

## THE POLYSEMY OF THE COLOUR TERM *BLACK* IN ENGLISH, RUSSIAN, TAJIK AND UZBEK

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### ABSTRACT

*Colours are omnipresent phenomena; it is almost impossible to imagine any objects without having a particular colour. Despite the ubiquity of colours their physiological perception is correlated with various cognitive and cultural conceptualizations across cultures. The present study aims to carry out an analysis of the polysemy black in four distant languages from lexicological and lexicographical perspective, starting with a semiological analysis. The lexicographic tradition in the treatment of black attempts to minimize polysemy, its senses are typically lumped, rather than split. The aims are to investigate the similarities and differences in the representation of adjectives denoting black across English, Russian, Tajik and Uzbek, and to compare dictionaries with respect to the way they structure their meanings. The study proposes suggestions for the improvement of the approach to black in general use and pedagogical dictionaries.*

### KEYWORDS

*black, white, polysemy, metaphor, metonymy, lumped, split, lexicographic presentation, dictionaries.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

We as human beings live in a colourful world that surrounds us everywhere we go and see. There is a vast variety of terms to describe the colourful things in the world, which carry different values across nations and cultures and allow us to draw the colour map of the world. Colour is a key component in shaping the linguistic and conceptual system of cultures (Sahlins, 1976). The ability to distinguish colour(s) is an important factor in a human's visual perception comprehension. Put differently, it is difficult to show one area of human activity in which the colour(s) factor would not participate at least. The vocabulary of colour terms had an important role for a long time in the culture of individuals, since this terminology was inherently associated with philosophical and esthetic considerations of society, and in this regard, the vocabulary of colour terms has become the center of research for many scientists in different disciplines such as anthropologists, physicists, psychologists and linguists, etc.

The present paper, based on a previous investigation which was related to the *white* colour<sup>1</sup>, tends to show that *black* colour exhibits a lot of polysemy in senses of literal, physical and of course with the rich funds of figurative usages in all four English, Russian, Tajik and Uzbek languages. Colour has a unique meaning for different languages and cultures, as in the process of the reality categorization, peoples often perceived colour(s) differently (cf. Whorf, 1956, 1940 p. 213, Brown & Lenneberg, 1954, Carroll, 1956, Lucy, 1997, Hardin & Maffi, 1997). The general picture of the colour term *black* is most often

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<sup>1</sup> Zayniev D. (2019). The polysemy of the colour term white in English, Russian, Tajik and Uzbek. *Explorations in English Language and Linguistics* 7.2:112-134. <https://doi.org/10.2478/exell-2020-0009>

carved with a negative meaning such as sadness, anger, unhappiness and darkness in all understudied languages and cultures. However, it can also have a positive connotation, for instance, the *black* colour of the body parts such as *black eyebrows*, *black eyes*, *black eyelashes* and *black hairs* are used to describe person's appearance in order to show the beauty/prettiness properties especially for females in combination with white skin particular in Tajik and Uzbek. The same configuration is true with the opposite view with the colour term *white*. Initially, it has a positive meaning, identified with light and is used to denote pure, light, joy and happiness from one side, and from other side it has a negative connotation, such as pale, fear, anger, for example, *white face* - pale face, and/or convey feelings of the strongest anger - *white with anger* in English, Russian, Tajik and Uzbek. Therefore, considering cognitive perspectives and the semantic of colour would of image, the paper starts examining Berlin and Kay<sup>2</sup>, as well as the other scholar's approaches. This involves exploring their explanations and findings regarding the crucial role of incorporating culture in the study of cognitive sciences.

The paper aims to explore the polysemy networks in all understudied languages, Tajik and Uzbek, which have not been investigated yet. It further seeks to, compare them with their counterparts English and Russian languages so as to show how the colour term *black* in these four different languages extend the polysemy structures of various meanings showing the similarities, differences and complexity functions and/or processes based on the monolingual and bilingual dictionaries data presentation. On the assumption of the aim, the current paper intends to find the answers to the following research questions:

- i. Are the meanings of colour *black* lumped or split i.e. generalized or detailed in all understudied language dictionary presentations?
- ii. What is the purpose of simplifying and limiting of the entire presentation of the meanings in a pedagogical dictionary?
- iii. Is the interpretation of the *black* polysemy provided similarly in the lexicographic presentation for all understudied language dictionaries?
- iv. How might be the colour term *black* improved and made more appealing for its presentation for learners and users of pedagogical/learner's dictionaries?

The present study consists of several parts which are structured by these research questions. In Part 2, I briefly introduce some theoretical notions including: universalism in colour research and the notion of polysemy with respect to lumped and split definitions. Part 3, presents the lexicographic analysis and the polysemy *black* in four the languages and cultures. Part 4, discusses the structure of the lexicographic representation proposals. Part 5, ends the with conclusions of the findings.

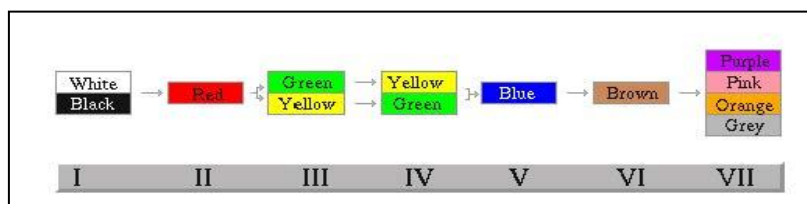
## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The classical work on colour spectrum presented by Berlin and Kay (1969) has been one of the fundamental exploration and findings to identify basic colour terms. When the theory about colour terms system was published, linguists started to more enthusiastically pay attention to colour terms in their studies. Berlin and Kay in the description, refer to 11 basic

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<sup>2</sup> Berlin, Brent, Paul Kay. (1969). Basic color terms: Their universality and evolution. Berkely: University of California Press.

