

Metaphorical Use Of Flower Names In Contemporary Poetry

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Abstract

This article reviews and analyses literature to find out the metaphorical use of flower names in modern poetry. The results indicate that today's poets keep the classical tradition of floral symbolism and at the same time invent new metaphorical associations that are more in tune with contemporary sensibilities and existential issues.

Keywords: metaphor, flower names, contemporary poetry, floral imagery, poetic symbolism, linguistic analysis, figurative language, literary criticism.

Introduction. The use of flower names as metaphors in poetry can be considered one of the longest-standing traditions in literature all over the world. This use has continued from ancient pastoral poems to today's experimental writings. Poets are able to develop images that appeal to the senses and can be easily recognized through the properties of flowers, the latter being a part of nature that has a visual, olfactory, and tactile aspect [1]. Furthermore, the importance of the present study completely depends on the understanding of the process how modern poets are able to create their own unique floral symbolism and thus claim their part in the evolution of poetic language and at the same time map out the limits of the metaphorical expressiveness. The different styles and themes in contemporary poetry have made it one of the main sources of inspiration for poets; their names have been very frequently used in modern poets' metaphors [2]. The study of this issue needs careful and methodical analyses on the one hand of the metaphorical attributes that particular flower names come to possess and on the other hand of how the meanings are carried out through the methods of communication between poet and reader that are taking place in the modern literary culture's framework.

Methodology and Literature Review. In the methodological approach taken, qualitative content analysis is combined with comparative literary criticism, while simultaneously relying on cognitive linguistics and metaphor theory - as articulated by Lakoff and Johnson - as the theoretical frameworks from which the study derives its metaphors. The research corpus is made up of the works of scholars who discuss the use of imagery in poetry, the symbolism of plants in literature, and the poetic practices of today, plus the texts of poets that are directly analyzed for the metaphorical use of flower names.

The grasp of floral metaphors in poetry is theoretically based on the modernist literary theory's concept of the objective correlative, which asserts that emotion can be indirectly expressed through concrete images or, in this case, flowers [4]. The literature of scholars indicates that flowers are what the researchers call "metaphorical versatility," which means that the flowers are allowed to be represented by different concepts e.g. - transient beauty as well as mortality, love, innocence, and spiritual elevation [5]. The rhetorical theory of antiquity makes a division between the metaphors of the first group and the metaphors in the second group; the first one is the conventional metaphors, where the meaning of the flower has become established culturally, and the second one is the novel metaphors, where poets create unexpected connections and thus compelling the readers to see the familiar objects in a new light. The contemporary poets, very often go for both practices at once, not only drawing upon the traditional floral symbolism but also breaking the existing associations to create new meanings [6]. The rose, for example, through the ages, has been and still is associated with love and beauty; however, at the same time, the rose is being endowed with new metaphorical dimensions in today's poetry that include ironic commentaries on romantic conventions and political symbolism, among others. Cognitive poetics studies point out that the strength of

flower metaphors lies in their connection to the human sensory experience, as readers seldom recall the flowers' sensory memories which help them to understand the metaphorical mappings [7]. This sensory perception possession of floral imagery, in contrast to that of more abstract metaphorical domains, enhances the emotional resonance of poets' flowers metaphors.

Results and Discussion. The examination of modern poetic works has brought to light several different trends in the metaphorical use of flower names, all of which signify the floral imagery's strong presence in today's literature. Modern poets make use of flowers' names to express their emotions, with the gentle nature of the flowers as a metaphor for the psychological vulnerability and the fleeting nature of the strong feeling. The metaphor of flowers as human emotional states works by a mechanism of selective attribute mapping, in which the traits of flowers like their short life span, sensitivity to weather, and beauty, are swapped with human experience to reveal the less accessible sides of emotional life that cannot be communicated directly.

A significant finding concerns the transformation of traditional flower symbolism in contemporary practice, where poets deliberately invoke established associations only to complicate or invert them, creating a dialogic relationship between classical and modern meanings. This technique demonstrates the self-reflexive quality of contemporary poetry, which often comments upon its own literary heritage while forging new expressive possibilities. The sunflower, traditionally associated with devotion and solar worship, appears in contemporary poetry as a metaphor for obsessive attention, artificial cheerfulness, or the exhausting demands of optimism in difficult circumstances, revealing how modern poets reimagine inherited symbols to address contemporary concerns. The analysis further reveals that flower names function not only as individual metaphors but also as components of extended metaphorical networks, where multiple floral references within a single poem create complex systems of meaning that illuminate central themes from various angles [8]. Contemporary poets demonstrate sophisticated awareness of these intertextual dimensions, consciously positioning their floral imagery in relation to literary traditions spanning multiple cultures and historical periods. The metaphorical use of artificial flowers in contemporary poetry represents a particularly significant development, as synthetic blossoms serve as vehicles for exploring themes of authenticity, imitation, and the relationship between nature and technology in modern life. Poets employing artificial flower imagery engage with fundamental questions about the nature of beauty, the value of permanence versus transience, and the human desire to preserve what is inherently ephemeral, demonstrating how floral metaphors continue to evolve in response to changing material and cultural conditions.

Conclusion. This investigation demonstrates that flower names retain their metaphorical potency in contemporary poetry, serving as versatile vehicles for expressing emotional, philosophical, and cultural meanings that resist direct articulation. Contemporary poets both preserve and transform traditional floral symbolism, creating a dynamic relationship between inherited associations and innovative metaphorical applications that reflects the broader tension between tradition and experimentation in modern literary practice. The findings confirm that floral metaphors derive their effectiveness from their grounding in sensory experience, their cultural resonance, and their capacity to bridge concrete and abstract domains of meaning. Future research should extend this analysis to include comparative studies across different linguistic and cultural traditions, examining how flower metaphors function within diverse poetic systems and how globalized literary culture influences the transmission and transformation of floral symbolism.

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