



Unveiling Cultural Perceptions: The Concepts “Freedom” and “Slavery” in The English and Georgian Linguistic Consciousness

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Abstract

The interrelationship between language and thought serves as the crux of this study, which delves into the comprehensive analysis of the concepts of "freedom" and "slavery" within the context of the English and Georgian linguistic cultures. Through an intricate exploration of linguistic markers, including dictionary definitions and phraseological units, the research illuminates the nuanced and multifaceted nature of these concepts, emphasizing their dynamic interplay with consciousness and cultural perception. Employing a range of research methods, such as conceptual analysis, interpretive analysis, and introspection, the study unravels the intricate layers of meaning embedded within these terms, shedding light on their socio-philosophical underpinnings.

The findings underscore the fundamental role of language as a medium for cultural transmission, reflecting the intricate socio-historical contexts and values inherent within each linguistic community. While both languages accentuate the significance of autonomy and subjugation, they do so through distinct linguistic nuances, showcasing the diverse perspectives that shape their interpretation. This comparative analysis not only deepens our understanding of linguistic diversity but also holds practical implications for enhancing intercultural communication and fostering a more profound awareness of the complexities underlying human perception and behavior.

Through its meticulous examination of the intricate relationship between language, consciousness, and cultural perception, this study contributes to the burgeoning field of linguistics and cultural studies, paving the way for further research into the intricate dynamics of linguistic diversity and its profound impact on human cognition and societal constructs.

Key words: Language, consciousness, freedom, slavery.

INTRODUCTION

Language profoundly influences thought, serving as its generative mechanism. This correlation between language and consciousness encompasses the entirety of form and content, capturing not only the comprehensive spectrum of the material world but also its rich diversity. Moreover, it accounts for the fundamental cognitive actions of individuals, while acknowledging the multidimensionality and constant evolution of this interaction, adapted to various historical contexts. It is imperative to recognize that as circumstances change, both consciousness and language adapt accordingly.

Consciousness, serving as its ontological counterpart, is embodied in two distinct forms: firstly, as a reflection or description of specific objects, constituting fixed knowledge; and secondly, as a process or action through which these mental images are shaped. In this regard, thinking manifests initially as knowledge and subsequently as cognitive ability. Language, functioning as a linguocognitive medium of thought expression, unveils the intricate relationship between the individual and society, the self and the collective culture of the world. According to Russell's postulations, language assumes two mutually exclusive roles: it serves as a social tool and concurrently offers a general articulation of thoughts, thus encompassing both their expression and formation (Russell, 1948, p.58).

The roots of certain linguistic approaches can be traced back to Humboldt, who observed that diverse ethnic groups perceive the world differently through the prism of language signs. Subsequently, this notion was elaborated upon by other scholars such as Steinthal, Folser, de Courtenay and others. Baudouin de Courtenay, in his literary contributions, emphasized that language exists within individual psyches, collectively forming a linguistic community.

The aim of this research is to delineate the peculiarities of the concepts of "freedom" and "slavery" in both every day and philosophical contexts within the linguistic cultures of English and Georgian. In alignment with this objective, the following tasks were outlined:

1. To establish the defining attributes of the concepts of "freedom" and "slavery."
2. To delineate the phraseological units of the concepts of "freedom" and "slavery" within the realms of English and Georgian linguistic consciousness and verbal communication.

The novelty of this research lies in the identification of the essential characteristics of the concepts of "freedom" and "slavery," elucidating their crucial figurative, conceptual, and evaluative traits. Additionally, it aims to discern their specificities and highlight existing disparities within the linguistic consciousness of English and Georgian. The theoretical significance of this paper lies in its contribution to the field of linguocultural studies, particularly in the realm of regulating concepts and the development of methodologies for comparative linguocultural research, exploring their ethno- and socio-specific associative characteristics. The practical implications of this research lie in its potential application within courses of general linguistics, cultural linguistics, lexicology, linguistic and cultural studies, intercultural communication, as well as in practical English and Georgian language courses.

