
A Comparative Study of Positive Mental States in English and Russian Languages in Criminal Courts

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Abstract

In some cases, ordinary people do not commit crimes. Sometimes mentally ill people will commit crimes that would never have happened if they were in a normal state. Since the mental and psychological condition of these criminals is different from other criminals, the law also stipulates the punishment of mentally ill people in a different way. In the Islamic Penal Code, the issue of insanity is mentioned and various measures are taken for insane persons. In the following, we refer to the punishment of mental patients and explain their conditions in case of committing crimes. The paper is focused on the results of the analysis aimed to study the conceptual and synonymic representation of positive mental states in English and Russian languages. The study is based on the reverse method that allows to identify how different the semantic range of definitions, determined in dictionaries as equivalents, is. The Oxford Dictionary and dictionaries of Russian language (edited by S.I. Ozhegov and D.N. Ushakov) formed a base for the study. A comparative analysis of definitions and synonyms of the mental states in two languages was carried out. The first stage of the study included a lexicographic analysis of definitions of such mental states as *удивление* – *surprise*, *радость* – *joy*, *удовольствие* – *pleasure*, *страсть* – *passion*. At the second stage the synonyms of the above mentioned mental states were compared. The study revealed the monosemy of the Russian lexemes *эмоция*, *страсть*, *радость*, and the polysemy of the Russian words *удивление*, *удовольствие* and the English words *emotion*, *surprise*, *astonishment*, *delight*, *pleasure*, *amusement*. The semantic structure of such English words as *emotion*, *joy*, *passion* is wider. The synonymy of the English words *emotion* – *excitation* – *stimulation* – *excitement* (as “arousal”), *emotion* – *sense* – *sensation* – *feeling* – *consciousness* – *love* (as “feeling”), *pleasure* – *delight* – *amusement* (as “surprise”), *surprise* – *astonishment* – *delight* (as “astonishment”) has been revealed.

Keywords: Criminal law, conceptual representation, dictionary definition, mental state, emotion, word.

Introduction

The mental states determined by subjective reactions of an individual and displayed as pleasure or displeasure, fear, anger, sadness, joy, hope, grief and etc., play an important role in every person's life. Therefore, the studies focused on representation of mental states (emotions above all) are coming into ascendance. A comparative analysis of such representation in different linguistic cultures is becoming even more relevant. It is obvious that we need to study the inter-relation of the extralinguistic universality and linguistic specificity of conceptual representation of mental states. The mental states are the most individual phenomena of our psyche. So if we reveal the universal and specific components of their conceptual representation, it will be possible to identify the important patterns in shaping the understanding of the language speakers' inner peace.

The aim of this paper is to study the representation of mental states in English and Russian languages. The tasks consisted of, first of all, the detailed analysis of definitions, as well as the comparative analysis of the conceptual representation in both languages, and finally, the analysis of the concepts and their synonyms. The study is novel as it is focused on the comparative analysis of the conceptual definitions of the positive mental states.

The comparative analysis of the lexemes that refer to human emotions in Russian and English languages reveals similarities and differences, which are determined both by the peculiarities of the national culture and the worldview, as well as the characteristics of grammatical and semantic systems of each language.

Methods

The field of emotions includes a large number of lexemes both in English and Russian languages. In order to establish the equivalents of these lexemes, as well as identify their synonyms, homonyms and reveal confirmations and refutations of the influence of “the linguistic view of the world” on the appropriateness in translation, we applied the reverse method proposed by S.V. Grinev. The reverse method allows to determine if the semantic range of lexemes, identified in dictionaries as equivalents, varies widely. It follows that this method helps to clarify the semantic range of the concept defined by a certain lexeme in a certain language [Grinev

1999]. In addition, the reverse method can help to identify the associative bonds with a certain term in a source language that appear in translation which is important to prevent distortion in translation from one language into another one.

The study is based on dictionaries of English (Oxford Dictionary) and Russian (S.I. Ozhegov dictionary and D.N. Ushakov dictionary) languages. The comparative analysis of definitions of mental states and their synonyms was carried out in these two languages. It consisted of two stages: the lexicographic analysis of definitions of such mental states as *удивление* (*surprise*), *радость* (*joy*), *удовольствие* (*pleasure*), *страсть* (*passion*) and the subsequent analysis of their synonyms.

Results And Discussion

The definitions of the concepts of mental states *удивление* (*surprise*), *радость* (*joy*), *удовольствие* (*pleasure*), *страсть* (*passion*) in English language are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Dictionary definitions of positive mental states, sampled from the Oxford dictionary for the analysis

| Mental states | Definition in Oxford dictionary | Synonyms in English language as specified in a dictionary |
|---------------|--|--|
| Surprise | A feeling of mild astonishment or shock caused by something unexpected | Astonishment, surprise, amazement, wonderment, wonder |
| Joy | Feeling pleasure or happiness | Gladness, mirth, chuckle, sunshine, joyfulness, pleasance, sunniness |
| Pleasure | The state or process of taking pleasure in something | Enjoyment, delight, treat |
| Passion | Strong and barely controllable emotion; A state or outburst of strong emotion; Intense sexual love | Passion, awfully, flamme |

Let us consider the conceptual and synonymic representation of each mental state in details.

