ANALYSIS OF METAPHORS: “DOWN” IDIOMS TO EXPRESS EMOTIONS IN ENGLISH AND TATAR

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the potential of “down” idioms to express negative emotions in two diverse cultures – Anglo-Saxon and Tatar. English is very idiomatic in its nature giving a plenty of opportunities to its linguistic means to express various abstract phenomena, including psychological ones. Tatar abounds in colorful idioms relating to the emotional disturbances that contribute to the expression of human state in all the shades. The given research presents a comprehensive overview of the interrelation between languages and human mentality in the form of metaphor thinking. To reach the research goals the following methods were employed: comparative, descriptive; contextual analysis, continuous sampling and statistic estimation. Based on the research results, we come to statement of different and common features in the patterns of “down” idioms verbalizing negative emotions in English and Tatar. Bears mentioning the fact, that no other comparative research was undertaken to analyze “down” idioms’ potential in verbalizing negative emotions in English and Tatar.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Among many others there is one thing in our life which is constantly changing, always different and that is – movement. We barely make identical movements two times, what can be different is speed, force and direction. When we control our body we always take into account an essential aspect of moving – the spatial orientation. As soon as we get disoriented, we lose our focus and our movements become awkward, irrational and may be even dangerous. This shows the significance of the orientation, to underestimate which means to lose direction not only in physical movements, but also in immaterial interaction with the world – our communication, cognition, mentality, cultural matters, etc.

We should point out that spatial orientation is presented by two oppositions – horizontal (up and down) and vertical (in and out). Other authors refer to a different term “place-name metaphors” and consider different classifications of metaphor oppositions, e.g. far - near, high - low, deep - surface...
Science generally considers space as one of the fundamental phenomena in world cognition. Linguistics, in particular, studies various types of space and types of its conceptualization, like spatial concepts, spatial metaphors, etc.

Invaluable contribution to the theory of space and orientation in thinking and cognition was laid by American scholars – George Lakoff and Michael Johnson – when they published their pioneering book “Metaphors we live by” (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). Later it was added by Gerard J. Steen, who turned the theory to the sphere of social interactions.

Today, as the topic of Metaphor Studies is getting more and more widespread in the world of science, it takes diverse forms, where metaphor is regarded not only as a one-word structure, but a phrase or even a sentence. People assume metaphor to be a tool for various social interactions, including the replacement of taboo words. The relevant study was undertaken by Elena Arsentyeva and discussed in the article (Arsenteva and Arsentyeva, 2017).

In this work, the author attempted to perform the analysis of metaphors and show two languages speaking the emotions universally and culturally-specific.

2. METHODS

To collect the corpus of the study, among all the relevant sources, several were picked out, namely English dictionary of Idioms by Spears and Free Online Dictionary; Tatar examples were taken from the fiction books of folk literature bringing an insight to the use of the idioms. The rationale behind the selection of these sources was primarily their availability and recommendation provided by competent native speakers. The quantity of the corpus seemed to be adequate for the purpose of the study.

To enrich the material with relevant research analysis the following methods were employed: comparative analysis, descriptive analysis, contextual analysis, continuous sampling and statistic estimation analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The group of orientational idioms appears to be one of the features for the Anglo-Saxon world picture to express emotions; it includes dynamical up and down mapping, as well inward and outward.

English abounds in the examples of negative emotions conveyed by downward orientation idioms, as they are employed to express disappointment, sadness, fear and low spirits. Let us focus on the study of their verbalization, which is clearly observed in the given examples:

- *To be down in the dumps in:* I have been down in the dumps for the past few days. [Oxford Learner’s Dictionary. Oxford University Press. 2016. URL: http://oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com].

- *To be down in the mouth in:* Since her dog died, Barbara’s been down in the mouth. [Oxford Learner’s Dictionary. Oxford University Press. 2016. URL: http://oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com].

From the above mentioned examples we may conclude on the potential of the down idioms to clearly convey the ideas of *disappointment* (a comedown), *low spirits* (spirits plummet) and *sadness* (to be down in the dumps, o be down in the mouth).

*Fear* can be also exposed through the downward orientation idioms, as seen in the following example:


- *A chill runs/ goes down somebody’s spine in:* When I read the details of the murder, a chill ran down my spine. [Spears R.A. (2005)].

- *A shiver runs/ goes down one’s back in:* When I heard all those people shouting and screaming, a shiver ran down my spine. [Spears R.A. (2005)].

Plenty of English idioms featuring orientational components convey not only intense emotions, but also emotional disturbances or collapses. This state can be conveyed by *breakdown* lexeme:


Apart from the above mentioned, the emotion of love which is characterized with intenseness can be expressed by the model as in the example: *to fall in love*.

Although the downward orientation idioms mostly feature negative connotation, English language has it to reflect calmness or relaxation which one may experience after anger or fury, as in the below given examples:


*Downward* mapping mostly expresses negative emotions in the Tatar language contributing to verbal expression of such affects as *fear, anxiety, sorrow, grief* and *sadness*.