colour terms (BCTs) viz. *black, white, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, pink* and *grey*. The first two and last colour in the sequence are achromatic, while the rest are related to chromatic groups. Further, they state that these colours exist in the greatest number of the languages. In addition, they hypothesized that such a set is possible to exist due to perceptual physiology of the humanity. Scholars also presupposed a possible way for a language to acquire basic colour terms. Figure 1 below represents the notion of the basic colour terms and colour acquisitions are arranged on a scale, with the seven stages reflecting the evolutionary order of their appearance in languages:



**Figure 1. The evolutionary order of BCTs presented by Berlin and Kay (1969)**

According to the Figure 1, all languages and cultures at the initial stage recognize *black* and *white* colours. If the third colour is included to the system, it is always *red*. In most of the cases it is followed by *green* and *yellow* as fourth (but not both colours at the same time), and then as fifth followed by *yellow* and *green*. The next colour universal is believed to be *blue*. On the pre-final stage, it is *brown* that enters and finally four more colours such as *orange, pink, purple* and *grey* enter the system to make the total of eleven universal colours. However, despite their popular and influential worldwide research investigation approach, it was contradicted and competed and/or refined by several other familiar scholars e.g., by Rosch, 1972, Kay and McDaniel, 1978, Wierzbicka, 1990, and the rest. Based on Rosch (Heider, 1971, 1972; Heider and Olivier, 1972) who provided convincing evidence for the universal position through linguistic and memory experiments, Berlin and Kay observed the partition between BLACK and WHITE as a strict demarcation between dark and light colour. Although she refined these two universal categories into DARK-COOL and WARM-LIGHT, when she asked her subjects, i.e., Dani speakers, who know only two colours *mili* (dark-cool: black, green and blue) and *mola* (warm-light white, red, yellow and pink) to examine her hypothesis on colour categories. Kay and McDaniel (1978) attempted to demonstrate that categories could be derived from neurological response (Steinwall, 2002). Put differently, they were highlighted that semantics of basic colour terms in all languages are the results of a common set of neuropsychological process where the differences in wavelength of light reaching the eye are transformed into response differences in the visual nervous system. According to Wierzbicka (1990), the universal pattern established on universal landmarks, i.e. the colour concept is interwoven in certain identifiable human experiences such as: day, night, fire, sun, vegetation, sky etc. All in all, these sequences of theoretical interpretation show that the abovementioned camps look at colour spectrums from completely different viewpoints.

The present paper focuses on Steinvall's methodological framework. Therefore, the study of meaning is closely connected with two observable perspectives in linguistic and conceptual categories. According to Geeraerts et al. (1994), these two observable phenomena are onomasiological and semasiological perspectives which play the crucial role in the study of meaning:

The onomasiological perspective	The semasiological perspective
It is a <b>concept</b> concerned with the expression and/or code: - Synonymy - Hyponymy - Levels of representation	It is a <b>linguistic form</b> concerned with the extension and delimitation: - Prototypes - Polysemy - Vagueness - Homonymy

**Table 1. Two perspectives on the study of meaning.**

Based on Görlach (1997), it is observed that these two perspectives correspond to the speaker-hearer situation:

*The contrast between onomasiology and semasiology can be seen as reflecting the achievement of the speakers in expressing in linguistic form what they wish to communicate, and that of listeners in decoding the message. (Görlach 1997: 120-121)*

The speaker's view, in a conversation, intends to determine the best way to formulate a particular thought in the onomasiological perspective. On the other hand, the hearer's view, which, in contrast, aims to find the best interpretation of a presented form with respect to the semasiological one (Steinwall, 2002). The former perspective takes a concept or an idea as its starting point, because it is concerned with how this concept can be expressed or codified, allowing one to choose from a number of different way. The questions of synonymy, hyponymy and levels of representation are of prime interest here. Additionally, this perspective encompasses the concept of sense and reference and/or mental phenomena, wherein individuals denote the referent using various expressions with distinct meanings. From a cognitive perspective, this phenomenon is frequently analysed in terms of *construal*, i.e. the way we choose to view a particular situation or entity. Based on Langacker's analysis, *construal* is a complex mental phenomenon which involves a number of cognitive abilities (Langacker, 1999: 5). In a broad sense it can also be argued that the onomasiological perspective is concerned with lexical fields. Returning to the study topic, colour terms typically refer to the colour domain, they may have much wider descriptions in order to appeal to the differences in controversy in colour studies. Berlin and Kay in their study, were not interested in the description of colour terms (i.e. the lexical field) as much as the structure of the conceptual domain COLOUR. In contrast, the latter perspective takes the hearer relation and a linguistic form which is concerned with the extension and delimitation, i.e. defined by one encounter with a form. Steinvall (2002) argues that examinations of this viewpoint regard prototypes, polysemy, vagueness and homonymy. The output of this aspect looks as:

- Form (one form);
- Problem (ambiguity and vagueness);
- Sense relations (homonymy, polysemy and monosemy);
- Lexeme status (two or more words and one word).

As far as colour terms are concerned, the prototypes are to a certain extent determined by our biological characteristics, namely, with the primary basic terms: *black, white, red, yellow, green* and *blue*. According to Kay and McDaniel (1978), foci are indeed entire categories and they could be derived from neurological responses to perception. Additionally, the same

fashion is true in explaining the universal pattern presented by Berlin and Kay which is also suggested by Wierzbicka (1990).

