LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS RELATED TO POLITICAL TOPICS

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Abstract: The conceptual metaphor is one of the most important research objects in modern linguistics, given its deep relevance in understanding how people think, communicate, and build cognitive models of the world around them. In particular, the analysis of conceptual metaphors in political discourse holds a unique place, as politics is an area highly charged with abstract ideas, ideologies, and power relations—all of which often require linguistic devices to make them accessible and persuasive to the general public. The study of the linguocultural aspects of conceptual metaphors in political topics not only reveals how meaning is constructed and conveyed but also exposes the underlying social, historical, and cultural factors influencing public consciousness.

Key words: conceptual metaphor, political discourse, linguocultural analysis, Uzbek language, cultural semantics, metaphorical expression, cognitive linguistics, political communication, national mentality, media language

Political language, by its nature, often employs metaphorical expressions to create a bridge between complex, abstract notions and the everyday experience of the audience. Since political ideologies, relationships, and notions such as freedom, security, progress, reform, or threat are not concrete, the use of conceptual metaphors allows speakers and writers to frame these ideas in accessible and emotionally resonant terms. The linguocultural analysis of such metaphors involves an exploration of both the linguistic forms by which metaphors are expressed and the cultural meanings and frameworks that shape how these metaphors are interpreted and internalized by speakers of different languages. Linguocultural analysis is crucial

because one and the same metaphorical expression may carry different connotations, implications, and associative meanings across different cultures. In political discourse, this may dramatically influence the ways in which citizens interpret policies, understand governmental actions, or relate to political leaders. Thus, the metaphors used in English-language and Uzbek-language media, for example, can shed light on broader cultural attitudes towards authority, community, competition, and nationhood [1].

Conceptual metaphors function by mapping knowledge and experiences from a usually concrete source domain onto a more abstract target domain. For example, the framing of politics as a game or a war is not merely an ornamental feature of language; it fundamentally shapes the way issues are thought about and acted upon. In the context of political communication, recurring metaphorical patterns reveal not only the communicative aims of politicians, journalists, and commentators but also the cultural models and scripts that underlie political action and engagement. In-depth linguistic and cultural studies of political metaphors show that their pervasiveness is tied to cognitive processes as well as cultural traditions. Political actors use metaphors as strategic tools: they help simplify intricate subject matter, provoke emotional responses, and subtly guide public interpretation. The choice of which metaphor to use—whether politics is presented as a family, a journey, a marketplace, or a battleground—reflects prevailing cultural attitudes or attempts to reinforce new ways of seeing political reality. The study of political metaphors in English and Uzbek media, for example, highlights both common global trends and notable differences rooted in historical and cultural contexts. In English-language political discourse, metaphors of competition, battle, and business are frequent, reflecting broader cultural ideals of competitiveness, individual action, and economic rationality. Meanwhile, Uzbek-language political discourse may show stronger metaphorical associations with concepts such as community, harmony, or familial relationships, signifying a different ideal model of social and political organization.Importantly, metaphors in political discourse do not merely describe

reality—they shape it. When metaphors become conventionalized, they influence how policies are constructed, how leaders justify their decisions, and how the audience perceives themselves in relation to power. The establishment of war metaphors, for instance, can create a sense of urgency and mobilization, while the use of family-related metaphors may encourage citizens to feel protective or loyal towards the state [2].

The analysis must also take into account the dynamic interaction between media texts and their audiences. Political metaphors are not simply imposed from above—they resonate with the audience's existing cultural knowledge and experience, and are constantly negotiated, challenged, and reinterpreted. This dynamic is especially visible in times of political change, crisis, or reform, when traditional metaphors may lose their persuasive power and new metaphorical frames emerge in response to shifting realities. Furthermore, the cross-cultural comparison of political metaphors between English and Uzbek unfolds significant insights into national identity, collective memory, and political ideology. The metaphors chosen by political actors and institutions, and the way these metaphors are received and discussed in society, reveal not only what is valued or feared by each culture but also the preferred models of social organization and governance. One central aspect of linguocultural analysis is the identification of the conceptual metaphors that frequently appear in each language's political discourse. In English, the prevalence of journey metaphors—speaking of political programs as "roadmaps," "paths to progress," or "milestones of reform"—mirrors a cultural preference for conceptualizing life and advancement as movement along a predetermined route. In Uzbek, metaphors involving unity, growth, or heritage may reflect deep-seated cultural values of collectivity, continuity, and respect for tradition [3].

At the same time, the interpretation of political metaphors is heavily influenced by the socio-political context in which they appear. A metaphor that is persuasive in one context may be rejected or misinterpreted in another. Media, as both a mirror and shaper of society, plays a vital role in circulating successful

metaphors and establishing them as part of the common political language. This process of metaphor dissemination, conventionalization, and possible eventual transformation is a key subject of linguocultural investigation. It should also be noted that conceptual metaphors play a powerful role not only in rhetorical persuasion but also in building a sense of political agency and identity. By framing events and social actors in metaphorical ways, language can help citizens position themselves vis-à-vis the state, political institutions, or each other. For example, metaphors that conceptualize citizens as members of a family can have different implications for individual agency than those that depict them as warriors or customers [4].

Thus, thorough linguocultural analysis requires attention to both the formal linguistic features of metaphors and the cultural schema they activate. It involves studying the historical evolution of metaphorical expressions, their role in ideological battles, and their resonance across different social strata. Scholars must critically evaluate not just how metaphors function at the level of language, but also how they shape, reinforce, or challenge prevailing worldviews and power structures.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the linguocultural analysis of conceptual metaphors in political topics is an interdisciplinary endeavor that enriches our understanding of political communication, culture, and cognition. Conceptual metaphors in political discourse are not simply decorative—they are foundational mechanisms through which abstract realities are made graspable, cultural norms are transmitted, and political worlds are constructed. The careful examination of such metaphors in both English and Uzbek contexts offers profound insights into collective mindsets, value systems, and patterns of political participation. By understanding the cultural roots and cognitive effects of conceptual metaphors, we become more aware of how language shapes both our perception of politics and our engagement with the world at large.

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