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A Study of Colour Words in Chinese, Tibetan and Yi Languages

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Abstract: Chinese, Tibetan and Yi belong to the Sino-Tibetan language family, and there are kinship between the three languages. By comparing and analysing the colour words of Chinese, Tibetan and Yi, we can understand the three languages' respective lexical features and unique cultural traditions, and find out the unique expressions and cultural connotations of the colour words of the three languages. Han, Tibetan and Yi are all important parts of the Chinese Minzu, and all have their own unique language systems and colourful cultures. Colour words, as an important carrier of language system and culture, carry the linguistic and cultural characteristics of each language, and this paper will start from the colour words of Chinese, Tibetan and Yi languages to explore the three linguistic features and cultural connotations.

Keywords: Chinese, Yi, Tibetan, colour words, cultural connotation

1. Introduction

Colour is a visual impression formed by the reflection and absorption of different wavelengths of an object. The famous British physicist Isaac Newton first discovered that there is no such substance as colour in the objective world, and that colour is the impression triggered by different wavelengths of visible light acting on human vision, which is its physical and natural property.

One of the first to focus on and discuss the evolution of colour words was the English scholar W. Gladstone, who noted that "the uncertainty and inconsistency in the application of colour words led him to deny that there was any clear conception of colours in Ancient Greece in the time of Homer". In his opinion, the colour organs and their perception of the ancient Greeks were defective, and their ability to discriminate colours was less developed than that of modern man.

The first to propose a universal acquisition sequence for colour words was the German linguist Geiger, who argued that the order in which people perceive colours corresponds to the order in which colours are arranged on the natural spectrum, and that the development of colour words in a language goes through at least six stages[1].

The German ophthalmologist Magnus, who conducted the first cross-cultural survey of colour perception in 61 indigenous tribes on five continents, concluded that the naming of colours is not necessarily related to the level of human perception. A "primitive" language often lacks abstract names for colours, but this is not because the speakers of this language cannot distinguish certain colours, but because the distinction of these colours is not important to them, so they do not have to

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distinguish them linguistically; on the contrary, they can distinguish the colours of certain things linguistically more than the modern civilized peoples, as long as it is necessary to do so. distinctions more minutely than modern civilised peoples [2]. So it is reasonable that there are differences among the three languages, even though they belong to the same linguistic family.

But since the emergence of human society, colour has been inextricably linked with the material and spiritual life of human beings, thus giving rise to its second attribute, i.e. social attributes [3]. That is to say, the human visual organ not only can identify the colourfulness of nature, but also give colours a certain social significance, i.e. symbolic and emotional significance.

2. Comparison Linguistic Characteristics of Chinese, Tibetan and Yi Colour Words

2.1. Phonological Characteristics of Chinese, Tibetan and Yi Colour Words

Table 1: International Phonetic Alphabet for Colour Words.

Meaning	Chinese	Tibetan	Yi
white	pai^{3}/pai^{35}sɯ^{51}	kar^{55}po^{55}	tɕ^{h}u^{33}/a^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{33}
black	he^{55}/he^{55}sɯ^{51}	na?^{132}pa^{55}	nɔ^{33}/a^{33}nɔ^{33}
red	huŋ^{35}/huŋ^{35}sɯ^{51}	mar^{13}	n̥i^{33}/a^{33}n̥i^{33}
yellow	huaŋ^{35}/huaŋ^{35}sɯ^{51}	ser^{55}/cer^{55}kha^{55}	ʂʅ^{3}/a^{33}ʂʅ^{33}
grey	hue^{55}/hue^{55}sɯ^{51}	ca^{55}ca^{55}	tʂ^{h}o^{33}/a^{33}tʂ^{h}o^{33}
green	ly^{51}/ly^{51}sɯ^{51}	ŋon^{13}/ŋa^{13}ŋo^{13}	a^{33} lo^{21}/a^{33}vu^{33}
blue	lan^{35}/lan^{35}sɯ^{51}	ŋon^{13}/ŋa^{13}ŋo^{13}	a^{33}vu^{33}/a^{33} lo^{21}
dark green	bi^{51}ly^{51}	thiŋ^{55} /than^{55}thiŋ^{55}	vu^{33}x̱ʅ/vu^{33}x̱ʅ^{33}x̱ʅ^{33}
emerald green	cuei^{51}ly^{51}	ŋo^{13}tɕaŋ^{13} /tɕaŋ^{13}theŋ^{55} ŋer^{13}	vu^{33}ci^{33}/vu^{33}ci^{33}ci^{33}
glistening yellow	huaŋ^{35}deŋ^{55}deŋ^{55}	ser^{55}saŋ^{55} /ser^{55}haŋ^{55} haŋ^{55}	ʂʅ^{44}ndo^{33}/ ʂʅ^{44}mu^{33}ʂʅ^{44}ndo^{33}ndo^{33}
pitch-black	hei^{55}ya^{55}ya^{55}	myn^{13}tʂhiʔ^{51} /na?^{132}thiŋ^{55}thiŋ^{55}	nɔ^{33}dzʅ^{33}/a^{44}nɔ^{33}nɔ^{33}dzʅ^{33}

