

Cross-Cultural Perspectives On Allegory: Linguoculturological Features In English And Uzbek Literal Texts

Rajapova Malika Akhmadali kizi¹, Haydarova Gulhayo Akhmadaliyevna², Karimova Vasila Vahobovna³, Zakirova Dilrabo Khaydarovna⁴, Davlatova Adiba Rakhmatovna⁵, Burhanova Dilnoza Ilhomjon qizi⁶, Yuldasheva Dilorom Aliyevna⁷, Meliyeva Xusnida Xafizaliyevna⁸

¹PhD, lecturer at Kokand state university, Uzbekistan. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0696-0497>

²PhD, senior lecturer at Kokand state university, Uzbekistan. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-8262-304X>

³PhD, Docent at Kokand state university, Uzbekistan, Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3610-3001>

⁴Department of Russian Language and Literature, Senior Lecturer (PhD), Uzbekistan, Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0739-7296>

⁵Doctor of Philological Sciences (DSc), Professor at Chirchik state pedagogical university

Orcid: <https://orcid.org/my-orcid?orcid=0009-0009-8470-0138>

⁶PhD, Docent at Kokand state university, Uzbekistan

⁷PhD, lecturer at Kokand state university, Uzbekistan.

⁸PhD, lecturer at Kokand state university, Uzbekistan. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-7858-8599>

Abstract

This study investigates the linguoculturological features of allegory in English and Uzbek literary texts through a comparative and semiotic perspective. Drawing upon George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Muhammadsharif Gulhaniy's *Zarbulmasal*, the research analyzes how allegorical units reflect national worldviews, cultural codes, and collective consciousness. Descriptive, comparative-contrastive, semantic-stylistic, and cognitive-metaphorical methods were employed to reveal the universal and culture-specific functions of allegory as a linguistic and cultural phenomenon. The findings demonstrate that allegory serves as a key means of expressing socio-political and moral ideas through symbolic representation, thereby bridging language and culture. In both works, allegorical imagery not only conveys national identity and ethical values but also enables intercultural dialogue and understanding of global human issues. The paper contributes to modern linguoculturology by elucidating how figurative devices—particularly allegory, metaphor, and symbol—function as cognitive and cultural signifiers across languages.

Keywords: allegory, linguoculturology, comparative linguistics, symbolic imagery, cultural codes, *Animal Farm*, *Zarbulmasal*, George Orwell, Muhammadsharif Gulhaniy, cross-cultural analysis.

Introduction

In contemporary linguistics, the circulation and adaptation of modern philological research methodologies acquire particular significance insofar as they enable the exploration of how linguistic units manifested in literary texts are interconnected with cognitive processes of the human mind. Accordingly, the analysis of allegory through the lens of literary works across diverse languages, the examination of figurative devices in their direct and indirect role in shaping an individual's national and linguistic worldview, as well as the investigation of both universal and language-specific regularities of their functioning, have become pressing issues in modern linguistic inquiry. Within this framework, research directed at identifying scientifically grounded solutions to these problems underscores the crucial importance of studying the intricate relationship between language and thought in the broader process of comprehending and conceptualizing reality.

Scientific novelty of the research is as the following:

The study demonstrates that in the linguistic national-cultural worldview, the allegorical concept of different systemic languages, their universal nature, associative characteristics, and the expression of common semantic mechanisms of language and culture through allegorical means are substantiated

within artistic texts on the basis of English and Uzbek language materials from linguoculturological and semiotic perspectives.

A semantic-typological analysis of similarities and differences in figurative devices—such as allegory, simile, metonymy, and metaphor—employed in literary texts belonging to the selected languages is provided. Within this framework, the practical manifestation of linguocultural norms, the structural-semantic convergence, and the differential features of allegorical units in the national-cultural codification of artistic texts are grounded.

Furthermore, allegorical means are characterized within the conversational and publicistic styles of English and Uzbek languages as emotionally expressive elements. The research identifies distinctive criteria of figurative devices whereby artistic images, events, and symbols influence readers or listeners indirectly through means of representation rather than direct expression. It is also scientifically and practically proven that linguopoetic units generate semantic load, thereby enriching the artistic text.

