

METAPHORIZATION OF THE COLOR GREEN IN ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN ONLINE DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The study reveals similarity of green color metaphors in the English and Ukrainian languages and finds psychological, cultural, religious, and political background of green color associations in online discourse. In both languages green is connected with growth, youth and freedom, based on resemblance to nature, while in Ukrainian it has additional negative characteristics of illnesses and jealousy. Moreover, in both languages green is often used as part of proper and general names to relate to ecological organization and environmental issues.

Keywords: associations, color terms, color metaphors, mapping, online discourse.

Color terms are words denoting various visual part of an optic specter and are used in online discourse for naming colors and shades which people can see with their eyes. It is not surprising that color terms are quite often used in discourse as vision is one of the basic human ability to perceive the world, thus color terms give the readers visual understanding and create image of the items which are the subject matter of the article, for instance, *green tree*, *blue sky*. However, there are numerous color metaphors both in English and Ukrainian, where color terms stand for other notions and concepts, embracing cultural, psychological and historical background of the nations.

Even though color terms are widely studied in English and Ukrainian [3, 5], no comparative analyses of color metaphors in the languages has been done. The aim of this research is to allocate green color metaphors and establish their sematic similarities and differences in English and Ukrainian.

Color metaphors are based on perceived experience of nations to associate colors with various phenomena and environmental characteristics and attribute these additional psychological, cultural, religious, etc. features to semantics of colors, in other words create metaphors [4], where the connection appears between color and idea.

In modern times, the psychological associations of colors, and thus the connotations of color vocabulary, continue to be exploited in a wide range of contexts, such as in the description of paint shades, advertising language, and techniques of self-imaging. Almost all psychological color associations are expressed metaphorically.

Speaking about Englishmen, 'green' in psychological aspect is associated, on the one hand, with positive emotions: physical healing, health (*green lung* an area of parkland within a town or city, considered in terms of the healthier environment it provides), monetary success (*greenback informal* an inconvertible legal-tender US currency note originally issued during the Civil War in 1862; *slang* a dollar bill), abundance, growth, generosity (*green belt* a zone of farmland, parks, and open country surrounding a town or city: usually officially designated as such and preserved from urban development), renewal (*green revolution* the introduction of high-yielding seeds and modern agricultural techniques in developing countries), calm

(*lime green* a moderate greenish-yellow color), responsiveness (*Greenpeace*, *deep green* a person, esp. a politician, who is in favor of taking extreme measures to tackle environmentalist issues), good luck; and on the other hand, with negative feelings: immortality (*dark green*), inexperience (*greenhorn* an inexperienced person, esp. one who is extremely gullible), vigor (*green line* a line of demarcation between two hostile communities, not faded a green old age), jealousy, envy (*green-eyed*), dependability, sickness (*greensickness*, *green around the gills informal* looking or feeling nauseated). For example, collocation *green lung* in the following extract names the last remain green area in Mumbai: *Aarey is a densely forested area dotted with lakes and has the Mithi river flowing through it. It lies at the heart of Mumbai and is often referred to as its last green lung* (BBC, 07.10.2019).

In Ukraine, 'зелений' has the psychological associations with growth, youth (*прозелень* молоді зелені паростки рослин), financial success (*капустя / зелень* долари США (з огляду на зелений колір), freedom (*зелена вулиця* про відсутність перешкод, затримок у здійсненні чого-небудь), responsibility, care (*зелений патруль* громадська група, що здійснює нагляд за рослинністю, охорону її), joy, happiness (*зелені свята* одне зі свят православної церкви), and also with diseases (*нудьга зелена*), immaturity (*зеленький* який не має достатнього життєвого досвіду; малодосвідчений).

From the cultural point of view, both in Ukrainian and English 'green'/'зелений' is the color of nature. It combines gay yellow and dignified blue. It is tranquil, refreshing, quiet, and natural. Early rituals centered on the hope of a good harvest with fresh green vegetables, the food sustaining life itself. Consequently, green is the color of agriculture/crops ('зеленити', 'озеленювати', 'прозеленити' 'green revolution', 'village green'), healing ('green wound is soon healed'), and fertility ('узеленитися', 'green belt', 'green field'). Where there are seasonal cycles, green also signifies spring, rebirth, youth and freshness. The strong universal association of green and nature accounts for its popularity in most cultures [2, p. 36].

Other cultural metaphoric associations with the green color are specific for different nations. The vehicle in the metaphoric meaning of the Ukrainian 'зелень', denoting money, is the color of the American

cash. This meaning is common only for Slavonic, but not western nations, as it has the linguistic synonym in those languages (укр. червонець). The Englishmen use the metaphoric word combination 'Green Goddess' to name an army fire engine, because of its green livery.

