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<http://www.supportscience.uz/index.php/ojp/about>**CONCEPTUALIZING COURAGE WITHIN THE SEMANTIC DOMAIN OF SPIRITUAL AND MORAL VALUES****Mokhinabonu Jurayeva**

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ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: courage, spiritual values, moral values, semantic domain, conceptual semantics, moral courage, bravery, fortitude, dignity, conscience, conceptual metaphor, axiological linguistics.

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Abstract: The present study examines the conceptualization of courage within the semantic domain of spiritual and moral values from linguistic, cognitive-semantic, and axiological perspectives. Courage is interpreted not simply as bravery or fearlessness but as a complex value-oriented concept that incorporates emotional, volitional, ethical, psychological, and spiritual components. The article focuses on the semantic relationships between courage and such related concepts as bravery, fortitude, determination, dignity, conscience, responsibility, faith, sacrifice, perseverance, and integrity. Particular attention is devoted to the differentiation of physical, moral, psychological, and spiritual courage and to the linguistic mechanisms through which these dimensions are represented in English.

JASORATNI MA'NAVY-AXLOQIY QADRIYATLARNING SEMANTIK DOIRASIDA KONSEPTUALIZATSIYA QILISH**Moxinabonu Jurayeva**

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MAQOLA HAQIDA

Kalit so'zlar: jasorat, ma'naviy qadriyatlar, axloqiy qadriyatlar, semantik doira, konseptual semantika, axloqiy jasorat, mardlik, matonat, qadr-qimmat, vijdon, konseptual metafora, aksiologik lingvistika.

Annotatsiya: Mazkur tadqiqotda jasorat konseptining ma'naviy-axloqiy qadriyatlar semantik doirasi tarkibida konseptuallashuvi lingvistik, kognitiv-semantik va aksiologik nuqtayi nazardan tadqiq etiladi. Jasorat

shunchaki mardlik yoki qo'rqmaslik sifatida emas, balki emotsional, irodaviy, axloqiy, psixologik va ma'naviy komponentlarni o'zida mujassamlashtiruvchi murakkab qadriyatga yo'naltirilgan konsept sifatida talqin qilinadi. Maqolada jasorat konseptining mardlik, matonat, qat'iyat, qadr-qimmat, vijdon, mas'uliyat, e'tiqod, fidoyilik, sabot-matonat va axloqiy butunlik kabi turdosh konseptlar bilan semantik munosabatlariga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Shuningdek, jismoniy, axloqiy, psixologik va ma'naviy jasorat turlarining o'zaro farqlanishi hamda ushbu ma'no qirralarining ingliz tilida ifodalanishini ta'minlovchi lingvistik mexanizmlar tahlil qilinadi.

КОНЦЕПТУАЛИЗАЦИЯ МУЖЕСТВА В СЕМАНТИЧЕСКОМ ПОЛЕ ДУХОВНО-НРАВСТВЕННЫХ ЦЕННОСТЕЙ

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О СТАТЬЕ

Ключевые слова:	мужество, духовные ценности, нравственные ценности, семантическая сфера, концептуальная семантика, нравственное мужество, храбрость, стойкость, достоинство, совесть, концептуальная метафора, аксиологическая лингвистика.	Аннотация:	В настоящем исследовании рассматривается мужество в рамках семантической сферы духовно-нравственных ценностей с лингвистической, когнитивно-семантической и аксиологической точек зрения. Мужество интерпретируется не просто как храбрость или бесстрашие, а как сложный ценностно ориентированный концепт, включающий эмоциональный, волевой, этический, психологический и духовный компоненты. Особое внимание в статье уделяется семантическим взаимосвязям концепта мужества с такими смежными концептами, как храбрость, стойкость, решимость, достоинство, совесть, ответственность, вера, самопожертвование, настойчивость и нравственная целостность. Особое внимание также уделяется разграничению физического, нравственного, психологического и духовного мужества, а также анализу лингвистических механизмов, посредством которых данные
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Introduction. The investigation of value concepts has become one of the important areas of contemporary linguistics because language reflects not only the objective characteristics of reality but also the moral, cultural, emotional, and spiritual experience of its speakers. Through language, individuals and communities categorize phenomena as desirable or undesirable, right or wrong, noble or shameful, acceptable or unacceptable. Consequently, linguistic units denoting values constitute an important part of the conceptual and axiological worldview of a linguistic community. Concepts such as goodness, justice, dignity, honesty, responsibility, loyalty, faith, hope, and courage are particularly significant because their meanings cannot be restricted to simple dictionary definitions. They accumulate cultural experience and reflect socially established models of human behaviour.

