

**METAPHOR: A PHENOMENON OF THOUGHT****Jo'rayeva Nargiza Rafiq qizi**

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[juraevanargiza8@gmail.com](mailto:juraevanargiza8@gmail.com)**ABSTRACT**

This article interprets metaphor not merely as a rhetorical device, but as a fundamental cognitive mechanism of human thinking. It explores the close relationship between metaphor, language, and cognition, emphasizing its role in understanding and conceptualizing abstract notions. Drawing on Aristotle's classical views and the conceptual metaphor theory developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, the paper analyzes the mapping process between source and target domains. Examples from different languages and cultures demonstrate that metaphor reflects cultural worldview and primarily functions as a phenomenon of thought rather than solely a linguistic expression.

**Key words:** metaphor, cognition, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, source domain, target domain, language and thought.

**ANNOTATSIYA.**

Mazkur maqolada metafora hodisasi an'anaviy ritorik vosita sifatida emas, balki inson tafakkurining markaziy kognitiv mexanizmi sifatida talqin qilinadi. Metaforaning til va tafakkur o'rtasidagi uzviy bog'liqligi, uning mavhum tushunchalarni anglash va tushuntirishdagi roli yoritiladi. Aristotelning klassik qarashlari hamda George Lakoff va Mark Johnson tomonidan ishlab chiqilgan konseptual metafora nazariyasi asosida metaforaning manba sohasi va maqsad sohasi o'rtasidagi xaritalash jarayoni tahlil qilinadi. Turli tillar va madaniyatlarda metaforaning namoyon bo'lishi misollar orqali ko'rsatilib, metafora nutq hodisasidan ko'ra ong hodisasi ekanligi asoslab beriladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** metafora, tafakkur, kognitiv lingvistika, konseptual metafora, manba sohasi, maqsad sohasi, til va ong.

**АННОТАЦИЯ**

В статье метафора рассматривается не как риторическое украшение речи, а как фундаментальный когнитивный механизм человеческого мышления. Анализируется связь метафоры с процессами познания и концептуализации абстрактных понятий. На

основе классических взглядов Аристотеля и теории концептуальной метафоры Дж. Лакоффа и М. Джонсона раскрывается механизм соотнесения исходной и целевой областей. На примерах из разных языков и культур показано, что метафора отражает особенности национального мировосприятия и функционирует прежде всего как явление мышления, а не только языка.

**Ключевые слова:** метафора, мышление, когнитивная лингвистика, концептуальная метафора, исходная область, целевая область, язык и сознание.

The need to distinguish similar and adjacent concepts gives rise to the metaphorical naming of new concepts. Based on the sufficient capacities of the human mind, the distinct and similar forms of any two concepts are differentiated. Initially, even if such mutually distinguishable concepts are expressed by a single word, their lexical meanings (sememes) gradually diverge. As is known, every word is monosemantic, that is, univocal, by its very nature. The formation of polysemantic words in a language is, in fact, the result of an attempt to name a certain unnamed concept with the name of a related concept. Although the adaptation (encoding) of a single word to express several concepts may seem like a minor issue that negatively affects the development of the language's lexicon, it can ultimately lead to an expansion of expressive possibilities. Therefore, it is often observed that every significant concept formed in the mind is not named with a separate word, but rather with the name of a similar concept.

On the concepts and knowledge of being, the great philosopher Immanuel Kant expresses the following thoughts: “Man cannot fully know things beyond the limits of knowledge... we call phenomena those things that can be perceived by reason within the limits of human thought, while the dark concepts beyond the limits of knowledge are noumena...” . Kant calls the world of phenomena he has in mind two parts: the world of the senses (mundus sensibilis) and the world of reason (mundus intelligibilis). We know the concepts of the world of the senses through our sensory organs. We understand the concepts of the world of reason through thought. A metaphor, then, arises at the intersection of these two realms—the world of reason and the world of the senses. Its function is to express those concepts that are difficult for us to articulate—namely, those that cannot be seen with the eye, touched with the hand, tasted with the tongue, or heard with the ear: intention, shame, sorrow, or shame, love, anger, and so on—to express these concepts to everyone through names that are easy to understand, so that people do not encounter difficulties in speech and communication. In general, metaphor is not about

knowing content belonging to the world of reason through forms belonging to the world of sensation, but rather about symbolically implying it.

Every society has its own distinctive set of metaphors, and it uses these to establish communication and relationships. For example, in the everyday speech of the Russian peoples, themes of animals, colors, and emotions predominate. As examples: “You, bear, knocked all the plates off the shelf,” “What a kid I was—a calf looking at the world through ‘rose-colored glasses’!” examples of the use of animal metaphors, the color metaphor in phrases like “When I see injustice in the country, such black malice comes over me that I want to destroy everything,” and “Kolesnikov screams, turning completely green with rage,” and the “Ah, so you're on his side? - in a fit of rage, Ivan shouted,“ ”The director could forgive young employees' incompetence, but their blatant insolence threw him into a rage,” and in other examples of spoken discourse we can see the metaphorical portrayal of emotions. In the speech of Arab peoples, we can observe that the primary metaphors revolve around the soul, the body, food, nature, and religion. “Abyad Albo” (أب يض ق ل به), meaning “His heart is white,” or “Tu'burné” (تؤد رني) – “You buried me alive!”, “Almada va sharab akal” (الامدى و شرب اكل), meaning “He devours knowledge,” لع أقدر ما “ma akdar abla' hatha alshkhis,” i.e. “I can't swallow this person,” among others. In English, metaphors are mainly about economics and finance, politics, sports, and human rights and freedoms, and we can cite the following as examples: “Argument is war,” “Time is money,” “I'm walking ahead.” Looking at the given examples, metaphorical thinking is intrinsically linked to language and culture. Each society has its own unique worldview, so a metaphorical concept in one language can take on a completely different meaning in another. For example, according to the above English definition of the concept of time, “Time is money,” because, as George Lakoff said, “Time is considered a very valuable commodity in our culture.” It is a finite resource that serves to help us achieve our goals." Accordingly, if we draw a conclusion, this metaphor does not carry any semantic meaning in the language of a nation on the other side of the world where the concept of time is not central and the concept of money does not exist at all.

The concept of metaphor was first mentioned by the ancient Greek philosopher and polymath Aristotle. He in his In his works Poetics and Rhetoric, he discusses metaphor, defining it as a word in noun phrases that is “...not proper to the thing, but is transferred from the genus to the species, or from the species to the genus, or from one species to another, or is likened to it.” In this instance, using the genus-to-species method, Aristotle gives the following example: “Look, my ship is also standing...” Here ‘standing’ can be understood as a genus—that is, a

general meaning—and as a species, meaning “it has dropped anchor and is motionless.” If we look at this in Uzbek, with the example “He is sitting in class,” here the action “to sit” in its general sense—i.e., as a genus—means “to participate in the course activities.” For the next one, in moving from a species to a genus—that is, from the particular to the general—Aristotle gives the following example: “Odysseus performed a thousand glorious deeds.” Here, the indefinite number “a thousand” is replaced by the meaning “many.” In fact, “thousand” is a definite number, that is, a species. Another example is “He took life with bronze,” where bronze is used here in the sense of a weapon. In the next example, “He struck with iron,” the word “iron” refers to a tool or weapon. To see this more clearly in today's examples, consider “He worked hard from dawn till dusk to earn a loaf of bread.” In this example, “a loaf of bread” means livelihood, and “worked hard” means very difficult labor. Or “The black cauldron is boiling.” Here the cauldron is the pot, and through the pot the entire life is meant. The third metaphorical meaning is the trope of conversion, from one kind to another, and Aristotle gives the following examples: “To give up one's life with a copper” and “To cut water droplets with a tireless copper.” In the first example, “to take one's life” is meant, and in the second, the metal object cutting water—that is, ships on a river or in the sea—is in view. Thus, turning to the method of analogy, the following definitions of the term “Analogy” are first provided in the Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language: “ANALOGY” (from the Greek *analogia* — correspondence, similarity),

1. The similarity of a certain characteristic in things and phenomena;
2. Logic. A form of inference in which, based on a similarity in one respect between two things or phenomena, a conclusion is drawn about their similarity and other aspects;
3. Judgment. A judgment that presumes a similar action (event) in the absence of a specific law of action; the criterion was applied to this action;
4. Logic. The similarity in function or other respects of linguistic units due to some relationship between them, whereby they acquire uniformity. For example, the independent and auxiliary forms of Uzbek verbs “ko'k” and “qara” are functionally and semantically equivalent to the verb ‘ber’ with the object “ko'k”: verbs such as ko'r, qara, yubor, ber.

