

Lexico-semantic analysis of the emotion “grief and suffering”: cross-cultural overlapping of linguistic worldviews (on the material of Russian and English languages)

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Abstract

The article analyses lyrics of folk songs that carry the most typical national characteristics and reflect socio-cultural relationships and principles of their expression in language. The authors present the findings of the dominant and comparative analysis of the semantics of lexical units in the source material. The study emphasizes the fact that the group of verbs that denote “grief and suffering” is the dominant one in Russian and English folklore. It is shown that more than one interpretation of lexemes in different languages is possible during the analysis of a folklore text. The authors claim that the emotion “grief and suffering” plays an important role in both Russian and English folklore. The novelty of the research stems from the fact that the specific features of the category of emotiveness are studied on the material of folk songs in two languages, so that it is possible to establish differences both in the expression and the description of emotions of the representatives of two different nations, which in turn points at a certain specificity of their mentality.

The relevance of the study is determined by the need to identify ways of how emotions are expressed in English and Russian linguistic worldviews, since emotions are an integral component of spiritual culture and reveal a subjective interpretation of the reality by means of different languages, thus being an interesting linguistic issue.

Key words: folk song lyrics, emotiveness, emotion, dominant analysis, lexeme, usage frequency

Introduction

In this article, considered folk songs were chosen due to their cultural and linguistic significance: the folk song lyrics, being the product of folk art, always reflects the situation typical for the time of its creation and the features of a national worldview.

Emotions are not only a way of reflecting reality, but they can also act as an object of reflection since people seek to express how they feel about the world and themselves in this world. Regarding this aspect, the emotive function is inherent in any language and, therefore, any language has special emotive markers incorporated in the emotional code of this language as a separate cognitive-emotional structure of its cultural and linguistic code. Bicultural linguistic persona’s mastery of this function is the most important cognitive component of his communicative competence.

The issues related to studying the emotional sphere of a person through the language have been explored for several decades by many linguists. In our work, we relied on the studies of Yu. D. Apresyan (1995), A. A. Vodyakha (2003), N. A. Krasavsky (2001), V. A. Maslova (2004), E. Yu. Myagkova (2000), K. O. Pogosova (2006), and V. I. Shakhovsky (2010).

Methodology

Expression of universal emotions – anger, joy, sadness, anger, admiration, – is accompanied by the manifestation of ethnocultural differences, since the emotion itself is a part of the culture of any nation. Acquiring knowledge through language, a

person develops cultural competence, the most important component of which is emotional competence.

Emotional competence includes:

- Ability of a person to become aware of his emotions and express them;
- Ability to see the connection between one's own and other people's thoughts, emotions and actions;
- Knowledge of the social norms of emotional behavior and response;
- Knowledge of the ways/methods of managing one's own or other people's emotions, their expression, simulation, imitation, and concealing them;
- Knowledge of basic main vocabulary for naming emotions;
- Ability to recognize emotions in oneself and in others, and also to understand them, their causes and, especially, their consequences;
- Knowledge of the methods of exchanging emotions;
- Knowledge of means and ways of emotions verbalization (to name, to express and to describe them): the deeper is this knowledge, the more developed style a person has for communicating their emotions, with more communicative abilities to avoid and resolve conflicts. Without the knowledge of cultural references, a speaker of a foreign language cannot feel comfortable when communicating with the members of another linguistic culture. To overcome this, it is particularly important to learn about the content of the national cultural component in the meaning of the words.

The knowledge of the specific connotative meanings of the vocabulary of a particular language is the most complex part of the linguistic knowledge underlying intercultural competence. There are two types of correlation of connotations in different languages:

1. A match of connotations in both languages. However, such a coincidence is not always possible.

2. A mismatch of connotations. Such a difference can be expressed by the situation when one language has this connotation, and the other does not and vice versa. In addition, the word, that is common to the whole nation, can differ in different languages, according to the presence or absence of a particular connotation. The neutral word of one language has several connotations in another language. This discrepancy is sometimes defined as a case of connotative undifferentiation in one language and connotative differentiation in another. The mismatch of connotations in different languages also includes a case of opposite connotations in different languages of matching words. National specifics of different languages may lead to the fact that there are no connotative matches for denoting national-specific realia (Shakhovskiy, 2010.).

