

## Color terms in the Uralic and Altaic languages of Siberia

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### Abstract:

According to the classical theory of the universality of color terms by B. Berlin and P. Kay, the basic color lexicon in various languages of the world must historically have passed through the certain universal evolutionary stages of its development in the appropriate order. The given research aims to contribute to the study of the questions related to the evolution of the color term systems characterized by the macrocolours, which depict the main parts of the spectrum of blue, green and yellow in the Uralic and Altaic languages of Siberia. The linguistic representation of such systems is featured by the expression of blue-green, or yellow-green, or blue-yellow-green parts of the spectrum by means of one term. The study shows that in the XX century a significant part of the languages of Eurasia was characterized by the existence of the blue-green color system. The situation was different for the languages geographically located in Siberia, where the Turkic and Tungus languages with the blue-green systems had an assimilating effect on the speakers of the Samoyed and Ob-Ugric languages, for which in the XVIII century the yellow-green-blue system was documented and which became blue-green for the majority of the speakers by the XX century except the Selkup language, where the yellow-green-blue macrocolour system has been preserved. This exception also applies to the East Khanty dialects, which native speakers lived in hard-to-reach places on the rivers Vah and Vasyugan and, as far as we know, had no significant contacts with native speakers of the Turkic and Tungus languages.

The analysis of the data from the dictionaries and written documents shows how the languages with such systems form areals. The study of the contacts of the speakers allows to assume two possible scenarios for the development of such systems of color terms:

- 1) Both systems disintegrate, macrocolour term disappears, such evolution occurred in the languages of Asia Minor, currently there are no macrocolours in the Oguz, Iranian, Greek languages.
- 2) More stable system wins (in Siberia it was the blue-green Turkic and Tungus systems), the less stable system (Ob-Ugric, Samoyed) passes through the stage of the triple macrocolour and gradually coincides with the more stable.

Currently, the Russian language has a great influence on the languages of minor people of the Russian Federation. In Russian there is no macrocolours and in most modern Uralic, Turkic and Tungusic languages of Russia macrocolours have disappeared.

**Key words:** color terms, evolution of the system of color terms, lexical typology, the Altaic languages, the Uralic languages