

The Characteristics of Simile in the Uzbek and Korean Languages and the Differences of Animals Used for Simile Supplementary Concepts

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Abstract

This thesis explains the simile concepts and their distinctive usages in Uzbek and Korean languages, including the differences and similarities of the subjects being used in both languages as simile supplementary concepts.

Humans vividly express their thoughts that are varied and difficult to express using simile. Expressions comparing animals accompanying the human race with the subject of simile are frequently used in daily lives.

Many scholars, globally, have proved that metaphoric expression is an important tool for human cognitive activities, and making expressions in comparison to animals, the closest beings to humans, has proved to be an effective way of human communication. The use of animals in simile expressions in the Uzbek and Korean languages could appear different according to the different cultures and geographical locations, including examples such as the donkey and camel. Simile expressions with comparison to donkeys are naturally used among the Uzbeks as they were used as means of transportation (as wagons). Camel, which inhabits Uzbek but not Korea, is also used as a supplementary concept of simile; in Uzbek, strong cold weather is expressed as “the cold weather like camels.” In Korea, there is a similar metaphoric expression as in “bull wind.”

Key-words: Simile, Metaphor, Characteristics of Simile, Cultural and Geographical Differences, Auxiliary Postpositional Particle, Adverbial Case Marker.

1. Introduction

Humans express their thoughts and emotions using sound or letters in the surroundings they are born into and perceive their existences while communicating with others and living their lives as components of the society. It is natural that the language of each country, being a tool to express the unique concept, life style, and culture of the people using it, is closely related to the invisible social

atmosphere of the groups using the language. Thus, it can be said that, through languages, one can understand the culture of the society (Ene 2014).

Also, what humans feel and think is directly expressed through languages, and moreover, language is considered the most basic means to provide clues to understand the cultural background in the form of human senses, thoughts, and actions of the people using the same language (Bae 1997). Based on these arguments, we can confirm that human language has an organic relationship with the culture and cannot avoid being directly influenced by it. That the language is influenced by culture is seen in these well-known examples: in case of Mongolia, the language related to nomadism are subdivided, and many of Korean words are composed of Chinese characters showing that Korea had embraced Chinese cultures for long; moreover, Eskimos have varied vocabulary related to snow influenced by their regional environment (Kim 2009).

As such, the example sentences used in this thesis exactly show that the language of a people contains the living environment and historical background the way they are, and especially the subjects as supplementary concepts (Yoon 2020) of simile are very closely related to the objects in the surroundings and the culture of such people.

Humans are unable to express emotional facts directly and realistically with their limited vocabulary, and thus draw in similar objects to make analogy in order to express the meanings and emotions they intend to express as faithfully as possible.

Hence, the study on the comparison-simile can be considered essential in the study of human language.

2. The Simile Concepts in the Uzbek and Korean Languages

Simile is a kind of comparison, which seemingly shows meanings similar to that of metaphor but, unlike metaphor that identifies the original concept of simile with the supplementary concept of simile, simile has postpositions and adjectives that clearly appear in the sentence. Such characteristics of simile shows the similarity of the two objects but also explicitly shows that the two are never the same (Yoon 2020).

The scholars and researchers of Uzbekistan and Korea define simile as follows.

2.1 The Definition of Simile in Uzbekistan

“O‘xshatish, ikki narsa yoki voqea-hodisa o‘rtasidagi o‘xshashlikka asoslanib, ularning biri orqali ikkinchisining belgisini, mohiyatini to‘laroq, konkretrroq, bo‘rttiribroq ifodalashga aytiladi.

O‘xshatishlar tashqi dunyoni bilishning eng qadimiy usullaridan hisoblanadi. O‘xshatishlar muayyan xalqning ilk tafakkur tarzini va tasavvurlarini tamsil etadi. Ularda ma’lum davrda yashagan ajdodlarimizning kechinmalari, tasavvurlari muhrlangan bo‘ladi” (Usmanova 2016).

“Simile, based on the similarity between two things or events, through either of them, expresses the essential characteristics of the other in a more complete, precise, or exaggerated manner. Simile is considered the oldest method to perceive and get to know the world. Simile shows the thought systems and description patterns of certain people. The thought systems and description patterns of a people contain the experiences of their ancestors who lived in a certain period of time.”