The next important notion in this paper is related to polysemy. As is widely known, polysemy has been intensively studied in several strands of linguistic research since the beginning of the 1980s. The standard explanation to the issue of ‘*What is polysemy?*’, can be found throughout linguistic literature. Polysemy is the phenomenon of a single word having two or more meanings, no matter how meaning is defined in a given approach. Consequently, if those meanings which are expressed by the same form, i.e., sounding and/or looking similar but unrelated to each other, then the notion will be a case of homonymy. Homonymy is one of the most important and intuitively most salient distinctions in connection with polysemy. Indeed, based on precise theoretical background the definition of polysemy is problematic. The classical viewpoint of Apresjan (1973) states that in linguistic theory, the notion of polysemy is divided into two types, i.e., regular (or systematic) and irregular (or non-systematic) polysemy. Systematic polysemy is where the relation between the interpretations  $a_1$  and  $a_2$  of a word A is the same as between the interpretations  $b_1$  and  $b_2$  of a word B, and there are parallel sets of meanings for several further words as well. The second type of non-systematic polysemy is specific to individual languages. In sum, there are several other authors who treat polysemy as a more general common term encompassing both kinds of polysemy e.g., by adjectival specification or by introducing new terms of polysemy. Based on Taylor’s (2003: 32) argumentation, polysemy becomes problematic when one wants to apply them to a set of data because it might seem straightforward as it is generally accepted as “the association of two or more related meanings with a single phonological form”. On the other hand, Blank (2003:272) stresses that polysemy should be seen “as a chain or a network of senses”, rather than as senses of words having “something in common”. Therefore, these kinds of issues also arise in relation to other notions namely, monosemy and homonymy. Taylor (2005) argues and provides analyses that it is easy to identify clear cases of monosemy e.g. *bird* in the sentence *There’s a bird in the garden*, for polysemy e.g. *neck* as *neck of the body* and *neck of a bottle* and for homonymy e.g. *die* which can be used as a verb meaning ‘*to stop living*’ or as a noun referring to a rounded cube used in various board games. Although there are less clear cases, e.g., *ear*, that is ‘*organ of hearing*’ and ‘*grain-holding part of cereal plant*’ which suggest that the boundaries between the three are fuzzy. The work on type modification by Steinwall (2002) is a relevant key to the discussion of the polysemy of colour terms for the current investigation. Therefore, based on his analyses, he identified many types of humans (race), natural objects and as well as artefacts by colour terms white, black and red. For instance, red in red hair and red beet are not limited with simple descriptive adjectival function, but these examples identify types as well as, i.e. a certain type of hair or particular type of beet (Steinwall, 2002: 97). Additionally, type modification construed as that the usage of the descriptive purpose is restricted only to a few terms, it is often used outside the domain of its normal designation and it is closely connected with some aspect of figurative usage (ibid. 2002: 98). For example, white and black people/coffee, white and red wine are more than just simple reference to colour. *Black coffee* is coffee without milk/cream, whereas *white coffee* contains milk, both of which are far from being prototypical. Similarly, the same is true for *white* and *black* to refer to people’s appearances, particularly when used in reference to highlight race, not skin colour. Therefore, when using colour terms in such a way, one can talk about figurative usage, i.e. the crucial key elements of the polysemy which are strongly motivated by conceptual mechanisms: metaphor and metonymy (also by blending). These mechanisms are the essential types of word meaning extension, which reveal how human perceive abstract (unfamiliar) via concrete (familiar) on the basis of bodily experience. The



concepts of metaphor and metonymy are so finely revolutionized by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). They emphasize that these two conceptual systems are not merely rhetoric devices as traditional studies regard, instead, the main role of metaphor and metonymy mechanisms function in human's conceptual system and play a significant role in shaping how people think and behave.

Based on these assumptions, it is apparent that when a colour term(s) or any kind of word has multiple related senses, it brings a number of serious problems for lexicographers because they have to decide how these related senses of a word have the appropriate definitions in dictionaries in general. All these senses 'collectively explain how that word contributes to the meaning of all the individual events' (Atkins and Rundell, 2008). According to Allen (1999) the general structure of the dictionary fall into two broad classes/categories, they are 'lumpers' (grouped or less detailed) and 'splitters' (enumerated or more detailed):

*The 'lumpers' like to lump meanings together and leave the user to extract the nuance of meaning that corresponds to a particular context, whereas the 'splitters' prefer to enumerate differences of meaning in more detail; the distinction corresponds to that between summarizing and analysing.*

These two categories are strongly connected with the coupled senses such as specialized and non-specialized, scientific and common, specific and general, technical and non-technical and rest related senses in order to identify any kind of word for lexicographers. On the other hand, lumpers and splitters categories are a serious issue for lexicographers defining words with both coupled senses above. Moon (1987) states that:

*A related problem occurs when words — or senses of words — have a specialist meaning for one group of people as well as a general meaning. To an astrophysicist space is a continuum, and the nearest synonym one can think of is everything; to most people, space is what lies outside the earth's atmosphere. To the former, this planet is part of space: to the latter, it is not. Two senses, or two aspects of the same sense?*

The present paper found that both types of senses are typically lumped rather than split in the case of colour terms. Based on linguist and the colour specialist Annie Mollar-Desfour for the TLFi (Le Tresor de la langue francaise informatise), she is also convinced that colour perception is culturally defined<sup>3</sup>. In addition, she defines that:

*As this is a language dictionary, and not a specialized work, [or] an encyclopedia, I purposefully chose not to define colors by their wavelengths. This holds no interest for a language dictionary. We are interested in words and culture, which is often contrary to definitions used by scientists, physicists, etc. (Personal communication, 29 September 2012)<sup>4</sup>*

This personal communication point is also true in the case of the Russian, Tajik and Uzbek dictionaries where all the definitions are related to culture which include less encyclopedic contents. Indeed, colours are a semantic domain with both scientific and

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg19426101-700-interview-shades-of-meaning/>

<sup>4</sup> Williams, K. (2017). Colors in French, American and British Dictionaries. *Lexikos* 27 (AFRILEX-reeks/series27: 2017): 540-560.

common senses. As Moon (1987) states, it is not necessary to split sense because the context needed to interpret the word. On the other hand, Bejoint (1988) adds that the meaning of scientific terms is largely independent of the context. For instance, when one asks for *a blue car*, he/she is not using the word blue to mean the long-wave of the visible spectrum, wavelength with a number of nanometer and/or nor to be interested in the fact that the colour term blue is a primary colour, belongs to cool category and so on. This is true in the case of the colour black with different shades as in: crow, charcoal, onyx, soot, leather, coal, and the rests are simple used as black. Therefore, all these detailed of definitions can be found grouped or lumped in some lexicographic presentations of different kind of colour terms.

