

COLOR CONCEPTUALIZATION ACROSS LANGUAGES: *BLUE* IN ENGLISH AND *KO‘K* IN UZBEK

Turaeva Guzal
Termez state university

Senior teacher

Abstract: This study compares the English *blue* and Uzbek *ko‘k*, highlighting differences in meaning and cultural associations. While English distinguishes blue from green and links it to emotions, Uzbek *ko‘k* covers broader shades and relates to nature and sky. The analysis shows how language shapes color perception and cultural understanding.

Keywords : color conceptualization, semantics, culture , cognition

Language does more than label the visible world—it shapes how that world is perceived, organized, and understood. Color conceptualization refers to how people mentally categorize and assign meaning to colors. While the physical perception of color is universal due to shared human biology, the way colors are named, grouped, and symbolized varies across languages and cultures.

Among the most revealing examples of this relationship is the way different languages conceptualize color. A compelling case can be found in the comparison between the English term *blue* and the Uzbek word *ko‘k*. While often treated as direct equivalents, these terms differ significantly in scope, symbolism, and cognitive framing.

In English, *blue* denotes a clearly bounded segment of the color spectrum, positioned between green and violet. It is a discrete and stable category, sharply distinguished from neighboring colors such as green. This precision

reflects a broader tendency in English toward fine-grained lexical differentiation in color terminology.

By contrast, the Uzbek term *ko 'k* operates within a more expansive semantic field. In addition to referring to what English identifies as *blue*, *ko 'k* may encompass certain shades of green, particularly in natural contexts. Beyond chromatic reference, the word also extends metaphorically to denote the sky or heavens. This layered meaning suggests that Uzbek organizes color not as isolated units, but as part of a more interconnected conceptual system tied to the natural environment.

The symbolic associations of *blue* in English are diverse but relatively stable. The color is frequently linked to calmness, depth, and reliability, yet it also carries a notable emotional connotation of sadness, as reflected in expressions like “feeling blue.” These dual associations—tranquility and melancholy—demonstrate the emotional versatility of the term within English-speaking cultures.

In Uzbek, *ko 'k* is deeply embedded in cultural and environmental imagery. Its connection to the sky imbues it with meanings of expansiveness, vitality, and renewal. Rather than signaling sadness, *ko 'k* more often evokes life, growth, and a sense of openness. In some contexts, its association with the heavens lends it a subtle spiritual resonance, reinforcing its elevated and positive connotations.

Idioms provide further insight into how these color terms function cognitively and culturally. In English, phrases such as “out of the blue” convey suddenness or unpredictability, while “feeling blue” expresses

emotional distress. These usages highlight the abstract and emotional extensions of the color term.

Uzbek idiomatic expressions involving *ko 'k* similarly draw on its association with the sky. The phrase “*ko 'kdan tushganday*” (as if fallen from the sky) parallels the English “out of the blue,” indicating something unexpected. Meanwhile, “*ko 'kka ko 'tarmoq*” (to raise to the sky) signifies high praise or admiration. Unlike English, however, Uzbek idioms involving *ko 'k* tend to emphasize elevation, admiration, and natural imagery rather than negative emotional states.

The contrast between *blue* and *ko 'k* illustrates a broader cognitive difference in how color is structured across languages. English enforces clear categorical boundaries, separating blue and green into distinct perceptual domains. Uzbek, in contrast, allows for a more fluid boundary, where a single term can traverse multiple shades and meanings.

This difference does not imply a variation in visual perception itself, but rather in how that perception is linguistically encoded and culturally interpreted. Uzbek reflects a more holistic, context-sensitive approach, while English favors analytical precision and categorical clarity.

The comparison between *blue* and *ko 'k* reveals that even the most seemingly universal aspects of human experience—such as color perception—are shaped by language and culture. English presents a model of specificity and emotional nuance, while Uzbek offers a broader, nature-oriented conceptualization. Together, they demonstrate that color is not merely seen, but understood through the lens of linguistic and cultural frameworks.

References

1. Berlin, Brent, Kay, Paul Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution. — Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969. — 178 p.
 2. Sapir, Edward The Status of Linguistics as a Science // Language. — 1929. — Vol. 5, № 4. — P. 207–214.
 3. Whorf, Benjamin Lee Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writings. — Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1956. — 278 p.
 4. Wierzbicka, Anna Semantics: Primes and Universals. — Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. — 500 p.
 5. Lakoff, George Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind. — Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. — 614 p.
-