

Pragmalinguistic and Stylistic Functions of Nationally and Culturally Marked Metaphors in Uzbek, German, and Russian

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ABSTRACT

The article comparatively examines the pragmatic and stylistic functions of nationally and mentally marked metaphors in Uzbek, German and Russian. It aims to systematize the speech functions of metaphor, identify how the same communicative purpose is realized through different national images, and propose criteria for functional analysis. The material comprises a purposive qualitative sample of 36 metaphorical expressions from everyday, journalistic and literary discourse. Comparative, contextual, conceptual, pragmatic and stylistic methods are applied. Eight pragmatic functions are distinguished: evaluation, emotive expression, persuasion, mitigation, intensification, ironic criticism, identity construction and framing. Six stylistic functions are also identified: imagery, individualization of style, register marking, textual cohesion, semantic compression and genre formation. The analysis shows that a shared conceptual model does not necessarily imply identical national imagery, evaluation or stylistic salience. The proposed function image effect model can support metaphor analysis in discourse, translation and intercultural communication.

Keywords: Metaphor, national mentality, pragmatic function, stylistic function, evaluation, expressivity, irony, identity, framing, linguoculturology

INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is one of the ways in which human beings name, understand, and evaluate reality; in discourse, it does not merely serve as a figurative ornament. A metaphorical unit expresses the speaker's attitude toward an event, directs the addressee's attention, intensifies emotional impact, condenses complex content, and may present a particular sociocultural perspective as a natural truth. In conceptual metaphor theory, metaphor is interpreted as a mechanism for understanding an abstract target domain through a concrete source domain. This interpretation makes it possible to view the cognitive basis of metaphor and its pragmatic outcome as an integrated whole.

The effect of metaphor is related to the historical memory, values, everyday experience, and stereotypes of language communities. For example, the Uzbek *Vatan-ona*, the Russian *Родина-мать*, and the German *Vaterland* refer to the same concept homeland yet differ in their kinship image, gender semantics, and emotional tone. Whereas the Uzbek and Russian models activate the image of the mother as a symbol of protection, affection, and sacredness, the German model foregrounds the father as a symbol of ancestry, lineage, and historical belonging. Z. Kövecses demonstrates that universality and cultural variation operate simultaneously in metaphor: shared bodily experience is selected and foregrounded differently in different cultural contexts.

The research problem lies in the fact that metaphorical meaning is often not limited to lexical content: the same unit may perform the functions of evaluation, irony, mitigation, or the expression of group identity. If this dimension is ignored, formal similarity across the three languages may lead to incorrect functional equivalence. For example, the images *tulki*, *Fuchs*, and *лиса* may convey cunning; however, depending on the context, the German expression *alter Fuchs* may also communicate a positive or humorous evaluation of an experienced and resourceful person. Thus, in comparing metaphors, the principal unit of analysis should be not the image alone, but its contextual evaluation and its effect on the addressee.

The aim of the article is to identify the pragmatic and stylistic functions of nationally and mentally specific metaphors in Uzbek, German, and Russian, to classify them comparatively, and to propose a model of functional analysis. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were set: to summarize theoretical approaches to the functional nature of metaphor; to compare metaphors in the three languages according to communicative purpose, national imagery, and stylistic effect; to systematize their pragmatic and stylistic functions; and to interpret the findings from the perspectives of discourse and intercultural communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

N. D. Arutyunova classifies linguistic metaphors as nominative, figurative, cognitive, and generalizing, thereby demonstrating their potential to range from naming an object to constructing an abstract model. This approach explains how the function of a metaphor changes according to the status of the unit within the language system and its use in discourse. In examining the relationship between metaphor and discourse, the scholar identifies predicative adaptation, evaluation, and semantic renewal as important factors in the formation of metaphorical meaning.

In V. N. Telia's linguocultural approach, the evaluative, emotive, stylistic, and cultural connotations of a figurative unit are placed at the center of analysis alongside its denotative content [5]. This perspective is particularly important for identifying the pragmatic function of a nationally and mentally specific metaphor: by using an established image, the speaker not only describes an object but also activates a culturally established evaluative code.

From a pragmalinguistic perspective, the meaning of a speech unit is formed through the interaction of the speaker's intention, the situation, presupposition, and the addressee's interpretation. Sh. Safarov regards communicative intention as an organizing factor of speech activity and emphasizes that the pragmatic value of a linguistic form emerges through the context and the relationship between the participants in communication.

