Multilingual Color Dictionary: Contextual Implications in Using Color Vocabulary

Dicionário multilíngue de cores: implicações contextuais no uso do vocabulário das cores

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Abstract

This work aims to discuss the universe of colors in relation to the singularities of each chromatic field. Since the use of color universe in language depends on the culture it represents, color phrases illustrate human beings' reality perception. The multilingual dictionary, whose aim is to create colour entries in Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, French and English has been developed at the São Paulo State University (Unesp) as a multidisciplinary academic project, namely *Multilingual Color Dictionary (MDC)*. In this work, we reflect on how the principle of Linguistic Relativism (Arcaini, 1991; Zavaglia, 1996; Lee, 1996) influences the study of color names; we emphasize the lexicon cultural character and reiterate the role of metaphors in the construction of this vocabulary, as well as we emphasize the necessity of considering word's context of use in communication between cultures. By examining entries in Italian > Portuguese and English, and Portuguese > Italian and English, it is possible to classify color vocabulary occurrences as symmetrical or asymmetrical cases depending on specific cultures' influence.

Resumo

Este trabalho tem como objetivo discutir o universo das cores em relação às singularidades de cada campo cromático. Uma vez que o uso do universo das cores na linguagem depende da cultura que representa, as frases coloridas ilustram a percepção da realidade dos seres humanos. O Dicionário Multilíngue de Cores (MDC), em desenvolvimento na Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp) como um projeto acadêmico multidisciplinar, tem como objetivo criar verbetes de cores em português, italiano, espanhol, francês e inglês. Neste trabalho, refletimos sobre como o princípio do Relativismo Linguístico (Arcaini, 1991; Zavaglia, 1996; Lee, 1996) influencia o estudo dos nomes das cores; enfatizamos o caráter cultural do léxico e reiteramos o papel das metáforas na construção desse vocabulário, bem como enfatizamos a necessidade de considerar o contexto de uso da palavra na comunicação entre culturas. Examinando entradas em italiano> português e inglês, e português> italiano e inglês, é possível classificar as ocorrências do vocabulário de cores como casos simétricos ou assimétricos, dependendo da influência de culturas específicas.

Keywords

Lexicography • Colour phrases • Multilingual dictionary • Colours

Palavras-chave

Lexicografia • frases coloridas • dicionário multilíngue • Cores

1. Introduction

In a few words, lexicon represents people's culture inasmuch it verbally expresses all the experience acquired by a community in its course of history (Biderman, 2001). The intrinsic connection between lexicon and culture characterizes lexical studies' complexity, since new lexical units are constantly created to verbalize actions, thoughts, everyday events, technical-scientific concepts, cognitive processes that merge language, culture, history and society.

In this work our object of study is phraseologies composed of color names. Our analysis is based on data collected for the elaboration of the *Multilingual Color Dictionary - MCD*, a multidisciplinary project developed at São Paulo State University (Campus of São José do Rio Preto) that includes Portuguese, Italian, English, Spanish and French languages. Thus, based on MCD entries in Italian > Portuguese and English, as well as Portuguese > Italian and English, we will provide some examples of color phraseologies whose content, or meaning, on one hand, are totally transmissible, and on the other, examples that are not.

Undoubtedly, the usage of such complex units in language is consolidated by the socio-historical and cultural movement of a given society. This progress leads to individual choices in the discourse production, but also to contextual comprehension (Álvarez, 2012). Consequently, in order for users to recognize these complex units and also improve the ability to understand and make use of them in communication, it is necessary to develop semantic and pragmatic skills in addition to accumulating knowledge about cultural and linguistic history (Colson, 2004).

In the following pages we firstly reflect on how the principle of Linguistic Relativism (Arcaini, 1991; Zavaglia, 1996; Lee, 1996) influences the study of color names, reinforcing their contribution to lexical expansion. Secondly, we emphasize the lexicon cultural character, as well as the necessity of considering the context of use in communication among cultures. Thirdly, we reiterate the role of metaphors in the construction of this vocabulary; and lastly, we mention examples obtained during the elaboration of MCD of linguistic symmetries and asymmetries in Italian > Portuguese and English, then in Portuguese > Italian and English.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Lexical Universe and Linguistic Relativism

According to Berlin & Kay (1969), the Linguistic Relativity is the prevailing doctrine among American linguists and anthropologists of the twentieth century. This principle, which comes from the thesis of Cultural Relativism advocated by Franz Boas, explains that each language has its own way of building experiences. Therefore, each language has a semantic arbitrariness compared to all other languages.