### 3. THE LEXICOGRAPHIC TREATMENT OF THE POLYSEMY OF THE COLOUR TERM BLACK

As is seen from the previous section, most words are polysemous, since a single word has two or more meanings. Therefore, this section of the paper attempts to show how dictionaries of English and its counterparts Russian, Tajik and Uzbek divide the semantic/conceptual space of the colour term *black* in different ways in order to present a polysemic network. A basic question is what type of meaning or information is given in a typical entry of dictionaries in general. For instance, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, presents the following aspect of a word:

- Spelling (headword in bold);
- Frequency information (frequency of the word in spoken and written);
- Pronunciation (phonetic scripts);
- Word class (grammatical information);
- Sense(s) (given a functions and explanation the meanings);
- Collocations and idiomatic expression (combination with other words).

For any spelling (orthographic word), therefore, for which a lexicographer identifies multiple meanings, a decision must be made whether the different meanings arise from polysemy or because there are homographs. According to dictionary policy, the lexicographer applies the criteria of etymology and word class membership. If the criteria of etymology is satisfied, then multiple headwords are entered in the dictionary. If not, then a single headword is entered with multiple meanings or senses. Consequently, the general dictionary structure organization in the case of Russian, Tajik and Uzbek are different from English and as well as different from each other. However, the definition of the colour term *black* is mainly similar in general for all languages. The large explanatory (monolingual) dictionaries reveal the multiple roles of the word and the colour terms in the case of the current paper, and point out any chronological, contextual and regional restrictions on each function and process, that may not be obvious to a person from a different culture. Nevertheless, there is small, pocket, concise and/or electronic (the special application for smartphones) version of dictionary too. There is an issue with this type of dictionary, e.g., English *black*, Russian *чёрный* (chyorniy), Tajik *cuëx* (siyoh), and Uzbek *qora* (qora) which contains a less sufficient information. Or put differently, do the examples above give a sense that learners can use them as a native? The answer is probably no. The weight reason is that when learners from a different language and culture start to seek an equivalent of the colour term *black*, they would find only an analog from the study language, and, perhaps nothing more. Therefore, the treatment of the present paper is mainly focused on monolingual for all and bilingual especially for Tajik and Uzbek

languages, because of the reason that some meaning definitions are given in finer details. On the other hand, the paper tends to direct the attention to the differences and specific meanings (not say about similarities) across four languages and cultures. For the present section of lexicographic analysis of the colour *black* polysemy, the paper relies on the data from 4 monolingual dictionaries including 2 bilinguals, especially for Tajik and Uzbek as it has mentioned above. However, as a starting point for the analysis, the paper beginning from WEUD (Webster Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary) which serves as a skeleton and not as a pedagogical dictionary, is understandably a most split (i.e. detailed) one, and it distinguishes as 14 meanings of the colour term *black* in the sense of adjective (Figure 2 below). This approach is also true for its counterparts Russian, Tajik and Uzbek dictionaries (which are not for a pedagogical purposes), of course, with the differences in order and also what is split and/or lumped.

**black** (blak), *adj.* 1. lacking hue and brightness; absorbing light without reflecting any of the rays composing it, as the type on this page. 2. wearing black or dark clothing, armor, etc.: *the black prince*. 3. a. of, pertaining to, or belonging to an ethnic group characterized by dark skin pigmentation. b. pertaining specifically to the dark-skinned peoples of Africa, Oceania, and Australia: the Negroes, Negritos, Papuans, Melanesians, and Australian aborigines. 4. soiled or stained with dirt: *That shirt was black within an hour*. 5. characterized by absence of light; involved or enveloped in darkness: *a black night*. 6. gloomy; pessimistic; dismal: *a black outlook*. 7. boding ill; sullen; hostile: *black words*; *black looks*. 8. deliberate; harmful; inexcusable: *a black lie*. 9. without any moral light or goodness; evil; wicked: *His black heart has concocted yet another black deed*. 10. marked by ruin or desolation, as would be indicated in black on a map: *black areas of drought*. 11. indicating censure, disgrace, or liability to punishment: *a black mark on one's record*. 12. (of coffee) without milk or cream. 13. (of steel) unfinished; in the form in which it comes from the rolling mill or forge. 14. **black or white**, completely either one way or another, without any intermediate state. —*n.* 15. the color at the ex-

Figure 2. The colour *black* in the Webster Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary

In addition, a pedagogical dictionary characteristically tends to 'lump' senses and it serves to children, schools, and learners of English. The rest of the dictionary omits the less salient senses. The way senses are presented vary a lot from dictionary to dictionary. However, it tends not only to lump, but even more importantly, leave out certain senses, i.e. because of limitations and functions it simplifies the colour *black* or the content of any word in general. This can be clearly seen from Tab 2. below, namely, the colour term *black* tends to contain 6-7 other meanings when its presentations are compared in the Big Five (the five most important English monolingual pedagogical dictionaries). The basic meanings of the colour term *black* relate to the typical objects exhibiting it, particularly to human race, a dark shade of a colour, a traditional negative association: bad, evil or wick intensions, a general state due to emotion, the colour of food and drink absence of any addition e.g., milk and/or cream (opposed to white and green), while the last specific meaning is related to some culturally motivated sense.



