



NEOLOGISMS AND METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE WORKS OF POETS AND WRITERS OF THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIAN GOLDEN AGE

Aminhonova Nargizkhon Abboskhon qizi

Master's Student, International Innovative University

Email: safixonmuzaffarovna@gmail.com

Introduction

The language of literary works created during the Golden Age of Russian literature in the nineteenth century is distinguished by a high degree of lexical, semantic, and stylistic innovation. This period, associated with the names of poets and writers such as Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolai Gogol, and their contemporaries, played a decisive role in shaping the norms and expressive potential of the modern Russian literary language. One of the most significant features of this epoch is the active use of neologisms and metaphorical expressions as means of artistic cognition and aesthetic representation of reality.

Neologisms in the literary language of the Golden Age often emerge as individual-author formations, created to convey subtle semantic nuances, emotional states, or evaluative attitudes that could not be adequately expressed by existing lexical units. Such occasional formations reflect the creative linguistic consciousness of the writer and reveal the dynamic interaction between language norms and individual artistic intention. Alongside neologisms, metaphor occupies a central place in the poetic and prose discourse of the nineteenth century, functioning not only as a stylistic device but also as a fundamental mechanism of meaning-making and conceptualization.

Metaphorical expressions in the works of Golden Age authors demonstrate a close connection between language, worldview, and cultural context. Through metaphor, abstract concepts acquire tangible form, emotional experiences become



linguistically embodied, and the inner world of the individual is projected onto nature, history, and everyday reality. The richness and diversity of metaphorical models employed by writers of this period testify to the depth of their philosophical reflection and the anthropocentric orientation of their artistic thinking.

The relevance of the present study lies in the need for a comprehensive analysis of neologisms and metaphorical expressions as interconnected phenomena within the literary language of the Golden Age. While previous research has often addressed these elements separately, their interaction within a unified artistic system remains insufficiently explored. Examining neologisms and metaphors in close relation allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of linguistic creativity and the formation of individual authorial style.

The aim of this article is to analyze the functions, semantic features, and stylistic significance of neologisms and metaphorical expressions in the works of nineteenth-century Russian poets and writers, as well as to identify their role in the development of the Russian literary language. The study contributes to the broader field of literary linguistics by highlighting the creative potential of language in a period of intense cultural and aesthetic transformation.

Literature Review

The study of neologisms and metaphorical expressions in literary language has long occupied a central position in linguistic and literary scholarship. Researchers have approached these phenomena from various perspectives, including stylistics, semantics, cognitive linguistics, and historical poetics. In the context of nineteenth-century Russian literature, the Golden Age is widely recognized as a period of intensive linguistic creativity, during which authors actively expanded the expressive resources of the national language.

A significant body of research has been devoted to the problem of neologisms in literary texts. Scholars emphasize that literary neologisms differ fundamentally from general-language neologisms, as they are often context-dependent and closely tied to the author's individual worldview. Many studies underline the concept of



occasionalism, defining it as a deliberate, one-time lexical creation intended to perform an expressive or evaluative function rather than to enter common usage. In analyses of nineteenth-century Russian literature, neologisms are frequently interpreted as indicators of poetic innovation and as markers of the author's stylistic individuality. Researchers note that such lexical innovations are typically formed according to existing word-formation models, which allows them to remain comprehensible while simultaneously producing a stylistic effect.

Another major line of research concerns metaphor as a key mechanism of artistic thinking. In literary theory and linguistics, metaphor is no longer viewed merely as a decorative rhetorical device; instead, it is understood as a fundamental cognitive tool through which writers conceptualize reality. Numerous studies argue that metaphor enables the transfer of meaning between different conceptual domains, thereby revealing hidden similarities and structuring the reader's perception of the text. Within the framework of Russian Golden Age literature, metaphors often serve to express philosophical reflection, emotional intensity, and the complex relationship between the individual and the surrounding world.

