



**VERBAL EXPRESSION OF MORAL CONCEPTS IN
ALISHER NAVOI'S *HAYRAT UL-ABROR* AND GEOFFREY
CHAUCER'S *THE CANTERBURY TALES*: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UZBEK AND ENGLISH
LANGUAGES**

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada Alisher Navoiyning *Hayrat ul-Abror* asari va Geoffrey Chaucerning *The Canterbury Tales* asarida axloqiy tushunchalarning verbal ifodalanishi qiyosiy-lingvistik jihatdan tadqiq etiladi. Tadqiqotda adolat, halollik, saxovat, bilim, kamtarlik, rahm-shafqat, ochko'zlik, manmanlik, yolg'on va ikkiyuzlamachilik kabi axloqiy tushunchalarning ikki xil adabiy va lingvomadaniy muhitda ifodalanish xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. Navoiyning asarida axloqiy tushunchalar asosan falsafiy-didaktik bayon, metafora, ramziylik, leksik takror va semantik qarama-qarshiliklar orqali ifodalandani aniqlanadi. Chaucer ijodida esa mazkur tushunchalar ko'proq obrazlar xarakteri, dialog, kinoya, hikoya voqealari va pragmatik ma'no orqali namoyon bo'ladi. Tadqiqot natijalari har ikki asarda umumiy axloqiy qadriyatlar mavjudligini, biroq ularning verbal ifodasi tegishli tarixiy, diniy, madaniy va lingvistik an'analar ta'sirida shakllanganini ko'rsatadi. Maqola o'zbek va ingliz tillarida axloqiy konseptlarning ifodalanishidagi o'xshash va farqli jihatlarni aniqlashga xizmat qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: Alisher Navoiy, *Hayrat ul-Abror*, Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, axloqiy konseptlar, axloqiy tushunchalar, verbal ifoda, qiyosiy tilshunoslik, o'zbek tili, ingliz tili, lingvomadaniyat, metafora, kinoya, adolat, halollik, saxovat, bilim, kamtarlik.

Abstract



This article presents a comparative linguistic study of the verbal expression of moral concepts in Alisher Navoi's *Hayrat ul-Abror* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. The study examines the ways in which such moral concepts as justice, honesty, generosity, knowledge, humility, compassion, greed, pride, deception, and hypocrisy are represented within two different literary and linguocultural traditions. The analysis demonstrates that moral concepts in Navoi's work are primarily expressed through philosophical and didactic discourse, metaphors, symbolism, lexical repetition, and semantic contrasts. In Chaucer's work, these concepts are more frequently conveyed through characterization, dialogue, irony, narrative situations, and pragmatic meaning. The findings indicate that both literary works reflect a number of universal moral values, while their verbal representation is shaped by distinct historical, religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions. The study contributes to a better understanding of the similarities and differences in the verbalization of moral concepts in Uzbek and English literary traditions and highlights the close relationship between language, culture, literature, and moral worldview.

Key words: Alisher Navoi, *Hayrat ul-Abror*, Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, moral concepts, moral values, verbal expression, comparative linguistics, Uzbek language, English language, linguoculture, metaphor, irony, justice, honesty, generosity, knowledge, humility.

Аннотация

В данной статье проводится сравнительно-лингвистическое исследование вербализации нравственных концептов в произведении Алишера Навои «*Хайрат ул-Аброр*» и произведении Джеффри Чосера *The Canterbury Tales*. В исследовании рассматриваются особенности языкового выражения таких нравственных понятий, как справедливость, честность, щедрость, знание, скромность, сострадание, жадность, гордость, обман и лицемерие в двух различных литературных и лингвокультурных традициях. Установлено, что в произведении Навои нравственные концепты преимущественно выражаются посредством философско-дидактического изложения, метафор, символических образов, лексических повторов и семантических противопоставлений. В произведении Чосера эти концепты чаще раскрываются через характеристику персонажей, диалоги, иронию,



сюжетные ситуации и прагматические значения. Результаты исследования показывают, что оба произведения отражают универсальные нравственные ценности, однако способы их языковой репрезентации формируются под влиянием различных исторических, религиозных, культурных и языковых традиций. Исследование способствует выявлению сходств и различий в вербализации нравственных концептов в узбекской и английской литературных традициях.

Ключевые слова: Алишер Навои, «*Хайрат ул-Аброр*», Джеффри Чосер, *The Canterbury Tales*, нравственные концепты, нравственные понятия, вербальная репрезентация, сравнительное языкознание, узбекский язык, английский язык, лингвокультура, метафора, ирония, справедливость, честность, щедрость, знание, скромность.

