COLLOCATIONS OF COLOR-DESIGNATING ADJECTIVES AND THEIR MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the collocations of color-designating adjectives in their nominative and figurative meanings, examining their morphological structure and the nuanced relationship between color and language. The study investigates how color-designating words are morphologically classified and how their forms contribute to the expression of color-related concepts. The analysis encompasses simple color words, derived color words formed through affixation, compound color words, and phrasal color terms. Additionally, the article delves into the figurative use of color adjectives and their metaphorical associations, highlighting how colors go beyond their literal meanings to evoke emotions and convey abstract concepts. By examining the morphological structures of color-designating adjectives and their usage in nominative and figurative contexts, the study enhances our understanding of the intricate interplay between color, language, and meaning.

Keywords: Collocations, Color-designating adjectives, Figurative meaning, Morphological structure, Nominative meaning

1. Introduction

Language is a powerful tool for communicating and expressing our perception of the world around us. Color, being a basic part of human experience, has been a subject of great interest in various fields, including linguistics. The presented article discusses a particular group of adjectives, namely, color-designated adjectives, delving into how languages encode and convey the idea of color through their word creation processes. In the realm of color perception and description, understanding the basic collocations of color-designating adjectives is essential for unraveling how colors are linguistically categorized and conveyed (Pilling and Davies, 2004).

This article aims to explore the fundamental collocations of color-designating adjectives in linguistics, shedding light on their morphological structure and semantic implication.

2. Basic collocations of color-designating adjectives

Adjectives that designate color are essential for defining and classifying the enormous variety of hues seen in our environment. These adjectives, however, frequently have metaphorical overtones in addition to their core nominative meanings. Collocations of color-designating adjectives in both their nominal and figurative meanings can be used to gain an important understanding of how colors are interpreted and symbolically related.

2.1 Nominative meanings

In their nominative meanings, color-designating adjectives primarily serve to describe the literal color of an object or phenomenon. Examples include *red apple*, *blue sky*, or*green grass*. These collocations establish a direct correspondence between the color adjective and the object it describes, providing a clear and straightforward depiction of color.

2.2 Figurative meanings

Color-designating adjectives also extend beyond their nominative meanings and acquire figurative connotations. These figurative associations are metaphoric in nature, providing expressive and evocative descriptions beyond the literal color itself. Let's explore some common collocations in their figurative senses.

2.3 Nominative vs figurative meanings

The data found at the etic level revealed the general regularities to which nouns in color-designated words are related easily and naturally. Each of these words has several meanings, but their primary nominative meanings are related to color. Color-designating adjectives often have figurative meanings that are remote from their nominative ones. While comparing the collocations *black hair, black coffee*, and *black dress* on the one hand and *black days, black despair,* and *black moment* on the other, we will see that in the first case, the given adjective is used in its denotative meaning, whereas in the second case, the same adjective is presented in its figurative meaning. The same can be said about the colors blue, green, white, red, etc. Cf. the collocations of *blue sky, blue ball*, and *blue flower* used in the nominative meaning and *blue expression, blue mood*, used in the connotative meaning. While studying the color-designating vocabulary, interesting metasemiotic transformations are revealed in the semantics of these words. These are the connotations that these words take on when they are used with their transformed meta-meanings.

The analysis of fiction shows that color-designating adjectives are also freely combined with nouns at the emic level (Saunders, 2014), both in the nominative and figurative meanings. Below are given two examples for illustration.

*Marsha Preyscott was wearing a sleeveless dress. It touched her body lightly. Her long **black hair** hung loosely about her shoulders.*

(A. Hailey "Hotel")

*Her face was pale and full like a child's but almost stonily expressionless, her eyes were black and inscrutable. She watched both Cicio and Alvina with her **black look**.*

(D. H. Lawrence "The lost Girl")

In the first example, the adjective black indicates color and does not have any other inference. However, in the second example, the same color-designating adjective conveys semantic implication (Alousque, 2011) that has nothing to do with colorand is definitely based on its symbolic meaning.

3. Morphological structure of color-designating adjectives

Color-designating adjectives often exhibit interesting morphological patterns that contribute to their meaning and categorization. This section explores how basic color terms are constructed, highlighting the morphological components involved, such as roots, affixes, and derivational processes (Booij, 2014).

The morphological classification of color-designating adjectives can vary depending on the specific language and its morphological system (Plag, 2020). In the English language, these words can be classified into the following morphological categories:

a) **Simple**. Simple color adjectives are monomorphemic words that directly represent colors. They do not undergo any morphological changes to indicate different forms or variations. For instance: *black, green, white, pink, red, yellow, blue*, etc.

b) **Derived**. In the context of color-designating words, derivational morphology plays a crucial role in expanding the color vocabulary of a language. Derived color words are formed by adding derivational affixes to the base words or stems. These affixes modify the base words to indicate color-related meanings. For instance: *reddish, bluish, greenish, yellowy, purplish*, etc.

c) **Compound**. Compound color-designating adjectives are formed by combining two or more word-coinciding morphemes to create a new word that denotes a specific color. The

components of such compounds can be color words, other nouns, or adjectives. The following models can be singled out:

1) Compound adjectives with the element *colored*. It is noteworthy that though these words are hardly fixed at the etic level, they are quite often met at the emic one. For instance: *cocoa-colored skin, corn-colored hair, homey-colored sunlight, mulberry-colored birthmark*, etc.

2) Compound color adjectives are formed by the juxtaposition of bases, i.e., when the first element is a noun and the second one is a color-designating adjective. For instance: *charcoal-black hair, diamond-blue sky, midnight-blue kimono, summer- blue eyes, apple-green dress,* etc.

3) Word combinations that are formed with the help of the following words: *pale, dark, deep, bright, light, dull, and waxen*. These words do not contain any meaning of color, but they specify the second component of color designation. They indicate the depth, intensity, weakness, and other features of color. *Dark-yellow eyes, deep-green grass, dull-green ships, light-purple dress, pale-blue paper*, etc.

4) Word combinations whose both elements are color-designating words. For instance: *blue-red wine, grey-blue eyes, green-red bananas, grey-green light*, etc.

5) Word combinations in which the first component is a color-designating word and the second one is an adjective derived with the help of the suffix -ed. For instance: *green-shaded lamp, grey-haired man, orange-tinted window, red-cheeked face*, etc.

d) **Phrasal color words**. Phrasal color words are expressions consisting of multiple words that together convey a specific color. These expressions may include prepositions, articles, and adjectives. Examples include *blue as the ocean, red like fire, green as grass, yellow as the sun*, etc. It is noteworthy that these examples can also be considered similes.

4. Conclusion

The collocations of color-designating adjectives encompass their nominative and figurative meanings, providing a multifaceted understanding of color perception and linguistic expressions. While nominative collocations depict colors directly and descriptively, figurative collocations extend beyond the literal color, incorporating metaphorical associations and evoking emotions or concepts. Synesthetic collocations enrich the sensory experience by blending color with other sensory modalities. By delving into the collocations of color-designating adjectives in their

nominative and figurative senses, we gain a deeper appreciation of the nuanced relationship between color and language, also, the expressive power of figurative language in capturing the essence of colors.

The morphological structure of color-designating words provides "a fascinating avenue" for exploring how languages encode and represent the concept of color. By analyzing the morphological components, derivational processes, metaphorical extensions, and sound symbolism of color terms, researchers can uncover the intricate ways in which languages categorize and express color. Understanding the morphological structure of color words enhances our comprehension of the relationship between language, perception, and culture and deepens our knowledge of the human capacity for linguistic expression.

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