SEMANTIC AND CULTURAL FEATURES OF COLOR TERMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract

This article examines the semantic and cultural features of color terms in English and Uzbek. Color terms represent important linguistic units that express not only visual characteristics but also symbolic, emotional, and cultural meanings. The study focuses on how colors acquire additional meanings influenced by historical traditions, social values, and national worldview. A comparative analysis of English and Uzbek color terms reveals both universal semantic associations and culture-specific interpretations. The research demonstrates that color vocabulary serves as a significant component of linguocultural expression and reflects the relationship between language, cognition, and culture.

Keywords: color terms, color symbolism, semantics, linguoculture, English, Uzbek, cultural meaning, comparative analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Language represents not only a system of communication but also a reflection of cultural identity, historical experience, and human perception of the world. Among various linguistic elements, color terms occupy a significant position because they express both direct meanings and additional symbolic associations formed within a particular culture.

Colors are universal phenomena perceived by all human beings; however, their meanings and interpretations may differ from one culture to another. A color that expresses one concept in one society may represent a completely different idea in another cultural environment. Therefore, the study of color terms provides important information about the relationship between language, thought, and culture.

In linguistics, color terms are studied from semantic, cognitive, and linguocultural perspectives. They are considered not only as names of visual features but also as carriers of emotions, values, beliefs, and cultural experiences. English and Uzbek languages demonstrate interesting similarities and differences in the interpretation of colors due to their different historical and cultural backgrounds.

This article aims to analyze the semantic and cultural features of color terms in English and Uzbek and to identify common and culture-specific meanings expressed through color vocabulary.

Literature Review

Color terminology has been widely investigated in linguistics, anthropology, and cognitive studies. Berlin and Kay (1969) proposed that basic color terms demonstrate certain universal patterns across languages, while cultural factors influence their further development and symbolic meanings.

Wierzbicka (1992) emphasized that meanings of linguistic units are closely connected with cultural concepts and national experience. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphorical thinking plays an essential role in human cognition, and colors often function as conceptual metaphors expressing emotions, social evaluation, and abstract concepts.

Whorf (1956) highlighted the relationship between language and worldview, suggesting that linguistic categories influence how people conceptualize reality. Uzbek researchers have

also studied color meanings as important elements of national culture, showing that colors frequently represent traditional values, emotions, and social concepts.

Methods

The research is based on English and Uzbek color terms collected from dictionaries, linguistic sources, cultural studies, and academic publications related to semantics and linguoculturology.

The study applies several methods, including descriptive, semantic, comparative, and linguocultural analysis. The descriptive method is used to identify and classify color terms in both languages. Semantic analysis examines the literal and figurative meanings of colors, while comparative analysis reveals similarities and differences between English and Uzbek color concepts.

The linguocultural approach is applied to explain how historical experience, traditions, and cultural values influence the interpretation of color terms.

Results

The analysis demonstrates that color terms in English and Uzbek have both universal and culture-specific meanings. Although colors are based on common human perception, their symbolic interpretation is shaped by cultural traditions and social experience.

The color **black** has complex meanings in both languages. In English, black is associated with darkness, sadness, mourning, and negative evaluation. At the same time, it may symbolize elegance, power, formality, and luxury in modern cultural contexts. In Uzbek, qora is mainly connected with sadness, difficulties, seriousness, and negative situations; however, it may also express dignity, strength, and respect in certain contexts.

The color **white** demonstrates mainly positive meanings. In English, white is associated with purity, innocence, honesty, and peace. In Uzbek culture, oq has a broader cultural meaning and represents purity, blessing, happiness, and good intentions. Expressions containing oq often reflect positive wishes and moral values.

The color **red** also shows different cultural interpretations. In English, red is connected with love, passion, danger, warning, and strong emotions. In Uzbek culture, qizil is frequently associated with beauty, vitality, youth, celebration, and emotional intensity.

The color **green** represents life, nature, freshness, and renewal in both languages. However, English green may additionally express inexperience or immaturity, while Uzbek yashil is more closely connected with nature, growth, hope, and harmony.

The results indicate that color terms function as cultural symbols that reflect the worldview and values of English and Uzbek speakers.

Discussion

The comparative analysis shows that color terms contain both universal meanings and culturally determined interpretations. Similarities between English and Uzbek color symbolism are mainly related to common human experiences, while differences appear due to historical traditions, social values, and cultural perceptions.

For example, white universally represents positive concepts such as purity and goodness. However, Uzbek culture gives additional importance to white as a symbol of blessing and good fortune. Similarly, black demonstrates negative associations in both languages, but English culture often emphasizes social evaluation and elegance, whereas Uzbek culture may associate it with seriousness and dignity.

These differences prove that color meanings cannot be understood separately from cultural context. Color vocabulary reflects not only linguistic structure but also the collective experience and mentality of a nation.

Conclusion

The study confirms that color terms in English and Uzbek are significant linguistic units that combine semantic meaning with cultural interpretation. Colors represent not only physical characteristics but also emotions, values, traditions, and national worldview.

The comparative analysis reveals that some color meanings are universal, while others are determined by specific cultural backgrounds. English and Uzbek color terms demonstrate similarities in basic associations, but their symbolic meanings may differ according to historical and social factors.

Understanding the semantic and cultural features of color terms is important for comparative linguistics, translation studies, and intercultural communication. Further research may investigate color symbolism in other languages and explore its use in modern discourse, literature, and media.

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