

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.18454/RULB.10.18>Гудкова Л.В.¹, Бурлакова М.В.²^{1,2}Кандидат филологических наук, Шуйский филиал Ивановского государственного университета**ОТРАЖЕНИЕ КОНЦЕПТОВ ЦВЕТА В РУССКИХ И НЕМЕЦКИХ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ ЕДИНИЦАХ С КОЛОРИСТИЧЕСКИМ КОМПОНЕНТОМ***Аннотация*

В статье рассматриваются фразеологические единицы русского и немецкого языков, содержащие в своей структуре лексемы «белый», «черный», «красный», «синий», «зеленый». Основной целью исследования явилось выявление сем во вторично-номинативных значениях изучаемых единиц, являющихся характерными для концептов цвета русского и немецкого языков. Проведенный анализ показал, что наиболее отличающимися в русском языке являются концепты белого, черного и красного цветов, а в немецком – зеленого и синего. Результаты лингвистического анализа могут быть применены как в теоретических, так и практических аспектах преподавания немецкого языка, а также использованы практикующими переводчиками.

Ключевые слова: концепт, фразеологическая единица, вторично-номинативное значение, сема.

Gudkova L.V.¹, Burlakova M.V.²^{1,2}PhD in Philology, Ivanovo State University, Shuya Affiliated Branch**THE CONCEPTS OF COLOUR IN RUSSIAN AND GERMAN IDIOMS***Abstract*

The article deals with the Russian and German idioms involving the colours "white", "black", "red", "blue", "green". The secondary meanings of the words have been studied to describe the specificity of the Russian and German understanding of the concepts of colour. It has been revealed that the Russian language puts the emphasis on the concepts of "white", "black", and "red", while the German language is more likely to emphasize the concepts of "blue" and "green". The outcomes of the research can be used by the teachers of German, as well as the interpreters.

Keywords: concept, idiomatic expression, secondary nominative meaning, the seme.

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It is a well-known fact that a user's linguistic competence is not enough for successful intercultural communication. It is equally important to have a clear understanding of the values of a culture and the peculiarities of the people's outlook. To achieve that, it is necessary to take into account the conceptual content of speech as well as the "the psychological and cultural elements of the meaning, which are not so much thought of by the native speaker, rather they are sensed by them; those embrace associations, emotions, assessments, national images and connotations inherent in the culture" [2, P. 47]. Given the above mentioned, intercultural communication can be regarded as a kind of crossroads of concepts, stored in the cultural memory of a nation.

The concepts are understood by most linguists as the quantum of knowledge, which reflect a human's perception of the world. It is noteworthy that linguists view the concepts of national languages as containing both a universal meaning (because the human thinking is more or less the same), and the nationally specific component, which reflects the linguistic and cultural characteristics of a nation. The authors share the view that the skills of the accurate interpretation of the nation-specific concepts play the crucial role in maintaining effective multicultural communication.

The concepts of colour reflect the national outlook most vividly and accurately, as they are closely connected with the national culture. Such concepts are so often used, that it is easy to follow up their main similarities and differences, when comparing idioms with the colour-terms in Russian and German.

Over a hundred Russian and German idiomatic expressions involving the basic colours of white, black, red, blue [1], [3], [5], [6] have been analyzed. As the analysis has shown, the lexemes denoting colours are used in their primary meaning in the majority of the idioms. The semes of "the white colour", "the black colour", "the red colour", etc. have equal representation in all the analyzed idiomatic expressions, there is no clear distinction in the general perception of the colours in the Russian and German

language. A lot of idioms containing a specific colour have identical syntactic and semantic structures in the two languages: *черное золото* ("the black gold") – *das schwarze Gold*, *зеленая зона* ("the green zone") – *grüne Zone*, *белая ворона* ("the white crow") – *ein weißer Rabe*, etc. Many of them have been borrowed from the common language and are international words: *синий чулок* ("the blue stocking") – *der Blaustrumpf* (from English), *голубая кровь* ("blue blood") – *blaues Blut* (from Spanish), *Синяя птица* ("the Blue bird") – *der blaue Vogel* (from the play by M. Maeterlinck).

