
Phraseological Units with Colour Designation Component as a Means of Reflecting the Self-Consciousness of the English People

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Issue Details

Issue Title: Issue 1

Received: 15 January, 2021

Accepted: 08 February, 2021

Published: 31 March, 2021

Pages: 719 - 731

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Linguistica Antverpiensia

Abstract

This article examines phraseological units with a color designation component as a means of reflecting the self-awareness and attitude of the English people. The research presents an analysis of “colour” phraseological expressions taken from the works of famous English writers, as well as from authoritative dictionaries and reference books, also the article is devoted to the study of phraseological units containing in their semantics the element of color designation in English language, their functions in the implementation of the relationship between the national linguistic consciousness and spiritual and national culture. The reader will not only discover new phraseological phrases for himself, but also learn the symbolic meanings of flowers and some features of the English people. Based analysis of the estimated values of phraseological units with colour components, it is concluded that there are different attitude towards colors in the axiological picture of the world of the speakers of the studied language.

Keywords

phraseological unit, concept, color perception, symbolism, attitude, English people, nation, self-consciousness.

I. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this topic is due to the fact that the study of phraseological units is a necessary link in the process of mastering a foreign language, since their use eliminates the need to use additional words, makes speech brighter and more imaginative, helps to understand the national culture of the country of the target language. Different colors have different effects on the human soul - inspire or oppress, give rise to a feeling of warmth or coolness. Color symbolism has a long history [2]. People attached special importance to reading the “language of colors” from time immemorial, which was reflected in ancient myths, folk legends, and fairy tales. The meanings of colors in English languages have similarities, and these facilitates their understanding [1].

Anyone who learns English as a foreign language wants to learn how to speak like a true native speaker. A lot of people who study English feel the same way - as do English-speaking students who are trying to learn a foreign language. When listening speech in native English language , it may be noticed that it is colored with all the colors of the rainbow. The secret of natural English is to understand and use common figurative expressions. One type of figurative language is phraseological units that give great contributions to vocabulary and cultural knowledge. Their meaning is not literal, but figurative, and it does not consist of the sum of the meanings of the words included in the phraseological units [4].

Phraseology – (from the Greek “phrasis” and “logos”) is a science that studies stable combinations of words – phraseological units. The term “phraseology” was introduced by Swiss scientist Sh. Bally, where he understood this science as that which is studying connected combinations. Despite the fact that different authors name these units differently, each definition emphasizes the essence of phraseologism – their semantic unity, stability of meaning. Stability, as a rule, is characterized by the reproduction of the existing combination in the finished form. A. Kunin identifies five types of resistance of phraseological units: sustainability, structural-semantic stability, semantic stability, lexical and syntactic stability [9]. Phraseological units are word-groups that cannot be made in the process of speech, they exist in the language as ready-made units. They are compiled in special dictionaries. Like words, phraseological units express a single notion and are used in a sentence as one part of it. American and British lexicographers call such units idioms. Phraseological units can be classified according to the ways they are formed, according to the degree of motivation of their meaning, according to their structure and according to their part-of-speech meaning [10].

The aim of the article is to investigate the phraseological units with colour semantics in the basically unique English language and to show the plausibility of the utilization of phraseological units with shading semantics in discourse of this language. The examination of English language can assist with wiping out false impressions and encourage getting and utilizing information on the unknown dialect. Looking at different semantic marvels, we uncover a few basic highlights joining phonetic societies, we notice a few explicit attributes for describing of given semantic individual, all together of acquire a more profound comprehension of the public culture. "The lexical-semantic group in linguistics is defined as a set of words of one part of speech, united by a common sema at the level of lexical meaning" [8]. One of such groups is the lexical-semantic group of adjectives with the semantics of color.

These factors can explain the choice of the research topic. Colour carries important information separately from language, but, being a part of language units, including stable ones, this component is endowed with more important significance and acquires a certain symbolism. This research aims at studying English phraseological units containing the colour designation component from the perspective of semantic analysis, determining their place in the phraseological fund as a whole. In the course of this paper, the following tasks are set:

- to explore the theoretical basis of phraseology;
- to identify the features of phraseological units containing in their composition colour designation components and to perform semantic analysis of them.

