

## CONCEPTUAL MODELS OF COGNITIVE METAPHORS AND THEIR CULTURAL INTERPRETATION IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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**Annotatsiya:** This article analyzes conceptual metaphors and their cultural interpretation in English and Uzbek languages. The study examines the relationship between language, cognition, and culture through comparative analysis of metaphorical expressions. The research identifies both universal and culture-specific features of cognitive metaphors in the two languages.

**Keywords :** Cognitive metaphor, conceptual metaphor, cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, metaphorical conceptual

### **Introduction**

Language is not only a means of communication but also a tool through which people perceive and conceptualize the world around them. One of the most important mechanisms reflecting the relationship between language, thought, and culture is metaphor. In traditional linguistics, metaphor was mainly regarded as a stylistic device; however, the development of cognitive linguistics changed this perspective significantly. According to the theory of conceptual metaphor introduced by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, metaphors are not merely decorative elements of speech but cognitive structures that shape human thinking and understanding of reality.

Conceptual metaphors help people explain abstract concepts through concrete experiences. Expressions such as “life is a journey” or “time is money” demonstrate how metaphorical thinking functions in everyday language. These metaphorical models are closely connected with cultural background, national worldview, traditions, and social

experience. Therefore, the study of cognitive metaphors allows researchers to identify both universal and culture-specific features of human cognition.

The comparative investigation of conceptual metaphors in English and Uzbek languages is particularly important because these languages belong to different linguistic and cultural systems. English metaphorical expressions often reflect Western cultural values and individualistic perspectives, whereas Uzbek metaphors are deeply influenced by Eastern traditions, collective values, and national customs. As a result, metaphorical conceptualization in both languages may demonstrate significant semantic and cultural differences.

The present study aims to analyze conceptual models of cognitive metaphors and their cultural interpretation in English and Uzbek languages. The research focuses on identifying metaphorical patterns, comparing their semantic structures, and examining the influence of cultural factors on metaphorical thinking. Comparative, descriptive, and cognitive methods are used in the study. The findings of the research may contribute to cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, translation studies, and intercultural communication.

### **Conceptual Metaphor as a Cognitive Phenomenon**

The theory of conceptual metaphor occupies a central place in modern cognitive linguistics. According to cognitive scholars, metaphor is not only a linguistic expression but also a mechanism of human thought. People understand abstract concepts through concrete experiences that are rooted in their physical, social, and cultural life. In this process, one conceptual domain is interpreted through another domain, which is called metaphorical mapping. For example, in the conceptual metaphor “Life is a Journey,” the source domain “journey” helps explain the target domain “life.” Such metaphorical structures demonstrate how human cognition organizes knowledge and experience.

Conceptual metaphors are systematic and deeply embedded in language. They influence not only literary texts but also everyday communication, political discourse, scientific language, and cultural expression. Researchers emphasize that metaphorical thinking reflects the interaction between language, mind, and culture. Therefore,

conceptual metaphors serve as important cognitive models through which people interpret reality and construct their worldview.

### **Cultural Interpretation of Metaphors in English and Uzbek**

Although many conceptual metaphors are universal, their linguistic realization and cultural interpretation differ from one language to another. English and Uzbek languages represent different cultural systems; therefore, their metaphorical structures often reflect distinct national values, traditions, and ways of thinking.

In English linguistic culture, conceptual metaphors are frequently associated with individualism, time management, competition, and rationality. For instance, the metaphor “Time is Money” reflects the importance of productivity and economic value in Western culture. Expressions such as “save time,” “waste time,” and “spend time” illustrate how time is conceptualized as a valuable economic resource. Similarly, the metaphor “Argument is War” demonstrates the competitive nature of communication in English-speaking societies. Words like “defend,” “attack,” and “win” are commonly used in discussions and debates.

In contrast, Uzbek conceptual metaphors are more closely connected with collective values, morality, respect, and traditional social relations. Many Uzbek metaphorical expressions reflect family unity, hospitality, and emotional closeness. For example, the concept of the “heart” frequently symbolizes kindness, sincerity, and spiritual purity in Uzbek culture. Expressions related to respect for elders, friendship, and social harmony reveal the collectivist orientation of Uzbek society.

Furthermore, nature-based metaphors are widely used in Uzbek language due to the historical connection between people and agricultural life. Metaphorical expressions involving water, soil, sun, and gardens often symbolize prosperity, purity, and human character. In English, however, technological and industrial metaphors appear more frequently, reflecting the influence of modernization and industrial development on linguistic worldview.

### **Universal and Culture-Specific Features of Cognitive Metaphors**

Comparative analysis shows that some conceptual metaphors possess universal characteristics because they are based on common human experiences. For example, metaphors related to emotions, movement, health, and spatial orientation can be found in both English and Uzbek languages. Positive emotions are usually associated with upward movement, while negative emotions correspond to downward movement. Such conceptual patterns demonstrate similarities in human cognitive processes regardless of cultural background.

However, culture-specific metaphors emerge from national traditions, historical experiences, and social norms. In Uzbek culture, hospitality and respect are central moral values, and this is reflected in metaphorical expressions connected with home, bread, and family relations. English metaphorical systems, on the other hand, often emphasize independence, personal success, and efficiency. Consequently, cultural differences significantly influence metaphorical conceptualization and semantic interpretation.

Another important distinction can be observed in idiomatic metaphors. Some English metaphorical expressions may not have direct equivalents in Uzbek because they are culturally bound. Likewise, many Uzbek metaphors lose their figurative meaning when translated literally into English. This creates challenges in translation and intercultural communication. Therefore, understanding conceptual metaphors requires not only linguistic analysis but also cultural and cognitive interpretation.

### **The Role of Cognitive Metaphors in Intercultural Communication**

In modern globalization processes, intercultural communication has become increasingly important. Cognitive metaphors influence how people express ideas, emotions, and social values. Misunderstanding metaphorical meanings may lead to communication barriers and cultural misunderstandings. Therefore, the study of conceptual metaphors contributes to more effective interaction between representatives of different cultures.

The analysis of English and Uzbek metaphorical systems also plays an important role in foreign language teaching and translation studies. Language learners often experience difficulties in understanding metaphorical expressions because such expressions are

connected with cultural background knowledge. Comparative study of metaphors helps learners develop intercultural competence and interpret figurative language more accurately.

Thus, conceptual metaphors function not only as linguistic units but also as cognitive and cultural models reflecting national mentality and worldview. Their comparative analysis in English and Uzbek languages reveals both universal principles of human cognition and culture-specific patterns of metaphorical thinking.

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