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THE DISCURSIVE-SEMANTIC AND LINGUO-CULTURAL
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONCEPT OF “FAMILY” IN ENGLISH AND
UZBEK

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Abstract: This article provides a comparative analysis of the sociocultural content of the concept ‘oila/family’ in English and Uzbek. The study is conducted on the basis of lexical, phraseological and proverbs-related units, as well as materials from the discourse level. This article sheds light on the linguistic essence of the concept of ‘family’ and its national-cultural characteristics, and identifies the commonalities and differences in the conceptual perception of family relationships in the languages under comparison. The research findings indicate that in both linguocultures the family is regarded as an important social value, but they confirm that its expression in linguistic units differs from a collective to an individualistic perspective.

Keywords: concept of family, linguo-cultural studies, comparative analysis, discourse level, lexical-semantic units, phraseology, paremiology.

Introduction. In English culture (the individualistic orientation), family members are often regarded as independent, and special attention is paid to personal choice. For example, moving out to live independently once you reach adulthood or choosing your spouse independently is a common occurrence. In Uzbek culture (a collectivistic orientation), however, extended family ties are of great importance, and decisions—especially concerning marriage, inheritance and career choice—are often made within the family. These differences are also reflected in the language. In English, terms such as ‘stepfamily’, ‘half-sibling’ and ‘co-parenting’ denote modern, individualistic family structures, whereas in Uzbek, traditional family roles are prioritized [1].

In Uzbek culture, forms of address are formal and respectful, and are strictly observed, especially towards elders. For example, the concept of ‘parents’ is regarded as sacred, and the words “aka” (elder brother) and ‘opa’ (elder sister) are also used as marks of respect even towards non-relatives.

In Western societies, particularly in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Australia, the concept of the family has developed towards an individualistic model.

In Uzbek society, the family is understood not primarily as an individual unit but as a collective entity. The extended family (the large family), which often includes several generations living together, is regarded as the basic social structure. Respect for elders is regarded as a central element of cultural values. Family members are bound by obligations to one another, particularly concerning financial support, care and significant social



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decisions. Marriage and family decisions are often shaped by parents and elders, ensuring the continuity of family traditions [2, 3].

Uzbek culture prioritizes social harmony and cohesion over individual freedom; this is clearly reflected in language use, kinship terms and everyday speech practices. The terminology of kinship clearly demonstrates the cultural specificity of family relationship structures and roles. English kinship terms are relatively simple and do not reflect complex social hierarchies. A key feature is that no distinction is made between maternal and paternal relatives; for example, the term ‘uncle’ is used in the same way for a father's brother and a mother's brother.

In English linguoculture, the concept of “family” is primarily associated with the notion of the nuclear family, where personal independence and individual choice are prioritised [4]. In English society, the family is more associated with emotional closeness and interpreted as a sphere of personal life. The importance of the family is reflected in English idioms and proverbs: ‘Blood is thicker than water’, ‘Family comes first’. These units express the emotional aspect of family ties.

Discourse analysis. Within the framework of discursive analysis, the study examined how the concept of ‘family’ is reflected in literary texts, proverbs and everyday examples of social discourse. In particular, the semantic characteristics of the family image were analyzed in Uzbek and English proverbs. For the research material, various sources were selected: annotated dictionaries, examples of literary works, examples of literary works, proverbs and phraseological units, as well as scientific articles and monographs. These materials demonstrate the concept's real expression in language and culture, as well as its connection to social and cultural context. For example:

“*Blood is thicker than water*” In this proverb, the lexeme ‘blood’ denotes biological kinship, while ‘water’ denotes external, social relationships. Semantically, this unit signifies the primacy of family ties. From a discursive standpoint, this proverb reflects that in English society kinship relations are understood not as a compulsory social hierarchy but as based on emotional closeness. In everyday speech and public discourse, this unit is used as a means of justifying personal choice and emotional attachment [5].

