

LINGUOCULTURAL AND AESTHETIC EXPRESSION OF NATIONAL MENTALITY IN LITERARY WORKS

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Abstract: This article discusses the means of expressing national mentality, their linguoculturological significance, and the functions they perform in a literary work.

Keywords: linguoculturology, national mentality, literary work, polysemy, national identity, feature, function, external feature, internal feature.

National mentality is a unique synthesis of a people's collective consciousness, worldview, values, behavioral norms, and life experiences formed over centuries. It is passed down from generation to generation through language, culture, customs, and lifestyle. Fictional literature serves as the most perfect, profound, and artistically shaped mirror reflecting national mentality. In their works, writers embody not only a sequence of events but also the spiritual world of the people, their inner experiences, and philosophical views through the medium of artistic language.

In a literary text, mentality is manifested, first of all, through linguistic means: lexical, phraseological, and paremiological units. Every nation has its own unique "white spots" (lacunae), realia, and expressions with national color. For instance, in Uzbek literary prose, concepts such as "hospitality", "respect for elders", "the right of neighbors", and "a safe journey" (oq yo'l) are not mere words, but standard values deeply embedded in the profound layers of the national consciousness. Proverbs, idioms, and metaphors used in the characters' speech demonstrate the people's life experience and their way of perceiving the world. The attitude towards natural phenomena, such as water, soil, or certain animals (e.g., the swift horse/tulpor, wolf, falcon), is also expressed in literary works through national archetypes.

Another important facet of mentality is manifested in the behavior and mutual relationships of the characters in a work. The positive and negative aspects of the national character, such as generosity, patriotism, patience, or, conversely, ignorance and arrogance, are revealed through the plot. The actions of the characters in Abdulla Qodiriy's works O'tkan Kunlar (Bygone Days) or Mehrobdan chayon (Scorpion from the Altar), and their experiencing of feelings of love, hatred, revenge, and forgiveness, are psychological states specifically characteristic of the Uzbek national mentality. The character's place in the family, respect for elders, and the decisions they make in

difficult situations are formed on the basis of national ethical norms. Conflicts in literary works are often built precisely upon the contradictions between these national values and personal interests.

Furthermore, the individual talent of the writer plays a decisive role in expressing the collective consciousness. They describe the subtle psychological aspects and emotions of the people's language with such skill that the reader feels their national spirit in every word of the text. By imbuing the text with even the smallest details of national life—conversations around the dastarkhan (table), holiday ceremonies, and even the culture of keeping silence—the writer serves to shape the reader's national identity. As the linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt noted, “Language is the spirit of the nation”. The artistic word possesses the power to manifest this spirit at the highest level.

Mentality is, first and foremost, not an external perception, but an internal consciousness formed on the basis of the internal lexical units of a language. This can be explained as follows: within our language, various lexical units serve the function of expressing different separate concepts. When we hear a lexical unit denoting a specific animal, plant, tree, or other concept from a completely different geographical area, we first compare what this unit is with a corresponding unit in our own mental database, and only then do we accept the new concept. For example, when we hear a certain word and ask another person who has an idea about it, if they are familiar with the language, they will try to explain it by comparing it with another unit in your lexical layer. From this, it follows that mentality is of great importance as the primary feature of comprehending the world. Taking this into account, A.Y. Gurevich evaluates mentality as a logically undiscovered, unreflected method of perceiving, imagining, and thinking about the world.

Viewing the concept of mentality solely as the fruit of human philosophical and moral thinking is a limited approach. In mentality, a number of principles operate, such as historical-ethnic, spatial and temporal relations, and genetic factors.

The research of Y. Arpesyan, O. Kornilov, and Y. Yakovleva regarding the individual and collective characteristics of national mentality, based on views related to deep consciousness, conceptual landscape, the people's lifestyle, and the historical path of development they have traversed, is of great significance.

The lifestyle of a people and the expression of mentality within it are evident in their appearance, attitudes, views on situations, ability to use words, thinking and imagination, and the degree of their harmony with values. The emergence of such states is determined linguistically by how they are expressed through specific language units: polysemic words, metaphors, similes, proverbs, sayings, phraseological units, realia,

and other national-cultural concepts, depending on the competence and proficiency of the speaker.

In conclusion, a literary work is the most powerful factor in preserving national mentality and transmitting it to future generations. Through the study of literature, we not only gain aesthetic pleasure but also comprehend the spiritual gene pool of the people, their historical memory, and national identity. Indeed, understanding national mentality is not only about comprehending the past but also serves as the foundation for building the national idea of the future. Therefore, the problem of mentality in literary texts remains a constant and relevant object of research not only for literary studies but also for the sciences of linguoculturology and psycholinguistics.

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