The analysis will incorporate data derived from explanatory dictionaries, synonymous, combinatorial, and etymological dictionaries in both English and Georgian. Furthermore, it will draw upon paremiological reference books, textual excerpts from literary works, documents, advertisements, as well as data obtained from sociolinguistic experiments. The analysis will encompass a selection of text fragments totaling approximately 500 samples in both English and Georgian.

The research methods of the article were defined as:

1. Conceptual analysis;

2. Analysis of dictionary definitions;
3. Interpretive analysis;
4. Introspection.

The conducted research is anchored in the following established tenets, substantiated in existing linguistic literature:

1. The implications of linguistic units exert a profound influence on the perception of the world and the conduct of individuals immersed in a distinct language culture.
2. The distinct characteristics of concepts are shaped by the interplay of everyday and philosophical awareness, constituting a product of this interrelationship.
3. The exploration of the associative attributes of words enables the unveiling of peripheral meanings of concepts, which may not be explicitly documented within dictionaries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Dictionary meanings of the concepts - "freedom" and "slavery" in English and Georgian Languages

The concepts "freedom" and "slavery" represent a multifaceted semantic formation that has conceptual, symbolic and value aspects. They represent common civilizational concepts of Western culture and, at the same time, the field of national concepts of British-American and Georgian linguistic cultures.

The axiological components of the regulative concept of freedom include a positive evaluation of freedom as the most important value and, at the same time, the need to fight for freedom and protect it, while the axiological components of the regulative concept of slavery include negative connotations and evaluations.

In English linguoculture, the importance of personal efforts to gain freedom is evidenced, while Georgian people passively expect to receive freedom as a gift because of its historical and thrilling experience.

Dictionary meanings of the concept "freedom" according to "Cambridge Dictionary":

1. The condition or right of being able or allowed to do, say, think, etc. whatever you want to, without being controlled or limited.
2. The state of not being in prison.

Dictionary meanings of the concept "freedom" according to "Macmillan Dictionary":

1. The right to do what you want, make your own decisions, and express your own opinions.
2. The ability to do what you want because you have no obligations or responsibilities.
3. A situation where you are able to go where you want because you are not in prison.
4. The ability to move or go where you want because there is nothing physically stopping you.
5. A situation in which you are not affected by something unpleasant.

Dictionary meanings of the concept "freedom" according to "Merriam-Webster":

1. The quality or state of being free: such as: the absence of necessity, coercion, or constraint in choice or action.
2. The quality or state of being exempt or released usually from something onerous.
3. Unrestricted use.
4. Ease, facility.
5. The quality of being frank, open, or outspoken.
6. Improper familiarity.
7. Boldness of conception or execution.

Dictionary meanings of the concept "slavery" in the English language according to the "Cambridge Dictionary":

1. 1.The activity of legally owning other people who are forced to work for or obey you.

Dictionary meanings of the concept "slavery" in the English language according to the „Macmillan Dictionary“:

1. The system of owning people as slaves
2. The condition of being owned by another person and forced to work for them.

Dictionary meanings of the concept "slavery" in the English language according to the "Merriam-Webster“:

1. The practice of slaveholding.
2. A situation or practice in which people are entrapped (as by debt) and exploited.

3. Submission to a dominating influence – for example: slavery to habit.
4. Drudgery, toil.

Dictionary meanings of the concepts "freedom" and "slavery" in the Georgian language
Dictionary meanings of the concept "freedom" according to the "Georgian Explanatory Dictionary":

Free - 1. Who (or what) does not experience coercion, independent; who or what is not limited by any prohibition, unhindered; What nothing prevents, does not prevent - unlimited, bold. (free behavior); What happens in such a way that nothing hinders, nothing prevents (free breathing/movement).

