



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IDIOM AND NATIONAL MENTALITY

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Abstract. Idioms are regarded as significant linguistic indicators that express the national worldview, history, and long-established traditions of nations. They often cannot be understood through direct translation, without looking at their deep cultural and historical roots unlike other expressions. This article highlights the role of idioms as the most pivotal types of phraseological units in expressing national mentality, and explains the meaning of some idioms. In addition, they are deeply analyzed by exploring their historical background, cultural specificity, and their usage in a language.

Keywords: Idioms; national mentality; meaning; cultural roots; historical background; phraseological units.

Introduction

Understanding the original and full meaning of idiomatic expressions which are received from other languages is nearly impossible without knowing their cultural and historical background. This is because every idiom is formed from a specific social, historical or symbolic event, and serves as a linguistic tool, reflecting a nation's traditions, religious beliefs, and different worldview.

The importance of this study is that, national consciousness which shapes human cognition, directly influences the way of expressing meaning and the formation of idioms. Therefore, examining idiom's origins and relationship with cultural values plays a pivotal role in shaping the meaning. Otherwise, failure to comprehend these national and conceptual combinations may result in misunderstanding of the root point of notion or lead to miscommunication in international interactions. For instance, the English idiom "let sleeping dogs lie" may seem incomprehensible if it is translated word by word, regardless of a linguistic paradigm, but when its historical context is taken into consideration, the idiom clearly promotes the ideas of caution, restraint and avoiding unnecessary conflict.

Literature review

The relationship between idioms and national mentality is widely discussed among linguistics, cognitive scientists for several decades. In the back years, linguistics used to base on external pattern theories but not internal meaning. However, fixed expressions like idioms have recently being learned in cognitive approaches. For instance, V.N.Telia (1996) explains phraseological units are associated with cultural and national standards, stereotypes and traditions. According to Telia, the meaning of an idiom cannot be fully interpreted without reference to the cultural context since its semantics often includes cultural connotations as mentioned above.

Moreover, according to the study of Zoltan Kovecses and Peter Szabco (1996), although certain conceptual metaphors may be universal, their idiomatic meanings may vary from

culture to culture owing to differences in national mentality and the way of living . For example, the idioms about emotions show priorities of a nation or cultural, specific feelings such as fear, happiness. So they serve as cognitive tools in which national mentality is expressed and structured.

On top of that, "Foundations of cognitive grammar", Ron Langacker (1987), suggests that idioms represent mental patterns shared by members of a speech community. These influence on the formation of collective mental models that align closely with a nation' s thinking. For example , majority of uzbek idioms are mainly based on teamwork like "bir yoqadan bosh chiqarmoq"(to act together) , while in english, some of them depend on solitude and doing something alone (to go it alone, to stand on one's own).

Methodology

This study uses multiple approaches such as cognitive method and comparative method in order to understand and learn how national mindset is affected by idioms. These methods were used while quantitative data were being gathered via questionnaire and surveys given by people from different cultural backgrounds to get reliable information . Observations focused on how people from diverse backgrounds perceive the meaning of a single idiom , and also the effects of national way of thinking were identified by the participants' answers. These participants were adolescents within the same age range - 18 to 20 years. The collected survey data were assessed and compared from cognitive and psychological perspectives.

Results and discussion

According to the survey conducted as a part of the study, there is a close connection between explaining the meaning of the idiom and national mentality. Participants including 6 Russian, 6 Uzbek and 6 Spanish teenagers who engaged in the survey were asked to explain the phrase 'break a leg' (they were unfamiliar with this idiom in English language, for sure). 40 percent of them interpreted this phrase as "to injure ", 25 percent of them defined as "making noise" and 35 percent participants accept as a negative wish. It is important to note that the majority of those who perceived this phrase as "to injure" were the Uzbek and Russians too. As for the remaining proportions, most of the young people of Spanish nationality understood this phrase as "making noise". However, a mixed vote was observed in the composition of those who interpreted this phrase as a negative intention. In other words, representatives of three nationalities were included in the final proportion. From this it follows that the relationship between idiom and national mentality is reflected in most cases ,despite of some differences. This is because their interpretations were based on their cultural understanding more than linguistic knowledge as they were new for English language. These findings align with previous researches. For example, Zolatan Kovecses and Peter Szabo (1996) highlights that idioms are products of our conceptual system which is shaped by culture and social environment. That is why Russians understood the above idiom as implying injury , as resilience , perseverance and intensity are specific for their cultural mindset .

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that idiomatic expressions are shaped by mentality, national and cultural values ,contributing to how the meaning is formed and understood. They also serve as a cognitive tool that reflects the thinking model and cultural experience of a particular nation.This was once again confirmed by the different opinions expressed by representatives of different nationalities in the survey conducted during the study. It means that the learning of

the relationship between idioms and national mentality is important for organizing international dialogues and discovering the unique characteristics of the language and people.

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