



EXPRESSION OF NATIONAL-CULTURAL COMPONENTS IN CLOTHING LEXICAL UNITS: A COGNITIVE AND LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS (ENGLISH AND UZBEK)

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Abstract

This study investigates the expression of national-cultural components in clothing lexical units in English and Uzbek from a cognitive and linguocultural perspective. Clothing terminology is not only a system of naming material objects but also a repository of cultural meanings, social values, and historical experiences. The research integrates conceptual metaphor theory, frame semantics, and prototype theory to analyze how clothing vocabulary encodes cultural identity. The findings reveal that Uzbek clothing lexicon demonstrates a stronger connection with tradition, symbolism, and ethnographic heritage, whereas English clothing terminology reflects functional, institutional, and globalized perspectives. The study contributes to cross-cultural linguistics by demonstrating that lexical units serve as cognitive models of cultural knowledge.

Keywords: Clothing lexicon, linguoculture, national identity, conceptual metaphor, frame semantics, Uzbek, English

Introduction

The interrelation between language and culture has long been a central issue in linguistics. Lexical units, as the most dynamic elements of language, serve not only as tools of communication but also as carriers of cultural and cognitive information. Among them, clothing vocabulary occupies a special place because



*Modern American Journal of Linguistics,
Education, and Pedagogy*

ISSN (E): 3067-7874

Volume 2, Issue 4, April, 2026

Website: usajournals.org

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it directly reflects material culture, social structure, and symbolic systems. According to Sapir (1921), language functions as a symbolic guide to culture, shaping how individuals perceive and interpret reality (p. 162). Similarly, Humboldt argued that each language embodies a unique worldview (Weltansicht), encoded in its lexical and grammatical structures (Humboldt, 1836/1999, p. 60).

Clothing lexical units are particularly significant in this regard. They not only denote garments but also encode:

- cultural traditions
- social hierarchy
- gender roles
- ritual practices

For example, Uzbek traditional clothing such as chapan, atlas, and doppi reflects national identity, craftsmanship, and historical continuity. In contrast, English clothing terms such as business suit or uniform are more closely associated with institutional roles and modern social organization. The aim of this study is to analyze how national-cultural components are expressed in clothing lexical units and to identify cognitive and semantic differences between English and Uzbek.

Literature Review

The relationship between language and culture is grounded in the theory of linguistic relativity proposed by Whorf (1956), who argued that language influences thought and categorization of experience. This idea is further developed in cognitive linguistics, where meaning is seen as embodied and culturally situated. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) emphasize that conceptual metaphors structure human thinking and are rooted in cultural experience. For example, metaphors involving clothing often reflect abstract concepts such as identity, power, and morality. Linguoculturology focuses on the interaction between language and culture, emphasizing that lexical units carry cultural codes (Maslova, 2001, p. 45). Clothing vocabulary is considered a key domain where national identity and traditions are linguistically encoded.

Uzbek linguists have highlighted that clothing names reflect:

- ethnographic traditions



aesthetic values

symbolic meanings (Rahmatullayev, 2010, p. 245)

Frame semantics (Fillmore, 1982) explains that words activate structured knowledge frameworks. For instance, the word uniform evokes a frame including profession, hierarchy, and institutional identity. Prototype theory (Rosch, 1975) suggests that categories are organized around central examples. In Uzbek culture, traditional garments may serve as prototypes, while in English, modern clothing items dominate the category.

3. Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative and comparative approach combining:

Linguocultural analysis – identifying cultural meanings in lexical units

Cognitive-semantic analysis – examining conceptual structures

Comparative method – contrasting English and Uzbek data

Explanatory dictionaries

Ethnographic descriptions

Literary texts and discourse samples

4. Results

The analysis shows that Uzbek clothing vocabulary is highly culture-specific. Many terms are untranslatable or require descriptive equivalents in English:

doppi → traditional skullcap with symbolic ornamentation

chapan → quilted robe associated with hospitality and honor

atlas/adras → culturally significant textile materials

These lexical units function as linguocultural signs, encoding national identity and tradition.

In contrast, English clothing vocabulary tends to be more universal and function-oriented:

jacket, shirt, jeans

globalized and widely shared across cultures

This reflects the influence of industrialization and globalization. Clothing lexical units in both languages encode symbolic meanings, but with different emphases.

Uzbek Context



White clothing → purity, weddings, celebration

Chapan → respect, honor, social status

Headwear (doppi) → identity and regional belonging

English Context

Black clothing → mourning, formality

Suit → professionalism and authority

Uniform → institutional power

These differences illustrate that clothing vocabulary reflects culturally specific value systems.

Clothing-related metaphors reveal deeper cognitive structures:

English: cloak of secrecy , wear responsibility , under someone's coat

Uzbek: oq libos → purity , bosh kiyim → honor and dignity

Such metaphors support Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) claim that abstract concepts are structured through embodied and cultural experience.

Frame analysis shows that clothing terms activate different knowledge systems:

Uzbek frames: tradition, rituals, family, craftsmanship

English frames: profession, status, functionality

For example:

chapan → hospitality + ceremony frame

uniform → institutional + authority frame

5. Discussion

The comparative analysis reveals that clothing lexical units function as cognitive-cultural models. Uzbek clothing vocabulary preserves traditional and symbolic meanings, reflecting a strong connection between language and heritage.

In contrast, English clothing lexicon demonstrates:

abstraction

functional categorization

globalization

This difference can be explained by:

historical development

socio-economic systems

cultural priorities



Thus, clothing vocabulary provides insight into how cultures conceptualize identity, hierarchy, and social roles.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, clothing lexical units in both English and Uzbek serve not only as linguistic labels for garments but also as rich carriers of national-cultural meaning and cognitive representation. The analysis demonstrates that Uzbek clothing terminology is deeply rooted in tradition, symbolism, and ethnographic identity, while English clothing lexicon tends to reflect functionality, social roles, and globalized cultural patterns. These differences highlight how language encodes distinct worldviews through lexical choices, revealing the close relationship between language, culture, and cognition. Therefore, clothing vocabulary can be understood as a significant linguocultural domain that preserves cultural heritage and reflects the conceptualization of identity and social values within each linguistic community.

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