

ANALYZING THE MEANING OF WHITE COLOUR ELEMENT IN TURKISH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

This study investigates phraseological units containing colour components within the framework of modern Turkish. It focuses on the semantic properties of colour lexemes and classifies phraseological expressions based on their underlying meanings. Special emphasis is placed on the most frequently occurring units involving the colours white. Through a semantic analysis, the research reveals patterns in how this colour terms contribute to figurative meaning in Turkish phraseology, offering insight into the cognitive and cultural dimensions embedded in language use.

Keywords: phraseology, colour, semantics, Turkish language, figurative meaning

Phraseological units are a unique phenomenon of every language of the world, as they contain information about the extra-linguistic reality, which makes it possible to reflect the material and spiritual life of a particular people quite accurately and figuratively, to convey its spirit and culture. The phraseological dictionary of the Ukrainian language gives the following definition: 'Phraseological units are semantically coherent and structurally closed minimal syntactic units with a nominative function in the communicative system of the language, the semantic structure of which is not motivated by the lexical meanings of their permanent components' [6, p. 3]. Thus, phraseological units form a specific system of units in each language.

In linguistics, there are different approaches to defining the boundaries of phraseology. The views of the representatives of a broad understanding of the object of phraseology are that this section should include proverbs, sayings, catchphrases, aphorisms, quotations, maxims, paradoxes, etc.

Phraseological units with a colour component take a significant place in the modern Turkish language. Colour is a vital component, as it is largely included in the cultural traditions of the people and is biologically linked to the psycho-genetic code of each person [2, p. 117]. Each of the colours carries a certain information load. Therefore, it can be stated that phraseological units with a colour component make it possible to understand the specificity of the worldview and world perception of a particular people. The study of colour names takes a leading place in linguistics, since colouratives represent a significant layer of the language's lexical vocabulary and are actively used. In the modern Turkish language, there are a large number of phraseological units with a colour component, and they require additional study. The semantic analysis of phraseological units with a colour component through the cultural and ethnic perspective determines the relevance of the article.

In Turkish, there are two names for some colours. This is primarily due to historical reasons. For example, two lexemes are used in Turkish to refer to the colour white: *beyaz* (derived from the Arabic noun *bayād* - whiteness, its use as an adjective

is typical for the Turkish language) - *ak* (a lexeme of Turkic origin) [5, p. 106]. In our study, we will analyse phraseological units with such components as *ak*, *beyaz*, which are most frequently found in the phraseological units of modern Turkish.

The overwhelming majority of phraseological units with colour is used in a reinterpreted meaning. It is as a result of rethinking the meanings of colours that such idioms and phraseological units arise, in the structure of which colour already has the meaning of a symbol, often with national and cultural specificity [3, p. 170]. That is, we can talk about the figurativeness and metaphorical nature of the colour component.

Therefore, we can classify phrases with the component *ak*, *beyaz* according to the following semantic meanings:

1) **honour, dignity.** In phraseological units that characterise a person, white helps to give a positive assessment from a moral and ethical point of view. Before the adoption of Islam, there were Turkish shamans who identified white with greatness, justice, strength, and considered it a source of good. The shamans' headdress, the cap, was made of the white skin of a young lamb, so white became a symbol of sinlessness and high rank [6, p. 190]. It is interesting that Turkish people compare a person's conscience to a white face, and not to any other part of the body, since, for example, in Ukrainian, 'білолиций' means 'beautiful'. In this case, the colour white is used metaphorically:

yüz akı ile çıkmak (lit. to go out with a white face) 'to hold one's head high', i.e. to have a good reputation;

alnının akı ile (lit. with a white forehead) 'to keep up the good name', 'to keep up the style';

alını ak, yüzü pak (lit. his forehead is white, his face is clean) 'to have a bright eye', 'to be as good as glass', 'to be as pure as glass', i.e. a conscientious, honest person;

iki cihanda yüzü ak olmak (lit. to be white-faced in both worlds) 'innocent, like Adam and Eve in paradise';

beyaza çıkmak (lit. to go white) 'to make excuses';

beyaza çikarmak (lit. to whitewash) 'to keep someone's reputation', i.e. to justify someone.

2) **purity, beauty.** Mother's milk as the primary product for feeding a child, as for all cultures of the world, is an important component of everyday life for the Turkish people. Therefore, phrases with the colour white can have a connotation of good meaning.

Anamın ak sütü gibi helal olsun 'May it be as good as mother's milk'.

