



LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CONVERGENCE IN METAPHORS OF UZBEK AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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Abstract

The interrelationship between language, culture, and cognition has been a subject of linguistic research since the time of Wilhelm von Humboldt. He emphasized that language is intricately linked to humanity's spiritual development and reflects every stage of cultural progression. This perspective laid the groundwork for the development of linguistic cultural studies, which explore the cultural backdrop of communicative spaces through the prism of language and speech. Despite the emergence of new fields like cognitive linguistics, the intricate relationship between language, culture, and cognition remains underexplored. This paper focuses on metaphor as a point of convergence between these domains, especially in the context of Uzbek and English. Language, therefore, is not only a communicative tool but also a mirror of the cultural and intellectual development of a society. The theoretical frameworks laid down by scholars such as Cassirer, Vico, and Ricoeur support the claim that metaphors are embedded deeply in our perception of the world. Cultural metaphors reflect how societies categorize experiences, emotions, and abstract ideas in different ways, thereby making them a key component of cross-cultural linguistic research.

Introduction

This research uses a comparative conceptual and cultural-linguistic approach to analyze metaphor usage in Uzbek and English. By applying principles from cognitive linguistics and linguistic cultural studies, the study investigates metaphor as a cognitive mechanism that facilitates the understanding of abstract concepts through



more familiar ones. The analysis draws from both historical-philosophical sources (e.g., Aristotle, Nietzsche, Heidegger) and contemporary linguistic theories (e.g., Conceptual Metaphor Theory). The comparative analysis involved reviewing metaphorical expressions from contemporary literature, media texts, and academic discourse in both languages. Additionally, the study incorporated a meta-analysis of previous linguistic and philosophical works to frame metaphor as both a linguistic and cultural construct. Emphasis was placed on identifying underlying conceptual metaphors and their cognitive mappings in source and target domains.

Results

The study identifies that metaphors are not merely linguistic devices but cultural phenomena embedded deeply in cognition and worldview. For instance, in both languages, metaphors help categorize, evaluate, and explain reality. Metaphors reflect not just a linguistic reality but a cognitive-cultural one, where known concepts are projected onto unknown phenomena to facilitate understanding. Cultural-specific metaphors in each language indicate differing cognitive frameworks shaped by social experience.

Additionally, challenges arise in metaphor comprehension during second-language acquisition due to the cultural embeddedness of expressions. Psycholinguistic studies confirm that while native speakers process metaphorical expressions as effortlessly as literal ones, non-native speakers struggle with cultural meanings encoded in metaphors.

The findings suggest that while many conceptual metaphors (e.g., TIME IS MONEY, LIFE IS A JOURNEY) appear across languages, their cultural expressions and nuances differ significantly. In Uzbek, metaphors often stem from agrarian and family-centric values, whereas in English, industrial and individualistic metaphors are more prevalent. This cultural divergence impacts metaphor usage in idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and even educational language.

Discussion

Metaphors are essential in shaping human thought and communication. They enable individuals to describe abstract concepts using concrete imagery, thus extending the reach of cognition. As Ortega y Gasset states, metaphor acts as an intellectual extension tool, revealing the otherwise inaccessible. The metaphorical system of each



language consists of interconnected elements tied by an invariant core metaphorical meaning. These patterns reveal not only linguistic structures but cultural norms and values. Linguocultural research is gaining momentum, emphasizing the necessity of examining metaphors as part of broader socio-cognitive and cultural processes. Despite differing views on the emergence of linguocultural studies as a distinct discipline, its relevance is evident in cross-cultural communication and language pedagogy. Understanding metaphor's semantic and cultural dimensions can significantly aid language learners in grasping nuanced meanings.

Understanding these metaphorical patterns has practical implications for education, translation studies, and intercultural communication. Effective language instruction, particularly in ESL/EFL contexts, should include training in culturally embedded metaphorical usage to improve learners' comprehension and expressive ability.

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