Recently, social, political and economic upheavals have led to the migration of people, their resettlement, which led to a clash of cultures. The whole world is divided into its own, united by language and culture, and strangers who do not know another language and another culture. English has become the main international means of communication; it is used by millions of people. Despite the large number of works devoted to this problem, it remains in the spotlight for many reasons. Therefore, the relevance of the research is determined by the cultural value and prevalence of idiomatic expressions in modern English language.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Russian and foreign researchers in the field of linguistics (Baudouin de Courtenay, Grunina E.A., Zakiryanov K.Z., Kubryakova E. S., Maslova V.A., Yung I.A., German N. F., Marvin D. E., George B. Bryan) wrote that there are universal concepts through which mutual understanding between people is achieved [7,10, 12].

It should be noted that the topic of the use of color in language was previously raised in the works of such scientists as V.V.Krasniy (Ethnopsycholinguistics and linguoculturology, 2001), Alimpieva R.V. (Color images as a means of expressing anthropocentricity in literary texts by Adam Mitskevich and their translations, 2005), Vasilevich A.P. (Etymology of color names as a mirror of national-cultural consciousness, 2007), Vendina T.I. (Semantic-symbolic paradigm of color in the context of word formation, 2000) and Frumkina R.M. (Color, meaning, similarity, 1984). However, despite such a variety of works, this problem remains relevant for study, since many of its aspects have not yet been disclosed [6,8,10,11].

A lot of consideration is paid to the investigation of the etymological part of the issue of colour assignment underway of researchers from various nations and dialects. Featuring colour assignment as an exceptional etymological applied classification, colour assignment is considered on the material of various dialects in the psychological and sociocultural perspectives (E. Sapir and B. Wharf, Berlin V and Kay R. (1949), Kay R., Berlin B., Maffi L., Merrifield W. (2003), Saunders B., Van Brakel (1997), Bernstein (1973), Brown (1976), Collier (1976), Hickerson (1971), Durbin (1972), Conklin (1973), Bakhilina N. B., Kulpina V. G., Matveev B. I., Pemyakin F.N.) [12,15].

III. METHODOLOGY

The following investigation methods were carried out in the research :

- the primary examination strategy is a descriptive method;
- a continuous sampling was utilized in choosing information of phraseological units with colour component
 - a method for part investigation, the quintessence of which is to decipher the qualities of the units under examination through a bunch of semantic parts innate in them;
 - a method for etymological portrayal, including the understanding of the attributes of the considered language units;
 - a method for the field approach, permitting to recognize both focal, or atomic, fringe segments in the design of manner with a tone assignment segment; just as examination by recognizing topical classes, the appropriation of phraseological units into phraseological semantic subgroups on the premise of their relationship with singular lexemes, states of colour portrayals in lexicographic sources;
 - a theoretical examination strategy pointed toward investigating the substance of the idea of “colour designation” in English language.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the English language, there are over 15 thousand phraseological units and for them there are special dictionaries, where phraseological units are classified by topics. One of the topics - phraseological units with color designation components - is the subject of this work. We analyzed 208 phraseological units with a pronounced color coding component. This group includes lexemes that contain the following concepts: *black, blue, red, white, brown, green, gray, pink, purple, yellow*.

Consider the frequency of use of these phraseological units in English works of three completely different genres: in the novel “The Teacher” (1857) by Charlotte Brontë, in the detective “The Sign of Four” (1890) by Arthur Conan Doyle and in the comedy “Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)” (1889) by Jerome Klapka Jerome. We chose the listed works, since all works were created in the same period - during the transition from the romantic literary direction to the realistic (XIX century). All three works are classical and programmatic for learning English. The most important criterion for the selection of works is their assignment to different genres, which helped us make the most accurate conclusion about the frequency of the use of “colored” expressions in English literature.

Black. In the work of Arthur Conan Doyle “The Sign of Four”, there are nine phraseological units with the concept of “black”. In the novel “Teacher” the colour “black” phraseological units appear five times. In the comedy “Three in a boat, not counting a dog” there are only two phraseological units with the designation in colour “black”. Black symbolizes evil, grief and misery. Among phraseological units with an element of color black, the group that denotes negative emotional states of a person prevails. For example, in the detective story “The Sign of Four” we meet such phraseological units as: “fits of the blackest depression”, “as black as thunder”, in the comedy “Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)”: “was black in the face”. “Black” phraseological units describe the appearance of people, objects, for example, in the novel “Teacher”: “raven-black hair”, “flash in his black eye”, or in the comedy “Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)”: “the black gentleman”.

