

Comparative analysis of metaphorical expressive means in Russian and Uzbek languages

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Abstract: This article carries out a comparative analysis of the metaphoric expressive means in Russian and Uzbek languages. The aim of the study is to identify the similarities and differences in the use of metaphors in the two linguistic systems, as well as to examine the influence of cultural-historical and cognitive factors on the formation of metaphoric images. The research employs methods of comparative analysis, corpus studies, and cognitive-semantic analysis, allowing for the observation of both traditional and modern tendencies in the functioning of metaphor in artistic and journalistic texts. Special attention is given to the analysis of imagery, the structural organization of metaphoric constructions, and their role in forming the emotional and semantic richness of utterances. The results indicate that, despite certain universal characteristics of metaphoric thinking, each language culture possesses its own specific metaphorical models that reflect the historical experience and worldview of its speakers.

Keywords: Metaphor, comparative analysis, imagery, cognitive semantics, Russian language, Uzbek language.

Introduction: For most people, metaphor is considered a tool of poetic imagination and a rhetorical flourish rather than an essential part of ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is usually viewed as a feature of language alone—more as a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, many people believe they can do without metaphors.

On the contrary, research has shown that metaphor is widely present in everyday life, not only in language but also in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, through which we think and act, is inherently metaphorical.

The idea of using metaphors, proposed by R. Lakoff and G. Johnson, has inspired many linguists to reexamine and consciously delve into the study of metaphor. Their argument has proven to be valid, as the influence of metaphors extends beyond poetry and rhetoric.

A common stereotype among scholars suggests that only a limited group of people can effectively use this stylistic device. However, Johnson and Lakoff argue that "the most important claim we have made so far is that metaphor is not just a matter of language—that is, simply a matter of words. Instead, we assert that human thought processes are largely metaphorical.

This is what we mean when we say that a person's conceptual system is structured and defined metaphorically. Metaphors, as linguistic expressions, are possible precisely because metaphors exist in the human conceptual system."

METHODOLOGY

Until recently, metaphor was primarily studied by philosophers, rhetoricians, literary scholars, psychologists, and linguists such as Aristotle, Hume, Locke, Vico, Herder, Cassirer, Bühler, I. A. Richards, Whorf, Goodman, Max Black, and others. These are just a few names among thousands of scholars who have worked on metaphor over the past two thousand years.

Today, an increasing number of cognitive scientists, including cognitive linguists, are conducting research on metaphor. The reason for this is that metaphor plays a crucial role in human thinking, comprehension, and reasoning. Additionally, it contributes to the formation of our social, cultural, and psychological reality. Thus, an attempt to understand metaphor is an attempt to grasp a fundamental aspect of who we are and the world we live in.

Metaphor has also been extensively studied by Uzbek linguists. Some scholars have dedicated their research

to the transmission of general meaning (ko'chim), while others have focused on specific types of meaning transfer, such as metaphor (sometimes referred to as istiora).

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language, metaphor is defined as: "the use of a word or phrase based on similarity or comparison, or the use of a word or phrase in this sense; istiora, majoz. For example, the tuner of a dutar (a musical instrument) is metaphorically called its 'ear'."

As observed, a metaphorical word or phrase in one language may not be equivalent to the same meaning in another language. For example, in Uzbek, the term "ear" is used metaphorically for the tuning peg of a dutar or rubab, while in English, it is called a tuning peg. Similarly, in English, the word hook is used metaphorically to refer to something one can hang objects on, similar to a clothespin.

As previously mentioned, many linguists have explored the phenomenon of meaning transfer, each defining it in their own way. By analyzing some of these perspectives, we can observe well-reasoned approaches to the subject.

According to G. Kobuljonova, the lexeme is the most fundamental unit of language. It serves to name objects that exist in the world. However, its function is not limited to naming alone; it also performs several key roles, such as knowledge transmission between generations (cumulative function), perception (perceptual function), and influencing the listener (expressive function). She also argues that comparison plays a crucial role in understanding the world. A new object or event is always compared to previously known objects or events, leading to the application of established names to newly encountered phenomena. [41; 3-4]

Kobuljonova acknowledges that metaphor was traditionally considered a literary device that primarily attracted poets and literary scholars. She highlights the fact that, since the 1970s, metaphor has been actively researched, particularly in the works of M. Mirtodjiyev.

