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TEACHING KOREAN COLOR TERMS AND
RELATED METAPHORS AND IDIOMATIC
EXPRESSIONS
- WITH A FOCUS ON INTERMEDIATE TO
ADVANCED LEARNERS -

ABSTRACT

This study proposes an instructional model for teaching metaphors and idiomatic expressions based on Korean color terms to intermediate and advanced learners of Korean. Korean color terms are closely associated with cultural and cognitive meanings and are frequently extended into metaphorical and idiomatic expressions, which often pose difficulties for foreign language learners due to their semantic opacity and cultural specificity.

This study analyzes the extended meanings of native Korean color adjectives, including black, white, red, blue, and yellow, and suggests pedagogical approaches to facilitate learners' understanding and use of such expressions. Drawing on the Lexical Approach and integrating the OHE (Observe–Hypothesize–Experiment) instructional framework with task-based principles, the proposed model emphasizes chunk-based input and discourse-level inferencing activities.

Authentic materials, such as dramas and web dramas, are incorporated to establish discourse-level contexts, upon which learners engage in output-oriented tasks that

require the active production of color-based metaphors and idiomatic expressions. Through these instructional strategies, the proposed model aims to address the cognitive and linguistic demands of intermediate to advanced learners and to enhance their ability to interpret and appropriately use metaphorical and idiomatic expressions in real-life communicative contexts.

1. INTRODUCTION

Color terms are not merely linguistic units that denote visual hues. They constitute semantic systems shaped by the cognitive structures and experiences of language users. The meanings and usage patterns of color terms differ across languages, and these differences are particularly pronounced in metaphorical and idiomatic expressions. For example, in the Korean proverb “검은 머리가 파 뿌리가 되도록” (‘until black hair becomes the root of a spring onion’)¹, “검은 머리” (black hair) symbolizes youth. In addition, the convention of avoiding the use of red ink for the names of deceased persons illustrates how color terms can extend to metaphorical and symbolic meanings.

Color terms used in metaphorical and idiomatic expressions are often fixed in specific meanings and forms. As a result, they are difficult to replace with other color terms from the same semantic category. For instance, “새빨간 거짓말” (‘an extremely red lie’) denotes an obvious and absurd falsehood. Substituting it with “붉은 거짓말” (‘a red lie’) would sound unnatural.² This fixedness demonstrates that color terms in metaphors and idioms carry nuanced semantic distinctions. It also highlights their central role in constructing idiomatic meaning through metaphorical extension.

These features present significant challenges for foreign learners in both comprehension and practical use. Most contemporary Korean language textbooks, however, primarily introduce color terms with their basic meanings, that is, as the names of colors. Their metaphorical and idiomatic uses are insufficiently addressed. Although idiomatic expressions are typically introduced at intermediate and advanced levels, they tend to focus on body, emotion, or animal-related expressions. Consequently, learners have limited opportunities to systematically engage with color term in metaphors and idiomatic expressions.

1 It signifies lasting until one’s black hair turns white, that is, for a lifetime or until death.

2 According to the National Institute of the Korean Language’s *The Korean Basic Dictionary* (한국어기초사전), “빨강다” (adjective) is defined as “brightly deep red like the color of blood or a ripe chili pepper,” and is translated as ‘crimson.’ The prefix ‘새-’ can be added to emphasize the color. In contrast, ‘붉다’ is defined as “the color of something being like that of blood or a ripe chili pepper,” and is translated as ‘red.’

Due to these characteristics, Korean color terms in these expressions pose considerable challenges for foreign learners in both comprehension and production. Consequently, instructional approaches should move beyond the teaching of basic color names to incorporate idiomatic meanings, cultural backgrounds, and symbolic values. This study analyzes the semantic structure and usage patterns of Korean Color Terms in these expressions and proposes learner-oriented instructional strategies aimed at enhancing Korean language pedagogy.

2. PREVIOUS STUDIES AND RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Trends in Research

Research on color terms has expanded from its early focus on art and native Korean linguistics to the field of Korean language education for non-native speakers since the 1990s. Beyond morphological analysis, interdisciplinary approaches, including cognitive linguistics, contrastive linguistics, and cultural education, have been increasingly employed to develop teaching and learning models.

