

## COLOR DESIGNATIONS IN THE CHINESE AND CHUVASH LANGUAGES AS A REFLECTION OF THE LINGUISTIC WORLD-IMAGE OF PEOPLES

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the features of the use of lexemes-color designations in the Chuvash and Chinese languages on the material of phraseological and paremiological expressions. The problem is considered to be urgent because of the fact that it helps to determine the specifics of the world-image of peoples, which has been developing over many centuries, as well as to identify the values of the Chuvash and Chinese cultures, their similarities and distinctive features. It was revealed that the perception of color in each nation has certain specific features. The analysis of units showed that in the Chuvash and Chinese languages white, black, red, blue, yellow, green colors are most associated with feelings and emotions and form a kind of core of the color picture of linguistic culture. It was revealed that the differences in the linguocultural connotation of lexemes-color designations among the Chuvashes and the Chinese are determined by such factors as the geographical environment, myths, customs, and religious beliefs.

**Keywords:** linguoculturology, color designation, Chinese language, Chuvash language, world-image of peoples

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistics, the study of words denoting colors in the linguoculturological aspect is of special interest, due to the fact that this layer of vocabulary reflects national and cultural specifics and is a capacious component for constructing a national world-image.

The subject of study in this article is the lexical group of color designations in the Chinese and Chuvash languages. The material is paremiological and phraseological units containing color words.

The novelty of the study is determined by the fact that color designations in the Chinese and Chuvash languages in the comparative aspect have not become the subject of special research by linguists, although, in our opinion, their study helps to understand better the national worldview of the people.

The relevance of the research is determined by the fact that the linguistic analysis of the semantic content of Chinese and Chuvash words-color designations allows, firstly, to determine the connotation of color designations in the studied languages in the linguistic and cultural aspect; secondly, to reveal the values of the Chuvash and Chinese cultures, their similarities and distinctive features.

The aim of the research is to analyze the lexical group of color designations in the Chinese and Chuvash

languages and to reveal the peculiarities of the linguistic world-image of these peoples and their specific world perception, projected onto the color spectrum.

Tasks of the research:

- 1) Comprehensively study paremiological and phraseological units containing color words, taking into account linguistic and cultural data;
- 2) To determine the specifics of the linguistic world-image of Chuvash people and the Chinese, which is reflected in the lexemes-color designations.

## 2 RESULTS

Color designations have always played an important role in human life, as well as in the world-image of the people as a whole. They are closely related to the national and historical characteristics of the people, their traditions, perception of the surrounding reality, geographic location, etc. Researches of scientists show that in folk culture, color is one of the elements with the help of which a model of the world is created, in which it acquires symbolic characteristics (Shesterkina, 2011, p. 62).

The most vividly specific features of color designations and symbolism of colors are reflected in phraseological and paremiological units.

The phraseological and paremiological units of the Chuvash and Chinese languages most often contain such colors as white, black, red, blue, yellow, green, which, as a rule, are associated with feelings and emotions and form a kind of core of the color picture of linguoculture, and they contain information about the life of the people, its realities, reflecting in full its linguistic picture and worldview (Petrova, Nikitina, 2017, p. 308).

### 2.1 White Color in the Chuvash and Chinese Pictures of the World

Analysis of the material showed that in the Chinese and Chuvash cultures, white has a dual connotation: both positive and negative. In many phraseological units and paremias of the Chuvash language, it often symbolizes purity: *Ир тăракан кайăкăн сăмси шурă* 'an early bird has a clean beak; about hard working person' (literally: an early bird has a white nose); in a set combination *шурă пурт* (literally: white house) white is used in the meaning of light and beauty.

With a negative connotation, the white color in the Chuvash language is found in the following phraseological units: *шур вăкăр юмахĕ* 'to talk about wrong facts; babble' (literally: tales of a white bull), *шурă кайăк* 'lazy man' (literally: white bird), *шур кучпа нăх* 'look with dislike' (literally: look with white eyes), etc.

