

**“THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN SHAPING STYLISTIC DEVICES: A CASE
STUDY OF SIMILE USE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK POETRY”**

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Annotation: This paper investigates how simile usage and structure in Uzbek and English poetry are influenced by culture. Simile is a stylistic device that expresses ingrained cultural beliefs, customs, and worldviews in addition to language choices. The study aims to demonstrate how language and culture interact in literary expression by highlighting both universal tendencies and culturally particular elements in simile usage through comparative analysis.

Key words: stylistic devices, poetry, simile, comparative analysis, cultural context.

Stylistic devices serve as tools for enriching literary texts, poetry and other types of texts providing vivid imagery and emotional depth. Among the many stylistic devices used in literature, some reflect distinct cultural connotations, reflecting a society's traditions, beliefs, and way of thinking. These are known as culturally marked stylistic devices—linguistic expressions that are deeply rooted in a specific cultural context and may not have exact equivalents in other languages. They shape a text's meaning by evoking cultural imagery, historical references, and shared knowledge within a linguistic community. One of the most popular figures of speech among them is the simile, the which is employed to establish analogy and creative meaning. Similes in English and Uzbek poetry, examining how cultural contexts influence both the form

and content of this stylistic device. However, similes are not used in a cultural vacuum; they are shaped by the experiences, symbols, and values of the people who create them.

The relationship between language, culture, and stylistic expression has been widely explored by scholars. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their influential work *Metaphors We Live By*, contend that figurative language—including simile—is deeply rooted in conceptual metaphors that emerge from cultural experience. They emphasize that metaphors and analogies shaped by culture serve as the foundation for our comprehension of abstract ideas [3]. Leech and Short (2007) claim that stylistic analysis sheds light on the ways in which language expresses cultural and artistic values [4]. According to Jakobson (1960), language decisions influence the reader's perception, and poetic function is an important element of stylistic expression. The reader's interpretive framework is influenced by cultural implications included into stylistic elements in both English and Uzbek literature [2]. Scholars such as Nida (1964) and Newmark (1988) have discussed the boundaries of translating culture-specific expressions, focusing on the importance of preserving meaning rather than literal translation. The more recent approach to stylistic devices pay attention to their role in conveying the cultural meaning [5]. Overall, the literature supports the notion that similes are a powerful stylistic tool that serve as a bridge between linguistic form and cultural meaning.

Similes are a common stylistic device used to create vivid imagery by comparing one thing to another using words like “as”, “like”, or “as if.” However, not all similes are universally understood in the same way across cultures. In many cases, similes are culturally marked, meaning that the objects or concepts used in the comparison are deeply rooted in the traditions, values, or everyday experiences of a particular culture. For example, a simile that compares someone’s beauty to a *Navruz flower* may carry strong cultural connotations in Central Asian or Middle Eastern literature but may not resonate with or be understood by readers from Western cultures. The reference points in such similes are familiar and emotionally loaded within the source culture, but they may appear strange, irrelevant, or meaningless in another culture. Here’s an excerpt from Zulfiya’s poem “Men tug‘ilgan kun” (“The Day I Was Born”) [6]:

Qora terda tanho boshingiz,

Labingiz - dasht jo'yagiday qoq.

Og'zingizga tiqib sochingiz,

Tanangizga solarlar to'lg'oq.

In this excerpt, the line “**Labingiz – dasht jo’yagiday qoq**” contains a simile comparing the lips to a “*jo’yak*” (a furrow). The word “*jo’yak*” is a culturally marked term that may not evoke the same imagery or emotional resonance for readers outside this cultural context.

Here’s another example from the English poem “A Red, Red Rose” by Robert Burns:

O my Luve is *like a red*, red rose,

That’s newly sprung in June;

O my Luve is *like the melody*

That’s sweetly played in tune.

The lines “**My love is like a red, red rose**”, “**like the melody**” are similes that compare love to a rose and to a melody. The words “*June*” and “*rose*” are culturally marked elements, as they carry deep symbolic meaning in English literature.

This study examines how similes are used in Uzbek and English poetry to demonstrate relationship between language, culture, and stylistic expression. In addition to enhancing the literary style, similes represent cultural values, symbols, and viewpoints that are particular to each language community. Comparative examination reveals that although similes are a universal stylistic device, how they are expressed is frequently culturally specific. Since similes act as a link between linguistic form and cultural meaning, understanding these cultural nuances is crucial for accurate interpretation and translation.

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