

LINGUOCOGNITIVE AND LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS OF “BENEFIT” AND “HARM” IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

Divanova M. H.

Abu Rayhon Beruniy nomidagi Urganch
davlat universiteti stajor-o'qituvchisi81751

Аннотация

Макалада англис жана өзбек тилдериндеги «пайда» жана «зыян» концепттерине лингвокогнитивдик жана лингвомаданий талдоо жүргүзүлөт. Бул концепттер баалоочу негизги категориялар болуп эсептелип, тил ээлеринин чындыкты кабыл алуусунда, коомдук жүрүм-турумду баалоосунда жана дискурста маанини түзүүсүндө маанилүү роль ойнойт. Изилдөөнүн максаты – аталган концепттердин семантикалык түзүлүшүн, когнитивдик моделдерин, маданий баалуулуктарын жана прагматикалык функцияларын аныктоо, ошондой эле алардын тилдик чагылдырылышындагы окшоштуктарды жана айырмачылыктарды ачып көрсөтүү. Изилдөө материалы катары түшүндүрмө сөздүктөрдүн маалыматтары, фразеологиялык бирдиктер жана саясий-медиялык дискурс колдонулган. Изилдөөдө концептуалдык талдоо, салыштырма талдоо, дискурс талдоо жана лингвомаданий интерпретация ыкмалары пайдаланылган. Изилдөөнүн жыйынтыктары «пайда» жана «зыян» концепттеринин универсалдуу мүнөзүнө карабастан, алардын тилдик репрезентациясы улуттук-маданий баалуулуктар системасын чагылдырарын көрсөтөт. Алынган жыйынтыктар котормо таануу, маданият аралык коммуникация, дискурс талдоо жана чет тилдерди окутуу тармактары үчүн маанилүү.

Ачкыч сөздөр: лингвокогнитивдик талдоо, лингвомаданий изилдөө, баалоочу концепттер, пайда, зыян, англис тили, өзбек тили, концептуалдык талдоо, маданий баалуулуктар, дискурс талдоо, котормо таануу, маданият аралык коммуникация, прагматика, когнитивдик лингвистика, лингводидактика

Аннотация

В статье представлен лингвокогнитивный и лингвокультурологический анализ концептов «польза» и «вред» в английском и узбекском языках. Данные концепты относятся к фундаментальным оценочным категориям, посредством которых носители языка осмысливают действительность, оценивают социальное поведение и конструируют значение в дискурсе. Цель исследования заключается в выявлении семантической структуры, когнитивных моделей, культурных ценностей и прагматических функций данных концептов, а также в определении сходств и различий

в их языковой репрезентации. Материалом исследования послужили данные толковых словарей, фразеологических единиц, а также политического и медийного дискурса. В работе используются методы концептуального анализа, сопоставительного анализа, дискурс-анализа и лингвокультурологической интерпретации. Результаты исследования показывают, что при универсальном характере концептов «польза» и «вред» их языковая реализация отражает национально-культурные системы ценностей. Полученные выводы имеют значение для переводоведения, межкультурной коммуникации, дискурс-анализа и методики преподавания иностранных языков.

Ключевые слова: лингвокогнитивистика, лингвокультурология, оценочные концепты, польза, вред, английский язык, узбекский язык, концептуальный анализ, культурные ценности, дискурс-анализ, переводоведение, межкультурная коммуникация, прагматика, когнитивная лингвистика, лингводидактика

Abstract

This article presents a linguocognitive and linguocultural analysis of the concepts of “benefit” and “harm” in English and Uzbek. These concepts represent fundamental evaluative categories through which speakers conceptualize reality, assess social behavior, and construct meaning in discourse. The study aims to identify the semantic structure, cognitive models, cultural values, and pragmatic functions associated with these concepts and to reveal similarities and differences in their linguistic realization. The research is based on data from explanatory dictionaries, phraseological units, and political and media discourse. Methods of conceptual analysis, comparative analysis, discourse analysis, and linguocultural interpretation are employed. The findings demonstrate that while the concepts of benefit and harm are universal in nature, their linguistic representation reflects culturally specific value systems. The results of the study are relevant for translation studies, intercultural communication, discourse analysis, and foreign language teaching.

