

**THE CONCEPT OF METAPHOR AND ITS PLACE IN LINGUISTICS***Buriyeva Shaxodat Baxriddinovna**1st year master's student of the University  
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**ANNOTATION:** This article analyzes the linguistic and cognitive content of metaphor, how it expands the semantic and figurative capabilities of language. Metaphor is interpreted not only as a literary stylistic tool, but also as the main conceptual model of human thinking. In particular, examples are given that explain how a person understands abstract concepts through concrete experience based on the theory of conceptual metaphor. Also, linguistic, literary, cognitive and cultural forms of metaphor and their role in linguistics are highlighted. The impact of metaphor not only on the structure of language, but also on human worldview and cognitive processes is studied separately. The article provides an in-depth analysis of metaphor at the intersection of linguistics, cognitive sciences and cultural studies and justifies how important its study is for modern linguistics today.

**KEYWORDS:** Metaphor, linguistics, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, semantics, thinking, imagery

**INTRODUCTION**

Language is a reflection of human thinking and worldview. Each word, phrase or sentence embodies not only information, but also meaning, emotion and cultural connotations. From this perspective, metaphor, as one of the means that increases the level of imagery of language, has a special place. Through metaphor, language not only gains aesthetic power, but also serves as a means of understanding the world on a cognitive basis.

**THEORETICAL BASIS OF METAPHOR**

Metaphor is an important scientific concept in many fields such as linguistics, philosophy, cultural studies and psychology. It is mainly a means of creating a new meaning or content by calling something or a phenomenon by the name of something else, in which the similarity between two objects serves as the main support. The theoretical foundations of metaphor go back to ancient Greek philosophy, and this concept has been interpreted in different ways by scholars of different eras.

The scientific study of metaphor dates back to ancient Greek philosophy. The first main theoretical views are found in the works of Aristotle. He defined metaphor as “the transfer of a word from its natural meaning to another meaning.” According to him, metaphor enhances the beauty of human speech, makes information memorable, and gives it imagery. Aristotle brought metaphor closer to poetics and rhetoric than to thought and logical analysis. Therefore, it was mainly seen as part of literary and oratorical skills.

In the Middle Ages, attention to metaphor was associated with religious and philosophical views, and it was used more in the interpretation of sacred texts. Many symbolic and figurative expressions in the Bible and the Quran were interpreted on the basis of metaphor. During the Renaissance, metaphor again began to be appreciated as an important element of literary creativity. During this period, metaphor began to be understood as a creative edge of thinking.

European linguists of the 19th and early 20th centuries, in particular F. de Saussure, although they saw the language system as a social phenomenon with a fixed structure, did not study the issue of metaphor in depth. During this period, metaphor was studied mainly within the framework of stylistics and semantics, that is, based on the analysis of the change in the meaning of language units and their

expressive properties. Metaphor was also considered closely related to simile and comparison. A fundamental shift in metaphor theory occurred in 1980 after the work "Metaphors We Live By" by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. They interpreted metaphor not only as an aesthetic device, but also as a conceptual model of human thinking. According to the theory of conceptual metaphor, people understand the world more on the basis of concrete experiences and try to understand abstract concepts precisely through metaphorical thinking.

For example:

"Time is money" - understanding time as a resource.

"Thought is an object" - expressing thoughts with verbs such as "load", "get", "lose".

"Life is a path" - imagining a human life as a path along which it develops step by step.

This theory explains metaphor as a multifaceted cognitive process. Now metaphor is not a transfer of meaning, but a mental connection between conceptual domains (for example, "life" and "journey").

In modern linguistics, metaphor is studied not only at the semantic level, but also in cognitive, pragmatic, discursive and cultural contexts. Through metaphor, people:

understand new concepts;

simplify complex ideas;

achieve an emotional and figurative effect in communication;

form social consciousness and views.

The role of metaphor in discourse is also important. In political speeches, advertising texts, religious or ideological speeches, metaphors can have a strong impact on the public consciousness. In such cases, metaphor is not only a linguistic tool, but also a socio-psychological weapon.

#### METAPHOR IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

In modern linguistic research, the issue of metaphor has reached a new level, and it is being interpreted not only as an artistic tool, but also as a conceptual phenomenon reflecting the mechanisms of thinking and perception. In particular, the "Theory of Conceptual Metaphor" put forward by American scientists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in 1980 made an important turn in this regard. According to them, metaphor is not an external decoration of language, but a central element of human mental activity, deeply embedded in our everyday way of thinking.

In their work "Metaphors We Live By", Lakoff and Johnson defined metaphor as a conceptual phenomenon and showed it as an integral part of human thinking. According to their theory, each person, when understanding abstract concepts, makes metaphorical perception, relying on concrete concepts with an experiential basis. For example:

Through the metaphor "Life is a journey", a person imagines life as a path, direction, stages;

Through the metaphor "Time is money", time is evaluated as a resource ("saving time", "wasting time").

In modern linguistics, such metaphors are called "basic conceptual metaphors" and through them, complex connections between language, culture, thinking and perception are revealed. This approach allows us to see language not as a passive reflective tool, but as an active cognitive system. Metaphors play a crucial role in the formation, explanation and interpretation of general human concepts about the world.

Also, modern research studies metaphor in a cultural context, and it has been found that each society has its own metaphorical models. For example, in Western culture, the metaphor "life is a struggle" is widespread, while in Eastern culture it is interpreted with natural images such as "life is a river". This situation is also an important source for linguoculturological analyses.

Another important aspect is the application of metaphor in modern linguistics in areas such as corpus linguistics, cognitive semantics, discourse analysis, and even artificial intelligence and machine

translation. Linguists analyze not only the structure of metaphor, but also the social and communicative context in which it is used. They also study how metaphors in political, religious, advertising, and media texts influence the audience. Thus, in modern linguistics, metaphor is a universal phenomenon based on deep semantic and cognitive mechanisms, inextricably linked with human thought, culture, and social life.

**TYPES OF METAPHOR**  
Metaphors are classified as follows:

1. Linguistic metaphor - metaphorical expressions that arise through language units.
2. Conceptual (cognitive) metaphor - a model of understanding abstract concepts through concrete experiences.
3. Literary metaphor - a means of enhancing imagery used in works of art.
4. Cultural metaphor - figurative expressions inherent in the worldview and mentality of a particular people.

#### SEMANTIC AND COGNITIVE SIGNIFICANCE OF METAPHOR

Metaphor, as one of the main tools of human thinking, facilitates the creation, naming and understanding of new concepts through language. Especially when explaining new scientific terms or abstract concepts, metaphor often serves as a language tool. In this regard, metaphor acts as a bridge between language and thinking.

#### CONCLUSION

Metaphor is not only a literary tool, but also a conceptual model of human thinking. Through it, imagery enters language, depth enters content, and systematicity enters thinking. Today, metaphor should be studied not only as an aesthetic tool, but also as a unit representing the cognitive structure that forms the basis of knowledge. The study of metaphor in the fields of linguistics, psycholinguistics and cultural studies is of urgent importance for modern science.

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