Literature Review

In world linguistics, figurative expressions of literary texts such as symbol, allegory, metaphor, and simile, as well as the fields of linguoculturology, have been extensively investigated. Among them, the contributions of A. Fletcher [1], I. Arnold [2], I. Galperin [3], T. Znamenskaya [4], Sh. Maaz [5], M. Edelson [6], V. Maslova [7], and V. Humboldt [8] are invaluable. A significant contribution to the study of allegorical devices was made by J. Gulya, who conducted research under the theme “Allegory Enlightenment: The Adaptation of Allegorical Form in British Literature, 1660–1750” [9], where he explored the use of allegory in British literature during the years 1660–1750 and examined the historical origins of allegorical forms. V. Burchak, in his scholarly work “Allegory and Its Functions in Russian Poetry of the 1870s” [10], analyzed the use, functions, and peculiarities of allegory in Russian poetics. Similarly, T. Ushakova investigated the figurative devices of allegory and symbol in the poetry of Nikolai Gumilev [11].

In Uzbek linguistics, a considerable number of studies have been devoted to stylistic devices, particularly allegory and its manifestations, with special attention to its diverse characteristics and functions. Important contributions have been made by N. Mahmudov [12], A. Berialiyev [13], M. Yoʻldashev [14], D. Khudoyberganova [15], A. Rahimov [16], A. Nurmonov [17], S. Moʻminov [18], M. Hakimov [19], Sh. Safarov [20], and O. Bozorov [21]. In recent years, F. Usmanov has described the national linguistic worldview of the Uzbek language by examining fixed similes from a linguocultural perspective and grounding the system of values specific to Uzbek culture [22].

Nevertheless, allegory in Uzbek and English, its peculiarities, as well as the linguo-culturological features of allegorical devices used in literary texts, still require further research and remain to be studied in a monographic aspect.

In this study, descriptive, classificatory, comparative-contrastive, semantic-stylistic, contextual, and cognitive-metaphorical analysis methods were employed.

Allegory is regarded as a form of symbolism, in which a symbolic word (image) is employed to represent a concrete depiction in place of an abstract concept, event, or object. In other words, it is a method of expressing an indeterminate or abstract concept through features associated with commonly known objects. Allegory serves to render abstract notions or ideas in a vivid and figurative form. For example, the word “wolf” carries different semantic meanings across cultures: in some contexts it symbolizes evil and hostility, whereas in others it represents bravery and courage. Similarly, the word “fox” is interpreted as a linguo-cultural symbol of cunning and craftiness. Such instances are recognized as the earliest linguo-culturological manifestations of allegory.

Since ancient times, abstract concepts that were difficult to articulate directly have been conveyed through bright and figurative images, that is, in allegorical form. Allegory has been extensively used from the earliest examples of world literature. In Greek literature, Aesop’s fables serve as primary illustrations, while in Eastern literature the collection *Kalila and Dimna* is among the earliest samples. Later, allegory found expression in works such as Prudentius’s *Psychomachia* (The Battle of the Souls), Guillaume de Lorris’s *Romance of the Rose*, and Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy*.

The emergence of the concept of allegory dates back to the 6th century BC. The expression “the first allegorist” is attributed to Homer for his interpretations rich in allegorical expressions [23]. In addition, Theagenes of Rhegium (whom Porphyry refers to as “the first allegorist”) or Pherecydes of

Syros are assumed to represent the earliest manifestations of allegory [24]. German stylisticians E. Riesel and Ye. Schendels, meanwhile, interpreted allegory as a type of metaphor. They classified figurative devices into several categories: metaphor (pure metaphor, personification, allegory, symbol, synesthesia); metonymy (synecdoche, pars pro toto); epithet (tautological epithets, explanatory epithets, simple epithets, complex epithets); periphrasis (irony, litotes); and simile [25].

