

## THE LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE EMOTIVE CONCEPT OF “HAPPINESS” IN TWO OLONKHO TEXTS (“KHAN DZHARGYSTUY” AND “NURGUN BOTUR, THE SWIFT”) AS A CASE-STUDY

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**ABSTRACT:** The article provides a content analysis of the emotive concept of „happiness” and its linguistic representation in the Olonkho texts titled “Khan Dzhangystuy” and “Nurgun Botur the Swift”. The aim of the study is to define the linguistic expressive means representing the concept of „happiness” in the Olonkhonarratives. The following linguistic expressive means were identified as a result of the research: lexical means in the semantic field of „happiness” (*yuor-kot* ‘to be filled with joy, to cheer’; *kul-oyno* ‘to be happy, to rejoice’; *korulae* ‘to rejoice, to fool around’); figurative lexical means (*yamay* ‘to sneer’; *yrzhay* ‘flee’; *muchuy* ‘to smile timidly’); interjections (*Uruy! Akhal! Ieheybin*); and formulaic constructions (all-round “happiness”, a kiss after a long-time partition). It is worth mentioning the conceptual metaphors, which represent a comparison of a specific situation to another concept recognizable by the recipient of the metaphorical idea. Thus, in the Olonkho texts, the “happiness” concept is represented using a pattern of “clapping one’s hands together”, a descriptive feature typical for depicting the Lower World representatives. It can be concluded that the representation of “happiness” in the analyzed texts is hyperbolic, purposefully exaggerated, and effective in producing an emotional and evaluative effect. It also demonstrates the hierarchic relationships within the folk-epic world and the belonging to a specific group.

**KEYWORDS:** concept, “happiness”, Olonkho, epic language, folklore, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, epic.

### Introduction

The language of the Yakut heroic folk epic is rich in expressive means and stylistic devices, and it frequently impresses the reader with its fantastic descriptions of the epic world created in Olonkho. “This language is poetic, flourishes with descriptions and is rich in its brave comparisons, as well as repetitions, which are truly admired by the Yakut people, metaphoric descriptions and an extensive use of words typical exclusively for fairytales and songs” (Kulakovskiy, 1979, p. 380). The Olonkho gives an exceptionally bright and colorful description of the characters’ emotions: it is done so in a hyperbolic manner, dramatically and pompously. Generally, it is typical for the Olonkho texts to exaggerate all the actions and concepts taking place in this unusual imaginary world. The goal of the Olonkhosut (or the Olonkho teller) is to immerse the listener into the events unfolding in the Olonkho, to make the listener empathize, sober, and feel joy together with the main characters, to love and cheer for the protagonists, to hate and to laugh at the antagonists. The characters’ bright display of their emotions contributes to this and establishes a specific contact with the listeners.

This article attempts to overview the concept of „happiness” as a basic universal concept typical for all humanity capable of expressing emotions. The aim of the study is to distinguish which linguistic means and stylistic devices are implemented to represent the „happiness” concept in the Yakut Olonkho texts.

The importance of the research is justified by the tendency in modern linguistics to conceptualize the inner world of human beings, considering that this world has an emotional side to it as well. With this in mind, the author believes it would be interesting to apply the component and conceptual analysis methods in analyzing the folk-epic texts as well as to distinguish the forms in which emotions are expressed in the fantastic world surroundings to define their unique linguistic features and representations. The author considers using the materials of the folk-epic text in analyzing the emotive concepts representation to be a novice research attempt.

In a relatively new trend in linguistics – cognitology – there is a clear rising interest in the study of the emotional sphere of human activity. There is also a possibility to single out a completely new and narrow field of research – emotiology (the linguistic study of emotions); the aim of this field is to study the emotiveness of language, speech and text. Due to its specific features, all the studies within this field are connected with psycholinguistics, linguistic culture, and ethnolinguistics. There are a number of fundamental studies on emotive concepts, mainly focusing on the lingo-cultural approach (Shahovskij, 1998, 2008; Mjagkova, 1990; Pimenova, 2004, 2007); in terms of its comparative aspect,

