



NATIONAL-CULTURAL DESCRIPTION OF THE IMAGE OF MOTHER IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

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Abstract

This article analyzes the national-cultural interpretation of the image of "mother" in different cultures, the value attitude formed towards the mother in the associative consciousness of the speakers of the language, spiritual and moral approaches. The study provides a comparative analysis of the associative fields of the Uzbek, Russian, Bulgarian and Arab peoples related to the root word "mother", revealing their inextricable connection with their national mentality, worldview and spiritual values. The article, based on the theory of Russian psycholinguistics and associative research, shows the synonymy, metaphorical and associative properties of the word "mother" in different cultures. In Uzbek culture, the image of the mother is interpreted as a symbol of selflessness, love, tolerance, and patience, while in Russian culture it is expressed as a symbol of holiness, kindness, warmth, and loyalty. The Bulgarian people associate the mother with love, selflessness, goodness, and trust. In Arab culture, the religious-metaphorical uses of the word "umm" (for example, Umm al-Qura, Umm al-Kitab) indicate that the mother is perceived in harmony with higher values. The article also analyzes the national-cultural identification of the image of the mother through folk oral literature, proverbs, metaphors, and associative portraits. According to the results of the study, although the image of "mother" is universal in all cultures, it has its own interpretations depending on the cultural thinking, social values, and worldview of the nation.

Keywords: Mother image, national-cultural characteristic, associative field, psycholinguistics, mentality, metaphorical interpretation



Ethnic characteristics and culture also play an important role in the perception of the world and the attitude of representatives of different nationalities to it. As the Russian psycholinguist A.A. Leontiev noted, “the worldview and perception of the world of each people is based on a system of specific subjective meanings, social stereotypes, and cognitive schemes. Therefore, the human mind is always ethnically determined, and the worldview of one people cannot be translated into the language of another people’s culture by simple “recoding”¹. In this regard, linguistic associations based on the knowledge and ideas of representatives of the nation about the outside world are also distinguished by their ethnic, national-cultural characteristics.

As is known, linguistic associations reflect the knowledge and ideas of the language owners about the outside world, as well as their worldview, mentality, way of perceiving the world, attitude towards it, and national-cultural views. In particular, the collective consciousness, mentality, and culture of the language owners, the nation are directly reflected in the image of an object based on associations. Although linguistics presents various views and considerations about the perception of national worldviews and mentality through their speech in the process of mutual communication, in the responses obtained in associative experiments conducted on language owners, it is observed that, along with the specific national characteristics of the nation, worldviews and mentality are also manifested. Russian linguist Y.N. Karaulov writes about this: “The national mentality reveals itself, shows itself only in the presence of another mentality, that is, in intercultural communication. However, “experimental” research, observation of the composition and ratio of parts of the associative-verbal networks of different languages, leads us to understand the features of human perception of the world and its assessment by the national linguistic consciousness”².

¹ Леонтьев А.А. Языковое сознание и образ мира // Язык и сознание: парадоксальная рациональность. – М., 1993. – С. 20.

² Караулов Ю.Н. Показатели национального менталитета в ассоциативно-вербальной сети // https://iling-ran.ru/library/psylingva/sborniki/book2000/html_204/4-1.html



The associative field and associative portrait of the word mother-motive, which is the object of our study, also reflect the national-cultural views and values of the speakers of the language related to the image of the mother.

It is known that the valuable attitude of Uzbeks towards mothers was formed on the basis of ancient traditions, life experience, and historical memory. In this sense, the associative portrait of the mother is formed in direct connection with the spiritual world of the people, moral standards, and attitude towards the mother.

In Uzbek culture, the mother has long been associated with various symbols. The mother has been described as a symbol of love, selflessness, loyalty, patience, purity, and tolerance. High appreciation of the mother is also evident in examples of folk oral creativity, in particular, in proverbs. For example, proverbs such as “Where there is a mother, there is a world”, “The mother’s god shakes the world”, and “The mother is the pride of the world” reflect the fact that all existence exists with mothers, that mothers are the source of love and affection, the pride of the world. Such proverbs reflect the national perception of the mother formed in the language community.

Har bir millat kishilarining onalar haqidagi tasavvurlari o‘ziga xos. Shu sababli turli millat vakillari jamoaviy ongidan o‘rin olgan ona obrazi o‘ziga xos milliy belgilari bilan ajralib turadi. Masalan, rus tili egalarining *мать* turtki so‘zi assotsiativ maydonidan o‘rin olgan yuqori chastotali javob reaksiyalari – отец 111; родная 14; **любовь** 30; **родина** 28; **моя** 26; **женщина** 21; любимая, твою 14; **добрая** 10; **дом, жизнь** 8; **дорогая, тепло** 7; забота, мама, **святое, хорошая** 6; **героиня, дети, добро, дочь земля, милая, нежность, родной человек** 5; **родня** 4; Горький, детство, и мачеха, одна, спокойствие, старая, сын 3; близкий человек, вашу, Горького, детей, доброта, дома, его, единственная, жена, Женя, злая, зовет, и отец, и сын, кормилица, красивая, ласковая, любит, люблю, мачеха, поддержка, радость, ребёнка, ребёнок, родной, свято, семья, старушка, счастье, твоя, хозяйка 2 **assotsiativ birliklari** tarkibidagi *родная, тепло, святое, героиня, добро, родной человек, близкий человек, спокойствие, доброта, поддержка, радость, свято, счастье* kabilar onani ulug‘lovchi, uni qadrlı inson ekanligini anglatuvchi, shuningdek,



baxt, yaxshilik, quvonch, xotirjamlik, iliqlik, mehribonlik, qo'llab-quvvatlash timsoli sifatida tavsiflovchi assotsiatsiyalar hisoblanadi.

