

Kazakh Ethno and Lingvocultural Ideology: The Symbol of «Blue»

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ABSTRACT The ethnonym of the word *Blue* has a symbolic feature in the Kazakh ethnocultural comprehension. Ethno-, lingvocultural description of the importance of reaching a symbolic rate of the blue color is illustrated in this paper: its meaning was analyzed in relation to customs, traditions of the Kazakh ethnos. For this, a cognitive description illustrating the linguistic symbol of *blue* has been analyzed and assessed via Ancient Turkic monuments (V-VIII centuries), poetry by zhiraus (XV-XVIII centuries), the school of writers (XIX century) and the heritage of classic literature (XX century). In other words, the researchers' target was to reveal the link between a man and nature, a man and *society, a man and mentality in the coloristic concept of blue in the Kazakh ethnoculture. In particular, the blue color gives an opportunity to reveal the link with Tengri (God of Sky), the Lord of Power as a symbol of clearness, holiness, stability and eternity.*

INTRODUCTION

A multilayered semiotic system serves to create a national image of the recognized and chosen world in the life experience. The importance of color vocabulary is clear in the comprehension of environment by the Kazakhs, in digesting of it in mind. The reason, it is difficult to consider and accept each state's history, culture, customs and traditions, belief and religion without colors. Colors accompany people from birth to death at different stages. In the rite of cutting off a *colorful* thread on toddler's legs, the existence of expressions like *white* death, *black* death, *red* death relating to a man's death, and many other coloristic connotations are noticed in the History of the Kazakhs.

A great attention is paid to the survey of coloristic signs with the aim of raising the national spirit, promoting culture, reflecting a linguistic ideology in a modern trend of anthropology. The origins of colors have their own stories for the World Science. The surveys of this kind are called the Color Science or Colorimetry. The main reason of a great attention to the survey of colors by many scientific trends lies in the prime functions for the society. Priceless materials are far useful in revelation of colors in the national life of the ethnos in ethnolinguistic science. In general, seeing the link between a language and a na-

tional spirit in the Science of Ethno linguistics by Humboldt stems from the idea that "a language is a constantly growing fortitude to express thoughts via words. In other words, each nation is limited within the frames of their language" (1984). The etymology of colors is covered in the historic dictionaries of comparisons, historic data. This time, the scientific paper by the scientist of oriental studies Kononov (1975), works by American scientists Berlin and Key (1969) can be particularly marked.

Many scientists connect coloristic names with psychology. Psychologists say there are colorful waves in nature, colors are an output of a man's brain and eyes. Sutton and Altarriba (2015) analyse in their works the link between colors and inner world of a man. According to them, a color can show different sides of man's moods.

Kaidarov describes with respect in his works, the concept of natural colors for Kazakhs from a scientific point of view. He states the significance of the social symbolism of colors and the survey relating to customs and traditions of an ethnos (1992).

The concept of the *blue* color in the Kazakh culture performs a great role in revealing the link between a man and nature, a man and the society; and a man and mentality. In the lexical unit of *Blue* in Kazakh definition dictionaries, the first

means color, the second - sky, air (The Dictionary of Kazakh Formal Language 2011). The meaning of the word *blue* as an original symbolic sign was used as well as a name of a phenomenon (sky, air), by comparing the blue sky with everything blue in the world, the necessity of the general name of “blue” is shown in the works by Kaidarov (1992) and Laulanbekova (2010). Whichever of the meanings appeared first, their formation in the lexical unit of *blue* is a disputable opinion for etymology. Definitely, Blue in the meaning of Sky is not just typical of the Turkic peoples. This meaning of Blue is known for many global languages. However, as a concept of a *blue* color, each nation provides various cognitive descriptions. Vezhbitskaya (1996) says clearly on this subject: In many world languages that are quite similar to English Language, *blue* are the words morphologically or ethymologically related to the word with the meaning of sky. For instance, *niebieski* in Polish is derived from the word *niebo* “sky”; *caerulus* in Latin is derived from *Caelum* “sky”. Such words like *blue*, *aoi* (Japanese) or *niebieski* are semantically connected with the concept of “colors”, but they are not equal in meanings, for the scale of usage – each word has its own meaning. *Niebieski* relates to more light – or middle-light blue colors, not to dark blue (in English all of them are called *blue*). If the symbol of *blue* is considered to be common for all Turkic languages and the lexical unit of *Sky* was included into Turkic languages in later centuries, therefore, an objective meaning (sky, air) of *blue* was defined first.

