



## COLOR IMAGERY AS A LEXICAL-SEMANTIC AND COGNITIVE-STYLISTIC SYSTEM IN UTKIR HOSHIMOV'S THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD

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**Abstract:** *This article examines color imagery as a lexical-semantic and cognitive-stylistic system in Utkir Hoshimov's novella The Affairs of the World. The study aims to determine how chromatic lexemes and figurative constructions function within psychological realism and narrative organization. Employing lexical-semantic, contextual, stylistic, and cognitive-metaphorical analysis, the research identifies the descriptive, symbolic, psychological, and structural roles of color-related units. The findings demonstrate that chromatic imagery in Hoshimov's prose constitutes an interconnected semantic network rather than isolated decorative elements. Color functions as a conceptual mediator between perception and emotion, enabling the externalization of trauma, love, memory, and existential reflection. The study contributes to lexical-semantic research in modern Uzbek prose and expands theoretical discussions on color symbolism within cognitive poetics.*

**Keywords:** *color imagery, lexical semantics, cognitive stylistics, metaphor, epithet, psychological realism, Uzbek literature*

### Introduction

Color imagery has long served as a fundamental aesthetic and semiotic category in literary discourse. Beyond its descriptive function, color operates as a symbolic and conceptual structure that mediates between visual perception and emotional cognition. In classical poetics, chromatic associations were largely stable: white symbolized purity, black indicated

mourning or evil, red signified passion or blood, and green represented rebirth. However, in modern realist prose, color imagery acquires greater psychological and contextual flexibility.

Contemporary literary theory increasingly interprets color as a cognitive construct embedded in metaphorical mapping and conceptual framing (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Turner, 1996). From this perspective, color lexemes activate associative schemas that guide reader interpretation. Thus, chromatic units function not merely as visual descriptors but as semantic triggers structuring emotional and narrative meaning.

In Uzbek literature, Utkir Hoshimov occupies a central position as a representative of psychological realism. His novella *The Affairs of the World* combines everyday realism with lyrical introspection, creating a narrative space where internal states are externalized through environmental and chromatic imagery. Despite critical attention to Hoshimov's psychological depth, systematic lexical-semantic analysis of color imagery in his prose remains underdeveloped. The present study addresses this gap by examining how chromatic devices operate as a structured stylistic system within the novella.

The objectives of the research are:

1. To identify color-related lexical units and classify their semantic functions.
2. To analyze the interaction between color imagery and figurative devices.
3. To determine how chromatic symbolism contributes to psychological realism.

4. To interpret color imagery through the lens of cognitive metaphor theory.

### **Methods:**

The study employs a multi-layered methodological approach combining linguistic and literary analysis.

2.1. Corpus Selection. The primary material consists of selected narrative fragments from *The Affairs of the World* containing explicit color lexemes (e.g., black, red, white), chromatic metaphors, and symbolic epithets.

### 2.2. Analytical Procedures

#### 1. Lexical-Semantic Analysis

Color lexemes were examined for denotative meaning (literal chromatic reference) and connotative extension (symbolic or emotional associations).

#### 2. Stylistic Classification

Figurative constructions involving color were categorized as metaphor, simile, epithet, or personification.

#### 3. Contextual Interpretation

Each chromatic unit was analyzed within its narrative environment to determine functional significance.

#### 4. Cognitive-Metaphorical Framework

Following Lakoff and Johnson (1980), abstract experiences (e.g., grief, love, trauma) were analyzed as conceptual mappings onto perceptual domains (e.g., darkness, fire, light).

### **Results**

The analysis demonstrates that color imagery in the novella functions across four primary dimensions: descriptive realism, symbolic encoding, psychological projection, and structural cohesion.

### 3.1. Chromatic Metaphor and Collective Trauma

The metaphor “the black wing of war” exemplifies how color operates as a conceptual signifier. The lexeme black extends beyond chromatic reference to encode grief, devastation, and historical memory. War is metaphorically embodied as a living creature whose “wing” casts an enduring shadow over society.

