

A COGNITIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PROVERBS WITH ANIMAL CONCEPT

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HAYVON KOMPONENTLI INGLIZ VA O‘ZBEK MAQOLLARINING KOGNITIV TAHLILI

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КОГНИТИВНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ АНГЛИЙСКИХ И УЗБЕКСКИХ ПОСЛОВИЦ С КОМПОНЕНТОМ ЖИВОТНЫЕ

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**For citation (iqtibos keltirish uchun,
для цитирования):**

Normuradova G.M. A Cognitive Analysis of English and Uzbek Proverbs with Animal Concept. //O‘zbekistonda xorijiy tillar. — 2024. — 10-jild, № 2. — B. 169-179.

<https://doi.org/10.36078/1715853406>

Received: February 15, 2024

Accepted: April 17, 2024

Published: April 20, 2024

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Abstract. In this paper, the role of generic cognitive mechanisms in language structure and usage is analysed by conducting an analysis of proverbs in both English and Uzbek. A framework for understanding proverb cognition based on universal principles is provided, presenting an alternative perspective to that of Lakoff & Turner (1989) and aligning with Ruiz de Mendoza who proposes a more economical and motivated conceptual model. Additionally, utilizing a corpus of study, a comparative cognitive and sociolinguistic analysis is conducted between English and Uzbek proverbs. This analysis reveals a shared underlying cognitive schema among proverbs, while also demonstrating the reflection of distinct cultural beliefs. Consequently, proverbs offer a valuable resource for examining how we process experiences and conceptualize the world. The conclusion drawn is that proverbs represent a conceptual universal phenomenon with significant communicative and cross-cultural relevance.

Keywords: conceptual metaphors; a conceptual model; a cognitive analysis; a cognitive scheme; metaphorical picture of the world

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o‘zbek tillaridagi maqollarni tahlil qilish orqali umumiy kognitiv mexanizmlarning til tuzilishi va qo‘llanilishidagi o‘rni tahlil qilindi. Maqolada Lakoff va Turner nuqtai nazariga muqobil nuqtai nazarni taqdim etuvchi va yanada rivojlangan va motivatsiyalangan kontseptual modelni taklif qilgan Ruiz de Mendozaning mulohazalari bilan uyg‘unlashgan, universal tamoyillarga asoslangan maqollarni kognitiv jihatdan tushunish uchun asos yaratildi. Bundan tashqari, o‘quv korpusidan foydalanib, ingliz

va o'zbek maqollarini qiyosiy kognitiv va sotsiolingvistik tahlil qilindi. Ushbu tahlil maqollar orasidagi umumiy kognitiv sxemani ochib beradi, shu bilan birga alohida madaniy qadriyatlarining aksini ko'rsatadi. Shunday qilib, maqollar ma'lumotlarni qanday qayta ishlashimiz va dunyoni qanday konseptualizatsiya qilishimizni o'rganish uchun qimmatli manba bo'lib xizmat qiladi. Xulosa shuki, maqollar muhim kommunikativ va madaniyatlararo ahamiyatga ega bo'lgan kontseptual universal hodisadir.

Kalit so'zlar: kontseptual metafora; kontseptual model; kognitiv tahlil; kognitiv sxema; dunyoning metaforik tasviri.

Аннотация. В данной статье анализируется роль общих когнитивных механизмов в структуре и использовании языка посредством анализа пословиц на английском и узбекском языках. Статья обеспечивает основу для когнитивного понимания пословиц, основанную на универсальных принципах в сочетании с комментариями Руиса де Мендосы, который предлагает альтернативную точку зрения Лакоффу и Тернеру и предлагает более развитую и мотивированную концептуальную модель. В ходе исследования использовались такие методы анализа, как сравнительный, когнитивный и социолингвистический анализ. Проведенное исследование пословиц выявило общую когнитивную схему пословиц, а также продемонстрировало различные культурные взгляды носителей языков. Пословицы представляют собой ценный ресурс для изучения того, как мы обрабатываем переживания и концептуализируем мир. Сделан вывод, что пословицы представляют собой концептуальное универсальное явление, имеющее значительную коммуникативную и межкультурную значимость.

