

INDICATOR WORDS IN COMPARATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE YAKUT HEROIC EPIC «DYULURUYAR NYURGUN BOOTUR» BY P.A. OYUNSKIY (AS COMPARED TO THE ALTAI HEROIC EPIC «MAADAY KARA» BY A.G. KALKIN)

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Abstract: The present paper presents comparisons formed using indicator words in Yakut and Altai. The research into the heroic epics of Yakut and Altai people revealed the most common indicator words – postpositions in Yakut and Altai as well as comparison reference and objects.

Keywords: epic, olonkho, Yakut folklore, Turkic epic, figurative, reference of comparison

INTRODUCTION

Comparison is a structural-semantic category comparing objects and phenomena based on the similarities considering one or a set of common characteristics. We distinguish between the terms comparison and comparative construction, the latter being a comparative structure operating as comparison which is linguistically represented by syntactic constructions with a comparative conjunction within a simple or compound sentence.

The ways to express comparison in the Turkic languages have been theoretically covered in the studies of Yakut [1], [2], Tuva [3], [4], Khakass [6], Altai [6], [7], Shor [8] and other Turkic languages. Recently, functioning of comparative construction in heroic epics has been the focus of researchers [9], [10], [11].

The purpose of the paper is to reveal and describe Yakut and Altai comparative constructions formed by indicator words in simple sentences. The present paper considers comparisons taken from the Yakut heroic epic “Dyuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur” by P.A. Oyunskiy and the Altai heroic epic “Maaday Kara” by A.G. Kalkin.

“Dyuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur” is one of the best and most popular Yakut epics. It was recreated by P.A. Oyunskiy based on people’s legends. With more than 36,000 poetic lines, it is the greatest Yakut epic. P.A. Sleptsov claims that “an out standing expert and a brilliant story teller perfectly and adequately captured the language and

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style of epic” [12, 358]. “Maaday Kara” is one of the best monuments of the Altai epic heritage, having 7,000 poetic lines in the interpretation by A.G. Kalkin [13, 98].

Methods

Every comparative construction possesses such obligatory components as “subject” and “reference” of comparison. The term “reference” may be used to the scale or unit referred to by the subject for any semantic-stylistic type of comparison. The reference objects may be subject nouns, i.e. nouns, personal pronouns. The subject and the object are the base of comparison, with comparison itself being interpreted as a verbal construction, the components of which allow to express an image through linguistic means.

The research was performed using the method of component analysis, the method of morpheme word division in comparative constructions, the distributive and comparative analyses.

Results and Discussion

It was revealed that the most common Yakut indicator word is курдук ‘like’. Less common are дылы ‘similar, like’, кэриэтэ ‘asif’, саҕа ‘the same as’, тэнэ ‘equalto’.

The Yakut epic “Dyuluruуar Nyurgun Bootur” shows comparative constructions formed by the indicators курдук and саҕа. The references for comparison are bionyms, phytonyms, artifacts, and celestial bodies.

In the Altai heroic epic “Maaday Kara”, comparative constructions are formed using the indicators туней, кептү, кеберлү. The references for comparison are bionyms, celestial bodies, colors, metals, and natural phenomena.

Comparative Constructions with Auxiliary Indicator Words in the Yakut heroic epic

Comparison may be expressed by various auxiliary indicator words, such as Yakut post positions курдук ‘like’, дылы ‘similar, like’, кэриэтэ ‘asif’, саҕа ‘thesameas’, тэнэ ‘as, asif’. Besides, auxiliary words such as буолан ‘being like’, быһыылаах ‘looking like’, айылаах ‘asthough’ are found. In the Yakut heroic epic the post positions курдук and саҕа are used.

Comparative constructions with the indicator курдук

The indicator курдук takes a special place among indicators of comparison. A story teller mainly used this one to describe appearance of a character, e.g. a hero:

(1) Хоппо күрдьэх курдук / Куораан далай ытыһынан (Dyuluruуar Nyurgun Bootur, 109) ‘With a hand wide like a shovel’.

хоппо=Ø бох=NOM

күрдьэх=Ø shovel=NOM
 курдук POSTP
 куораан далай wide
 ытыс=a=нан hand=POSS.3SG=INSTR

(2) Эридэһиннээх үүн тиэрбэһин курдук / Энсиилээх эрилкэй турулук, / Хатааһыннаах хара чабыл, /Хатыгы-түтүү харахтаах эбит (Dyuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur, 115) ‘They say, (he) has sharp, round, with shining pupils, like in a bridle two silver rings alert eyes’.

