

LEXICAL SEMANTIC AND STYLISTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE WATER CONCEPT IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK IN A COMPARATIVE LINGUO COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores the semantic and stylistic representation of the water/suv concept in English and Uzbek through a linguo-cognitive lens. Drawing on comparative, semantic, and stylistic methodologies, the study reveals how the lexical and metaphorical realizations of the concept reflect cultural cognition and ecological perception. English employs water as a symbol of change, adaptability, and rational clarity, while Uzbek conceptualizes suv as sacred, life-giving, and spiritually purifying. Findings demonstrate that while both languages share universal archetypes of life and purity, they diverge in their cultural codification, with English favoring dynamic, process-oriented imagery and Uzbek emphasizing ethical, communal, and sacred dimensions. The research further establishes that the water/suv concept functions as a fundamental cognitive schema that integrates natural, emotional, and axiological domains of human experience. Its lexical realizations in both languages reveal how perception of the environment is filtered through cultural values and mental models. Consequently, water and suv embody not only physical substance but also conceptual categories that encode human memory, tradition, and worldview, reflecting the inseparable unity of language, thought, and culture.

Keywords: concept, cognition, semantics, linguoculture, stylistics, worldview, comparative linguistics, water/suv...

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of water is among the most ancient and symbolically rich cognitive categories in human linguistic consciousness. Within cognitive linguistics, it is interpreted as a mental construct that organizes perception, categorization, and the conceptualization of the natural and cultural world. The semantic field of water in different languages manifests not only the physical essence of the element but also its profound spiritual and axiological meanings that have accumulated throughout human history. The linguistic representations of water in various cultures reveal the close interrelation between human cognition, environment, and collective memory.

In both English and Uzbek, the lexical field of water or suv reflects the anthropocentric nature of thinking, where the natural element becomes a vehicle of meaning and evaluation. English linguistic tradition tends to associate water with movement, temporality, clarity, and rational continuity, illustrating the dynamic and analytical character of Western cognitive patterns. Uzbek perception of **suv**, in contrast, elevates it to a moral and sacred category that embodies the ideas of baraka meaning blessing, poklik meaning purity, and hayot meaning life. This dichotomy demonstrates that linguistic conceptualization of natural phenomena is culturally determined and rooted in the axiological foundations of each nation's worldview.

The analysis of these semantic representations shows that the water concept functions not only as a lexical category but also as a symbolic cognitive model that unites emotional, ethical, and

ecological domains of meaning. In English, it is frequently realized through metaphorical extensions that express motion, transformation, and the flux of time, while in Uzbek it retains sacral and communal meanings reflecting deep respect for nature and life itself. Both linguistic systems embody water as the source of existence and spiritual harmony, yet each constructs its meaning through distinct cultural codes and linguistic mechanisms.

According to V. I. Karasik, the conceptualization of natural entities within a language forms part of the collective cognitive experience of a people and represents a symbolic reflection of its mentality and cultural identity [1]. The present research aims to explore the semantic, stylistic, and cognitive dimensions of the water or *suv* concept in English and Uzbek, identifying how universal archetypes are transformed into national conceptual frameworks. Through this comparative linguo-cognitive analysis, it becomes possible to observe how language not only names reality but also interprets and re-creates it as a mirror of cultural consciousness and collective thought [2].

2. METHODOLOGY. This research is conducted within the framework of cognitive and comparative linguistics, employing an integrated methodological approach that combines linguo-cognitive, semantic, and stylistic analyses. The comparative perspective enables the identification of both universal and culture-specific features of the **water/suv** concept, while the cognitive approach reveals the mental mechanisms through which linguistic signs encode experience and worldview. The study applies componential analysis to determine semantic invariants, semantic-field modeling to trace associative and metaphorical relations, and conceptual mapping to visualize the structure of meaning in both languages. These complementary methods provide a comprehensive understanding of how lexical and figurative realizations of the water concept function within the linguistic worldview of English and Uzbek speakers.

The data corpus includes idiomatic expressions, proverbs, literary excerpts, and lexicographic sources in both languages. Proverbs such as “still waters run deep” and “**suvni asragan el yashar**” were analyzed not as mere linguistic artifacts but as cognitive and cultural codes reflecting the collective experience of each nation. The material also encompasses poetic metaphors and symbolic imagery extracted from classical and modern literature, which illustrate how water-related expressions acquire aesthetic and emotional dimensions in discourse. Dictionaries and explanatory glossaries were used to identify lexical paradigms, etymological developments, and semantic extensions that define the conceptual boundaries of water/suv.

The methodological foundation of this research is built upon the theoretical frameworks proposed by E. Kubryakova, who viewed cognitive semantics as a study of mental categorization processes [1]; Z. Popova and I. Sternin, who developed the concept of the linguistic worldview as a reflection of national consciousness [2]; and Sh. Safarov, who emphasized the pragmatics of linguistic meaning and its dependence on socio-cultural context [3]. Their approaches collectively underline that linguistic cognition is not a neutral reflection of reality but a culturally determined process of conceptualization that organizes human experience into structured knowledge.

