

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS IN ENGLISH AND  
UZBEK**

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**Abstract:** This article presents a contrastive analysis of metaphorical expressions in English and Uzbek languages from a linguocultural perspective. Metaphors are examined not only as stylistic devices but also as cognitive tools that reflect national worldviews and cultural values. The study uses examples from literature, proverbs, and contemporary speech, focusing on the classification, conceptual domains, and culturally-bound metaphorical structures in both languages. Special emphasis is placed on the contributions of Uzbek linguists to the theory of metaphorization. The analysis reveals both universal tendencies and culturally specific patterns in metaphor usage, contributing to the broader understanding of linguistic and cultural interaction.

**Key words:** metaphor, metaphorical expression, cognitive linguistics, culture, linguocultural worldview, Uzbek, English.

## **1. Introduction**

Metaphor has long ceased to be seen as a purely poetic or stylistic device. Modern linguistics, especially the cognitive approach, treats metaphor as a fundamental mechanism of human thought. As Lakoff and Johnson argue, “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action” [Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live By*, p. 3]. However, the conceptual metaphors used in different languages vary in terms of cultural values, worldview, and national mentality.

In Uzbek linguistics, researchers such as S. U. Mirzaeva, A. Sh. Shukurova, and N. S. Odilova have emphasized that metaphor reflects the unique cultural and national character of a language. According to Shukurova, metaphor is “a cultural-symbolic expression of reality that carries national and emotional value” [Shukurova, *Til va Tafakkur*, p. 129].

This study aims to conduct a comparative linguistic analysis of metaphorical expressions in English and Uzbek, focusing on the similarities and differences in metaphorical conceptualization and the implications for language learning and intercultural communication.

## **2. Theoretical Foundations**

Metaphors are cognitive-linguistic structures that allow speakers to understand abstract concepts through more concrete experiences. For instance, the abstract concept of life is metaphorically conceptualized as a journey: “Life is a journey”, or in Uzbek: “Hayot yo‘l – uni o‘zing bosib o‘tasan.”

Uzbek linguist N. S. Odilova points out that metaphors are “products of national thinking, and they form a significant part of the linguistic picture of the world” [Odilova, *Metafora va Uning Lisoniy Tahlili*, p. 45].

Following the cognitive model, the main source domains in metaphorical expressions include:

Nature (e.g., water, fire, light)

Body and health

Motion and space

War and struggle

Religion and belief

These domains serve as universal bases but are culturally shaped in both English and Uzbek metaphorical systems.

### **3. Metaphorical Domains in English and Uzbek**

Nature Metaphors. In both languages, nature serves as a rich source for metaphorical expressions.

English: "He has a stormy personality."

Uzbek: "Uning fe'li shamolday o'zgaruvchan."

Here, emotional volatility is mapped onto natural phenomena like wind and storm. However, Uzbek tends to use metaphors rooted in agricultural and rural life more often.

Uzbek: "Odam – daraxt, mehnati – meva."

This metaphor maps human productivity onto the tree-fruit relationship, emphasizing labor and reward.

Body-Related Metaphors. The body is another universal source domain.

English: "She is the heart of the family."

Uzbek: "U – oilaning yuragi."

Both use "heart" metaphorically for centrality and emotional importance. However, in Uzbek, metaphors using other body parts are more culturally loaded:

Uzbek: "Ko'ngli ko'zidan o'qiladi." – "One's feelings are read through their eyes."

As T. A. Toshmatova notes, such metaphors are often emotional and expressive in Uzbek and reflect collectivist values [Toshmatova, *Til va Madaniyat*, p. 81].

### **4. Cultural and Nationally Marked Metaphors**

While many metaphors share conceptual roots, others are deeply culture-bound.

English: "Time is money."

Uzbek: "Vaqt – oltin."

While both value time, the English version reflects capitalist ideology, while the Uzbek metaphor connects time to value in a more symbolic, non-materialistic way.

English: "He's a lone wolf."

Uzbek: "Bo'ri bo'lib yuradi."

The Uzbek version often carries a negative connotation, whereas in English, the metaphor may imply independence or non-conformism.

A. R. Orifova stresses that “national metaphors in Uzbek are often tied to folklore, myth, and Islamic ethics” [Orifova, Lisoniy Madaniyatlararo Muloqot, p. 67].

Examples:

Uzbek: “Ona yurti – muqaddas zamin.”

English: “Motherland” is also metaphorical but lacks the same religious-sacral resonance found in the Uzbek version.

### **5. Implications for Linguistics and Language Teaching**

Understanding metaphors is crucial in translation and language acquisition. Learners often misinterpret metaphors due to cultural differences. For instance, the metaphor “to carry the world on one’s shoulders” may confuse Uzbek learners if rendered literally.

As linguist Sh. A. Juraeva notes, “intercultural metaphor teaching must involve contextual and background knowledge training” [Juraeva, Tilshunoslikda Metafora, p. 92].

Moreover, in translation practice, metaphorical equivalence is not always direct; often, functional substitution is needed:

English: “A leopard cannot change its spots.”

Uzbek equivalent: “Bo‘ri terisini almashtirmaydi.”

While animal symbols differ, the conceptual metaphor is preserved—unchanging nature.

### **Conclusion**

The study of metaphorical expressions in English and Uzbek reveals a dynamic interaction between language, cognition, and culture. While many metaphors are based on shared human experiences, the way they are structured and used differs according to cultural priorities and linguistic traditions. Uzbek metaphors tend to be more emotionally expressive, tied to collectivist values and religious or rural imagery. English metaphors often reflect individualism, logic, and modern socio-economic frameworks.

By examining metaphor not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a cognitive-cultural mechanism, this article underscores the importance of metaphor in shaping national consciousness and intercultural communication. Further research can explore metaphor usage in modern media, political discourse, or youth slang in both languages.

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