The Roman philosopher and statesman Cicero (106–43 BC), in his famous treatise *De Oratore*, defines allegory as follows: “the frequent repetition of metaphor is called allegory by the Greeks”. Interpreting allegory as a rhetorical device composed of multiple metaphors, Cicero demonstrates that metaphor and allegory are closely related and interconnected means of expression [26].

Allegory is regarded as a type of tropic expression, a figurative linguistic unit employed to enhance artistic expressiveness through metaphorical meaning, represented by a word or phrase used symbolically. Allegory, irony, metonymy, metaphor, epithet, synecdoche, and simile are among the most widely applied forms of tropes. Likewise, allegory is also viewed as a form of figurative expression (majoz). In the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language*, allegory is defined as: “the expression of abstract concepts or ideas by means of a concrete image; figurative expression (majoz)” [27]. Linguistic dictionaries often interpret allegory and majoz as equivalent devices of representation: “Majoz (allegory) is the expression of an idea (concept) through concrete images. Unlike the polysemous symbol, it has a single meaning and is conceived separately from the image” [28]. In literary dictionaries, allegory is defined as: “the art of depicting human lifestyle, virtues, and vices through the transfer of traits to inanimate objects, events, birds, and animals” [29]. In such works, objects, animals, and birds do not directly reflect their natural qualities; rather, they serve as vehicles for illuminating distinct aspects of human life and spiritual reality. For instance, the flower symbolizes a benevolent person, the storm an evil-minded individual, and the hare cowardice or boastfulness. The formation of allegory is grounded in human relationships, where people refrained from direct expression of thoughts, preferring instead to employ animals, birds, and objects as symbolic means of communication. In the West, allegory became a medium for discussing class relations, whereas in the East it primarily functioned as a means of promoting moral and ethical issues. Some literary dictionaries further define allegory as “a trope based on representing an abstract concept or phenomenon through a concrete object” [30]. As a type of trope, allegory acquires diverse cultural interpretations. For example, the parrot symbolizes eloquence in Uzbek culture but imitation in English culture; the nightingale signifies melodiousness in both cultures; the fox embodies cunning in Uzbek culture but beauty in English culture. In Uzbek tradition, these are also referred to as symbols (ramz). Within the oral folklore genre of fairy tales, such images convey symbolic meanings. In his research, F. Usmonov emphasizes that similes—figurative units created by linguistic means—constitute an essential component of the worldview shaped in collective consciousness [31]. The study reveals that the images expressed through similes bear national-cultural connotations and reflect a system of values embedded in their semantic structures. In particular, it is substantiated that simile units function as linguocultural codes, serving as tools that integrate stereotypical images deeply entrenched in collective thought with the language and culture of a community.

Methods

Descriptive, classificatory, comparative-contrastive, semantic-stylistic, contextual, and cognitive-metaphorical analysis methods were employed in the research.

Research And Discussion

“Animal Farm” is also analyzed from linguoculturological and linguopragmatic perspectives. Examining George Orwell’s aim—namely, to expose the weighty, oppressive nature of totalitarian rule—demonstrates the need for a distinctive approach in terms of pragmatics. Linguopragmatics is a scholarly method that investigates language use and its practical functions; its main points are as follows:

In the linguopragmatic analysis of the work, the practical functions of language, modes of speech, contents, meanings, and processes of meaning-making are examined. Such analysis affords broad opportunities to explore how the book is used for directive purposes, how it reflects political society and government through animals, and how meanings are expressed through words.

The work narrates key events of the twentieth century. The author employs not only allegory but also a wide array of stylistic devices such as metaphor and simile. Readers are led to reflect: Why is our world like this? How should it truly be? From these reflections, one may infer that the work's essential content pertains to the Soviet period. The prominent allegorical expression of the book suggests that betrayal, falsification of events and facts, and attempts to reshape history for one's own ends are recurrent features of human society, underpinned by a persistent drive for power. According to this view, the lust for power is cloaked in the guise of a striving for freedom: having freed themselves from human domination and seeking to build a cowshed (farm) grounded in equality and liberty, the animals reestablish a dictatorship—namely, the rule of one group of animals over another. The work criticizes the totalitarian order of the twentieth century, especially Stalinism. Through a seemingly simple fable about farm animals who rise against their farmer, Orwell crafts a narrative rich in allegory that reflects the events from the 1917 Russian Revolution to the subsequent rise of the Soviet Union.