2. What is not connected to something else; (in nature) independently existing (free hydrogen); What or whom it does not burden, does not burden anything.

3. Whoever (or what) is not possessed, freed from imprisonment; empowered to govern himself.

4. What can be used - empty, unoccupied; vacant. 5. Not in circulation, - unused, (money, amount).

6. such (time) that they are not busy with their usual activities; Those who are not busy with work, those who have time for something.

Freedom (freedom) – 1. The ability to express one's will.

2. The state of freedom, - the legal state of any person, public class (layer), the state, which ensures his unhindered action, activity (in one or another sphere of social and political life); The ability to express one's beliefs, opinions or aspirations through any means (meeting, printed word, etc.).

3. Condition - the condition of one who is not imprisoned, that is not trapped.

4. Free behavior, treatment.

Freedom lover - who loves freedom, who strives for freedom, fights for independence.

Love of freedom - a feature of a freedom lover, - love of freedom, striving for freedom.

Dictionary meanings of the concept "slavery" in the Georgian language according to the "explanatory dictionary of the Georgian language":

Slave - in a slave society - a person deprived of all rights and means of production, who was the complete property of the slave owner. 2. Obeying someone else's will without saying a word.

Slavery - 1. The same as slave ownership. Exploitation is almost as cruel (under feudal system) as during slavery 2. To be a slave, the condition of a slave. The situation of the oppressed, the disenfranchised. 3. transfer Obeying someone else's will without saying a word.

Slavery is a social system in which the means of production and also the production worker - the slave - are the complete property of the slave owner.

The concepts of freedom and slavery, as understood in English and Georgian cultures, exhibit both similarities and differences, reflecting the diverse historical, social, and linguistic contexts. In both languages, 'freedom' is defined as the state of being unrestrained, unencumbered, and empowered to make choices and express oneself. It denotes the absence of physical, social, or psychological constraints. While the English dictionaries primarily emphasize the absence of coercion and the right to self-determination, the Georgian language also underscores the notions of independence, unhindered action, and the ability to express beliefs or aspirations. Additionally, Georgian interpretations include the idea of vacant or unoccupied states, indicating freedom from occupation or preoccupation.

On the other hand, 'slavery' in both languages represents a system of ownership and control, where individuals are deprived of their rights and autonomy, forced into labor, and subjugated under a dominating authority. While both English and Georgian definitions acknowledge the idea of ownership and exploitation, the Georgian language specifically denotes the complete possession of means of production and the worker by the slave owner. Additionally, it highlights the concept of obedience to someone else's will without protest.

Overall, both languages recognize the fundamental dichotomy between freedom and slavery, emphasizing the significance of self-governance, autonomy, and the absence of oppressive forces for individuals. However, the Georgian context seems to focus more on the legal and economic dimensions of slavery, highlighting the systemic and structural implications of the subjugation of individuals, while also emphasizing the notions of obedience and lack of protest in the face of domination.

Phraseological units of the concepts of “Freedom” and “Slavery” in the English and Georgian languages

Phraseological units of the concepts of “Freedom” and “Slavery” in the English language.

