

THE IMPORTANCE OF METAPHOR AND SIMILE IN ENGLISH AND
UZBEK ECONOMICAL TERMS

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Annotation: This article deals with contrastive study of Metaphor and simile in English and Uzbek economic terms. Moreover, types of metaphor and their usage in English and Uzbek languages comparatively studied.

Key words: economic metaphors, adequately, conceptual sphere, tendency, anthropomorphic metaphors, animal metaphors, synaesthetic metaphors.

When dealing with the specialised language of the field of Economics, one may often be at a loss regarding the translation of certain terms or structures from English into Romanian. Such a task proves even more arduous and demanding in the case of the so-called “economic metaphors”, which require, due to their particular status, the translator’s utmost attention and skills in order to adequately decode, and then render them into the TT. Thus, it would certainly be useful to analyse the structure and various types of economic metaphors, and try to establish strategies for their accurate translation into Romanian. Defined as the transference of some quality from one object to another, or, in psycholinguistic terms, “from one conceptual sphere or cognitive domain to another” metaphors seem to be in all cases “departures from a norm” the result of the use of words with deviant typicality conditions. Although seen as the typical rhetorical devices, Peter Newmark states that “metaphors help the reader to gain a more accurate insight,



both physical and emotional and may be added to the technical terminology of a semantic field and therefore contribute to greater accuracy in the use of language”.

In keeping with the same theory, Lakoff sees metaphor not as a figure of speech, but as a mode of thought defined by a systematic mapping. The problem of translation acquires a tremendous importance not only in fiction, but also in non-fictional texts, especially those pertaining to newly developed or emerging areas of human activity, such as the domain of Economics. So, stock and original metaphors are prominent in many West-European financial columns, and basically serve the purpose of jiggering up a series of passionless statistics, or ruthless mergers: `Ray got rid of the Board and took over the reins/ the roost/ the head/ the controls`, `Ray a revocat/ dezmembrat Consiliul de conducere si a preluat controlul/ comanda`. It is obvious that in the Romanian translation the metaphorical terms were slightly `cooled down`, preserving more of their function of enlivening the usually plain specialized language rather than their form, which appears as too informal to be suitable in the context[1].

One reason for this tendency towards strictness and sobriety in translating metaphorical economic terms in the English economic lexicon into Romanian may well be the inequality of development of such a specialized language in the two cases: while English disposes of a soundly established vocabulary in the field, Romanian has just engaged on the path to integrating its economy, and therefore its specialized vocabulary[2], into the European and global economic system. Lexicographic research has shown that English, considered as the international language of commerce and economic activities, comprises a multitude of specific metaphoric terms belonging to this particular field, which may well illustrate the various classifications that have been proposed for metaphors in general. The language of Economics contains a large range of metaphoric terms, which can be classified according to different criteria. According to the classification of



metaphors advanced by Ullmann , the language of Economics is well-represented in all the categories established by the researcher.

- anthropomorphic metaphors, i.e. transfers of meaning from the human body and its parts to inanimate objects, e.g. Samurai market (the foreign market in Japan), Yankee market (the foreign market in the U.S.), Matador market (the foreign market in Spain), arm`s length price (the price at which a willing buyer and a willing unrelated seller would freely agree to transact), beggar-thy-neighbour devaluation (a device that is designed to cheapen a nation`s currency and thereby increase its exports at other countries` expense and reduce imports), lifting a leg (closing out one side of a long-short arbitrage before the other is closed), daughter company, sister company, parent company, head office, etc. These terms hold a very important position in the language of Economics owing to the relationship they establish between economic entities and vehicles marked as [+HUMAN]. Therefore, it may be said that a basic formation principle of economic metaphors is the `humanization` of economic entities, so that to facilitate their comprehension and manipulation by human `end-users`[3].

- b) animal metaphors, viz. transfers of meaning from the animal field to other fields, e.g. Bulldog market (the foreign market in the U.K.), bear (an investor who believes a stock or the overall market will decline), buck (slang for one million dollars), fair game (an investment prospect that has a zero risk premium), butterfly shift (a non-parallel shift in the yield curve involving the height of the curve), hurdle rate (the required return in capital budgeting), bull market (a situation in a stock market or currency market where prices are raising and lots of shareholders are buying), shark (a person who lends money at a very high rate of interest), stag (a person who applies for shares with the intention of selling them immediately for profit), strike (a strike called at short notice and without trade union agreement), wildcat (of a project that is very



risky financially), cats and dogs (1. Slang for highly speculative, low-priced securities; 2. An odd assortment, especially of goods on sale), etc.

- c) metaphors that translate abstract experience into concrete terms, e.g. heavy industry/ industrie grea, light industry/ industrie usoara, to catch a cold/ a face o afacere proasta, to streamline/ a eficientiza, etc. Such terms display a high frequency of occurrence, due to their powerful evocative virtue, as they appeal to the basic human method of cognitive appropriation of abstract concepts, processes and entities, i.e. by means of concrete illustration and particularization.

- d) synaesthetic metaphors, i.e. metaphors based upon the transposition from one sense to another, are not so frequent, possibly because of the relatively narrow specialisation of this particular type of discourse, focusing not on humans (and implicitly human senses) but on economic concepts and entities. Such metaphors are however, highly suggestive and expressive: hot industry/ industrie eficienta/ profitabila/ cu activitate intensa/ de interes maxim (transferring the cognitive appreciation occasioned by the sense of sight to the physical sensation pertaining to the human sense of taste, apparently on the ground `similarity of effect`); to cook/ salt the books/ a cosmetiza/ falsifica registrele contabile (obtained by means of the transposition of the information received by the sense of sight to the sense of taste). It is to be remarked that the Romanian equivalent resorts to either a paraphrase of the initial metaphor, or the sense on which the target originally relied.

Simile is an explicit comparison between two unlike things through the use of connecting words, usually "like" or "as." The technique of simile is known as a rhetorical analogy, as it is a device used for comparison. The other most popular rhetorical analogy is metaphor, which shares some traits and is often confused with simile. As stated above, simile and metaphor are often confused. Though the



difference is simple between the definition of simile and that of metaphor, it can be profound. While simile compares two things with the connecting words “like” or “as,” metaphor simply states that one thing is the other. For example, a simile would be, “He was as aggressive as a tiger in that argument,” whereas a metaphor would be, “He was a tiger in that argument[4].” Metaphors are thus subtler and can be stronger in a rhetorical sense, because they equate the two things in comparison rather than just present them as similar. Similes, however, allow for truly bizarre comparisons that make the reader stretch to understand the connection between them.

To sum up, it should be highlighted that according to the metaphor`s degree of freshness or moment of creation, metaphorical economic terms fall into the category of dead metaphors, e.g. black economy, hard currency, liquidity, pie chart, price war, to flood the market, pyramid selling, red tape, wage-freeze, etc.; cliché metaphors, consisting of either stereotyped collocations, usually made up of a figurative adjective and a literal noun - blacklist, ballpark figure (an approximate figure), predatory pricing, etc., or vogue words, which exhibit a tendency to overuse, e.g. strategy, profile, crucial, etc. A special mention is due to live metaphors, with a rather rare occurrence in a specialized language, especially those belonging to slang.

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