INTRODUCTION

Literature is one of the most important means through which societies express, preserve, and transmit their moral values. Literary works not only entertain readers but also reflect cultural ideas about good and evil, justice and injustice, honesty and dishonesty, compassion and cruelty, knowledge and ignorance, generosity and greed. Moral concepts are particularly significant because they are closely connected with the worldview, traditions, religious beliefs, and social values of a particular community. Although different cultures may use different linguistic forms to express these concepts, many fundamental moral ideas demonstrate remarkable similarities. This can be clearly observed when comparing Alisher Navoi's *Hayrat ul Abror* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, two major works of medieval literature belonging to different linguistic and cultural traditions.

Alisher Navoi and Geoffrey Chaucer occupy central positions in the literary histories of Uzbek and English cultures respectively. Navoi is regarded as one of the greatest representatives of classical Chagatai literature and played an exceptional role in demonstrating the expressive possibilities of the Turkic language. Chaucer, meanwhile, is widely regarded as one of the foundational figures of English literature, particularly for his contribution to the development of literary English. Despite the considerable geographical, linguistic, religious, and cultural distance between them, both writers devoted substantial attention to human behavior and



moral questions. Their works portray people from different social backgrounds and examine their virtues, weaknesses, ambitions, relationships, and responsibilities.

Hayrat ul Abror, the first poem of Navoi's *Khamsa*, is fundamentally concerned with ethical and philosophical questions.

The work presents reflections on justice, morality, knowledge, humility, generosity, human dignity, social responsibility, and spiritual perfection. Navoi frequently expresses moral concepts through aphoristic statements, metaphors, comparisons, religious terminology, didactic narratives, and descriptions of exemplary or negative behavior. His language is highly symbolic and philosophical, and moral ideas are often presented as universal principles that should guide human life.

The Canterbury Tales, on the other hand, employs a more varied narrative structure. Chaucer presents a group of pilgrims traveling to Canterbury, each of whom tells one or more stories. Through these tales and through the descriptions of the pilgrims themselves, Chaucer explores a wide range of moral concepts, including honesty, hypocrisy, greed, generosity, fidelity, deception, justice, forgiveness, pride, and social responsibility. Chaucer's treatment of morality is frequently indirect and dramatic. Rather than simply stating a moral principle, he often allows characters, events, irony, humor, and narrative consequences to reveal the moral dimension of human behavior.

The comparison of these works from a linguistic perspective is particularly valuable because moral concepts are not expressed only through abstract vocabulary. They are also encoded in grammatical structures, lexical choices, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, speech patterns, forms of address, proverbs, repetitions, contrasts, and narrative strategies. Therefore, the comparison of *Hayrat ul Abror* and *The Canterbury Tales* makes it possible to examine how Uzbek literary tradition and English literary tradition verbalize similar moral ideas through different linguistic and cultural systems.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Moral Concepts as Linguistic and Cultural Phenomena

A moral concept can be understood as an abstract idea concerning what a society considers right or wrong, desirable or undesirable, honorable or shameful. Concepts such as justice, honesty, kindness, generosity, patience, wisdom, humility,



loyalty, greed, envy, pride, and hypocrisy exist in many cultures, but their verbal expression differs according to the linguistic resources and cultural traditions of each community.

Language provides speakers and writers with different ways of conceptualizing moral experience. A moral quality may be expressed through a noun, adjective, verb, metaphorical expression, proverb, comparison, or an entire narrative episode. For example, the concept of generosity may be represented by words referring to giving, charity, kindness, open-handedness, or selflessness. However, the semantic and emotional associations of these words depend upon cultural context.

In classical Uzbek literature, moral concepts are frequently associated with Islamic ethics, Sufi philosophy, classical Persian literary traditions, and the social ideals of the medieval East. Concepts such as *adolat* (justice), *ilm* (knowledge), *sabr* (patience), *saxovat* (generosity), *tavoze* (humility), *halollik* (honesty), and *muruvvat* (benevolence) have significant ethical and spiritual dimensions. Their meanings may extend beyond ordinary social behavior and become associated with the individual's relationship with God, society, knowledge, and the human soul.

In Chaucer's literary world, moral concepts are influenced by Christian ethics, medieval European social structures, classical literary traditions, and contemporary English society. Words and expressions associated with *virtue*, *sin*, *charity*, *truth*, *honor*, *greed*, *pride*, *lust*, and *deception* often carry both religious and social meanings. Chaucer's characters demonstrate these concepts through their actions and interactions, frequently producing a contrast between what people claim to be and what they actually do.

Thus, although the linguistic forms differ, both authors use language to examine the relationship between moral ideals and real human behavior.

Moral Vocabulary in *Hayrat ul Abror*

The title *Hayrat ul Abror* itself reflects the ethical orientation of the work. The expression can be interpreted as referring to the astonishment or wonder associated with righteous and virtuous people. From the beginning, the poem establishes a moral and philosophical framework in which human beings are encouraged to seek spiritual and ethical perfection.

Navoi's moral vocabulary includes concepts connected with justice, wisdom, knowledge, generosity, humility, honesty, compassion, and responsibility. These concepts are often presented through elevated literary language. Moral nouns and



abstract concepts are especially important because they allow Navoi to discuss ethical principles as universal categories.