Keywords: linguocognition, linguoculturology, evaluative concepts, benefit, harm, English language, Uzbek language, conceptual analysis, cultural values, discourse analysis, translation studies, intercultural communication, pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, linguodidactics

Introduction

In contemporary linguistics, language is increasingly viewed as a cognitive and cultural phenomenon rather than a purely structural system. This shift in perspective has led to growing interest in the study of concepts as mental units that mediate between language, thought, and culture. Cognitive linguistics argues that linguistic meaning is grounded in human experience

and conceptualization [1, p. 29]. As a result, concepts are understood not only as elements of knowledge but also as carriers of cultural values and evaluative judgments.

Among evaluative concepts, the opposition of “benefit” and “harm” occupies a central place. These notions are fundamental to human life, as individuals constantly assess actions, decisions, and social processes in terms of their usefulness or harmfulness. Such evaluations influence moral judgment, political choice, economic behavior, and interpersonal communication. Therefore, the concepts of benefit and harm play a key role in shaping discourse across various domains.

This article examines the linguocognitive and linguocultural characteristics of the concepts of “benefit” and “harm” in English and Uzbek. The comparison of these languages is particularly significant because they belong to different linguistic families and cultural traditions. While English reflects a predominantly Western, individual-oriented worldview, Uzbek is deeply rooted in collectivist and moral-cultural values. Despite the universality of evaluative thinking, the linguistic realization of benefit and harm differs considerably in these languages. The aim of this study is to identify these differences and explain them through cognitive and cultural factors.

The theoretical foundation of this research is based on cognitive linguistics and linguoculturology. Cognitive linguistics views language as an integral part of human cognition and emphasizes the role of conceptual structures in meaning construction. According to Lakoff, concepts are shaped by embodied experience and are often structured metaphorically [1, p. 45]. This approach allows researchers to analyze how abstract notions such as benefit and harm are understood through concrete cognitive models.

Linguoculturology complements cognitive linguistics by focusing on the cultural dimension of concepts. Wierzbicka argues that key concepts reflect culturally specific values and norms and therefore differ across languages [2, p. 21]. From this perspective, concepts are not neutral semantic units but culturally loaded mental formations. They include rational meaning, emotional evaluation, and social significance.

Evaluative concepts, such as benefit and harm, are particularly important because they express value judgments. Langacker notes that evaluation is a fundamental cognitive operation through which speakers categorize experience as positive or negative [3, p. 76].

The opposition of benefit and harm thus functions as an axiological axis that structures human understanding of reality.

The research employs a qualitative comparative methodology. Linguistic data were collected from English and Uzbek explanatory dictionaries, phraseological dictionaries, and authentic discourse materials, including media texts and political statements. The study uses conceptual analysis to identify the core and peripheral features of the concepts, comparative analysis to examine cross-linguistic similarities and differences, and discourse analysis to investigate

pragmatic functions. Linguocultural interpretation is applied to explain how cultural values influence conceptualization.

In English, the concept of “benefit” is commonly associated with notions of advantage, profit, and gain. Dictionary definitions emphasize usefulness and positive outcomes, often in measurable terms. Lexical units such as benefit, advantage, profit, and gain form the core of the conceptual field. These words are frequently used in economic, professional, and institutional contexts, which reflects a pragmatic orientation toward efficiency and results.

From a cognitive perspective, benefit in English is often conceptualized through economic metaphors. Expressions such as cost–benefit analysis and return on investment demonstrate that benefit is viewed as something that can be calculated and optimized. This metaphorical framing reflects a rational and individual-centered worldview in which success is measured by tangible outcomes [3, p. 89].

In Uzbek, the concept of “foйда” is represented by several closely related lexical units, including foyda, naf, and manfaat. While these words also denote usefulness and positive results, they often extend beyond material gain. In Uzbek linguistic consciousness, benefit is closely linked to moral behavior, social responsibility, and collective well-being. Being “foydali” implies contributing to others and acting ethically.

