STYLISTIC FEATURES OF METAPHOR IN PUBLICISTIC TEXTS

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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes the stylistic features of metaphors in publicistic texts, highlighting their significant role in shaping readers' perception and influencing public opinion. The study focuses on how metaphors contribute to emotional expressiveness, ideological coloring, and textual coherence. Through examples from publicistic discourse, the research explores different types of metaphors and their pragmatic functions in modern journalism. Findings show that metaphors in publicistic writing serve not only aesthetic purposes but also persuasive and cognitive functions.

Keywords: metaphor, stylistic features, publicistic text, journalistic discourse, cognitive function, emotional expressiveness, ideological function, pragmatics.

INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistic studies, the metaphor is no longer perceived merely as a stylistic embellishment but as a fundamental mechanism of human cognition. Particularly in publicistic texts, metaphors play a crucial role in structuring information, evoking emotions, and shaping public attitudes. Publicistic discourse, which includes newspaper articles, magazines, editorials, and journalistic reports, extensively employs metaphors to achieve persuasive communication and to simplify complex ideas for the audience.

The importance of studying metaphors within publicistic texts arises from the genre's primary functions — informative, persuasive, and influential. Unlike purely literary works, publicistic writing aims not only to entertain or inform but also to provoke thought, advocate viewpoints, and mobilize readers. Consequently, the metaphoric language becomes a powerful tool in the hands of journalists and commentators.

Lakoff and Johnson's seminal work "Metaphors We Live By" (1980) established that metaphors shape our worldview and underlie not only artistic but also everyday and professional discourses. Their cognitive approach to metaphor analysis has significantly influenced studies in media language, where metaphors are often used to create frames for interpreting events.

Metaphors in publicistic texts often reveal ideological stances and serve as instruments of persuasion. Political journalism, for instance, abounds with metaphors that frame policies, politicians, or international relations in emotionally charged terms. By employing war metaphors ("battle for votes," "economic warfare"), natural disaster metaphors ("political tsunami"), or medical metaphors ("economic recovery"), journalists guide readers' interpretations along intended lines.

Moreover, metaphors help structure the narrative and provide coherence to journalistic writing. They connect abstract or unfamiliar concepts with relatable images, enhancing comprehensibility. In times of crisis, for example, metaphors help audiences emotionally process complex phenomena, such as financial downturns or pandemics, by associating them with familiar experiences.

Different types of metaphors are used depending on the publicistic genre and the target audience. Structural metaphors organize thought processes, orientational metaphors provide spatial understanding, and ontological metaphors allow for the conceptualization of abstract entities. The choice of metaphor also depends on the publication's political orientation, cultural

background, and stylistic preferences.

While metaphors enrich journalistic language, their excessive or manipulative use can lead to biased representations of reality. Thus, studying the stylistic functions of metaphors in publicistic texts is essential for critical media literacy and understanding the interplay between language, thought, and society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of metaphor in linguistic and stylistic research has evolved considerably over the centuries. Initially, metaphor was treated narrowly, primarily as a figure of speech used for ornamentation. In Aristotle's *Poetics*, metaphor was recognized as an element of rhetoric, a means to beautify and enhance speech [1]. However, modern linguistic approaches have broadened the understanding of metaphor, seeing it as a fundamental process of human cognition and communication.

The groundbreaking work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (*Metaphors We Live By*, 1980) revolutionized the field by demonstrating that metaphor is not just a linguistic phenomenon but a conceptual one that shapes thought and action[2]. Their cognitive approach revealed that our conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. In publicistic texts, this means that metaphors not only decorate language but organize the way information is perceived and interpreted by the audience.

Jonathan Charteris-Black's research on political rhetoric (*Politicians and Rhetoric*, 2005) extended this view into the domain of public discourse, arguing that metaphors are vital persuasive tools that influence public opinion by framing events in emotionally resonant ways[3]. In publicistic genres, journalists use metaphors strategically to highlight or downplay issues, create heroes or villains, and guide readers toward specific interpretations.