The concept of justice is particularly significant in Navoi's worldview. Justice is not presented simply as an individual virtue but also as a principle necessary for the proper organization of society. The ruler, the scholar, and the ordinary person all have moral responsibilities. Through lexical repetition and semantic contrasts, Navoi establishes relationships between justice and oppression, knowledge and ignorance, generosity and greed, humility and arrogance.

One important characteristic of Navoi's moral language is the frequent use of oppositional structures. Good and evil, light and darkness, knowledge and ignorance, justice and oppression, generosity and greed are placed in semantic opposition. Such contrasts make abstract moral concepts easier to understand and give the text a strong didactic quality.

Metaphorical language is another important means of verbalizing morality. Navoi frequently conceptualizes spiritual and moral states through images drawn from nature, religion, light, darkness, travel, wealth, and human relationships. In this way, an abstract moral quality becomes a concrete image in the reader's imagination.

Navoi also uses advice, reflection, narrative examples, and aphoristic statements. His moral statements often have a generalizing character, transforming individual observations into broader principles about human existence. The reader is not merely invited to observe characters but encouraged to evaluate human behavior according to a clearly established ethical framework.

Moral Concepts in *The Canterbury Tales*

Chaucer approaches morality through a markedly different narrative strategy. Instead of constructing a single continuous didactic poem, he creates a collection of stories told by pilgrims representing different occupations, social positions, personalities, and moral perspectives. This diversity enables Chaucer to examine morality from multiple angles. The General Prologue introduces characters whose physical appearance, profession, behavior, and social reputation frequently reveal moral contradictions. Some characters appear respectable but behave dishonestly, while others have socially questionable occupations yet display positive personal qualities. This contrast between appearance and reality is one of the most important mechanisms through which Chaucer expresses moral concepts. The concept of hypocrisy is particularly prominent. Certain characters publicly represent



themselves as respectable, religious, or virtuous, while their actions reveal greed, vanity, deception, or self-interest. Chaucer frequently uses irony to expose this discrepancy. The language of praise may therefore contain an implicit criticism.

Greed is another recurring moral concept. Characters may be motivated by money, social status, personal pleasure, or material advantage. Through dialogue and narrative events, Chaucer demonstrates how excessive attachment to material wealth can distort relationships and moral judgment.

Chaucer also explores concepts such as fidelity and marriage. Different tales present contrasting perspectives on love, marriage, sexual morality, power, and trust. Rather than providing a single simple answer, Chaucer allows different characters to express conflicting viewpoints. This makes his representation of morality dialogic and multifaceted.

Religious morality is also important. Some characters genuinely embody religious ideals, while others exploit religion for personal benefit. The contrast between sincere faith and religious hypocrisy becomes an important source of both moral criticism and irony.

Justice and Injustice in the Two Works

Justice represents one of the most significant points of comparison between Navoi and Chaucer. In *Hayrat ul Abror*, justice is strongly connected with social order and ethical governance. Navoi's treatment of justice reflects the idea that rulers and individuals must act responsibly and avoid oppression. Justice is therefore both a personal virtue and a social principle.

In *The Canterbury Tales*, justice appears in different forms depending on the tale and its characters. It may be connected with law, punishment, social relationships, marriage, revenge, or divine judgment. Chaucer's narratives sometimes reveal the limitations of human justice and emphasize the complexity of moral situations. The linguistic realization of justice also differs. Navoi tends to use abstract moral vocabulary and philosophical statements, whereas Chaucer frequently dramatizes justice through characters and events. In Navoi, the reader may encounter an explicit statement about the importance of justice. In Chaucer, the reader may instead observe a conflict in which an individual's behavior produces consequences that raise questions about justice. This distinction demonstrates an important difference between the two authors' methods. Navoi often moves from a particular example



toward a universal moral principle, while Chaucer frequently moves from a particular story toward an ambiguous or multifaceted moral interpretation.

Generosity and Greed

Generosity and greed form another important semantic opposition. In Navoi's ethical system, generosity is closely associated with human dignity and spiritual excellence. The generous person is represented as someone who contributes to society and demonstrates moral strength. Greed, by contrast, limits the individual and represents excessive attachment to material possessions. The linguistic representation of generosity in classical Uzbek literature frequently involves concepts of giving, sharing, hospitality, charity, kindness, and open-heartedness. Such vocabulary reflects the cultural importance of communal responsibility and generosity toward others.

Chaucer also repeatedly examines generosity and greed. His characters may give money for religious purposes, seek wealth through commerce, manipulate others for financial gain, or use religious authority to acquire material benefits. The contrast between genuine generosity and self-interested giving becomes an important source of irony.

One particularly significant difference is the manner in which the two authors present these concepts. Navoi generally establishes generosity as a positive moral ideal within a clearly defined ethical worldview. Chaucer often allows the reader to discover the moral contradiction through narrative context. The same action may appear virtuous on the surface but become questionable when the character's motivation is revealed.