People of every nationality have their own ideas about mothers. For this reason, the image of the mother, which has taken place in the collective consciousness of representatives of different nationalities, is distinguished by its own national characteristics. For example, the high-frequency responses of Russian speakers from the associative field of the word мать push - отец 111; родная 14; любовь 30; родина 28; моя 26; женщина 21; любимая, твою 14; добрая 10; дом, жизнь 8; дорогая, тепло 7; забота, мама, святое, хорошая 6; героиня, дети, добро, дочь земля, милая, нежность, родной человек 5; родн4; Горький, детство, и мачеха, одна, спокойствие, старая, сын 3; близкий человек, вашу, Горького, детей, доброта, дома, эго, единственная, жена, жена, злая, зовёт, и отец, и сын, кормилится, красивая, ласковая, любит, люблю, мачеха, поддержка, радость, ребёнка, ребёнок, родной, свято, семья, старушка, счастье, твоя, хозяйка 2³ associative clauses associations such as родная, тепло, святое, героиня, добро, родной человек, близкий человек, спокойствие, доброта, поддержка, радость, свято, счастье etc., are associations that glorify the mother, implying that she is a valuable person, as well as describing her as a symbol of happiness, goodness, joy, calmness, warmth, kindness, and support.

The responses добрая, хорошая, милая, нежность, ласковая in the associative field are considered an assessment of the moral qualities of the mother and reflect the positive attitude of the respondents towards the mothers of the nation. The above and these responses show that the image of the mother is harmoniously located in the minds of the Russian people with spiritual, moral, and religious views.

It is characteristic that in the following high-frequency response reactions of representatives of the Bulgarian people, which take place in the associative field of the word майка (mother), there is not a single association expressing a negative attitude towards the mother: баща 66; любов, обич 40; дете 23; жена 22; добра 18; родител 12; закрила, нежност, топлина 9; ми 8; моя, приятел, родна 7;

³ Славянский ассоциативный словарь: русский, белорусский, болгарский / Н.В.Уфимцева, Г.А.Черкасова, Ю.Н.Караулов, Е.Ф.Тарасов. – М., 2004. – С. 146-148.



грижа, обичам, татко б; баба, дом, мама, мила, родина, семейство, сигурност 5; бебе, добро, д'щеря, ск'па 4; всеотдайност, деца, единствена, живот, земя, ласка, моята, начало, опора, святост, син, спокойствие, утеха, утроба 3; всеотдайна, всичко, героиня, грижовност, доброта, и баща, м'ка, м'ченица, помощ, приятелка, раждам, светиня, свещена, свято, сила, стара, с'пруга, топлина 2⁴.

The responses in this associative field, любовь, обич (love), добра (good), нежност, топлина (kindness, warmth), гриж (care), обич (I love), мила (beloved), сигарантия (trust, security), добро (goodness), ск'па (dear), всеотдайност (sacrifice), единственна (the only one), ласка (kindness, caress), опора (support), святост (holiness), стоить (calmness), утеха (comfort), всеотдайна (sacrifice), героиня (heroine), грижовност (care), доброта (kindness), помощ (help), приятелка (close friend), светиня (sacred), свещена (sacred), свято (sacred), топлина (warmth), reflected the positive assessment of mothers by the Bulgarian people. In these responses, the mother figure is depicted as a symbol of love, kindness, affection, warmth, care, trust, selflessness, peace, and goodness.

In the associative field of the word mother's urge, there are also associations reflecting the negative qualities of mothers, people's negative assessment of them. Such associations add a personal touch to the associative portrait of мать For example, the high-frequency associative unit злая 2⁵ given to the word mother's urge by Russian speakers indicates a negative attitude towards the mother.

O'zbek xalqi onani oila, qarindosh-urug'larni birlashtiruvchisi, ularning bir-biriga mehr-oqibatli bo'lishiga turtki beruvch inson sifatida ham tavsiflaydi. Ona shaxsiga xos bu xususiyatlarni tasvirlovchi assotsiativ portret etnomadaniy xususiyatga ega bo'ladi.

Ona assotsiativ portretining milliy-madaniy xoslanishi onaning vizul tasvirida ham namoyon bo'ladi. Ona turtki so'ziga o'zbek sinaluvchilari tomonidan berilgan *mehrli nigoh, sipo, beg'ubor tabassum* assotsiatsiyalari ona obrazining milliy qiyofasini ko'rsatadi.