Ключевые слова: концептуальные метафоры; концептуальная модель; когнитивный анализ; когнитивная схема; метафорическая картина мира.

Introduction

In this study, the cognitive mechanisms underlying proverbs and present my perspectives on their specific versus universal characteristics is elucidated. Subsequently, a comparative analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs is conducted, leading to the conclusion that they represent a conceptual universal phenomenon, possessing considerable communicative and instructive efficacy. Moreover, they serve as a fascinating and enlightening repository of folk wisdom.

The exploration of proverbs has been approached from various angles, including personal, formal, religious, cultural, and cognitive perspectives. In this study, cognitive, social, and pragmatic viewpoints are adopted. The cognitive perspective allows access to the universal principles underpinning proverb cognition. Conversely, the social and pragmatic perspectives enable us to delve beyond the linguistic structure of proverbs to explore the vast reservoir of background knowledge and cultural beliefs they embody.

From a pragmatic standpoint, proverbs serve communicative functions, necessitating pragmatic reasoning for comprehension. They are employed with specific communicative intentions that transcend their linguistic form and literal meaning. Additionally, they reflect an implicit typology of reasoning patterns or arguments.

For these and other reasons, proverbs merit scholarly investigation, as they afford insights into our thought processes, conceptualizations, categorizations of the world, and the transmission of traditional folk wisdom across generations.

Proverb cognition. How proverbs work

According to Lakoff, the interpretation of proverbs can be understood through the framework of the Great Chain Metaphor (5). This metaphor comprises several key elements, including the Generic Is Specific metaphor, which identifies common generic-level structures from specific schemas. Additionally, the communicative maxim of Quantity, which dictates that communication should be as informative as necessary without excess, influences the interpretation of proverbs by limiting what can be understood. Moreover, the interaction between the Great Chain and the Nature of Things further shapes the interpretation process.

Derived from the Great Chain of Being is the People Are Animals metaphor, which is evident in many proverbs. The strength of the Great Chain Metaphor lies in its applicability to a wide range of situations with consistent generic-level structures. For instance, the proverb “Big thunder, little rain” can be applied metaphorically to describe various scenarios, such as a barking dog (indicating that its bark is more intimidating than its actual bite), a person (suggesting lots of talk but little action), or even weather conditions (signifying loud thunder but minimal rainfall). Similarly, the English proverb “*All bark and no bite*” can be applied to numerous analogous situations, except when literal references to dogs are involved, unless the context suggests a metaphorical interpretation.

Conceptual interaction patterns in proverbs

Goossens outlines four patterns of interaction between metaphor and metonymy, which Ruiz de Mendoza (11) condenses into two, following his differentiation between source-in-target and target-in-source metonymies (4, 14). These two patterns involve scenarios where the output of a metaphoric mapping serves as the source for a metonymy, or vice versa.

Of particular relevance to the study of proverbs is the metonymic expansion of the source of a metaphor, which provides pertinent material for constructing a metaphoric mapping, thus generating a generic space. Consequently, these patterns of interaction are significant as they allow for the utilization of the Specific for Generic metonymy inherent in proverbs.

For instance, consider the proverb: “Better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion.” Here, the metaphorical understanding of leaders as the “head” of a body, in terms of the basic metaphor “Control Is Up,” allows for the mapping of the physical aspect of being “up” (the head) from an animal onto a person, who is also metaphorically “up” in terms of leadership. This mapping preserves the generic-level structure. In this case, the interaction occurs between the Great Chain metaphor and the basic metaphor “Control Is Up,” along with a source-in-target metonymy, specifically the Specific for Generic metonymy involving domain expansion, where “head” represents a person with a leading role.

Generic-level structure and the Extended Invariance Principle

The development of the source domain in the People Are Animals metaphor relies on a source-in-target metaphor, structuring a mental space that facilitates the mapping from specific instances to generic situations, which then become part of the source domain. This process involves two input spaces: one generated by the metaphor itself and the other derived from the particular situation to which the metaphor is applied.