Political assignment of color 'green' is in most cases prevalent with parties or other legal organizations, connected with the protection of nature and wild life (e.g. Eng. *Greenpeace*, укр. партія зелених), and also as a means of social identity. We see the association of color politically in the mandatory or voluntary dress in both the historical and contemporary world: *Greenpeace is protesting against the method of decommissioning platforms in the Brent oil field which is about 116 miles (186km) north east of Shetland (BBC, 14.10.2019)*. In this example, the author mentions ecological *Greenpeace* organization which protects environment fighting against oil fields spread in Shetland.

Religious and mythical associations of green color are connected with spiritual or magical beliefs in two countries. The *green man* is the God of fertility in Celtic myths. Also, in contemporary Western culture, 'green' is associated with extraterrestrial beings (*green man* the creature one may see being under the influence of drugs or alcohol). [3, p.65] In Ukrainian culture 'зелений' is often associated with 'Зелені свята (святки)' одне зі свят православної церкви, яке відзначається на п'ятдесятій день після Великодня і супроводжується прибиранням хати всередині та зовні зеленню. This is an ancient symbol that carries over into today's life. The negative connotation of 'зелений' is also preserved. In the Ukrainian idiom 'допитися до зелених чортиків' *зелений* acquires connection with evil forces, thus expressing people's negative attitude towards alcoholism.

Linguistics provides further evidence on how cultures express color meaning. There are many examples of the use of color as metaphors, which have cultural significance, in most languages throughout the world. Metaphor is the universal cognitive mechanism based upon preconceptual and prelinguistic experience. The mapping of one concept (the source domain) onto the concept (the target domain) gives rise to innumerable words, expressions, word meanings and syntactical structures in languages in the world.

The functions of metaphors in our daily life are cognition based. Lakoff and Johnson also proposed that metaphors traditionally have been viewed as linguistic phenomenon, which had to do primarily with stylistic matters. The concepts govern not only our thoughts but also our daily functioning of the metaphors. These concepts organize what we perceive, how we get from the world, and how we relate to other people [4, p.54-62]. Marie Byrne, Assistant Professor in New York University of Technology says that 'People perceive the same colors from our daily life, but develop different color metaphors due to different cultures' [5, p.65].

English *greenhorns*, *green with envy*, *green of youth* (young, inexperienced), *greenbottle*, *green paper* (propositions to discuss something), *Green Flag* (cleanliness), *Green Beret* (force), *green tea* (calm), *bowling green* (sports, activities), *green finger* (talent), and укр. *зеленяк* (young), *зелений театр*, *зелена*

нудьга (sick) are some examples of metaphorical usage of color term 'green'/'зелений' in common speech.

However, some color metaphors lose their power as the reason for their reference fades. For example, the term "*greenwoods*" originally referred to the English forests, where robbers attacked the travelers. Today, this metaphor is used only relating to the traditional setting of stories about English outlaws, esp. Robin Hood. English '*Gretna Green (Scotch) marriage*' (denoting the marriage of people in love, who escaped from their native home to marry) is also out of use today, as this phenomenon does not exist and people are free to choose the spouse. In the Ukrainian language some metaphors also lost their value. For instance, "*зелений театр*" (літній театр серед зелені, сучасний, новий, модерний) was a common term in the 19th century, but today such theatres are out-of-date and the term is used only referring to the historical past: *Будівля зеленого кольору, у зв'язку з чим цей літній кінотеатр пізніше стали називати «зеленим театром». Зараз кінотеатр покинутий, по периметру оповитий диким виноградом (Glavcom, 06.05.2019)*.

Naturally, metaphor plays an important role not only in everyday discourse but also in reflecting or shaping how people think in a broad range of domains [6, p. 109]. That is cultural background, social and historic events and phenomena motivate semantics of precedent names, phrases and texts, which are used even today [1, p.40-45]. For example, *Greenback Party* (*history* a political party formed after the Civil War advocating the use of fiat money and opposing the reduction of paper currency) is used nowadays, to speak about financial machinations in politics. And Ukrainian '*зелена аптека/крамниця*' the common name for the drugstore, is now often used as the proper name for the range of chemists all over Ukraine.

The meaning of the color term continuer changing because different language contact, and this makes the meanings of the color term become diverse, therefore the color metaphors today can be more interesting and plentiful. At the same time, the process of globalization decreases the number of culture-specific meanings of colors.

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