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## METAPHOR AND CONCEPTUALIZATION IN ENGLISH AND TURKIC LANGUAGES

### Annotation

This paper investigates metaphor and conceptualization in English and Turkic languages from a cognitive linguistic perspective. Metaphors are not merely decorative linguistic devices; rather, they are central to how human beings conceptualize abstract domains such as time, emotion, and life. Drawing on the theoretical framework of Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), the study compares metaphorical expressions in English with those found in Turkic languages, particularly Uzbek, Turkish, and Kazakh. Through a comparative-analytical method, examples from idioms, proverbs, and everyday speech are analyzed. The findings reveal both universal cognitive patterns (e.g., metaphors rooted in embodied experiences like heat for anger) and culture-specific conceptualizations (e.g., nomadic imagery in Turkic expressions versus economic-industrial imagery in English). The paper argues that metaphorical conceptualization is a window into cultural values, worldviews, and historical experiences. The conclusions have implications for translation studies, intercultural communication, and language pedagogy.

**Key words:** Metaphor, conceptualization, English-Turkic languages, cognitive linguistics, comparative study, culture, translation.

## МЕТАФОРА И КОНЦЕПТУАЛИЗАЦИЯ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И ТЮРКСКИХ ЯЗЫКАХ

### Аннотация

В данной статье исследуются метафора и концептуализация в английском и тюркских языках с точки зрения когнитивной лингвистики. Метафоры рассматриваются не только как декоративные языковые средства, но как центральный механизм, посредством которого человек осмысливает абстрактные сферы, такие как время, эмоции и жизнь. Основываясь на теоретической модели Дж. Лакоффа и М. Джонсона – Теории концептуальной метафоры (Conceptual Metaphor Theory, CMT), в работе проводится сопоставление метафорических выражений английского языка с выражениями, зафиксированными в тюркских языках, в частности в узбекском, турецком и казахском. В рамках сравнительно-аналитического метода анализируются примеры из пословиц, идиом и повседневной речи. Результаты показывают как универсальные когнитивные модели (например, метафоры, основанные на телесном опыте – тепло как выражение гнева), так и культурно-специфические концептуализации (например, кочевая образность в тюркских выражениях по сравнению с экономико-индустриальной образностью в английском языке). В статье утверждается, что метафорическая концептуализация является окном в культурные ценности, мировоззрение и исторический опыт. Выводы исследования имеют практическое значение для переводоведения, межкультурной коммуникации и преподавания языка.

**Ключевые слова:** Метафора, концептуализация, английский язык – тюркские языки, когнитивная лингвистика, сравнительное исследование, культура, перевод.

## INGLIZ VA TURKIY TILLARDA METAFORA VA KONSEPTUALIZATSIYA

### Annotatsiya

Mazkur maqolada ingliz va turkiy tillarda metafora hamda konseptualizatsiya kognitiv lingvistika nuqtai nazaridan tadqiq etiladi. Metaforalar faqatgina bezak vositasi sifatida emas, balki insonning vaqt, hissiyot va hayot kabi mavhum sohalarni anglashida markaziy mexanizm sifatida qaraladi. J. Lakoff va M. Johnsonning Konseptual metafora nazariyasi (Conceptual Metaphor Theory, CMT) asos qilib olingan bo'lib, unda ingliz tilidagi metaforik ifodalar turkiy tillarda – xususan, o'zbek, turk va qozoq tillarida uchraydigan ifodalar bilan qiyoslanadi. Qiyosiy-analitik uslub asosida maqolda maqollar, iboralar va kundalik nutqdan olingan misollar tahlil qilinadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, umumiy kognitiv modellarga (masalan, tana tajribasiga asoslangan metaforalar – g'azabni ifodalashda issiqlik) hamda madaniyatga xos konseptualizatsiyalarga (masalan, turkiy ifodalarda ko'chmanchilik obrazlari, ingliz tilida esa iqtisodiy-sanoat obrazlari) duch kelinadi. Maqolada metaforik konseptualizatsiya madaniy qadriyatlar, dunyoqarash va tarixiy tajribaga deraza bo'lib xizmat qilishi ta'kidlanadi. Tadqiqot natijalari tarjimashunoslik, madaniyatlararo muloqot va til o'qitishda amaliy ahamiyatga ega.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Metafora, konseptualizatsiya, ingliz tili – turkiy tillar, kognitiv lingvistika, qiyosiy tadqiqot, madaniyat, tarjima

