

ASPECTS OF STUDYING OF ENGLISH COLOR NAMES: COGNITIVE-DISCURSIVE APPROACH

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Abstract: *The article is devoted to the consideration of aspects of studying of English colour names within the cognitive-discursive approach. As one of aspects of study, modeling of knowledge structures defining creation and interpretation of the colour names, which are results of the secondary nomination, is offered. The analysis of simple and parasynthetic words helps to come to a conclusion that their meaning can be defined by the metonymic cognitive model WHOLE – PART (colour) and the propositional cognitive models - HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE/AS QUALITY (COLOUR), HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE OBJECT. Other aspect of studying of colour tone names assumes the analysis of their functioning and the description of cognitive mechanisms of their interpretation.*

Keywords: *English colour names; secondary nomination; simple names; parasynthetic names; formation of semantics; metonymic cognitive model; propositional cognitive model; cognitive mechanisms; interpretation.*

Introduction

The study of linguistic phenomena from the standpoint of cognitive-discursive approach, which investigates "language as a cognitive process implemented in communication activities and provided by special cognitive structures and mechanisms in the human brain" [Kubryakova, 2004: 406], is very promising. The cognitive aspect is related to the study of language units through the activities during which a person operates knowledge structures as a special mental representation. The discourse aspect involves identifying how language units are used in the communication process that presupposes speech production and perception.

In this regard, colour tone terms are of interest, because they form the "periphery" of lexical-semantic field of colour, which is a fairly extensive and growing vocabulary layer. According to their structure names of colour tones can be divided into simple (chocolate, amber, tomato), compound, parasynthetic (blood-red, snow-white, stone-coloured), as well as word combinations (dusky pink, Siberian squirrel, dark red). The object of study in this article is simple names formed by semantic derivation and parasynthetic words formed on the model of N + colour + ed (wine-coloured, jade-coloured, sky-coloured). The purpose of research is the analysis of cognitive models and cognitive mechanisms that

may be used in the creation and interpretation of English names of colour tones in their functioning. Methods of cognitive modeling, conceptual and contextual analysis are used in the study.

Cognitive models of creation and interpretation of colour tone names

Modeling in the study of the derivatives that arise as a result of secondary nomination involves identifying cognitive models that determine their semantics.

The method of modeling is the basis of all science, as it is impossible to explore any abstract or material object without research purposes to simulate it. The term "model" is an interdisciplinary, characterized by ambiguity. However, after analyzing the definitions of the term "model" given in the encyclopedia, we can derive a universal for all disciplines idea of what is a model. Model - a form, a gage for the production of any product, it is more convenient for observation replica. The model represents a schematized construct designed to mimic or "substitute" more complex and difficult to observe original. Despite the simplicity and schematic nature the model makes it possible to identify and explore the most important properties for the study of the original object, and therefore it is a productive way of knowing it [Belyaevskaya, 2008]. The accuracy of the model developed for the studied object often determines the outcome of the study. Different types of models are allocated, because models can be a means of studying and describing the internal structure of the original (structural model), its behavior (functional model) and development (dynamic model) [Piotrovsky, 1998].

The method of modeling is recognized to be a general linguistic one, but its understanding in different paradigms of linguistic knowledge varies. It originated in the framework of structural linguistics in the 60 - 70-ies XX century thanks to the emergence of mathematical linguistics and penetration into linguistics ideas and methods of cybernetics. Now the term "model" is used in various fields - in word formation, syntax, and stylistics to describe linguistic phenomena regardless of processes underlying their understanding.

Within the framework of cognitive linguistics it is important to show "the relationship and interaction of linguistic units and their underlying knowledge structures, and based on the study of language experience - the experience of using language units - to simulate as much as possible these structures, their content and connections, making thus a contribution to the general theory of intelligence" [Boldyrev, 2008]. This simulation of knowledge structures allows to study the process of accumulation and processing of information in the human mind, and the way this knowledge is stored and activated.

The approach to modeling the semantics of language units proposed by George Lakoff is widely known in cognitive linguistics. According to George Lakoff, one resorts to the use of cognitive models to understand the world. He uses them in the theoretical understanding of the world, to create scientific theories and theories for everyday use [Lakoff & Johnson, 2004]. The scientist introduces the concept of an idealized cognitive model (ICM). ICM, correlated with mental-spaces, gives them inherent structuring,

thus organizing our consciousness. In general, the ICM can be understood as a generalized set of conceptual structures, which is conventional for speaking people belonging to a particular language community [Lakoff, 1987]. In the conceptual system Lakoff distinguishes four types of models: image-schematic, metonymic, metaphorical, and propositional.