it is connected with the study of a different language material (Krasavskij, 2001, 2008; Trushkova, 2010); a range of scholars have distinguished the place of emotive concepts in the concept sphere of the language (Likhachev, 1993; Vezhbickaja, 2009; Pimenova, 2007). Thus, M.V. Pimenova suggests that the concepts expressing such emotions as rejoicing, „happiness”, joy, anger, sadness, suffering, loyalty, longing, anxiety, and love are psychological (or spiritual) along with the concepts of the human inner world (soul, spirit, heart), concepts expressing character (risk-taking, patience, good nature, generosity, dignity, etc.), mental concepts (knowledge, intellect, thought, understanding, memory, representation, etc.) (Pimenova, 2007, pp. 81–82).

The presented research was based on the text of Olonkho titled “Khan Dzargystuy”, which was recorded by I.A.Khudyakov from the unidentified Olonkho teller of the Verkhoyansk region who told the folk epic in the Northern local epic traditional manner and the text “Nurgun Botur, the Swift” by K.G. Orosin, who is a representative of the Tattinsky region folk-epic telling tradition. Both texts were recorded in approximately the same period – at the end of the 19th century when Olonkho existed actively in its pure art form as an oral epic art. The Verkhoyansk regional Olonkho was recorded by a folklore expert who was in exile in Yakutia; he was assisted by a local literary merchant, N.S. Gorokhov. Unfortunately, the name of the folk-epic teller remains undiscovered because, in that particular period of folklore studies, there was a tendency to leave out the bibliographical reference when recording the folklore material on paper. The written text version of Olonkho was first issued in the “Verkhoyansk Collection” in Russian language and later in the Yakut language in the “Selected Works of Yakut Traditional Literature”. The Tattinsky region Olonkho was recorded by the Olonkho teller, K.G. Orosin, personally; he learned how to write and read in the Yakut language; he came from a rich family. At that time, it was typical for wealthy families to invite famous Olonkho tellers to their festivities. Being young at that time, K.G. Orosin “inherited” the poetic folklore traditions from them. He was also greatly inspired by the political exiles that helped him to write down and record the Olonkho text in the “Selected Works of Yakut Traditional Literature”. Both texts mentioned earlier are considered masterpieces that perfectly represent the folklore traditions and language of those times, which is precisely why they are such valuable linguistic material for our study.

### **Linguistic representation of the concept of “happiness”**

„Happiness” is a positive emotional state associated with the ability to fully and sufficiently satisfy an urgent need; this is felt after some kind of creative or socially significant action occurs. There is a clear distinction between active and passive „happiness”. One of the criteria for such a distinction may be the difference in the levels of how strongly the person experiences joy. Strong „happiness” can be violent and, therefore, appear to be active, while weak “happiness” can appear to be passive. However, since „happiness” is an emotional experience, it is never completely passive or completely active. „Happiness” cannot be passive because it is always a state of anxiety. What is called active „happiness” may actually be interplay of anxiety with the cognitive and motor systems. The manifestations of rejoicing have a wide spectrum, from intense activity to contemplation „happiness”.

The „happiness” concept in the overviewed Olonkho texts is represented by various linguistic means, characteristic of both the folklore language and the Yakut language as a whole.

### **Verbs of the lexical-semantic field “happiness”**

In the Olonkho text “Nurgun Botur, the Swift”, the „happiness” concept is introduced using the compound verb *uor-kot* “to greatly rejoice, rejoice” (BTSYaYa, 2015, p. 486) (literally ‘rejoice and fly from joy’). In this example, the compound word is formed with the aim of intensifying the meaning, since simply *uor* would mean “to rejoice” and *kot* - “to fly”; however, combined together, these verbs mean “to rejoice greatly, to fly from joy”. This compound verb occurs six times in the Olonkho text. For example, an old mother, seeing her son in a heroic outfit, exclaims:

- Э, дьэ, оџобун  
Одун бис оџорбута кырдык эбит,  
Дьылџа тойон айбыта чаччы эбит,  
оџолор! Дьэ **үөрдүм-көттүм!** (NBS, 1947, p. 88)

Yes, it is indeed true, our son  
was created by the will of Odunbis,  
was born by the decree of Dylgatoyon,  
Now I **rejoice** and I am **filled with joy** about this!  
(NBS, 1947, p. 89).