Exponents of Linguistic Relativity studies are Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf. In Sapir's words, our linguistic habits justify our interpretation choices of the world. For this reason, two or more languages are not similar enough to represent the same social reality. For Whorf (1956), in his turn, the language spoken by an individual

influences how he/she perceives reality. The linguistic system in our minds organizes our apprehensions of the world. Put differently, we delineate, organize in concepts and assign meanings as we do because we are part of an agreement solidified through our speech and encoded in language standards. Furthermore, language influences human cognition as well as it systematically standardizes the experiences, shaping ideas and interactions. Thus, divergent existing meanings into different linguistic systems cause misunderstandings in communication between cultures.

Lee (1996), in a study of Relativism Theory disseminated by Whorf, states that what varies in languages is the conceptual processing instead of thought. According to Lee (1996), if the conceptual operations on perceptual data vary, the experience, which is the only reality we actually know, also changes. The principle of Linguistic Relativity deals precisely with these conceptual or experiential ramifications of a given linguistic source. Generally speaking, this principle considers how language mediates the relationship between environmental variations that inhabit the human being and changes in cognitive processes of perceptual kind.

The theory of Linguistic Relativism supports that lexicon is «an organized symbolic categorization which classifies in a unique way human experiences of a culture»[1] (Biderman, 1981, p. 133). In this regard, Eco (1985:63 apud Moraes Filho, 1995, p. 65) also asserts that:

> When an individual verbalizes the name of a color, he/she is not pointing directly to a state of the world (reference process). Instead, he/she is correlating this term to a unit or to a cultural concept. This articulation of the term is obviously determined by a given sensation. However, the translation from sensory stimuli to a perception object is likewise determined by the semiotic relationship between the linguistic expression and the meaning or content culturally correlated to the meaning.[2]

From the moment we postulate that each linguistic universe has an inherent way to decode and define world conceptions, color names domain is represented according to the idiosyncrasies of each culture, that is to say, in a connotative and subjective way. Hence, color perception will be linguistically represented in a different way from one culture to another.

Through a comparative analysis between Italian and French languages, Arcaini (1991) advocates the influence of socio-cultural and historical characteristics of a people in the linguistic use of color names. For the aforementioned author, it is necessary to analyze the symbolic use of color throughout history, both synchronically and diachronically. In addition to examining the relationship between perception and naming, there is a need to observe the dynamism inherent to language. Moreover, Arcaini (1991)

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[1] Uma categorização simbólica organizada, que classifica de maneira única as experiências humanas de uma cultura.

[2] Quando um indivíduo profere o nome de uma cor, ele não está apontando diretamente para um estado do mundo (processo de referência), mas ao contrário, ele está correlacionando esse termo a uma unidade ou a um conceito cultural. Essa articulação do termo é determinada, obviamente por uma dada sensação, mas a transformação dos estímulos sensoriais em um objeto da percepção é, do mesmo modo, determinada pela relação semiótica entre a expressão linguística e o significado ou conteúdo culturalmente correlacionado com ele.

also argues that the study of color names should prioritize, in the first place, properties established between color names and natural languages; and in the second place, how these properties are used and understood by speakers.

Fresu (2006) complements Arcaini's (1991) discourse as she reiterates the importance of considering the implications of cultural and symbolic values to the construction of linguistic structures formed by color names in denominating or describing the reality of a given culture.

In accordance to this, Jorge et al. (2003) continue:

> Colors create interfaces with other areas of language-culture and they are a favorable place to interdisciplinarity, both in a synchronic and diachronic perspective. The richness of color vocabulary is the result of a plural and multifaceted view where subjectivity, affectivity and aesthetics are combined. Colors do not correspond to stagnant elements. On the contrary, they emphasize the dynamism and creativity of a language-culture, being dynamic objects in the traductological process.[3] (p. 127).

