

Article

THE CONCEPT OF “TIME” IN THE EXISTING CORPORA OF THE UZBEK LANGUAGE AND THE NOTION OF TIME IN UZBEK LINGUOCULTUROLOGY

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Abstract: This article examines the Uzbek language corpus and explores the semantic representations of the concept of time within it. In addition, the study analyzes the notion of time in Uzbek linguoculturology, its role as a cultural unit, the attitudes and perceptions of the Uzbek people toward time, and the factors that have shaped these perceptions. The analysis is based on examples drawn from the Uzbek language corpus and Uzbek proverbs, which are systematically interpreted and generalized in the study.

Keywords: time concept, Uzbek language corpus, linguoculturology, semantic analysis, cultural semantics, Uzbek proverbs, temporal metaphors, conceptual metaphor, national worldview, time perception, corpus linguistics, cultural values.

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of time is examined simultaneously in several disciplines, including physics, mathematics, astronomy, and others. There is virtually no process that occurs independently of time. Time is also an indispensable element of artistic literature—subtle, intangible, yet constantly present. As the prominent scholar L. Gumilev noted, “History is the study of processes occurring within the framework of time, yet no one truly knows what time is.”

At first glance, time may appear to be a simple concept. However, upon deeper reflection, it reveals itself as a mysterious and abstract phenomenon. To transform such an abstract notion into a poetic subject and to reveal it at a high artistic level, a creator must simultaneously be both poet and philosopher—capable of producing art from abstraction and discovering the aesthetic power hidden within thought.

In his work “Physics”, Aristotle raises the fundamental question of whether time belongs to the realm of existence or non-existence, and what its essential nature may be. Thus, whether approached from a physical-scientific or poetic-emotional perspective, time remains an enigmatic phenomenon.

The question “What is time in human life, and what is its essence?” finds a distinctive interpretation in Uzbek linguoculturology. One metaphorical explanation describes time as “the threads from which the fabric of life is woven, the stronger and finer the threads, the more precious and valuable life becomes.” This metaphor suggests that if the threads are weak and worn, life itself becomes impoverished and meaningless. Therefore, time is conceptualized as one of the most valuable human resources.

Another fundamental characteristic of time is its irreversibility. Once passed, it cannot return. Time constitutes the primary capital of human existence, however abundant

it may seem, it is always insufficient. When used productively, it becomes blessed and fruitful. Hence, individuals are encouraged to make efficient and meaningful use of every moment of their lives.

2. Materials and Methods

An analysis of the lexeme *vaqt* ("time") in the Uzbek language corpus reveals culturally specific semantic features. For example, the expression "five times prayer" (*besh vaqt namoz*) reflects the division of the day into five distinct periods of worship. This usage demonstrates not only a temporal meaning but also reveals how life is structured through religiously defined temporal divisions. It reflects the perception of time as a sacred and significant resource. Islamic teachings, which strongly influence Uzbek culture, encourage diligence, responsibility, early rising, and the appreciation of youth, health, and free time as divine blessings.

Further corpus analysis, including literary excerpts, shows that time is frequently metaphorically conceptualized as rapidly flowing water. In such representations, time is described as swift, uncontrollable, and impossible to restrain. Just as flowing water cannot be stopped, time moves forward irreversibly. In Uzbek culture, water is regarded as a sacred and life-giving blessing; therefore, comparing time to water elevates its symbolic value.

Time is also depicted as an unconquerable force. Literary examples portray even powerful historical figures as unable to overcome time. This idea is reinforced in Uzbek linguocultural discourse by the proverbial expression: "Time is a sword: if you do not cut it, it will cut you." Here, time is metaphorically represented as a sharp weapon capable of both protection and destruction. The proverb emphasizes that one must actively and wisely use time; otherwise, its passing may result in loss and regret.

The analysis demonstrates that in Uzbek culture, time is considered more valuable than gold or jewels. An hour wasted represents a lost opportunity for meaningful action. Valuing time requires discipline, self-restraint, and purposeful activity. Idleness is regarded as one of the most undesirable human traits.

3. Results & Discussion

Analysis of Uzbek proverbs and corpus data reveals several dominant conceptualizations of time:

1. Time as Economic Value.

Many proverbs equate time with material wealth, reflecting the idea that "Time is money." Time is viewed as a measurable and economically significant resource. Efficient time management is associated with productivity, financial success, and responsible behavior. This conceptualization emphasizes:

1. The economic consequences of wasted time;
2. The direct relationship between labor, productivity, and temporal efficiency;
3. The importance of personal and professional time management;
4. The necessity of planning and rational organization.

Although the expression "Time is money" is widespread globally, its presence in Uzbek discourse demonstrates the integration of economic rationality into cultural perceptions of time.

2. Time in Agrarian Context.

Given the historical agrarian lifestyle of the Uzbek people, many temporal expressions are rooted in agricultural cycles. Proverbs emphasize seasonal appropriateness and timely labor. The success of agricultural work depends on acting at the correct time, delay results in loss. This reflects harmony between human activity and natural rhythms. The message is clear: every action has its proper time.

3. Time as a Precious and Limited Resource.

Time is consistently described as limited and irreplaceable. Its waste leads to regret and misfortune. Effective time management is considered essential for achieving personal goals and shaping one's future. Time is universal yet finite, and its value depends on how it is utilized.

4. Time as an Unconquerable Divine Force.

In Uzbek linguoculture, time is frequently portrayed as a powerful, even divine force. Proverbs such as "Time erodes mountains; water wears away stone" emphasize its unstoppable and transformative power. Time is presented as beyond human control, shaping life, destiny, and change.

5. Every Action Has Its Time.

Another dominant concept is that each event or action has its appropriate moment. This notion encourages patience, perseverance, and trust in natural and divine order. Acting prematurely or belatedly disrupts harmony and leads to unfavorable outcomes.

6. Time as Judge.

The proverb "Time is a judge" attributes a personified role to time. It implies inevitability of justice: over time, truth emerges and actions receive their deserved consequences. This view is closely connected to religious beliefs about divine justice and moral accountability. Time ultimately reveals correctness or error.

In media corpus examples, expressions such as "Time is the supreme judge" reinforce this idea. Time is described as objective, impartial, and decisive in revealing truth and ensuring justice.

4. Conclusion

The conducted analysis of corpus materials and Uzbek proverbs demonstrates that in Uzbek linguoculture time possesses multifaceted semantic and cultural dimensions. It is conceptualized as:

1. A valuable but limited resource requiring careful management;
2. Swift and relentless, like flowing water;
3. A powerful, unconquerable force;
4. A sharp weapon symbolizing urgency and responsibility;
5. A just and supreme judge ensuring moral balance.

Time is also perceived as an educator: through experience, success, and failure, it teaches individuals wisdom and patience. Social transformations, moral norms, and cultural values evolve under the influence of time. Thus, time functions not only as a temporal category but also as a moral and philosophical regulator.

In conclusion, time in Uzbek linguoculture is regarded as sacred, precious, irreversible, and ethically significant. While abundance often diminishes value, time never loses its worth for those who possess wisdom. Whether measured in years or in minutes, its significance remains constant. Ultimately, the value of time depends on the individual: it may become either the most precious asset or the most wasted opportunity. Therefore, human life should be filled with meaningful and beneficial activity so that no space remains for regret or sorrow.

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