

## THE ETYMOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE NATIVE IDIOMS WITH COLORATIVE COMPONENT IN THE ENGLISH, ROMANIAN AND TURKISH LANGUAGES

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### ABSTRACT

The article is dedicated to the etymological study of native phraseological units with a colorative component in the English, Romanian and Turkish languages. Special attention is given to the culture-bound items and events in the history of the languages. The article aims to describe some peculiarities of the origin of the English, Romanian and Turkish phraseological units in the comparative aspect. The introduction presents a concise literature review devoted to the study of phraseological units with a colorative component and defines the notion of a native phraseological unit. Materials and methods section proposes a detailed account of the phraseological units, the appearance of which is motivated by some definite culture-bound items and events in the historical development of the language bearers. The data and facts gathered to conduct the study are taken from authoritative dictionaries. The results and discussions sections concentrate on both general and specific etymological peculiarities of the phraseological units under analysis and offer the result of the research which was carried out.

**Keywords:** native phraseological unit, idiomatic expression, etymology, culture-bound items, colorative component.

### INTRODUCTION

The world itself is so diversified when it comes about the phraseological units with colorative components. Diversity of so many languages used in the world makes it even more colorative as the perceptions are so diverse and vivid as ever, differences are made mainly between languages which are having different roots, such as Latin, Germanic, Turkic and Slavic.

Following our approach for this paper we will take as example only three main important languages, respectively English, Romanian, and Turkish.

Etymological study of phraseological units is a key component to a versatile examination of a phraseological stock of any language in general. Phraseological units have been widely researched by different prominent linguists. For instance, L. P. Smith made a great contribution to the study of the etymology of phraseological units of terminological nature and gathered a great collection of idiomatic expressions of the English language. The English idioms, and the sources of their formation are thoroughly examined in his book "The Phraseology of the English Language"[1].

One of the most comprehensive examples of etymological data is presented in "Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable" [2]. It should be mentioned, that historical facts referring not only to the history of Britain but also to the peculiarities of development of the USA and the former colonies of the British Empire are collected in the dictionary. Respectively, it determined the choice of the dictionary as the basis for the investigation.

Turkish phraseological units with colorative component, in their turn, were partly investigated by M.

Meskhoidez in his Magister dissertation [3], which investigates Turkish and Kirghiz phraseological units and describes the attitude to the notion of colour in the Turkish and Kirghiz cultures.

Peculiar Turkish idioms with a colour components were found from the one of the most known dictionaries of phraseological units dedicated to the Turkish language is compiled by D. Karakurt [4].

However, Romanian idioms with a colorative component have never been under the linguistic study and studies on the comparative analysis in such unrelated languages as Romanian and Turkish are still lacking. Therefore, these limitations determined the undertaken attempt to examine native Romanian idioms with a colorative component in this paper.

Therefore, comparative investigations of a colorative component of the native phraseological units in different languages deserve special attention of the researchers and represent an important impact on the linguistic study in this field.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In the study of the etymology of native phraseological units with a colorative component we applied to a variety of methods of investigation.

First of all, etymological analysis is inevitable when it comes to finding culture-bound items and events in the history of the language bearers. Besides, comparative method is thought to be invaluable while comparing phenomena of three languages belonging to different language families, respectfully Turkish, Romanian and English. Another essential method used in the study is structural-grammatical analysis which is used to establish and investigate the connection between the direct meaning of phraseological units' prototypes based on culture-bound items and events of three language bearers, and the phraseological units' transferred meaning.

Sampling method was used to choose Romanian, English and Turkish phraseological units from authorized dictionaries, such as "Brewer's dictionary of phrase and fable 19<sup>th</sup> edition" [5], "The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms" [6], "Aksoy O.M. Atasözleri ve Deyimler Sözlüğü" [7], "Tuğlacı, P. İngilizce – Türkçe Etimolojik Sözlüğü" [8], "Dictionar Onomastic Romanesc" [9], "Termenii privitori la culori în latină, cu referință la limbile romanice" [10].

### **RESULTS**

The results of the study revealed that a group of native English, Romanian and Turkish idioms is based on some culture-bound items and closely connected with events in the history of the language bearers.

The investigation has shown that culture-bound items and events in the history of the language bearers are considered as a fruitful source of a group of native idioms with a colorative component in the discussed languages. The folk origin prevails over other types of roots (e.g. historical, ethnical, etc.) in the investigated examples.

Americanisms, which are connected with the American culture-bound items and the history of America, are proved to be featured in the English phraseology. Moreover, the results thus obtained have indicated that there is a limited number of native English idioms based on events in the history of the former British Empire.

When it comes to Turkish idiomatic expressions, it is important to point out the great influence of the Turkish History. We discovered religious, military and historical impact on the major development of the phraseological units with a colorative component. Turkish phraseology may be characterized by the great role of symbols connected with Turkish culture-bound items and the history of the Turkish language bearers.

The meaning of Romanian idioms is not independent from the domains of knowledge that makes up a large part of the conceptual system and provides the link between the special idiomatic meaning and the etymological meaning. Therefore, as a conclusion of what we have tried to demonstrate so far in many cases what determines the importance of not only the general meaning but most importantly their etymological roots.

