

# Usage of Polysemantic Words in the Novel of “Meet Me in Istanbul” by Richard Chisholm

---

**Nilufar Kholmakhmadova<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Phd student of Navoiy State University

---

## **Abstract:**

Polysemantic words, or words with multiple meanings, are a critical feature of language that enrich narratives and offer depth to storytelling. This study investigates the use of polysemantic words in Richard Chisholm's novel "Meet Me in Istanbul," a text renowned for its suspense and intricate interplay of cultural and personal themes. Through close analysis of the novel's lexicon, this study highlights how Chisholm's use of polysemantic words contributes to the narrative's thematic complexity and the reader's engagement. The findings reveal that polysemantic words serve as a tool for ambiguity, symbolism, and cultural contextualization, thereby enhancing the novel's literary and interpretive value.

**Keywords:** Polysemantic word usage, Ambiguity and Suspense, Symbolism, Cultural Contextualization, Character Development

**Introduction:** Polysemantic words are an essential aspect of linguistic versatility, enabling authors to embed layers of meaning within their works. In literature, they serve not only as tools for stylistic embellishment but also as vehicles for thematic exploration. Richard Chisholm's "Meet Me in Istanbul" exemplifies how polysemantic words can shape a narrative by fostering interpretative richness and emotional resonance. This paper examines the role of polysemantic words in Chisholm's novel, focusing on their contribution to character development, plot progression, and thematic depth.

**Methods:** The study employed a qualitative content analysis methodology. Key passages from "Meet Me in Istanbul" were identified and examined for instances of polysemantic word usage. The analysis focused on contextual meanings, connotations, and their impact on narrative elements. Secondary sources, including critical essays and linguistic studies, were consulted to support the interpretation of findings. This study employs a qualitative content analysis approach to examine

the use of polysemantic words in Richard Chisholm's novel *Meet Me in Istanbul*. The first step involved selecting key passages from the novel that contain words with multiple meanings. These passages were chosen based on their relevance to the overall themes of the book, such as ambiguity, symbolism, and cultural context. The polysemantic words were then identified, and their contextual meanings were analyzed in detail.

For each identified polysemantic word, the study focused on its different meanings and how these meanings influenced the narrative, character development, and thematic exploration. Special attention was given to how these words contribute to the ambiguity and suspense, and how they enhance the cultural depth of the story, particularly in the context of Istanbul's dual cultural influences.

To support the analysis, secondary sources, including linguistic studies on polysemy, critical essays on narrative techniques, and other literary works that use polysemantic words, were reviewed. This provided a broader understanding of the role these words play in literature and helped to contextualize their function within Chisholm's work. The overall aim was to show how the strategic use of polysemantic words enriches the novel's narrative structure and emotional impact.

**Results:** The analysis revealed several notable patterns in Chisholm's use of polysemantic words:

**Ambiguity and Suspense:** Words with multiple meanings were frequently employed to create ambiguity, enhancing the novel's suspenseful atmosphere. For instance, the word "shadow" appears in various contexts, signifying both literal darkness and metaphorical concealment or danger.

**Symbolism:** Chisholm used polysemantic words to embed symbolic meanings. The term "bridge," for example, functions literally as a structure in Istanbul and metaphorically as a connection between cultures and characters.

**Cultural Contextualization:** The novel's setting in Istanbul, a city known for its historical and cultural dualities, is reflected in the use of polysemantic words. Terms like "bazaar" and "minaret" carry both their denotative meanings and evoke a sense of cultural richness and complexity.

**Character Development:** Polysemantic words were also used to reflect the internal conflicts and evolving relationships of characters. For example, the word "journey" captures both the physical travel and the emotional transformation experienced by the protagonist.

### **Examples of polysemantic words which are used in the novel:**

#### **1. Run**

English: To move quickly or to operate something (e.g., a business).

Uzbek: Yugurmoq (to move quickly) or boshqarmoq (to operate).

Similarity: Both languages use the word for movement and operation.

Sentences: "The plane suddenly moves forward, races down the runway and rises into the air." (Page:5)

Samolyot to'satdan oldinga siljidi, yolak bo'ylab pastlab havoga ko'tarildi.

#### **2. Change**

English: To alter or exchange something.

