proverbs in the Kyrgyz language is determining connection between their role and significance in life practice through the following purposes: text properties, content meaning, language study tool (Imanakunova, 2016). The use of paremiyas is one of the good knowledge indicators in a particular language and today, unfortunately, in the speech of a modern person we meet a rather limited number of paremiyas, which dictates the relevance of this article. Both proverbs and sayings are variable, sometimes new variants in proverbs and sayings arise as a result of replacing one word with a similar one in meaning, less often as a result of restructuring the lexical and grammatical structure of the paremia (Gafarova, 2017).

It should be noted that despite the similarity of the meanings of most of the

paremias in different languages, the specificity of the people is traced in them, due to their way of life, history, religion, etc. This is what makes proverbs and sayings a good material for studying the peculiarities of the representation of certain concepts in various languages, which once again speaks of the relevance of this study.

Within the microsystem of proverbs and sayings, almost all linguistic phenomena and processes occurring in the lexical macrosystem are also observed, therefore, linguistic observations of paremias are always of great interest for resolving various issues in linguistics, cognitive linguistics, and cultural linguistics. In searching linguistic universals, at the same time the identification of national-cultural components reflected in a particular language, description of content and structure of basic concepts are very important. The substantive features in conceptual opposition between good and evil that we have highlighted are first of all, general cultural, ethical and philosophical components. The data obtained can be used in obtaining new information about Russian and Kyrgyz people's mentality.

2. Research Methods

The object of this article is the concepts of good and evil in Russian and Kyrgyz linguocultures. The subject of this work is the national specificity of the linguistic nominatives of the concepts under consideration. To write this article, we collected material from 52 Russian proverbs and sayings and 48 Kyrgyz proverbs and sayings. All analyzed pairs express an understanding of the concepts of good/evil in the corresponding linguistic cultures.

For the study, we used the method of continuous sampling of material from dictionaries, collections. Then an analytical technique was used to select the proverbs and sayings that fit our purposes. Then the method of comparing the linguistic material of the two languages is applied. When describing the concepts of good and evil in two different-structured languages, we used the method of conceptual analysis (Serova, 2007). We could not do without the techniques of cognitive interpretation when building a model of the studied concepts.

When describing the concepts of good and evil in two different-structured languages, we used the conceptual analysis method, since we are interested in understanding the concept meaning as a mirror that reflects the national vision of the world. We also involved the method of semantic-cognitive analysis, where the main goal of study was to model concepts as units of the national conceptosphere and national culture. We tried to identify linguistic means representing the concepts of good/evil in Russian and Kyrgyz languages.

3. Research Results

The opposition "good-evil" chosen for this study is included in the system of basic moral and ethical values of any nation. Paremias verbalizing this opposition are frequent in fiction, some of them are actively used in colloquial speech. Investigating the paremiological representations of the concepts of good and evil in Russian and Kyrgyz linguocultures, we have come to some interesting results:

1) The antithesis of good and evil is a characteristic feature of most proverbs, which, using the example of simple concepts, seeks to teach a person to live and behave correctly in society;

2) The representation of ideas about good and evil reflects the cultural and historical traditions of a particular ethnic group;

3) We fully agree with the opinion of I. Kant (Rumyantseva, 2015), that man is naturally inclined to do good rather than evil;

4) The concepts of good and evil initially contain an assessment, which affects a person's perception of situations and phenomena described in proverbs and sayings;

5) Analysis of concepts "good" and "evil", presented on the material of the parremias of the Russian (Dahl, 1904; Orlova & Nikulina, 2016) and Kyrgyz languages, allows us to conclude that in the structure of these languages not two opposed concepts are expressed, but a single antonymic concept, where the corresponding concepts are not always strictly demarcated.

4. Discussions

The proverb reflects any phenomenon of reality that has been observed by people since ancient times and therefore is part of the collective experience of the people. According to A.V. Artemova, "proverbs do not reflect a fragment of reality, but a rethought concept of the phenomena of the real world. All their meanings are associated with a person, his perception of the world and attitude to reality" (Artemova, 2000: p. 4).