Within this relationship, metaphor expresses an illocutionary intention indirectly, figuratively, and often in an intensified form.

In German linguistics, H. Weinrich proposes understanding metaphor through semantic expectations and contrasts within the text; the value of an image is revealed not in an isolated word but in the network of textual cues and contexts. O. Jäkel, in turn, demonstrates that metaphors in everyday, academic, economic, and religious discourse are systematic models that organize abstract knowledge. R. Schmitt's systematic metaphor analysis makes it possible to relate individual expressions to thematic metaphorical models and to reconstruct their functions in context and social experience.

Although existing research has extensively examined the cognitive, pragmatic, and cultural layers of metaphor, there remains a need to describe within a single framework the pragmatic and stylistic functions of nationally and mentally specific images in an Uzbek-German-Russian comparison. The novelty of this article lies in distinguishing eight pragmatic and six stylistic functions in material from the three languages and in proposing a practical analytical model based on the function–image–effect triad.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research material consists of a purposive comparative sample of 36 metaphorical expressions characteristic of everyday, journalistic, and literary discourse in Uzbek, German, and Russian. The sample covers the source domains of body and emotion, animals, kinship, nature, path and movement, war and struggle, building and space, and living organism. Trilingual counterparts were selected for each functional group. The material was used not as a statistically representative corpus but as a qualitative sample designed to test the functional classification and analytical model. The translation equivalents presented are the author's comparative examples and are not claimed to be published translations of any particular literary work.

The comparative method was used to identify the relationship between image and function in the three languages;

the contextual method revealed the actual meaning and evaluative orientation of a metaphor; conceptual analysis established the mapping between source and target domains; pragmatic analysis interpreted the speaker's intention, presupposition, and effect on the addressee; and stylistic analysis assessed expressiveness, register, genre, and textual cohesion. The expression-model-context principle of systematic metaphor analysis was applied in grouping the metaphorical units.

Functional analysis model

Each example was analyzed in five stages. At the first stage, the metaphorical expression and its immediate context were identified. At the second stage, the source domain, target domain, and principal conceptual model were determined. At the third stage, the national-cultural connotation – positive or negative evaluation, historical association, taboo, and emotional coloring – was described. At the fourth stage, the pragmatic purpose and stylistic outcome were distinguished. At the fifth stage, expressions in the three languages were compared in terms of functional correspondence. The model can be summarized as follows: metaphorical form → national image → communicative purpose → stylistic effect → addressee interpretation.

Function and linguistic form were not treated as equivalent in the analysis. A single metaphor may perform several functions depending on the context. For example, the expression *iqtisodiyot lokomotivi* (“the locomotive of the economy”) evaluates leadership, frames development as movement, and adds dynamism to journalistic discourse. Therefore, the dominant function was determined on the basis of the communicative situation, while supplementary functions were identified through stylistic and connotative indicators.

RESULTS

Pragmatic functions of nationally and mentally specific metaphors

The analysis identified eight principal pragmatic functions of metaphor. The first is the evaluative function. A metaphor assigns

a ready-made positive or negative evaluation to a person or event: Uzbek *u tulki*, German *er ist ein Fuchs*, and Russian *онлиса* (“he/she is a fox”). In German, however, *Fuchs* may also denote an experienced and resourceful person; consequently, evaluation can be determined only in context. The images *eshak/Esel/осёл* (“donkey”) generally convey stupidity or stubbornness in all three languages, although the degree of insult varies according to the communicative situation.

The second is the emotive-expressive function. The Uzbek *qoni qaynadi*, German *sein Blut kochte*, and Russian *кровьзакипела* (“his/her blood boiled”) convey the intensity of anger through physiological heat. The EMOTION IS HEAT model exists in all three languages, and the metaphor expresses a stronger emotional state than the neutral Uzbek *jahli chiqdi*, German *er wurde wütend*, and Russian *онрассердился* (“he became angry”). The third is the intensification function: expressions such as Uzbek *dard tog’i*, German *ein Berg von Problemen*, and Russian *горапроблем* (“a mountain of problems”) magnify quantity and burden, thereby increasing the perceived scale of the problem for the addressee.

