

Semantic content of social lexicon in Uzbek and English languages

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Annotation: This article explores the semantic content of social lexicon in Uzbek and English languages. Social lexicon includes words and expressions that describe social relationships, roles, institutions, and behavioral norms in society. The study analyzes how cultural, historical, and social factors influence the development and usage of social vocabulary in both languages. Particular attention is given to words that express status, politeness, authority, and social hierarchy. Comparative analysis highlights the similarities and differences in conceptualizing social realities in Uzbek and English cultures. By examining specific lexical items and their semantic fields, the article aims to reveal how language reflects and shapes social cognition. The research is based on linguistic and sociolinguistic sources, as well as examples from modern usage. This study is useful for linguists, sociologists, and language learners interested in cross-cultural communication and translation studies.

Key words: social lexicon, semantics, Uzbek language, English language, sociolinguistics, cultural differences, social cognition, lexical analysis

Семантическое содержание социального лексикона в узбекском и английском языках

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Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается семантическое содержание социальной лексики в узбекском и английском языках. Социальная лексика включает слова и выражения, описывающие социальные отношения, роли, институты и нормы поведения в обществе. Исследование анализирует, как культурные, исторические и социальные факторы влияют на развитие и употребление социальной лексики в обоих языках. Особое внимание уделяется словам, выражающим статус, вежливость, авторитет и социальную иерархию. Сравнительный анализ подчеркивает сходства и различия в концептуализации социальной реальности в узбекской и английской культурах. На основе анализа отдельных лексических единиц и их семантических полей, статья показывает, как язык отражает и формирует социальное мышление. Исследование основано на лингвистических и социолингвистических источниках, а также примерах современного употребления. Работа будет полезна лингвистам, социологам и изучающим языки в контексте межкультурной коммуникации и перевода.

Ключевые слова: социальная лексика, семантика, узбекский язык, английский язык, социолингвистика, культурные различия, социальное мышление, лексический анализ

O‘zbek va ingliz tillaridagi ijtimoiy leksikaning semantik mazmuni

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o‘zbek va ingliz tillaridagi ijtimoiy leksikaning semantik mazmuni tahlil qilinadi. Ijtimoiy leksika – bu jamiyatdagi ijtimoiy munosabatlar, rollar, institutlar va xulq-atvor me‘yorlarini ifodalovchi so‘z va iboralarni o‘z ichiga oladi. Tadqiqotda madaniy, tarixiy va ijtimoiy omillarning ushbu leksikani shakllantirish va qo‘llanishiga qanday ta‘sir qilishi o‘rganiladi. Ayniqsa, ijtimoiy maqom, odob, hokimiyat va ierarxiyani ifodalovchi so‘zlarga alohida e‘tibor qaratiladi. Taqqoslovchi tahlil orqali o‘zbek va ingliz madaniyatlarida ijtimoiy haqiqatni tasavvur etishdagi o‘xshashlik va farqlar ochib beriladi. Maxsus leksik birliklar va ularning semantik maydonlari misolida tilning ijtimoiy tafakkurni qanday aks ettirishi va shakllantirishi ko‘rsatib beriladi. Tadqiqot tilshunoslik, sotsiolingvistika va amaliy misollarga asoslangan bo‘lib, madaniyatlararo muloqot va tarjima bilan shug‘ullanuvchilar uchun foydalidir.

Kalit so‘zlar: ijtimoiy leksika, semantika, o‘zbek tili, ingliz tili, sotsiolingvistika, madaniy tafovutlar, ijtimoiy tafakkur, leksik tahlil

Context and Relevance of the Research

Due to globalization, migration, and technological advancement, interlingual and intercultural communication has become increasingly dynamic. This process necessitates an in-depth study of the semantic characteristics of lexical units that express social concepts across different languages. In this regard, the social lexicon of Uzbek and English holds particular significance, as both languages are products of distinct civilizations – Eastern and Western – and possess unique features in expressing social concepts.

Social lexicon is a broad and relevant field of linguistics that includes words and phrases expressing social relationships, roles, hierarchies, institutions, and moral or informational norms in a society. Each language shapes this lexicon based on its historical development, culture, and social structure. Therefore, semantic analysis of this type of lexicon must be conducted not only from a linguistic perspective but also from cultural and psychological viewpoints.

This research specifically focuses on the comparative study of the semantic structure of social lexical units in Uzbek and English, aiming to demonstrate how social consciousness and values are expressed through language.

Scientific Foundations and Theoretical Approaches

The theoretical foundation of this study is based on key principles of semantics, sociolinguistics, conceptual linguistics, and cognitive linguistics. Semantics is the study of the meaning of lexical units and their interrelations within context, while sociolinguistics examines the relationship between language and society. The combination of these two approaches serves as an essential tool for analyzing social lexicon.

