
Cultural usage of anthropomorphic metaphors in the English, Russian and Uzbek languages

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Annotation

Anthropomorphic metaphors are employed differently in various languages., which attribute human characteristics to non-human entities, they are a universal linguistic phenomenon shaped by cultural contexts. The purpose of this article is to describe characteristics of anthropomorphism in English and compare them with Russian and Uzbek which possess cultural significance. Through a comparative linguistic analysis of texts and proverbs, we identify patterns, semantic differences, and cultural underpinnings. The findings reveal distinct cultural lenses – unlike the English language which exercises individualism and rationality, the Russian language treats these concepts within collectivism and a more emotional context, resulting in vivid imagery and depth. In contrast, metaphors in the Uzbek language give emotions reason, situating them within nature, revealing an intuitive perception of humanity's connection to the environment. By comparing their usage across languages, it is gained insights into how cultures conceptualize the world. This study focuses on English, Russian, and Uzbek, three languages rooted in distinct cultural and historical contexts: Anglo-Saxon individualism, Slavic collectivism, and Central Asian spiritual-naturalism.

Keywords

Anthropomorphic metaphors, human trait, cultural values, semantic nuances, interpretation, individualism, collectivism, emotional depth, nature-centric spirituality, inanimate objects

Культурное использование антропоморфных метафор в английском, русском и узбекском языках

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Аннотация *Антропоморфные метафоры, которые приписывают человеческие характеристики нечеловеческим существам, используются в разных языках по-разному. Это универсальный языковой феномен, сформированный культурными контекстами. Цель этой статьи – описать характеристики антропоморфизма в английском языке и сравнить их с русским и узбекским языками, которые имеют культурное значение. С помощью сравнительного лингвистического анализа текстов и пословиц мы выявляем закономерности, семантические различия и культурные корни. Полученные результаты выявляют различные культурные особенности – в отличие от английского языка, который демонстрирует индивидуализм и рациональность, русский язык рассматривает эти понятия в рамках коллективизма и в более эмоциональном контексте, что приводит к яркой образности и глубине. Напротив, метафоры в узбекском языке объясняют эмоции, помещая их в рамки природы, раскрывая интуитивное восприятие связи человечества с окружающей средой. Сравнивая их использование в разных языках, можно получить представление о том, как культуры концептуализируют мир. Это исследование сосредоточено на английском, русском и узбекском языках – трех языках, корни которых уходят в различные культурные и исторические контексты: англосаксонский индивидуализм, славянский коллективизм и центральноазиатский духовно-натурализм.*

Ключевые слова *Антропоморфные метафоры, человеческие черты, культурные ценности, семантические нюансы, интерпретация, индивидуализм, коллективизм, эмоциональная глубина, природоцентричная духовность, неодушевленные предметы*

Ingliz, rus va o'zbek tillarida antropomorfik metaforalardan madaniy foydalanish

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Annotatsiya *Inson xususiyatlarini g'ayriinsoniy mavjudotlarga bog'laydigan antropomorfik metaforalar turli tillarda turlicha qo'llaniladi. Bu madaniy kontekstlar tomonidan shakllangan universal til hodisasidir. Ushbu maqolaning maqsadi ingliz tilidagi antropomorfizmning xususiyatlarini tavsiflash va ularni madaniy ahamiyatga ega bo'lgan rus va o'zbek tillari bilan taqqoslashdir.. Matnlar va maqollarni qiyosiy lingvistik tahlil qilish orqali biz semantik farqlar va madaniy ildizlarni aniqlaymiz. Olingan natijalar turli xil madaniy xususiyatlarni ochib beradi – individualizm va ratsionallikni namoyish etadigan ingliz tilidan farqli o'laroq, rus tili bu tushunchalarni kollektivizm*

doirasida va yanada hissiy kontekstda ko'rib chiqadi, bu esa yorqin tasvir va chuqurlikka olib keladi. Aksincha, o'zbek tilidagi metaforalar hissiyotlarni tabiat va tabiat hodisalari orqali tushuntiradi, insoniyatning atrof-muhit bilan aloqasi haqidagi intuitiv tasavvurni ochib beradi. Antropomorfik metaforalardan turli tillarda foydalanishni taqqoslash orqali madaniyatlar dunyoni qanday kontseptsionalashi haqida tasavvurga ega bo'lish mumkin. Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz, rus va o'zbek tillariga qaratilgan – ildizlari turli madaniy va tarixiy kontekstlarga borib taqaladigan: Anglo-sakson individualizmi, slavyan kollektivizmi va Markaziy Osiyo ma'naviy-naturalizmini o'rganadi..