METHODOLOGY

While writing this paper, an ethnolinguistic method was used. «An Ethnolinguistic method is an interdisciplinary integration of methods, techniques and procedures used to study a wide range of issues related to the relationship between a language and an ethnos with the aim of identifying typical correlations between ethnic and linguistic processes for consolidation of ethnic communities and scientific prediction of an ethno-linguistic construction» (Komarova 2012). This method can be considered to be complex. In its content, it includes separate comparative and historic, structured, communicative and pragmatic, cognitive and communicative, socio-linguistic methods. Generally, due to the aim of research of the paper, cognitive and communica-

tive, ethno-sociological scientific methods were used. To support the aim of this research, ethnolinguistic materials were extracted about the State Program “Cultural Heritage” of the Republic of Kazakhstan from the period between 2004-2013 from the scientific publication of “Ancestors’ Words” released in 100 volumes, upon the State Program “Cultural Heritage” of the Republic of Kazakhstan within 2004-2011 and from the “Dictionary of Kazakh Formal Language” released in 15 volumes, Kazakh Phraseological Dictionary and Ancient Turkic Dictionary. Over 300 thousand card-indexes were gathered on the concept of “Blue”, and linguistic units with a symbolic meaning were classified separately. Besides, with the aim of identifying a cognitive model of the concept “blue”, an ethnosocial questionnaire was conducted. In total, 100 Kazakh speakers were involved in this questionnaire, 40 of them were students, 30 of them were pre-retired and 30 of them were retired. Compared to young people, middle aged people were more active while conducting the questionnaire. Their examples were more interesting and genuine in providing ethnocultural descriptions of the blue color.

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

Humans do not see the world in one-colored rank. They learn the world via various colors. Therefore, everyone, every nation has specific colors. The colors gain a symbolic value while learning life philosophy. The blue color is of great importance in the Kazakh ideology. The *blue* color has had a symbolic value since ancient times by our ancestors. Ancient Turks called themselves *Blue Turks* (Gumilev 2003). Here, *blue* symbolizes the concepts of Sky, *Tengri* (God of Sky), Upper World. The idea of the worship of the founder, Blue (Sky) stems from Tengriism. The Sky (Blue) was called the Upper World, the Land – the Middle World in accordance with the concept of Tengriism, the Middle World (Land-Water) was considered to be dependent of the Upper World (the Sky, the Blue). “The top saint -the God of Sky – Tengri was honored by ancient Eurasian Turks” (Gumilev 2003). The Kultegin monument proves the following lines “*In the past, when the blue sky was formed on the top, black ground at the bottom, mankind was formed between them*”. Scientist Gumilev stated that *Blue Tengri* (God of Sky) was not just a sky, but had a different meaning of a saint attribute-sunbeams (2003). The

nomadic Kazakhs knowing the eternal sunbeams coming from the Blue, the Sky particularly honored and considered the Blue as their Lord. The theory of Tengriism is explained in the Kazakh philosophy in the following way: “the feature of the Turkic ideology is to honor the Sky, the Turks considered the Sky as Upper God, no one else is considered to be Upper. Therefore, they named the top of the mount Khan-Tengri. Here, the true worship of the Sky and His spiritual symbol is clearly seen here. The life feature of the Nomadic Turks and farmers was a feeling of being under control by God from the sky all the time and it influenced in maintaining the right route on Earth. By means of continual observation of the Sky, the steppe dwellers could identify the right route to travel. The knowledge of celestial bodies enables to observe the real nomadic life. Tengry-Sky is God, Truth and the symbol of assembly” (Orinbekov 2005).

The parts of the world are considered to be rectangular in accordance with the ancient Turkic mythic ideology and have various symbolic meanings. For example, east is ranked as *blue* (the symbol of a dragon), west as *white* (the symbol of a tiger), south as *red* (the symbol of a gopher), north as *black* (the symbol of a snake) in ancient Uyghur manuscripts. East ranked as *blue*, west as *white*, south as *red*, north as *black* were based on alternation of day and night in the nomadic Kazakh ideology. Ancestors regarded blue as sacred, therefore they honored east. They said prayers to the east, the doors of the researchers looked out on the east. Here, it is clear that the worship of Sky, *Tengri* (God of Sky) stems from the blue color.