Within this system, the concept of courage deserves particular linguistic attention. At first sight, courage appears to denote a relatively simple human quality associated with the ability to confront danger without fear. A more detailed semantic examination, however, demonstrates that such an interpretation is incomplete. Courage may manifest itself in situations involving physical danger, but it can also characterize the ability to defend moral principles, acknowledge an uncomfortable truth, resist social pressure, accept responsibility, remain faithful to one's convictions, protect another person, or endure suffering without losing dignity and hope. Courage therefore belongs simultaneously to emotional, psychological, ethical, social, and spiritual domains. [2:34-37]

The semantic complexity of the concept becomes particularly evident when courage is compared with its near-synonyms. Words such as bravery, boldness, fearlessness, valor, fortitude, determination, resolve, and steadfastness share certain semantic components with courage, yet none of them reproduces its entire conceptual structure. Fearlessness, for example, primarily indicates the absence of fear, while courage does not necessarily imply that an individual experiences no fear. On the contrary, the very presence of fear can create the conditions in which courage becomes meaningful. An individual may recognize danger and experience anxiety while consciously choosing to act despite those emotions. In this respect, courage involves not simply an emotional condition but an interaction between emotion, cognition, volition, ethical evaluation, and behaviour. [6:90]

Materials and Methods. The methodological basis of the study combines principles of lexical semantics, cognitive linguistics, conceptual analysis, and axiological interpretation. Such an integrated methodological framework is necessary because the concept of courage cannot be

adequately investigated through a single linguistic method. Its lexical meaning represents only one level of a considerably broader conceptual structure.

The research material consists of English lexical units, collocations, phraseological expressions, metaphorical constructions, and conventional patterns of language use associated with courage and related moral-spiritual concepts. Particular analytical attention is paid to expressions such as show courage, have courage, find the courage, take courage, summon up courage, lose courage, moral courage, courage of one's convictions, stand one's ground, stand up for something, and face one's fears. These linguistic constructions provide valuable evidence concerning the conceptual structure underlying the English understanding of courage. [1:22]

Semantic-field analysis is employed to identify the relationships between courage and semantically adjacent units. This method makes it possible to examine the concept as part of a structured lexical-semantic network rather than an independent word. The semantic field includes both direct synonyms and more distant axiologically related categories. Thus, alongside bravery, valor, fortitude, and boldness, the analysis considers dignity, conscience, integrity, responsibility, faith, sacrifice, and perseverance.

Componential analysis is used to determine the semantic features shared by these lexical units and those distinguishing them from one another. Particular attention is given to such components as the presence of fear or danger, resistance to difficulty, conscious choice, determination, endurance, ethical evaluation, responsibility, and purposeful action.

Conceptual analysis allows the lexical-semantic findings to be interpreted as elements of a broader cognitive structure. This method is particularly relevant because courage is understood in the present study as a mental and cultural category whose meaning emerges from accumulated human experience.

Contextual interpretation is used to examine how the meaning of courage changes according to communicative context. The semantic profile of courage in descriptions of physical danger differs from its realization in ethical, religious, psychological, or social contexts. Therefore, context provides an important criterion for differentiating the various dimensions of the concept. [4:15-16]

Finally, conceptual metaphor analysis is employed to identify the source domains through which courage is represented linguistically. The analysis focuses particularly on the domains of physical strength, vertical stability, movement, struggle, obstacles, darkness, and light. These domains reveal the embodied foundations of the abstract conceptualization of courage.