In the Olonkho “Khan Dzhargystuy”. The „happiness” concept is most often incorporated in the Olonkho text with the help of the compound verb *kol-oyno* (lit.: *kul-onnyo*), which means “to rejoice, to have fun, to joke” (BTSYaYa, 2007, p. 607). *Kul* separately means “to laugh, to rejoice”, *onnyo* “to play, to be amused” (BTSYaYa, 2010, p. 313). The Olonkho under consideration uses a variant of *oyno*, which may be an ancient form of the verb *onnyo* (compare Alt. *oina*, Tuv. *oino*). We find confirmation of this in the article by N.N. Efremov on the syntactic constructions in the Abyisk regional Olonkho: “The use of the verb structure *oino* instead of the modern-day *onnyo* ‘to play’ in the Olonkho text shows the preservation of this ancient form in the Abyisk dialect” (Efremov, 2019, p. 99). The Verkhoyansk region, like the Abyisk region, is in the northern part of Yakutia; therefore, it is possible to preserve the ancient form due to the isolation of the language in the conditions of inaccessibility of the districts in question. For instance, the compound verb *kul-oino* is used when the main characters return to their homeland:

Иньэ гынан,  
 Оботун оџо оностон,  
 Дьахтарын дьахтар оностон,  
 Хонуктарыгар ол курдук утуйан,  
 Күнүстэригэр ол курдук айаннаан,  
**Күлэн-ойноон,**  
 Көһөн күөгэйэн испиттэр. (KhDzh, 2016, p. 75)

And so, having recognized the child as their own, the woman as their real wife, thus spending the night at the sleepover, traveling this way during the day, they walked and rode, **laughing and playing** (KhDzh, 1890, p. 167).

These compound verbs generally describe situations in which different characters meet the main character, i.e., the hero. In this case, according to the cluster method of describing emotional concepts suggested by V.Y. Apresyan, the hero can serve as a stimulus for a positive reaction (Apresjan, 2014) since in the epic world, the image of the Aiy (representative of good) hero is idealized. G.U. Ergis notes that the images of the heroes are especially perfect in artistic terms, “their Olonkho tellers are surrounded by an aura of strength, courage, unyielding will to achieve the goal, courage and heroism. The heroes are endowed with extraordinary beauty (of course, from the point of view of the ideals of the ancient Turks)” (NBS, 1947, p. 20).

Olonkho tales always end with the victory of good over evil and universal „happiness” and celebration. In the Olonkho “Khan Dzhargystuy”, in its final part, the concept of “happiness” is represented by the verbs *uor* “to rejoice”, *oino* “to play”, *uor-kot* “to be very happy” and *korolie* “to have fun, to be amused”, which are included in one semantic field of „happiness”:

Бу кэлбитэригэр,  
 өлбүт тилибитигэр  
**үөрэр** майгытынан **үөрдүлэр**.  
 Ас-бөбөнү аһаан,  
 ойнуу былатын **ойноон**,  
 киһи үтүөтэ тиксэн,  
**үөрэн-көтөн**,  
 отут хонук тоххору **көрүлээбиттэрин**  
 биир дэ хонук саҕа санаабатахтар. (KhDzh,  
 2016, p. 204)

When they arrived (to the parents), (the parents) **rejoiced** upon their arrival, as if they were raised from the dead; the best people gathered, the best people ate the best food, **played** all kinds of games, **rejoiced and had fun** for thirty whole nights. And in this **fun and joyous atmosphere** they did not count for a whole month even in one night (KhDzh, 1890, p. 230)

The Olonkho text “Nurgun Botur, the Swift” ends like this:

“The husband and wife joined hands and entered their dwelling. They began to live together, **playing and having fun**, as if there were twenty or thirty people gathered in one place” (NBS, 1947, pp. 358-359).