Knowledge and Ignorance

Knowledge is central to Navoi's understanding of human perfection. The concept of *ilm* occupies an important position in classical Islamic and Central Asian intellectual culture. Knowledge is associated with wisdom, moral development, spiritual awareness, and the proper use of human abilities. Ignorance is not simply the absence of information; it can also represent moral and spiritual deficiency.

Navoi's language frequently creates semantic relationships between knowledge, wisdom, reason, and virtue. The educated and wise person is presented as someone capable of recognizing moral truth and controlling undesirable desires.



In Chaucer's work, knowledge is also connected with authority and social status, but its representation is frequently ironic. Characters may possess professional knowledge yet lack moral wisdom. Others may claim knowledge or authority without genuinely possessing the qualities they profess. This creates a distinction between technical knowledge and moral understanding.

The linguistic contrast between knowledge and ignorance therefore operates differently in the two works. Navoi tends to establish knowledge as an explicit ethical value, whereas Chaucer frequently explores the gap between knowledge, authority, and actual behavior.

Humility and Pride

Humility and pride constitute another significant moral opposition. Navoi's moral philosophy places considerable emphasis on humility. Excessive pride is presented as a barrier to spiritual development because it separates the individual from other people and encourages self-admiration.

The linguistic expression of humility may involve words and phrases associated with modesty, submission, respect, and recognition of one's limitations. Pride, by contrast, is associated with arrogance, self-importance, social superiority, and excessive attachment to status.

Chaucer also presents pride as a significant human weakness. Characters may boast about their wealth, beauty, education, profession, social position, or sexual experiences. Chaucer's irony becomes especially effective when a character's own speech unintentionally exposes the very moral weakness that the character is attempting to conceal.

This difference illustrates the importance of narrative voice. Navoi's narrator frequently guides the reader toward an ethical interpretation, while Chaucer often creates a distance between the narrator, the character, and the reader. The reader must sometimes interpret the moral significance independently.

Honesty, Deception, and Hypocrisy

Honesty is another universal moral concept represented in both literary traditions. In *Hayrat ul Abror*, truthfulness is associated with moral integrity and spiritual purity. Dishonesty damages relationships and distances the individual from ethical perfection.



Chaucer's world is particularly rich in representations of deception. Characters deceive one another for economic, romantic, social, or personal reasons. Some forms of deception are openly condemned, while others are presented humorously or ambiguously. This creates a complex moral landscape.

The linguistic expression of deception in *The Canterbury Tales* often depends on dialogue. A character's words may conceal the truth, manipulate another person, or construct a false image of reality. Speech itself becomes a moral instrument. The ability to speak persuasively can be used either for legitimate communication or for manipulation.

In Navoi's work, moral language tends to emphasize the distinction between truth and falsehood as ethical categories. In Chaucer, the distinction may become more complicated because the act of storytelling itself is foregrounded. Characters are storytellers, and storytelling can reveal, conceal, entertain, persuade, or deceive.

Religious and Spiritual Dimensions

Religion plays a central role in both works, although the literary manifestations of religious thought differ. Navoi's *Hayrat ul Abror* is deeply connected with Islamic moral and spiritual concepts. Ethical behavior is often presented as part of the individual's spiritual journey. Human virtues are not merely socially useful qualities; they are connected with spiritual purification and closeness to divine truth.

Chaucer writes within a Christian medieval society, and religious concepts appear throughout *The Canterbury Tales*. Pilgrimage itself provides a religious framework for the narrative. At the same time, Chaucer examines the difference between religious ideals and the behavior of religious representatives.

This difference is especially visible in the treatment of religious figures. Navoi's moral discourse often presents an idealized ethical model grounded in spiritual principles, whereas Chaucer frequently exposes contradictions within religious institutions and individuals. His use of irony allows him to criticize hypocrisy without necessarily rejecting the religious ideals themselves. From a linguistic perspective, both works use religious vocabulary to establish moral authority. However, the surrounding narrative functions differ. In Navoi, religious and ethical vocabulary often supports direct philosophical instruction. In Chaucer, religious vocabulary may become part of characterization and satire.



Metaphor and Symbolism

Metaphor is one of the most powerful linguistic devices used to express moral concepts. Abstract ideas such as virtue, sin, knowledge, and ignorance are difficult to represent directly. Writers therefore transform them into concrete images.

Navoi's poetry makes extensive use of symbolic imagery. Light can be associated with knowledge or spiritual truth, while darkness may suggest ignorance or moral failure. The journey can represent spiritual development, and images of wealth may represent either generosity or attachment to worldly possessions.

Chaucer's symbolism is more closely integrated with narrative situations. Objects, professions, clothing, physical appearance, and social practices can acquire moral significance. A character's clothing may reveal social aspirations, while professional tools may symbolize economic interests or personal identity.