In addition to the general meaning of the blue color in modern cultural and linguistic ideology of the society, this term, apart from a coloristic meaning, has a few meanings relating to myths. The original word, *Blue* proves relevant holiness, power and means “root”, “home”, “origin” in ancient Kipchak. *Blue* as well was used in the meaning of kinship for ancient Turks. For instance, the saying *who is your blue?* From “the Dictionary of Turkic languages” by Kashgari means where *do you originally come from?* Moreover, there are a few meanings of the word *blue* in this dictionary by Kashgari, one of them is the Sky (1997). Valikhanov in his paper of “Remains of shamanism among the Kirgiz people” stated that “the Sky is the greatest power in shamanism. There’s a view that Blue Tengri and Blue

Sky are similar words” (1985). *The faith has not lost its significance so far.* At the beginning of the XX century, the Kazaks put up domes on the top of the graves of saint people and painted them blue, by means of which they invented the model of the world: a dome representing sky illustrates four parts of the world and rests on four columns. On the basis of this tradition, the *blue* color for all Turkic - related peoples means height, dream, antiquity, and purity of sky.

The verbal art clarifying the Kazakh national ideology stems from the ancient Turkic culture and the national thinking and feeling are kept in literature - poetry. “Blue” in poetry is used in the meaning of nobility symbolizing sky, air.

One of the most profitable ways of passing national manners of a nation precisely from generation to generation is known as a linguistic phraseological and semantic system. The reason, a phraseological, paroemiological store of every language is an accumulative cultural code of mentality and religions, customs and traditions, beliefs and trust of an ethnos living in this language. A phraseological layer derived from the lexic unit of blue in the meanings of sky, air in the linguistic image of the Turkic world makes a great contribution to the viability of the language (vitality). For instance, in the Dictionary by Kashgari: “*Kekke suzsa a jyzge tılwyr: Kekke çdzca uyze myuyr – If you spit to the Blue, hundreds will suffer. (A man spitting to the Sky gets it back to the face)*” (Vol. II, 1997). This proverb means “If you do harm to someone, the same will happen to you”. *Blue* with the meaning of Sky, air relevant to this paramiology “*êisi göge tükürse yüzüne düser*” in *Modern Turkic* “*A man spitting to the Sky gets it back to the face*” is precisely used in this meaning.

The Turkic world system is abound with a phraseological, paramiological store derived from *blue*. The concept of blue in steady compound expressions in the Kazakh culture such as *the worship of Blue Tengri, blue wolf’s offspring, being cursed by the Blue, turning to the Blue, blue curse (big curse), saying prayers to the Blue, talking to the Blue,* and so on is used as the meaning of God, Tengri, Allah and symbolizes eternal power, vitality. They are not related to the coloristic rank. Abai said:

I turned to “Allah” saying / Praising His Power. He is grateful to us, / It is not hard to us. The occasionalism of *turning to the Blue* in the great writer’s discourse illustrates “the worship, devotion to God”.

There were samples of gratitude, blessings and curses devoted to God among the Kazakhs (Turks). *Tengri* is an ancient Turkic word. In Altai languages, it means “sky”, “blue”. In “Kazakh phraseological Dictionary”, the phraseological layer related to the blue color is shown in the expressions: *opening a blue door* means “God Save, God help”; *flying in the blue* – “Being happy, successful, reaching an aim”; *blue invectives* – “blue curse (big curse), God curse you”; *being cursed by the Blue* – “Being cursed by Allah”; *blue invectives* – “God damn you, God bedevil you, *Tengri* curse”; *pouring milk into the Blue* – “insulting, cursing from the bottom of the heart” (2005). Analyzing distinctly these extracts, the verbal meaning of *blue* is used both in creating positive/negative images of power by both grateful and accursing *Tengri*(God of Sky). In other words, everything monitored by the Upper World – *Blue Tengri*(God of Sky) is based on the Turkic ideology. Therefore, the ancient Kazakh established ideology relating to the blue color concerns the idea of prosperity as well as considers one of the basic concepts (Baskakov 1984).

In the comprehension of the ancient Turkic people, Space was considered as a flat and inclined plain. Multy- storey models of Space existed in the Kazakh ideology. The expressions kept in the linguistic storage like *seven blue layers*, *seven planets* are derived from this ancient comprehension. Hence, blue is a symbol of eternity. The phrase *nine blue layers* is depicted in the linguistic image of the Turkic world. For instance, phrases like *seven blue layers* in Kazakh, *yedi kat gök* in Turkic were linked to seven layers of the God of Blue (the Sun, the Moon, the Venus, the Red Star, the Jupiter, the Saturn and the Mercury). The paramiologism “*The value of the Blue should be increased*” informs about the acceptance and analysis of spiritual value of the Blue. Here, as a genuine basis, the worldwide light and the granted light with gratitude by the Creator is the acceptance of an internal secret writes Kokumbaeva in her special research work of *Tengri* in the Science of Culture (2012).

