

Analysis of The Theory of Conceptual Integration in Poetic Texts

Siddiqova Kamola Rasuljon qizi

Phd Student, Department of Uzbek Language and Literature, Namangan State University, Namangan, 160100, Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This study analyzes the concept of the “apple” represented in poetic texts on the basis of Conceptual Integration Theory. The research examines the cognitive aspects of the “apple” concept expressed in the poetic texts of Eastern peoples, reflecting the author’s individual poetic perception. The study is based on a methodological approach that includes descriptive, associative, comparative, stylistic, and linguo-conceptual analyses. The obtained results demonstrate that although the author’s individual perception in poetic texts emerges from the worldview, culture, and linguistic richness of the living folk language, the concept of the “apple” creates new blended spaces in the works of different authors. This small-scale study broadens the understanding of the semantics of artistic concepts expressed in poetic texts and develops skills for interpreting them. It contributes to identifying the author’s individual perception in linguo-conceptual and cognitive analysis processes, enriches the theoretical foundations of anthropocentric linguistics, and has practical significance in teaching cognitive linguistics and linguoculturology.

Keywords: Concept, artistic concept, conceptual integration, “apple” concept, conceptual metaphor, linguoculturology, linguo-conceptual analysis, author’s individual poetic perception.

Introduction: Representatives of cognitive linguistics — George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Gilles Fauconnier, and Mark Turner — emphasize that the human conceptual system is closely connected with physical and cultural experience (1–4). Linguistics and a number of related disciplines have proven that metaphor serves as the primary cognitive mechanism of conceptualization and have advanced the understanding of linking linguistic expression with mental models (4). Numerous studies demonstrate the effectiveness of the conceptual-metaphorical method in comparing linguistic worldviews: metaphorical models reflect the general patterns of human thinking while simultaneously changing under the influence of national and cultural experiences (6–7).

According to the founders of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, metaphor is not merely a stylistic feature of language; rather, metaphor is thought itself — a set of ideas formed in human

consciousness. Metaphor constantly surrounds us and is reflected not only in everyday speech but also in our daily thoughts.

The perception of the world is a process shaped by such parameters as the era and place in which a person lives, mentality, beliefs, and, of course, the language they speak. Human thinking is directly connected with language and cognitive processes. Through semantic analysis of language, it is possible to determine a worldview that differs from the scientific model of reality.

The poetic model of the world is more complex than the linguistic model because it reflects human emotions, feelings, and spiritual values. In poetic texts, words express both real and imaginary worlds, thereby creating the author’s unique model of reality. The lexical level plays a central role in poetic texts. The meaning of the text is formed through linear structure and associative-semantic connections(5).

METHODOLOGY

Poetic texts were analyzed on the basis of Conceptual Integration Theory. This method helps identify the main concept and conceptual sphere of a poetic text.

According to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, metaphor is based on relationships between two domains: the target domain and the source domain (4). However, according to the Conceptual Integration Theory proposed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, metaphor is not simply a method of semantic transfer but a complex integration process. In this theory, not two but four mental spaces are distinguished: two input spaces, a generic space, and a blended space (1).

MATERIAL

The research materials include the poems "Bir olma keladi to'iqinda o'ynab" ("An Apple Comes Playing on the Waves") by Saida Zunnunova, "Qizil olma" ("Red Apple") by Muhammad Yusuf, "So'nggi olma" ("The Last Apple") by Xurshid Davron, and "Biz olmamiz" ("We Are Apples") together with "Oq olmalar" ("White Apples") by Halima Xudoyberdiyeva. Through these poems, the study explores how the concept of the "apple" is expressed through various cognitive models.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Saida Zunnunova's poem "Bir olma keladi to'iqinda o'ynab"

...Someone will surely catch it,

Stretching strong arms toward the waves.

Admiring its beauty, they will raise it in their palm.

Perhaps such a falcon is waiting for it.

Maybe someone will bite it and throw it onto the ground,

Without even thinking, without seeing it in a dream.

