



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF METAPHORS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a comparative analytical study of metaphorical systems in English and Uzbek through the framework of Cognitive Metaphor Theory. It examines the interplay between universal cognitive mechanisms shared across human experiences and language-specific cultural variations shaped by historical, geographical, and social contexts. The paper analyzes how structural differences between analytical English and agglutinative Uzbek influence the realization of conceptual mappings, particularly within emotional and somatic domains.

Keywords

cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, comparative analysis, source domain, target domain, English language, Uzbek language, somatic metaphor, cultural specificity, translation strategies.

ANNOTATSIYA

Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi metaforalarning kognitiv va madaniyatshunoslik xususiyatlari qiyosiy-tiSpace tahlil qilingan. Tadqiqot Kognitiv metafora nazariyasiga asoslangan holda, har ikkala tilda mavjud bo'lgan universal kognitiv modellarni, qisman mos keluvchi obrazli vositalarni hamda milliy-madaniy xususiyatga ega bo'lgan metaforik birliklarni yoritib beradi. Maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillarining strukturaviy-tipologik fapqlari (analitik va agglyutinativ) metaforalarning gramatika va semantikada namoyon bo'lishiga ko'rsatadigan ta'siri tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: kognitiv tilshunoslik, konseptual metafora, qiyosiy tahlil, manba sohasi, maqsad sohasi, ingliz tili, o'zbek tili, somatik metafora, madaniy xususiyat, tarjima strategiyalari.





АННОТАЦИЯ

В данной статье представлен сравнительно-типологический анализ метафорических систем английского и узбекского языков на основе теории концептуальной метафоры. В работе рассматривается взаимосвязь между универсальными когнитивными механизмами и национально-культурными особенностями, обусловленными историческим и социальным контекстом двух народов. Анализируется влияние структурно-типологических различий аналитического английского и агглютинативного узбекского языков на языковую реализацию метафор, в частности в соматической и эмоциональной сферах.

Ключевые слова: когнитивная лингвистика, концептуальная метафора, сравнительный анализ, сфера-источник, сфера-мишень, английский язык, узбекский язык, соматическая метафора, культурная специфика, стратегии перевода.

Introduction. Metaphor is far more than a decorative rhetorical figure; it is a fundamental cognitive mechanism through which human beings structure their thoughts, perceive reality, and articulate complex abstract concepts. In cognitive linguistics, as pioneered by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, metaphors are understood as conceptual mappings from a concrete source domain to an abstract target domain. Studying metaphors across different languages reveals both universal cognitive patterns shared by humanity and distinct cultural mindsets shaped by unique historical, geographical, and social experiences. A comparative analysis of metaphors in English and Uzbek offers a compelling field of inquiry, as it juxtaposes two linguistically and culturally distinct traditions.

The significance of comparing English and Uzbek metaphorical systems lies in their profound typological and cultural divergences. English, an analytical language of the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family, possesses a metaphorical inventory heavily influenced by Anglo-Saxon heritage, maritime history, classical Greco-Roman



mythology, Christian theology, and the Industrial Revolution. Conversely, Uzbek, an agglutinative language belonging to the Turkic family, features a rich metaphorical landscape deeply rooted in Central Asian pastoral life, Silk Road commerce, Islamic philosophy, traditional family structures, and Eastern literary traditions. Despite these structural and cultural differences, speakers of both languages frequently rely on similar primary metaphors grounded in shared physical human experiences, such as conceptualizing time as space or emotions as temperature and pressure.

A comparative investigation into English and Uzbek metaphors allows linguists to categorize metaphorical expressions into universal conceptual patterns, partially overlapping domain mappings, and highly culture-specific metaphors. Examining how abstract domains like emotion, time, life, and power are metaphorically mapped in both languages contributes directly to contrastive linguistics, intercultural communication, and translation theory. Understanding these metaphorical frameworks prevents cross-cultural misinterpretations and provides translators with effective strategies to render figurative language accurately while preserving stylistic integrity.

In modern cognitive linguistics, metaphor is recognized not merely as a stylistic device, but as a primary cognitive tool that structures human thought and action. According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, a conceptual metaphor consists of a systematic mapping from a concrete **source domain** (e.g., physical movement, heat, or journeys) to an abstract **target domain** (e.g., time, emotion, or life). When comparing English and Uzbek, this cognitive mapping demonstrates how speakers of both languages use physical reality to rationalize abstract experiences. For instance, both speech communities conceptualize *Life as a Journey*, where progress is mapped onto physical movement along a path. In English, one speaks of reaching a ***crossroads in life*** or finding oneself at a ***dead end***, while in Uzbek, life is similarly conceptualized through expressions like ***hayot yo'li*** (*the road of life*) or ***turmush chorrahasi*** (*the intersection of life*).



