

# Color Lexemes in Context: Cognitive and Cultural Explorations

Dilrabo Bakhronova<sup>1</sup>, Nodira Alavutdinova<sup>2</sup>, Saodat Israilova<sup>2</sup> and Virna Velazquéz Vilchis<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Uzbekistan State of World Languages University, Uzbekistan*

<sup>2</sup>*National University of Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan*

<sup>3</sup>*Autonomous University of Mexico State, Mexico*

**Keywords:** Context, Color, Cognitive Linguistics, Pragmatic Meaning, Discourse.

**Abstract:** This study explores the pragmatic dimensions of lexemes that express color, highlighting their contextual usage and the cognitive and cultural factors influencing their interpretation. By analysing how color lexemes function across various discourses, the research delves into the mental associations and perceptions readers form around colors. The findings underscore the role of context in shaping the pragmatic meaning of color-related terms and offer insights into the interplay between language, cognition, and culture. This comprehensive analysis reveals how colors convey meaning, evoke emotions, and shape communicative strategies. The implications extend to practical applications in advertising, marketing, and cross-cultural communication, where understanding the nuanced use of color is essential. By filling a research gap, this study enriches linguistic scholarship and provides valuable knowledge for effective color usage in diverse communicative contexts.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The interplay between color, language, and culture represents a fascinating and multifaceted domain within the humanities. Color, as a fundamental aspect of human perception, exerts a profound influence on our emotional and cognitive responses. This relationship is not arbitrary; rather, it reflects the inherent qualities of the world we inhabit. From the vibrant hues of nature to the symbolic use of colors in various cultural expressions, color shapes our understanding of reality in significant ways. The Qur'an acknowledges this diversity in creation, highlighting the divine intention behind the multiplicity of colors that adorn the natural world. This inherent diversity not only enriches human experience but also plays a crucial role in shaping cultural and individual identities.

Since the nineteenth century, the intricate relationship between language and culture has garnered the attention of scholars across disciplines such as philosophy, linguistics, and cultural studies. Language serves as a mirror reflecting human existence and thought, capturing the essence of cultural and social realities. The anthropocentric principle of thinking underscores the notion that our comprehension of reality is inherently human-

centered, shaped by our sensory and cognitive frameworks. Within this framework, colors assume symbolic meanings that resonate deeply within specific cultural and ethnic contexts. These symbolic meanings offer valuable insights into the socio-political, economic, and spiritual dimensions of human life, revealing the interconnectedness between visual perception and cultural narratives.

Despite the rich cultural significance of colors, there remains a notable gap in the pragmatic linguistic analysis of color-related adjectives and adverbs, particularly in languages such as Uzbek. Pragmatics, which involves the study of how context influences the interpretation of meaning, is crucial for understanding how language operates in real-world situations. Effective communication relies on the ability to navigate the subtleties of language, recognizing the appropriate context, audience, and intention behind speech acts (Hakkulov, 2001). This requires a level of interpretive skill and cultural awareness from the reader or listener. In the context of Uzbek, there is a pressing need for a more nuanced exploration of how color-related language functions pragmatically, to better understand the ways in which meaning is constructed and conveyed in different cultural settings (Ibrahim, 2001).

The exploration of color symbolism and its linguistic implications underscores the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to understanding human cognition and culture (Bakhronova, 2022). By examining the ways in which colors influence and reflect cultural identities, scholars can gain deeper insights into the human condition. Furthermore, the pragmatic analysis of language provides a valuable framework for understanding the dynamic interplay between linguistic expression and cultural context. As such, there is a compelling need for further research into the pragmatic dimensions of language, particularly in underexplored linguistic landscapes like Uzbek, to enrich our understanding of how color and language intersect to shape human experience.

## 2 OBJECTIVE

- Explore historical origins of color symbolism in Uzbek folklore.
- Investigate interdisciplinary dimensions of color symbolism across cultures.
- Examine pragmatic features of color language for cultural understanding.