In Chinese culture, white is most often used with a negative assessment, which is due to the fact that it embodied such philosophical concepts as old age, death, withering as the end of the cycle and going beyond the world. Therefore, white is a symbol of mourning and emptiness. So, the expression 素车白马 *sùchēbáimǎ* (white chariots and white horses) means a funeral cart, on which a deceased person is taken from home to a cemetery. In the phraseological units 以白为黑 *yǐbáiwéihēi* и 颠倒黑白 *diāndǎohēibái* (call black white, distort or pervert the truth), white also has a negative connotation.

There are few phraseological expressions with a positive connotation of white color in Chinese: 白璧无瑕 *báibìwúxiá* 'not a speck on white jasper' in the meaning of 'perfection, absence of flaws, crystal purity and purity'; 白衣天使 *báiyī tiānshǐ* 'doctors, nurses' (literally: angels in white clothes); the expression 白鱼入舟 *báiyú rù zhōu* (literally: a white fish swims to the boat) is used to mean an omen of a good event that will soon happen to a person, and so on.

### 2.2 Black color in the Chuvash and Chinese Linguocultures

The analysis of the linguistic material showed that in the Chuvash linguoculture the symbolism of black color has mostly negative connotations, while in the Chinese it has both negative and positive meanings.

Black is one of the most widely used color in Chuvash phraseological units and paremias. It is used mostly in the following cases:

- 1) For a negative assessment of the qualities of a person: *хура чикан* (literally: black Gypsy) 'dirty, stupid person'; *хура çăхан* (literally: black crow) 'stupid'; *хура чун* (literally: black soul) 'evil, a person with evil intentions'; *хура юн* (literally: black blood) 'a man with evil thoughts'; *хура шухăш* (literally: black thought) 'evil thoughts', etc.;
- 2) For a negative assessment of a person's actions: *хура сăрпа сăрпа* (literally: paint black) 'slander a

person'; *хура чир илттер* (literally: let one's take away the black disease) 'wish death or something bad'; *хура пӑнчӑ шыра* (literally: to look for a black spot) 'to look for flaws in a person', etc.;

3) for a negative assessment of the phenomena: *хура пӑлӑм пек* (literally: like a black cloud) 'too much'; *чӑрне хури чухлӑ* (literally: like dirt under the nails) 'very little' etc.

In the Chinese picture of the world, black in most phraseological expressions has a negative connotation both literally and figuratively: 黑 (black) is an indicator of night and darkness: 黑更半夜 'late at night' (literally: blackness replaces midnight); 一团漆黑 'impenetrable darkness' (literally: completely black and black); 黑心肠 *hēi xīn cháng* 'black heart' (about a greedy, selfish person). In a figurative sense, the lexeme 黑 can symbolize danger: 月黑风高 – a dangerous situation (literally: black moon and strong wind). In the Chinese language, in phraseological units, the opposition of black and white is often found: 知白守黑 – to Distinguish true from false, but remain indifferent (literally: know white, but keep black), 白黑不分 – do not distinguish truth from false (literally: do not distinguish white from black).

### 2.3 Symbols of Red Color

Red color in Chinese culture has a wide associative range, symbolizes luck, wealth, warmth, fame, strength, it is the color of life, joy and love, imperial power. This fact is reflected in phraseological units, the range of values of which is very wide:

1) A description of the person's appearance: 红男绿女 (literally: a red guy and a green girl) 'smartly dressed boys and girls'; 唇红齿白 (literally: lips are red and teeth are white) means attractive appearance;

2) Characteristics of life phenomena: 红白相间 – happiness and unhappiness replace each other (literally: red and white alternate); 红白喜事 – wedding and funeral (literally: red and white, big events); 开门红 (literally: open the doors [and see] the red color) – to make a successful start, to give positive results from the very beginning;

3) a description of the emotional state: 脸红耳赤 – to be filled with paint (from shame, embarrassment) (literally: the face is red, the ears are red); 脸红筋涨 – blush (from anger) (literally: face turned red, muscles swollen) (Shevchuk, 2018, p. 293); 红眼 – red eyes (get angry);

4) Characteristics of a person: 红眼 (red eyes) – about an envious person; 红脸 (red face) – about an embarrassed or angry person.