A deliberate reference to folk experience distinguishes proverbs and sayings from other semantic units of the language, which represent such an unconscious use of the experience of previous generations. Thus, when using the proverb, the problem of the truth of the statement is removed, "since a person does not speak from himself, but referring to someone else's and thereby objectified experience" (Nikolaeva, 1994: p. 154). Therefore, the assessment by proverbs and sayings of surrounding reality and a person are accepted as a priori.

4.1. Good and Evil Categories

Good and evil are moral categories. Good is a category of ethics that unites everything that has a positive moral meaning, meets the requirements of morality, and opposes evil. That is, good is when the actions of the individual benefit him and those around him.

Evil is a category of ethics that is opposite to good in its content, expressing in general terms the idea of immorality, contrary to the requirements of morality, and deserving of condemnation. This is a general abstract characterization of negative moral qualities. That is, evil is when by his actions a person harms himself or others.

In proverbs, the concept of goodness can be represented by such words as friendship, kindness, wealth, prosperity, native land, bread, etc., for example:

A kind word will build a house, but a bitter word will destroy
A good neighbor is better than an evil brother
A good tree is better than a bad person
Good fame is more valuable than wealth
It's not satisfying without bread, it's not sweet without salt
Better words of a clever than a treat of a stupid
Zhakshynyn sharapaty, zhamandin kesepeti which means *from good is nobility, from bad or dirty is a trick.*
Zhakshy soz zhan eritet, zhaman soz zhan keitet means *a kind word will melt the soul, an evil word will grieve the soul.*
Boton zherde khan bolgoncho, ozunun zherinde kul bol that mean *than being a khan in an alien land, it is better to be a slave in your homeland.*
Toguz kabat torkodon toktuchamdyn terisi artyk-*than nine layers of silk, better is t bright skin.*

As we can see, goodness is associated with such concepts as kindness, homeland, good fame, etc. Evil, in turn, is associated with the concepts of a “bitter” word, a bad person, stupidity, dirty tricks, etc.

Determinants of conceptual concepts content “good” and “evil” are the values reflected in social and cultural stereotypes of the ethnos behavior (Tseeva, 2012: p. 399). Good and evil are categorical concepts (Pechagina, 2011: p. 99).

4.2. Proverbs and Culture

Proverbs in all cultures call us to goodness, to adequate behavior, decency and hard work. Most of the proverbs and sayings express universal human values, concepts, worldviews. But some of them show us the national specifics of the ethnos, which is associated with the way of life, mentality, history, culture and ethnic memory of the people. Ethnic memory is long-term and it is on it that the peculiarities of culture, life, values and morality of the ethnic group depend.

As G.A. Madmarova writes: “The higher the culture and education of a person, the more open he is for intercultural dialogue. Respect and love for your culture and your language causes the same attitude towards other cultures and languages” (Madmarova, 2016: p. 142). Thus, respecting our spiritual values and language, preserving our national identity, we learn to respect the cultural traditions of other peoples, which are clearly reflected in the paremias.

4.3. Proverbs in Various Languages

The Kyrgyz people have several proverbs that do not have an unambiguous equivalent in Russian.

Tash, tashty eritken ash means even a stone will melt a treat.

Eastern people attract great importance to hospitality. It is believed that you can negotiate with any person with a cup of tea. Approximately, meaning it is possible to pick up a proverb from the Russian language “Not a red hut with corners, but red with pies”, although there is no exact equivalent in Russian. The Turkic

proverb says that instead of wars, quarrels and bloodshed, one should always choose a peaceful path, negotiations, human understanding.

The same idea is carried out in the following proverb:

“Tash menen urganda ash menen ur” means, the one who hit you with a stone, hit back with a treat. This proverb speaks of the peaceful nature of the Kyrgyz ethnos. Instead of retaliating, you can hit the enemy with your generosity.

