



TEXT-SIMILE AND TEXT-METAPHOR AS UNITS OF TEXT ORGANISATION IN UZBEK: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

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Abstract. *The article outlines the theoretical and methodological foundations for studying text-similes and text-metaphors in the Uzbek language. Traditional Uzbek linguistics has described simile and metaphor mainly at the level of the word, the phrase and the sentence, whereas in literary texts both devices often extend over several sentences and become a principle of text construction. Drawing on the theory of the text as a complex syntactic whole, on classical and cognitive theories of metaphor and on Uzbek research into similes, the article defines the text-simile and the text-metaphor, identifies the features they share and the features that distinguish them, and proposes criteria for recognising them in Uzbek poetic texts. Examples from the poetry of Cho'lon and Abdulla Oripov show that the text-simile keeps its formal comparative marker and develops the ground of comparison through predicates, while the text-metaphor removes the marker and builds a coherent conceptual scenario across the text.*

Keywords: *text-simile, text-metaphor, complex syntactic whole, cohesion, extended metaphor, conceptual metaphor, Uzbek language, poetic text.*

INTRODUCTION

Simile and metaphor are among the oldest objects of linguistic and rhetorical reflection. In Uzbek linguistics they have traditionally been treated as lexical-stylistic devices: the simile as a comparison marked by suffixes such as -dek, -day, -simon or by the words kabi, singari, xuddi, go'yo, and the metaphor as a transfer of name based on similarity (Shomaqsudov et al., 1983). Such an approach is justified when the device is confined to a word or a sentence. In literary texts, however, a comparison or a metaphorical image is frequently sustained over a stanza, a paragraph or even a whole poem. In these cases the device does more than decorate a sentence: it organises the text, links its parts and determines its semantic development.

For such sustained devices we use the terms text-simile (matn-o'xshatish) and text-metaphor (matn-metafora). The aim of this article is to establish the theoretical and methodological basis for their study in Uzbek. The tasks are: to show how the text is



understood as a complex syntactic whole and as a linguistic system; to review the main stages of the study of simile and metaphor; to define the text-simile and the text-metaphor and to describe the relations between them.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The first theoretical foundation of the study is the linguistics of text. M. A. K. Halliday and R. Hasan argue that “a text is best regarded as a SEMANTIC unit: a unit not of form but of meaning” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:2). They define cohesion as a relation in which “the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:4). I. R. Galperin describes the text as a product of the speech-creative process that possesses completeness and consists of a title and a number of supra-phrasal units bound by lexical, grammatical, logical and stylistic links (Galperin, 1981:18). In Uzbek grammar the supra-phrasal unit is described as a complex syntactic whole, a group of sentences united by a common microtheme and by formal means of connection (Mahmudov & Nurmonov, 1995). This view allows us to treat a sustained simile or metaphor as one of the means that create such unity.

The second foundation is the theory of metaphor. I. A. Richards rejected the view of metaphor as mere ornament and claimed that “when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction” (Richards, 1936:93); he introduced the terms tenor and vehicle for the two members of a metaphor (Richards, 1936:96). M. Black developed this into the interaction view, distinguishing the metaphorical focus from the literal frame that surrounds it (Black, 1962:28). The cognitive turn was made by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, for whom “the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980:5) and for whom metaphor is pervasive “not just in language but in thought and action” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980:3). Z. Kövecses formulates a conceptual metaphor as the formula CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (A) IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (B), in which a target domain is understood through a source domain (Kövecses, 2010:4). P. Werth showed that a metaphor can underlie a whole text and called such text-level metaphors megametaphors (Werth, 1994:79).

The third foundation is Uzbek research into figurative comparison. M. Mukarramov’s monograph on the Uzbek simile described its structure and formal means (Mukarramov, 1976). N. Mahmudov and D. Xudoyberganova compiled an explanatory dictionary of



Uzbek similes that records stable comparisons together with the images on which they rest (Mahmudov & Xudoyberganova, 2013). M. Yo‘ldoshev’s work on the linguopoetics of the literary text and D. Xudoyberganova’s anthropocentric study of the text treat figurative units as elements of text structure and of the author’s worldview (Yo‘ldoshev, 2008; Xudoyberganova, 2013).

The study uses descriptive, structural-semantic, contextual and cognitive methods. The material consists of poems by Cho‘lpon and Abdulla Oripov in which a simile or a metaphor is sustained across at least two lines and functions as a link between sentences. English renderings of the examples are literal and serve the analysis only.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The text as the domain of figurative units. If the text is a semantic unit and a complex syntactic whole, then figurative units should be studied not only in their own boundaries but in their relation to the whole. A single comparison inside a sentence is a fact of the sentence; a comparison whose components are distributed over several sentences becomes a fact of the text. We therefore define the text-simile as a comparison whose components – the compared object, the image of comparison, the ground and the formal marker – are realised across two or more syntactically independent units and which, through this distribution, ensures the semantic and structural connectedness of a text fragment. Correspondingly, the text-metaphor is a metaphorical transfer whose source image is developed through a chain of interrelated metaphorical expressions across a text fragment or a whole text, so that the text is organised around a single conceptual correspondence.