The chromatic phrases are included in this immense set of lexical units, in which linguistic and semantic differences are inherent in cultures and in speech communities. Certainly, color phrases are a unique linguistic microsystem full of meaning and syntactic-semantic-pragmatic richness.
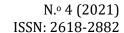
2.2. Contextual implications in communication between cultures

According to Schogt (1992), on philosophical and epistemological issues of the relationship among languages, thought and the extra-linguistic world, the assumption that different languages delineate different realities implies that communication between two people that do not share the same mother tongue would be impossible even if one of them has learned the other's language. This is because, the author continues, even those who have learned a second language remain attached to their mother tongue's system values.

Although it would be an exaggerated assumption to accept the impossibility of intercultural communication, Schogt (1992) emphasizes the difficulty to completely deny this assumption, inasmuch it is generally agreed that each language focuses on specific elements of extra-linguistic world, creating abstract notions that other languages may not apprehend or may not give importance to.

For this reason, *context* assumes a fundamental role in this process, since translation is a linguistic unit developed within a social framework and historical situation, hence it fulfills a particular function. Thus, the socio-cultural environment and the prior knowledge should be concomitantly analyzed in order that social interaction could be established.

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[3] As cores geram interfaces com outras áreas da língua-cultura e são o lugar propício para a interdisciplinaridade, tanto numa perspectiva sincrónica como diacrónica. A riqueza do léxico cromático é o resultado de um olhar plural e multifacetado, onde se mistura a subjectividade, a afectividade e a estética. As cores não correspondem a elementos estanques, antes realçam o dinamismo e a criatividade de uma língua-cultura, sendo, deste modo, objectos dinâmicos no próprio processo tradutológico.

Socio-cognitive context is crucial for communication between two nations. Indeed, their cognitive contexts must be at least partially similar for inter-subjective understanding. Their language, encyclopedic, episodic, procedural, macro and super-structural or schematic and interactional knowledge must be partly shared. Focus given to socio-cognitive context in which the reader/speaker is inserted prioritizes extra-textual role in the interpretation. According to Fish (1980, p. 342), this issue is the result of ideological processes and institutional authority. Meanings are not present in text, but are constructed by the «interpretive community» that assigns interpretation to them.

However, interpretation will always be unequivocal within the interpretative community as a conventional system. As a result, a consensus regarding the interpretation of terms or phrases is established. In fact, individuals share norms or principles that may (not) be accepted in a given community, and inserted in a given social-cultural context. Hence, it is the interpretive community that reads the text in a specific context and that allows the use of certain phrases used in different contexts/cultures, and that accepts the translational equivalences.

To conclude, the color universe is an interesting field of study, since it calls attention to peculiarities of each language and culture. At the same time, it allows the explicitness of inter-subjective, as well as intercultural and inter-linguistic differences. In the present work, peculiarities and differences are demonstrated by (non) equivalence among Portuguese, Italian and English. These (a)symmetries are understood here as complements given by each language to conceptual/verbalization deficiencies of the other languages (Benjamin, 1971).

2.3. Metaphors in the construction of chromatic phrases

According to Arcaini (1991), the comparative analysis of color vocabulary requires the observation of the semantic/metaphorical level, where differences are more evident. In fact, every culture is endowed with a semantic arbitrariness in the reality description that differs from other cultures and that organizes the lexical universe in a particular way. Regarding color vocabulary, since each culture experiences the spectrum in a certain way, values assigned to the chromatic domains differ from culture to culture.

Concerning the phraseological units composed of color names, one of their characteristics is the idiomaticity. In this context, a special role is reserved to metaphor, a language mechanism considered essential for understanding many aspects of conceptualization of our day-to-day life experiences and which characterizes speakers' creativity. In Lakoff and Johnson's (2007) terms, as well as other semantic phenomena, metaphor establishes a close relationship with culture because the conceptual system is also culturally-based. Therefore, metaphor is based on conventional models organized into systematic relations, and contributes to categorization and understanding of experiences.

Kövecses (2005; 2010) observes the existence of differences and similarities in the construction of metaphorical domains and in the linguistic representation of reality. Similarities come from the sharing of metaphorical structure, resulting from coincidence, by different cultures, through knowledge transmission and universal properties related to the human body. Differences, however, derive, firstly, from some principles that guide

the key concepts, which vary from culture to culture; and secondly, from distinct linguistic forms to express the same conceptual metaphor.

Ultimately, we note that variations can occur even within the same culture, from individual to individual, depending, for example, on social, geographical and historical factors. All these possibilities, namely, variations within the same community as well as contact between people and, consequently, language and cultural influences, lead to metaphors change. Moreover, they lead to the creation of new metaphors and, in turn, enable new expressions to arise in order to bring metaphors to life, characterizing changes and vividness of languages.