Given the multiple approaches to defining metaphor in the Uzbek language, Mirtodjiyev proposes his own interpretation:

"Metaphor is the transfer of the name of an object, attribute, or action to another object, attribute, or action based on mutual similarity."

He also classifies metaphors into various types, distinguishing between simple and extended metaphors based on their formation, as well as literary and linguistic metaphors from a stylistic perspective.

Kobuljonova further emphasizes that in linguistic studies, metaphor is illustrated in two forms: linguistic metaphor and speech-based metaphor.

Mirtodjiyev categorizes metaphors into three groups based on denotative similarity:

Simple metaphors

Personification – attributing human characteristics to inanimate objects

Synesthesia – a perceptual phenomenon where the stimulation of one sensory or cognitive pathway leads to automatic, involuntary experiences in a second sensory or cognitive pathway.

Additionally, he highlights the importance of ellipsis in shaping meaning transmission through metaphor.

At the beginning of her research, G. Kobuljonova refers to Aristotle's theory, which is considered traditional since Aristotle was the first to introduce the fundamental concept of metaphor as epiphora:

"A generic term for metaphorical transfer preceding any objectification of figurative meaning."

Based on this, she states that a metaphor involves the comparison or transfer of a word from a genus to a species, from a species to a genus, or from one species to another, without directly referring to the object.

As examples, she provides:

From genus to species: "My brother's boat stands still," where "stands" conveys a figurative meaning.

From species to genus: "Odysseus accomplished thousands of great deeds," where "thousands" metaphorically means "many."

From species to species: "You lose your soul with copper" and "You cut a drop of water with copper," where the metaphorical words are "cut" and "lose."

Commenting on the limitation of Aristotle's theory, she points out that while Aristotle defined metaphor, he did not explain how this similarity occurs.

Metaphor as a Condensed Comparison

A. A. Potebnya defines metaphor as "a condensed comparison."

For example:

"She was beautiful and tender, like a flower."

"She was a tender and beautiful flower."

Analyzing the theories and approaches of other linguists, Kobuljonova notes that many scholars have included attributes of synecdoche or comparison—sometimes even metonymy—when defining metaphor, leading to confusion on the subject.

She references Aristotle's definition and explains that many linguists have relied on his ideas, which may have

led to these varying interpretations.

Rahmatullayev's View on Metaphor and Meaning Transfer

Kobuljonova also comments on Sh. Rahmatullayev, emphasizing that metaphor can interact with other types of meaning transfer, such as:

Metaphor-functionality

Metaphor-metonymy

Metaphor-synecdoche

As an example, she presents the term "airplane wing," which is not only a functional metaphor but also based on similarity to an actual bird's wing.

Similar insights are found in other sources on Uzbek linguistics, further supporting the idea that metaphor extends beyond simple comparisons and integrates with other semantic processes.

It is stated that the transfer of meaning from one object, attribute, or action to another based on external similarity is called a metaphor. This similarity is established through associations related to color, shape, action/state, attribute, place, and time.

For example, the spout of a teapot is metaphorically compared to a human nose.

Metaphors are most commonly formed through comparisons with:

- Human body parts (head, face, nose, mouth, ear, tongue, foot)
- Parts of fabric or clothing (apron, collar)
- Parts of animals, birds, and insects (wing, tail)

A linguistic example is the Uzbek word "otlanmoq" (originally meaning "to go somewhere on a horse"). In the past, this action was specifically associated with horseback riding. However, in modern usage, the word means "to depart somewhere", regardless of whether the mode of transportation is a horse, walking, or a car. Here, only the external similarity of the action remains.

Types of Metaphorical Similarities

1. Shape similarity

- odamning qulog'i (a person's ear) → qozonning qulog'i (a pot's handle)
- qush uchdi (a bird flew) → odam uchdi (a person flew [figuratively, e.g., in an airplane])

2. Positional similarity

- itning dumi (a dog's tail) → samolyotning dumi (an airplane's tail)
- qo'shni odam (neighboring person) → qo'shni dala (neighboring field)

3. Conceptual similarity

- tomdan yiqilmoq (to fall from a roof) → imtixonidan yiqilmoq (to fail an exam)

- sovuq havo (cold air) → sovuq xabar (cold/unpleasant news)

- qaynoq suv (boiling water) → qaynoq liniya (hotline)

- achchiq o't (bitter herb) → achchiq sovuq (harsh cold)

- tomdan tushmoq (to fall from a roof) → mansabdan tushmoq (to lose one's position)

- odam o'tirdi (a person sat down) → fabrika o'tirdi (a factory shut down)

These examples illustrate how metaphors extend beyond simple word meanings, influencing language through associations based on resemblance, function, and conceptual links.

