

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT “HEART”

Definitions of the concept “Heart” in metaphorical structures

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ABSTRACT

This article explains the metaphorical meaning of the “Heart” concept in the literature and language system. Here given comparative analysis of the concept heart in three languages: English, Uzbek, and Russian. In the article, we looked through the similarities and difference of the “Heart” concept in three languages. The Heart concept is studied by a number of English and Russian scientists. However, there are fewer scientists who carry out research of concept “Heart”.

In addition, here also given some examples of semantic meaning of the Heart concept such as sincerity, temperature, sadness, worry, desire and etc.

Keywords: concept, conceptual meaning, metaphorical meaning, metaphorical structure, semantic meaning of the concept.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions are the most basic thing of the human being and, therefore, they constitute something intrinsic to our lives. Above all, the heart stands out for being considered the place where they are located. Therefore, we can establish the metaphor “The heart is a container of emotion”. Among them, love is the outstanding one.

Firstly, we should define what a metaphor is. Metaphor is a word or phrase for one thing that is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest that they are similar. An object, activity, or idea that is used as a symbol of something else [8].

Metaphors are a form of figurative language, which refers to words or expressions that mean something different from their literal definition. In the case of metaphors, the literal interpretation would often be pretty silly. For example, imagine what these metaphors would look like if you took them at face value: for example: Love is a battlefield, Bob is a couch potato, Baby, you’re firework, I am titanium.

However, the fact that emotions are located in this body part does not constitute a universal, since there are other languages and cultures in which they are metaphorically eradicated in other body parts. Turkish, for example, locates them in the liver, that is why the expression “My liver, my soul” may be striking to us. Another case is Nigerian English, language that considers the belly the seat of emotions [1, 120]

The cultural differences are due, most of the time, to the metaphorical location of certain faculties or states (like the intellect or the emotion) in the body, since some populations associate internal organs with specific faculties. Sometimes, different cultures do not share those associations [3, 354], as we have just seen, and those differences are reflected on the language in a later stage.

The heart, being the place where feelings are located figuratively, opposes the “head”, place where the reason is conventionally placed. Therefore, someone who is led by his heart refers to a person who pushes that main capacity of the intellect into the background in order to give free rein to his feelings.

As it is well known, metaphor is a useful means of expressing one thing in terms of another. Consequently, when it is difficult to express something we resort to it. Therefore, it is self-evident that such a rich field as emotions would make a frequent use of this expressive means and, if we consider the heart as its nucleus, it is no wonder that we find a great number of metaphoric and metonymic expressions with this organ as a source domain.

The first indispensable metaphor in order to be able to refer to an abstract concept is called reification. This consists of attributing characteristic properties of objects to concepts, once turned into discrete entities. In this sense love, symbolized in the heart, is taken as a valuable object. As such, it is delicate and fragile and, as a consequence, it is breakable. As we know, someone has a “broken heart” due to an unhappy love affair, translated in the other languages as: Rus *разбитое сердце*. Uzb. *Singan yurak*.

Therefore, we can coin the metaphor “The heart is a breakable object”. Being granted the condition of object, the heart can own its typical features and be treated as such. In this last sense, it is possible to “possess” someone’s heart or “give it” in a love relationship.

“The heart is sincerity”. In relation with this feeling, we find the following expressions: Eng. From the bottom of one’s heart. Rus. *От чистого сердца*. Uzb. *Chin qalbidan*.

The feelings associated to these expressions are sincere and intense. In English, we even find a use that could be considered hyperbolic Uzb: “In one’s heart of hearts”. Here again the heart is conceptualized as a container from which sincere feelings, which are usually hidden, emanate. Another expression associated to the concept of sincerity is: Eng. To speak from the heart. Rus. *Сказанное от души*. Uzb. *Ко’ngildan aytgan*. Such an image could be attributed to the fact that the person, in order to clearly show his feelings, figuratively takes the heart out of his breast and shows it on his hand, where it is more easily seen. The same happens in English with the expression “To wear one's heart on one's sleeve”, Uzb “*yuragini to’kib sochmoq*” which finds its explanation in the chivalry tradition of the Middle Ages, when the jousts took place in the King’s court and the knight dedicated his fight to a woman. She would give him a garment, usually a ribbon, as a sign of her love, and the knight would tie it to his arm, and in this way he would show that he loved her or that he would defend her honour. This is the explanation why nowadays this expression is used with the meaning of clearly showing one’s emotions or feelings. This is a case of metonymy, since “heart” stands for “lover”. Therefore, a diachronic perspective can help us reveal the meaning of some expressions that came to light in a particular synchronic moment as a result of its literature, history, beliefs, etc.

