

Artículo de investigación

Connotative meanings of the lexical-semantic group «eye» in the English and Tatar languages

Significados connotativos del grupo léxico-semántico «ojo» en los idiomas inglés y tártaro
 Significados connotativos do grupo lexico-semántica «eye» nas línguas de inglés e tatar

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Abstract

The paper is aimed at theoretical treatment and practical description of the relationship between language and culture represented by national and cultural connotations. Studying national and cultural connotations leads to the indication of culturally significant information which is one of the criteria for defining the language acquisition level and a desirable advantage in cross-cultural communication. This paper is the first attempt to carry out an in-depth research into the lexical-semantic groups of the English "eye" and the Tatar "kuz", defining the connotative meanings of the lexical units and revealing the counterparts in the given groups. The method of comparative analysis allowed us to determine proximity and distance in anthropological, cognitive, associative, emotional and evaluative backgrounds of these languages. The paper's findings may be useful for researchers who deal with contrastive and cognitive linguistics, typology of non-related languages, lexicography and may help those who study English as a foreign language.

Keywords: Linguistics, language, national and cultural connotation, comparative analysis, conceptual picture of the world.

Resumen

El trabajo tiene como objetivo el tratamiento teórico y la descripción práctica de la relación del lenguaje y la cultura representada por connotaciones nacionales y culturales. Estudiar las connotaciones nacionales y culturales lleva a la indicación de información culturalmente significativa que es uno de los criterios para definir el nivel de adquisición del idioma y una ventaja deseable en la comunicación intercultural. El documento es el primer intento de llevar a cabo una investigación en profundidad sobre los grupos léxico-semánticos del "ojo" inglés y el "kuz" tártaro, definir los significados connotativos de las unidades léxicas, revelar las contrapartidas en los grupos dados. El método de análisis comparativo nos permitió determinar la proximidad y la distancia en los antecedentes antropológicos, cognitivos, asociativos, emocionales y evaluativos de estos lenguajes. Los hallazgos en el documento pueden ser útiles para los investigadores que se ocupan de la lingüística cognitiva y contrastante, la tipología de lenguajes no relacionados, la lexicografía y pueden ayudar a quienes estudian inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras claves: Lingüística, lenguaje, connotación nacional y cultural, análisis comparativo, imagen conceptual del mundo.

Resumo

O artigo visa o tratamento teórico e a descrição prática da relação entre língua e cultura representada por conotações nacionais e culturais. Estudar conotações nacionais e culturais leva à indicação de informações culturalmente significativas, que é um dos critérios para definir o nível de aquisição de linguagem e uma

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vantagem desejável na comunicação intercultural. O artigo é a primeira tentativa de realizar uma pesquisa aprofundada sobre os grupos léxico-semânticos do "olho" inglês e o "kuz" tártaro, que definem os significados conotativos das unidades lexicais, revelando as contrapartes nos grupos dados. O método de análise comparativa permitiu determinar a proximidade e a distância em contextos antropológicos, cognitivos, associativos, emocionais e avaliativos dessas línguas. As descobertas do artigo podem ser úteis para pesquisadores que lidam com linguística contrastiva e cognitiva, tipologia de línguas não-relacionadas, lexicografia e podem ajudar aqueles que estudam inglês como língua estrangeira.

Palavras-chave: Linguística, linguagem, conotação nacional e cultural, análise comparativa, imagem conceitual do mundo.

Introduction

The word as the basic unit of language reflects the relationship of language, thought and extralinguistic reality; it simultaneously has a linguistic, national and cultural meaning. Recognizing the existence of a connection between language and culture, Tarasov notes that language is part of culture, since the "body" of a sign (signifier) is a cultural object and the meaning of a sign is a cultural unit (Tarasov, 1994).

Lexico-semantic systems of different languages have different elements, kind of national-specific information; since "two national cultures never completely coincide, each culture consists of national and international units" (Vereshchagin, Kostomarov, 1980). According to Kobozeva, the core of the semantic systems of different languages consists of conceptual systems formed in the minds of representatives of a particular lingvocultural community (Kobozeva, 2000). The realities of culture, lifestyle, and perceptions of the world, characteristic of each nationality, are reflected in the language, primarily in the form of linguistic definitions of these specific elements of civilization, bearing a cultural imprint (national verbal images) (Oshchepkova, 1995).

From the linguistic-cultural point of view of the theory of the word, lexical units are subdivided into those in which the culturally significant information is reflected in the denotative aspect of meaning, and those in which the culturally significant information is concentrated in the connotative aspect of meaning (Teliya, 1996). This approach is consistent with the principles of cognitive science, used in describing the semantics of the word. Denotative aspect of meaning is considered as a typical image of a class of objects and phenomena in the minds of native speakers. Connotative aspect is the interpretation or expansion of the denotative aspect with diverse information: associative-

background, empirical, cultural, historical or world-view (Teliya, 1996).

National-cultural connotation is the correlation of linguistic meanings with one or another cultural code, owned by representatives of a certain lingvocultural community. As Kobozeva points out, "the connotation includes a reference not to the individual user of the sign – the speaker, but to the language community (which in this case can be defined as a national-cultural community)" (Kobozeva, 2000).

