

The Linguocultural Comparative Aspect of the Concept of Time in English and Uzbek Languages

Sapaeva Sokhiba Otakhonovna ¹

¹ ESL, Senior Teacher of Toshkent International University

Annotation:

A deep theoretical and linguistic conceptualization of the concept of time requires a comparative study of communicative behavior and cognitive dynamics. In recent trends in the study of time, this approach is clearly visible in emphasizing the role of linguistic material for revealing modal-status meanings, for the systematics of ethno-cultural stereotypes. In this study, it is aimed to describe the national components, as well as linguistically research the characteristics of time as an image in artistic texts. The concept of time essentially applies to everyone regardless of religion, nationality, or region. Time, as a concept, regulates the entire system of human worldview. On the other hand, it is considered the most important and the most ancient concept, which is the basis for the characteristic conceptual form of the society. Certain methods are used to verbalize a defined or desired concept. In particular, studying the rate of formation and development of that concept in the language helps to determine the importance of this concept in the hierarchy of social values. In addition, comparing the common features of this concept with other concepts, dialects and sister languages, it will be possible to observe how ancient and valuable it is. That's why in the article, tasks such as analyzing the relationship between language speakers, their worldview and national character are defined in the understanding of time.

As a result of this scientific work, it will be possible to determine the unique cultural characteristics of Uzbek and English societies by analyzing the concept of time from a linguistic and cultural point of view. Time, like space, has an objective, universal and general character, it is inseparable from matter. Time is a continuous sequence of events. Time is one of the main categories of existence, and its linguistic interpretation is a way of explaining reality that reflects a universal and national character. One of the most complex, controversial and interesting considerations for the concept of time can be made by studying its linguistic and cultural characteristics.

Keywords: time, concept, linguoculturology, culture, analysis, conceptualization, society, conceptual basis, real time, language.

INTRODUCTION

Time, as an intrinsic factor within language, reflects the capabilities of language itself. Time appears clearly in language structures as a tool for depicting information sequentially (in a system), in the rhythm of speech, and in the continuity of speech processes. In the language system, time is expressed through temporal vocabulary and grammatical tense categories and manifests in speech at the levels of morpheme, word, sentence, and text. For this reason, scholars from various linguistic schools have studied the concept of time from multiple perspectives. Among the notable works in this field are those by Eastern European linguists such as L.N. Mikheeva, Y. Streltsova, P.P. Gaydenko, Y.V. Paducheva, Y.V. Gilyasev, D.G. Ishuk, and S.V. Dimitryuk. In English-language research, the studies of V.E. Bull, D. Carter, P.J. Davies, C. Emmot, G. Fauconnier, S. Fleischman, G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, G. Rowe, and P. Stockwell are noteworthy.

Additionally, interdisciplinary fields such as cognitive science, linguoculturology, linguistics, pragmalinguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and ethnolinguistics each have their own research objects, goals, and methods. Numerous new studies have been conducted in linguistics, guided by the significance, objectives, and tasks of these fields. Among these are the notable works of young scholars such as Sherzod Jabbarov, Aziza Paizbekova, Iroda Rahmonova, and Khurshida Mamatqulova.

The idea of time has a unique historical origin. Over the course of scientific development, various theories have emerged on the origin and formation of this concept, generally divided into two main views: some scholars believe that it arose as a result of the evolution of human consciousness. According to Kant's theory, time is not dependent on experience but consists of a priori (unproven) forms of perception that enable judgment. Kant viewed time as a "sensory form" aligned with inner feeling, describing it as a force that imposes an absolute claim on reality [Lucy, 2019; 370].

In modern texts, both prose and poetry, the depiction of time can be understood as a method for interpreting the fundamental stylistic approaches of linguistics. Time represents one of the significant lexical categories, as no aspect of human activity progresses without time [Streltsova, 1995; 11]. The linguistic markers of temporality play a crucial role in shaping the linguistic worldview, capturing societal aspects of time perception unique to individuals, nationalities, and ethnic groups. The connotative semantics of time, as investigated by scholars like N.D. Arutyunova, G.N. Sklyarevskaya, and M. Black, provide insight into cognitive processes through the analysis of suggested metaphors.

