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Article

The Associative Field of Color Terms in the Uzbek Language Speakers

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Abstract: This study investigates the associative field of color terms among Uzbek language speakers to understand how colors are perceived and associated based on individual, cultural, and symbolic factors. While previous research highlights the psychological and cultural dimensions of color perception, limited focus has been given to language-specific associative patterns. To address this gap, this research aims to explore the individual and collective associations of key color lexemes—white, blue, and yellow—using experimental methods with native Uzbek speakers. Findings reveal that associations are influenced by external factors such as cultural knowledge, symbolic meanings, and individual experiences, forming a structured associative field with core and boundary components. For instance, "white" evokes purity and innocence, while "blue" relates to calmness and clarity. The results highlight the interplay of linguistic and cultural cognition in shaping color perception and have implications for understanding cross-cultural semantics and designing culturally sensitive communication.

Keywords: Individual associations, Paradise association, Associative field, Collective association, Core and boundary parts of the associative field.

1. Introduction

It is well known that when a person perceives a certain color of an object, their perception differs from others based on their physiological state, mood, imagination, and national-cultural views. As a result, the associations they form regarding this color will significantly differ from others' associations. For example, if a particular person perceives the color yellow as "saffron," then associations like "carrot" and "sun" will form for them. Or, if they perceive a dark color as "black," this person will associate it with "night" and "darkness." In such cases, the associations formed with the words "yellow" and "dark" are of an individual nature. [1].

Objects in nature that are present in different colors or appear in various colors can also provoke individual associations in people. For instance, people will form different color associations related to the Uzbek atlas that appears in seven different colors. [2]. Even in individuals who cannot distinguish colors clearly, certain objects' colors can evoke various associations. Since such associations are not repeatable in others, they are considered individual associations.

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2. Materials and Methods

The Psychological Impact of the Colors of Objects on Individuals and the Formation of Individual Associations. As a result of the psychological impact of the colors of objects on individuals, various individual associations are formed. [3]. The color of blood and the color of a tulip evoke different associations in people. The color of blood, which causes a sense of unpleasantness or discomfort in most people, leads to associations that have an individual nature [4].

On the other hand, the color of a tulip evokes positive emotions in most people, so the associations formed around this color are naturally linked to those emotions and also have individual characteristics. [5]. In associative experiments conducted with language speakers concerning colors, it was found that individual associations were formed in relation to various external factors. This can be demonstrated through the associative field of the lexemes "white" and "blue."

3. Results

White: Alcohol, happiness, innocence, my father, notebook, cloth, goodness, air, trust, paradise, butterfly, day, tulip, marble, cat, mask, light, mother, moon, purity, money, heart, cleanliness, teacher, conscience, baby [6].

The individual response reactions within the associative field of the lexeme "white" are formed based on the following external factors:

1. Individual Associations Based on the Speaker's Knowledge of Objects with White Coloring: These associations are formed based on the speaker's existing knowledge about the color white in objects. Such associations are seen in the responses: notebook, cloth, butterfly, tulip, marble, cat, mask, moon [7].
2. Individual Associations Based on the Name of the Object in Folk Language: These associations are formed based on the folk name of an object. Such an association was observed in the response reaction of "alcohol." In folk language, the word "white" is often used in relation to alcohol. This knowledge contributed to the formation of the association between "white" and "alcohol." [8]
3. Individual Associations Based on People's White Clothing: These associations are formed through people's clothing and appearances. The following response reactions exemplify this type of association: "my father," "mother," "teacher," "baby," "paradise." Research revealed that among the respondents, their father's constant white shirt, their mother's white headscarf, the teacher's white coat, and the baby's white swaddling cloth prompted the associations of "my father," "mother," "teacher," and "baby" in relation to the lexeme "white."
   The association with paradise is also directly linked to white clothing. Religious beliefs about people in the afterlife wearing pure white clothing prompted the association of "paradise" with the lexeme "white."
4. Individual Associations Based on the Speaker’s Knowledge of the Symbolic Meaning of the Color White: This type of association is based on the speaker’s knowledge that the color white symbolizes certain things. Such associations appear in the following response reactions: happiness, innocence, goodness, trust, purity, cleanliness. [4, 317-318]

The Associative Field of the Lexeme "Blue"

In the associative field of the lexeme "blue," the following external factors played a key role in the formation of individual response reactions:

Blue: Arrival of spring, axe, t-shirt, inner peace, jumper, cap, clothing, diary, jacket, college, container, marker, mask, clear, apple, coat, pen, pepsi, bird, color, ink, calmness, purity, shoes, ocean, eraser, line [9]

