

Color choices of young Poles and the values they reveal: an anthropological study

The doctoral dissertation deals with the colour choices of young Poles and the values they reveal, leading to an understanding of the role of colours in the everyday life of contemporary people and to the discovery of elements of their axiological system. The topic of the thesis therefore covers two research issues. The first are colours - a phenomenon that is of interest to both the exact and natural sciences, as well as the humanities and social sciences. The author, taking an anthropological perspective, examines the role of colours in the everyday life of contemporary young Poles. The starting point for the analysis are the colour-related decision-making processes of the studied group. The second issue concerns values, understood as ideas that are sought to be implemented in order to meet important needs (Bartmiński 2014). The considerations are based on the thesis that the axiological system possessed by an individual determines the choices he or she makes (cf. Smyk 2018, 2019). Therefore, the author assumes that by analysing the decision-making processes of the studied group, it is possible to discover elements of their value system. The author places her analysis in the context of postmodern culture, assuming, following its theorists (Giddens 2012; Beck 2004; Bauman 2006, 2007b, 2008b), that it is characterized by the imperative of making choices, especially those regarding one's identity and lifestyle, as well as a high degree of individualism and activities aimed at continuous consumption of goods.

The author's goal is to identify the colour choices made by young Poles today and to indicate the values that are revealed through these choices. Her intention is, in particular, to characterize situations in which decisions regarding colours are made and to analyse the motivations and determinants of these decisions. Additionally, the author attempts to categorize the identified values and present the relations between them.

The material basis of the thesis is primarily data obtained from fifty individual in-depth interviews conducted with Polish citizens aged 18-40. In addition, the material for analysis was provided by existing data, interpreted using the method of content analysis, obtained from life guidance books, lifestyle press, internet forums and social media. It was necessary to use participant and non-participant observation of some of the colour choices, and the material was supplemented by data collected using a survey questionnaire and the projection technique.

The dissertation consists of four chapters preceded by an *Introduction* and ended with a list of sources and an Annex, which includes illustrations, an interview questionnaire, a list of interviewees and a list of respondents.

Chapter 1, *Man in postmodern culture - choices and values*, is devoted to outlining the theoretical framework for the overarching conceptual categories: choices (1.1) and values (1.2.), interpreted through the prism of postmodern culture phenomena. The considerations in the first part of the chapter allow to propose an anthropological understanding of the decision-making process, in which identity choices intertwine with consumer choices. The analysis in the second part of the chapter lead the author to the thesis that young Poles value traditional values, but interpret and implement them in a different way than previous generations.

Chapter 2, *Research methodology*, is devoted to discussing: research objectives and questions (2.1.), research methods (2.2.), analysis and interpretation of the collected data (2.3.).

Chapter 3, *Colour choices in the everyday life of young Poles*, contains the analysis and interpretation of materials collected during the research. At the beginning, the author presents the general characteristics of the decision-making process related to colours (3.1.) - motivations, conditions and the role they play in the life of the studied group. It becomes clear that colours belong to the sphere of everyday life and it is necessary to analyse them from this perspective. The second subchapter (3.2.) is devoted to discussing specific situational contexts in which young Poles make colour choices - the author names these contexts "decision fields". These are: colour preferences (3.2.1.), interior design and furnishings (3.2.2.), external appearance (3.2.3.), festive attire (3.2.4.), everyday items (3.2.5.)). The analysis shows that colour choices are closely related to individual identity and lifestyle. They also reveal some of the values held by respondents.

Chapter 4, *Values in narratives about colours*, discusses in detail the issue of values revealed in the collected research materials. These values have been categorized by the author in four axiological fields. The fields of close interpersonal values and social relations belong to the values of the collectivistic type (4.1.). Fields of experiencing physical and mental pleasure as well as self-identification and self-expression, belong to the individualistic type (4.2.). The value categories and the connections between them were visualized using a diagram.

The dissertation ends with *Summary*, which verifies the research theses and outlines perspectives for further research. Based on the identified choice situations, their motivations and the values revealed through them, the author comes to the conclusion that the lifestyles and axiological systems of young Poles are strongly influenced by postmodern cultural trends, primarily individualism and the need to have an autonomously constructed identity.

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