Results. The results of the analysis demonstrate that courage possesses a complex semantic structure organized around several interdependent components. The first of these is the recognition of danger, difficulty, risk, uncertainty, or fear. This component is fundamental because courageous

behaviour generally becomes relevant in circumstances in which an individual perceives a threat or anticipates negative consequences. Nevertheless, the nature of this threat may vary considerably. It can be physical, psychological, social, moral, or spiritual.

This observation enables an important distinction to be made between courage and fearlessness. Although these concepts are frequently treated as synonyms in ordinary language, their semantic structures are not identical. Fearlessness foregrounds the absence or minimal presence of fear, whereas courage can presuppose the existence of fear. A courageous individual may feel afraid and nevertheless make a conscious decision to continue acting. In this respect, fear is not necessarily the semantic opposite of courage. Instead, it can constitute the experiential background against which courage acquires its value. [15:20]

The concept also contains a strong volitional component. Courage requires more than recognition of danger. An individual must make a decision regarding how to respond to it. This decision introduces the notions of determination, will, and conscious choice into the semantic structure of courage. Therefore, the concept is closely related to resolve and determination. Nevertheless, determination itself does not necessarily constitute courage. A person may be strongly determined to achieve a goal without facing any serious threat or ethical dilemma. Courage becomes relevant when determination operates under conditions of risk, fear, suffering, uncertainty, or moral pressure.

The relationship between courage and fortitude reveals another important semantic distinction. Fortitude is particularly associated with endurance in the face of suffering, adversity, or prolonged difficulty. Courage may be manifested in a single decisive act, whereas fortitude often implies sustained resilience over time. Nevertheless, the concepts intersect considerably within the domain of spiritual values. An individual who maintains dignity and hope through prolonged suffering may simultaneously be characterized as courageous and possessing fortitude. [13:67]

The analysis further demonstrates that courage occupies an intermediate position between emotional experience and moral action. This becomes especially evident in the phenomenon of moral courage. Physical courage usually involves an identifiable external danger. A person may enter a dangerous environment, protect another individual, or confront a physical threat. Moral courage, however, often operates in circumstances in which the principal risk is social, professional, emotional, or reputational rather than bodily.

Conscience plays a particularly important role in this process. Conscience functions as an internal mechanism of moral evaluation through which individuals distinguish between what they consider right and wrong. Courage becomes necessary when acting according to conscience

creates difficulty or risk. Consequently, moral courage can be understood as the capacity to transform ethical judgement into action despite anticipated negative consequences.

A similarly close relationship exists between courage and dignity. Dignity represents an individual's perception of personal and human worth, while courage may provide the capacity to protect that worth under pressure. Refusing humiliation, defending another person's dignity, maintaining self-respect in adversity, or rejecting behaviour that contradicts one's principles may all require courage. This semantic interaction explains why courage frequently acquires positive axiological meaning even when the resulting action brings no immediate material benefit. [12:190-192]

Responsibility represents another important component. Courageous behaviour is not necessarily impulsive or reckless. Indeed, the distinction between courage and recklessness depends largely on awareness and responsibility. Recklessness may involve exposing oneself or others to unnecessary danger without sufficient evaluation of consequences. Courage, by contrast, normally presupposes that the individual recognizes the risk but considers the action necessary, justified, or valuable. The presence of responsibility therefore strengthens the moral component of courage.

The spiritual dimension of the concept reveals additional semantic relationships. Spiritual courage is particularly connected with faith, hope, perseverance, patience, and sacrifice. In situations of loss, suffering, uncertainty, or existential crisis, courage may be manifested not through dramatic external behaviour but through the capacity to continue living according to meaningful values. The ability to maintain hope in despair, faith in uncertainty, compassion under suffering, or dignity in loss represents an internal form of courage. [10:12-15]

Sacrifice also interacts with courage, although the two concepts should not be considered identical. A courageous action may require an individual to sacrifice comfort, status, reputation, security, or personal interest. However, sacrifice acquires the semantic characteristics of courage only when it is connected with risk, conscious choice, and a value perceived as more important than individual benefit.

