

The Problem of Symbolic of Colours in Different Language Cultures

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Abstract: *The present article investigates lexemes, which nominate different colours and compose set expressions used to characterize a person and transfer information dealing with description of his/her appearance, age, character, inner state and interpersonal attitude. The authors present English, Uzbek and Karakalpak expressions with various colours and analyze them from anthropocentric point of view. In the result, national-cultural specific of analyzed languages has been revealed.*

Keywords: symbolic of colour, anthropocentric characteristics, human, age, appearance, interpersonal attitude, range of colours, national-cultural specific.

1. Introduction

Colour has a certain stimulus that affects the mood and energy of a person. In this regard, not only physicists, but also psychologists are engaged in the properties of colour. Goethe proved that colour affects the emotional state of a person. In turn, this ability of colour is associated with objects related to a particular colour. So, for example, green colour is considered to have a beneficial effect on the human nervous system, since it is the colour of nature, greenery and trees.

Psychologists are interested in problems associated with colour perception. The psychological aspect of colour perception is closely linked to social-cultural and historical heritage. This means that psychology focuses on symbolic nature of colour and establishes a direct connection between colour and brain perception, as well as associations arising from colour perception.

There is a whole concept about the history of the development of colour symbolism, in which the psychological effect of colour on a person, factors and mechanisms of colour preferences are studied. One of the important works in this direction is the work of B.A. Bazym's "Colour and psyche" [1].

According to Faber Birren, there are four types of associations of colour perception: 1) general impression, 2) mental associations, 3) objective associations and 4) subjective associations. The last two types of associations are associated with the correlation of colour with the object of the surrounding reality. Sometimes the same colour can cause a wide variety of associations. For example, red colour is associated with blood, life, energy, impulse, passion, love, anger, danger, war, idleness and vitality. Red colour is always alarming and indicates the importance of any information or phenomenon.

Each colour has a certain symbolism and is associated mainly with objects of the world. The sensations and emotions caused by any colour are similar to the sensations associated with an object or phenomenon constantly painted

in that colour. So, the blue colour, which is a symbol of harmony and tranquility, is associated with the colour of a cloudless sky that does not predict rain or thunder. In the process of colour perception, a person identifies certain signs, qualities, sides of different objects and phenomena.

2. Results and Discussion

As you know, the problem of colour symbolism has become of interest to linguists since the 18th century. In this regard, in modern linguistics, the so-called coloristic vocabulary has been highlighted, demonstrating the features of colours in the linguistic picture of the world. Colour vocabulary is unique for each language based on the uniqueness and national specificity of the languages of the world. So, if the white colour in many nations is considered the colour of happiness (for this reason, brides wear a white dress), in other nations (for example, Indians), white is considered a mourning colour. Green is associated with security for American lingual culture and with crime for French people. Consequently, colour is a means of reflecting the culture of a particular nation and is associated with its history, customs, traditions, folk traditions and beliefs. Therefore, the same colour can be perceived differently in different language cultures. This suggests that the symbolism of colour is also a sociocultural index indicating the emotions, images, experiences and psychological conditions of people.

Colour has an ancient history and plays an important role in characterizing objects of the picture of the world. Colour semantics, names of colours and their shades are included in the vocabulary of any language. Moreover, colour semantics has rich resources for the formation of new colour shades and related expressive-shaped values: English *ripe cherry* – the colour of ripe cherries, Uzbek *osmonrang* – colour of blue sky. Similar lexical colour designations are easily perceived by the human brain and easily form associations with the colour of the object being compared: ripe cherries in the first example and clear sky in the second example.

It should be noted that each nation perceives the surrounding reality in different ways, therefore the number of tokens denoting colours varies in different languages. So, in

Russian there is a strict border between light blue – *goluboy* and dark blue – *siniy*, in Uzbek and English the same lexeme is used to denote light blue and dark blue: blue for English and *kuk*. The African tribes of Liberia have only two tokens for colour designation: one is used for all warm tones, and the other for all cold tones.

American linguists B. Berlin and P. Kay were engaged in the number of tokens for designating colours on the material of about 100 different languages. According to their conclusion, in any developed language there are eleven basic colour markers, including English: white, black, brown, gray, blue, purple, green, yellow, red, orange, pink. This theory was supported by the linguist U.L. Chafe, arguing that although different languages record a different number of colour categories in their vocabulary, there is a universal set of eleven colours.