The Mental State Of Surprise (Russian: Удивление).

In a Russian-English dictionary this lexeme has two equivalents – *surprise* and *astonishment*, so the polysemy of the source word and the synonymy of its English equivalents are evident.

After we have determined that the above-mentioned lexemes in English language have six equivalents in Russian language. The lexeme *surprise* has four equivalents – *удивление*, *неожиданность* (*something unexpected*), *неожиданное действие* (*unexpected action*), *сюприз*, and the lexeme *astonishment* has two more – *удивление*, *изумление*. Thus each of two lexemes in English language is equivalent with the original definition *удивление*. The full equivalence of *удивление* – *surprise* – *удивление*; *удивление* – *astonishment* – *удивление* has been revealed. In both cases the Russian lexeme *удивление* is a primary definition for both lexemes in English language that can be considered as a proof for the synonymy of Russian lexemes and polysemy of English lexemes.

It is an interesting fact that the dictionary defines the expression “*to smb's delight*” as an equivalent of the Russian expression «*на удивление*». According to the definition given by S.I. Ozhegov’s dictionary “*на удивление*” (slang) is used to say about someone or something surprising [Ozhegov 1990, p. 824]. When we translate the English lexeme *delight*, we get four lexemes in Russian language: *восхищение*, *удовольствие*, *восторг*, *наслаждение*.

We could suggest that *удивление* is directly related to a positive emotion. However, the definition given by S.I. Ozhegov does not confirm it: “*удивление* (*surprise*) is an impression of something unexpected and strange, incomprehensible” [Ozhegov 1990, p. 824]. As we can see it, based on the definition, it does not contain the characteristic of a positive emotion.

The Mental State Of Joy (Russian: Радость).

The dictionary entry provides us with one equivalent of *joy*, which means that the source word is monosemantic. The lexeme *joy* is related to the source word: *радость* – *joy* – *радость*, which proves the full equivalence of these lexemes.

In addition, the lexeme *joy* has three equivalents as follows: *веселье*, *что-либо*, *вызывающее восторг*, *восхищение*, *удовольствие*. It proves that the semantic range of the English lexeme is wider than of its equivalent in Russian language.

The Ozhegov dictionary provides us with several definitions of the lexeme *радость*: 1. A gay feeling, sense of moral satisfaction. 2. Something or somebody causes this feeling. 3. A happy event, occasion. [Ozhegov 1990, p. 638].

We frequently identify the lexeme «*радость*» and «*удовольствие*» as follows: «*удовольствие (pleasure)* is a feeling of *радость (joy)* caused by positive feelings, senses or thoughts» [Ozhegov 1990, p. 825]; «*радость (joy)* is *удовольствие (pleasure)*, a feeling of inner satisfaction, good mood » [Ushakov 2004, p. 876].

A.A. Gabrielyan, when compares *радость* and *удовольствие*, states that *удовольствие (pleasure)* is a joy for a body, while *радость (joy)* is a joy for both soul and body. It means *радость* is a spiritual value, it is related to the mental world, and *удовольствие* is something physical, “bodily” [Gabrielyan 2015].

M.A. Teplyashin suggests that *удовольствие* is axiologically neutral, in the Russian worldview it is rather negative than positive [Teplyashin 2015].

According to A.A. Gabrielyan, in the literary form of the language in XVIII – XIX centuries the lexeme *удовольствие* had a wider, more vague definition and it was related to the semantic field of *радость*, used as its alternative in a certain context. As well as *радость* and *веселость (веселье)* and some other lexemes. [Gabrielyan 2015].

The Mental State Of Pleasure (Russian: Удовольствие).

The Russian lexeme has three equivalents in English language (*pleasure, delight, amusement*), which proves its polysemy. In a Russian-English dictionary the lexeme *delight* is defined as *радость*, the lexeme *amusement* – as *развлечение*.

If translated from English into Russian, all three lexemes are related to the source word. The lexeme *pleasure* is defined as *развлечение, наслаждение, воля, соизъявление, желание*. The latter three equivalents are given with a label “bookish”. The lexeme *delight* is defined as *восторг, восхищение, наслаждение*. The lexeme *amusement* has four different equivalents : *развлечение, забава, веселье, времяпрепровождение*. In total, 11 lexemes.

The Russian equivalent *наслаждение* is related to two groups of equivalents: *удовольствие – pleasure – наслаждение, удовольствие – delight – наслаждение*.