Special attention in scholarly literature has been paid to the cultural and historical conditioning of metaphorical models. Researchers point out that metaphorical imagery in nineteenth-century Russian texts is deeply rooted in classical antiquity, Christian symbolism, and Romantic aesthetics. At the same time, it reflects the social and intellectual transformations of the era, including the growing emphasis on individuality, freedom, and moral responsibility. This has led scholars to interpret metaphors not only as linguistic phenomena but also as carriers of cultural memory and ideological values.

Despite the extensive scholarship on neologisms and metaphors as separate phenomena, relatively few studies focus on their interaction within a single literary system. Some researchers suggest that neologisms and metaphors share a common creative foundation, as both arise from the author's стремление to renew language and to overcome the limitations of conventional expression. From this perspective,



neologisms can be seen as lexical realizations of metaphorical thinking, while metaphors often rely on newly formed or semantically transformed words to achieve expressive precision.

In recent years, corpus-based and interdisciplinary approaches have enriched the study of literary language by providing quantitative data and broader contextual analysis. Such studies confirm that the language of Golden Age authors demonstrates a high density of metaphorical expressions and a notable presence of individual-author neologisms, especially in poetic texts. However, scholars also note the need for qualitative analysis that takes into account the aesthetic function and contextual motivation of these linguistic elements.

Thus, the review of existing literature reveals that while neologisms and metaphorical expressions in nineteenth-century Russian literature have been thoroughly examined from various angles, their combined role in shaping artistic meaning and authorial style remains insufficiently explored. This gap highlights the relevance of the present study, which seeks to analyze neologisms and metaphors as interconnected components of the linguistic and aesthetic system of the Golden Age.

Research Aim and Objectives

The present study aims to provide a systematic linguistic and stylistic analysis of neologisms and metaphorical expressions in the works of Russian poets and writers of the nineteenth-century Golden Age, with particular attention to their role in shaping artistic meaning and individual authorial style. The research seeks to demonstrate that neologisms and metaphors function not as isolated stylistic devices but as interconnected elements of a unified artistic system that reflects the cognitive, aesthetic, and cultural paradigms of the period.

The study is guided by the following objectives:

➤ To identify and classify neologisms in selected poetic and prose texts of the Golden Age according to their word-formation models, semantic characteristics, and contextual functions.



- To analyze the dominant types and models of metaphorical expressions employed by nineteenth-century Russian authors, focusing on their semantic structure and expressive potential.
- To examine the functional interaction between neologisms and metaphorical expressions in literary discourse, revealing how lexical innovation contributes to the creation of metaphorical imagery.
- To determine the role of neologisms and metaphors in the formation of individual authorial style and in the broader development of the Russian literary language during the Golden Age.
- To assess the aesthetic and cognitive significance of these linguistic phenomena in relation to the cultural and philosophical context of nineteenth-century Russian literature.

By addressing these objectives, the article seeks to contribute to contemporary literary linguistics and stylistics by offering an integrated perspective on linguistic creativity in the Golden Age, emphasizing the dynamic relationship between language innovation and artistic expression.

Analysis of Neologisms

Neologisms in the literary language of the Russian Golden Age represent one of the most prominent manifestations of linguistic creativity and artistic innovation. In the works of nineteenth-century poets and writers, newly formed lexical units frequently appear as context-dependent, author-specific formations that serve expressive, evaluative, and conceptual functions. These neologisms are not intended for stable integration into the general lexical system; rather, they operate within a specific artistic context, where their semantic potential is fully realized.

As shown in Table 1, neologisms in the literary language of the Russian Golden Age can be classified according to their word-formation mechanisms and dominant stylistic functions.



