

THE ROLE OF NOUNS IN THE CREATION OF METONYMIC SIGNS

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Abstract: This article is devoted to the study of the role of nominal units in creating metonymic signs. The research analyzes how nominal units in speech express objects, events, or processes metonymically, and examines their semantic and functional properties. The results indicate that nominal units enhance semantic richness and expressiveness in communication through metonymy while reflecting cultural and social context.

Keywords: nominal units, metonymy, semantic properties, functional properties, speech communication, cultural context.

Nominal units, which emerge according to the internal laws of language and satisfy the communicative needs of the language community, usually belong to general-use vocabulary. However, nominations that appear in specialized fields, social groups, or authors' discourse often remain outside the scope of the general lexicon. This process is closely linked to the semantic potential of nominal units, particularly their activity in creating metaphorical and metonymic signs. Signs based on metaphor demonstrate the ability of nominal units to transfer meaning relying on similarity and associative thinking. In metaphorical nomination, a nominal unit transfers a property of one object or event to another, creating a new semantic quality. As a result, the external appearance, function, or abstract characteristics of an object are evaluated figuratively. In this way, metaphorical signs expand the expressive potential of language and imbue nominal units with evaluative and figurative meaning.

Metonymic signs, in contrast, are based not on similarity but on relationships such as proximity, cause-effect, part-whole, or process-result between objects and events. As a nomination mechanism, metonymy expands the semantic scope of nominal units and transforms them into secondary naming tools. In this process, a nominal unit expresses not the object directly, but another element logically or functionally associated with it.

One of the important forms of metonymy, synecdoche, clearly demonstrates the role of nominal units in sign creation. In synecdoche, the name is transferred from part to whole or from whole to part, creating a new semantic unit based on quantitative features. The nominal unit is applied in a broader or narrower semantic range, expressing logical relations between objects. In linguistics, this phenomenon is interpreted as meaning expansion and narrowing.

Comparative studies of the role of nominal units in metaphorical and metonymic sign creation across different languages show that these processes are based on universal cognitive mechanisms while reflecting the unique semantic system of each language. In some cases, metonymic shifts correspond across languages, whereas in other cases, semantic gaps occur. This demonstrates the intrinsic connection between nominal units and national-cultural characteristics.

Before discussing the metonymic properties of nominal units, it is necessary to define “metonymy.” In the explanatory dictionary of Uzbek, metonymy is defined as follows: the term “metonymy” derives from the Greek for “renaming” and refers to the replacement of the name of an object or event with the name of another object associated with it; that is, the word or expression is used in this transferred sense (for example, the word *samovar* used to refer to a teahouse is formed on the basis of metonymy)¹. In linguistics, the lack of a strictly defined set of types and forms of metonymy creates certain difficulties. Nevertheless, the Russian linguist M. Petrovsky attempted to clearly distinguish the objects involved and demonstrate the logical proximity between phenomena in metonymy, in efforts aimed at classifying and encompassing the diverse speech phenomena collectively referred to as metonymy².

Metonymy is considered one of the main types of figurative use of a word. Metonymy is the figurative use of a word’s meaning to refer to another object or event that is related to the object or event it originally denotes³. In metonymic usage, there is no similarity between the objects grouped under a single name. For example, the victory in the Great Patriotic War was achieved through both the front and linguistic units, referring simultaneously to the Soviet Army fighting on the front and the people working on the home front. Based on research findings, T. Kazakova classified metonymies into three groups according to associative connections. These are as follows:

Metonymic epithet – a connection between an object and one of its features;

Antonymy (Antonomasia) – a connection between a proper noun and a related noun that shares a common semantic feature;

Synecdoche – a connection between the whole of an object and its part.⁴

Synecdoche (from Greek *synekdoche* – “composite meaning expressed through indication”) is defined as “the transfer of meaning from one phenomenon to another based on quantitative relations between them.” A. Refermatsky notes that “synecdoche is such a transfer of meaning in which, during the naming process, a part is mentioned while the whole is implied, or conversely, the whole is named while its part is understood; for this reason, the Romans referred to synecdoche as *totum pro parte* (the whole for a part) or *pars pro toto* (the part for a whole)”⁵. Many linguists interpret synecdoche as a type of metonymy, since certain similarities can be observed between them. In particular, “synecdoche

¹ O‘zbek tilining izohli lug‘ati. <https://izoh.uz/word/metonimiya> Murojaat vaqti: 28.10.2025. 15:18.

² Петровский М. 20 327

³ Литературный энциклопедический словарь / Под общ ред. В. М. Кожевникова, П. А. Николаева. –М.: Советская энциклопедия, 2003. – С.201.

⁴ Казакова Т. Казакова Т.А. Практические основы перевода. English - Russian. Учебное пособие. – Спб. Лениздат; Издательство —Союз, 2002. С. 296–310Д. Метонимия // Русский язык. Энциклопедия. –М.: Советская энциклопедия, переиздание 2014. –С. 142–144.

⁵ Реформатский А. Введение в языковедение. –М.: 1996 –С. 206.

is based on a relationship of proximity; however, its distinguishing feature lies in the quantitative ratio between the objects whose names are transferred. In such a ratio, one element is always broader or more general, while the other is narrower or more specific”⁶.

Nominal units serve as an important tool in creating metonymic signs in discourse. They generate new semantic and functional meanings by linking one object or event to another. In this way, nominal units enrich meaning in communication, enhance expressiveness, and allow for the reflection of cultural and social context.

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⁶ Метонимия // Толковый словарь русского языка: В 4 т. / Под ред. проф. Д. Ушакова. –М.: ТЕРРА, 2008. - Т. I. – С.201.