The fourth is the persuasive and directive function. In political and journalistic discourse, the Uzbek *islohotlar yo’li*, German *Reformweg*, and Russian *путьреформ* (“the path of reforms”) represent progress as forward movement, while *iqtisodiyot lokomotivi/Lokomotive der Wirtschaft/локомотивэкономики* (“the locomotive of the economy”) presents a particular sector as the force pulling the entire system. Metaphor does not merely embellish an argument; it determines the perspective from which reality is to be viewed. Such framing may push alternative interpretations into the background, and its persuasive power must therefore be considered in critical discourse analysis.

The fifth is the function of mitigation and euphemization. The Uzbek *hayotdan ko’z yumdi*, German *von uns gehen* or *für immer die Augen schließen*, and Russian *уйтиизжизни* or *закрытьглазанавеки* soften a direct statement about death. These counterparts are not identical in stylistic level: *von uns gehen* and *уйтиизжизни* are more natural in formal expressions

of condolence, whereas the forms meaning “to close one’s eyes forever” are more poetic. Metaphor thus enables a taboo subject to be expressed within the conventions of cultural etiquette.

The sixth is the function of irony and criticism. In the expressions *kursi uchun kurash/Kampf um den Sessel/борьба за кресло* (“a struggle for the chair”), the chair becomes a metonymic-metaphorical sign of authority and office. The expression evaluates political competition as a struggle for position rather than for ideas, thereby creating a critical presupposition. The forms *qog‘oz qahramoni/ Papierheld/ бумажный герой* (“paper hero”) also portray ironically the discrepancy between outward status and genuine courage.

The seventh is the function of identification and solidarity. In the example *ona til/Muttersprache/родной язык* (“mother tongue/native language”), Uzbek and German directly retain a kinship image, whereas Russian relies on the adjective *родной*, meaning “native” or “dear and close to oneself.” The models *Vatan ona/Родина-мать* and *Vaterland* reinforce collective belonging through different family codes. The eighth is the framing function. *Bozor jonlandi/der Markt belebte sich/рынок ожил* (“the market came to life”) conceptualizes an economic process as a living organism, whereas *narxlar jilovini tortmoq/die Preise in den Griff bekommen/обуздать цены* (“to rein in prices”) models economic management in terms of force and control.

Table 1. *Realization of pragmatic functions in Uzbek, German, and Russian*

Funksiya	O‘zbekcha	Nemisch	Ruscha	Pragmatik natija
<i>Baholash</i>	<i>u tulki</i>	<i>er ist ein Fuchs</i>	<i>он лиса</i>	<i>Ayyorlik; nemischada tajriba bahosi ham mumkin</i>
<i>Emotiv-ekspressiv</i>	<i>qoni qaynadi</i>	<i>sein Blut kochte</i>	<i>кровь закипела</i>	<i>G‘azabni kuchli hissiy shaklda berish</i>
<i>Intensifikatsiya</i>	<i>dard tog‘i</i>	<i>ein Berg von Problemen</i>	<i>гора проблем</i>	<i>Ko‘lam va og‘irlikni kattalashtirish</i>
<i>Ishontirish</i>	<i>islohotlar yo‘li</i>	<i>Reformweg</i>	<i>путь реформ</i>	<i>Taraqqiyotni oldinga harakat sifatida ko‘rsatish</i>
<i>Yumshatish</i>	<i>hayotdan ko‘z yumdi</i>	<i>von uns gehen</i>	<i>уйти из жизни</i>	<i>O‘lim xabarini evfemistik berish</i>
<i>Kinoya-tanqid</i>	<i>kursi uchun kurash</i>	<i>Kampf um den Sessel</i>	<i>борьба за кресло</i>	<i>Mansabparastlik presuppozitsiyasi</i>

Identifikatsiya	Vatan – ona	Vaterland	Родина-мать	Jamoaviy mansublikni qarindoshlik bilan kodlash
Freymlash	bozor jonlandi	der Markt belebte sich	рынок оживился	IQTISOD – TIRIK ORGANIZM modeli

Manba: muallifning qiyosiy tahlil materiali.

Stylistic functions of metaphors

The pragmatic function of a metaphor reflects the speaker's communicative intention, whereas its stylistic function demonstrates how that intention is expressed and aesthetically realized in the text. The analysis identified six primary stylistic functions. The first is imagery and visualization. In expressions such as *Vaqt uchadi* /*die Zeit fliegt* /*времялетит* ("time flies"), the abstract concept of time is conceptualized as a moving entity. The second function is the creation of an individual style. By employing a novel metaphor or an unexpected combination of conventional images, an author develops a distinctive idiolect; in such cases, the novelty of the metaphor becomes an integral part of its meaning.