The text-simile. A characteristic example is found in Cho‘lpon’s poem “Zarafshon”:

Ko‘z oldimda oqib yotkan Zarafshon, / Yosh boladek erkalaydir, o‘ynaydir. (Before my eyes the flowing Zarafshon / Plays and frolics like a little child.)

Here the compared object (the river Zarafshon), the image (a little child), the formal marker (the suffix -dek) and the ground (the predicates erkalaydir, o‘ynaydir – frolics, plays) are all explicit. What makes the comparison a textual rather than a sentential unit is that the ground is expressed through predicates: the river is not merely said to be like a child, it is shown performing the actions of a child, and this predicative development can be continued in further lines. The same model with inverted order is used in Cho‘lpon’s “Tortishuv tongi”: “Yengan qo‘shin boshlig‘idek gerdayib / Botgan quyosh bulutlarning



ostidan” (Proudly, like the commander of a victorious army, / The sun set from beneath the clouds). The image and the marker (boshlig‘idek) precede the compared object (quyosh), so the reader first meets the image and only then learns what it refers to; the comparison thus creates a tension that is resolved at the level of the text, not the word.

Abdulla Oripov’s poem “Odam va tulpor” (Man and the Steed) begins with a simile that is stated as the thesis of the whole poem: “Ko‘ngli bu dunyodan sovigan odam / Kasalga chalingan tulporga o‘xshar” (A man whose heart has grown cold to this world / Resembles a steed that has fallen ill). The marker here is the verb o‘xshamoq (to resemble), and the title itself already names both members of the comparison. The simile becomes the frame in Black’s sense (Black, 1962:28) for the text that follows: the remaining lines are read as an elaboration of the ground on which the man and the steed are compared.

The text-metaphor. In a text-metaphor the formal marker disappears and the source image is projected directly onto the target. Oripov’s poem “Kechuv” (The Crossing) provides a clear case: “Qaysi kechuvdan o‘tdik? / Hech kimning yodida yo‘q. / Bilganim shu, shoirim, / Biz bitta qayiqdamiz” (Which crossing did we pass? / No one remembers. / All I know, my poet, / Is that we are in one boat). The target domain – the shared history and fate of a people – is never named; it is accessible only through the source domain of a river crossing: kechuv (ford, crossing), o‘tmoq (to pass across), qayiq (boat). In Kövecses’s terms the text realises the conceptual metaphor A COMMON FATE IS A JOURNEY ACROSS WATER (Kövecses, 2010:4), and each sentence adds a new element of the source scenario. Similarly, in Oripov’s “Do‘stlar va raqiblar” (Friends and Rivals) the lines “Ravon yo‘l yo‘q ekan, har yon so‘qmoqdir, / Yo‘lbars ham yurmagan chigal bu o‘rmon” (There is no smooth road, on all sides are narrow paths, / This is a tangled forest where even the tiger has not walked) build the metaphor LIFE IS A DIFFICULT JOURNEY through the related images of yo‘l (road), so‘qmoq (path) and o‘rmon (forest). Each image is bound to the next by lexical cohesion in the sense of Halliday and Hasan (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:4).

Common features and differences. The analysis shows that the text-simile and the text-metaphor share three features. Both are based on the mapping of one conceptual domain onto another; both require more than one syntactic unit for their realisation; and both act as cohesive devices that bind the text into a semantic whole. They differ,



however, in four respects. First, the text-simile keeps an explicit formal marker (-dek, -day, kabi, o'xshamoq), whereas the text-metaphor drops it. Second, in the text-simile both members are named and remain distinct, while in the text-metaphor the target is often implicit and must be reconstructed by the reader. Third, the text-simile typically develops through predicates of the image (the river frolics, plays), while the text-metaphor develops through a chain of nouns and verbs belonging to one source domain (kechuv – o'tmoq – qayiq). Fourth, the text-simile tends to state the comparison at the beginning of a fragment and then elaborate it, whereas the text-metaphor often unfolds gradually and may reveal its target only at the end of the text or not at all.

These differences show that the text-simile and the text-metaphor are not merely the sentence-level simile and metaphor “stretched” over several lines. They acquire properties that do not exist at sentence level: a distributed structure, a cohesive function and the ability to determine the compositional development of the text. This is precisely why they must be studied as units of text organisation.

CONCLUSION

The theory of the text as a complex syntactic whole, together with the interactive and cognitive theories of metaphor, provides a sufficient basis for treating the text-simile and the text-metaphor as specific units of Uzbek text organisation. The text-simile is a comparison whose components are distributed over several syntactic units and whose ground is developed predicatively; the text-metaphor is a sustained metaphorical transfer in which a single source domain organises a sequence of images across the text. Both devices perform a cohesive function and shape the semantic development of the text, but they differ in the presence of a formal marker, in the explicitness of the target and in the way they unfold. The proposed criteria can be applied in the structural-semantic and cognitive-pragmatic study of Uzbek literary and journalistic texts.

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