

# A Cognitive Analysis of White Colour Metaphorization in Algerian Arabic

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**Abstract**—This study explores the use of white verbal colour metaphors in the Algerian context. It seeks to unravel how the use of conceptual metaphors symbolises white colour. Data informants were eight native speakers of the dialect under scrutiny, and the corpus of the study consisted of 14 verbal metaphors. The researcher adopted Lakoff and Johnsons’s Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980) and Charteris Black’s Critical Metaphor Analysis (2004) to analyse data. The findings revealed that a very high proportion of the examples are mapped onto positive domains in the Algerian culture, such as spiritual purity. Negative connotations of white in Algeria included drugs, anger, and poison. Some findings of this study assimilated previously obtained conclusions in the field. The researchers linked this to shared factors such as culture, language, economy, and history. About differences, they emanate from the Algerian community’s various cultural, historical, and social backgrounds, including the long colonial history of both France and Turkey in Algeria. However, the differences in conceptualising concepts in the east and west of Algeria can be traced back to the vast distance that separates the two (over 1.800 km).

**Index Terms**—white colour, Algerian culture, cognitive analysis, conceptual metaphor

## I. INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is an essential part of human language. It is a figure of speech directly tied up to thought and action. Language users employ metaphors to render vague ideas and concepts more concrete and feasible. Hence, the essence of metaphor is to understand and experience one thing in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

With the advent of cognitive perspectives on metaphors in the 1980s, studying metaphors has inspired research in different areas. Colours, for instance, are regarded as a highly productive metaphorical field. Colour terminology has gained growing attention and has recently become the focus of many studies. This is because colours are an inseparable and indispensable part of human life and language. They play a significant and undeniable role in constructing encyclopedic knowledge, shaping experience, and modeling the environment (Chatii, 2016, p.165). Rasekh and Ghafel (2011) further claimed that colours in different languages and cultures might convey different associative meanings. The Algerian dialect, too, is a clear instance of how colours are loaded with extra attributive meanings.

Algerian Arabic, also known as ‘*daardʒah*’, is typically adopted in everyday communication. The high presence of French terminology in this variety makes it informal, thus, inappropriate in academic settings. It has some typical pronunciation and a set of words that makes it distinguishable from other dialects in the Arab world, resulting from the prolonged presence of French in Algeria. Although Algerian Arabic is an outstanding example of how colours can be used metaphorically, a review of existing literature shows that no research exists in the Algerian context.

Therefore, the present study investigates white verbal colour metaphors in the Algerian context. Particularly comparing colour metaphorization across the eastern and the western regions of Algeria. Furthermore, this study aims to explore in detail the metaphorization process, highlight how this basic colour acquires extra meanings and depict any differences. This investigation will be couched within the contemporary theory of metaphor known as the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Geeraerts (2010) states that “Conceptual Metaphor Theory tends to discern metaphors by comparing figurative readings with the basic meaning of a word” (p. 209). Thus, metaphor is primarily conceptual, conventional, and part of the ordinary system of thought and language. Analysis of the connotations of verbal colour metaphorization is of paramount significance in that it will reveal how the Algerian culture envisages thought as each culture has its unique way of conceptualizing experience.

### A. Metaphor

According to Saeed (2016), “a metaphor results in a transference of a quality from one entity to another” (p.370). A metaphor, thus, is a figure of speech where one thing is compared to another by saying that one is the other. In the example (*he is a lion*), the word *lion* is used metaphorically to signal that both (the person and animal) have something in common, namely bravery and strength (Kovecses, 2010),

There has been a remarkable increase in metaphor and figurative language studies since 1980 (Geeraerts, 2010). This rise resulted from the publication of Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), which is regarded as an eye-opener for a new generation of linguistic studies. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) viewed metaphorical language as an indispensable part of human life, involving language, thought, and action.

### B. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson first proposed this theory in their 1980 book *Metaphors We Live By*, which was developed later in several subsequent publications (Evans & Green, 2006). It rests on three essential pillars. They viewed metaphors as a "cognitive phenomenon, rather than a purely lexical one" (Geeraerts, 2010, p.205). That is cognitivist view metaphor as not simply a rhetorical trope used to embellish and decorate speech. Instead, they perceived 'thought' as metaphorical. The second premise of CMT is that metaphor is the conceptual mapping from one source domain onto a clearer different target one. It is important to note at this stage that it is customary for Conceptual Metaphor Theory to represent metaphoric patterns by small patterns.