3. Methodology

The MCD is based on Arcaini's (1991) and Zavaglia's (1996) works, which constitute the dictionary fundamental corpus. Dictionary source languages are Italian and Portuguese, and this dictionary also brings the equivalents in English, Spanish and French.

Its macrostructure includes simple or complex lexical units, phraseologies and technical-scientific terms of several areas, since they contain at least one of the following color names in their linguistic structure: arancio/laranja, azzurro, blu/azul, giallo/amarelo, verde/verde, rosso/vermelho, nero/preto, bianco/branco, rosa/rosa, grigio, cenere/cinza, bruno/marrom.

Regarding the microstructure, it contains the following information items:

1. Spelling, grammatical and syntactic properties;
2. Area of expertise;
2. Translation of source language headwords in Portuguese/Italian, English, French and Spanish, as well as their synonyms;
3. Context of use in the source and target languages;
4. Definition written in Portuguese for Italian-Portuguese direction, and in Italian for Portuguese-Italian direction.

It is important to note that the web was used as Corpus for context extraction, a more viable option due to vocabulary low frequency characteristics. In addition, the web as a corpus provided evidence for equivalent search and for definition elaboration. In their turn, definitions were exclusively elaborated for the MCD, according to contexts of use as well as other reference works.

In the next section, we will exemplify the (a)symmetries among Italian, Portuguese and English languages.

4. Discussions

Searching for equivalents in the target languages resulted in the categorization of the translation process in two major groups:

I. Correspondence between source and target language, whose lexical items are translatable and fully correspond in both languages, and

II. Non-correspondence between source and target language, as exemplified below.

4.1. Chromatic symmetries between languages

Before referring specifically to cases of non-linguistic equivalence between contextually dependent items, we should consider some complex and phraseological units that maintain a degree of symmetry among the aforementioned languages.

a. For plants and animals widely distributed, i.e., concrete and objective reality, there is isomorphism and linguistic symmetry among languages (Table 1: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry for plants and animals):

Italian	Portuguese	English
Alghe azzurre: *L'atmosfera primitiva della Terra era priva di ossigeno, ma a partire da circa 4 miliardi di anni fa, i cianobatteri (o alghe azzurre) iniziarono a produrre ossigeno, che però veniva sottratto da numerosi processi ossidativi*	**Algas azuis**: *As algas azuis, algas cianofíceas ou cianobactérias, não podem ser consideradas nem como algas e nem como bactérias comuns*	**Blue-green algae:** *The microalgae Chlorella and the cyanobacteria Spirulina green blue algae, are being used as health-promoting foods.*
Balenottera azzurra: *La balenottera azzurra (Balaenoptera musculus), la più nota, è il più grande animale oggi esistente: certe femmine possono raggiungere i 30-33 m. Il peso nei maschi supera le 90 t, nelle femmine può arrivare a 130 t.*	**Baleia azul:** *O maior animal do planeta é a baleia-azul!*	**Blue whale:** *The largest creature ever known to have existed on earth is the present-day blue whale.*

Table 1: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry for plants and animals.

b. For footballing vocabulary, once it is a global sport, there are symmetries in all linguistic universes under study (Table 2: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in footballing vocabulary):

Italian	Portuguese	English
Cartellino giallo: *Cartellino giallo per Corrado Di Lorenzo.*	**Cartão amarelo**: *FIFA acata pedido alemão e transfere cartão amarelo de Neuville para Jeremies.*	**Yellow Card:** *A soccer referee shot and killed a coach and wounded two players who questioned a yellow card decision during a match.*
Cartellino rosso: *Il cartellino Rosso o la somma di due cartellini Gialli, anche in giornate di Campionato diverse, daranno luogo alla squalifica, da scontarsi nella successiva giornata o manifestazione, indipendentemente dall'eventuale Rapporto dell'Arbitro e conseguente provvedimento disciplinare del Giudice Sportivo.*	**Cartão vermelho:** *Se o atleta já foi penalizado com um ponto, o árbitro deve aplicar novamente o cartão amarelo e o cartão vermelho juntos e deve acrescentar dois pontos ao adversário e comunicar o Árbitro Geral.*	**Red card:** *Pritchard, whose team was losing 1-0 at the time, immediately intervened, but in the eyes of the referee his actions brought the game into disrepute and he was shown the red card.*