In this context, the Extended Invariance Principle, as formulated by Ruiz de Mendoza (10, 263), imbues cognitive processes underlying such phenomena with systematicity. This principle states: “Metaphorical mappings maintain the generic-level structure of the source domain in a manner consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain.” Ruiz de Mendoza (9, 265) revises this principle to enable the convergence of multiple cognitive domains without compromising the generic-level structures of any of them: “All contextual effects resulting from a metaphoric mapping will uphold the generic-level structure of the source domain and any other input space involved, in a manner consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain.” Consequently, we observe the convergence of the Generic Is Specific metaphor and the People Are Animals metaphor, along with any relevant conceptual mappings, abstract or concrete, present in metonymies.

The universality and specificity of proverbs: implications

What remains universal about proverbs is the cognitive mechanisms employed by speakers for their production, comprehension, and transmission, as elucidated through the lens of the Great Chain Metaphor Theory (GCMT). However, when considering the cultural perspective, we recognize that the Great Chain metaphor serves as a cultural model that attributes characteristics and behaviors to humans, animals, plants, complex objects, and natural phenomena.

Lakoff & Turner (7, 193-194) introduce various metaphorical schemas illustrating how humans conceptualize animals and apply this folk knowledge to construct metaphorical frameworks. Consequently, we can perceive people in terms of lower-order beings or conversely, comprehend these lower-order beings in light of human attributes and behaviors. The domain of animal life is particularly intricate and frequently utilized to comprehend the human domain. This understanding is pivotal for the analysis and interpretation of proverbs. Lakoff & Turner highlight several common propositions inherent in animal schemas (7):

Pigs are often associated with traits of being dirty, messy, and rude.

- Lions are symbolized as courageous and noble creatures.
- Foxes are commonly depicted as clever and sly.
- Dogs are characterized by traits of loyalty, dependability, and dependency.
- Cats are often perceived as fickle and independent.
- Wolves may be seen as cruel and murderous or, in Uzbek folklore, as gullible.
- Gorillas are sometimes portrayed as aggressive and violent.

These associations and representations within animal schemas provide rich insights into cultural perceptions and are instrumental in the

interpretation of proverbs.

“These are metaphorical propositions within schemas[...]. Our folk understanding of what these animals are like is metaphorical[...] It is so **natural** for us to understand non-human attributes in terms of our own human character traits that we often have difficulty realising that such characterisations of animals are metaphorical.” Lakoff & Turner (7, 194).

The interpretation offers a valuable perspective on the nature of folk knowledge underlying proverbs. While Lakoff & Turner (7) suggest that this folk knowledge is natural and thus universal, you rightly argue that its widespread presence across cultures does not necessarily imply naturalness. Rather, it is a convention subject to potential changes, making the metaphorical propositions common rather than universal. This shared folk knowledge contributes to the resonance of proverbs across cultures, facilitating their interpretation even when encountering them for the first time, thanks to their universal underlying mental mechanisms.

The distinction proposed by Orbaneja and Majada between universal moral proverbs and those born from specific historical or cultural contexts further underscores the social and cultural underpinnings of proverbs (8). While some proverbs convey timeless moral principles applicable across societies, others are tied to particular events or customs, bearing distinct identity markers reflective of their origin.

This perspective highlights the role of social, cultural, and political values in shaping proverbs, with differences in their reach across countries and societies. This distinction proves useful for the analysis, as it is aimed to explore similarities and differences between English and Uzbek proverbs to glean insights into societal values. In contrast to Lakoff & Turner's (6, 213) potentially deterministic view, our approach acknowledges the dynamic and socially constructed nature of proverbs:

For whatever reason, perhaps because in our early cognitive development we inevitably form the model of the basic Great Chain as we interact with the world, it seems that the Great Chain is widespread and has a strong **natural** appeal. This is frightening. It implies that those social, political, and ecological evils induced by the Great Chain will not disappear quickly or easily or of their own accord.

