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THE CONCEPT OF “MOTHER” IN TURKISH AND GAGAUZ LANGUAGES

This paper interrogates issues central to linguocultural studies, including the influence of human beings on language, the interplay between language and culture, and the manifestation of the perception process in language. For this purpose, research on concepts, which is the main notion of linguoculturalology, is indispensable. At this point, the lexical units found in the language are examined from the perspective of folk culture, and the cultural meaning that people associate with the word is being investigated. By comparing the concepts in the Turkish and Gagauz languages, the research work aims to identify their distinctive and similar aspects in the worldviews of the speakers of these languages. By comparatively studying the concepts in the cognate languages (Turkish and Gagauz), is to identify similar and characteristic features of a given concept in the worldview of the language carriers. Using comparative, descriptive, and conceptual analysis techniques, the article examines how the Turkish and Gagauz peoples conceptualize “mother” in their worldview based on the examples of written literature, paroemias, folklore, and set phrases and flexible word combinations used to provide an impression about the people’s cultural codes of a long history. The conclusion is that historically, a mother held a more prominent role inside the family. However, as societal conditions evolved, her position steadily diminished, resulting in her becoming a comparatively less influential figure within the family unit. Furthermore, Gagauzi linguistic facts depict the mother primarily as a figure who makes sacrifices for others, whereas in Turkish, she is predominantly represented by love. Hence, based on the elements of the Turkish and Gagauz languages, the preconceptions about the concept of mother in the worldview of these two Turkic nations are established.

Key words: *mother, concept, language, culture, lexicon, worldview, word combinations, proverbs.*

Introduction. The emergence of new directions in linguistics has changed the approach to language units. The language units are now subject to research not only from a grammatical aspect but also from the perspective of their relation to culture and the variousness of their reflections in the minds of people and individuals. Among these new directions, linguoculturalology, which “learns language as a cultural factor” [10, p. 10], occupies a particular place. Linguo-cultural research is anthropocentric. Being human-centered, it inquires into issues such as humans’ influence on language, the connection between language and culture, and the reflection of perception processes on the language. It is here that the concept appears as the main notion of linguoculturalology. By learning concepts, lexical units of language become the subject of research in the folk culture aspect, and cultural information ascribed to the word in the folk consciousness comes under investigation. Through this information, which consists of the knowledge and experiences of the folk, its worldview and the characteristic features of its culture unfold.

The concepts formed in the consciousness of the speakers of a language wholly constitute the conceptual system of the language. The notion of “conceptual system” comprises verbal and non-verbal knowledge. The purpose of this research, by comparatively studying the concepts in the cognate languages (Turkish and Gagauz), is to identify similar and characteristic features of a given concept in the worldview of the language carriers.

This paper analyzes the concept of “mother” in the thought of Turkish and Gagauz people. The reason behind choosing the concept of “mother” in order to learn Turkish and Gagauz people’s mentalities and their customs by means of language is its characteristic significance in folk culture studies. To study this concept, the paper draws on examples of fixed and free phrases, paroemias, folklore, and written literature that create an impression about the folk’s long-standing cultural codes. Each of these foregoing language materials has its own linguo-cultural peculiarity. Therefore, they are of particular importance as reliable materials when conceptually learning the lexical and phraseological systems of a language.

The research paper utilizes comparative, descriptive, and conceptual analysis methods.

Discussion. Throughout history, women have been recognized as the foundation of society. People's high regard for women stems primarily from the fact that they are mothers. In this regard, when considering the concept of motherhood in the thoughts of these two nations, Turkish and Gagauz, it appears that their understanding of this concept is varied.

The concept of "mother" could be studied from the perspective of the following three semantic groups:

- mother's place and role in the family;
- mother's role in child-rearing and mutual relations;
- mother's role and the moral duties ascribed to her in society.

Resulting from historical and geographical events and from the influence of variations in folk culture on language, Turkish has several words to denote the "mother" concept. The word to refer to this concept in earlier sources was "öğ" which means "birth" [6, p. 112]. However, "öğ" is not found in *Diwan lughat al-Turk* where "ana", "aba", "apa" are the words to refer to mother.