RESULTS

Metaphors in Uzbek and Russian are largely similar. For example:

davlat boshi (Uzbek) → «глава государства» (Russian) (head of state)

qaynoq liniya (Uzbek) → «горячая линия» (Russian) (hotline)

«лицо здания» (Russian) → binoning yuzi (Uzbek) (the face of a building)

«крыло самолета» (Russian) → samolyot qanoti (Uzbek) (the wing of an airplane)

In these examples, there is both semantic and lexical correspondence between Uzbek and Russian.

However, some words are metaphors in one language but not in the other.

For example:

choynakning burni (Uzbek: the nose of a teapot) is a metaphor in Uzbek, but in Russian, «нос чайника» (nose of a teapot) sounds unnatural because there is a specific term for it: «носик» (spout).

sovuq xabar (Uzbek: cold news) is a metaphor, but in Russian, the equivalent «холодная новость» (cold news) does not exist—people say «плохая новость» (bad news) or «ужасная новость» (terrible news).

qozonning qulog'i (Uzbek: the ear of a pot) is metaphorical in Uzbek, but in Russian, this object is simply called «ручка» (handle), not «ухо» (ear).

As demonstrated by the definitions and examples above, metaphorical expressions in both languages are mostly similar, but some conceptual differences exist, leading to unique metaphorical constructions in each language.

DISCUSSION

A comparative analysis of metaphors in Russian and Uzbek requires consideration of various aspects such as cultural, linguistic, and historical factors. As an important stylistic device, metaphor reflects the unique ways of thinking and perceiving the world in each culture.

Common Aspects of Metaphors in Russian and Uzbek

1. Natural Phenomena

- Both languages frequently use metaphors related to natural elements.

- For example, the Russian metaphor “море слёз” (a sea of tears), meaning deep sorrow, has a similar equivalent in Uzbek as “ko’z yoshlar dengizi (daryosi)” (a river/sea of tears).

2. Human Emotions and States

- Emotional states are often described through metaphors in both languages.

- In Russian, “ледяное сердце” (an icy heart, meaning a cold, unfeeling attitude) has a direct counterpart in Uzbek: “muz yurak” (frozen heart).

3. Cultural Features

- Metaphors reflect unique cultural elements in each language.

- The Russian expression “волк в овечьей шкуре” (a wolf in sheep’s clothing), referring to someone who hides their true nature, originates from a well-known fable.

- A similar expression exists in Uzbek as “qo’y shimida bo’ri”, carrying the same connotation.

Differences in Metaphors

1. Historical Context

- The Russian language contains many metaphors rooted in Christian tradition.

- For example, “нести свой крест” (to bear one’s cross, meaning to endure hardships) has no direct equivalent in Uzbek, where Islamic culture has played a more significant role.

- Conversely, Uzbek includes metaphors linked to Islamic traditions.

- For instance, “oshi iymon” (literally “food of faith”), which symbolizes generosity and hospitality, does not have an exact equivalent in Russian.

2. Everyday Realities

- Russian metaphors are often influenced by the northern climate.

- For example, “застыть от ужаса” (to freeze from fear, meaning to be paralyzed by fear) may have an

equivalent in Uzbek but is less vividly expressed due to climatic differences.

- Uzbek metaphors, on the other hand, are often connected to agriculture and a nomadic lifestyle.

- An example is “o’rgan doningdan uning yaxshi”, meaning “your own efforts and labor always yield the best results,” which does not have a precise counterpart in Russian.

CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of metaphors in Russian and Uzbek demonstrates how cultural, climatic, and historical factors influence the formation of metaphorical expressions. Despite significant differences, metaphors play a key role in both languages in conveying emotional and cultural meanings, enriching speech and making it more expressive and vivid.

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