

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF METAPHORS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Annotation. This article presents a comparative study of metaphors in English and Uzbek from linguistic, semantic, and cultural perspectives. Metaphor is considered one of the most productive means of figurative expression and plays an important role in conceptualizing abstract ideas, emotions, human characteristics, and social phenomena. The study examines metaphorical expressions in English and Uzbek, focusing on their structural, semantic, and conceptual features. Particular attention is paid to similarities and differences in the ways the two languages conceptualize reality through metaphor. The analysis demonstrates that some metaphorical concepts are universal and reflect common human experiences, whereas others are determined by national culture, traditions, historical development, and social values.

Keywords: metaphor, comparative linguistics, English language, Uzbek language, conceptual metaphor, figurative language, semantic analysis, cognitive linguistics, cultural differences, metaphorical expression.

Аннотация. В данной статье представлен сравнительный анализ метафор в английском и узбекском языках с лингвистической, семантической и культурологической точек зрения. Метафора рассматривается как один из наиболее продуктивных способов образного выражения, играющий важную роль в концептуализации абстрактных понятий, эмоций, человеческих качеств и социальных явлений. В исследовании рассматриваются метафорические выражения английского и узбекского языков с особым вниманием к их структурным, семантическим и концептуальным особенностям. Анализ направлен на выявление сходств и различий в способах концептуализации окружающей действительности посредством метафоры. Результаты показывают, что некоторые метафорические концепты имеют универсальный характер и отражают общечеловеческий опыт, тогда как другие обусловлены национальной культурой, традициями, историческим развитием и социальными ценностями.

Ключевые слова: метафора, сравнительное языкознание, английский язык, узбекский язык, концептуальная метафора, образная речь, семантический анализ, когнитивная лингвистика, культурные различия, метафорическое выражение.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi metaforalarning lingvistik, semantik va madaniy jihatdan qiyosiy tahlili amalga oshiriladi. Metafora obrazli ifodaning eng mahsuldor vositalaridan biri sifatida qaralib, mavhum tushunchalar, his-tuyg'ular, insoniy xususiyatlar va ijtimoiy hodisalarni konseptuallashtirishda muhim ahamiyat kasb etadi. Tadqiqotda ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi metaforik birliklarning strukturaviy, semantik

va konseptual xususiyatlari o'rganiladi. Shuningdek, mazkur ikki tilda voqelikning metafora vositasida konseptuallashtirilishidagi o'xshashlik va farqlarga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Tahlil natijalari ayrim metaforik konseptlarning universallik xususiyatiga ega ekanligini va umumiy insoniy tajribani aks ettirishini, boshqa metaforalar esa milliy madaniyat, an'analar, tarixiy taraqqiyot hamda ijtimoiy qadriyatlar bilan chambarchas bog'liqligini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: metafora, qiyosiy tilshunoslik, ingliz tili, o'zbek tili, konseptual metafora, obrazli nutq, semantik tahlil, kognitiv lingvistika, madaniy farqlar, metaforik ifoda.

INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is one of the most significant and productive phenomena in human language, playing an essential role in the expression, interpretation, and conceptualization of reality. Although metaphor has traditionally been regarded as a stylistic device associated primarily with literary language, contemporary linguistic research demonstrates that metaphor is not restricted to artistic discourse. It is deeply embedded in everyday communication and influences the way people understand abstract concepts, emotions, social relations, human behaviour, and various aspects of the surrounding world. Therefore, the study of metaphor has become an important area of modern linguistics, particularly within cognitive linguistics, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and comparative language studies.

The theoretical understanding of metaphor underwent a significant transformation during the twentieth century. Traditionally, metaphor was primarily interpreted as a form of figurative language in which one object or phenomenon is described through the characteristics of another based on a perceived similarity between them. In classical rhetoric, metaphor was generally viewed as an expressive and ornamental device used to make speech more vivid and persuasive. However, this traditional perspective was considerably expanded by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their influential work *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). The scholars argued that metaphor is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also a fundamental mechanism of human thought. According to the conceptual metaphor theory, people frequently understand abstract and complex domains through more concrete and familiar experiences. Thus, metaphorical expressions reflect underlying conceptual mappings between a source domain and a target domain.