Researchers distinguish between real and perceptual time (subjective perception of time), linking these types to objective (dictum) and subjective (modus) time in texts [Fuhrman et al., 2011; 14]. Additionally, time can be mythologically cyclical, repetitive, linear, unidirectional, with a beginning and an end. In real life, it is impossible to "pause" or rewind time (as Goethe's Faust intended) [Nilsen, 2014; 16].

In her studies on the linguistic properties of the concept of time, Uzbek linguist A. Paizbekova emphasizes the importance of addressing "the issue of national cultural specificity," which involves "comparative identification of culturally marked linguistic units within the concept of time," as the realities represented within cultural units help convey the unique worldview and lifestyle of a nation [Paizbekova, 2015; 100].

RESEARCH METHODS

In linguistics, analyzing the category of time demands highly complex analysis. Grammar, for example, determines the position of tense on the timeline. In language, this category can be viewed as a semantic category embedded across all levels of the language system. At the morphological

level, time is expressed through verb forms (e.g., “I read,” “I am reading,” “I will read”) and degrees of adjectives (e.g., “faster”).

This study employs methods such as broad linguistic analysis, description, cognitive-conceptual analysis, linguocultural analysis, and comparative analysis of the text within the context of the components and literary works being studied. Today, research into the concept of time is an object of inquiry in fields such as linguistics, linguoculturology, and pragmalinguistics. In modern linguistics, two main approaches are used to analyze a concept. The first approach involves techniques aimed at analyzing the relationship between language and society, using text analysis methods that include information on the cultural background of ethnic groups. The second approach involves identifying key terms that represent the concept under study, describing the concept as a set of characteristics, and analyzing its relevance in both spoken language and social consciousness. In this approach, metaphors related to time in the language being studied are analyzed through cognitive-conceptual analysis. The stages of metaphor formation are identified, followed by examining the influence of culture on these metaphors through linguocultural methods. Conclusions specific to the language in question are then compared and final conclusions are drawn through comparative analysis.

RESULTS

The comparison of the concept of time in English and Uzbek literary texts, conducted through a linguistic approach and incorporating advancements from related fields, provides new practical outcomes for the study of this scientific issue. In the study of the concept of time, texts that reflect this concept are collected, and unique features in the expression of time are identified. In another approach, a single word representing time is centered, and several layers are derived based on its semantic valency. Here, time, as a linguistic concept, evolves into a conceptual sphere with hundreds of layers.

1) “Vaqtning birlamchi ma’no qobig’i” — The primary meaning of time refers to a continuous, measurable progression of existence and events from the past, through the present, and into the future. This concept embodies the fundamental sequence in which all events and changes occur in a linear order, typically marked by units such as seconds, minutes, hours, days, and years. Time serves as a framework for understanding the duration, succession, and chronology of events, forming the basis for how humans structure and perceive reality.

