

THE PROBLEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND TYPES OF SIMILE IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

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Abstract: This article discusses the concept of simile has often been conflated with metaphor in various definitions, leading to terminological confusion within linguistic and literary studies. We clarify the distinct characteristics of simile as a figure of speech, arguing against the prevalent view that defines simile primarily through metaphor.

Keywords: Simile, stylistic device, metaphor, concepts, interpretation, figurative form, comparison.

Many definitions express a standard view of simile as a stylistic device, the only value of which is the ability to transform into a metaphor. The quintessence of this approach is the definition of simile through metaphor. It seems that such a confusion of concepts is unacceptable in terminological dictionaries. The analyzed interpretations are very different from each other, but two main areas of distinction can be distinguished: the opposition of the figure and the path, as generic characteristics of simile, and the long-discussed problem of differentiating comparison and metaphor. This problem is closely related to the inaccurate, vague formulations of the term “simile” in many sources, where the simile is so closely associated with the metaphor that it becomes either its variety, or basis, or derivative.

The interpretation of simile as a trope entails not only a narrowing of the circle of simile, from which many comparative figurative forms fall out that cannot be tropes, but also often makes it difficult to identify simile among other artistic devices. For the purposes of this study, we will adhere to the following definition: simile is a figure of speech that expresses the likening of one object to another, the structure of which is represented by three components (comparable, comparing, base of comparison)

In a literary text, to reveal the image, reflect the emotional states, portrait and speech characteristics of literary characters, depictions of landscapes, the simile, a method of comparison, is often used. According to O. S. Akhmanova, a simile is “a figure of speech consisting in likening one object to another, which is supposed to have a feature in common with the first one” [1, 450].

Here we see the definitions of simile offered by some dictionaries:

In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary:

“Simile” is a figure of speech involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more emphatic or vivid: as brave as a lion; (the use of) an expression comparing one thing with another,

In Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary:

The term “simile” always includes the words “as” or “like”: she walks in beauty, like the night;

In COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary:

“Simile” is an expression which describes a person or thing as being similar to someone or something else: she runs like a deer;

In Collins English Dictionary:

“Simile” is a figure of speech that expresses the resemblance of one thing to another of a different category, usually introduced by as or like;

In Webster's New World College Dictionary:

“Simile” is a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, dissimilar thing by the use of like, as, etc.: a heart as big as a whale, her tears flowed like wine.

Having studied these definitions in lexicographic sources, we can conclude that the term “simile” is used to nominate a figurative means used in a text (in particular, in a literary text) in order to show the likening of objects according to one of their attributes or to identify important ones for the subject of speech properties of the compared objects.

In the reference sources of D.E. Rosenthal and M.A. Telenkova's simile is defined as “a trope consisting in likening one object to another on the basis of their common feature” [2, 337].

From the point of view of O.S. Akhmanova, comparative constructions are "the concepts of equality - inequality, a greater or lesser degree of quality, which are expressed both in the grammatical category of degrees of comparison of adjectives and adverbs, and in vocabulary and phraseology" [3, 449].

I.R. Galperin defines the essence of simile as a stylistic trope as follows: “Two concepts, usually belonging to different classes of phenomena, are compared with each other according to one of the features, and this comparison receives a formal expression. A prerequisite for the stylistic method of simile is the similarity of any one feature with a complete divergence of other features” [4, 168].

Despite a thorough study of comparison in the scientific literature, the features of this stylistic device have not yet been fully studied in theory and practice. This is due to the fact that simile is a complex and multifaceted concept, just the initial stage among all the means of expressiveness of the language, from which other tropes are formed (for example, metaphor, parallelism, metonymy, hyperbole, etc.)

Like simile, hyperbole is based on relationships of similarity. The differences between hyperbole and simile are only in the fact that with a hyperbolic connection,

the object significantly exceeds the subject of comparison in terms of the degree of manifestation of the sign of comparison.

Between litotes and simile, the only dissimilarity is found in that the object of simile are not equal to each other, and the object has an underestimated sign, on the basis of which the comparison is built.

As for the oxymoron, this stylistic device is also based on the comparison of objects. A characteristic feature of an oxymoron, which distinguishes it from simile, is the combination of incompatible objects and phenomena within the framework of a comparative turnover.

Simile is a stylistic device that creates a vivid image due to the fact that the object with which we compare is known as an example of the quality in question. Simile is a stylistic comparison that is formed using the prepositions *like (as)* or *as ... as (such as)*, when a similarity or difference is established between two objects or people. This is the most popular and frequently used stylistic device, because it describes an object or person, we often resort to comparison. For examples: *Life is like a roller-coaster — sometimes you go up and sometimes you go down.* — *Umr go'yo charxpalakka o'xshaydi, goh yuqoriga ko'tarilasan, goh pastga tushasan. She walks as gracefully as a cat.* — *U mushuk kabi nafis qadam tashlaydi.* The main indicator of this stylistic device is the auxiliary word "as": (as) beautiful as a rose; fat as a pig; white as snow; drunk as a lord; proud as a peacock.

