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National and Cultural Specificity of the Family Concept in English and Uzbek

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Abstract: This study explores the national and cultural specificity of the family concept in English and Uzbek linguistics within the framework of cognitive and cultural linguistics. While previous research has addressed conceptual analysis in general, limited attention has been paid to comparative studies of culturally embedded concepts in different linguistic traditions. To address this gap, the present research applies a qualitative methodology combining cognitive-semantic analysis, comparative analysis, and interpretative approaches.

The study examines lexical units, phraseological expressions, proverbs, and cultural practices related to the concept of family in both English and Uzbek contexts. The findings reveal that although the family is a universal social institution, its conceptualization differs significantly across cultures. In English culture, the family concept is closely associated with individualism, independence, and the nuclear family model, whereas in Uzbek culture it reflects collectivism, extended kinship relations, and strong intergenerational ties.

The study demonstrates that the family concept functions as a multi-layered cognitive structure incorporating linguistic, cultural, and social dimensions. It plays a crucial role in shaping worldview and social behavior. The research contributes to cognitive linguistics by emphasizing the importance of cultural specificity in conceptual analysis and provides practical implications for intercultural communication, translation studies, and language education.

Keywords: *family concept, cognitive linguistics, linguoculture, English culture, Uzbek culture, conceptualization, worldview.*

1. Introduction

In recent decades, linguistics has undergone a significant transformation due to the increasing integration of cognitive science, cultural studies, and anthropology [1]. Within this interdisciplinary framework, cognitive linguistics has emerged as a prominent approach that views language as a reflection of human cognition, cultural experience, and social interaction. Unlike traditional structural approaches, cognitive linguistics emphasizes the role of mental representations and conceptual systems in meaning construction [2].

One of the most important categories in this field is the *concept*, which functions as a fundamental unit of knowledge organization and worldview formation. Concepts serve as cognitive structures that integrate linguistic meaning with cultural knowledge and social values [3]. Among these, the concept of *family* occupies a central position, as it reflects essential human relationships, moral norms, and social organization.

Despite the universal nature of the family as a social institution, its conceptualization varies significantly across cultures [4]. These differences are

manifested in language, particularly in lexical units, phraseological expressions, proverbs, and discourse patterns. In English-speaking societies, the concept of family is often associated with individualism, independence, and the nuclear family model. In contrast, in Uzbek culture, the family concept reflects collectivism, extended kinship relations, and strong intergenerational bonds [5].

Although the concept of family has been studied in linguistics and cultural studies, there is still a lack of comprehensive comparative research that integrates cognitive, linguistic, and cultural perspectives, especially in the context of English and Uzbek languages [6].

The aim of this study is to analyze the national and cultural specificity of the family concept in English and Uzbek linguistics.

The objectives include:

- identifying the structural components of the family concept;
- analyzing its linguistic representation;
- comparing cultural interpretations across the two languages [7].

2. Methods.

This study employs a **qualitative research methodology** grounded in cognitive and cultural linguistics. The research is based on a systematic analysis of linguistic and cultural data related to the concept of family.

The data analyzed in this study include:

- lexical units (e.g., *family, parents, children; oila, ota-ona, farzand*);
- phraseological expressions and idioms;
- proverbs and sayings;
- examples from cultural practices and everyday discourse.

3. Research methods

1. Cognitive-semantic analysis.

This method is used to identify the internal structure of the concept and its semantic components.

2. Comparative analysis.

It allows for identifying similarities and differences in conceptualization across English and Uzbek cultures.

3. Interpretative (hermeneutic) analysis.

This approach helps to reveal deeper cultural meanings embedded in linguistic expressions.

Theoretical framework

The study is based on:

- linguocultural theory ;
- conceptsphere theory ;
- conceptual metaphor theory.

This integrative framework enables a comprehensive understanding of how language encodes cultural knowledge.

4. Results.

1. Conceptual Structure of Family

The analysis shows that the family concept has a complex, multi-layered structure consisting of:

- a **core** representing universal biological and social relationships;

- a **periphery** including culturally specific values, emotions, and norms [8].

The core meaning remains relatively stable across cultures, while peripheral elements vary significantly depending on cultural context.

2. English Conceptualization of Family

In English linguistic culture, the family concept is primarily associated with the **nuclear family model**, which emphasizes independence, privacy, and personal autonomy [9]. Linguistic expressions such as “*start a family*,” “*breadwinner*,” and “*family ties*” reflect both emotional and economic dimensions of family life. Proverbs such as “*Charity begins at home*” emphasize moral upbringing, while expressions like “*leave home*” highlight the cultural importance of independent [10].

These findings indicate that English conceptualization of family is closely linked to individualistic values and social mobility.

3. Uzbek Conceptualization of Family

In Uzbek culture, the family concept reflects **collectivism and extended kinship relations**. The family includes not only parents and children but also a wide network of relatives.

Lexical units such as “*oila*,” “*qarindosh*,” and “*urug*” express both biological and social relationships. Proverbs such as “*Oila muqaddas joy*” and “*Ota rozi — Xudo rozi*” emphasize respect for elders and the sacred nature of family.

Cultural practices, including multi-generational households and strong kinship obligations, further reinforce these values [11].

4. Cross-cultural Differences

The comparative analysis reveals key differences:

- English culture → individualism, independence
- Uzbek culture → collectivism, social responsibility

These differences are also reflected in:

- child upbringing strategies;
- attitudes toward elderly care;
- social expectations within the family.

5. Discussion.

The findings confirm that the concept of family functions as a **cognitive-cultural model** that reflects broader societal values and norms. The study supports the idea that concepts are not merely linguistic phenomena but complex structures integrating cognition, culture, and social experience [12].

The differences identified between English and Uzbek conceptualizations can be explained by underlying cultural orientations. English culture is characterized by individualism and personal autonomy, while Uzbek culture emphasizes collectivism, social cohesion, and respect for tradition [13].

These results align with previous studies in cognitive linguistics, which highlight the role of cultural context in shaping conceptual systems [14]. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that language serves as a tool for preserving and transmitting cultural values.

Implications

The findings have important implications for:

- intercultural communication;
- translation studies;
- foreign language teaching.

Understanding conceptual differences can help avoid misinterpretation and improve cross-cultural interaction [15].

6. Conclusion.

This study has demonstrated that the concept of family, while universal in its basic meaning, is highly culture-specific in its linguistic and cognitive representation.

The research shows that:

- concepts are multi-dimensional structures;
- they reflect cultural values and social norms;
- they play a key role in shaping worldview.

Scientific contribution

- provides a comparative cognitive-cultural analysis highlights Uzbek linguistic perspective;
- contributes to conceptual studies in linguistics.

Limitations. The study is theoretical and qualitative in nature, which limits empirical generalization.

Future research Future studies should include:

- corpus-based analysis;
- experimental research;
- broader cross-cultural comparisons.

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