



CONNOTATION AND ITS ROLE IN METAPHORIZATION IN THE ALTAI (RUSSIAN FEDERATION) AND MONGOLIAN LANGUAGES

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Abstract: The article examines connotation and its role in metaphorization in the Altai and Mongolian languages. The relevance of the topic lies in the lack of study of connotation in both the Altai and Mongolian languages from a comparative perspective. The methods used include surveys of informants, descriptive method, synchronic method, and comparative method. The novelty of the research consists in the introduction of new lexical material in comparison with the Mongolian language and in determining the national-cultural specifics of the analyzed units within the framework of the Altai and Mongolian languages. The study has shown that the figurative component, which is a generalized, sensory-visual image of an object denoted by a sign, is closely related to connotation. In the Altai and Mongolian languages, depending on the dominant connotation, four main groups of expressive words are distinguished: 1) purely expressive words, e.g., Alt. *jaltanbas/korkybas*, Mong. *zürkhteĩ/aimshiggüi/erelkheg* – 'daredevil' – with an emotion of admiration and a positive assessment of a very brave person; 2) words carrying emotional-expressive coloring, e.g., Alt. *köörkiĩek/jalakai*, Mong. *zürkhni/khairtai* – 'sweetheart'; 3) stylistically expressive words, e.g., Alt. *keber/ser/yes*, Mong. *niguur/tsarai* – 'face'; 4) 'depictive' words, devoid of the original nominative basis, e.g., Alt. *soksoo*, Mong. *munag khiin* – 'blockhead'. The researchers conclude that besides the four already identified groups of expressive words in the Altai and Mongolian languages, there is another, most extensive group consisting of figurative-expressive words, also known as metaphorical nominations, and it is these that become the subject of our study. The studied material can be applied in compiling dialectal, phraseological, and linguocultural dictionaries of the Altai and Mongolian languages, which determines the practical value of this article.

Keywords: connotation, Altai language, Mongolian language, connotative semes, associations, component, metaphor, associative-figurative representation.

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Introduction

Modern linguistics pays special attention to the problem of how language reflects not only conceptual but also axiological and connotative features of the objective world. The lexical-semantic group of reality objects within each culture bears the imprint of the linguocultural specificity of the national language. In the system of concepts of human thinking, the notions of connotation and its influence on metaphorization are of particular importance. In this sense, the study of connotation and its role in metaphorization in the Altai and Mongolian languages is essential for determining the specifics of the worldview and word-creation of the Altai and Mongolian peoples.

The phenomenon of connotation is examined in works on cognitive linguistics (works by A. Wierzbicka, I. A. Sternin, V. Z. Demyankov, Yu. S. Stepanov, etc.), psycholinguistics (works by A. A. Leontiev, A. A. Zalevskaya, etc.), philosophy of language and semantics (works by N. D. Arutyunova, Yu. D. Apresyan, L. O. Cherneyko, etc.), linguoculturology (works by V. V. Krasnykh, V. I. Karasik, G. G. Slyshkin, Yu. N. Karaulov, V. G. Kostomarov, Yu. E. Prokhorov, D. B. Gudkov, etc.), mythology and cultural studies (research by A. A. Potebnya, V. N. Toporov, etc.). Representatives of each of these sciences highlight those properties of connotation that they observe from the perspective of their field of research. Each of these sciences identifies the properties of connotation that are most important to it.

The relevance of the research is determined, firstly, by the lack of study of connotations in Altai linguistics in comparison with the Mongolian language. Secondly, the collection, preservation, and actualization of regional material—lexical and phraseological units—remains relevant. Thirdly, connotations are fragments of a cultural code, the study of which is necessary for revealing the origins of the culture of the Altai and Mongolian peoples.

Materials and Methods

The subject of our research is Altai-Mongolian connotations and their role in the metaphorization of these languages. The research material consists of field records collected during expedition trips in 2025 to settlements in the Republic of Altai. Consequently, units from different dialects of the Altai language—Telengit and Altai-Kizhi—are analyzed. Language usages obtained from informants, native speakers of the Altai and Mongolian languages, as well as examples from literature and texts, are used as illustrative material. Furthermore, material extracted from the Altai-Russian phraseological dictionary [1] and the Mongolian-Russian dictionary [2] was used. The study employed various research methods: the descriptive method—allows for the examination of connotations in a symbolic aspect; the synchronic method, comparing simultaneously existing linguocultural units in the Altai and Mongolian languages; the comparative method—reveals similar units in the vocabulary of the Altai and Mongolian languages.

The aim of the research is to identify the features of connotation in the Altai and Mongolian languages and to establish its role in the metaphorization of these languages.