Accordingly, the study proceeds from the assumption that the water/suv concept constitutes a cognitive-semantic field whose core consists of basic nominative units such as water, river, rain and *suv*, *daryo*, *yomg'ir*, while its periphery is represented by metaphorical

and stylistically marked forms expressing evaluative and symbolic meanings. Through the integration of semantic and stylistic analyses, the research reveals how language transforms natural perception into cultural interpretation, turning the physical substance of water into a mental image that encodes the values, emotions, and aesthetic sensibilities of a given community.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Semantic Representation. In both English and Uzbek linguistic systems, the concept of water or *suv* develops as a multi-layered semantic formation that bridges the physical, cognitive, and symbolic dimensions of meaning. In English, water constitutes an extensive lexical and metaphorical network that includes numerous derivatives and idiomatic formations. Words such as stream, flow, wave, tide, ripple, and flood form a continuum of meanings that evoke movement, continuity, and transformation. These linguistic realizations illustrate the cognitive process of mapping physical experience onto abstract domains of thought, in which the fluid nature of water becomes an image of temporal flow, emotional intensity, and adaptability. For instance, the idioms to be in deep water or to hold water indicate complexity, responsibility, and logical soundness, whereas to muddy the waters represents confusion or obstruction in communication. The underlying conceptual metaphors described by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson in their cognitive theory—such as LIFE IS A FLOWING STREAM and EMOTION IS DEPTH—are vividly manifested in English discourse, confirming that the semantic structure of water operates as a model for interpreting abstract experience through sensory imagery [1].

In the Uzbek linguistic worldview, *suv* exhibits a semantically richer and more value-oriented system. The lexemes *buloq* meaning spring, *daryo* meaning river, *sharshara* meaning waterfall, and *yomg'ir* meaning rain represent not only natural phenomena but also serve as figurative and ethical symbols. These lexical items are deeply embedded in cultural memory and often appear in oral traditions, poetry, and religious discourse. Proverbs such as **Suvni asragan el yashar** meaning a nation that preserves water will live and expressions like *suvday tiniq* meaning **as clear as water are not merely descriptive**; they function as moral imperatives that convey reverence for nature and social responsibility. The semantic field of *suv* thus transcends material substance, linking it with notions of divine grace, renewal, and spiritual balance.

The Uzbek conceptualization of water reflects an ancient worldview shaped by agrarian culture and Islamic ethics, in which water symbolizes sustenance, blessing, and purity of both the body and soul. Consequently, the cognitive model of *suv* integrates ecological awareness with moral consciousness, establishing it as a linguistic symbol of life, harmony, and spiritual perfection [2].

This comparative analysis reveals that while English associates water with logical coherence, emotional depth, and dynamic transformation, Uzbek interprets *suv* as a sacred element of existence that mediates between humanity and the divine. Both systems share universal archetypes such as life, renewal, and purity, yet differ in the degree of ethical and cultural valuation assigned to the element. Hence, the semantic representation of water/*suv* encapsulates not only the environmental experience of each nation but also its collective philosophy of being.

3.2 Structural and Stylistic Features. English and Uzbek languages demonstrate distinct structural and stylistic mechanisms in representing the water/suv concept, revealing differences in grammatical typology, morphological organization, and discourse aesthetics. In the English linguistic system, idiomatic and figurative constructions that involve water typically follow a verb-centered syntactic pattern such as **to hold water, to pour cold water on, to be in deep water, or to test the water**. These expressions emphasize movement, action, and process, reflecting the analytical character of English, where meaning is often expressed through syntactic relations and verbal dynamics. The dominance of verbs signifies an orientation toward external events and pragmatic outcomes, which aligns with the empirical and rational nature of English cognitive models [1].

In contrast, Uzbek idioms and figurative expressions containing suv are structurally agglutinative and frequently realized through adjectival, participial, or comparative forms such as *suvday oqmoq, suvday tiniq, suvdek zarur, and suvga o'xshamoq*. These constructions emphasize the qualities and states of being rather than action, thus encoding stability, continuity, and harmony. The agglutinative morphology of Uzbek enables the combination of semantic nuances through affixation, allowing a single lexical form to convey multiple layers of meaning related to purity, transparency, and necessity. This reflects the synthetic and image-based thinking of Turkic linguistic consciousness, where essence and description are prioritized over movement or causality [2].

Stylistically, English employs water with a pragmatic and empirical tone. In literary and journalistic discourse, it functions as a metaphor for logic, truth, or rational coherence, as in the argument does not hold water or to keep one's head above water. Such expressions exemplify cognitive restraint and intellectual control, traits that dominate Western linguistic culture. Meanwhile, the Uzbek suv carries a deeply aesthetic, emotional, and ethical resonance. It frequently appears in poetry, oral epics, and proverbs where it symbolizes sincerity, benevolence, and divine blessing. For instance, in Uzbek poetic imagery, the phrase *suvday hayot oqadi* represents the transience of human life while affirming its cyclical renewal.