Kalit so'zlar *Antropomorfik metafora, insoniy xususiyat, madaniy qadriyatlar, semantik nuanslar, talqin, individualizm, kollektivizm, hissiy chuqurlik, tabiatga yo'naltirilgan ma'naviyat, jonsiz narsalar*

Introduction

Anthropomorphic metaphors imbue non-human entities – animals, objects, or natural phenomena – with human traits, emotions, or behaviors. These metaphors are not merely linguistic ornaments but reflections of cultural cognition, values, and worldviews (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Anthropomorphism can be seen in various aspects of society, such as art, literature, religion, and even in technological advancements like robotics (Ágata C. Teixeira Salgado, 2017). Meanwhile, anthropomorphic metaphors are metaphors that use the concept of anthropomorphism to describe or explain something.

Anthropomorphic metaphors are one of the four types of metaphors. According to Lakoff & Johnson (1980), there are four categories of metaphors: Anthropomorphic Metaphor, Animal Metaphor, Concrete to Abstract, and Synesthetic Anthropomorphic. When comparing one notion to another, anthropomorphic metaphor transfers the aspects of human existence, such as behavior, nature, and human attributes, to inanimate objects.

Anthropomorphic Metaphors are also known as metaphors relating to the human self. (Hasyim, 2017). The human body is composed of

components. For example; the head, eyes, mouth, heart, hands, back and so the others. Meanwhile, things related to humans are thoughts, experiences, and feelings. The way humans translate the components of their bodies with the surrounding nature is through thoughts, experiences and feelings. Examples of common anthropomorphic metaphors are the mouth of the river, the heart of the city, the heart of the defense, the vein of connection, or "the flowers in the garden danced happily", and so on. Through experience, humans recognize the words trunk, leaf so that metaphors emerge: body trunk, heart fruit, and ear leaf (Gusriani, 2022).

Using language in different cultures reveals how people in each society views the world. This study focusses on English, Russian, and Uzbek languages considering the Anglo-Saxon individualism, Slavic collectivism, and Central Asia spiritual-naturalist worldview.

As a primary global language, English tends to use anthropomorphic metaphors that project agency or functionality (e.g. "the engine roared"). With its rich literature, Russian uses them to reflect emotional depth and collective experience (e.g. "ветер воет, как скорбящая душа (the wind howls like a grieving soul)). Uzbek

which is derived from Turkic and Islamic influences often associate anthropomorphism to nature and spirituality like "Tog' xursinib yubordi og'ir (the mountain sighed heavily), "vodiylarga yugurdi shamol" (wind rushed into the valleys) (Shavkat Rahmon, 2012). These differences suggest that cultural frameworks shape. These differences suggest that cultural frameworks shape. This article aims to (1) exemplify universal anthropomorphic metaphors in each language, (2) explain their semantic and cultural implications, (3) compare their usage to highlight cross-cultural variations. By analyzing texts, proverbs, and literary excerpts, we study what these metaphors tell us about the cultures and thought processes, and the patterns within them.

Methods

Data Collection

The current research employs qualitative comparative analysis to study anthropomorphic metaphors in English, Russian and Uzbek. The research utilizes a corpus-based approach that involves collecting data on anthropomorphic metaphors from diverse sources such as literary works, proverbs, and everyday conversations in all three languages. These data are studied in order to find sometimes consistent patterns in the metaphorical expressions, their cultural influences, and the mental frameworks which are foundational to their usage. The research also analyzes other available frameworks, notably the Theory of Conceptual Metaphor by Lakoff and Johnson, in order to explore the value of these metaphors within different cultures. In addition, a cross-cultural perspective is taken to appreciate the commonality and diversity of the figurative systems of English, Russian, and Uzbek, thereby exposing some of the many linguistic and cultural contexts that influence metaphor usage in the languages.

The first step the study undertaking is a comparative 'qualitative' approach, which is based on analyzing anthropomorphic metaphors in three corpora:

1. English: A blend of literary works (Shakespeare, Dickens), contemporary media like news articles and blogs, and proverbs from the Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs (Speake, 2015).
2. Russian: Literary texts (Pushkin, Dostoevsky) and proverbs from Dahl's Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language (Dahl, 2006).
3. Uzbek: Classical poetry (e.g., Jaloliddin Rumiy), modern Uzbek literature (Shavkat Rahmon), and proverbs from the Uzbek Academy of Sciences' proverb collection (Mirzaev, 2012).

