



STRUCTURAL SEMANTIC FEATURES OF METAPHORS: A CROSS-LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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A highly influential academic contribution that directly targets the intersection of structural grammar and cognitive semantics in figurative language is developed in 'Metaphor and Lexical Semantics' by Michael Glanzberg (2007). While contemporary cognitive approaches frequently treat metaphors as abstract, purely conceptual mappings that exist independently of specific linguistic structures, Glanzberg bridges the gap by analyzing the strict linguistic and structural constraints that dictate exactly how and where a metaphor can form in a sentence. Expanding this model to a cross-linguistic paradigm involving the Uzbek language exposes how different syntactic typologies—specifically the analytic mechanics of Germanic English versus the agglutinative and morphological architecture of Turkic Uzbek—police, constrain, and validate the structural parameters of semantic metaphors.

Glanzberg establishes a sharp dividing line between primary grammatical categories when analyzing the structural conditions of metaphorical interpretation, presenting what is known as the functional versus lexical split constraint. Lexical categories, which encompass open-class words such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives, function as the primary carriers of core semantic weight within a phrase. Because their definitions are conceptually rich, flexible, and variable across contexts, they readily accept metaphorical interpretation and act as triggers for cross-domain mappings, such as the noun *sun* in the classic phrase 'Juliet is the sun' transferring properties of radiance, warmth, and centrality. Conversely, functional categories, which include determiners, tenses, and conjunctions, act as the structural 'linguistic glue' or syntactic architecture of language and remain semantically thin or rigid. Glanzberg argues that functional categories cannot be interpreted metaphorically; they retain their literal, fixed structural operations regardless of the shifting figurative context surrounding them, meaning a speaker can easily metaphorize the nominal heads of a sentence but cannot assign a metaphorical value to a definite article or a quantifier like 'every'.

When translating this lexical-functional dichotomy into the agglutinative morphology of the Uzbek language, Glanzberg's rule undergoes a structural translation but remains theoretically intact. Unlike English, which utilizes



independent closed-class words for functional operations, Uzbek fuses its syntactic architecture directly into nouns and verbs via complex chains of suffixes and case endings. In traditional Uzbek idioms such as 'yuragi qoraygan' (meaning an individual's heart has darkened, or they have grown bitter), the core lexical roots representing the noun 'yurak' (heart) and the adjective-verb base 'qora' (black) successfully receive the abstract metaphorical shift. However, the attached functional markers—specifically the third-person possessive suffix '-i' and the past participle suffix '-gan'—remain entirely unyielding to figurative distortion, executing their exact, literal grammatical duties of assigning ownership and temporal framing. This morpho-syntactic boundary underscores that across divergent language families, the foundational functional machinery of grammar fiercely resists metaphorical interpolation, confining cognitive mapping strictly to open lexical spaces.

Beyond category splits, the structural-semantic paradigm identifies internal aspectual templates within verbal systems as major pathways for metaphor constraints. In English, aspectual boundaries are frequently mapped through phrasal verb combinations or auxiliary aspect shifts, allowing a telic or durative verb structure to directly shape how a state is conceptualized, as observed when an emotional burst is framed via a physical container limit like 'his anger boiled over'. In Uzbek, this structural governance is mediated through a highly sophisticated system of compound and descriptive verbs, where a principal action verb is paired with structural auxiliary modifiers such as 'tushmoq' (to fall), 'chiqmoq' (to exit), or 'yubormoq' (to send). In metaphorical constructs like 'jahli chiqdi' (his anger went out) or 'boshiga tog' qulab tushdi' (a mountain collapsed onto his head, denoting immense grief), the internal structural properties of directionality and aspectual completion inherent to 'chiqmoq' and 'tushmoq' are rigidly transferred to the psychological target domain. The target concept is therefore forced to adapt to the pre-existing temporal and spatial geometry of the Uzbek verbal lexicon, proving that cross-domain cognitive mappings do not operate in a vacuum but are filtered through native aspectual syntax.

The exact structural mechanics of linking a source domain to a target domain reveal another profound point of contrast between the two typologies. English relies primarily on isolating phrasal frameworks, copular connectors, and separate prepositions like 'of' or 'like' to explicitly delineate the boundary between literal and figurative domains. Uzbek, by contrast, relies on a combination of highly specialized cases (such as the dative or ablative) and bound postpositions like 'kabi', 'singari', or the clitic suffix '-dek'. In an English expression like 'a sea-like heart', the preposition establishes an overt semantic



distance between the target and source, whereas the Uzbek equivalent 'dengizdek yurak' blends the comparative structural constraint directly onto the lexical source token itself. This dense structural integration alters the immediacy of cognitive processing, demonstrating that while both languages successfully navigate identical abstract conceptual metaphors, their architectural execution remains strictly subservient to their respective analytical or agglutinative syntax.

By validating Glanzberg's structural-lexical framework through a comparative analysis with Uzbek, linguistic science receives a robust counterweight to the generalized models found in mainstream Conceptual Metaphor Theory. While traditional cognitive models pioneered by Lakoff and Johnson provide an exceptional framework for macro-level cross-domain thought mappings, they frequently minimize surface grammar as a secondary symptom of cognition. Testing these models against an agglutinative system proves that microscopic syntactic constraints, case dynamics, and morphological affixes actively dictate, license, or systematically block the realization of figurative thought. Ultimately, an integrated cross-linguistic approach demonstrates that whether a language distributes its functional operations across separate phrases as in English, or condenses them into intricate suffix matrices as in Uzbek, the underlying structural-semantic parameters of human grammar maintain absolute sovereignty over the limits of metaphorical expression.

REFERENCES

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