



**ECOLOGICAL METAPHORS IN UZBEK LITERARY LANGUAGE:
CONCEPTUAL AND COGNITIVE ANALYSIS**

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Abstract: This article examines ecological metaphors in the Uzbek literary language from conceptual and cognitive perspectives. Ecological metaphors express complex meanings through natural imagery, reflecting human psychological states, social processes, and national culture. The study explores ecological metaphors from the perspectives of linguopoetics, cognitive linguistics, and ecolinguistics, detailing their functions and conceptual significance in literary texts.

Keywords: ecological metaphor, cognitive linguistics, concept of nature, national culture, linguopoetics.

Introduction: Formal Uzbek linguistics addressed the pressing issues of its time, laying the foundation for new directions in language studies. These approaches are based on examining the connection between language and thought and aim to analyze linguistic and speech phenomena using functional-structural methods. Research focused on the interrelation of language and speech, the internal capabilities of language, and their expression in speech, analyzing principles such as unity and differentiation, causes and effects within linguistic units.

One of the modern fields is cognitive linguistics. This discipline emerged from studies in artificial intelligence and other cognitive sciences, dealing with structural analysis of concepts, studying the physiological basis of language and cognition, and investigating metaphorical and metonymic relationships in language. Cognitive linguistics is closely linked to linguistics, epistemology, and philosophy, and it undertakes research based on the natural characteristics of the Uzbek language.

The central unit in cognitive linguistics is the concept, which is the primary focus of research in the Uzbek language. Cognitive linguistics studies human cognition through language, as the relationship between language and thought constitutes the core mechanism of knowledge. This field aims at theoretical research on the linguistic mechanisms of language.

In Uzbek literary language, natural imagery occupies a central role, reflecting human psychological states, social processes, and spiritual values. Ecological metaphors transfer natural phenomena to other semantic domains, conveying complex meanings. From a cognitive perspective, a metaphor is interpreted as a conceptual mechanism of human thought. Linguopoetics examines the aesthetic and semantic functions of metaphorical imagery in literary texts. Ecolinguistics studies the role of natural imagery in shaping ecological consciousness.

Ecological Metaphors: An ecological metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon that creates a new semantic unit by linking natural phenomena with humans, society, or spiritual concepts.

From a cognitive standpoint, natural phenomena serve as the source domain, while humans, society, and psychological states function as the target domain. Through this conceptual bridge, complex meanings are conveyed, expanding the reader's perception.

Ecological metaphors enhance literary texts with beauty, rhythm, and imagery. They evoke aesthetic and ideological impressions, adding emotional depth to the narrative.



Metaphorical natural imagery fosters ecological awareness, enabling readers to understand the interconnection between humans and nature and realize ecological responsibility. Thus, ecological metaphors contribute conceptual depth and a cognitive layer to the text.

Ecological Metaphors in Uzbek Literary Texts

Ecological metaphors manifest in several directions:

Nature Imagery and Human Psychology:

Natural phenomena represent internal states of human beings. Trees, wind, springs, and the sun symbolize psychological states: yellowing leaves denote melancholy, rising wind indicates anxiety, and shining sun signifies hope and renewal.

These metaphors create cognitive and aesthetic effects and help the reader grasp the protagonist's inner world. The connection between nature and human psychology is rooted in national culture and folklore heritage.

Nature and Society:

Changes in nature reflect social processes. A withered tree symbolizes societal crisis and spiritual emptiness, while the awakening spring signifies renewal and social revival. Ecological metaphors conceptualize social changes and issues, enhancing readers' social thinking and awareness.

National Culture and Ecological Code:

In Uzbek culture, natural values form the semantic basis of ecological metaphors. Springs symbolize purity, trees represent longevity, deserts denote freedom, and gardens signify prosperity. Ecological metaphors strengthen national identity, integrate folk experience into literary texts, and cultivate ecological and spiritual awareness in the reader.

Shaping Ecological Awareness: Modern Uzbek literature uses metaphorical imagery to depict ecological problems. For example, "a blocked river" or "a suffocating tree" evokes awareness of ecological instability and the need for care for nature.

Thus, ecological metaphors serve both artistic and social functions, adding ideological depth and a cognitive dimension to the text.

Cognitive Analysis

Ecological metaphors function conceptually as follows:

Source-Target Domains: Natural phenomena are the source, while humans and society are the target. This creates a semantic bridge for conveying complex meanings.

Mental Models: Wave—change and movement; tree roots—stability and permanence; wind—anxiety and inner emotions.

Aesthetic and Pragmatic Functions: Adding beauty, rhythm, and imagery to the text, while shaping ecological and social awareness.

Ecological metaphors create complex conceptual models in human cognition, enriching literary texts both aesthetically and cognitively.

Artistic Functions of Ecological Metaphors

Emotional Function: evokes inner feelings, adding emotional depth to the text.

Ideological Function: expresses social and spiritual ideas through natural imagery.

Conceptual Function: reflects the conceptual relationship between nature, humans, and society.

Pragmatic Function: fosters ecological responsibility and careful attitude toward nature in readers.

Conclusion: Ecological metaphors in Uzbek literary language constitute a conceptual system that reflects the connection between nature, humans, and society. They depict



psychological and social states, strengthen national culture and identity, and develop ecological awareness. A cognitive-linguopoetic approach allows ecological metaphors to be understood not only as artistic embellishments but also as conceptual apparatuses of human thought.

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