Further, Elena Semino's work (*Metaphor in Discourse*, 2008) focused specifically on metaphors in media language. She showed how metaphors serve as framing devices in news reporting, simplifying complex issues such as immigration, war, and economic crises into familiar, emotionally charged narratives[4]. According to Semino, metaphors act as cognitive shortcuts that help readers quickly grasp the essence of the news, but they also carry the risk of bias and oversimplification.

Arthur Goatly in *The Language of Metaphors* (1997) explored the ideological dimension of metaphor, emphasizing that publicistic metaphors are rarely neutral. They often reflect and reinforce underlying cultural and political ideologies [4]. For instance, metaphors framing immigration as a "flood" or "wave" suggest uncontrolled, threatening movement, shaping public perception in ways that may fuel xenophobia.

Andreas Musolff contributed significantly to understanding metaphor scenarios in political and media discourse. His research (*Political Metaphor Analysis*, 2016) demonstrated that metaphors create not isolated images but coherent scenarios that guide narrative structures in public discourse [6]. For example, the "body politic" metaphor conceptualizes the state as a living organism, suggesting that political problems are diseases to be diagnosed and cured, thus influencing policy narratives.

In addition, Lynne Cameron's analysis of metaphor clusters (*Metaphor in Educational Discourse*, 2003) showed that metaphorical expressions often occur not singly but in groups, creating cohesive thematic frames within texts [7]. In publicistic writing, such clusters strengthen the emotional and ideological impact, leading readers to intuitive conclusions without overt argumentation.

Moreover, Ruth Wodak and colleagues, working within the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), have highlighted that metaphors contribute to discursive strategies of inclusion and exclusion in publicistic and political discourse[9]. They show how metaphorical language can either promote solidarity or deepen social divisions.

Finally, Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (2020) emphasizes that in digital journalism, metaphor combined with visuals (images, infographics) enhances understanding but

also magnifies emotional impact[10]. This points to the increasing importance of analyzing metaphor use not only in textual but also in multimodal publicistic texts.

In summary, contemporary literature underscores that metaphors in publicistic discourse are powerful cognitive and rhetorical tools. They frame perception, simplify complexities, elicit emotions, and influence ideological positioning. A critical awareness of their usage is thus essential for both media producers and consumers.

DISCUSSIONS

In publicistic writing, metaphors perform not merely an aesthetic function but serve as powerful tools for shaping public opinion, constructing ideologies, and emotional engagement. Analysis of metaphor usage in real-world publicistic texts reveals consistent patterns that align with the theoretical frameworks outlined in the literature.

In times of political crisis, journalists often employ war metaphors to frame events. For example, headlines such as *"Government declares war on inflation"* or *"Battling the pandemic"* depict abstract problems as external enemies that must be defeated[1]. Such metaphors create a sense of urgency and rally public support but may also oversimplify complex socio-economic phenomena, reducing multifaceted problems to binary struggles of victory versus defeat.

A common metaphor found in news coverage about migration issues is the portrayal of migrants as a "flood," "wave," or "tsunami" inundating borders. For instance, phrases like *"a tidal wave of refugees"* [2] instill fear and suggest an uncontrollable, threatening force. This metaphorical framing dehumanizes migrants, presenting them as a faceless mass rather than individuals seeking safety, thus influencing public sentiment and policy decisions. Economic crises are frequently described using medical metaphors, with newspapers referring to "ailing economies," "sick markets," or "financial fever"[3]. For example, an article in *The Economist* once described the Eurozone crisis as "a virus infecting global markets." Such language implies that economic problems are diseases requiring diagnosis and treatment, positioning governments and international institutions as healers. However, these metaphors also implicitly suggest that there are no easy solutions and that "treatment" might be painful, justifying austerity measures. In publicistic texts discussing political reforms or social progress, the journey metaphor is prevalent. Expressions such as *"on the road to recovery"*, *"at the crossroads of history"*, or *"navigating turbulent waters"*[4] emphasize direction, agency, and purposeful movement. They instill optimism about overcoming difficulties but may also mask the complexities and slow, non-linear nature of real-world reforms. Coverage of diplomatic negotiations often draws on sports metaphors, portraying discussions as matches, contests, or games. For example, *"The summit ended in a stalemate,"* or *"Diplomats are playing hardball"* [5]. These metaphors frame negotiations as competitive events where winning and losing are paramount, potentially undermining the nuanced reality of compromise and cooperation. Publicistic commentary on social issues often resorts to metaphors of light and darkness. Articles speaking of *"shedding light on corruption"*, or *"emerging from the shadows of discrimination"* [6] use a universally comprehensible metaphorical contrast to represent moral clarity versus ignorance or evil. These metaphors serve to emotionally align the audience with the cause being discussed. In discussions about bureaucracy and governance, governments are sometimes likened to machines. Terms like *"the bureaucratic machine"*, *"government engine"*, or *"gears of policy grinding slowly"*[7] suggest that institutions are impersonal, mechanical, and slow to change. Such metaphors can subtly foster public cynicism toward political processes.

