

THE PROBLEM OF THE THEORETICAL DELIMITATION OF METAPHOR AND METONYMY IN TOPONYMS (A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS: CRITERIA FOR DISTINGUISHING THE TWO PHENOMENA)

Maxmudova Shakhlokhon Sayfiddin qizi
egamberdiyevashahloxon551@gmail.com
Kokand State University

Abstract: This article addresses, from a cognitive-linguistic perspective, the problem of theoretically delimiting metaphor and metonymy within toponymic units. Traditionally, these two types of semantic transfer are distinguished on the basis of similarity (metaphor) and contiguity (metonymy); however, when applied to toponymic material - geographical names - the boundary between the two phenomena often proves unclear, since the naming of one and the same object may rest on associative resemblance as well as on a real spatial or possessive relation. To resolve this problem, the article proposes an integrative six-criterion model of analysis: the conceptual-domain criterion, the similarity/contiguity criterion, the syntagmatic-paradigmatic criterion, the referential-transparency criterion, the cognitive-economy criterion, and the metaphor-metonymy overlap (metaphonymy) criterion. These criteria are tested on material drawn from the Uzbek toponymic system - zoonymic, phytonymic and somatic (body-part-based) place names.

Keywords: toponym, metaphor, metonymy, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, semantic transfer, conceptual domain, cognitive economy, nomination, toponymic motivation

Introduction

Geographical names - toponyms - are not merely a means of identifying space but a linguo-cultural monument embodying a people's history, worldview and conceptual system. A large proportion of toponyms are formed not through direct nomination (naming an object according to its size, color, location, etc.) but through figurative transfer - metaphor or metonymy. In practical research, however, including the compilation of toponymic dictionaries, these two phenomena are often merged under the general notion of a "figurative name" without being distinguished from one another.

World linguistics contains a considerable body of research devoted to the commonality and distinction between metaphor and metonymy¹⁶¹⁷¹⁸, yet certain

¹⁶Лакофф Дж., Джонсон М. Метафоры, которыми мы живем. — М.: Едиториал УРСС, 2004.

¹⁷Kövecses Z. Metaphor: A Practical Introduction. — 2nd ed. — Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. — P. 171–187.

¹⁸Ungerer F., Schmid H.-J. An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics. — London: Longman, 1996. — P. 114–149.

aspects of differentiating the two phenomena still remain outside the researchers' field of view - in particular, the question of how they operate in toponymic nomination requires separate, in-depth study. The relevance of this article lies precisely here: in the need to distinguish metaphor and metonymy in the analysis of toponymic units on a consistent, operational set of criteria.

The purpose of the study is to develop a scientifically grounded system of criteria for theoretically delimiting metaphor and metonymy in toponyms and to test it on material from the Uzbek toponymic system. To achieve this purpose the following tasks were set: 1) to comparatively analyze the theoretical interpretations of metaphor and metonymy within cognitive linguistics; 2) to systematize the existing criteria for distinguishing the two phenomena; 3) to demonstrate the practical application of these criteria using Uzbek toponyms as material; 4) to separately analyze borderline cases in which the two phenomena intersect (metaphtonymy).

Research methodology and literature review

The study employed descriptive-analytical, comparative-typological and componential analysis methods. The theoretical basis was formed by the cognitive theory of metaphor¹⁹, the notions of conceptual domain and idealized cognitive model (ICM)^{20,21}, as well as the traditional distinction between metaphor and metonymy based on similarity versus contiguity²². The interpretation of metonymy as a "reference-point" mechanism operating within a single conceptual domain²³ likewise played an important role in shaping the system of criteria.

In Russian linguistics, E. V. Paducheva, studying dynamic models of semantic transfer, showed that metonymic shift possesses a regular and predictable character²⁴, a feature interpreted as an important structural trait distinguishing metonymy from metaphor. In Uzbek toponymic studies, S. Qorayev classified toponyms - including natural-geographic oikonyms - into hydro-oikonyms, oro-oikonyms, phyto-oikonyms and zoo-toponymic groups²⁵; this classification serves as a reference point for clarifying which denotative domain (water, relief, vegetation, fauna) a given toponymic nomination is tied to. H. Hasanov, investigating the historical formation of Central Asian place names, shows that many names arose precisely in connection with a real geographical or historical fact (a past individual, tribe, or event) - that is, via a

¹⁹Лакофф Дж., Джонсон М. Метафоры, которыми мы живем. — М.: Едиториал УРСС, 2004.

²⁰Kövecses Z. Metaphor: A Practical Introduction. — 2nd ed. — Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. — P. 171–187.

²¹Ungerer F., Schmid H.-J. An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics. — London: Longman, 1996. — P. 114–149.

²²Jakobson R. Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances // Fundamentals of Language. — The Hague: Mouton, 1956. — P. 55–82.

²³Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez F. J. The role of mappings and domains in understanding metonymy // Metaphor and Metonymy at the Crossroads. — Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2003. — P. 109–132.

²⁴Падучева Е. В. Динамические модели в семантике лексики. — М.: Языки славянской культуры, 2004. — С. 165–189.

²⁵Qorayev S. Toponimika: O'quv qo'llanma. — Toshkent, 2006. — B. 41–58.

metonymic route²⁶, while T. Nafasov's explanatory dictionary provides annotated examples of both types of naming²⁷.

Analysis and results: criteria of differentiation

1) The conceptual-domain criterion. Metaphor arises through a mapping between two distinct conceptual domains - a source domain and a target domain²⁸. For example, in the mountain name "Qorabosh" ("Black Head"), the domain of the HUMAN BODY (head) is mapped onto the domain of RELIEF - a classic cross-domain metaphor. Metonymy, by contrast, occurs within a single conceptual domain (ICM)²⁹: names such as "Tolzor" ("Willow Grove") or "Qayrag'ochli" ("Elm Place") are tied to a real species of tree growing in that locality, so the domain does not change - the plant name is transferred directly to the place name.