“O‘xshatish- badiiy tasvir vosifalaridan biri bo‘lib, ob’ektni obrazli, tasirchan, konkret va ixcham ifodalash xususiyatlari bilan ajralib turadi. O‘xshatish deb, bir predmet yoki hodisani ikkinchi bir predmet yoki hodisa bilan taqqoslanganda ularning shakli yoki mazmun tomondan obrazli o‘xshashligiga aytiladi. O‘xshatishlarni belgilashda asosan ‘-day/dek’, ‘kabi’ belgilarning roli kata” (Nigina 2011).

“Simile is one of the literary expression methods and has the characteristics of embodying the object and vividly expressing the same. Simile means, when one subject or situation is compared to the shape or the situation of the second subject, to compare them by embodying the aspects of their shapes or meanings. Among the conjunctions of simile, ‘-day/dek’ and ‘kabi’ have the biggest roles.”

“O‘xshatish hamma vaqt, xar qanday holatda ham metaforiki iboralarni hosil qiladigan asosiy mexanizm, kuch hisoblanadi” (Mirzo 2020).

“Simile is considered the most basic and important system and driving force to make metaphoric phrases.”

“O‘xshatishda so‘zlar to‘g‘ri ma’noda, ya’ni o‘z ma’nosida, metaforada esa ko‘chma ma’noda qo‘llaniladi. Metaforada o‘xshatishga nisbatan chuqurroq ma’no transformachiyasi yuz beradi” (Mamatov 2000).

“While the words in simile expressions show the original meaning of the vocabulary, in metaphor, there occurs expansions of the meaning. In metaphor, compared to simile, the semantic transformation is more profound.”

2.2 The Definition of the Simile in the Korean Language

“Analogy, in general, has been discussed in rhetoric, literature, and philosophy, of which examples include metaphor and simile. If metaphor is a connoted analogy, simile is an exposed

analogy, which specifically indicates the similarity with the use of the words such as ‘like’, ‘as’, or ‘such as’” (Chae 2008).

“Simile is a method of showing the subject of the expression, that is, the original concept (A) with the use of the supplementary concept (B), i.e., another subject of similarity, and take the form of ‘A is like B’; the representative examples of simile include ‘round-shaped moon like a tray’, ‘a face like white jade’ (Encyclopedia of Korean Culture).

“In general, analogy is classified into similarity and contiguity, based on two kinds of associative principles, i.e., metaphor and metonymy. Simile and metaphor connect the topic and the vehicle following the associative principle of similarity. However, unlike metaphor, simile has a constant morphological element and vehicle that clearly exist, such as ‘like and such as’, etc.” (Fishelov 2007).

“Simile is the most basic and direct analogy. For its clear and obvious comparison, it is also called an ‘obvious metaphor’. Simile has its roots in Latin, *similis*, which has the meaning of ‘like’ or ‘as if’ and when translated into Korean means ‘~같이’ or ‘~처럼’. Therefore, simile is an analogy where the original concept and supplementary concept combine with the use of vehicles of postposition such as ‘like’ or ‘as if’” (Lee 2003).

This way, both countries have the same definition about simile: the original and the supplementary concepts, i.e., two subjects, are expressed in one phrase or one word using simile conjunction, based on their property of similarity. Besides, considering that the property of simile is revealed while comparing it to the property of metaphor, both countries also have a similar theoretical method to explain simile.

3. The Kinds of Simile Conjunctions that Indicate Simile and their Differences in the Uzbek and Korean Languages

Simile and metaphor seemingly have very similar purposes of semantic expression but show evident differences depending on the existence of a medium that connects the principle concept with the supplementary concept in the sentence structure. That is, in simile, there exist parts of speech such as “like/as.” These are “처럼, 같이, 같은...” in Korean, meaning “like, as, as if,” which are adverbial case markers and adjective; in Uzbek, they are auxiliary postpositional particle such as “-day/dek” and “kabi.”

The postposition “처럼” in Korean, meaning “like,” the most used simile conjunction, is used when articulating short sentences, and the example sentences below show that it is used as in “like + noun” with no morphological transformation.¹ Note: When used in a form such as “like + noun,” verb or adjective must be followed right next to it, but noun must not come there (Yeon 2010).

