

**SEMANTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF VOCABULARY
ASSOCIATED WITH IRAQI ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS IN
LATE 2019 AND EARLY 2020 (AS EXEMPLIFIED ON THE PAGES
FROM RUSSIAN AND ARABIC NEWS BANDWIDTH)**

Hadi Nahla Jawad¹

Jassem Muna Arif.²

Abstract: This paper deals with semantic characteristic of vocabulary associated with Iraqi anti-government protests in late 2019 and early 2020, determination of its specificity, functioning and role in the implementation of the political communicative goal of the addressee.

Keywords: semantic characteristic, Arabic vocabulary, Arabic media, Russian media, political communication, Iraqi communication.

1. Introduction

Lexicology is a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the word, its meaning, its relationship, the history of the formation of vocabulary. Modern linguists pay special attention to

the study of the semantics of the word and its semantic description.

A. A. Potebnya in his work *From Notes on Russian Grammar* claims that the word contains an indication of the content that is peculiar only to it, and at the same time an indication of one or more general categories called grammatical categories. Each grammatical category has its certain content in every concrete word [5, p. 35].

As is well known, generalizing function of the word consists in naming the objects of reality, its meaning reflects a feature of the object on the basis of which a name emerges. In addition to a specific object, the word also names the entire class of such objects [2 p. 60]. A concept of a particular object is at the core of the meaning.

¹ University of Baghdad, College of languages, Department of Russian Languages, Iraq, Email: nahlahadi@colang.uobaghdad.edu.iq

² University of Baghdad, College of languages, Department of Russian Languages, Iraq Email: dr.munaarif71@colang.uobaghdad.edu.iq

Scholars point out that objects are reflected in human consciousness in the form of representations and concepts. Representations, in turn, contain a visual image of the object, and the word is a material reflection of the concept as a mental image of the object.

The fate of languages, like human fate, unfolds differently. Their status is determined based on different histories, varying degrees of influence and extension of use in the world. The economic, cultural, political level along with the improvement of science and technology of any country are mirrored in a language.

Language is one of the most complex human phenomena. It is a complex system of symbols bearing different meanings, in addition, it is considered to be one of the most important means used to penetrate the depths of culture and its formation and the social structure of peoples. Language plays an important role in the formation and construction of society.

After the events of 2003 (the collapse of the regime of Saddam Hussein and the democratization of the country) the Iraqi people went through various turns associated with political economic social events. The new

political regime, the conflict of political forces involved in the political process, the fight against terrorism, came in determining the new Iraqi linguistic identity. At the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, with anti-government protests in Iraq caused by soaring corruption and mounting unemployment, the threat from neighboring regions, new words, phrases and expressions depicting the Iraqi environment, saturated with the realities of public culture and the political scene of modern Iraqi society emerged. These words, phrases and expressions are reflected not only in the Arab media, but also in the world ones, including Russian. Since news websites at the present stage have become one of the important and fastest media for covering world news, the material of our study was the examples extracted from the pages of Russian and Arabic news bandwidth.

The purpose of the article is to give a semantic description of the vocabulary associated with anti-government protests that is found on the pages of Russian Internet news sites, to reveal semantic changes in language units. The novelty of this paper is to consider the language units

characteristic of Iraqi anti-government protests in late 2019 and early 2020

Let us give the Arabic euphemistic phrase **al-taraf al-salis, al-taraf al-thaaleth**) (**третья сторона / the third party**) as the first illustration. In Russian, the following equivalent was used.

- Чиновник при этом утверждает, что ранения, полученных как протестующими, так и полицейскими, свидетельствуют, что против них применяла оружие некая "**третья сторона**" [www. iz.ru](http://www.iz.ru) (Among other things the official claims that the injuries received by both the protesters and the police testify that some "**third party**" used weapons against them)

- В этой связи парламентарии призвал к сотрудничеству между силами безопасности Ирака и координаторами демонстраций, дабы, не допускать проникновения так называемой "**третьей стороны**", организовавших взрывы. www.inforos.ru (In light of this, parliamentarians called for cooperation between the security forces of Iraq and the coordinators of the demonstrations in order to prevent the penetration of the so-

called "**third party**" who organized the bombings.)

It is the case of the camouflage function of political euphemisms in these examples, since concrete aggressive actions are hidden in an opaque complicated meaning. The identity of this party has two opposite concepts. The Iraqi government implies the gangs supported by external forces attacking peaceful demonstrators and security forces, and the protesters – the armed militias that support government.

Similar in function and form is the expression **al-quua al-salisa / "третья сила"** ("third force").