## 3 ANALYSIS

The exploration of pragmatic features within linguistic activity, alongside the factors that give rise to these features, is paramount in understanding the social nature of language. Such an examination allows us to gather evidence that linguistic communication adheres to social and psycholinguistic laws, while also contributing to the evolution of the language system itself. Pragmatics is concerned with questions such as why an individual uses a sign and for what purpose, as well as the manner in which it is used. This field thus overlaps with syntax, where the involuntary combination of characters forms linguistic structures, and semantics, where these structures convey intended meanings, extending into pragmatic analysis.

Pragmatic statements must be contextualised to apply to individuals, groups, social classes, and public organisations. The debate surrounding the completeness of speech structures as linguistic signs has long been a subject of scholarly discussion. Notably, N. Chomsky's early work, which scrutinised the grammatical correctness of the structure "Colourless green ideas are sleeping furiously," provides a seminal example. Chomsky also delved

into the intriguing construction of "new ideas are born from time to time." Logicians and philosophers, concerned with both the content and structure of speech in line with grammatical rules, often focus on how these structures are utilised in actual speech activities. The linguistic experience of the researcher, informed by social context and accumulated knowledge, becomes a crucial criterion in this analysis.

For instance, when determining the veracity of the phrase "Golden Rectangle," Chomsky's judgement was influenced by his social experience and accumulated knowledge. Grammatical correctness is often tied to one's proficiency in their native language or a foreign language, contingent on the mastery of grammatical rules. Herein lies the significance of pragmatic analysis, which underscores the necessity to comprehend the practical application of linguistic constructs in communication.

Uncovering the pragmatic features of colour-expressing lexemes and effectively conveying these in text and discourse is equally important. This involves assessing the extent to which pragmatic content is communicated and understood by the reader. Beyond their semantic and stylistic dimensions, as well as their linguocultural significance, colour-expressing lexemes possess an inherent pragmatic beauty and depth of meaning that become especially prominent within textual contexts. Focusing initially on the lexemes denoting white and black, which are extensively employed in artistic expressions related to colour qualities, we observe that these lexemes are often mistakenly interchanged. The juxtaposition of white and black brings forth rich imagery associated with good and evil, as evidenced in various proverbs and idiomatic expressions within our cultural lexicon.

For example, phrases such as "Fifteen of the moon is black, fifteen is white," "black inside," "black face," and "white heart" vividly illustrate the connotative power of these colours. Such expressions reflect societal perceptions and moral dichotomies, demonstrating the profound interplay between language, culture, and cognition. By analysing these colour lexemes pragmatically, we can better understand their usage and significance in different social contexts, thereby enriching our comprehension of language as a social phenomenon.

The lexeme "black" carries diverse connotations beyond its primary reference to color. When used merely to denote the hue of an object, such as in "black pencil" or "white notebook," it functions without emotional nuance, solely providing information about the object's color. This

straightforward use lacks stylistic embellishment. However, the semantic landscape of color lexemes shifts significantly when they adopt figurative meanings. For instance, phrases like "black past" or "white heart" imbue these adjectives with metaphorical significance, enriching their semantic depth.

Historically, in the ancient Turkic language, the word "black" evolved to express various figurative senses: sadness, heaviness, badness, simplicity, and roughness, among others. This semantic expansion persisted into the old Uzbek literary language, where "black" gained additional layers of meaning. In contemporary Uzbek, the lexeme "black" encompasses fifteen distinct senses, forming the basis for approximately fifty compound words. Modern usages include metaphorical connotations such as "uneducated," "unhappy," "sad," "unpleasant," and "guilty," reflecting an evolved and nuanced semantic structure absent in earlier literary contexts.

The pragmatics of "black" in expressions like "black drugs" illustrate this expanded meaning. Here, "black" transcends its color reference, implying harmful or poisonous substances rather than literal drugs. The term connotes the destructive impact of such substances, thereby justifying its figurative use. Similarly, in the context of a chess game, phrases like "Blacks are ahead" or "Poor white" utilize "black" and "white" to represent chess pieces, not their colors. The listener's understanding shifts once the game context becomes apparent, demonstrating how pragmatic analysis reveals underlying meanings.