The below mentioned examples of metaphorical models characterizing downward mapping are used to verbalize *fear*:

Жэн табан астына тошу (zhan taban astyna toeshyu) – to be scared;
everyone was scared (lit.: “everyone had their hearts sunk”);

— had one’s heart in the mouth (lit.: “had heart sunk”);

Seems like the girl had her heart in the mouth (lit.: heart sank).

— to be scared (to have one’s heart in mouth, lit.: to have heart sunk).

Seems like the girl had her heart in the mouth (lit.: heart sank).

— to feel scared and worried.

Seems like the girl had her heart in the mouth (lit.: heart sank).

— to feel scared and worried.

Seems like the girl had her heart in the mouth (lit.: heart sank).

Having heard these words from the daughter-in-law, my soul was filled with fear.

Sorrow and sadness are vividly expressed by the following idioms:

— break into perspiration due to moral torments;

— Can’t sleep because of uneasy feelings and sufferings.

— The next day when Khalim woke up he felt no heaviness.

— low spirits.

— That day he came back in low spirits.

— to irritate somebody (lit.: “to bring fresh heartache”).

— to feel desperate (lit.: “to have spirits sunk”).

Anxiety can be verbally expressed in the Tatar language using heart/ioryak lexeme, e.g.:

— to torment, lit.: “heaviness falls upon heart”.

Lexemes featuring orientational components can also verbalize diverse emotional concepts of negative value, such as сагыш/sagysh – yearning, sadness, кайгы/kaiyg – grief, хәсәм/hasryat – grief, heart-ache.

Kyrgyz is associated with emotional torments, anguish, distress, something transmitted in space, that gets one drowned in grief. This lexeme often goes with the verb бату/ batu (lit.: “to drown, to plunge”), йоту/iotu (lit.: “engulf”), тешерү/toesheryu (to drown in grief).

— Why are you so drowned in grief?

News about aunt Galima made

— to have heart sunk).

Lexemes featuring orientational components can also verbalize diverse emotional concepts of negative value, such as сагыш/sagysh – yearning, sadness, кайгы/kaiyg – grief, хәсәм/hasryat – grief, heart-ache.

Hygiene is associated with emotional torments, anguish, distress, something transmitted in space, that gets one drowned in grief. This lexeme often goes with the verb бату/ batu (lit.: “to drown, to plunge”), йоту/iotu (lit.: “engulf”), тешерү/toesheryu (to drown in grief).

— Why are you so drowned in grief?

News about aunt Galima made
all of us sad. (lit.: “made us fall into melancholy”).

Үз кайсыны үзен ɨот. (Yuz kaigyngy yuzeng iot). – Live your grief down alone (lit.: “swallow your grief”).

Жамали белән Камали, кат-кат сойлешеп икәү тирың уйда, авыр қайсыда утыралар. (Zhamali belen Kamali, kat-kat soileshep ikeyu tiryang uida, avyr kaigyda utyralar). – After extended discussions, Jamal and Kamali were in deep thoughts and heavy feelings.

The concept khesret (misery, uneasiness, sorrow) can be successfully expressed through lexemes with orientational components.

Khesret and kaigy share the same semantic components and reflect emotions of negative value and the situations associated. For this reason both of them are often used with the verbs басу/ basu (suppress), йоту/ iotu (swallow), чигү/ shchigu (scrape).

Күңәлге басу (kyungelne basu) – to calm down (lit.: “to soothe heart”).

Йөрәктә авыр таш тѳш кәндә й булды (Ioryaktyan avyr tash toeshkyandyai buldy) – to have great weight off one’s mind.

Despite of downward orientation of the components in the idiom күңәлгә ятыу (kyungelga yatuy), it conveys the positive value verbalizing affection. The emotion which is stronger than affection is expressed in the following example through the downward orientation:

Мехебеттә бату (mehebbetkya batu) – to fall in love.
- both Anglo-Saxon and Tatar languages have more idioms to express negative emotions. This is presumably linked to higher differentiation of negative emotions and more eager emotional, verbal and cognitive human reaction to the negative events;
- downward orientation idioms are vividly presented in both cultures; however their patterns of verbalization vary, as they contribute to the expression of fear, anxiety, sadness, sorrow and yearning – all of which are negative emotions;
- English idioms are also used to convey the terrific state of emotional disturbance at its highest degree and the state of relaxation or calmness which comes right after such tough emotions as anger and fury;
- both languages have the down idioms to convey the vibrant emotions of affection and love, they appear in the idioms connoted with deep immersion into feelings, when a human experiences something to the full; these emotions are understood as the immersion into the state of love.

5. CONCLUSION

Cognitive human map describes the mechanism used by scholars to categorize space into various structures. Orientation is the basis for the emergence of cognitive orientational metaphors related to anthropocentric world model or human-centered model. In terms of this model people consider vertical opposition (up stands for “good”, down – for “bad”) and horizontal opposition (right stands for “good”, left – for “bad”). We may assume this to be one of the tools to organize world picture which finds its reflection in the form of linguistics world picture.

These oppositions are widely employed to convey human emotions, particularly the up – down opposition is extensively used by Anglo-Saxon and Tatar linguocultures. We believe that human body anatomy (upward direction) strongly affects human understanding of space, because world view features the complexity of human life (Gafuri, 2007).

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7. REFERENCES


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