“The heart is worry”. Uzb “*Yuragi g’ash*”. The heart can experience worries, concerns and even interest, as the following expressions show: Eng. To have something at heart. In Uzbek language it can be “*yuragi g’ash*”. In English, one’s heart even “goes out to someone” Rus.Uzb “*yuragi achimoq*” Deignan explains that “If your heart goes out to someone, you sympathize very deeply with their problems”, and she cites the following examples: “My heart goes out to this compassionate man. How could anyone see him as a criminal?”; “Her sincerity and her unhappiness were clear and his heart went out to her” [2, 8].

“The heart is sadness”. As we have previously commented, emotions give rise to a big number of metaphors. The feelings of sadness or anger (among others) can manifest themselves as: Eng. To take something to heart. Uzb. Yuragiga olmoq. The feeling of something pressing, resulting in the difficulty to breathe is the same in all languages. The emotional locus is placed in the heart in Uzbek and English. As we can observe, it may be the case that some languages share the same conceptual metaphor, but it could be elaborated in a different way in different codes. There is no equivalence of the linguistic expression; however, the conventional projection is the same in all languages. Likewise, due to the feeling of sadness, in Uzbek the heart cries: “Yuragi yig’lamoq”. The heart, reached by Cupid’s arrows, can be wounded, and as a consequence, it may even bleed, as it happens in English: It makes my heart bleed Uzb.yuragi qon bo’lmoq. The metaphor of the wound is found, in general terms, in those cases when something causes a big impression. It is therefore related to the metaphor of the blow, which belongs to the first phase of Ungerer and Schmid’s classification: “The emotion comes suddenly from the outside”, as such it is conceptualized as a blow.

“The heart is desire”. As a living organism, the heart can even experience desire in English, Russian and Uzbek: Eng. To a heart’s desire; to one’s heart’s content/ delight Uzb.ko’ngil istagi. Conclusion of this section, we can say that the heart, in the sense that it experiences desire (“To a heart’s desire”), cries bleeds (ko’ngil istagi), etc., is conceptualized as a “living organism”.

“The heart is courage”. The heart is used in conventional expressions to symbolize courage and state of mind. In English, discouragement is conceptualized as loss of heart: To lose heart (ko’ngil yo’qatmoq). On the other hand, the English and the Uzbek “take heart” in order to cheer up: Eng. To take heart. Uzb dovyurak. A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Heart Metaphors. We can observe that the Uzbek word “dovyurak, yurakli”, and the English “courage”, derive from the Latin cor, which means “heart”. The explanation of it comes from Ancient times, especially the Middle Ages, since courage was placed in the heart, symbol of warlike virtue. The symbolic meaning of the heart as the seat of courage still exists. In Uzbek someone with a “yuragi yorilmoq” is someone who gets easily frightened. The English expression “Not to have the heart to do something” is another example of it.

According to the metaphor “Sad is down”, the lack of spirit is conceptualized as a downwards projection. This metaphor gives sense to expressions such as “Her heart sank”. This one is similar to the Uzbek “qalbini sindirmoq”. This lack of spirit conceptualized as a downward movement can even project itself on garments, as in Uzbek “yuragi og’ziga kelmoq” can be translated differently in English “His heart was in his boots”. We can see the difference in parts of the body which is totally opposite for example in Uzbek language in order to express the phrase “yuragi og’zaki kelmoq” the heart moves up to the head. In contrast, in English the heart moves downwards of the body.

Finally, we have to point out that the heart associated to certain animal represents the presence or lack of courage. Obviously, it is not the same to have “a heart of lion”, “sheryurak” brave and fierce animal par excellence, than to have a “chicken heart”, “quyon yurak” animal commonly associated to cowardice.

“The heart is a material”

It is a common place in our culture to associate the heart to several materials. For example, related to gold it symbolizes the virtues that can be found inside us, as goodness or kindness,

and those virtues are conceptualised are riches. This reification is present in the three languages: Eng. To have a heart of gold Rus. открытое сердце, Uzb. Ochiq ko'ngil.