Examples of simile can be found in any fictional text. Some of them are used so often that they have already become fixed expressions that we use in speech and do not even notice that initially these expressions were colorful comparisons.

Ordinary comparison and simile must not be confused. They represent two diverse processes. Comparison means weighing two objects belonging to one class of things with the purpose of establishing the degree of their sameness or difference. To use a simile is to characterize one object by bringing it into contact with another object belonging to an entirely different class of things. Comparison takes into consideration all the properties of the two objects, stressing the one that is compared. Simile excludes all the properties of the two objects except one which is made common to them. For example, 'boy seems to be as clever as his mother' is ordinary comparison. 'Boy' and 'mother' belong to the same class of objects—human beings—so this is not a simile but ordinary comparison. [5, 449]

But in the sentence: "Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare" (Byron), we have a simile. 'Maidens' and 'moths' belong to heterogeneous classes of objects and Byron has found the concept moth to indicate one of the secondary features of the concept maiden, i.e. being easily lured. Of the two concepts brought together in the simile—one characterized (maidens), and the other characterizing (moths)—the feature intensified will be more inherent in the latter than in the former. Moreover, the

object characterized is seen in quite a new and unexpected light, because the writer, as it were, imposes this feature on it.

Such simile often become clichés. In some idiomatic similes, the image is no longer distinguishable: as dead as doornail; as thick as thieves. The feature on the basis of which the simile is made can only be implied, but not named, as when using the preposition "like": to drink like a fish.

This stylistic device may not contain a special link expressing simile. She climbed with the quickness of a cat; He reminded me of a hungry cat.

Comparative similes are not considered as comparison unless an image is created, that is, when the object to which something is compared is not accepted as a well-known example of quality. John skates as beautifully as Kate does; She is not so clever as her brother; John is very much like his brother.

It is worth paying attention to the fact that, unlike simile, a metaphor expresses a comparison hidden, which is already included in the figurative meaning of the word. For example, a metaphor: What an ass he is! and comparison: He is stupid as an ass.

Metaphors are usually more expressive and emotionally colored than similes, since they do not express the comparison openly.

Similes can be classified from different points of view. This peculiar part of the vocabulary of any language can thus be described in different ways. For example, almost all researchers divide similes into two groups:

Similes are accurate, without evaluative elements, the criterion for their selection is the use in a neutral style.

Similes containing an evaluative element, or related to a certain style (sublime, familiar).

The simile can be detailed and, sometimes, can turn into a metaphorical expression.

To the first group of simile N.P. Pototskaya, for example, classifies similes as neutral, accurate, pointing to objectively existing features. In any text (any speech style) they play the role of an objective informant. At the same time, phenomena of nature, events of the era, two specific objects, two faces are compared. As soon as an evaluative element is included in objective information, which is expressed not necessarily by comparison, but by context, for example, or by some word, the simile loses its neutrality and passes into the second group.

The second group of similes are comparisons that include an evaluative element or are stylistically colored, which represent two clearly distinguished groups:

Traditional similes recorded by lexicography.

Individual similes, including:

traditional comparisons updated by a writer or journalist;

individual stylistic neologisms.

A rather large group of traditional similes is based on a comparison of an object with the animal or plant world. Some of these similes are international.

Yu. Stepanov believes that similes, first of all, can be individual and generally accepted, stable. As for individual similes, they aim to characterize an object from a variety of points of view, but most often to reproduce its unique appearance:

In generally accepted similes, however, a measure of quality is usually conveyed, while the quality itself must be expressed separately.

Similes can also be analyzed from the point of view of the structure of their structure. Yu. Stepanov believes that individual similes most often consist of two parts - an indication of the object that is being compared (topic), and a description of the object that is being compared.

In the example above, the individual simile is more of a metaphor, especially in form. Generally accepted similes, as a rule, belong to the norm of the language and usually consist of three parts: topics and comparisons, between which a separate indication of what they have in common is placed - this is the basis of comparison. Each base, expressed by an adjective, verb or noun, is assigned to one comparison, due to which the whole phrase turns into a stable one.

K.A. Dolinin calls the basis the sign by which the theme and the image of comparison come together, i.e. action in verbal comparison and quality in comparison with adjective.

A.I. Efimov distinguishes three components in the structure of simile:

what is being compared (subject of simile);

what is being compared with (simile object);

basis of comparison.

Similes can also be classified in terms of how they are introduced into the text. In English, the simile gets a formal expression in the form of words such as *as*, *such as*, *as if*, *like*, *seem*, etc.

In conclusion, the concept of simile is frequently confused with metaphor in various definitions, resulting in terminological ambiguity in linguistic and literary studies. This article seeks to clarify the unique characteristics of simile as a figure of speech, challenging the common perspective that primarily defines simile in terms of metaphor. By analyzing the essential elements of simile—comparable, comparing, and base of comparison—this study aims to provide a clearer understanding of its function in literary works. Similes are crucial for enhancing imagery, expressing emotions, and illustrating characters and settings.

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