



The Phenomenon Of Antonymy In Interior Design Terminology

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the linguistic features of antonymic relations observed in interior design terminology. The study analyzes terminological oppositions formed within semantic fields such as stylistic approaches, material treatment, color concepts, and spatial planning. Using descriptive, structural-semantic, and comparative methods, the research identifies semantic differences and functional similarities between antonymic terms used in English and Uzbek. Furthermore, the stylistic connotation and communicative role of these terms in design-related texts are examined in practice. The article theoretically and practically substantiates the role of antonymy in understanding the conceptual foundations of interior design language.

Keywords:

interior design, antonymy, terminology, design vocabulary, functional opposition

Introduction. The modern field of interior design is a complex environment formed at the intersection of aesthetics, practicality, and cultural thinking. In this field, effective communication emerges through the system of terms and their semantic relationships.

According to M.A. Kobyakova, interior design is a branch of design ensuring a comfortable and harmonious balance between humans and their environment. It integrates art and design and encompasses all stages of a designer's activity [Kobyakova, 2018, p. 5.]. Moreover, interior design is interpreted as the process of planning and organizing space, lines, shapes, textures, furniture, color, and lighting. As a result, an environment is formed that provides convenience, safety, a healthy microclimate, coziness, and artistic appeal for habitation [Barabanshchikova, 2020, p. 6.].

In contrast, terminological oppositions—units in antonymic relations—are an essential means of delineating the semantic boundaries of interior design language and distinguishing key concepts. These oppositions are significant not only linguistically but also serve as an analytical criterion in design processes. Among views on

this phenomenon, O.I. Lukina's perspective is noteworthy: she asserts that antonymy is more typical of scientific vocabulary than of literary language [Lukina, 2017, p.31.]. This observation highlights the logical nature of scientific concepts, often structured around internal contradictions.

Therefore, examining antonymy in interior design terminology allows a deeper understanding of the structural and communicative features of the field's vocabulary.

Literature review. Oppositional relationships are rooted in human perception of reality, while antonyms represent the verbal expression of this perception. According to many linguists, antonymy is based on the category of opposition (L.A. Novikov, 1997; Yu.D. Apresyan, 1974) or contrast (V.N. Komissarov, 1957). These relationships apply not only to objects and phenomena of the world but also to actions, qualities, and attributes. Thus, antonymy can be regarded as one of the "most essential linguistic universals" (L.A. Novikov, 1997, p.6.) characterizing the lexical system of language and reflecting its logical, philosophical, and ontological essence.

Antonymy is characteristic not only of literary language but also of scientific discourse. V.P. Danilenko notes that antonymy in scientific vocabulary is “no less common than in literary language, and perhaps even more so” (B.П. Даниленко, 1997, с.79.). This stems from the nature of scientific knowledge, where thinking often relies on opposing concepts. Many terms appear in antonymic pairs, as phenomena and processes in scientific discourse are frequently described in contrast to others.

There is considerable scholarly literature on antonymy in terminology. Some studies examine antonymic units in fields such as linguistics [phonetics] (O.I. Lukina, 2017), business (N.V. Basko, 2016), engineering (S.A. Leonova, 2013), medicine (Bagana & Velichkova, 2012), chemistry (Dolgova, 1984), industry (Gorokhova, 2015, [2]), sports (E.I. Minina, 2020), and the oil and gas sector (N.V. Gorokhova, 2015, [1]).

These studies attempt to classify antonyms and highlight features of antonymic vocabulary across scientific domains. Several articles address the lexical description of antonyms (Novikov, 1997) and methods of their lexicographic representation in antonym dictionaries (Mukhin, 2016). However, most investigations focus on antonymic pairs in general language, while antonymy in specialized terminology—particularly interior design—remains underexplored. This field is shaped by the interconnectedness of aesthetic principles, functional approaches, and technological solutions. Emerging concepts in lighting, spatial organization, form, color, ecological and ergonomic standards contribute to the growing complexity of the terminological system. Antonymic units within this complexity serve as analytical tools for identifying conceptual oppositions and defining semantic boundaries. Since interior design language must maintain stability and coherence, studying antonymy from a linguistic perspective is particularly important.

Research Methodology. This study investigates antonymic relations in interior design terminology from a linguistic perspective. *Descriptive, structural-semantic, and comparative methods* were applied. Analysis materials include English and Uzbek interior design terms from specialized dictionaries, academic articles, and practical

design sources. Antonymic pairs were classified based on mechanisms of semantic opposition.

Analysis and results. Antonymous terms in interior design language reflect the structured model of design thinking. These units rely on conceptual, functional, and visual oppositions and serve as key criteria in design planning and communication. Below, the terms are classified into four main semantic groups:

1. Stylistic antonymic terms: *minimalist* – *maximalist*. In interior design trends, the opposition between minimalist and maximalist approaches represents a core conceptual contrast:

- *A minimalist interior* is built on the principles of simplicity, functionality, and spatial “breathing”.

- *A maximalist interior*, on the other hand, is characterized by an abundance of ornamentation, vibrant colors, and rich decorative layers. For example: “In the *minimalist* approach, every element adheres to the criterion of functionality, whereas in the *maximalist* approach, aesthetic richness takes precedence”. (F.D.K. Ching, K.Binjelli 2007; J. Pile, 2014).

2. Surface finish terms: *glossy* – *matte*. The surface treatment of materials in interior design directly influences light perception, texture, and the psychological perception of space.

- *Glossy* surfaces reflect light and create a sense of visual spaciousness.

- *Matte* surfaces, on the other hand, absorb light and enhance a feeling of calmness. For example: “**Glossy** finish reflects light and adds vibrance, while **matte** surfaces absorb it, creating a muted, elegant feel”. These antonymic terms represent an important functional approach both in color application and material selection.

