

## COMPARATIVE RESEARCH OF ENGLISH AND KYRGYZ METAPHORS

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**Abstract:** *This article deals with the metaphors which we use in daily life, especially concerns metaphors that people use to express their feeling, emotions, happiness. The article will focus on differences and similarities between the Kyrgyz and English metaphors of love. Before we start our discussion, it is important to emphasize the fact that we are going to understand metaphor as a cognitive tool, helping us to activate categories of our conceptual system and providing connections between them. Such metaphors most often result in a literal expression in a language. In that way they differ from a metaphor as a stylistic device, the latter belonging to the sphere of the imaginative language.*

**Key words:** *metaphor, human beings, connection, correspond, expression, magic, madness, patient, journey, cognitive*

АНГЛИС ЖАНА КЫРГЫЗ ТИЛДЕРИНДЕГИ МЕТАФОРЛАРДЫ САЛЫШТЫРЫП  
ИЗИЛДӨӨ

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**Аннотация:** *Бул макалада адамдар сезимин, эмоциясын, бактысын билдирүү үчүн пайдаланган метафоралар жөнүндө сөз болмокчу. Макалада кыргыз жана англис тилдериндеги сезимди билдирген метафораларынын ортосундагы айырмачылыктар жана окшоштуктар талкууланат. Биз метафораны когнитивдик инструмент катары түшүнүп, концептуалдык системабыздын категорияларын активдештирүүгө жардам берип, алардын ортосундагы байланыштарды камсыздай турганыбызды баса белгилеп кетүү зарыл. Мындай метафоралар көбүнчө тилде сөзмө сөз туюндурууга алып келет. Ушуну менен алар метафорадан стилистикалык каражат катары айырмаланат, экинчиси элестүү тил чөйрөсүнө кирет.*

**Таяныч сөздөр:** *метафора, адамзат, байланыш, туш келүү, сөз айкашы, сыйкырдуу, акылдан азуу, сабырдуу, саякат, когнитивдик*

СОПОСТАВИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ МЕТАФОР В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И  
КЫРГЫЗСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ

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**Аннотация:** В этой статье рассматриваются метафоры, которые люди используют, чтобы выразить свои чувства, эмоции и счастье. Речь пойдет о различиях и сходствах между кыргызскими и английскими метафорами любви. Важно подчеркнуть тот факт, что мы собираемся понимать метафору как когнитивный инструмент, помогающий нам активировать категории нашей концептуальной системы и обеспечивающий связь между ними. Такие метафоры чаще всего приводят к буквальному выражению в языке. Этим они отличаются от метафоры как стилистического приема, относящегося к сфере образного языка.

**Ключевые слова:** метафора, человек, связь, совпадение, словосочетание, волшебное, сойти с ума, терпеливый, путешествие, когнитивная

A metaphor is a literary device that imaginatively draws a comparison between two unlike things. It does this by stating that Thing A *is* Thing B. Through this method of equation, metaphors can help explain concepts and ideas by colorfully linking the unknown to the known; the abstract to the concrete; the incomprehensible to the comprehensible. It can also be a rhetorical device that specifically appeals to our sensibilities as readers. What do we know about metaphors? They are not something we stop and think about every time we utter a sentence. Perhaps, they are just stylistic devices we use when we write a poem and certainly not our way of cognizing the world, some may argue. They would appear to be wrong – metaphors are not purely a subject matter of stylistics, they are an inevitable part of our conscious as well as unconscious thinking and acting, even though we are not aware of their existence.

So a metaphor not only explains by making the abstractor unknown concrete and familiar, but it also enlivens by touching the reader's imagination, further it affirms one more interconnection in the unity of all things by showing a relationship between things seemingly a line to each other. And the fact that two very unlike things can be equated or referred to in terms of one another comment upon them both. No metaphor is “just metaphor”

All have significant implications, and they must be chosen carefully, especially in regard to the connotations the vehicle (image) will transfer to the tenor. Consider, for example, the differences in meaning conveyed by these statements:

That club is *spreading like wildfire*.

That club is *spreading like cancer*.

That club is really blossoming now.

That club, in its amoebic motions, is engulfing the campus.

And do you see any reason that one of these metaphors was chosen over the others?

*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.—Luke 10:2*

*The pile of dirt is high, but we do not have many shovels.*

*The diamonds cover the ground, but we need more people to pick them up.*

*So bold and striking is metaphor that it is sometimes taken literally rather than as a comparison.*

Metaphors expressed by one word is called simple. There are metaphors which are expressed by several words, a group of words, they are metaphorical periphrasis.

