

METAPHOR AS A MEANS OF SPEECH DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: This article explores metaphor not merely as an ornament of speech, but as a universal unity of language and thought that stimulates the development of individual speech. The linguistic potential of metaphor in enriching children's speech, as well as its role and significance in innovative pedagogy, are thoroughly analyzed. Due to the multifunctionality of human cognition, from the perspective of linguistic methodology, metaphor is presented as a key component of speech expressiveness and as an effective tool for speech development.

Keywords: metaphor, linguistic potential, speech, cognitive cognition, speech development, metaphorization.

In the 20th century, metaphor became the subject of research not only in philosophy, sociology, psychology, linguistics, and semiotics, but also in linguodidactics, where it is considered not simply as a stylistic device, but as a universal cognitive and linguistic mechanism that activates the development of individual speech.

Returning to Aristotle's interpretation of metaphors as a "means of perceiving and understanding the world" allows us to view them as an instrument of "linguistic consciousness." Studying metaphor at school, comprehending and creating the so-called "living word" with both general cultural and personal meaning, intensifies and deepens the process of developing students' speech.

Because of the multifunctionality of human cognition, from a linguistic and methodological standpoint, metaphor is regarded as a fundamental component of speech expressiveness and a tool for speech development. The study of metaphors enables us to understand the unique characteristics of the speaker's thinking and to assimilate fragments of thought captured by them. A metaphor, through a single word, expresses not only the world of objects, events, and emotions, but also the ways they are perceived and evaluated, fulfilling cognitive, nominative, expressive-evaluative, and heuristic functions.

The possibilities of metaphorical development of an individual's speech are limitless, since the process of metaphorization in speech represents the synthesis of cultural symbols encoded in words and signs of different spheres of life. Considering the cultural archetype as the "depth of metaphors," V.N. Toporov concludes that it constitutes "the most important class of modes of existence with mythological, symbolic, and archetypal characteristics."

N.F. Alefirenko, when discussing the revival of Aristotle's tradition of interpreting metaphors as a "means of perceiving and understanding the world" in modern science, emphasizes that oral metaphor functions as a "tool of linguistic consciousness." Considering metaphors in school from a linguo-cognitive perspective enhances and deepens the process of developing students' speech through the comprehension and creation of the "living" word, filled with both socio-cultural and personal meaning, enabling learners to create the world within themselves and position themselves within the world.

Through the development of linguistic metaphors (reflecting mental concepts of reality) and occasional metaphors (created in artistic literature), a system of axiological and aesthetic ideas is formed, thereby shaping the spiritual domain of the linguistic personality.

Speech development can be understood as the process of forming and evolving the individual's ability to express oneself verbally. V.G. Marantsman connects "changes in speech development" with the consolidation of new meanings, emotions, and attitudes in students' consciousness, linking them to personal growth through speech activity.

The primary goal of speech development is to shape an individual who "creatively employs their native language as a means of cultural integration, self-development, and self-expression." In this context, metaphor, as a meaningful linguo-cognitive and linguistic tool, evokes particular interest.

Mastery of metaphorical meanings by schoolchildren is an indicator of their level of speech development. According to M.V. Muley and Samoylova, "the gradual acquisition of increasingly complex categories of metaphor in the learning process cultivates an extraordinary personality in the learner." Thus, metaphor becomes a multifunctional tool for shaping a linguistic personality capable of self-awareness.

Metaphorization, as a philosophical process, manifests itself as an effective method of innovative teaching, ensuring the development of students' speech-creative potential. Consequently, metaphor, as a linguistic unit, plays a systemic role in the teaching of native language and literature.

Teaching students to use figurative and expressive means of language to enhance the expressiveness of their speech fosters their understanding of the logic and aesthetics of language. It also facilitates the integration of communicative and aesthetic functions, which in turn leads to the attainment of communicative competence—an important indicator of speech development.