Table 2: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in footballing vocabulary.

c. Also for expressions regarding cultural reality, since they illustrate widely known historical episodes or actual facts, there is isomorphism and linguistic symmetry among the three languages (Table 3: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in cultural expressions):

Italian	Portuguese	English
Baschi blu: *Nel mese di ottobre l'assemblea dei sindaci dei comuni di Avolasca, Berzano, Brignano, Fabbrica, (…) che fanno parte del servizio associato hanno deciso di aumentare il numero dei vigili e di avviare in via sperimentale la collaborazione con i Baschi Blu per il controllo notturno del patrimonio pubblico.*	**Boinas azuis**: *Mas ela, (ONU), tem conquistado muitíssimo mais que isso, evitando conflitos armados, (…) enviando seus batalhões de «boinas azuis» para pacificar e proteger, defender os direitos humanos e as minorias, observar a lisura de pleitos e assim por diante.*	**Blue-berets:** *There are, on average, over 50,000 Blue Berets in the service of peace in various parts of the world.*
Essere cintura azzurra: *Attualmente è cintura azzurra e istruttore responsabile sotto la federazione PWKA Club Italia.*	**Ser faixa azul:** *Sou faixa Azul, tenho 17 anos. Estou achando o Taekwondo do nordeste muito parado.*	**To be blue belt:** *The blue belt student has knowledge rained down on him/her; hence the blue color represents rain.*

Allarme giallo: *È allarme giallo in America dopo che la Cia e il National security agency hanno riferito di numerose intercettazioni attribuite a membri di Al Qaeda.*	**Alerta amarelo:** *Decretado alerta amarelo em base americana.*	**Yellow alert:** *America is on yellow alert, facing a «significant risk of terrorist attacks,» homeland security chief Tom Ridge said Tuesday as he announced a color-coded system designed to end confusion over terror warnings.*

Table 3: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in cultural expressions.

d. The same symmetry was observed in idioms originated from metaphors based on body and brain functioning (Table 4: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in idioms based on body and brain functioning):

Italian	Portuguese	English
rosso di vergogna [essere; diventare]: *Impiegai un po' per trovare una farmacia aperta e quando chiesi un tubetto di vasellina dovevo essere rosso di vergogna come un adolescente che compra i preservativi.; Orco Otto diventa rosso di vergogna e non sa più che cosa dire.*	**vermelho de vergonha [estar, ficar]:** *Nem tive coragem de olhar pra ele, pois deveria estar vermelho de vergonha e excitação.; Bandido não tem aquele negócio de ficar vermelho de vergonha, não sabe o que é isso.*	**Red with shame [to paint; to be; to become; to grow; to turn]:** *A flush of embarrassment overtook my face and neck, painting me red with shame.*

Table 4: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in idioms based on body and brain functioning.

e. When there is a similarity between the domains involving the metaphorical expression (Table 5: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in domains involving the metaphorical expression):

Lack of money - color		
Italian	**Portuguese**	**English**
uscire dal rosso: *Per uscire dal rosso nei mesi a partire dal prossimo aprile Hitachi intensificherà la ristrutturazione in atto, tagliando il personale e riducendo i costi di 200 miliardi di yen.*	**sair do vermelho:** *Dicas de como sair do vermelho Cortando despesas – administrando melhor o seu dinheiro.*	**To get out of the red:** *Many banks charge a fee for each bounced check, which makes it even more difficult for the student to get out of the red.*

Table 5: Isomorphism and linguistic symmetry in domains involving the metaphorical expression.

4.2 Chromatic asymmetries among languages

Chromatic non-isomorphism existing among languages is prominent in cases where:

f. There are unique socio-cultural realities, as well as historical events that belong to a group of people. In the absence of a translation, an explanatory expression was inserted (Table 6: Linguistic asymmetry in culturally-marked expressions.):