Results and Discussion

In modern linguistics, expressiveness is described in terms of componential analysis and is included by many researchers into the so-called connotation, which represents a whole spectrum of associative (connotative) features [3]. A number of researchers include connotative features, along with denotative and figurative components, in the lexical meaning of a word [4, 5, 6]; others believe that 'these features do not enter the core of the lexical meaning (the sememe), but surround it like a force field' and form the so-called implicational field of the primary meaning [7, pp. 91-102; 3].

Thus, the connotative semes of the Altai language *sogushchang* 'pugnacious', *aamay* 'stupid', and *bodü* 'clumsy', being part of the implicational field of the words *teke* 'goat', *koy* 'ram', and *iynek/uy* 'cow', have determined their metaphorical use. Cf.: *koydiy aamay 'stupid as a ram'. For example: Uulchak koyding köstörö oshkosh tostok köstörin sañ örö körüp, arık kejiri kırılıp, tort lo aamay koydy köründi (Inf.1). Koydiy bodü "nepovorotlivyy kak baran". Bashtapkı chanaktu attardıń janında jarash shēlezin terezi tondu, yoon koydy bodü kizhi boochını azhp baratkan maldın kiyinen udaan körüp turdı (Inf.1). For example: Tekedy sogushchang "drachlivyy kak Kozel". For example: Shkoldın oogosh baldarı kırıńing ichinde sogushchang tekedy yürgüleyt. Uydy yeek "vseyadnaya kak korova". For example: Emegen ucharga turgan kan-kerededy, kechte koldorın kayra bökötüp algan, yırakta yaltırzhp turgan möngküderdeng uydy yeek közin albay turgan (Inf. 2). Connotative features reflect the specifics of the communication situation, the participants of this communication, and their emotional attitude towards the subject of discussion, encompassing emotional, evaluative, intensifying-expressive, and stylistic components. I. Arnold identifies four main microcomponents in the structure of the sememe: emotional, evaluative, expressive, and stylistic [9, p.87]. V. Kharchenko classifies evaluativeness, expressiveness, and emotionality as connotative features [10, p.16].*

The emotional coloring of a word, expressing connotation, indicates a person's subjective emotional experience in relation to a certain phenomenon. For example, in the Altai and Mongolian languages, the words – Alt. *jıldıs*, Mong. *od* – 'star', Alt. *karlagash*, Mong. *kharaatsai* – 'swallow' – acquire emotional coloring in the context of address. For example: *Karkanak jeremin sananıp iyele, tuura tın tekerele, iyt chilep, kungzıgan aias andana sogup, jıldısty küyüp chıktı (Inf. 3). Karlagajım karlagash kaida jainap jüredin?*

The evaluative component, often carrying an emotional nuance, expresses an approving/disapproving assessment of the subject of the statement. For example: in Alt. *sagıştu/sanaalu/kerse*, Mong. *sergelen khüüikhen* – 'clever girl'; Alt. *epchil/kelek*, Mong. *zavshaan eregch* – 'go-getter'. For example: *Köstö uyku jok, jüzün le bashka sanaalar kaidang da uchkulap kelip, sanaalu kizhidiy oturat (Inf. 4). Ol aldında da jaantayın la kojondop jereten edi, bu da öydö ol lo kılgın tashtabay, möt tartkan adaru chilap, ach-amırın bilbes külik (Inf. 5).*

The figurative aspect is directly adjacent to the concept of connotation, representing a generalized, sensory-visual image of an object, which acts as a sign. Depending on which component of connotation comes to the fore, the following are distinguished among expressive words in the Altai and Mongolian languages:

1. **Purely expressive words:** Alt. *chimerkek*, Mong. *tseverch/tsevriig erkhemlegch* – 'neat-freak' – a pedantic lover of cleanliness, mainly a person. The leading component in the semantic structure of such words is the emotional-evaluative component: Alt. *ishtenkei*, Mong. *azhilch* – 'hard worker' – with an emotion of approval and a positive assessment of a person who works a lot and well; Alt. *jozoru/kicheenkei*, Mong. *khödölmörch* – 'workaholic' – with an emotion of disapproval and a negative assessment of a person who works excessively; Alt. *jaltanbas/korkabas*, Mong. *zürkhteï/aimshiggüi/erelkheg* – 'daredevil' – with an emotion of admiration and a positive assessment of a very brave person. For example: *Karganaktıng kıstarı ol tushta chimerkek te bolzo, sırangai la jumrktanıng kabıgın yangı oio chokıgılap chıkkın azatpailar oshkosh bolgon* (Inf. 5). *Emdi biske judrukty bir bolor kerek, adarıdıy nak, kicheenkei bololı* (Inf. 4).
2. **Emotional-expressive words**, whose connotative component includes the expression of the semes of emotionality, evaluativeness, and stylistic affiliation: Alt. *jalku*, Mong. *zalkhuuch* – 'slacker'; *kulugur/shilemir*, Mong. *mekhchin/zuiguurch* – 'rogue'; Alt. *köörkiyek/jalakai*, Mong. *zürkhni/khairtai* – 'sweetheart'. For example: *Adazı yurt ichinde köp er uluska tenei emes: uzun sindu, ayudıy bökö, kılık-yanı yalakai* (Inf. 6). *Serekei keberkek öböğön, tort lo kulugurdiy* (Inf. 4). *Yarishka beletep turgan at chilap, ulai la ishteiteni, baila, yaan yaialtalu uluska berilip, jalku dep neme bilbes* (Inf. 1).
3. **Stylistically expressive words**, in whose semantic structure the component of stylistic affiliation, supported by semes of emotionality and, as a rule, evaluativeness, is of particular importance: Alt. *keber/ser/yes*, Mong. *niguur/sarai* – 'face'; Alt. *ölem*, Mong. *nögchikh* – 'demise'; Alt. *kol*, Mong. *gar/baruun gar/zöv gar* – 'right hand'. For example: *Katkak yüstü, chike moyınu saduchı lavkazınan bazhın turgen chıgarıp aldı* (Inf. 2). *Keberkek kelin chikke kara yol yalandarding la kobılardıng koyu özüp turgan chechekterine le kök ölöngdorine chongup, kezikte tyrup, irakta boochı yaar chöyilip braattu* (Inf. 3).
4. **'Depictive' words**, which have no primary nominative base and are not semantic derivatives of modern nominative vocabulary: Alt. *soksoo*, Mong. *munag khiin* – 'blockhead'; Alt. *optu/yosırkak*, Mong. *eldekhi/khiikh* – 'tart'; Alt. *yeelgek*, Mong. *dyuren* – 'oaf'. For example: *Emegen kayırchagı sınpı kalganın körüp iyele, chikke ünile mımi kandıy sokso etken dep kıyırın* (Inf. 1). *Izüge chudashpai, yeelgek nemediy eki kolu karmandanıp algan körüp, ongdoboi turdı* (Inf. 2).

In addition to the four groups of expressive words already identified in the Altai and Mongolian languages, the most numerous are the figurative-expressive words, also known as metaphorical nominations, which become the focus of our research.

The connotation of these metaphorical nominations includes not only emotionality, evaluativeness, intensity, and stylistic coloring, but also a pronounced figurativeness, which is understood as a 'semantic property of a linguistic sign, its ability to express a

certain extra-linguistic content... through a holistic visual representation-image in order to characterize the designated person, object, phenomenon and express the emotional evaluation of the subject, i.e., the speaker' [3, pp. 183–201]: in the Altai language *jılan* 'snake', in the Mongolian language *mogoi* 'snake' – with an emotion of disapproval, negative assessment of a very treacherous, evil person, whose image is associated with the image of a reptile; in the Altai language *mürküüt* 'eagle', in the Mongolian language *bürged* 'eagle' – with an emotion of admiration and a positive assessment of a very strong and brave person, whose image is associated with the image of a strong bird. For example: *Kerkerek suıu öro chörköishken chere ogo chookır jılandıy körenet* (Inf. 2). *Amır ucharga turgan mürküttei, kechte koldorın kara bököitip algan, irakta yaltırayıp turgan möngkülerdeng közin albay turgan* (Inf. 5).

It is important to note that in some situations, the denotative significance of figurative-expressive words can be very broad, and when they are used in speech, emotional and evaluative semes can manifest themselves differently. For example, in the Altai (*chimalı* 'ant') and Mongolian (*shorgoolj* 'ant') languages, it appears in two meanings – a) with an emotion of approval and a positive assessment of a hardworking person. For example: *Toi-yurgalda Aduchning chimalıdy kıstarı ishtenip turguladı* (Inf.1); b) with an emotion of disapproval and a negative assessment of a person who is constantly busy with insignificant, petty affairs. For example: *Ol aldında da jaantayın la ishtenip jereten edi, bu da öydö ol lo chimalıdy kılıgın tashtabai, chimalı chilap, ach-amırın bilbeit* (Inf.6).

The connotative, or associative, feature of a word is closely related to its direct, non-derivative meaning. Connotations, in turn, generate the implicational field of the primary meaning. For example, the connotations 'stubborn' and 'stupid' enter the implicational field of the primary meaning of the words Alt. *koy* 'ram' and Mong. *ram* 'ram'. *Kezik ulustıng kılık deiten nemesi neme deer, koydıy keder* (Inf.5).