In Turkish folklore, however, "ana" is more common than other examples. In remote areas, it is still used. In modern literary Turkish, though, its altered variation "anne" is more common. In addition to "anne," Arabic origin "valide," meaning "birth-giver," and Persian origin "mader" are also used in the Turkish language. The Arabic origin "valide," in the modern Turkish language, is also a part of another compound noun "kaynvalide," which means mother-in-law. The Turkish language also possesses several fixed and unfixed or flexible phrases that are formed with the combination of *anne* and *ana* with other words such as *ana dil* (mother tongue), *ana kucağı* (mother lap), *ana kuzusu* (a mother's boy), *ana tarafı* (mother's/maternal side), *ana vatan* (motherland), *ana yurt/toprak* (homeland), *ana yüreği* (maternal drive), *anadan doğma* (inborn), *anadan görme* (seen from mother), *anne yarası* (maternal aunt), *süt anne* (wet nurse).

To study the concept "mother" in Turkish and Gagauz languages, it is necessary to look at the lexical meaning of the words used referring to mother. According to the "Güncel Türkçe Sözlük" the word "anne" has two meanings: a woman who has given birth to a child and a female animal that bears offspring [19]. The word "ana", however, being a multi-sense word, expresses more meanings; moreover, it carries the connotation of sanctity and respect in itself.

On the other hand, in Gagauzi, there are several words that mean mother. These are mainly "ana" and "mamu" or "mamo." The latter variations are of Bulgarian origin. Nevertheless, like its Turkish counterpart in Gagauz folklore, the former term "ana" is prevalent. In the "Gagauzi-Russian-Romanian" dictionary, by Çebotar-Dron, the entry for "ana" gives its two different meanings: mother; foundation, base [4, p. 36]. To explain the word, it provides some phrases as well as proverbs as examples. It seems that, in Gagauzi as well, the word "ana" has created several phrases combining with other words: *ana taraf* (mother's side), *anadan duuma* (inborn), *ana topra* (mother land), *ana dili* (mother tongue), *ana topu* (gift given to mother-in-law by bride), etc. Regarding the first phrase, *ana taraf*, it should be noted that its meaning in Gagauzi is different from that in Turkish. If in Turkish it means mother's side and is related to maternal kinship, in Gagauzi it is associated with homeland concept. Yet in both languages, *ana topra*, *ana yurt*, and *ana vatan* reveal Turkish and Gagauzi people's love and relation to their homeland.

The association of devotion to one's nation and land with maternal love is a demonstration of its significance, which could be considered an impact of the Turkic worldview on language. For, Turks throughout history have held their motherland as dear as a mother and fought for the sake of their land against enemies. However, it is worth mentioning that the "motherland" term is not necessarily peculiar to a specific language and exists in many languages around the world.

Mother's place and role in the family. The most significant position in a family, which is the smallest as well as the most important social group that makes up society, is that of mother. The concept of "mother" is associated with various concepts that satisfy humans' needs, including generosity, care, compassion, protection, nourishment, love, attachment, consolation, etc. These foregoing features, attributed to mother, are vividly manifested in the expression "mother lap" (*ana kucağı*) available in the Turkish language. Puskulluoglu, while explaining the meaning of this phrase, says, "mother's side, full of compassion warm environment, prepared by a mother for a person" [16, p. 83]. A mother's arms are capable of covering a person with all the things he or she needs.

Although attitudes towards women vary in different cultures around the world, when it comes to the concept of mother, woman appears to possess sacred connotations. Especially in Turkish national culture, the value of the mother is immeasurable; it is glorified and even sometimes analogous to God, the Creator. In

such a way that a mother, as a parent, is directly involved in a person's birth, survival, and recovery from any difficult situation. She provides a shield for a person against the hardships of life and brings him or her up.

To support this claim, one can consider the Book of Dede Korkut, regarded as a joint cultural and historical monument of the Turkic people. Several expressions mentioned in the Book of Dede Korkut such as "woman mother", "Mother's right, God's right," prominently display the value given to women as mothers in ancient Turkic culture. The following example from Gagauz language shows that the position of parents – both father's and mother's one is equal or at least similar to that of God: *Ana bobayı saymayan Allahu da saymaz* (Gagauzi) [9, p. 104]. (Whoever does not respect parents will not respect God).

