

## COLOR NAMING IN FRENCH AND TATAR

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### ABSTRACT

The relevance of the problem under study is relevant due to the significance of problems in modern linguistics, which connected with different ways of Russian, Tatar and European people's color perception. The aim of the paper is to prove a greater affinity of the Tatar language to the French than to Russian as an example of the concept of blue color, also an absence of special lexeme in both languages, which determines the concept "kind". The principal method to the research of this problem was comparative method of typologically different languages like analytical French and agglutinative Tatar. During the conducted study the authors obtained results, which are indicative of congeniality of the concept "blue color" in Tatar and French and the absence of dichotomy "dark blue – blue" in both languages. Matters of this paper can be useful at further studies within a frame of typology of unrelated languages, phraseology and lexicography.

**Keywords:** *linguistics, reception of cultural heritage, color naming, typology of French and Tatar, dark blue color, blue color.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Color perception is one of the most important characteristics of human vision with the help of which we have a good sense of direction in the environment and know its common factors [1, p. 198]. Color naming of one or another language is a sign of culture, creative manner, it plays a very important role in the system of public ritual symbolism and has a distinct communicative beginning. Our color vision and perception are reflected in the language as in a mirror [2, p. 19]. Phraseology is the branch of linguistics, in which the national-cultural identity of language's color perception is clearly reflected, as it is closely related with the culture, history and life of the people. Its spirit, character and way of thinking are embodied in the phraseology. Thus, one is white crow, another is black bone, the third is "red" maiden [3, p. 165]. In nature the color is an objective reality independent of people.

#### 1.2. Status of a Problem

However colors are matchlessly perceived in different languages. As noted by V.G. Gak "color is differently reflected in different languages, color names is a complicated system in each language, and systems of different languages reveal indicative divergences" [4, p. 97]. Thus there are languages, which distinguish seven colors of the rainbow, for example, Russian and Slavic; the most other European languages distinguish only six colors [5, p. 20]. This is due to the fact that such region of the spectrum, in which the Russians see two colors - blue and dark blue are denoted by one lexeme in English and German

- Eng. blue, Ger. blau, Fr. bleu. They even sound the same, despite the fact that they belong to different groups of languages.

### 1.3. The Research Hypothesis

It is worthy of note that Tatar is close to European languages, as it doesn't distinguish "blue" and "dark blue" determining that region of the spectrum as "za'nga'r". Nominally, sure enough, there is a denomination of dark blue - "ku'k" in Tatar under an areal influence of Russian language, but it is rarely used because it is not an adjective, the first meaning of it - "sky". Consequently this word would be more accurately translated not as a "dark blue", but as "sky-blue".

## 2. EXPERIMENTAL (MATERIALS AND METHODS)

In support of given postulate it is possible to operate with fact that there is one song "Ku'k ku'ga'rchen" (Blue Dove) which is related with "Za'nga'r ku'lma'k" (blue dress) and "Za'nga'r to'jma'" (blue button), not to mention figural expression "Za'nga'r sha'l" (blue scarf). These color namings are often synonyms in Tatar. So "ku'k/ za'nga'r so't" - skim milk - lait dégraissé (milk from which the fat has been removed), "ku'k ku'zle" - blue-eyed; "ku'k yaulu'k" - blue (dark blue) kerchief; "ku'k jilək" - blueberry; "ku'k ku'ba'la'k" - wanderer; "za'nga'r/ ku'k cha'cha'k" - blue cornflower, flower which is also not a pure blue color. As we can see Tatar is distinguish from Russian language in the determination of this flower and coincides with French - bleuet, which can be translated as "bluish." Interestingly that "bluish" in Tatar as well as "bluey" also mean two different concepts with analyzed bases in this paper: "ku'ksel" and "za'nga'rsu", it again proves that difference between them is conditional. There is no indication of color in the notation of blueberry and copper-butterfly in French: "airielle des marais" (heathberry) and "lycène". But there is a figural expression in Russian and French - "oiseau bleu" - whistling thrush, symbol of the unattainable ideal. Furthermore sometimes this adjective shows a completely different color, for example, "ku'k agach" means not dark blue tree, but horn-beech, "le charme" in French. "Ku'k ala sakal" means grizzled beard, i.e., of gray color, "ku'k ala at" - gray horse in bright "apples", "ku'k at" means "trooper". Nevertheless paints of horses are diverse and remain unheralded now, therefore we would like to inscribe a particular paper to their typological research. It is of interest to note that grey beard translates as "barbe fleurie" in French, i.e., "exuberant" or "argentée", i.e., "silver", often "barbe grise" or "blanche" without any allusion! Barbe bleue means "any man alleged to have murdered a number of his wives or other women". This fairy-tale character is familiar to Russian-speaking readers, but absolutely unknown to the Tatar folklore, as the Tatar people is far more humane, including toward a woman. But there is an idiom in French, which is close to Tatar - "menton bleu" (literally: dark blue chin) - old man. There is one case when the color vision of the Tatars is closer to the Russians within this concept: "ku'k talaq ita'rga", literally: to make blue brilliant green - to beat black-and-blue, than to the French, who also have this idiom, but it takes darker tones: "être noir de coups", literally: "be black from blows". The French are apparently more cruel, they even don't have a word - kind, for this epithet they use another word - "bon", i.e. "good". Interestingly that among the Russians the words "kind" and "good" were anciently synonyms. Since the number of kind Russians increased, this trait of character needed special determinant. Nominally there is lexeme in Tatar, which means "kind"- "igelekle", but it is rarely used in practice, than "a'jba't", that is an absolute synonym of the concept "yakhshy- good". In view of this it is possible to advance a hypothesis that at present this concept in the Tatar language is at that stage where in the Russian language a few centuries ago. Correspondingly if the number of kind Tatars will increase, it would be logical to move the word form of a word "a'jbət" from that legal doublet to the concept "kind". Basically an interlinguistic alternation observed in this case "dark blue- black" exists in Tatar language: "ku'k/ kara bo'rlega'n" (dark blue and black bramble), i.e. blackberry, "mûron" in French. And, finally we managed to find a rare case when lexical naming units are close in all three languages under consideration in the given semantic field: blue fox - "za'nga'r/ ku'k to'lke" in Tatar and "renard bleu" in French. Notably there is a similarity between two latter languages

