

EXPRESSIVE POTENTIALS OF GRADATION MEANS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract: This article provides a lexical, morphological, syntactic, and stylistic analysis of the expressive means of gradation in English and Uzbek. The author studies, from a comparative perspective, how gradation is formed within paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations, how it is expressed in both languages, and how it is perceived in cultural context. The article highlights methods of increasing emotional load, enhancing imagery, and creating stylistic effects through gradation, supported by examples.

Keywords: gradation, scaling, paradigmatic system, syntagmatic structure, stylistic expression, comparative linguistics

Through language, humans not only comprehend their surroundings but also evaluate, express, and react to them. In these processes, the phenomenon of gradation—the linguistic means of expressing the strengthening or weakening of qualities and states—plays an invaluable role. Gradation holds a special place in stylistics and functional linguistics as a powerful means of realizing the emotional, evaluative, and expressive functions of language.

The essence of gradation lies in arranging linguistic units by degrees of semantic intensity, realized through lexical, grammatical, and syntactic elements. This article comparatively explores the phenomenon of gradation based on examples from English and Uzbek.

Paradigmatic relations refer to systematic links based on the substitutability of linguistic units within a category. Gradational series are based on the principle of increasing meaning: for example, "small – medium – large" in English or "kichkina – o'rtacha – katta" in Uzbek. In such sequences, each unit must convey stronger or weaker meaning than the preceding one.

Within paradigmatic analysis, gradation displays the following features:

It is organized based on semantic sequencing.

It is expressed through synonymous or antonymous words.

It reflects sequential increase or decrease in form and meaning.

In Uzbek, gradational expression is often achieved through morphological means, such as "katta – kattaroq – eng katta" (large – larger – largest), or through affixal intensification like "katta-katta", "nihoyatda katta" (extremely large). In English, gradation appears in the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, such as "tall – taller – tallest".

Syntagmatic relations are expressed through the sequential use of linguistic units in discourse. This type of gradation allows for expressing the progressive intensification of actions, qualities, or states within speech itself.

For example, in English: "He whispered, spoke, then shouted" – shows the increasing intensity of the action. In Uzbek: "U yurdi, chopdi, yugurdi" – illustrates gradation through a sequence of verbs indicating increasing movement speed.

Syntagmatic gradation exhibits the following characteristics:

It is built on sequential structures within speech.

Each subsequent unit conveys stylistic intensification.

It is often used for dramatic or emotional impact.

Lexical and Morphological Means of Gradation

At the lexical level, gradation appears in various word classes, arranged according to their semantic intensity. For example:

In English: "some – many – countless"

In Uzbek: "bir oz – ancha – juda ko‘p"

At the morphological level, Uzbek uses affixes to create gradational effects: "qorong‘i – qoramtir – qop-qorong‘i" (dark – dim – pitch dark). In English, auxiliary words are used to express gradation: "quite good – very good – absolutely perfect".

Syntactic gradation emerges through phrases or sentences. For example, in Uzbek: "Bu voqea yuragimni ezdi, jonimni o‘rtadi, butun vujudimni larzaga soldi" (This event squeezed my heart, burned my soul, shook my entire being). Each subsequent sentence intensifies the effect, enhancing imagery.

Similarly, in English: "It upset me, devastated me, and completely broke me." Here, syntactic structures amplify emotional intensity.

Stylistic gradation is characteristic of artistic language. It is combined with epithets, metaphors, irony, sarcasm, and other stylistic devices. For example:

"O‘sha tun – g‘amgin, g‘ira-shira, sovuq, yurakni muzlatadigan tun edi" (That night was sad, dim, cold—a night that chilled the heart).

"She was brilliant, dazzling, almost divine."

Gradation manifests differently in every language and culture. Uzbek, rich in emotional and figurative expression, often adapts gradational means to its national mentality, traditions, and lifestyle.

For example, in Uzbek, figurative gradations like "osmondek katta" (as big as the sky), "tog‘dek yelka" (shoulders like a mountain), or "dengizdek yurak" (a heart like the sea) are frequently used.

In English, emotional intensification is often expressed through literary devices, similes, and sequences of adjectives. Such examples serve as valuable tools for revealing cross-cultural differences.

Comparative analysis shows that although gradation expressions in English and Uzbek are based on common semantic principles, they display noticeable cultural and stylistic differences in their formation and usage. English relies more on grammatical devices, while Uzbek emphasizes morphological and figurative expressions.

The paradigmatic aspect of gradation ensures lexical richness, meaning intensity, and speech flexibility, while the syntagmatic aspect creates stylistic variety, imagery, and expressiveness.

Gradation is a significant linguistic phenomenon that reveals the semantic and stylistic potentials of both languages. This article examined it from paradigmatic and syntagmatic perspectives. Comparative analysis helps to identify the expressive potentials of gradation means in English and Uzbek and analyze cross-cultural differences. Further research can expand this topic in the context of functional pragmatics, intercultural communication, and translation studies.

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