

LINGUOCULTURAL REPRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPTS OF “GOOD” AND “EVIL” IN ENGLISH AND KARAKALPAK PROVERBS

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the linguocultural representation of the concepts of good and evil in English and Karakalpak proverbs. The study focuses on proverbs containing the lexical units good and evil, revealing how moral values are directly encoded in Karakalpak folklore. Through comparative semantic and cultural analysis, it is demonstrated that Karakalpak proverbs emphasize social harmony, labor, and collective responsibility, while English proverbs tend to reflect individual ethics and abstract reasoning. Furthermore, the findings show that although both traditions share universal moral principles such as causality and justice, their linguistic realization differs significantly in terms of metaphor, explicitness, and cultural orientation.

The concepts of good and evil occupy a central place in human cognition, and, consequently, they are widely reflected in the paremiological systems of different languages. First of all, it should be emphasized that proverbs serve not only as linguistic units but also as carriers of collective experience, moral values, and cultural norms [2]. In this respect, Karakalpak proverbs demonstrate a particularly explicit and direct representation of moral evaluation through the lexical opposition good and evil, which allows for a clearer linguocultural interpretation in comparison with English proverbs.

To begin with, the concept of *jaqsılıq* in Karakalpak folklore is closely connected with moral behavior, social usefulness, and positive interpersonal relations. For instance, the proverb “Jaqsı isleseñ asındı jerseñ, jaman isleseñ basında jerseñ” clearly establishes a cause-and-effect relationship between good and evil actions, emphasizing that good deeds bring reward while bad deeds lead to negative consequences. Similarly, the expression “Jaqsınıñ jati bolmas” conveys the idea that a good person is universally accepted and has no strangers, which highlights the social dimension of goodness. Thus, *jaqsılıq* is not merely an abstract moral category but a socially recognized and valued quality.

Moreover, the notion of good is frequently associated with action, productivity, and usefulness. This is evident in the proverb “Jaqsı jumı basında”, which implies that goodness is realized through action rather than intention. In addition, “Jaqsıǵa kóp eredi” suggests that people naturally follow and are attracted to good individuals, thereby reinforcing the idea that goodness has a collective influence. In contrast, English proverbs such as “Actions speak

louder than words” or “A good example is the best sermon” also emphasize action, yet they tend to focus more on individual responsibility and personal integrity rather than collective harmony [3].

On the other hand, the concept of *jamanlıq* in Karakalpak proverbs is represented as a combination of negative moral qualities, social harm, and personal weakness. For example, the proverb “*Jaman adam qayır bermes*” indicates that a bad person is incapable of contributing positively to society. Likewise, “*Jamandı jaqsı deme malı bar dep*” warns against misjudging a person’s moral character based on material wealth, thereby emphasizing ethical values over material ones. These examples demonstrate that *jamanlıq* is perceived primarily as a moral deficiency rather than merely undesirable behavior [1, 23-27].

Furthermore, Karakalpak proverbs often portray evil as something that spreads and damages the collective environment. This idea is vividly expressed in “*Bir qumalaq bir qarın maydı shiritedi*”, which metaphorically suggests that a single bad element can spoil the whole. A similar meaning can be found in the English proverb “One bad apple spoils the barrel”, which indicates a universal understanding of the destructive nature of evil. However, the Karakalpak expression relies on concrete, everyday imagery, whereas the English version employs a more generalized metaphor.

In addition, *jamanlıq* is frequently linked with incompetence and irresponsibility. The proverb “*Jaman qazıwshı bel tañlaydı*” (a bad worker blames his tool) illustrates that evil or badness is often associated with a lack of skill and accountability. Although this idea also exists in English in the form “*A bad workman blames his tools*,” the Karakalpak version carries a stronger cultural emphasis on practical labor and personal responsibility [4].

Another important aspect is that Karakalpak proverbs tend to express the opposition between *jaqsılıq* and *jamanlıq* in a very direct and explicit way through lexical markers. This contrasts with English proverbs, where the concepts of good and evil are often implied rather than explicitly named. For example, English expressions like “*Honesty is the best policy*” or “*The road to hell is paved with good intentions*” convey moral evaluations indirectly, without using the words “good” or “evil” in a strict lexical opposition. Therefore, the Karakalpak paremiological system can be considered more transparent in its moral categorization.

At the same time, both linguistic traditions share a common underlying principle: moral causality. That is to say, both English and Karakalpak proverbs emphasize that actions have consequences, and that good behavior leads to positive outcomes while evil behavior results in negative consequences. However, the way this principle is linguistically encoded differs significantly. Karakalpak proverbs rely on concrete imagery, direct lexical contrasts, and references to everyday life, especially labor and social relations, whereas English proverbs often use abstract reasoning and metaphorical generalization.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of proverbs demonstrates that the concepts of *jaqsılıq* and *jamanlıq* are universal in their moral foundation but culture-specific in their linguistic representation. Karakalpak proverbs reveal a worldview in which goodness is closely tied to action, social harmony, and usefulness, while evil is associated with moral weakness, irresponsibility, and social harm. In contrast, English proverbs tend to conceptualize these categories in a more abstract and individual-centered manner. Therefore,

proverbs not only reflect ethical norms but also serve as a mirror of cultural identity and collective consciousness.

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