rather than with Russian, as this animal is named “fox” in both languages. Concerning the more widespread color naming “za’nga’r” in Tatar, its detailed typological research confirms thesis about great affinity of French to Tatar than to Russian, which we postulate. “Za’nga’r tash” that literally means “blue stone” – “lasurite”, le lapis in French. In actual fact this stone is not blue, but dark blue. The time between night and morning the Tatar call “za’nga’r tan” that is again translated as “dark blue” not “blue dawn”. It is significant that the French see this predawn in dark blue color: “heure bleue”. And only in the case of the blue dream there is complete unanimity in all three languages: “za’nga’r khyal” and “rêve bleu” because the logical continuation of this idiom is “za’nga’r khyalga batyrğa” (literally: “to sink in a blue dream”), another evidence of great affinity between the French and the Tatar, who as opposed to the Russian, “aren’t in the clouds”, but “nagent dans le bleu”, i.e. “to sink in the blueness” that characterizes them as more down to earth people. There is an evident international idiom “see through rose-coloured glasses” – “regarder à travers des lunettes roses”, but there suddenly appears blue color in Tatar: “za’nga’r / al kuzlek asha kararga”. The amazing fact: there is also synonymous phraseological unit in French “voir tout en bleu/ rose” – “see everything, not only in rose, but also in blue. “Heart-rending voice” – “des cris d’orfraie” (literally: the sea eagle’s note), the Tatar also see in color: “za’nga’rle-yashelle tavysh” that brings to mind the fact that the verge between blue and green in Tatar is vague, but this phenomenon requires a separate analysis in the next paper. And, finally the Tatar after the Russian call “gays” as “za’nga’rla’r” that would be surprise for the French, as for them “les bleus” are players from the national team, and they use the word “la pédale” of feminine gender, which means “pedal” as in Russian in order to determine homosexual men. The word “bleu” of the singular means “first-timer” or “recruit”, apparently, because their uniform is still new and doesn’t lose dark blue color. However, we managed to find an idiom in French as “ballets bleus” (literally: blue balet) – an orgy with boys. According to Michel Pastoureau, French historian, the attention to dark blue color of the French was being changed in course of time. Noteworthy is that this color didn’t mention in the medieval literature before XII [6, p. 15). The French associated dark blue color with some negative emotions, even one on the meanings of this noun was “bruise”. For example, “avoir du bleu au coeur” (literally: “have a bruise on the heart”), i.e. “to feel sad” – “yaman sularga” in Tatar; “une peur bleue” (literally: blue fear) – panic fear (“bik nyk kurku” i.e. simply “very strong fear” in Tatar); “une colère bleue” – “absolutely anger” (“bik nyk achu kilu” in Tatar); “en être bleu” – (literally: “to be dark blue from something”), i.e. to be stunned (“avyr kichereshta’ bulyrğa” in Tatar); “n’y voir que du bleu” (literally: “see in something only dark blue color”) – don’t understand anything (“berna’rsa’ da’ anlamaska” in Tatar); “passer au bleu” (literally: “go to the blue”) – conceal (“ser itep totarga” in Tatar (literally: keep a secret); “bas bleu” - “bluestocking” (so’jkemsez khatyn in Tatar (literally: “unattractive woman”); “bête bleue” (literally: blue cattle) – fleabag (aryk at – i.e. literally “tired horse” in Tatar); “bleu comme la poule à Simon” (literally: blue, like chicken Simon) 1) strayed (“adashkan” in Tatar) 2) frightened, in panic (“bik nyk kyrukkan” in Tatar) 3) conservative (“kadimche” in Tatar) and correlating with latter meaning Chambre “bleu horizon” – Blue Chamber (reactionary Chamber of Deputies in France, elected in 1919, so named for the color of the officer’s greatcoat); the French compare an amourette with “fleur bleue”, i.e. with “dark blue flower” (“ma’ha’bba’t ma’kere” in Tatar); “cultiver la petite fleur bleue”- sentimentalize (“tojgylarga birelgera” in Tatar, that literally means “yield to feelings”); “coup bleu” (literally “dark blue hit”) polysemic word: 1) shot in the air (“yukka aty”, i.e. that literally means “dry shot” in Tatar); 2) lost labor (“fajdasyzga ko’ch tu’gu”, i.e. literally “useless waste of energy” in Tatar); “papier bleu” (literally “dark blue paper”) - request for summons – “sudka chakyrı” in Tatar; “vin bleu” (literally “dark blue wine”) - bouse – “nachar kyzyl sha’rab” in Tatar; “zone bleue” – restrictive parking-place; “ne pas être bleu de rire” (literally: “don’t be dark blue from the laugh” – don’t have a wish to laugh, but the Tatar would say: “ko’lu’da’n kyp kyzyl bulmaska” (literally: “don’t be red from the laugh”); “conte bleu” (literally: “dark blue fairy-tale” - old wives’ tales – “a’bila’r a’kiyate” or “yuk-bar suz” in Tatar, literally: “the word, which means yes or no”; “elle est bleue, celle-là” (literally: “this is dark blue”) – “ujdyrma” in Tatar – “tale”! And finally “les diables bleus”, i.e. that literally means “dark blue devils”- yearning. Interestingly that the Russian visualize an yearning in a different color, namely “green” (“yashel sagysh” in Tatar, but color perception of the Tatar’s yearning is more saturated: “ak sagysh” is like “easy” sadness, “za’nga’r