Considering the significance of the blue coloristic unit in the national image of the Kazakh world, its widening, an entire conceptual model forms. For instance, the concept of blue in ethnoculture, first of all, in addition to the meaning of sky, air, reveals the symbols of purity, holiness, superiority. Moreover, youth, temper, love (blue feelings (new feelings), *blue affection* (great

affection), *blue dove*, *blue sky*); wealth (blue coated, blue booted); opposite silly, irritating (*kok doli* /*blue rude* (extremely rude), *kok milzhin* / *blue talker* (big talker), *kok zhalkau* / *blue lazy* (big lazy), *kok mi* / *blue brain* (empty-headed), *kok bet* / *blue face*(completely impudent), *kok ail* / *blue rude* (extremely rude) cognitive models of blue can be marked. These are the responses to the questionnaire by groups. A group of students who participated in the questionnaire considers basically the blue color as a symbol of sky and love. To be precise, about 70 per cent of the students attributes the blue color to the Sky, God. And 12 per cent in addition to the sky recognizes love as well. The comprehension of the *blue* unit is large for the pre-retired and retired. In their comprehension, the blue color relates to Kazakh, Turkic terms, and they comprised 92 per cent. In the ethnocultural comprehension of the people of this age, *blue* does not have just a positive meaning but a symbolic negative one. Respondents aged 30 – 60 responded in the following way. For instance, they used the blue unit in the meaning of an impudent, insolent, stubborn woman (idioms like *kok doli* (an impudent woman), *kok shaitan* (blue devil), *kok bet* (impudent), *kok sokkir* (big curse). Elderly Kazakh respondents aged 60-80 used more positive than negative meanings of the blue color. They showed excellent knowledge of a widespread use of the idiomatic layer of the word *blue*. This index illustrates excellent knowledge of ethnoculture by the Kazakhs.

The blue color of the cloudy sky expresses the clear sky, growing greenery world, deep water in the Kazakh ethnoculture. It was particularly valued in the Kazakh ideology and considered to be completely sacred and had a big ethnocultural meaning. “The yurt represented by three parts in the Kazakh ethnoculture (seven layers of the ground, seven layers of greenery and top of the ground) is served as a small pattern of the big world and equaled to a blue dome of *Tengri* and had a great power. The top of the yurt, *shanirak*, is considered to be the most sacred” (Seidimbek 2001). Likewise, *kok shikti* in the Turkic ethnoculture (the Blue has appeared) does not mean the color but the appearance of grass. If Blue *Tengri* is the start of the world, the word *grass* along with *blue* symbolizes the start of spring, beginning of a new life.

A big well-built, long crested, leading, very brave particular wolf distinguished from others

in the comprehension of Turkic people is called *kokzhal* (*blue crest*). *Kokzhal* is an euphemistic name of a wolf in a traditional surrounding. There are plenty of views on naming these wolves *kokzhal*. There is a saying among the Kazakhs «the strong and fierce wolf called *Kokzhal* has a long crest from head along the spine. There are also terms describing a strong wolf as a *blue crested wolf* which can skillfully attack a horse and drag away a sheep and form new words like *Kok Bori* (Blue Wolf) and *Kokzhal* (a blue crested wolf). So, the crest symbolizes power, strength, authority among the Kazakhs (a crested horse, crest-headed horse). *Kokzhal* expresses such qualities as gallantry, bravery, courage, superiority and sometimes violence. Relating to it, typically Kazakh well-built, authoritative heroes were sometimes called *kokzhal*. The symbol of the wolf converted into dexterity and power was related to males in a traditional awareness (the encyclopedia of the “Typical system of Kazakh ethnic categories, terms and names”).

The ancient Turkic tradition of paying last respects to a deceased man and the funeral customs of noble Kazakh descendants were accompanied with the tradition of hanging up a black cloth. The black cloth hung up on the left of the dead man’s house differed in accordance with the origins and age of the deceased (Kenzheakhmetuli 2007). For instance, if an old man dies, then it is a white cloth; if a young man dies – a red one; if a middle aged man dies, a black and red-sided cloth would be sewn. The deceased man’s elderly children and his younger brothers wears red kerchiefs before the burial. The North Kirgiz wear white, blue or green kerchiefs in accordance with the deceased man’s age. Kirgiz women wear *blue* or green dresses for forty days. In Uzbek ancient customs and traditions, if a male died, his widow and mother wear blue dresses and blue pants and white kerchiefs to express grief (Kazakh traditional culture from the Collection of Kunstkamera). The widow and mother wear blue outfit. The following year after the man’s death, relatives are invited to the house and his/her black clothes and shoes would be replaced with white ones.