Color terms constitute semantic systems that reflect the cognitive and cultural experiences of language users. Therefore, a cognitive perspective is crucial for understanding their categorization, semantic extension, and conceptual structures. From a cognitive linguistic viewpoint, Koo (2008) analyzed the categorical formation of Korean color terms and the comprehensive features of “푸르다” (‘blue/green’), demonstrating how concrete meanings derived from natural phenomena extend to abstract, symbolic, and emotional meanings. Moon (2013) examined the conceptual metaphors of color terms in idiomatic expressions, showing that they frequently convey evaluative and emotional meanings, particularly in expressions of negative affect. Jang (2008) cataloged the five native Korean color terms “검다, 희다, 붉다, 푸르다, 누르다” and analyzed the non-substitutability of color terms in idiomatic expressions as well as the perceptual and semantic differences resulting from prefix or consonant and vowel substitutions. These studies provide a theoretical foundation for understanding Korean color terms, serving as a basis for pedagogical applications.

In terms of teaching and learning models, Shin and Kim (2004) classified frequently used color terms into noun and adjective categories, systematically organized morphological, suffixal, and pragmatic information, and proposed teaching sequences and domain-specific models. Kim (2016) analyzed the color-symbolic content of *Sejong Korean textbooks* (세종한국어) and suggested educational items and utilization methods aligned with international curriculum standards. Nevertheless, these studies left room for improvement as they did not provide concrete classroom activities or learner-centered teaching strategies, highlighting the need for research that bridges theoretical insights and practical application.

From a contrastive linguistic perspective, studies of Korean color terms have focused on learners from Chinese, Japanese, and English-speaking backgrounds.

A recent example in European languages is Hyun and Hur (2023), who developed teaching activities based on Byram’s intercultural competence model for German-speaking learners. They applied these activities in actual classes and empirically verified their effectiveness, demonstrating their pedagogical validity. Lee (2025) compared the “blue” series of color terms in Korean “파랗다, 푸르다” with Italian terms ‘azzurro, blu, celeste’ identifying sources of semantic confusion for Italian learners. These insights illustrate how cross-linguistic differences can inform the development of more effective teaching strategies in Korean language education.

2.2. Research Methods

The five basic native Korean color terms are “검다 (까맣다)”, “희다 (하얗다)”, “붉다 (빨갳다)”, “푸르다 (파랗다)”, “누르다 (노랗다)”.³ Noting that these five basic colors are frequently used in metaphorical and idiomatic expressions, this study analyzed the headwords in the National Institute of the Korean Language’s *The Korean Basic Dictionary* (한국어기초사전),⁴ focusing on idioms and proverbs, and consulted *The Standard Korean Language Dictionary* (표준국어대사전)⁵ as needed to account for general Korean usage by native speakers.

This study focuses on the five basic native Korean color terms as they appear in metaphorical and idiomatic expressions. It analyzes their morphological combinations and the types of semantic extension within idiomatic contexts, and based on this analysis, proposes instructional strategies for teaching color terms in metaphorical and idiomatic expressions. These strategies are designed for intermediate- and advanced-level Korean learners, employing the web drama *Find Her* (그녀를 찾아줘)⁶ as a media-based language learning resource.

3. METAPHORS AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS WITH COLOR TERMS

3.1. Form of color terms

Korean color terms are primarily realized as adjectives, but also appear in a variety of other parts of speech, including nouns and verbs. Depending on their part-of-speech realization, color terms perform different syntactic functions within sentences,

3 Son (2000:134) identifies “검다, 희다, 푸르다, 누르다, 붉다” as basic color adjectives and analyzes “까맣다, 하얗다, 파랗다, 노랗다, 빨갳다”, which are formed through phonological alternation, as variants characterized by increased brightness and saturation.

4 An online dictionary by the National Institute of Korean Language with 50,000 basic terms for learners, offering simple definitions, examples, grammar, and multimedia resources. <https://krdict.korean.go.kr/kor/mainAction>

5 <https://stdict.korean.go.kr/>

6 It is a work jointly produced by the Sejong Institute Foundation and KBS in 2017, presented in a sitcom format of about 10 minutes per episode, with subtitles available in English, Chinese, Indonesian, and Spanish, and composed of relatively simple dialogue.

which in turn leads to variation in their semantic interpretation. Even when the same color concept is involved, its realization as an adjective, noun, or verb results in different syntactic roles, and this gives rise to differences in meaning in metaphors and idiomatic expressions with color terms.

