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## **COGNITIVE FEATURES OF METAPHORS OF ENGLISH, RUSSIAN, AND UZBEK LANGUAGE**

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### **Annotation**

This article examines the cognitive features of a metaphor in English, Russian, and Uzbek languages using a comparative lens. It investigates the similarities and differences between these three languages using cognitive linguistic theory, focusing on metaphors' significance in conceptualizing abstract events, particularly the idea of "life." The study also looks at metaphorical tales in literary texts to see how cultural environment influences metaphorical thinking.

**Keywords:** metaphor, cognition, conceptual metaphor theory, cultural linguistics, comparative linguistics, metaphorical narrative, Uzbek, Russian, English.

**Аннотация.** В статье рассматриваются когнитивные особенности метафоры в английском, русском и узбекском языках с точки зрения сопоставительного анализа. Исследование опирается на теорию когнитивной лингвистики и направлено на выявление сходств и различий в осмыслении абстрактных понятий, прежде всего концепта «жизнь». Особое внимание уделяется анализу метафорических образов в литературных произведениях, что позволяет проследить влияние культурной среды на метафорическое мышление.

**Ключевые слова:** метафора, теория концептуальной метафоры, культурная лингвистика, сопоставительная лингвистика, метафорическое повествование, узбекский язык, русский язык, английский язык.

Metaphors are more than merely lovely linguistic devices; they are essential to human intelligence and perception. Metaphors, according to Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), shape people's understanding of abstract



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concepts by mapping them onto more tangible, experiencing domains [7]. These metaphors vary depending on the linguistic and cultural environment, reflecting the speech community's values, views, and worldview. This article seeks to study the cognitive bases of metaphors in English, Russian, and Uzbek languages, focusing on the idea of "life," and to compare how this metaphor is expressed in each language's literary traditions.

This study implements a qualitative comparative method based on cognitive linguistics [6]. Metaphorical expressions were gathered from literary works, idiomatic idioms, and native speaker corpora in English, Russian, and Uzbek. Each statement was classified according to its source domain (e.g., voyage, war, game) and examined for target domain mapping (e.g., life, emotion, death). The analysis took into account the metaphors' frequency, cultural significance, and emotional weight.

The metaphorical concept of "life" demonstrates significant cognitive and cultural differences between languages. In English, "life" is typically depicted by the metaphor "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" (e.g., He's come a long way, at a crossroads), stressing progress, direction, and personal [7]. Other metaphors, such as "LIFE IS A GAME" or "LIFE IS A BATTLE", emphasize competition and struggle, respectively [6].

In Russian, life metaphors frequently take on a fatalistic or communal tone. For example, "ЖИЗНЬ - РЕКА (LIFE IS A RIVER)" emphasizes motion, inevitability, and destiny (жизнь течёт, как река - «life flows like a river») [5]. Russians use the metaphor "LIFE IS A CROSS" (e.g., нести свой крест - "to carry one's cross"), which has spiritual and philosophical implications.

In Uzbek, metaphors about life often emphasize harmony with environment and social interaction. The metaphor "HAYOT - BOG' (LIFE IS A GARDEN)" represents cultivation, growth, and seasonal change (hayot guldek ochiladi - "life blooms like a flower") [2]. Uzbek also uses proverbs, such as "Hayot yo'l-o'tkir tig'" [1], which depicts life as a keen blade, conveying both danger and honor.

Cross-linguistic metaphor comparison reveals cultural values: English promotes autonomy and accomplishment, Russian emphasizes endurance and moral duty, while Uzbek emphasizes social harmony and moral balance.



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Metaphorical narratives in literature serve not only aesthetic, but also cognitive and cultural purposes. They influence how readers understand abstract concepts like love, death, and fate.

Metaphors in English literature, such as "Life is a stage" [10], emphasize performance and public roles. More contemporary examples, such as Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea," use metaphors of battle and endurance to convey existential resilience: "A man can be destroyed but not defeated."

