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COLOR SYMBOLISM IN RUSSIAN AND UZBEK ADVERTISING: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract. The article examines color symbolism in Russian and Uzbek advertising from a comparative linguocultural perspective. Color in advertising is interpreted as a semiotic resource that creates emotional appeal, organizes visual perception, and transmits culturally marked meanings. The study focuses on the symbolic functions of red, white, blue, green, black, gold, and yellow in advertising messages. The aim of the research is to identify similarities and differences in the use of color signs in Russian and Uzbek linguocultures and to determine their relevance for translation into English. The research uses descriptive, comparative, semiotic, and linguocultural methods. The results show that Russian advertising often uses color to intensify emotional contrast, express prestige, or construct modern consumer identity, while Uzbek advertising tends to connect color with tradition, purity, hospitality, nature, national symbols, and cultural continuity. The paper argues that the translation of color symbolism requires not only lexical equivalence but also cultural interpretation and adaptation.

Keywords: color symbolism, advertising discourse, linguoculturology, semiotics, Russian language, Uzbek language, comparative analysis, translation, cultural code.

Introduction

Advertising is one of the most dynamic forms of modern public communication. It combines verbal text, image, color, typography, sound, cultural values, and emotional influence. In contemporary society, advertising does not only inform the consumer about a product or service. It also constructs a symbolic world in which the product becomes associated with comfort, success, beauty, reliability, family happiness, national pride, or modern lifestyle. For this reason, advertising can be studied not only as a marketing phenomenon but also as an object of linguistic, semiotic, and cultural analysis.

Color is one of the most powerful semiotic elements of advertising discourse. It attracts attention before the consumer reads the slogan or the main text. It organizes the visual composition of the advertisement and helps the recipient understand whether the message is connected with joy, trust, elegance, energy, ecology, tradition, or luxury. In this sense, color is not a neutral decoration but a meaningful sign. Kress and van Leeuwen describe color as a semiotic mode, that is, as a resource that participates in the culturally located production of meaning. This approach is especially important in advertising, where visual signs often function more quickly than verbal explanation.

The symbolic meaning of color is partly universal and partly culture-specific. For example, red may be associated with blood, fire, danger, love, or celebration in many cultures. However, its advertising meaning depends on the cultural context, product category, and accompanying verbal message. White may symbolize purity, peace, winter, medicine, or simplicity. Green may refer to nature, health, fertility, ecology, Islam, or national identity. Therefore, color symbolism should be analyzed as a complex linguocultural code.

Russian and Uzbek advertising discourses are especially productive for comparison because they belong to different but historically connected cultural spaces. Russian advertising reflects Slavic, European, Soviet, and post-Soviet semiotic traditions. Uzbek advertising combines Turkic, Islamic, Central Asian, national, and global commercial codes. In both languages, color names are actively

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used in slogans, brand names, packaging, and visual design. Nevertheless, the same color may activate different cultural associations for Russian and Uzbek consumers.

The aim of this article is to analyze color symbolism in Russian and Uzbek advertising from a comparative linguocultural perspective. The objectives are: to describe the theoretical basis of color as a semiotic sign; to identify the main color symbols used in Russian and Uzbek advertising; to compare their cultural meanings; and to outline translation problems that arise when culturally marked color signs are rendered into English.

Methods

The study follows the IMRAD model and is based on qualitative analysis. The material of the research consists of typical examples of Russian and Uzbek advertising discourse, including slogans, product names, packaging descriptions, outdoor advertising, online advertisements, and promotional texts for food, cosmetics, banking, tourism, household goods, and national products. The article does not aim to provide a statistical corpus count; instead, it concentrates on culturally significant patterns that can be observed in advertising communication.

Several methods were used in the analysis. The descriptive method helped to identify the most common symbolic meanings of color in advertising contexts. The comparative method was used to determine similarities and differences between Russian and Uzbek advertising messages. The semiotic method allowed color to be interpreted as a sign that interacts with verbal text, product image, composition, and cultural background. The linguocultural method was applied to reveal how national values, traditions, and collective associations influence the interpretation of color.