3.1 Like

A: After the conversation, finally, I ended up saying that I was not fond of anyone who lacks personality or taste like you (Hwang 2000).

B: As if they themselves are the ones who suffered it, they frothed at the mouth and growled like a tiger at the dawn (Moon 1987).

C: Un-seok was fat like a western pig and dark-skinned (Standard Korean Language Dictionary).

Simile conjunctions that are frequently used next to “처럼” meaning “like” are “같은, 같이,” derived from adjective “같다” meaning “the same,” and in the case of “같이,” it functions as an adverb it means “together,” and, when attached next to an uninflected word and showing the typical characteristics of the word ahead of it or meaning “the same,” it functions as an adverbial case marker (Korea University Korean Dictionary, 2011).

3.2 “같이,” which means “like” (Cited from the Examples in the Standard Korean Language Dictionary)

A: A dry and hardened hand like leather.

B: Adversity passes by like the wind.

C: She has sparkling eyes like stars in the sky.

D: Against corrupted politicians, hungry people arose like bees.

¹ In the spoken corpus data, research shows that the sentences where ‘처럼’ is used are 224, ‘같은, 같이’ 187. The corpus data of the reference is recommended to be referred to.

“같은” is the conjugated form of the adjective “같다” and is composed of “같-,” the stem and “-은,” the modifier form. It modifies the nouns or noun phrases that follow (Korea University Korean Dictionary).

3.3 “같은” Meaning “Like or as” (Cited from the Standard Korean Language Dictionary and Korea University Korean Dictionary)

A: I feel like I will win first place.

B: My father is an iron-like person.

C: I do not want to miss this golden opportunity.

In Uzbek, the most used simile conjunctions meaning “like/as” are “-day/dek” of which part of speech is a conjunction (called in Uzbek: qo‘shimchasimon yordamchi so‘z) and are used combined with common nouns, adjectives, and pronouns. It has the role of showing the meaning of the adverb in the sentence, “-dek” is the phonetic variant of “-day,” thus using “-day” in the place of “-dek” does not make any difference in the meaning (Abdurahmonov et al. 1975). The postposition of the Uzbek language, “-day/dek” can be translated into Korean as “처럼/같이,” which means “like/as.”

3.4 -day/dek (Below example Sentences were cited from the examples in the book ‘o‘zbek tili grammatikasi 1; Abdurahmonov et al. 1975)

A: Ruschani rusday bilasan-ku.

You know the Russian language like a Russian.

[Ruscha: the Russian language, Rus: Russian, bilmoq: know]

B: Sizdek yaxshi odamni ko‘rganim yoq.

I have never seen a good person like you.

[Siz: you, yaxshi: good, odam: person, ko‘rmoq: see, yoq: never]

C: Uning ko‘zi yulduzdek chaqnaypati.

His eyes are sparkling like stars.

(Uning-his, ko‘z-eyes, yulduz-stars, chaqnamoq: sparkle)

In Uzbek, the conjunction used for simile expressions aside from “-day/dek” is “kabi,” which is a postposition (auxiliary postpositional particle) used to express analogy and comparison, but

unlike “-day/dek,” as it is used apart from the word ahead of it, it has specific name as in “plain auxiliary postpositional particle”-Uzbek name: *sof yordamchi so‘z’*. The meaning of “kabi” is identical with that of “-day/dek,” but it is more applicable in literary expressions.

3.5 kabi (below example sentences were cited from the book ‘*o‘zbek tili grammatikasi 1*)

A: ko‘z yoshlar kabi tomchilar tomardi.

Water drops like tears fell down.

[ko‘z yosh: tears, tomchi: Water drop, tomarmoq: Fall down]

B: bu voqea qo‘rqinchli tush kabi yo‘lchining ko‘z oldidan o‘tdi.

This incident passed before the drifter’s eyes like a scary nightmare.

[bu: this, voqea: incident, qo‘rqinchli: scary, tush: nightmare, yo‘lchi: traveler, drifter, ko‘z: eyes, oldidan o‘tmoq: pass]

C: U yo‘lchiga yaqin kelib, ona kabi boshini siladi.