Ex: Oh let me true in love but truly and then believe me, my love is as fear as any mother's child, thought not so bright as those gold candles fixed in heaven's air. A metaphor becomes a stylistic device when two different phenomena (things, events, ideas, and actions) are simultaneously brought to mind by the imposition of some or all of the inherent properties of one object on the other, which by nature is derived of these properties. Such an imposition generally results when the creator of the metaphor finds in the two corresponding objects certain features, which to his eye have something in common.

It is through them we get a chance of wording our inner thoughts as well as endowing words with a particular meaning. What do we know about feelings? Love, happiness, exhaustion, disappointment are they clearly defined in the language? Can we always explain what we feel

when we are in control of our feelings, not to mention the situations when we are excited or upset? What mechanisms are involved when we are trying to describe our emotional states? Are these mechanisms personal or rather universal, uniting all human beings, as a result of our ability to use language as a means of communication? Is there any connection between our ways of understanding and expressing emotions and a metaphor? The article will focus on differences and similarities between the Kyrgyz and English metaphors of love. Before we start our discussion, it is important to emphasize the fact that we are going to understand metaphor as a cognitive tool, helping us to activate categories of our conceptual system and providing connections between them. Such metaphors most often result in a literal expression in a language. In that way they differ from a metaphor as a stylistic device, the latter belonging to the sphere of the imaginative language.

Let us take the LOVE IS WAR metaphor (which is an example of structural metaphor, the most productive type of cognitive metaphors):

•He is known for his many rapid *conquests*.

(Kyrg. Ал өзүнүн тынымсыз утуштары менен таанымал)

*She fought* for him but his mistress *won out*

(Kyrg: Ал сүйгөнү үчүн күрөштү бирок атаандашы утуп кетти)

•He *overpowered* her (Kyrg: Ал анын текебердигин сындырды)

•He is slowly *gaining ground* with her (Kyrg: Ал акырындап аны багындырып алды)

The way we act is directly expressed in our language, thus the LOVE IS WAR metaphor reflects one side of this feeling, namely that of a fight. The love is war metaphor is found and widely used in Kyrgyz as well, that makes us think that this aspect of love, namely war, is present in both English and Kyrgyz; furthermore, the languages have developed similar ways of expressing it. If we talk about love as the examples above suggest, either in English or in Kyrgyz, “we would not be viewed as speaking metaphorically, but as using the normal everyday language appropriate to the situation”. However, there are some instances of how this metaphor can result in a figurative expression: “There came battalions of her admirers” (Kyrg: Мына эми аны сүйүүчүлөрдүн тобу келди). All these examples, the literal expressions and the figurative one, prove that “metaphors are not random but instead coherent systems, in terms of which we conceptualize our experience”. To fight/күрөшүү, an ally/шерик, to overpower/үстөмдүк кылуу, to gain ground/багындырып алуу, battalions/топ, etc, are instances of the same defining domain, that of war. We coherently use the war terminology when talking about a feeling. Keeping in mind that the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another”, we can say that love is “partially structured, understood, performed and talked about in terms of war”.

LOVE IS HEAT metaphor (the examples will follow) can be scientifically explained as follows: when we are in love, we get excited, the heart strikes more rapidly, we get hot, nervous, sometimes we redden. The body temperature rises, that allows us to see the connection between love and heat through the similarity of physical experience. The “folk” theory would suggest, as for example in Kyrgyz, that when we fall in love, we usually become silly and absent-minded. “Сүйүүдөн башы айланып” (He has lost his head because of love), this example would perfectly fit under the LOVE IS MADNESS metaphor (the examples will follow). Even though there is no scientific evidence proving that one, when in love, necessarily loses his or her mind, this “folk” belief has found its expression in the form of proverbs and sayings in the Kyrgyz language. Sometimes, the “folk” theories can directly contradict the facts of the scientific research.

LOVE IS MADNESS: I am *crazy* about her (Kyrg: Аны көргөндө акылымдан адашам). *She drives me out of my mind*. (Kyrg: Ал менин башымды айландырып алды). He constantly *raves* about her (Kyrg: Ал кыз жөнүндө боздоп калды). He has *gone mad* over her (Kyrg: Ал кыз анын мээсин айландырып койду). I am *insane* about her (Kyrg: Мен ал дегенде эстен танам).

Wild, mad, angry and crazy are well-understood by us, we do not have any difficulties in specifying our feeling or behavior when we experience any of these emotions or mental states. Furthermore, we are aware of the fact that each of these emotions is slightly different from the others, and that some of them evoke stronger feelings than the others do. Madness with all its implications belongs to our most natural and basic experiences and therefore gives us a clue of how we feel about love. The existence of the same metaphor is predetermined in many languages, because it involves our most basic instincts and reactions, it is an unalienable part of our development.

