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PRAGMATIC AND LINGUACULTURAL FUNCTIONS OF COLOR SYMBOLS IN DISCOURSE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES)

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Abstract: This article examines the pragmatic and linguacultural features of color symbolism within discourse structure, based on a comparative analysis of English and Uzbek languages. It investigates how color terms transcend their basic denotative values to become culture-bound ideological, emotional, and context-dependent devices. The research identifies the underlying cognitive mechanisms and communicative functions of white, black, red, blue, and green within diverse discursive situations. By drawing parallels and noting divergences, the study outlines the specific communicative strategies employed by speakers in both cultures to achieve specific pragmatic goals through color framing.

Keywords: discourse, color symbolism, pragmatic function, linguacultural analysis, communicative strategy, cultural connotation, cognitive framing.

Introduction

In modern cognitive and communicative linguistics, language is no longer viewed merely as an isolated structural system of signs, but as an active tool deeply embedded in human action, social interaction, and cultural contextualization. This paradigm shift has placed discourse analysis at the center of linguistic inquiry, highlighting how speakers construct meaning, convey implicit intents, and invoke cultural shared knowledge during live communication. Within various types of discourse, including political, publicist, social, and everyday spoken interaction, color symbols act as powerful cognitive anchors. They possess a dual nature: carrying immediate physical visual associations while simultaneously triggering complex socio-historical, psychological, and ideological values [5; 14–15-b.].

Color terms in communicative discourse often undergo significant pragmatic expansion. Instead of just identifying the chromatic properties of an object, they are strategically used to frame arguments, evoke specific emotional states, polarize opinions, or reinforce cultural identity markers. In a manner analogous to how the philosophical concepts of individual freedom and inner subjective experience in romanticism challenge rigid, standardized patterns of thought, the strategic use of color symbols in discursive practices allows speakers to construct personalized, highly nuanced conceptual worlds that defy literal translation [1; 352–354-b.]. When analyzing non-cognate and socio-historically distinct languages such as English and Uzbek, examining how color semiotics function pragmatically reveals the underlying cognitive models that drive communication in Western and Eastern societies.

The practical relevance of deciphering these discourse-specific color codes spans across multiple domains. In the field of modern language pedagogy, helping learners grasp the implicit pragmatic weight of color terms in speech is critical for developing authentic intercultural communicative competence across different age groups [2; 160-b.]. Furthermore, understanding the strategic deployment of color symbolism yields vital insights for applied fields such as public relations, cross-cultural media management, and regional tourism marketing, where generating an attractive cultural brand relies heavily on invoking the correct symbolic associations [3; 15-b.]; [4;

105-b.]. Consequently, a systematic investigation into the pragmatic and linguacultural functions of color symbols in English and Uzbek discourse addresses a vital gap in contemporary text and discourse linguistics.

Materials and Methods

To thoroughly investigate the multifaceted nature of color signs in active communication, this study employs an integrated methodological framework that bridges discourse analysis, linguacultural tracking, and pragmatic inquiry. The empirical material for this research consists of a diverse corpus of over 450 discursive extracts gathered from contemporary media texts, political speeches, public addresses, and colloquial conversational transcripts in both English and Uzbek. The core of our methodology is built upon the following specialized analytical procedures:

First, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Pragmatic Contextual Analysis were utilized to determine how color terms function as communicative tools intended to influence the listener, convey hidden irony, or reinforce social status. The speech-act potential of utterances containing color components was scrutinized to see how they fulfill illocutionary functions such as praising, warning, or marginalizing.

Second, Linguacultural and Frame-Semantic Analysis allowed us to map color terms to specific cultural domains. By treating color symbols as cultural codes, we reconstructed the cognitive frames and metaphorical mappings that native speakers unconsciously evoke during communicative events.

Third, Comparative-Typological Method was applied to systematically juxtapose English and Uzbek discursive data. This helped isolate instances of conceptual overlap (universals) from culture-specific variations (divergences), highlighting where the pragmatic target of a color term changes drastically between the two languages.

Fourth, Translation Evaluation and Semantic Matching procedures were executed to check how effectively discourse-bound color meanings are transferred across languages without losing their pragmatic force.

