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## ЯЗЫКОЗНАНИЕ И ЛИТЕРАТУРОВЕДЕНИЕ

УДК 81'371

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AMBIVALENT PERIPHERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONCEPT "YELLOW"  
IN THE ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN LINGUISTIC CULTURES<sup>©</sup>

Concept has multi-component and multi-layer structure that can be revealed through the analysis of the linguistic units. Elementary units of meaning - *semes* - represent in speech some cognitive characteristics (concept *microcomponents*) forming the concept contents [8]. Binding conceptual characteristics form *the core of the concept* (Rus. *ядро концепта*), i.e. its *intension* (Rus. *интенционал*), while its *peripheral characteristics* represent its *implication* (Rus. *импликационал*), i.e. is a complex of characteristics implicitly connected with its intentional core with varying degrees of probability [6]. Both the core and peripheral parts of concept include so called *macrocomponents*: image component (Rus. *образный компонент*), encyclopedic area (Rus. *энциклопедическое поле*) and interpretative area (Rus. *интерпретационное поле*). *Image component* includes units of nonverbal universal object code (Rus. *универсальный предметный код*) that are visual images forming in human mind in the process of environment perception [3]. *Encyclopedic area* of concept includes characteristics that reflect conceptualization of proper ontological features of a phenomenon distinguishing it from similar objects and phenomena. Encyclopedic data are adopted by language speakers through personal life experience in the process of practical interaction with a conceptualized object or phenomenon. *Interpretative area* is a complex of characteristics interpreting the image and encyclopedic contents of the concept in different ways and representing their practical conceptualization by human mind [11].

Differentiation of characteristics in the structure of colour concepts we offer to make as follows. *Core conceptual characteristics* (CCC) include those reflecting colour features of conceptualized objects without any additional meaning. *Peripheral conceptual characteristics* (PCC) interpret *why* a certain object is yellow. The basis for this differentiation is explained below. Visual images (units of universal object code) always include a colour component. Sensuous perception as the first step in the world cognition does not imply any conscious interpretation: the sun is yellow just because it is yellow but not because it is "the star at the center of the Solar System..." [7]. The first stage of interpreting why the object is of certain colour involves understanding of its ontological characteristics which are prototypical by nature. In case of colour concepts we speak about "sample" colours of objects, cf.: grass is green, blood is red, snow is white, etc. These universals form *the core* of colour concepts. Further understanding of the situation marked by the colour implies engaging of definite encyclopedic knowledge and practical experience of interaction with the colour both of individual and the nation. Moreover, interpreting the environment in general and its colour layout in particular we develop our own world similar to that objective one but not identical to it. These "polished by mind" meanings of colour form the concept *periphery*.

Manifestation of colour concept PCCs is connected to the ability of integration of colour images and abstract phenomena. This ability exists due to an associative and image-bearing link between phenomena of the physical world and abstract notions. For example, unnatural yellow colour of a person's face may be associated with the danger of some infectious disease contamination. Associative and evaluative components play special role in describing the peripheral area of the colour concepts, as «development of colour adjectives goes from specific to abstract, from colour meaning to evaluative characteristics of the world around realities» [10, c. 9]. Associative links give infinite amount of meanings and are motivated by both linguistic and extra linguistic factors. The interaction with the environment always involves certain emotionally evaluative relations to this interaction.

Language units reflecting perception and interpretation of different objects and phenomena include connotations that are not included in the lexical meaning of the word. Moreover, they do not represent any consequences or conclusions from that lexical meaning. According to R. Gläser, connotations may be of two types, *individual*, those appearing while listening or reading, and *cultural*, those mentioned in dictionaries as semantic attributes correlating to public values [13]. So, for example, H. Biedermann in his "Encyclopedia of symbols" interprets *yellow* as follows, "*Yellow. This colour is ambivalent. Light or golden yellow is solar. This is the colour of the Sun, intelligence, intuition, faith and god. Dark yellow means treachery, betrayal, jealousy, ambitions, stinginess, secretiveness, deceit, lack of faith*" [2, c. 362] (*translation - ours*).