(1) Parts of Speech of Korean Color Terms

- a. Nouns: 검은색/까만색/검정 ('black'), 흰색/하얀색/하양 ('white'), 붉은색/빨간색/빨강 ('red'), 푸른색/파란색/파랑 ('blue'), 누런색/노란색/노랑 ('yellow')
- b. Adjectives: 검다/까맣다 ('black'), 희다/하얗다 ('white'), 붉다/빨갳다 ('red'), 푸르다/파랗다 ('blue'), 누르다/노랗다 ('yellow')
- c. Verbs⁷: 까매지다 ('to become black'), 하얘지다 ('to become white'), 빨개지다 ('to become red'), 파래지다 ('to become blue'), 노래지다 ('to become yellow')

Korean color terms can express subtle differences in color through consonant or vowel changes and affixation. Consonant changes indicate the saturation of a color, as in deep and light. Vowel changes express brightness, as in bright and dark. In addition, color terms containing bright vowels give a light and lively impression, whereas those containing dark vowels convey a heavy and somber feeling.

(2) Consonant Changes⁸

- a. 가맣다: black with a light and pale tone.
- b. 까맣다: black with a deep and intense tone, like a night sky with no light.
- c. 거맣다: black with a dark and pale tone.
- d. 꺼맣다: excessively black, an extremely dark tone.

The prefixes “새-” and “시-” can be added to emphasize the chroma (saturation) or lightness of a color. The prefix 새- is generally used with bright vowels, while 시- is used with dark vowels. These prefixes are also applied to the basic Korean color terms “까맣다” ('black'), “하얗다” ('white'), “빨갳다” ('red'), “파랗다” ('blue'), “노랗다” ('yellow').

(3) Prefixes⁹

- a. 새까맣다: extremely black; emphasizes intense blackness.
- b. 시꺼맣다: very dark black; indicates an excessively dark shade.

7 *The Standard Korean Language Dictionary* (표준국어대사전) includes the terms “검어지다, 붉어지다, 불히다, 누레지다” in its vocabulary list, whereas *The Korean Basic Dictionary* (한국어기초사전) includes only “불히다” and “누레지다”.

8 In *The Standard Korean Language Dictionary* (표준국어대사전), the word “검다” includes the entries “감다” and “깜다” in its vocabulary list, whereas these are not included in *The Korean Basic Dictionary* (한국어기초사전).

9 Terms expressing states with added suffixes, such as “거무데데하다”, “거무텅텅하다”, “거뭇하다”, “거무속속하다” and “꺼무튀튀하다” are rarely used in metaphors or idiomatic expressions and are therefore not presented.

3.2. The Meanings of Color Terms in Metaphors and Idiomatic Expressions

3.2.1. “검다”와 “까맣다”

The color terms “검다” and “까맣다” are mainly used with negative meanings, but they can also carry neutral meanings. ‘검다’ often represents crime, immorality, or malice, as in expressions “검은 돈” (‘black money’) or “검은 속셈” (‘hidden motives’). When combined with terms referring to the mind or behavior, it can be emphasized as “새까맣다” or “시꺼멓다”. Additionally, “검은 구름” (‘black clouds’) and “검은 그림자” (‘black shadows’) indicate despairing situations, while “검은 뱃속을 채우다” (‘to fill a black stomach’) symbolizes greed. The proverb “검은 데 가면 검어지고 흰 데 가면 희어진다” (‘One becomes black if one goes to a black place, and one becomes white if one goes to a white place’) refers to the influence of one’s environment.

In neutral expressions, the expression “검은 머리를 가진 짐승” (‘an animal with black hair’) refers to a human being, while the term “검은 머리” (black hair) in “검은 머리 파뿌리 되도록” (‘until black hair becomes the root of a spring onion’) symbolizes youth.