It would be right to assume, that being aware of cultural connotations of words is one of the criteria for the preferred level of language proficiency and one of the conditions for intercultural communication (Mamontov, 2000). However, there are no references for such kind of connotations in dictionaries so the ignorance of them may eventually lead to the "cultural-connotative lingua-cultural interference" in a communicative act; as well as difficulties in translating from language to language, where original emotional image and stylistic elements, typical of a non-native language, are required to preserve.

The present study is an endeavor to demonstrate on a modest but essential language material the connotative meanings of the Tatar lexical unit "kuz" in contrast with its English counterpart "eye". Thus, it could contribute to deeper understanding of the cultural and national variety of connotations in the Tatar and English languages. Another reason is that it would greatly benefit the language learners or translators and would be a definite improvement over their choice of the correct word in English.

Materials and methods

Research objectives. In order to carry out the comparative study of connotative meanings of

the Tatar and English lexico-semantic groups under study we stated the following objectives:

- to review the existing works devoted to the research topic and analyze the main approaches to studying national and cultural connotations in English and Tatar linguistics.
- using continuous sampling method, to collect the body of study from English and Tatar lexicographic sources.
- to study the semantic structures of the Tatar and English lexico-semantic group "eye" and work out the typology of connotative meanings in Tatar and English in lexicological framework.

Theoretical and empirical methods. Our research is based on the following key methods:

- theoretical methods of analysis and synthesis, including the analysis of the theoretical literature devoted to the research problem and generating the reviewed linguistic knowledge into the relevant research approach;
- empirical methods including linguistic observation and selection of research data, which was examined in the light of comparative analysis.

Body of Data. The body of data comprises the connotative meanings which were collected from the Tatar and English monolingual glossaries, that is Tatar Teleneng An'latmaly Suzlege (vol.1-3, 1977-1981), Tatar Teleneng An'latmaly Suzlege (Ganiyev, 2005) Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2009), Oxford Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014) and Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary.

Results

According to word definitions (Tatar Teleneng An'latmaly Suzlege (1977-1981, 2009), Oxford Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014), Merriam Webster Online) the denotative meanings of the English word «eye» and the Tatar «kuz» are equivalent: they mean a part of face responsible for sight and ability to see.

Before closing my eyes I catch sight of a notice posted on the dormitory door (Oxford Dictionary of Contemporary English).

– Kuzen bar ich, kur! Sinen belen iory! (Gilyasov, 1982)

Studying the connotative meanings of this lexico-semantic group enabled us to point out the following common types:

a) a small hole in something: a needle's eye (English) / ine kuze (Tatar), eye door (English) / ishek kuze (Tatar), achkych kuze (Tatar), cheese-eye (English), ikmek kuze (Tatar), eye of a pistol (English), eye of an axe (English), toime kuze (Tatar), tereze kuze (Tatar).

Runs the river, white with foam, Like a thread through the eye of a needle. (Longfellow)

Lisey looked into the black eye of the pistol he held and felt the strength run out of her legs.

Bulmege, ber yaktan, zhiles, saf hava kerep tora, ikenche yaktan – tushemge yakyn, ine kuze shikelle ber kechkene gene ber torle su chechrep, boten bulmene narat ise belen an'kyta ide. (Amirhan)

Vatylgan tereze kuzennen haman da shulai zh'il yzhgyra. (Kamal)

b) the centre or central part of something: the eye of hurricane (storm, a whirlpool, the megastorm) (English), flower eye (English); botka kuze (Tatar), su zhyentygynyn' (yatmalarnyn') kuze (Tatar), boz kuze (Tatar), zh'il kuze (Tatar).

There is strife within the tempest But there is calm in the eye of the storm. (Ringo, 2009)

Kulnen' kuzene gene baskanbys. (Gilyasov, 1982)
Keletler avyldan shakty erakta, atau syman kalkulykta, nek" zhil kuzende tezeleshkenner. (Gilyasov, 1982)

c) a small loop: a swivel eye (English), eye splice (English), hook and eye (English), kuz (Tatar).

Instead of buttons, the jacket had a row of cloth hooks and eyes. (King, 1984)

Kuzler sanyn arttyru kirek bulganda, osten ber kuz ostep, ber kuzne gene beilep alalar.

d) something resembling an eye in appearance, shape, or relative position: eye (English); kuzlut (Tatar), kuz tebe (Tatar).

'The train feathers have a series of eyes that are best seen when the tail is fanned.

A mene shushy chechekne berenche tapkyr kuzlut dip atagan keshege baryber bulmagan ul, Hanafi aby! (Gilyasov, 1982)

e) noon, midday, sun: the eye of heaven/ the eye of day (English), yakty kuzde (Tatar), koyash kuzende (Tatar).

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, And often is his gold complexion dimmed. (W. Shakespeare, 2008)

– Yat'rek tashyp betarik te yakty kusde oige ychkynyk ele bugen. (Gilyasov, 1982)

Helilnen' chuprekleren shunda chaikap, koyash kuzende, konde kipterep alasy kilde. (Gilyasov, 1982)

f) a round, dark spot on a potato from which a new shoot can grow: potato's eyes (English), beren'ge kuze (Tatar).