эридэһин=нээх fanciful=ADG
 үүн=Ø bridle=NOM
 тиэрбэһин ring=POSS.3SG=GEN
 курдук POSTP
 энсии=лээх wide-ranging=ADG
 эрилкэй турулук round
 хатааһын=наах hard=ADG
 хара чабыл black, shining
 хатыгы-түтүү sharp
 харах=таах eyes=ADG
 эбит EVID

Using these comparisons, a story teller describes power and strength of the hero Nyurgun Bootur the Swift. The hero’s hand is likened to a broad shovel and his eyes are compared to the rings in a bridle. The reference for comparison are күрдьэх ‘shovel’ and үүн ‘bridle’, with the objects being a hand and the nose.

The following examples describe the appearance of a hero from the underworld Esekhe Kharbyur. Here, the story teller uses a stylistically colored word ‘mouth’, with the reference being a pit, the object being a mouth. These comparisons communicate the underworld hero’s unpleasantness and ugliness.

(3) Ахпа-дьяхпа курдук / Амаан-дьамаан айаҕа (Dyuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur, 231) ‘Like a pit, fathomless is his mouth’.

ахпа-дьяхпа= Ø pit=NOM
 курдук POSTP
 амаан-дьамаан fathomless
 айах=a mouth=POSS.3SG

(4) Толомон маҕан күнүм / Туналҕанын курдук / Туналҕаннаах ньуурдаах (Dyuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur, 275) ‘With the golden cheeks of the sunset’.

толомон маҕан snow white
 күн=үм sun=POSS.1SG

туналџан=а=н light=POSS.3SG=GEN

курдук POSTP

туналџан=наах light=ADG

ньуур=даах face=ADG

Thereby, comparative constructions with the indicator курдук are mainly used when describing the appearance of a character.

Comparative constructions with the indicator саџа

The auxiliary word саџа is used for the most part to describe particular items.

In the following example snowstorm is likened to young cattle, blizzard to a young bull.

(5) Тингэһэ ынах саџа / Дэриэспэ таас тибийтэ, / Кунан оџус саџа / Лочугурас таас буурџата (Dyuluruуар Nyurgun Bootur, 263) ‘Hurricane with stones, gravel as big as young cattle, snowstorm with huge stones as big as a young bull’.

тингэһэ ынах=∅ young cattle=NOM

саџа POSTP

дэриэспэ=∅ gravel=NOM

таас= ∅ stone=NOM

тибии=тэ snowstorm=POSS.3SG

кунан оџус=∅ young bull=NOM

лочугурас split

таас=∅ stone=NOM

буурџа=та blizzard=POSS.3SG

In the examples 6 and 7 insects are hyperbolized: a bug as big as a one-year-old calf, a frog as big as a horse, larvae as big as a two-grass (two-year-old) calf, bugs with protruding horns as big as a three-year-old bull. The reference for comparison are a one-year-old calf, a horse, a calf and a three-year-old bull, the objects of comparison are a bug, a frog, and larvae.

(6) Торбос саџа / Чоху кыылардаах, / Байтаһын биэ саџа / Баараџай баџалардаах (Dyuluruуар Nyurgun Bootur, 105) ‘As big as a one-year-old calf / With water bugs-beasts / As big as a horse / With big frogs’.

торбос=∅ calf=NOM

саџа POSTP

чоху=∅ water hug=NOM

кыыл=лар=даах beast=PL=ADG

байтаһын биэ=Ø mare=NOM

саға POSTP

баарағай big

баға=лар=даах frog=PL=ADG

(7) Өгүрүмэр оџус саға / Үрүн үөннээх, / Кунан оџус саға / Хончоннос чохулаах (Dyuluruуar Nyurgun Bootur, 185) ‘With white larvae / As big as a two-grass (two-year-old) calf / With bugs with protruding horns / As big as a three-year-old bull’.

өгүрүмэр huge

оџус=Ø bull=NOM

үрүн white

үөн=нээх worm=ADG

кунан оџус=Ø young bull=NOM

хончоннос protruding=ADV

чоху=лаах water bug=ADG

Comparative constructions with auxiliary indicator words in the Altai heroic epic

In Altai, comparisons may be expressed by indicator words such as тўней ‘the same as’, кептў ‘like’, кеберлў ‘similar to’, чылап ‘like, as’, бўдўштў ‘similar, alike’. The indicator тўней is common for oral speech and literature, comparisons in the Altai heroic epic “Maaday Kara” are mostly expressed by the indicator кеберлў. The indicators тўней and кептў are rarely used.