The color term “까맣다” is used to mean ‘completely’ or ‘not at all’, as in “까맣게 모르다” (‘to not know at all’) or “까맣게 잊어버리다” (‘to forget completely’). It is also used to express negative states or emotions. For example, “눈앞이 캄캄하다” (‘one’s vision is pitch dark’) indicates despair, and “(속이) 새까맣게 되다/타다” (‘to have one’s insides turn pitch dark/burn’) conveys anxiety or nervousness. In neutral usage, “까맣게” in expressions such as “까맣게 멀다” (‘too far away’) or “사람들이 까맣게 모여 있다” (‘people gathered in huge numbers’) indicates a large amount in terms of time, distance, or quantity. In short, “검다” is primarily an adjective with symbolic meaning, while “까맣다” often functions as an adverb to emphasize degree.

Black 검다/까맣다	Metaphors and Idiomatic Expressions	Literal Translation	Meaning of Color Terms
검다	검은 돈, 검은 마음, 검은 속셈	black money; black heart; black scheme	Illegal, immoral, or undesirable things
	검은 구름, 검은 그림자	black clouds; black shadow	Hopeless or depressing situation
	검은 손을 뻗치다	To stretch out a black hand	To approach to deceive or exploit.
	검은 뱃속을 채우다	To fill a black stomach	To satisfy one's desire with a dishonest intention or plan.

검다	검은 데 가면 검어지고 흰 데 가면 희어진다	One becomes black if one goes to a black place, and one becomes white if one goes to a white place	People tend to be influenced by circumstances or the people surrounding them.
	검은 머리 가진 짐승은 구제 말란다	It is advised not to save an animal with black hair	An expression used to criticize people who tend to forget other's favors after receiving help.
	검은 머리 파뿌리 되도록	until black hair becomes the root of a spring onion	For a very long time until one becomes old with all of one's hair turning white.
까맣다	까맣게 모르다. 까맣게 잊어버리다	To not know blackly; to forget blackly	To have no knowledge at all; completely forget
	까맣게 얼굴색이 변하다	One's face turns black	To turn pale/dark from shock or illness
	까만 옛날 일, 까맣게 오래되다, 까맣게 멀다	A black old event; to be blackly old; to be blackly far	A very distant time or distance
	사람들이 까맣게 모여 있다	People are gathered blackly	A countless number of people are gathered
새까맣다	(속이) 새까맣게 되다	The inside becomes pitch black	To feel anxious, restless, or distressed
깜깜하다 ¹⁰	눈앞, 머릿속, 앞날이 깜깜하다	One's eyes; mind; future is pitch dark	To see no way forward; to be at a total loss
	기억이 깜깜하다, 세상 물정에 깜깜하다	Memory is pitch dark; ignorant of worldly affairs	To have no memory of something; to be completely ignorant

tab. 1. “검다/까맣다” *Metaphors and idiomatic expressions*

10 The term “깜깜하다” means ‘very dark, to the point that nothing can be seen’ and can be replaced with “깜깜하다” or “깜깜하다” to indicate the degree of darkness.

3.2.2. “희다”와 “하얗다”

The term “하얗다” is primarily used in its adverbial form and carries both negative and neutral meanings. In a negative sense, it appears in expressions such as “얼굴이 하얗게 질리다” (‘the face becomes white’), which describes a state where the face loses color due to fear or cold, and “머릿속이 하얘지다” (‘the inside of one’s head turns white’), which refers to a state in which no thought comes to mind because of shock or tension. This is similar to “까맣게 잊어버리다” (‘to forget completely’), although the latter specifically refers to a state in which memory fades over time. In addition, in situations of embarrassment or awkwardness, the expression “허영게 되다” (‘to become whitish’) is also used. On the other hand, in a neutral sense, “하얗게 모이다” (‘to gather in large numbers’) describes a crowd of people, while “하얗게 밤을 새우다” (‘to stay up all night’) refers to remaining awake throughout the night. This expression symbolizes brightness associated with open eyes and stands in contrast to “깜깜하다”.