Proverbs are comprehended within the framework of underlying assumptions and values, rendering them fundamentally social constructs. Context plays a pivotal role in deciphering their intended meaning, given their indirect mode of communication. Acquired through social interactions and serving communal objectives, proverbs serve as vehicles for the propagation of social values. While there is ambiguity regarding whether proverbs merely mirror or actively propagate social values, they undeniably offer profound insights into the ethos of a particular culture.

Comparison of proverbs in English and Uzbek

Proverbs, much like species, undergo evolution. They abound in imagery, possess familiarity, and are easily acquired. Despite their broad cultural reach, proverbs vary greatly in their longevity. In this study, the proverbs related to dogs have been chosen specifically to narrow down the scope for analysis.

Embedded within the cultural model of the Great Chain are

hierarchies that serve not only descriptive but also instructive purposes. They convey ideals about how the world should be organized. At the core of the Great Chain lies the relationship between humans and lower forms of existence, wherein animals are prototypically characterized by instinctual behavior. However, common knowledge suggests that higher animals, such as dogs, also possess interior states like desires, emotions, and limited cognitive abilities such as memory. According to the Great Chain metaphor, these attributes dictate specific behavioral patterns. By employing the Generic Is Specific metaphor, human traits can be understood in terms of animal attributes, allowing for the construction of metaphorical schemas, as exemplified above, portraying dogs as dependable, dependent, and loyal. With this understanding, I focus specifically on proverbs featuring these traits.

Proverbs may vary in the metaphors they employ. While all utilize the Generic Is Specific metaphor, some feature animals as protagonists, thus incorporating the People Are Animals metaphor, while others involve animals merely as participants or may even exclude them altogether.

Corpus of study

My corpus has been extracted from a number of compilations of proverbs, both in English and in Spanish: Carbonell (2), Flavell (3), Junceda (1998), and Canalleda (1). Out of all these, it is decided to delimit my scope of research in order to provide this piece of research with more accuracy and more detailed explanatory and descriptive power. Thus, the proverbs where dogs are the protagonists have been selected – those where we find the People Are Animals metaphor – at least in one of the two languages it is being dealt with. The corpus analysed is provided in Figures 1 below:

Figure 1 Corpus of analysis

Uzbek	English
1. <i>It vafo — xotin jafo</i>	1. Every dog has his day
2. <i>O'ning o'limi — itning bayrami</i>	2. The weaker has the worst An unhappy man's cart is eith to tumble
3. <i>It hurar, karvon o'tar</i>	3. Let sleeping dogs lie [When sorrow is asleep, wake it not]
4. <i>So'z bilmagan kishidan Hura bilgan it yaxshi</i>	4. Barking dogs seldom bite
5. <i>Chaqirilmagan mehmon — sariq itdan yoman</i>	5. Dead dogs bite not [Dead men don't bite]
6. <i>Urishmoq itka yaxshi</i>	6. Dogs wag their tails not so much in love to you as to your bread

<i>Nomarddan najot kutma, Itidan - hojat</i>	7. Better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion
<i>Sher izini it bosmas</i>	8. A living dog is better than a dead lion
<i>Yomon ot oxur buzar, Yomon it egasini uzar</i>	9. You cannot teach an old dog new tricks
<i>Hayt desa, It yugurar Itidan avval — qiz</i>	10. The dog that is idle barks at his fleas
<i>Qo'rqqaqan itning quyruq i qisiq</i>	11. A dog is a man's best friend
<i>El tinsa ham it tinmas</i>	12. Dog does not eat dog
<i>Yetim o'g'lon it bo'lar, Yoqasi to'la bit bo'lar</i>	13. In every country dogs bite
<i>Birovning yurtida bek bo'lguncha, O'z yurtingda it bo'l</i>	14. The dogs bark but the caravan goes on
	15. An old dog barks not in vain If the old dog barks, he gives counsel

Unraveling the Wisdom of Proverbs: a Pragmatic and Sociolinguistic Analysis

Proverbs serve as linguistic artifacts rich in cultural insights, reflecting the beliefs, values, and practical wisdom of a society. Through the lens of conceptual metaphor theory, we can unravel the intricate layers of meaning embedded within these succinct expressions. In this article, we delve into a selection of proverbs, examining both their sociolinguistic nuances and pragmatic implications.

