

Colours of the War: coloronyms in the political-military discourse

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The study examines textual and discursive peculiarities of the functioning of adjectives denoting colours in the political-military discourse. The research poses questions about how the deliberate saturation of texts with units of conceptual-imagery semantics – coloronyms – intensifies the sensory-emotional perception of information emphasized by the addresser.

The material was selected from texts available on the official website of the President of Ukraine in the section “Speeches” (Zelenskyy, 2023). The analysed content is multiformat: oral speech (with its recording posted on the President’s website), a written text of the speech in Ukrainian, and its English translation.

The method of exhaustive sampling was employed to select contexts containing coloronyms. 170 sentences containing 199 coloronyms in Ukrainian and their translation equivalents in English (adjectives *білий* – *white*, *блакитний*, *синій* – *blue*, *жовтий* – *yellow*, *зелений* – *green*, *золотий* – *golden*, *сірий* – *gray / grey*, *червоний* – *red*, *чорний* – *black* and their combinations – *біло-червоний* – *white-red*, *жовто-блакитний*, *жовто-синій* – *yellow and blue / yellow-blue*, *синьо-жовтий* – *blue and yellow / blue-yellow*, *чорно-білий* – *black and white*) were selected. The sampling period is from February 24, 2022, to December 31, 2023. The obtained data is illustrated and visualized with the chronocolorograms – diagrams constructed on combined chronological and quantitative indicators of the use of coloronyms in the examined texts.

The semantics of colour nominations are much broader than denoting the physical characteristic of a certain colour of an object, manifesting, among other things, through context and extralinguistic factors (speaker’s personality, social, historical, and political situation of text functioning, etc.). A significant place in the examined texts is occupied by coloronyms with emphasized national associations (e.g., denoting countries by naming colours of the national flags).

Diagrams built on the obtained data allow us to assert that the examined texts are a source not only or not so much of linguistic but also historical, political, social, and other data. The analysis of dominant colours in texts of high significance provides researchers with additional information about the situations of creation and functioning of these texts. It is revealed that the use of such expressive units with additional symbolic meaning focuses the addressee’s attention on the emotional component of

the message, enhances the impact on the reader/listener and directs their perception in accordance with the addresser's intention.

References

Zelenskyy, V. (2023). The Presidential Office of Ukraine. URL: <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/speeches>.