Italian	Portuguese	English
Fiamme nere: *Successivamente, quegli uomini che si gettavano nella battaglia con un ardimento da lasciare sbigottiti, furono chiamati «Arditi» o anche «Fiamme Nere» (dalle mostrine che portavano sul bavero della divisa).*	**Agrupamento pré-fascista dos «Arditi»:** *Apesar de tudo, Marinetti leva suas posições às últimas consequências: em 1919 funda o agrupamento pré-fascista dos «arditi» e se lança numa atividade abertamente política, em apoio ao fascismo italiano.*	**Assault detachments «Arditi»:** *In the Italian army these shock troops were called Arditi and belonged to units called reparti d'assalto, or assault detachments. (Arditi means fearless, daring, courageous.) They were carefully selected from volunteers and specially trained in assault tactics.*
Telefono azzurrorosa: *Il Telefono Azzurrorosa presenta corsi gratuiti per operatori volontari tutti i mercoledì.*	**Associação voluntária em defesa de crianças, jovens e mulheres:** ∅	**Association voluntary for defense of children, teens and women:** ∅
Rosea: *La rosea non cambierà formato, come inizialmente ipotizzato dai vertici di Rcs, ma si rinnoverà nella grafica.*	**Jornal esportivo da Itália:** ∅	**Italian sports newspaper:** ∅

Table 6: Linguistic asymmetry in culturally-marked expressions.

g. Phraseologies originated from different metaphorical domains, although representing the same reality. Such differences derive, firstly, from some principles that guide the key concepts and that vary from culture to culture; and secondly, from distinct linguistic forms to express the same conceptual metaphor (Table 7: Cultural variation in representing cultural metaphors):

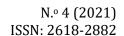| Italian	Portuguese	English
nero in volto [essere, diventare]: *Lui é diventato nero in volto e guarda tutti con severità.*	**cara fechada [estar, ficar de]:** *O cara de pau veio me perguntar o que eu tinha pra estar de cara fechada.; ...fim, eu saí dessa! Sei lá é mó perda de tempo...o que adianta ficar de cara fechada por vários dias???*	**Long face [to make, to pull]:** *I don't understand your dad, libertad: he knows who he's going to vote for in the coming elections, thinks that he's going to win... and he's not happy? no. he's got such a long face, poor thing!*

Table 7: Cultural variation in representing cultural metaphors.

h. In letter (d), it was pointed out that symmetries in idioms originated from metaphors based on body and brain functioning. However, asymmetries were also found (Table 8: Linguistic asymmetry in idioms based on body and brain functioning):

Italian	Portuguese	English
giallo dalla/d'invidia [farsi; diventare]: *[...] fino a quando gli durava il vino, un colorito rubizzo ed un'espressione di soddisfazione, ben diversa da quella dei suoi compaesani dura e gialla d'invidia.*	**vermelho de inveja [estar; ficar]:** *é um dos poucos que tem tudo para não estar no buraco: tem marca mundialmente conhecida e torcida de tamanho capaz de deixar muito rival vermelho de inveja.*	**Green with envy [to turn]:** *He turned green with envy when he saw Tom's new car.*
rosso di gelosia [farsi]: *Ci siamo messi a parlare del più e del meno, le solite cose. Il viso di Antonio si fece rosso di gelosia.*	**roxo de ciúmes [estar, ficar]:** *Que engraçadinho! - resmungou Hermione. - Aposto que você ficaria roxo de ciúmes se eu fosse mesmo!*	**Green with jealousy:** *George is horrified when he discovers Janet sharing carrot cake with another man, and literally turns green with jealousy.*

Table 8: Linguistic asymmetry in idioms based on body and brain functioning.

i. Some idioms are inherent to the source culture. In the absence of a translation, an explanatory expression was inserted (Table 9: Non-isomorphism and linguistic asymmetry in culturally-marked idioms):

Portuguese	Italian	English
Estar azul de saudade: *Oi Romas, que saudade amigo,estou azul de saudades de você e de toda a nossa curtição(...).*	**Sentire la mancanza di qualcuno**: ∅	**To miss someone:** ∅
Estar com a mosca azul: *Será que esses cientistas acertaram mesmo na mosca ou eles estão com a mosca azul? Para quem estiver deslumbrado, informa-se que estar «com a mosca azul» é estar tentando a fama e a glória ou aspirar a posto elevado.*	**Desiderare fama e gloria:** ∅	**To wish fame and glory:** ∅
Estar amarelo de: *Igor está amarelo de ver os alunos dizerem sempre a mesma coisa: «não tivemos tempo!»*	**Essere stanco di:** ∅	**To be fed up with:** ∅