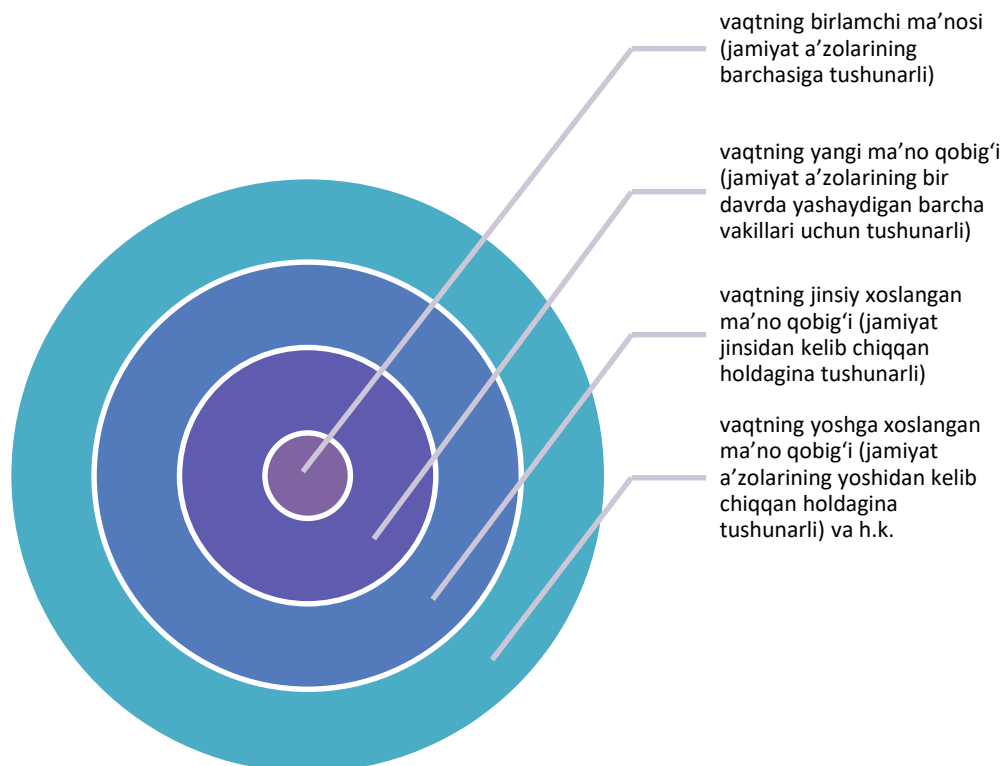
2) “Vaqtning yangi ma’no qobig’i” — “The New Semantic Layer of Time”

The New Semantic Layer of Time refers to the contemporary interpretations and understandings of time, reflecting its fluidity and evolving significance in modern society. This concept encompasses how social, cultural, and technological changes influence our perception of time, as well as how these shifts are expressed in literature and art. It highlights the complexities of time as experienced in today’s fast-paced world, where traditional notions of time are redefined and recontextualized.

3) “Vaqtning jinsiy xoslangan ma’no qobig’i” — “The Gendered Semantic Layer of Time”. The Gendered Semantic Layer of Time explores how the concept of time is perceived and experienced differently based on gender. This perspective examines cultural and societal constructs that influence the understanding of time, including how time management, life stages, and responsibilities are often shaped by gender roles. It also investigates the implications of these differences on individual experiences and societal expectations, highlighting the intersection of time and gender in various contexts, such as family, work, and personal identity.

- 4) “Vaqtning yoshga xoslangan ma’no qobig’i” — “The Age-Related Semantic Layer of Time” in English.

The Age-Related Semantic Layer of Time examines how the understanding and significance of time vary across different age groups. This concept highlights the ways in which individuals perceive time based on their life stages, such as childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age. It addresses how cultural and societal norms influence the experience of time at different ages, including the expectations and milestones associated with each stage of life. Additionally, this layer explores how attitudes toward time, such as urgency and reflection, change as people age, impacting their goals, relationships, and overall life satisfaction.



It is important to note that linguistic research conducted in real-time and based on the daily language of society members yields more accurate results. However, referring to literary texts for comparative analysis is also appropriate for thorough

DISCUSSION

As a concept, time structures the entire framework of human worldview. On the other hand, it is one of the oldest and most fundamental concepts, forming the basis for the distinctive conceptual structure of society. Specific methods are applied in verbalizing any given concept. The study and development of the concept in language, for example, help determine its importance within the hierarchy of social values. Moreover, by comparing its common features with other concepts, dialects (accents and regional varieties), and related languages, one can observe how ancient and valued it is. Since communication among people always involves the concept of “time,” understanding how each nation lexically expresses this concept and what it signifies for them is essential for effective communication. Misinterpretations of national characteristics can lead to misunderstandings and failures in communication, which both sides of intercultural interaction may find difficult to resolve [Tishkov, 2002; 121].