A.P. Vasilevich expresses the idea that the categorization of many names in a language is immanent to the speakers of that language. The members of a given linguistic community, when perceiving the colour space, identify in it a certain number of meanings for which the language has a set of lexical means of expression [3]. This set and the number of colour values included in it depends on the development of the social development of the language culture. Some linguists claim that in addition to the eleven primary colours, there are thousands of colour shades.

Especially often used colour notation in the texts of fiction, when they are used for expressive descriptions of objects of the world, as well as characterization of artistic characters.

A comprehensive analysis of the symbolism of colour is a necessary task of modern linguistics, since it will allow you to deeply comprehend the linguistic picture of the world and the reality surrounding us, understand the effect of colour on a person and his attitude, as well as describe human qualities using colour-marking means of the language.

Colour has a universal classification function and combines language designations of various objects and phenomena of reality, human nominations, social and social, religious and moral, emotional and interpersonal relationships, revealing a clear logic and a relatively strict system.

The symbolism of colour acts as a means of reflecting the national culture of native speakers and has great cultural significance. Colour tokens convey the deep meanings and interpretations embedded in them, the emotions and experiences of peoples (in our case, English, Uzbek and Karakalpak). Researchers call the symbolism of colour the embodiment of cultural values and cultural realities, since the colour vision of the world is interpreted by each nation differently. Colour designations in each language culture have their own history and national-cultural specificity. For example, the English have the expression yellow journal – tabloid magazine, yellow magazine. This is due to the year 1895, when a colour photograph was placed in one of the issues of the New York World magazine, which was rare at the time. This was done in the expectation of sensation and attracting readers. The photograph depicted a child in yellow [4].

The same color (yellow) is associated with coins in the Uzbek language: *sarik chakasi yuk* – there is not a penny in one's pocket.

In Karakalpak language, the yellow color, expressed by the lexeme *sary* – yellow, blond, golden, is mainly used to describe the color of a person's hair: *sary jigit* – blond fellow, *sary hayal* – blonde girl [2].

Many colours are used primarily to describe the appearance of a person. Some phraseological units are unique because they simultaneously transmit several types of information. So, in Uzbek phraseology, *sochiga ok tushgan* means that a person has gray hair which appears with age [6]. Here not only information about the appearance is transmitted, but also about the elderly age of a person when he has gray hair. The gray hair in this expression is denoted by the Uzbek lexeme *ok* – white. The same meaning is the English phraseology *gray hair* – old age (live to gray hair) [4] with the lexeme *gray*. The analysis shows that the same information (in this case, about an elderly person) is transmitted in different language cultures using different colours: white - in the Uzbek language and gray - in English.

Sometimes colour symbolism may not match in different languages. For example, English phraseology *Judas hair* - red-haired [4] does not contain a token denoting colour, but actualizes the meaning of “red-haired”. Most likely, this is due to the name of the person who had red hair colour, which led to the replacement of the word red-haired, meaning red hair colour, with Judas - proper name. In this phraseology, one feels the national-cultural specificity associated with the history of the English people.

The English expression *lily white* - consisting only of white-skinned people, not having a single Negro in the group, only white [4] dropped out of everyday use and entered the list of archaisms. But in everyday speech, phraseology (*as*) *white as a sheet (as ashes or as death)* is often used – it means pale as a canvas, deadly pale. This expression is used either to describe the complexion of a person, or to characterize his reaction to any news, event or incident. Often, phraseology (*as*) *white as chalk (as driven snow, as milk, as snow or as wool)* is used to describe skin colour – white, snow-white [4].

If the white colour in English is mainly used to characterize the colour of a person's skin, then in the Uzbek language the same colour is used to express old age by describing gray hair: *soch-sokoliga ok kirdi* - he turned gray, aged [6]; *ok tushgan* – became gray-haired, with gray hair [6].

A healthy and flourishing person, “blood with milk” is nominated by the Uzbek expression *oki ok, kizili kizil* [6].

White colour is used not only to describe the external characteristics of a person, but also his internal qualities, one of which is intelligibility in people: *ok-korani ajratmok (tanimok)* - to understand between people [6].