1. Freedom of maneuver - the space and ability to make changes to something.
2. Freedom of speech - the right to express one's opinion without censorship or other forms of punishment imposed by the government.
3. Give (one) (one's) freedom - to free or release one from something, such as a situation or agreement.
4. Born free - Officially, to be born free means you were born after the end of the Apartheid era in South Africa. It can also describe, more literally, someone not born into slavery.
5. Free spirit / free-spirited - when you act in an uninhabited way, do your own thing, and never worry about normal social rules or constraints, you could be called free-spirited. Another way to explain it would be „nonconformist”
6. There’s no such thing as a free lunch - This is an example of a ‘free’ idiom about money. When someone comments that there is no such thing as a free lunch, they are suggesting that even if something is offered for free, there is usually a hidden cost or consequence.
7. Freeloader - A freeloader is someone who doesn’t pay their own way, or share a financial burden. They take advantage of other people’s kindness and generosity.
8. Free rein - When you are given free rein, you are given permission to do something your own way.
9. Get off scot-free - people who get off scot-free have avoided the punishment they deserved, or escaped from a situation without consequences.
10. Free will - It’s the power and liberty to make your own choices.
11. Fly the coop / nest - To fly the coop or fly the nest is to move out of your family home – usually a move that brings a new level of liberty and independence.
12. Better be an old man's darling than a young man's slave - proverb It is better for a woman to marry an old man who treats her well than a controlling young man.
13. Slave away - to work strenuously and continuously (doing something).
14. Slave market - slang An area where day laborers gather to be hired by a prospective employer.
15. Slave over a hot stove - to spend a lot of time and effort preparing and cooking a meal.
16. What did your last slave die of - an expression of irritation, exasperation, or discontent to someone who is being imperious or makes excessive or unreasonable demands on one.

17. Slave driver - a cruel employer who demands excessive work from the employees.
18. Slave ship - a ship used to transport slaves from their homes to places of bondage.
19. Slave trader - a person engaged in slave trade.

Phraseological units of the concepts of “Freedom” and “Slavery” in the Georgian language.

1. Love of freedom - a feature of a freedom lover, - love of freedom, striving for freedom.
2. Imprisonment - arrest.
3. Get rid of - get rid of, get rid of, save (from something unwanted), avoid (something).
4. To get rid of oneself - to free oneself, to save oneself (from something unwanted), to escape.
5. Throwing off the yoke (from the neck) - liberation from oppression, exploitation, gaining freedom.
6. Opening the hands and feet - giving the means to act freely.
7. He holds his bridle tightly in his hand - he rules himself, he has a strong character.
8. He does not bow down (to someone) - he does not obey, he is proud.
9. Freewill came to an end - he was disappointed, his free life was over.
10. Breaking the leash / letting go - to free oneself, to do one's will, to be bold, to be bold.
11. At least he will get his way - he will do what he wants.
12. He escaped the king's anger and master's appetite - he escaped injustice, oppression.
13. He would break (the people) the barriers that have been stuck for centuries - he would free the people.
14. Throwing off the yoke - liberation from oppression, gaining freedom.
15. Spreading wings - free action
16. He does not give up - he does not oppress himself; he does not obey.
17. Putting a yoke (on the neck) - enslavement, oppression, subjugation.
18. Laying down the shield-sword - submission, surrender, cessation of resistance.
19. Bending the ridge / bending the ridge - submission, cessation of resistance.
20. Your sword and my neck! - Have whatever you want, I give you everything; I am ready to serve you.
21. To bend one's hand - to submit, to become the executor of one's will.
22. He got hold of - gained, captured, mastered, owned, seized, took hold of.

23. He has no hand in (anyone, anything) - he has no right, he has nothing to do with (anyone, anything), he does not belong to (anyone, anything).
24. Binding of hands and feet - limitation, creating an obstacle, tying, narrowing.
25. To hold in one's hands - to be at one's disposal, to be under one's influence, to subjugate, to conquer.
26. To seize - to possess, to conquer, to master, to acquire.
27. To fall into hands - to pass into someone's possession, to become (someone's) property or captive.
28. A slave with a cut off ear - obeying someone else, fulfilling someone else's will.
29. Slave-submissive - the same as slave.
30. Self-submission, self-humiliation.
31. Bending the head - submission, bending the spine.
32. Twinkle in the eyes - obedience, flattery.
33. To bend (something, something) on the finger - submission.
34. Sitting on the neck - oppression, fooling.
35. Bending the neck - enslavement, wordless obedience.
36. Neck bending - bending of the neck, enslavement.
37. Bending the neck - bending the neck
38. To be subjugated - obeyed, destroyed his willpower.
39. The king and the master have risen together - all of them oppress us, at the same time destroy our soul, shake our skin.
40. Broken voice - subdued, lost pride.
41. Sucking blood - cutting, oppressing, exploiting.
42. He has (the village) in his hands - he has subdued (the people of the village).
43. Peeling the skin - harsh, cruel treatment, oppression.
44. Putting on a yoke - enslavement, oppression.
45. Lifting the bridle - restricting, subduing, taming, forcing a stop, silencing, silencing.