The difference reflects the genres and literary traditions of the two works. Navoi's poem belongs to a highly developed tradition of didactic and philosophical poetry, while Chaucer's work combines narrative, satire, comedy, romance, exemplum, and social observation.

Lexical and Stylistic Differences Between Uzbek and English

A linguistic comparison of the two works must consider the historical forms of the languages involved. Navoi wrote in Chagatai Turkic, the classical literary language that became highly influential in Central Asian literature. Chaucer wrote in Middle English, an important stage in the historical development of modern English.

Both literary languages possessed rich systems of borrowing. Navoi's vocabulary reflects Turkic elements alongside substantial Persian and Arabic influence. Many moral and philosophical terms in classical literature have Persian or Arabic origins, particularly in religious and intellectual discourse. Chaucer's English likewise contains substantial French and Latin influence, especially in areas connected with religion, administration, law, philosophy, and social hierarchy.

Consequently, moral concepts in the two texts may be represented through layers of vocabulary associated with different cultural traditions. The lexical history of a word can itself provide information about the intellectual environment in which a moral concept developed.



The grammatical structures of the languages also influence expression. Chagatai is an agglutinative Turkic language, meaning that grammatical information can be expressed through suffixation. English, by contrast, relies more heavily on word order, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, and relatively limited inflection. These structural differences can affect the way relationships between concepts are expressed.

The poetic structure of Navoi's work also allows repetition, parallelism, rhyme, and rhythmic organization to reinforce moral statements. Chaucer's verse similarly employs rhyme and meter, but his narrative style allows extended dialogue and characterization to play a major role.

Proverbs, Aphorisms, and Moral Generalizations

Proverbs and aphoristic expressions are important mechanisms for expressing cultural knowledge. A proverb compresses a complex social or moral principle into a relatively short linguistic form. Such expressions are memorable because they use rhythm, repetition, metaphor, contrast, and culturally familiar imagery.

Navoi's moral discourse frequently resembles proverbial wisdom. His statements about human behavior can often be interpreted as general principles that extend beyond the immediate narrative context. This gives *Hayrat ul Abror* a strong didactic quality.

Chaucer also incorporates proverbial and moralizing expressions into his narratives. Characters frequently make statements concerning marriage, wealth, age, love, honor, and human behavior. However, Chaucer sometimes places contradictory proverbs or moral statements next to each other, allowing different characters to defend opposing positions.

This difference is particularly important for comparative linguistics. In Navoi, moral generalization frequently strengthens the authority of the ethical message. In Chaucer, moral generalization can also become a tool for character construction and irony.

Direct and Indirect Moralization

One of the most important differences between the works is the degree of directness in moral communication. Navoi's text is strongly didactic. The narrator or poet often speaks directly about moral values and advises the reader about proper conduct. Moral concepts are explicitly named and explained.



Chaucer frequently uses indirect moralization. A character's behavior, speech, contradictions, and consequences may reveal the moral significance of a situation without an explicit authorial statement. Irony becomes an essential interpretive mechanism.

For example, when a character describes himself or herself as virtuous while behaving in a contradictory manner, the reader is expected to recognize the discrepancy. The moral message therefore emerges from the interaction between words and actions.

This contrast can be described linguistically as a difference between explicit and implicit moral encoding. Navoi frequently encodes morality through lexical and propositional statements, while Chaucer often encodes it through pragmatic inference, irony, characterization, and narrative context.

The Role of Characterization

Characterization is another major mechanism of moral representation. In *Hayrat ul Abror*, exemplary figures and negative examples help demonstrate desirable and undesirable qualities. Characters can function as embodiments of ethical principles.

In *The Canterbury Tales*, characterization is much more socially diverse. The pilgrims represent different professions and social groups, and their behavior reflects various moral possibilities. Their speech is particularly important because language reveals personality.

The Knight, Miller, Wife of Bath, Pardoner, Friar, Merchant, Clerk, and other figures have distinctive linguistic and behavioral characteristics. Their stories also reflect their personal interests and values. Consequently, language becomes evidence through which readers construct moral interpretations.

This aspect of Chaucer's work demonstrates that moral meaning can be generated not only by vocabulary but also by discourse style. A person's choice of words, tone, claims, repetitions, and rhetorical strategies may reveal moral qualities that are not explicitly named.

Cultural Similarities

Despite their different historical and cultural environments, Navoi and Chaucer demonstrate several important similarities. Both writers are deeply concerned with human behavior. Both criticize greed, hypocrisy, pride, dishonesty, and abuse of power. Both value knowledge, justice, generosity, and morally responsible behavior.



Both authors also understand literature as a means of observing society. Their works contain representations of different social groups and professions. Through these representations, they explore the relationship between individual morality and social institutions. Another important similarity is the use of contrast. Virtue becomes more visible when placed alongside vice. Honesty is understood through its opposition to deception. Generosity becomes meaningful in contrast with greed. Wisdom becomes clearer when contrasted with ignorance. Both authors therefore use semantic opposition as a fundamental strategy for organizing moral meaning.