The deliberate repetition of the same thought using the synonyms (*uor* ‘rejoice’, *oino* ‘play’, *uor-kot* ‘greatly rejoice’ and *korolie* ‘to have fun, to entertain’) is a favourite technique both in folklore and in fiction, the purpose of which is the sharpening of the focus of attention on a recurring phenomenon. Such an exaggerated scene of fun and joy (30 nights they had fun as if 20-30 people had

fun) at the end of the story symbolizes the absolute triumph of the Aiyu tribe and the beginning of a new, happy life.

### **Figurative vocabulary**

In the reviewed Olonkho texts, the „happiness” concept can also be represented by figurative vocabulary which is a special layer of the Yakut language, which has a vivid expressiveness as well as emotional and evaluative characteristics. Using figurative vocabulary, the narrator can express his attitude towards the character, deliberately emphasize or exaggerate certain features in the character under description.

„Happiness” is expressed primarily by depicting facial expressions: movement of eyebrows, eyes, mouth and lips. For example, Abasy, the monsters from the Lower World, seeing the hero, Aiyu, express their „happiness” in their own special way:

<p>Онтон бу киһини (Үрүн Уоланы) дьэ көрөн баран, <b>Ымах-ымах,</b> <b>Ырдьас-ырдьас</b> соньуйан кэбистэ. (KhDzh, 2016, p. 53)</p>	<p>Seeing this person, he began <b>to smile terribly</b> (KhDzh, 1890, p. 155).</p>
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Here, the compound figurative words *ymakh-ymakh* from *ymay* (“disapproving smile, grin, blur into a smile” (BTSYaYa, 2017, p. 428)) and *yrdayk-yrdayk* from *yrday* (“bared teeth, grinning” (BTSYaYa, 2017, p. 485)) characterize „happiness” in an ominous manner typical for the Abasy. Moreover, the reason for such joy is the intention of the Abasy to give an obscene task to the *Aiyu bogatyr*, humiliating his honour and dignity - to prepare a bed for the Abasy’s love pleasures. The purpose of this request is to make the *Aiyu bogatyr* angry and provoke him to fight, thereby gaining psychological satisfaction. The Abasy heroes are characterized by such behavior. I.V. Pukhov notes their rudeness and the complete absence of any skills typical of an intelligent creature. The researcher gives the Abasy the following characteristic: “They are arrogant, self-confident; their bragging is incomparable with anything. In a word, the Abasy heroes are depicted in the Olonkho as beings who do not adhere to the most basic norms of human behaviour” (Pukhov, 1962, p. 137).

In other words, the „happiness” concept is represented through the figurative verb *muchukgyn*, derived from *muchuy*, “to smile slightly, timidly” (BTSYaYa, 2009, p. 382). With such a benevolent, modest smile, Khan Dzharystuy meets the blacksmith. It also demonstrates a respectful and noble attitude towards the *Aiyu bogatyr*. In particular, the blacksmiths themselves also hold a special place in the Yakut culture; they are revered, and it was believed that they stood next to the shaman (Alekseev, 1975, p. 104). Therefore, in Olonkho, their image is always calm and restrained, and such is the manifestation of their emotions.

### **Interjections**

„Happiness” also manifests itself in involuntary exclamations and speech reactions, which are usually attributed to interjections. “Interjections in the modern Yakut language are a fairly rich and actively functioning class of words, which are one of the brightest means of expressing a complex range of human emotions” (GSYaLYa, 1982, p. 369). However, they are also subject to archaization and may go out of use. Many interjections have survived in the folklore language, including the Olonkho language. For example, *alata-alata*, *ihilikpin-taulykpyyn*, and some others. They often become the initial component of the characters’ tunes and perform a distinctive function. For example, *buya*, *buyaka* (and the variations of this word) is typical for Abasy songs but not for representatives of the Aiyu:

<p>Онуоха абааһы уола көтүтэн иһэн санара иһэр үһү: — «<b>Буйакам-тайакам!</b>.. Мин диэтэх киһи саах балбаах саҕа байанайым улаатан иһэр, оҕолор! Кунан оҕус саҕа өрөгөйүм Улаатан иһэр, оҕолор!.. (NBS, 1947, p. 124)</p>	<p>The Abasy’s son said the following words on the fly: “<b>Buyakam, tayakam!</b>” The luck in hunting for a person like me grew like a frozen block of cattle feces. My „happiness” was crowned with success the size of a young bull, guys! (NBS, 1947, p. 125)</p>
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Here, we see the “happiness” of Abasy, who stole beauty from the Middle World. The Abasys associate joyful events with the impurities they are accustomed to in their terrible world. We cannot imagine that in moments of “happiness,” we would compare our feelings to feces. Such a discrepancy will produce a comic effect in Olonkho’s text.