Monosyllabic words can be used to describe colours, but people tend to use multi-syllables to describe colours. It can be seen that the colour vocabulary of Chinese, Tibetan and Yi are developing in the direction of disyllabification and polysyllabification. The disyllabification or polysyllabification of the vocabulary is partly due to the development of the internal structure of the vocabulary itself, and partly in order to match the syllabic harmony of the disyllabification of the modified word[4].

2.2. Lexical Characteristics of Chinese, Tibetan and Yi Colour Words

Chinese, Tibetan and Yi colour words can be divided into four categories in terms of meaning structure: single colour words, mixed colour words, vivid colour words, and special colour words[5].

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2.2.1. Single Colour Words

Table 2: International Phonetic Alphabet for Single Colour Words.

Meaning	Chinese	Tibetan	Yi
white	pai^{35}/pai^{35}sɯ^{51}	kar^{55}po^{55}	tɕ^{h}u^{33}/a^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{33}
black	he^{55}/he^{55}sɯ^{51}	na?^{132}pa^{55}	nɔ^{33}/a^{33}nɔ^{33}
red	huŋ^{35}/huŋ^{35}sɯ^{51}	mar^{13}	n̥i^{33}/a^{33}n̥i^{33}
yellow	huaŋ^{35}/huaŋ^{35}sɯ^{51}	ser^{55}/cer^{55}kha^{55}	ʂl^{33}/a^{33}ʂl^{33}
grey	hue^{55}/hue^{55}sɯ^{51}	ca^{55}ca^{55}	tʂ^{h}o^{33}/a^{33}tʂ^{h}o^{33}
green	ly^{51}/ly^{51}sɯ^{51}	ŋon^{13}/ŋa^{13}ŋo^{13}	a^{33}lo^{21}/a^{33}vu^{33}
blue	lan^{35}/lan^{35}sɯ^{51}	ŋon^{13}/ŋa^{13}ŋo^{13}	a^{33}vu^{33}/a^{33} lo^{21}

The main basic colours in single colour words are white, black, red, yellow, grey, green and blue. These single colour words are simple words, both monosyllabic and disyllabic.

In Tibetan and Yi, there is no clear definition of blue and green colour words, and there is a mixture of these two colours, which is a matter of language habit. Because "blue" and "green" are adjacent colours on the spectrum, in the early stage of human civilization, the vocabulary of language was limited, and so were the words used to describe colours; In the early development of the Sino-Tibetan language family, there were no special words for blue and green.

2.2.2. Mixed Colour Words

Mixed words are an important part of vocabulary in various languages, and mixed colour colour words are an important part of colour words.

2.2.2.1. Three ways to form mixed colour colour words in Chinese

The first is a mixture of colour words made up of "two colour roots", such as navy blue, greenish grey, pinkish white, greyish black and other colour words.

The second is the mixed-colour colour words formed by "adverbs of degree + colour root words", such as light blue, light red, dark blue, dark green and other colour words.

The third is a mixture of colour words named by "extracting the characteristics of plants, animals and objects", such as: amber, rose red, navy blue, duck, egg green and other colour words, this kind of colour words, some of the colour words at the end of the word "colour" can not be omitted, omitted to indicate that the meaning of the other.

In Chinese, there is special category of words that need to use the character "se" to distinguish whether they are colour words or not. In general, colour words have the meaning of describing colours with or without the character "se", but in some colour words, the character "se" needs to be added at the end of the word to indicate that the word is a colour word. There are many colour words in Chinese, but fewer in Tibetan and Yi, which has a great deal to do with the vitality of the language. Compared with Chinese, Tibetan and Yi have relatively low vitality, so the ability to create and accept new words is also relatively low.

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2.2.2.2.Three ways of forming mixed colours colour words in Tibetan

The first is the mixed-colour colour words made up of "monosyllabic words" such as [caŋ^{55}] brownish red, [kham^{55}] apricot yellow, [ŋo^{13}] lime green, [thiŋ^{55}] sky blue, [muʔ^{51}] purple, [tshɛ:^{55}] vermilion, and other colour words, which are a major feature of Tibetan colour words, and this linguistic phenomenon is related to the unique natural environment, cultural field, and language usage habits of Tibetan.

The second type is mixed-colour colour words consisting of "two-syllable words", such as [lo^{55}kha^{55}] light red, [se^{55}pho^{13}] black-yellow, [sa^{55}muʔ^{51}] purplish purple, and [li^{13}kan^{13}] reddish yellow.

The third type of colour words is a mixture of colours named by "extracting characteristics of plants, animals, or objects". Colour words such as [li^{13}waŋ^{13}] orange, [ŋo^{13}kar^{55}] egg green, [tshon^{55}toʔ^{132}] navy blue, and so on.

2.2.2.3.Three ways of forming mixed colour colour words in Yi

The first is a mixed-colour colour word consisting of "two colour word roots", such as [sɔ^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{33}] pallid, [so^{33}nɔ^{33}] greyish black, [vu^{55}nɔ^{21}] dark green (navy blue), and other colour words.

The second type is mixed-colour colour words formed by "adverb of degree + colour root", such as [ʂʅ^{44}mɔ^{33}] light yellow, [tɕ^{h}u^{33}sʅ^{33}] pale white, [vu^{55}pu^{33}] light blue, [ʂʅ^{44}bu^{33}] light yellow, and other colour words.

The third category consists of mixed-colour colour words named by "extracting characteristics of plants, animals, and objects", such as [ʂʅ^{44}ŋa^{33}] egg-yolk yellow, [tɕ^{h}u^{44}vo^{33}] snow-white colour, [n̥i^{44}tɕo^{33}] blood red, and [a^{33}tɕe^{33}] reddish date colour, among other colour words.

The fourth category consists of mixed-colour colour words consisting of "verb + colour root", such as [tsʅ^{33}n̥i^{33}] fuchsia, [tsʅ^{33}nɔ^{33}] purplish black, [so^{44}po^{33}] light grey, [ʂu^{21}vu^{55}] light blue, [p^{h}o^{33}vu^{55}] indigo, and other colour words.

2.2.3. Vivid Colour Words

The only vivid colour words in Chinese are the ABB style, such as [bai^{35}hua^{55}hua^{55}]white blossom, [hu ŋ $^{3\,5}$tu ŋ ^{55}tu ŋ ^{55}] red, [lan^{35}yi ŋ $^{3\,5}$yi ŋ $^{3\,5}$] blue, [ly^{51}you^{35}you^{35}] green, [jin^{55}can^{51}can^{51}] golden, [huei^{55}meŋ^{35}meŋ^{35}] grey, and so on.

There are three kinds of vivid colour words in Tibetan: ABB, ABC, and ABCD, such as [ŋo^{13}thiŋ^{55}thiŋ^{55}] green, [mar^{13}lam^{13}lam^{13}] red, [ca^{55}tha^{55}le^{13}] grey, [kar^{55}tʂhom^{55}me^{13}pha^{13}] white and shiny, and other colour words.

The richness of vivid colour words in Yi is one of the major features of Yi colour words. There are five types of lexically enhanced vivid colour words in Yi: ABB, ABAB, ABACC, ABBC, and ABBCC, such as [n̥i^{33}ʂɔ^{33}ʂɔ^{33}] reddish grey, [tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33}] pure white, [a^{44}so^{33}so^{33}nɔ^{33}] dark grey, [a^{33}vu^{33}vu^{33}tʂɻ^{33}tʂʅ^{33}] dark green (dark blue) and other colour words.

In the Chinese, Tibetan and Yi vivid colour words, the horizontal development of vivid colour words is more or less the same in all three languages, but the vertical development of vivid colour words is the richest in Yi, For example, [tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33}] There are five vivid colour words for the word "pure white": [tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33}tsʅ^{33}], [tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33}], [a^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33}tsʅ^{33}], [tɕ^{h}u^{33}mu^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{44}tsʅ^{33} tsʅ^{33}], [tɕ^{h}u^{44}dzʅ^{21}dzʅ^{21}tsʅ^{33}tsʅ^{33}], each of which deepens the meaning of the word to varying degrees from its original meaning. [n̥i^{33}ʂʅ^{33}] There are four vivid colour words for the word "red crystal": [n̥i^{33}ʂʅ^{33}ʂʅ^{33}], [n̥i^{33}ʂʅ^{33}n̥i^{33}ʂʅ^{33}], [n̥i^{33}mu^{33}n̥i^{33}ʂʅ^{33}ʂʅ^{33}], [ni^{33}ʂʅ^{21}ʂʅ^{21}ʂʅ^{33}], the lexical meanings of these words have also been deepened to varying degrees from their original meanings.

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2.2.4. Special Colour Words

Every language has some colour words that refer to the colour of an object or an animal because of the natural environment, the cultural field and the habits of language use.

In the Chinese language with the development of people's ability to identify the colour of the basic colour words developed and fixed in addition to the special colour words, they are mostly retained by the ancient Chinese language, the original meaning of the original object with a certain colour, with the change of the times, almost all of them have become a special reference to a certain colour of the words, such as: [zuŋ^{55}] brown, [he^{51}] brown, [qiŋ^{55}] green, [feŋ^{214}] pink, [dai^{51}] dark green and dark black, [jiaŋ^{51}] dark reddish purple, [fei^{214}] scarlet and other colour words[6].

There are colour words in Tibetan that refer specifically to the colour of animals, such as [caŋ^{55} kar^{55}] light brown (the colour of the coat of a horse, donkey, mule), [caŋ^{55}caŋ^{55}] date bay (the colour of a horse), [caŋ^{55}na?^{132}] black date bay (as in the colour of the coats of a horse, donkey, mule), [caŋ^{55}mar^{13}] date red (as in the colour of the coats of a horse mule) and other colour words.

In Yi language, colour words that refer specifically to animal colours are divided into those that refer specifically to animal colours and those that refer specifically to objects. The colour words that specifically refer to animal colours are [vu^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{33}] animals with white bellies, [vu^{33}ʂ ɿ^{33}] animals with yellow bellies, [vu^{33}n̥i^{33}] animals with red bellies, [a^{33}gɯ^{33}] grey chicken. Colour words that refer specifically to objects include [ʂ ɿ^{33}nɔ^{33}] black shawl, [ʂ ɿ^{33}vu^{55}] blue shawl, [ʂ ɿ^{33}tɕ^{h}u^{33}] white shawl, [ʂ ɿ^{33}pu^{33}] grey shawl and other colour words.

2.3. Grammatical Characteristics of Chinese,Tibetan and Yi Colour Words

Each language has its own word-constructing features, using different word-constructing methods to produce new word meanings.

2.3.1. Three ways to change the meaning of colour words in Chinese

The first method is to add different affixes after the root word to achieve deepening or weakening of the colour word meaning. For example, [tʂu^{55}huŋ^{35}] vermilion, [mei^{35}huŋ^{35}] plum red, [tau^{35}huŋ^{35}] peach red, [dou^{51}huŋ^{35}] bean red, [jin^{55}huŋ^{35}] gold red and other colour words.

The second type is the combination of colour words and other morphemes to form idioms with colour words. Some of them have unchanged colour word morphemes in idioms, such as [bai^{35} yuən^{35}caŋ^{55}gou^{214}], [huŋ^{35}tʂuaŋ^{55}su^{51}kou^{214}], [ly^{51}cau^{214}ʐu^{35}yin^{55}], [tʂ^{h}a^{51}tsi^{214}yaŋ^{55}huŋ^{35}] and other idioms; some have derived meanings for colour words in idioms such as [bɑi^{35}mei^{35}tʂ^{h}i^{51}yan^{214}], [huŋ^{35}qiŋ^{35}ly^{51}yi^{51}], [lan^{35}dian^{35}ʂeŋ^{55}yuən^{51}], [qiŋ^{55}mei^{35}tʂu^{35}ma^{214}] and other idioms.

The third is to add overlapping additional components after the basic colour words to deepen the meaning of the colour words; for example, [huŋ^{35}toŋ^{55}toŋ^{55}] red, [huŋ^{35}yin^{55}yin^{55}]

red, [lan^{35}yiŋ^{35}yiŋ^{35}] blue and other colour words.

2.3.2. Two ways to change the meaning of colour words in Tibetan

The first method is to add different affixes to the same colour word root to achieve a deepening or weakening of the meaning of the colour word, e.g., [mar^{13}] red becomes [mar^{13}caŋ^{55}] big red, [mar^{13} ca^{55}] pink, [mar^{13}tʂha^{55}] saffron-coloured, [mar^{13}thaŋ^{55}] solid red, etc. after the addition of different affixes, and so on, in order to achieve a new meaning of the colour word.

The second is to overlap additional constituents to achieve lexical deepening or transformation from AA to ABB style, e.g, [ca^{55}ca^{55}] greyish-white becomes [ca^{55}chi:^{55}chi:^{55}] greyish-white (or white,

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white-covered), [ŋa^{13}ŋo^{13}] greenish (or greenish) becomes [ŋo^{13}thiŋ^{55}thiŋ^{55}] green (or turquoise, lush), [ŋa^{13}ŋo^{13}] green (or green) becomes [ŋo^{13}seŋ^{55}seŋ^{55}] verdant (or greenish, blue), [ca^{55}ca^{55}] greyish-white becomes [ca^{55}tshup^{51}otshup^{51}] greyish, etc. have achieved lexical shifts.

2.3.3. Four ways to change the lexical meaning of colour words in Yi

The first type of lexical deepening is achieved by overlapping root-final words. There are two such grammatical realisations, one in which AB forms become ABB forms. pure white [tɕʰu^{44}tsʅ^{33}] becomes [tɕʰu^{44}tsʅ^{33}tsʅ^{33}], white flowers [tɕʰu^{44}kʰɔ^{33}] becomes [tɕʰu^{44}kʰɔ^{33}kʰɔ^{33}], white-capped [tɕʰu^{44}ko^{33}] becomes [tɕʰu^{44}ko^{33}ko^{33}] and other variations, this other category is AB to ABAB, such as red puff [n̥i^{33}bi^{44}] to [n̥i^{33}bi^{44}n̥i^{33}bi^{44}], red [n̥i^{44}lo^{33}] into [n̥i^{44}lo^{33}n̥i^{44}lo^{33}], red-orange [n̥i^{44}dzo^{33}] changed to [n̥i^{44}dzo^{33}n̥i^{44}dzo^{33}] and other changes, both of which achieve lexical deepening in the Yi context.

The second is to deepen the meaning of words by adding components. The deepening of lexical meaning is achieved by adding the word A in the middle flat tone and mu^{33} to the front of the original ABB style word as "A (middle flat tone) + mu^{33} + ABB", e.g., the word white flower [tɕʰu^{44} ʂa^{33}ʂa^{33}] becomes [tɕʰu^{33}mu^{33}tɕʰu^{44}ʂa^{33}ʂa^{33}], pure white [tɕʰu^{44}zʅ^{33}zɻ^{33}] becomes [tɕʰu^{33}mu^{33}tɕʰu^{44}zʅ^{33} zɻ^{33}], white-capped [nɔ^{44}pu̱^{33}pu^{33}] to [nɔ^{33}mu^{33}nɔ^{44}pu̱^{33}pu̱^{33}] and other changes have achieved deepening of the lexical meaning of colour words.

The third type of lexical shift is achieved by overlapping additional constituents. The low descending C of the word B is repeated twice in the middle of this word in the original AB style for the ACCB style, e.g., white [tɕʰu^{44}vo^{33}] becomes white and shaky [tɕʰu^{44}vo^{21}vo^{21}vo^{33}], bright [tɕʰu^{44} lɔ^{33}] into white shimmering ground [tɕʰu^{44}lɔ^{21}lɔ^{21}lɔ^{33}], whitish [tɕʰu^{44}ʂʅ^{33}] into white blossom [tɕʰu^{44} ʂʅ^{21}ʂʅ^{21}ʂʅ^{33}] and other shifts all achieve lexical shifts. from a mere colour word to an adjective of state.

The fourth is when the colour word prefix has only a as a tight vowel, the roots overlap and the lexical meaning is attenuated. Yi has a large number of intensified colour words, but an equally small number of colour words with attenuated lexical meanings. For example, dark grey [a^{44}tʂʰo^{33}] becomes [a^{44}tʂʰo^{33}] after overlapping roots becomes [a^{44}tʂʰo^{33}tʂʰo^{33}], and floral [a^{44}bu̱^{33}] after overlapping roots becomes [a^{44}bu̱^{33}bu̱^{33}], black [a^{44}nɔ^{44}] after overlapping roots becomes [a^{44}nɔ^{44}nɔ^{44}], blue (green) [a^{33}vu^{55}] becomes after overlapping roots [a^{33}vu^{55}vu^{55}] and other changes, all of which underwent semantic attenuation.