Further, it is known that all conceptual metaphors have a simplified formula based on the principle "A is B" (A is the target domain, and B is the source domain). As a third argument for their theory, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that metaphors are deeply rooted in our daily interaction with the world. That is, conceptual metaphor has an experiential basis (the notion of embodiment). This inspiration came due to the directionality of metaphors. Put differently, we usually do not only understand one concept in terms of another, but we also structure vague concepts in terms of more concrete ones (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 112).

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The relevant literature shows that metaphors have been investigated in a plethora of discourse types, including business, media, legal, classroom, talk in the workplace, institutional discourse, and so many other domains. As for the notion of colour metaphors, recent research reveals a growing interest in this area in multiple contexts dealing with chromatic and achromatic colours.

Philip (2006) investigated connotative meaning in English and Italian color-word metaphors. Her study revealed the frequencies of the basic colour terms in English and Italian. Philip further showed that the universality of colour metaphorization does not exist and that each culture has its own visualisations of different meanings. As another finding of her investigation, Philip asserted that "the activation of connotative meaning is entirely dependent on deviations from the habitual usage of the expressions and their cotext" (p. 324).

Another significant work was done by Al-Adaileh (2012); he explored the connotations of Arabic colour terms with special reference to Jordanian Arabic. In his study, he explored the figurative uses of the six most common colour terms in Jordanian community, namely, black, white, yellow, red, green, and blue. The researcher gathered data from multiple sources like newspapers, TV shows, books, and the Dictionary of Colours and Names Associated with Them. He also tended to informally ask his informants about the common connotative meanings of colour expressions and whether they consider them as positive or negative. Al-Adaileh looked into colours differently, adopting Allan's (2009) approach. Following this approach, he classified the obtained data x-phemistically into orthophemistic, euphemistic, and dysphemistic. Results of his study revealed that the green colour can imply both euphemistic and dysphemistic connotations. Clear examples of euphemistic connotations are growth and health.

A dysphemistic example would be a 'green-wood', which stands for someone immature or inexperienced. On the other hand, blue and yellow were found to have only dysphemistic connotations. In contrast with these colors, white colour in Jordanian Arabic has only positive connotations: it is used euphemistically to refer to purity and evil-free issues, such as 'white heart'. Black symbolises negative and dysphemistic connotations more than all the other examples do. It is considered a sign of bad luck and a bad end.

Rasekh and Ghafel (2011) attempted to show how well colour metaphors can be different across English and Persian and examine the metaphorical mappings in both languages. They highlighted that the subsequent conceptual metaphors exist in English for the colour green, ENVY IS GREEN and ILNESS IS GREEN. However, in Persian they identified the yellow conceptual metaphors ILNESS IS YELLOW and FRIGHT IS YELLOW. Regarding the red colour, they found that in English SHAME / EMBARRASMENT / ANGER IS RED. In Persian, however, red connotes both shame and embarrassment but not anger. They concluded that the relation between language and culture greatly affects connotations of colour words. Colours may have similar connotative meanings in both English and Persian, but this does not mean that they employ identical expressions. Continuing with the notion of colour metaphors which is the basic concern of this work, the following passage will highlight the methodology used by the researcher.

The related literature review demonstrated a gap in the studies conducted within the framework of cognitive linguistics on colour terms in Arabic, precisely Algerian Spoken Arabic (ASA), daardzah. Consequently, the researcher aims to fill this gap through the current study. Relatedly, The study seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the white verbal conceptual metaphors found in the Algerian context?
2. What are their underlying conceptual mappings?
3. Are there any regional differences between the east and the west of Algeria in metaphorising white colour?

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Sample

The present study sample consists of 14 white verbal colour metaphors currently employed in daily communications in Algerian society. In order to proceed with the present research, informants of the data were primarily eight native speakers of the variety under scrutiny who also have a working knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). They were randomly selected to participate in the study. Four of them were from the eastern part of Algeria. The first participant is a female from Constantine. She is 35 years old and holds a master's degree in Arabic from the University of Mentouri. She works as a primary school teacher and has eleven years of teaching experience. The second informant is 56 years old; she is an illiterate housewife from Skikda. Another informant is a male aged 62 years from Mila. He has a bachelor's degree in Mathematics from University of Ferhat Abbas, Setif. He used to be a teacher at middle school. The last informant from the eastern regions is a female from Annaba city. She is 42 years old. She currently holds a PhD in Management and teaches at the University of Badji Mokhtar, Annaba.