Red. As for the color “red”, its interpretations are also varied. In the detective story “Sign of Four”, the concept “red” appears four times, in the comedy “Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)” three times, and in the novel “The Teacher” there are two “red” expressions. These phraseological units designate feelings and emotions, for example,

in the detective story “The Sign of Four”: “roars himself red in the face”, “it was a red light”; “Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)”: “he laughed until his ears were quite red” or the appearance of a person, as in the novel “The Teacher”: “her hair was red - quite red”.

White. The third place in terms of the total number of colored phraseological units is occupied by white. In Conan Doyle’s detective story, there are seven phraseological units with a “white” component. There are two “white” expressions in Charlotte Brontë’s work. In Jerome K. Jerome’s comedy, there were no phraseological units with a “white” component. White color symbolizes not only purity and innocence, but also negative character traits, as in the detective “The Sign of Four”: “white feather in the side”. White is also used in the meaning of “pale”: “her face grew white to the lips”, “she turned so white that I feared she was about to faint”, “Morstan had turned deadly white” (“Sign of four”). As you can see from the examples, “white” phraseological units can describe appearance or character: “The sign of four” – “a heap of white hair”, “Teacher” – “I am no Oriental; white necks, carmine lips”, “that made a perfect white demon of her”.

Grey. The grey color is neutral. In “The Sign of the Four”, we find three “grey” examples. In the novel “The Teacher” - two. But in the comedy “Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)” phraseological unit with the component “grey” are absent. More often, “grey” phraseological units denote old age, grey hair: - “overhung by long grey side-whiskers”, “curly hair was thickly shot with grey” (The sign of four), “the hair grown grey”, “her grey hair strangely disheveled” (Teacher).

Blue. Blue has symbolic meanings similar to black. It was considered mourning in ancient Egypt and South Africa. In English, blue is most often associated with longing: “softened by a mild melancholy blue eye”, “I saw it all blue” (Teacher). This color also symbolizes constancy and nobility. In the work of Jerome K. Jerome “blue” phraseological unit is used once: “the old blue” that we hang about our walls were common every day”. In the detective story “The Sign of Four”, expressions with the concept blue are not found.

Green, brown. “Green” and “brown” expressions shared the sixth place in terms of frequency of use in the composition of colored phraseological units. In ancient times, brown was given a negative meaning. It is considered a symbol of despondency and depression. Most often, this concept is used in phraseological units describing the appearance of people or objects, such as in the work of Jerome K. Jerome: “to light a bit of brown paper”, or in describing a gloomy and

dirty environment: “rain-falling drops on its brown and sluggish waters” or “brown, heavy clouds were drifting across the sky”. Green is associated with nature, freshness: “Three in a boat” – “George suggested meat, tomatoes and green stuff”. We find two “green” phraseological units in the work of Charlotte Brontë: “get a glimpse of the green region”, “a lane as green as the lawn”.

Yellow. Yellow means modesty, cowardice, an example of which we see in the novel “The Teacher”: “Madame Pelet was meagre and yellow”, and also describes objects and phenomena: “The sign of four” – “make after that launch with the yellow light”.

Purple and pink. Purple is the color of royalty and supreme beauty. Just one phraseological unit with the concept of purple appears in the work of Charlotte Brontë: “I saw the purple light of love”. Pink was not met in the works of pink. This color symbolizes tenderness and lightness. Pink is present in a few English phraseological expressions, denoting a positive emotional state: (*be in the pink, to be tickled pink*) or speaking in the meaning of “*the top of perfection*”: (*the pink of perfection*).

Thus, each color has a specific symbolism. As can be seen from our research, phraseological units are a kind of mirror reflecting the distinctive features and characteristics of a particular nation. We analyzed all the “color” expressions in English dictionaries and reference books and we can say that the color phraseology of the English language is characterized by the predominance of the lexeme black (53), the concept blue is the second most frequently used (42). Red is presented in 26 units [5]. Colors such as white, green represent the average level of usage in English phraseology (about 20 each). Less vividly represented are phraseological units with components yellow, gray and brown (about 10 each), this suggests that they are not basic in human perception of the surrounding world.

It can be seen that the predominant components are black and blue. Black is traditionally seen as a symbol of evil, misfortune, witchcraft, lack of luck and purity. Blue is the color of calm, but in most of its meanings, it is associated with longing and sadness. Perhaps this prevalence of dark colors depends on the fact that the bad person remembers better than the good [7].