Bright ambivalence of colour estimation exists in many European linguistic cultures. As an example we'll cite the fragment from the novel "Snake" by Malerba Luigi, where the associative and symbolic links of *yellow* are depicted very evidently. So, "*One mattress maker from Dutch Harlem, Joseph Gessner, bent to pick a yellow tulip and died of a viper bite. A yellow flower is long known to hide a venomous snake. Although not all people believe that where there is something yellow there always is a venomous snake and that the yellow colour is worse than Attila sowing death around him. They do not believe because gold is of yellow colour and the Sun is said to be yellow too. Disputing is meaningless. The yellow colour is maize, lemon, natural wax, gold and sun,*" say some people. "The

*yellow* colour is sulphur, fever, inquisition, jaundice, and Chinese people," say others. The case with the mattress maker from Harlem does not mean anything special and does not settle the dispute, maybe, because the newspapers do not pay it much attention or because even *yellow* tulip is nothing more than just a flower. *Yellow* electric sparkles are not flowers but just imagine how many people die of them! Anger, envy, jealousy are *yellow* too. The most terrible crimes are *yellow*. The sign of disaster and danger is *yellow*. If you add black to *yellow* you get the Underworld, as God teaches us. That's why it is absolutely useless to make any attempts at distinguishing *ochre* *yellow* from *straw yellow*, as some scientific specialists try to do" (translation - ours). The set of associations and estimations given in the passage is sure to reflect an individual author's perception of the colour (CONCEPT<sub>IND</sub> - according to A. A. Zalevskaya), which at the same time is a part of the whole colour world picture of the given linguistic culture, in general, and of the concept *yellow*, in particular (CONCEPT<sub>INV</sub> - according to A. A. Zalevskaya).

Such ambivalence in estimation of *yellow* unconditionally acknowledged by the authors of dictionaries and encyclopedias of symbols [1; 2; 4; 5; 9] becomes actual in the peripheral area of the concept. This actualization gives the bases for dividing all PCCs into three groups: PCCs with a negative estimation, PCCs with a positive estimation and PCCs with an ambivalent estimation. Realization of ambivalently estimated PCCs is contextually dependent. For example, PCC "Warning" (the concept "yellow") realizes the positive member of the opposition "good - bad" in case of "Warning about the absence of danger", cf.: Eng. <...> *yellow O flag* today means that the ship does not have disease aboard; it signifies "I request free pratique," which means I ask that the authorities in the port give me a clean bill of health (<http://www.crwflags.com/>). In the opposite case the negative member of the opposition is activated, cf.: Eng. In light of today's attacks in London, the United States government is raising the threat level from Code *Yellow*, or Elevated, to Code Orange, High ([http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/press\\_release\\_0700.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/press_release_0700.shtm)).

In this article we are going to present a detailed analysis of the ambivalently estimated peripheral area of the concept "yellow" in the English and Russian linguistic cultures. This is the area that is considered to reflect an individual colour world picture (CONCEPT<sub>IND</sub>) most obviously. While the core of colour concepts and PCCs with a negative/positive estimation reveal the colour world picture of the given linguistic culture (CONCEPT<sub>INV</sub>) to a greater extent.

The factual base makes up over 2773 examples of text realization of the language units with meaning "yellow". Our research [12] showed that 1600 examples (57,7%) activate the core area of the concept "yellow" while the periphery accounts 1173 examples (42,3%). Statistics reflects average data on both linguistic cultures, if it is not mentioned separately.

Prototypical units of universal object code forming the core area of the described concept include images of environmental phenomena that are divided into three macrogroups: "Environmental phenomena" (994 examples, 62,1%), "Artifacts" (336 examples, 21%), "Human being" (270 examples, 16,9%).

The colour yellow in its peripheral manifestation is evaluated mostly negative: about 50% of all examples are marked with the minus sign, while positively marked PCCs amount to only 10%. Moreover, the group of PCCs with a negative estimation is presented by a larger number of characteristics (13 characteristics, 56,4%): "Disease", "Age", "Danger", "Mud, dirt, dust", "Death", "Sensationalism, scandalousness", "Cowardice, meanness", "Treachery, jealousy", "Rage, fury, aggression", "Cheap object", "Boredom, melancholy, depression", "Separation, farewell", "Rotting". PCCs with a positive estimation account 9,6% (5 characteristics): "Maturity", "Pleasure, fun, holiday, happiness", "Democratic party loyalty", "Birth, youth", "Divinity" [Ibidem].

Realization of the PCCs with an ambivalent estimation is contextually dependent. The estimation can be expressed explicitly (in a close linguistic environment of the representative) or implicitly (through a system of symbols or associative relations). This group of PCCs includes 9 characteristics described below in detail.

**1. Peripheral conceptual characteristic "Autumn".** The structure of the described concept includes stable associations of *yellow* with "Autumn". Despite all diversity of autumn colours this one is estimated as prevailing. So, in the following example even though the aspen is described as *red in the bottom* and *still green in the top* this is the yellow colour that demonstrates the process of changes (*began to yellow from the bottom*), cf.: Rus. Вокруг стволов лежали широкие круги от палых листьев. Деревья начинали *желтеть* снизу: я видел осины, красные внизу и совсем еще зеленые на вершинах (К. Г. Паустовский. Желтый свет).

