The Category of Colour Naming in English, German and Mari Idioms

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Abstract

Colour naming is reflected in all the languages of the world, namely, in phraseological units where one of the components denotes a colour. The objective of the article is to study idioms in three unrelated languages: English, German and Mari and to reveal how they are organized around universal focal colours. The article analyses 205 idioms of the English language, where one of the components includes colour naming. The research shows that in the English language 'black' (47 units, 23 %), 'blue' (39 units, 19 %), 'red' (32 units, 16 %) and 'white' (32 units, 16 %) form the core of the category. In the German language 185 phraseological units have been found, among which 'schwarz/black' (42 units, 21 %), 'grün/green' (36 units, 20 %) and 'blau/blue' (35 units, 19 %) are dominating colours. In the Mari language – 18 idioms: 'шем/black' (8 units, 44,5 %), the same amount of 'ош/white' (8 units, 44,5 %),' ужар/green' (1 idiom, 5,5 %) and 'йошкар/red' (1 idiom, 5,5 %). Taking into account their semantic meaning, all the idioms in three languages have been divided into nine groups. According to their semantic organization, four classes of idioms have been distinguished.

Keywords: *English, German and Mari idioms, colour naming, semantic meaning, semantic organization.*

1. Introduction

The article is devoted to the analysis of colour terms in the phraseological units of the unrelated languages: English, German and Mari. We examine how they are organized around universal focal colours, and what colour terms build their cores of the linguistic idiomatic view of the world. Then their semantic meaning and semantic organization were examined. None of current scientific research has investigated the link between linguistic colour categories in the English, German and Mari languages.

2. Materials and Method

The research is based on the analysis of 205 English phraseological units found with the use of the method of continuous sampling in the following monolingual and bilingual dictionaries: Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English (2006), Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2007), Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2007), English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary by A.V. Kunin. Thus, verification was made on the basis of 10,000 idioms, 65,000 collocations and 4,500 carefully-selected key words.

In the German language 185 idioms were found in the following dictionaries: Duden. Das Stilwörterbuch: Grund legend für gutes Deutsch (2001), Duden. Richtiges und gutes Deutsch (1997), German-Russian Phraseological Dictionary by L.E. Binovich and N.N. Grishin (1975). Thus, verification was made on the basis of 98,000 words, idioms and collocations.

In the Mari language we examine 18 idioms containing colour-terms from the dictionary Mari Idioms by F.T. Gracheva, containing 1078 phraseological units. It is the only dictionary of Mari idioms that exists currently.

Quantitative and statistical analysis was used to represent the dominating colour terms in the three languages.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 English Idioms with Colour-naming

Nine groups have been identified in the English idioms containing colour terms: '*black*', '*blue*', '*brown*', '*green*', '*grey*', '*red*', '*pink*', '*white*' and '*yellow*'. Exactly these colours are focal colours (Rosch, 1975), (Wierzbicka, 1992), (Berlin, Kay, 1969), (Regier, Kay, Richard, 2005). The research does not contain two focal colours: '*orange*' and '*purple*' due to the fact that these colours have not been not found in English phraseological units.

According to their quantity the idioms with colour terms have been distributed in the following way: *black* (47 units, 23 %), *blue* (39 units, 19 %), *brown* (8 units, 4 %), *green* (20 units, 10 %), *grey* (9 units, 4 %), *red* (32 units, 16 %), *pink* (5 units, 4 %), *white* (32 units, 16 %), *yellow* (12 units, 6 %).
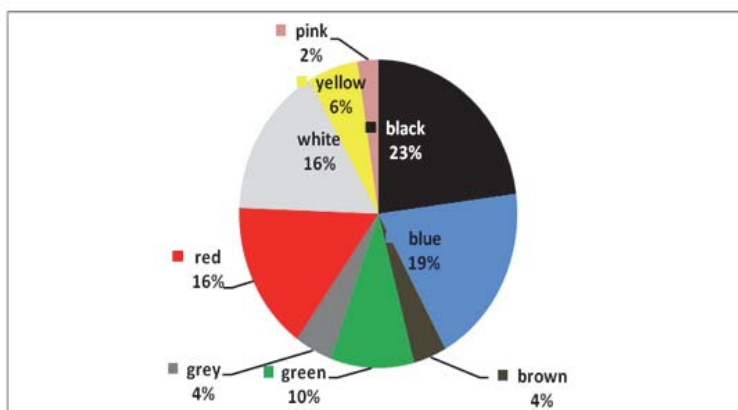

Figure 1. The percentage ratio of colour terms in English idioms

In Figure 1 we see the percentage ratio of the English linguistic idiomatic view of the world which is characterized by the domination of the *black* colour (23 %), followed by *blue* (19 %). *White* as well as *red* are represented by 32 idioms each which makes 16 % of all idioms; 10 % belongs to green. The result shows that *black, blue, red, white* and *green* form the core of linguistic colour categories of the English language.

3.2 Semantic Analysis of English Idioms with Colour-naming

Using the classification by V.G. Kulpina (2001) who analysed colour-naming data in the Polish and Russian languages from semantic side, we can identify the following groups of the English idioms:
1) Idioms characterizing a person (their character, background, people's attitude towards them), e.g. *blackguard (old-fashioned)* – an immoral man who treats other people very badly; *black leg* – someone who continues to work when other workers are on strike – used to show disapproval; *blue-eyed boy* (*British informal*) – a young man who is admired because he is very successful, attractive etc. This word usually shows that the speaker dislikes people like this; *a/the black sheep in the family* – a person who is different from the rest of their family or another group, and who is considered bad or embarrassing; *browned off* (*British informal old-fashioned*) – be bored or slightly annoyed; *green hand* – an inexperienced man; *as red as a beetroot* – with red cheeks because of angriness, embarrassment or heat; *red-blooded* – behaving like a typical man, especially by being sexually active; *be tickled pink* – be very happy; *yellow-belly* – (slang) – a coward; *a yellow streak* – a quality of being easily frightened; cowardice; *he, it, etc. is not as black as he, it, etc. is painted* – somebody or something is not as bad as people say; *the Green Wellie Brigade* – a humorous or insulting name for rich people who live in the country and enjoy country life, especially hunting and horse-riding; *red neck (informal)* – a person who lives in a country of the US, is uneducated, and has strong, unreasonable opinions – used in order to show disapproval, etc.;
2) Idioms denoting a profession, membership in a party or any other organization, type of activity or functions: *grey suits* – people working in politics, law, etc. who have power but are not known to the public; *white collar* –

workers who work in offices, rather than doing physical work; *blue-collar* – people who do physical work, rather than working in offices; *pink-collar* – people who have a low-paid job (salespersons, waiters); *the boys in blue* (*old-fashioned, informal or humorous)* – police officers; *brown shirt* – a member of a fascist organization; *the green room* – the room in a theatre, television studio etc., in which performers wait when they are not on stage performing; *redcoat* – a British soldier during the 18th and the 19th centuries;

3) Naming a phenomenon: *black ice* – ice-covered ground; *blue funk* – a state of extreme horror; *brown study* – be deep in thoughts, gloomy; *the green-eyed monster* – jealousy, *yellow streak* – cowardice; *have a blue/pink fit (informal)* – be very angry; *scream blue murder (informal)* – shout, scream, etc. very loudly and for a long time; make a lot of noise or fuss because you disagree very strongly with something; *green-wash* – when a company hides the true effects of its products or actions on the environment; *red eye (informal)* – to take a journey in a plane that continues all night; *red herring* – fact or idea that is not important but is introduced to take a person's attention away from the points that are important, etc.;

4) Symbolic nomination of a phenomenon (symbol-substitution, symbol of dreams): *to burn blue* – bad, evil omen; *to give the green light* – to allow a project, a plan, etc. to begin; *a red alert* – a warning that there is very great danger; *black and white* – absolutely right or wrong, good or bad, with no grades between them; *in black and white* – in print or writing*; blue-sky thinking* – concerned with thinking of new and interesting ideas, without worrying about whether they are practical or not, etc.;

5) Proper names (names of countries, nicknames, names of organizations, institutions). Examples: *the Black Country* – industrial area of the West Midlands in England, north and west of Birmingham; *blue Peter* – blue flag with white square, a signal flag meaning standing out to sea; *green paper* – "Green Book" (governmental publication which exposes suggestions for public discussion); *yellow pages* – "yellow reference book" (chapter or separate volume of telephone book with addresses and phone numbers of shops, enterprises and institutions, printed on yellow paper); *blue stocking* – a woman who is more interested in ideas and studying than in parties, men, etc.