Another productive model represents courage through vertical stability. Expressions such as stand firm, stand one's ground, and stand up for one's beliefs demonstrate that remaining physically upright serves as a metaphor for psychological and ethical stability. External pressure is conceptualized as a force capable of moving or destabilizing a person, whereas courage allows the individual to remain metaphorically standing.

Movement metaphors are also important. Difficult life experiences can be conceptualized as paths containing obstacles. Consequently, continuing despite adversity is expressed through such

ideas as moving forward, taking a step, and going on. Within this cognitive structure, courage represents the internal resource that enables movement to continue despite barriers. [6:10]

The struggle metaphor conceptualizes fear as an opponent that must be confronted, resisted, defeated, or overcome. Such expressions are significant because they confirm that courage does not necessarily eliminate fear. Instead, courage is represented as an active force capable of regulating or overcoming the influence of fear on behaviour.

Finally, the metaphorical opposition between light and darkness introduces an explicitly spiritual dimension. Darkness conventionally represents uncertainty, fear, despair, or loss of direction, whereas light is associated with hope, understanding, goodness, and spiritual orientation. Within this system, courage can be conceptualized as an inner source of illumination that allows individuals to preserve direction and meaning in difficult circumstances.

Discussion. The findings of the study indicate that the linguistic conceptualization of courage is considerably broader than its conventional association with heroic behaviour. Courage emerges as an axiologically complex concept that integrates emotional regulation, conscious decision-making, moral judgement, personal responsibility, spiritual resilience, and purposeful action.

One of the most significant findings concerns the relationship between courage and fear. Traditional interpretations may present these concepts as opposites. Cognitive-semantic analysis, however, suggests that they are more closely interconnected. If there is no perceived danger, difficulty, or fear, an action may be positive or admirable but may not necessarily be conceptualized as courageous. Courage becomes particularly meaningful precisely because the individual is aware of risk and nevertheless chooses to act. [7:57]

This interpretation also helps differentiate genuine courage from reckless behaviour. Both may involve risk, but their cognitive and axiological foundations differ. Recklessness minimizes or ignores consequences, whereas courage recognizes consequences and acts on the basis of a meaningful purpose. Therefore, conscious evaluation and responsibility constitute essential semantic components of moral courage.

The analysis also shows that moral courage represents one of the strongest points of interaction between courage and the semantic domain of moral values. Concepts such as justice, truth, dignity, responsibility, integrity, and conscience establish normative orientations for behaviour. Courage becomes necessary when acting in accordance with these values carries a personal cost.

This relationship demonstrates that moral values and courage perform different but complementary functions. Moral values provide the individual with an understanding of what should be protected or pursued, whereas courage provides the capacity to act according to this

understanding when action is difficult. Courage therefore serves as a mediating category between moral cognition and moral behaviour. [5:189]

The relationship between courage and integrity is particularly illustrative. Integrity implies consistency between principles and behaviour. Yet such consistency is relatively easy when there is no external pressure. It becomes ethically significant when maintaining one's principles results in inconvenience, criticism, danger, or loss. Under such conditions, integrity depends upon courage. Conversely, courage without ethical orientation can lose its positive moral value. A daring act undertaken for destructive or unethical purposes may demonstrate boldness but cannot automatically be classified as moral courage.

This observation has significant implications for the axiological interpretation of courage. The positive evaluation of courage depends not only on the intensity of risk but also on the value toward which the action is directed. The semantic content of courage therefore contains both descriptive and evaluative dimensions.

Spiritual courage expands this interpretation even further. While physical and moral courage frequently result in visible action, spiritual courage may take the form of sustained internal resilience. Patience, forgiveness, hope, faith, and perseverance can represent courageous responses when they are maintained under conditions that encourage despair, hatred, surrender, or moral compromise. [3:35]

In this sense, courage functions as an internal mechanism of value preservation. An individual experiencing adversity may lose external resources while continuing to maintain internal principles. Language represents this process through metaphors of strength, stability, movement, struggle, and light because these concrete experiences provide accessible cognitive structures for understanding abstract spiritual resilience.