Additionally, the theory of cognitive linguistics – particularly the theory of metaphor developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) – helps identify how social concepts are modeled through language. For instance, the English phrase “glass ceiling” refers to the invisible barriers faced by women and minority groups in social advancement. In Uzbek, expressions like “erkak ish” (“a man’s job”) or “bola yetti yoshga yetgach, otasiga qaraydi” (“when a child turns seven, he looks to his father”) represent gender-based social stereotypes. These theoretical approaches allow the identification of semantic fields of social concepts, analysis of their components, and comparative evaluation between the two languages.

Literature Review

The literature related to this topic includes both foreign and local sources. Among the international references are P. Trudgill's *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society* (2000), Deborah Tannen's *Gender and Discourse* (1994), and George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). These works provide theoretical foundations on how social lexicon is expressed in language.

Among the local sources are N. Mahmudov's *Lexicon and Phraseology of the Uzbek Language* (2020), Sh. Shoabdurahmonov's *Language and Culture: Issues of Interconnection* (2015), and A. Tursunov's *Contemporary Problems of Uzbek Linguistics* (2021). These studies offer valuable insights into the study of socially meaningful lexical units in Uzbek and their cultural bases.

In addition, various dissertations, articles, and international conference materials have been used in this research. Especially sources related to translation theory and intercultural communication provide an opportunity to analyze social lexicon within context.

Research Problem and Main Directions

The main problem addressed in this study is the analysis of the semantic layers of meaning of social lexical units in the context of language and culture, and identifying how these meanings are formed in both Uzbek and English. Language does not reflect social phenomena by itself, but rather symbolically expresses the social concepts created by members of society. Therefore, analyzing language also means analyzing social consciousness and thinking.

This research is conducted in the following directions:

1. Semantic analysis of social lexical units in Uzbek and English;
2. Cultural foundations and historical development of these units;
3. Social stereotypes and values expressed through language;
4. Identification of similarities and differences based on comparative analysis;
5. Creation of a conceptual map based on semantic fields.

This research may be beneficial not only for linguists but also for translators, sociologists, cultural scientists, and communication specialists.

Methodology

In this study, the comparative analysis of the semantic content of social lexical units in Uzbek and English was chosen as the main methodological direction. The research is based on linguistic, sociolinguistic, and cognitive linguistic approaches. This section outlines the key methods and sources used in the study:

a) Criteria for Material Selection

The following criteria were used in selecting lexical units:

- The word expresses social status, roles, or interpersonal relationships;
- It is frequently used in linguistic corpora (BNC, COCA, Uzbek Text Corpus);
- It carries connotative meaning and cultural significance.

A total of 150 social lexical units were selected for each language. They were categorized into the following semantic fields:

- **Kinship and family**
- **Social status and rank**
- **Politeness and decorum**
- **Power and hierarchy**
- **Occupations and social roles**
- **Age and generational terms**

b) Selection, Database, and Analysis

The primary materials for the study included over 150 frequently used lexical units in both Uzbek and English that represent social relationships. The words were categorized into semantic fields such as state, family, gender, occupation, status, politeness, age, and social norms.

- **Uzbek data:** gathered from modern media, literature, websites, and real-life speech recordings.

- **English data:** drawn from British and American English texts, Oxford Dictionary entries, social media analyses, and linguistic corpora (British National Corpus, Corpus of Contemporary American English).

Semantic analysis was the primary method used, focusing on:

- **Denotative meaning** (literal or primary meaning)
- **Connotative meaning** (additional, cultural meaning)
- **Stylistic coloring** (neutral, positive, or negative)

This analysis helped to identify each word's role in shaping social consciousness. In the comparative stage, lexical units performing similar social functions in Uzbek and English were paired and examined for semantic differences and cultural representation.

Examples:

- Uzbek: *katta odam* (“important person”), *odamiylik* (“humanity”), *halollik* (“honesty”)
- English: *senior figure*, *humanity*, *integrity*

Additionally, the cognitive linguistic perspective was applied to examine metaphorical conceptualization of ideas. For example, metaphors like *hayot yo‘li* (Uzbek) and *life journey* (English) illustrate conceptual mapping of social conditions.

c) Interviews and Surveys

As a supplement, a short survey was conducted with 20 respondents – speakers of Uzbek and English. Participants were asked to choose and explain words describing various social concepts. The results provided insight into the cultural motivations behind these lexical units.

Participants:

- 10 native English speakers (UK, USA)
- 10 native Uzbek speakers (Uzbekistan)

Participants were presented with 20 pairs of social concept-related words and asked the following:

- How do you use this word in terms of connotation?
- Which social groups do you associate this word with?
- What are its synonyms or alternatives?

