SEMANTIC AND STYLISTIC FEATURES OF METONYMY IN ENGLISH, UZBEK AND KARAKALPAK: THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN METONYMY AND METAPHOR

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Annotatsiya. *Maqolada ingliz, o‘zbek va qoraqalpoq tillarida metonimiyaning semantik va stilistik xususiyatlari ko‘rib chiqiladi. Metonimiya va metaforaning farqlanishi, ma’no ko‘chishi, kontekstual talqin va badiiy ifoda imkoniyatlariga alohida e’tibor qaratiladi. Qoraqalpoq adabiy tilidan olingan misollar ma’no shakllanishida madaniy assotsiatsiyalarning o‘rnini ko‘rsatadi. Maqolada uch tilda metonimik birliklarni qiyosiy tahlil qilish uchun besh o‘lchamli tahlil modeli taklif etiladi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *metonimiya, metafora, semantika, stilistika, kognitiv tilshunoslik, leksik ma’no, badiiy diskurs.*

Аннотация. *В статье рассматриваются семантические и стилистические особенности метонимии в английском, узбекском и каракалпакском языках. Особое внимание уделяется разграничению метонимии и метафоры, семантическому переносу, контекстуальной интерпретации и выразительным функциям. Примеры из каракалпакского литературного языка показывают роль культурных ассоциаций в формировании значения. Предлагается пятипараметровая модель для сопоставительного анализа метонимических единиц в трёх языках.*

Ключевые слова: *метонимия, метафора, семантика, стилистика, когнитивная лингвистика, лексическое значение, художественный дискурс.*

Abstract. *This article examines the semantic and stylistic features of metonymy in English, Uzbek and Karakalpak, with particular attention to the boundary between metonymy and metaphor. It discusses semantic transfer, the effect of context on interpretation, the conventionalization of figurative meanings and the use of metonymy in literary texts. Karakalpak examples show how cultural associations contribute to meaning. The article proposes a five-dimension framework for the comparative analysis of metonymic units in the three languages.*

Keywords: *metonymy, metaphor, semantics, stylistics, cognitive linguistics, lexical meaning, literary discourse.*

Introduction

Figurative language shows how speakers extend the meanings of words, organise conceptual knowledge and communicate more than the literal sense of individual words. Metaphor and metonymy have been studied in rhetoric, lexical semantics, stylistics and cognitive linguistics. Traditionally, metaphor is linked to similarity and metonymy to contiguity, that is, a relationship between things that are connected or close to each other (Jakobson 1956 [1]). This contrast remains useful, but current research treats both phenomena as part of how people form concepts and construct meaning, not only as ornaments of style (Lakoff & Johnson 1980 [2]). In cognitive terms, metonymy is a mechanism by which one entity gives mental access to another related entity (Radden & Kövecses 1999 [3]). Kövecses (2010 [4]; 2013 [5]) argues that experiential correlations and metonymic relations can motivate metaphorical mappings, which is why the border between the two is often blurred. This boundary is a practical problem for the comparative study of English, Uzbek and Karakalpak. An expression may have a conventionalized meaning, gain extra significance in a particular context, or combine associative and similarity-based relations. Karakalpak linguistics offers a foundation for studying such meanings in literary language, notably the works of A. Bekbergenov on stylistics [6] and E. Berdimuratov on the development of literary-language styles and lexicon [7]. Their material is, however, rarely discussed in comparison with English and Uzbek. The aim of this article is to specify the semantic and stylistic features of metonymy, to define criteria that separate it from metaphor, and to propose a procedure for comparing the three languages. The article is theoretical and methodological. Its examples are illustrative, and a full empirical comparison is left for further research.

Theoretical Foundations

Metonymy is a semantic and conceptual mechanism in which an expression gives access to an associated entity within one conceptual structure, or, in Radden and Kövecses's terms, within one idealized cognitive model (ICM, Lakoff 1987 [8]). The relation may be spatial, causal, part–whole, or one of group membership. In *The "White House announced a decision"*, the building gives access to the administration that works there. In "*I am reading Shakespeare"*, the author's name gives access to his works. In neither case are two ideas compared. One is used to reach the other through a link that speakers already know.

Metonymy is therefore more than word substitution. It is a relation between an expression and the knowledge activated when the expression is interpreted.