Table 1. Types and functions of neologisms in the literary language of the Russian golden age

| Type of neologism | Word-formation mechanism | Dominant function | Stylistic role in the text |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Morphological neologisms | Suffixation, prefixation, compounding | Expressive and evaluative | Intensification of emotional colouring |
| Semantic neologisms | Semantic shift of existing words | Conceptual specification | Condensation of abstract meanings |
| Occasionalisms | Individual-author formations | Characterization and irony | Markers of authorial individuality |
| Context-dependent neologisms | Interaction with surrounding context | Meaning actualization | Enhancement of textual coherence |

From a word-formation perspective, the majority of neologisms in Golden Age literature are created according to productive morphological patterns of the Russian language. Authors actively employ suffixation, prefixation, compounding, and hybrid word-formation models, which allows newly coined words to remain structurally transparent while acquiring novel semantic nuances. This structural familiarity ensures comprehensibility for the reader, while semantic novelty generates a stylistic effect that enhances the expressive density of the text. Thus, neologisms function as a balance between linguistic norm and creative deviation.

Semantically, literary neologisms of the Golden Age often perform a characterizing function. They are used to convey subjective evaluation, irony, emotional intensity, or subtle shifts in meaning that cannot be expressed through conventional vocabulary. In poetic discourse, such neologisms frequently condense



complex emotional or philosophical states into a single lexical unit, thereby increasing the semantic compactness of the utterance. In prose texts, neologisms may contribute to character speech, narrative irony, or social and cultural commentary, reflecting the author's critical stance toward contemporary reality.

An important feature of neologisms in Golden Age literature is their close dependence on context. The meaning of many newly formed words cannot be fully understood outside the specific textual environment in which they appear. Contextual cues—such as surrounding imagery, syntactic structure, and metaphorical framing—play a decisive role in activating the intended meaning of the neologism. This contextual embeddedness reinforces the view that such lexical innovations are not autonomous units but integral components of the artistic whole.

Neologisms also play a significant role in the formation of individual authorial style. Each writer demonstrates a distinct preference for certain word-formation models and semantic strategies, which contributes to the recognizability of their linguistic identity. Some authors tend toward playful, ironic, or satirical neologisms, while others favor emotionally charged or philosophically dense lexical innovations. Through repeated use of specific patterns, neologisms become markers of stylistic individuality rather than random linguistic experiments.

Furthermore, neologisms in the Golden Age often interact with broader cultural and aesthetic tendencies of the period. Romantic and post-Romantic sensibilities encourage lexical experimentation as a means of expressing individuality, inner experience, and resistance to rigid norms. As a result, neologisms function not only as stylistic devices but also as reflections of the cultural shift toward personal expression and creative freedom in literature.

Analysis of Metaphorical Expressions

Metaphorical expressions occupy a central position in the literary language of the Russian Golden Age, functioning as one of the principal means of artistic cognition and aesthetic representation. In the works of nineteenth-century poets and writers, metaphor transcends its traditional rhetorical role and becomes a



fundamental mechanism through which abstract ideas, emotional experiences, and philosophical reflections are linguistically embodied. The prevalence and diversity of metaphorical imagery in this period testify to the heightened attention to the inner world of the individual and to the symbolic interpretation of reality.

As summarized in Table 2, metaphorical expressions in the literature of the Russian Golden Age are structured around recurrent conceptual models derived from nature, space, and material culture.

Table 2. Dominant Metaphorical Models in the Literature of the Russian Golden Age

| Source domain | Target domain | Conceptual focus | Artistic function |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Nature | Human emotions and inner states | Anthropocentric worldview | Visualization of psychological experience |
| Space and movement | Life, fate, time | Existential reflection | Structuring narrative and lyrical meaning |
| Light and darkness | Knowledge, morality, truth | Axiological evaluation | Symbolic contrast |
| Material objects | Abstract concepts | Cognitive embodiment | Semantic concretization |

From a semantic perspective, metaphors in Golden Age literature frequently arise from the interaction between concrete sensory experience and abstract conceptual domains. Natural phenomena, spatial relations, and everyday objects are employed as source domains for the representation of emotions, intellectual states, and moral values. Such metaphorical transfers enable authors to visualize internal experiences and to create a multidimensional artistic space in which subjective



perception and objective reality intersect. As a result, metaphor becomes a means of integrating the personal and the universal within a single expressive structure.