Proverb *Every dog has his day*, sociolinguistically suggests that everyone will have moments of success or recognition in their life, regardless of their current situation or status. It reflects a belief in the cyclical nature of life and the potential for individuals to experience moments of triumph. Pragmatically, the metaphorical concept here is the idea of temporary success or fortune, which is mapped onto the behavior of dogs. The source domain of “dogs” is mapped onto the target domain of “individuals,” suggesting that everyone will have their moment of prominence or achievement.

“The weaker has the worst / An unhappy man's cart is easy to tumble”. From sociolinguistics viewpoint, these proverbs convey the idea that those who are vulnerable or in a disadvantaged position are more susceptible to hardships or misfortunes. Sociolinguistically, they reflect societal attitudes toward power dynamics and the challenges faced by the less fortunate. Both proverbs employ the metaphorical concepts of vulnerability and instability, which are mapped onto the behavior of dogs and carts, respectively. The source domains of “dogs” and “carts” are

metaphorically mapped onto the target domains of “vulnerable individuals” and “unstable situations,” emphasizing the precariousness of their positions.

Let sleeping dogs lie (When sorrow is asleep, wake it not). These proverbs advise against stirring up trouble or revisiting past grievances. Sociolinguistically, they reflect a pragmatic approach to avoiding unnecessary conflicts or emotional distress. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of avoiding confrontation or disruption, which is mapped onto the behavior of sleeping dogs and sorrow, respectively. The source domain of “dogs/sorrow” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “potential conflicts/emotional distress,” emphasizing the importance of leaving things undisturbed.

Barking dogs seldom bite. This proverb suggests that those who make the most noise are often not the ones who pose a real threat. Sociolinguistically, it reflects skepticism toward individuals who boast or threaten without follow-through. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of empty threats or bluster, which is mapped onto the behavior of barking dogs. The source domain of “dogs” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “individuals making noise,” highlighting the discrepancy between appearance and action.

Dead dogs bite not (Dead men don't bite). These proverbs imply that once someone or something is no longer a threat, they can no longer cause harm. Sociolinguistically, they reflect attitudes toward mortality and the cessation of danger. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of harm or threat, which is mapped onto the behavior of dead dogs/men. The source domain of “dogs/men” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “potential harm/threat,” emphasizing the cessation of danger once the source is no longer active.

Dogs wag their tails not so much in love to you as to your bread. This proverb suggests that loyalty may be motivated more by self-interest or material gain than genuine affection. Sociolinguistically, it reflects cynicism toward expressions of loyalty or affection. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of loyalty, which is mapped onto the behavior of dogs wagging their tails. The source domain of “dogs” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “loyalty,” suggesting that loyalty may be driven by external factors rather than genuine affection.

Better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion. This proverb suggests that it is preferable to be a leader in a small or humble position than a follower in a prestigious but subordinate role. Sociolinguistically, it reflects attitudes toward power, autonomy, and dignity. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of leadership and status, which is mapped onto the anatomical positions of dogs and lions. The source domain of “dogs/lions” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “leadership/subordination,” emphasizing the value of autonomy and authority.

A living dog is better than a dead lion. This proverb suggests that it is better to be alive and humble than to be powerful and deceased. Sociolinguistically, it reflects attitudes toward life, vitality, and practicality. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of value and vitality, which is mapped onto the status of dogs and lions. The source

domain of “dogs/lions” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “value/life,” emphasizing the importance of existence and functionality.

You cannot teach an old dog new tricks. This proverb suggests that it is difficult to change someone's habits or behaviors, especially as they grow older. Sociolinguistically, it reflects attitudes toward adaptability, learning, and age. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of learning and adaptability, which is mapped onto the behavior of old dogs. The source domain of “dogs” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “individuals,” emphasizing the challenge of teaching new skills or behaviors to those set in their ways.