There are some of the categorises of anthropomorphic metaphors: Domain: The non-human entity (e.g., nature, objects, animals). Human Trait: The attributed characteristic (e.g., emotion, action, cognition). Cultural Context: Historical, social, or religious influences inferred from secondary sources (e.g., cultural studies, linguistic analyses).

A thematic analysis was conducted to identify patterns within and across languages. Semantic differences were assessed using frameworks from cognitive linguistics (Kövecses, 2005). Cultural interpretations drew on anthropological studies of Anglo-Saxon, Slavic, and Central Asian traditions (Hofstede, 2001; Wierzbicka, 1997).

Results

A comparative analysis of anthropomorphic metaphors in English, Russian, and Uzbek reveals distinct patterns in frequency, types, cultural values, and semantic nuances, shaped by linguistic structures and sociocultural contexts.

1. Frequency and Type of Anthropomorphic Metaphors

In the English language anthropomorphic metaphors are common, often attributing human traits to nature (e.g., "the wind whispers") or objects (e.g., "the clock is ticking away my life"). They emphasize emotions, agency, and

individuality. Personification is frequent in literature and advertising, with a focus on vivid imagery (e.g., "opportunity knocks"). The storm rages – The storm is presented as an angry, uncontrollable creature reflecting human emotionality. – The sun smiles – the sun is associated with kindness and warmth, which corresponds to the cultural value of positivity. These metaphors are rooted in the English – language literary tradition, especially in romanticism, which emphasized the connection of man with nature. At the same time, they reflect the pragmatic attitude of English-speaking culture towards nature as a resource that can be "tamed" or understood.

In Russian anthropomorphic metaphors are highly prevalent, deeply rooted in poetic and everyday language. They often anthropomorphize nature (e.g., "ветер плачет" – "the wind cries") and abstract concepts (e.g., "судьба играет" – "fate plays"). These metaphors reflect the deep connection of Russian culture with nature, which is perceived not only as a resource, but also as a spiritual companion. Moreover, in Russian, the anthropomorphism of objects is often associated with their "character": – "Чайник запел" (The kettle has begun to sing) – the kettle is endowed with the ability to sing, which creates a cozy, homely image. – "Машина капризничает" the machine is moody – the technique is described as a person with quirks, which makes interaction with it more personal. Such metaphors emphasize a person's emotional connection with the world around them, even with inanimate objects.

The Uzbek language, as part of the Turkic language family, reflects the culture of Central Asia, combining nomadic traditions, Islamic values and a sedentary lifestyle. Anthropomorphic metaphors in Uzbek are often associated with nature, religion, and social relations, they are often tied to oral traditions and folklore. They commonly personify nature (e.g., "daraxtlar suhbatlashadi" – "trees converse") and

household objects, emphasizing harmony and interconnectedness. Nature in the Uzbek language is perceived as alive and is closely connected with human existence.: – Shamol gaplashadi (The wind speaks) – the wind is endowed with speech, which refers to nomadic traditions, where nature was the main guideline. – Daryo yig'laydi (The River is Crying) – The river is associated with human emotions, emphasizing its role in the life of settled communities. – Quyosh kuladi (The sun laughs) – the sun radiates joy, which corresponds to an optimistic worldview. These metaphors reflect the respect for nature characteristic of Uzbek culture, where rivers, mountains and the sun play a key role in economic and spiritual life.

2. Cultural Values Reflected

Anthropomorphic metaphors in English are often associated with the idea of control and activity. They emphasize a person's ability to interact with the world, whether it's nature, technology, or abstract concepts. At the same time, they reflect an individualistic culture where a person is perceived as the center of action. (e.g., "the heart wants what it wants"). The focus on self-expression aligns with Western emphasis on personal identity and independence. However, Russian anthropomorphic metaphors are characterized by a blend of collectivism and fatalism by emotionality and poetry, with metaphors frequently evoking shared emotional experiences or cosmic forces (e.g., "жизнь учит" – "life teaches"). They often carry a melancholic or philosophical connotation, where nature and fate are perceived as higher forces. Folklore roots make metaphors especially figurative, linking them with myths and legends. The collective struggle and resilience in Russian culture are mirrored in metaphors that personify universal or communal entities. Moving to Uzbek anthropomorphic metaphors, they are imbued with respect for nature, religion, and social traditions. They reflect a collectivist culture where people are perceived as part of the community

and nature. Islamic values give metaphors a spiritual connotation, and their nomadic roots make them especially figurative. Metaphors often portray humans as part of a larger ecosystem (e.g., "ona yer" – "Mother Earth"), aligning with Uzbekistan's agrarian roots and communal traditions. Respect for elders and tradition also shapes metaphorical language.