The lexeme "white" similarly extends beyond its basic color reference to symbolize innocence, purity, and peace. In Uzbek culture, "white" signifies goodness and purity, a symbolic association common across various cultures. However, "white" can also denote cowardice, as seen during World War I when white feathers were sent to French soldiers avoiding military service. This dual symbolism highlights the lexeme's versatile pragmatic meaning in different cultural contexts.

Literary examples further illuminate these pragmatic meanings. In the passage discussing "greedy tyrants" unable to "distinguish between black and white," the terms symbolize good and evil, rather than literal colors. Another example, where Asadbek orders "fifty in the white," employs "white" to refer to a type of alcohol, showcasing its pragmatic shift away from color.

Thus, the lexemes "black" and "white" serve as powerful vehicles for metaphor and symbolism, their meanings shaped by historical, cultural, and contextual factors. Their semantic and pragmatic

versatility enriches linguistic expression, allowing for nuanced communication that transcends mere color description. This exploration underscores the dynamic nature of language, where words continually evolve to capture complex human experiences and cultural values.

The lexemes associated with colours, such as "white," "black," and "red," have evolved significantly from their original meanings, revealing their nuanced pragmatic applications in various contexts. For instance, "white" in the phrase "white drink" pertains not to colour but to a type of beverage. Similarly, "red" is often universally linked to vitality and life, symbolising blood's flow across cultures. However, in a given literary text, "red" transcends its literal sense to denote Tsarist Russian soldiers and government, portraying a negative connotation associated with bloodshed and conflict. This semantic shift underscores the importance of pragmatic analysis in deciphering the true meanings behind such expressions. A pertinent example involves a conversation where "You drive in red" refers to a traffic light violation, illustrating how colours play a crucial role in everyday life, especially in the realm of traffic signals. Furthermore, the expressions involving "green," "blue," and "yellow" exhibit distinctive pragmatic meanings, extending beyond their literal sense. For example, "green" signifies the green traffic light, "yellow" metaphorically describes illness, and "blue" in "a piece of blueberry" symbolises spring and its bounty, indicating the lushness and renewal associated with that season.

The Uzbek language offers a rich tapestry of colour-related lexemes, encompassing thirty-one different meanings, which reflect the intricacies of human perception and cultural significance. Colours like white, black, red, and yellow often transcend their basic hues to denote complex concepts such as complexion, illness, or emotional states. Phrases like "golden autumn" and "turquoise sky" exemplify how colours imbue descriptive language with vivid imagery, linking them to natural phenomena and cultural expressions. As human society and intellect have evolved, so too have our interpretations of colour, intertwining mythological imagery, cultural customs, political symbols, and even dream symbolism. For instance, in the Muslim world, green signifies renewal, while red evokes the dynamism of life, yellow can represent both wealth and sickness, and black and blue are associated with mourning. The profound significance of colours is studied extensively, as seen in Japan's dedicated scientific institute exploring the emotional and aesthetic impacts of colour. These cultural perceptions of

colour are deeply embedded in social customs, rituals, and ancient beliefs, reflecting a diverse array of attitudes shaped by geographical and societal influences. For example, the Earth's poles are symbolically represented by distinct colours—green for the east, red for the south, black for the north, and white for the west—each holding sacred significance for the respective regions. This cultural and geographical diversity highlights the intricate relationship between colour and human expression, revealing a rich spectrum of meaning that varies across different cultures and societies.

The historical origins of color symbolism in folklore unveil a tapestry of human emotions and societal values intricately woven into the cultural fabric of Uzbekistan. Within the realm of folk oral art, colors emerge as potent vehicles for expressing profound emotions and moral concepts predating written language. As noted by Sh. Turdimov, colors evoke a symphony of emotions akin to sounds, enriching the imagination with the mysteries of nature while articulating profound sentiments. Through the lens of folklore, colors such as white and black assume symbolic significance, embodying contrasting societal traits and moral dichotomies. White symbolizes purity and innocence, reflecting an individual's steadfastness amidst adversity, while black connotes guilt and irreparable stains of wrongdoing, serving as a stark reminder of the consequences of one's actions. Proverbs and folk traditions abound with vivid imagery, encapsulating the enduring power of color symbolism to convey complex moral narratives and societal values deeply ingrained in Uzbek culture.