Frequently described metonymic patterns include:

- **container for content** (*the kettle is boiling*);
- **author for work** (*to read Shakespeare*);
- **place for people or institution** (*the White House*);
- **part for whole** (*all hands on deck*);
- **object for associated activity or concept** (*the Crown* for monarchy).

These patterns are models, not fixed classes. Their application depends on convention, context and the relation between the expression and its referent. In discourse, a metonymic relation can also carry stylistic weight, for example by drawing attention to a character, a social group or a cultural practice. Semantic motivation and stylistic function should be examined together, without assuming that every metonymy produces a special literary effect.

Semantic Features of Metonymic Units

Semantic transfer and meaning extension

Metonymy creates meaning through a known link between entities. Metaphor, by contrast, usually involves understanding one domain through another because of perceived similarity. When a metonymic use is repeated, the new meaning may become established in the language and function as a lexical sense rather than a figure. English "*the crown"* can denote the headgear or the monarchy, and the relation between a symbol of power and the institution it represents motivates the shift. Metonymy is also economical: instead of naming a thing directly, speakers use a related thing that listeners can easily recover. The same general mechanism can be expected in Uzbek and Karakalpak, but the lexical senses already established in each language must be confirmed with dictionaries, corpus data and language-specific studies. It cannot be assumed that a given metonymic model is equally productive or equally conventional in all three languages.

Metonymy in Karakalpak literary language

In *Qaraqalpaq tiliniń stilistikası* (1990), A. Bekbergenov discusses the distinction between metaphor and metonymy in terms of the associations that underlie figurative meaning [6, p. [78-79]]. One example is "*tabaq"*'dish, platter', which in the literary passage he discusses is read as referring to the food on the dish and not only to the vessel:

tabaq (container) → food contained in it

The meaning does not rest on resemblance between a dish and food. It rests on the physical relation between container and content. Berdimuratov [7, p. [78]]

discusses expressions in which an object stands for a broader cultural concept. Two examples are *dasturxan* and *shañaraq*:

- *dasturxan* 'tablecloth, spread for a meal' can in context refer to a meal, to hospitality and to receiving guests (object → associated activity);
- *shañaraq* 'the crown ring of a traditional yurt' can refer to the household or family (part → whole).

Both meanings are context-dependent. *Dasturxan* does not automatically mean hospitality, nor does *shañaraq* always mean family. The wider sense emerges when the context activates the relevant cultural and practical associations. Interpretation here draws on both lexical meaning and shared cultural knowledge, and the expression only opens access to a concept whose relevant features the surrounding text selects.

Conventional and individual metonymies

Conventional metonymies are established through repeated use in a speech community and are fairly predictable, as with *the White House* for the US administration. Individual (author's) metonymies depend more on the writer's stylistic choices and on the immediate context, and the reader may have to reconstruct a less familiar relation between the named entity and the intended meaning. Berdimuratov's discussion of conventional and individual stylistic metonymies [7, p. [78]] is a useful basis for this distinction in Karakalpak literary analysis. Two cautions are needed. First, conventionality is not the absence of figurative motivation: a conventional metonymy keeps a recognizable relation between literal and intended meaning even when speakers no longer feel it as stylistically marked. Second, an unusual or expressive phrase is not metonymic merely for being so. It counts as metonymy only if a relation between associated entities motivates its interpretation.

The Boundary between Metonymy and Metaphor

Contiguity and similarity as criteria

Compare *The White House announced a decision* and *Her voice was velvet*. In the first, the place gives access to the people acting through it, a relation of association, so the expression is metonymic. In the second, a voice is characterized through the softness of a material, a comparison between auditory and tactile experience, so the expression is metaphorical.

Criterion	Metonymy	Metaphor
Primary motivation	Association (contiguity)	Similarity or analogy

Conceptual relation	Connected entities within one domain or ICM	Mapping between two distinct domains
Interpretation	Access to an associated referent	Understanding one concept in terms of another
Typical function	Reference, economy, highlighting	Characterization, conceptualization, evaluation
Test	Can the target be reached through a real-world link (part, place, container, producer)?	Can the expression be paraphrased as a comparison ("X is like Y")?

These criteria are analytical, not absolute. Both mechanisms can become conventionalized, both can express evaluation, and both can serve stylistic functions. Expressiveness alone therefore cannot decide the category. The deciding factor is the semantic relation that motivates the interpretation.