The dictionary edited by D.N. Ushakov proves the semantic distance of these Russian lexemes: “*наслаждение* is the highest pitch of *удовольствие (pleasure)*” [Ushakov 2004, p. 480]. Based on the definition, *наслаждение* is a hyponym of the lexeme *удовольствие (pleasure)*, since the definition refers to the first one as a variety of the second lexeme.

Another equivalent is *развлечение*: *удовольствие – pleasure – развлечение, удовольствие – amusement – развлечение*.

In this case the semantic relation is obvious, because of the line «*удовольствие – забава, развлечение*» [Ozhegov 1990, p. 825].

Two lexemes *pleasure* and *delight* have the same equivalent in Russian language – *наслаждение*. Both of them – *delight* and *amusement* – have another equivalent *развлечение*, which proves that these pairs can be considered as synonyms in a certain context.

The Mental State Of Passion (Russian: Страсть)

In English language the Russian lexeme *страсть* has the only equivalent – “*passion*”.

However, the English lexeme is related to the source word but adds ten other equivalents – *страстное увлечение, вспышка гнева, взрыв чувств, сильное душевное волнение, предмет страсти, пыл, страстность, энтузиазм, Страсти Господни, крестные муки*. The last two are religious terms, therefore we can assume they are homonyms. Thus the English equivalent is related to the source word, so we can suggest, these lexemes are absolutely equivalent: *страсть – passion – страсть*. We are able to assert that the English lexeme is polysemantic and the Russian ones are synonyms.

The dictionary edited by S.I. Ozhegov defines *страсть* as it follows: 1. Deep love, fascination for someone. 2. A deep feeling, excitement. 3. A fancy for someone, addiction to something [Ozhegov 1990, p. 770].

It is important to note, that the Russian equivalent has the only definition. The exception is an expression *вспышка гнева*. The relative connection between two Russian lexemes *страсть* and *гнев* can be identified based on the definition given by the dictionary edited by V.I. Dal’.

The Oxford dictionary provides us with an equivalent of “*an outburst of anger or bad temper*” (*взрыв/вспышка гнева или плохое настроение*) as one of the definition of *passion*; it can be another proof that these two lexemes in English language are related.

The results of the study on the conceptual and synonymic representation of the mental states of *удивление (surprise), радость (joy), удовольствие (pleasure), страсть (passion)* gives a problem for further consideration.

The emotion of surprise (*удивление*) is related to a wide range of concepts in Russian and English linguistic cultures:

1. something strange, something that does not fall within the standards, including behavioral norms and common ideas;
2. incomprehensibility, cognitive dissonance;
3. something unexpected, as hysteron proteron, something illogical.

Only the first definition can be considered as a positive emotion. It leads us to the conclusion that the concepts of surprise in English and Russian languages do not match. Therefore, the question if it is appropriate to translate the lexeme *удивление* as “surprise” is still open.

The provided analysis of the lexeme *радость* allowed us to discover the existence of doublets. They exist in the modern Russian language. However, we can observe the trend for lexical unification.

Also, we are able to state that the definitions of the Russian lexemes *удовольствие* and *радость* are similar. In English language it is not evident as the Russian-English dictionary does not provide an equivalent *delight* for the Russian lexeme *радость*.

The only English equivalent *passion* for the Russian lexeme *страсть* proves that the Russian lexeme is monosemantic. The comparative analysis provides evidence that the English lexeme *passion* has a wider semantic structure than its Russian equivalent.

Summary

When we consider the structure of the linguistic and cultural category of “positive emotions”, we can identify the monosemy of such Russian lexemes as *удивление*, *удовольствие* and English lexemes *emotion*, *surprise*, *astonishment*, *delight*, *pleasure*, *amusement*.

The English lexemes *emotion*, *joy*, *passion* have a wider semantic structure than their Russian equivalents *эмоция*, *радость*, *страсть*.

Also, we have revealed the synonymy of such English lexemes as *emotion* – *excitation* – *stimulation* – *excitement* (as “arousal”); *emotion* – *sense* – *sensation* – *feeling* – *consciousness* – *love* (as “feeling”), *pleasure* – *delight* – *amusement* (“pleasure”), *surprise* – *astonishment* – *delight* (“surprise”).

Conclusions

The lexemes that define emotions are under the close attention of linguists, psycholinguists and translators who strive to consider the appropriate translation for them.

The comparative analysis of the lexemes mentioned above in English and Russian languages helped to reveal similarities and differences, substantiated by the peculiarities of the national culture, the worldview and the grammatical and semantic systems of the languages.

Emotions are a universal semantic category that has national and other specific characteristics. The comparative analysis of emotions makes a significant contribution to the holistic comprehension of the whole category.

Directions for further research lie in an opportunity for a comparative analysis of the phraseological representation of mental states in English and Russian languages.

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