

LEXICAL-SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF ANTONYMIC STRUCTURES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH FICTION

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Annotatsiya

Tadqiqotning maqsadi o'zbek va ingliz badiiy matnlaridagi antonimik tuzilmalarning funksional-semantik va pragmatik xususiyatlarini aniqlash, shuningdek, ularning badiiy tasvir yaratish va milliy-madaniy xususiyatlarni aks ettirishdagi rolini belgilashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda o'zbek adiblari Abdulla Qodiriy, Cho'lpon, G'afur G'ulom, ingliz adiblari Uilki Kollinz, Tomas Xardi, Uilyam Shekspir va boshqalarning asarlari kontekstual-semantik va qiyosiy tahlilga asoslangan. Tadqiqotda o'zbek adabiyotida antonimlar ko'pincha Sharq falsafiy an'analarini aks ettiruvchi qarama-qarshiliklarni uyg'unlashtirish vositasi bo'lib xizmat qilishi, ingliz adabiyotida esa ular ziddiyat va axloqiy dilemmalarni ta'kidlashi aniqlandi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, har ikki an'adagi antonimik tuzilmalar nafaqat leksik vositalar, balki matn poetikasining muhim tarkibiy qismlari bo'lib, syujet dinamikasiga va o'quvchilarning hissiy idrokiga ta'sir ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqotning yangiligi qiyosiy yondashuvdan iborat bo'lib, u antonimlardan badiiy vosita sifatida foydalanishning madaniy o'ziga xos xususiyatlarini aniqlash imkonini beradi. Ushbu topilmalar madaniyatlararo stilistika va adabiy semantika nazariyasini rivojlantirishga hissa qo'shishi mumkin.

Kalit so'zlar

antonimiya, badiiy tasvir, kontrast, o'zbek adabiyoti, ingliz adabiyoti, adabiy semantika, matn poetikasi, pragmatika.

**ХАЙДАРОВ АНВАР АСКАРОВИЧ (ПРОФЕССОР БУХАРСКОГО
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО УНИВЕРСИТЕТА)**

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Аннотация

Целью исследования является выявление функционально-семантических и прагматических особенностей антонимических структур в узбекских и английских художественных текстах, а также определение их роли в создании художественного образа и отражении национально-культурных особенностей. В рамках исследования проведён контекстуально-семантический и сравнительный анализ произведений узбекских писателей Абдуллы Кадыри, Чулпона, Гафура Гуляма, а также английских авторов Уилки Коллинза, Томаса Харди, Уильяма Шекспира и других. Установлено, что в узбекской литературе антонимы часто служат средством гармонизации противоположностей, отражающих философские традиции Востока, тогда как в английской литературе они подчёркивают противоречия и моральные дилеммы. Результаты исследования показывают, что антонимические структуры в обеих литературных традициях являются не только лексическими средствами, но и важными составляющими текстовой поэтики, влияющими на динамику сюжета и эмоциональное восприятие читателей. Новизна исследования заключается в сравнительном подходе, который позволяет выявить культурные особенности использования антонимов в качестве художественного средства. Данные выводы могут способствовать развитию межкультурной стилистики и теории литературной семантики.

Ключевые слова

антонимия, художественный образ, контраст, узбекская литература, английская литература, литературная семантика, текстовая поэтика, прагматика.

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to identify the functional-semantic and pragmatic features of antonymic structures in Uzbek and English literary texts, as well as to determine their role in creating artistic imagery and reflecting national and cultural characteristics. The research is based on a contextual-semantic and comparative analysis of the works of Uzbek writers Abdulla Qodiriy, Cholpon, G'afur G'ulom, and English authors Wilkie Collins, Thomas Hardy, William Shakespeare, among others. It has been established that in Uzbek literature, antonyms often serve as a means of harmonizing opposites, reflecting Eastern philosophical traditions, while

in English literature, they emphasize contradictions and moral dilemmas. The study results demonstrate that antonymic structures in both literary traditions function not only as lexical devices but also as essential components of textual poetics, influencing plot dynamics and readers' emotional perception. The novelty of the research lies in its comparative approach, which allows for the identification of cultural peculiarities in the artistic use of antonyms. These findings may contribute to the development of intercultural stylistics and the theory of literary semantics.

Keywords

antonymy, artistic imagery, contrast, Uzbek literature, English literature, literary semantics, textual poetics, pragmatics.