A characteristic feature of metaphorical expressions in this period is their strong anthropocentric orientation. Human feelings, thoughts, and existential concerns are projected onto the surrounding world, transforming nature into an active participant in the emotional and cognitive life of the lyrical or narrative subject. This tendency reflects the broader cultural and philosophical context of the nineteenth century, in which individuality and self-reflection gained increased significance. Metaphors thus serve as linguistic markers of the era's worldview, revealing how writers conceptualize the relationship between the self and the external world.

Metaphorical expressions also play an important role in shaping the emotional tone and evaluative stance of the text. Through metaphor, authors intensify emotional expression, convey irony or ambiguity, and subtly guide the reader's interpretation. In poetic discourse, metaphors often condense complex emotional states into compact images, enhancing the lyrical intensity of the text. In prose, metaphorical language contributes to narrative depth by enriching character portrayal and reinforcing thematic motifs.

Another distinctive aspect of metaphorical usage in Golden Age literature is the coexistence of conventional and innovative metaphorical models. While many metaphors draw on established cultural and literary traditions, authors frequently modify, extend, or combine these models to produce original imagery. This creative reworking of traditional metaphors allows writers to maintain continuity with earlier literary heritage while simultaneously asserting their individual artistic voice. As a result, metaphor becomes a site of both tradition and innovation.

Context plays a decisive role in the interpretation of metaphorical expressions. The meaning and stylistic effect of a metaphor often depend on its interaction with surrounding lexical units, syntactic structures, and broader narrative or lyrical context. In many cases, metaphorical expressions gain additional semantic depth through repetition, variation, or integration into larger metaphorical networks



within the text. Such networks contribute to the coherence of the artistic world and reinforce key thematic oppositions.

Discussion

The analysis of neologisms and metaphorical expressions in the literary language of the Russian Golden Age confirms that these phenomena constitute core mechanisms of artistic meaning-making rather than auxiliary stylistic devices. The findings of the present study support the view that lexical innovation and metaphorical thinking are closely interconnected and jointly contribute to the formation of individual authorial style and the expressive richness of nineteenth-century Russian literature.

Table 3. Interaction between Neologisms and Metaphorical Expressions

| Aspect of interaction | Role of neologisms | Role of metaphors | Resulting stylistic effect |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Meaning formation | Introduction of new lexical units | Conceptual framing | Expansion of semantic space |
| Expressive intensity | Lexical novelty | Imagery enhancement | Increased emotional impact |
| Authorial style | Individual lexical choice | Recurrent metaphorical patterns | Stylistic recognizability |
| Textual cohesion | Context-bound semantics | Metaphorical networks | Artistic unity of the text |

Table 3 illustrates the functional interaction between neologisms and metaphorical expressions, demonstrating how lexical innovation reinforces metaphorical meaning in Golden Age literary texts.

The results demonstrate that neologisms in Golden Age texts are predominantly context-bound and functionally motivated. This observation aligns with earlier research that interprets literary neologisms as occasional formations



designed to fulfill expressive and evaluative purposes rather than to enrich the general lexicon. However, the present analysis extends this perspective by emphasizing the systematic character of such innovations. Neologisms are shown to operate within stable word-formation patterns, which suggests that linguistic creativity in this period is governed by an implicit balance between norm and deviation. This balance allows authors to expand the semantic potential of language without undermining its comprehensibility.

The discussion of metaphorical expressions reveals a similar dynamic between tradition and innovation. While many metaphors draw upon culturally established models, Golden Age writers actively reinterpret and reconfigure them in accordance with their individual aesthetic goals. The anthropocentric orientation of metaphorical imagery identified in the analysis reflects a broader cultural shift toward subjectivity and self-reflection characteristic of nineteenth-century literary thought. Metaphor thus emerges as a means of articulating complex inner experiences and philosophical concerns through concrete linguistic forms.