The “happiness” concept is incorporated in the text of Olonkho researched by using interjections which express “happiness”, *urui*, *aikhal*, *michil* and *ieheyikpin*. In the first case, the interjections *urui*, *aikhal*, and *michil* are pronounced by an old woman greeting Nurgun Botur. Such a greeting has a pretentious and solemn nature since these interjections are characteristic of an algys – a well-wishing ceremonial text. L.S. Efimova defines these exclamations as expressive words characteristic of the texts of the Yakut algys with the meaning of special sensitivity and expressiveness (Efimova, 2013, p. 36). Again, in this situation, there is a respectful attitude towards the main character.

The exclamation of joy *ieheyikpin* is a slightly modified form of the generally accepted interjection *iehei*, *ieheibin*. In Olonkho, it occurs quite often and in the deliberately distorted form presented by us, i.e., *ieheyikpin* characterizes the speech of a representative of the Lower World, the manifestation of his emotions.

#### **Formula constructions**

The formality of the Olonkho language is its hallmark. N.N. Efremov defines the formula constructions as one of the fundamental structural and semantic elements of the Olonkho text (Efremov, 2013, p. 67). Formula constructions repeated from one Olonkho text to another are intertextual; they pass on from one text to another with minor changes or in an unchanged form.

Olonkho has a few formula constructions that represent the “happiness” concept. However, they are fairly common, easily recognizable, and come in several varieties. In the Olonkho text “Nurgun Botur, the Swift”, the following variation is presented: “The luck of facing victory has increased; the joy-and-” happiness” has increased” (NBS, 1947, pp. 296-297). In other versions, only some design elements change: *ulatta* ‘increased’ - *urdetie* ‘rose’, *sorgu-sargy* “‘happiness’, well-being’ as a phonetic variation depending on the vocal tradition in a particular region. Nevertheless, the core concept remains the same - the construction expresses the general “happiness” of victory or meeting with the hero.

Another common formula construction in all epic traditions describes a kiss, usually used when heroes meet after separation or as a sign of reconciliation. In the Olonkho text “Nurgun Botur, the Swift”, we come across this construction twice: after the release of the captive sister and reconciliation with the sibling. For example:

<p>Балтын кытта үүһэ уостарыттан үстүүтэ уурастылар, аллараа уостарыттан алталыыга сылластылар. (NBS, 1947, p. 160)</p>	<p>I kissed and sniffed my sister for joy three times with the upper lips, six times with the lower lips (NBS, 1947, p. 161).</p>
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In “Khan Dzargystuy”, another version of the construction describing the kiss of reconciliation is given:

<p>Били кэньиттэн уостарыттан уураһан, куустуһан, туксан, Айыыга танараҕа алҕаһан, этэ эттэрэ альаммытын ытыстарыгар силлэхэн баран, имэриһэн-оһорон кэбиһэн баран, дьиэлэригэр таһсан тийэн кэллилэр (KhDzh, 2016, p. 173)</p>	<p>After kissing the lips, making an incantation to God (Ai tangara), healing their wounded body by spitting, went out to their house, and came (KhDzh, 1890, p. 215)</p>
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The “happiness” concept in both cases is incorporated with the help of the so-called conceptual metaphor, i.e., description of emotions through metaphors, in which these emotions are conceptualized in language; the speaker compares this situation with another phenomenon similar to it, familiar to the addressee (Jablokova, 2016, p. 181). Therefore, in our situation, a kiss serves as a metaphor for joy, a behavioural expression of emotion. We will consider the conceptual metaphor in more detail in the following subsection of the article.