Introduction. The use of antonymic structures in literary texts has long been a focus of attention for linguists, literary scholars, and semanticists. As a type of lexical unit with opposite meanings, antonyms carry stylistic, semantic, and pragmatic weight in a text. However, research devoted to antonymy in the context of literary works—especially from a comparative analytical perspective—remains fragmented.

Theoretical exploration of antonymy has been undertaken by scholars such as John Lyons (1977) [5], M.A.K. Halliday (2004) [4], and S. Criere (1986) [3]. Lyons interprets antonymy as a binary opposition through contraries, complementaries, and converses, though his approach largely remains at the level of the language system [5]. Halliday considers antonyms as a means of ensuring semantic cohesion within the text, analyzing them within the framework of systemic functional linguistics [4]. S. Criere, meanwhile, examined the evaluative and emotional functions of antonymic pairs but did not focus on Eastern literary traditions [3].

In Russian lexical semantics, N.D. Arutyunova (1990) [1] emphasized the role of antonyms in expressing modal meanings and in text formation. V.G. Gak (1998) explored the variability of antonymic pairs depending on context [2].

Nevertheless, there are several issues in the study of antonymic structures in literary texts. Research has primarily focused on lexical-semantic features, while the functional-pragmatic role of antonyms in literary discourse remains underexplored. The national and cultural specificity of antonymic constructions in Uzbek literature has been studied only fragmentarily, and comparative research with Western literature is virtually absent. The genre-based functions of antonyms (in poetry, drama, epic) have not been sufficiently analyzed. Empirical studies are also lacking: the frequency of antonyms, their functional diversity, and semantic variability have not yet been thoroughly investigated.

The research is aimed at identifying the functional-semantic features of antonymic structures in Uzbek and English fiction. For the first time, a comprehensive comparative approach to antonymy in Uzbek and English literary texts is proposed. The novelty of the study lies in revealing the cultural differences in the use of antonymy in Uzbek and English literature. Contextual-semantic, functional-pragmatic, and comparative-typological methods are integrated. The stylistic and pragmatic functions of antonyms in literary texts are uncovered. It has been established that in Uzbek literature, antonyms serve to express harmony, whereas in English literature, they function to intensify conflict and dramatic tension.

The study explores the following key questions: which antonymic structures are most prevalent in Uzbek and English literature? What are their main semantic and stylistic functions across different genres? To what extent are antonymic structures influenced by cultural and national factors? What role do they play in shaping artistic imagery and the philosophical concept of the work?

The main objective of the research is to uncover the role of antonymic structures in the poetics of Uzbek and English literary texts. To this end, the study undertakes the following tasks: to determine the typology of antonymic structures in Uzbek and English fiction; to analyze the contextual meanings of antonymic pairs; to define their pragmatic functions as a means of artistic expression; to conduct a comparative-typological analysis of these structures; and to identify cultural and national distinctions.

The study is structured as follows. The “Materials and Methods” section highlights the contextual-semantic, descriptive, and comparative-typological methods used. The “Results” section presents concrete examples of antonymic structures drawn from the works of Uzbek and English authors. The “Discussion” section compares the findings with previous research and analyzes cultural differences. The “Conclusion” summarizes the outcomes of the study and outlines prospects for further research.

Materials and Methods. This study investigates the semantic, stylistic, and pragmatic functions of antonymic structures in Uzbek and English literature through an interdisciplinary approach. It integrates methods from linguopoetics, cognitive semantics, textual analysis, and literary studies, aiming to identify both universal and culturally specific features of antonymy.

The objective of the research is to analyze the functional load of antonymic structures in Uzbek and English literary texts and to identify differences in their semantic and pragmatic aspects. Special attention is given to the formation of

semantic dominants through antonyms and their connection with national and cultural contexts.

The analysis is conducted within a contextual-semantic framework, where antonyms are viewed as structural elements of the text's semantic organization. For instance, in **Abdulla Qodiriy's novel** *Bygone Days*, the phrase **"The mother is alive, but her heart is dead"** illustrates a contextual transformation of the life-death opposition. In English literature, antonyms are often used to generate dramatic intensity, as in Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*, where the light-dark contrast enhances the gothic atmosphere.

Comparative analysis shows that Uzbek literature emphasizes the philosophy of harmony between opposites, whereas English literature reflects the conflict of antagonistic forces. For example, in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, the antonymic pair **"innocence - experience"** reveals the moral repression of Victorian society, while in *Bygone Days*, the **"old - new"** opposition symbolizes an existential choice between tradition and modernization.