⁴ This dictionary. – P. 147.

⁵ Славянский ассоциативный словарь: русский, белорусский, болгарский / Н.В.Уфимцева, Г.А.Черкасова, Ю.Н.Караулов, Е.Ф.Тарасов. – М., 2004. – С. 146-148.



Turli xalqlarda insonlar tomonidan qadrlanadigan narsalar, joylarni onaga qiyoslash kuzatiladi. Masalan, arab xalqi muqaddas Makka shahriga nisbatan **أُمُّ الْقُرَى** (“Umm al-Qura” – “Shaharlar onasi”) metaforasini qo‘llashadi. Yoki “Qur’oni karimga nisbatan **أُمُّ الْكِتَاب** “Umm al-Kitab” (“Kitoblarning onasi”) sifatlashi ishlatiladi.

The Uzbek people also describe the mother as a person who unites the family, relatives, and encourages them to be kind to each other. The associative portrait depicting these characteristics of the mother's personality has an ethnocultural character.

The national-cultural characteristic of the associative portrait of the mother is also reflected in the visual image of the mother. The associations of a loving gaze, a smile, and an innocent smile given by Uzbek respondents to the word mother's motivation indicate the national image of the mother.

In different nations, there is a comparison of things and places that are valued by people with the mother. For example, the Arab people use the metaphor **أُمُّ الْقُرَى** (“Umm al-Qura” - “Mother of Cities”) in relation to the holy city of Mecca. Or, the adjective “Umm al-Kitab” (“Mother of the Books”) is used in reference to the Holy Quran.

The name of the holy city of Mecca as **أُمُّ الْقُرَى** (“Umm al-Qura”, i.e. “Mother of Cities”) is found in the 92nd verse of Surah Al-An’am of the Holy Quran: “This (Quran) is a blessed Book which We have revealed, confirming what was before it, and that you may warn the towns (and the mother of cities) and those around them (of the torment of the Hereafter). Those who believe in the Hereafter believe in it and establish their prayers at their appointed times.”

The evidence for the title of the Holy Quran as **أُمُّ الْكِتَاب** (“Umm al-Kitab”, i.e. “Mother of the Books”, the original book) is the verse 4 of the Holy Quran in Surah Az-Zukhruf. It contains the following sentence: “Indeed, it (the Quran) is in Our Book (Lawh al-Mahfuz), the Most High and Wise.”⁶

Arabs also use the word **أُمُّ** (ummun) - mother) in relation to language. In the metaphor of **اللغة الأمية** (Al-lug‘otu-l-ummiyya, i.e. mother tongue⁷), the

⁶ Source indicated.

⁷ Al-Qamus. Arabic-Uzbek dictionary. – Tashkent: G‘afur G‘ulom Publishing House, 2017. –P.94.



comparison of language to the mother takes into account the greatness of the mother, her important role in human life, and her role in the development of the personality. It is understood that the metaphorical meanings of the word **أُمُّ** (ummun) indicate that the image of the mother in Arab culture is equated with cultural, spiritual, and religious values.

In the Russian language, the metaphors **родная мать, родина мать, святая мать, материнская любовь** take into account the fact that the mother is a beloved person, her holiness, her unconditional love for her child and the environment. These metaphorical units show the unique approach of the Russian people to the mother figure.

The Uzbek people also often use the word mother in a figurative sense. In speech, the word mother is often used in relation to the homeland, language, and nature. Such metaphorical expressions demonstrate the assessment of the mother as a sacred person, a valuable being (motherland, motherland, mother land, mother land); her perception in connection with giving birth to a child (mother language), her association with the concepts of protection and care (mother nature). These metaphors reflect the national-cultural approach of the speakers of the Uzbek language to the image of the mother.

In the proverbs of the Uzbek people dedicated to mothers, the image of mothers also reflects the valuable attitude and appreciation towards mothers. For example, A house with a mother is a house of light, If a child is clay, then a mother is a potter, A mother's heart is in a child's heart - in a field, A child with a mother is a tulip with a flower, If a mother cries, the whole world cries, Ananing allasi dunini tebratar proverbs reflect the fact that a mother brings grace, blessing, light to the family, gives birth to her child, her love and care for them; the sorrow of mothers is felt by the world, the power of the Uzbek mother goddess, her ability to even shake the world, are figuratively expressed. It is understood that representatives of different cultures describe the image of a mother based on their national worldview, thinking, and national values. This approach to the image of a mother is also reflected in her associative portrait in different cultures. Therefore, in the associative portrait of a mother, along with the image of the mother, the worldview and thinking that reflect the spiritual and cultural world of each people are also reflected.



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It can be concluded that although the mother's personality is embodied in the minds of representatives of all nations, first of all, as a biological being, a person with a social role, her associative portrait has its own unique image, depending on the worldview, thinking, culture, religion, etc. of each nation. Characteristically, in all cultures, the mother is represented as a sacred, loving person, a symbol of goodness. An analysis of metaphorical expressions involving the word mother in the Uzbek, Russian, and Arabic languages shows that the image of the mother is universal, but at the same time has its own interpretation in different cultures.