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COGNITIVE-LINGUISTIC MODELING AND NOMINATIVE PROPERTIES OF "KINDIK/GÖBEK" SOMATIC METAPHORS IN TURKISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23163407

ABSTRACT: This paper presents a comparative analysis of the cognitive nature, semantic derivation, and nominative potential of metaphorical units derived from the somatisms kindik and göbek in the Uzbek and Turkish languages. It explores the role of human bodily experience associated with the navel/umbilicus as a source domain in conceptualizing various physical, spatial, and abstract target domains. The findings reveal shared conceptual patterns across both languages within the models of **CENTER**, **FUNCTIONAL CORE**, and **CONNECTION**, while highlighting key distinctions in their technical, spatial, and linguo-cultural realizations. Furthermore, the paper contrasts the active productive use of the Turkish lexeme göbek in technical and spatial nomenclature with the semantic preferences of Uzbek kindik, which leans predominantly toward metaphorical conceptualizations of centrality, proximity, and interpersonal interconnectedness.

Keywords: somatic metaphor, cognitive linguistics, kindik, göbek, source domain, target domain, conceptual model, nominative properties, linguo-cultural features, comparative semantics.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the consolidation of the anthropocentric paradigm, the human factor—specifically bodily experience in perceiving and conceptualizing the world—has become a central focus of modern linguistic inquiry. Under the Conceptual Metaphor Theory advanced by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, human embodied experience serves as a foundational cognitive substrate for grasping and articulating abstract notions [4]. Humans systematically structure abstract concepts through bodily experiences, physical organs, and sensorimotor perceptions. In this regard, somatisms function not merely as stylistic and expressive devices, but as an active lexical stratum driving the categorization of reality and the lexical nomination of emerging concepts [1].

The physiological and sensory experience tied to the umbilical region provides a critical cognitive anchor for the semantic expansion of the kindik/göbek somatisms. The navel is fundamentally perceived as an embodied trace of an individual's prenatal biological attachment to the maternal organism. This embodied grounding fosters cognitive associations with centrality, internal interconnectedness, and core structural organization. However, the precise metaphorical mappings, the degree of involvement in technical and spatial terminologization, and the points of semantic divergence between Turkish and Uzbek warrant systematic comparative scrutiny.

The empirical material of this study consists of lexical items, fixed collocations, and idiomatic expressions containing the components kindik and göbek, extracted

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from lexicographical works and verified via online discourse data. Data collection involved validating authentic occurrences through web corpora and digital repositories, factoring in recurrence across diverse registers. The accumulated data was examined through comparative-typological, cognitive-semantic, and conceptual-metaphorical analysis. Investigating the conceptual and nominative potential of kindik/göbek across these two closely related Turkic languages thus addresses an important issue in cognitive and comparative lexicology.

2. ANALYSIS AND MAIN RESULTS

The empirical findings demonstrate that in both Turkish and Uzbek, the somatic items kindik/göbek project onto three primary conceptual trajectories anchored in bodily experience: **CENTER**, **FUNCTIONAL CORE**, and **CONNECTION**. Nonetheless, the lexicalization patterns and nominative productivity of these trajectories display noticeable asymmetry between the two languages.

2.1. Spatial and Architectural Centrality Model

The physical perception of the navel as the focal, central point of the human body is systematically mapped onto the structural centers of physical spaces and geographic entities:

- **In Turkish:**
  - Avrupa'nın göbeği (the heart/center of Europe)
  - Balkanların göbeği (the heart/center of the Balkans)
  - şehir göbeği (city center / downtown core)
- **In Uzbek:**
  - shaharning kindigi (the center/heart of the city)
  - Toshkentning kindigi – Chorsu (Chorsu is the center of Tashkent)
  - Dashtning kindigi mana shu yer (This very place is the center of the steppe) [2]

In these expressions, göbek/kindik does not denote a strictly geometric midpoint, but conceptualizes a vital, focal, and functional focal zone. In Turkish, this mapping extends further into architectural and interior design terminology: the collocation ahşap tavan göbeği denotes the central carved or ornamental rosette medallion of a wooden ceiling.

Consequently, these instances represent the conceptual shift: **BODY CENTER → OBJECT/SPACE CENTER**.

2.2. Techno-Mechanical Functionality and Nominative Differentiation

In Turkish, the semantic range of göbek extends broadly into technical and engineering nomenclature:

- bisiklet göbeği (bicycle wheel hub)
- jant göbeği (wheel rim hub/cap)
- tekerlek göbeği (wheel axle hub)
- kapı göbeği (door lock core/cylinder)
- kilit göbeği (lock cylinder mechanism)

Here, göbek specifies the structural pivot and functional core of an engineered artifact or mechanism. The embodied knowledge of the body's center thus provides a cognitive matrix for conceptualizing and naming mechanical components.

In Uzbek, by contrast, the functional application of kindik within technical and engineering domains is considerably more constrained. Uzbek technical discourse

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prefers alternative non-somatic nominative items such as o‘zak (core/shaft), mag‘iz (kernel/nucleus), o‘q (axis/shaft), or markaz (center). This disparity demonstrates that identical somatic items can yield divergent degrees of nominative productivity across sister languages.

