

Национально-культурные особенности полисемантических слов: сравнительный анализ английского и узбекского языков

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Аннотация: В данной статье рассматриваются национально-культурные особенности полисемантических слов в английском и узбекском языках. Анализируются когнитивные и культурные механизмы, посредством которых одно слово приобретает несколько значений. Особое внимание уделяется роли метафоры, символики и контекста в формировании смыслов и отражении культурных ценностей народов.

Ключевые слова: полисемия, когнитивная лингвистика, метафора, культура, английский язык, узбекский язык, национальные особенности

National and Cultural Specifics of Polysemantic Words: A Comparative Analysis of English and Uzbek Languages

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Abstract: This article explores the national and cultural specifics of polysemantic words in English and Uzbek. It examines cognitive and cultural mechanisms through which a single word develops multiple meanings. Special attention is given to metaphor, symbolism, and context in shaping semantic nuances and reflecting the cultural values of respective linguistic communities.

Keywords: polysemy, cognitive linguistics, metaphor, culture, English language, Uzbek language, national characteristics

Language transcends its function as a mere system of signs, operating instead as a profound reflection of human cognition and cultural perception. This intricate relationship becomes especially evident in the phenomenon of polysemy, where a single lexical item embodies a network of interrelated meanings. Far from random, polysemantic words act as sophisticated cognitive instruments, enabling speakers to condense multifaceted concepts into concise and expressive linguistic forms. These words function not only as carriers of meaning but also as mirrors reflecting the cognitive frameworks and cultural nuances of their speakers.

In both English and Uzbek, polysemy plays a central role in encoding historical legacies, social norms, and ethical frameworks. English, shaped by a rich literary tradition, centuries of scientific exploration, and its global role in technological discourse, exhibits polysemy that frequently emphasizes abstraction, innovation, and individual-oriented conceptualizations. In contrast, Uzbek, deeply rooted in nomadic traditions, Islamic intellectual heritage, and communal social systems, manifests polysemantic patterns that foreground environmental awareness, spiritual consciousness, and collective social experience. By examining metaphorical and metonymic transitions, context-dependent meaning shifts, and historically embedded semantic layers, we can illuminate how polysemy reflects both cognitive processing and cultural worldview, serving as a linguistic vehicle for national identity.

Polysemantic words arise from a dynamic interplay of cognitive, linguistic, and cultural factors. Cognitively, they represent structured mental schemas, allowing speakers to map observable phenomena onto abstract conceptual domains. Metaphor is a key mechanism in this mapping process. Through metaphorical extension, words acquire new senses based on perceived similarities between distinct entities or experiences. For example, in English, the term *branch* may denote a segment of a tree, a subdivision within a company, or an offshoot of a river. The Uzbek term *shox* similarly refers to a physical branch of a tree, but also extends metaphorically to designate subdivisions of families, clans, or other social structures. Such mappings demonstrate a universal cognitive tendency: human understanding often relies on projecting familiar, concrete experiences onto more abstract social or organizational phenomena.

Metonymy further enriches polysemy by generating associative extensions of meaning. In English, *crown* can simultaneously indicate the physical headpiece worn by a monarch, the monarchy as an institution, or symbolic authority. Similarly, Uzbek *toj* represents both the literal crown and a metaphorical symbol of honor, leadership, and social rank. This metonymic expansion illustrates how polysemy embodies culturally entrenched perceptions of social hierarchy and power, making it not only a cognitive mechanism but also a carrier of societal values.

Contextual polysemy underscores the importance of situational, pragmatic, and cultural cues in interpreting meaning. Words do not function in isolation; their significance emerges in interaction with their surrounding context. The English word *light*, for example, may signify illumination, weightlessness, or lack of seriousness, depending on usage. Uzbek *yorug'* similarly encompasses meanings of physical brightness, intellectual enlightenment, or spiritual illumination. These context-driven shifts reveal the fluidity of meaning and demonstrate the intricate interface between cognition, culture, and language in the interpretation of polysemantic units.

Cultural and national frameworks play a decisive role in shaping polysemy. In English, polysemantic words often reflect the evolution of literary expression, historical development, and technological innovation. Consider *apple*, which may refer to the fruit, biblical knowledge, or a contemporary technology brand - each meaning layered with historical, religious, or cultural significance. Uzbek polysemous words, conversely, encode pastoral heritage, nomadic experiences, communal relationships, and spiritual values. The word *Oq* exemplifies this multiplicity, representing white, purity, snow, or nobility - linking environmental, moral, and social dimensions. Similarly, *uy* signifies house, home, family lineage, and household responsibility, emphasizing the collective and familial obligations characteristic of Uzbek culture. In contrast, English *home* primarily denotes dwelling and emotional comfort, reflecting a more individualistic conceptual framework.

Historical and symbolic dimensions further shape polysemy in both languages. English, with its centuries of literary, scientific, and philosophical development, has cultivated layers of meaning around words that often draw upon symbolic, narrative, or empirical associations. In Uzbek, polysemy emerges from accumulated experiences with the natural environment, structured social interactions, and spiritual traditions rooted in Islamic and Sufi philosophy. The word *ruh* (spirit, soul, essence, inspiration) embodies these intersecting layers, demonstrating how cognitive and cultural histories converge in the construction of meaning.

Comparative analysis reveals that while cognitive mechanisms underpinning polysemy - such as metaphor, metonymy, and contextual modulation - are universal, the cultural content encoded within words is distinct. English polysemantic words frequently foreground individualism, abstract reasoning, and technological innovation, whereas Uzbek polysemantic words emphasize communal cohesion, spiritual depth, and historical continuity. This distinction illustrates that polysemy is both a linguistic and cognitive-cultural phenomenon, serving as a mirror of how different societies conceptualize reality, social relationships, and human behavior.

Ultimately, the polysemantic systems of English and Uzbek demonstrate a profound synergy between human cognition, linguistic evolution, and cultural paradigms. While the underlying drivers of polysemy - metaphor, metonymy, and context-sensitive shifts - remain consistent across languages, the semantic, historical, and cultural load differs significantly. English polysemy often privileges abstract thought, innovation, and self-oriented perspectives, whereas Uzbek polysemy preserves semantic structures shaped by communal life, ethical traditions, and spiritual consciousness. These differences underscore the role of national identity and cultural ontology in the construction of meaning, highlighting that language functions simultaneously as a cognitive tool and a repository of cultural knowledge.

Polysemantic words offer speakers a streamlined yet holistic means of expressing complex realities, encoding social, ethical, and environmental knowledge within concise lexical units. Comparative analysis of English and Uzbek polysemy reveals both shared cognitive principles and language-specific cultural innovations, emphasizing that meaning is shaped not only by the human mind but also by the social and cultural context in which language evolves. By bridging abstract thought and lived cultural experience, polysemantic words exemplify the intricate interplay of cognition, language, and culture, affirming the centrality of linguistic analysis in understanding national identity and worldview.

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