

HOW METAPHORS REFLECT WORLDVIEW AND COGNITION

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Annotation: This article explores how metaphors are not merely linguistic expressions but reflect deep-seated cognitive processes and cultural worldviews. Drawing from cognitive linguistics, anthropology, and cross-cultural communication studies, the paper argues that metaphors function as cognitive models that shape how individuals and societies perceive reality. By analyzing conceptual metaphors such as “Life is a journey”, “Mind is a container”, and culture-specific metaphors in English, Uzbek, and other languages, this study illustrates how metaphorical language encodes perception, value systems, and collective experience. The findings underscore the role of metaphor in shaping thought and highlight its significance in intercultural understanding and translation.

Keywords: Cognitive metaphor, worldview, cognition, conceptual mapping, cultural models, linguistic relativity.

Аннотация: Данная статья исследует метафоры не только как языковые выражения, но и как отражение глубинных когнитивных процессов и культурных мировоззрений. Опираясь на данные когнитивной лингвистики, антропологии и межкультурной коммуникации, автор утверждает, что метафоры функционируют как когнитивные модели, формирующие восприятие реальности как отдельными индивидами, так и обществом в целом. Анализируя концептуальные метафоры, такие как «жизнь — это путешествие», «разум — это контейнер», а также культурно-специфические метафоры в английском, узбекском и других языках, исследование демонстрирует, как метафорический язык кодирует восприятие, систему ценностей и коллективный опыт. Полученные результаты подчеркивают роль метафоры в формировании мышления и её важность для межкультурного понимания и перевода.

Ключевые слова: когнитивная метафора, мировоззрение, познание, концептуальное соответствие, культурные модели, языковая относительность.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada metaforalar faqat til birliklari emas, balki chuqur kognitiv jarayonlar va madaniy dunyoqarashlarning ifodasi ekani o'rganiladi. Kognitiv lingvistika, antropologiya va madaniyatlararo kommunikatsiya tadqiqotlariga tayanilgan holda, maqolada metaforalar shaxslar va jamiyatlar qanday qilib haqiqatni qabul qilishini shakllantiradigan kognitiv modellari sifatida faoliyat yuritishi ta'kidlanadi. “Hayot — bu safar”, “Ong — bu konteyner” kabi konseptual metaforalar hamda ingliz, o'zbek va boshqa tillardagi madaniy jihatdan xos bo'lgan metaforalar tahlili orqali metaforik til qanday qilib

inson idroki, qadriyatlar tizimi va jamoaviy tajribani kodlashi yoritib beriladi. Tadqiqot natijalari metaforalarning tafakkurni shakllantirishdagi rolini va ularning madaniyatlararo tushunish hamda tarjima jarayonidagi ahamiyatini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: kognitiv metafora, dunyoqarash, idrok, konseptual moslik, madaniy modellar, til nisbiyligi.

The study of metaphor has evolved from a purely literary concern to a central topic in cognitive science. Since Lakoff and Johnson's groundbreaking *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), metaphors have been understood not only as stylistic devices but as cognitive tools that structure thought, perception, and behavior. They reveal how humans conceptualize abstract domains through more familiar, embodied experiences.

The relationship between metaphor, cognition, and worldview is especially important in cross-cultural communication, where differences in metaphorical framing can reflect deeper divergences in how societies interpret reality. This article examines how metaphors encapsulate cultural models and cognitive schemata, contributing to the formation of distinct worldviews across languages and societies.

The cognitive approach to metaphor, pioneered by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999), posits that metaphors are conceptual mappings between source and target domains. These mappings are rooted in bodily experience and are shaped by culture. Kövecses (2005) argues that metaphors are both universal and variable, with cultural context determining the specifics of metaphorical expression.

Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis (1956) suggests that language influences thought, a view echoed in how metaphors shape the way we categorize and respond to our environment. For example, in Western cultures, "Time is money" conceptualizes time as a limited resource, influencing punctuality and efficiency. In contrast, in Uzbek and many Eastern cultures, time is more contextually and socially embedded, often expressed through metaphors that emphasize patience, fate, or spiritual rhythm.

Yu (1998) and Boers (2003) further explored how metaphors vary based on cultural logic, values, and environment. For instance, metaphors based on seafaring (e.g., "smooth sailing") are more common in maritime cultures, while metaphors rooted in agriculture or family dominate agrarian or collectivist societies.

1. Metaphors as Cognitive Frameworks

Metaphors function as frames that structure perception. The metaphor "Life is a journey" shapes how we think about goals, obstacles, progress, and destinations in life. This metaphor implies agency, direction, and purpose. Its cognitive salience lies in mapping physical movement onto existential experience. In cultures where life is seen more as a cycle than a linear path, such as in many Asian traditions, this metaphor may be replaced by "Life is a circle" or "Life is a wheel", reflecting different conceptions of time and existence.

2. Cultural Models Embedded in Metaphors Worldview is often embedded in metaphorical expressions. The metaphor “Argument is war” (e.g., “He shot down my argument”) reflects a confrontational, competitive view of discourse. In contrast, some cultures may view argument as collaborative discussion or even mutual learning, resulting in metaphors like “argument is weaving” or “argument is construction”. These metaphors encode cultural attitudes toward conflict, dialogue, and social harmony.

In Uzbek culture, expressions like “Til – el ko‘zgusi” (Language is the mirror of the nation) or “Ona yurt – oltin beshiging” (Your homeland is your golden cradle) reflect deep emotional attachment to land, family, and identity, which may not be easily translatable but reveal a worldview centered around collectivism and respect for heritage.

3. Embodiment and Shared Human Experience

Metaphors are grounded in bodily experiences. Expressions such as “I’m under pressure” or “He exploded with anger” reflect universal physical sensations associated with stress or emotion. However, the interpretation of these metaphors may differ: some cultures externalize emotion (e.g., through metaphors of heat or explosion), while others emphasize control or internalization.

4. Metaphors and Social Cognition

Metaphors shape not only individual thought but collective ideology. Political metaphors like “the nation is a family” or “the state is a machine” guide how people view authority, responsibility, and power structures. These metaphors are culturally specific: in paternalistic societies, the state is often portrayed as a father figure, whereas in Western liberal contexts, metaphors of contract or network dominate.

5. Implications for Translation and Intercultural Understanding

Understanding metaphor as a reflection of cognition and worldview is essential for translators, educators, and intercultural communicators. Translating metaphors literally can lead to misinterpretation if the underlying cultural model is not shared. For example, “She carries emotional baggage” may be rendered in Uzbek as “U ko‘nglida og‘ir yuk ko‘taradi”, adapting the metaphor to local conceptual norms.

Results: Metaphors are powerful linguistic indicators of how people think, feel, and view the world. They serve as cognitive templates shaped by embodied experience and cultural worldview. While some metaphors are near-universal due to shared physical experience, others are culture-specific, reflecting values, beliefs, and historical memory. Recognizing the role of metaphor in cognition enhances our understanding of linguistic diversity and fosters deeper intercultural empathy.

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