For example, the tragic ending of O'tkir Hoshimov's novel *Between Two Doors*—where the love between Muzaffar and Munavvar is thwarted due to their familial ties, leading Munavvar to take her own life—may seem confusing and even backward to a Western reader. Only those in Uzbekistan or countries with Islamic influences may fully understand the story's tragic depth. Consequently, this novel may not resonate with Western readers, who may struggle to grasp its cultural and historical significance, much as some fail to appreciate the profound impact of World War II on people's lives.

Studying concepts that are both essential and unique to every culture is undoubtedly intriguing. The category of time, alongside that of space, forms humanity's fundamental perception of the world [Stopocheva-Moyer, 2001; 65]. These views necessitate a deeper examination of concepts as research objects. Such studies, in turn, require a multifaceted scientific approach. This approach prompts us to explore how individuals in different societies understand and perceive time, and how this concept manifests in languages across cultures, emphasizing its relevance to linguistic research. The syntactic function of language serves as the primary indicator of temporal relations since the time marker is explicitly expressed in the syntactic paradigm of speech [Tarasova, 1989; 17].

In English and Uzbek cultures, events are often centered on “the here and now.” This orientation is primarily shaped by natural conditions. Psycholinguistic research, as well as work in intercultural communication, indicates that a cyclical model of time dominates the consciousness of people in Asian countries. Even within a single country, distinct time perceptions may exist between northern and southern regions, or between urban (linear perception) and rural (cyclical perception) areas. The natural element within a culture and its model of time are interlinked, as seen in the Anglo-European and Arab time perceptions and in E. Hall's theory regarding the classification of cultures as monochronic or polychronic [Hall, 1968; 35]. The monochronic system perceives time as linear, with people focusing on one task at a time before moving to the next. In contrast, the polychronic system lacks a fixed schedule; time here is spiral, meaning it is cyclical as the past shapes the present context. Emphasis is placed on personal relationships rather than strict deadlines. Countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Turkey, and Japan are classified as monochronic, while Egypt, India, Italy, China, and notably Uzbekistan are polychronic cultures. In monochronic cultures (e.g., the US, the UK, Germany, and Scandinavian countries), time strictly regulates people's behavior and relationships. Time and punctuality are integral to the English identity, viewed as a guarantee of trust and a means of managing the unpredictable.

In other cultures, such as Uzbek culture, time is often perceived polychronically, with individuals focusing on multiple events simultaneously. Flexibility is a feature of this cultural type, with people engaging in multiple activities at once. Relationships take precedence over deadlines. Unlike the English, most Uzbeks do not regard time as a rigid principle of life. Consequently, attitudes toward time may appear more relaxed, manifesting in delays, rescheduling events, and a general disregard for strict schedules.

In Uzbek culture, punctuality is not emphasized; in fact, lateness is often socially accepted and even expected (e.g., at visits or gatherings). Uzbeks view the concept of time more freely, which is reflected in folk sayings like “A hasty girl doesn't find a husband” or “Better late than never.”

In some instances, a disregard for punctuality is seen as a cultural etiquette in Uzbek society. For example, in Ulug'bek Hamdam's novel *Sabo and Samandar*, one character says, “Have you ever seen a girl arrive on time for a date? It's shameful for her to be punctual before the groom's family!”

Phrases commonly used by Uzbeks when setting a meeting or call time often perplex English speakers. For example, Uzbeks might say, “We'll call again to finalize the time.” An English speaker would find this confusing since, in their mind, time is fixed. Moreover, the phrase “we'll

finalize the time later” has no equivalent in English. Uzbeks, when waiting for someone, might say, “He’ll be here by three o’clock.” In English, “He’ll be back by three” implies a definite return time. If there’s a possibility of delay, a modal form is used, such as, “He should be back by three.”

