

## INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGICAL TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING NEGATIVE EVALUATION VOCABULARY THROUGH THE SEMANTIC FIELD OF 'UGLINESS' IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

**Shaxzoda Qurbonboy qizi QALANDAROVA**

Teacher of Uzbekistan State World Languages University  
shaxzoda.qalandarova.96@gmail.com

**Annotation:** *This paper explores the pedagogical potential of the functional–semantic field of “ugliness” in English and Uzbek, proposing an innovative set of techniques for teaching negative evaluation vocabulary. Negative evaluative expressions form an essential component of communicative competence, yet they remain one of the least systematically taught lexical categories. The study argues that combining corpus-based observations, cognitive-semantic principles, and sociolinguistic patterns allows learners to interpret evaluative meanings more accurately, understand their cultural motivations, and apply them appropriately in communication. The paper demonstrates how the semantic field of “ugliness” – with its emotional charge, metaphorical productivity, and cross-cultural variability – can be used to develop stylistic awareness, pragmatic sensitivity, and intercultural literacy.*

**Keywords:** *semantic field, ugliness, negative evaluation, cognitive semantics, corpus-based pedagogy, English, Uzbek.*

### Introduction

Evaluation is a fundamental human cognitive activity that allows individuals to classify, interpret, and react to phenomena around them. Negative evaluation vocabulary, particularly the lexicon associated with the semantic field of “ugliness”, plays a significant role in the creation of emotional stances, social judgments, and rhetorical strategies. Despite its relevance, this lexical field receives minimal attention in language pedagogy, especially in Uzbek contexts where descriptive and expressive vocabulary is often overshadowed by grammar-based instruction.

The semantic field of “ugliness” is particularly suitable for pedagogical exploration due to its complex interplay of literal, figurative, cultural, and pragmatic meanings. In English and Uzbek, such vocabulary extends beyond physical appearance to describe behavior, moral qualities, social events, interpersonal conflict, and psychological states. For instance, expressions like ugly truth, ugly politics, hideous crime in English, and jirkanch holat, xunuk gap, badbashara ish in Uzbek illustrate the field’s conceptual depth.

The aim of this research is to develop innovative, linguistically grounded techniques that integrate modern technology, corpus tools, and intercultural insights for teaching evaluative vocabulary more effectively.

### Literature review

The study of evaluative language has long occupied a central place in modern linguistics, particularly within semantic, cognitive, and sociolinguistic frameworks. Early foundational works by Lakoff and Johnson (2003) demonstrated that evaluative



expressions are deeply rooted in conceptual metaphors that shape human perception and structure the way individuals categorize experience. Their theory argues that notions such as “ugliness” extend beyond literal descriptions and represent cognitive mechanisms used to conceptualize moral, social, and emotional judgments. This view was further elaborated by scholars such as Fillmore, who emphasized the role of frames in organizing semantic domains, including those related to negative evaluation.

In parallel, corpus-based approaches introduced by Hunston (2011) and Bednarek (2006) highlighted the importance of semantic prosody, collocational behavior, and discourse patterns in shaping evaluative meaning. Their findings show that negative evaluation lexicon exhibits notable cross-linguistic variation and is sensitive to socio-cultural norms. Such insights are crucial for English–Uzbek contrastive studies, where differing politeness strategies, social hierarchies, and cultural expectations shape the use of evaluative language.

Research on Uzbek evaluative vocabulary, while comparatively limited, underscores the moral and ethical dimension of negative evaluation. Uzbek linguists have noted that evaluations such as *xunuk*, *jirkanch*, and *qabih* frequently function as discourse tools reinforcing social cohesion, moral codes, and interpersonal boundaries. These observations parallel findings in English discourse, where terms like *ugly behavior* or *hideous crime* reflect cultural ideologies embedded in language.

The pedagogical aspect of evaluative semantics remains underexplored despite its relevance to translator training, intercultural communication, and advanced vocabulary development. Existing studies argue that evaluative lexicon plays a vital role in shaping pragmatic competence, yet language curricula often marginalize it in favor of neutral or factual vocabulary. This gap indicates a strong need for instructional models integrating corpus insights, cognitive principles, and cultural interpretation.

By synthesizing theories from cognitive semantics, corpus linguistics, and sociolinguistics, this study positions the functional–semantic field of “ugliness” as a powerful pedagogical resource capable of enhancing semantic awareness, stylistic sophistication, and intercultural literacy among learners.

### **Methodology**

The methodology of this research is based on a triangulated design combining corpus analysis, cognitive-semantic interpretation, and pedagogical experimentation. This integrated approach allows for a multifaceted examination of the semantic field of “ugliness” in both English and Uzbek and supports the development of innovative teaching techniques.

