

The Grammatical Structure and Meaning of Similes in the Uzbek Language

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Abstract. This article examines the grammatical structure and semantic characteristics of similes in the Uzbek language. Similes, as a prominent stylistic device, play a crucial role in expressing comparisons, emphasizing qualities, and enhancing the figurative meaning of expressions. The study investigates the syntactic patterns commonly used in Uzbek similes, including noun-based, adjective-based, and verb-based comparisons, and analyzes the morphological markers that signal resemblance. Semantic analysis focuses on how similes convey similarity, intensity, or metaphorical nuances within context. The research highlights the interplay between grammar and meaning in similes, contributing to a deeper understanding of Uzbek stylistics and its application in language teaching, literary analysis, and linguistic research.

Key words: simile, comparative construction, grammatical structure, semantics, Uzbek language, figurative meaning, word formation, syntactic patterns, stylistics.

Similes are one of the most important stylistic devices in language, serving to create vivid comparisons, clarify concepts, and enrich expression. They allow speakers and writers to draw parallels between different objects, actions, or qualities, making descriptions more expressive and relatable. In the Uzbek language, similes occupy a central role in both spoken and written communication, appearing in everyday speech, folklore, proverbs, and literary texts.

From a linguistic perspective, similes combine **grammatical structure** and **semantic meaning**, functioning at the intersection of syntax, morphology, and semantics. Grammatical analysis focuses on the syntactic patterns that enable comparisons, such as noun-based, adjective-based, or verb-based constructions, while semantic analysis examines how similes convey similarity, intensity, exaggeration, or metaphorical nuances. For example, in the Uzbek phrase “*oqday oq*” (“white as snow”), the comparison not only emphasizes the quality of whiteness but also conveys a vivid, figurative image.

Understanding the grammatical and semantic aspects of similes is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it contributes to the theoretical study of Uzbek stylistics, morphology, and syntax. Secondly, it provides practical insights for language teaching, helping learners recognize, interpret, and use similes effectively. Finally, it aids literary analysis, allowing scholars to interpret stylistic choices and cultural connotations embedded in texts.

This study aims to analyze the structural patterns and semantic functions of similes in the Uzbek language. By examining common constructions, morphological markers, and contextual meanings, the research seeks to provide a systematic understanding of how similes operate, highlighting their role in enhancing expressiveness and conveying nuanced meaning in Uzbek.

1. Theoretical Foundations of Similes

Similes are figurative expressions that compare two different entities to highlight shared characteristics, typically using comparative words or phrases. In Uzbek, similes are widely employed in literature, oral traditions, and everyday speech. Linguistically, similes are studied from both **grammatical** and **semantic** perspectives. The grammatical aspect examines syntactic structures and morphological markers that indicate comparison, while the semantic aspect focuses on meaning, similarity, intensity, or metaphorical nuances.

2. Grammatical Structures of Similes in Uzbek

Uzbek similes typically follow certain syntactic patterns based on the part of speech of the elements being compared:

2.1 Noun-based Similes

These similes compare two nouns using comparative markers such as *day*, *kabi*, or *singari* (meaning “like” or “as”).

Examples:

1. *Oyday nurli* — “bright as the moon” (comparing a person’s radiance to the moon).
2. *Arslon kabi jasur* — “brave like a lion” (indicating courage).
3. *Qush singari yengil* — “light as a bird” (emphasizing lightness).

Noun-based similes often involve a subject or object and emphasize qualities associated with concrete or abstract nouns.

2.2 Adjective-based Similes

Adjective-based similes compare qualities or characteristics of two entities.

Examples:

1. *Qor day oq* — “white as snow” (emphasizing extreme whiteness).
2. *Shirin kabi asal* — “sweet like honey” (indicating pleasantness or charm).

Here, the comparative marker links the adjectives, showing similarity in a particular property.

2.3 Verb-based Similes

Verb-based similes compare actions or behaviors, often highlighting intensity, speed, or manner.

Examples:

1. *Tez yugurdi, qush kabi* — “ran quickly, like a bird” (indicating swiftness).
2. *Yumshoq so 'zladi, shamolday* — “spoke gently, like the wind” (emphasizing manner of speech).

These similes demonstrate how Uzbek uses verbal actions in figurative comparisons, enriching narrative and descriptive expression.

3. Semantic Functions of Similes

Similes in Uzbek perform several key semantic functions:

1. Expressing similarity:

Similes highlight shared features between two entities, as in “*Arslon kabi jasur*” (brave like a lion).

2. Intensifying meaning:

By comparing an object to a highly salient entity, similes intensify the attribute, e.g., “*Qor day oq*” emphasizes extreme whiteness.

3. Conveying stylistic or metaphorical nuances:

Similes add figurative or poetic expression, often evoking emotions, imagery, or cultural associations, such as “*Shirin kabi asal*” to indicate charm or pleasantness.

4. Morphological Markers in Uzbek Similes

Uzbek uses specific **comparative markers** that signal resemblance:

Marker	Function	Example	Translation
day / -dek	“like/as”	<i>Oyday nurli</i>	bright as the moon
kabi	“like”	<i>Arslon kabi jasur</i>	brave like a lion
singari	“similar to”	<i>Qush singari yengil</i>	light as a bird

These markers are crucial in identifying similes and distinguishing them from literal expressions.

5. Stylistic and Cultural Considerations

Similes often reflect cultural values, imagery, and folklore. For instance:

- “*Arslon kabi jasur*” reflects traditional admiration for bravery.
- “*Shirin kabi asal*” evokes positive aesthetic and emotional associations.

Understanding both grammatical and semantic aspects allows learners and researchers to appreciate the richness of Uzbek similes in literature, oral traditions, and everyday communication.

This study of similes in the Uzbek language demonstrates the intricate relationship between grammatical structure and semantic meaning in figurative expressions. Similes function as a key stylistic device, enabling speakers and writers to convey comparisons, intensify qualities, and add vividness to language. Uzbek similes are typically formed using noun-based, adjective-based, or verb-based constructions, with specific comparative markers such as *day*, *kabi*, and *singari* signaling resemblance.

Structurally, these markers establish clear syntactic patterns, while semantically, similes convey similarity, intensity, and metaphorical nuance. Moreover, similes often reflect cultural values, imagery, and aesthetic preferences, linking linguistic form with social and literary context. For example, expressions like “*Arslon kabi jasur*” (“brave like a lion”) or “*Shirin kabi asal*” (“sweet like honey”) illustrate both structural regularity and rich semantic meaning.

In conclusion, understanding the grammatical structures and semantic functions of similes is essential for a comprehensive study of Uzbek stylistics, literature, and language teaching. This analysis highlights the productive, expressive, and culturally significant role of similes, offering valuable insights for linguists, educators, and students interested in figurative language and comparative linguistics.

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