
Metonymy in English and Uzbek languages

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Annotation

This article studies metonymy as a semantic and stylistic phenomenon in English and Uzbek. It explains how metonymic meaning is built on real relations such as part and whole, place and institution, author and work, container and content, and object and social value. The study uses descriptive and comparative analysis of examples from public discourse, literary usage, and everyday communication. The findings show that English and Uzbek share several common metonymic models, because speakers in both languages use one related sign to activate a wider meaning. However, the cultural emphasis is different. English metonymy is especially common in political, institutional, media, and literary discourse, while Uzbek metonymy is more strongly connected with hospitality, family relations, traditional objects, and national symbols. The article also discusses the role of metonymy in translation and language teaching, where literal rendering may weaken cultural meaning and stylistic force for learners, translators, and readers in intercultural communication.

Keywords

Metonymy, English language, Uzbek language, semantic transfer, stylistics, comparative linguistics, translation

Ingliz va o'zbek tillarida metonimiya

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada metonimiya ingliz va o'zbek tillarida semantik hamda stilistik hodisa sifatida o'rganiladi. Unda metonimik ma'no qism va butun, joy va muassasa, muallif va asar, idish va mazmun, predmet va ijtimoiy qadriyat kabi real aloqalar asosida shakllanishi tushuntiriladi. Tadqiqot ommaviy nutq, badiiy uslub va kundalik muloqotdan olingan misollarni tavsifiy hamda qiyosiy tahlil qilishga asoslanadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ingliz va o'zbek tillarida metonimik ko'chishning bir necha umumiy modellari mavjud, chunki har ikki tilda so'zlovchilar kengroq ma'noni ifodalash uchun unga yaqin bo'lgan belgidan foydalanadilar. Biroq madaniy urg'u turlicha namoyon bo'ladi. Ingliz tilida metonimiya siyosiy, institutsional, media va adabiy nutqda ko'proq uchrasa, o'zbek tilida u mehmondo'stlik, oilaviy munosabatlar, an'anaviy buyumlar va milliy ramzlar bilan kuchliroq bog'lanadi. Maqolada metonimiyaning tarjima va til o'qitishdagi ahamiyati ham yoritiladi,

chunki so'zma-so'z tarjima madaniy ma'no va uslubiy kuchni susaytirishi, o'quvchining to'g'ri tushunishiga xalaqit berishi, izoh yoki moslashtirishni talab qilishi mumkin. Bu holat amaliy tarjima jarayonida ayniqsa muhimdir ham.

Kalit so'zlar *Metonimiya, ingliz tili, o'zbek tili, semantik ko'chish, stilistika, qiyosiy tilshunoslik, tarjima*

Метонимия в английском и узбекском языках

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Аннотация *В статье изучается метонимия как семантическое и стилистическое явление в английском и узбекском языках. В ней объясняется, как метонимическое значение возникает на основе реальных связей: части и целого, места и учреждения, автора и произведения, сосуда и содержимого, предмета и социальной ценности. Исследование опирается на описательный и сопоставительный анализ примеров из публичного дискурса, художественной речи и повседневного общения. Результаты показывают, что английский и узбекский языки имеют ряд общих моделей метонимического переноса, поскольку в обоих языках один связанный знак может активировать более широкое значение. Однако культурный акцент различается. В английском языке метонимия особенно часто встречается в политическом, институциональном, медийном и литературном дискурсе, тогда как в узбекском языке она теснее связана с гостеприимством, семейными отношениями, традиционными предметами и национальными символами. Также рассматривается значение метонимии для перевода и преподавания языков, где дословная передача может ослабить культурный смысл и стилистическую силу для учащихся и переводчиков, особенно при работе с устойчивыми выражениями и культурно маркированными единицами.*

Ключевые слова *Метонимия, английский язык, узбекский язык, семантический перенос, стилстика, сравнительное языкознание, перевод*

Introduction

Metonymy is one of the basic mechanisms through which language creates compact and meaningful expression. In a metonymic expression, one word or name is

used instead of another unit that is closely related to it in real life or in human experience. For example, The White House may stand for the American administration, and Shakespeare may stand for the works written by

Shakespeare. In such cases, the meaning is not based on similarity, as in metaphor, but on closeness, association, and contextual connection. This makes metonymy an important object of study in semantics, stylistics, cognitive linguistics, translation studies, and comparative linguistics.