A particularly significant outcome of the study is the identification of functional interaction between neologisms and metaphorical expressions. The findings suggest that neologisms often serve as lexical anchors for metaphorical imagery, enabling authors to introduce new conceptual associations and intensify the expressive impact of metaphors. Conversely, metaphorical contexts provide the semantic framework necessary for the interpretation of newly coined words. This reciprocal relationship underscores the integrative nature of literary language in the Golden Age, where different levels of linguistic creativity converge within a unified artistic system.

In comparison with previous studies that address neologisms and metaphors separately, the present research highlights the advantages of an integrated analytical approach. By examining these phenomena in conjunction, it becomes possible to uncover patterns of stylistic organization that remain invisible in isolated analyses. This approach also sheds light on the mechanisms through which individual authors



develop distinctive linguistic identities while participating in shared cultural and aesthetic traditions.

The discussion further suggests that the intensive use of neologisms and metaphors is closely linked to the historical and cultural context of the Golden Age. The period's emphasis on personal expression, intellectual freedom, and artistic experimentation creates favorable conditions for linguistic innovation. As a result, lexical and metaphorical creativity can be interpreted not only as a stylistic choice but also as a reflection of the broader cultural dynamics shaping nineteenth-century Russian literature.

Conclusion

The present study has examined neologisms and metaphorical expressions in the literary language of the Russian Golden Age of the nineteenth century as interrelated components of artistic discourse. The analysis has demonstrated that these linguistic phenomena play a decisive role in the formation of meaning, the expression of individual authorial worldview, and the development of the Russian literary language during a period of profound cultural and aesthetic transformation.

The findings confirm that neologisms in Golden Age literature are predominantly individual-author formations characterized by contextual dependence and expressive motivation. Rather than functioning as mere lexical novelties, such neologisms serve to intensify emotional expression, convey evaluative nuances, and compress complex semantic content into compact linguistic forms. Their systematic use, based on productive word-formation models, reflects a conscious balance between linguistic norm and creative innovation.

The study has also shown that metaphorical expressions constitute a central mechanism of artistic cognition in nineteenth-century Russian literature. Metaphors enable authors to conceptualize abstract ideas and inner experiences through concrete imagery, revealing the anthropocentric orientation and philosophical depth of Golden Age literary thinking. The coexistence of traditional and innovative metaphorical models highlights the dynamic interaction between cultural heritage and individual



creativity. A key conclusion of this research is that neologisms and metaphorical expressions function not in isolation but in close interaction with one another. Neologisms often reinforce and extend metaphorical imagery, while metaphorical contexts provide the semantic framework necessary for interpreting lexical innovations. This interaction contributes to the coherence of the artistic system and enhances the expressive capacity of literary language.

REFERENCES

1. Arutyunova, N. D. (1990). *Metaphor and discourse*. In N. D. Arutyunova (Ed.), **Theory of Metaphor** (pp. 5–32). Moscow: Progress.
2. Black, M. (1962). *Models and metaphors: Studies in language and philosophy*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
3. Gibbs, R. W. (1994). *The poetics of mind: Figurative thought, language, and understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
5. Lotman, Y. M. (1990). *The structure of the artistic text*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
6. Ricoeur, P. (1977). *The rule of metaphor: Multi-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
7. Valiulina, S. V. (2020). Pushkin's nonce words in the word-formation aspect. *Neophilology*, 6(22), 226–234. <https://doi.org/10.20310/2587-6953-2020-6-22-226-234>
8. Vinogradov, V. V. (1935). *The language of Pushkin and the history of Russian literary language*. Moscow–Leningrad: Academia.
9. Wierzbicka, A. (1992). *Semantics, culture, and cognition: Universal human concepts in culture-specific configurations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
10. Zolyan, S. T. (2014). Metaphor and cultural semantics in Russian literary discourse. *Russian Literature*, 76(3), 347–362.