LOVE IS MAGIC: She *cast her spell* over me (Кырг: Ал мени сыйкырлап койду). The *magic* is gone (Кырг: Сыйкырдуу күч жоголду). She had me *hypnotized* (Кырг: Ал мени эчумдан тандырды). She is *bewitching* (Rus: Ал мени сыйкырлады).

For centuries humans have been fascinated with things connected with magic, as it provided the explanation for the unknown. We are unlikely to find out how the very sensation of love appears, that is why we call it magic. This metaphor is extremely productive in Kyrgyz, moreover, the verb '*эс учунан тандыруу*' (meaning *to hypnotize, to cast spell*) is most commonly used when talking about women's ability to charm men, and not vice versa. "In the Slavonic mythology women are thought to have power over forces of evil, darkness and disease", this explains the Old Kyrgyz tradition of matriarchy, where women functioned as intermediaries between their own husbands and the ancient gods.

LOVE IS A PATIENT: This is a *sick* relationship (Кырг: Алардын келечеги жок). They have a *strong, healthy* marriage (Кырг: Алардын никеси бекем). We are getting *back on our feet*. (Кырг: Биз акырындап өзүбүзгө келип жатабыз). Their marriage is *on its last legs*. (Кырг: Алардын никеси аксап жатат).

It takes time to *cure* one's heart (Кырг: Ооруган жүрөктү айыктыруу үчүн убакыт керек). "It is folly to pretend that one wholly recovers from a disappointed passion. Such wounds always leave a scar" (Longfellow). Most of us know what it means to be ill, it is a very basic experience for all human beings, that is why we are able to comprehend this aspect of any relationship. In Kyrgyz there is an expression: "Мен сиз деп ооруган жокмун", word by word translation "I am not sick because of you", meaning "I am not interested in you".

LOVE IS A JOURNEY: Look how *far we have come* (Кырг: Карачы, биз канча нерсеге жетиштик). We shall just have to *go our separate ways* (Кырг: Биз ар кимибиз өз жолубуз менен кетели). I do not think this relationship *is going anywhere* (Кырг: Биздин мамилебиз чиелешип кетти). We are *stuck* (Кырг: Биз тунгуюктабыз). We have got *off the track* (Кырг: Биз жолдон адаштык).

"The *course* of true love never did *run smooth*" (Shakespeare). "Love (...) is looking outward together in the same *direction*" (de Saint-Exupery). Steven Pinker in his book *How the Mind Works* points out: "We are using space and motion as a metaphor for more abstract ideas", that explains why the LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor is so often used in English and Russian when talking about love. However, in English this metaphor is not homogeneous in nature, as it refers to different kinds of journeys. "Car trip: It's been a long, bumpy road; Train trip: We've gotten off the tracks; Sea voyage: Our marriage is on the rocks", the fact that they "are all journey metaphors, makes them coherent". This distinction is not as clearly made in Kyrgyz. Most probably, due to richness of the English sea-faring tradition, English has many expressions containing the "sea voyage" element.

In this article we have discussed metaphors of love in English and Kyrgyz in order to find some similarities and differences between them. From the beginning of the article we assumed that feelings and emotions of love are extremely difficult to comprehend. In the course of our analysis we have proved that the cognitive metaphor is influential in our lives as a universal means of understanding complex matters.

It is through metaphor we get an adequate picture of the complexity of the external world. The most productive type of the cognitive metaphor in both Russian and English proved to be the structural metaphor. Moreover, the two languages share almost all structural metaphors of love with only small deviations within each of them. These deviations can be explained by the peculiarities of the cultural and historical development of the languages; as well as the speakers' different ways of treating reality. Here we should take into consideration the ambitions of each of us, our social backgrounds, age, sex, health, economic situation, etc. The cognitive metaphor is culturally-bound. It can be both motivated (non-arbitrary) in the cases of orientational metaphors as well as conventional (arbitrary) – the cases of structural metaphors. Metaphor organizes our external reality and structures our every day activity.

The literal expressions we use in order to express our emotions are dictated by metaphor which is systematic in character. That is why we do not find any expression, which would not follow the pattern given by a general metaphor. If health had been down (with all linguistic expressions fitting under it), then in the Western world it would have contradicted amore basic metaphor good is up. Even the figurative expressions are the products of the same general metaphors and are meant to fit into the metaphorical system of a language. In structuring the abstract emotion of love, metaphor provides us with many sides of the same concept we were not aware of before. "The primary function of metaphor is to provide a partial understanding of one kind of experience in terms of another kind of experience" stated Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphors We Live by*. Metaphors are not something really existing in the external world, but they become real to us because it is through them we create our subjective meaning of the objective events and things.

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