The findings consequently suggest that courage should be treated as a multidimensional category consisting of emotional, cognitive, volitional, ethical, behavioural, and spiritual layers. Its emotional layer concerns fear and anxiety; its cognitive layer involves awareness and evaluation of risk; its volitional layer concerns decision and determination; its ethical layer concerns values and responsibility; its behavioural layer involves action or deliberate endurance; and its spiritual layer concerns the preservation of faith, hope, dignity, and meaning.

Such a multidimensional interpretation explains why courage interacts with numerous other concepts without becoming fully synonymous with any of them. Bravery emphasizes readiness to confront danger; fortitude emphasizes endurance; determination emphasizes firmness of intention; integrity emphasizes consistency with principles; dignity emphasizes human worth; conscience provides moral evaluation; faith provides spiritual orientation; and perseverance emphasizes

continuation. Courage integrates elements of these meanings when an individual is required to maintain or realize a value under difficult conditions. [9:160]

From the perspective of semantic-field theory, therefore, courage can be regarded as one of the organizing concepts within the domain of moral and spiritual values. Its importance lies in its dynamic character. Concepts such as dignity, justice, faith, and responsibility can exist as internal convictions, but courage contributes to their realization in behaviour. It converts a passive recognition of value into active or sustained commitment.

The linguistic evidence also confirms that the conceptualization of courage is strongly embodied. Human beings understand abstract moral strength through experiences of physical strength, upright posture, movement, resistance, and orientation in space. This supports the broader cognitive-linguistic assumption that abstract conceptual systems are grounded in embodied experience.

At the same time, the semantic domain of courage cannot be understood exclusively through universal cognitive mechanisms. Cultural values influence which forms of courage receive greater emphasis in particular linguistic communities. English-language discourse frequently foregrounds individual conviction, personal integrity, speaking out, overcoming fear, and standing up for one's beliefs. In other cultural contexts, courage may be more strongly associated with collective responsibility, patience, honour, loyalty, sacrifice, or endurance. This creates important prospects for comparative linguocultural research.

A comparison between English courage, bravery, fortitude, and moral courage and Uzbek jasorat, mardlik, matonat, iroda, sabr, and qat'iyat would be particularly productive. Although these lexical categories overlap, their cultural associations and semantic boundaries may differ. For example, the Uzbek concept mardlik may include ethical and culturally marked characteristics associated not only with courage but also with generosity, honour, nobility, and socially approved behaviour. Similarly, matonat places particular emphasis on endurance and psychological stability. Such differences indicate that courage represents both a broadly human conceptual category and a culturally structured value.[15:156]

Conclusion. The research demonstrates that courage constitutes a complex linguocognitive and axiological concept whose semantic structure extends far beyond the conventional meaning of physical bravery. Courage integrates emotional, cognitive, volitional, moral, behavioural, and spiritual dimensions and therefore occupies an important position within the broader semantic domain of spiritual and moral values.

The semantic analysis has shown that courage is closely associated with bravery, valor, fortitude, determination, resolve, and steadfastness, while its axiological structure connects it with dignity, conscience, integrity, responsibility, faith, sacrifice, hope, and perseverance. These

relationships demonstrate that courage operates at the intersection of personal emotion and socially meaningful moral behaviour.

An important result of the study is the distinction between courage and fearlessness. Courage does not necessarily require the absence of fear. On the contrary, awareness of fear or risk often constitutes an important condition for the emergence of courageous behaviour. Courage consists in the conscious regulation of fear and the decision to act or persevere despite perceived difficulty.

The findings provide a theoretical basis for further comparative and corpus-based investigation. Future studies may examine the frequency, collocational behaviour, metaphorical representation, and discourse functions of courage-related lexical units in contemporary English corpora. A comparative English-Uzbek investigation could further reveal how universal aspects of courage interact with culturally specific concepts such as *jasorat*, *mardlik*, *matonat*, *iroda*, *sabr*, and *qat'iyat*. Such research would contribute to cognitive semantics, linguoculturology, axiological linguistics, and the comparative study of spiritual and moral concepts.

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