**Introduction.** Language is not merely a neutral medium of communication but a cognitive and cultural tool through which people conceptualize the world around them. One of the most powerful mechanisms in this process is metaphor. Traditionally considered a figure of speech, metaphor was long confined to the domain of literary stylistics. However, with the advent of cognitive linguistics in the late 20th century, metaphor came to be understood as a fundamental

component of thought and conceptualization (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Metaphors allow speakers to understand abstract domains (such as time, love, or life) in terms of more concrete, familiar experiences. For example, when English speakers say "time is running out," they conceptualize time as a finite resource that can be lost or wasted. Similarly, Turkic speakers often describe time as a river that flows, drawing on natural and environmental imagery. These examples illustrate how

metaphors are both universal—because they rely on human bodily and cognitive experiences—and culture-specific, reflecting the unique traditions and environments of linguistic communities.

The purpose of this article is to examine how English and Turkic languages conceptualize key abstract domains through metaphor. By focusing on three central areas—time, emotion, and life journey—this study demonstrates both similarities and differences in metaphorical thought across these languages. Such a comparative perspective contributes to fields including contrastive linguistics, translation studies, and cultural linguistics.

**Literature Review.** The modern study of metaphor was revolutionized by Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) *Metaphors We Live By*, which introduced Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). According to CMT, metaphors are not merely linguistic phenomena but reflections of underlying conceptual structures. For example, the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR manifests in expressions like "He shot down my argument," demonstrating how abstract reasoning is framed in terms of physical conflict.

Kövecses (2010) further developed metaphor research by emphasizing cultural variation. While some conceptual metaphors are nearly universal due to shared human experiences (e.g., ANGER IS HEAT), others vary according to social and cultural contexts. For instance, metaphors of love in American English often emphasize passion as fire, whereas in other cultures love may be conceptualized through metaphors of journey, fate, or even illness.

In the Turkic linguistic tradition, metaphor studies have focused on idioms, proverbs, and oral literature. Kononov (1960) analyzed the grammatical and semantic structure of Turkish literary language, while Kara (1998) highlighted the prevalence of metaphorical imagery in Turkic oral traditions, particularly in epics and folk narratives. More recently, Özdemir (2015) examined Turkish idioms through a cognitive lens, demonstrating how metaphors emerge from both embodied experiences (such as bodily reactions to emotions) and cultural practices (such as nomadic heritage).

Comparative studies between English and Turkic languages remain relatively scarce. However, scholars in contrastive linguistics have noted significant cultural differences in how metaphors are expressed. For example, Uzbek and Kazakh expressions often employ imagery drawn from nature, animals, and nomadic life, while English tends to rely on economic and industrial metaphors (Yuldasheva, 2019). This study builds on such observations by offering a systematic comparative analysis of metaphorical conceptualization in the two linguistic traditions.

**Research Methodology.** The research employs a comparative-analytical method based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The data set consists of:

1. English idioms, proverbs, and literary expressions collected from dictionaries, corpora, and secondary literature.

2. Turkic idioms and proverbs (with focus on Uzbek, Turkish, and Kazakh) collected from phraseological dictionaries, scholarly works, and oral sources.

The analysis targets three conceptual domains—time, emotion, and life journey—chosen because they are central to human experience and highly metaphorical across languages. Each domain is examined to identify (a) shared metaphors across English and Turkic languages, (b) culture-specific metaphors unique to one tradition, and (c) the implications of these patterns for translation and intercultural understanding.

This study employs a comparative-cognitive linguistic approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods. The methodology consists of the following stages:

1. Corpus Selection

English sources: idiomatic dictionaries (e.g., Oxford Dictionary of Idioms), literary texts, and authentic examples of spoken discourse.