Cultural Differences

The differences between the two works are equally significant. Navoi's ethical framework is strongly connected with Islamic philosophy, Sufi thought, Persianate literary traditions, and Central Asian cultural values. Moral perfection is frequently understood as part of a spiritual process.

Chaucer's moral world is shaped by medieval Christianity, European social institutions, feudal relationships, urban culture, commerce, and the emerging complexity of English society. His work frequently emphasizes the contradictions between social appearance and actual behavior.

Another difference concerns authorial voice. Navoi generally provides a stronger explicit moral framework, while Chaucer often allows competing perspectives to coexist. This does not mean that Chaucer lacks moral concerns. Rather, he expresses them through irony, narrative contrast, characterization, and the consequences of actions.

The two authors also differ in their representation of social diversity. Chaucer's pilgrimage framework brings together a broad range of social characters whose individual voices create a polyphonic narrative. Navoi's work is more unified in its philosophical and didactic orientation.

Translation and the Problem of Equivalence

Comparing moral concepts across Uzbek and English literary traditions raises important questions about translation. A moral term in one language rarely has an exact equivalent in another language because words carry cultural associations in addition to dictionary meanings. For instance, a classical Uzbek concept associated with *muruvvat* may include meanings related to generosity, benevolence, kindness,



and noble conduct. Translating it simply as “kindness” may preserve part of its semantic content while losing some cultural and ethical associations. Similarly, the English concept of “charity” has religious, social, and ethical meanings that may not correspond perfectly to a single Uzbek word. The translator must therefore consider not only lexical equivalence but also context, historical meaning, religious associations, and literary function. The translation of metaphors presents an additional difficulty. A metaphor based on a culturally familiar image may lose its effect when transferred into another linguistic tradition. Therefore, comparative analysis should distinguish between lexical equivalence and conceptual equivalence.

Pragmatic Expression of Morality

Moral meaning is also produced through pragmatics, or the relationship between language and its use in context. A sentence can have a literal meaning and a different implied moral meaning.

Chaucer makes extensive use of pragmatic ambiguity. A character may praise someone while actually criticizing them through irony. A statement may appear complimentary but become negative when considered alongside the speaker's previous behavior.

Navoi's pragmatic strategies are often more directly connected with instruction and reflection. However, metaphor, contrast, and contextual implication also allow readers to interpret moral meanings beyond the literal level. This demonstrates that moral concepts cannot be studied only through dictionaries. A complete linguistic analysis must consider discourse, context, speaker intention, narrative structure, cultural knowledge, and the relationship between literal and figurative meaning.

The Significance of the Comparison

The comparison of *Hayrat ul Abror* and *The Canterbury Tales* demonstrates that moral concepts are simultaneously universal and culturally specific. Human societies share many fundamental ethical concerns, but they verbalize them through different linguistic and literary mechanisms.

Navoi's language demonstrates the capacity of classical Turkic literature to express complex philosophical and ethical ideas through rich metaphorical, symbolic, and didactic structures. His treatment of morality is closely connected with spiritual development, knowledge, justice, generosity, and human dignity.



Chaucer's language demonstrates the flexibility of Middle English as a medium for social observation, irony, characterization, and moral debate. His characters embody contradictory moral positions, and their speech becomes an important source of ethical interpretation.

The two works therefore complement one another as objects of comparative linguistic research. They show that morality can be communicated directly through explicit statements and indirectly through narrative, irony, metaphor, characterization, and pragmatic implication.

RESULTS

The comparative analysis of Alisher Navoi's *Hayrat ul Abror* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* demonstrates that moral concepts are expressed through a combination of lexical, semantic, stylistic, metaphorical, pragmatic, and narrative resources in both literary traditions. Although the two works belong to different linguistic and cultural environments, the analysis reveals a considerable degree of conceptual similarity in their treatment of fundamental moral categories such as justice, honesty, generosity, knowledge, humility, compassion, greed, pride, deception, and hypocrisy. At the same time, substantial differences can be observed in the linguistic realization and literary presentation of these concepts.