Speaking about phraseological units, one cannot fail to mention their classifications. There are several classifications of phraseological units in English, such as the classification of A.V. Kunin, A.I. Smirnitsky, V.V. Vinogradov [10,15]. Based on the consideration of the meanings of phraseological units, we have compiled a thematic classification of phraseological units with a color designation component [7]:

1. Phraseological units associated with various spheres of human life (38%). Such phraseological units describe the psychological state of a person, his mood, emotions, for example: *be in the pink, black-affronted, be green with envy*; characterize the appearance of a person, for example: *be red as a beetroot, black as a raven*; denote a group of people, for example: *men in blue or character traits: white feather, yellow-livered*.

2. Phraseological units call actions, deeds (14%): *to paint town red, to sing the black psalm*;

3. Phraseological units call an abstract concept (12%). For example: *a white lie, red alert*;

4. Phraseological units denote a sign by action (7.3%). For example: *till all is blue, yellow-bellied*;

5. Phraseological units name dishes and food (5.7%): *brown sugar, blue plate*;

6. Phraseological units design a place (5%). For example: *a green-belt area, a black hole, white Africa, blue earth*;

7. Phraseological units denote an intense color feature of an object (4.8%): *as red as a cherry, white as the driven snow, as black as night*;

8. Phraseological units associated with time (4%). For example: *the blackest day of the life, a red letter day*;

9. Phraseological units denote concepts related to profit (3%). For example: *green stuff, black money, gray market*;

10. Phraseological units name a specific subject (2.2%): *a black flag, a green glass, a white elephant, black diamond*;

11. Other (4%). For example: *white magic, a blue, a purple heart, black Maria*.

Colours are available wherever in our world. By the utilization of our eyes we can recognize an incredible scope of colours. They have a significant impact in our life. Wherever we look we see tones and frequently we ask one another “What is your favourite colour” and so forth colours don’t just name actual items; we give them an importance and a specific implication which is distinctive in various societies. The word is excellent in light of the fact that it is brilliant and that is the reason we say “a daily existence loaded with colors”. According to the analysis of colour components in the communication, everyday life speech of English people, Anders Steinval has directed a fascinating exploration on tones and feelings in the English language. By utilizing the corpus bank of English he found 50 colour phrases and 153 expressions which express feeling. He contemplated “which colour classes are obvious and clear according to passionate perspective and the

other way around”. According to SteINVAL “english speaking people have a preference system on which they relate colors and emotions” [6]

Colours	Love	Happiness	Surprise	Anger	Sadness	Fear	Total
Black	0.65	0.65	0.00	16.13	75.48	7.10	100
White	2.53	18.99	0.00	39.24	5.06	34.18	100
Red	7.23	12.72	0.00	55.49	19.94	4.62	100
Yellow	3.70	81.48	0.00	3.70	7.41	3.70	100
Green	0.50	5.97	0.00	88.06	5.47	0.00	100
Blue	0.00	54.90	0.00	3.92	37.25	3.92	100
Brown	0.00	7.14	0.00	50.00	42.86	0.00	100
Grey	0.00	1.00	0.00	4.00	75.00	20.00	100
Pink	30.43	43.49	0.00	11.59	8.70	5.80	100
Orange	8.70	73.91	0.00	13.04	4.35	0.00	100
Purple	12.96	5.56	0.00	57.41	18.52	5.56	100

1. **Black.** The expressions with black are identified with misery, according to SteINVAL explanation black is the color of death and mourning in the English culture. According to the Oxford Learner’s Dictionary of English idioms – “*a black day (for sb)*” means “*a day when sth sad, unpleasant, disastrous happens to someone*” [3]. Apart from this, the “black” color shows to break the law and illegibility *e.g. black market, black economy, and blackmail*. Illegible things bring these phraseological units like: *blackball, a blackleg, and the black sheep of the family*. This color prescribes the human feelings like: *be in a black humor/mood, paint*.

2. **White.** This colour tone embodies immaculateness, excellence, honest goals, euphoria, magnificence. In English there are phraseological units “*to be whiter than white*”, “*Lily-white reputation*”, “*White hands*”, “*White lie*”, “*A white wedding*”, “*To mark with a white stone*”, “*White-collars*”[3].

3. **Red.** The colour of red tone represents love, enthusiasm, commitment. It additionally represents fire, defiance, political agitation, battle, transformation, blood, opportunity, freedom. In the UK, red is an image of statehood, which is reflected by phraseological units: “The red, white and blue” which implies shades of the British banner, signifying the British armada and armed force; “Red book” – the name of the lineage book or a few official registries, “A special red occasion” – occasion, a noteworthy day.

