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EMOTIONAL ASSOCIATIONS WITH GREEN COLOUR IN ENGLISH AND BELARUSIAN CULTURES

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Green colour is included in the list of the most important colour names both in English and Belarusian culture. Its associative characteristics have a lot in common too, but there are some culturally-specific differences.

Key words: *green colour, emotions; Belarusian, English culture, similarities, differences*

Introduction. Representatives of different cultures have different conceptualizations of colours [1, p.231]. There is no word corresponding to the Russian colour term *'goluboy'* in English, and the word *'indigo'* isn't widespread among Belarusians and Russians. Colour conceptualization involves not only its allocation and identification, but its correlation with emotions and feelings of different language communities.

We attach very great importance to the distinctions discovered in the perception of the word *green* by Belarusian and English speakers. Lexical meaning of words, as it is well-known nowadays, is described linguistically not only through their references to extralinguistic realia or their collocations with other words, or else through their paradigmatic connections such as synonymy, antonymy, semantic fields, but through numerous and various associative ties, coming up (happening or taking place) in the minds of human subjects (speakers) when they hear (perceive) this or that word [2, p.89]

Green colour is included into the list of the most important colour names both in English and Belarusian cultures. But colour distinctions are not limited by the list of the main colour names. We assume that associations with green colour can have some peculiarities in English and Belarusian cultures.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between green colour and emotions it evokes in English and Belarusian cultures. The research involves an analysis of the results obtained in the experiment conducted to check what feelings are associated with green colour. This colour is included in the hierarchical list of basic colour terms, proposed by Berlin and Kay [3, p.151-153].

As was observed by T. Szczygłowska [4, p.89-107], the first thought which we have when examining the relationship between colours and emotions is that both of these phenomena are important parts of human life. The world which surrounds us is full of colours and our emotional attitude towards the objects of everyday life is very often conditioned by their colour. Colours affect our emotions and feelings and this can be reflected in the way people think and use the language. We are going to examine the relationship between the colour term *'green'* and emotions which it brings about in the minds of the speakers of Belarusian and English cultures. We want to find out the associations they may have with this colour.

The method of the investigation is borrowed from T. Szczygłowska for it appeared to be simple. In Scotland a questionnaire was presented to subjects which come from different countries: the UK, Australia, South Africa and the USA. The group of informants consisted of both men and women of approximately 20-30 years of age (only a few informants were younger than 20 or older than 30). The same experiment was carried out by us in Belarus. It also started with a questionnaire and the question asked was: What are your associations with the green colour? The subjects were requested to write down their associations.

When studying the results of the experiment, only associations were of importance. Neither the sex nor the age of the subjects was taken into consideration. Furthermore, it needs to be noted that the responses were different and weren't grammatically uniform. For the sake of clarity and order, it seemed sensible to present the answers in their noun form. Moreover, some individual responses had to be excluded from the analysis as they evidently pertained to phenomena other than the domain of emotions or feelings. But if such associations were offered many times and there was a logical explanation for them, they were taken into consideration in our analysis. If there wasn't a logical explanation, they were considered in a special group.

Let us examine emotional associations with the green colour. Such positive associations as *'calmness'*, *'peace'*, *'happiness'*, *'joy'*, *'friendliness'* were mentioned by 44 % of English informants. On the other hand, negative associations *'envy'*, *'jealousy'*, *'sickness'*, *'coldness'* make 40 %. 16 % of the English subjects attributed green to *'nature'* (Table 1).

As far as Belarusian informants are concerned, 32 % of their answers contained such positive associations as: *'calmness'*, *'joy'*, *'hope'*. More than a half of the answers belonged to the group of associations with nature: *'freshness'*, *'grass, trees'*, *'vegetables'*, *'youth'*. It means that nature is the strongest attractor in Belarusian culture.

Linguistics, Literature, Philology

Whereas only 6 % of respondents associated green with such negative emotions as 'disgust'. What is more there was a neutral association with 'traffic lights' which we interpret as an association with town (Table2).

The associations evoked by green are presented in Tables 1 and 2

Table 1.- Associations in British culture

Association	Percentage of subjects	Percentage of answers
Calmness, peace	30	23
Envy, jealousy	24	19
Nature	16	13.5
Happiness, joy	10	8
Sickness	8	6
Coldness	4	3
Freshness	4	3
Friendliness	4	3

Table 2.- Associations in Belarusian culture

Association	Percentage of subjects	Percentage of answers
Nature (trees, grass)	26	13
Calmness	18	9
Vegetables, fruit (cucumber, avocado, apple)	12	6
Youth	10	5
Hope	10	5
Traffic light	8	4
Disgust	6	3
Freshness	6	3

Summing up the results of our research we can say that Belarusian and English cultures have a lot in common in their view of the green colour: associations with nature and a lack of experience('youth', 'inexperience') were mentioned by the informants of both cultures. But Belarusian associations of the green colour with nature are by far more numerous against 20 % in English culture. We assume that this corresponds to the claims of Belarusian researchers about the role of nature and natural phenomena in the outlook of Belarusians. Besides associations of Belarusians were mostly positive and only 6 % of the answers belonged to the group of negative emotions. Surprisingly, English-speaking respondents comparatively often viewed *green* as having something to do with negative emotions (Table 3).

Table 3.-The analysis of the results

Culture	Associations with nature and little life experience	Associations with positive emotions	Associations with negative emotions
Belarusian	54	32	6
English	20	44	36

Conclusion. Summing up what has been said above, informants from Belarus and Britain have some similarities in their emotional perception of the green colour, but there are some striking differences as well, which don't allow us to consider their perceptions identical. So, green colour has a culturally-specific interpretation. In Belarusian culture most of the associations are often connected with nature and very few of them are negative, while English culture associations with nature are less numerous. Besides, negative connotations are much more part of English vision of the green colour; on the other hand English informants mostly associate green colour with something unpleasant. So, we claim that perception of *green* is culturally specific and has its peculiarities in both Belarusian and English cultures. The subtleties discovered in our research can help to describe the lexical meaning of

the word *green* in the languages involved in our experiment with a much greater precision and help to understand cultural differences in the interpretation of colours better.

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