Only the Turkic peoples (Kyrgyz, Uzbeks) have an unusual proverb that fully expresses the mentality of these peoples: *“Atandy olturgongo apandy ber”* that means “To the one who killed your father, give your mother.” The meaning of proverb is that in order not to generate enmity between people, you need to show mercy and nobility. Other peoples have no analogs of this proverb, in any case, we could not find them in dictionaries. Its approximate meaning is conveyed by the Church Slavonic “If they hit you on one cheek, turn the other.” But in the Christian proverb, it is called to humility, and in the Turkic to the manifestation of generosity.

Man is naturally inclined to good, this is what folk wisdom, folklore and some philosophers of the past think. We, too, believe that it is human nature to do good deeds; everyone has a desire to look good in the eyes of other people. But upbringing or external circumstances can turn him towards evil.

Already in ancient times, the idea of an irresistible connection between good and evil was deeply understood. In Eden, the knowledge of good and evil was on the same tree, that is, it was impossible to know good without evil. The dialectical relationship of these concepts was tried to characterize the 19th century Kyrgyz akyn and improviser Zhenizhok. According to the poet’s reflections, the concept of “good” is evaluated only in comparison with the concept of “evil”. The groom in his ethical views proceeded from the fact that a person becomes evil or good under the influence of society, under the influence of circumstances. The same is said in the following proverbs:

There is a silver lining;

If you have not tasted the bitter, you will not know the sweet;

Where there is laughter, there are tears;

There would be no happiness, but misfortune helped.

Philosopher I. Kant asks “Is there a sample in the external world, a standard of goodness? Is there a specific person as a bearer of this standard? There is no such person. But why do we have an idea of good and evil? This concept is given to us from above. Our moral consciousness inevitably concludes that there is God as a symbol of the moral ideal” (Derbisheva, 2017: p. 154). This interpretation of moral law places Kant among the great humanists.

The concepts of good and evil are quite relative in any culture, since people themselves are different in nature and principles. What is good for me may turn out to be evil for another, and vice versa. Analyzing paremias, we can note that often the same concept or phenomenon in them can be evaluated from two sides: both as good and as evil.

For example, you can cite a proverb about language, which is common for many linguistic cultures: “Language is my friend, language is my enemy.” In the Kyrgyz language we say:

“*Zhakshy soz-suu, zhaman soz-uu*”. It can be translated into Russian as “The sweetest is the tongue; the most bitter is the tongue.”

On the one hand, language is assessed as undoubted good: with the help of language we communicate, say good words to each other, confess our love, get the information we need, sing, etc. On the other hand, language can offend, offend, declare war, etc., that is, language is undoubtedly evil. Thus, both the concept of good and the concept of evil can be represented by the word language.

The Russian people have such a proverb as “Do not do good, you will not get evil.” Its meaning is that good sometimes can turn into evil. The proverb “*Another’s grief is a double joy*” says that a person can rejoice in someone else’s grief. Fortunately, this proverb is not very common. The limited use of it suggests that its meaning is not relevant for modern people.

The proverb “*And good can be bad*” indicates that not all people understand good; good is the one who himself knows and appreciates the difference between good and bad. Your good can harm a stupid person. There are no exact equivalents of these proverbs in the Kyrgyz language. An approximate meaning can be conveyed by the proverb “*Mal arygyn sylasan, ooz maylight, kishi aragyn sylasan, tøbø kandayt*”, means “*If you feed thin cattle, you will eat fat; If you feed a thin man, he will break the top of your head.*”

A modern Kyrgyz language firmly believes that friend and friendship are very valuable concepts, although in the recent past this was not entirely the case

As Z.K. Derbisheva writes, “for the Kyrgyz, who lived in large families, clans, in hard-to-reach places, life was spent surrounded only by relatives and friends. The attitude of the Kyrgyz towards friends is fundamentally different from the norms and ideas that have developed in the Russian linguistic consciousness. In general, the category “friend” for the Kyrgyz is a late phenomenon, a product of the Soviet period (Hlebdá, 1994) way of life. Therefore, family ties for the Kyrgyz are much more important than friendly ones. Friends in the Kyrgyz view are needed for a fun and pleasant pastime, hence the saying:

Zhamandyn zholdoshu kəp, zhanyna paidasy zhok, i.e. the unlucky one has many friends, but they are not useful.