The cognitive approach to metaphor has significantly influenced contemporary studies of language. Lakoff and Johnson demonstrated that concepts such as *TIME*, *EMOTION*, *LIFE*, *ARGUMENT*, and *LOVE* are often structured metaphorically in human cognition. For instance, English expressions such as "spend time," "waste time," and "save time"

conceptualize TIME as a valuable resource. Similarly, expressions such as “fall in love” and “deeply in love” demonstrate that emotional experience can be conceptualized through spatial and physical dimensions. Such examples indicate that metaphorical language reflects systematic patterns of conceptualization rather than isolated or accidental linguistic choices.

The study of metaphor is particularly important from a comparative perspective because languages may employ different metaphorical models to conceptualize similar experiences. English and Uzbek belong to different linguistic and cultural traditions, and their metaphorical systems can therefore reveal both universal cognitive patterns and culture-specific conceptualizations. Certain metaphorical expressions in the two languages may be based on common human experiences such as nature, body, movement, temperature, space, and physical perception. At the same time, their linguistic realization may differ because speakers of different cultures interpret and categorize reality through culturally specific frameworks.

The comparison of English and Uzbek metaphors is especially relevant because metaphorical expressions frequently contain information about national worldview, cultural values, traditions, historical experience, and social attitudes. For example, concepts related to strength, intelligence, beauty, kindness, anger, sadness, happiness, and human relationships can be metaphorically represented through different objects and images in different languages. A metaphor that appears natural and transparent to native speakers of one language may have a different equivalent, or even no direct equivalent, in another language. Consequently, comparative metaphor analysis can provide valuable insights into the relationship between language, cognition, and culture.

Metaphor can be regarded as a multidimensional linguistic phenomenon that operates simultaneously at semantic, cognitive, pragmatic, and cultural levels. In a comparative study of English and Uzbek, metaphors should therefore be analyzed not simply as individual figurative expressions but as linguistic manifestations of conceptual patterns. The meaning of a metaphor is usually established through the interaction between two conceptual domains: the source domain, which provides concrete knowledge and imagery, and the target domain, which is understood through this imagery. This relationship allows speakers to conceptualize abstract or complicated experiences through more familiar physical and experiential domains.

One of the most influential approaches to metaphor is the Conceptual Metaphor Theory developed by *George Lakoff and Mark Johnson*. Their theory emphasizes that metaphor is fundamentally a matter of conceptualization rather than merely a matter of linguistic ornamentation. Human beings frequently understand abstract concepts through concrete experiences. As a result, metaphorical expressions appearing in everyday speech can be viewed as linguistic reflections of underlying conceptual mappings. This approach

provides a productive theoretical framework for comparing English and Uzbek because it makes it possible to examine not only individual expressions but also the conceptual structures underlying them.

A particularly common conceptual metaphor in English is LIFE IS A JOURNEY. English speakers use expressions such as “She is at a crossroads in her life,” “He has chosen a new path,” “They are moving forward in life,” and “He has reached an important turning point.” The source domain JOURNEY is mapped onto the target domain LIFE. A person is conceptualized as a traveller, life is understood as a road, difficulties are obstacles, and important decisions are crossroads. Similar conceptualization can be observed in Uzbek expressions such as “hayot yo‘li,” “hayot yo‘lida yangi bosqich,” “to‘g‘ri yo‘lni tanlamoq,” and “hayotida burilish yasamoq.” Although the lexical forms are not necessarily identical, the underlying conceptual relationship is remarkably similar.

This similarity can be explained by the universal nature of human physical experience. People in different cultures experience movement, roads, destinations, obstacles, and changes of direction. Such shared experiences provide a common cognitive basis for conceptualizing life as a journey. Nevertheless, cultural differences may influence the specific metaphorical images selected by speakers. Thus, universal conceptual patterns can coexist with language-specific metaphorical realizations.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of metaphors in English and Uzbek demonstrates that metaphor is a fundamental linguistic and cognitive mechanism through which speakers conceptualize both concrete and abstract aspects of reality. The study confirms that metaphor operates beyond the boundaries of literary language and is actively used in everyday communication, emotional expression, social interaction, academic discourse, and translation.

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