The importance of metonymy is connected with the fact that it is not only a literary device. It is used in newspapers, political speeches, ordinary conversations, academic texts, and classroom language. Speakers often use metonymy without noticing it because many metonymic forms have already become conventional. Cognitive approaches to figurative language show that metonymy reflects the way people organize experience and activate a whole domain through one selected detail (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Gibbs, 1994). For this reason, metonymy can reveal not only linguistic patterns, but also cultural habits of attention.

A comparative study of English and Uzbek metonymy is especially useful because the two languages share several general mechanisms, while their cultural associations are not always the same. English frequently uses institutional and media-related metonymies, such as Downing Street, Wall Street, or Hollywood. Uzbek also has place-for-institution and author-for-work models, but many of its expressive examples are connected with hospitality, family life, traditional objects, national clothing, and shared social values. Such differences are important for translators and language teachers, because a literal translation may be grammatically correct but pragmatically weak.

The aim of this article is to describe the main semantic and stylistic features of metonymy in English and Uzbek and to compare their most productive patterns. The study uses descriptive and comparative methods. The examples are interpreted in relation to semantic transfer, cultural meaning, and communicative function. The discussion also considers how metonymy can be handled

in translation and how it can be explained in language teaching.

Theoretical basis of metonymy

In traditional stylistics, metonymy is usually defined as the transfer of a name from one object to another on the basis of contiguity. Contiguity means that the two things belong to the same situation or are connected in real experience. This feature distinguishes metonymy from metaphor. Metaphor is usually based on resemblance, while metonymy is based on association. For example, calling a brave person a lion is metaphorical because it is based on similarity, but saying the classroom was silent is metonymic if classroom refers to the students inside it.

Modern linguistic research treats metonymy as more than a decorative figure. It is also viewed as a cognitive process. A speaker chooses one salient element of a situation and uses it to activate a broader meaning. Barcelona explains metonymy as an important cognitive operation that often works together with metaphor and shapes conceptualization in discourse (Barcelona, 2000). Jackendoff also emphasizes that meaning is closely related to conceptual structure, which makes it possible for one related element to call up a larger conceptual frame (Jackendoff, 1996). Therefore, metonymy is both linguistic and mental.

Several common types of metonymic relation can be found in many languages. These include part for whole, whole for part, place for institution, author for work, container for content, symbol for authority, object for user, and material for product. Some scholars also discuss metonymy in connection with word formation, because names of objects, actions, and social roles can change their meanings through repeated contextual use (Brdar, 2018). This process is important in both English and Uzbek, where everyday words may gain broader social or stylistic meanings.

Metonymy is closely connected with metaphor, but the two devices should not be confused. Kövecses notes that figurative

meaning often depends on conceptual mappings, yet metonymy usually remains inside one conceptual domain, while metaphor connects different domains (Kövecses, 2010). For instance, a kettle may stand for tea in a domestic situation because the two belong to the same activity frame. By contrast, time is money is metaphorical because it interprets time through the domain of money. This distinction helps make comparative analysis clearer.

In stylistics, metonymy is valuable because it can make speech shorter, more vivid, and more indirect. A single detail may represent a whole person, group, institution, or event. In literature, a writer may describe a character through a face, a voice, a uniform, or a gesture. In journalism, one place name may represent a whole government or organization. Thus, metonymy works both as an economical naming device and as an expressive stylistic tool (Leech, 2014).

Metonymy in English

English uses metonymy very actively in political and media discourse. Expressions such as the White House, Downing Street, Wall Street, Hollywood, and the Crown are common examples. These expressions are short, but they activate complex institutions, people, decisions, and cultural meanings. The White House does not simply refer to a building; in many contexts it refers to the United States administration. Wall Street does not only name a street; it often refers to the financial sector. Such examples show that English metonymy is strongly linked with public institutions and mass communication.

Another productive model in English is author for work. Sentences such as I am reading Shakespeare, She teaches Dickens, or The class discussed Hemingway are easily understood by English speakers. The proper name of the author stands for the works produced by that author. This type of metonymy is common in education, literary criticism, and everyday conversation. It is efficient because it avoids the need to repeat the titles of works and allows

one name to represent a whole literary or cultural tradition.