Negative connotations are, however, more numerous. We find expressions like: Eng. To have a heart of stone, Rus. жестокое сердце, Uzb. Toshuyrak. There is an exact equivalence in English and Russian languages with other materials, such as iron, steel, marble, but in Uzbek language the word "stone" can not be replaced with iron, steel or marble. Metaphorically, we associate those materials to the heart when we refer to negative feelings. Someone who has a heart of stone, iron, steel, marble, etc., refers to someone who is not easily moved and does not harbour feelings of sensitivity, compassion, sympathy or interest for others. The hardness of the material corresponds to the hardness or coldness in attitude, as we can also observe in the following expressions: Eng. To be hardhearted Rus. жестокое сердце, Uzb. yuragi qattiq. The opposite would be: Eng. To be soft/ tenderhearted, Rus. невинная душа Uzb. ochiq ko'ngil. Someone who has such a heart possesses qualities like kindness or generosity.

Size is another basic reification consists of granting the heart a particular size. Ruiz de Mendoza offers a description of the cognitive model of size, which consists of the following features [6, 19]:

(a) Objects vary in size, ranging from very small dimensions to very big ones. (b) A small object seems to be more controllable than a big one.

(c) A small object seems to be potentially less harmful than a big one.

(d) A small object seems to be potentially less important than a big one.

According to this author, this cognitive model has an experiential basis which arises from our interaction with big and small objects, and it makes us take different perspectives about them, what can produce diverse generalizations; among them, small objects are controllable and less important and big ones are less controllable and important.

From this cognitive model it follows that the largeness of the heart has positive connotations, like kindness or generosity, as it is illustrated in the following examples of our corpus: Eng. To have a big heart, Rus. Большое сердце, Uzb. Yuragi keng.

As we see it, this metaphor has an evident metonymic basis. The relevant fact, however, is not that a part (the heart) is used to represent a whole (the person), but the metaphorical conception of choosing a particular feature of the person (kindness, generosity) that is associated with a part of that whole. Related to this, Ibarretxe Antuñano talks about the "Property Selection Processes" (PSPs): "i.e. the selection in the target domain of only some of those prototypical properties that characterize the physical source domain" [5, 34]. Later on, she adds:

x

On the other hand, the smallness or absence of heart has negative connotations. The meaning of the following expressions is easily deduced from this: Eng. He has no heart, Rus. Он бессердечный, Uzb. Yuraksiz.

Related to the cognitive model of size, the heart can even swell in English. In English, the most frequent is that the heart "swells with pride" which can have a positive connotation, as in: My heart was full of joy". However, in Uzbek language it owns more negative meaning: "Yuragi yorilib ketmoq" which means she/he is frightened.

On the contrary, the heart can also shrink. In Uzbek, it means to experience grief "ko'ngli tor". It also means "to grieve". Therefore, when the heart "expands", it has positive connotations,

while when it “shrinks”, it has negative ones. Small is conceptualized as negative, while big is conceptualized as positive.

Temperature is another factor to take into account, since it has consequences on the figurative uses of the heart. The cold-hot duality has negative and positive connotations respectively, which are motivated by the effect that these sensations have on the body, as can be proved by the following English expressions: “To be warm-hearted”; “Heartwarming” as in “It was heartwarming to see how pleased the child was”. To this respect, Deignan points out: “Whereas heat is usually used to talk about emotions which are strong and often negative, warm is used to describe emotions that are friendly, caring, and positive” [2, 161]. English corresponds to Uzbek “ko’ngilchan”.

On the other hand, the expressions related to cold have negative connotations, as in: To have a cold heart/ to be coldhearted again, the English expression can be right equivalent to the Uzbek “muzyurak”.

These have an easy explanation, since we fight the cold due to the discomfort it causes. In the other languages there is not an exact metaphorical projection in the adjectival compound uses, however, we find similar projections in phrases like “muzyurak”. In English, the heat even softens the heart: “It has warmed the cockles of my heart”. As we all know, the heart opposes the head, since the latter is the seat of reason and the former is the seat of emotions. We also find this contrast in relation to temperature. Therefore, it is easy to deduce the meaning of an expression as “to keep one’s head cool”. The use of thermal metaphors to refer to people’s character is, in fact, one of the most widespread. If emotions are “hot”, and their absence is interpreted as coldness, we could argue in favour of a metonymic basis of the previous metaphors, according to the metonymic principle “The physiological effects of an emotion stand for that emotion”, since bodily temperature rises when we experience emotion [4, 228].