It can be clearly concluded by studying the symbolic meaning of the ethnocultural unit of *blue* that the linguistic image is common in the Turkic world. In other words, the Turkic common resemblance of roots is life-long and co-

exist eternally. The word *blue* as a symbol of clearness, holiness, stability and eternity is related to Tengri, the Lord of Power. In fact, ancestors aspiring eternity not by chance named themselves the Blue Turks. In fact, ancestors thirsty for eternity called themselves Blue Turks knowingly. According to scientist Gumilev, “Living under the blue dome of the eternal Sky ancient Turks called their state as an “Eternal State” (Gumilev 2003). The color of the flag can be explained by its resemblance with the Blue Sky as a symbolic sign by the Kazakhs as the Lord of stability and eternity.

DISCUSSION

Taking into consideration the whole XX century, it was hard time to the Kazakh ethnos to reside. This issue is proved by history. Sarsambekova shows precisely in her surveys these hard times for Kazakhs: “The last decade of the twentieth century was a difficult period for the people of the USSR. The Collapse of the USSR had the following consequences: formation of independent states, migration processes, which involved millions of former Soviet citizens, westernization and globalization, which at the level of everyday consciousness is seen as Americanization” (2014). In other words, toughening the migration regulations at the end of the XX century, the rapid development of globalization issues led to a search for ethnocultural genesis of the Kazakhs. The whole nation proceeded to the exploration of their History. Scientific research methods altered, a scientific paradigm proceeded to anthropology. From this point of view, studying the coloristic lexis again, the survey of the symbolic role is a particular field for the nation.

By reporting the rich coloristic lexis of Kazakh, Kaidarov named basic colors. He showed the list of first 5 more frequently used colors: first - *black*, second – *white*, third – *blue*, fourth – *red*, fifth – *yellow* (1992). However, the blue color is on top of the list if the role of independence years is taken into account. Along with gaining independence, the Republic of Kazakhstan marked its state flag blue. That is not by chance. Ancient Turks (Kazakh) called themselves Blue Turks. Nowadays, the Kazakh ethnos searches for the real ideology of this. Mazhitaeva who studied the concept of colors (2013), shows the general role of enlarging national vocabulary: «specific expressions, idioms and proverbs are

used relating to various ranks of a certain color in a language. They can provide social and historic, emotional and mental information of a nation in the past”.

Sutton and Altarriba consider coloristic names as an advertising and informational tool introducing the nation's says about its significant role in intercultural communication (2015). The researchers agree with this explorer's opinion and put the research on top. Studying the «Blue» color, we concluded that as a tool, it can introduce ethno-, -lingvocultural world of the Kazakh nationality.

CONCLUSION

The highly intelligent, educated Kazakhs could form a conceptual image of the world. Definitely, not all peoples can illustrate the picture of the fantastic world. This time, it can be particularly noted that the Turks (Kazakhs) with an excellent knowledge of space boundaries had “their own science of space”. The lexic role of the blue color is of great importance in revelation of the ethnoculture on space boundaries of the intelligent Kazakhs. Taking into account the History from ancient Turkic times up to present, the Kazakh national image is directly represented by the *blue* unit. The coloristic lexicology of *blue* can be considered as one of the indexes of the Kazakh great knowledge. It is proved by the blue color of the flag of the entire state of the declared Republic of Kazakhstan. The idea by ancient Turks aimed at mankind's eternity by maintaining its values of civilization is reflected on today's program of Kazakhs “the Strategy of Kazakhstan – Eternal State.” If a language is considered to be the prime condition of a social necessity, a linguistic image in anthropologic paradigm of the Kazakhs in modern science reveals its ethno-, Lingvocultural function.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In terms of this issue, the coloristic lexicology within scientific aspects is about to be widely analysed in intercultural communication, conceptology, ethnopsychology and ethnoculture. The continual exploration of the coloristic concepts including the symbolic *blue* illustrating the national ethnoworld helps to comprehend mankind's inner world. Creating an ethnolinguistic dictionary of colors seems to be very essential.

For that reason, a unit of the blue color in Turkic languages is targeted to be classified into one system within forthcoming years. This issue is considered to be solved in future.

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