The connotative component of a colour lexeme depends on the definite period of this season. The end of summer and the beginning of autumn, so called *Indian summer*, is associated with *golden yellow* as the colour of ripeness, last sun rays and beautiful autumn leaves. In the story "The Yellow Light" ("Желтый свет") К. Г. Паустовский even compares autumn leaves with the Sun giving them similar functions, cf.: Rus. Я проснулся серым утром. Комната была залита ровным *желтым* светом <...> Станный свет - неяркий и неподвижный - был непохож на солнечный. Это светили осенние листья <...> От этого сияния лица людей казались загорелыми <...> Осень пришла внезапно. Так приходит ощущение счастья... (К. Г. Паустовский. Желтый свет). The autumn leaves are shining and seem making people's faces sunburnt. In contrast to a grey morning (*серым утром*) the yellow light of autumn leaves gives positive emotions (*the feeling of happiness*).

However a beautiful autumn does not last long. Indian summer quickly moves (*не шагает, а летит*) to "Age" (*безголовые леса, темные туши зародов среди седой от иньев отавы*) and then to "Death" (*перегорелый пепел лета*) of Nature, cf.: Rus. Бабье лето покидало Приполярье <...> В легком светозарном платье <...> не шагало, а *желтым*, выветренным листом летело это краткое приполярное лето <...> оставляя сзади хмарь, сбитых с места птиц, безголовые леса, темные туши зародов среди седой от иньев отавы <...> самое уже донышко его несмело подсвечивало перегорелым пеплом лета (В. П. Астафьев. Царь-рыба).

Yellow leaves falling down from trees serve as a certain link between late autumn and winter: cf.: Eng. ... *a yellow leaf, fluttering down, presaged the coming of winter* (G. Stratton-Porter. *Freckles*). Autumn in its *dark yellow* and *brown* tints symbolizes "Old age" of Nature while winter - its "Death" (*охладевшая земля, могильная тень земли*), cf.: Rus. *Чем ниже опускался лист, было ему падать все тягостней и тягостней: встреча с большой, почти уже охладевшей землею страшила его <...> но могильная тень земли, на которую предстояло лечь листу, погаснуть, истлеть и самому стать землею, неумолимо втягивала его желтое свечение* (В. П. Астафьев. *Зарески*). The ground covered with *dead flowers, yellow leaves* and *cold winter snow* seems to present the end of the life way (Winter), cf.: Eng. *Autumn flowers were dead and gone, yellow leaves lay rustling on the ground, bleak winds went whistling through the naked trees, and cold, white Winter snow fell softly down* (L. M. Alcott. *Flower Fables*).

Thus, the connotations of PCC "Autumn" depend on the definite period of the season: early autumn as a short prolongation of summer (bright golden tints) is marked positively, while the very end of autumn as the time closest to winter-death (dark yellow and brown yellow tints) is marked negatively.

**2. Peripheral conceptual characteristic "Warning".** The basis for all linguistic realizations of PPC "Warning" is some visual image attracting attention due to brightness of *yellow*, cf.: the amber yellow colour of traffic lights, yellow road signs, yellows police tape, etc. The linguistic material shows that this characteristic can have unrestricted amount of application points both with positive and negative connotations. The bivalent estimation of "Warning" gives the ground for dividing all the examples illustrating the mentioned characteristic in two large groups. Examples marked negatively are grouped in "Warning about danger" and "Warning about rule breaking"; while those marked positively join to "Warning about absence of danger".

**"Warning about danger"** can be connected with some threat to people's health and life. The brightest example of this PCC actualization is the colour-coded threat level system that aims to warn about any terroristic perils. *Yellow* indicates the *heightened* threat level, cf.: Eng. *US Security Threat Level set to Severe (red) for flights to England, Orange (high) for domestic flights. The GENERAL level is still at heightened (yellow)* (<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1680971/posts>).

"Warning about danger" is often represented through different highlighting tools, e.g. flags, signs, fences, barriers, etc. The most widely spread tools are yellow flags that were initially used to inform about contagious diseases (usually *yellow fever*) on board or in a hospital, cf.: *The use of the yellow flag (Yellow Jack) in the U.S. dates back to 1700's. The flag was used as a quarantine flag for ships suspected of carrying contagious disease <...> A yellow flag was also used to mark the location of hospitals* (<http://www.crwflags.com/>).