The remaining four informants were from the western part of Algeria. The first participant is a 53 years old housewife from Oran, who completed her secondary education. The second informant is a female from Mascara; she is a Mathematician that holds a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Jordan and is currently teaching at Mustapha Stambouli University (Mascara). She is 32 years old with two-years of teaching experience. The other participant is a female from Saida. She is 44 years old; she has been an employee at the post office for over ten years and holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Saida. The fourth informant is a female who is a housewife. Her age is 58 years; she left primary school in the fifth grade and is from Tlemcen. Table 1 below will summarise the sample.

TABLE 1  
SUMMARY OF THE SAMPLE

Details	Informants from the East	Informants from the West	All data informants
Age range	35-62	32-58	32-62
Mean	48.75	46.75	47.75
Median	49	48.5	48.5

A glance at table (01) above shows that it represents the mean difference in informants' age. This notion stands for the general average of the population. The median, on the other hand, stands for the middle number in the data set.

#### B. Data Collection Procedure

As colour metaphors exist widely and commonly in almost all discourses of everyday life in the Algerian community, the researcher opted for the free-to-speak listening method to interview the informants. This method is beneficial in providing vivid and valid data that precisely describe the informant's conception of social reality. In support of this argument, Gomm (2004) points out that interviews are naturalistic since they resemble conversations or chats and that the relationship that holds the interviewer and the interviewee is almost built on a friendship basis.

Following similar lines of inquiry, the researcher involved intuitive knowledge as a native Algerian. She also relied on famous Algerian TV series, sitcoms, and movies. Further, she used to informally ask colleagues, friends, and people from the surroundings whom she knows very well in informal settings about the common connotative meanings of colour terms and their evaluation of the extended meanings of colour terms as being positive or negative.

Furthermore, the researcher consulted three native speaker respondents of the dialect under scrutiny. They were asked to provide aid in adjusting the data transcription and rectifying possible errors. The participants are Ph.D. students at the University of Jordan. They have been studying English for over nine years at university. Their ages range from 28 to 30. They are two females from the eastern part of Algeria (Constantine and Ouargla), and a male student from the very western part (Mascara).

It is crucial to highlight that the data collection activity occurred in 2021 (from January to August). The researcher interviewed the eight respondents in their houses in face-to-face settings in Algeria. Besides, to enrich her understanding of the multiple connotative meanings and check for commonalities and discrepancies, she consulted in her house in Algeria and Jordan with seven friends and nine relatives.

#### C. Theoretical Framework

To reach the previously stated objectives, the researcher adopted the theoretical framework of the CMT to classify the verbal colour metaphors present in the Algerian Arabic into concepts of thought. Further, Charteris-Black's (2004) Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) framework was employed to capture the conceptual metaphors and fully understand colour metaphorization. This framework is a product approach resulting from the amalgamation of corpus linguistics with cognitive linguistics and CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) Charteris Black (2004). It involves three main stages,

- a) Metaphor identification deals with the ideational meaning
- b) Metaphor interpretation discusses the interpersonal meaning
- c) Metaphor explanation, however, is concerned with the textual meaning

## IV. RESULTS

The word white is classified as an adjective referring to something having the colour of new snow or milk. Algerians tend to pronounce it as *بَيض* (*bya?ð*). Generally speaking, the colour white denotes serenity and purity. It is directly linked to peace, cleanliness, bridal dress, light, and many other positive figurative meanings; thus, it stands for what is good. However, such white colour associations are not necessarily universal; their connotations vary over cultures. Table 2 below will demonstrate the cognitive analysis (conceptual metaphors) of the most frequent verbal white colour metaphors in the Algerian context.