Aristotle explains the method of analogy as follows: "Here I mean a case in which the second word is related to the first in the same way that the fourth word is related to the third... If the four things (four terms) are so connected that the second is to the first as the fourth is to the third, then by using this similarity, one can substitute the fourth for the second, or the second for the fourth." This is the law of analogy (proportional similarity). Here Aristotle cites the

example of “Dionysus's cup—Ares's shield” and says that they can be used like “Dionysus's shield and Ares's cup.” In these examples, the cup served as protection for Dionysus, just as the shield served the same purpose for Ares. And as a second example, he gives the phrase “The end of the day—the old age of life.” Here he explains that “the old age of the day” and “the end of life” can be used in a proportional manner. Since evening is the end of the day, old age is also the final part of life; therefore, in expressions like “Evening – the old age of the day,” “Old age – the evening of life,” or “The sunset phase of life,” old age is implied.

If we look at analogies in Uzbek metaphors, in the examples “Light of Knowledge” and “Light of Reason,” one could also say “Knowledge's Lamp” and “Reason's Light.” Furthermore, in similes such as “Time is flowing water” and “Life is a flowing river,” they can also be expressed as “Time is a flowing river” and “Life is flowing water.” Furthermore, if we look at metaphors used for a teacher, they are often compared to a candle or a gardener. For example, “A teacher is a gardener.” A good teacher is like a gardener. He teaches and nurtures his students just as a gardener carefully tends a sapling, caring for it until it becomes a fruitful tree. Or, another metaphor is the saying, “The teacher is a candle.” Like a candle, the teacher spreads light and shares knowledge with his students. Another example concerns life and the journey, in which life is likened to a long road. On the road, there are turns, obstacles, and a destination. In life, too, there are hardships, choices, and a purpose.

The concept of “Conceptual Metaphor,” which departs somewhat from Aristotle's definition of metaphor (“meaning transfer”), emerged in the 20th century (1980) in Mark Johnson and George Lakoff's *Metaphor We Live By* (“Metaphor We Live By”) in which they theoretically grounded the theory. They are considered one of the founders of cognitive (conceptual) metaphor theory. This book marked a turning point in the field of lexicology in linguistics. “Metaphor is not just language, but the primary mechanism of thought and action,” says George Lakoff. “Our ordinary conceptual system—the system by which we think and act—is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.”

According to Lakoff, since the time of Aristotle, metaphor has been viewed by linguists as merely a literary linguistic ornament, applied in everyday life, such as with words like “mother,” “finger,” “such as words like ‘evening’ have not been considered to play an important role in speech, according to Lakoff. In his article “Contemporary theory of metaphor,” the linguist refers to another classic linguist, Michael Reddy, and this linguist's “The Conduit metaphor” (“The Conduit Metaphor”) “served as a small pointer” that fundamentally changed the view of traditional metaphor theory, he says, and continues: “While other theorists had

noticed some cognitive properties of metaphor, Reddy was the first to demonstrate this through rigorous linguistic analysis and to articulate generalizations based on a large corpus of examples.” acknowledging that Michael Reddy was the first to present the theory of conceptual metaphor in linguistics. In his subsequent research, George Lakoff specifically acknowledges Reddy's contribution and, as a cognitive scientist and linguist, poses the key question to prove that metaphor is not merely poetic ornamentation or a rhetorical device. It was as follows: “Are there general laws governing the linguistic expressions traditionally called ‘poetic metaphors?’” and in response, Lakoff says: “The principle that generalizes and governs artistic metaphorical expressions is not language but thought.”

George Lakoff presents the following five pieces of evidence proving the existence of the theory of conceptual metaphor. They are as follows:

- Generalizations related to polysemy, that is, the use of a single word in several related senses;
- General laws governing the application of inference methods developed in one conceptual domain to situations in another domain;
- General rules that determine the new formation of artistic metaphors;
- General laws governing semantic changes;
- Psycholinguistic experiments.

Here, the first principle is the concept of interconnection in polysemy, analyzing primarily what kind of connection lies at the basis of the emerging meanings. For example, in the compounds “pillar of the family” and “head of the family,” theoretical knowledge about why the words ‘pillar’ and “head” were chosen is analyzed.

In the next principle, issues concerning the use of the same words and phrases in two distinct domains are analyzed. For example, in the compounds “oila qurmoq” and “uy qurmoq,” one pertains to the topic of society, while the other relates to the construction field. This principle examines the unifying principle based on which the word “qurmoq” was chosen in these two examples.