The analysis also takes into account translation into English. In advertising translation, color names are often translated literally; however, the symbolic meaning of a color may not be transferred automatically. For example, the Uzbek association of white with a good road or good wishes in the expression oq yo'l has no exact emotional equivalent in English. Similarly, the Russian lexical distinction between siniy and goluboy is more detailed than the English word blue. Such cases require cultural commentary, adaptation, or compensation in the target text.

The theoretical basis of the research includes works on semiotics, advertising discourse, color terms, and multimodal communication. Special attention is given to the idea that color meaning is produced through interaction between language, culture, and visual design. Therefore, the unit of analysis is not an isolated color word but a color sign within an advertising message.

Results

The analysis shows that color symbolism in Russian and Uzbek advertising has both common and culture-specific features. In both cultures, colors are used to attract attention, create emotional atmosphere, and support product positioning. At the same time, Uzbek advertising more often connects color with tradition, hospitality, purity, nature, and national identity, while Russian advertising often emphasizes contrast, individuality, prestige, modernity, and psychological effect.

Color	Russian advertising	Uzbek advertising	Translation note
Red	Energy, passion, sale, urgency, celebration.	Life force, festivity, warmth, attention, national-emotional intensity.	Usually literal, but emotional value depends on context.
White	Purity, snow, medicine, simplicity, reliability.	Purity, peace, blessing, hospitality, good wishes.	May require adaptation when linked with oq yo'l.
Blue	Trust, technology, stability;	Sky, water, openness, national symbolism.	English blue may lose Russian lexical

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	siniy/goluboy distinction is relevant.		nuance.
Green	Nature, health, ecology, freshness, organic products.	Nature, new life, harvest, Islam, national identity.	Literal translation is possible, but cultural associations differ.
Black/Gold	Luxury, elegance, premium status, seriousness.	Prestige, solemnity, prosperity, decorative tradition.	Often needs stylistic adaptation for luxury discourse.

Red is one of the most expressive advertising colors in both languages. In Russian advertising, it is widely used in messages about discounts, sales, energy drinks, entertainment, and products connected with passion or speed. Red attracts attention and creates a feeling of urgency. It can also be connected with the cultural memory of holidays, victory, and public celebration. In Uzbek advertising, red also functions as a sign of emotional intensity and celebration, but it may additionally be associated with life force, warmth, ornament, and festive culture. In both contexts, red is a powerful persuasive color, but Uzbek advertisements often soften its aggressive commercial meaning through combination with white, gold, or traditional decorative patterns.

White has a strong positive meaning in both Russian and Uzbek advertising. In Russian advertisements, white is frequently connected with purity, cleanliness, medicine, snow, winter freshness, and minimalist design. It is especially common in advertisements for dairy products, cosmetics, household chemicals, clinics, and premium technological goods. In Uzbek advertising, white is closely connected with purity, peace, good intentions, hospitality, and blessing. The Uzbek expression oq yo'l literally means white road, but culturally it means good luck or a good journey. This association makes white especially meaningful in tourism, family, wedding, and food advertising.

Blue is also significant in both advertising systems, but its linguistic and cultural organization differs. Russian has two basic color terms for blue: siniy for dark blue and goluboy for light blue. This distinction may be important in advertising because dark blue often creates associations with authority, depth, reliability, banking, and official style, while light blue is linked with freshness, sky, childhood, water, and softness. In English, both meanings are usually expressed by one basic word, blue, which creates a translation problem. In Uzbek advertising, ko'k and moviy shades are connected with sky, water, openness, and national symbolism. Blue can mark reliability, calmness, and cultural dignity.

Green is connected with nature, growth, health, and freshness in both cultures. In Russian advertising, green is especially active in the promotion of organic food, pharmacies, eco-products, agricultural goods, and banking services that want to appear stable and responsible. In Uzbek advertising, green additionally has associations with new life, harvest, fertility, spring, and Islamic cultural tradition. It is often used in advertisements for food, tea, agricultural products, tourism, and national brands. The green color can also suggest harmony between modern consumer goods and traditional values.

Black and gold usually create a premium effect. Russian advertising uses black to express elegance, seriousness, exclusiveness, and urban style. Gold is used to indicate luxury, high quality, festive design, and success. Uzbek advertising also uses black and gold in the sphere of prestige goods, restaurants, jewelry, ceremonial services, and festive products. However, in Uzbek visual culture gold often interacts with ornamental patterns and traditional decorative aesthetics. Therefore, the same combination of black and gold may appear more modern and minimalist in Russian advertising and more ceremonial or ornamental in Uzbek advertising.