<b>Lumped sense</b>	<b>OAD (online)</b>	<b>LED (online)</b>	<b>COED (online)</b>	<b>Macmillan</b>	<b>COBUILD</b>
<b>Dark</b>	(1, 2) <i>having the very darkest colour, like coal or the sky at night</i>	(1) <i>having a color that is darker than every other color, like the sky at night</i>	(1) <i>having the darkest colour there is, like the colour of coal or of a very dark night</i>	(1) <i>having the darkest color, like the sky at night when there is no light</i>	(1) <i>Something that is black is of the darkest colour that there is, the colour of the sky at night when there is no light at all</i>
<b>Skin</b>	(3) <i>belonging to a group of people who have dark skin, especially people who come from Africa; connected with black people</i>	(2) <i>someone who is black has dark skin, and is from a family that was originally from Africa</i>	(2) <i>relating or belonging to people with black or dark brown skin, especially people who live in Africa</i>	(2) <i>belonging or relating to a race of people with dark skin, especially people whose families were originally from Africa</i>	(2, 3) <i>something who is black belongs to a race of people with dark skins, especially a race from Africa</i>
<b>Food &amp; drink</b>	(4) <i>without milk</i>	(3) <i>black coffee does not have milk in it</i>	(3) <i>without any milk or cream added</i>	(3) <i>coffee or tea that is black has no milk in it</i>	(4) <i>Coffee or tea that is black has no milk or cream added to it</i>
<b>Sad</b>	(7) <i>without hope; very depressing</i>	(4) <i>sad and without hope for the future</i>	(4) <i>(bad) without hope</i>	(4, 5, 6) <i>making people feel unhappy or lose hope</i>	(9) <i>if you are in a black mood or feel black despair, hatred, feel very unhappy and depressed or very hostile and angry</i>
<b>Bad,</b>	(6, 8, 9) <i>full</i>	(5) <i>black</i>	(5) <i>literary</i>	(7) <i>literary</i>	(8, 10, 11,

<b>evil, wick</b>	<i>of anger or hate</i>	<i>humor/comedy humor that makes jokes about serious subjects</i>	<i>bad or evil: a black-hearted villain</i>	<i>evil or cruel</i>	<i>12, 13) if you describe a situation as black, you mean that it is bad and is not likely to improve</i>
<b>Other</b>	<i>(5) very dirty; covered with dirt</i>				

**Table 2. The colour term *black* in the Big Five dictionaries**

In WEUD (Figure 2 above), the sequence of meanings that are documented by numbers, differs from that in the Big Five dictionaries (Table 2). Nonetheless, certain apparent patterns exist. Overall, it appears that the arrangement aligns with the frequency of usage; in other words, more frequently used senses are presented before those that are less common. This assumption could likely be verified through a dedicated corpus study, examining the frequency of specific collocations in a corpus.

Practically, the explanation of the prototypical sense of the colour *black* in all dictionaries of the understudied languages starts with the literal meaning, which is related to physical objects, e.g. *coal*. However, in Table 3 below, there are differences not only in the order of frequency, but in the referenced objects and/or concept, perhaps due to cultural reasons, such as *night* and *soot* on the first of the main definition of each English, Russian, Tajik and Uzbek languages.

<b>Colour</b>	<b>Languages</b>	<b>Dictionaries</b>	<b>Prototype(s)</b>		
<b>B L A C K</b>	English	<i>LED COED (online) CCEDAL</i>	<i>coal</i>	<i>night</i>	<i>dark</i>
	Russian	<i>DRL, EDRL</i>	<i>сажа sadza 'soot'</i>	<i>уголь ugol' 'coal'</i>	<i>темный темный 'dark'</i>
	Tajik	<i>EDTL (old ed.) EDTL (new ed.) TRD</i>	<i>ангисит angisht 'coal'</i>	<i>торик torik 'night'</i>	<i>тура tira 'dark'</i>
	Uzbek	<i>EDUL (old ed.) EDUL (new ed.) URD</i>	<i>қозонқуя qozonkuya 'soot'</i>	<i>қўмир ko'mir 'coal'</i>	<i>қорамтир qoramtir 'dark'</i>

**Table 3. The prototypical meaning(s) of the colour term *black* in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> The following abbreviations are used to refer to dictionaries included in the study: *LED* – *Longman English Dictionary*; *COED* – *Cambridge Online English Dictionary*; *DRL* - *Dictionary of Russian language*; *EDRL* - *Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language*; *EDTL* - *Explanatory Dictionary*

But this is not the end of the entire picture of the colour *black*, because it is full with other semantic classes or groups of meaning through formulaic speech, i.e. collocations, idioms and proverbs as well and/or through the usage of figurative purpose (cf. Stievall 2002). Since the current paper provides the analysis of distant non-family languages, the variations presented are not only via lexical structure but due to specific culture distinctions. Traditionally, the colour term *black* is perceived mostly with negative connotation as mentioned above, therefore the symbols or concepts such as bad, evil, sad and dirty senses can be seen in all monolingual dictionaries in the studied languages and cultures. However, the list of concepts can be continued with other distinctions as in the case of Russian, Tajik and Uzbek. The distinctions show that colour black symbolizes hard, socially backward class of people and intensity on one hand.

Russian	Tajik	Uzbek
<i>Черная работа</i> Chernaja rabota 'lit. black work/job'	<i>Кори (меҳнати) сиёҳ</i> Kori (mehnati) siyoh 'lit. black work/job'	<i>Қора иш</i> Qora ish 'lit. black work/job'
<i>Черный ход/лестница</i> Cherniy khod/lestnitsa 'lit. black passage/staircase'		<i>Қора тер</i> Qora ter 'lit. black sweat'

**Table 4. The specific 'hard' semantic classes in Russian, Tajik and Uzbek**

On the other hand, instead of similarities in the senses, a special semantic class is also presented in Tajik and Uzbek. The examples below may evidence the specific semantic class of 'curse' which is absent in English and Russian languages and cultures:

Tajik	Uzbek
<i>Замини сиёҳ кашад</i> Zamini siyoh kashad 'lit. the black earth swallowed up (someone)'	<i>Қора ер бўлмоқ</i> Qora yer bo'lmoq 'lit. to be a black land/earth (wish someone to die)'
<i>Рўта боди сиёҳ хўрад</i> Ro'ta bodi siyoh kho'rad 'lit. the black wind ate (someone) face'	<i>Қораси ўчмоқ</i> Qorasi o'chmoq 'lit. to fade black (when someone disappear/die)'

**Table 4.1. The specific 'curse' semantic classification in Tajik and Uzbek**

Along with the hard life, these two idiomatic expressions are used in order to curse someone using the traditional symbolic sense, i.e. evil intention. However, as mentioned above, the colour term *black* symbolizes a positive connotation as well, e.g.:

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of the Tajik Language; TRD - Tajik-Russian Dictionary; EDUL - Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language; URD - Uzbek-Russian Dictionary.