TABLE 2  
CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF WHITE COLOUR IN ALGERIAN SPOKEN ARABIC

Expression	Translation	Conceptual Metaphor
قلبو بيض	White-hearted	MORAL PURITY IS WHITE
بيضي قلبك/بيض قلبك	To advise someone to let go and forgive	FORGIVENESS IS WHITE
كذبة بيضا	A white lie	HARMLESSNESS IS WHITE
الله يبيضاك وجهك	May Allah make you proud	PRIDE IS WHITE
هزيت الدرابو لبيض/الراية البيضاء	I held the white flag	SURRENDER IS WHITE
ضارب البيضاء	He is high	BEING HIGH IS WHITE
حطيتها بيضاء	I voted for no-one	NEUTRALITY IS WHITE
كي اليوم تلبسنا لبيض	I hope you get married soon	MARRIAGE IS WHITE
بيض عينيه	To widely open the eyes	ANGER IS WHITE
شعرو كامل بياض	His hair turned grey	WISDOM IS WHITE
ليلة بيضا	A sleepless night	SLEEPLENESS IS WHITE
حلتيتها بيضا	I left unanswered questions	UNKNOWING IS WHITE
سنة بيضاء/عام بيض	A barren year/a year off, a lost year	NOTHINGNESS IS WHITE
السم لبيض	The white poison	POISON IS WHITE

In the following, the researcher presents examples of the metaphorical mappings used in conceptualizing white colour in Algerian Arabic.

## A. Moral Purity

In Algeria it is very common to hear the expression below,

a. *قلبو بَيض*

(*galbu bya ð*)

Lit. Heart-his white

Trans. White-hearted

It is used to describe someone who has a white heart. *Yacin galbu bya ð* means he is kind-hearted, honest, and gives himself to aid the others. Further, it refers to the person who has reached the highest degrees of forgiving and harmlessness where the heart is filled with good and loveable humanitarian characteristics. In essence, the literal meaning of this utterance demonstrates that *Yacin's heart* is white-coloured. So, *قلبو بَيض* is a colour metaphor.

Since the white colour is directly linked to purity and innocence, in contrast to black which stands for darkness and nothingness, this metaphorical expression equates the purity of the heart and innocence of thoughts of an individual with the white colour. It further demonstrates people's positive perception of white. Thus, according to the frameworks of both Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and Charteris Black (2004), it underlies the following conceptual metaphor MORAL PURITY IS WHITE, whereby the target domain MORAL PURITY (being kind) is mapped and linked to the source domain WHITE. It could be said that white is used positively in this expression, and Algerians feel happy and flattered to be addressed as such.

## B. Forgiveness

The primary definition of expression below *بَيضي قلبك/بيض قلبك* (for masculine and feminine respectively) is to order someone to turn his heart to the white colour. On the other hand, and concerning the previously mentioned colour metaphor, Algerian speakers tend to use it to advise someone to let go of a problem and/or to forgive the one responsible for that flow or mistake. It may be used to ask someone to stop wishing to punish the one who caused him/her embarrassment or offense and no longer feel angry about him/her. In brief, this expression seeks for purification of the heart and the opening of a new page between enemies. So, the colour white in this respect has a positive connotation.

a. *بَيضي قلبك/بيض قلبك*

(*bayaa ð galbk/bay ð galbk*)

Lit. Whiten your heart

Trans. To advise someone to let go and forgive

Dealing with both definitions shows that this expression is a metaphor as there exists a mapping from the ETHICS domain onto the COLOURS domain. The common aspect between both domains lies in purity. Since the purity of the heart is envisaged through white, forgiveness is a quality of people having a pure heart. The resulting conceptual metaphor from combining these two domains is FORGIVENESS IS WHITE. Notably, embracing forgiveness does not

necessarily denote forgetting and excusing the harm. Instead, it can only lessen its effect on the person and pushes the soul and heart toward positive feelings, empathy, and compassion. Further, it brings inner peace that helps proceed successfully in life with less stress and hostility. Thereby, FORGIVENESS is conceptualised as WHITE in the Algerian culture.

### C. Harmlessness

The expression كذبة بيضة (a white lie) indicates a lie that is colored in white which is semantically odd. This collocation is often heard in daily conversations in the Algerian community. It is a minor or unimportant detail that people adhere to hide their true intentions towards something not to hurt someone's feelings and obtain favorable results. A clear instance is when someone pretends to be busy or have some critical issues instead of going to a friend's party. Of course, this lie, or white lie, will not have any awful consequences; instead, it will protect the listener from the absolute truth.

a. كذبة بيضا

(Ka ḏba bi ḥa)

Lit. Lie white

Trans. White lie

Linking the two meanings of this collocation denotes the existence of a verbal colour metaphor. The domain of ETHICS is, thus, mapped into the domain of colours. In Algeria, كذبة بيضة (a white lie) is a metaphorical expression that denotes honesty and harmlessness in the sense that when the word lie (regarded as a pejorative word as being Muslims) is attached to the word white which illustrates purity, eternal peace, evil repellant, and harmlessness it took its criteria and turned to be having a positive connotation. Contrary to black, when attached to a word, it generally gives it a negative value. As such, the conceptual metaphor for the expression (a white lie) according to the frameworks of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Charteris Black (2004) is undoubtedly HARMLESSNESS IS WHITE, wherein the target domain HARMLESSNESS is explained through the source domain WHITE.