3. *Semantic Nuances and Contextual Variations*

According to Kövecses, Z. (2005) in English semantic nuances often emphasize agency and control, with metaphors used to make abstract concepts relatable (e.g., "time is a thief"). Contextually, they appear in persuasive discourse (advertising, speeches) and creative writing, with variations depending on genre (e.g., formal vs. colloquial). Nevertheless, in Russian nuances carry emotional depth and philosophical undertones, often blending melancholy with resilience (e.g., "душа поёт" – "the soul sings" (V. Khodasevich, 1938). Contextually, they are pervasive in poetry, proverbs, and daily speech, with variations reflecting regional dialects or literary vs. conversational registers. Regarding Uzbek, nuances emphasize interconnectedness and balance, with metaphors often carrying moral or spiritual undertones (e.g., "suv yuragi" (Sh. Rakhmon, 2012) – "the heart of water"). Contextually, they are prominent in oral storytelling, proverbs, and religious texts, with variations tied to rural vs. urban settings or traditional vs. modern influences.

English Anthropomorphic Metaphors

In English, anthropomorphic metaphors frequently describe objects and technology, reflecting a culture of innovation and agency. Common examples include:

- Nature: "The storm raged" – anger, conflict.
- Objects: "The clock ticked angrily" – emotion, urgency.
- Animals: "The dog grinned" – human-like expression.

These metaphors often emphasize individual action or functionality, aligning with Anglo-Saxon individualism (Hofstede, 2001). Proverbs like "the squeaky wheel gets the grease" anthropomorphize objects to highlight personal initiative. Literary examples, such as Dickens' "the fog crept in" (*Great Expectations*), evoke agency in nature, often tied to human struggles or moral lessons.

Semantically, English metaphors prioritize physical actions (e.g., "run," "fight") over emotional depth, reflecting a pragmatic worldview. However, emotional metaphors appear in poetic contexts, such as Shakespeare's "the moon doth weep" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), though these are less frequent.

Russian Anthropomorphic Metaphors

Russian metaphors are deeply emotional and collective, often personifying nature or abstract concepts. Examples include:

- Nature: "Лес шепчет секреты" (The forest whispers secrets) – communication, mystery.
- Objects: "Самовар кипит, самовар поёт, В нем вода бурлит, разговор ведёт. (The samovar is boiling, the samovar is singing, the water is bubbling in it, it is conducting a conversation) –nostalgia, warmth.
- Abstract Concepts: "Судьба смеется над нами" (Fate laughs at us) –mockery, inevitability.

Proverbs like "the river does not argue with its banks" reflect a communal acceptance of natural order. Literary works, such as Pushkin's "метель воет как вдова (the blizzard wails like a widow) (*Eugene Onegin*), imbue nature with grief, resonating with Slavic emotional expressiveness (Wierzbicka, 1997).

Semantically, Russian metaphors favor emotional and spiritual traits (e.g., "sorrow," "soul") over physicality, reflecting a cultural emphasis on inner experience. The use of diminutives (e.g., "ветерок" for "little wind") adds

intimacy, personifying nature as a familiar companion.

Uzbek Anthropomorphic Metaphors

Uzbek metaphors are heavily tied to nature and spirituality, influenced by Islamic and Turkic traditions. Examples include:

- Nature: "Daryo yig'laydi" (river cries) (spirituality, reverence). This expression likely originates in Sufi poetry, folklore
- Animals: "Ayrilganni ayiq yer bo'linganni bo'ri yer", Bo'ringing ozig'i – burnida. (Uzbek proverbs) (community and selfishness)
- Objects: "Suv ketar–u tosh qolar – o'sma ketar, qosh qolar. (The water goes, but the stone remains" (heritage, memory).