From the first chapter—"... Old Major (so he was always called, though the name under which he had been exhibited was Willingdon Beauty) was so highly regarded on the farm that everyone was quite ready to lose an hour's sleep in order to hear what he had to say..." (translation: "... 'Old Major' (he was always called that, although when taken to exhibitions he was shown under the name 'Willingdon Beauty') was held in such high esteem on the farm that all the animals agreed to the proposal.")—the figure of "Old Major, the boar" is used to criticize certain leaders of that era's government. Their pursuit of self-interest alone is suggested by remarks such as, "in recent times, he had broadened not in height but in girth," which also implies the outward appearance of state officials. Allegory here is discerned not in a single sentence, but across several sentences or within a broader context.

Similarly, "...He was twelve years old and had lately grown rather stout, but he was still a majestic-looking pig with a wise and benevolent appearance in spite of the fact that his tusches had never been cut. Before long the other animals began to arrive and make themselves comfortable after their different fashions" (translation: "...Despite his fearsome tusks, he remained as noble as before, with eyes radiating wisdom and kindness. Quite some time passed until all the animals had gathered and each had found a place to sit according to its taste."). This passage evokes the assemblies called to discuss state affairs, which often produce no real benefit—and, when they do, that benefit serves officials alone.

"The two cart-horses Boxer and Clover came in together, walking very slowly and setting down their vast hairy hoofs with great care lest there should be some small animal concealed in the straw..." (translation: "...The steeds named Boxer and Clover arrived together. They moved cautiously and slowly so that their broad, hairy hooves would occupy as little space as possible..."). In this example, the two horses are likened to politicians careful not to jeopardize their positions. In the work, Clover embodies a female leader and Boxer a male leader who hold similar posts within the government. The description—"...Clover was a stout motherly mare approaching middle life, who had never quite got her figure back after her fourth foal. Boxer was an enormous beast, nearly eighteen hands high, and as strong as any two ordinary horses put together..." (translation: "Clover was approaching middle age, sturdy, and full of maternal tenderness; after her fourth foal she never quite regained her former figure. Boxer's appearance involuntarily inspired respect—his withers were about six feet high, and he was so strong that he possessed the power of two ordinary horses.")—also conveys gender hierarchy, advancing the notion that men's activity in leadership is more effective than women's. A glance at the Soviet system reveals that women were scarcely involved in state affairs; governance was predominantly male. Later depictions of Boxer underscore that the leaders of that time were not particularly enlightened: "...A white stripe down his nose gave him a somewhat stupid appearance, and in fact he was not of first-rate intelligence, but he was universally respected for his steadiness of character and tremendous powers of work" (translation: "...The white stripe running down his face gave the steed a somewhat foolish look; to tell the truth, he was not especially intelligent. Yet he pleased everyone with his calm disposition and extraordinary diligence.").

From beginning to end, the work is composed of allegorical units—from its characters to the development of events. For example: "...Muriel, the white goat, and Benjamin the donkey. Benjamin was the oldest animal on the farm, and the worst tempered. He seldom talked, and when he did it was usually to make some cynical remark..." (translation: "Muriel, the white goat, and Benjamin, the donkey. Benjamin was the oldest and the most ill-tempered creature on the farm. He rarely spoke, and

when he did, it was usually to voice a sardonic remark.”). This allegorical depiction represents those functionaries who served the government yet did not respect other members of society as persons. The character Benjamin is also portrayed as indolent, wishing to avoid exertion in the absence of real opportunity. The following passage illustrates this: “...for instance, he would say that God had given him a tail to keep the flies off, but that he would sooner have had no tail and no flies. Alone among animals on the farm, he never laughed. If asked why he would say that he saw nothing to laugh at” (translation: “...He once said that the Creator had given him a tail to drive away flies, but that it would be better to have neither flies nor a tail. Among the animals, he alone never laughed—and if asked why, he would say there was nothing to laugh at.”). Through this example, the author depicts a figure within the system who does not desire progress and prefers an unchanging way of life.