### D. Pride

Wishing pleasure, fulfillment, satisfaction, and fortune to someone in the Algerian culture is expressed by saying,

a. الله يبيضلك وجهك

(Allah ybayyadlk waḏḏhak)

Lit. God whiten-your face-you

Trans. May Allah makes you proud

Literally, الله يبيضلك وجهك is translated to wishing someone that God whitens his/her face. In essence, the link between the two denotations of the same expression reflects on the existence of a metaphor.

Older people usually utter such an expression toward younger ones to transmit their optimistic hopes for them to face a good destiny. To put it more precisely, one reason for paleness might be fear, being shocked, and fuzzy from the inside under particular stress. In contrast, being successful, rewarded, and worthy in the eyes of others will inherit and maintain pride, dignity, and prestige. This will boost one's self-esteem and make him/her white-faced.

Concerning the underlying conceptual mapping for the colour metaphor Allah ybayyadlk waḏḏhak, it can be seen that the domain of EMOTIONS is expressed through COLOURS. So, considering the points mentioned previously, the conceptual metaphor can be depicted as PRIDE IS WHITE, whereby the tenor is PRIDE, and the vehicle is WHITE.

### E. Surrender

Metaphorically, showing or raising the white flag signifies peace, cease-fire, and surrender in battles and wars. In Algeria, this idiomatic expression is expressed as follows,

a. هزيت الدرايو لبييض/الراية البيضاء

(Haziit ?ra?jaa lbii ḥa?/?drapo labja ḏ)

Lit. I hold Flag white

Trans. I held the white flag

Notably, for an Algerian to say that you show the white flag (الراية البيضاء-الدرايو لبييض) it means that you are enough or done with a topic or a problem that weakened you for a long time. Further, it can be said that you stopped worrying and gave up about something/somebody you kept in mind for quite a while.

Drawing lines of comparison between the first and second provided meanings, it can be concluded that we are dealing with a metaphor. Evidence for this comes from mapping the GIVING UP domain to the COLOURS domain. This latter can be equated to SURRENDER IS WHITE as a conceptual metaphor. Whereby the tenor SURRENDER stands for letting go of what disturbs you, and the vehicle WHITE denotes peace of mind as white is a signifier of it.

### F. Being High

The act of taking illegal drugs like cocaine, heroin, and so; results in feelings of immediate relaxation, happiness, and cheerfulness. As such, the one who takes these narcotics turns amused in his/her own thoughts and thrilled. Usually, they label these sorts of feelings as being euphoric and high. Algerian people generally refer to this feeling as,

a. ضارب البيضا

(daʔrab ʔalbii ʕaʔ/ ʔalbaʔy ʕaʔ)

Lit. He hit the white

Trans. He is high

The primary denotation of the utterance under scrutiny highlights that someone is hitting the colour white. However, as previously mentioned, this utterance has another different meaning in the Algerian territory. Thereby, we can understand the word DRUGS in terms of COLOURS. Thus, we conclude that this expression is metaphorical.

Concerning the colour metaphor ضارب البياض, denoting the feelings of highness and dope, it is asserted that it results from taking white substances (illegal drugs) either pulled (smelled), injected, or swallowed. For this reason, the researcher depicted the conceptual metaphor BEING HIGH IS WHITE, whereby BEING HIGH is the target domain, and WHITE is the source domain.

It is worth mentioning at this stage that all white illegal drugs found in the Algerian territory are referred to as البياض (?albii ʕaʔ/ ʔalbaʔy ʕaʔ). These include powder that comes in cocaine and heroin, sold in black markets and is relatively high in price. Also, it comes in the form of pills, which are medications like Rivotril, Lexamil, and Dolica destined for psychological and mental diseases. They are available and lower in price, yet, their effect is relatively low compared to the first type. Addicts in more advanced levels usually head into using medicaments for cancer and more severe diseases such as morphine and its variants to feel as high as needed.