The third function is register marking. The Uzbek expression *Qovog'idan qor yog'adi* ("his/her face is as gloomy as a storm cloud") is an expressive unit characteristic of colloquial and literary discourse, whereas *iqtisodiy o'sish sur'ati* ("the rate of economic growth") is a terminologized metaphor used in academic and journalistic discourse, in which its figurative nature is hardly perceived. The German expression *ein Gesicht wie sieben Tage Regenwetter* and the Russian expression *мрачнеетучи* are likewise commonly used in colloquial and literary registers. The degree to which a metaphor becomes conventionalized reduces its stylistic salience: a "live" metaphor foregrounds the image, whereas a terminologized metaphor primarily performs a nominative-cognitive function.

The fourth function is textual cohesion. A sequence of metaphors belonging to the same conceptual model connects different parts of a text. For example, the sequence *bozor uyg'ondi – iqtisodiyot sog'lomlashdi – o'sish tezlashdi* ("the market awakened – the economy recovered – growth accelerated") develops the conceptual model ECONOMY IS A LIVING ORGANISM/MOTION. The German sequence *der Markt*

erwachte – die Wirtschaft erholte sich – das Wachstum beschleunigte sich and the Russian sequence *рынок проснулся – экономика озодоровилась – рост ускорился* similarly establish conceptual coherence in their respective languages. A disruption in the metaphorical chain weakens the conceptual unity of the text.

The fifth function is semantic compression. The word “locomotive” condenses the meaning of “a leading sector that provides impetus and sets other components in motion” into a single image. The sixth function is the formation of genre and tonal atmosphere. Political commentary employs war metaphors such as “the fight against a problem,” “front,” and “strategy”; popular-science texts use metaphors of journeys and discoveries; and literary texts employ authorial imagery to establish the argumentative or aesthetic tone of the genre. The functional type of a metaphor is also closely related to its syntactic and discursive position.

Table 2. *Principal stylistic functions of nationally and mentally marked metaphors*

Uslubiy funksiya	Mexanizm	Misol yoki natija
<i>Obrazlilik</i>	<i>Mavhum mazmunni sezgi-harakat obrazi bilan konkretlashtiradi</i>	<i>vaqt uchadi / die Zeit fliegt / время летит</i>
<i>Individual uslub</i>	<i>Kutilmagan xaritalash orqali muallif idiolektini yaratadi</i>	<i>Mualliflik metaforasi; kontekstda izohlanadi</i>
<i>Registr</i>	<i>So‘zlashuv, publitsistik, ilmiy yoki poetik ohangni belgilaydi</i>	<i>qovog‘idan qor yog‘adi; Wachstum</i>
<i>Kohesiya</i>	<i>Bir modelga mansub obrazlar bilan matnni bog‘laydi</i>	<i>bozor uyg‘ondi – iqtisodiyot sog‘lomlashdi</i>
<i>Kompressiya</i>	<i>Murakkab munosabatni bitta obrazda jamlaydi</i>	<i>iqtisodiyot lokomotivi</i>
<i>Janr hosil qilish</i>	<i>Argumentativ yoki estetik tonal muhit yaratadi</i>	<i>kurash/front/strategiya; yo‘l/kashfiyot</i>

Manba: muallifning qiyosiy tahlil materiali

Functional correspondence and national differences

The material from the three languages revealed cases of full functional correspondence, partial functional correspondence, and functional asymmetry. In cases of full correspondence, the conceptual model, evaluative meaning, and register are almost

identical: *vaqt uchadi* – *die Zeit fliegt* -*времялетит* (“time flies”); *yuragini ochmoq* – *sein Herz öffnen* -*открытьсердце* (“to open one’s heart”). In cases of partial correspondence, the general communicative purpose is preserved, while the image or register differs. For example, the Uzbek expression *narxlar jilovini tortmoq* and the Russian expression *обуздатьцены* (“to curb prices”) are based on the model of controlling an animal, whereas the German expression *die Preise in den Griff bekommen* (“to get prices under control”) activates the model of manual control.

In cases of functional asymmetry, national evaluations may differ even when the external images are similar. For example, depending on the context, the German word *Fuchs* (“fox”) may acquire the positive semantic component of being “clever” or “resourceful,” whereas the Uzbek *tulki* and the Russian *лиса* generally express the negative quality of cunning when used in reference to a person. Conversely, the Uzbek *ona til* and the German *Muttersprache* are closely related through the kinship model, while the Russian *роднойязык* conveys the same identificational effect through a different lexical means. These findings demonstrate that, when comparing metaphors, pragmatic function and stylistic value should be prioritized over formal imagery.