She came close to the drifter and patted him on the head like a mother.

[u: he, she, yaqin: close, kelmoq: come, ona: mother, bosh: head, silamoq: pat]

As confirmed through the above example sentences, the functions and places of simile conjunctions in sentences are very alike in Uzbek and Korean. However, it is clear that the Uzbek language does not have the simile conjunction designated as an adjective as “같은” in Korean, and the “kabi” in Uzbek can be used in the same meaning and place in the sentence as “같은” in Korea, but the part of the speech differs. Moreover, “처럼, 같이, 같은,” the typical simile conjunctions in Korean, which mean “like/as/as if” have identical meanings in the sense that they show the simile expressions, but the rules in which they are used in sentences and classified parts of the speech are obviously different. However, the representative simile conjunctions in Uzbek are completely identical in their functions and usages, and if replaced with one another in the sentence, never cause any awkwardness in the meaning and format of the sentences.

4. The Differences in the Animals Used in Uzbek and Korean Simile Expressions

If you are Korean, you would have heard of or used yourself simile phrases such as “a huge house like the back of a whale” or “a person like a fox.”

Through the example phrases with the animal analogy, it is seen that Koreans compare a very big house to the back of a whale and a sly and crafty person to a fox (Doosan Encyclopedia 2000).

However, the reason that people choose to express their thoughts and feelings through animal analogy rather than use dictionary expressions, such as “very very big house” and “sly person,” is that animal analogy is an essential function in the human cognitive activities, and expressions compared to animals, the closest beings to humans, are highly important in the expression methods (Takahashi 2012).

Humans discovered themselves in the actions, faces, lives of animals and, by observing the similarities between the two beings, found out that the two share far common instinctive characteristics, and thus have long experienced that expressing through the images of animals can be useful tools to express their own emotions and thoughts more vividly (Kim 2014).

However, with cultural and geographical differences, the images and analogical expressions endowed to animals are different from people to people.

For example, Korea is a peninsula with three sides of the land surrounded by sea, and thus has far more chances to see marine creatures. Hence, the Korean language has plenty of simile expressions with the analogy to marine creatures; however, in Uzbekistan, a typical landlocked country of desert climate where there is no sea around, there are rare expressions that use the analogy to marine creatures.

Thus, while conveying identical meaning, the application of simile supplementary concept shows differences as in the following example sentences.

1) Gong, an elderly man, having stared at the vice minister Choi’s towering house looking like the back of a whale, finds his way to the tavern (Park 2012a).

2) Shunday katta uy, saroydek uyni ko‘rsatib qanchalik mag‘rur bolgan u (To‘xtaboyev 2018).

How bragging he was, showing such a huge house, a house like a palace!

(shunday-such, katta-huge, uy-house, saroy-palace, ko‘rsatmoq-show, qanchalik-how, mag‘rur-bragging, showing off)

As seen in the two examples above, a “huge house” is compared to “the back of a whale” as the supplementary concept in Korean, whereas it is compared to a “saroy (palace)” as the supplementary concept in Uzbek. It is notable that in Uzbek, there are no simile expressions using the analogy to “the back of a whale.”

3) Even if they only wished for safe delivery, let alone their desire for a son, once they got a son healthy like a toad... (Park 2012b).

4) Arslondek olti o‘g‘li bor (Sotim 2006).

He has six sons like lions (arslon-lion, olti-6, o'g'li-son, bor-has).

Through two examples above, different animals are used as simile supplementary concepts between Uzbekistan and Korea, when they express sons comparing to animals.

In Korea, sons are usually expressed in the analogy to “toads”² but in Uzbekistan to “lions.” The “toad” in Uzbek, “baqadek xunuk(baqa:toad, xunuk: Ugly)” is usually used in the analogy to an ugly person, and “lion” is mostly used when describing “fierceness” and “bravery” (Adiba 2019). In Korean, “lion” is used in the analogy to scary or raged person as in tiger.

5) Who could deal with his bull-like stubbornness? (Lee 1999).

6) This guy, as bullheaded as he can be, will never be talked through.³

7) Bunchalar eshadek qaysar (Исроилова (2018).