In addition, the word white in Turkish has a connotative meaning of purity and innocence:

ak pak (lit. white and clean) 'like a new penny';

akça pakça (literally, white, clean) 'as neat as a whistle'.

Like most peoples of the world, the Turkish people associate white with weddings. According to ancient traditions, girls wore red headscarves before marriage, and on the wedding day they had the right to wear a white headscarf and a white dress. Turks perceive a young bride in a white dress as a symbol of purity and beauty. Therefore, the lexeme white has a connotative meaning of beauty:

ak topuk beyaz gerdan (lit. white heel, white neck, i.e. beautiful woman) ‘drink the water off the face of the earth;

akı ak karası kara (lit. both white and black) ‘with a white body, black hair and dark eyes’, i.e. beautiful.

Beyazın adı var, esmerin tadı var ‘Blondes have fame, brunettes have charm’.

2) **the meaning of novelty.** In some phraseological units, white has a connotation of novelty. Here it most strongly manifests the semantic meaning of the original source, the beginning, and is used figuratively:

beyaz sayfa açmak (lit. to open a white page) ‘to start from scratch’;

beyaz etmek ‘to rewrite completely’.

3) **old age, mature age.** Turkic peoples, like most peoples, associate white with old age. A white beard is considered a symbol of knowledge, great life experience and respect for a person. In these phraseologies, the lexeme white is used in a reinterpreted way, as it indicates grey hair as an indicator of mature age:

ak düşmek (lit. to start turning grey) ‘to dip in milk’;

ak saçlı (lit. with white hair) ‘grey as a dove’;

ak sakaldan yok sakala gelmek (lit. to live to the age when there is no grey beard left) ‘to get out of one's years’, ‘to get into one's years’, ‘to leave the fair’;

sakakları beyazlanmak (lit. ‘temples turn grey’) ‘to grow mossy’.

4) **negative meaning.** Despite the fact that the colour white is associated only with positive connotations, there are some phraseological units that have a negative meaning. In the process of studying the decrease in the semantic tendency of the colour white in phraseological units, we must be guided by knowledge of the history and traditions of the Turkish people in order to adequately understand the content of the figurative meaning. For example, Turks believe that a person with bright eyes can jinx anyone at first sight. Therefore, there is a prejudice against light eyes that has been ingrained in the subconscious of the people:

ak gözlü (literally, with white eyes) ‘bad in the eye’.

Further, we see that the ‘white sheep’ refers to a good and hardworking person, and the ‘black lamb’ to a person with negative traits. Here, the black colour negatively affects the semantics of the white colour.

Ak koyunun kara kuzusu da olur (literally, a white sheep can have a black lamb) ‘Many a good cow has a bad calf.’.

Ak koyun kara koyun geçit başında belli olur (lit. both black and white sheep are recognised at the crossing) ‘A friend in need is a friend indeed’.

Sometimes white symbolises emptiness, incorporeality, and death:

ak sadeler giyinmek (literally, to put on a modest, white garment) ‘to be on God's bed’, i.e. to die;

kağıt gibi bembeyaz olmak (literally, to become white as paper) - ‘to turn white as death’.

Even during the Ottoman Empire, military commanders and soldiers wore white uniforms to war, which was considered a symbol of noble origin, but used the red flag as a symbol of fire, patronage, brilliance, victory, splendour [6, p. 192], so in this case, Turks associate the white flag with defeat, as it does not carry the image of belligerence:

beyaz bayrak çekmek (literally, to pull out the white flag) ‘to surrender’.

Having studied the stable expressions with colour as a component, we can conclude that the basic colours are quite imaginatively and vividly represented in the Turkish language. White, black and red are the most frequently used colours in Turkish phraseological units: these lexemes are characterised by imagery and expression. As the study has shown, each colour has national-specific features that are unique to a particular language. Accordingly, in order to better understand the national picture of the Turkish world, which is conveyed in phraseological units, we need to have background knowledge. It should be noted that when translating phraseological units with colourful images, it is necessary to preserve their figurative basis in order to find the closest possible Ukrainian equivalent.

Overall, Turkish phraseology is a promising area for further research, and phraseological units with a colour component require a deeper and more detailed analysis, as they can help us learn more about the mentality of the Turkish people and their history. It is semantic analysis that makes it possible to systematise knowledge about the symbolism of Turkish colours. In future research, we can consider phraseological units with the rest of the colour components present in the Turkish colour scheme. Comparative and comparative studies, problems of translation of this category of phraseological units are necessary and promising. In addition to semantics, it is possible to study the motivation for the use of colours in phraseological units by using fiction.

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