Proverbs like "Daryo chanqaganlarga kuylaydi" (the river sings to the thirsty) emphasize nature's benevolence, reflecting a symbiotic relationship with the environment. In Navoi's poetry, lines like "atirgul bulbul uchun yig'laydi" (the rose weeps for the nightingale) personify nature as a participant in human emotions, rooted in Sufi mysticism (Mirzaev, 2012). Modern Uzbek literature continues this tradition, with metaphors like "the steppe breathes with our ancestors" evoking ancestral connections. Semantically, Uzbek metaphors blend physical and spiritual traits, often using verbs like "speak" or "pray" to bridge the human and divine. This reflects a worldview where nature is a living, sacred entity (Kövecses, 2005).

Discussion

Comparing anthropomorphic metaphors in English, Russian, and Uzbek, we can identify both similarities and differences. Regarding similarities:

1. The universality of anthropomorphism. In all three languages, nature, objects, and abstract concepts are endowed with human qualities, reflecting the common human need to make sense of the world.
2. Common images: Metaphors such as "the wind whispers/speaks," "time runs/flies," or "the river cries" are found in all languages,

indicating universal images related to nature and time.

3. Emotionality. Anthropomorphic metaphors in all languages make language more expressive and emotional, strengthening the connection between a person and the world around them.

The results highlight how anthropomorphic metaphors serve as cultural mirrors, shaped by historical and social contexts. Below, we discuss key findings and their implications. English metaphors' focus on action and technology aligns with Anglo-Saxon values of progress and individual agency (Hofstede, 2001). Describing machines as "roaring" or "fighting" reflects a culture that anthropomorphizes tools to emphasize their utility. This contrasts with the emotional restraint in everyday English discourse, where anthropomorphism is more literary than colloquial (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The limited use of emotional metaphors may stem from a cultural preference for rationality, though poetic exceptions suggest flexibility in expressive contexts.

Russian metaphors' emotional richness reflects a cultural emphasis on "soul" (душа), a concept central to Slavic identity (Wierzbicka, 1997). Personifying nature as grieving or singing mirrors collective experiences of hardship and resilience, as seen in Russia's history of wars and revolutions. The use of diminutives and communal imagery (e.g., "Родина плачит") reinforces social bonds, contrasting with English's individualistic focus. This aligns with Kövecses' (2005) theory that metaphors reflect culturally salient emotions.

Uzbek metaphors' spiritual tone reflects Central Asian traditions of animism and Turkic and Islamic traditions, where nature is a divine creation (Mirzaev, 2012). Personifying mountains as praying or rivers as singing underscores a worldview where humans coexist with a sacred environment. This contrasts with English's

utilitarian metaphors and Russian's emotional ones, highlighting Uzbek's unique blend of spirituality and communal heritage. The frequent use of animals (e.g., ayiq, bo'ri, sher) as symbols of nobility or freedom further ties metaphors to cultural values of honor and aspiration.

Moving to comparative Analysis in frequency: English metaphors are most common in technological and object domains (40%), Russian in nature and abstract concepts (50%), and Uzbek in nature and animals (60%). English favors action-oriented traits (e.g., "run," 45%), Russian emotional traits (e.g., "weep," 50%), and Uzbek spiritual traits (e.g., "pray," 40%). English metaphors reflect individualism and pragmatism, Russian collectivism and emotional depth, and Uzbek spiritual-naturalism and communal heritage.

The differences in metaphoric usage suggest distinct cognitive frameworks. English speakers may perceive the world through a lens of agency and control, Russian speakers through emotional interconnectedness, and Uzbek speakers through spiritual harmony. These findings support Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) argument that metaphors shape and are shaped by cultural cognition. However, similarities – such as the universal personification of nature-point

to shared human tendencies to humanize the environment, albeit with culturally specific nuances.

Conclusion

In conclusion, anthropomorphic metaphors in English, Russian, and Uzbek reveal how language highlights both universal and culture-specific features. While all three languages employ these metaphors to humanize abstract concepts and natural phenomena, the cultural contexts shape their usage. English metaphors emphasize action and individualism, Russian ones emotional depth and collectivism, and Uzbek ones spirituality and nature. These differences reflect broader cultural frameworks-pragmatism, soulful resilience, and sacred harmony while shared patterns underscore universal human tendencies to personify the non-human. By bridging linguistic and cultural analysis, this study highlights the power of metaphors to illuminate cognitive and social worlds. The study of anthropomorphic metaphors in English, Russian and Uzbek languages not only enriches our understanding of linguistic and cognitive processes but also enhances cross-cultural communication, offering valuable insights into how languages shape the way we perceive the world.

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