Table 9: Non-isomorphism and linguistic asymmetry in culturally-marked idioms.
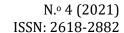
j. Similarly, for typical Brazilian products, without a translation in source languages, an explanatory expression was inserted (Table 10: Non-isomorphism and linguistic asymmetry in expressions that denominate typical products):

Portuguese	Italian	English
Azuladinha: *Paraty é sinônimo de pinga, afinal a fama de boa qualidade da sua pinga já rodou o mundo e foi premiada internacionalmente por conta da azuladinha (...)*	**Aquavite:** ∅	**Sugar cane aguardente; cachaça:** ∅
Cheiro verde: *Verificar, com a colher de pau, se o arroz está solto, acrescentando por último o cheiro-verde.*	**Erbe usate come condimento:** ∅	**Herbs used as condiment:** ∅

Table 10: Non-isomorphism and linguistic asymmetry in expressions that denominate typical products.

5. Conclusions

The above examples illustrate the vast universe that surrounds color vocabulary. Despite similarities, which broadly speaking are correlated to cultural diffusion, it is impossible to ignore lexical distinctiveness regarding color vocabulary. In fact, the lexicon

expresses the speakers' subjectivity and the contextual implications, and the social and political notions that constitute each language emanate from culture.

Thus, in Brazil, sugar-cane aguardente has its place in our culture together with other alcoholic beverages that are not white, but yellow, for example, beer or whiskey. However, only this alcoholic beverage has in its common denomination a color name, that is *branquinha*. It also maintains its domination over other alcoholic beverages that have the same color (vodka, for example), but are not typical of our country.

Similarly, the Italian expression *arte bianca*, i.e., *bakers' work, the art of making bread or decorating other foods such as cakes and pastries*, is not crystallized in Portuguese and English. In these two languages, possible translations are *arte de padeiro* and *baker's art* or *bread making*, respectively. On the other hand, for the Italian expression *cooperative bianche*, i.e., *Christian social organizations*, there is not an equivalent in Portuguese. In English, on the contrary, there is *white (Catholic) co-operatives,* a lexical unit that contains a color name.

There are also cases in which color names differ from one language to another, although there is an equivalence in meaning. For example, the Italian expression *di punto in bianco*, i.e., *unexpectedly*, has as equivalent in English *out of the blue*. Therefore, the equivalent expression exists, and it is also composed of a color name, but in a different chromatic subdomain. In Portuguese, on the contrary, the equivalent is *de uma hora para outra*, without a color name. In Portuguese there is also the expression *de ponto em branco*, structurally similar to the Italian one, but its meaning is *carefully*. In fact, *vestido de ponto em branco* in Italian is *vestito di tutto punto*.

Lastly, we emphasize that the absence of a chromatically marked translation can generate unusual situations. An example of this is the semantic non-correspondence of chromatic subdomains among languages in study, specifically illustrated in letter (i), *azul de saudade,* from Portuguese into English. In the target language, the color *blue* does not denote intensity, as in Portuguese, but sadness. Another example concerns the terminological non-correspondence in drug classification. In Brazil, *tarja preta* refers to a black stripe on the medicine pack, which restricts the consumption of these products, requiring a doctor's prescription. In most countries, by contrast, general medicines may only be sold on prescription.

Furthermore, due to the inherent limits for each culture, the color domain used to designate a particular event or object can be different among languages. For instance, the name *imprensa marrom* in Portuguese has as its equivalent in Italian *stampa gialla,* and in English *yellow journalism*. While in Portuguese language the preferred domain is *marrom/ brown,* in English and Italian, there is the use of another color name, i.e., *yellow/giallo*. Nevertheless, the statement that the color name *yellow* expresses in Italian and in English the same meaning as *brown* in Portuguese reclaims 50's traditional concept of translation as the transportation of meanings across languages.

Nowadays, following the developments in the field of Translation Studies, instead of searching for linguistic equivalences, we should try to find the discursive correspondences across cultures. In other words, there is no equality on language level. However, on the discourse level we are able to deal with the differences in context. As a result, *imprensa marrom* as well as *stampa gialla* and *yellow journalism* are equivalents on one level but non-equivalents on another.

Finally, the linguistic plurality is grounded on its complementary nature, as each entity complements its counterpart in a mutual interaction, realizing its otherness in the (perhaps illusory) identity of its relationship with other (non) equivalents.

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