The general denotation of time in the mind is not transmitted as abstractly as its connotation [Huddleston, 1995; 24], as time lacks the precision of space. Time is an ultra-abstract concept, lacking a concrete object or visual element that matter could serve as its prototype. People comprehend time more intuitively than cognitively. Linguists, however, offer specific, practical recommendations on critical design choices, dilemmas, and agreements when studying conceptual and empirical time [Herman & Rene, 2021; 112].

In the minds of Uzbek speakers, the concept of time is closely linked to somatic understanding, which is reflected in the language’s phraseology. In other words, culturally significant body parts are used to express time figuratively. Simply put, the concept of time is symbolized by metaphorically conveying human characteristics. For instance, expressions like “In the blink of an eye” and “One foot here, the other there” illustrate this.

Time appears as an emotionally charged category filled with metaphor and is a nominative concept with abstract semantics. For linguists, time holds great importance as a grammatical and text-forming category [Tarasova, 1979; 36]. The variation in the concept of time across languages is a phenomenon shaped in the minds of Western and Eastern peoples based on their studies of natural phenomena. Furthermore, it is essential to identify the ethno-linguistic features of the concept of time in non-genetically related languages like English and Uzbek and how they are expressed through phraseology, ethno-semantics, and cognitive metaphors. For example, in English, the concept of time is expressed in the domain of money. In this view, “wasting time” is equivalent to “wasting money,” and conversely, using time effectively is associated with “saving money.” This suggests that in English culture, the domains of “time” and “money” are cognitively mapped onto each other, resulting in unique metaphors [Djabbarov, 2021; 71]. In Uzbek, however, the formation of time-related metaphors has largely relied on religious attributes, rituals, as well as literary analogies and personifications. Let’s analyze a passage from Isojon Sultan’s novel *Genetic*:

“From dawn until dusk, we cared for wheat and cotton. Ever since I can remember, we walked through dust in summer and mud in winter.”

Here, the phrase “until dusk” is metaphorically represented by “until the eyebrows darken.” This phrase points to the darkening of eyebrows at sunset. Thus, the expression “until the eyebrows darken” fully conveys the meaning of sunset.

It is known that imagery and components of values are essential in the semantic field of a concept. The primary component is based on cultural ideas, while the secondary component objectifies cognitive metaphors and helps understand abstract details. In modern Uzbek literature, writers strive to incorporate common expressions to make their works more accessible to the public. In the mid-20th-century work *Ibn Sino* by Mirkarim Osim, metaphors related to time are frequently used. For example:

“Why are you wandering around before the Sufi’s call to prayer?” he asked his friend.

Here, “before the Sufi’s call to prayer” conveys the idea of being very early. The Sufi is a person who calls people to prayer in the mosque. In Muslim countries, people measure significant parts of the day with prayer times. In this way, starting an action “before the Sufi’s call to prayer” implies starting very early.

Such metaphors to express time are common in Uzbek. To understand how “time” is portrayed in the works of modern English authors, we can see the value placed on accuracy and responsibility. Our concept of time includes ideas like summer, autumn, winter, and spring, representing specific periods. Similarly, brief experiential moments—such as instant, moment, or second—form part of the concept of time. Human life stages, such as childhood, youth, adolescence, and old age, further characterize time as culturally significant, with varying conceptualizations across cultures. To mark time, all societies use seasonal cycles and days of the week [Matveeva, 2001; 33].

For example, in English literature, autumn is often depicted beautifully, as seen in the following passage:

“The Copper Beech Naiads were the most beautiful creatures any of them had ever seen. They were exquisite, rather fearless-looking creatures with manes of flowing red-gold hair and skin the color of an autumn sunset, with long, narrow eyes and slender, graceful arms and feet. As Snizort and the Court sat, barely moving, the Trees seemed to become aware of the watchers and, one by one, ceased to move and turned to regard them” [Shaw, 1969; 108].

