THE USE OF FLOWER NAMES WITHIN ARTISTIC-STYLISTIC DEVICES

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Annotation

This article examines the linguistic and literary functioning of flower names (phytonyms) as components of artistic-stylistic devices in English and, comparatively, in Uzbek literary texts. Flower names occupy a special place in the lexical-semantic system of a language because, beyond their direct nominative meaning, they regularly acquire figurative, symbolic and connotative meanings shaped by culture, folklore, religion and everyday experience. The study analyzes how phytonyms function within metaphor, simile, epithet, personification, symbol and metonymy, and how these figurative uses reflect national world-view (concept-sphere) and aesthetic tradition. Examples are drawn from classical and modern English poetry and prose, as well as from Uzbek classical and contemporary literature, to demonstrate both universal and culture-specific tendencies in the stylistic exploitation of flower vocabulary. The article argues that flower names form a distinct and productive stylistic-lexical microsystem that deserves systematic study within cognitive stylistics, comparative literature and translation studies. Findings suggest that while certain flower symbols (the rose, the lily) show remarkable semantic universality across cultures, others carry markedly different connotations, which has direct implications for literary translation and intercultural communication.

Key words

phytonym, flower name, artistic-stylistic device, metaphor, simile, epithet, personification, symbol, connotation, comparative linguistics, cognitive stylistics, English literature, Uzbek literature.

1. Introduction

Language is not only a means of communication but also a repository of a people's aesthetic and cultural experience. Among the many lexical groups that carry rich figurative potential, the names of flowers (phytonyms) occupy a particularly prominent position. From the earliest folk songs to the most sophisticated works of modern fiction, writers and poets have turned to flowers — the rose, the lily, the violet, the poppy, the tulip, the daisy — not merely to describe nature but to express emotion, character, fate and moral judgement.

The actuality of the present research is determined by the growing interest of modern linguistics in the anthropocentric and cognitive study of language, in which lexical units are examined not in isolation but as elements of a broader conceptual and cultural system. Flower names represent an especially fruitful field for such research because they lie at the intersection of botany, folklore, religion, painting and literature. Studying how phytonyms are transformed into stylistic devices allows us to understand deeper mechanisms of figurative thinking and the way a given linguo-culture perceives beauty, love, death, purity, transience and other universal categories.

The object of the research is the artistic-stylistic devices built on flower names in English-language literary texts; the subject is the semantic, structural and functional peculiarities of these devices, examined in comparison with parallel phenomena in Uzbek literature. The aim of the article is to identify and systematize the principal stylistic functions of flower names and to reveal the extent to which their figurative meanings are universal or culturally specific.

To achieve this aim, the following tasks are set: (1) to define the linguistic status of phytonyms as a lexical-semantic group; (2) to describe the main stylistic devices in which flower names participate; (3) to illustrate each device with authentic literary examples; (4) to compare English and Uzbek material in order to reveal common and distinctive features; (5) to draw conclusions relevant to stylistics, comparative literary studies and translation practice.

2. Theoretical Background: Phytonyms as a Stylistic-Lexical Microsystem

A phytonym is a lexical unit denoting a plant, in our case specifically a flower. Within the lexical system of a language, phytonyms form a semantic field united by the common seme 'flower/plant', yet each individual name additionally accumulates a set of connotative and symbolic meanings that are not derivable from its denotative meaning alone. For example, the direct meaning of rose is simply the name of a particular flowering shrub and its blossom; however, through centuries of literary, religious and folkloric use, rose has come to connote love, beauty, passion, secrecy (as in the expression 'sub rosa') and even political allegiance (the Wars of the Roses).

This accumulation of secondary meanings is what makes flower names so productive as material for artistic-stylistic devices. Stylistics defines such devices as intentional deviations from the neutral, norm-governed use of language, employed to achieve expressiveness, imagery and emotional-evaluative effect. When a flower name is used not to identify a botanical object but to characterize a person, an emotion, or an abstract idea, it undergoes a semantic shift that is the essence of tropes such as metaphor, simile, epithet and symbol.