Nowadays the scope of application is much wider that gives the ground to treat it as "Warning about any kind of danger", cf.: Rus. *Желтый флаг - «Опасность»*. Флаг показывается сигнальщиками на постах наблюдения и информирует о возникшей опасности на дороге, запрещает обгон (<http://www.vexillographia.ru/avto.htm>). The phrase *yellow flags* can also be used metaphorically. In the example below doctors from all around the world are greatly concerned with the increasing number of children with diabetes. The results of the carried research must caution (*this is a yellow flag and warning*) officials about the necessity to fight with children's obesity, cf.: Eng. *Within 2 years, 8 of 34 children with metabolic syndrome developed type 2 diabetes <...> This is a yellow flag and a warning for public health officials and education systems to focus on reducing childhood obesity* (Medical News Today Journal. 03.07.04).

"Warning about danger" is also revealed through a system of images, cf.: *Она несла в руках отвратительные, тревожные желтые цветы <...> И эти цветы очень отчетливо выделялись на черном ее весеннем пальто. Она несла желтые цветы! Нехороший цвет <...> с желтыми цветами в руках она вышла в тот день, чтобы я, наконец, ее нашел, и что если бы этого не произошло, она отравилась бы, потому что жизнь ее пуста* (М. А. Булгаков. *Мастер и Маргарита*). The yellow flowers against the background of Margarita's black coat cause disgust and anxiety (*отвратительные, тревожные желтые цветы*) and make the Master think about possibility of "Death" (*она отравилась бы*).

The most famous representative of PPC **"Warning about rule breaking"** is a *yellow card* in sport, and the warning refers to the breach of the rules of the game, cf.: *He had already sent two players off in the second half for second yellow cards* (<http://www.foxsports.com.au/>).

"Warning" may refer to the violation of rules of public order as well. For instance, the police in Great Britain may issue a yellow card to a teenager for misconduct, while in New Zealand pubs' owners practice a special system of yellow and red cards used to prevent alcohol abuse (<http://keyetv.com/watercooler.html>).

The examples of the second large group are marked positively. Verbalization of **"Warning about absence of danger"** is realized due to the polysemy of the language units. For instance, in modern navigation captains use yellow flags (usually with the letter Q) to ask for the permission of free communication with the coast as there is no disease on board, cf.: Eng. *<...> yellow Q flag today means that the ship does not have disease aboard; it signifies «I request free pratique», which means I ask that the authorities in the port give me a clean bill of health* (<http://www.crwflags.com/>). This example demonstrates the development of an opposite meaning with the least possible changes of the visual image and the language unit. Another bright example of this group is the Yellow Card in medicine, cf.: Eng. *Yellow Card, or Carte Jaune is an international certificate of vaccination. It is presented to immigration authorities with one's passport, upon entering countries which are quarantined by reason of disease* (<http://en.wiki pedia.org>).

Thus, all examples of PCC “Warning” are grouped around two centers with diametrically opposite estimation. “Warning about danger” and “Warning about rule breaking” are marked negatively, while “Warning about absence of danger” is characterized positively.

**3. Peripheral conceptual characteristic “(Asian) race”.** Most authors in their schemes of race classifications distinguish between three large races: Mongoloids (Rus. *монголоид*), Negroids (Rus. *негроид*), and Europoids, or Caucasians (Rus. *европеоид*), though the names of these races can be different.

Though in naïve conceptions based on the experience of interracial relations all people are divided into four races according to the colour of the skin, that has not any objective base, cf.: Eng. *The color yellow and the term the yellow is inaccurate in terms of skin color for Tripartite Asians. Asians have origins in the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Subcontinent. These three regions have all shades of skin color, ranging from white to yellow to brown to black and every color in between <...> The term yellow ignorantly separates Far East Asians from the darker skinned Southeast Asians and Subcontinent Asians* ([http://kennethomura.tripod.com/racial\\_slur\\_yellow/](http://kennethomura.tripod.com/racial_slur_yellow/)).

The illustrative material shows that the yellow colour is used both for describing Asian people and representatives of other or mixed races and even nationalities, e.g. light-skinned mulattoes (cf.: Eng. *bright-eyed man with a strain of negro blood in his yellow face* (W. Collins. *Man and Wife*); gypsies (cf.: Rus. *с круглым желтым лицом, цыганка родом <...> она ни в чем не уступала мужу* (И. С. Тургенев. *Дворянское гнездо*); Swedes (cf.: Rus. *Соломин производил впечатление чухонца или, скорее, шведа <...> лицо имел длинное, желтое* (И. С. Тургенев. *Новь*), etc.