According to A. Nurmonov, figurative expressions of this kind serve as cultural codes that preserve the moral worldview of a people and transmit collective identity through linguistic symbolism [3]. The stylistic function of suv thus extends beyond description, embodying a spiritual principle that connects language, thought, and ethical tradition. The comparison of both linguistic systems illustrates that while English highlights rational control and objectivity, Uzbek reflects an emotional and humanistic perception of existence, in which water becomes a moral and aesthetic ideal rather than a mere natural phenomenon.

3.3 Cognitive and Cultural Implications. The comparative cognitive and cultural analysis of the water/suv concept in English and Uzbek demonstrates that both languages encode water as a fundamental cognitive prototype of life and purity, yet they diverge significantly along the axiological and symbolic dimensions. In English cognition, water serves as a metaphor for adaptability, logic, and natural balance, symbolizing intellectual clarity, progress, and rational transformation. The linguistic conceptualization of water reflects a worldview where the element embodies the principles of motion, renewal, and equilibrium within nature. This semantic orientation reveals an anthropocentric model grounded in pragmatic observation and empirical reasoning, where nature is interpreted through human logic and experience [1].

In contrast, the Uzbek conceptualization of *suv* retains a sacred and spiritual orientation deeply rooted in traditional culture and religious worldview. Here, *suv* is not only a natural phenomenon but also a moral and ontological symbol associated with divine grace, gratitude, and existential harmony. In the Uzbek linguistic mentality, water represents the continuum between the physical and spiritual worlds, functioning as a sign of blessing and moral cleansing. This understanding is reflected in everyday discourse and folklore, where *suv* is invoked in prayers, blessings, and metaphoric speech expressing the interconnectedness of nature, humanity, and divinity. Such usage indicates that the cognitive framework of the Uzbek people interprets natural phenomena through ethical and metaphysical paradigms rather than solely pragmatic or logical perspectives [2].

The divergence between these two linguistic systems confirms Yu. Stepanov's idea that every concept operates as a fragment of culture, embodying the intellectual, emotional, and axiological coordinates of a given society [3]. In the English worldview, water is conceptualized as a neutral, life-supporting force that symbolizes order, adaptability, and continuity. It aligns with Western rationalism, where human intellect seeks to master and understand natural processes. Conversely, in the Uzbek worldview, water becomes a bearer of sanctity and communal identity, integrating ecological awareness with spiritual responsibility. The expression *suv aziz*, *hayot manbai* meaning water is sacred, the source of life illustrates this ethical orientation, showing how language encodes moral principles through natural imagery.

From a broader linguo-cognitive perspective, both systems reveal that the human mind structures reality through metaphorical and evaluative patterns that transform physical experience into symbolic meaning. Water thus operates as a universal archetype connecting all forms of existence, while its linguistic realizations embody the national color of thought and culture. In English, the cognitive metaphor of water expresses control, rational order, and temporal movement, whereas in Uzbek it reflects humility, reverence, and harmony with nature. These findings demonstrate that the *water/suv* concept is not only a linguistic category but also a manifestation of each nation's cultural self-awareness and cognitive worldview.

4. CONCLUSION. The study concludes that the *water/suv* concept functions as a linguo-cognitive universal representing life, purity, and transformation, yet it is linguistically and culturally shaped through the prism of human experience. The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek linguistic systems reveals that language not only describes external phenomena but also interprets them through culturally determined mental models. English conceptualizes water as an element of logical structure and pragmatic equilibrium, reflecting the analytical worldview of Western cognition where nature is viewed as a system governed by order and adaptability. In contrast, Uzbek treats *suv* as an ethical and sacral category that integrates physical reality with spiritual and communal existence, emphasizing the unity of humanity and nature in the moral and emotional spheres of cognition [1].

This distinction illustrates that the meaning of water is not confined to universal human experience but is mediated by the cultural semiotics of each language community. The English linguistic consciousness employs metaphoric abstraction and ecological rationality, where water becomes a symbol of intellectual clarity, renewal, and endurance. Uzbek linguistic and cultural traditions, however, preserve mythopoetic imagery where water embodies harmony, benevolence, and divine blessing. In this way, *suv* serves not merely as a natural entity but as a

spiritual and ethical ideal embedded in collective memory and expressed through artistic and proverbial discourse [2].

The research confirms that the conceptualization of water/suv in both languages functions as an interpretative mechanism linking sensory perception with abstract cognition. It bridges physical and moral universes, symbolizing the shared yet diversified human experience encoded in linguistic form. Language thus acts as a cultural mirror, translating ecological and existential awareness into a system of verbal symbols that define the worldview of a people. Ultimately, water/suv represents a universal conceptual archetype through which humanity perceives life, motion, and renewal while manifesting the distinct cognitive and ethical colorings of English and Uzbek cultures [3].

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