As can be seen from the examples, the symbolism of colour is a unique means of transmitting information of a very diverse nature. So, the Uzbek expression *ok podsho* (white

king) [6] conveys historical information - it was used to designate the Russian Tsar.

An interesting semantics is the paremiological unit *Every white hath its black, and every sweet its sour* - there is no sweet without bitter (and there are spots in the sun) [4]. Usually this proverb is used to emphasize that there is no ideal person, each has its own shortcomings.

In the Uzbek language there is an expression *ok ichmok (urmok)*, which means “drink to the dregs” [6]. This phraseologism reflects a model of human behavior in a certain situation, which means it conveys anthropocentric information.

The Uzbek-benevolent expression *ok yul* (etiquette, benevolence) means “have a good journey” [6]. National phraseological expressions can be called Uzbek phraseological units *ok yul bersin* – it’s a wish to a pregnant woman; *ok fotiha (bermoq)* - blessing (give blessing) [6]. These expressions have no English equivalents; they convey the high culture, kindness and benevolence of the Uzbek people. Typically, these expressions are pronounced by older people in relation to the younger ones, before traveling, getting married, having a baby, or just starting a business.

Among the Uzbek phraseological units with a purely national-cultural specificity, the following can be noted: *ok sut bergan (ona)* - mother who was breastfeeding; *ok sutimga roziman / rozi emasman* - the words of a mother in relation to her children when she is happy or unhappy with their attitude towards her. The biggest curse in Uzbek linguistic culture is the expression *ok kilmok* - to curse, reject a son or daughter.

Parental care for children is reflected in the Uzbek expression *ok yuviv, ok taramok* - to look after, to look after [6]. Let's try to translate it into English: to take care. At first glance, it seems that the English analogue of this Uzbek expression is selected, although without the presence of white symbols. In fact, it is impossible to reflect that fullness, sincere love and infinite parental care, which is reflected in the semantics of the expression *ok yuviv, ok taramok*.

White colour can indicate the social status of a person: *white-collar job* - (American) work in an institution, office, *white-collar worker* - employee. “White” work is metaphorically transmitted using the combination of *white collar* - a white collar, that is, one who wears a white shirt and works in an office.

In the English language, red color is expressed mainly by the lexeme *red*, in the Uzbek language the lexeme *kizil* and in Karakalpak language the lexeme is *kyzyl*. In English, various shades of red are also expressed by tokens: *scarlet, crimson, ruby, cherry, bloody-red, fire-red*. In the Uzbek language, there are similar shades of red that are conveyed by tokens: *alvon* - scarlet, crimson, bright red, *scarlet, kirmizi* - red, *scarlet, pushti* - pink, *olov rang* – fire-red, *och kizil* - light red, *tuk kizil* - dark red, *bordo*. These shades are widely used to describe mainly the external characteristics of a person:

English: *cherry cheeks* - red cheeks, Uzbek: *olov rangli soch* - red hair, *pushti rang lablar* - pink lips.

It should be noted that the symbolism of red is positive in English. So, in addition to the above notations, this colour also symbolizes a healthy looking face: (*as red as cherry* - ruddy, with a blush all over the cheek, blood with milk [4]. If the color of the human face becomes red from any news, strong unrest or feelings of shame, the British use the expressions (*as red as a lobster* - red as a turkey [4]. Expressions appearing in the Karakalpak language emphasize the connection of red color with a sense of shame: *bet kyzaryp keti* - cheeks are burning, *uyalgannan kyzar* - burn with shame [2].

It is very interesting that the red colour (as well as other colours) can mean professional employment of a person: *red coat* - an English soldier; *the red-coated gentry* - British soldiers; *red tab* - (military jarg.) staff officer [5].

3. Conclusion

Based on the above study obtained conclusion that is: the symbolism of colour in the description of man and objects-phenomena of the surrounding reality has both similarities and differences in different linguistic cultures, and this is due to the moral-religious, ethnospecific, social-historical background of peoples and native speakers. Each of the languages studied has a unique meaning, symbolism and specificity of use. This specificity is especially evident in the description of a person, his age, appearance, social status, professional employment, personal characteristics and psychological conditions. The colours most vividly and expressively create vivid and unique images, sometimes metaphorical and hyperbolic in the description of anthropocentric characteristics.

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