

Linguistic and Cultural Aspects of the Oneirosphere

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Abstract: *This paper explores the linguocultural dimensions of the Oneirosphere—the conceptual domain of dreams—through a comparative analysis of symbolic representations in English and Uzbek dream cultures. The study is grounded in the assumption that language and culture are interdependent, and that dream interpretation reflects deep-rooted cultural narratives, values, and collective memory. By examining recurring dream symbols (such as water, snakes, death, and flying), the research uncovers how different societies attribute varying meanings to similar dream elements.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Oneirosfera, tush hikoyalari, simvolizm, lingvistik tuzilmalar, o'zbek xalq og'zaki ijodi, inglizcha tush talqini, tushlar pragmatikasi.*

The concept of the Oneirosphere—a term derived from the Greek *oneiros* (dream) and *sphere* (domain)—encompasses the symbolic, cognitive, and cultural environment in which dreams occur and are interpreted. While traditional psychology often treats dreams as manifestations of individual unconscious processes (Freud, 1900; Jung, 1964), the linguocultural perspective emphasizes that the content and interpretation of dreams are deeply influenced by language, cultural models, and collective semiotic frameworks (Kövecses, 2006; Sharifian, 2017). In this context, the Oneirosphere is understood not merely as a personal or biological phenomenon but as a culturally constructed space shaped by linguistic, mythological, and folkloric patterns.

Linguoculture, as defined by Vereshchagin and Kostomarov (1990), refers to the unity of language and culture as expressed through symbols, metaphors, idioms, and culturally specific discourse patterns. It highlights how language functions both as a vehicle and a repository of cultural knowledge. In dream narratives, this becomes especially salient, as dreamers rely on culturally embedded vocabulary and frameworks to make sense of the surreal or ambiguous elements they experience. For example, a dream involving water might symbolize purification or emotional turbulence in one culture, while in another it may signal financial fortune or danger, depending on the symbolic systems embedded in the language.

Dream symbolism, in turn, is a rich field within cultural semiotics and symbolic anthropology. According to Eliade (1959), symbols in dreams often carry multiple layers of meaning that derive from religious, mythical, and historical traditions. These symbols are not arbitrary; they are shaped by centuries of narrative repetition, ritual practice, and linguistic encoding. In both English and Uzbek cultures, dreams involving animals, natural elements, or supernatural events often reflect shared archetypes—such as Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious—but these archetypes are filtered and reinterpreted through the lens of local culture and language.

For instance, in Uzbek tradition, a snake in a dream often connotes betrayal or a hidden enemy, a belief rooted in Islamic and Turkic folklore. In contrast, in Anglo-European interpretations, snakes can represent either danger or transformation, a dual meaning influenced by both Biblical narratives and psychoanalytic interpretations (e.g., Freud's theory of repressed desires). These variations demonstrate how dream symbols are linguoculturally encoded, drawing meaning not just from universal psychology but from the symbolic lexicon of each language and culture.

Moreover, dream interpretation practices themselves are culturally bound. In many traditional Uzbek households, dream interpretation is still a communal activity, often mediated by elders or written dream

books (tush ta'birlar), where specific dream images are explained in a culturally meaningful way. In contrast, in Western cultures, dream interpretation is frequently individualistic, influenced by psychological theories or popular dream dictionaries. This difference further underscores the role of cultural values—such as collectivism versus individualism—in shaping the Oneirosphere.

Thus, the theoretical framework of this paper combines elements of cognitive linguistics, cultural semiotics, and symbolic anthropology to analyze dreams as linguocultural phenomena. It builds on the idea that language not only reflects but also actively constructs the way we perceive, remember, and narrate our dreams.

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