### G. Neutrality

The basic denotation for the expression حطيتها بياض is to put or to place something down which is white-colored.

b. حطيتها بياض

(hatitha bay ʕaʔ)

Lit. I put it white

Trans. I voted for no-one

In the Algerian dialect, the utterance above could be an answer for someone who wanted to know your vote went for whom in elections. By saying, حطيتها بياض, the speaker is referring to an envelope containing the name of potential electoral candidates to be elected. Nevertheless, he expressed his neutrality and convictions by putting an empty envelope.

Given the meaning of both explanations, the analysis provided above, and following the frameworks of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Charteris Black (2004), the target domain NEUTRALITY is understood by perceiving the source domain COLOURS, mainly WHITE. The domain of ELECTIONS is, hence, mapped onto the domain of COLOURS. So, we are dealing with a verbal colour metaphor for which the conceptual metaphor is NEUTRALITY IS WHITE. In the same setting, Hasturkoglu (2017) mentioned that abstention for voting in Turkish is referred to metaphorically as “*çekimser davranıldığını gösteren oy*”. This expression stands for “a green vote,” which shows that abstention or being neutral in voting is green in Turkish.

### H. Marriage

At first sight, the expression below كي اليوم تلبسنا لبيض denotes demanding a female to wear white clothes. Though, in Algeria it is used to express a sincere wish for a single lady to get married soon that they celebrate her. This one is motivated by a physical feature of the bridal dress, which can be directly perceived via the white colour. As such, the conceptual metaphor here is MARRIAGE IS WHITE.

c. كي اليوم تلبسنا لبيض

(Ki lyum telbsilna? laʔbya ʔ)

Lit. The white wearing you us today like

Trans. I hope you get married soon

As the explanation of this colour metaphor shows, the root metaphor is MARRIAGE IS WHITE. This conceptual metaphor thus represents a link between the source domain WHITE and the target domain MARRIAGE. Marriage is mapped to the white colour as it represents the colour brides wear on wedding days symbolizing beauty, sexual purity, and innocence.

### I. Anger

The expression ببيض عينيه stands for someone who made his eyes whiter; however, in the Algerian colloquial conversations, instead of saying that someone is angry, bad-tempered, or furious, they tend to say the expression ببيض عينيه. For instance, Sameer bay ʔ ʕinik fih, means show him that you are angry.

d. ببيض عينيه

(bayaʔ ʔ ʕinih)

Lit. Whitened eyes his

Trans. To widely open the eyes

In this context, ببيض عينيه means that Sameer will open widely and forcefully his eyes in reaction to something provoking that the sclera (the white part of the eye) is all out and visible. Through reviewing the provided explanation of both the contextual and the basic meaning of this phrase, it seems that we can understand the domain of ANGER

concerning the domain of COLOURS, typically white colour. As a result, something in here implies that the expression *شعره ببيض عينيه* contains a colour metaphor. For which the conceptual metaphor is ANGER IS WHITE.

Given our analysis provided above and following the frameworks of both Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Charteris Black (2004), the target domain ANGER is understood by perceiving the source domain WHITE. The domain of COLOURS is, hence, mapped onto the domain of ANGER.

#### J. Wisdom

When a person's hair turns grey, this denotes that he is growing older. As such, this person will have wrinkles, difficulty in sight, or hearing problems; perhaps he will even suffer from forgetfulness. Of course, these symptoms occur with varying degrees to people depending on their genes. In the Algerian community, they use the expression mentioned below,

e. *شعره كامل ببيض*

(ʃaʃru kaʔml byaʔ ð)

Lit. Hair his all white

Trans. His hair turned gray

Although this expression denotes negative associations like powerlessness, in the Algerian community *شعره كامل ببيض* refers to having white hair, mustache, and beard. Besides, it does not stand only for someone who is growing older. Instead, it is used to talk about a sheikh (شيخ /ʃeɣx), meaning someone who is experienced, knowledgeable and wise.

Naturally, older people tend to be more mature as they face more ups and downs than youngsters in their lives. In the Algerian culture, such people (white-haired) are considered to be wise. Therefore they are good advisers and solution providers for youth in matters of life.

Drawing comparisons between both meanings of the expression *شعره كامل ببيض*, indicates the existence of a metaphor where there is a link between the domain of WISDOM and The domain of COLOURS, specifically white. The underlying conceptual metaphor for it is WISDOM IS WHITE, wherein WISDOM is the target domain is explained through the source domain WHITE.