Despite the statement that “signs of racial differences (the colour of skin, eyes, hair, skull shape, body length, etc.) have secondary importance as well as all races have equal biological abilities for achieving high level of civilization” [7], some people believe that there is some correlation between race and character. The following example is a bright illustration of racial discrimination, cf.: *In European culture, the color white was considered clean and godly. The color black was seen as dirty and evil. The color red connoted war, blood and danger. The color yellow denoted cowardice. Europeans felt pleased with the term White and used it instead of European* (<http://kennethomura.tripod.com/>).

Nowadays the nomination of races on the bases of the skin colour is considered unacceptable due to political correctness prevailing in the modern world, which is the reason we live together with *Afro-Americans* (i.e. Americans of the African origin) and *Tripartite Asians* (i.e. people living in the Far East, India and the South-East Asia). The terms “yellow” (in relation to Asian people) and “black” (in relation to Afro-Americans) are interpreted insulting especially in the USA where they have a lot of negative connotations, cf.: Eng. *Sometimes Tripartite Asians use the term yellow as a metaphor, but it has too many negative connotations to make it an acceptable equivalent to the term Asian <...> Yellow is associated in America with cowardice, urine, and corruption* (<http://kennethomura.tripod.com/>). It is worth mentioning that these connotations of yellow are more typical for the USA and Europe. In the Russian linguistic culture people with yellow complexion are mostly perceived as a stranger posing no threat (see PCC “Stranger, foreigner”).

Thus, PCC “(Asian) race” primarily realizes in the English linguistic culture (85% of the total number of examples) with considerable prevalence of negative associations. Russian native speakers show more tolerance towards Tripartite Asians.

**4. Peripheral conceptual characteristic “Wealth, power”.** Realization of the given characteristic is directly connected to the perception of yellow as the colour of gold. Gold as one of the denotata representing the core area of the described concept has stable associations with wealth and power. In the following example a yellow landlord’s private residence (*желтый барский особняк*) coupled with a large area of landed property (*целый квартал*) and the titled owners (*графиня*) causes the felling of “Wealth, power”, cf.: Rus. *Еще в годы царского режима <...> усадьба графини Рогаль-Пионтковской занимала целый квартал на городской окраине: Желтый барский особняк с колоннами у подъезда терялся в зелени тенистого сада* (В. П. Беляев. *Старая крепость. Книга 3*).

Ambivalence of estimation is explained by a simple fact: money makes people happy of holding material values (and, consequently, power) and, at the same time, unhappy because of cruel struggles for these very material values. Some people seem to live according to the principle “The more yellow I have (understand “gold”) the happier I am”, cf.: Eng. *However, there would be compensations later. She thought <...> of the private dining-room, and the carefully planned and horribly expensive decorations <...> The flowers and candle-shades were to be yellow, and she was to wear her yellow chiffon gown, with touches of gold embroidery, a gold comb set with topazes in her yellow hair, and <...> a yellow diamond of very considerable value* (Freeman M. E. Wilkins. *The Butterfly House*). In the context of a fiction “Wealth, power” can be revealed through different symbols as a yellow *Saab* in the following example, cf.: *Colin Kendrew Gearley arrived in a yellow Saab that wasn’t six months old. Nothing else about him looked particularly wealthy, though* (D. Mace. *Frankenstein’s Children*).

The negative member of the opposition “good - bad” can be demonstrated with a famous pamphlet by M. Gorky “*City of the yellow devil*” (1906), where New York is described as a city-monster pressing people with stone and iron. Trying to get as much wealth and power as possible people are using dishonest methods of struggle thereby becoming a “*blind instruments of the Devil Yellow, Gold*”. Since that time the set expression *yellow devil* means “gold enslaving people, the power of capital” [1, c. 254].

Thus, an evaluative component of PCC “Wealth, power” depends on the individual attitude to material values and willingness/unwillingness to struggle for them at any costs.

**5. Peripheral conceptual characteristic “Sex industry”.** Brightness of *yellow* is often used to attract attention to important objects (see PCC “Warning”) as well as to a person himself/herself. Bright yellow clothes are a good way to stand out of the crowd.