The research includes English and Russian folk songs collected by S. Sharp and A.I. Sobolevsky.

In our study, we applied dominant analysis which provided information on how emotions are expressed in the lyrics of Russian and English folk songs. We identified 496 cases of the word usage in Russian folk songs. In English folk songs, 508 cases of word usage were recorded.

Results

The conducted analysis allowed us to identify the dominant groups of emotive verbs. We can conclude that, in both Russian and English folklore, the verbal groups that express grief and suffering, joy and fear are dominant. Some English song lyrics have an expression of contempt which was not found in Russian songs.

Having studied the corpus of Russian folk song lyrics, we found 289 examples of the word usage related to the group "grief and suffering." After examining the corpus of English folk song lyrics, we identified 149 such examples, which proves a significant difference in the total number of this word usage.

Let us analyze a group of verbs which reflect the emotion of grief and suffering found in Russian folk song lyrics. The identified verbs can be classified in the following way:

1. Primary nominative units of emotion. This subgroup includes 6 lexemes found in 103 words. The primary nominative units include such verbs as *gorevat'* (to grieve), *stradat'* (to suffer), *tuzhit'* (to pine), *toskovat'* (to languish), *pechalit'sya* (to feel sad), *grustit'* (to feel down). These verbs can be classified by the strength of the experienced emotion. In this case, the strongest emotion will be expressed by the verbs *gorevat'* (to grieve), *stradat'* (to suffer), *tuzhit'* (to pine), with the verbs *gorevat'* and *tuzhit'* being the most common – 53 and 25 words, respectively. These verbs have different word forms that denote the beginning, the emergence of the emotion, and stimulation for the emotion – *razgoryuisya*, *vzgorevalasya*; *potuzhi*, *tuzhi* (begin to grieve); the process – *gorevat'*, *gorevati*, *goryuyesh'*; *tuzhat*, *tuzhit-plachet*, *tuzhish'* (to grieve); a completed action in the past – *gorevala*, *tuzhila* (grieved). The verb *stradat'* (to suffer) accounts for only 3 cases of word usage.

The primary nominative units of grief or suffering that denote a less intense emotion are the verbs *toskovat'* (to languish), *pechalit'sya* (to feel sad), *grustit'* (to feel down). The most common word in this subgroup is the verb *toskovat'* – 16 words. The word forms of this verb also denote the emergence of the emotion, stimulation for it (*rastoskuysya*, *rastoskuyetsya*); duration and process (*toskovati*) and a completed action, the result (*stoskovalasya*).

2. Secondary nominative units that express grief or suffering through external manifestations of emotions. This group includes verbs that form a synonymic row, but have a different degree of intensity – *plakat'* (to cry), *rydat'* (to sob), *vyt'* (to wail). The verb *vyt'*, which expresses the highest degree of grief and suffering, is the least frequently used one. The verb *plakat'*, on the contrary, expresses the lowest degree of the emotion and is the most common – 124 cases of usage. The variety of affixes makes it possible to divide verbs into groups of verbs that denote the beginning, the emergence of the emotion – *vsplakala*, *zaplakala*, *rasplakalis'*, *porasplakalas'*, *zavyla* (began to cry, began to wail), the group of verbs reflecting the duration of the emotion – *plakati*, *proplakala*, *rydayet* (was crying/sobbing), and the group of verbs denoting a completed process, the result – *prinaplakalasya*, *naplakalas'*, *narydalas'* (has cried/sobbed).

3. In addition to that, having studied the source material, we could identify indirect nominative units that transfer emotions through adjacency, association, or certain functions. This group is comprised by such verbs as *bolet'* (to ache), *vzdykhat'* (to sigh), *chernit'sya* (to blacken), *issushit'* (to dry up). The verb *bolit* is the most frequent, and at the same time it expresses the strongest emotion. The most frequent noun used with this verb is a heart:

<p>Kak moyeserditse bolit, Otoytiproch' ne velit! <Kir_1177 (5)> I oy da chtobolit-to, oybolit-to moyeserdechushko, Oy, da bolit, bolitretivoye, Oy da chtolyubil-to, lyubilmal'chikdevushku, Sam spokayalsya, I oy da ispokayalsyadobryymolodets, Oy, da s devkoyrechigovoril: "Oy da skazhi, devka, skazhi, krasnaya, Lyubish' ali net? <Kir_1330 (2)></p>	<p>My heart is aching so badly, Does not let me go away! <Kir_1177 (5)> Oh, my heart is aching so much, Oh, it is aching, it is aching, my fervent heart, Oh, it happened that a boy loved a girl, And revealed his feelings, That good fellow revealed his feelings, Oh, he spoke to a girl: "Oh, tell me, girl, tell me, beautiful, Do you love me or not? <Kir_1330 (2)></p>
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Having studied the lyrics of English folk songs, we identified 19 lexemes reflecting the emotion of “grief and suffering” recorded in 152 cases of usage. These verbs can also be divided into groups:

1. Verbs that are primary nominative units. We included 8 lexemes recorded in 71 cases of usage to this group. Primary nominative units of the emotion “grief and suffering” are such verbs as to aggrieve, to deplore, to dree, to grieve, to lament, to mope, to mourn, to mourne. Among these verbs, to deplore, to grieve, to mourn, to mourne are the synonyms. In this group, the most frequent are the verbs to mourn and to grieve – 27 and 22 cases of usage, respectively. The verb to mourn is used to express grief, bitter feelings from the loss of a loved one, for example,

And since I lost my own sweetheart,
What can I do but mourn <Sh I, 18, Q, 92>

Or friends:

And never mourn for the friends we've left,
In Erin's lovely home <Sh I, A, 349>

Or the death of the nearest and dearest:

Pray tell my parents not to mourn,
And don't forget to tell my mother dear,
I never shall see her more <Sh I, E, 332>

The verb to grieve is used in two meanings:

- to grieve, to lament

And soon he did this letter burn,
Leaving this maid to grieve and mourn <Sh I, 157, A, 606>

- to make sad

Her father said: Don't grieve me,
The boy shall never leave me <Sh II, 387, A, 563>

In the second meaning, the verb to grieve is very often used with the noun heart, denoting the intensity of the emotion.

That does grieve my heart full sore,
That's to go and leave my sweet wife;
All for the loss of five jolly tars,
Which grieved us ten times more <Sh II, 292, A, 294>

This meaning of the verb to grieve is synonymous with the word to aggrieve.

And her beauty and pride was my delight,
When something did aggrieve.<Sh I, 64, 292 >

Among the verbs that are primary nominative units of “grief and suffering,” the verb to mope expresses the lowest intensity of emotion. There is one case of using this verb in English song texts which denotes the insignificance of this emotion that is emphasized by a comparison.

You mope about just like a goose <Sh I, 187, 704>.

2. Secondary nominative units include those expressing emotion through physiological processes, external manifestations of grief and suffering. This group is comprised of 6 lexemes, with a total of 65 words. They are the following verbs: to cry, to groan, to moan, to mourn, to shed, to wail, to weep. Among the verbs listed,

the lowest intensity of emotion was expressed by the verb to shed, with 3 cases of usage. In all these cases the verb is used along with the noun a tear, with the meaning ‘to be sad, to mourn.’

And at every line,
O she shed a tear,
And at the end, I shall lose my dear.
<Sh I, 301, A, 320>

The most frequent verbs of the secondary nominative group are the verbs to weep and to cry: 37 and 19 cases of their usage, respectively. Both verbs are associated with mourning over the loss of the loved ones:

Go tell my tender-hearted mother
Not to weep for me,
For I died the death, I did not fear <Sh II, 305, A, 329>.

3. The group of indirect nominative units of grief and suffering is comprised of the verbs such as to ache and to bleed. Both these verbs express grief associated with a pain in the heart, a bleeding wound in the heart, in the soul:

And when he came to her and found it was she,
His heart bled with sorrow till his eyes could not see <Sh I, 51, A, 235>.

Grief is expressed through pain in the heart in Russian and English songs (bolit – is aching); however, in Russian folklore, this verb is used more frequently than in English one: 25 and 2 cases of usage, respectively.