The phraseological units related to the concepts of "Freedom" and "Slavery" in the English and Georgian languages provide a comprehensive understanding of the cultural connotations associated with these notions. Here's a more detailed analysis of their similarities and differences:

Similarities:

1. **Freedom from Oppression:** Both languages contain expressions that signify liberation from oppression and control. In English, phrases like "throwing off the yoke" and "free rein" emphasize the idea of breaking free from constraints. Similarly, in Georgian, the phrase "throwing off the yoke (from the neck)" and "spreading wings" suggest a sense of freedom from restraints and the ability to act without hindrance.
2. **Loss of Autonomy:** Both languages have phrases that illustrate the loss of personal autonomy and agency. In English, terms like "slave driver" and "get off scot-free" depict the denial of freedom and the imposition of authority. Similarly, in Georgian, expressions such as "sitting on the neck" and "peeling the skin" symbolize the harsh treatment and oppression that strip individuals of their independence.

Differences:

1. **Metaphorical vs. Literal Expressions:** The English language employs metaphorical expressions like "free spirit" and "fly the coop," which symbolize a nonconformist attitude and the act of leaving one's place of origin, respectively. In contrast, the Georgian language employs more direct, physical metaphors such as "peeling the skin" and "bending the neck," which directly evoke the imagery of oppression and submission.
2. **Contextual Emphasis:** English phraseological units often focus on economic and social contexts, such as "freeloader" and "there's no such thing as a free lunch," highlighting the idea that nothing comes without a cost or consequence. On the other hand, the Georgian expressions emphasize personal attitudes and character traits, as seen in phrases like "twinkle in the eyes" and "broken voice," which suggest the surrender of one's pride and individuality.

Overall, while the English and Georgian languages portray the concepts of "Freedom" and "Slavery" through different linguistic and cultural lenses, both languages use idiomatic expressions to depict the complexities and nuances of these fundamental human experiences. They showcase the multifaceted nature of these concepts, encompassing not only physical confinement or liberation but also the psychological and emotional implications of living under oppression or enjoying personal autonomy.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research undertaken illuminates the intricate relationship between language, consciousness, and cultural perception, emphasizing their dynamic interplay in shaping the concepts of "freedom" and "slavery" within the English and Georgian linguistic cultures. Analyzing various linguistic markers, including dictionary definitions, phraseological units, and cultural connotations, the study delves into the multidimensional aspects of these concepts, unraveling their socio-philosophical underpinnings.

The findings underscore the significance of language as a vessel for cultural transmission, encapsulating not only the structural elements of communication but also the profound layers of meaning that contribute to the construction of individual and collective worldviews. Through an exploration of both languages, it becomes evident that "freedom" and "slavery" are not merely binary terms but rather intricate constructs deeply entrenched in historical, social, and psychological contexts.

Moreover, the comparative analysis highlights both similarities and disparities in the conceptualization of these terms, emphasizing the diverse cultural perspectives that influence their interpretation. While both languages acknowledge the fundamental significance of autonomy and oppression, they depict these notions through distinct linguistic nuances, reflecting the unique socio-historical backgrounds and values embedded within each linguistic community.

Ultimately, this research not only contributes to the interdisciplinary field of linguistics and cultural studies but also holds practical implications for understanding the intricate dynamics of intercultural communication. By shedding light on the complex relationship between language, thought, and culture, this study lays the foundation for further explorations into the intricate intricacies of linguistic diversity and its impact on human perception and behavior.

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