Turkic sources: explanatory dictionaries, collections of proverbs and sayings, contemporary media texts, and samples of spoken Uzbek, Turkish, and Kazakh.

A balanced corpus of 500 metaphorical expressions was compiled (250 from English, 250 from Turkic languages).

2. Categorization of Metaphors

Expressions were analyzed within the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Conceptual domains included:

Time (e.g., time is money vs. vakt oltindek qadrli [time is like gold])

Emotion (anger, love, sadness, happiness)

Life and Death (journey metaphors, cyclical metaphors)

Social Relations and Power (hierarchy, respect, hospitality).

3. Analytical Procedure

Qualitative analysis identified metaphorical mappings and conceptual domains.

Comparative analysis examined universal metaphors (embodied experiences) versus culture-specific metaphors (rooted in nomadic imagery, religious values, or industrial-economic frameworks).

Quantitative analysis calculated the frequency of recurring metaphors across English and Turkic corpora.

4. Translation & Intercultural Dimension

Selected metaphors were tested in translation tasks to investigate equivalence and cultural adaptation.

Special focus was given to untranslatable or culture-bound metaphors (e.g., "ko'ngil" in Uzbek as a metaphorical domain of the heart-mind).

5. Reliability and Validity

Triangulation was ensured through multiple data sources (dictionaries, corpora, native speaker intuitions).

Intercoder reliability was tested by having two independent researchers classify a subset of metaphors, ensuring consistency.

Through this layered methodology, the research achieves both depth (qualitative insights into metaphorical thinking) and breadth (quantitative overview of metaphorical domains).

Analysis and Results

1. Time Metaphors

English: The metaphor TIME IS MONEY dominates English expressions, reflecting a capitalist-industrial society (e.g., "waste time," "save time," "invest time") (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Turkic: Turkic languages often employ TIME IS A RIVER (e.g., Uzbek "vaqt daryo kabi oqadi" – "time flows like a river"), emphasizing the natural, inevitable, and continuous aspect of time (Özdemir, 2015).

Comparison: Both traditions conceptualize time as a valuable resource, but English frames it economically, while Turkic languages draw from natural imagery linked to nomadic life and agrarian cycles.

2. Emotion Metaphors

English: Emotions, especially anger, are conceptualized through HEAT metaphors (e.g., "boiling with anger," "simmering with resentment") (Kövecses, 2010).

Turkic: Emotions are also described with fire imagery (e.g., Uzbek "g'azabdan yonmoq" – "to burn from anger"), but often with stronger cultural associations with danger, destruction, or purification (Kara, 1998).

Comparison: The universality lies in the embodied experience of heat and fire, but Turkic languages incorporate

symbolic dimensions of fire rooted in nomadic and spiritual traditions.

### 3. Life Journey Metaphors

English: The metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY is dominant, expressed through phrases like “at a crossroads,” “moving forward,” or “a rocky road ahead” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Turkic: Similar metaphors exist, but they are often tied to mobility and horseback riding (e.g., Uzbek “hayot yo‘li” – “the road of life,” Kazakh “өмір жолы” – “the path of life”), reflecting the nomadic heritage of Turkic peoples (Kononov, 1960).

Comparison: Both languages see life as a path, but English emphasizes linear progress, while Turkic imagery is strongly influenced by nomadism, travel, and natural landscapes.

**Conclusion and Recommendations.** This study demonstrates that metaphors in English and Turkic languages are shaped by both universal embodied experiences and culture-specific frameworks. While both traditions use metaphors of time, emotion, and life journey, the imagery differs: English favors economic and industrial metaphors, whereas Turkic languages rely on natural, nomadic, and spiritual imagery.

1. Comparative studies should expand to include a broader range of Turkic languages, such as Kyrgyz, Uyghur, and Tatar.

2. Translation studies should pay close attention to metaphorical equivalence, as direct translations may miss cultural connotations.

3. Language teaching should incorporate metaphor analysis to enhance cultural understanding and communicative competence.

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