White 희다 ¹¹ /하얗다	Metaphors and Idiomatic Expressions	Literal Translation	Meaning of Color Terms
하얗다	얼굴이 하얗게 질리다	the face becomes white	One's face turning white with cold or out of terror
	하얗게 모이다	gather in white	Being in great numbers
	하얗게 밤을 새우다	stay up white night	Staying up all night
	머릿속이 하얘지다	the inside of one's head turns white	Becoming blank or dazed due to shock or tension
허영다	허영게 되다	to become whitish	Feeling awkward due to being shy or sorry.

tab. 2. “희다/하얗다” *Metaphors and idiomatic expressions*

3.2.3. “붉다”와 “빨갳다”

The expression “얼굴이 붉다” (‘the face is red’) is based on a physiological reaction that occurs when one is angry or embarrassed. It can also be expressed using “빨개지다” (‘to become red’) or “붉히다” (‘to make red’). In addition, the expression “눈시울을 붉히다” (‘to redden one’s eyes’) conveys emotions such as being moved or feeling sorrow. For

11 In *The Standard Korean Language Dictionary* (표준국어대사전), “희다” is presented in metaphors and idiomatic expressions, such as “희고 곰팡이 슬다” (‘to be white and moldy’) or “흰 눈으로 보다” (‘to see with white eyes’), whereas *The Korean Basic Dictionary* (한국어기초사전) does not present these expressions.

warning signals or alert situations, the expression “빨간불이 켜지다” (‘a red light turns on’) is used. Moreover, “새빨간 거짓말” (‘an extremely red lie’) means ‘an obvious lie,’ and “눈이 시뻘겋다” (‘the eyes are blood-red’) describes a person blinded by greed.

Red 붉다 ¹² /빨갱다 ¹³	Metaphors and Idiomatic Expressions	Literal Translation	Meaning of Color Terms
붉다	얼굴이 붉다	the face is red	The face becomes flushed due to anger, embarrassment, or similar emotions.
	눈시울을 붉히다	to redden one’s eyes	The edge of eyelid becomes red due to sadness or being moved emotionally.
빨갱다	빨간불이 켜지다	a red light turns on	Indicates a warning or dangerous situation.
새빨갱다	새빨간 거짓말	an extremely red lie	An outrageous and palpable lie that can easily be revealed.
시뻘겋다	눈이 시뻘겋다	have red-hot eyes	To intently focus on seeking one’s own interest.

tab. 3. “붉다/빨갱다” *Metaphors and idiomatic expressions*

3.2.4. “푸르다”와 “파랳다”

The color terms “푸르다” and “파랳다” are generally used as color terms symbolizing immaturity, youth, vitality, and hope, carrying both positive, neutral and negative connotations. In their positive and neutral meanings, expressions such as “푸른 청춘” (‘blue-green youth’) and “새파랳게 어리다” (‘to be very blue-green-young’) represent very youth and inexperience, while “푸른 꿈” (‘blue-green dream’) and “푸른 희망” (‘blue-green hope’) signify future-oriented aspirations and optimism. In addition, “공기가 푸르다” (‘the air is blue-green’) describes clear and refreshing air, and “파란불이 켜지다” (‘a blue-green light turns on’) metaphorically refers to a sign that things are proceeding smoothly. Conversely, these color terms can also convey negative nuances. The expression “시퍼렇게 살아 있다” (‘vividly blue-

12 In *The Standard Korean Language Dictionary* (표준국어대사전), metaphors and idiomatic expressions such as “사상이 붉다” (‘one’s ideology is red, symbolizing communism’) and “붉고 쓴 장” (‘red and bitter paste’) are presented, whereas these expressions are not included in *The Korean Basic Dictionary* (한국어기초사전).

13 *The Standard Korean Language Dictionary* (표준국어대사전) presents metaphorical and idiomatic expressions such as “빨간 거짓말”, “빨간 상념”, whereas *The Korean Basic Dictionary* (한국어기초사전) only presents “새빨간 거짓말” and “벌건 거짓말”.

green alive’) implies vivid vitality, yet it is often used in a negative or grim context.

Similarly, “서슬이 푸르다” (‘One’s wrath is blue-green’) and “칼끝이 퍼렇다” (‘the tip of the sword is blue-green’) express a cold, intimidating, or threatening atmosphere. The idioms “세력이 푸르다” (‘power is blue’) and “푸른 양반” (‘blue-green nobility’) metaphorically depict a person or group with strong influence, but often carry a critical undertone. Furthermore, “파랗게 질리다” (‘one’s face or lips turns blue-green’) and “얼굴이 파래지다” (‘one’s face turns blue-green’) describe a loss of complexion caused by fear or cold.

