METAPHORICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ILLNESS IN ENGLISH

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Annotatsiya. Tezisda ingliz tilida kasallik tushunchasining konseptual metaforalar orqali ifodalanishi ilmiy adabiyotlar tahlili asosida o'rganiladi. Kasallik urush, pastga tushish, yo'l, yuk va mulk sifatida tasavvur qilinadigan asosiy metaforik modellar ajratib ko'rsatiladi hamda ularning baholovchi ta'siri ochib beriladi. Ingliz tilidagi modellar o'zbek va rus tillaridagi ifodalar bilan qiyoslanadi. Natijalar tibbiy matnlarni tarjima qilish va ingliz tilini o'qitishda qo'llanilishi mumkin.

Kalit so'zlar: konseptual metafora, kasallik, manba soha, urush metaforasi, kognitiv tilshunoslik, ingliz tili.

Аннотация. В тезисе на основе анализа научной литературы рассматривается метафорическая концептуализация болезни в английском языке. Выделяются основные метафорические модели, в которых болезнь представлена как война, движение вниз, путь, груз и обладание, и описывается их оценочный потенциал. Английские модели сопоставляются с соответствующими выражениями в узбекском и русском языках. Результаты могут быть использованы в переводе медицинских текстов и преподавании английского языка.

Ключевые слова: концептуальная метафора, болезнь, сфера-источник, военная метафора, когнитивная лингвистика, английский язык.

Abstract. The thesis examines the metaphorical conceptualization of illness in English on the basis of an analysis of scholarly literature. It identifies the main metaphorical models in which illness is understood as war, as downward movement, as a journey, as a burden and as a possession, and describes their evaluative effects. The English models are compared with corresponding expressions in Uzbek and Russian. The results can be applied in the translation of medical texts and in English language teaching.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor, illness, source domain, war metaphor, cognitive linguistics, English.

Introduction

Illness is one of those experiences that people find hard to describe directly. Pain, weakness and fear have no clear outlines, and when speakers try to talk about them they almost automatically turn to images taken from more familiar areas of life. A patient says that a headache is killing him, a doctor explains that the body is fighting an infection, a newspaper reports a war on cancer. These expressions are so ordinary that they seem literal, yet each of them presents illness through the structure of another domain. Since the work of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, linguists have treated such expressions not as ornaments of speech but as evidence of conceptual metaphors, stable mappings that organize thinking about abstract domains in terms of concrete ones [1]. The domain of illness is especially suitable for this kind of analysis because it is both universal and deeply personal, and because in English it has become the subject of open public

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debate about the consequences of metaphorical language for patients. The relevance of the topic is connected with the growing role of English as the language of medicine and health communication. Medical texts, public health campaigns and popular articles written in English are widely translated into Uzbek and Russian, and the metaphors they contain travel together with the information. Without understanding the conceptual background of these metaphors, a translator or a teacher may reproduce images that sound unnatural or carry unwanted connotations in the target culture. The purpose of this thesis is to identify the main conceptual metaphors through which illness is understood in English, to describe their source domains and evaluative effects, and to consider how they relate to the conceptualization of illness in Uzbek and Russian.

Methodology and Literature Review

The work is based exclusively on the analysis of published scientific literature and on the author's interpretation of examples cited in academic sources and dictionaries. It uses descriptive and conceptual analysis, the method of metaphorical modelling and elements of comparative analysis. The starting point is the cognitive theory of metaphor, according to which a metaphor is a mapping from a source domain to a target domain that allows people to reason about the target using knowledge of the source [1]. Z. Kövecses developed this theory further, showing that the most frequent source domains include the human body, animals, buildings, machines and war, and that metaphors differ in their degree of conventionality and in their cultural variation [2]. Russian scholarship approached metaphor from a somewhat different angle. N.D. Arutyunova described metaphor as a way of creating meaning through the meeting of two different conceptual spheres and stressed its role in evaluation and in forming the linguistic picture of the world [3]. V.A. Maslova, summarizing the achievements of cognitive linguistics, emphasized that metaphor is a key instrument for representing concepts and for studying the national mentality reflected in language [4]. In Uzbek linguistics Sh. Safarov argued for a cognitive approach that treats linguistic units as reflections of human knowledge and experience [5], while N. Mahmudov drew attention to the anthropocentric paradigm and to the need to study language in close connection with the person who uses it [6]. These works provide the general theoretical framework. The specific literature on illness metaphors is mostly written in English. S. Sontag's essay Illness as Metaphor remains the best known critique of metaphorical thinking about disease; Sontag showed how tuberculosis and cancer were mythologized and how military imagery could make patients feel responsible for their condition [7]. P. Hodgkin, writing in the British Medical Journal, analysed the dominance of the idea that medicine is war in professional medical language and urged doctors to notice its hidden consequences [8]. E. Semino developed a discourse-oriented approach and showed that the same source domain can have very different effects depending on who uses it and for what purpose [9]. Finally, V.I. Karasik's work on concepts and discourse helps to connect the metaphorical structure of illness with the value system of a linguistic community [10].