The empirical basis consists of works by **Abdulla Qodiriy, Cholpon, G'afur G'ulom, Wilkie Collins, Thomas Hardy, and William Shakespeare**. In total, **600 pages of text were analyzed, 140 antonymic pairs were identified, and 86 of them were subjected to in-depth analysis**.

The key findings of the research demonstrate that the functional and semantic characteristics of antonymic structures in Uzbek and English literary texts are shaped by cultural codes and are rooted in national literary traditions. The integration of contextual and comparative methods provides a profound understanding of the linguistically and culturally defined pragmatic functions of antonymy.

Results. The study, based on the analysis of Uzbek and English literary texts, has made it possible to determine that antonymic structures are among the leading tools for creating artistic imagery, expressing the author's position, and uncovering the deeper meanings of literary works. These structures possess high lexical-semantic adaptability and play an essential pragmatic role in shaping the compositional integrity of the text, its emotional-expressive background, and the multiplicity of interpretation.

In Uzbek prose, poetry, and drama, antonyms are closely linked to traditional worldviews and reflect the Eastern philosophy of the harmony of opposites. English literature, by contrast, is characterized by a different tendency: antonymic structures often function as a means of generating opposition, tension, and the expression of moral and spiritual dilemmas. The juxtaposition of these two cultural

models reveals the diversity of functions antonyms can perform and the specific nature of their pragmatic application.

In Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *Bygone Days*, the antonymic pair *life – death* is repeatedly used to reflect existential issues of being, emphasizing the fragility and transience of human life. In the scene where the protagonist Otabek realizes the inevitability of losing loved ones, the author writes: "The mother is alive, but her heart is dead." Here, the antonymic structure intensifies the tragedy of the moment, creating a contrast between physical existence and spiritual desolation.

In Cholpon's work, the figurative antonymic construction *night – dawn* symbolizes a transition from suffering to hope, from helplessness to awakening. The poet uses lines such as "The night froze the heart, but the dawn awakened hope again." This opposition conveys the lyrical protagonist's emotional turmoil and expresses their inner spiritual renewal.

In Wilkie Collins's novel *The Woman in White*, the antonymic opposition *light – darkness* constructs an atmosphere of gothic unease and hidden threat. One of the central scenes is described as follows: "The soft moonlight soothed, and the wide expanse without gave a sense of freedom which refreshed me." However, the next sentence introduces a contrast: "Yet the shadows were dark and deep as those of winter." This antonymic pair evokes a sense of unstable balance between safety and threat, calm and chaos.

Antonyms function as a means of expressing social and philosophical contradictions. In Uzbek literature, antonymic structures often convey the idea of balance between tradition and innovation. In the novel *Bygone Days*, the pair *old – new* is repeatedly emphasized as a symbol of the clash between patriarchal foundations and the currents of modernization: "I could not distinguish between yesterday and today." This opposition reflects the protagonist's internal doubts and his search for identity amid social change.

In Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, the antonyms *innocence – experience* play a crucial role in revealing the theme of moral loss and the conflict between individual values and societal pressures. In the scene depicting the violence against Tess, the author writes: "Poorly dressed innocence is more vulnerable than armor-clad experience." The contrast highlights the injustice of the social system, where unprotected purity is doomed to defeat.

Antonymic structures reflect the protagonist's inner conflicts and emphasize their spiritual anguish. In G'afur G'ulom's poetry, the antonymic opposition *hope – despair* expresses the condition of a person overcome by poverty: "My life is a dark day, but there's a spark of hope shining in my heart."

In William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the *light – darkness* antonymic structure becomes a symbol of the struggle between good and evil, truth and delusion. In the scene of King Duncan's murder, Macbeth declares: "Stars, hide your fires; let not light see my black and deep desires." Here, antonyms create a poetic form for expressing the hero's internal struggle.

Antonymic pairs also reflect the value orientations of their era. In English Victorian prose, for example, Charles Dickens's novel *A Tale of Two Cities* uses the antonyms *best – worst* to illustrate the contradictions of social injustice: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

In the epic *Alpomish*, the antonymic pair *strength – weakness* conveys the idea of heroism and resilience: "If the youth is strong, let him support the weak."