The results indicate that Navoi's representation of moral concepts is predominantly explicit, philosophical, and didactic. Abstract moral nouns and ethically marked vocabulary play a central role in constructing the conceptual framework of *Hayrat ul Abror*. Concepts associated with justice, knowledge, generosity, patience, humility, and human dignity are repeatedly reinforced through lexical repetition, semantic opposition, metaphorical imagery, and generalized statements. This linguistic pattern creates a relatively clear relationship between a particular moral quality and its evaluation. Positive concepts are associated with spiritual and social perfection, whereas negative concepts are presented as obstacles to individual and communal development. The analysis also shows that semantic opposition is one of the most productive mechanisms of moral expression in Navoi's work. Pairs such as justice and injustice, knowledge and ignorance, generosity and greed, humility and pride, and truth and falsehood create a binary semantic structure through which ethical values become more recognizable. Such oppositions are not merely stylistic devices but also function as conceptual structures that guide the reader toward the ethical interpretation of human behavior. The frequent use of



contrasting concepts contributes to the didactic character of the poem and strengthens the relationship between language and moral instruction. Another significant result concerns the role of metaphor and symbolism. In *Hayrat ul Abror*, abstract ethical concepts are frequently conceptualized through concrete images and symbolic relationships. Knowledge and spiritual awareness can be associated with light, while ignorance and moral deficiency can be represented through darkness or other negative images. Similarly, the notions of journey, wealth, generosity, and human character may acquire metaphorical meanings extending beyond their literal interpretation. This demonstrates that moral concepts in classical Uzbek literary discourse are not restricted to direct lexical expressions but are deeply embedded in figurative language.

The investigation further demonstrates that religious and philosophical vocabulary constitutes an important semantic layer in Navoi's representation of morality. Moral qualities are frequently connected with spiritual development and the individual's relationship with higher ethical principles. Consequently, concepts such as knowledge, justice, generosity, and humility acquire meanings that extend beyond ordinary social behavior. They become components of a broader ethical and spiritual worldview. This characteristic distinguishes Navoi's moral discourse from a purely secular representation of human behavior.

The analysis of *The Canterbury Tales* reveals a different but equally complex method of verbalizing moral concepts. Chaucer relies less on direct philosophical explanation and more heavily on characterization, dialogue, irony, narrative events, and social interaction. Moral qualities are frequently revealed through what characters say and do rather than through direct authorial statements. As a result, the reader often needs to interpret the discrepancy between a character's self-presentation and actual behavior. One of the most prominent findings is the importance of irony in Chaucer's representation of morality. Characters may describe themselves or others in apparently positive terms, while their behavior provides evidence of greed, hypocrisy, vanity, dishonesty, or self-interest. This creates a distance between literal linguistic meaning and implied moral meaning. The interpretation of a moral concept therefore depends not only on vocabulary but also on context, speaker identity, narrative situation, and the relationship between words and actions.

The results further indicate that characterization functions as a major linguistic and narrative mechanism for moral expression in *The Canterbury Tales*. Different characters represent different social positions, professions, values, and behavioral



patterns. Their speech styles contribute to the construction of their moral identities. In this respect, Chaucer demonstrates that moral meaning can be encoded through discourse style itself. Vocabulary, tone, rhetorical strategies, claims, repetitions, and forms of self-presentation can reveal characteristics that are not directly named.

A comparison of the two works shows that justice is conceptualized as both an individual and social value, although it is presented through different linguistic strategies. Navoi tends to discuss justice as a fundamental principle of proper human and social organization, whereas Chaucer frequently dramatizes questions of justice through interpersonal conflicts, social relationships, punishment, law, and consequences. This difference demonstrates a movement from explicit ethical conceptualization in Navoi toward more context-dependent and narrative realization in Chaucer.

The concept of generosity also demonstrates considerable conceptual similarity between the two works. Both literary traditions associate generosity with positive human behavior and criticize excessive attachment to material wealth. However, Navoi generally presents generosity as an established moral ideal, while Chaucer frequently investigates the motivations behind apparently generous actions. In Chaucer's narratives, an action may have a positive external appearance but a questionable internal motivation. Therefore, the moral interpretation depends on both action and intention.

The results concerning knowledge demonstrate another important similarity. In Navoi's work, knowledge is strongly associated with wisdom, moral development, and spiritual improvement. Ignorance is represented as a limitation of human potential. In Chaucer's work, knowledge is also valuable, but the possession of knowledge or professional authority does not automatically guarantee moral virtue. Characters may possess specialized knowledge while demonstrating selfishness, hypocrisy, or poor judgment. This difference highlights the importance of distinguishing intellectual competence from ethical wisdom.

The comparative analysis of honesty, deception, and hypocrisy shows that both authors are concerned with the discrepancy between appearance and reality. Navoi generally establishes truthfulness as an essential moral quality and presents falsehood as a negative ethical condition. Chaucer explores this opposition through complex social interactions in which characters manipulate language to achieve personal objectives. Consequently, deception in *The Canterbury Tales* is particularly significant at the pragmatic level because characters use speech not merely to communicate information but also to influence, persuade, conceal, and manipulate.