Based on the principles of developmental psychology, it can be argued that metaphor is perceived most organically by students aged 10–11, since its semantic and structural features correspond to the spontaneous mythological character of preadolescent thinking and their natural curiosity about novelty. At the ages of 13–14, metaphor aligns with adolescents' romanticized worldview (a period of personal self-identification) and becomes an effective tool for their verbal self-expression.

The perception and creation of metaphors as a creative process is characterized by the activity of the individual's language and the cognitive orientation of thought. Understanding and producing metaphors involves memory—constructing new meanings based on prior experience of objects and phenomena—through a creative process. Working with metaphors, which requires associative thinking, activates and strengthens the connections between separate word-concepts within the ABC structure. As a result, the linguistic personality gradually acquires greater freedom in using words in speech. Speech enriched with figurative meanings becomes more expressive. Both error memory and logical-conceptual memory are equally important for understanding and creating metaphors. N.I. Zhinkin considered sensory and intellectual faculties as complementary mechanisms for receiving and processing information. This makes it particularly important to view metaphor as a product of parallel abstract-logical thinking and visual-sensory perception.

The formation of metaphors resembles word formation, with the difference that in metaphor, the elements are not morphemes but lexical units. Furthermore, metaphor enters into a special

semantic context while simultaneously establishing it; essentially, it represents a micro-context. Metaphor disrupts lexical compatibility, and in perceiving it, we analyze not only its structural anomaly but also the emotional-evaluative attitude it conveys toward a phenomenon or object. This reveals a specific logic of synthesis. Under developed abstract thinking, metaphorical combinations may be interpreted literally, i.e., “non-metaphorically.” For example, schoolchildren often interpret idiomatic expressions literally, such as “working without rolling up one’s sleeves” or “shifting from one foot to another” (used to mark time). The levels of semantic generalization and abstraction reflect the varying degrees of semantic comprehension of metaphors in language and literary texts.

Metaphor, as a synthetic phenomenon of thought, language, and speech—a “means of perceiving and understanding the world”—possesses truly limitless potential for the development of a growing linguistic personality. Owing to its multifunctionality, metaphor can be regarded as a central element of speech development in schools. By exploring metaphorical functions across different levels of language—lexicon, morphology, syntax, stylistics—and by mastering the diversity of metaphorical meanings, students gain insight into the unity of language and literature, the inexhaustible creative potential of expression, and the individual variations in imagery construction.

Teaching the use of metaphors as a means of creating expressiveness in speech requires students to understand the mechanisms of metaphor formation. The logic of comparison within metaphor has been widely acknowledged as associative by many researchers. It is argued that sufficient grounds always exist for comparing objects, even those that appear distant from one another.

A learner-centered methodology of speech development—understood as the purposeful acquisition of native language resources to enhance the impact of speech—requires strengthening the communicative dimension in interpreting linguistic devices that make expressive speech possible. Expressiveness, as an essential communicative quality of speech, is characterized by logic, clarity, imagery, and emotional intensity. It serves as a marker of communicative culture in a linguistic personality and reflects the readiness to effectively realize individual intent in accordance with the situation, purpose, genre, and style of communication. Due to its vivid imagery, achieved through the synthesis of denotative and connotative meanings, metaphor becomes a key tool for shaping the expressiveness of students’ speech, fulfilling both communicative and aesthetic functions.

Enhancing the social component of metaphor perception and creation in children promotes the development of their emotional-evaluative, moral, and aesthetic domains. This can be supported through training based on a linguo-cultural approach to speech development. The emergence of metaphors in children’s speech is closely tied to their mythological mindset, which attributes human qualities to inanimate objects: “the ball is sleeping” (about a ball lying in the corner), “the TV is tired” (about a turned-off device), or “the book is sick” (about a worn-out book with damaged pages). Children tend toward anthropomorphism, often using symbolic imagery in their speech. For instance, the expression “the trousers frowned” originates from the visual perception of wrinkles, transferred from the image of a frowning human forehead.

In conclusion, the use of metaphors in developing children’s oral speech contributes not only to the growth of their verbal abilities but also to the advancement of their cognitive domain.

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