Tajik	Uzbek
<p><i>Чашии сиёҳ / Сиёҳчашии</i> Chashmi siyoh/Siyohchashm 'lit. black eye' <i>Сиё-ю сафеди чашии</i> Siyo-yu safedi chash 'lit. A black and white of (my) eyes'</p>	<p><i>Қора кўз</i> Qora ko'z 'lit. black eye': black eye a sign of beauty; 2. for innocent and/or defenceless, unprotected, poor people <i>Кўзнинг оқу қораси</i> Ko'zimning oqu qorasi 'lit. A black and white of (my) eyes'</p>

**Table 4.2. The usage of specific expression for beloved child in Tajik and Uzbek**

These above expressions are used mostly for children, or for persons who are closer in spite of their good or even bad behavior/character. Considering all the examples above with the element of *black*, the whole picture of the polysemy network uses not only to present the traditional negative patterns: bad, evil, sad, hard life, work, time, emotions and curse; it is also rich with the positive notions whose definitions are motivated through metonymically and metaphorically in the four understudied languages and cultures.

#### 4. SOME MODEST SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE LEXICOGRAPHIC PRESENTATION OF BLACK IN PEDAGOGICAL/LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES

In line with earlier study on the polysemy of *white*<sup>6</sup> as, it is suggested that the improvement of the lexicographic presentation of a pedagogical dictionary can be realized by the following two general subtasks, i.e.:

- I. The order of the senses (the choice of senses and the degree of granularity);
- II. The generality and/or specificity of the senses (two more senses lumped into one or split into several).

The paper suggests that both subtasks play a crucial role for the lexicographic presentation of the colour term *black* (as well as the rest colours) in a pedagogical dictionary. Therefore, the former subtask can be integrated into the three small, but important functions:

- a. the frequency of use;
- b. the diachrony (the order of particular senses);
- c. the network of the related senses (to organize the sense(s) in some cognitively and psychologically plausible fashion).

In addition, the whole presentation is that all the three above mentioned functions might produce the same result, but this is not always the fact in reality. One the contrary, it is quite rare. From the viewpoint of the pedagogical dictionary, regarding the order of the senses, it would be rewarding to combine the point of a. (frequency) and c. (network relation) in an adequate form. However, the network of the related senses which are organized cognitively

<sup>6</sup> Zayniev D. (2020). The polysemy of the colour term white in English, Russian, Tajik and Uzbek. *Explorations in English Language and Linguistics* 7.2 (2019):112-134. <https://doi.org/10.2478/exell-2020-0009>

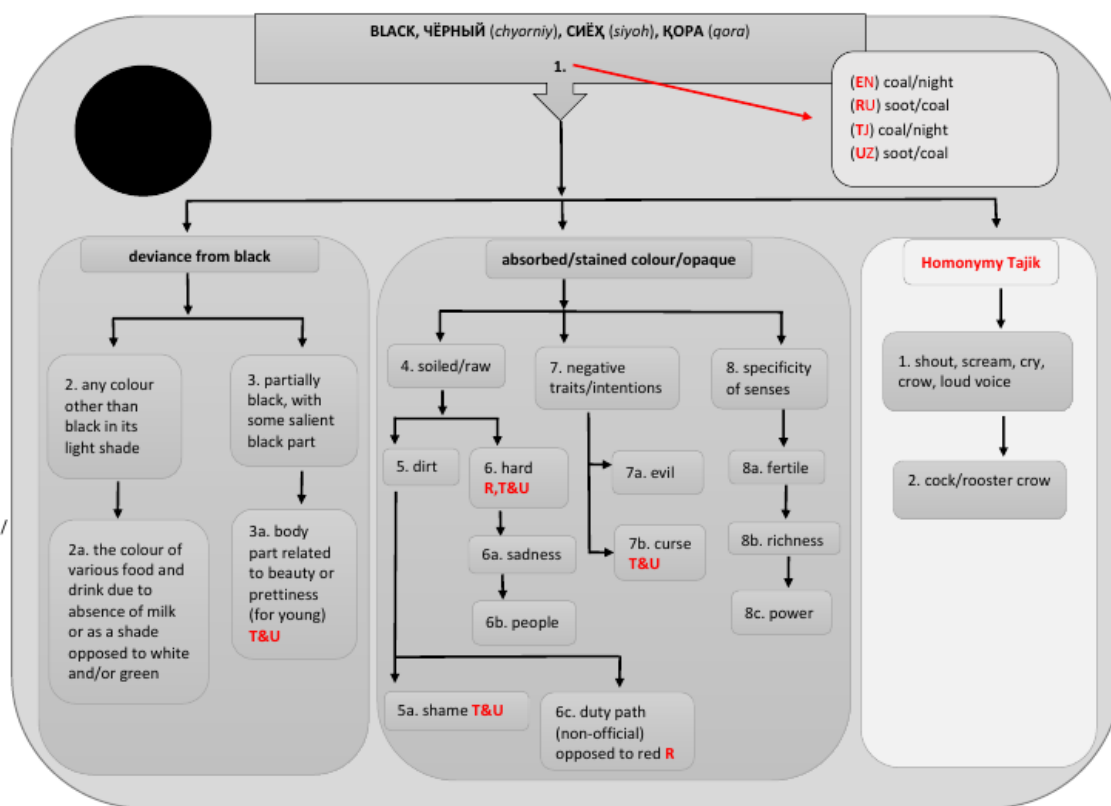
and psychologically may take precedence over the frequency. On the other hand, as can be observed in the second subtask below, the remaining one, i.e. b. (diachrony) and c. (network relation) are often converged in actual reality.