Since the Middle Ages *yellow* is reputed to be the colour of “easy virtue” women, cf.: Eng. *Tsar Pavel I <...> granted a special uniform to prostitutes. Public women were supposed to wear special yellow dresses. It did not take them long to wear such clothes, but it was enough for the yellow color to become the symbol of this profession* (<http://english.pravda.ru/>). In the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century a yellow dress means nothing unlike a *yellow ticket*, cf.: Rus. *Софья Семеновна, желтый билет принуждена была получить, и уже вместе с нами по случаю сему не могла оставаться* (Ф. М. Достоевский. Преступление и наказание), or its west analog, a *yellow card*, cf.: Eng. *‘Those girls of yours got in a frightful row.’ ‘What about?’ ‘Something the patronne’s daughter said. She was rather splendid, you know. Showed her yellow card and demanded the patronne’s daughter too’* (E. Hemingway. Selected Stories). Despite the full coincidence of denotata the two phrases have different volume of meaning. In the English language a yellow card is mostly perceived through cause-and-effect relations: this is a kind of official document for a prostitute with little if any connotations, while in the Russian language an emotive component dominates. Partial legalization of sexual business has led to *red light areas* and *yellow health cards* proving that sex-women are registered and have recently undergone their bi-weekly health check, cf.: Eng. *Prostitution is legal in conservative Singapore but soliciting is not. There are several “approved” red light areas where strict regulations require registered sex workers to carry a yellow health card and submit to monthly medical checks* (<http://www.thaianxiety.com/>).

The analysis of articles in chats and forums as well as of entries of user-made on-line encyclopedias and dictionaries showed that PCC “Sex industry” is of current importance for modern English-speaking youth. Most examples demonstrate the combination of two PCCs - “Sex industry” and “(Asian) race”. For instance, the set expressions *yellow fever* has two meanings - ‘an infectious disease’ and ‘strong sexual inclination to Asian girls’ (<http://www.urbandictionary.com>).

Thus, in the modern world an evaluative component of “Sex industry” is more likely neutral than negative as it used to be throughout many centuries.

**6. Peripheral conceptual characteristic “Officiality, formality”** is presented only in the Russian linguistic culture. The main representatives are *желтый дом* (yellow house) and *желтое здание* (yellow building) where the adjective realizes its seme ‘официальный, казенный’ (‘official, formal’). This meaning of the colour can easily be explained by the fact that most official buildings (administrative buildings, stations, post offices, prisons and so on) of pre-revolutionary Russia were coloured yellow, cf.: Rus. *Желтое здание управы* (И. А. Бунин. Жизнь Арсеньева), *желтые стены вокзала* (В. П. Беляев. Старая крепость. Книга 3), *к стене желтого дома со сводчатыми воротами я узнал здание почтамта* (К. Г. Паустовский. Далекие годы), *желтый острожный дом* (И. А. Бунин. Жизнь Арсеньева), etc.

These yellow buildings cause ambiguous emotions connected with the events taking place inside rather than with the colour itself, cf.: Rus. *<...> в это время за спиной у музыкантов, в низких подвалах желтого, с колоннами дома <...> расстреливают арестованных большевиков* (В. П. Беляев. Старая крепость. Книга 1) and Rus. *То, бывало, все дома были белые да желтые, а у купцов водились с такими голубыми и желтыми отворотцами <...> - была настоящая житейская пестрота; а теперь, гляжу, только один неопределенный цвет, которому нет и названия* (Н. С. Лесков. Смех и горе). In the first example *yellow* becomes the colour of “Death” while in the second one it is the colour of “Pleasure, fun, holiday, happiness”.

Thus, PCC “Officiality, formality” is presented only in the Russian linguistic culture that is explained by extra linguistic factors. The estimation of the colour fully depends on the type of activity of yellow-walled official institutions.

**7. Peripheral conceptual characteristic “Urine”.** A human body is half of the water involved in metabolism. Urine, as one of the physiological fluids, removes the products of a human being vital activity. According to the socially adopted etiquette to pass urine publicly is prohibited that is the reason the boy in the following example awkwardly turns away, cf.: Rus. *Неловко отвернувшись, мальчик заструил в тазик, удивляясь тому, что моча такая желтая и горячая* (Ч. Айтматов. Белый пароход). Though if there is a rule, there always are people breaking it, cf.: Rus. *За перроном возле будки техосмотра вагонов кучу мы разбивали, насквозь проиштую желтыми струями мочи не сыскавших уборную пассажиров* (В. П. Астафьев. Веселый солдат).

The analysis of the Street slang Dictionary (<http://www.urbandictionary.com>) and of comments to some online articles revealed that one of the most stable associations teenagers have towards the yellow colour is “Urine”. These associations are often connected to sex and presented by a relatively large number of examples (14 examples).

Thus, the described PCC belongs to the group of ambivalently marked characteristics due to two facts: as a part of a human being physiology it has neutral estimation (in some cases it is negatively marked); from the position of the group norm (teenagers and the youth) it can have positive estimation.