The third theoretical principle analyzes the metaphors used by writers and poets in literary works and the metaphors generated by the demands of discourse. This topic is systematically presented in the 1989 book “More Than Reason: A Field Guide to Metaphor Understanding,” co-authored by George Lakoff and Mark Turner.

The fourth theoretical argument concerns semantic changes, suggesting that “the historical development of word meanings is not random but is subject to certain cognitive and

cultural patterns.” More precisely, this means that a person uses metaphors based on their own experiences. They first test them in physical experience, then analyze them using mental concepts and transfer them into speech. For example, in the fifth theoretical argument, serious analyses are conducted on why the verb “to see” is used for the combination “to see the essence” in examples like “He saw the essence of the problem” and “He saw the mountains from a distance.”

In the final fifth theoretical argument, conclusions drawn from psycholinguistic research are presented. This is primarily based on the psycholinguistic perspectives and experiments of American linguist Raymond W. Gibbs. In this, Gibbs discusses the metaphorical structure of language, its effects on the thought process, and the important role metaphor plays in automatic phenomena within the human cognitive mechanism. For example, questions such as why the concept of time is treated as a valuable object in the phrase “I wasted my time,” or why thought is treated as an object in “He got his thoughts together,” are explored in depth.

In his theories on conceptual metaphor, George Lakoff presents a specific mapping system. According to him, each metaphorical unit consists of a “TARGET DOMAIN” and a “SOURCE DOMAIN” (“SOURCE DOMAIN”) as manifested, giving the example “Love is a journey.” Here ‘love’ is the target domain and “journey” is the source domain. On the journey there is a path—distance, obstacles, intersecting roads, companions, and passengers. The lives of lovers are like a journey. In it, too, there are various difficulties, that is, obstacles. During the process of falling in love, counselors serve as companions. In that process, there are divergent paths. During this time, one may also encounter other travelers.

According to Lakoff and Johnson, metaphors are systematic and partial. A metaphor highlights certain aspects of a concept while hiding others. For example, in the “Time is money” metaphor, the highlighted aspects are saving time, spending time, investing time, and wasting time. What it conceals are the unique qualities of time, such as its “irreversibility” or the possibility of “rest.”

In examples like “You wasted your time,” “It was expensive,” and “Time is money,” a valuable commodity is implied, just as with money.

Lakoff and Johnson divided metaphor into the following types:

1. Orientational metaphors (based on direction): Good is up, bad is down. He gives examples such as “My spirits were lifted,” “Prices went down,” and “The situation improved.”
2. Ontological metaphors (using objects or physical things as a basis for abstract concepts). In this case, abstract things are seen as objects, containers, or persons. For example,

“The mind is a container,” “This idea has taken root in my brain,” “I can't get this thought out of my head”;

3. Structural metaphors – understanding a complex concept through another complex concept, for example, “Love is a journey”

Lovers – travelers

The relationship of love – a mode of transportation

Common goals – destination

Examples that illustrate these metaphors include: “Our relationship is not on the right track,” “We have overcome many obstacles,” and “This relationship has hit a dead end.”

As Lakoff later emphasized, metaphors often stem from our body's physical experiences. Therefore, they appear universal, but they can vary depending on the culture.

Metaphor is not a part of language but a central mechanism of human thought. Through it, we understand abstract concepts (time, love, argument, theory) via our physical and everyday experiences. More precisely, metaphor is not a product of speech but a phenomenon of the mind. In linguistics, language (lison) and speech (the act of speaking) are distinguished. Metaphor exists in the lison system (the shifting of word meaning), but its foundation is a mental phenomenon. In speech, it appears only as a “product,” because the mind has already established the relation “A = B.” For example, in Uzbek, “Yuragim yondi,” “yuragim yaralandi,” “ichim kuydi” The reason for this is that the mind already knows what physical pain is from its experience with bodily injuries, so it uses words for physical pain to express metaphors for emotional suffering, such as “my soul aches.” This is why we perceive our mental state through words that are familiar to us from the cognitive process, such as “to burn,” “to scratch,” “to be wounded,” and “to be on fire.”

In conclusion, this article interprets the phenomenon of metaphor not as a traditional rhetorical ornament, but as a fundamental cognitive mechanism of human thought. Drawing on modern cognitive metaphor theory, it was demonstrated that metaphor extends beyond language to serve as a tool that shapes the processes of thinking, understanding, and reasoning. Specifically, through the concepts of “source domain” and “target domain,” it was shown that humans strive to comprehend abstract and complex experiences based on concrete, physical, and everyday experiences.

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