Skuchno, grustnomnestalomolodtsu, Sam ne znayu, skuchnopochemu, Tol'koznayu, bolitserdtsepoyey, Po sudarushke-devushkesvoyey. <Kir_1383>	I, a good fellow, got bored and sad, I do not know, why I am bored, I only know my heart is aching for her, My lady, my girl. <Kir_1383>
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One evening late ‘twas in the park
She met her love and ached her heart.<Sh I, 66, A, 298 >

In English folk songs, grief is denoted with the verb to bleed. This lexeme expresses emotion as a bleeding wound in the heart of the character, which is not typical of the Russian epic:

And when he came to her and found it was she,
His heart bled with sorrow till his eyes could not see. <Sh I, 51, A, 235>

In Russian linguistic culture, grief is related to the seme ‘toska, toskovat’ ‘sadness, to feel sad.’ We identified 16 cases of using the lexem ‘toskovat’. It is interesting that nothing like this was found in English songs. Russian folklore is characterized by sympathy, and in Russian songs, the character does not remain alone with his longing, even nature does not remain indifferent to the character’s emotions:

Yes! li budesh' ty grusti'' iunyvat,' S tobybudetvsyaprirodatoskovat': Pozavyanutvsezelonyyelesa, Napadetnanikhkholodnayarosa, Pozhelteyutvselistochkinadrevakh, Solnteskroyetsya v tumane, v oblakakh.<Kir_1349 (2)>	If you get sad and discouraged, The nature will be sad with you: All green forests will wither, The cold dew will fall on them, Leaves on the trees will turn yellow, The sun will disappear in the mist and clouds. <Kir_1349 (2)>
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A specific feature of expressing grief in Russian songs is the usage of a colorative unit 'to blacken' which was not found in English texts. Also, English folklore does not contain the description of how grief influences the character's body. Russian songs contain a lexeme *issushit'*, *povysshila* 'to dry up.'

Discussion

In Russian and English folklore, the group of verbs denoting "grief and suffering" is a dominant one. In the lyrics of Russian songs, dominant lexemes include the verbs *gorevat'* (to grieve), *tuzhit'* (to pine), *plakat'* (to cry). In English songs, the dominant lexemes of this group are represented by the words to grieve, to mourn, to weep, to lament.

Grief, suffering	<i>gorevat'</i> <i>tuzhit'</i> <i>plakat'</i>	to grieve to mourn to lament to weep
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Both in Russian and English songs, there are many verbs expressing joyful feelings, and this group takes the second place after "grief and suffering".

Joy	<i>veselit'sya</i> <i>zabavlyat'sya</i> <i>radovat'sya</i> <i>smeyat'sya</i> <i>teshit'sya</i>	to enjoy to please to delight to laugh
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It is worth mentioning that the lexeme to smile found in English songs did not have its equivalent in Russian folklore.

The group of verbs expressing the emotion of "fear" dominates in Russian and English folk songs. In Russian song lyrics, the most frequent lexeme that denotes fear is the *lexembogat'sya*. In English folklore, the lexeme to fear is also frequently used.

Fear	<i>boyat'sya</i> <i>ispugat'sya</i> <i>oposat'sya</i>	to fear to trouble to fright
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Another dominant group is a group of verbs expressing anger. In Russian folklore, *lexemspognevat'* (to drive mad), *gnevat'sya* (to be angry), *nenavidet'* (to hate) are frequent lexemes of this group. In English songs, the frequent words were to curse, to complain, to hate.

A group of verbs expressing contempt is dominant in English folklore. The dominant lexemes of this group include verbs to despise, to scorn, to slight. This match was not found in Russian folklore. In other words, in Russian folk song lyrics, there were no lexemes expressing contempt. Despite the fact that the stratification of society is characteristic for both world views, the emotion of contempt is not characteristic for Russians. In English folklore, we found 5 lexemes expressing contempt, with a total of 30 cases of usage. Contempt is associated with a low position in society and poverty – Never disdain a soldier for that he is poor <ShI, 3, B, 14>.

Pain in the heart denotes strong grief, an intense heartache, often due to unrequited love or betrayal, the loved one being unfaithful. The verb *vzdokhnut'* (to sigh) represents the external manifestation of sadness, missing dear and close people:

On vzdokhnul-to li, vzdokhnulposudarushke, Po lyubeznoyposvoyey. <Kir_1262 (78)>	He sighed, oh, he sighed thinking about the lady, his dear lady. <Kir_1262 (78)>
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The verb chernit'sya (to blacken) is colorative. In the Russian picture of the world, black color is associated with negative phenomena, negative characters. Black color denotes the malicious. Since sadness and grief wear out a person, undermining both the nervous system and the body as a whole, the meaning was transferred to denote the influence of this emotion on the character of the song.