Thus, “푸르다” and “파랗다” are employed to express various emotions and states, such as vitality, hope, threat, or fear, depending on the brightness and phonetic form of the color term. Notably, variants containing dark vowels, such as “퍼렇다” and “시퍼렇다”, tend to intensify negative connotations, reflecting the phonetic symbolism inherent in Korean color expressions.

Blue/Green 푸르다/파랗다	Metaphors and Idiomatic Expressions	Literal Translation	Meaning of Color Terms
푸르다	푸른 양반, 세력이 푸르다	blue-green nobility, power is blue-green	A power being strong.
	푸른 청춘	blue-green youth	Being full of youth and livelihood.
	푸른 꿈, 푸른 희망	blue-green dream, blue-green hope	A hope, dream, etc., being big and beautiful.
	공기가 푸르다	the air is blue-green	Air, etc., being clear and fresh.
	서슬이 푸르다	One's wrath is blue-green	For one's force or attitude to be threatening and ferocious to such an extent that no one dares to defy it.
파랗다	파랗게 질리다	(one's face/lips) turns blue-green	One's face, lips, etc., being blue because one is cold or scared.
	파란불이 켜지다	a blue-green light turns on	A sign of hope that a certain situation will become better in the future.
새파랗다	새파랗게 어리다/젊다	to be very blue-green-young	Very young
퍼렇다	칼끝이 퍼렇다	the tip of the sword is blue-green	A knife or the blade of a tool being very keen.

시퍼렇다	시퍼렇게 살아 있다	vividly blue-green alive	Living without any problems or very fresh.
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tab. 4. “푸르다/파랗다” *Metaphors and idiomatic expressions*

3.2.5. “누르다”와 “노랗다”

When a health problem affects the complexion, the expression “얼굴이 누렇게 뜨다” (‘the face turns yellow’) is used. When the likelihood of success for a business or a person is low, expressions such as “싹수가 노랗다” (‘one’s sprout is yellow’) or “싹이 노랗다” (‘one’s sprout is yellow’) are used. Here, “싹” refers to a young leaf or stem, and a sprout that is yellow from the beginning metaphorically indicates low growth potential. Meanwhile, “하늘이 노랗다” (‘the sky is yellow’) is used to describe a situation in which one feels weak or dizzy, and “하늘이 노래지다” (‘the sky turns yellow’) conveys a state of mental dizziness caused by shock.

누르다/노랗다	Metaphors and Idiomatic Expressions	Literal Translation	Meaning of Color Terms
누르다	얼굴이 누렇게 뜨다	the face turns yellow	One's face looking pale and yellowish due to malnutrition or a disease.
노랗다	싹수가 노랗다	one's sprout is yellow	For a business or person to have no chance of success.
	하늘이 노랗다	the sky is yellow	For one's energy to substantially weaken.
	하늘이 노래지다	the sky turns yellow	To feel dizzy and stunned by a sudden shock.

tab. 5. ‘누르다/노랗다’ *Metaphors and idiomatic expressions*

4. TEACHING METHODS

Most Korean learners acquire color terms in their literal sense at the beginner level, but this study aims to teach the metaphors and idiomatic meanings of color terms to intermediate and advanced learners¹⁴, enabling them to use these expressions

¹⁴ According to the official CEFR–TOPIK comparison by the National Institute for International Education (국립국제교육원, NIIED), intermediate- and advanced-level learners correspond to CEFR levels B1–C1 (approximately TOPIK levels 3–5). Learners at this level have fully established knowledge of core grammar and vocabulary, as well as well-developed abil-

naturally in real-life contexts.

The instruction is based on a lexical approach¹⁵ and integrates the OHE (Observation-Hypothesis-Experiment) teaching method¹⁶ with Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)¹⁷, focusing on simultaneously enhancing learners' cognitive engagement and practical language skills. Metaphorical and idiomatic expressions involving color terms are presented as lexical chunks rather than individual words, enabling learners to infer their meanings from discourse, consolidate them in memory, and apply them effectively in communicative contexts.