... by the time we had got all the peel off and all the eyes out, there was no potato left-at least none worth speaking of. (Gerome K. Gerome, 2005)

“Tango” – ozyncha-tugerek, kuzlere urtacha tirenlekthe. (Nurgaliyeva, 2017)

g) some degree of perception or attention: to catch one's eye (English) / kuzge berelu (tashlanu) (Tatar)/ kuzge chalynu (Tatar), turn a blind eye to (English) / kuzne iomyp ioru (Tatar), half an eye (English) / kuz kyryen tosheru (Tatar), to run one's eye over (English) / kuz salu (to sheru) (Tatar), to set eyes on (English).

Mr. Johnson's speeches turned out to be nothing but pretty sentiment, for the next day Mr. Dogmill's friends in the city could no longer stomach turning a blind eye to the violence and posted soldiers in Covent Garden (David, 2004) They are a long way off from Mrs Miff, but Mrs Miff can see with half an eye how she is leaning on his arm, and how his head is bent down over her. (Dickens, 2012)

“Minem behetem shundadyr, ul da mine uilap torgandyr” — dip, min terezege kuz tosherdem. (Kutui)

Yeget kuz kyryie belen kyzga kuz salgalai ide. (Gilyasov, 1982)

h) something/ somebody of whom one is extremely fond and proud: the apple of one's eye (Eng) / kuz almam (nurym, karasy) (Tat):

George was the apple of his father's eye. (Maugham, 1994)

Katgy reveште – buynnan-buynga namus kodeksyn kuz karasy shikelle saklap kilu. (Unys, 2002)

i) opinion or making judgements about: in the eye of smb (English), in the eyes of the law (English), il (halyk) kuzende (Tatar).

But he is a liberal master, I suppose, and THAT in the eye of a servant comprehends every virtue. (Austen, 2012).

“Il-kuz bar, kilen, atan' da yaratmas, beruk karyshyp keyefen kyra kurme,” – dide aierata uhalany Safura. (Gilyasov, 1982)

Despite the numerous coincidences in connotative meanings in the English “eye” and Tatar “kuz”, there are also the features characteristic of a single language. Thus, in the English lexico-semantic group, the following connotative meanings have been found:

- ability to recognize, appreciate, and make good judgments about somebody or something: an eye for beauty / talent / innovation;

- focus on a particular thing that could happen in the future: with an eye to the future;

- expression of surprise or disbelief: imy eyes!;

- showing that you believe if someone does something wrong, that person should be punished by having the same thing done to them: eye for an eye.

In the Tatar language there are following distinctive connotative meanings of the lexical unit “kuz”:

- somebody watching somebody and gathering information about them: kuz zhiberu;

- some particular time of a day: karan'gy kuzende, kuz beilengende;

- being full with something up to the limits: chilek kuzennen;

- an intuition or instinct, as opposed to an opinion based on a logical analysis: kun'el kuze.

Discussion

Acquisition of national-cultural connotations of words is one of the keys to successful intercultural communication. However, dictionaries don't give any references to any connotations of this kind; especially Tatar ones. This often leads to cultural-connotative linguacultural interference in a communicative act.

The researches devoted to connotative meaning are mostly carried out on a separate language basis. Comprehensive full-scale surveys including two or more languages, which results could be compiled in lexicographic dictionaries are carried out quite rarely. Despite the shortage of comparative studies of connotative meaning in Turkic languages with other non-related languages, there are certain works that deal partly with theoretical studies of connotation in Tatar. Remarkable are the researches of Ahunzyanov (1963), Ahatov (1995), Bashirova (2010), Safiullina (1999) and others, where the connotative meaning of words are equaled mostly with figurative meaning. As for the comparative studies of the connotative meanings of lexical units, this paper represents the first

endeavor to demonstrate the typological similarities between the Tatar and English languages.

Conclusion

We find out that being different in the cultural and historical development the English and Tatar languages have similar connotative meanings which come out of the associative perception of the concept under study. Absolute equivalents are expressions based on the visual function of the eye, the focus of attention, as well as objects of reality that resemble the shape of the eye. Partial equivalents are found in the functional-semantic definitions of the lexical units, determined by the cultural-historical conditions of the country's development of the native speaker. Namely, one might come across English expressions and phrases with "eye" in the Bible (the eye of heaven, an eye for an eye), nautical terms (a swivel eye, eye splice), whereas Tatar connotative meanings of the word are found in nature description (kuzlut, zhil kuze, koyash kuze, kul kuze). Mention should be made that most expressions in the Tatar language become archaisms and are found mainly in fiction at the moment, while English expressions are actively used in colloquial speech.

We believe comparative studies of connotative meanings to be promising, since they allow us to reveal the national-connotative significance of the semantics of linguistic units, which contributes to a deeper penetration into the paradigmatic and cognitive laws of language and to an accurate understanding of the functional features of linguistic units.

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