Therefore, for the subtask II, the paper suggests that, in the order of granularity, one might be, in part, determined in a cognitively plausible fashion by the function c. (network relation). By this, it explains that the general output might look like a “story” describing a “conceptual journey”, which appears to be a logical and convincing manner stepping from sense to sense, but which may exhibit forks or branching at certain points. The literal sense is on the starting steppingstone that one may find in most dictionaries under analysis, illustrated with reference to a prototypical object or substance saliently characterized by its colour. Along with this fashion, there may be some convergences and therefore one might choose two branches or paths, which is illustrated in Figure 3 below:

- the extension from the colour black (prototypical objects or substances);
- the absorbed, stained colour and/or opaque.

The deviations in general, between points in these paths and of the colour term *black* in the case of the present analysis are mostly of metaphorical or metonymic nature in all English, Russian, Tajik and Uzbek languages and cultures. In general, this is not so surprising in view of what is known about the development of polysemy over time. In actual reality, lexicography has always relied on these two basic cognitive processes, although they were not explicitly recognized as such. As pointed out by Geeraerts (2007), cognitive linguistics is naturally suited to function as the backbone of lexicographic enterprise. Therefore, the role of metaphor and metonymy in lexicographic practice has been highlighted in a series of monographs and articles, e.g. Nuccorini (1986), Moon (2004, 2005), van der Meer (1996, 1997, 1999) for metaphor, and Nikiforidou (1999), Wojciechowska (2007, 2010a and b, 2012, 2015), Sweep (2012), Brdar, Brdar-Szabo and Buljan (2001), Brdar (2002, 2005) for metonymy.





**Figure 3. The structure of lexicography presentation of the colour term *black* in pedagogical/learner’s dictionary based on the conceptual mechanisms of metaphors and metonymies**

The structure of lexicographic presentation is demonstrating that the two paths have a clear case of metonymic reasoning when it moves from the concept of being absorbance to being stained (see Figure 3 above). The first path is characterized by the deviance from the total *black*, shifts are metonymically motivated. The logic approach applies when the colour of various types of food and drinks can be saliently referred to by pointing out that it is not containing any other superfluous object (with colours), i.e. absorbed. It is clearly shown with the same opposed fashion which is presented with the colour term *white* e.g. *white coffee* (containing milk) or *white wine* (with white shade). So, *black* with absence of any addition, (i.e. sugar, milk or cream etc.) e.g. *black bread*, *black coffee*, *black tea* or with a black background of the label/tag on Coca-Cola Zero drinks on the surface which is covered the bottle, and/or some GMO products with black stripe might illustrate that that salient part/property stands for the whole. It gives a sense that metonymy assimilates a darker shade or a portion of the chromatic part (e.g. *brown* in fact) of the spectrum into its achromatic part for all languages in the present paper analysis. Additionally, it is also inferred metonymically that something that is soiled or dirty for all languages understudy when a colour *black* is used to refer to Category and Property ICM (Kövecses and Radden, 1998), as in PART FOR WHOLE: DEFINING OR SALIENT PROPERTY OF A CATEGORY FOR WHOLE CATEGORY. Furthermore, it is continued with the explanations that the concept of dirty is referred to as hard physical work

and it is usually for lower class (or with lower social status) of people who are doing a dirty job in the idiomatic expressions of Russian, Tajik and Uzbek languages and cultures:

Russian

(1) *Чёрная кость*

Chernaya kost'

'lit. About people of non-noble origin'

(2) *Чёрные люди*

Cherniye lyudi

'lit. A rural population (who are mostly doing hard physical job)'

(3) *Чёрный ход*

Cherniy khod

'lit. For the daily (not ceremonial) purpose'

Tajik

(4) *Кори (меҳнати) сиёҳ*

Kori (mehnati) siyoh

'lit. black work/labour' A work for the lowest class (social status) of people or hard work

(5) *Пули сиёҳ*

Puli siyoh

'lit. black money' A small amount of money for any kind of work (mostly for hard physical job)

(6) *Дегу сиёҳ жўшидан*

Degu siyoh jo'shidan

'lit. to boil black pot' To spend a day or life in general (most cases in the sense of hard)

Uzbek

(7) *Қора меҳнат (иш)*

Qora mehnat (ish)

'lit. black work' A work for the lowest class (social status) of people or hard work

(8) *Қора чақа*

Qora chaqa

'lit. black coin (money)' A small amount of money (or not have money at all)

(9) *Қора тер*

Qora ter

'lit. black sweat' To work in a hard physical job

From there it can be seen that the examples above are motivated by metonymically metaphor nature, since illustrating a job, may be reinterpreted as hard physical one, i.e. LIFE IS COLOUR, LIFE IS DARK, LIFE IS HARD, HARD IS DIRTY that perhaps a person with dirty clothes and who earned a small amount of money which are probably spoiled on dirt etc. Traditionally, the colour term *black* has mostly related with negative associations. It infers in a sense of evilness. However, the negativity further develops with the imprecation semantic category, which is specific only for Tajik and Uzbek languages and cultures, For instance:

Tajik

(10) *Замини сиёҳ кашад*

Zamini siyoh kashad

‘lit. the black earth swallowed (someone)’

Uzbek

(11) *Қора ер бўлмоқ*

*Qora yer bo'lmoq*

‘lit. to be a black land/earth (wish someone to die)’

The last column in Figure 3 above related to the specificity part which is mostly demonstrated with positive association. The difference is inferred that *black* colour for English and Russian use especially with the concept of ‘richness’, and the concept of ‘prettiness’ is for Tajik and Uzbek. Therefore, it is demonstrated that a cognitive linguistic approach that explores the figurative extensions of the senses of the colour term black through metonymies and metaphors emerges as a promising candidate for the basis of an innovative, psychologically plausible, and appealing method/technique in their lexicographic presentation.