#### K. Sleeplessness

As it turns out to be a common thread among students, it is very usual to hear among Algerian students and learners who utter the expression *jawazt Lila bii ða, fatet lila bii ða* here there at the day of examination. Precisely, this sentence designates a white-colored night though this terminology seems to be somehow invalid. In Algeria, this expression is transferred or borrowed from the French *nuit blanche* (a white night). It is when one stays awake for the whole night restlessly doing the last minutes work or revising lectures in the case of students.

f. *ليلة بيضا*

(Lila bii ða)

Lit. Night white

Trans. A sleepless night

To explain this, asleep at night means closing the eyes and seeing the dark. Yet, remaining awake denotes a night that is never properly dark (awake means viewing light). Thus, we deduce that the domain of SLEEPLESSNESS is expressed using the domain of colours (WHITE) which is a direct indication of light. Thus, the conceptual metaphor for a sleepless night is SLEEPLESSNESS IS WHITE.

#### L. Unknowing

So far, the present study shows a strong alliance between white colour metaphors and positive connotations in the Algerian culture. Nevertheless, it is not the case for the present one.

g. *خليتها بيضا*

(xalitha baʔy ðaʔ)

Lit. I left it white

Trans. I left unanswered questions

The expression above signifies leaving something white behind. Nevertheless, similar to the pre-stated verbal colour metaphor (in 4.1.12), the current one is also becoming a common thread among Algerian students. Also, it is frequently articulated by candidates in contests and job applications involving written and online tests.

Notably, *خليتها بيضا* can be a negative answer for a student who just had an examination and asked whether he did well in it. This metaphor stands for the exam/test sheet (generally white-colored), which is left blank when the candidate/student leaves the questions unanswered. As the explanation denotes, the deduced conceptual metaphor for *خليتها بيضا* is UNKNOWING IS WHITE. The tenor NOT KNOWING TO ANSWER is explained through the vehicle demonstrated in WHITE COLOUR.

#### M. Nothingness

Among the dysphemistic metaphoric uses of the white colour in the Algerian culture are when one says

h. *عام ببيض*

(ʃaam byaa ð)

Lit. Year white

Trans. A barren year

The contextual meaning of the phrase عام بيض stands for an arid, desertic, infertile, and unproductive land. A barren year is when the land is sterile and unable to give fruitful plants, seeds, crops, and none of the agricultural yields. However, the basic meaning of the expression عام بيض (a white year) is a literal translation from the French expression (*ann ée blanche*) referring to the year where French people are free from paying certain taxes. With a glance at both provided meanings, it appears that we can understand a sterile land in terms of the colour white, which is a clear indication that the expression عام بيض is metaphorical. For which the underlying conceptual metaphor is NOTHINGNESS IS WHITE.

Another verbal color metaphor that can be mapped onto the same pre-stated conceptual metaphor is سنة بيضاء (the literal meaning of this expression is mentioned so far).

i. سنة بيضاء

(sa?naa baya? ð)

Lit. Year white

Trans. A year off, a lost year

About the contextual meaning, this idiomatic expression denotes an exceptional academic year during which the prescribed courses and the learning objectives are partly reached resulting from long vacations. Thus, it must be repeated for all students without any exceptions. Besides, it may mean the possibility of repeating the school year with a health certificate, i.e., when a student is suffering from a long-term sickness, he/she may apply for سنة بيضاء and takes a year off from school. It is a school year whereby students achieve nothing. Consequently, a lost or an off-school year is explained metaphorically in terms of the white colour.

Given our analysis provided above and following the framework of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Charteris Blacks' (2004), the target domain NOTHINGNESS is understood by perceiving the source domain WHITE in both colour metaphors سنة بيضاء, عام بيض. The domain of COLOURS is hence mapped onto the domain of NOTHINGNESS.

#### N. Poison

Since both salt and sugar come in a white colour, they are labelled in Arabic as الابيضين. However, in Algeria, they tend to use the expression السم لبيض (highlighted below), which is a metaphorical construct.

j. السم لبيض

(?assa?m labya ð)

Lit. The white the poison

Trans. The white poison

Putting this construct under the lens shows that, like any other nutrient, salt and sugar can be either helpful or harmful if taken in varying degrees. Too much salt can cause osteoporosis and increased blood pressure, leading to heart failure and strokes in the worst situations. Moreover, too much sugar may cause obesity and diabetes as it raises fats. Also, it is regarded as a direct reason for having cancer. We deduce a link between BEING SICK OR POISONED and THE WHITE COLOUR. In a nutshell, the pre-stated verbal colour metaphor is visualized in the following conceptual metaphor POISON IS WHITE. The target domain POISON is explained as the source domain WHITE.

