

NATIONAL-CULTURAL FEATURES OF LEXICAL UNITS FORMED ON THE BASIS OF THE "TOURISM" CONCEPT

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Abstract

This article examines the national-cultural specificity of lexical units that constitute the conceptual-associative field of the concept "Tourism" in the Uzbek and English languages. Adopting a cognitive-linguistic and comparative-associative approach, the study demonstrates that the internal structure of the concept, although sharing a common semantic core in both languages, is shaped by distinct historical, social and cultural experiences of the two linguo-cultural communities. The findings show that in the Uzbek linguistic consciousness the concept "Tourism" is organised around a value-oriented, heritage-centred model, whereas in the English linguistic consciousness it is organised around a process- and experience-oriented model.

Keywords: concept, tourism, conceptual-associative field, national-cultural specificity, cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, Uzbek language, English language.

Introduction

The relationship between language and culture is one of the most complex, controversial and multidimensional problems in modern linguistics. Because language and culture represent two distinct types of semiotic systems, their study requires particular caution: an uncritical or overly generalising approach risks reducing these systems to a single, undifferentiated model. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that language and culture share a considerable number of common features. According to V.N. Teliya, this commonality can be observed in the following respects: both language and culture are forms of consciousness that reflect the human world-view; language and culture exist in a state of constant interaction and communication; the subject of both language and culture is always an individual or a social group – a collective personality or society; normativity is a property common to both language and culture; historicity is an essential feature of both phenomena; and both are equally characterised by the opposition of dynamics and statics. Indeed, as the scholar notes, the features that bring language and culture closer together are numerous.

Within contemporary cognitive and psycholinguistic research, the



conceptual-associative field of linguistic units is no longer interpreted as a mere sum of lexical items, but as a complex cognitive structure formed in human consciousness. As E.S. Kubryakova has emphasised, every concept is formed in inseparable connection with an individual's cognitive experience, social practice and cultural memory, and it becomes verbalised through language.

The concept "Tourism" is precisely such a complex cognitive unit. Its conceptual-associative field is shaped gradually, under the influence of a range of historical, social, cultural and economic factors. Associative links arise not only within the boundaries of individual consciousness, but also through the assimilation of meanings consolidated by collective social experience and the surrounding cultural environment. The present article aims to identify and compare the national-cultural features of the lexical units that verbalise the concept "Tourism" in the Uzbek and English languages.

Methods

The study relies on a complex methodology combining conceptual analysis, componential (semantic) analysis and comparative-associative analysis of lexical material. The conceptual-associative field of "Tourism" was reconstructed on the basis of associative reactions and lexical units functioning in Uzbek and English, with particular attention paid to the frequency and cognitive salience of the units obtained. The comparative method was employed to identify convergent and divergent features in the structuring of the concept across the two linguo-cultures, while the linguoculturological approach, drawing on the theoretical positions of V.N. Teliya and E.S. Kubryakova, allowed the associative material to be interpreted in the broader context of national world-view and collective cultural experience. The theoretical framework also incorporates E. Begmatov's observations on the nominative and spatially anchored character of concepts in the Uzbek language, which provided a basis for interpreting the structural peculiarities of the Uzbek material.

Results

The analysis of associative responses shows that the conceptual-associative field of "Tourism" in the Uzbek language is dominated by lexical units such as *meros* (heritage), *qadimiy* (ancient), *tarixiy* (historical), *ziyosat* (pilgrimage/visitation) and *mehmondo'lik* (hospitality). The high frequency and cognitive activity of these units indicate that in the national consciousness of the Uzbek people the concept "Tourism" is conceptualised primarily through a value-oriented model connected with historical memory, sacred space and hospitality traditions. As E. Begmatov has noted, concepts in the Uzbek language





are frequently named in an objectified, space-bound manner. This tendency is explained by the agglutinative nature of the Uzbek language and results in the predominance of nominative (naming, object-denoting) units within the conceptual-associative field of “Tourism”. By

contrast, the concept “Tourism” in the English-speaking national consciousness has been shaped within an entirely different social and cultural environment; its conceptual-associative field is oriented predominantly towards action, process and subjective experience. This is reflected in the high activity of associative reaction units such as travel, comfort, experience, adventure and explore, which are closely bound up with the underlying cognitive structure of the English-language concept.

Thus, although the conceptual-associative fields of “Tourism” in Uzbek and English share a common semantic core – both being related to movement beyond one’s habitual environment for the purpose of leisure, cognition or recreation – their internal organisation and cognitive layering differ considerably, being shaped by national history, culture and social experience.

Discussion

The results obtained confirm Teliya’s thesis that language and culture, while representing distinct semiotic systems, are bound together by a set of common properties, among which historicity and normativity play a particularly important role in the formation of national concepts. The heritage- and hospitality-centred organisation of the Uzbek conceptual field of “Tourism” can be explained by the country’s long history as a crossroads of civilisations along the Great Silk Road, where hospitality and reverence for historical and sacred sites have traditionally occupied a central place in social life. This value orientation is further reinforced, at the linguistic level, by the agglutinative and nominative tendencies described by Begmatov, which favour the encoding of tourism-related meanings through concrete, space-anchored nouns.

The process- and experience-oriented organisation of the English conceptual field, in turn, corresponds to a cultural context in which tourism developed historically as an individualised leisure activity closely associated with personal mobility, comfort and self-fulfilment. The prevalence of verbal and experiential lexemes (travel, explore, experience, adventure) in the English associative material reflects this dynamic, action-based conceptualisation, consistent with Kubryakova’s view that a concept is verbalised in accordance with the cognitive experience and social practice of its speakers.

These findings suggest that translation, intercultural communication and the marketing of



tourism services between Uzbek- and English-speaking audiences should take into account this fundamental asymmetry: while Uzbek discourse on tourism tends to foreground heritage, authenticity and hospitality, English discourse tends to foreground experience, comfort and adventure. Recognising this asymmetry can help avoid a reductive or overly generalised representation of the concept and can inform more culturally sensitive lexicographic, pedagogical and translational practice.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis carried out in this article demonstrates that the concept “Tourism” although possessing a shared semantic core in Uzbek and English, is structured according to two distinct cognitive models: a value-oriented, heritage- and hospitality-centred model in Uzbek, and a process- and experience-oriented model in English. These differences are conditioned by the historical, social and cultural experience specific to each linguo-cultural community and are consistently reflected in the composition and frequency of the lexical units verbalising the concept. Further research into the associative-verbal network of “Tourism”, based on wider experimental data, would allow these findings to be refined and extended to other related concepts within the domain of travel and leisure.

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