Distinct from the traditional PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) method, the OHE method minimizes teacher intervention, emphasizing cognitively oriented learning in which learners independently identify and conceptualize lexical patterns through the observation-hypothesis-experiment cycle.¹⁸

In the Observe stage, learners recognize the language-use context through color term expressions in the drama *Queen of Tears* (눈물의 여왕)¹⁹. In the Hypothesize stage, they infer the meanings of color terms and engage in activities comparing them with their native language. During the Experiment stage, worksheets are used to check comprehension and allow learners to practice using the expressions. Finally, in the TBLT stage, learners write scripts, perform role-plays, and complete plot-based tasks using color terms from metaphorical and idiomatic expressions in conjunction with the web drama *Find Her* (그녀를 찾아줘), enabling them to internalize these expressions in authentic language-use situations.

ities to infer meaning from context and understand cultural nuances. Such competencies are essential for learning metaphorical and idiomatic color expressions, making these learners an appropriate target group for the present study.

15 Michael Lewis's (1993) Lexical Approach. This approach understands language as a collection of lexical chunks rather than grammatical rules and facilitates natural acquisition by repeatedly exposing learners to these chunks and encouraging their use.

16 The OHE (Observation-Hypothesis-Experiment) model is a core instructional method derived from Michael Lewis's lexical approach, emphasizing learner-centered inductive inquiry over teacher-directed instruction. Lee (2005) expanded Lewis's lexical concept to include proverbs, idiomatic expressions, collocations, and conceptual metaphors, providing a theoretical foundation for teaching metaphorical and idiomatic expressions involving color terms as part of a lexical approach.

17 Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), systematized by Willis (1996) and Nunan (2004), is an instructional method that centers on authentic tasks, guiding learners to naturally use the target language while acquiring it.

18 Lee (2005) empirically demonstrated that, compared to the PPP method, applying the OHE method in Korean vocabulary instruction enhanced learners' ability to autonomously discover lexical patterns by 47%, reduced teacher dependency by 62%, and increased performance scores combining accuracy and fluency by 35% (2005:94, Table 34).

19 It is a drama broadcast on tvN in 2024.

Stage	Teaching-Learning Activities	Teaching Methods
Observe	Watch the video of the drama <i>Queen of Tears</i> ²⁰ and introduce the learning topic Present color term expressions: “까맣게 잇다”, “속이 새까맣게 타다”, “머리가 새하얘지다”, “하얗게 밤을 새우다”, “새빨간 거짓말을 하다”, “얼굴을 붉히다”, “새파랗게 어리다”, “얼굴이 새파랗게 질리다”, “쌍수가 노랗다” Guide learners to recognize the topic	Use of video materials (to arouse interest) Presentation of Lexical Input ²¹
Hypothesize	Guiding learners to infer the meanings of color term expressions Comparison with the mother tongue	Presentation of Lexical Chunks Meaning Inference-Centered Activities
Experiment	Provide explanations of meanings and usage examples Check comprehension through activity sheets	Lexical Approach + Context-Based Activities
TBLT	Watch the web drama <i>Find Her</i> Create and perform role-play scripts Complete a storyline reconstruction task	TBLT Task Performance Stage Role-Play-Based Speaking/Writing Tasks

tab. 6. Teaching-Learning Model

<Example 1>

유진: 어제 발표는 어땠어?

안나: 나 발표 전에 머리가 새하얘져서 무슨 말을 해야 할지 생각이 안 났어.

유진: 너무紧张했구나!

Question: ‘머리가 새하얘지다’의 의미는 무엇인가요?

화가 나서 아무 생각이 없다

놀라거나紧张해서 아무 생각이 안 난다

머리를 염색해서 하얗게 됐다

< Example 2>

어제 나는 밤새 과제를 하느라 하얗게 밤을 새웠다. 점심에 친구와 약속이 있었지만 너무 피곤해서 까맣게 잊어버렸다. 친구는 나를 기다리다 화가 나서 얼굴을 붉히며 나에게 화를 냈다. 나는 너무 미안해서 말도 제대로 못 했다.

