DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH FASHION AND DESIGN TERMS

Nastinova E'zoza Bahriddin qizi
Toshkent davlat transport universiteti akademik litseyi ingliz tili fani o'qituvchisi
Email: nasriddinovaezoza7@gmail.com
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Abstract: This thesis examines English fashion and design terminology from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives. Fashion vocabulary represents a dynamic part of the English lexicon because it continuously reflects changes in society, culture, technology, art, and lifestyle. The diachronic approach focuses on the historical development of fashion and design terms, including changes in their meanings, forms, and usage. The synchronic approach, in contrast, investigates the contemporary structure and functioning of these terms in modern English. The study demonstrates that many fashion terms have undergone semantic expansion, narrowing, specialization, or complete changes in meaning over time. At the same time, contemporary fashion discourse is characterized by extensive borrowing from French, Italian, and other languages, as well as by the emergence of terminology connected with digital fashion, sustainable design, and new technologies. The research highlights the importance of studying fashion terminology as a constantly developing lexical system.

Keywords: fashion terminology, design terms, diachronic analysis, synchronic analysis, semantic change, lexical development, borrowing, English vocabulary.

Introduction

Fashion and design constitute important areas of modern culture and communication. The development of fashion has influenced not only clothing styles but also the English vocabulary used to describe garments, materials, accessories, artistic styles, production techniques, and design concepts. As a result, fashion and design terminology represents a rich linguistic field for studying lexical change.

The English language has accumulated fashion terms from different historical periods and linguistic sources. Many terms entered English through French and Italian, while contemporary terminology is increasingly influenced by globalization, social media, digital technologies, and international fashion communication. Therefore, the analysis of fashion vocabulary requires both historical and contemporary perspectives.

A diachronic analysis makes it possible to trace how particular fashion and design terms appeared, developed, and changed their meanings throughout different periods of English. A synchronic analysis focuses on the vocabulary used in contemporary English and examines the semantic relations, word-formation patterns, and functional characteristics of modern terminology. Diachronic Development of Fashion and Design Terms

The historical development of English fashion vocabulary demonstrates that terminology changes together with social and cultural developments. A significant number of English fashion terms have foreign origins. For example, words such as boutique, couture, silhouette, chic, and ensemble entered English from French and became established in international fashion discourse. The term couture, for instance, is connected with the French word referring to sewing and dressmaking. In modern English, it

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is strongly associated with the production of high-fashion garments and exclusive clothing. This example illustrates semantic specialization, in which a general lexical item develops a more specific meaning within a particular professional field. Another interesting example is silhouette. Historically, the word was associated with a type of profile portrait. In contemporary fashion terminology, however, silhouette refers to the overall shape or outline of a garment or a person's appearance. Its development demonstrates semantic extension and specialization within fashion discourse. The history of fashion vocabulary is also closely connected with changes in clothing culture. Terms describing traditional garments, fabrics, and production techniques sometimes become archaic or acquire historical meanings, while new words emerge to describe innovative materials and styles.

Synchronic Characteristics of Modern Fashion Terminology From a synchronic perspective, contemporary English fashion terminology can be divided into several semantic groups. The first group includes terms referring to clothing, such as dress, skirt, trousers, jacket, coat, blouse, and hoodie. The second group contains terms related to accessories, including handbag, necklace, bracelet, belt, and sunglasses. Another important group consists of terms describing materials and fabrics, such as cotton, denim, silk, leather, and synthetic fiber. Modern design terminology includes words associated with visual appearance, functionality, construction, and artistic principles. Examples include minimalism, texture, pattern, composition, aesthetic, proportion, form, and prototype. These terms frequently function across several professional fields, including fashion design, graphic design, architecture, and product design.

Contemporary fashion vocabulary is also characterized by the rapid appearance of new lexical units. Technological development has contributed to terms such as digital fashion, virtual clothing, wearable technology, smart textiles, and 3D fashion design. These expressions demonstrate how technological innovations influence the vocabulary of fashion and design. Semantic Changes in Fashion Terminology

One of the most important features of fashion terminology is semantic change. Words may develop new meanings as a result of cultural and technological transformations. Semantic change can include broadening, narrowing, specialization, generalization, metaphorical transfer, and other processes. For example, the word platform originally referred to a raised or level surface. In fashion, platform shoes developed as a term for shoes with thick soles. The lexical meaning of the word has therefore been extended through contextual and metaphorical association.

Similarly, classic can refer generally to something recognized as a standard or exemplary form. In fashion discourse, it can describe clothing styles that remain acceptable or influential over a long period. Thus, the word acquires a specialized evaluative function in fashion communication. Another important process is lexical borrowing. English fashion vocabulary contains numerous borrowings from French and Italian because these languages have historically been strongly associated with European fashion and design. Modern globalization has further increased the international character of fashion terminology. The Role of Globalization and Digital Communication Globalization has significantly accelerated the development of fashion terminology. Fashion magazines, international brands, social networks, online shops, and fashion blogs contribute to the rapid circulation of new terms. Words and expressions can now spread internationally within a very short period.

Social media platforms have also contributed to the creation and popularization of fashion-related expressions. Terms such as streetwear, influencer, fast fashion, slow fashion, sustainable fashion, and fashion trend are widely used in contemporary English.

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The emergence of sustainable fashion has created an especially productive terminological field. Expressions such as ethical fashion, eco-fashion, recycled materials, upcycling, circular fashion, and zero-waste design reflect growing attention to environmental and social issues.

Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that English fashion and design terminology represents a dynamic and constantly developing lexical system. The diachronic perspective reveals how historical, cultural, and linguistic factors have influenced the formation and semantic development of fashion terms. The synchronic perspective, meanwhile, shows the structure and diversity of contemporary fashion vocabulary.

Fashion terminology is influenced by borrowing, semantic change, word formation, globalization, technological development, and changes in social values. The interaction between historical vocabulary and newly emerging terms makes fashion and design terminology an important area of linguistic research. Studying these terms from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives provides a broader understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and social development.

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