The heart is a living organism. Ungerer and Schmid basing themselves on Kövecses’ several publications, establish a series of metaphors and metonymies in relation to the category of emotion, which we put forward below [7, 140]:

Metonymy: Physical agitation stands for the emotion

Metaphors: The emotion comes suddenly from the outside: The emotion strikes, casts, hits you.

The emotion is a natural force: It overwhelms you, sweeps over you.

The emotion is a living organism: It grows wilts and dies.

Presence is the existence of emotion: The emotion stays, goes away, comes back. Emotion is a fluid in a container; the body/ the eyes/ the heart/ other organs are containers for the emotion: I am full of/ filled with the emotion.

If we analyze them in detail, we can observe that the emotion goes through a series of phases: its arrival, which usually strikes; the effect it causes on the person while the emotion is present; and its disappearance. This finding has encouraged both cognitive psychologists and linguists to develop what has been called emotion scenarios.

According to Ungerer and Schmid, the principle which governs these scenarios is that the emotion follows a sequence of different phases. These are: the cause of the emotion (stage 1), the emotion itself (stage 2), the (attempt of) control (stage 3), the loss of control (stage 4), and its consequences (stage 5). However, the different phases cannot be applied in the same way to the six categories of emotions considered to be

basic (sadness, anger, disgust/hate, fear, joy/happiness and desire/love). They argue that they can be perfectly applied to anger and other negative emotions, but not to positive ones, such as happiness or love. We will show which phases can be applied to the category which concerns us [7, .140-142].

As we will see through our analysis, the heart, as long as it represents the emotion, is conceptualized as a living organism. Therefore, we can establish the metaphor “The heart is a living organism”. This is a personification, the second type of basic cognitive operation. Concretely, it is an ontological metaphor, since an entity lacking that status, is personified. The clearest example of personification regarding the heart is its ability to talk, as the following expressions show: Eng. My heart tells me, Uzb. Yuragim aytyapdi.

The heart is the seat of the intellect

The heart can carry out activities that require a special type of ability or mental capacity. Clear examples of that are the English and Uzbek expressions: Eng. To learn by heart, Uzb. Yod olmoq. In Uzbek language the word “heart” is not used for expressing the meaning the intellect. It is commonly used for emotions and feelings. In other cases, such as the Uzbek “yod olmoq, eslamoq”, that capacity could be associated to affectivity, in the sense that we remember what we love or care for, what “touches our hearts”. The belief, already present in Ancient times, of the “mental” capacity of the heart, seen in English that finds correspondence in the other languages.

The fact that the intellect is metonymically represented by the head (the whole for the part) has an evident physiological grounding, since the brain is located in the head, and therefore, it can be seen objectively as the place where abilities such as imagination, perception, creativity, logic, etc. can be found. However, it is not so clear that the heart has been considered the seat of certain intellectual faculties, as we have just seen. The popular psychology has located emotions in this body part (in Western cultures) and in the liver (in Turkish languages), as a consequence of a social convention. Nowadays, we know that the modern psychology locates the intellectual and the emotional functions in the brain. Reason and language are located in the left hemisphere, while emotions are placed in the right one and in the amygdala.

The heart is the center/core of something. As we know the heart is an organ situated in the chest and almost in the middle of the body. Besides, the function it carries out is vital for the human survival. That is why we refer to a central place as its heart, especially if that place is very important or has a lot of activity. We find an exact equivalence in the five languages studied regarding that conceptualization of the heart as the center or core of something, for example: Eng. The heart of the city Rus. сердце города, Uzb. shahar markazi.

The heart is the stomach So far we have seen that a metaphorical expression, derived from a conceptual metaphor, has the same equivalences in the other languages. Besides, we have highlighted that there are intercultural variations. On the one hand, we have pointed out that it may be the case that the underlying conceptual metaphor is the same, but its realizations in concrete lexical forms are different, i. e. there are different expressions or instantiations. Now, we are interested in showing that, on the other hand, there is also the possibility that the projection only takes place in one language. This is the case of the metaphor “The heart is the stomach”, just found in French.

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