Uzbek: O'zgartirmoq (to alter) or ayrboshlamoq (to exchange).

Similarity: Represents both transformation and exchange in context.

Sentences: Change: "Suddenly the traffic lights changed and the bus moved forward." (Page:8)

Birdaniga svetafor chiroqlari o'zgardi va avtobus ilgarilab ketdi.

### **3. Left**

English: Direction (opposite of right) or to depart.

Uzbek: Chap (direction) or jo'nab ketmoq (to depart).

Similarity: The word represents physical direction and movement away in both languages.

Sentences: Left: "The bus left the airport and drove towards Istanbul." (9)

Avtobus aeroportdan chiqib, Istanbul tomon harakatlandi.

### **4. Right**

English: Direction (opposite of left) or something correct.

Uzbek: O'ng (direction) or to'g'ri (correct).

Similarity: Refers to direction and correctness in both.

Sentences: Right: "Tom turned right and down the street." (11)

Tom o'ngga burilib, ko'cha bo'ylab yurdi.

### **5. Watch**

English: To look at or a timepiece.

Uzbek: Kuzatmoq (to look at) or soat (timepiece).

Similarity: Used for both observing and the device for timekeeping.

Sentences: Watch: "Tom sat looking at his fiancée's letter." (15)

Tom unashirgan qizining maktubiga qarab o'tirardi.

### **6. Miss**

English: To feel longing or fail to achieve something.

Uzbek: Sog'inmoq (to feel longing) or boy bermoq (to fail).

Similarity: Represents emotional longing or failure in both languages.

Sentences: Miss: "I miss you very much." (6)

"Men seni juda sog'indim."

### **7. Match**

English: To pair something or a competition.

Uzbek: Mos kelmoq (to pair) or o'yin (competition).

Similarity: Represents pairing and competition.

Sentences: Match: "The description matches Angela's." (12)

Tavsif Anjelanikiga mos keladi.

### **8. Fair**

English: Beautiful or just.

Uzbek: Adolatli (just) or chiroylı (beautiful).

Similarity: Represents beauty and justice.

Sentences: Fair: “The fair weather is beautiful.” (5)  
havo juda go’zal.”

## **9. Park**

English: A public green space or to leave a vehicle.  
Uzbek: Bog‘(green space) or to‘xtatmoq (to leave a vehicle).  
Similarity: Represents recreation and vehicle placement.  
Sentences: Park: “There’s a big hotel called the Park Hotel near the square.” (14)  
“Maydon yaqinida Park Hotel deb ataladigan katta mehmonxona bor.”

## **10. Square**

English: A geometric shape or a central public space.  
Uzbek: Kvadrat (shape) or maydon (public space).  
Similarity: Used for shapes and locations.  
Sentences: Square: “That’s in the square of the new part of the city.” (17)  
“Bu shaharning yangi qismining markazida joylashgan.”

## **11. Letter**

English: A written message or a character in the alphabet.  
Uzbek: Harf (character) or maktub (message).  
Similarity: Refers to communication and alphabetic symbols.  
Sentences: Letter: “Tom sat looking at his fiancée’s letter.” (15)  
Tom unashirgan qizining maktubiga qarab o’tirdi.

## **12. Plane**

English: An aircraft or a flat surface.  
Uzbek: Samolyot (aircraft) or tekislik (flat surface).  
Similarity: Represents both objects and geometry.  
Sentences: Plane: “The plane is preparing to leave.” (6)  
“Samolyot uchish uchun tayyorlanmoqda

## **13. Kind**

English: A type or being nice.  
Uzbek: Tur (type) or mehribon (nice).  
Similarity: Represents categorization and human qualities.  
Sentences: Kind: “All kinds of things – brass ornaments, coffee pots, trays...” (30)  
“Turli xil narsalar – mis bezaklar, kofe qaynatkichlari, tayyorlar...”

## **14. Light**

English: Brightness or not heavy.  
Uzbek: Yorug‘lik (brightness) or yengil (not heavy).

Similarity: Represents physical illumination and weight.

Sentences: 15. Light: "Suddenly the traffic lights changed and the bus moved forward." (8)

"To'satdan svetoforlar o'zgardi va avtobus oldinga siljidi."