It should be emphasized that flower symbolism is never purely arbitrary. It is grounded in the real perceptual properties of the flower — its colour, fragrance, shape, fragility, the shortness of its bloom, or the presence of thorns — which the human mind projects onto abstract domains such as human character, feeling or fate. This process corresponds to what cognitive linguists call conceptual metaphor: the mapping of a concrete, sensorily rich source domain (FLOWER) onto a more abstract target domain (WOMAN, LOVE, YOUTH, DEATH).

3. Flower Names in Metaphor

Metaphor is the most widespread stylistic device built on flower names. In English poetry, a young and beautiful woman is frequently metaphorically identified with a flower in full bloom, while the fading of a flower stands for the loss of youth or the approach of death. Robert Burns's famous comparison of his beloved to 'a red, red rose' has become one of the most quoted metaphorical images in English literature, fusing colour symbolism (red = passion, vitality) with the flower's natural freshness.

Shakespeare uses flower metaphors extensively across the sonnets and plays: the fleeting beauty of a rose is repeatedly invoked as a metaphor for mortal beauty threatened by time, most memorably in Sonnet 1, where the poet urges 'that thereby beauty's rose might never die.' Here the rose is not a decorative image but the central metaphorical vehicle carrying the sonnet's whole argument about beauty, procreation and the destructive power of time.

Modern English prose continues this tradition in a more understated way: authors metaphorically describe a character's cheeks as 'blossoming like roses,' a shy smile as 'unfolding like a flower,' or a community's sudden cultural flourishing as 'a garden coming into bloom.' In each case the flower metaphor transfers not only visual qualities (colour, shape) but also a temporal quality — the idea of a brief, precious period of flourishing that will inevitably pass.

Uzbek classical poetry demonstrates a strikingly parallel yet independently developed tradition. In the ghazals of Alisher Navoi, the beloved's face is compared to a 'gul' (rose/flower) whose freshness eclipses the garden itself, while the poet-lover is likened to a nightingale (bulbul) forever singing to the rose. This gul-bulbul (rose-nightingale) pair is one of the most stable metaphorical constructs of the entire Perso-Turkic literary tradition and functions as a ready-made symbolic system for expressing unattainable love, longing and devotion.

4. Flower Names in Simile

While metaphor asserts identity between the flower and the tenor, simile makes the comparison explicit through markers such as like, as, or resemble. English literature abounds with similes of the type 'fair as a lily,' 'fresh as a daisy,' 'delicate as a violet,' 'fragile as a poppy petal.' Such similes typically single out one salient property of the flower — whiteness and purity in the lily, freshness in the daisy, fragility in the poppy — and project it directly onto a human quality.

A particularly productive simile pattern in English involves contrasting a flower's outward beauty with an inner danger or flaw, as in the traditional warning image of someone being 'as deceptive as a

beautiful but poisonous flower.' This type of simile performs an evaluative-didactic function, warning the reader or listener against judging by appearance alone.

In Uzbek literature, similes built on gul (flower), lola (tulip) and bino/full (rose) names are equally frequent in both classical and folk poetry. A girl's beauty is traditionally compared to a freshly opened rose (yangi ochilgan gulday), while red cheeks are likened to a tulip (loladay), a comparison that also carries patriotic-heroic connotations in later Uzbek poetry, where the tulip additionally symbolizes the blood of martyrs and thus national memory.

5. Flower Names in Epithet and Personification

Epithets built on flower names compress an entire evaluative image into a single attributive word or phrase: 'rose-lipped,' 'lily-white,' 'violet-eyed.' These compound epithets are characteristic of English descriptive poetry and continue to be productive in contemporary fiction, where they economically evoke both a visual image and an emotional-aesthetic judgement (purity for lily-white, delicacy and rarity for violet-eyed).

Personification, in turn, endows the flower itself with human qualities, actions or emotions. English Romantic poetry, particularly the work of William Wordsworth, presents daffodils that 'toss their heads in sprightly dance,' turning a field of flowers into a joyfully animated crowd. This personifying strategy allows the poet to transfer human emotional states onto nature and, reciprocally, to let nature's vitality restore or elevate the poet's own mood — a hallmark of Romantic nature philosophy.