English also uses part-for-whole metonymy. The expression all hands on deck uses hands to refer to sailors or workers. In the phrase many mouths to feed, mouths stand for people who need food. Such cases show how a body part can represent a human being in a specific practical situation. This model is not neutral in every context; it can emphasize work, need, dependence, or collective action. Therefore, metonymy also shapes the emotional tone of the sentence.

Object-for-person and symbol-for-power models are also frequent in English. The suits may refer informally to business managers or officials, often with a critical or humorous tone. The crown can stand for monarchy, and the bench can refer to judges or the judicial institution. These examples show that metonymy can express social attitude. It may sound respectful, neutral, ironic, or critical depending on the word and context. Therefore, the semantic meaning of metonymy cannot be separated from its pragmatic effect.

In literary English, metonymy often works through selected details. A writer may mention a tired voice, a nervous hand, a uniform at the door, or a pair of eyes, while the real focus is a whole person or emotional state. Such usage supports characterization and foregrounding. Leech points out that literary language often uses foregrounded features to draw attention to meaning beyond direct description (Leech, 2014). In this sense, metonymy helps the writer guide the reader from a small visible detail to a larger interpretation.

Metonymy in Uzbek

Uzbek also uses metonymy widely, but its expressive center is often connected with social life, cultural values, and shared everyday experience. Uzbek linguistic studies pay much attention to the relationship between language, meaning, and national worldview (Mahmudov, 2017). Metonymy is one of the devices that shows this relationship clearly. A word may name a concrete object, but in a

certain context it can represent a wider cultural situation, a social role, or a traditional value.

Place-for-institution metonymy is productive in Uzbek. A sentence such as Tashkent qaror qildi can be understood as a reference to official structures or central authority, not to the physical city itself. This pattern is close to English examples such as London announced or Washington responded. It is useful because the place name becomes a compact label for political or administrative activity. Such usage also shows that metonymy is not only poetic; it is part of formal and public communication.

Author-for-work metonymy is also familiar in Uzbek. When speakers say Navoiy o'qimoq or Boburni o'rganmoq, the name of the author points to his literary works. This model is similar to English expressions such as reading Shakespeare. However, in Uzbek, the names of classical writers may also carry cultural and educational value. They may activate respect for literary heritage and national identity. This broader cultural meaning is important when such expressions are translated or explained to learners.

Many Uzbek metonymic expressions are connected with culturally marked objects. Words such as osh, choy, dasturxon, do'ppi, and mahalla may refer to more than their direct dictionary meanings. Osh can represent a social gathering or hospitality; choy may activate the idea of welcoming a guest; dasturxon can stand for family warmth, respect, and generosity. Uzbek semasiological studies show that lexical meaning develops through use, cultural association, and social context (Mirtojiev, 2010; Rahmatullayev, 2006). This is why Uzbek metonymy often carries a warm and culturally rich tone.

In Uzbek artistic texts, one detail can represent a whole character, household, or emotional atmosphere. Khudayberganova's anthropocentric approach to Uzbek literary texts emphasizes the human-centered nature of artistic meaning (Khudayberganova, 2015). A domestic object, a piece of clothing, or a

traditional item may reveal social status, generation, region, or emotional condition. For example, do'ppi may stand for national identity or traditional masculinity in a context where it is culturally marked. Such metonymy depends on shared background knowledge.

Uzbek also uses abstraction and figurative extension in ways that are important for semantic analysis. Hakimova discusses lexical abstraction in Uzbek, showing how word meaning can move from concrete reference to more general conceptual meaning (Hakimova, 2019). This process is close to metonymic transfer when a concrete object begins to represent a social value or wider situation. Qobuljonova's work on metaphor is also useful here because it shows how figurative mechanisms in Uzbek can be interpreted systematically rather than randomly (Qobuljonova, 2000).

Comparative analysis

English and Uzbek share the main structural models of metonymy. In both languages, a place may refer to an institution, an author may refer to a work, a part may refer to a whole, and an object may refer to a person or social role. These similarities show that metonymy is based on general cognitive habits. Speakers in different languages often use one visible, concrete, or familiar element to activate a broader meaning. This supports the idea that figurative language is connected with human thought and not only with stylistic decoration (Gibbs, 1994).