Yet far beyond this momentary game —

It was the pure love of someone who had fallen.

In this poetic text, two primary input spaces are observed: the natural space — an apple floating in water — and the emotional space consisting of human feelings such as love, waiting, and fate. The poet does not perceive the apple as merely an ordinary fruit but integrates it with human emotions. The apple floating in water symbolizes the flow of life, while catching or losing it symbolizes love. These two input spaces unite

in the generic space through semes such as value and destiny. As a result, conceptual integration emerges through the model: "the apple is pure love."

Analysis of Muhammad Yusuf's poem "Qizil olma"

The concept of the "apple" in Muhammad Yusuf's poem also symbolizes love, but unlike in Saida Zunnunova's poem, it forms the concept of "imperfect love" rather than "pure love":

On a high branch a red apple

Had ripened.

When I picked and looked at it,

A worm had entered it.

When I threw the apple away,

It cried out:

"If you would abandon me,

Why did you pick me at all?"

In the poem, the externally beautiful and seemingly perfect apple, yet containing a worm inside, merges with the emotional input spaces of love and human feelings through the shared seme of imperfection. In conceptual integration, the apple forms the concept of "love that can never be perfect, yet is loved and valued together with all its flaws."

Through the contrastive integration of beauty and imperfection (the worm inside), the poet seeks to express that true love is not ideal but must be accepted together with its shortcomings.

Analysis of Xurshid Davron's poem "So'nggi olma"

In Xurshid Davron's poem, the "apple" concept symbolizes "belated love":

...O last apple, lonely like a widow, farewell.

I stood sadly beside you,

But no sound came from you.

Tonight in the sky

A shooting star suddenly glides,

Flying and flying at dawn,

It comes and strikes you.

Yet no one notices, warming themselves

In autumn's fire,

In the icy morning air

The scent of a burnt apple...

In this poem, the lonely apple remaining on the branch integrates with human emotions such as loss and delayed love, uniting within the generic space of passing time and loss. As a result, the model “apple as a missed opportunity and unanswered love” emerges through conceptual integration.

The sensory metaphors expressed in the poem — the icy morning air and the smell of a burnt apple — intensify the effect of integration even further.

Analysis of Halima Xudoyberdiyeva’s poems “Biz olmamiz” and “Oq olmalar”

In the poems of the talented Uzbek poet Halima Xudoyberdiyeva, the “apple” concept acquires a social dimension and forms an entirely different model:

We are apples on the branches, tell them not to shake us down,

Our tears would become rivers, tell them not to drown us.

We are still unripe; tell them not to pluck green fruit,
Let them not disturb the sweet morning sleep of a child.

In this poem, the apple on the tree, society, and the younger generation enter conceptual integration within biological and social spaces. In the blended space, a new semantic model emerges: “apple as the immature young generation; branch as the social system and authority.”

The poet expresses the socio-philosophical idea that, just as an apple blossoms, bears fruit, remains unripe, and eventually ripens, human beings also pass through developmental stages. Until maturity, people should be nurtured and supported just as apples are watered and cared for. Likewise, just as one should not throw stones at unripe apples to knock them down, society should not deprive the younger generation of opportunities.

In Halima Xudoyberdiyeva’s poem “Oq olmalar”, the “apple” concept forms yet another semantic model:

The days when white apples ripened were overcome by dark sorrows,

I could not find my father, wandering through the orchard in tears...

Years later my younger brothers repeat after me:

“We lost our father when the white apples ripened.”

In this poem, the white apples, the apple orchard, the loss of the father, and memory integrate within natural

and emotional spaces. In the blended space, the model “apple as childhood memory, separation, and longing” is formed.

The “apple” concept, which traditionally carries positive senses such as abundance and affection in Eastern cultures, undergoes transformation through the author’s individual poetic perception.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analyses above, it can be concluded that the concept of the “apple” forms new semantic models through conceptual integration within poetic texts. Each author, relying on their personal experience, worldview, individual poetic universe, and aesthetic perspectives, creates new blended spaces through conceptual integration.

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