The "woman mother" concept is a political and social title ascribed to mother which is a demonstration of the fact that woman is regarded as admirable sublime being in society. The Book of Dede Korkut says "mother-father," and the name of the mother precedes the name of the father [18].

In Gagauz culture, it is believed that having parents' blessings plays a very significant role in a person's life. The extent of this high regard for parents in Gagauz culture is well documented in their cultural maxims, where it is said that parents' blessing could rescue a person from the bottom of the ocean: *Ana duası denizin dibindän çıkarêr* [9, p. 104] (Mother's prayer rescues from the bottom of the sea).

Ana boba duvası da büük. / Ana-boba duvası da büük, betvası da. (Gagauzi) [9, p. 103]. (Mother's blessing/prayer is powerful / Parents' blessing/prayer is powerful as their curse is).

In Turkish culture as well, this similar divine description of the mother is observable. According to Turkish people, mother's milk is sacred; it is even a thing to take an oath on: "*Sana verdiğim süt hakkı için*" [8, p. 91] (swear on the milk I fed you). When a mother curses her ungrateful child, who has disobeyed her, she does not give a blessing for the milk sucked by the child: "*Emdiğin süt burnundan gelsin, haram olsun*" [8, p. 91] (Let the milk you sucked come from your nose, be haram), "*Sütüm sana haram, it kanı ola*" [8, p. 91] (the milk I gave you be dog blood), and so on.

Other than this, while giving blessings to someone again, mother's milk is regarded as an object of oath, and taking an oath or swearing on it is considered a warranty. "*Anamın ak sütü gibi helal olsun*" [2, p. 470]. (May it be halal to you as my mother's milk) Ömer Asım Aksoy on the meaning of this maxim says that it means may it be halal to you as my mother's milk is to me.

Mother's role in child-rearing and mutual relations. The close relationship between mother and child and their love for each other are reflected in the following proverbs in the languages of the Turkish and Gagauz peoples. For example, one Turkish proverb says, *Ana gibi yar olmaz, Bağdat gibi diyar olmaz* [1, p. 133]. (There is no love as mother, there is no city as Baghdad). The main idea in this proverb is that, as one cannot find a city better than Baghdad, likewise, among people, no one could find a human category equal to mother.

On the other hand, a Gagauzi proverb says, *Anaya kendi boyunuzu ar gelmeer* [9, p. 105]. A mother welcomes every hardship caused by her child. In contrast to this example from the Gagauz language, a Turkish proverb says that the mother's torture does not hurt the child like that caused by others: *Ananın bastığı yavru (civciv) incinmez (ölmez)* [1, p. 134]. (The baby (chick) that the mother steps on will not be hurt or die). Here, the main idea is that a mother cannot purposefully harm her child, and in the event that she does, she will do it with consideration for his welfare.

*Şu dağlar garip dağlar,
İçinde garip ağlar.
Kimse garip olmasın,
Garip için kim ağlar?
Ağlar ise anam ağlar,
Küsuru yalan ağlar.* [3, p. 151]

These mountains are mountains strange.
In the mountains, cries a stranger.
No one should be a stranger.
Who will cry for the strange?
If anyone, she will be my mother.
Others will untruly cry.

The last lines of this Turkish folk poetry are also available as a separate proverb: *Ağlarsa anam ağlar, başkası yalan ağlar* [1, p. 117] (If anyone will cry, she will be my mother; others will pretend to cry). Once more, the belief that a person's mother is the most precious entity and the only one who will sympathize with them at times of hardship is conveyed. Another example from Turkish folklore expressing this belief is *Ana, yürekten yana* (Mother is a devoted person).

From the moment that she brings her child into the world, maternal instinct emerges into the woman's existence, and it is very strong in this stage. She always tries to satisfy her child's needs. The reason for the creation of some folklore examples such as lullabies is, as well, of this kind. Mother so as to satisfy her baby's sleeping need lulls the baby to sleep and in these lullabies she utters about her sleepless nights.

*Asmanın altına yatak ettim,
Sallaya sallaya sabah ettim,
Uzun kış gecelerinde,
Uykum yoluna heba ettim!* [5, p. 229]

I made a bed under the vine,
Stood up all night rocking it,
On long winter nights,
I wasted my sleep for you!