This divergence cannot be attributed solely to cultural variance; it is governed by intra-linguistic polysemy, derivational flexibility, lexical traditions, and the historical development of specialized terminology.

2.3. Connectivity and Socio-Emotional Proximity Model

In Uzbek, along with spatial centrality, the somatism kindik actively participates in structuring notions of interpersonal intimacy and communal affiliation:

The expression kindigi bir (literally "their navels are one") conveys close psychological, intellectual, or spiritual alignment between individuals. In interrogative pragmatic constructions such as U bilan kindiging birmi? ("Was your umbilical cord cut together with his?"), the idiom encodes an evaluative, critical stance toward overstepped personal boundaries, unwarranted meddling, or excessive, stifling closeness.

This semantic extension follows the conceptual pathway: **BIOLOGICAL CONNECTION → SOCIAL PROXIMITY**, where the prenatal biological bond serves as the source domain for organizing abstract social relations.

2.4. Divergent Conceptualizations of an Identical Target Domain

Although the Turkish construction huzurun göbeğinde and the Uzbek idiom orom qo‘ynida both delineate an experiential state of serenity, peace, and rest, they recruit distinctly different source domains:

In Turkish, huzurun göbeğinde utilizes göbek to activate a focal image schema, conceptualizing serenity as an optimal, central locus. For instance, in Vefa Altınsoy’s poem Bir Gün, the phrase surfaces with the meaning "in the very epicenter of tranquility":

“Maviyle buluşacağım bir gün
Sukunetin içinde, huzurun göbeğinde... .” [6]

Here, göbek invokes the **CENTER** schema, structuring the conceptual relation **TRANQUILITY IS A CENTER**.

In Uzbek, the corresponding concept of peaceful rest is structured through the container and protective proximity schema via qo‘yn (bosom/lap). For example, in Sardor Samandar o‘g‘li’s (Kavsar) poem Makka qarzim bor, this state is framed as:

“Shirin orom qo‘ynida, bir tush ko‘ribman,
Orzuga belangan ko‘kda turibman...” [7]

Here, orom represents an abstract emotional-physical condition, while qo‘yn acts as an embracing, protective container, yielding the shift: **ABSTRACT STATE → ENCOMPASSING CONTAINER SPACE**.

Thus, the shared target domain of **TRANQUILITY/PEACE** is mediated through divergent conceptual vehicles: Turkish relies on the **CENTER** schema (huzurun göbeğinde), whereas Uzbek utilizes the **ENCOMPASSING SPACE / CONTAINER** schema (orom qo‘ynida, orom bag‘rida). This highlights how a common conceptual need in related languages can manifest through divergent linguistic mechanisms.

2.5. Linguistic and Linguo-Cultural Constraints

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Asymmetrical activation of somatic metaphors is not determined purely by cultural factors. Structural dynamics—including polysemy, naming conventions, terminological requirements, and existing lexical inventories—play a significant role.

The extensive application of Turkish göbek across technical and spatial nomenclature reflects strong nominative derivation tendencies. In Uzbek, the metaphorical potential of kindik remains primarily centered on relational depth, geographic focal points, and interpersonal ties.

Interpreting these distinctions requires evaluating the interplay between embodied experience, internal semantic systems, lexical traditions, and functional terminological needs.

3. CONCLUSION AND SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS

The findings confirm that kindik and göbek in Uzbek and Turkish operate not merely as anatomical terms, but as versatile lexical units that conceptualize spatial, structural, mechanical, and social relations. Their semantic expansion is anchored in embodied cognitive schemas of centrality, coredness, and biological interconnection.

1. **Shared Conceptual Foundations:** Both languages systematically construct the conceptual models **CENTER**, **CORE**, and **CONNECTION** from the kindik/göbek somatisms, underscoring the universal role of bodily experience in conceptualizing physical spaces, physical objects, technical mechanisms, and human relationships.
2. **Nominative Specialization:** In Turkish, the **CENTER → FUNCTIONAL CORE** model is highly productive in mechanical, architectural, and spatial designations. In Uzbek, the applications of kindik feature prominently within **CENTER → SALIENCE/IMPORTANCE** and **CONNECTION → SOCIAL PROXIMITY/INTERDEPENDENCE**, illustrating how identical bodily premises undergo distinct verbalization patterns.
3. **Source Domain Variation for Equal Targets:** Collocations such as Turkish huzurun göbeğinde and Uzbek orom qo‘ynida / orom bag‘rida prove that identical target states (peace and tranquility) can be structured via alternative conceptual domains: Turkish conceptualizes tranquility via **CENTER**, whereas Uzbek structures it through an **ENCOMPASSING CONTAINER**.

Ultimately, this comparative analysis of kindik/göbek illustrates the mechanisms by which somatic lexemes move beyond biological denotation into abstract spatial, technical, and socio-cultural frameworks, providing valuable empirical insights for comparative cognitive linguistics.

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