There are two recent technical innovations already present in pedagogical dictionaries of English that paper propose to build on, i.e. integrate the cognitive linguistic network with these technical solutions. Specifically, they are:

1. the quick menu boxes in Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners at the top of articles on polysemous items (set in a different colour);
2. the navigating system employed by Longman Language Activator, with its overview boxes.

One of the major recent breakthroughs in the organization of the microstructure of a dictionary is the use of so-called meaning menus introduced in the second edition of MacMillan English Dictionary in Figure 4 below. Entries with five or more senses have a special meaning menu at the top of the article for rapid access to the correct meaning.



Figure 4. The quick meaning menu in MacMillan English Dictionary.

The other type of dictionary according to Figure 5 is related to Longman Language Activator (1993), which is basically an onomasiological dictionary, but its primary macrostructure is semasiological, i.e. it is alphabetically organized. This is visually signalled by a vertical bar in grey to the left of the list. Lexical items are listed in alphabetical order, followed by reference to one or more key words. At certain points, when it comes to one of its key concepts or key words, as they are called there, such as CELEBRATE, FAR, SAD/HAPPY, EASY,

FALT/STH WRONG, etc., the dictionary switches to its onomasiological structure that begins with an access map that helps the user find the right key word, followed by a meaning menu with numbered meanings to choose from, after which number sections follow. This means that this dictionary has a hybrid macrostructure, the alphabetical macrostructure serving as a carrier for a series of word/semantic fields, integrating the onomasiological with the semasiological perspective.

cavernous BIG 6  
**cease** STOP DOING STH 1, STOP HAPPENING 1  
**cease to exist** DISAPPEAR 3  
**ceasefire** PEACE/NO WAR 4  
**ceiling** LIMIT 1  
**celebrate** CELEBRATE 1

**CELEBRATE**

to show that an event or occasion is important by doing something special or enjoyable

- 1 to celebrate something
- 2 a special event that has been arranged to celebrate something

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 to celebrate something</li> </ol>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"><b>celebrate</b></td> <td style="width: 50%;"><b>mark</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>commemorate</b></td> <td><b>in celebration of</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>do sth in sb's honour/</b></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>honor</b></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<b>celebrate</b>	<b>mark</b>	<b>commemorate</b>	<b>in celebration of</b>	<b>do sth in sb's honour/</b>		<b>honor</b>	
<b>celebrate</b>	<b>mark</b>								
<b>commemorate</b>	<b>in celebration of</b>								
<b>do sth in sb's honour/</b>									
<b>honor</b>									

**celebrate** /'selɪbreɪt/ to show that an event or occasion is important by doing something enjoyable, for example by having a party [v I/T]  
*Congratulations on your promotion – we must go out and celebrate!* | **celebrate sth** *My mother bought a dozen bottles of champagne to celebrate my twenty-first birthday.* | **celebrate sth with sth** *Harry celebrated his thirtieth birthday with a meal in a posh restaurant.*

**commemorate** /kə'meməreɪt/ to do something to show that you remember, respect, and are grateful to someone who did something special or important in the past, especially someone who is now dead [v T]  
*The annual parade commemorates the soldiers who died in the two World Wars.* | *The concert commemorated the singer's first recordings which were made in 1946.*

**commemoration** /kə'memə'reɪʃən/ [n U] *Candles were lit in commemoration of Hiroshima's dead.*

Figure 5. The hybrid navigating system of Longman Language Activator.

Both these relations could be adapted graphically and content-wise in the form of boxes within boxes and integrated with what paper has suggested in Figure 2 above. This would be the top of the dictionary article followed by the usual rest of the information, with individual senses ordered following the cardinal numbers preceding the short definitions at the top. What follows is a simplification/reduction that probably would be adequate in the case of a pedagogical dictionary. The print version could contain the table with arrows showing extensions, as in the figures above, while in an electronic version the same could be achieved by means of the possibilities offered by the graphical user interface (GUI), i.e. by the change of colour, appearance or disappearance of parts of the structure on clicking or touching.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study has established that the colour terms for *black*, similar to that of the previous examination of *white*, belongs to key cultural concepts. In terms of importance, they are closely related to, if not equal to, the categories of space, time, and movement. The findings reveal that all speakers' understudied languages mostly use the two conceptual mechanisms of metonymies and metaphors which are strongly motivated by polysemy. Furthermore, the study tried to illustrate the lexicographic treatment of the polysemy of the English lexeme *black* and its counterparts in Russian, Tajik and Uzbek. There are lots of splitting and lumping senses, with more or less overlaps concerning the method of splitting and lumping as well as concern-

ing the order of the senses identified. This is quite likely to be found in many monolingual dictionaries of other languages. The same is probably true for the lexicographic treatment of other colour-denoting words. What is more, it is almost certain that it applies to the lexicographic treatment of any lexical items. It has shown that a cognitive linguistic account of the network of the senses of the colour term *black* is a promising candidate for establishing an innovative, psychologically more plausible and appealing method of their lexicographic presentation. The technical preconditions that combined in the paper proposal are already present in Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners in the form of quick menu boxes and in the navigating system employed by Longman Language Activator. The paper has tried to classify the collections, with the spontaneous approach to show not only the similarities and differences, but also the specific cultural values of each language. Additionally, it can be applied to other chromatic colours: *red*, *green*, *yellow* and *blue* as well. The paper proposes ways to further expand and enhance these approaches in both print and in electronic dictionary formats.

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