“*Like father, like son*” – “*Onasini ko’rib qizini ol*”- *Children gradually adopt the virtues and characteristics of their parents.* These proverbs semantically convey the idea of intergenerational similarity and the continuity of hereditary and educational traits. While the English idiom ‘Like father, like son’ emphasizes the similarity of character, behavior or abilities between father and son, the Uzbek proverb ‘Onasiga qarab qizini ol’ refers to the moral, ...that a daughter's moral, social and cultural qualities are judged by her mother's personal qualities. *Discursively*, the English proverb is used primarily in the context of the hereditary transmission of personal identity and individual traits, serving in everyday speech to explain or evaluate a particular individual's behavior. The Uzbek proverb, on the other hand, is used in discourses concerning family social responsibility, upbringing and the central role of women in the family, and particularly manifests itself as an important sociocultural unit in evaluating marriage and kinship relationships. In this regard, the concept of ‘family’ in *the discursive-semantic* interpretation of the term ‘oila/family’



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expresses the idea of continuity between generations, while in English discourse this process is conceptualized in terms of individual identity, while in Uzbek discourse it is conceptualized in connection with social and ethical norms [6].

'Home is where the heart is' - For a person, a home is not merely a physical space but a value that embodies a deep emotional and spiritual connection. In this phrase, the lexeme 'home' semantically moves beyond the notion of space and is conceptualised as an emotional and psychological value. Discursively, this unit reflects how home and family are interpreted as emotional support in English culture. This phrase is widely used in discourses related to migration, personal life and individual choice.

'Spare the rod, spoil the child'. This proverb is semantically based on the concepts of upbringing and discipline. Within the framework of discursive analysis, it manifests itself as a unit that emphasizes the individual responsibility of parents in child-rearing within English society. This phrase is used in pedagogical and family discourse as a means of evaluating parenting strategies.

A chip off the old block- A person who bears a close resemblance to their parents in appearance, behavior or character. **Example:** *He's such a chip off the old block — telling jokes just like his dad used to.* This idiomatic expression '*a chip off the old block*' can be analyzed as a linguistic unity that emphasizes the strong similarity between a child and their parents from a discursive-semantic point of view. Semantically, it indicates similarities in appearance, temperament, or character traits inherited from one's parents. From a discursive perspective, this expression is used in everyday conversation to emphasize personal identity within the family, to express social expectations, or to evaluate the continuity of family characteristics. It reflects cultural attitudes towards inheritance and the importance of parents' influence in shaping their children's personalities.

The research process is carried out in several successive stages. First, the relevant theoretical sources are analyzed in depth. In the next stage, the linguistic units associated with the 'concept' are selected. After that, semantic and linguo-cultural analysis is conducted on the basis of these units. In the final stage, comparative generalizations and scientific conclusions are drawn from the results obtained. Each stage builds upon the results of the previous analysis, proceeding in a logical sequence.

The reliability of research findings is assessed on the basis of several different sources. The use of various complementary methods and approaches in the analysis ensures that the conclusions are scientifically grounded and credible [7].

In Uzbek linguoculture, the concept of "family" is regarded as a sacred and leading social institution in society. The concept of family is not limited to the circle of parents and children, but also encompasses broader kinship relationships. This aspect expresses the community spirit characteristic of the Uzbek people, as well as the ideas of responsibility and interconnectedness between generations. The concept of "family" is reflected in numerous proverbs and sayings. In particular, paremiological units such as "A family is a small fatherland" and "The approval of one's parents is the approval of God" clearly demonstrate the family's important role as a spiritual and moral value. In Uzbek society,



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families are typically composed of biological relatives, namely the mother, father and children, but the concept of the family adapts to sexual, economic, cultural and historical changes. In Uzbek society, families are typically extended, comprising biological relatives, namely mothers, fathers, children and siblings. However, many Uzbek families are headed by a single father or a single mother [8, 9].

Conclusion

Overall, this study once again confirms the intrinsic link between language and culture and, through conceptual analysis, makes it possible to identify national values. The comparative study of the concept of 'oila/family' is of significant theoretical and practical importance not only for linguoculturology but also for translation studies, intercultural communication and foreign language teaching. In the future, researching this concept from a gender, discursive or pragmatic perspective could yield even more comprehensive scientific results.

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