At the same time, the linguistic and cultural realias involving colour may have different etymological explanations. In that case, they are translated either in a descriptive way, or with a traditional idiom, containing a different colour or even involving no colour at all: *der blaue Brief* (because of the color of the envelope in which letters from official agencies were sent) – *извещение об увольнении* (a notice of dismissal); *der weiße Sonntag* (the color of the priest's clothing during the baptism on the first Sunday after Easter) – *Красная горка* (*Krasnaya Gorka*); *eine weiße Maus* (humorous) (because of the white uniform) – *регулировщик уличного движения* (a traffic policeman), *der grüne Donnerstag* ("The Green Thursday", in the Catholic Church "the green people" used to be the ones who repented sins before Easter in public) – *Чистый четверг* (The Clean Thursday); *der blaue Montag* (originally: the Monday before the fast, on that day altar was covered with a blue frontal; later: every Monday when people were allowed by the unions to stay home from work) – *прогул в понедельник после праздника* (blue Monday); *das Schwarze Brett* (the boards used to be painted black) – *доска объявлений* (a bulletin board); *der grüne Tisch* (a table used to be covered with a green tablecloth) – *круглый стол* (the Round Table).

The secondary nominative meanings of the words denoting colour have developed on the foundation of the primary meanings with a "wide range of associative potential" [4, P. 12] and have proved to have more semantic differences. The study has showed that, along with the

common semantic elements, each lexeme contains one or more extra semantic components inherent in only one of the two languages, which accounts for the difference of the perception of the colour.

The idioms involving the colour “white” («белый/weiß»)

Of all the secondary meanings of “white”, there are the following common semantic components:

– «the unknown», e.g. белое пятно – ein weißer Fleck auf der Karte (*literally: the white spot, meaning the unknown territory*);

– «peace, the chastity of the mind», e.g. поднять белый флаг – die weiße Fahne hissen (*literally: to raise the white flag, meaning to give up*). This meaning has a broader representation in German: eine weiße Weste haben (*compare: иметь незапятнанную репутацию – to have an impeccable reputation*), eine weiße Hemdbrust (*compare: безупречное прошлое – a clean sheet*), ein weißes Blatt sein (*compare: быть чистым [нетронутым] существом – be pure*).

The peculiarity of the concept “white” in Russian is the meaning of “the best one”: белая кость (*literally: the white bone, meaning the nobility*), белый гриб (*the white mushroom*), белое духовенство (*the white clergy*), for which there are no German counterparts, and which are translated into German respectively, as *blaues Blut*, *Steinpilz*, *weltliche Geistlichkeit*. The seme of “openness” is also inherent in the Russian concept of “white”: на белом свете (*in the world*) – in/auf der weiten Welt, среди бела дня (*in the white daylight*) – am helllichten Tage.

The idioms with the lexeme “black” («черный/schwarz»)

Concerning the secondary nominative meanings of the concept “black”, the idioms contain the semes of “dark” and “sad” in both languages, e.g. черные мысли – schwarze Gedanken (*black thoughts*), черный день – ein schwarzer Tag (*a black day*), черный юмор – schwarzer Humor (*the black humour*), рисовать черными красками – in den schwärzesten Farben (aus)malen/schildern (*to colour with the black paint*), видеть в черном свете – schwarz sehen (*to see everything through black-coloured glasses*). Besides, there is the seme of «evil, unkind» in both languages, e.g. черная душа – eine schwarze Seele (*a black mind*), черная неблагодарность – schwarzer Undank (*black ingratitude*), черный список – die schwarze Liste (*the black list*), черная магия – die schwarze Magie (*the black magic*). The seme of «illegal» is better represented in German: черный рынок – der schwarze Markt (*the black market*), schwarzfahren (*to drive without a license, to travel without paying*), schwarz hören (*to use an illegal radio*), schwarzarbeiten (*illegal work*), schwarz über die Grenze kommen (*to cross the border illegally*). In Russian, there is a distinctive seme of «lower in the status» in such idioms: черная кость – der Pöbel, der Mob (*literally: the black bone, meaning a commoner*); черный ход – der Küchenaufgang (*the back door*); черная изба – die Rauchhütte (*literally: a black house, meaning a house without a regular chimney*); держать в черном теле – j-n kurz/streng/knapp halten (*to treat smb harshly, unkindly*).

