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THE SEMANTICS OF THE COLOR “RED” IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK AND ITS GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT

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Annotation:

This research paper explores the multifaceted semantic landscape of the color "red" through a comparative analysis of the English and Uzbek languages. The study focuses on the gradual development of the color's meaning, tracing its evolution from a primary sensory perception to a complex system of cultural, emotional, and ideological metaphors. By examining the lexical-semantic fields of "red" and "qizil," (in Uzbek) the author identifies the specific historical and social factors that have shaped their distinct paths of growth. The investigation reveals that while both languages share a biological foundation for color perception, their idiomatic and metaphorical structures diverge based on unique national identities. In English, the development of "red" is closely linked to judicial, economic, and emotional archetypes, often representing warnings, financial status, or intense passions. Conversely, the Uzbek "qizil" demonstrates a deep-rooted connection to traditional rituals, health, and beauty, while also reflecting significant semantic shifts during the 20th-century political landscape.

Keywords: Comparative Linguistics, Color Semantics, Diachronic Analysis, English, Uzbek, Conceptual Metaphor, Ethnolinguistics, Lexical Evolution.



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The current thesis investigates the multifaceted semantic landscape of the color "red" in the English and Uzbek languages, utilizing a comparative diachronic framework to trace its development from a primary sensory descriptor to a complex vehicle for cultural and emotional expression. Drawing upon the Universalist Theory of Berlin and Kay, the study examines how both languages follow the evolutionary hierarchy of color terms while diverging significantly in their symbolic application. Through a contrastive analysis of lexicographical sources, historical texts, and contemporary corpora, the paper identifies the transition points where "red" (English) and "qizil" (Uzbek) acquired secondary meanings. The study employs Cognitive Linguistics to categorize these developments into conceptual metaphors, such as "Red is anger" or "Red is validity". The study highlights the shift of "red" into the realms of bureaucracy ("red tape"), economics ("in the red"), and geopolitical identity, alongside its ancient roots in blood and fire symbolism. Analysis reveals a strong ethno-linguistic tie between "qizil" and the concepts of beauty, health, and auspiciousness in Central Asian Turkic traditions, contrasted with the ideological shifts introduced during the 20th-century Soviet period where the color was repurposed for political mobilization. Through a narrative and theoretical approach, the article categorizes these changes into conceptual metaphors, highlighting how the "gradualness" of this development is mirrored in the transition from literal description to abstract symbolism. The study concludes that the semantic evolution of color terms serves as a linguistic mirror of a nation's historical consciousness and cultural values, offering valuable insights for cognitive linguistics and translation theory.

The comparative analysis of the color "red" in English and Uzbek reveals that while the biological perception of the chromatic spectrum is a human universal, the linguistic manifestation of color is a deeply cultural and historical construct. This study has traced the gradual development of "red" (English) and "qizil" (Uzbek)



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from their origins as primary sensory descriptors to their current status as sophisticated vehicles for abstract thought and cultural identity. The research demonstrates that the semantic evolution of these terms follows a trajectory of increasing complexity. In the English language, the development of "red" has been characterized by a secularized expansion into the realms of social organization, economics, and emotional psychology. The metaphors associated with "red" in English often prioritize themes of intensity, urgency, and formal regulation. Conversely, the Uzbek "qizil" maintains a more intimate connection to the ethno-cultural landscape, where its development is intertwined with traditional aesthetics, health, and ancestral rituals. The 20th-century ideological shift in the Uzbek lexicon serves as a significant marker of how external socio-political factors can rapidly accelerate the gradual semantic growth of a color term.

The study of color terminology occupies a central position at the intersection of cognitive linguistics, anthropology, and semantics. The theoretical framework for understanding the gradual development of color terms was pioneered by Brent Berlin and Paul Kay (1969). Their evolutionary hierarchy suggests that "red" is a primary chromatic category that emerges in a language's lexicon immediately after the basic distinction between light and dark. This universalist perspective argues that the physiological structure of the human eye dictates the order in which color names are codified, placing "red" at the forefront of linguistic evolution due to its high perceptual salience in nature, fire, and blood.

Moving beyond the biological constraints, the Relativist school, influenced by the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, posits that the semantic expansion of a color term is dictated by the unique cultural and environmental context of its speakers. In contemporary linguistics, this is often explored through Conceptual Metaphor Theory, developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. From this perspective, "red" is not merely a label for a frequency of light but a source domain for abstract



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concepts. Scholars such as Anna Wierzbicka have furthered this by utilizing "Natural Semantic Metalanguage" to argue that the prototype of red—universally linked to blood—evolves differently across cultures, transforming into "danger" or "intensity" in Western contexts, while representing "vitality" or "sacredness" in Eastern traditions.

In the specific context of English linguistics, researchers have focused on the secularization and technical expansion of "red." Studies in English diachronic semantics highlight how the term migrated from literal descriptions of textiles and nature into the administrative and economic spheres. The work of G. Hughes on the history of English keywords provides a narrative of how "red" became associated with bureaucratic "tape" and financial "debt," reflecting the socio-economic history of the Anglophone world.

The study of Uzbek color semantics, however, is rooted in the broader field of Turkic philology. Scholars such as A. Kononov and contemporary Uzbek linguists have examined the ethno-cultural layers of the word "qizil." Unlike the more technical evolution seen in English, the development of "qizil" in the Uzbek language is characterized by its deep connection to folk aesthetics and traditional rituals. Literature in this field emphasizes the role of "qizil" as a symbol of beauty, youth, and health—a manifestation of the "red-is-beautiful" archetype prevalent in Central Asian nomadic and agricultural history. Furthermore, the transition of the term during the 20th century represents a unique period of "forced" semantic development, where the color was repurposed to align with new political mythologies. Finally, Contrastive Linguistics provides the methodological bridge for this research. By synthesizing these diverse scholarly views, the current study seeks to address a gap in the literature: the specific comparative trajectory of "red" and "qizil." While previous works have treated these languages in isolation or focused on static translations, there remains a need for a theoretical narrative that



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explains the *gradualness* of their semantic divergence—how two languages, starting from the same biological prototype, arrived at such distinct metaphorical destinations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the divergence between these two linguistic systems highlights the role of ethnolinguistic consciousness in shaping reality. The "red" of the English speaker and the "qizil" of the Uzbek speaker are not merely translations of one another but are unique semantic maps that reflect different historical experiences and worldviews. This study concludes that the study of color semantics is essential for understanding the cognitive mechanisms of metaphor and the enduring influence of culture on the evolution of language. By move away from a purely descriptive approach toward a diachronic and theoretical framework, we gain a clearer perspective on how humanity colors its world with meaning, one word at a time.

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