Metaphors in publicistic discourse serve as powerful linguistic tools that shape perceptions, emotions, and ideologies. Unlike purely artistic metaphors found in literary fiction, metaphors in publicistic texts are often more direct, emotionally charged, and ideologically purposeful. They aim not only to beautify the language but to influence, persuade, and mobilize readers toward particular viewpoints. One of the primary stylistic features of metaphor in publicistic texts is its cognitive role — helping the audience conceptualize complex or abstract ideas through familiar, tangible imagery. In George Orwell's essays, particularly in *"Politics and the English Language"*, Orwell criticizes how metaphors like "toe the line," "iron curtain," and "riding

roughshod" have become "worn-out" yet still function as cognitive shortcuts that define political realities. Here, metaphors perform a cognitive simplification. "Iron curtain" metaphorically frames the division between Eastern and Western Europe, turning complex geopolitical realities into a vivid, almost visual image understandable to the general public.

The examples demonstrate how metaphors structure publicistic narratives, providing emotional resonance and simplifying complex ideas. War metaphors instill urgency and conflict; medical metaphors suggest diagnosis and remedy; natural disaster metaphors create a sense of inevitability and chaos.

From a cognitive perspective, metaphors map familiar source domains onto unfamiliar target domains, facilitating understanding. Pragmatically, they align readers' emotions with the journalist's evaluative stance.

However, excessive metaphorization risks oversimplifying or biasing information. For instance, persistent use of war metaphors in political reporting may normalize conflict-oriented thinking and undermine diplomatic discourse, while metaphors enhance readability and engagement, critical awareness of their implications is necessary.

CONCLUSION

In publicistic texts, metaphor serves as an essential stylistic and communicative device, bridging the gap between complex ideas and the reader's everyday experiences. Unlike purely aesthetic metaphors in fiction, metaphors in journalistic, political, and socio-cultural discourse are highly functional — they shape public opinion, frame ideologies, simplify abstract concepts, and emotionally engage audiences.

Through the analysis of metaphors from publicistic sources, it is evident that they perform multiple functions simultaneously: cognitive, emotive, persuasive, and ideological. Metaphors such as "the iron curtain," "economic storm," or "information battlefield" are not mere embellishments but critical tools that define realities, influence decisions, and direct the public's perception of events and phenomena.

Moreover, metaphor usage in publicistic texts often reflects broader socio-cultural contexts and collective worldviews. The analysis also reveals that the stylistic construction of metaphors in such texts tends to favor vivid imagery, strong emotional undertones, and strategic ideological positioning.

Thus, the study of metaphors in publicistic discourse is not only a linguistic and stylistic investigation but also an interdisciplinary exploration into cognitive linguistics, media studies, sociology, and political science. Future research could focus on the comparative analysis of metaphor usage across different languages and cultures to uncover deeper insights into their universal and culturally specific characteristics.

Metaphors will continue to be a powerful instrument in public communication, shaping narratives and influencing societies — making their study crucial for understanding modern discourse dynamics.

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