Results and Analysis

According to the findings of the study, social lexical units in Uzbek and English are distributed across various semantic fields and reflect culturally specific social stereotypes. Below is the distribution of lexical items according to the main semantic categories:

Semantic Field	Uzbek Language (count)	English Language (count)
Family and Kinship	30	28
Social Status	25	22
Politeness and Etiquette	20	27
Power and Hierarchy	15	18
Occupations and Roles	25	20
Age and Generation	10	15

Analysis:

- In Uzbek, words such as *ota* (father), *amaki* (uncle), *akam* (older brother), *qaynona* (mother-in-law), and *kattalar* (elders) form the core of the social lexical repertoire.

- In English, words like *parent*, *uncle*, *elder*, and *caregiver* are more often used based on individual roles.

This trend suggests that:

1. In Uzbek, concepts related to family, kinship, and occupations are represented with a broader lexical range;
2. In English, expressions related to politeness and hierarchical relationships are semantically more nuanced and complex.
3. The “*Politeness*” semantic field is broader in English, which can be explained by the greater emphasis on personal freedom and courteous interactions in Western culture.
4. In Uzbek, concepts such as “*respect for elders*”, “*honor*”, and “*family role hierarchy*” are among the core social concepts expressed in the language.

Sociocognitive Differences

Concept	Uzbek Lexicon Example	English Lexicon Example	Cultural Note	Concept
Authority	“katta odam”	“leader”, “senior”	In Uzbek, authority is often attributed based on age and kinship experience.	Authority
Respect	“hurmat”	“respect”	In English, it is generally used in a more egalitarian context.	Respect
Politeness	“iltimos”, “marhamat”	“please”, “would you...”	English expresses politeness through syntax; Uzbek through specific vocabulary.	Politeness

Survey Results

- 90% of Uzbek respondents indicated that the phrase “*katta odam*” implies both age and social status.
- 80% of English-speaking respondents interpreted “*elder*” solely based on age.
- Uzbek speakers found it easier to list synonyms for “*odob*” (politeness), while English speakers mentioned a variety of context-specific expressions for “*politeness*”.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of the study indicate that the social lexicon of a language can reveal the social roles, values, and hierarchies present within a society. Social relationships in every language are expressed through specific linguistic units that carry cultural meanings unique to that language.

Additionally:

- The way social concepts are modeled in cultural consciousness through language was identified.
- The social lexicon of both languages is deeply embedded in their respective cultural contexts, making it difficult to preserve their full meanings in translation.
- The findings of this study can be effectively utilized in intercultural communication, translation practices, and language teaching.

This research further proves that language is not only a tool for communication but also a carrier of culture. Although the social lexicons of Uzbek and English have significant differences, both languages reflect the social structure, values, and models of interpersonal relationships in their societies. For example, the Uzbek terms "ota," "bobokalon," and "kattalar" strongly express intergenerational hierarchy and respect-based relationships within society. In contrast, English terms like "mentor," "elderly," and "senior citizen" primarily denote social status based on age but do not convey the emotional and intimate meanings found in their Uzbek counterparts.

The translation of the word "hurmat" is also problematic: "respect" is only its denotative equivalent, while "hurmat" conveys a broader concept of expected conduct and value-based approaches within society. During the study, it was found that the social lexicon in English is often contextual (adapted to the situation), functional, and frequently dependent on gender and racial characteristics. In Uzbek, however, lexical units have strong traditional foundations, with many retaining fixed meanings that are less connected to individual characteristics.

The Link Between Social Lexicon and National Culture

The research also revealed that the content of the social lexicon is directly tied not only to language structure but also to the value system, moral norms, and historical heritage of a society. Phrases like "kattalarga hurmat" and "kichiklarga izzat" in Uzbek reflect social concepts that define cultural norms of interaction regardless of age, position, or gender.

In contrast, English social structures are much more flexible and contextual. Words like "Sir" or "Madam" are used exclusively in formal settings, while everyday communication tends to be more egalitarian. As a result, the social lexicon in English relies more on personal qualities and functions, whereas Uzbek social lexicon is rooted in social status and values.

Stylistic Variations and Socio-Psychological Impact

Many social lexicon units in Uzbek are stylistically multi-layered and carry a high emotional charge. For example, the word "ota" (father) does not only denote a biological father but also a spiritual leader (e.g., "vatan otasi" or "ustoz ota"). This demonstrates the psychological and social functions of language. In English, metaphorical connotations like this are much less common. Phrases like "Father of the Nation" exist but are typically used in formal or historical contexts. This shows that the Uzbek social lexicon is rich in emotional and national components.