During the inquiry into the concept of mother in Turkish and Gagauz languages, it appears that the absence of a mother, the longing for the mother, brings out the positive aspects of her existence against the background of her absence. In the following four-line poem from Turkish folklore, this situation, the mother's absence and longing for her, is described with agonizing feelings.

*Kekliğim seker ağlar
Tüyünü döker ağlar
Anasız gelin olan
İçini çeker ağlar.* [5, p. 151]

My partridge hops and cries
Sheds its feathers and cries.
A motherless bride
By having a sigh cries.

Other than these, language facts and literature examples in which stepmother theme is touched upon play an essential role in understanding the linguo-cultural features of the mother concept. *Analık fenalık (kara yamalık)* [1, p. 134] (Stepmother – evil) (Turkish); *Analık – fenalık, kara yamalık* [9, p. 105] (Gagauzi) As is seen, the given proverb is available in both Turkic languages.

However, sometimes, the terms *üvey anne* and *analık*, mean stepmother, replaced in Turkish with the euphemism “cici anne” in order to avoid the negative connotation the former terms have and create a better image for the stepmother. If “analık” refers to a woman who replaces biological mother and means not real mother, the “cici anne” term means “new mother” and therefore is a more polite expression. Furthermore, in Turkish there is another term “öz anne” (birth mother) which refers to the biological link between mother and her child. *Üvey öz olmaz, kemha bez olmaz* [2, p. 369] (Step is never birth mother, velour is never cloth.)

Along with proverbs in which the idea that birth mother is irreplaceable are dominant, there are some examples either where bringing the child into the world does not seem enough while bringing them up

and looking after them are too regarded virtuous characters: *Diil o mamu, angısı duudurdu, ama o angısı büüttü* [9, p. 105] (Mother is not she who gives birth to you, but she who raises you).

Although in most of the proverbs parents are not distinguished, both mother and father enjoy the same status in family, in some examples mother seems more important than father. It is emphasized that the mother's absence will leave her child defenseless. A mother is, first of all, a shelter for her child.

Anasız kuzu melemez; Anasız çocuk evde hordur, babasız çocuk çarşıda [7, p. 26] (Turkish); *Anasız uşak-kanatsız kuş gibi* [9, p. 104] (Gagauzi).

A motherless lamb will not bleat; A motherless child is despised at home, but a fatherless child is so in the market (Turkish); A motherless child is like a wingless bird (Gagauzi).

Baba, ananın evde çektiklerini bilmez [2, p. 169]. Father has no idea what difficulties mother faces at home. In the given proverb, it is emphasized that the father spends more time at work outside the home and is not aware of the things that happen to mother at home, such as housework, bringing up the child, and other concerns. In the proverb, the concepts of father and mother are contrasted and compared, and the positive connotation of the mother concept is being highlighted. More precisely, by emphasizing the positive connotation of the concept mother, the negative aspect of the concept father is made obvious. This view is more prevalent in the Gagauzi proverbs.

Anası olmayan uşaan, bobası da olmaz [9, p. 104] (Gagauzi) (a child who has no mother has no father)

Anasız uşak – uşak üüsüz, Bobasız uşak – uşak üzsüz [9, p. 104] (Gagauzi) (Motherless child – an orphan child, fatherless child – shameless child)

Anasını tanımazkan bobasını hiç da/ta tanımaz [9, p. 105] (Gagauzi) (If a child is not respectful to the mother, never be respectful to the father)

The idea that a mother is an example for her child, especially for her daughter, is particularly emphasized both in Turkish and Gagauz proverbs. Mother indeed is a living model as well as a teacher for her daughter. It is because there are certain boundaries between father and daughter in terms of closeness. Daughters do not spend as much time with their fathers as they do with mothers; therefore, it is not unusual that they learn more from their female parents and try to apply this knowledge to their own lives. They try to follow their mothers and want to be like them. The following language materials are good examples of mother-daughter stereotypes:

Ana ile kız, helva ile koz. [1, p. 133] (Turkish)

Mother with daughter, halva with walnut.

