



EXPRESSION OF TIME IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK IN HISTORICAL AND
CULTURAL CONTEXT

Usmonova Sh

PhD, Fergana State University

Bozorboyeva X

Master's student, Fergana State University

Abstract: *This article analyzes the cultural, cognitive, and semantic differences in the expression of the concept of time in Uzbek and English. The paper compares models of time perception in Eastern and Western thinking, particularly the cyclical and linear approaches. In the Uzbek language, time is associated with ritual practices, natural cycles, and collective memory, whereas in English it appears as counted, planned, and functionally organized. The study is based on the theories of Benjamin Lee Whorf, Edward Hall, and J. P. Gee, and explains how language, as a cognitive and cultural system, gives meaning to the concept of time.*

Keywords: *concept of time, cognitive linguistics, cultural thinking, cyclical model, linear model, Uzbek language, English language, Edward Hall, Benjamin Lee Whorf, language and culture.*

INTRODUCTION

The expression of time in every language and culture is formed on the basis of specific historical experiences, social values, and worldviews. Language is not only a grammatical system but also a reflection of culture. Therefore, linguistic units related to time are not merely indicators of tense; they can also be viewed as representations of historical memory, ritual rhythm, social identity, and cognitive models.

In the Uzbek language, the concept of time is formed on the basis of cyclical, ritual, and natural rhythms. This feature is not only a grammatical characteristic of the language but also an expression of cultural, historical, and cognitive patterns of thinking. Such an approach corresponds to the Eastern perception of time as cyclical, repetitive, and harmonized with nature. The main reasons for this phenomenon are explained below.

1. A lifestyle harmonized with nature: The historical lifestyle of the Uzbek people has largely been connected with agriculture, animal husbandry, and other types of labor closely linked to nature. This way of life led to the perception of time through natural cycles such as seasons, harvest periods, and lunar phases.

For example, the arrival of spring is not merely a meteorological event but also symbolizes renewal, the celebration of Navruz, the beginning of planting activities, and the emergence of hope. Similarly, the end of winter is perceived as a period of rest, expectation, and preparation.

Living in harmony with nature shapes the perception of time not as a linear progression but as a cyclical rhythm. This perception is also reflected in language, where temporal expressions are often connected with seasons, rituals, and life cycles.

2. Ritual and Religious rhythms: In Eastern cultures, particularly in Uzbek society, time is often defined through rituals, religious holidays, and traditional cycles. Expressions



such as during the month of Ramadan, after Qurbon Hayit, before the wedding, or during the harvest season indicate time within a social and religious context. In this perspective, time is not simply a functional measurement but is perceived as a spiritual and social state.

Anthropologist Edward Hall emphasizes that in Eastern cultures time is often perceived as polychronic, meaning that several activities, rituals, and states may occur simultaneously. In this model, time is flexible, context-dependent, and cyclical rather than strictly structured.

3. Historical memory and collective thinking: In the Uzbek language, time is frequently expressed through historical events, periods, and collective memory. Expressions such as during the Soviet period, after independence, or in the old times define time through historical stages.

This approach leads to the perception of time not as an individual experience but as a collective one. In Eastern thought, time is understood through memory, shared experience, and the continuity between different historical periods. As a result, temporal expressions in the language often carry historical and cultural meanings.

4. Language structure and semantic approach: In the Uzbek language, temporal meanings are often expressed through lexical units such as adverbs, season names, and ritual expressions, while grammatical tense forms frequently depend on context.

For example, the verb boradi (“goes” or “will go”) may refer to either the present or the future depending on the context of the sentence. This demonstrates the semantic flexibility of the language and its sensitivity to contextual meaning.

According to the theory of Benjamin Lee Whorf, the way language expresses time influences how people perceive it. Temporal expressions in the Uzbek language therefore reflect a linguistic representation of a cyclical model of thinking.

The formation of the concept of time in the Uzbek language on the basis of cyclical, ritual, and natural rhythms is closely connected with the historical experience, cultural values, and cognitive worldview of the people. This corresponds to the Eastern perception of time as cyclical, flexible, and context-dependent. Language, as a means of reflecting thought, does not merely measure time; it also gives it meaning, symbolism, and social significance.

Main characteristics:

- Season-related time: expressions such as the arrival of spring or the end of winter represent not only meteorological changes but also cultural renewal and festivals such as Navruz.

- Ritual time: expressions like before the wedding, during the harvest season, or in the month of Ramadan indicate that time is defined through religious and social rituals.

Historical Memory: Expressions such as after independence, during the Soviet period, and in the old times demonstrate that temporal expressions in Uzbek often carry a semantic connection with social and historical transformations. In the Uzbek language, the expression of time frequently emphasizes emotion, memory, and cultural context. This indicates that the language is strongly connected with emotional and collective patterns of thinking. For instance, the word spring does not refer only to a season but also symbolizes renewal, hope, and the cycle of life.