The cognitive study of the above-mentioned British colour names allows to reveal cognitive models that determine the formation of their meaning. Thus, the meaning of derivatives is determined by metonymic cognitive model WHOLE - PART (colour), which may have the following varieties: WHOLE (object of inanimate nature) - PART (colour): sand, rust, straw, etc; WHOLE (object of flora) - PART (colour): thistle, wisteria, myrtle, etc; WHOLE (object of fauna) - PART (colour): canary, teal, egret, etc; WHOLE (gem, mineral, metal) - PART (colour): jade, malachite, opaline, etc; WHOLE (paint and colour) - PART (colour): indigo, manganese, pastel, etc; WHOLE (product) - PART (colour): coffee, marshmallow, caramel, etc. The essence of cognitive metonymy is that any area of the conceptual content can serve as a means of representation of the whole concept. Within the conceptual framework one of its constituent concepts may represent other related concepts, or the entire structure as a whole. The meaning of parasynthetic words with an element -coloured is formed with the help of metonymical cognitive model WHOLE - PART (colour) and propositional cognitive model, which can be represented in two varieties.

Among parasynthetic words formed by word-formation model N + colour + ed, according to V.V. Bolkhovitinov, there are two semantic groups [Bolkhovitinov, 1967].

1) parasynthetic words, including the first element, which is a noun having the meaning of «colour» (emerald-coloured, ruby-coloured, claret-coloured, ivory-coloured). Let's identify a propositional cognitive model that determines their meaning. As it is known, the suffix -ed joined to the base words forms adjectives with the following meaning «having characteristics of» [Meshkov, 1976: 76]. On the basis of this derivational meaning the proposition HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) can be revealed. The element QUALITY (COLOUR) of the proposition HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE / AS QUALITY (COLOUR) is represented by the word colour; the element LIKE is revealed through inference.

2) parasynthetic words, including the first element, which is a noun that does not have the meaning «colour», but calls an object that has a specific colour (coal-coloured, flame-coloured, fox-coloured, etc.). The meaning of the derivatives is determined by the propositional model HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE OBJECT. The element OBJECT of the proposition HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE OBJECT, is represented by a noun, and the element LIKE is revealed through inference. We believe that the formation of meaning of these words is originally determined by the propositional cognitive model HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE OBJECT, and then metonymical

cognitive model WHOLE – PART is used. However, not only cognitive models, but also cognitive mechanisms are used during the interpretation of colour tone names in the process of their functioning.

Cognitive mechanisms that determine the interpretation of colour tone names

The discursive aspect of research of colour names involves investigation of their functioning in texts, in this case, literary ones. To find out a meaning (sense) of colour terms under consideration one can refer to the cognitive domain underlying the noun that denotes the object of fauna, flora, inanimate nature, etc. This allows to activate complex associations that are connected not only with the colour of an object, phenomenon. In addition, such cognitive mechanisms as "composition", "completion", "elaboration" are used. Cognitive mechanisms "composition", "completion", "elaboration" have been proposed in the framework of the theory of conceptual integration by G. Fauconnier and M. Turner [Fauconnier & Turner, 1998]. The use of cognitive mechanism "completion" allows to reconstruct characteristics that are necessary to create a concept underlying a derivative colour name. It occurs through reference to the information in long-term memory - cognitive domains underlying the components from which a derivative is formed. Among such cognitive domains may be plant, animal, food, stone, metal, and others. The use of cognitive mechanism "elaboration" leads to the appearance of new characteristics in the concept represented by a derivative colour term as a result of activation of inference and encyclopedic knowledge. The cognitive mechanism of "composition" provides the coordination of all characteristics of the concept represented by a derivative colour name.

Let's refer to the examples demonstrating functioning of semantic derivatives:

(1) Only when she lifted her head the radiance of her eyes could stun any man, for she had bright, **emerald** eyes, eyes that sparkled like twin stars [LC].

In the example (1), comparing the shine of eyes with the brilliance of the stars (sparkled like twin stars, bright), the author is trying to convey the idea of their beauty to the reader. The meaning of the derivative word emerald is determined by the metonymical cognitive model WHOLE (gem - emerald) - PART (colour). The dictionary article gives the following definition of the colour term: clear green colour of an emerald [AL]. However, the context makes us consider not only the knowledge reflected in the definition, but activate background knowledge about the features of the precious stone - emerald. Through the mechanism of "completion" we borrow characteristics 'luminous', 'vivid', 'sparkling', 'shining'. The mechanism of "composition" allows to combine the above-mentioned characteristics and characteristics associated with the colour of an emerald: 'vivid green', 'sparkling green', 'shining green'. Next, the mechanism of "elaboration" helps to deduce a positive connotation in the sense of colour tone name. Therefore, the use of colour term emerald allows to depict an unusually beautiful colour of eyes of the heroine, to emphasize their brightness and radiance.