S pechali – litsechernitsya. <Sob-3, 8>	The face blackens because of sadness. <Sob-3, 8>
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Comparing English and Russian folklore world views, we can identify some similarities and differences. In Russian songs, for greater expressiveness, the verb gorevat' (to grieve) is used along with the noun gore (grief) which emphasizes the intensity of emotion:

Domoybatyushkasbiralsya, Menyaostavlyayet Na chuzhoydal'neystoronke Gore gorevati, Gore gorevati. <Sob-3, 164>	Father is going home, He is leaving me In the foreign land To grieve my grief, To grieve my grief. <Sob-3, 164>
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In Russian songs, the characters experience grief together:

Polnotebe, sizen'kiy, kruzhit'sya, Opustisya so mnoynaluzhok, syademvmeste s toboy pod kustok, Pod lavrovyyzelenen'kiylistok, Budemvmeste gore gorevat', Kogo k milomuposlat'! <Sob-2, 287>	Blue-grey pigeon, don't fly anymore, Come down on the meadow, We'll sit with you under the bush, Under the laurel green leaf, We will grieve together, Whom to send to the loved one! <Sob-2, 287>
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It is not typical for English folklore, as, in English songs grief is associated with loneliness, the character remains alone with his emotion. For example,
I'll do as much for my true love
As any young man may,
I'll sit and mourn all on her grave
A twelve month and a day.<Sh I, 18, B, 84>

Both in Russian and in English songs grief is associated with the loss of a loved one or a relative. For example,

Lyudibayutigutaryat-govoryat: Tebe, mladoy, udovoyugorevat', Tvoimdetkamsirotamitoskovat'! <Sob-6,284>	People are talking and saying: You, so young, will grieve, Your children will be sad without their father! <Sob-6,284>
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The stalk is withered and dry, sweetheart,
And the flower will never return,
And since I lost my own sweetheart,
What can I do but mourn. <Sh I, 18, Q, 92>

In Russian folklore, grief is also associated with marriage which entails separation from relatives. This is not typical for English folklore.

Yest' u devushki tri goryagorevat': Pervo gore – vyshlazamuzhmoloda. <Sob-2, 447>	There are three griefs for a girl to grieve over: The first grief is to get married young. <Sob-2, 447>
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Both in English and Russian songs grief is expressed through suffering; however, in Russian folklore, the lexeme stradat' (to suffer) is more frequent if compared to English songs.

V voskresen'itsevidelsudarynyusvoyu, V ponedel'nikvlyubilsya, Ves' vovtornikstradal, V sredudumalsamsebe: Ne pozhaluyet li komne? <Kir_1191 (7)>	On Sunday I saw my lady, On Monday I fell in love, The whole Tuesday I was suffering, On Wednesday I thought to myself: Will she come to me? <Kir_1191 (7)>
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Father, O father, dear father, said she,
It's only my new gown, and that's too long for me
And I am afraid it will draggle driggle dree
And I rolled it underneath my apron.<Sh I, 169, A, 641>

In Russian songs, suffering is associated with unrequited love. The lexemvzdykhat' (to sigh) is frequent in Russian folklore in the meaning “to be sad, to long for.” In English songs we found one case of using the verb to sigh, combined with the noun woe to denote the character's emotions:

Matushka da sudarushka Tyazhelo da vzdykhala, Menyavspominala. <Sob-3, 86>	Mother and the lady Sighed heavily, Remembering me. <Sob-3, 86>
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As hunger, it came creeping on,
Poor girl, she sighed with woe. <Sh I, 62, A, 283>

In both pictures of the world grief is externally expressed with such verbs as plakat', oplakivat' – to cry, rydat' – to weep, vyt' – to wail, vzdykhat' – to sigh.

Conclusion

As we could see, the emotion of grief and suffering is expressed both in Russian and in English folklore. The analysis allows us to say that grief is a more typical emotional state of the characters of Russian songs, which was indicated by the difference in the number of word occurrences – 289 and 149. In the English lyrics, the character experiences grief in solitude. Russian songs are characterized by sympathy, involvement, and a desire to help the character with overcoming difficulties.

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