First, a corpus-linguistic component was employed to identify the frequency, collocational patterns, semantic prosody, and contextual distribution of negative evaluative expressions. Authentic samples were retrieved from established corpora such as COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English), BNC (British National Corpus), and the Uzbek National Corpus. These corpora provided a reliable empirical foundation for distinguishing recurrent patterns and detecting subtle pragmatic differences.

Second, the cognitive-semantic component focused on identifying conceptual metaphors and frames that structure evaluative meanings. The analysis included examining how physical “ugliness” functions as a source domain for abstract evaluations



– such as dishonesty, aggression, or moral impurity. This cognitive-semantic mapping enabled a deeper understanding of how evaluative meanings are conceptualized and extended in both languages.

Third, a pedagogical component was included to test the applicability of corpus and semantic insights in language instruction. Classroom-based micro-experiments, demonstration lessons, and task-based activities were designed to evaluate how learners internalize and use evaluative vocabulary. These tasks incorporated semantic clustering, mind-mapping, translation workshops, discourse analysis, and corpus-driven discovery learning.

This threefold methodology ensured that the research remained firmly grounded in linguistic theory while simultaneously addressing real educational needs.

### **Data collection and analyzes**

Data collection involved systematically extracting evaluative lexemes related to the semantic field of “ugliness” from English and Uzbek corpora. The selection criteria included:

- lexical items directly denoting physical ugliness,
- metaphorical extensions used for events, behavior, and moral judgment,
- expressions demonstrating clear socio-cultural relevance,
- stable collocations and frequently occurring discourse patterns.

In the English dataset, lexical items such as ugly, hideous, repulsive, grotesque, foul, and disgusting appeared with high frequency across news media, fiction, blogs, and spoken corpora. Their collocational environment revealed patterns such as ugly truth, ugly scene, hideous crime, and repulsive behavior, indicating strong associations with moral, emotional, and interpersonal evaluation.

The Uzbek dataset included xunuk, jirkanch, badbashara, sassiq, jirkanarli, and qabih. Analysis showed that Uzbek evaluative vocabulary often carries culturally grounded connotations tied to moral judgment, community norms, and traditional etiquette. Expressions such as xunuk gap, jirkanch ish, qabih xatti-harakat demonstrated a semantic overlap with English but also revealed culturally specific nuances.

Quantitative analysis – frequency counts, concordances, and collocational metrics – was complemented by qualitative interpretation. The latter focused on identifying metaphorical patterns, discourse functions, politeness strategies, and stylistic constraints. The dual analysis provided a comprehensive understanding of both the literal and extended meanings of evaluative lexicon.

### **Result and discussion**

The findings demonstrate that the semantic field of “ugliness” is characterized by high emotional intensity, rich metaphorical structure, and strong cross-cultural variability. Both languages utilize this field to express disapproval, moral condemnation, and social distancing, yet they differ in politeness norms, stylistic preferences, and pragmatic usage.

#### **1. Semantic and Stylistic Richness**

English displays a wide range of lexical items with fine-grained distinctions, enabling nuanced emotional expression. Uzbek, meanwhile, often integrates ethical and communal values into evaluative expressions, giving them a culturally specific depth.



### 2. Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Differences

English speakers tend to mitigate negative evaluations through hedging, indirectness, or softened phrasing, particularly in formal contexts. Uzbek discourse, however, may employ direct evaluations depending on social hierarchy, speaker authority, and cultural expectations. This contrast has implications for translation accuracy and intercultural communication.

### 3. Pedagogical Value

Instructional experiments revealed that students benefit significantly from corpus-driven tasks, which helped them notice authentic usage patterns, infer meanings independently, and apply evaluative vocabulary more confidently. Activities based on semantic mapping and contrastive translation encouraged deeper cognitive engagement and improved pragmatic awareness.

### 4. Pedagogical Implications

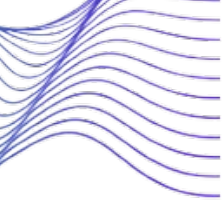
The results underscore that evaluative semantics should not be treated as peripheral vocabulary. Instead, it should be integrated into curricula for translator training, academic writing, and discourse competence development. The proposed methodology proved effective in enhancing learners' interpretive, analytical, and communicative skills.

### Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the functional–semantic field of “ugliness” provides a powerful and linguistically rich foundation for teaching negative evaluation vocabulary in English and Uzbek. By combining corpus-linguistic insights, cognitive-semantic frameworks, and sociolinguistic interpretation, the research offers a comprehensive and innovative pedagogical model. The findings show that learners not only acquire lexical items but also develop a deeper awareness of cultural norms, pragmatic constraints, and metaphorical extensions that shape evaluative language use. Incorporating evaluative semantics into advanced language instruction is essential for fostering intercultural competence, stylistic control, and critical language awareness.

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