References for comparison are bionyms, celestial bodies, colors, metals, and natural phenomena. Studies suggest that Altai shows complicated sentences with a comparative phrase of the nominal type by analytical indicators of comparison, i.e. auxiliary words, verbal (process) relations are expressed by the analytical-synthetic way [10, 190].

Comparative constructions with the indicator тўней

In the Altai heroic epic “Maaday Kara”, the indicator тўней is not common. The objects for comparison are бөрўкти ‘helmet’, аракы ‘argack’, for example:

(8) Айга тўней бу чолмонду / Алтын кўлер бу бөрўкти (Maaday Kara, 73) ‘With a moon like star, golden-bronze is this cap’.

ай=га moon=DAT

тўней POSTP

бу this

чолмон=ду star=POSSV

алтын golden

күлөр bronze

бу this

бөрүк=ти cap=ACC

Comparative constructions with the indicator кептү

The storyteller of the heroic epic “Maaday Kara” mainly uses the auxiliary word кептү. In the example (9) hero’s breath is compared to wind. The reference for comparison is wind (тыныштары), with the object being air (салкын).

(9) Тыныштары салкын кептү (Maaday Kara, 69) ‘Their breath is like a wind’.

тыныш=тар=ы=Ø breath=PL=POSS.3=NOM

салкын=Ø wind=NOM

кептү POSTP

In the example (10) the mountain ridge is likened to gold, a precious metal. Altai is famous for its high mountains and ridges, therefore the mountains are compared to gold and hero’s appearance to a mountain ridge.

(10) Жал-арказы алтын кептү (Maaday Kara, 122) ‘Its mountain ridge is like gold’.

жал-арка=зы=Ø ridge=POSS.3=NOM

алтын=Ø gold=NOM

кептү POSTP

The example (11) describes the appearance of the hero Kogydey-Mergen. His chest is likened to a plain, his eyebrows to taiga. As the reference for comparison serve a plain (төжи) and taiga (айан), the objects of comparison are chest (жалаң), an eyebrow (кабак). The comparisons represent us a strong, mighty, stately hero.

(11) Жалаң кептү бу ла төжи (Maaday Kara, 179) ‘His chest, like a plain’.

жалаң=Ø plain=NOM

кептү POSTP

бу this

ла PTCL

төж=и=Ø chest=POSS.3=NOM

(12) Айан кептү бу кабагы (Maaday Kara, 180) ‘[Thick] as taiga his eyebrows’.

айан=Ø taiga=NOM

кептү POSTP

бу this

кабаг=ы=Ø eyebrow=POSS.3=NOM

The story teller compares the face of Maaday-Kara's wife Altyn-Targa to the mood and the sun. The references for comparison are the moon (ай) and the sun (күн), the object of comparison is the face (чырай).

(13) Ай кеб ери ол чырайы / Айга бербес алтын кептү / Күн кебери бу чырайы / Күнге бербес күмүш кептү (Maaday Kara, 71) 'Her face is as round as the moon / Like gold it was that is brighter than the moon / Her face is as round as the sun / Like silver it was that is brighter than the sun'.

ай moon=NOM

кебер=и=Ø face=POSS.3=NOM

ол that

чырай=ы=Ø face=POSS.3=NOM

ай=га moon=DAT

бер=бес give=NEG.PrP

алтын=Ø gold=NOM

кептү POSTP

күн=Ø sun=NOM

кебер=и=Ø face=POSS.3=NOM

бу this

чырай=ы=Ø face=POSS.3=NOM

күн=ге sun=DAT

бер=бес give=NEG.PrP

күмүш=Ø silver=NOM

кептү POSTP

Comparative Constructions with the Indicator кеберлү

A.T. Tybykova, M.I. Cheremisina, L.N. Tybykova point out that an ancient indicator of comparison was used in epics [14, 189]. L.N. Tybykova emphasizes that comparative constructions with the indicator кеберлү contribute to poetic figurative comparisons in a heroic epic. It is suggested that traditional folklore symbols of beauty are mainly used as the reference for comparison [6, 9].