2) The similarity/contiguity criterion. In traditional linguistics, metaphor is based on paradigmatic similarity, while metonymy is based on syntagmatic, real contiguity (spatial, causal, or part-whole relations)³⁰. This distinction is clearly visible in zoonym-based toponyms: if a mountain or hill is likened to an animal (for example, a camel - "Tuyatortar") because of its shape, this is metaphor; if a locality's name arose from the type of livestock commonly herded or kept there (for example, occupation-based names such as "Qo'ychi" - "shepherd", or "Yilqichi" - "horse-herder"), this is metonymy, because a real, historical connection exists.

3) The syntagmatic-paradigmatic criterion. Metaphor is a substitution operating on the paradigmatic axis, conceptualizing the named object entirely through a different conceptual system; metonymy is a syntagmatic, referential shift in which a part of an object, or an element associated with it, points to the whole object within the same frame^{31,32}. In somatic toponyms (names based on body parts), metaphorical substitution is frequently observed: relief forms such as "Burun" ("Nose"), "Yelka" ("Shoulder"), or "Bosh" ("Head") are likened to the human physical structure, where there is no real physical connection at all - only visual-associative resemblance serves as the basis.

4) The referential-transparency criterion. As H. Hasanov demonstrates, many Central Asian toponyms arose in connection with a specific historical individual, tribe, or event³³ - the motivation of such names, that is, their real referent, can be reconstructed through historical sources (etymological transparency), which is a

²⁶Hasanov H. O'rta Osiyo joy nomlari tarixidan. — Toshkent: Fan, 1965. — B. 23–37.

²⁷Nafasov T. O'zbekiston toponimlarining izohli lug'ati. — Toshkent: O'qituvchi, 1988.

²⁸Лакофф Дж., Джонсон М. Метафоры, которыми мы живем. — М.: Едиториал УРСС, 2004.

²⁹Ungerer F., Schmid H.-J. An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics. — London: Longman, 1996. — P. 114–149.

³⁰Jakobson R. Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances // Fundamentals of Language. — The Hague: Mouton, 1956. — P. 55–82.

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³²Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez F. J. The role of mappings and domains in understanding metonymy // Metaphor and Metonymy at the Crossroads. — Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2003. — P. 109–132.

³³Hasanov H. O'rta Osiyo joy nomlari tarixidan. — Toshkent: Fan, 1965. — B. 23–37.

distinctive feature of metonymic naming. In metaphorical names, by contrast, it is not the original referent but an associative resemblance that gave rise to the name, so such names frequently acquire a symbolic-figurative character and can only be explained through purely linguistic or cognitive analysis.

5) The cognitive-economy criterion. Metonymy is connected with the principle of cognitive economy, giving rise at the linguistic level to a distinctive semantic ellipsis, whereas metaphor is not driven by such economy but serves to create a new conceptual connection^{34,35}. In other words, a metonymic toponym economically exploits an already existing, cognitively "close" connection (for example, simply calling a hill next to a bridge "Ko'priktepa" - "Bridge Hill"), whereas a metaphorical toponym activates a new, more distant conceptual link and therefore tends to carry a more artistic, image-laden character.

6) The overlap (metaphonymy) criterion. In certain toponyms, metaphor and metonymy become interwoven: the notion of "metaphonymy" proposed by L. Goossens³⁶ makes it possible to describe precisely such intermediate phenomena. For instance, an area may first be named metonymically after a real object located there (for example, a lake), after which this name may later be extended metaphorically to a broader area or even to a differently located but similarly shaped landform. In such cases the original metonymic basis later becomes the trigger for a metaphorical extension, which means that the delimitation of the two phenomena must be treated not as static but as dynamic and staged.

Discussion

The six criteria outlined above yield the highest degree of accuracy when applied not in isolation but as a complementary, integrated system. In practice - particularly in toponymic dictionaries and dissertation research - it is recommended that, instead of the general notion of a "figurative name", the terms "metaphorical toponym" and "metonymic toponym", defined precisely on the basis of these criteria, be applied consistently. At the same time, as F. Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez points out, in certain cases metonymy serves as the conceptual grounding for metaphor³⁷, which makes the occurrence of mixed, staged phenomena in the toponymic system - rather than "pure" metaphor or "pure" metonymy - theoretically expected. Consequently, the problem of delimitation is not eliminated entirely, but the proposed criteria make it possible to determine, with a high degree of justification, the mechanism underlying the formation of each concrete toponym.

³⁴Ungerer F., Schmid H.-J. An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics. — London: Longman, 1996. — P. 114–149.

³⁵Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez F. J. The role of mappings and domains in understanding metonymy // Metaphor and Metonymy at the Crossroads. — Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2003. — P. 109–132.

³⁶Goossens L. Metaphonymy: The interaction of metaphor and metonymy // Cognitive Linguistics. — 1990. — Vol. 1, No. 3. — P. 323–340.

³⁷Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez F. J. The role of mappings and domains in understanding metonymy // Metaphor and Metonymy at the Crossroads. — Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2003. — P. 109–132.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the problem of distinguishing metaphor and metonymy in toponyms can be resolved fairly consistently by applying, in interconnected fashion, the criteria of conceptual domain, similarity/contiguity, syntagmatic-paradigmatic character, referential transparency, cognitive economy, and overlap (metaphtonymy). The proposed integrative model proved effective in analyzing the Uzbek toponymic system, including geographical names based on zoonyms, phytonyms, and somatic elements. A promising direction for future research remains the broader, corpus-based statistical-typological study of metaphtonymic - that is, borderline - toponyms in which the two phenomena intersect.

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