**8. Peripheral conceptual characteristic “Stranger, foreigner”.** This characteristic is only available in the Russian linguistic culture and has some meaningful connection with PCC “(Asian) race”. Numerous literary examples show that before active migration of Asian workers to the country Russian speakers associated yellow-faced people with any “Strangers, foreigners” but just people of “(Asian) race” or with travelling abroad. This effect was intensified by yellow pieces of clothing that were not typical for Russian everyday life, cf.: Rus. *Посмотрите, посмотрите <...> идет князь Козельский - вон этот высокий мужчина с бородой, в желтых перчатках. Сейчас видно, что за границей побывал* (И. С. Тургенев. Записки охотника). Even if the clothes were, along yellow,

of other bright colours the yellow garment gave the ground to define a person as “Stranger, foreigner” (*незнакомец, одет не по-нашенски*), cf.: Rus. ...а другой с ним *незнакомый какой-то и одет не по-нашенски. Кафтан это на ем, штаны - все желтое, из золотой* <...> парчи, а поверх кафтана широкий пояс с узорами и кистями, тоже из парчи, только с зеленью. Шапка *желтая*, а справа и слева красные зазорины, и сапожки тоже красные. Лицо *желтое*, в окладистой бороде <...> Только глаза зеленые <...> А смотрят по-хорошему, ласково (П. П. Бажов. Сказки).

Nowadays this characteristic has got little if any realization. Yellow-faced people are considered to belong mainly to “(Asian) race”, cf.: Rus. *Лица желтые, доходы серые. Даже нелегальные иммигранты экономически выгодны России. А что будет с легальными?* (<http://www.ogoniok.ru/cf/4898/3/>).

Thus, PPC “Stranger, foreigner” vividly demonstrates time-dependent nature of concepts: conceptual characteristics can be of current importance or become irrelevant for native speakers because of some linguistic or extra linguistic factors in the definite time periods.

**9. Peripheral conceptual characteristic “Artificiality”** is mainly realized through the description of artificial human or animal body parts, e.g. hair, cf.: Eng. *Rising, she advanced to my side placing the yellow wig over my black hair* (E. R. Burroughs. The Gods of Mars); arms, cf.: Rus. *В свертке старика оказалась пара новых желтых скрипучих протезов, очень ловко сконструированных и пригнанных по мерке* (Б. Полевой. Повесть о настоящем человеке); eyes, cf.: Rus. <...> *неподвижное чучело ястреба, которое <...> вечно смотрит вниз блестящим глазом из желтого стекла* (И. А. Бунин. Жизнь Арсеньева), etc.

The estimation here may be functionally dependent: if the artificial party of the body is well done (*ловко сконструированных и пригнанный по мерке*) it is marked positively or at least neutral. Though more often unnatural things are perceived negatively, cf.: Rus. *Желтое тюленеподобное лицо резинового человека, предназначенного для развлечения купальщиков, показалось ему похожим на лицо Драйера, и он был рад, когда его унесли* (В. Набоков. Король, дама, валет).

PPC “Artificiality” has the least frequency among PCCs with an ambivalent estimation - 1,8% (7 examples).

Statistic data on realization of ambivalently estimated PCCs of the concept “yellow” in the English and Russian linguistic cultures are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Summary data of the ambivalently estimated characteristics of the colour concept “yellow” in the English and Russian linguistic cultures with the ratio of their use

Name of conceptual characteristic	English		Russian		Total	
	Number of examples	Ratio in %	Number of examples	Ratio in %	Number of examples	Ratio in %
1. Autumn	35	14,5	68	43,4	103	25,8
2. Warning	76	31,4	19	12,2	95	23,8
3. (Asian) race	61	25,2	11	7	72	18
4. Wealth, power	33	13,6	11	7	44	11
5. Sex industry	19	7,9	8	5	27	6,7
6. Officiality, formality	0	0	19	12,1	19	4,8
7. Urine	15	6,2	3	1,9	18	4,6
8. Stranger, foreigner	0	0	14	8,9	14	3,5
9. Artificiality	3	1,2	4	2,5	7	1,8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>26,5</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>34</b>

So, statistical analysis shows that ambivalently estimated PCCs in the structure of the colour concept “yellow” are realized in 34% (399 examples) from the total number of representatives of the concept peripheral area (1173 examples). The fact that this group of PCCs is realized in both the English and Russian linguistic cultures lets us talk about the universal perception of the colour. At the same time peripheral manifestation of the concept “yellow” demonstrates culturally marked characteristics stipulated by different extra linguistic factors. Thus, ethnically marked features of the yellow colour for Russian speakers are “Officiality, formality” and “Stranger, foreigner”. In the English linguistic culture this area is presented by a greater number of examples (42% from the total number of representatives of the concept peripheral area (from 581 examples)). While in the Russian linguistic culture this figure is only 26,5% (from 592 examples).