Ananın geçtii köprüdän kızı da geçer [9, p. 105] (*Gagauzi*)

The daughter will also cross the bridge that was crossed by her mother.

Anasına/anasını bak, danasını al [9, p. 105] (*Gagauzi*) – *Anasına bak kızını al, kenarına (kıyısına, tarağına) bak bezini al* [1, p. 135] (*Turkish*)

Look at its mother, take the calf (*Gagauzi*) – Look at the mother, before marrying her daughter.

Kız anasına bakmayınca, sofrayı kaldırmaz [9, p. 105] (*Gagauzi*)

Without seeing from her mother, a daughter won't clear the table.

Nicä anası – nicä/ölä da danası [9, p. 104] (*Gagauzi*)

Like mother like daughter

Mother's role and the moral duties ascribed to her in society. The main expectation of society and other members of the family from mother is to raise a good person. For people, a person's family, particularly the mother, has a direct impact on his or her upbringing, his or her attitude toward national and moral ideals, his or her moral characteristics, and even some subjective aspects of his or her character. They even do not take a person's subjective characteristic features into account at all. When a woman becomes a mother, she is already a role model in the family, and she is kind of obliged to do her duties in front of society, given to her by society itself.

According to the Turkish worldview, a mother who has given birth to a male child is more respected than a mother who has brought a female child into the world. Thus, one of the expectations or requirements of society from women, especially in Gagauz culture, is giving birth to a son. "In traditional families, having a male child were seen as the number one priority. In this kind of family, male children were increasing women's status within the family" [10, p. 357].

Similarly, in Turkish proverbs as well, this idea is observable:

Oğlanı her karı doğurmaz, er karı doğurur; Oğlan doğuran övünsün, kız doğuran dövünsün. (Only brave women could give birth to a son; a woman who gives birth to a son should be proud of herself, and a woman who gives birth to a girl should beat her breast).

Expressing in proverbs the idea that bringing a boy into the world is something to be proud of and an accomplishment to glorify, shows how language shapes culture by transferring this idea to subsequent generations. Today this way of thinking is not widespread and has decreased to a certain extent, however, unfortunately in some areas it is still present.

Another important language material in linguo-cultural studies is literature. For literary examples reveal the worldview of the people and the historical and social processes of the period in which they are created. Both in Turkish and Gagauz literature mother character is common. Because either in conceptual sphere of Turkish or in Gagauz languages the concept of mother occupies a significant place. Its significance is obvious not only in oral literature but also in written literary tradition. Naturally, a figure like mother who gave birth and raised human being could not stay out of people's attention. Written literature is expression of a nation's way of thinking or worldview in one of its member's language. By reading a written literature example, through the fictional characters created by an author, readers learn about the worldview of members of society as well as the historical and social problems of the time that the literary work belongs.

One conclusion drawn from the analysis of famous Turkish novels is that it is not enough that the mother educates the child well. On some occasions, children are not able to solve the problems that they face in society. They have nothing to learn from their mother in this regard because the mother herself is helpless in the face of these issues. This is because the mother, a woman who first lived under her father's and then her husband's authority, does not recognize society. Therefore, she is powerless in the face of social problems.

To consider novels, they can be classified into two in terms of plot: those that describe single parent families with the absence of father and stress the inability of mother in dealing with male children because of her weaker character, including Şemsettin Sami's "Taaşuk-ı Talat ve Fitnat", Ahmet Mithat Efendi's "Felatun Bey ile Rakım Efendi", Namiq Kamal's "İntibah" or "Sergüzeşt-i Ali Bey", Rezaizade Mahmud Ekrem's "Araba Sevdası" etc.; and those portray again single parent families this time with the absence of mother and point to the bitter fruits of this situation, bad fate girls, as in the example of Mehriban character in "Felatun Bey ile Rakım Efendi". Another point worth mentioning in these novels is that woman, as well as the mother, is not the main character of them but deuteragonist.