Metaphoric Concepts in Social Lexicon

Based on Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive linguistic ideas, the analysis found that social lexicons are often shaped by metaphors. In Uzbek, phrases like "boshi ochiq ayol" (open-minded woman), "yuzi yorug' inson" (bright-faced person), and "og'zi pishiq odam" (sharp-tongued person) metaphorically depict social roles and values. In English, terms like "open-minded," "cold-hearted," and "tight-lipped" are typically used to describe behavior and personal traits, reflecting different conceptual foundations: one based on group values, the other on individual virtues.

Gender and Lexical Approaches

The study found that gender roles are expressed differently in the two languages. In Uzbek, terms like "ayol kishi" (woman), "erkak odam" (man), and "muhtaram opa" (respected woman) not only show social status but also clearly mark gender roles. In contrast, English language promotes gender neutrality, with changes such as "chairperson" instead of "chairman" and "firefighter" instead of "fireman," reflecting the language's adaptation to modern democratic values.

Translation and Semantic Ambiguities

The study highlighted that semantic ambiguities are common in translation. For example, the phrase "hurmatli mehmon" (dear guest) when translated into English as "dear guest" loses the social status, national values, and cultural nuances embedded in the original phrase. Similarly, the term "pastkash odam" (dishonest person) when replaced with "dishonest person" loses its emotional weight. Therefore, it is essential to study the cultural semantics of social lexicons and express them contextually in translation and language teaching.

Social Hierarchy and Lexical Systems

The social lexicon, especially in Uzbekistan, has become a tool for defining a person's position in society. Words like "domla" (teacher), "hokim" (mayor), and "mahalla raisi" (neighborhood head) not only refer to positions but also convey the social environment and respect surrounding the individual. English terms, in contrast, focus more on the functional aspects of positions, such as "mayor," "lecturer," and "manager," which express roles without the emotional undertones seen in Uzbek social lexicon.

Transformation of Social Lexicon under Globalization

In today's era of globalization, the social lexicons of national languages are undergoing changes. Specifically, terms borrowed from English, such as "leader," "influencer," "public figure," and "manager," are increasingly used in Uzbek, replacing older terms like "rahbar" (leader) and "yo'l ko'rsatuvchi" (guide). This process is occurring in both directions: while English social lexicon is often becoming more universal in a global context, Uzbek still carries cultural, religious, moral, and historical layers with every word, meaning these changes may pose a threat to language integrity. Therefore, monitoring and coordinating lexical transformation is important.

Digital Communication and Lexical Speed

Social networks and digital communication are giving rise to new forms of social lexicon. In Uzbek, terms like "admin," "blogger," "podcaster," and "follower" are widespread in internet language, reflecting the modern communication environment. Similarly, English terms like "netizen," "content creator," "socialite," and "troll" serve to express new social roles. These lexical units have different semantic content compared to traditional lexicons, reflecting new activities, online status, and social influence. Hence, modern forms of social lexicon should also be analyzed.

Social Lexicon in Youth Language

The new lexical system forming among young people plays a significant role in the development of language. In Uzbek, terms like "gap yo'q bola" (cool person), "respekt" (respect), "bir toifa odam" (a certain kind of person), and "brat" (brother) convey social status, friendship levels, or mannerisms among youth. In English, terms like "squad," "bro," "homie," and "respect" serve the same purpose. These terms are often used in informal communication and are significant in the context of personal relationships.

Balance Between Stability and Flexibility in Social Lexicon

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that social lexicon is a system expressing stability, reflecting culture and values. However, it must also be adaptable to societal changes. For instance, the inclusion of gender equality, inclusivity, and democratic values is leading to the emergence of new lexical units. In English, gender-neutral terms like "they" instead of "he/she" have gained prominence. In Uzbek, such changes are still developing slowly.

Recommendations

- The cultural connotations of the social lexicon should be taught specifically in language learning.
- It is recommended that translators create guides reflecting the semantic diversity of social terms in both languages.
- The creation of new lexical units in Uzbek reflecting modern social roles will contribute to language development.

Scientific Novelty

The study presents the following novelties:

4. The social lexicon of Uzbek and English was systematically compared for the first time through cognitive-semantic and sociolinguistic analysis.
5. The metaphorical structures, stylistic value, and cultural loading of words were analyzed together.
6. Empirical results were obtained based on the connotative understanding of real users through a survey.

Limitations

The study has the following limitations:

- Only two languages (Uzbek and English) were studied, and a comparative analysis with other languages was not included.
- The selection of words was based primarily on general literature, and specialized lexicons (e.g., medical, legal) were not covered.
- The number of survey participants was relatively small (20 people), so caution is required in generalizing the results.

Conclusion

The findings of this study lead to the following conclusions:

- In Uzbek, the social lexicon is primarily shaped by group interests, intergenerational connections, and traditional values.
- The English social lexicon is based on individuality, social equality, and functional roles.
- Both languages have their strengths and limitations, and these factors must be considered in translation, intercultural communication, and language teaching.

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