Results and Discussion

The analysis makes it possible to distinguish several productive metaphorical models of illness in English. The first and most widespread is the military model, ILLNESS IS WAR. Its source domain supplies a whole system of roles and actions: the disease is an enemy or an invader, bacteria and viruses attack the body, the immune system defends it, the doctor and the patient fight or combat the illness, drugs are weapons in an arsenal and recovery is a victory. The model is highly coherent and therefore persuasive, which explains its popularity in medical journalism and public campaigns. Its weaknesses, however, have been widely discussed. Sontag pointed out that the language of war tends to demonize the

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illness and, indirectly, the ill person, and that it makes death look like a defeat for which someone is responsible [7]. Hodgkin noted that the military model also shapes the professional identity of doctors and encourages an aggressive style of treatment [8]. Semino's discourse approach shows that the effect of the metaphor is not always negative: for some patients the idea of fighting gives a sense of purpose and control, while for others, especially at the end of life, it produces feelings of guilt and failure [9]. The second model is the orientational model ILLNESS IS DOWN described by Lakoff and Johnson [1]. It is grounded in the simple bodily fact that a seriously ill person lies down while a healthy person stands up. In English it appears in expressions such as fall ill, come down with flu, be laid low and feel down and, in the opposite direction, pick up, be up and about or be back on one's feet. This model is far less controversial than the military one, and it is clearly shared with Uzbek and Russian, where verbs of falling and lying down are also used to speak about illness. Its spread across languages supports Kövecses's observation that metaphors grounded in basic bodily experience tend to appear in many cultures [2].

The third model may be formulated as ILLNESS IS A JOURNEY. It has become particularly visible in English in recent decades, partly as an alternative to the war metaphor. A patient goes through treatment, is on the road to recovery, faces ups and downs, reaches a milestone or takes things one step at a time. The journey model shifts the focus from conflict to process and makes room for uncertainty and personal experience, and for this reason it is often preferred in communication with seriously ill people [9]. The fourth model presents ILLNESS AS A BURDEN, a load that the person carries, as in to bear an illness, to be weighed down by pain or the burden of disease. Closely related to it is the model of ILLNESS AS A POSSESSION, expressed through the verb have, which separates the condition from the self and makes it possible to speak about getting rid of it. From the comparative point of view, the most interesting result concerns the military model. Uzbek also uses the vocabulary of struggle, as in kasallikka qarshi kurash, especially in official and medical texts, but in traditional everyday speech illness is more often presented as something that has come to a person and must be endured with patience, which is reflected in the frequent pairing of dard and sabr. Russian, as general descriptions of metaphor and national mentality suggest [3; 4], shows a similar combination of military imagery in official discourse with a more emotional framing in ordinary speech. These differences suggest, in line with Karasik's view of concepts as carriers of cultural values [10], that the choice of a metaphor reflects a community's attitude to suffering, responsibility and fate. For translators this means that a direct transfer of English military metaphors into Uzbek is possible and already common in official documents, but in texts addressed to patients it may sound harsh, and the journey or burden models may be closer to the expectations of the reader.

Conclusion

The analysis shows that illness in English is conceptualized through a limited number of productive metaphorical models, among which the military model, the orientational model, the journey model and the models of burden and possession are the most significant. The military model dominates medical and media discourse and gives the concept of illness a dynamic and conflictual character, but it is also the most criticized because of its possible negative effect on patients. The orientational model rests on universal bodily experience and is shared with Uzbek and Russian, while the journey model is gaining ground in modern English as a more humane alternative. The comparison with Uzbek and Russian indicates that the metaphorical understanding of illness depends not only on bodily experience but also on cultural attitudes to suffering, patience and responsibility. These findings may be useful in teaching

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English for medical purposes, in translating health-related texts and in developing patient-oriented communication. The topic deserves further study, particularly with regard to the metaphors of mental illness and the language of recent global health crises.

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