Based on the results, four criteria are proposed for practical analysis: 1) which conceptual model is activated by the image; 2) whether it conveys a positive, negative, or ambivalent evaluation; 3) which communicative intention of the speaker persuasion, mitigation, humour, criticism, or solidarity it serves; and 4) in which register and genre it sounds natural. These criteria make it possible to determine not only the semantic meaning of a metaphor but also its communicative value in translation and comparative analysis.

DISCUSSION

The identified functions demonstrate that the cognitive, pragmatic, and stylistic dimensions of metaphor are not isolated from one another. The conceptual model determines the direction

of perception, the national-cultural image provides it with evaluative meaning and associations, and the pragmatic intention activates the function of the image in communication. For example, the model *bozor jonlandi* (“the market revived”) conceptualizes an economic phenomenon as a living organism, conveys a positive evaluation of economic dynamics, and creates an optimistic frame in journalistic discourse. Thus, a single metaphor can simultaneously perform the functions of cognitive modelling, evaluation, and stylistic dynamization.

The analysis of the material from the three languages confirms Arutyunova’s views on metaphor types and meaning-making in discourse. The findings are also consistent with Telia’s concept of cultural connotation: the pragmatic power of an image is based on collective knowledge and culturally shared evaluative codes. The relationship between universal experience and cultural variation emphasized by Kövecses is manifested in the different lexical and stylistic realizations of such common models as the heart, journey, and warmth in the three languages.

The distinction between the pragmatic and stylistic functions of metaphor is analytical in nature. While evaluation may represent a pragmatic purpose, expressive imagery may serve as its stylistic means of realization. Irony is a pragmatic effect, whereas register and an unexpected semantic clash constitute its stylistic mechanism. Therefore, assigning only one label to a metaphor is insufficient; its auxiliary functions should also be identified alongside its dominant function. The principle of reconstructing context and conceptual models simultaneously in systematic metaphor analysis provides an effective methodological basis for such a multidimensional description.

The practical significance of the research lies in the fact that the proposed function–image–effect model can be applied to the analysis of literary and journalistic texts, foreign-language teaching, translation editing, and intercultural communication. Language learners should not limit themselves to knowing the dictionary meaning of a metaphor; they should also understand the situations in which it may function as an insult, joke, compliment, or expression of sympathy. Before mechanically transferring an external image, translators should examine its

evaluative meaning, register, and potential impact on the target audience.

A limitation of the study is its reliance on a purposively selected qualitative sample comprising 36 units. Therefore, the findings reveal functional tendencies but do not represent the statistical distribution of all metaphors in the three languages. Further studies should determine the frequency of these functions in corpora of literary, political, and digital discourse, experimentally examine how metaphors are evaluated by different age and cultural groups, and compare the preservation of pragmatic effects in human and machine translation.

CONCLUSION

Nationally and mentally marked metaphors in Uzbek, German, and Russian not only describe reality but also evaluate it, regulate the emotional attitudes of communication participants, and activate particular cultural perspectives. The study systematized eight pragmatic functions: evaluation, emotive-expressive influence, persuasion, mitigation, intensification, irony and criticism, identification, and frame formation. Imagery, individual style, register, cohesion, semantic compression, and genre formation were identified as the principal stylistic functions of metaphors.

The comparative analysis demonstrated that even when the same conceptual model exists in all three languages, its specific national image, evaluative orientation, and stylistic salience may not be identical. Strong similarities were identified in images associated with time, the heart, journeys, and warmth, whereas substantial cultural differences were observed in images related to kinship, animals, taboos, and sociopolitical phenomena. Therefore, the functional value of a metaphor emerges not merely from the relationship between form and meaning but also from the context, communicative intention, and cultural knowledge of the addressee.

The proposed function image effect model makes it possible to analyse a metaphorical unit through five stages: context, conceptual model, national connotation, pragmatic intention, and

stylistic effect. The model may be used in translation studies to select functional equivalents, in linguocultural studies to interpret national-cultural codes, and in stylistics to reveal an author's system of imagery. An adequate analysis should answer not only the question of "what the metaphor means" but also "why this particular image has been selected" and "how it affects the addressee."

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