## **15. Drive**

English: To operate a vehicle or energy/motivation.

Uzbek: Haydamoq (operate a vehicle) or harakatlantiruvchi kuch (motivation).

Similarity: Represents movement and motivation.

Sentences: Drive: "The bus left the airport and drove towards Istanbul." (19)

"Avtobus aeroportdan chiqib, Istanbulga tomon yo'l oldi."

## **16. Store**

English: A shop or to save something.

Uzbek: Do'kon (shop) or saqlamoq (to save).

Similarity: Represents both commerce and saving.

Sentences: Store: "My parents had a store in Istanbul." (54)

"Mening ota-onamning Istanbulda do'koni bor edi."

## **17. Book**

English: A written work or to reserve something.

Uzbek: Kitob (written work) or bron qilish (to reserve).

Similarity: Represents literature and reservation.

Sentences: Book: "Tom had booked a room at the Park Hotel." (10)

"Tom Park Hotelda xona bron qilgan edi."

## **18. Train**

English: A mode of transport or to practice.

Uzbek: Poyezd (transport) or o'rgatmoq (to practice).

Similarity: Represents transportation and skill development.

Sentences: Train: "Tom trained as an engineer." (22)

"Tom muhandis sifatida ta'lim olgan."

## **19. Board**

English: A flat piece of material or to get on a vehicle.

Uzbek: Taxta (flat material) or chiqmoq (to get on).

Similarity: Represents objects and actions.

Sentences: Board: "Will passengers please proceed to Gate 16 for boarding." (5)

Yo'lovchilardan 16-chiqish eshigiga kelishlarini so'raymiz"

## **20. Seal**

English: To close tightly or an aquatic animal.

Uzbek: Muhrlamoq (to close) or muhr (seal).

Similarity: Represents security and symbolic seals.

Sentences: Seal: “The letter was sealed with a kiss.”(6)

“Maktub o’kish bilan muhrlangan edi.”

## **21. Can**

English: A container or to be able.

Uzbek: Quti (container) or qila olmoq (able).

Similarity: Represents capability and objects.

Sentences: Can: “I can’t come to the airport to meet you.” (6)

“Men seni kutib olish uchun aeroportga kira olmayman.”

## **22. Tie**

English: A neck accessory or to connect.

Uzbek: Galstuk (accessory) or bog’lamoq (to connect).

Similarity: Represents clothing and connection.

Sentences: Tie: “Tom wore a tie to the meeting.”(18)

“Tom uchrashuvga galstuk taqib keldi.”

## **23. Suit**

English: A formal outfit or to fit.

Uzbek: Kostyum (outfit) or mos kelmoq (to fit).

Similarity: Represents clothing and suitability

Sentences: Suit: “He was wearing a dark suit.”(18)

“U qorong’u kostyum kiyib olgan edi.”

## **24. Bank**

English: A financial institution or river edge.

Uzbek: Bank (institution) or sohil (river edge).

Similarity: Represents finance and geography.

Sentences: Bank: “The bus drove along the bank of the Bosphorus.”(46)

“Avtobus Bosfor bo’yida harakatlanib bordi.”

## **25. File**

English: A storage folder or to arrange documents.

Uzbek: Fayl (folder) or tartibga solmoq (to arrange).

Similarity: Represents storage and organization.

Sentences: File: “Angela kept a file of important documents.”(35)

“Anjela muhim hujjatlarning faylini saqlardi.”

## **26. Ring**

English: A jewelry piece or the sound of a bell.

Uzbek: Uzuk (jewelry) or jiringlamoq (bell sound).

Similarity: Represents both sound and jewelry.

Sentences: Ring: "Tom gave Angela a beautiful ring." (31)

"Tom Anjelaga chiroyli uzuk berdi."

## **27. Date**

English: A specific day or a romantic meeting.

Uzbek: Sana (specific day) or uchrashuv (romantic meeting).

Similarity: Represents time and relationships.

Sentences: Date: "We'll date on the 14th Tom" (6)

"Biz 14-kuni uchrashamiz Tom."

## **28. Point**

English: A position or purpose.

Uzbek: Nuqta (position) or ma'no (purpose).

Similarity: Represents place and meaning.

