



Annotation

The article shows a number of cognitive features of the concept of quantity in Uzbek folk proverbs. Figurative nature of proverbs is not related to explicit or hidden comparisons in them - it is the result of cognitive processes that are manifested in different ways in the cognitive bases of the semantic structure of proverbs of different types. In the proverbs created by mankind, people compare and complete their thoughts about concepts based on one concept and another concept, and ensure that the expressions are figurative. Based on the expression of primary thoughts, he verbalizes secondary, derivative thoughts. Numbers represent several cognitive aspects in addition to their function. The numbers interpreted as a national-cultural indicator are a unique linguistic and cultural sign that expresses the spiritual thinking, worldview, and national mentality of each nation. By studying proverbs in the Uzbek language from this point of view and classifying them on the basis of linguistic and cultural codes, it is possible to create models of Uzbek thought, and to shed light on the mechanisms specific to the linguistic consciousness of the nation.

Key words and expressions: cultural code, mental unit, concept, linguistic and cultural symbol, quantity, number, cognitive basis, model, semantics.

Introduction

Everything in the world around us reflects certain quantitative characteristics. The concept of number and quantity emerged at the earliest stages of human development as a result of the need to account for existence and to measure objects and phenomena within it.

According to Professor D. Nabieva, interpreting and understanding numbers solely as mathematical symbols significantly narrows the possibility of fully revealing their functions and limits the scope of analysis. Such a superficial approach reduces numbers to mere indicators of date of birth, birthdays, dates, time, money, telephone numbers, identification codes, and economic figures. Therefore, she emphasizes the need to move beyond this one-sided perspective and approach the semantics of numbers more seriously. Studying numbers as indicators expressing national and cultural values, and examining them from a linguistic perspective, allows their functions to be revealed more comprehensively [4; 1183].

Supporting the scholar's view, it can be noted that numbers expressing quantity, beyond their primary function, also convey a number of cognitive aspects. These aspects help us to comprehend and interpret the world through numbers.

Literature review and methods

Numbers interpreted as national and cultural indicators represent specific linguocultural signs that reflect the spiritual thinking, worldview, and national mentality of a particular people. Over time, numbers have risen to the level of a national-cultural code and have taken their place among the markers expressing a nation's rituals, traditions, and way of life. A special

field of study—numerology—has even emerged to examine the characteristics of numbers and their role in human life. People have endowed numbers with a kind of divine “garment,” which has led to the formation of distinctive beliefs and interpretations related to numbers among different nations. Some numbers have been regarded as auspicious, while others have been considered inauspicious [4; 1185].

The cognitive aspect of numbers lies in their study as concepts. A concept is examined in connection with the meaning of linguistic units, and accordingly, in shaping a concept as a unit of thought, scholars rely on the features inherent in language units.

In expressing the concept of quantity, various linguistic means are involved: **phonetic means** (intonation, sound repetition, stress), **lexical means** (lexemes possessing the semantic feature of quantity, phraseological units, non-standard words, terms), **morphological means** (parts of speech, morphemic units), and **syntactic means** (sentence parts, vocatives, parenthetical words, word combinations, simple and compound sentences) [2; 218].

Supporting the above views, the expression of quantity can be observed at different levels of language. As examples, we may refer to the following Uzbek folk proverbs.

In the proverb “*Bir o’lganga tegma, bir – kuyganga*” (“Do not touch the one who has died once, nor the one who has been burned once”), the quantitative unit is expressed through a morphological means, namely a connective element.

In the proverb “*Yettining biri – ayyor, yettining biri – Xizr*” (“One of the seven is cunning, one of the seven is Khizr”), the substantivized word functions as a morphological unit. In “*Kasal bitta – davosi mingta*” (“One illness – a thousand cures”), quantity is manifested both morphologically and syntactically.

Beyond performing a counting function, numbers also acquire symbolic meanings in connection with various ancient beliefs. They are not merely mathematical elements, but also serve as means reflecting a nation’s ethnic characteristics, national traditions and customs, cultural and mental markers, as well as its history and way of life. In the consciousness of every people, numerous notions reveal the semantics of numbers and express their national-cultural significance. Cultural codes expressed through numbers in national culture possess distinctive and unique features.

This can be clearly observed in Uzbek folk proverbs. Numbers carry specific meanings in them, and the significance of quantity is considerable. The most frequently used quantitative concepts in proverbs are the numbers *one, two, seven, eight, forty, nine, and thousand*. Each number is employed in proverbs for different purposes. It is difficult to claim that all of them possess symbolic meaning or generate a concept from a cognitive perspective. Some numbers are used simply to denote a literal quantity. The following proverbs may serve as examples:

“*Nonning ikki kunligini ye, go’shtning – bir kunligini*” (“Eat two days’ worth of bread, but only one day’s worth of meat”);

“*Bir qo’yga pichoq, ikki qo’yga tayoq*” (“For one sheep – a knife, for two sheep – a stick”);
“*Berishda bir sana, olganda – ikki*” (“Count once when giving, count twice when taking”).