The selection and validation of the discursive data were carried out systematically in three stages. First, texts were scanned for high-frequency color terms (white, black, red, blue, green). Second, their contextual meanings were cross-referenced with authoritative lexicographic, encyclopedic, and idiomatic resources to filter out purely descriptive uses from pragmatic symbolic uses. Third, to ensure a high level of academic rigor and structured evaluation, the categorization of pragmatic functions and the assessment of cross-cultural equivalence were aligned with comprehensive parameters similar to those used in modern educational monitoring and evaluation systems [6; 90-b.]. The collected qualitative findings were then converted into structured categories to provide a clear, scannable overview of the discourse dynamics.

Results

The empirical analysis demonstrates that color terms in both English and Uzbek discourse serve as highly active stylistic and persuasive tools, yet their pragmatic orientation is heavily dictated by the socio-cultural values of each respective speech community.

Pragmatic functions of White / Oq in discourse. In Uzbek discursive practices, the term "oq" is frequently weaponized to establish moral superiority, validate innocence, or invoke blessings. In public oratory and familial discourse, expressions like "oq yuvib, oq taramoq" (to raise with ultimate care and purity) or "yuzi oq" (honorable, cleared of blame) serve as powerful pragmatic tools for social validation. In English discourse, "white" is similarly tied to transparency, safety, and legitimacy, as seen in institutional terms like "white paper" (an authoritative government report) or "white lie" (a pragmatically motivated, harmless lie used to maintain social harmony). However,

English discourse also uses "white" to frame economic or functional redundancy, as exemplified by the phrase "white elephant," which carries a critical pragmatic edge completely absent in Uzbek.

Pragmatic functions of Black / Qora in discourse. The color term black represents a cross-cultural communicative tool for negative framing, crisis signaling, and ideological polarization. In Uzbek political and publicist discourse, "qora" is used intensely to condemn actions or designate tragic social periods, such as "qora niyatlar" (malicious agendas) or "qora kunlar" (dark days of hardship). In English discourse, "black" exhibits a massive functional range in socio-political and economic context framing. It is used to denote illegal or covert operations ("black market," "black ops") and social banishment ("blacklist"). Interestingly, in financial discourse, English shifts "black" into an intensely positive pragmatic zone: "in the black" means highly profitable. If translated literally into Uzbek, this financial discourse marker would completely fail, as black invariably signals misfortune or illicit activity in Uzbek economic contexts.

Pragmatic functions of Red / Qizil in discourse. The discursive deployment of red exposes sharp contrasts between Western and Eastern rhetorical habits. In English publicist and political discourse, "red" is a primary marker for danger, immediate threats, administrative paralysis, or operational guilt. The term "red tape" is used pragmatically to criticize bureaucratic inefficiency, while "red flag" serves as an ideological warning sign. In sharp contrast, Uzbek discourse historically and culturally links "qizil" to youth, vibrant health, and celebration. While modern political discourse in Uzbekistan has occasionally adapted "qizil" to refer to past Soviet administrative systems, in standard socio-cultural discourse, it retains its vital aesthetic and laudatory function, creating a sharp pragmatic divergence from the predominantly alarming tone of English "red."

Pragmatic functions of Blue and Green / Ko‘k va Yashil in discourse. In English everyday and psychological discourse, "blue" is heavily utilized for emotional framing, explicitly signifying depression, vulnerability, or unexpected shock ("feeling blue," "out of the blue"). In Uzbek discourse, "ko‘k" operates under an entirely different cognitive map, associated with the expansiveness of the sky, growth, or physical bruising. Pragmatically, telling someone they look "blue" makes no sense in Uzbek unless implying physical trauma. For "green" / "yashil," English discourse leverages it to express envy ("green with envy") or lack of professional experience ("greenhorn"), alongside its modern ecological framing. In Uzbek discourse, "yashil" carries deeply rooted positive associations tied to spring, renewal, Islamic spiritual heritage, and prosperity, making its sudden use as a marker of jealousy or incompetence culturally inappropriate and pragmatically misleading [10; 44–46-b.].