- Единственным непререкаемым авторитетом для восставших иракцев остаётся духовный лидер иракских шиитов великий аятолла Али ас – Систани. Он кстати поддержал мирные протесты , с одной стороны , и с другой - призвал политические власти страны как можно скорее принять новый закон о выборах и приступить к реформам , И тогда "**третья сила**" действительно , станет лишней в иракском политическом раскладе. [www. iz.ru](http://www.iz.ru) (The only unchallenged authority for the rebellious Iraqis is the spiritual leader of the Iraqi Shiites, Grand Ayatollah Ali al

- Sistani. By the way, on the one hand, he supported peaceful protests, and on the other hand, he called on the political authorities of the country to adopt a new election law as soon as possible and proceed with reforms. And then the **“third force”** will indeed become superfluous in the Iraqi political situation.)

Here the word-combination **“третья сила”** (“third force”) is also camouflage and has a more positive evaluation than the direct meaning “вооруженные отряды, не подчиняемые государству” (“armed units not subordinate to the state”).

To indicate the repressive actions of the authorities, the expression **al-quua al-mufreta / чрезмерное применение силы** (excessive force) is used instead of **isthikhdam al-quua al-mumita / “применение смертельной силы”** (lethal force), for example

- В Ираке более 60 офицеров судят за **чрезмерное применение силы**. www.iz.ru (In Iraq, more than 60 officers are tried for **excessive force**.)

So, it can be said that not only the topics associated with a person’s social life, but also with their political activity are subject to euphemization, with the aim of avoiding conflict, not

evoking an interlocutor’s sensation of communicative discomfort, sometimes veiling, camouflage of the essence of the case.

When translating the Arabic word **tansikeat** in Russian online posting, the equivalent of foreign origin **“координаторы демонстрации”** (the coordinators of the demonstration) is used, for example:

- В этой связи парламентарии призвал к сотрудничеству между силами безопасности Ирака и **координаторами демонстраций**, дабы, не допускать проникновения так называемой “третьей стороны” , организовавших взрывы. www.inforos.ru (In this connection, parliamentarians called for cooperation between the security forces of Iraq and **the coordinators of the demonstrations** in order to prevent the penetration of the so-called “third party” who organized the bombings.

Along with different semantic undertones in different areas, the word “координаторы” (coordinators) in modern political activity refers to those people who perform certain functions, such as organizing revolutionaries and their movements, transmitting news of

the revolutionaries to the media, presenting financial support to internal organs and appointing a coordinating representative in each country, statistics and documentation on the number of the dead and the arrested.

The Arabic participle **munddass** (literally, проникший / infiltrated) is a dysphemism with two opposite concepts. In line with the Iraqi government, it is used in the meaning of those people supported by external forces attacking peaceful demonstrators or people sabotaging the disorder in the country, and from the point of view of the protesters – persons belonging to government bodies. To convey this word, two equivalents were used in the Russian language, one of them is originally Russian, and the second one is of foreign origin, for example:

- Согласно данному сообщению, демонстрация была в поддержку высказываний аятоллы Систани, призывающего иракский народ опознать **злоумышленников** и отделить их от мирных демонстрантов. (December 05, 2019), parstoday.com (According to this report, the demonstration was in support of the statements of Ayatollah Sistani, urging the Iraqi people to identify the

malefactors and spin them off into the category of peaceful demonstrators.)

- Население Багдада, столицы Ирака, организовало широкомасштабные демонстрации под девизом (изгнания **диверсантов**) в соответствии с указаниями великого аятоллы Систани духовного лидера иракских шиитов страны. (December 05, 2019), parstoday.com (The population of Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, organized large-scale demonstrations under the motto *Expulsion of the **Diversianists*** in accordance with the instructions of Grand Ayatollah Sistani, the spiritual leader of the Iraqi Shiites of the country.)

Under the influence of the factors related to history, political ideology, world events and the linguistic impression in modern Iraqi political communication, color designation has acquired a symbolic meaning. Monochrome colors (the representations of monochrome (one-color and solid color) color designations and cases of their mixing), which, from the linguo-cognitive point of view of color designation, are the third frame of verbalized color nominations [4, p. 108] occupy an important place in some categories associated with these events.

The lexeme **Azraq** – **синий** (**dark blue**) is a part of the combination **al - kubbaat al - zarkaa – синие шапки** (**dark blue caps**) designating the units formed by Iraqi clergyman as - Sadr in October in support of public protests against the government, imitating the United Nations peacekeepers. Although this metaphorical transfer has emerged from an international phrase based on the color of the helmets of UN peacekeepers, in the Russian media when rendering it, instead of the Russian phrase **голубые каски** (**blue helmets**), calquing **синие шапки** (**dark blue caps**) is used, for example

- Согласно показаниям очевидцев, группа сторонников Сарда, называющая себя (**синие шапки**) пытались попасть на площадь Садрейн в центре города, для организации демонстрации в иракском Наджафе в демонстрации погибли 6 человек. [www. trt.net.tr](http://www.trt.net.tr) (According to eyewitnesses, a group of Sard's supporters calling themselves **blue caps** tried to get to Sadrein Square in the center of the city, six people were killed during the demonstration in Iraqi Najaf in order to organize a demonstration.)