Here, the mapping follows the cognitive pattern:

TRAUMA IS DARKNESS

WAR IS A SHADOW-CASTING ENTITY

The metaphor produces a visual-spatial image that conveys the persistence of suffering. Even after the war’s conclusion, its “shadow” remains, suggesting unresolved collective trauma. Thus, black functions as a cultural and emotional code.

### 3.2. Sunset Imagery and Emotional Softening

Descriptions of sunset reveal a softer chromatic palette. The expression “The sun pressed its lips to the horizon” introduces personification, transforming natural transition into human tenderness. The color shift from daylight brightness to twilight warmth parallels emotional transition from tension to reflection.

Similarly, the depiction of twilight as a “burning flame” extinguished by wind merges red chromatics with fire imagery:

SUNSET IS A FLAME

WIND IS AN EXTINGUISHING FORCE

This dynamic chromatic representation reinforces temporality and sensory immersion. The fading of red hues metaphorically parallels emotional cooling or narrative closure.

### 3.3. Simile and Cultural Encoding

Similes incorporating culturally specific references strengthen national texture. The comparison of thin legs to a chil-lak stick illustrates how physical description merges with cultural memory. The object's slenderness conveys fragility and hardship, while its folkloric origin anchors the narrative in Uzbek tradition. Similarly, the phrase "creaking as if lamenting" aligns environmental sound with human sorrow. The environment becomes emotionally responsive, demonstrating psychological realism in which external reality mirrors internal states.

### 3.4. Epithets and Chromatic Contrast

Epithets such as the "mung-bean-and-rice beard" exemplify semantic condensation. The mixed black-and-white coloration conveys age, dignity, and moral authority. The contrast between white garments and darker beard strands generates symbolic duality:

- White → purity, spiritual clarity
- Dark tones → life experience, realism

Such contrast functions structurally, creating balanced visual imagery that parallels thematic dualities (youth/age, innocence/experience).

### 3.5. Red as Passion and Vital Energy

The portrayal of Dilor in a red dress against a crimson sunset creates a unified chromatic field. The metaphorical perception of her figure "burning like fire" merges environmental and emotional intensity:

LOVE IS FIRE

PASSION IS RED

This convergence amplifies affective resonance. The external world reflects internal fervor, illustrating how color becomes a psychological amplifier.

#### 4. Discussion

The findings indicate that chromatic imagery in *The Affairs of the World* operates as a systemic mechanism integrating perception, symbolism, and cognition.

##### 4.1. From Description to Conceptualization

While color initially appears as descriptive detail, it evolves into conceptual structure. Black encodes trauma; red encodes passion; white encodes moral clarity. These associations correspond to universal metaphorical schemas but are adapted within Uzbek cultural context.

##### 4.2. Cognitive Activation

According to cognitive poetics, readers process metaphor through embodied experience. Color perception is physiologically immediate; thus chromatic metaphor intensifies emotional engagement. Darkness triggers feelings of fear or sorrow; brightness evokes safety or hope. Hoshimov strategically exploits these embodied responses.

##### 4.3. Structural Cohesion

Recurring chromatic motifs create thematic continuity. Black shadows of war, red flames of love, and white garments of wisdom form a symbolic triad that structures the novella's emotional trajectory.

##### 4.4. Psychological Realism

The integration of chromatic imagery with character psychology confirms the novella's classification within psychological realism. External scenery functions as projection surface for internal states, aligning with realist traditions while incorporating lyrical symbolism.

#### Conclusion

The study confirms that color imagery in Utkir Hoshimov's *The Affairs of the World* constitutes a coherent lexical-semantic and

cognitive-stylistic system. Chromatic lexemes function across descriptive, symbolic, psychological, and structural levels. Through metaphor, simile, epithet, and personification, color becomes a conceptual framework that organizes narrative meaning and intensifies emotional depth.

The research contributes to:

- lexical-semantic studies of Uzbek prose,
- cognitive-stylistic approaches to color symbolism,
- comparative investigations of chromatic metaphor in world literature.

Future research may extend this framework to comparative analysis with Western psychological realism or explore cross-cultural chromatic symbolism in bilingual literary corpora.

The list of used literature:

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