It's worth mentioning that 3 out of 9 ambivalently estimated PCCs (“(Asian) race”, “Sex industry”, “Warning”) are included in so called *near-core area* (Rus. *приядерная зона*), or *close periphery* (Rus. *ближняя периферия*) of the concept. These PCCs, registered in lexicographical literature through the figurative meaning of the basic representative (cf.: Eng. *yellow<sub>adj</sub> - 2. having the light brown skin of some east Asian people (may be considered offensive)* [14] - PCC “(Asian) race”), and fixed word combinations with the basic representative as one of their component (cf.: Eng. *yellow card - a yellow card held up by a football referee to show that a player has done something wrong* [Ibidem] - PCC “Warning”), demonstrate the least degree of abstraction and hence maximal involvement in the core area.

*Distant and extreme periphery* (Rus. *дальняя и крайняя периферия*) of the colour concept “yellow” are represented by 6 ambivalently estimated PCCs: “Autumn”, “Wealth, power”, “Officiality, formality”, “Urine”, “Stranger, foreigner”, “Artificiality”. These characteristics are realized through connotative, associative and symbolic components of the color lexemes, cf.: yellow leaves as a symbol of “Autumn”. The meanings mentioned are not registered

in some lexicographic literature and can be revealed only through the analysis of a considerable quantity of examples verbalizing the investigated concept on the discourse level.

The analysis of the peripheral area of the concept “yellow” offered in this article does not purport to be the only possible description of the matter, and represents the author’s vision of the yellow color (CONCEPT<sub>ind</sub>). However, the identified universal and culturally marked trends still can outline some specific ways for further analysis of the colour concepts on the basis of both kindred and unrelated languages.

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#### О РОЛИ АТТРАКТОРОВ В ЕСТЕСТВЕННЫХ ЯЗЫКАХ<sup>©</sup>

Если взять любое число  $Z$  (например,  $Z=325$ ) и напечатать его словесное выражение (триста двадцать пять), последнее, как часть речи, будет представлять собой количественное числительное. Число букв в нем ( $6+8+4=18$ ) будем обозначать  $N$  и называть *намлетом* этого числа (от англ. *NUMber of LETters* - количество букв),  $N=18$ . В словесной форме (восемнадцать) - это тоже количественное числительное со своим намлетом  $N=12$  (двенадцать). Последнее как число имеет свой намлет  $N=10$  (десять); следующий намлет  $N=6$  (шесть), далее  $N=5$  (пять),  $N=4$  (четыре), наконец,  $N=6$ , и мы получили *цикл* 6-5-4.

В [1, с. 120] доказана «теорема существования аттракторов»: «какое бы число в русском языке ни взять, описанный выше процесс всегда приводит либо к циклу 6-5-4, либо к 3, либо к 11» (последние два числа будем называть *одноэлементными циклами*). Назовем эти циклы, к которым «тянутся» в письменном русском языке все количественные числительные, *аттракторами* (русского языка).

Примечание 1. При доказательстве теоремы мы ограничились числами, меньшими миллиона, поскольку большие числа подверглись сильной интернационализации и утратили специфику своего языка. Это не уменьшает ее общности, т.к. для чисел большей значности доказательство теоремы проводится аналогично.

Примечание 2. Для любых других языков с алфавитно-звуковым письмом доказательство теоремы существования аттракторов (с учетом специфики языка) проводится совершенно аналогично.

Примечание 3. В 1972 году Р. Госпером и Р. Шроппелем был обнаружен (без доказательства) факт наличия одиночного аттрактора 4 в английском языке, рассматриваемый ими не более чем «забавный феномен» [3, р. 64].

Между тем, аттракторы (как будет показано ниже) при их внимательном изучении могли бы оказать определенную помощь при изучении структуры и классификации естественных языков.

Примечание 4. В более общем плане можно говорить о намлетах любых слов (не обязательно числительных), но поскольку сам намлет - это числительное, то и теорема об аттракторах справедлива лишь для числительных.

С целью определения аттракторов и долей, которые они составляют в языке, была составлена программа на ЭВМ для 28 языков, в основном, индоевропейской группы. Дело в том, что «...в индоевропейских