The idioms with the colour-term “red” («красный/rot»)

The secondary nominative meanings of the concept “red” in both languages embrace the seme of “precision” (e.g. проходить красной нитью – etwas zieht sich wie ein roter Faden hindurch (*to be outlined with the red line*)) and the seme of “revolution” (e.g. Красная Армия, Красный Флот –

cp. Rot Front! (*the Red Army, the Red Navy – the Red Front*). Nevertheless, neither meaning is widespread in either language. In Russian, the most common meaning of the “red” is the seme of “smart, beautiful” and “the best”: красна девица – schöne/holdе Jungfrau (*a beautiful young woman*); красное крыльцо – die Paradedtreppe, der Paradeaufgang (*the front door*); красное солнышко – die liebe/strahlende Sonne (*the beautiful sun*); красные дни – die schönen/glücklichen Tage (*the beautiful days*); красная строка – neue Zeile mit Absatz (*new paragraph*); ради красного словца – der schönen Worte wegen (*just to sound smart, just for the effect*); Красная площадь – der Rote Platz (*the Red Square*). The meaning is represented in the German language by a single example of Heute rot, morgen tot (*literally: Today red, tomorrow dead, meaning „you never know what tomorrow brings“*).

The idioms with the lexeme “green” («зеленый/grün»)

The German language embraces a wide range of the secondary meanings of the concept “green”, like the meanings of “wellness, success” (*auf einen grünen Zweig kommen, j-n über den grünen Klee loben u. даже Wer sich grün macht, den fressen die Ziege*) and “favourable, happy, nice” (*sich an j-n grünen Seite setzen, j-m nicht grün sein*), while there is a common secondary semantic component of “inexperience and immaturity” in both Russian and German, e.g. быть зеленым, зеленый юнец – der Grünschnabel/grüner Junge (*to be a green man*); unsere Bekanntschaft ist noch grün (*we haven’t known each other for long enough*). At the same time, it is often that “green” in Russian means “unripe”, but in the German counterpart idiom it means “new and fresh”, e.g. зеленые овощи, зеленый горошек – grünes Obst, grünes Holz, grüne Fische/Heringe, grünes Fleisch.

The idioms with the lexeme “blue”

(«синий/голубой/blau»)

The lexeme “blue” has more secondary meanings in German. These include such meanings as “enigma, mystery” (*sein blaues Wunder erleben*); “the unknown” (*die blaue Ferne – голубые дали, Fahrt ins Blaue, ins Blaue hinein, etwas geht ins Blaue, ins Blaue schießen*), “a tall story, fiction” (*blaue Märchen, j-m blauen Dunst machen, blau reden*), «laziness» (*blau machen* (from *blauer Montag*)). The common meaning of “blue” in both languages is the seme of “a dream”: синяя птица – der blaue Vogel (*the blue bird*).

The study has shown that the meanings of the words denoting colour differ in Russian and German idioms. The Russian idioms display a wide range of the concepts of “white”, “black”, and “red”. Although there are some components of the meaning that the Russian language shares with the German language, there are distinctive Russian culture-oriented features. The Russia people associate the white colour with the best things, the black colour – with the worst things, and the red colour – with the beautiful things, which is reflected in the idioms. The concepts of “blue” and “green” prevail in the German idioms, with the corresponding meanings of “mystery, tall tales and laziness” and “wellness and favourability”, which are not to be found in Russian. The authors argue that it is important to know and understand the full range of the principal and secondary meanings embraced in the concept of a colour, for a professional to be able to maintain adequate Russian-German and German-Russian communication.

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