Notably, this conceptual metaphor comprises so many meanings underneath as it generates multiple negative verbal colour metaphors at a time. Yet, the widely known among Algerians are the ones about both sugar and salt as it is popular to refer to them consistently in a metaphorical dysphemistic way as السم لبيض typically by elders since they are primarily exposed to such diseases.

*Question 3: Are there any regional differences between the east and the west of Algeria in metaphorising white colour?*

Concerning the third question, which seeks to reveal potential regional differences in conceptualizing white colour among the east and west of Algeria, it was found that almost all verbal white colour metaphors are shared among both territories with slight differences in naming and pronunciation of subjects. For instance, for the expression ضارب البيض denoting the conceptual metaphor BEING HIGH IS WHITE, in the western regions like Oran and Mascara they refer to drugs as الغبرة (?lyabra) or الفرينة (?lfareena), this latter which stands for plain flour. As such, they tend to employ the expression ضارب الفرينة in place of ضارب البيض. Again, this metaphor is mapped onto the same conceptual metaphor: plain flour is white-coloured. Besides, for the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS WHITE, it was found that it is used only by the western territory's inhabitants and not the eastern parts. The conceptual keys SURRENDER, POISON, and UNKNOWING existed only in the eastern part of Algeria.

#### V. DISCUSSION

The main aim of the current study is to do a thorough cognitive analysis of the white verbal colour metaphors currently applied in the Algerian territory and unveil their conceptual metaphors by relying on the frameworks of both Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Charteris Black (2004). Further, this study aimed to find regional differences in conceptualizing colours in Algeria.



The results showed that unlike the connotations of white in Asia, which stands for sadness and mourning (Li, 2020; Trim, 2007), a very high proportion of the examples showed that the white color is mainly mapped onto positive domains in the Algerian culture. This result conforms to several previous Arabic studies (Al Adaileh, 2012), suggesting that the colour white has more euphemistic than dysphemistic associations in Arabic. Clear instances for this finding are moral or spiritual purity, which concurs with the findings of Al Adaileh (2012) on JSA, wherein he stated that the white colour is used in Jordanian Arabic and Egyptian as well to refer to purity and evil-free issues. Also, the same connotation of white on wisdom was established in Turkish, too (Hasturkoglu, 2017). The similarities here can be linked to many shared factors such as culture, language, economy, and history.

Negative connotations in Algeria included drugs, anger, and poison typical for Algerians. Such differences emanate from the various cultural, historical, and social backgrounds of the Algerian community, including the long colonial history of France and Turkey in Algeria. To mark such a point, the verbal colour metaphors *ann ée blanche* and *nuit blanche* are the best examples in this case which were identified as purely French-oriented.

Moreover, this study is regarded as proof of the existence of what is labeled as universal metaphors. To exemplify this finding, one can mention ‘a white-lie’ and ‘a white-flag’ as these metaphors were found to operate in several languages like English and Kurdish (Gharib & Ghareb, 2018), Arabic (Ibrahim, 2017; Al Adaileh, 2012), Turkish (Hasturkoglu, 2017), and Indonesian (Wijana, 2015) among others. The existence of such similarities or precisely universal metaphors is probably traced back to the process of globalization, enculturation, and translational studies among other factors.

Differences in conceptualising concepts exist by saying that Algeria is a vast country with a space of over two million (2.381.741 km<sup>2</sup>) and a long history of colonization, including the Spanish and the French ones, which left their traces. A clear example in here is the conceptual metaphor NOTHINGNESS IS WHITE, which is depicted from the French *nuit blanche* (ليلة بيضاء). This latter is first known in Paris as this city hosts an annual *Nuit Blanche* event during which Paris remains alive all night.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to investigate the issue of verbal colour metaphorization in the Algerian dialect. The cognitive analysis of the white colour showed that its connotations are primarily positive as this colour is predominantly used euphemistically in the Algerian territory and the Arabic language in general. These include moral purity, forgiveness, harmlessness, pride, neutrality, weddings, fascinating beauty, wisdom, trust, truthfulness, and many other positive target domains. For the negative connotations, it was observed that the white colour was dysphemistically coined to refer to Surrender, drugs, anger, unknowing to answer questions on exam days and to stand for poison.

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