Moreover, the symbolic imagery of colors extends beyond mere aesthetics, permeating various facets of Uzbek folklore and societal practices. Yellow, red, and blue, alongside white and black, serve as allegorical anchors, imbuing narratives with layers of meaning and cultural resonance. Proverbs and folk games become repositories of symbolic language, reflecting mythological notions and ancestral wisdom surrounding the natural properties of colors. Through meticulous examination, scholars like D. Bakhronova and S. Abduraimov unravel the intricate interplay of color symbolism in Uzbek folklore, shedding light on its enduring significance in shaping communal identity and cultural pride. From the playful rituals of children's games to the poetic symbolism of folk songs, colors emerge as potent conduits for transmitting socio-ideological and religious ideals, transcending linguistic boundaries to evoke profound truths about the human condition. Thus, the study of color symbolism in Uzbek folklore

not only enriches our understanding of cultural heritage but also underscores the universal language of colors in articulating timeless truths and moral imperatives across generations.

## 4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the exploration of colours within the cultural and linguistic landscape unveils a rich tapestry of tradition, symbolism, and human experience. Through the lens of traditional children's games and folk festivals like "The Red Flower" celebration among the Khorezmians, we gain profound insights into the historical and cultural evolution of societies. These games serve as more than mere pastimes; they are windows into the past, offering children a tangible connection to their cultural heritage and the collective consciousness of their people.

Central to the discussion is the role of colours as carriers of meaning and cultural significance. From the symbolism of red flowers in spring festivals to the sacred associations of colours with cardinal directions in Uzbek folklore, hues permeate every aspect of societal norms and values. Through interdisciplinary collaborations, scholars across various fields endeavour to unravel the complex interplay between colours and human experience, shedding light on their psychological, social, and historical dimensions.

Moreover, the pragmatic analysis of colour-expressing words reveals their nuanced impact on interpersonal communication and cultural perceptions. By understanding the pragmatic features of colour language, individuals can navigate diverse cultural contexts more effectively, fostering mutual understanding and cross-cultural dialogue. This approach not only enriches our understanding of colour symbolism but also promotes inclusivity and cultural appreciation in an increasingly interconnected world.

As we continue to delve into the study of colours, it is imperative to recognise the dynamic and evolving nature of this field of research. With each discovery, we unravel new layers of meaning and deepen our connection with cultural heritage. By embracing the richness and complexity of colours, we embark on a journey of self-discovery and cultural exploration, transcending linguistic and geographical boundaries.

In essence, the study of colours is more than an academic pursuit; it is a testament to the intricacies of human expression and the diversity of cultural experiences. By delving into the historical roots of colour symbolism and engaging in interdisciplinary

dialogue, we not only enrich our understanding of the human condition but also forge connections that bridge past and present, fostering a more inclusive and empathetic global community.

## REFERENCES

- Alpatov, V. M. (2003). *Language and culture*. Moscow: Languages of Slavic culture.
- Bakhronova, D., & Abduraimov, S. (2022). The Influence of the National-Cultural Image of the World on the Construction of Metaphors in the Poetic Discourse.
- Chomsky, N. (2000). *New Horizons in the study of Language and Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Galiyev, Sh. (1998). *The folk games of Uzbek Children*. Tashkent.
- Hakkulov, I. (2001). About the interpretation of black colour again. *Uzbek language and literature*, 3, 17-20.
- Ibrahim, Haqqul. (2001). About the interpretation of the color black again. *Uzbek language and literature*, 3, 17-24.
- Jahongirov, G. (1975). *The folk of Uzbek children*. Tashkent.
- Jamila Sh. Djumabayeva, Ra'no R. Sayfullayeva, & Dilnoza B. Mamatova. (2022). Modern Methods Of Teaching English In Preschool Institutions. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(3), 1736.
- Karimov, S. (1992). *Literary style of the Uzbek language*. Samarkand: Zarafshon.
- Ma'rufov, Z. (1957). Adjective. In *Modern Uzbek language (lexicology, phonetics, graphics and orthography, morphology)* (pp. 343-357). Tashkent: Editorial board of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan.