

# An Idealized Cognitive Models Interpretation of Color Terms *Huang* in the *Book of Songs*

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**Abstract:** Color terms are not only the linguistic expression of color concept, but also the natural result of human cognition, categorization and linguistic decoding of color. This essay primarily aims at color terms *Huang* and interprets it with an idealized cognitive model, in order to analyze the cognitive mechanism of its formation, having a more comprehensive analysis and understanding of it.

**Keywords:** Idealized Cognitive Model; Color Terms; *the Book of Songs*; Huang

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## Introduction

Using ICM to interpret color terms will acquire a gestalt and whole understanding of color itself. The color terms in *the Book of Songs* involved all aspects of society at that time, and permeated religious beliefs and social habits. In Chinese, *Huang* has a certain cultural meaning. It has a strong sense of light, giving the impression of brightness and hope. While it is not easy to distinguish because the short wavelength has the characteristics of decadence and decline. Therefore, there will be an analysis on *Huang* by the framework of ICMs and make a conclusion to let us know more about *Huang* in a gestalt way.

## 1. Huang in Propositional Model

Lakoff (1987:113) clarified that propositional ICMs consist of specified elements with properties and relations that hold between those elements, which explains the relevant concept, features, attributes and the relations among ICMs. "*Huang, Di Zhi Se Ye*" (Xu Shen & Si Lv, 2019), it is the color of earth. In *the Book of Songs*, there are four kinds of structures: single use, compound use, overlapping use and exists as a syllable of a continuous word (Tan Xiaoping & Chang Zhen, 2009). First, *Huang* as a verb has the meaning of turning yellow. It can refer to the horse's fur turning yellow because of excessive fatigue. As a noun, it has the meanings of yellow horse and topaz earrings. And as an adjective, it mainly describes the color of objects, especially the color of clothes and flowers. The second use is mainly divided into two kinds, one is Huang + noun. It can be served as adjectives, expressing the specific meaning of yellow birds, clothes, wine, seeds and hair or the man with longevity. The other is the noun means horse in yellow, its structure is modifier + Huang. Thirdly, the overlapping is mainly used to describe colors and increase the vividness of the appearance of things. In *Hu Qiu Huang Huang* (Yang Heming, 2016), it refers to the beautiful and elegant fox fur people wear, so as to show the moral character of the owner. The definition of *Huang* is that the hue of that portion of the visible spectrum lying between orange and green, evoked in the human observer by radiant energy with wavelengths of approximately 570 to 590 nanometers or any of a group of colors of a hue resembling that of ripe lemons and varying in lightness and saturation. But in form, it is mainly used to produce a different sense of rhythm, and the repeated use of *Huang* into overlapping color terms makes it catchy to read. And from the emotional point of view, these words often can also enhance subjective attitude towards describing objects, praising the high character of man.

## 2. Huang in Symbolic Model

ICMs of this kind represent the knowledge structures that Fillmore described in terms of semantic frames (Vyvyan Evans & Melanie Green, 2018). Symbolic models represent the knowledge structures that provide an overview of what an encyclopedic view of word meaning. And Lakoff (1987) presented that this model has the structure of symbolic units. In terms of physics, the color is the result of the different wavelength of light reflection, which doesn't even have any special meaning.

However, when people's emotions and the color of objects collide, it becomes people's emotional sustenance and cultural symbol. *Qi Huang Er Yun*(Yang Heming, 2016) is to point to the color of mulberry leaf becoming yellow and fall, symbolizing the decline of love of two people like leaves, and Huang will become the symbol of love will decline as leaves. Huang is not only the decay of withered meaning, but also a symbol of mature harvest meaning. In *Lv Yi Huang Li, Lv Yi Huang Shang and Hu Qiu Huang Huang*(Yang Heming, 2016), Huang is not only a simple color of clothes, but also the symbol of social class. For ancient Chinese, Huang is a symbol of power and position of good quality and virtue. Dual semantic features are the embodiment of the special value of color terms as a symbol of cultural level (Zhang Wangxi,1988). *Huang*, on the one hand, gives a person a strong sense of visual stimulation. On the one hand, because of its short wavelength, it is not easy to distinguish, and with thin, weak and other characteristics, sometimes can disappear under the light, which can make people think of the end of depression, decadence and other pessimistic feelings. To sum up, the connotation of color terms is not only the painting of objective color, but more inner true feelings it depicts.

### 3. Huang in Image-schema Model

As Lakoff and Johnson (1987) proposes, image schema refers to the regular pattern that appears repeatedly in the process of humans interaction with the objective world, which mainly functions as abstract image structure. Image schema refers to the recurring conventional style that human interactive with the objective world in the process of experiencing, they mainly function as abstract structure of image (Wang Yinyin, 2007). In order to understand things and the world, gain meaning and construct knowledge, people need to use such conscious images over and over again to analyze the same relationship between things in the external world repeatedly and carefully. Abstract unceasingly, so as to gradually perfect an image schema, so that it has relative stability, so that it can be stored in memory as a cognitive model to understand the world. Color with different spectrum can cause a person's visual sense of pleasure to stimulate and trigger emotional complex reaction. There are five main image schemas: First, five positive colors, which are used to describe the true color of objective things. Troopial is known as a lovely bird. *Huang* does not simply mean yellow further, but expresses the joyful feelings of yellow birds. Second, *Huang* is the symbol of the earth, the main color of the Yellow River basin and the color of the clothes, which can stand people's status and that is why Huang Pao is the symbol of the Chinese emperor. Third, the image schema of turning yellow, *He Cao Bu Huang* (Yang Heming,2016) shows that the mulberry leaves turn yellow and the withered grass turns yellow and the flowers fade and turn yellow, forming the process of turning yellow. Fourth, the image pattern of good harvest in *Huang Mao*(Yang Heming,2016), symbolizes the beautiful and vibrant scene. Fifth, using *Huang* refers to things with yellow, such as horses. Yellow is the color of a noble and horse for fine horses, only yellow aristocracy. We can use the sense perception, and people in and objective external appearances to explain the interactive experience obtained in the process of image schema. It is because these several kinds of image schema of *Huang*, and constantly from different image abstract concepts, separation and then integration and making progress continuously in cognition, which enable us to establish the concept of *Huang* as a color term and have a deeper understanding of its denotation.

### 4. Huang in Metaphor Mapping Model

Lakoff (1987: 114) defined metaphorical models are mapping a propositional or image-schematic model in one domain to a corresponding structure in another domain. When we use the basic category of color to express and explain the categories of other cognitive domains, the objective color source of color metaphor cognition *Huang* is the earth, sun, and yellow leaves, etc., and the metaphor meaning has double meanings, one is positive and good side and another is decline in the negative side. In *the Book of Songs*, *Huang Niao* are often used to express their feelings of praise or to express ironic sounds by means of the image. *Huang Niao Yu Fei*(Yang Heming, 2016) is a metaphor for ancient women while beating in the bush. The scenery of yellow birds gathering in the bush singing merrily expressed the hope and joy of women reunited with their parents. Troopial is endowed with a motto of the connotation of elegant, used to symbolize the sage of high character in *Mian Man Huang Niao*(Yang Heming,2016). *Jiao Jiao Huang Niao*(Yang Heming, 2016) has fine feathers with beautiful sound, and is used to sage excellent talents. *Huang Niao in Wu Ji Yu Gu, Wu Zhuo Wo Su*(Yang Heming,2016), the yellow bird pecking to metaphor for the slave owners and rulers who get extortion without work, the poet expressed strong

feelings in an implicit way, through the hatred of yellow bird to express the indictment of the exploiters. In a word, the cognitive metaphor of basic color is an important cognitive tool for human beings to recognize the world.

## 5. Huang in Metonymy Mapping Model

Lakoff (1987) stated that metonymic mapping models are the mapping of one conceptual entity to another conceptual entity within the same cognitive domain. Metonymy is a basic cognitive ability to recognize things. In *Lv Yi Huang Li* (Yang Heming, 2016), it expresses the content of the green coat in yellow for the lining, but this color is not correct in ancient times, at metaphor abnormal state, expressed the concerns of the heart. Linguistic metonymy is referential in nature: it relates to the use of expressions to 'pinpoint' entities in order to talk about them (Vyvyan Evans & Melanie Green, 2018). *Huang Gou* and *Huang Fa* refer to gray hair by age, using his hair to replace this part of the overall, expressed the man's body is in good condition, in the full ripeness stage, as a symbol of longevity. A further defining feature of metonymy pointed out by Lakoff and Johnson is that it is motivated by physical or causal associations. Traditionally, this was expressed in terms of contiguity: a close or direct relationship between two entities (Vyvyan Evans & Melanie Green, 2018). *Cheng Huang* originally refers to the color of the fur of a horse to represent the horse. In the cognitive domain of the horse, yellow fur is used to highlight the external characteristics of the horse. Having certain subjective initiative, human knowledge and solutions for the end of the cognitive ability, can from different angles, according to different needs, based on different levels to meet the whole event, metonymy is perceived more easily within the same cognitive domain part to perceive or understand another part of the whole or the whole. Therefore,

## Conclusion

The color terms in *the Book of Songs* are the linguistic result of the recording and description of objective colors by our ancestors, which is a reflection of thinking cognition. Color terms not only represent the specific color of something, but also convey the subjective feelings and specific cultural information brought to us by color, which has historical inheritance. In this colorful world, we can deeply feel its cultural implications. Therefore, to study one of the five basic colors in *the Book of Songs* from the perspective of cognition not only to make us have a clear understanding of color terms with cognition, but also has new ways to study the color terms.

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