The structural and pragmatic distribution of these color codes across the two examined discourse systems is systematically summarized below.

Pragmatic and linguacultural distribution of color symbols in discourse:

Color Code	Primary Discursive Target (English)	Primary Discursive Target (Uzbek)	Illocutionary Force / Pragmatic Goal	Cross-Cultural Discursive Alignment
White / Oq	Administrative legitimacy, innocence, harmlessness	Moral purity, blessing, public honor, validation	To legitimize, absolve, or praise an agent	High conceptual overlap; minor structural

				differences
Black / Qora	Illegality, social exclusion, financial health	Tragedy, moral condemnation, malicious intent	To marginalize, alarm, or denote crisis	High situational asymmetry (due to economic discourse)
Red / Qizil	Alert, bureaucratic criticism, anger, catching crime	Beauty, vitality, historical system reference	To warn, critique bureaucracy, or celebrate vitality	Strong divergence; high risk of communicative failure
Blue / Ko‘k	Emotional melancholy, unexpectedness, elite class	Environmental vastness, renewal, physical injury	To express psychological state or physical reality	Deeply divergent cognitive and pragmatic models
Green / Yashil	Environmental awareness, envy, professional immaturity	Spiritual purity, growth, seasonal revitalization	To flag eco-friendliness, mock inexperience, or bless	High cultural specificity; distinct metaphorical tracks

The comparative data illustrates that when colors enter live discourse, they function as tactical instruments of persuasion, evaluation, and ideological positioning. Relying on simple literal translations of these terms during active cross-cultural communication inevitably triggers discourse dissonance, as the target audience decodes the message using an entirely different set of socio-cultural parameters.

Discussion

The distinct communicative tracks observed in English and Uzbek discourse reflect the deeper cognitive architectures and historical trajectories of both speech communities. The heavy presence of maritime, commercial, and urban institutional histories in England has shaped English discourse to utilize color terms for financial, systemic, and psychological categorization. Conversely, Uzbek discursive strategies are strongly anchored in agricultural, nomadic, and deeply collective Eastern traditions, where color terms are used to regulate social relations, convey elder blessings, or defend community morals. Just as the intellectual framework of romanticism stresses that a person's inner landscape can transform external reality into a unique subjective experience, so too does a speech community use color choices to colorize objective truth into a culturally specific ideological reality [1; 355-b.].

Failing to recognize these pragmatic discrepancies results in serious breakdowns in translation and cross-cultural communication. For example, translating the English media headline "The government is tangled in red tape" literally into Uzbek as "Hukumat qizil tasmaga o‘ralib qoldi" strips the utterance of its critical pragmatic punch, rendering it absurd to an Uzbek listener who

lacks the historical frame of British legal document binding. Instead, it must be adapted to non-color terms like "rasmiyatchilik" or "qog‘ozbozlik" to achieve pragmatic equivalence [2; 162-b.].

Integrating these discourse insights into interactive language teaching methodologies allows instructors to train students to look beyond the dictionary definition of a word and master its contextual social value [7; 95-b.]; [8; 50-b.]. This level of sociolinguistic precision is equally indispensable for international relations, global media dissemination, and tourism-driven regional branding, where messages must resonate perfectly with the psychological expectations of the target culture [3; 18-b.]; [4; 107-b.]. Ultimately, color symbols in discourse cannot be treated as static items; they are dynamic communicative triggers that require thorough cultural adaptation.

Conclusion

Color symbols within active discourse are not merely decorative elements but serve as highly strategic pragmatic units that carry context-dependent values, emotional evaluation, and ideological framing across both English and Uzbek.

The comparative analysis demonstrates sharp lines of divergence in the discursive use of red, blue, and green. While English discourse relies on these colors for institutional critique and psychological states, Uzbek discourse utilizes them primarily for socio-moral validation and environmental-spiritual reflection.

Achieving communicative harmony and pragmatic adequation in translation requires speakers and translators to reject literal lexical mapping (calquing) in favor of dynamic functional-discourse adaptation, ensuring that the illocutionary force of the original message remains intact.

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