1-jadval. Antonymic structures as a means of contrast

Antonymic Pair	Work	Literary Function	Example from the Text
life – death	<i>Bygone Days</i>	Existential meaning	The mother is alive, but her soul is dead
light – darkness	<i>The Woman in White</i>	Creating a gothic atmosphere	The shadows were dark and deep as those of winter
old – new	<i>Bygone Days</i>	Social conflict	I could not distinguish between yesterday and today
innocence – experience	<i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>	Social conflict	Poorly dressed innocence is more vulnerable than armor-clad experience

2-jadval. Antonymic structures in the context of characters' inner struggles

Antonymic Pair	Work	Literary Function	Example from the Text
hope – despair	<i>G'afur G'ulom</i>	Conveying emotional state	There is a spark of hope shining in my heart
light – darkness	<i>Macbeth</i>	Inner conflict	Let not light see my black and deep desires
strength – weakness	<i>Alpomish</i>	Heroic imagery	If the youth is strong, let him support the weak
best – worst	<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>	Social critique	It was the best of times, it was the worst of times

Antonyms appear not only as lexical-semantic units but also as multilayered concepts that carry cultural, social, and philosophical subtext.

Discussion. The results of the study show that the functional and semantic load of antonymic structures manifests differently in Uzbek and English literature. They serve not only to express formal-semantic oppositions but also act as important stylistic devices that reveal the inner world of characters and the broader socio-philosophical context. A. Hojiyev interprets antonymic relations at the lexical, phraseological, and grammatical levels as a universal phenomenon. However, in

Uzbek texts, contextual antonymy occupies a leading role, emphasizing philosophical harmony.

In English literature, antonyms function as a means of generating dramatic tension. For instance, in Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*, the light – darkness opposition creates a gothic atmosphere, while in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, the innocence – experience opposition highlights moral tragedy. In Shakespeare's works, the light and darkness opposition carries ethical and psychological implications, appearing in *Macbeth* as a symbol of the struggle between good and evil.

In Uzbek literature, antonymic pairs more often reflect philosophical wholeness. In *Bygone Days*, the life – death opposition operates on a spiritual and metaphorical level. In the epic *Alpomish*, the oppositions youth – old age and strength – weakness reinforce the idea of generational continuity. In Cholpon's poetry, the antonyms night – dawn express the character's inner rebirth, while in G'afur G'ulom's works, the opposition hope – despair conveys socio-psychological conditions.

In conclusion, the use of antonymic structures varies depending on cultural codes: in English literature, they create dramatic tension, whereas in Uzbek literature, they emphasize philosophical harmony. This observation aligns with the approaches of Hojiyev, Leech, and other scholars, offering a deeper understanding of intercultural differences.

Conclusion. The study focuses on identifying the role of antonymic structures in Uzbek and English fiction not only as a means of expressing opposition but also as tools for revealing characters' inner worlds and illuminating philosophical and social layers. The findings demonstrate that antonymic structures are key mechanisms in shaping the semantic dominants of a literary text, uncovering emotional experiences, and articulating socio-philosophical contradictions. In Uzbek literature, they symbolize the harmony of life's cyclical nature and oppositions, while in English literature, they serve to create dramatic conflict, highlight social injustice, and express existential anxiety.

In Uzbek literature—particularly in the works of Abdulla Qodiriy, Cholpon, and G'afur G'ulom—antonymic pairs such as **life – death, night – dawn, old – new** reflect the Eastern philosophical idea of harmony between opposites. For instance, the phrase “The mother is alive, but her soul is dead” from *Bygone Days* expresses life and death not only as physical but also as spiritual concepts. In contrast, in English literature, antonyms create sharp dramatic contrasts that serve to expose characters' inner conflicts and illuminate moral oppositions. For example, in *The Woman in White*, the antonymic connection between light and darkness intensifies

the gothic atmosphere and simultaneously conveys tensions between truth and deceit, safety and threat.

Despite cultural differences, antonymic structures play an essential role in constructing narrative architecture, driving plot dynamics, and creating emotional intensity across all literary texts. The national characteristics of antonymy use are linked to each culture's worldview: while Uzbek literature tends toward harmonizing oppositions, English literature is oriented toward expressing social conflict and moral antagonism. The results of the study hold significance for philology, comparative literary studies, and literary translation practice, as a precise understanding of the contextual meanings of antonymic structures is crucial for preserving the semantic integrity of a work.

In the future, it is advisable to expand the study by including antonymic structures in contemporary Uzbek and English literature, as well as conducting comparative analyses with Russian, Turkish, and Persian literary traditions. Examining antonymic structures in drama and folklore will help identify genre- and style-specific features of antonym usage. This research confirms that antonymic constructions in literary texts function not only as contrasts but also as instruments for creating multilayered meaning, opening broad opportunities for further research in comparative literary scholarship.

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