In this example, autumn is portrayed through the metaphor of a beautiful girl, her hair. The English writer tries to animate and feel the season of autumn. Understanding autumn as a symbol of beauty is not new to European readers.

In general, “consumer societies” tend to compare any abstract concept to tangible reality as much as possible. Uzbek authors, however, often explain abstract concepts by linking them with other abstract notions. Autumn is associated with negative abstract concepts such as withering, separation, and longing. Similar metaphors are abundant in Uzbek literature:

“Grass withers and sheds its seeds. Then it slowly fades, as if someone is mowing it down from one side...”

Here, the author uses autumnal imagery to describe the passage of time and “those who have gone,” referring to deceased friends and reflecting on future thoughts with them. This reveals the Uzbek perception of autumn as a symbol of death and silence, often viewed with a sense of loss, regret, and sorrow for the past, while the future is regarded as a source of strength, success, and happiness.

Taking these factors into account, it can be confidently stated that the concept of time in Uzbek society is elevated to the level of value and divine power. In English society, time is considered a limited resource that individuals use to achieve their goals. Common expressions such as “I don’t have enough time to spare for that” or “He doesn’t use his time profitably” illustrate this. For the English, time is a private resource, and its management reflects accuracy and responsibility. These examples highlight the intrinsic connection between the concept of time and social activity across societies, with social activity often tied to economic interests.

Both Uzbek and English languages, besides universally accepted expressions of time (day, week, month, year), contain unique lexemes:

the coming weeks – kelgusi haftalar (upcoming weeks)

the deadline is approaching – fursat yaqinlashmoqda (deadline is nearing)

This anthropocentric view in both languages indicates that people move towards or away from a time or place, underscoring the importance of individual perspective in understanding time. Viewed through the lens of linguoculturology and ethnolinguistics, a nation’s worldview evolves in tandem with its historical progress, significantly diverging at the cultural and national level [Ishuk, 1995; 44].

Some English time-related words lack direct Uzbek equivalents, or vice versa, signaling how each society's way of life and social status influence time perception. For instance, there is no direct Uzbek equivalent for "deadline." Instead, phrases like "the last day," "the last hour," or "the end of the set time" serve as contextual substitutes, suggesting that strict deadlines are less emphasized in Uzbek culture.

For example:

"When do I need to submit the draft?"

"Submit it sometime soon; just make sure it's ready for publication by year-end."

This relaxed approach reflects the Uzbek mindset, with expressions like "Every task has its time."

CONCLUSION

Various social, ethnic, cultural, religious, and mythological concepts influence the perception of time. The complex interplay of these factors shows that daily markers of time such as year, month, day, and hour are perceived similarly in both Uzbek and English mentalities. In the literary texts of both languages, we find similar representations of time, using comparable objects to objectify it (such as water, books, wind, etc.). Considering the similarities and differences in the cultures studied, and based on the relationship between perception and time, it is possible to develop communication strategies to prevent misunderstandings and conflicts and to foster successful interactions, which is crucial for people.

Taking all of the above into account, we can conclude that, according to English speakers, time is an irreversible, one-directional, transient element with qualities of value and the ability to change surrounding reality; it can be perceived as an adversarial, destructive force or as a healing, miracle-working power. In the Uzbek language, however, time is viewed as a healing, invincible force, a divine element, as reflected in Uzbek phraseological expressions. In the context of Uzbekistan, it is essential to develop a culture of time perception that embodies the values of Uzbekistan's multicultural society and Islam, while also meeting the demands of modern global realities.