(2) There, with the rest of the family, drinking whisky, smooth, dapper, **silver** hair gleaming, face glowing, teeth shining, was Uncle Karl. 'My dear fellow!' As glossy as a fashion-plate, Karl jumped up, grasped Herr Nordern's hand, and beamed into his face [LC].

In the second example, colour term silver is also used to describe the appearance of the character, namely, the colour of his hair. The meaning of the derivative word is determined by the metonymical cognitive model WHOLE (metal) - PART (colour). The dictionary article gives the following definition of the colour term: of or tending towards the colour silver - a soft grayish-white metal that is very valuable and is used to make jewelry, coins, knives, forks, etc. [MW]. The context determines whether to activate background knowledge about the features of the metal. Through the mechanism of "completion" characteristics 'lustrous sheen', 'sparkling' are borrowed from cognitive domain METAL. The mechanism of "composition" allows to combine the above-mentioned characteristics and characteristics associated with the colour of silver: 'lustrous sheen', 'sparkling grayish-white'. Next, the mechanism of "elaboration" lets display an ironic connotation that the word acquires in this context. Therefore, the use of the colour term silver gives an idea of the character's quest to gloss, his wish to make a brilliant impression on others.

Let's consider some examples of parasynthetic words:

(3) Strether had become acquainted even on this ground with short gusts of speculation — sudden flights of fancy in Louvre galleries, hungry gazes through clear plates behind which **lemon-coloured** volumes were as fresh as fruit on the tree.

(4) His great hands (which can sprawl over half a piano, and produce those effects on the instrument for which he is celebrated) are encased in **lemon-coloured** kids, new, or cleaned daily.

(5) Her bright eyes, brown hair, flowery bonnet, **lemon-coloured** gloves, and flush beauty, were like an irradiation into the apartment, which they in their gloom could hardly bear [Wordnik].

It seems that in the proposed passages, along with the colour, there is an idea of brightness, splendor of described objects. Let's refer to the word lemon - an oval-shaped fruit with a thick bright yellow skin [CCELD, 1993: 828]. This view is supported by the context: in the examples (3) and (5) the comparison is used, in the example (4) - adjectives. The sense of considered derived words is formed not only with the help of the aforementioned cognitive models. The background knowledge underlying the word lemon is activated with the help of mechanism of "completion". This allows to borrow the characteristic 'bright', which is due to the mechanism of "composition" combines with the characteristics that give an idea of the colour. The mechanism of "elaboration" lets deduce a positive connotation of colour terms.

(6) The roofs overhead were engulfed in the **soot-coloured** sky that seemed to be descending on the heads of the passengers.

(7) They used to come trotting the five miles from Loughrea, little fellows with blue eyes shining out from soot-black faces, wearing little **soot-coloured** smocks [Wordnik].

The sixth example gives an idea not only about colour, but also makes us understand that the air is not clean, there is soot in the air. In the example (7) it is obvious that faces and clothing of people were black because of soot. Compare soot - black powder which is carried into the air in the smoke from a fire, and which is left on the sides of chimneys and on other surfaces [CCELD, 1993: 1390].

Thus, the colour terms are widely used in literary texts, performing a variety of functions: they give a detailed description of landscapes, portraits, acquire a symbolic importance being a component of metaphors and comparisons, playing the role of keywords in the literary text, helping to reveal the author's thought. To a large extent this contributes to their ability to transfer complex ideas about the described object, including not only information about colour.

Conclusion

The investigation shows that the use of cognitive-discursive approach that takes into account knowledge structure underlying linguistic units, mechanisms of their generation, opens new perspectives in the study of meanings and functioning of colour tone names. The research of colour tone names involves determining cognitive models and description of cognitive mechanisms used in the process of creation and interpretation of colour terms.

The analysis of colour names (simple words) reveals a metonymical cognitive model - WHOLE - PART (colour) and its variants. The study of colour names (parasyntetic words) leads to the conclusion that their meaning can be determined by the metonymical cognitive model WHOLE - PART (colour) and the propositional cognitive models HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE / AS QUALITY (COLOUR), HAVE QUALITY (COLOUR) LIKE OBJECT. The application of cognitive mechanisms provides an opportunity to identify additional senses that colour tone names get in the process of their functioning.

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