In the examples (14) and (17) the objects of comparison face and eyes are compared to celestial bodies (ай 'moon', күн 'sun', чагылган 'lightning'). These qualitative characteristics of a reference are figuratively transferred to the subject's characteristics. The face features are related to the moon characterizing its roundness, his sharp eyes to a lake, and the mouth to the half-moon.

(14) Ай кеберлү бу чырайы / Күн кеберлү бу бүдүжи (Maaday Kara, 83)

‘Moon-like his face, Sun-like his front’.

ай=Ø moon=NOM

кебер=лү face=POSSV

бу this

чырай=ы=Ø face=POSS.3=NOM

күн sun=NOM

кебер=лү face=POSSV

бу this

бүдүж=и=Ø front=POSS.3=NOM

(15) Көл кеберлү бу көзине (Maaday Kara, 83) ‘On lake-like eyes’.

көл=Ø lake=NOM

кебер=лү look=POSSV

бу his

көз=ин=е eyes=POSS.3=DAT

(16) Ай кеберлү бу чырайы (Maaday Kara, 127) ‘The face as round as the moon’.

ай=Ø moon=NOM

кебер=лү face=POSSV

бу his

чырай=ы=Ø face=POSS.3=NOM

(17) Көргөн көзи көл кеберлү / Көгөргөн лө бу чагылган ‘Looking his eyes like lakes, are turning blue and shining’.

көр=гөн look=PFCT

көз=и=Ø eyes=POSS.3=NOM

көл=Ø lake=NOM

кебер=лү look=POSSV

көгөр=гөн turn blue=PFCT

лө CONJ

бу this

чагыл=ган shine=PFCT

(18) Жылан-бака бу кеберлү / Кара черү турбай кайтгы (Maaday Kara, 144) ‘Like snakes and frogs the black army was standing’.

жылан-бака=Ø snake-frog=NOM

бу this

кебер=лү look=POSSV

кара black

черү=Ø army=NOM

тур=бай кайтты stand=NEG.CV MOD

N.R. Bayzhanova notes that in an Altai epic a character as well as his body parts are compared to phenomena and objects of the environment, with the objects of comparison usually being celestial bodies (stars, the moon, the sun, rainbow, sunset 0, plants (flowers), relief (mountain, clearing, lake) [10, 45].

Conclusions

Yakut and Altai heroic epics “Dyuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur” and “Maaday Kara” are rich in comparative constructions. The study suggests that:

- (1) The Yakut heroic epic “Dyuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur” shows auxiliary indicator words курдук and саҕа. The reference for comparison are: bionyms (харса ‘bull’, кырынаас ‘ermine’, улар ‘wood grouse’), phytonyms (тиит ‘larch’), artifacts (барас ‘weapon (glave type)’, үнүү ‘spear’, күрдьэх ‘shovel’, үүн ‘bridle’, ох ‘arrow’, туһах ‘loop’), celestial bodies (күн ‘sun’), natural phenomena (хайа ‘mountain’, кустук ‘rainbow’);
- (2) The Altai heroic epic “Maaday-Kara” shows comparative constructions with the indicators түней, кептү, кеберлү in simple sentences. The reference for comparison are: bionyms (жылан-бака ‘snake-frog’), celestial bodies (күн ‘sun’, ай ‘moon’, чолмоноды ‘star’), natural phenomena (алмыс ‘diamond’, салкын ‘wind’, көл ‘lake’), phytonyms (агаш ‘forest’, барал ‘marsh tree forest’), metal (алтын ‘gold’, кумуш ‘silver’, болот ‘steel’), colors (кара килин ‘black velvet’), relief (кырлан ‘mountain ridge’, кайа ‘rock’, јалан ‘field’, айан ‘meadow’).

It was revealed that the references for comparison in the Yakut epic are mainly phytonyms and artifacts, where as in the Altai epic these are celestial bodies and natural phenomena.

Sources of Examples

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Legend

3SG – personal affix, 3 person singular; 3PL – personal affix, 3 person plural; NOM – indefinite case; DAT – dative case; ACC – accusative case; AUX – auxiliary verb; CONJ – союз; NEG – negative form of verb, participle, adverbial participle; POSTP – postposition; PP – past participle ending with =быт; POSS – izafet,

PRTCL – particle; equality sign – morpheme joint of word-forming and form-building affixes; dash – morpheme joint of morph superposition.

Acknowledgment

The study was funded by the State project – 2016. Reference number 34.3377.2017/ПЧ.

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