sagysh” – something of unrealizable, “sary sagysh” as an analogue of spleen, and eventually – “kara sagysh” is like an outside limit of despair.(

Only in exceptional cases, this color has positive connotations in French. In the Renaissance, in the eye of M. Pastoureau, the dark blue color was “royal” and very prestigious. This explains origin of the phraseological unit - “blue blood”, but “ak so’yak” in Tatar, that means “white bone”; the word “cordon bleu” has three meanings: “blue ribbon of the Order of the Holy Spirit”, i.e. “person with great services” – “zur keshe” in Tatar and “an adept cook” – “a’jba’t pesheruche” in Tatar; “ruban bleu” – ribbon of orders – “orden tasmasy”; “dentelle bleue” 1) English laces (fabricated in Conventry) – “ingliz chelta’r” in Tatar; 2) woman in blue – “za’nga’r kiemle khatyn-kyz” in Tatar; “col bleu” (literally: blue collar worker) – 1) naval mariner – “ha’rbi dingezche” 2) worker – “eshche”; “bibliothèque bleue” – romances for children from 4 to 8 years; “bifteck bleu” – rare steak – “kanly bifshteks”; “le ciel est bleu partout” – literally : “sky is dark blue everywhere” - there are plenty more fish in the sea – “do’nya king/ irken”, literally: “the world is spacious” or “kaida da ber koyash”, literally : “ the same Sun is everywhere”. Since France is bounded by seas from three sides of the world, there is widespread concept “houille bleue” (tidal power) – blue coal. Moreover there is a set expression in Russian “blue flame natural gas” – “za’nga’r yagulyk” in Tatar. Since there is no a gas field in France, they don’t have this expression. M. Pastoureau confirms that the dark blue is the most favorite color in modern west society , because it symbolizes calmness and tranquility , hence an idiom “casques bleus” – blue helmets – “za’nga’r kaskalar” is originated.

### 3. RESULTS

As we can see the world vision in color is very much different in languages under study, with the exception of modern derivations, when some expression, appeared in one language in the process of globalization is quickly calked by other languages. Color naming is included in ritual symbols, denotes an integral part of our everyday consciousness, has different communicative intentions. It is also a culture’sign of historical era. We study the color as certain visual angle on the “worldview”, reflected in each separately taken language through the perception of the world by a native speaker. Ancient Greek philosophers used the color to describe a characteristic of voice, state of mind and other intrinsic properties of human. It was figurative translation from one language to another system of signs, when obscurity is revealed by known concepts [7, p. 53].

The study of phraseology concerns sphere of folklife culture. The phraseological units with color naming are the major figure in contemporary studies, because they reflect features of the mentality, convictions, traditions, system of values of some people.

Set phrases, comprising color naming represent symbols, stereotypes of cultural world view. The study of color naming as a part of phraseology reflects national specifics of French, other European languages and Tatar, their originality. We clearly demonstrated that the dichotomy “dark blue – blue” is irrelevant to the majority of European nations. It is worthy of note that there is an adjective in Russian “medium-blue” , for example, “expanse”, in which cohesion of both concepts exists in all primary European languages, that we analyzed in this paper. Unfortunately, it is uncommon in virtue of unhandiness.

### 4 .CONCLUSIONS

The vast historical experience of the people is chased in color meanings. The idea of labor activity, way of life and culture of the people are reflected in them. Right and appropriate use of color meanings gives an identity, a special expressiveness, an accuracy, a figurativeness to a speech. Therefore research results of the color meanings have practical significance – they are important for the successful teaching of French and Tatar as well as in the branch of lexicology and phraseology .

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