20 In episode 11 of *Queen of Tears*, in the scene where Baek Hyun-woo dries Hong Hae-in's hair, Hong Hae-in says: «나 어제 수철이 얼굴 보고 5초쯤 ‘누구지?’ 생각했어. 내 담당 교수 이름이 까맣게 생각이 안 났고... » (‘Yesterday, I looked at Suchul's face for about five seconds and thought, ‘Who is this?’ I completely couldn't remember the name of my supervising professor...’).

21 As a core element of the Lexical Approach, collocations, lexical chunks, and idioms are presented to enable learners to acquire them naturally.

Question: 이 글에서 ‘하얗게 밤을 새우다’는 무슨 뜻인가요?

새벽에 산책을 했다

불을 켜 놓고 잠을 잤다

잠을 자지 않고 밤을 지냈다

tab. 7. Example of an activity sheets for the Experiment Stage

웹 드라마 <그녀를 찾아줘> 4화

얀과 고하영은 야외 술집에서 술을 마시다가 예비군 군복을 입은 김정남과 고규필을 발견하다. 순간 얀은 전쟁을 하는 줄 알고 놀라서 얼굴이 새파랗게 질린다. 한편 김정남은 휴식 시간에 총을 옆에 놓고 쉬다가 휴식 시간이 끝나고 총을 챙기는 것을 새까맣게 잊고 다른 장소로 이동한다. 총을 잃어버린 것을 안 순간 머리가 새하얘진다. 고규필은 김정남에게 총값이 400달러인데 그것을 배상해야 한다고 했다. 김정남은 속이 새까맣게 탔다.

그러던 중 김정남은 나무 아래 앉아 쉬고 있던 전익수의 총을 몰래 훔친다. 그 사실을 안 전익수는 김정남에게 불 같이 화를 낸다. 김정남은 그 총이 자기 총이라고 새빨간 거짓말을 한다. 그때 얀이 총을 발견해서 김정남에게 주면서 김정남은 얼굴이 새빨개진다.

tab. 8. Application and Tasks (TBLT)

4. CONCLUSION

This study systematically cataloged metaphorical and idiomatic expressions with color terms that include the five basic native Korean colors, based on the *Korean Basic Dictionary* developed by the National Institute of the Korean Language. It examined how color terms are realized in terms of form and meaning within these expressions. On this basis, the study designed a teaching-learning model for intermediate- and advanced-level learners of Korean. The proposed instructional model integrates the Lexical Approach with the OHE (Observation-Hypothesis-Experiment) teaching method and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). In particular, it seeks to promote active vocabulary learning by presenting expressions as lexical chunks and engaging learners in discourse-based inferencing activities. In addition, by incorporating authentic drama and web drama materials, the model enhances learners' motivation and enables indirect exposure to the sociocultural contexts of the Korean language, which constitutes a key contribution of this study.

In Korean language education, metaphorical and idiomatic expressions with color terms have largely been limited to the presentation of basic lexical meanings at the beginner level. Consequently, systematic advanced instruction reflecting the cognitive and linguistic needs of intermediate- and advanced-level learners has been relatively insufficient. These needs include the ability to infer abstract semantic extensions, to interpret meaning based on context, and to use idiomatic expressions

appropriately at the discourse level. By learning the metaphorical and idiomatic expressions addressed in this study, learners are expected to move beyond simple lexical knowledge to develop a deeper understanding of the implicit meanings and sociocultural significance embedded in Korean discourse, as well as the ability to flexibly employ these expressions in actual communicative situations.

Meanwhile, the instructional model proposed in this study has limitations in that it represents a relatively general pedagogical approach designed with educational contexts such as domestic Korean language institutes in mind, where learners of diverse nationalities and linguistic backgrounds are typically mixed. Specifically, the model does not account in detail for individual learner variables such as first language, language typology, length of Korean language study, or age group. Moreover, it does not present teaching strategies based on contrastive analyses of metaphorical and idiomatic color expressions targeted at learners from specific linguistic backgrounds, which remains a limitation. Furthermore, another limitation of this study is that the proposed instructional model was not empirically tested through application in actual classroom settings. Future research should therefore design more fine-grained teaching–learning models based on contrastive analyses of metaphorical and idiomatic color expressions for specific learner groups or linguistic backgrounds and empirically verify their educational effectiveness through experimental studies.

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