Stubborn as a donkey (eshak-donkey, qaysar-stubborn, persistent).

8) Wind like a bull blows in through a needle hole (Korean proverb).

9) Ignadek teshikdan tuyadek sovuq kiradi (Shomaqsudov 1990).

Cold weather like a camel comes in through a needle hole (Uzbek proverb).

(igna teshik-needle hole, tuya-camel, sovuq-cold, kirmoq-come in)

As seen in the examples above, in Korea, when describing a stubborn person, the expression “bull-like stubbornness” is used. Besides, there are many proverbs and analogies related to “bull” because Korea was an agricultural society for long; so “bulls” essential for agricultural society always accompanied people in their daily lives.

On the contrary, in the case of Uzbekistan, whose culture is rooted in nomadism, donkeys useful for transportation and carriage existed in the lives of the Uzbek people, and thus the simile expressions in the analogy to donkeys such as “eshakdek qaysar-stubborn like donkeys” “eshakdek ishlamoq-work like a donkey (work tirelessly)” are frequently used. Moreover, in Uzbekistan, for its desert climate, camels were not hard to find, thus simile expressions such as “tuyadek sovuq-cold like a camel,” “tuyadek kuchli-powerful like a camel,” and “tuyadek baquvvat-strong like a camel” are well used.

² “떡두꺼비” meaning a toad is specified as a word used in Korean as an analogy for a boy in the Standard Korean Language Dictionary and Knowledge Encyclopedia.

³ In Woori Mal Saem Open Korean Dictionary (www.opendict.korean.go.kr), “황소고집” meaning bull-like stubbornness is written as a word describing a very stubborn person.

5. Conclusions

Through this thesis, the differences in determinations and usages of similes were discovered between Uzbek and Korean, and in addition, the following facts were recognized.

First, humans are limited in directly and realistically expressing varied emotional facts with their limited vocabulary, so to compensate for this, similar objects are drawn in as analogy in speech, and among such expression methods, the most proper and useful one is simile expression. Simile is an expression method used by human beings for a very long time, and through the simile expression of a specific people, the thought systems and cultural environments of such people can be understood.

Second, there is a similarity in the determination of the simile concept between Uzbek and Korean, and from the way things are expressed in metaphor and comparisons, the style of concept determination can also be said to be very similar.

Third, the most common characteristic of the simile expressions between the two countries is the existence of simile conjunction.

This accounts for the biggest difference in metaphor: unlike metaphor, simile expressions always accompany simile conjunctions, postpositions, and adjectives, such as “-처럼” or “-같이” in Korean, meaning “like” or “as” and auxiliary postpositional particles, such as “-day/dek” and “kabi” in Uzbek.

Fourth, the function and meaning of simile conjunctions in Uzbek and Korean are very similar but, unlike Uzbek, in Korean, there exists adjective simile conjunction such as “같은” meaning “like,” and this simile conjunction cannot directly be followed by a verb or other adjectives. Another simile conjunction of the Korean language, “-처럼,” in its characteristics, cannot be directly followed by a noun.

However, “-day/dek” and “kabi” in Uzbek are identical in meaning and function, so when interchanged in the sentence, there is nothing wrong with grammar and expression.

Fifth, animals are big and have distinctive characteristics, so they help express thoughts and emotions that would be difficult to express in other ways. Thus, humans have created many expressions with the analogy to animals.

However, as there are cultural and geographical differences, different animals are used for the same expression and their images differ among peoples.

Likewise, the simile provides fairly interesting information in terms of linguistics, anthropology, and cultural studies. In particular, through simile supplementary concepts used in

simile, we have the opportunity to understand the thought systems and cultural distinctiveness of certain people, thus clearly perceiving the differences of other countries.

The comparative language research results, such as this thesis, play a role in showing the difference and help people to see their distinctive characteristics from others more plausibly and objectively.

This suggests that they can be used as trustworthy material to sustain their culture and language amid the wave of globalization.

So far, there have not been many comparative studies on the Uzbek and Korean languages. I hope that through more active exchanges at the academic level as well as at the national level, new academic theories and facts unrevealed to the world will be brought to light.

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