1) Individual Associations Formed Through the Speakers' Different Knowledge and Perceptions of Colors: These associations were observed in the following responses: arrival of spring, clear, Pepsi [10].
   a. In this case, the response "arrival of spring" is linked to the knowledge of how everything turns green during the spring months, which triggered the association with "blue."
   b. The response "clear" appeared as a result of a related association. That is, blue refers to the sky, and the sky is clear.
   c. The presence of a blue line in the Pepsi logo led to the association with "Pepsi."
2) Individual Associations Formed Based on the Speaker's Knowledge of Objects' Blue Coloring: These associations were observed in the following responses: T-shirt, jumper, cap, clothing, diary, jacket, college, container, marker, mask, apple, coat, pen, bird, ink, shoes, ocean, eraser, line [11].
   a. All of these responses refer to objects that are colored blue.
3) Individual Associations Linked to the Emotions Evoked by the Color Blue: These associations were observed in the following responses: inner peace, calmness, purity.
   a. It is evident that the color blue evokes a sense of calmness and serenity in some individuals. This association appeared in the responses given by the respondents.
   b. Purity, in this case, was perceived as a symbolic meaning of the color blue (specifically the shade of light blue) by a single respondent, which emerged as their individual association.
   c. Generally, there is symbolism in the use of words like "clear," "transparent," and "pure" in relation to the sky [12].

In the associative field of color words, collective associations constitute the majority. This type of association arises from the shared general knowledge about colors, the similarities in perceptions based on this knowledge, a common attitude toward colors, social-cultural views, and the consistent symbolic meanings of colors. [13]

Associative Field of the Lexeme "Yellow" in Color Words

In associative experiments conducted on language speakers regarding colors, it has been determined that collective associations are formed based on various external factors. This issue is examined using the associative field of the lexeme "yellow" as an example. The associative field of this lexeme was established as follows in an experiment conducted for research purposes: [14]

Yellow: Sun 143, chick 44, flower 40, lemon 37, apricot 22, pineapple 21, shirt 18, leaf 14, carrot 13, apple 10, pencil 9, hair 9, t-shirt 9, banana 8, cat 5, taxi 5, stone 5, daisy 4, car 4, sunflower 4, light 4, frame 4, pen 4, pineapple 3, child 3, wall 3, bag 3, scarf 3, honey 2, bus 2, notebook 2, meatball 2, lily 2, pear 2, corn 2, traffic light 2, clock 2, ring 2, star 2, sweets 2, ant 1, separation 1, Bilayn (brand) 1, field 1, wall 1, doctor 1, hypocrite 1, ball 8, book 1, suit 1, jacket 1, mandarin 1, fire 1, horse 1, desk 1, coat 1, bird 1, jumper 1, colored paper 1, beard 1, button 1, shoes 1, road 1, grass 1, hat 1, peach 1, champagne 1, lion 1, pants 1.

In this field, collective associations consist of the following: Sun 143; Chick 44; Flower 40; Lemon 37; Pineapple 24; Apricot 22; Shirt 18; Leaf 14; Carrot 13; Apple 10; Pencil 9; Hair 9; T-shirt 9; Banana 8; Cat 5; Taxi 5; Stone 5; Daisy 4; Car 4; Sunflower 4; Light 4; Frame 4; Pen 4; Child 3; Wall 3; Bag 3; Scarf 3; Honey 2; Bus 2; Notebook 2; Meatball 2; Lily 2; Pear 2; Corn 2; Traffic light 2; Clock 2; Ring 2; Star 2; Sweets 2.

4. Discussion

These collective associations were formed based on the following factors:

a. Collective Associations Formed Based on the General Knowledge of Language Speakers About Objects' Color: This type of association was observed in the following response reactions: Sun, Chick, Flower, Lemon, Apricot, Pineapple, Shirt, Leaf, Carrot, Apple, Pencil, Hair, Banana, T-shirt, Taxi, Daisy, Car, Sunflower, Light, Frame, Pen, Bag, Scarf, Bus, Notebook, Meatball, Lily, Corn, Traffic light, Clock, Ring, Sweets [15].

   The given responses refer to objects that are either permanently yellow or can be found in yellow. For example, Sun, Chick, Banana, Sunflower, Light, and Corn are always yellow in color. However, objects such as Flower, Apricot, Shirt, Leaf, Carrot, Lily, Apple, Pencil, Hair, and T-shirt can also appear yellow. [16].

b. Collective Associations Formed Based on the Speakers' Similar Perception of Colors: This type of association was observed in the following response reactions: Cat, Stone, Child, Wall, Honey, Star.