Yellow and orange are connected with warmth, optimism, sunlight, childhood, and friendly communication. In Russian advertising, they are common in food, entertainment, retail, and children's

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products. In Uzbek advertising, yellow and orange may also refer to sunlight, ripeness, fruit, bread, hospitality, and the warm climate of Central Asia. These colors often create an atmosphere of generosity and abundance. In both cultures, however, excessive use of yellow can be perceived as cheap or too aggressive if it is not balanced by other colors.

Discussion

The results confirm that color in advertising functions as a cultural sign rather than as a purely visual element. The same color may participate in different systems of meaning depending on the cultural background of the audience. This is especially visible in the comparison of Russian and Uzbek advertising, where color symbolism reflects different dominant values.

Russian advertising often uses color to produce contrast and psychological influence. The color palette is frequently connected with product category and market positioning. Red is used for stimulation and urgency; blue for trust and stability; white for cleanliness and rationality; black and gold for premium status. These functions are similar to global advertising practices, but Russian linguistic culture adds specific associations, especially in the case of blue. The distinction between siniy and goluboy shows that color categories are not only visual but also linguistic. When Russian advertisements play with these shades, English translation may lose part of the original meaning.

Uzbek advertising demonstrates a stronger connection between color and national-cultural symbolism. White, blue, green, and red are especially meaningful because they appear in national symbolism and in traditional cultural interpretations. Blue is associated with sky and water, white with peace and good wishes, green with nature and renewal, and red with life force. These meanings can be used directly or indirectly in advertising to create trust and cultural closeness. Uzbek advertisements often combine color with traditional ornament, images of family, national food, hospitality, and festive rituals.

The comparison also shows that color symbolism is multimodal. A color receives its final meaning only in combination with other signs. Red on a discount banner differs from red in a wedding advertisement. Green on a package of tea differs from green in an Islamic or ecological context. White in a medical advertisement differs from white in a wedding advertisement. Therefore, the translator or researcher should analyze color together with the verbal slogan, product type, image, font, composition, and target audience.

From the point of view of translation into English, color symbolism presents several challenges. The first challenge is lexical: some color terms do not correspond exactly across languages. The Russian siniy/goluboy distinction and the Uzbek cultural associations of oq cannot always be translated by simple English equivalents. The second challenge is cultural: even when the lexical translation is correct, the emotional meaning may not be understood by the English-speaking reader. The third challenge is pragmatic: advertising translation must preserve persuasive effect, not only semantic content.

For this reason, the translation of advertising messages should use cultural adaptation. Literal translation is suitable when the color has similar associations in both cultures, for example green as a sign of ecology or red as a sign of attention. However, when color is connected with idioms, national symbols, religious associations, or traditional rituals, the translator may need to use explanation, substitution, compensation, or a different visual-verbal strategy. A culturally competent translation should reproduce the intended effect of the advertisement rather than mechanically copy its surface form.

Conclusion

Color symbolism is an important component of Russian and Uzbek advertising discourse. It functions as a semiotic and linguocultural resource that shapes consumer perception, creates emotional

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appeal, and communicates cultural values. The comparative analysis shows that Russian and Uzbek advertising share several universal color associations, such as red with energy, white with purity, blue with trust, and green with nature. At the same time, each linguoculture gives these colors additional meanings.

Russian advertising tends to use color for emotional contrast, brand differentiation, modernity, prestige, and psychological influence. Uzbek advertising more often connects color with tradition, hospitality, national symbolism, purity, nature, and cultural continuity. These differences are especially visible in the interpretation of white, blue, and green. The analysis also demonstrates that color meanings are not isolated but multimodal: they interact with words, images, ornaments, product categories, and social values.

The study is relevant for linguoculturology, advertising studies, and translation studies. It shows that the translation of color symbolism into English requires attention to cultural meaning and communicative effect. Further research may include a larger corpus of advertisements, quantitative analysis of color frequency, and experimental study of how Russian, Uzbek, and English-speaking audiences perceive the same advertising colors.

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