Dos taarynsa, bergenin alat (If a friend is offended, he will take away what he once gave).

An ironic attitude towards a friend expressed in the following proverb:

Dosum dos elek koon yzğəndə, teskeri karap kalypsyn bozo syzğondo (While the melons were being collected, we were friends, as soon as we poured the bozo (intoxicated drink), he suddenly began to squint).

Zhaman dos kələkə syraktuu: kun achykta kutula albaysyn, kyn byrkəktə izdep taba albaysyn which means a bad friend is like a shadow: when it’s sunny, you can’t get rid of it, when it’s cloudy, you can’t find it (Derbisheva, 2017: pp.

128-129).

Thus, we see that the attitude of the Turkic peoples towards friendship was not the same as that of the European peoples. Thus, they were disposed by the nomadic way of life, and at present, under the influence, mainly of the Russian language and Russian culture, the attitude towards the concept of friendship has changed for the better:

Dos, dosko janyny kosh (Kyrgyz), each must merge with the soul;

Dos gul bolso, dushman kul bolot (Kyrgyz, Kazakh), a good friend will be flower, and enemy will become a slave;

Zhyz somun bolgoncho, zhyz zholdoshun bolsun, do not have a hundred rubles, but have a hundred friends (Fuad, 2019).

As you can see, friend and friendship in the Kyrgyz language is also considered in proverbs from two points of view: both as good and as evil.

4.4. Good and Evil as Single Antonymic Concepts

The idea that good and evil are a single antonymic concept is also supported by such concepts of the Kyrgyz language as *zhakshy-zhaman* (good and bad), *yssyk-suuk* (hot-cold), *bar-jok* (yes-no), which is a sentence act as one word:

Zhakshy-zhamandy bilgen adam, a person who has experienced a lot;

Bar-jokko konush kerek, you have to get used to everything;

Issyk-suuktan choguu ottuk, we went through difficulties together.

These lexical units indicate inseparability of concepts good and evil, as we saw above are often represented by the same words.

Thus, the proverbs and sayings in the Russian and Kyrgyz languages convey the spiritual wealth of their peoples, reflecting their cultural and historical traditions.

In all languages, paremias are figurative expressions that reflect the social, economic, historical and everyday characteristics and values of peoples that have an educational character. Common features of proverbs and sayings include brevity, stability and widespread use.

When analyzing certain paremias, one must not forget that a significant part of them could be borrowed from other languages. For example, a certain number of proverbs and sayings about friendship were borrowed by the Kyrgyz people from Russian in Soviet times. It is better to subject the original units of the language to research.

5. Conclusion

Most of proverbs are based on the concept of good and evil. In the evaluating consciousness of a person and society, new values constantly appear, while others drop out. What a hundred years ago was highly and morally good today can be immoral and evil. However, even today we cannot precisely call any concept good or evil, since, depending on the situation, the same phenomenon can turn out to be both good and evil. Each person has his own scale of values, the basis of which is belonging to a certain nation. The group of values, united in this ba-

sic essence, creating and prevailing morality. Proverbs can go out of active use as concepts they speak of become obsolete. The basic fund of paremias remains unchanged since universal human concepts of good and evil are one and eternal, they are dictated to us by the concepts of culture, religion and ethics. The study of proverbs and sayings in the Russian and Kyrgyz languages gives us a key to the mentality of these people, indicating their values and priorities, as well as clearly outlining the national picture of the world in the considered ethnic groups.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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