Gulxaniy’s Zarbulmasal occupies a distinctive place not only in Uzbek literature but also in world literature, owing to its stylistic range and the modes in which it deploys stylistic and figurative devices. Composed in the genre of the fable, the work recounts events drawn directly from the life of the people and, by virtue of its accessible style, enables readers to interpret and analyze their own lives through the events depicted. Zarbulmasal has been published both as a standalone text and in literary-history anthologies, and it has been translated into Russian. Principally didactic in tenor, the work brings together various folk proverbs, aphorisms, and exemplary narratives, in which lived experience, human virtues, and moral values take center stage. An allegorical reading of Zarbulmasal illuminates its deeper meanings, for each story or fable comprises not merely surface-level events but also embedded significations, symbolism, and instruction. The distinctiveness of the literary text lies precisely in this symbolism and its didactic teachings.

The linguistic resources used in Zarbulmasal also allow for a close investigation of the language of Gulxaniy’s era. Accordingly, this study examines the work’s linguistic significance—specifically, its lexical, phonetic, morphological, syntactic, stylistic, and semantic features. Through the language of the text, Gulxaniy’s artistic style and its ties to oral folk tradition are brought to light, as is the work’s place in the development of the Uzbek language. A brief look at the lexical layer reveals the following hallmarks:

The text is rich in archaisms and historical words. For example:

“Anda Yapaloqqush aydi: ‘Men sizni bilimlik va ma’nidin boxabar kishi faxmlab erdim, ‘Karnay misdin, balg’am isdin’ bo’lurini bilmas ekansiz’.” (“Thereupon the Owl said: ‘I had taken you for a learned person, one versed in meaning, yet it seems you do not even know that ‘the trumpet is of copper and phlegm comes from [its source].’”)

“...Anda Ko’rqush aytur: ‘Mundog’ fahm va xirad sar manzilidin o’tgan kishilarni ko’rgan emasman.’” (“Then the Vulture says: ‘I have never seen people possessed of such understanding and wisdom.’”)

Such archaisms are valuable sources for historical linguistics. For instance (modern equivalents given first in Uzbek; English glosses in parentheses):

himoya ← homoya (protection/defense); ular ← alar (they); aytdi ← aydi (said); bilan/birga ← birlon/bila (with/together); inidan ← inidin (from the lair/den); boraman ← borurman (I go / I will go); nogahon ← banogoh (suddenly/unexpectedly); u ← ul (that/he/she); nimadan ← nedin (from what / why); yorgani ← yorg’ali (quilt); eltib beruvchi ← hammol (porter/carrier); tuyay ← teva (camel); joyladi ← jo’bladi (placed/arranged); ketidan ← keynidin (after/behind); gid / yo’lboshlovchi ← sorbon (guide; camel driver); turli ← turluk (various); ko’rib ← ko’rub (having seen/seeing); juda ← xud (very/quite); and many others.

Among the other narratives in Muhammadsharif Gulxaniy’s Zarbulmasal, the tale “Maymun bilan najjor” (“The Monkey and the Carpenter”) holds particular significance as an allegorical piece. It embeds a range of meanings and didactic ideas. In this story, a monkey enters a carpenter’s (najjor/duradgor) workplace, interferes with his tasks, and ultimately causes harm to himself and to others.

...Mindi yog’och ustiga najjordek,

Kosibi purkandai purkordek.

Ketdi hunar shavqi bila g’ussasi,

Tushdi yag’och ayrisig’a dumchasi...

Balki nedin bo’ldi tutulmoqlig’i,

Mumkin emas o'ldi qutulmoqlig'i.
Odami jinsida yo'q qissasi,
Qoldi aning dumchasining hissasi.