### *Conceptual metaphor*

A conceptual or cognitive metaphor is “understanding and experiencing an entity of one kind in terms of an entity of another kind” (Lakoff, 1980, p. 5). J. Lakoff proposed the theory of conceptual metaphor. Unlike the traditional understanding of metaphor, a conceptual metaphor is a universal thinking property. It covers a much more comprehensive range than just language and can be expressed both verbally (“life is a journey”) and nonverbally - in painting, music, gestures, etc.

“Happiness” can have a mimic expression (a spark in the eyes, a smile) or a physiological manifestation (rapid heart rate, change in breathing, intensity of sweating). In addition, “happiness” can manifest itself in so-called patterns (models) of behaviour characteristic only of this emotion—for example, jumping for joy, laughing, dancing, gesturing and other movements. Seeing such a reaction, one can immediately guess what emotion a person is experiencing. Patterns attached to emotions often become their metaphorical interpretation: stamping one’s feet - anger, covering one’s face with one’s hands - fear, etc.

In the Olonkho texts under study, the conceptual metaphor of joy is found in the following example:

<p>Онуоха абааһы бухатыыра икки ытыһын  <b>хабырҕатчы таһыйа-таһыйа</b> саҥа саҥара          тупар үһү. (NBS, 1947, p. 268)</p>	<p>The hero Abasy himself / <b>clapped his hands</b> loudly to this / and spoke such words          (NBS, 1947, p. 269).</p>
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The clapping pattern in this example has become a metaphorical interpretation of the emotion of joy. Indeed, such behaviour is characteristic of precisely that situation when a person experiences “happiness”. We find a similar example of the manifestation of joy in the Olonkho “Khan Dzhangystuy”: “And behind him, his damn girls (Abasy kysa) threw up their hands”. In this example, the expression “threw up their hands” is understood as “throwing up your hands, slightly clap your hands under the influence of some strong feeling”. Moreover, the fact that this is a manifestation of joy is clear from the general context since such a reaction followed the situation when the Aiyu hero fell into the trap of the Abasy girls. It is noteworthy that in both texts, the manifestation of joy through the pattern of “clapping hands” is found only in Abasy representatives of the Lower World. Such a manifestation of emotions is not typical for the inhabitants of the Middle and Upper Worlds. We can explain this by the fact that restraint and coldness are inherent in the mentality of the Yakut people. By their nature, for the most part, they are close to the Nordic peoples. An overemotional manifestation of feelings can be considered excessive, perhaps even vulgar, and therefore, in the epic world, such behaviour is attributed to representatives of the Lower World.

### **Conclusion**

Olonkho is a great folk work in which all folk knowledge and wisdom are preserved. It is not for nothing that it is called the encyclopedia of the life of the Sakha people. The emotions expressed by the characters in Olonkho are sincere, enthusiastic, and sometimes unrealistic. It is easy to imagine them when one reads or listens to Olonkho.

In this article, we have attempted to consider one emotive concept. Summing up the above and by the previously set research objectives, we conclude that the “happiness” concept in Olonkho texts “Nurgun Botur, the Swift” and “Khan Dzhangystuy” is represented by the following linguistic means: verbs included in the semantic field “happiness” (*Uor* ‘to rejoice’, *oino* ‘to play’, *korulie* ‘to have fun, to be amused’, etc.); figurative vocabulary, in particular, used to depict facial expressions (*ymakh* ‘smile, grin, blur into a smile’, *muchuk* ‘smile slightly, timidly’); interjection-exclamations of joy (*Urui!*, *Ieheyikpin!*); formula constructions; conceptual metaphor (patterns of behaviour).

In addition, we conclude that the manifestation of such emotion as joy in Olonkho texts is hyperbolic, deliberately exaggerated, has a bright emotional-evaluative texture and also demonstrates hierarchical relations within the epic world (respectful attitude to the main character), belonging to a certain group (the world - in the case of Abasy, craft - blacksmith).

The study of the representation of the “happiness” concept in Olonkho texts allows us to understand the processes of creating concepts of an epic text and their perception by listeners/readers. It also contributes to the systematization and categorization of the Olonkho concept sphere.

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