In Gagauz literature and folklore, the topic of motherhood has been widely considered. When considering Gagauz poetry, one can easily see that the majority of poets have often referred to this topic. In these poems, different issues related to mother such as love towards mother, challenges faced by mother

while raising her children, longing for mother etc. have been discussed. In this regard, Mina Köse's "Mamu", Nikolay Baboğlu's "Anam", T. Marinoğlu's "Sana, mamu!", "Annêêrız biz", "Mamu", "Mamuyu sevindirdik", Konstantin Vasilioğlu's "Ana Türküsü", Dimitri Qaraçoban's "Ana", Stepan Kuroğlu's "Ana Yaşı", Dionis Tanasoğlu's "Anasında Kucak", Q. Qaydarçı's "Afet, beni", "Garip anam", Todur Angeli's "Anamı Anarkan", and Todur Zaneti's "Anama Kiyat" poems could be mentioned. Moreover, famous Gagauzi poet and pedagogue Tudora Arnaut's book of poems "Anamın Evi" (My mother's house) is mainly devoted to mother.

After mentioning the foregoing poetry examples from Gagauz literature, related to the concept of mother, let us introduce one particular poem, to have more accurate description of the concept mother in the worldview of Gagauz people. The poem that you are going to read below is by Konstantin Vasilioğlu, called "Mamucuum benim" (My Mother/Mummy), where the poet describes mother-child relationships, her love and devotion in a particular way:

*Paali mamu, bana baaşladın
Büük bir can hem cennet dünneyi.
Bän hastaykan, kefsizkän gecä,
Sän bekläardın benim düşlermi.
Taa ölüncä borçluyum sana [13, p. 38].*

Dear mother, you bestowed upon me
This great world and life.
On my ill and unhappy nights,
You stood by my bed.
I owe you until I die.

The poem portrays mother as a being that gives life to human beings and cares for them, and, therefore, they owe her their lives.

Conclusions. This research paper focusing on the languages of the Turkish and Gagauz people explored the concept of "mother", which is universally significant, from the perspective of national culture. The paper specifically examined how this concept is understood in the conceptual framework of these two languages. The examination of written literature and folklore examples leads to the conclusion that, although the mother once held a dominant position in the family, due to changes in the social environment her function weakened and she became a secondary category in the family structure. Furthermore, the mother is portrayed in Turkic language facts as a more loving creature, though Gagauz language facts depict her as a more self-sacrificing entity.

Finally, utilizing the resources from the Turkish and Gagauz languages, the study identifies the stereotypes associated with motherhood in the perspectives of the speakers of both languages.

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Мірзасєва А. А. ПОНЯТТЯ «МАТИ» В ТУРЕЦЬКІЙ ТА ГАГАУЗЬКІЙ МОВАХ

У цій статті досліджуються ключові питання лінгвокультурологічних досліджень, зокрема вплив людини на мову, взаємодія між мовою та культурою та прояв процесу сприйняття в мові. Для цього не обійтися без дослідження концептів, які є основним поняттям лінгвокультурології. На цьому етапі лексичні одиниці, що зустрічаються в мові, досліджуються з точки зору народної культури, а також досліджується культурне значення, яке люди пов'язують зі словом. Шляхом порівняння концептів турецької та гагаузької мов дослідницька робота спрямована на виявлення їх відмінних та схожих аспектів у світогляді носіїв цих мов. Шляхом порівняльного вивчення концептів у споріднених мовах (турецькій і гагаузькій) є виявлення схожих і характерних рис даного концепту в світогляді носіїв мови. Використовуючи методи порівняльного, описового та концептуального аналізу, у статті досліджується, як турецькі та гагаузькі народи концептуалізують «матір» у своєму світогляді на прикладах писемної літератури, паремій, фольклору, а також усталених фраз і гнучких словосполучень, що використовуються для створення враження. про культурні коди народу багатоміркової історії. Висновок полягає в тому, що історично мати займала більш помітну роль у родині. Однак із зміною суспільних умов її позиція неухильно погіршувалася, в результаті чого вона стала відносно менш впливовою фігурою в сім'ї. Крім того, гагаузькі лінгвістичні факти зображують матір насамперед як фігуру, яка йде на жертви заради інших, тоді як у турецькій мові вона переважно представлена любов'ю. Отже, на основі елементів турецької та гагаузької мов закладено упередження щодо поняття матері у світогляді цих двох тюркських народів.

Ключові слова: *мати, поняття, мова, культура, лексика, світогляд, словосполучення, прислів'я.*