Despite these shared cognitive foundations, the structural typologies of analytical English and agglutinative Uzbek shape how metaphors are grammatically realized. In English, conceptual metaphors often manifest through fixed verb-noun collocations or prepositional phrases, such as *wasting time* or *falling in love*. In Uzbek, due to its Head-Final (SOV) structure and extensive agglutinative morphology, metaphorical meanings are frequently embedded within complex verbal phrases and somatic (body-part) compounds. For example, emotional target domains in Uzbek heavily rely on the heart (*yurak* or *dil*) and liver (*jigar*) as source domains. Where an English speaker might describe anxiety as feeling *butterflies in the stomach*, an Uzbek speaker expresses profound sorrow or empathy as *jigari bag'ri qon bo'lmoq* (*one's liver and chest bleeding*), reflecting a unique bodily localization of emotion.

Comparative Typology of Metaphorical Domains. Comparative analysis reveals that English and Uzbek metaphors fall into three primary categories based on their cognitive mapping and socio-cultural motivation:

1. These metaphors arise from shared human biology and universal physical interactions with the environment. For instance, the conceptual metaphor Anger is Heat / Hot Fluid appears identically in both languages: English speakers **boil with anger** or **blow off steam**, while Uzbek speakers describe extreme anger as **qoni qaynamoq** (*one's blood boiling*) or **jahl otiga minmoq** (*mounting the horse of anger*). Similarly, Time is Money translates directly across both cultures, seen in English **spending time** and Uzbek **vaqt sarflamoq**.

2. In these cases, the abstract target domain is identical, but each culture selects a different concrete source domain based on its historical and environmental context. To convey the idea of an impossible situation, English draws upon maritime or physical improbabilities, such as **looking for a needle in a haystack**. Uzbek, deeply rooted in Central Asian pastoral traditions and trade, uses the source domain of camels or agricultural phenomena, such as **tuya dumi yerga tekkanda** (*when the camel's tail*



touches the ground). Likewise, while English conceptualizes stubbornness through animals like mules (**as stubborn as a mule**), Uzbek frequently maps stubbornness onto physical stiffness or hardness, such as **oyog'ini tirab olmoq** (bracing one's feet firmly).

3. Culture-Specific metaphors reflect distinct socio-historical developments, religious traditions, and folk literature that exist in one culture but lack a direct counterpart in the other. English metaphorical expressions are frequently derived from Greek mythology (**Pandora's box**), Shakespearean literature (**green-eyed monster** for jealousy), or naval history (**showing true colors**). Conversely, Uzbek culture-specific metaphors are impregnated with Central Asian hospitality, Islamic heritage, and traditional family structures. Expressions like **dasturxon yozmoq** (to spread the tablecloth, metaphorically meaning to show boundless hospitality) or **oq yo'l tilamoq** (to wish a white road, meaning to bestow blessings for a prosperous journey) carry deep cultural resonance that cannot be mapped directly onto a single English phrase.

Translating conceptual metaphors between English and Uzbek requires balancing cognitive equivalence with target-language naturalness. When addressing **universal metaphors**, direct translation or calque works seamlessly because both conceptual frameworks overlap completely. However, when translating **culturally nuanced metaphors**, translators must employ metaphor substitution (analogy), replacing the source culture's domain image with a functionally equivalent image in the target language—such as translating *when pigs fly* into Uzbek as *tuya dumi yerga tekkanda*. Finally, for **culture-specific metaphors**, translators rely on descriptive translation or paraphrasing to unpack the underlying cultural meaning, often using footnotes when preserving the original cultural color (*exotism*) is essential for literary or rhetorical effect.

CONCLUSION

This comparative study demonstrates that while English and Uzbek belong to distinct language families and cultural traditions, their metaphorical systems reflect a



complex interplay of cognitive universals and socio-cultural variations. Through the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the analysis reveals that both languages share foundational mappings grounded in universal human biology and physical experience, such as conceptualizing Life as a Journey, Time as Money, and Anger as Heat.

At the same time, significant divergences emerge in culturally nuanced and non-equivalent metaphors. English metaphor draws heavily upon maritime history, classical mythology, and industrialization, whereas Uzbek metaphor remains deeply rooted in Central Asian pastoral traditions, Islamic philosophy, and family values. Structurally, English realizes metaphors largely through fixed prepositional and verbal collocations, while Uzbek utilizes agglutinative morphology and Head-Final structures, frequently anchoring emotional target domains in somatic source concepts.

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