Within the framework of communicative semantics, I. Sternin [11, pp. 42-82] applied a structural approach to identify the hierarchical organization of lexical meaning inherent in metaphorical nomination. I. Sternin, dividing semantic components into macrocomponents (denotative, connotative, and functional-stylistic) and microcomponents (semes included in the denotative and connotative macrocomponents), created a typology of semes based on the opposition of paired categories: usual and occasional; systemic and individual; integral and differential; bright and weak; explicit and implicit; constant and probabilistic; assertive (describing factual properties) and dispositional (reflecting ideal, ascribed qualities); clear and blurred; positive and negative; actual and non-actual. The connotative aspect of meaning is formed by connotative semes of evaluation and emotion, which, according to I. Sternin, have significant proximity and are difficult to distinguish. "In the process of forming a metaphorical nomination, semantic transformations occur, which are each time determined by the communicative task and cannot be reduced to a single formula: sometimes nuclear differential semes are actualized, sometimes peripheral ones, etc." [11, p. 140].

Modern research in the technology of describing word meaning focuses on identifying macrocomponents that reflect the structure of the word's meaning and the types of information it conveys. Among the macrocomponents, the denotative is

distinguished, which conveys subject-conceptual or purely conceptual information about reality; the connotative, reflecting the speaker's attitude towards the object of nomination through emotions and evaluations; the functional-stylistic, determining the word's belonging to a particular variety of the language; and the empirical, representing a generalized sensory-visual representation of the object, characteristic of words with concrete semantics.

Depending on the type of meaning, a certain macrocomponent comes to the fore. Thus, in linguistic metaphors *altın tandak* (Alt.)/*altan üür* (Mong.) 'golden dawn', *altın kes/altan namar* 'golden autumn', motivated by the feature 'yellow color', the denotative feature (characteristic of the object *altın* 'gold') comes to the fore, whereas when metaphors lack a motivational component, the connotative meaning of the original word comes to the fore, which during metaphorization is transformed into a specific feature of the metaphor itself: someone is a beast, a ram, a donkey, a cow, an ant, etc.

Let's start with semantic associations, or connotations, which are components of pragmatics and reflect cultural ideas, traditions, ways of using corresponding things accepted in a given society, and other extra-linguistic contexts. "They are very capricious, differing greatly in coinciding or similar-meaning words of different languages or even of the same language" [5, p. 63]. With the word *koy* 'sheep' in the Altai and Mongolian languages, for example, the idea of readiness to submit, to obey meekly is associated..., while with the word *koy* 'ram' – its exact synonym in the main meaning – the idea of stubbornness and stupidity is associated...

It is important to note that the presence of connotation in a word as an associative element attached to its original, non-derivative meaning and forming its implicational content does not always indicate the presence of a corresponding metaphorical meaning. Thus, the word *koy* 'ram', which has the connotation 'stubborn', is not used in the meaning of 'stubborn person'.

Proof of the linguistic reality of connotations attributed to specific words are: 1) the ability to use the word metaphorically, relying on its attributed connotation; 2) the presence of derivative words with affixal formation that carry a connotative load; 3) the presence of phrasemes that carry their inherent connotation. Thus, proof of the reality of the connotations 'stubborn' and 'stupid' attributed to the word *koy* 'ram' are: 1) the metaphor *koy* 'fool'; 2) the affixal derivative *koydy* 'to joke stupidly, unsuccessfully'; 3) comparative phrasemes *koydy keder* 'stubborn as a ram', and *koydy aamay* 'stupid as a ram'.

The blurred nature of the denotative and connotative features of a word contributes to the development of metaphorical meaning, i.e., the transition from its initial, literal meaning to a metaphorical one.

Conclusion

National-cultural specificity is a relevant topic in modern linguistics; however, many related issues remain understudied and do not receive adequate coverage in scientific works. In a broad sense, the national specificity of a lexical unit's semantics manifests itself in its meaning differing from semantically similar units in the languages with which it is compared. National specificity is primarily characteristic of realia—'words denoting an object, an entity that exists or has ever existed materially' and is specific to the life of a given people. Human language, first and

foremost, serves as a means of communication, a tool for encoding and decoding specific information. In this regard, the semantic analysis of lexical units holds a special place within linguistic research. A strict definition of all linguistic concepts is only possible based on the semantic description of the meaningful units of a language. In the Altai language, this problematic, unfortunately, is still insufficiently studied. Meanwhile, the relationship between language and culture is defined as a fundamental linguistic problem.

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