

INGLIZ TILIDA PERSONFIKATSIYAGA UCHRAGAN EPITETLAR TAHLILI

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilidagi personifikatsiyaga uchragan epitetslar tahlil qilinadi. Epitetslar badiiy tasvir vositasi sifatida voqea-hodisalarni jonlantirish, obrazlarni yorqinroq gavdalantirishda muhim ahamiyatga ega. Personifikatsiyaga asoslangan epitetslarda odatda insonlarga xos belgi va sifatlar jonsiz predmet yoki tabiat hodisalariga ko‘chiriladi. Tadqiqotda XX asr ingliz adabiyotidan hamda zamonaviy matnlardan 100 dan ortiq misol yig‘ilib, ularning semantik va stilistik xususiyatlari tahlil qilindi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, bunday epitetslar asosan inson tashqi ko‘rinishi, xarakteri, kasallik nomlari va his-tuyg‘ularini ifodalovchi sifatlar orqali yuzaga keladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: epitets, personifikatsiya, badiiy tasvir, semantika, stilistika

АНАЛИЗ ЭПИТЕТОВ С ЭЛЕМЕНТАМИ ОЛИЦЕТВОРЕНИЯ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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Аннотация: В данной статье рассматриваются олицетворённые эпитеты в английском языке. Эпитеты как стилистическое средство играют важную роль в создании ярких художественных образов и «оживлении» описываемых явлений. В эпитетах с элементами олицетворения человеческие качества переносятся на неодушевлённые предметы или природные явления.

В ходе исследования было собрано более 100 примеров из литературы XX века и современных текстов на английском языке, которые подверглись семантическому и стилистическому анализу. Результаты показали, что подобные эпитеты в основном образуются от прилагательных, обозначающих внешность человека, черты характера, болезни и эмоции, а также от причастий настоящего времени, выражающих состояние или процесс.

Ключевые слова: эпитет, олицетворение, стилистическое средство, семантика, образность

ANALYSIS OF EPITHETS WITH ELEMENTS OF PERSONIFICATION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Annotation: This article analyzes personified epithets in the English language. As a stylistic device, epithets play an essential role in animating events and creating vivid imagery. In personification-based epithets, qualities that usually belong to human beings are transferred to inanimate objects or natural phenomena. For the study, more than 100 examples were collected from 20th-century English literature and modern texts, and their semantic and stylistic features were examined. The findings indicate that such epithets are most commonly formed from adjectives denoting human appearance, character traits, illnesses, and emotions expressing states or conditions.

Key words: epithet, personification, stylistic device, semantics, imagery

INTRODUCTION

Linguists and literary scholars have always been interested in epithets because they demonstrate how language can transform common words into rich and significant images. Personified epithets are one of the most intriguing

categories among them. They give things, concepts, or natural occurrences human characteristics, which helps us feel more connected to and alive in the world. To put it another way, language uses this device to reflect the innate human propensity to comprehend the world by contrasting it with ourselves (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Personification is a well-known figure of speech in general. It is used by authors to enhance the expressiveness, interest, and emotional appeal of their writing. Readers instantly feel a deeper emotional connection when the sun is described as “smiling” or the sea as “cruel.” Such instances demonstrate how personified epithets influence how reality is perceived and understood in addition to adding color to a text (Preminger & Brogan, 1993). The cultural component of personified epithets adds to their intrigue. They frequently mirror shared customs, values, and experiences. These epithets can reveal a lot about how people view the world around them, as different cultures may choose different images to personify (Kövecses, 2010). However, their widespread usage in literature emphasizes how they help shape an author’s distinct voice and style. Personified epithets have not gotten the same level of concentrated attention as other stylistic devices, despite their significance. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate their operation, meanings, and cultural information they encode. The study intends to demonstrate how languages imaginatively employ epithets to “personify” the world and to reveal the cultural viewpoints concealed behind them by examining examples from English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous areas of linguistics, including stylistics, cognitive linguistics, and cultural linguistics, have examined the phenomenon of epithets. Scholars frequently emphasize that epithets are significant instruments for expressing cultural meanings and influencing perception, rather than just being ornamental (Galperin, 1981). Although they are related to the study of personification and metaphor, personified epithets have not gotten as much direct attention within this broad category.