Metaphorical expressions in Uzbek further reveal this cultural orientation. Phrases such as foydasi tegmoq and baraka keltirmoq associate benefit with social harmony and moral value. According to Karimov, Uzbek cultural concepts are strongly influenced by ethical norms and communal values [4, p. 63]. As a result, benefit is conceptualized not only as individual advantage but also as socially and morally approved usefulness.

The English concept of “harm” is typically defined as physical, psychological, or material damage. It is commonly used in legal, medical, environmental, and economic discourse. Lexical units such as harm, damage, injury, and loss emphasize negative consequences and responsibility. In many contexts, harm is treated as an objective and measurable phenomenon, particularly in institutional discourse.

Cognitively, harm in English is often framed in technical and legal terms. Expressions such as environmental harm or economic damage reflect an analytical approach that focuses on cause-and-effect relationships. This framing aligns with a rational worldview in which negative outcomes are assessed in terms of risk and liability [5, p. 94].

In Uzbek, the concept of zarar encompasses a broader range of meanings. Alongside material loss, it includes moral, social, and spiritual damage. Words such as ziyon and talafot carry strong emotional connotations and imply ethical responsibility. Causing harm is often evaluated not only by its consequences but also by the moral intention behind it.

This moral dimension is deeply rooted in Uzbek culture, where social harmony and ethical behavior are highly valued. Harm is frequently associated with injustice, wrongdoing, and

violation of social norms. Such an interpretation reflects the culturally embedded nature of evaluative concepts in Uzbek linguistic consciousness [4, p. 71].

In political and media discourse, the concepts of benefit and harm function as persuasive tools. Political actors justify policies by emphasizing benefits and minimizing potential harm. In English political discourse, benefits are often framed in terms of economic growth, efficiency, and national interest, while harm is associated with risk and instability. Fairclough notes that evaluative language plays a crucial role in constructing ideological meanings in discourse [5, p. 102].

In Uzbek discourse, benefit and harm are also used rhetorically, but moral and social arguments are more prominent. Political decisions are often justified by reference to *xalq manfaatlari* (people's interests) and *ijtimoiy foyda* (social benefit). Harm, in turn, is framed as a threat to social stability or moral values. These differences illustrate how discourse strategies reflect underlying cultural models.

The translation of evaluative concepts such as benefit and harm poses significant challenges. Baker emphasizes that equivalence in translation cannot be achieved through literal correspondence alone, especially when culturally loaded concepts are involved [6, p. 118]. Translators must consider conceptual and pragmatic factors to convey intended meanings accurately.

Machine translation systems often struggle with such concepts because they lack cultural awareness. Kenny notes that machine translation tends to prioritize formal equivalence over conceptual meaning, which can result in misinterpretation [7, p. 211]. In intercultural communication, these differences may lead to misunderstanding if speakers interpret benefit and harm according to their own cultural frameworks.

From a pedagogical perspective, understanding evaluative concepts is essential for developing communicative and intercultural competence. Byram argues that language education should include cultural interpretation and value awareness [8, p. 39]. Teaching learners how benefit and harm are conceptualized in different languages helps them avoid pragmatic errors and improves their ability to participate in intercultural communication.

A concept-based approach to language teaching encourages learners to analyze meaning beyond vocabulary and grammar. This approach is particularly effective in digital learning environments, where authentic discourse materials can be used to illustrate cultural differences in evaluation.

The linguocognitive and linguocultural analysis of the concepts of "benefit" and "harm" in English and Uzbek demonstrates that while these notions are universal, their linguistic realization is culturally conditioned. English tends to conceptualize benefit and harm within a pragmatic and individual-centered framework, emphasizing efficiency, calculation, and

measurable outcomes. Uzbek, by contrast, embeds these concepts within moral, social, and collective values, highlighting ethical responsibility and communal well-being.

These differences are reflected in lexical choices, metaphorical structures, and discourse practices. Understanding such variation is crucial for effective translation, intercultural communication, discourse analysis, and foreign language teaching. The study confirms that evaluative concepts serve as a bridge between language, cognition, and culture. Future research may expand this analysis through corpus-based studies or by including additional languages to further explore the cultural dynamics of evaluation.

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