3. Antonymic terms based on color concepts: *warm tones* – *cool tones*. Colors are among the most powerful tools that influence psychological and spatial perception.

- *Warm tones*: red, deep orange, brown — evoke a sense of closeness, warmth, and energy.

- *Cool tones*: blue, turquoise, gray — evoke a sense of calmness, spaciousness, and coolness. For example: “**Cool tones** open up a space, while **warm tones** make it feel cozy and welcoming”. (L.Eiseman, 2006)

4. **Zoning terms:** *private zone – public zone*. The division of space into private and public zones in functional organization directly affects the psychological and social components of design. (D.K. Ballast, 2019)

– *Private zones* — bedroom, study, private bathroom;

– *Public zones* — living room, kitchen, hallway. For example: “*The clear distinction between **private** and **public** zones in an open-plan apartment ensures both privacy and interaction*” (Ballast, 2019).

5. **Space planning terms:** *open plan – enclosed layout*. The open or partitioned organization of space represents a key expression of functionality, social interaction, and aesthetics.

– *Open plan*: a wall-free, spacious design that allows free movement.

– *Enclosed layout*: function-based divisions offering greater privacy and control. For example: “*Open planning encourages social interaction, while enclosed layouts offer quiet, focused environments*”.

In interior design, antonymic terms play an important role not only as a semantic category but also as conceptual and communicative tools. Opposing terms are used to express design decisions based on binary thinking models, create aesthetic contrast, and convey information clearly in professional communication.

1. Expressing design concepts through opposing terms. Design concepts are often explained through binary oppositions such as simplicity – complexity, open – enclosed, soft – sharp. These contrasts form the conceptual criteria of design (Ching, 2007; Pile, 2014).

“Minimalist formal simplicity versus maximalist visual saturation forms the conceptual backbone of the project”. For example, a living room interior may be based on the principles of simplicity and openness, while a bedroom can ensure privacy through the use of enclosed forms and soft lines.

2. Creating visual and semantic contrast through terminological oppositions. In the

perception of interior spaces, visual contrast has a powerful impact. Opposing terms such as light vs dark, textured vs smooth, bold vs neutral not only differentiate the space but also enrich it semantically (Eiseman, 2006), e.g.: “*The contrast between matte black cabinetry and glossy white countertops creates dynamic visual tension*”. Through the opposition of light and deep tones, smooth and textured surfaces, a sense of rhythm and movement is generated within the space.

3. Communicative value of antonymic terms in design discourse. In the design process, terminological oppositions help clearly define concepts for effective communication with clients. For example, pairs like open vs enclosed, warm vs cool, formal vs casual allow designers to more precisely articulate the client’s needs (Ballast, 2014).

Client: “*I want an open and calming environment*”.

Designer: “*Then we’ll avoid enclosed planning and create an open space using cool colors*”.

Such communication through terminology reinforces the clarity of concepts and the connection between aesthetic ideals and functional solutions.

This section analyzes the use of antonymic terms in English and Uzbek interior design texts, focusing on their comparative and stylistic features. The analysis is based on modern design portfolios, online catalogs, journal articles, and product descriptions in the field of design.

1. Use of antonymic terms in interior design texts. In the analyzed texts, antonymic terms served as key semantic drivers, persuasive tools, and advertising criteria. For example: eng.: “*From cool sophistication to warm elegance — explore our new Scandinavian line*”; uzb.: “*Ochiq va zich zonalar muvozanatida barpo etilgan klassik interyer*”. In these expressions, oppositions such as *cool – warm*, *ochiq (open) – zich (dense)*, and *classic – modern* are used to shape the overall design concept.

2. Interior design terms in English and Uzbek: a comparative analysis of antonymic pairs:

English term pair	Corresponding Uzbek terms	Explanation
minimalist – maximalist	minimalistik – maksimalistik	Philosophical-aesthetic approaches
glossy – matte	yaltiroq – tutashgan	Technical terms based on surface texture

open plan – enclosed layout	ochiq reja – yopiq reja	Functional zoning of space
warm tones – cool tones	iliq ohanglar – sovuq ohanglar	Related to psychological and spatial impact
private zone – public zone	xususiy zona – umumiy zona	Sociopragmatic organization of space

Although these terms are functionally equivalent in English and Uzbek, in some cases cultural differences lead to variations in semantic scope. For instance, the term “*open plan*” in English is more closely associated with social mobility, while in Uzbek it primarily refers to structural and design solutions.

3. Stylistic and semantic features of antonymic terms in texts. In the analyzed design texts, antonymic terms appear not as ordinary descriptors but as stylistically charged units with connotative meaning. They add dramatic emphasis, precision, and a professional tone to the text. Examples: eng.: “Soft curves and sharp edges meet in this contemporary design”; uzb.: “Yorqin fon va xira mebel kontrasti orqali fazoda chuqurlik yaratilgan”. Through such units, the emotional impact of design language is enhanced, while the conceptual structure is simplified.

Conclusion/Recommendations.

The research findings demonstrate that antonymic relations in interior design terminology are directly connected to the logical, conceptual, and functional foundations of the language system. Opposing terms play a crucial role in the structured framework of design language, serving as key tools in defining conceptual boundaries, creating visual contrast, and enhancing communicative effectiveness.

The comparative analysis of interior design terms in English and Uzbek reveals that terminological oppositions function as a primary semantic mechanism for conveying design concepts in both languages. This phenomenon is regularly employed not only within the lexical system but also in practical design discourse.

Recommendations:

- 1) To develop a classificatory model for systematizing interior design terminology based on antonymic oppositions;
- 2) To continue the consistent study of the stylistic, semantic, and pragmatic potentials of antonymic terms used in interior design texts and project documentation.

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