

CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR: THE SYNTACTIC ASPECT (WITH REFERENCE TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE DATA)

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Abstract: *This study examines how conceptual metaphors appear in English sentence structures. Analyzing sentence patterns and embedded metaphors reveals how experiences are conceptualized and linguistically represented, and how they fit into the broader English conceptual system. Using examples of simple sentences from various genres, the research applies traditional linguistic methods alongside cognitive modeling and propositional/conceptual analysis. Findings show that metaphor serves both as a cognitive tool for representing reality and as a factor shaping sentence syntax. Key components include source and target domains, mapping direction, underlying motivations, and projection constraints.*

Kalit so'zlar: *metafora, metaforik kontseptualizatsiya, maqsad sohasi*

Annotatsiya: *Ushbu tezis ingliz tilidagi kontseptual metaforalarning jumlar orqali namoyon bo'lishini o'rganadi. Haqiqiy vaziyatlar haqidagi bayonotlarni asoslaydigan gaplar namunalarini va ular ichiga kiritilgan metaforalarni tizimli tekshirish, birinchidan, tajribani kontseptuallashtirish va lingvistik jihatdan ifodalash mexanizmlarini, ikkinchidan, ingliz kontseptual tuzilmalarining kengroq tizimini tushunish uchun muhimdir. Tahlil ingliz tilidagi matnlardan bir nechta janrlardagi oddiy jumladan olingan misollarga asoslanadi. An'anaviy lingvistik tadqiqot usullaridan tashqari, tadqiqotda kognitiv (kontseptual) modellashtirish, shuningdek, taklif va kontseptual tahlil qo'llaniladi. Metafora voqelikning fizik va mavhum tomonlarini kontseptuallashtirish uchun kognitiv vosita va gaplarning sintaktik tuzilishini belgilovchi omil sifatida ishlaydi. Tezis metaforik kontseptualizatsiyaning asosiy komponentlarini, jumladan manba va maqsad sohaslarini, metaforik xaritalash yo'nalishini, bunday xaritalashning asosiy motivlarini va metaforik proektsiyani boshqaruvchi cheklovlarni aniqlaydi.*

Keywords: *metaphor, metaphorical conceptualization, target domain*

The concept of conceptual metaphor, popularized by Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* [1], is central to modern linguistics. Also called conceptual transfer, it is crucial for studying polysemy, meaning change, and lexical use in unusual syntactic contexts. While individual constructions (e.g., ditransitive, locative, causative) have been studied, the metaphorical role of basic syntactic models of simple sentences has received less attention.

This article argues that any basic syntactic model can be metaphorical. In conceptual metaphor, a proposition expressed by a sentence structure is projected onto fragments of experience—abstract or physical—thus structuring and reinterpreting them. A situation of one type is presented as another: e.g., *The house fell into decay* conceptualizes state change as spatial movement (*Someone/something moves somewhere*).

Metaphorical transfer uses syntactic models meant for one type of reality to describe another. For instance, a locative model (subject + predicate + spatial complement) originally describes physical movement but can depict emotional states (*She was in*

despair). Differences in mapping depend on salience [11]—which elements matter most to the speaker—and on communicative intent.

Mappings preserve the target domain's figurative-schematic structure [8]; incompatible elements are excluded. For example, self-induced negative states omit intentionality (We fell in love; She slipped into depression), while changes caused by others use causative motion syntax (You put him through a lot of pain).

Metaphor operates between whole conceptual structures, producing systematic entailments [1]. Spatial concepts like containment and movement yield patterns for expressing conditions (They are in distress; She is out of her mind; He sank into apathy). Such patterns conceptualize states as locations or movements relative to a container.

Although specific situations are countless, core source situations can be identified via basic syntactic models abstracted from lexical content. Based on English verb valencies and structural classifications [12–17], seven basic sentence models account for most constructions [18].

Both concrete and abstract events can be metaphorically framed. Physical actions, like breaking objects, may be conceptualized as upward or downward motion (They pulled down the old building). Transfer actions map onto giving/taking syntax (I gave this book to my roommate). Physical relations—impact, possession, creation, perception—can themselves become sources for abstract mappings.

Ultimately, a statement's structure reflects metaphorical transfer: real-world situations appear as different ontological types. Abstract situations inherently involve metaphoricity and often combine several metaphor types and generalization levels. The choice of mapping depends on similarities between source and target and compatibility of their structures.

Metaphor thus reduces the infinite variety of experiences to a few basic situation types, expressible through a limited set of syntactic models. The specific representation reflects both the speaker's worldview and communicative aims.

Thus, the structural basis of the statement reflects the results of conceptual metaphorical transfer - the projection of a propositional model onto a certain fragment of experience. The situation of reality is represented in the statement as a situation of another ontological type. Not only abstract situations are metaphorically interpreted, but also relations between specific objects of physical reality, and the conceptualization of abstract relations is characterized by inherent metaphoricity. Metaphorical conceptualization of an abstract situation is supported by ontological metaphors, and the statement about an abstract situation simultaneously reflects conceptual metaphors of several types and several levels of generalization. In the metaphorical interpretation of one fragment of reality, several types of regular projections between the source area and the target area are possible. The possibility of one or another metaphorical projection is determined by the similarity of the source situation and the target situation and the compatibility of the generic structures of the related situations.

It is important to emphasize that the mechanism of metaphor allows us to reduce the infinite variety of situations to several basic types and designate them with a certain system of basic syntactic models of a sentence. At the same time, specific methods of

conceptualization and representation of a fragment of the world in the structure of an utterance are very diverse; they reflect the peculiarities of perception of the world and the communicative intentions of the speaker.

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