At the same time, English and Uzbek differ in the areas where metonymy is most noticeable. In English, many widely recognized metonymies belong to political, financial, media, and cultural industries: the White House, Wall Street, Hollywood, the Crown. These forms are strongly conventionalized and are common in newspapers and official reporting. In Uzbek, metonymy is also used in official contexts, but culturally expressive examples are often connected with household life, hospitality, traditional clothing, food, respect, and community relations.

Another difference concerns tone. English public metonymies are often neutral and economical. They help create a concise style. Uzbek culturally marked metonymies may carry stronger emotional and social associations. For example, *dasturxon* is not only a cloth or a place for food; in many contexts it represents hospitality, family unity, and respect

for guests. Therefore, the same structural model can produce different cultural effects in the two languages.

The table below summarizes the main patterns of metonymy in English and Uzbek. It shows that the two languages use similar semantic relations, but their examples and cultural meanings are not always identical.

Pattern	English example	Uzbek example	Comment
Place -> institution	The White House announced a decision.	Toshkent qaror qildi.	A place name refers to authority or an official structure.
Author -> work	She is reading Shakespeare.	U Navoiy o'qiyapti.	The author's name represents literary works.
Part -> whole	All hands on deck.	Qo'l ko'tardi.	A body part highlights a person or action.
Symbol/object -> power or identity	The Crown	Do'ppi	A concrete sign can stand for authority, status, or identity.
Food/household item -> social frame	Let's put the kettle on.	Osh, choy, dasturxon	Domestic objects may represent hospitality or social gathering.

Table 1. *Main patterns of metonymy in English and Uzbek*

Translation and Language teaching implications

Metonymy can create difficulties in translation because the direct lexical meaning may not be the real communicative meaning. When the White House announced is translated into Uzbek, the translator may sometimes keep the metonymy, but in some contexts it may be clearer to translate it as *AQSh ma'muriyati e'lon qildi*. The choice depends on the audience, genre, and level of familiarity with the expression. Therefore, the translator should preserve the function of the metonymy rather than only its form.

Uzbek culture-based metonymies may be even more difficult for English translation. Words such as *osh*, *choy*, *dasturxon*, *do'ppi*, and *mahalla* may require explanation or cultural adaptation. If they are translated only as food, tea, tablecloth, cap, and

neighborhood, part of the social meaning may disappear. In such cases, the translator can use a direct word with contextual explanation, a culturally similar expression, or an expanded paraphrase. The best strategy depends on whether the text is literary, academic, journalistic, or educational.

For language teaching, metonymy is useful because it helps learners understand that vocabulary is not a list of isolated meanings. Words work inside social and cultural contexts. When students learn metonymic expressions, they improve reading comprehension, intercultural awareness, and translation skills. This is particularly important for learners of English and Uzbek, because many common expressions cannot be understood through word-for-word translation. Teaching metonymy also helps students distinguish literal meaning from contextual meaning.

Teachers can use comparative tasks to make metonymy clearer. For example, students may compare the White House with Toshkent, Shakespeare with Navoiy, or the Crown with do'ppi. They can identify what stands for what, what type of relation is used, and whether the expression sounds neutral, formal, emotional, or cultural. Such activities develop semantic awareness and show learners how language reflects thought, culture, and communication. This practical approach agrees with the view that figurative language should be studied as a normal part of communication rather than as an exceptional literary ornament.

Conclusion

Metonymy is a central semantic and stylistic device in both English and Uzbek. It allows speakers to express a wider meaning through a related word, place, object, person, or symbol. Because of this, metonymy makes communication shorter, more expressive, and more culturally meaningful. It is not limited to poetry or literary style; it appears in political speech, media language, ordinary conversation, education, and translation.

The comparative analysis shows that English and Uzbek share several major metonymic patterns, including place for institution, author for work, part for whole, symbol for power, and object for social meaning. These common models show that metonymy is rooted in general human cognition. However, each language gives these models its own cultural coloring. English tends to use conventional institutional metonymies in public discourse, while Uzbek often connects metonymy with hospitality, family relations, traditional objects, and national identity.

The study also shows that metonymy is important for translation and language teaching. Translators should focus on the function and cultural meaning of metonymic expressions, not only on their literal form. Teachers should help learners notice how one word can activate a whole social or cultural frame. Such knowledge improves interpretation, prevents literal misunderstanding, and supports intercultural communication. Therefore, the study of metonymy remains valuable for semantics, stylistics, comparative linguistics, translation studies, and language education.

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