## DISCUSSIONS

In our paper, the focus of attention on native idioms with colorative component in the unrelated languages. Let us present and analyze the most vivid examples.

The idiom “the red rose” takes its existence starting from 1245. It was one of several badges of the House of Lancaster, and considered to be the most privileged one. This symbol was used by Edmond Earl of Lancaster and also it was one of the badges of Henry IV and Henry V. The symbol emphasized the royalty of the dynasty and showed their belonging to a high society [2:1378].

The historical event in 1725 when six companies of clansmen loyal to the king were raised and were stationed in small detachments to keep watch on the Highlands and the clans of Scotland is considered to be the basis of the phraseological unit “the Black Watch”. “Their tartan was dark, and their name, which was coined from a combination of this and their function, was used to distinguish them from the English troops performing the same duty. These companies later became the 42<sup>nd</sup> Foot and subsequently the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) [2:278].

The fact of the organization in the First World War of the so-called “Blue and Gray” from National Guardsmen of New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia can be considered to be the basis of this stable expression coining in American English. “It’s shoulder patch of blue and grey, the colours of the rival armies in the Civil War (1861-5), symbolizes the unity of former embattled states” [2:532].

As an example of an American idiom, the “black bottle” was used especially among tramps. “Black” conventionally connotes death, but the usage may also have been inspired by the 19<sup>th</sup> century “black drop”, a medicine that was essentially flavoured opium. Many tramps in USA in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were convinced that men in charity wards were given their “medicine” out of the “black bottle”, to save the authorities the cost of looking after them. [5:281].

The Romanian phraseological unit „*Țiganul*”, in translation “*the gypsy*” naming “Gabriel Bethlen *the Gypsy* (1580-1629)”, aka *Gabor Bethlen*, who ruled Transilvania for 16 years and was supposed to be named this way following his dark complexion. It is also known that his adversaries used to call him *the Gypsy* due to his dark skin complexion. Later on, according to some historians, the gypsies borrowed his first name Gabor as a tribute. In the Slang Dictionary of Romanian Language, the word “*gabor*” has more meanings, among them the one of “Hungarian gypsy”. Thus, in Transilvania, the term was used mainly to name generically the gypsy population, aka the Roma population [9:265][9:268][9:273]. There is also a legend within the gypsy tradition that says that the gypsies (aka *țigani*) who had an inferior status among the society have been released from slavery by Prince Gabor Bethlen who released and gave them the chance to develop and integrate in the society of that time. [9:602]

We may also find different Romanian surnames derived from the achromatic idiom colour *black*, as follows: *Negreni* (cities in the counties of Bacău, Botoșani, Cluj, Sălaj, Vâlcea, Olt, Gorj, Argeș, Teleorman and from the Cernăuți region, from Ucraina, but Romanian soil); the *Negreasca* antroponym and hydronym being present in different names of rivers or names of animals, especially dogs and surnames, such as: *Negrilă*, *Negrițescu*, *Negruț*, *Negruzzi*, the last one written with an Italian graphy [9:482].

The white color is considered to be the symbol of power in Turkey. Major Commanders of the Turkish forces in order to distinguish their soldiers dressed them in white uniforms. During the war between Turkey and China, Chinese people could figure out how many Turkish soldiers were killed. Besides, before the war, Turkish soldiers gave a vow of loyalty being dressed in white. In front of their head commander Alp-Arslan, each of them repeated the following vow: if I die, let my uniform be a shroud. These words proved their serious intentions and the soldiers' vow. Moreover, the white colour is associated with tidiness. For instance, "ak gün ağarır, kara gün karartır", in the meaning of honorable and happy life brings to a positive thoughts, whereas thinking negatively brings to unhappy life [8:27].

Some native Turkish phraseological units with colorative component are referred to the Turkish flags, since ancient times symbolizing the guardian spirit. For this reason, the red colour is perceived as a spiritual and national colour in Turkish culture. The phraseological unit "Türk'ün gözü aldadır" in the meaning of "the eye of the Turk chooses the red colour", shows the importance of the colour "red" in Turkish culture. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Turks began to use the word "al", literally "red", both as a name of a colour and as the synonym of the word "flag" [8:254].

There are many Turkish idioms which were used in the earliest Turkish legends. One of them is devoted to a love story with two flowers –the heart's ease and the tulip. Flowers are always associated with love and respect in the Turkish literature. One spring morning these flowers agreed to meet at an agreed hour. A girl was a symbol of a heart's ease and a guy was a symbol of a tulip. However, their meeting was not destined to happen – the guy missed the hour and when he finally reached the place, the beauty had already been frozen to death; her stem weakened and fell down on the ground. Thus, being heartbroken and disconsolate, he turned his bud black. Hence, the idiom "Menekşe ile Lale" takes its origin from the legend with the meaning of undying love.

## CONCLUSIONS

As the strongest tool of communication, language is deeply rooted in the reality of the culture, the life, customs and most significantly in the language of the people. The present contribution stands for a rich treasure of idioms, which can help broaden scientific horizon in phraseological aspect, arousing the curiosity and interest of researchers.

The comparative study of the idiomatic expressions with a colour component in such unrelated languages as English, Turkish and Romanian may present a great interest as well as a great difficulty, due to the high complexity of the issue, determined by native historical etymological origin.

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