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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AND SIMILES IN THE UZBEK LANGUAGE
(BASED ON THE SHORT STORIES OF ISAJON SULTAN)

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ANNOTATION

This article examines the relationship between phraseological units (idiomatic expressions) and similes in the Uzbek language based on the short stories of Isajon Sultan. The study is conducted within the framework of linguoculturology, which considers language units not only as linguistic phenomena but also as carriers of cultural, historical, and national meanings. Special attention is paid to the role of similes in forming figurative and expressive meanings and their contribution to the emergence and development of phraseological units.

The paper analyzes both external similes, which depict physical and natural phenomena, and internal similes, which reflect the psychological and emotional states of characters. Through a semantic and stylistic analysis of selected examples from Isajon Sultan's works, the article demonstrates that similes serve as an important cognitive and aesthetic mechanism that transforms free comparisons into stable phraseological expressions over time. The findings reveal that similes function not only as stylistic devices but also as a significant source of phraseological units, reflecting the national mentality, cultural experience, and associative thinking of the Uzbek people.

KEYWORDS: *Phraseological Units, Simile, Figurative Language, Linguoculturology, Isajon Sultan, Uzbek Language, National Mentality, Imagery, Cultural Semantics*

INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a means of communication but also a crucial social phenomenon that embodies the cultural experience, historical memory, national mentality, and worldview of a people. In this respect, the linguocultural study of phraseological units—especially idiomatic expressions—reveals the reflection of national thinking, cultural phenomena, and historical consciousness. Phraseological units act as a mirror of popular consciousness, expressing social values, moral norms, traditions, religious beliefs, aesthetic views, and other cultural components through language.

The term *linguoculturology* was introduced in the works of the founders of the phraseological school such as V. N. Teliya [1], V. V. Vorobyov [2], and V. A. Maslova [3]. The linguocultural approach studies language units not only from a linguistic perspective (lexical-semantic or grammatical) but also in terms of their cultural, national, and historical functional load. This approach interprets phraseological units as national-cultural codes. Each idiom carries a historically and culturally shaped connotation within the collective consciousness of a people, while its internal form and external semantics incorporate national images and cultural realia.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Research in linguistics and literary studies shows that expressive and figurative means, especially similes, enhance not only the aesthetic value of speech but also its semantic depth and persuasive power. In spoken language, similes make expression vivid and dynamic, while in written discourse they help realize the author's artistic intention more fully. Particularly in literary texts, similes convey subjective evaluations of reality and attach emotional and aesthetic attitudes to depicted phenomena or characters.

This issue attracted attention even in ancient times. Aristotle regarded simile as one of the oldest and most natural forms of cognition. According to him, simile is an essential poetic device through which humans comprehend reality by comparing and conceptualizing phenomena; therefore, poetry can be metaphorically described as "the art of simile" [4]. This view indicates the cognitive significance of similes in addition to their aesthetic role.

This idea has been developed in linguistics and linguoculturology by V. A. Maslova, who emphasized that the formation and development of figurative thinking are directly related to the system of similes existing in a national language. These units reflect distinctive features of national mentality and embody the collective associative field of speakers [5].

Similarly, D. Khudoyberganova notes that people's attitudes toward objects and phenomena are manifested in language primarily through similes. According to her, similes are the result of processes of evaluation, comparison, and generalization in human consciousness, revealing national patterns of thought [6].

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N. Mahmudov's research provides an important theoretical foundation for explaining the formation of fixed similes. He argues that many stable similes in modern language originated as free comparisons in speech and became fixed through frequent use and social acceptance [7].

RESULTS

Go'yo qoyalar yorilib-uvalanib, tutday to'kilayotgan edi (Tilsim Lashkari yoxud Muqanna The simile used in this example appears in the literary text as a figurative expression based on external depiction. The natural phenomenon—the sounds and movements occurring over the mountains during a thunderstorm—is represented through the image of *tutday to'kilish*. The simile is formed on the basis of visual and auditory perception and serves to render the external scene of reality in a vivid and concrete manner in the reader's mind.

Here, the splitting and crumbling of the rocks is expressed not as a real physical process, but as an imagined scene produced by the powerful impact of the thunderstorm. The image of *tutday to'kilish* incorporates the semantic features of fragmentation, disintegration, and speed, thereby intensifying the dramatic force of the depiction. As a result, the natural phenomenon goes beyond the role of a mere background and becomes a significant visual element that enhances the sense of danger, tension, and threat within the artistic space.

This simile clearly demonstrates the features typical of external similes, that is, it does not express the character's inner experiences but rather presents a sensory-based image of external phenomena in the surrounding environment. In this way, the author strengthens the artistic depiction, brings the reader closer to the center of the event, and conveys the terror and grandeur characteristic of a natural disaster in an aesthetically powerful form.

Internal similes in literary texts are devices that convey a character's inner experiences, emotional state, sensations, and psychological condition through figurative comparison. In such similes, the primary focus is not on external scenery or objects, but on the subject's inner perception, fear, anxiety, hope, or suffering. Although internal similes may appear to be expressed in the form of external action, their semantic center serves to reveal the psychological state. For this reason, they are regarded as an important stylistic device that strengthens psychological depth in literary texts.

Chunki katta yoshli kishilar ko'pincha yuragida zil-zambil toshlarni olib yurishadi (O'rmondagi kulba). In the simile used in the passage, the character's psychological state — the suffering, anxiety, and sense of responsibility accumulated over many years — is expressed through the image of *"yurakda zil-zambil toshlarni olib yurish"*. Here, the external object (stone) does not serve the purpose of direct depiction, but rather functions as a figurative means of comparing the subject's inner experience.

The semantic center of the internal simile is not physical weight, but the meaning of emotional burden and psychological pressure. The image of *zil-zambil tosh* brings together the semantic features of heaviness, pressure, and restriction of movement, thereby expressing how oppressive the pain and responsibility accumulated in the human soul are. As a result, the author does not describe the character's inner state directly, but instead exerts a deeper impact on the reader's consciousness through figurative comparison.

This internal simile differs from external similes in that it is not aimed at depicting an external scene or object, but at understanding and evaluating the human psyche. In this respect, it appears in the literary text as an important stylistic device that strengthens psychological depth and expresses the character's inner suffering in a generalized form.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that similes play a crucial role not only in enhancing the aesthetic and expressive quality of literary discourse but also in the formation of phraseological units. Free similes that arise in speech gradually become fixed in collective consciousness and develop into idiomatic expressions.

In Isajon Sultan's stories, both external and internal similes actively function to depict nature, events, and the psychological states of characters. External similes create vivid sensory images, while internal ones convey emotional and mental experiences. This confirms the strong role of similes in the writer's artistic and psychological style.

Moreover, both similes and idioms share a common cognitive and associative basis, reflecting the cultural experience and national mentality of the Uzbek people. Thus, phraseological units can be viewed as linguocultural codes formed through the semantic generalization of similes.

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