As a second color symbolism, the designation of red for Iraqi protesters is semantically far from the previous word (dark blue). Red caps symbolize the anger of peaceful demonstrators and the blood of the dead, for example,

- **Красные шапки** противостоят **синим** на площадях митинга. Albayan.ae (**Red caps** are opposed to **dark blue caps** in the squares of the protest.)

- Между **синими** аль - Садр и **красными** протестующих шапки разжигают сектантство, а Ираке. m.masralarabia.net (Between **the dark blues** of al-Sadr and **the red** of the protesters, the caps stoke the fire of sectarianism in Iraq.)

In some cases, the cognitive evaluation of a color metaphor changes in connection with a change in ideological beliefs, the following can be cited as an example:

- Критики движения **красных шапок** видят, что те люди получают поддержку от США. Называя их джокерами, сторонники Садр разместили фотографии Трампа в **красной шапке**. [DW google.com](http://DW.google.com) (Critics of the movement of **the red caps** see those people being supported by the USA. Calling them

jokers, Supporters of Sadr posted photos of Trump in a red cap.)

- Молодые протестующие в городе Васит решили демонстрировать в красных шапках, в знак крови погибших и в ответ на синие шапки, которые напали на протестующих. m.masralarabia.net (Young protesters in the city of Vasit decided to march in red caps, as a mark of the blood of the dead and in response to the dark blue caps that attacked the protesters.)

Color vocabulary can be part of the creation of metonymic images, which occurs on the basis of a uniform or symbolic use of colors, as the following examples show:

- Белые медицинские халаты помогают протестующих. Rawabetcenter.com (White coats help the protesters.)

- Многочисленные белые рубашки (студенческая униформа в Ираке) устроили антиправительственные протесты под девизом (Нет родины, нет учебной посещаемости) sputniknews.com (Numerous white shirts (student uniform in Iraq) staged anti-government protests under the

motto *No Homeland – No University Attendance*)

- Социальные сети передают, что активисты и протестующие женщины призывают всех женщин Ирака к фиолетовому и розовому митингу на площади Тахрир Надев фиолетовый или розовый цвет, только для того, чтобы доказать роль женщины в революции и не допускать нарушать её репутацию, неприкосновенность личной жизни и её активной роли в Октябрьской революции. www.baghdadpost.com (Social networks report that activists and protesting women urge all Iraqi women to hold a violet and pink meeting in Tahrir Square by having put the violet- or pink-colored clothes on, only to prove the woman's role in the revolution and not allow to affect her reputation, inviolability of her personal life and her active role in the October Revolution.)

It should be noted that the phrase фиолетовая или пурпурная революция (violet or purple revolution) emerged in the Iraqi social and political communication in 2005 to name the first attempt at democratic elections in the country after the overthrow of the regime of Saddam

Hussein, on the basis of the purple mark which was put on the forefingers of the voters so that they could vote a few times. [1, p. 2]

According to R. D. Krimov, the meaning of a negative event is fully realized in the expression **чёрный день (black day)** [3, p. 116]. This component in recent years in the history of Iraq is frequency and productive in the light of the formation of free phrases depicting tragic events like **чёрный вторник, чёрный четверг (black Tuesday, black Thursday)**. Former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi used the expression **чёрный понедельник (black Monday)** to call the events that accompanied the demonstrations in the city of Karbala in Iraq. Rudaw.net 29- 10 – 2019

We also note that propaganda word formation has led to the emergence of specific evaluative lexemes.

- During the three months that accompanied the start of the demonstrations in Baghdad and the cities of southern and central Iraq, the term **Zayl or Ziyul** literally, **tail or tails** ((influenced by others, weak-willed)) was widely used by Iraqis on the squares of protests and on pages of social networks ... Both words began to denote

political forces and party leaders being loyal to Iran, but later they used the same words to evaluate people who were inclined to agree with the policies of foreign countries, especially the United States. www.alaraby.co.uk

- Recently, the lexeme **zail** characterizing a person who has a positive attitude towards Iran has been used. burathanews.com 2019 – 11- 28

The foreign word **джокеры (jokers)** has also become one of the names of the socio - political realities of Iraqi political communication. According to the general classification of the realities by S. Vlahov and S. Florin, social and political realities are the third type in which administrative-territorial units, human settlements, parts of the villages are grouped. The second group of this type encompasses the realities associated with bodies and authorities. The third subgroup, called “socio-political life” comprises the realities associated with political organizations and political figures; patriotic and social movements; social phenomena and movements; ranks, titles, appeals; institutions; educational establishments and cultural institutions; estates and castes; class signs and symbols. The fourth group, called “military realities”,

combines the realities that denote the names of units; arms; uniforms; members of the armed forces and staff [7, p. 69- 70, see also 6, p. 165].