3. Cultural Characteristics of Chinese, Tibetan and Yi Colour Words

China has been a multi-ethnic country since ancient times, and different regions and ethnic groups have formed their own different colour beliefs and aesthetic habits. Over thousands of years, deeply influenced by primitive totem worship, religious beliefs, feudal imperialism, and regional customs and cultures, colours have been attached to various sacrificial and imperial patriarchal instruments, and have become symbols for spreading and manifesting divine, clan, royal and hierarchical rights[7]. The preference for colour shows the different Minzu cultural characteristics of each ethnic group, and the use of colour is a manifestation and reflection of the intertwining of culture, religion and psychology.

Since ancient times, the various ethnic groups on the Chinese land have been exchanging, interacting and mingling with each other, sharing and exchanging, learning from each other on an equal footing and with mutual benefits. We can see from the use of colour words in Chinese, Tibetan and Yi languages that they have all been influenced by the Confucian culture of "the five elements". Although the elements of the five elements of each culture are different, the corresponding colours are: "red, black, yellow, white and green".

The five elements in the Han Chinese are "gold, wood, water, fire and earth", and the corresponding colours are "white, green, black, yellow and red". Colours are mutually exclusive:

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"black grams red, red grams white, white grams green, green grams yellow, yellow grams black"; "black begets green, green begets red, red begets yellow, yellow begets white, white begets black". Such as the Forbidden City's colour scheme on the performance of the five elements of Chinese culture, "red and yellow" of this law, the Forbidden City's overall red and yellow two main colours, where the red has a festive, beautiful symbolism; yellow is on behalf of the power, nobility, and once became the emperor's exclusive colour.

In Tibetan culture, it is believed that the universe consists of five elements: fire, wind, water, earth and air, which correspond to the five colours: red, black, white, yellow and blue. In painting thangkas the most commonly used are red, yellow, blue, green and other pure primary colours, Tibetans use different colours to symbolize different souls and give them specific symbolic meanings, for example, yellow symbolizes peace, liberation, nobility and so on, it is the most noble colour, usually used in the thangka throughout the picture of the most sacred places, such as the Buddha's light, delicate ornaments, dharma equipment, etc. blue symbolizes bravery, might, etc. red symbolizes power, strength, etc. cyan symbolizes power, strength and so on. Blue symbolises valour and might; red symbolises power and strength; cyan symbolises wealth and abundance.

In the Yi culture, the five elements are the directions: "East, South, West, North and Middle", and the representative colours are: "Green, Red, White, Black and Yellow", for example, in the Yi lacquer ware, the three main colours are "Black, Red and Yellow". For example, on the lacquer ware of the Yi people, "black, red and yellow" are often used as the main colours. The Yi people favour black. This reverence for black originates from their worship of the black land. In the primitive period, the Yi people didn't understand why the seeds could grow from the black land, so they had the mentality of reverence and worship to the black land. They hoped that the black land could bring them a good harvest and the prosperity of six animals, so they gave the black colour a beautiful and noble meaning. Red represents blood and fire, symbolising bravery and passion. Yellow is a symbol of the sun's light, representing light, hope and beauty.

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As we can see from the above examples, colour words have unique cultural connotations within each ethnic group, and colours are not only visual symbols, but also expressions of emotions and thoughts of each ethnic group. The cultural meanings of the colour words are very rich, and the cultural meanings of the colour words within each ethnic group have similar meanings as well as opposing meanings, which are parallel and not contradictory. The cultural connotations of the colour words between the various ethnic groups have the same meaning, basically it can be said that: from the day of the formation of the culture of the various ethnic groups, they have been subjected to the far-reaching influence of the Han culture in the Central Plains. The Chinese people have been a family since ancient times, as they have exchanged, interacted and mingled with each other.

4. Conclusions

The colour vocabulary, in addition to reflecting the characteristics of the lexical system of the language of the people, also reflects the culture of the Minzu, as the American linguist Sapir says:

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"The vocabulary of a language reflects more or less faithfully the culture it serves, In this sense the history of language and the history of culture follow parallel and reciprocal lines."

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