In addition, the number *one* is the most frequently used numeral in proverbs, generally expressing singular quantity. At times, it also functions in comparison or contrastive structures: “*Kasal bitta – davosi mingta*” (“One illness – a thousand cures”);

“*Bir kunlik isitma qirg kunlik kuchni olar*” (“A one-day fever takes away forty days’ strength”);
“*O’nni ko’r, birni ol*” (“See ten, choose one”).

Results and discussion

In Uzbek proverbs, the perception of the number *thousand* reveals not only the semantic feature of quantity but also several additional semantic nuances. Consider the following examples:

“*Ming kulishning bir yig’isi bor.*”

(“A thousand laughs have one cry.”)

“*Ming kun shahidlikdan bir kun tiriklik afzal.*”

(“One day of living is better than a thousand days of martyrdom.”)

“*Ming Makka ziyoratidan bir ko’ngil imorat yaxshi.*”

(“Building one heart is better than a thousand pilgrimages to Mecca.”)

“*Ming sizni bizdan bir jizu biz yaxshi.*”

“*Mingtaning tusini bilguncha bittaning ismini bil.*”

(“Better to know one by name than to know the appearance of a thousand.”)

“*Ming qayg’u bir ish bitirmas.*”

(“A thousand worries accomplish nothing.”)

“*Ming so’zdan bir ish yaxshi.*”

(“One deed is better than a thousand words.”)

In these proverbs, the number *thousand* does not denote the exact numerical value; rather, it conveys the meanings of multiplicity, excessiveness, or abundance. Similarly, in the proverb “*Ming marta eshitgandan bir marta ko’rgan yaxshi*” (“Seeing once is better than hearing a thousand times”), the act of hearing is not literally counted a thousand times; instead, the expression emphasizes repetition and intensity.

In the cultures of many nations of the world, particular attention is paid to the number *seven*. It is often interpreted as a symbol of happiness, luck, and goodness [7; 1183].

Such a perception is also characteristic of Eastern peoples. The association of seven with miracles, planets, days of the week, the seven colors of the rainbow, and other phenomena may have contributed to the belief in its “magical” and “miraculous” nature. Even today, the number seven is widely regarded as the “luckiest” number. This can be observed, for example, in the preference for the number seven when selecting license plate numbers for a new car.

In Uzbek folk proverbs, the number *seven* expresses specific and distinctive meanings.

For example, in the proverb “*Yettining biri – ayyor, yettining biri – Xizr*” (“One of the seven is cunning, one of the seven is Khizr”), the reference is to a person’s ancestors, and the number seven functions as a means of distinguishing a family or even an entire lineage. In the proverb “*Men qilaman ikki, kelinim qiladi yetti*” (“I do two, my daughter-in-law does seven”), the number seven conveys the semantic nuance of completeness or bringing something to its final stage. In “*Yetti o’lchab, bir kes*” (“Measure seven times, cut once”), the number seven expresses the idea of careful and thorough consideration.

In the Uzbek mentality, the number *forty* holds a special place. Religious ceremonies associated with this number (such as mourning rituals and memorial gatherings for the deceased) as well as traditional customs (such as observing a forty-day period for newborns and newlyweds) have been preserved.

The meanings of the number forty in ancient Turkic were studied by V. A. Gordlevsky. According to him, the number forty does not denote an exact quantity but rather expresses the concept of “many.” Among ancient Turks, forty was used to indicate the number of sacrificial offerings performed in rituals.

The Karakalpak linguist A. Bekbergenov, reflecting on the reasons for reverence toward the number forty, states that in ancient times objects that were difficult to count, as well as certain religious concepts, were designated by the number forty [1; 45].

In his article, the Turkish scholar Y. Kerim extensively analyzed the use of the number forty in folklore works, examining its linguopoetics in fairy tales, legends, proverbs, and expressions. Based on Turkish folklore materials, he concludes that in popular imagination the number forty signifies not only luck or misfortune, but also infinity and multiplicity [3; 752].

Conclusion

Thus, numbers are not only an inseparable part of humanity’s religious, cultural, and spiritual life, but also important cultural codes that shape human behavior and interpersonal relationships. Therefore, numbers are not merely concepts used to express counting or measurement results; in Uzbek folk proverbs, they also function as national-cultural units and serve as objects of study in linguistics.

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