Consequently, the analysis of linguistic units shows that the red color in the Chinese linguistic culture has a positive connotation, set expressions with a negative assessment are rare.

In the Chuvash language, phraseological units with red color are not numerous, they mainly describe life phenomena and have negative semantics: *хӗрлӗ автан кӑлар* (literally: to bring out a red rooster) 'cause a fire'; *хӗрлӗ вӑкӑр сӗкет* (literally: a red bull butts) 'cause a fire'; *хӗрлӗ йӑмта ҫумер* (literally: let the red dog eat) 'ruin your happiness' etc.

### 2.4 Yellow in the Chuvash and Chinese World-Image

In the Chuvash and Chinese worldviews, yellow has a pronounced positive connotation. So, we have highlighted phraseological and paremiological expressions with a yellow color in the following meanings:

1) a description of a person's appearance: *сарӑ хӗр* (literally: a yellow girl) 'beautiful girl' (in the Chuvash language, yellow is used to denote beauty); *сарӑ кун* (literally: yellow day) 'warm day, happiness and good luck'; *сарӑ ача* (literally: yellow child) 'in the prime of life, strong';

2) a description of actions and life phenomena: *сарӑ ҫу ӑшӗнчи ӗвӗс пек* (literally: like aspen in oil) 'to live happily'; *сарӑ ҫу пек урӗл* (literally: melt like butter) 'rejoice'.

Nevertheless, yellow is also found for the negative characteristics of a person: *сарӑ мӑма* (literally: yellow lips) 'inexperienced'; *сарӑ сӑмса* (literally: yellow nose) 'inexperienced'.

Various Chinese realities, which include the lexeme 黄 (yellow), determine the dual connotation of the considered color designation in the composition of phraseological units. For example, some phraseological units are used to express something better, excellent (黄绢幼妇 (literally: a young married girl in yellow silks) – excellent, wonderful, amazing), but set expressions with a negative connotation are widely represented: 妄下雌黄 (literally: yellow paint) – say what you like; 黄色刊物 (literally: yellow press) – treason, venality.

## 2.5 Blue and Green Colors in the Chuvash and Chinese Cultures

Analysis of phraseological and paremiological units showed that blue and green colors are represented in the Chuvash and Chinese linguistic cultures, while they can be combined with both positive and negative connotations. For example, in the Chuvash language, the expression *кӑвак хуппи усӑлли* means 'fulfillment of dreams', and *кӑвак хуппи кӑмарм* means 'to beat'. Let's compare in Chinese: 平步青云 (literally: to reach blue clouds with light steps) – to make a dizzying career; 青面獠牙– evil, ferocious (literally: blue muzzle, protruding fangs). Green in Chinese linguistic culture can mean both immortality and life (青山不老 (green mountain) 'not an old mountain'), and inexperience and immaturity (绿叶成荫, 惨绿少年, 青梅竹马, 红男绿女 (green – young) 'still wet behind the ears'). In the Chuvash language, for example, the expression *сумӗс кайӑк* (literally: green bird) can mean alcohol or a drunken person.

## 3 CONCLUSIONS

Units containing lexemes-color designations acquire metaphorical and symbolic connotations, and color words are interpreted, as a rule, in certain cognitive features that carry positive or negative meanings. The analysis of linguistic units showed that in the Chinese and Chuvash languages, the differences in the linguocultural connotation of color words are determined by such factors as manners and customs, geographical environment, religious beliefs, myths.

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