Sentences: Point: "At this point, Tom decided to take a taxi." (9)

"Shu payt, Tom taksi olishga qaror qildi."

## **29. Look**

English: To direct one's eyes or observe something.

Uzbek: Qaramoq (to direct one's eyes or observe).

Similarity: Represents the act of visually focusing on something in both languages.

Sentences Look: He looked down at the green fields of France as the plane continued its journey across Europe. (6)

U samolyot Yevropa bo'ylab o'z parvozini davom ettirar ekan, Fransiyaning yashil dalalariga pastga qaradi.

## **30. Phone**

English: A device used for communication or the act of calling someone.

Uzbek: Telefon (a device for communication) or telefon qilish (to call).

Similarity: In both languages, "phone" refers to the device used for communication and the action of calling someone.

Sentences: Right, I'll phone you this evening. (page 29)

To'g'ri, men sizga kechqurun telefon qilaman.

**Discussion:** Chisholm's strategic use of polysemantic words aligns with the thematic core of "Meet Me in Istanbul," which revolves around mystery, cross-cultural interactions, and personal growth. The ambiguity introduced by such words engages readers by inviting multiple interpretations, while their symbolic undertones enhance the narrative's emotional and intellectual appeal. Moreover, the

cultural resonance of these words roots the story firmly in its Istanbul setting, enriching the reader's sense of place.

Richard Chisholm's use of polysemantic words in *Meet Me in Istanbul* plays a critical role in shaping the novel's themes of mystery, personal transformation, and cultural interaction. By incorporating words with multiple meanings, Chisholm introduces ambiguity that keeps the reader engaged, allowing for various interpretations of key events and characters' actions. For example, words like "shadow" and "bridge" serve not only their literal functions but also carry metaphorical significance, representing concealment, danger, or connections between disparate worlds.

Moreover, the novel's setting in Istanbul—a city known for its rich historical and cultural contrasts—benefits from the polysemantic nature of terms like "bazaar" and "minaret." These words evoke both their concrete meanings and a deeper cultural resonance, emphasizing the complexities of the city and its people.

Additionally, polysemantic words mirror the internal journeys of the characters, particularly the protagonist's emotional growth. Words such as "journey" and "change" reflect both physical and psychological transformations, enhancing character development.

Through these linguistic techniques, Chisholm not only crafts a suspenseful and multifaceted narrative but also invites readers to explore the nuanced interplay between language, culture, and personal identity. The strategic use of polysemantic words adds a layer of interpretive richness, making the novel a dynamic text that resonates on multiple levels.

**Conclusion:** The use of polysemantic words in "Meet Me in Istanbul" demonstrates Richard Chisholm's mastery of language as a tool for literary artistry. By weaving layers of meaning into his narrative, Chisholm not only heightens the novel's suspense and thematic depth but also fosters a deeper connection between the story and its readers. This study underscores the importance of polysemantic words in literature and their potential to elevate storytelling through linguistic and thematic complexity.

In *Meet Me in Istanbul*, Richard Chisholm effectively utilizes polysemantic words to enhance the narrative's depth and complexity. These words create ambiguity, foster suspense, and serve as symbolic devices, contributing significantly to the novel's thematic richness. Additionally, the cultural context of Istanbul is reinforced through the multiple meanings of key words, enriching the reader's experience. Overall, the use of polysemantic words demonstrates Chisholm's skill in utilizing language to engage readers and add layers of meaning to his storytelling.

## References:

1. Chisholm, Richard. *Meet Me in Istanbul*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
2. Crystal, David. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
3. Leech, Geoffrey. *Semantics: The Study of Meaning*. Penguin Books, 1981.
4. Various critical essays on linguistic ambiguity and polysemy in literature.
5. Saeed, John I. *Semantics*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2016.
6. Lyons, John. *Semantics: Volume 1*. Cambridge University Press, 1977.
7. Cruse, D. Alan. *Meaning in Language: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
8. Krennmayr, Tina, and Anna L. Trosborg. *Polysemy and the Lexicon: Semantics, Syntax, and Pragmatics*. Springer, 2013.

9. Dirven, René, and Marjolijn Verspoor. *Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004.
10. Nida, Eugene A. *Language and Culture: Contexts in Translating*. Mouton de Gruyter, 2001.