   The objects represented by these response reactions do not appear in pure yellow in nature, but they are perceived as having yellow tendencies, yellowish hues, or similarity to yellow. Nevertheless, these collective associations show that the respondents perceive them in the same way, that is, as yellow [17].

In conclusion, the associative field of each color word consists of various types of response reactions. These reactions reflect the language speakers' perception of colors, their knowledge and perceptions about colors, and their attitudes toward colors.

The Associative Field of Color Words: The Lexeme "White"

The associative field of color words consists of a core and boundary components. Below, we define the core and boundary components of the associative field of the lexeme "white": [18]

White: Shirt 41, pigeon 36, sheet 32, cotton 23, cloud 22, flour 19, curtain 18, flower 17, clothing 17, milk 15, sweater 14, shoes 13, car 12, skirt 11, black 10, sky 9, heart 8, purity 8, wall 6, color 6, rose 5, shroud 4, swan 4, scarf 4, bear 3, blackboard 3, cloth 3, paper 3, rabbit 3, peace 3, book 2, bag 2, light 2, grass 2, sugar 2, hat 2, lamp 2, vodka 1, happiness 1, innocence 1, father 1, notebook 1, linen 1, goodness 1, air 1, trust 1, paradise 1, butterfly 1, day 1, lily 1, marble 1, cat 1, mask 1, light 1, mother 1, moon 1, purity 1, money 1, heart 1, cleanliness 1, teacher 1, conscience 1, baby 1.

In this field, the following high-frequency response reactions appear in the core: Shirt, Pigeon, Sheet, Cotton, Cloud, Flour, Curtain, Flower, Clothing, Milk, Sweater, Shoes, Car, Skirt, Black, Sky, Heart, Purity, Wall, Color, Rose, Shroud, Swan, Scarf, Bear, Blackboard, Cloth, Paper, Rabbit, Peace, Book, Bag, Light, Grass, Sugar, Hat, Lamp. The boundary part of the associative field is two-tiered, divided into near and distant boundaries. Near Boundary: The following response reactions are closely semantically linked to the word "white": Vodka, Notebook, Linen, Butterfly, Lily, Marble, Cat, Mask, Light, Moon, Baby [19].

This category also includes associations that reflect the symbolic meanings of the word "white", such as Innocence, Goodness, Purity, Cleanliness. The formation of these associations is related to the symbolic meanings of the word "white". For centuries, the Uzbek people have seen purity, innocence, and cleanliness in the color white. White is also considered a symbol of goodness and trust for our people. These symbolic meanings of the word "white" were reflected in the associations noted by the respondents above [20].

Distant Boundary: The following response reactions are indirectly related to the word "white", without a direct semantic connection: Father, Air, Paradise, Day, Mother, Money, Heart, Teacher, Conscience. The structure of the associative field of the lexeme "white" can be illustrated in the diagram as follows:

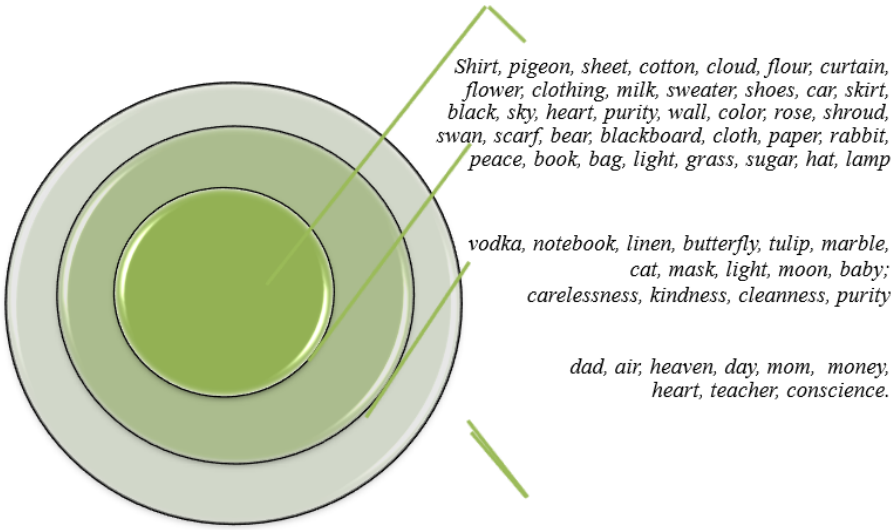

Figure 1. The structure of the associative field of the lexeme "white" can be illustrated in the diagram as follows

5. Conclusion

In the Uzbek language, each unit that expresses color and shade occupies a place in the minds of native speakers and is part of a set of units that are interconnected with each other. This set of units forms an associative field. The units of the associative field reflect how native speakers perceive colors, their knowledge and concepts about colors, and their attitudes towards them.

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