NATIONAL IDENTITY OF METONYMY IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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Abstract: This paper explores the role of metonymy in expressing national identity within Uzbek and English languages. Metonymy, a fundamental cognitive and linguistic mechanism, is not only a stylistic device but also a reflection of a society's cultural values and worldview. By comparing the national-specific metonymic structures in both languages, this article reveals how language encodes cultural perspectives, social institutions, and identity markers. The paper further highlights key differences and similarities, supported by linguistic examples from various domains such as politics, geography, cuisine, and traditional expressions.

Keywords: Metonymy, national identity, Uzbek language, English language, cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics

 INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a means of communication but also a repository of cultural values, historical experience, and national identity. One of the ways this cultural and national specificity is reflected in language is through metonymy. Metonymy, as a figure of speech and cognitive strategy, allows speakers to refer to entities not directly, but through related concepts. For instance, "the crown" for "the monarchy" in English or "tandir" symbolizing traditional lifestyle in Uzbek.

While metonymy operates in all languages, its forms and preferred patterns are shaped by cultural and national contexts. This article investigates the metonymic expressions in Uzbek and English to uncover how national identity is linguistically constructed and represented.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metonymy is a conceptual mapping where one conceptual domain (the source) provides mental access to another (the target). Unlike metaphor, which operates across domains (e.g., LOVE IS WAR), metonymy functions within a single domain (e.g., THE WHITE HOUSE for the U.S. administration).

National identity in linguistics refers to the expression of a people's culture, traditions, and collective memory through language. Metonymy can encapsulate values, behaviors, and national consciousness, turning specific elements of a culture into symbols of the whole.

In Uzbek, metonymy often draws upon agriculture, family structure, and Islamic heritage. For instance:

"Osh" (pilaf) is not only a dish but a metonym for Uzbek hospitality and celebration.

"Choy" (tea) can represent conversation, guest-welcoming, or peaceful gathering.

"Do'ppi" (skullcap) metonymically refers to Uzbek men or traditional identity.

"Toshkent" is frequently used as a metonym for the Uzbek government, similar to "Washington" in the U.S.

"Imom Buxoriy" or **"Hazrati Imom"** can evoke the religious identity of the nation, reflecting pride in Islamic scholarship.

These expressions are culturally loaded and may not directly translate with the same meaning in other languages. They serve as carriers of national identity through cultural embodiment.

Metonymy and National Identity in English

"Whitehall", "Buckingham Palace", and **"Downing Street"** serve as metonyms for British political institutions.

"Wall Street" in American English refers to financial markets.

"Oxford" or **"Cambridge"** can be metonyms for British higher education and intellectual tradition.

"Big Ben" is more than a clock—it stands for London, British punctuality, and tradition.

"Union Jack" may stand for British patriotism or colonial legacy, depending on context.

"The Crown" is a metonym for monarchy and national authority.

English metonymy often reflects political power, colonial history, and institutional pride.

Comparative Analysis

Category	Uzbek	English
Government	"Toshkent"	"White House", "Downing Street"
Food/Culture	"Osh", "Choy"	"Tea", "Fish and Chips"
Religion	"Hazrati Imom"	"The Church"
Clothing	"Do'ppi"	"The Crown" (as regalia)
Institutions	"Oliy Majlis"	"Parliament", "The Pentagon"

In both languages, metonymy functions to build solidarity, signal belonging, or express criticism. However, Uzbek leans more toward familial, communal, and religious metonymy, while English favors institutional and historical symbols. The cultural worldview embedded in metonymy shows how language and national consciousness are intertwined. Uzbek metonymy often arises

from daily life, agricultural traditions, or Islamic heritage, reflecting a collectivist and tradition-bound identity. English metonymy, on the other hand, often revolves around power, governance, and institutional legacy—hinting at a more individualist and structured societal model.

The perception of nationhood and national pride, thus, is cognitively and linguistically shaped by these habitual associations. Recognizing and analyzing metonymic patterns deepens intercultural understanding and highlights the intricate bond between thought, language, and identity.

CONCLUSION

Metonymy is more than a rhetorical device; it is a window into how nations think of themselves. The way Uzbek and English languages encode national identity through metonymy highlights cultural priorities, historical experiences, and social values. By studying these patterns, we not only gain linguistic insights but also foster cross-cultural empathy and appreciation.

Further studies could extend this research into corpus-based analysis, explore diachronic shifts in metonymic usage, or compare additional languages to map global metonymic patterns of national identity.

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