In contrast, the concept of time in English is often expressed in a linear, progressive, and precisely measured form. This feature is not only related to the grammatical system of the language but is also closely connected with the Western model of perceiving time. From the perspectives of linguistics, anthropology, and cognitive psychology, this phenomenon can be explained by several factors.

1. The linear model of time: Past → Present → Future

In Western cultures, time is typically imagined as a directed line where events occur sequentially: one event finishes and another begins. This model reflects a progressive worldview based on movement, development, and planning.

In English, this model is clearly visible in the grammatical tense system. Tense forms such as Past Simple, Present Perfect, and Future Continuous specify the temporal state of an action with precision. Expressions such as in 1990, on Monday, or at 3 p.m. demonstrate the measurement of time as a precise unit.

Thus, the linear expression of time in English is not only a grammatical convenience but also a reflection of a cognitive preference for order, planning, and precision. In this linguistic system, time is perceived as a manageable resource, a process that can be planned, and an event that can be documented.

2. Measured time: calendar and historical precision

In Western societies, the calendar system and historical dates play an important role in defining time. This system is based on the quantification and numerical measurement of temporal processes.

Expressions such as July 4th, during the Renaissance, or after the Cold War mark time within a clear historical framework. In English, formal speech, scientific texts, and official documents frequently rely on chronological markers and precise temporal references.

According to the theory of anthropologist Edward Hall, Western cultures are characterized by a monochronic model of time, meaning that time is perceived as sequential, structured, and divided into clear boundaries. In this model, managing time, planning activities, and maintaining schedules are considered essential cultural values.

3. Planning and Functionality

In English, the expression of time often serves practical and functional purposes, such as scheduling meetings, organizing work routines, and analyzing historical events. In this context, time becomes a practical tool, a communicative resource, and a mechanism for maintaining social order.

Examples such as We will meet at 10 a.m., The deadline is next Friday, and He has been working since morning illustrate how time is defined precisely and pragmatically in English.

In English discourse, precision and purposefulness dominate the expression of time. Time is not primarily associated with emotional or symbolic meaning but rather with functional organization. This reflects the individualistic, goal-oriented, and planned characteristics of Western thought.



Overall, the linear, progressive, and measured representation of time in English corresponds not only to its grammatical structure but also to the Western cognitive model of perceiving time as measurable, planned, and functional. This perspective shapes language as more than a communicative tool; it becomes a system that organizes social order, preserves historical memory, and structures cognitive understanding. In linguistics, this phenomenon highlights the importance of analyzing time not merely as a grammatical category but also as a cultural and semantic concept.

Main characteristics:

Historical dates: in 1776, during World War II, after the Industrial Revolution — time is defined through specific historical events.

Calendar-based time: on July 4th, in December, every Monday — time is connected with the formal calendar system.

Cultural time markers: holiday season, back-to-school period, summer break — time is associated with social rhythms and economic activities.

In English, the expression of time is dominated by precision, functionality, and planning. This reflects the individualistic and pragmatic orientation of the language. For example, the Fourth of July is not only a date but also a symbol of national identity and historical memory.

According to Edward Hall, Western cultures follow a monochronic (linear) model of time, while Eastern cultures are characterized by a polychronic (cyclical) perception of time.

Benjamin Lee Whorf argued that the way language expresses time shapes how people perceive it. The contextual expression of time in Uzbek and the numerically measured representation of time in English reflect differences in cognitive patterns.

J. P. Gee suggests that temporal expressions play an important role in shaping discursive identity, meaning that individuals position themselves in relation to the past, present, and future through language.

Conclusion

The expression of time in Uzbek and English within historical and cultural contexts reveals the semantic, discursive, and cognitive layers of language. In Uzbek, time is more closely associated with rituals, cyclical perception, and collective memory, whereas in English it is expressed in a linear, measurable, and functional manner. These differences highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity in language teaching and help learners understand diverse cultural and cognitive models of perceiving time.

REFERENCES:

1. Halliday, M. A. K. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (2nd ed.). London: Edward Arnold, 1994. – 384 p.
2. Hojiyev, A. *O'zbek tili morfologiyasi, morfemikasi va so'z yasalishining nazariy masalalari*. Toshkent: Fan, 1985. – B. 12–25.
3. Hojiyev, A. *O'zbek tili morfologiyasi, morfemikasi va so'z yasalishining nazariy masalalari*. Toshkent: Fan, 1985. – B. 45–52.



4. Sapir, E. The Status of Linguistics as a Science. *Language*, Vol. 5(4), 1929. – Pp. 207–214.
5. Schiffrin, D. *Approaches to Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1994. – 435 p.
6. Van Dijk, T. A. *Text and Context: Explorations in the Semantics and Pragmatics of Discourse*. London: Longman, 1980. – 260 p.
7. Van Dijk, T. A. *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. London: Routledge, 1985. – Pp. 35–71.
8. Выготский, Л. С. *Мышление и речь*. Москва: Государственное социально-экономическое издательство, 1934. – 348 с.

□