Why the boundary is not always clear

Real expressions often combine the two mechanisms. Goossens (1990 [9]) calls such combinations *metaphtonymy*, and later work discusses the interaction at length (Barcelona 2000 [10]; Dirven & Pörings 2002 [11]; Ruiz de Mendoza & Otal Campo 2002 [12]). A standard case is anger. In *She was boiling with rage*, the physical effects of anger, such as body heat, give metonymic access to the emotion. On that basis a broader mapping develops (ANGER IS HEAT, e.g. *blow off steam*), which is metaphorical (Kövecses 2010, 2013 [4, 5]). A single expression can thus involve a metonymic relation at one stage of interpretation and a metaphorical mapping at another. The analyst should therefore identify which relation is actually supported by the context and avoid assigning a category from surface form alone. The same applies to literary texts in all three languages: a word for a concrete object may acquire an abstract meaning through convention, through comparison, or through both.

Semantic and stylistic consequences

The two mechanisms tend to direct the reader's attention differently. Metonymy foregrounds an entity through an associated feature, participant, place or object, and is suited to indirect reference and compact representation of a larger situation. Metaphor characterizes an entity through qualities of another domain and may create

imagery, evaluation or a particular perspective. These are tendencies, not exclusive properties: metonymy can be highly expressive, and metaphor can become conventional and nearly neutral.

A Comparative Framework for English, Uzbek and Karakalpak

A comparative study should separate the conceptual relation, which may be shared across languages, from its language-specific realization. The following five dimensions are proposed.

1. **Source–target relation.** Identify the entity named in the text and the associated entity it activates.
2. **Semantic motivation.** Establish whether the relation is part–whole, container–content, author–work, place–institution, object–activity, or another association. If interpretation depends on similarity between domains, the expression is metaphorical.
3. **Conventionality.** Determine whether the relation is established in ordinary usage (check dictionaries and corpora) or depends on a specific literary context.
4. **Contextual interpretation.** Check that the surrounding text gives enough evidence to identify the intended referent.
5. **Stylistic function.** Assess whether the expression contributes to economy, emphasis, characterization, evaluation or imagery.

The framework can be tried on examples such as the following. They are illustrative and should be confirmed in dictionaries and documented texts before being used as evidence.

Language	Expression	Source → target
English	*the kettle is boiling*	kettle → water
English	*to read Shakespeare*	author → works
Uzbek	*Fuzuliyni oldim qo'limga*	author → works
Uzbek	*uning perosi qasos o'ti bilan yonadi*	weapon→action
Karakalpak	*tabaq* [6]	dish → food
Karakalpak	*dasturxan*, *shañaraq* [7]	object → activity; part → whole

This approach avoids two problems. Structurally similar expressions are not treated as identical in meaning and function, and cultural differences are not generalized without textual evidence. A container–content model may exist in all three languages, but whether a particular container term is conventionally used for its contents has to be established separately for each. The place–people relation, likewise, may be comparable across languages without identical lexical forms, contexts or stylistic effects. The Karakalpak material shows the value of combining semantic classification with literary interpretation: Bekbergenov's examples tie lexical designations to associated referents, and Berdimuratov's discussion shows how metonymic units take part in literary language and individual style. A full empirical comparison requires examples from documented English, Uzbek and Karakalpak literary texts, analyzed with the same five criteria, so that shared patterns, differently conventionalized patterns and culture-specific associations can be told apart.

Conclusion

Figurative meaning cannot be explained by lexical substitution alone. Metonymy is based on a relation between connected entities, while metaphor is based on similarity between conceptual domains, and this distinction remains the basic criterion for classifying figurative expressions. The semantic analysis of metonymic units shows the importance of meaning extension, conventionalization and contextual activation: established metonymies can enter everyday vocabulary, while individual literary metonymies depend more on context and on the reader's ability to reconstruct the associated meaning.

The Karakalpak examples discussed in the works of Bekbergenov and Berdimuratov show that containers, contents, objects and culturally significant concepts contribute to literary expression, and that interpretation can go beyond the literal referent without any metaphorical comparison. At the same time, conventionalization, context dependence and the interaction of mechanisms (metaphtonymy) mean that some expressions cannot be classified by a single criterion. The proposed five-dimension framework gives a consistent procedure for comparing the three languages and a basis for corpus-based research on how metonymy and metaphor are realized in their literary discourse. Distinguishing the two is not a purely terminological task: it is a step towards understanding how language organizes conceptual relations, conveys meaning economically and creates stylistic effects.

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