Uzbek poetry similarly personifies flowers, most often granting them the ability to feel longing, joy or sorrow in sympathy with the lyrical hero. A flower may be described as 'weeping' with morning dew or 'smiling' at the rising sun, reinforcing the traditional unity between human feeling and the natural world that pervades Eastern lyric poetry.

6. Flower Names as Cultural Symbols

Beyond individual tropes, certain flower names function as stable cultural symbols whose meaning is understood by native readers without any additional explanatory context. In the English-speaking world, the rose symbolizes love (particularly the red rose) but also secrecy, England itself (the Tudor rose), and, in a funerary context, remembrance. The lily symbolizes purity and is closely associated with Easter and the Virgin Mary in Christian iconography, while the poppy has become the internationally recognized symbol of remembrance for those who died in war, following its association with the battlefields of Flanders.

In Uzbek and broader Central Asian culture, the tulip (lola) carries strong associations with spring renewal, youthful vigour and, in twentieth-century poetry, with the memory of those who perished for the homeland, since its red colour is traditionally read as a symbol of shed blood. The rose (gul) remains, as in the Persian-influenced literary tradition, the supreme symbol of beauty and the beloved, so central that the very word gul has become a generic term for 'flower' in Uzbek, illustrating the depth of its cultural salience.

This comparison shows that while some flower symbols display remarkable cross-cultural universality (the rose as a symbol of love and beauty appears in both traditions), others acquire distinct, culture-bound meanings shaped by historical experience, religion and folklore (compare the differing associations of the poppy and the tulip as war-remembrance symbols in the two cultures).

7. Comparative Discussion and Implications for Translation

The comparative material presented above allows several generalizations. First, flower names in both English and Uzbek literary traditions are exploited across the full range of classical stylistic devices — metaphor, simile, epithet, personification and symbol — confirming that phytonym-based imagery is a near-universal resource of poetic language. Second, the specific flowers chosen and the meanings attached to them are shaped by ecological, religious and historical factors particular to each culture, so that a literal translation of a flower image does not automatically guarantee an equivalent emotional or symbolic effect for the target-language reader.

This has direct practical significance for literary translation. A translator rendering Navoi's rose-nightingale imagery into English, for instance, must decide whether to preserve the literal image

(which an English reader may interpret mainly as a decorative nature scene) or to supply cultural commentary that restores the full connotative weight the image carries for an Uzbek or Persian reader. Conversely, translating Wordsworth's dancing daffodils into Uzbek requires sensitivity to the fact that daffodils do not carry an established symbolic tradition in Uzbek culture, so the translator must rely more heavily on the personifying syntax of the original to convey its emotional effect.

These observations support the view, increasingly accepted in cognitive stylistics, that figurative language cannot be studied or translated as a purely linguistic phenomenon; it must be examined together with the cultural concept-sphere that motivates and sustains it.

8. Conclusion

The present analysis demonstrates that flower names constitute a rich and productive source of artistic-stylistic devices in both English and Uzbek literature. Functioning within metaphor, simile, epithet, personification and symbol, phytonyms allow writers to express complex ideas about beauty, love, youth, transience and national memory in a compact, sensorily vivid form. The comparative dimension of the study reveals a dual nature of flower-based imagery: on the one hand, certain images (the rose as beauty and love) show striking cross-cultural stability, suggesting shared cognitive mechanisms of metaphorical projection from the natural world onto human experience; on the other hand, many flower symbols are deeply culture-specific, rooted in each nation's history, religion and folklore.

Further research in this field could productively extend the analysis to other lexical-semantic groups (colour terms, bird names, tree names) using the same comparative methodology, and could incorporate corpus-based quantitative methods to measure the relative frequency and stability of particular flower-based tropes across historical periods. Such research would deepen our understanding of the cognitive and cultural foundations of literary imagery and would offer valuable practical guidance for translators and teachers of comparative literature.

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