The mask of supervillain Joker from the American thriller movie has become a single meme for protesters in many countries of the world, including Iraqi recent protests:

- Демонстрации под девизом ((Изгнание американского **джокера**)) прошли в Багдаде, Эн-Наджафе, Насерии, Аль – Ашшаре и Эд – Дивании с целью изолирования небольшой группы подстрекателей с подозрительной маской американского **джокера** , которые злоупотребляют протестами с тем , чтобы вызвать столкновения , а также другие незаконные действия. Sana.se/ru , 06 – 12 – 2019 (Demonstrations under the slogan *The Expulsion of the American **Joker*** were held in Baghdad, Najaf, Nasseria, Al Ashshar and Ed Diwai to isolate a small group of instigators with a suspicious mask of the American **joker** who abuse protests in order to cause scuffles, and also other illegal actions.)

- **Джокерами** стали называть всех погромщиков – анархистов, которые грабят магазины, бросают

((Коктейли Молотова)). ssad.livejournal.com (**The jokers** were used to designate all the pogrom-makers – the anarchists who rob shops, drop Molotov Cocktails).

Nouns constitute the most significant class of words functioning as dysphemisms. The pragmatic function of dysphemization – the discredit of a certain person, a group of people or another association – leads to the extensive use of noun dysphemisms, since it is this class which has a categorical meaning of objectness, used for direct nominating an object or a phenomenon, which the authors use to substitute or expand a name (if it is a group of people, organizations, etc.) of the object of discredit [p. 53, 4]

As a result of the addition of the Arabic suffix (**и**) to the word **Джокер (Joker)** of American origin, **джокери**, it became dysphemistic in nature. (Джокери, plural - Джокерие, джокер, plural джокеры) in the language of Iraqi political communication have turned into a nickname with a negative connotation. M.V. Lysyakova and A.A. Gayevaya pay attention to the two concepts of nickname. A nickname which is part of anthroponymy given to a person in

addition to his name usually indicates a noticeable feature of his character, appearance, activity, and some of the anthroponyms under consideration can be interpreted as nicknames in view of their non-favorite nomination. In their opinion, nickname is, first of all, a permanent name of a person, while occasional anthroponym is rather a special nomination used in certain situations. (4, p. 53)

Thus, as a result of anti-government protests in Iraq, there has been a special intensification of the formation and use of words and phrases with euphemistic needs and negatively evaluative characters. Color components have many meanings. One and the same color naming unit conveys a variety of meanings. One can also note that in the same lexical unit two opposing evaluative notions fixing a paradoxical situation in the Iraqi political arena are combined.

References

Budina M. E. Simvoli tsvetnikh revoleutsi v sostave ikh nominatsi , Kontsept – Nauchno – metoditicheski elektroni zhurnal , 2014 , № 08 , avgust, ltysept.ru/2014

Charikova O. N. ,cternin I. A. Vvedenie v eazikoznanie , Voronezh ? ISTORI) , 2005.

Kerimof R. D. Lingvosimvolika tsveta v nemetskoeazichnoe politicheskoe kulture , Politicheskaea lingvistika 2 (44) 2013.

Lysyakova M. V., Gaevaia A. A., Leksiko – gramatichiesvoestvo disfemizmof, RUDN Journal of Language Studies, Semiotics and Semantics /9 (1) 2018 .

Potebnea A. A. Iz zapisok po russkoe gramatike. M., 1958.

Tursunof F. M., Realia – spetseficheskaea sostavleaeushaea bezegvealentnoe leksike, Nomae Donshgohk SCIENTIFIC NOTES № 2(43) 2015 .

Vakhlov S., Florin S. Neperevodimoe v perevode – M.: ((R. Valent)), 2006.

Electronic Resources

www.alaraby.co.uk

www.baghdadpost.com

burathanews.com 2019 – 11- 28

www.DW google.com

ltysept.ru/2014

www.inforos.ru

www.iz.ru

ssad.livejournal.com

www.m.masralarabia.net

parstoday.com



Periódico do Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre Gênero e Direito
Centro de Ciências Jurídicas - Universidade Federal da Paraíba
V. 9 - Nº 04 - Ano 2020
ISSN | 2179-7137 | <http://periodicos.ufpb.br/ojs2/index.php/ged/index>
1071

www.Rawabetcenter.com

Rudaw.net 29- 10 – 2019

[Sana.se/ ru](http://Sana.se/ru) , 06 – 12 – 2019

sputniknews.com

www.trt.net.tr