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The colorative “white” in Italian

*Key words:* colour names, set colorative phrases, the lexeme “white”, negative connotations, depression, fear

One of the most widespread colour names in any language is white. There have been found a lot of colorative set phrases with the component “white” in the linguistic view of the world, in addition in Italian.

Topicality of the research is determined by the focus of linguistics on examining of colour names. Colorative vocabulary has been studied by a large number of scientists, for instance O. Artemova [1], A. Vasylevych [2], N. Kozlova [4], T. Semashko [6], L. Floyd [7].

However colour names function in Italian has not been examined in details. Italian is the language of art and culture, the way of communication in touristic business because the most of residents in Italy don’t speak English. They prefer to speak in their mother tongue. Italian is a very expressive language in which one can find a large number of words connected with emotions, psychological “portrait” of a person, emotional state of mind.

Research has shown that there are a lot of set colorative phrases with the lexeme “white” in Italian. Majority of them can be defined as comparative ones: bianco come la camicia \ una candela \ un morto \ la cera \ un fazzoletto \ il latte \ un marmo etc. (white as a sheet \ a candle \ death \ wax \ a handkerchief \ milk \ marble etc.). Such comparative lexemes with the component “white” have negative connotations representing such emotional states of mind as depression, fear, confusion, desperation. There are other set colorative phrases with the lexeme “white” for describing of feelings or emotions: nicchiare a pan bianco (to complain without a reason), vedere (tutto) bianco (to be an optimist).

It is worth focusing on the lexeme “white” in set colorative phrases connected with vote: votare bianco (to vote against); firmare in bianco (to put one’s signature on a blank voting paper); lasciare in bianco (to leave blank space); cambiale in bianco (blank paper \ blank cheque).

One can find set colorative phrases with the component “white” in names of Italian dishes: pasta in bianco (spaghetti with butter and onion); pesce in bianco (boiled fish); patate \ riso in bianco (boiled potatoes \ rice); arte Bianca (the art of baking).

It is worth outlining the set colorative phrases with the lexeme “white” in nominations denoting comprehension: conoscere il bianco dal nero \ distinguere il bianco dal nero (to be able to make difference between black and white, good and bad); chiamare nero il nero e bianco il bianco (to call things their names); non distinguere il nero dal bianco (not to be able to make difference between black and white, good and bad); fare del (il) bianco nero \ fare diventare bianco il nero (to prove that black is white); pigliare (prendere) (il) bianco per nero \ mostrare (far vedere) il bianco per nero (to take white for black).

One can find a number of set phrases with the component “white” in nominations of something extraordinary, unusual: carvo bianco \ mosca bianca (white crow); phrases describing death: la morte bianca (white death, death from gas); far bianco (to kill): omicidio bianco (death from industrial accident).

**Conclusions.** The colorative “white” has different particularities which can’t be described only as negative or positive ones. Set colorative phrases with the component “white” include a large number of nominations relating to different fields of usage (psychology, cookery, social sphere).

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