In the era of globalization, we see that Uzbek attitudes towards time are increasingly aligning with English perspectives on time. There is now a need to adapt this approach, adding some new words to the Uzbek lexicon that aid in more precise time expression based on the language's resources. Based on this need, we propose introducing the following new Uzbek words into common usage:

- Weekend – hafta so'ngi (end of the week)
- Deadline – tugash vaqti (end time)

REFERENCES

1. Paizbekova A.J. (2015) Representation of the national-cultural specificity of the concept "time" in Russian, English and Kazakh proverbs. *RUDN University Bulletin, series Theory of Language. Semiotics. Semantics* (2), 100-108.
2. Fuhrman, O., McCormick, K., Chen, E., Jiang, H., Shu, D., Mao, Sh., & Boroditskya, L. (2011) How Linguistic and Cultural Forces Shape Conceptions of Time: English and Mandarin Time in 3D. *Cognitive Science*, 35 (1305–1328), 14-35.
3. Nilsen Y.A. (2014) *Main trends in the development of time metaphors in English*. Nauka.
4. Djabbarov Sh. X. (2021) The concept of «time» is the theoretical basis of conceptualization. *International Journal of Word Art* (2), 82-86.
5. Lakoff J. & Jonson M. (1980) *Metaphors we live by*. The University of Chicago Press.

6. Mixeeva L.R. (2004). Time Russian picture of the world: linguistic aspect. diss. doc. Phil. Sci. (12). Moskva.
7. Strelsova Ye. Yu. (1995). *Lexico-semantic field "time" in the philosophical poetry of Spain and Catalonia in the 18th century*. Moskva.
8. Gaydenko P.P. (1999). *The concept of time and the problem of continuum*. Moscow.
9. Gilyasev Yu.V. (2012). Representation of the categories of time and space in the structure of a literary text. diss. Ph.D. Philol. Sci. Moscow
10. Ishuk D.G. (1995). Lexico-semantic field as an expression of the conceptual model of time in language (on Russian-Slavic material). dis. Ph.D. Philol. Sci. Saint Petersburg.
11. Dmitryuk S.V. (2001). Ethnic and cultural specificity of the image of time in the linguistic consciousness of Russians, Kazakhs and Englishmen. dis. Ph.D. Philol. Sci. Moscow.
12. Herman A. & Rene M. (2021) Time is of the essence: Improving the conceptualization and measurement of time. *Human Resource Management Review* 31 (2), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2020.100763>.
13. Stopocheva-Moyer A.Yu. (2001). Time in the context of language and culture: minimal units of division. dis. Ph.D. Philol. Sci. Moscow.
14. Tarasova Ye.V. (1989). About the multidimensional nature of time (physical, perceptual, linguistic, artistic and linguistic time). *Bulletin of Kharkov University*. (14). 218-231.
15. Tishkov V.A. (2002). Perception of time. *Ethnographic review*. (3). 119-132.
16. Turaeva Z.Ya. (1979). *Time category. Grammatical tense and artistic tense (based on the English language)*. Moscow.
17. Arutyunova N.D. (1997). Time: models and metaphors. Logical analysis of language. *Language and time*. Moscow.
18. Bull W. E. (1960). *Time, Tense and the Verb. A Study in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, with Particular Attention to Spanish*. California. University of California Press.
19. Carter D. (1977). *The Creation of Tomorrow: Fifty Years of Magazine Science Fiction*. Columbia University Press.
20. Davies P. J. (1990). *Science Fiction, Social Conflict and War*. Manchester University Press.
21. Huddleston R. (1995) The case against a future tense in English. *Studies in lang. Amsterdam*. 19 (2).
22. Lakoff G., Johnson M. (1980) *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
23. Smith C.S. (1983) *The Temporal Reference of the English Futurate // Problems in Syntax*. New-York Press
24. Mirtojiev M., Mahmudov N. (1992) *Language and culture*. Tashkent: Uzbekistan.
25. Yusupov O.Q. (2013) *Contrastive Linguistics of the English and Uzbek languages*. Toshkent: Akademyashr.
26. Sulton I. (2021). *Genetik*. Tashkent: Yangi asr avlodi.
27. Shaw I. (1969). *Rich Man, Poor Man*. GB: New English Library.