4. **Grey.** Aside from the phraseological unit grey matter, where the colour grey is utilized in view of the neurons tone in the mind, the phraseological units with this colour propose circumstances which are by one way or another melancholy, dim, and corrupt. It alludes to a circumstance where the standards are not satisfactory and it is troublesome or difficult to say what is correct or grey distinction is utilized to portray a figure that stays behind the stage and undetectable yet has the force and impacts in the choices; it could likewise mean – an individual who contrives.

5. **Yellow.** This colour is a shading that effectively stands out and is viewed as a positive tone, the shade of the sun and the blossoms. Anyway it very well may be somewhat overwhelming and disturbing. A weakness – implies weakness; being apprehensive. Another significant field identified with the yellow shading are feelings like desire, jealousy, and scorn. The saying sensationalist reporting is the term utilized for the hair-raising articles also, title texts in the papers.

6. **Blue.** It is a colour which addresses the sky, air, cold and the profound passionate distance. It very well may be related with the affliction from the cold or from the absence of air like operating at a profit beat up. The phraseological units suddenly, out of the reasonable blue sky, a jolt out of nowhere, all them three mean startlingly something which happens abruptly and their inspiration is clear.

7. **Pink.** This color is more related to the female gender as it is one of their favorite colors.

- Tickle someone pink- Entertain someone very much;
- A pink slip- A letter that tells you, you are fired;
- Pink collar jobs - Jobs popular among women (fashion designer, fashion blogger, model, nurse, cleaner etc.);

- See pink elephants- see things that are not really there, because you are drunk;

- Have a pink/blue fit (informal) –be very angry. [3]

8. **Brown** says stability, reliability, and approachability. It is the color of our earth and is associated with all things natural or organic. However the meaning in the following phraseological units is not as such.

- Brown out - partial loss of electricity;

- Brown nose - slightly vulgar, refers to flattering someone in a position of power in order to obtain favors;

- In a brown study - seriously contemplating something;

- Browned off –when someone is very tired and fed up;

- Brown as a berry- for someone who is sun tanned [5].

As we can notice there are colors as pink, brown, orange, purple based on this classification, it can be concluded that more than half of the phraseological units with the name of the color refer to a person, reflecting many aspects of his life.

V. CONCLUSION

The notion of colour reflect both evenhanded, inalienable colouring qualities and connections, and the information on colour which is abstract and frequently relies on the idiosyncrasies of a country. The thought of colour contains a complex of significant data, is aggregated by the language conveyors. In their awareness there exist a scope of essential prototypical referents utilized while naming tones. Every language has its own models as every country bears curious generalizations.

Subsequently ought to be coordinated in the educating and the learning cycle of an unknown dialect. In fiction, colour does no more capacity as a simple target reality, yet as an imaginative classification. As such it gets symbolical as it serves to in a roundabout way mean a specific wonder, as it turns into a rich wellspring of affiliations. The serious issue in replicating the significance of shading terms is the need to deliver, the extent that it is conceivable, a mix of visual denotative semes, filling in as reason for affiliations, and the demonstrative implications.

The analysis of phraseological units in the composition of literary works and in the corpus of dictionaries allows us to conclude that the most common are “dark” phraseological units, and phraseological units of “light” tones have a predominantly negative meaning. The predominant color of the picture of the world of the English people is black. It should be noted the national traits of the British, for whom self-control is the main advantage of the human character. From birth, English children are

taught not to show their true feelings and suppress any intemperance, so as not to accidentally offend someone. These people are stingy with emotions and believe that a person should remain calm, if not internally, then at least externally. It can be noted that the weather in England also rarely pleases its citizens with a bright sun - very often the sky over the country is cloudy, it rains. All this is reflected in colors on the life of the British: on the restrained colors of clothing, on predominantly gray buildings, on speech.

So, the phraseological unit (phraseological unit) is an unmodeled phrase associated with semantic unity. In speech, such a unity is not created, but is reproduced in a finished form (not modeled) and functions as a single member of a sentence. Thus, units of the phraseological foundation are a special, specific layer of vocabulary with a diverse structure, performing different functions in speech and endowed with special semantic cohesion. The semantics of phraseological units is very closely related to the context and, as a rule, are endowed with an expressive component of meaning. Phraseological units form an open flexible system, with the possibility of moving combinations closer to or further from the core, up to the exit from the phraseological fund.

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