The findings also demonstrate that the two works use different degrees of authorial moral authority. Navoi's narrative voice frequently establishes an ethical framework within which the reader can evaluate characters and actions. Chaucer's narrative structure is more dialogic and allows multiple perspectives to coexist. Different characters may express contradictory attitudes toward morality, marriage, wealth, religion, or social behavior. This plurality does not eliminate moral concerns; rather, it makes moral interpretation more dependent on context and reader participation. From a linguistic perspective, the research reveals that historical differences between Chagatai Turkic and Middle English contribute to differences in the expression of moral concepts. Navoi's language contains a substantial combination of Turkic, Persian, and Arabic lexical resources, particularly in philosophical and religious discourse. Chaucer's Middle English similarly reflects the influence of French and Latin, especially in religious, legal, intellectual, and administrative vocabulary. Therefore, the lexical systems of both works reflect their respective historical and cultural environments.

The analysis additionally reveals that moral concepts are often expressed through culturally specific lexical units whose meanings cannot always be transferred through direct lexical equivalence. A concept expressed through a particular classical Uzbek term may contain religious, philosophical, social, and emotional associations that exceed the meaning of a single English equivalent. Similarly, English medieval concepts may contain cultural associations that cannot be completely reproduced through contemporary Uzbek vocabulary. This finding emphasizes the importance of conceptual rather than purely lexical equivalence in comparative and translation studies. Another important result is that moral meaning is constructed at several linguistic levels simultaneously. At the lexical level, ethically marked words directly identify concepts such as justice, generosity, truth, greed, and pride. At the semantic level, oppositions and associations establish relationships between positive and negative moral qualities. At the stylistic level, metaphor, repetition, parallelism, and irony intensify moral meanings. At the pragmatic level, context and speaker intention influence interpretation. At the narrative level, characters and events demonstrate the consequences of moral choices.

The comparative results therefore suggest that the verbalization of morality should be understood as a multidimensional linguistic phenomenon. Neither the Uzbek nor the English material can be adequately analyzed through isolated vocabulary alone. A complete interpretation requires attention to historical language,



cultural context, literary genre, discourse structure, figurative language, and pragmatic meaning. The findings also demonstrate that both Navoi and Chaucer use literature as a means of social observation. Their works contain representations of individuals from different social positions and provide opportunities to examine the relationship between personal morality and social structures.

However, Navoi's representation is more strongly organized around a unified ethical and philosophical framework, while Chaucer's representation is characterized by greater social diversity and competing voices.

Overall, the results demonstrate a strong conceptual convergence between the two literary works combined with significant differences in verbal realization. Universal moral concepts such as justice, honesty, generosity, knowledge, humility, and compassion are recognizable in both texts, but their linguistic expression reflects the distinct cultural, religious, historical, and literary traditions of classical Uzbek and medieval English societies. Navoi predominantly employs explicit moral instruction, philosophical reflection, symbolic imagery, and semantic opposition, whereas Chaucer relies more extensively on irony, characterization, dialogue, narrative contrast, and pragmatic implication. These findings confirm that comparative analysis of *Hayrat ul Abror* and *The Canterbury Tales* provides valuable insight into the relationship between language, culture, literature, and moral cognition.

CONCLUSION

The verbal expression of moral concepts in Alisher Navoi's *Hayrat ul Abror* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* reveals both significant similarities and important differences between Uzbek and English literary traditions. Both works investigate fundamental questions of human morality, including justice, honesty, generosity, knowledge, humility, greed, pride, deception, and social responsibility. However, these concepts are encoded through different linguistic and literary strategies.

Navoi primarily presents morality through philosophical reflection, didactic statements, symbolic imagery, semantic contrasts, religious vocabulary, aphoristic expressions, and exemplary models of human behavior. His moral language is closely connected with Islamic ethical thought and the intellectual traditions of classical Central Asian literature. Moral concepts are frequently presented as universal principles that guide individuals toward spiritual and social perfection.



Chaucer, in contrast, relies extensively on characterization, dialogue, irony, narrative conflict, social observation, and the interaction between appearance and reality. His pilgrims and their stories create a complex discourse in which moral concepts emerge from different voices and perspectives. The reader is frequently required to interpret the ethical significance of behavior rather than receiving a single explicit moral conclusion.

From a comparative linguistic perspective, the two works demonstrate that moral concepts are not restricted to isolated lexical items. They are expressed through entire systems of language, including vocabulary, metaphor, syntax, discourse, pragmatics, narrative structure, and cultural symbolism. The historical development of Chagatai Turkic and Middle English also demonstrates how cultural contact and intellectual traditions influence the vocabulary through which societies conceptualize morality.

Ultimately, the comparison of *Hayrat ul Abror* and *The Canterbury Tales* shows that literature provides a powerful linguistic record of cultural morality. Although Navoi and Chaucer belonged to different geographical, religious, and linguistic environments, both recognized the importance of ethical behavior in human life. Their works demonstrate that concepts such as justice, honesty, generosity, wisdom, humility, and compassion can cross cultural boundaries while retaining distinctive local forms. Studying these similarities and differences contributes not only to comparative literature but also to linguistics, cultural studies, translation studies, and intercultural communication. The two masterpieces therefore provide valuable evidence of how different languages transform universal human ethical concerns into culturally meaningful literary expression.

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