Metaphors are intricately intertwined into the emotional and existential themes of John Green's novel "The Fault in Our Stars". The book regularly employs metaphors to depict illness, time, and love in abstract yet moving ways. For example, when the protagonist states, "Some infinities are bigger than other infinities," [4]. The author employs mathematical terms to emphasize the immeasurable significance of transitory moments. In this setting, love is described in depth rather than length, strengthening the idea of love as infinite. Another metaphor, "Cancer is a side effect of dying," questions the traditional view of illness as a war. Instead of portraying the disease as an opponent to be defeated, the novel views death as a process in which cancer is only one of many agents [4]. This moves the emphasis from conflict to acceptance, highlighting a cultural trend in modern English writing that values introspection, personal story, and existential pondering. Metaphors are used to personalize and humanize abstract situations, enabling readers to view life as a self-authored story.

In contrast, Mikhail Bulgakov's "The Master and Margarita" combines metaphor to explore issues of truth, evil, and spiritual duality. One of the novel's most memorable metaphors "Manuscripts don't burn" goes beyond literary expression. It encapsulates the belief that truth and creativity are indestructible and resistant to persecution [3]. The addition of Woland, a devil-like character, confuses the metaphorical landscape. Although he epitomizes evil, his acts frequently result in revelation and justice, implying a paradox in which evil becomes a means to truth [3]. This inversion symbolizes a larger Russian literary tradition in which suffering and chaos reveal deeper moral truth. Life is frequently portrayed figuratively as a theater, with human actors performing under the watchful eye of invisible, divine forces. Bulgakov's metaphors are rich in sarcasm and spirituality, representing a



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cognitive model influenced by historical pain, religious mysticism, and philosophical ambiguity [8].

Metaphors in Uzbek literature frequently reference rural and Sufi imagery. In O'tgan Kunlar, Abdulla Qodiriy uses the metaphors of seed, root, and harvest to reflect the characters' moral development and societal responsibility. For example, the term "yurakda g'am urug'i unibdi" ("the seed of sorrow has sprouted in the heart") uses an agricultural metaphor to describe emotional agony.

In addition, Abdulla Qodiriy's "O'tkan Kunlar" explores analogies from Uzbek culture and spiritual consciousness. Life is frequently equated to a river, as shown in phrases such as "In the heavy river of life, some drown, some swim"[9]. This metaphor represents a worldview in which individuals are carried by the current of fate, implying limited control and a focus on endurance. Love, too, is defined as a sacrifice, frequently in terms of society and familial duty. The metaphor of the trip is widely used in regard to happiness and spiritual satisfaction, with the belief that the path to joy is fraught with heavenly trials [9]. These metaphors are mainly based on Islamic teachings and traditional Uzbek values, emphasizing patience, faith, and moral endurance. Unlike the individualistic framing of English literature or the ironic dualism of Russian storytelling, Uzbek metaphors are communal and morally directive, anchored in a cultural cognition in which identity is inextricably linked to social peace and divine order.

Together, these three literary masterpieces demonstrate metaphor's power as a cognitive and cultural tool. Metaphors in English literature emphasize the interiority of human experience; in Russian literature, they address paradox and moral complexity; and in Uzbek literature, they express communal memory, religion, and social continuity. Despite their cultural distinctions, all three demonstrate how metaphor shapes our understanding of essential human experiences- life, love, death, and destiny- as influenced by the cultural glasses through which we perceive the world.

In conclusion, this comparative analysis of cognitive metaphors in English, Russian, and Uzbek demonstrates both universal and culturally particular frameworks. While concepts such as life, emotion, and time are metaphorically represented in all three languages, the areas from which metaphors are drawn and the values they highlight



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differ greatly. These distinctions represent fundamental cultural orientations—individualism in English, spiritual endurance in Russian, and harmony in Uzbek. Examining metaphor through a cognitive and narrative lens provides insight into the shared and diverse ways in which human minds shape experience through language.

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