The dog that is idle barks at his fleas. This proverb suggests that individuals who are idle or have no purpose may engage in trivial or unnecessary activities. Sociolinguistically, it reflects attitudes toward productivity, purposefulness, and idleness. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of idleness and distraction, which is mapped onto the behavior of dogs barking at fleas. The source domain of “dogs” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “idle individuals,” emphasizing the tendency to engage in unproductive behavior when lacking purpose.

It — vafo, xotin — jafo. (Dog is loyal, wife is betrayal). This proverb reflects societal attitudes towards loyalty and betrayal within relationships, particularly highlighting a comparison between the perceived loyalty of dogs and the perceived betrayal of wives. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of loyalty and betrayal, which is mapped onto the behavior of dogs and wives, respectively. The source domain of “dogs/wives” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “loyalty/betrayal,” emphasizing contrasting expectations within relationships.

Otning o'limi — itning bayrami. (The death of the camel is a holiday for the dog). This proverb suggests that certain individuals benefit from the misfortune of others, reflecting attitudes towards opportunism and schadenfreude. The metaphorical concept here revolves around benefiting from others' misfortunes, which is mapped onto the behavior of dogs celebrating the death of camels. The source domain of “dogs/camels” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “opportunistic behavior,” emphasizing the idea of gaining advantage from adversity.

It hurar, karvon o'tar. (The dogs bark but the caravan goes on). Equivalent to the proverb “the dogs bark but the caravan goes on,” this phrase suggests resilience and perseverance in the face of obstacles. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of persistence despite distractions, which is mapped onto the behavior of barking dogs and continuing caravans. The source domain of “dogs/caravans” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “distractions/progress,” emphasizing the importance of persevering despite challenges.

Chaqirilmagan mehmon — sariq itdan yomon. (An uninvited guest is worse than the yellow dog). This proverb reflects attitudes towards uninvited guests, emphasizing the discomfort or inconvenience they may cause. The metaphorical concept here revolves around unwanted intrusions, which is mapped onto the behavior of uninvited guests and yellow dogs. The source domain of “guests/dogs” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “intrusion/discomfort,” emphasizing the negative impact of uninvited visitors.

So‘z bilmagan kishidan. Hura bilgan it yaxshi (To be a barking dog is better than being not communicative). This proverb suggests the value of communication and expression, contrasting the perceived negativity of silence with the perceived positivity of vocalization. The metaphorical concept here is the idea of communication and expression, which is mapped onto the behavior of barking dogs and silent individuals. The source domain of “dogs/individuals” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “communication/expression,” emphasizing the importance of vocalizing one's thoughts and feelings.

Urishmoq itga yaxshi (Grumpy men are equal to the dogs). This proverb equates grumpiness in men with the behavior of dogs, reflecting attitudes towards moodiness or irritability. The metaphorical concept here revolves around mood and temperament, which is mapped onto the behavior of grumpy men and dogs. The source domain of “men/dogs” is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of “mood/behavior,” emphasizing the similarity between human and canine temperament.

Conclusion

In this article, my aim has been to shed light on the role of generic cognitive mechanisms in language structure and usage. Through a brief examination of metaphorical and metonymic phenomena in proverbs across different languages, I have illustrated their foundation on cognitive and pragmatic universal principles. Additionally, by delving into the social meanings conveyed by proverbs, I have uncovered evidence for the systematic conventionalization process inherent in these linguistic expressions across various languages. This process involves an array of cognitive mechanisms that have been scrutinized in this study, thereby contributing to our understanding of how grammatical resources evolve within proverbs.

I argue that while proverbial expressions may exhibit variations across cultures and convey different cultural scripts, they nevertheless underscore the uniformity of cognitive mechanisms employed by speakers to comprehend and produce them. Nonetheless, a comprehensive study encompassing languages beyond English and Spanish would further substantiate their universal systematicity.

Finally, it is crucial to acknowledge the significance and utility of proverbs. They serve as highly economical vehicles for transmitting ideas, making them pragmatically efficient tools of communication. Moreover, they offer valuable insights into the traditions and popular beliefs of a community of speakers, rendering them invaluable for sociolinguistic analysis.

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