Translation:

A faithful rendering:

He climbed onto the timber like a carpenter,
As if a craftsman, busily at his trade [scattering chips].
His zeal for skill departed, replaced by distress;
His little tail slipped into the cleft of the wood.
Be it whatever the cause of his entrapment,
Deliverance proved impossible.
No such tale is told among the human race;

Only the lesson of his tail remained.

These lines allegorically convey that, before undertaking any task, one must first study and master it—whether a craft or a scholarly field—thoroughly and with discipline. Through the figure of the monkey, the narrative is, in fact, addressing human beings. The work's principal aim is to inculcate didactic ideals and sound moral upbringing; accordingly, we argue that its dedicated treatment in school textbooks could substantively contribute to children's ethical formation. For the allegorical analysis of "The Monkey and the Carpenter," the following categories may be distinguished as the following:

- knowledge and experience;
- non-interference in others' work;
- acting with foresight regarding consequences;
- personal responsibility and accountability;
- self-regulation and self-control

The monkey's entry into the carpenter's workshop and his meddling in a task he does not understand underscores the primacy of expertise, highlighting the necessity of specialization and knowledge in every field. The problems that arise from the monkey's interference further demonstrate the importance of refraining from unwarranted intrusion into another's work. The narrative thus articulates—through allegory and, at points, through metaphor, metonymy, and personification—the principles that one should not pass careless judgment on another's labor and should remain faithful to one's own task. The tale also reflects on self-governance: the capacity to restrain one's impulses and curiosities. Moreover, the monkey's lack of a sense of responsibility—and the resulting harm—emphasizes that every individual must be answerable for their actions, so that neither others nor the self suffer. The aforementioned trait of self-control is presented through symbolic figures, teaching that one should not yield to fleeting whims and should think deeply before beginning any undertaking—an affirmation of the importance of self-monitoring and the deliberate management of one's conduct.

Conclusion

Allegory encapsulates a two-level semantics and, from a linguoculturological perspective, functions as a key medium for reflecting a society's cultural and social outlooks: by conveying cultural concepts through symbols and metaphors, it affords a deeper understanding of the national mentality. Accordingly, allegory serves as a principal instrument in studying the linguoculturological facets of literary texts. As a literary technique, it is an effective means of expressing meanings symbolically. In George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Gulxaniy's *Zarbulmasal*, allegorical representations enable a profound interpretation of social, political, and moral issues.

Allegorical units mirror the interaction between culture and language, expressing speakers' national distinctiveness, social values, and way of life. Here, linguoculturological units—particularly metaphor, metonymy, and symbols—occupy an important place as carriers of cultural information within language. Linguoculturological analyses help elucidate the cultural and social content of works. Both texts, by exploiting the symbolic resources of language, reflect the cultural and ethical values of their time. From a linguoculturological standpoint, they also permit cross-cultural

comparison of national value systems and serve as vehicles of international dialogue for understanding global and national problems.

The use of allegory in literary texts is crucial for identifying linguoculturological foundations. Language is thoroughly anthropological in character, and the task of linguoculturology is to explicate the cultural content of linguistic units that embody a nation's cultural mentality, to identify cultural stereotypes as manifested through language, and—through those stereotypes—to reveal culture's conceptual order and system of values.

Allegorical units, culturally and linguoculturologically, serve to depict the condition of a given period or society. Such units disclose human qualities, social relations, and values through symbolic images, thereby underscoring the relevance of analyzing texts from a linguoculturological perspective. The cognitive landscape of a text is the manifestation in language of its conceptual landscape. Culture, for its part, is the aggregate of a nation's norms, criteria, and values, and is semiotic in nature.

By analyzing allegorical units, linguoculturology deepens our understanding of the integration of language and culture. This approach directs special attention to how cultural stereotypes, traditional views, and social ideals are reflected through linguistic means, demonstrating allegory's distinctive significance in linguistics and cultural studies. In constructing allegories, a nation typically selects as prototypes what is familiar and salient in its lived experience, a process that is conditioned by national-cultural connotations.

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