Understanding personification as a linguistic and cognitive process was made possible by Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphor. Their framework states that personification is the process of projecting human characteristics onto non-human entities in order to make abstract or inanimate concepts easier to understand. By highlighting the cultural foundation of personification and metaphor and demonstrating how these expressions are closely linked to common cultural experiences and worldviews, Kövecses (2010) expanded on this concept.

Epithets have been studied in literary studies as tools for enhancing imagery and indicators of authorial style (Leech & Short, 2007). Personification in epithetical form, according to Preminger and Brogan (1993), is important in poetry and prose because it adds symbolic depth and emotional resonance. Additionally, comparative studies show that epithets vary among languages based on symbolic traditions and cultural associations (Bally, 1961).

Despite these realizations, systematic studies that concentrate on personified epithets in cross-linguistic contexts are still lacking. The majority of current research either looks at personification as part of metaphor theory or addresses epithets in general. This disparity emphasizes the necessity of conducting targeted studies on personified epithets as separate stylistic units.

METHODS

This study examines personified epithets in English from a qualitative method. The primary source type was selected in order to construct the dataset. Poetry, prose, and literary works of XX century, where epithets are particularly prevalent and employed for aesthetic effect. Purposive sampling was used to choose the examples. To put it another way, the study only looked at instances that were obviously personified, in which non-human things, phenomena, or abstract concepts were explained as though they had human feelings, traits, or behaviors. About 100 examples were collected in each language to guarantee balance.

There were multiple phases to the analysis. Initially, all of the epithets were recognized and categorized according to their semantic characteristics, such as

those that described moral qualities, emotions, or behaviors. Each example was then analyzed in its cultural and stylistic context. Using knowledge from cognitive and cultural linguistics, the study integrated descriptive and interpretive methodologies. In this way, the study investigated the deeper cultural meanings that personified epithets carry in addition to how they function as linguistic devices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personification, in a broad sense, is a form of metaphor, and in classical literature it is referred to as *tashxis* — the art of animation. It is the phenomenon of attributing qualities characteristic of humans, or of living beings in general, to inanimate objects and phenomena. It also includes the attribution of human qualities to animals (Kuronov D et.,al 2010). In English, this phenomenon is most clearly seen in epithetical constructions, where an epithet gives human-like qualities to inanimate objects. Such forms are known as *personification-based epithets*. They arise when the usual balance between the qualifier and the qualified word is disrupted: an adjective that would normally describe a living being is instead attached to a noun denoting an inanimate object. In this way, the epithet transfers features typical of living beings to non-living entities. Unlike some cases where nouns referring to humans evoke an “animation’ meaning in the adjectives that describe them, here the process works the other way around. The adjective itself carries human-related features, and when applied to an inanimate noun, it makes that noun appear alive or human-like. In other words, the epithet imposes animation onto the object. In the following section, this phenomenon will be explored and illustrated with examples:

A grey striped cat arched its back doubtfully near an anaemic maple tree (J.Lindsay).

In this example, the word *anaemic* functions as an epithet. It has several senses, such as “disease,” “a person suffering from anaemia,” and “pale and sickly looking.”(Collins Online English Dictionary). In the given case, it is the sense “pale and sickly looking” that is actualized. The adjective forms an attributive

phrase with the noun *maple tree*, thereby creating the expression *anaemic maple tree*. The word *anaemic* belongs to the adjective class and originally refers to anaemia, a disease characterized by a decrease in the number of red blood cells and hemoglobin, and is typically used to describe human conditions. However, in the example under discussion, this word forms an epithetical attributive phrase with the noun *tree*, figuratively describing a tree that is dehydrated and withering. As a result, an adjective normally applied to living beings is transferred to an inanimate object, producing a personified epithet.

Gumbril Senior occupied a tall, narrow-shouldered and rachitic house in a little obscure square not far from Paddington (A.Huxley).

