

**М. Д. Кравцова**

COLOUR EPITHETS IN THE COLLECTION OF NOVELLAS  
“IF IT BLEEDS” BY STEPHEN KING

The question of color epithets is inextricably linked with the phenomenon of color itself. The problems of the concept of color as one of the most important factors in the development of culture and society, various concepts of color issues as a subject of aesthetics were studied by V. F. Petrenko, A. A. Surin, L. N. Mironova, A. S. Zaitsev, M. O. Surin.

Color epithets are often used artistic techniques. The question of the use of epithets is raised by many linguists. So, some scientists consider the epithet in connection with the author's style of writers (E. A. Kasyanova, V. B. Petrov, E. D. Petrova, Z. A. Kravchenko), with various artistic motifs (T. A. Nikitina), with national works (O. A. Melnichuk, E. S. Rufova). Thus, the problem of color epithets is relevant and in demand in linguistics, as it not only helps to understand the cultural features of national literature, but also allows you to describe in more detail the individual style of the author.

The writer Stephen King often uses figures of speech in his works, including color epithets. With the help of this figure of speech, the author conveys a wide range of emotions and sensations, creates a certain atmosphere in a chapter or scene, describes the characters and the environment.

**Frequency of use of color epithets in the collection**

Scientists B. Berlin and P. Kay call the main colors in English: **white, black, red, green, yellow, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange, gray**. V. A. Moskovich, in his semantic and statistical studies, also adds two more adjectives **scarlet** and **violet** to this group of the most frequent color epithets.

The collection revealed 234 phrases with color epithets, a total of 12 color epithets. According to mathematical calculation, the most frequent color epithets are the epithets **black, white, red, green, pink, blue, grey**. Other primary colors are used to a lesser extent, they include the following: **yellow, purple, brown, orange**. The text also contains the epithets **violet, turquoise**. **Black, white, red, blue** are allocated to a separate group, as they carry advanced functions.

The number of the color epithets within the collection:

1. Black – 60/25,6 %; 2. White – 46/19,6 %; 3. Red – 30/12,8 %; 4. Blue – 20/8,5 %; 5. Pink – 19/8,1 %; 6. Green – 18/7,6 %; 7. Grey – 18/7,6 %; 8. Brown – 8/3,4 %; 9. Yellow – 6/2,5 %; 10. Orange – 4/1,7 %; 11. Purple – 4/1,7 %; 12. Turquoise – 1/0,4 %.

**The functioning of the color epithets**

**Black** and **White**. The most frequent color epithets in this collection of short stories are the following color adjectives – **white** and **black**. According to mathematical calculations, the epithet **white** accounts for 46 (19,6 %) examples, and the epithet **black** – 60 (25,6 %) examples. As a rule, epithets in the works of Stephen King have an expressive function, that is, they convey horror, fear and

hopelessness. However, in this collection, these two color epithets are not emotionally expressive, they carry the function of describing and determining people's belonging to a social group:

*"I like to watch you dance, though. You do it like a white guy, but still." Little sister, also white, also liked to dance.*

*Alton Robinson spent his childhood and early adulthood in Memphis, where a thriving black middle class existed in the latter years of the nineteenth century.*

In the novels, a distinction is created between social strata and groups of the American population by using the epithets **black** and **white**, since they are most often used in describing people, as mentioned above.

Another way to use epithets is to determine the qualitative characteristics of objects that allow you to assess in more detail the appearance of the characters or the surrounding reality. Most often we are talking about clothes or accessories:

*Mr. Harrigan attended church every week, dressed in his rusty black suit with the sagging seat, wearing one of his unfashionably narrow black ties, and with his thinning grey hair neatly combed. Black-framed glasses.*

**Red.** The next most frequent epithet is the epithet **red** – 30 (12,8 %) examples. The author uses red quite often in his works, since red is associated with blood, pain and evil within the framework of horror literature. The epithet red creates an atmosphere of tension and anxiety:

*His eyes are shimmering, and when his lips spread in a wide grin, squirming red bugs spill from his mouth and stream down his chin. Not blood; that red stuff is full of flocking black specks. He glanced into the rearview mirror and briefly regarded his red, watery eyes.*

However, as in the case of the epithets **black** and **white**, the epithet **red** sometimes is used as a simple definition describing the surrounding reality and objects:

*Before I could go there on the morning after Mr. Harrigan's funeral, I saw a little red circle on the SMS icon, which meant I had a text message. Not surprising, considering that he had rolled out the academic red carpet for me.*

**Blue.** The frequency of the epithet **blue** (20/8,5 %) is quite high due to the fact that it is most often used in determining the color of the eyes and the color of the sky in Stephen King's novels. The blue, cloudless sky becomes the background for the inexplicable and frightening events taking place in the works. This is a kind of antithesis, with the help of which the author opposes a calm, real life and the shadow that something frightening brings into it. Thus, this image becomes more intimidating, as the reader begins to realize that even under a blue sky something bad or incredible can happen.

*It was a beautiful late afternoon for walking, the sky still an unblemished blue, and plenty of people were out and about. He looked at me, blue eyes bright beneath his shaggy white brows.*

The considered examples of epithets allow us to conclude about their functioning in the text. Most epithets perform the function of determining the characteristics of an object, describing the appearance of characters and the

environment. They allow the reader to more clearly imagine the appearance and character of the character. With the help of color, the author creates a palette of the work, which helps to fix the plot and the outline of the narrative in memory. Four epithets (black, white, red, blue) have expanded functions: they allow you to give an atmosphere of horror, hopelessness and fear, emphasize social differentiation in American society. The other epithets also have definitely little influence, since they are limited only to scenes or chapters. Further research can be carried out with other figures of speech used in the collection, or an analysis of translations of epithets from English into Russian can be carried out.