In the given sentence, the words *narrow-shouldered* and *rachitic* function as epithets. The first adjective (*narrow-shouldered*) carries the semantic feature of “narrow,” while the second (*rachitic*) is associated with “rickets” or “deformed.” The epithet *narrow-shouldered* is usually used to describe the physical appearance of humans. The epithet *rachitic* typically refers to young, breastfed children who suffer from a deficiency of vitamin D, which disrupts mineral metabolism, bone formation, and the functioning of the nervous system. However, in the example under discussion, both words function as epithets applied to the inanimate noun *house*, resulting in personified epithets. The author uses these epithets to vividly depict the state of the house where the character Gumbril lives, emphasizing how dilapidated and worn it has become.

I’m trotting up the path out of the gates and turning by that bare-faced, big-bellied oak tree at the lane end (A.Sillitoe, “The Loneliness of the Long-distance Runner”, p11).

In this example, the words *bare-faced* and *big-bellied* form attributive combinations with the noun *tree*, producing personified epithets. The word *bare-faced* carries several semantic shades, including “having the face uncovered,” “wearing no mask,” “beardless,” and “without dress” (naked) (Collins online English Dictionary). Similarly, *big-bellied* may mean “having a prominent belly,” “thick,” or “grand.” In the given case, the epithet *bare-faced* realizes the meaning

of “without dress” (naked), while *big-bellied* conveys the senses of “thick” and “grand.” Together, these epithets create a vivid image of the tree, endowing it with human-like qualities and turning its physical form into an expressive, almost living portrait. These two epithets belong to the adjective class and are typically used to describe a person’s physical appearance. In the given example, however, they are applied to an *oak tree*, which, despite having shed its leaves, is portrayed as thick and imposing. This usage highlights the author’s skillful employment of epithets for artistic description, reflecting the individuality and distinctiveness of his literary style.

It began to rain, the slanting pitiless rain of an English winter (A.J.Cronin).

In the given sentence, the word *pitiless* functions as an epithet, realized through its meaning of “cruel.” In English, *pitiless* is an adjective typically used to describe human emotions or inner feelings. In this case, however, it is applied to the natural phenomenon *rain*, producing a personified epithet. By doing so, the author vividly conveys the relentlessness of the English winter rain, portraying it as merciless and unceasing. This choice of epithet demonstrates the writer’s ability to animate the scene and intensify the reader’s perception of the atmosphere.

He seemed driving through a world thievish shadows and obscurely threatening mechanisms (J.Lindsay).

In this example as well, an adjective typically used to describe human character traits is applied to a natural phenomenon — the *shadow*. The word *thievish*, belonging to the adjective class, literally means “dishonest” or “thieving” and is normally used to characterize a person. In the given sentence, however, the author employs it to describe a shadow, vividly portraying the moment when the protagonist finds himself trapped in a dead-end street, moving toward darkness. In all of the examples discussed, such a transfer results from a disruption of ordinary semantic compatibility. Adjectives that are usually applied to humans are attached to inanimate objects or natural phenomena, thereby creating personified epithets. As a result, these epithets animate the objects they describe, presenting them to the reader as if they were living beings.

CONCLUSION

Thus, in English, personified epithets are typically formed through the use of adjectives. Their function is to intensify the figurative portrayal of events in the narrative and to vividly embody the protagonist's traits and inner emotions before the reader's eyes. Such epithets play an essential role in enriching the imagery of the text and enhancing its emotional impact. Personified epithets are typically formed within attributive constructions, where the epithet functions as a modifier. Based on the examples, in English they often emerge from adjectives denoting illnesses, human appearance, character traits, and inner emotions, as well as from present participles that describe a state or condition. In personification-based epithets, the word functioning as the epithet belongs literally to the category of adjectives or present participles; hence, adjectivization does not occur. Both the adjective and the present participle are realized on the basis of specific semes of their lexical meaning, which give rise to personified epithets. The key feature here is the disruption of the usual compatibility between the modifier and the modified word: attributes characteristic of living beings are transferred to the object being described. As a result, an inverse process occurs in personified epithets: while in adjectives that are consistently used with nouns denoting human qualities the seme of 'animation' emerges under the influence of those nouns, in combinations with personified epithets it is the inanimate nouns that, under the influence of their modifiers, acquire the seme of "animation."

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