6) Periphrastic substitutes (of anthroponyms, toponyms, names of residents, different pieces of territories, time intervals, nutritious substances, energy sources, precious metals, useful plants, parts of human body, taboo euphemisms): *black gold* – oil, *once in a blue moon* – for once in a while, *the red-light district* – an urban area where there is a concentration of prostitution and sex-oriented businesses; *green back (informal)* – an American banknote.

7) Negative, unpleasant or dangerous substances, phenomena, events (deceases, especially expressive and figurative euphemistic names of negative phenomena): *to beat black and blue* – to beat with bruises, to beat to a mummy; *blue movie* – a film that shows a lot of sexual activity; *to do brown* – to cheat, to swindle; *look through green glasses* – to feel jealous; *to see red* – to be furious; *the Black Death* – the illness that killed large numbers of people in the 14th century, bubonic plague; *a black day* – a day when something sad, unpleasant or disastrous happened; *a black eye* – a bruise around the eye caused by an accident or fighting; *a black look* – an angry or disapproving expression on somebody's face; *a black mark against somebody* – something that somebody has done which makes other people dislike or disapprove of them; *the black market* – an illegal form of trade in which foreign money, or goods that are difficult to obtain, are bought and sold; *a black spot* – a place where accidents often happen, especially on a road; *look black* – show no signs of hope or improvement; *a bolt from the blue* – an event or a piece of news which is sudden and unexpected; a complete surprise, etc.

8) Assemblies of people and their meetings: *black list* – a list of people unmasked or suspected of smth, excluded from the general list; *the grey population* – the elderly people; *white wedding* – a wedding ceremony where all decorations symbolize bride's virginity.

9) Terms (medicine, printing, terms of paint and coatings industry, wood-pulp and paper industry, agricultural industry): *black hole* – (astronomy) region of space and time domain where gravitational attraction is so strong that even object moving at a rate of knots cannot leave it; *green belt* – a green area around the city where construction or infrastructure development are strictly confirmed; *white goods* – big household appliances*; in the black* – have money or make profit;

The meanings of the idioms are best presented by the following groups: characteristics of a human being (character, occupation), negative substances, phenomena, and periphrastic substitutes. It is necessary to point out an obvious anthropocentric orientation of idioms with colour components: a considerable part of idioms is connected with a human being, his state, character, etc.

Idioms connected with a human being and his occupation can be divided into several groups:

– Idioms designating a human being according to his professional occupation (*blacksmith* – hammersmith, *blue boy* – policeman), social set-up (*blue-eyed boy*), political affiliation (*dressed in blue* – belonging to conservative party, *true blue* – a member of Whigs party), ethnicity (*red skin* – (coarse, colloq.) native-born American; *white slave* – a white woman kidnapped by criminals who made her prostitute), etc.;
– Idioms denoting a person's age (*greenhorn* – a young, inexperienced man, *the grey population* – the elderly people);
– Idioms defining internal state of a person: showing emotions (*red-blooded* – full of determination, brave, courageous, *be tickled pink* – to feel very happy) and physical state or actions (*be white about gills* – to have a sick look, *black and blue* – (colloq.) about a person or his skin: covered in cuts and bruises);
– Idioms describing people's appearance, naming their clothes (*white tie* – white bow-tie which is an obligatory part of evening man's suit);
– Idioms designating traits of character, behavior of people (*grey eminence* – the power behind the throne, *grey mare* – a woman henpecking her husband);
– Idioms describing interpersonal relations (*blackmail* – to try to influence a person using pressure or intimidation; *to put the black on smb.* – (colloq.) to intimidate (smb);
– Idioms connected with professional, political, economic, household, religious, and other spheres of human life (*black market* – (econ.) illegal trade; *black economy* – shadow economy).

We distinguished four classes of idioms according to *semantic organization* of idiomatic phrases with colour-naming component in the English language, taking into account classification principles by A.M. Chepasova (1983): 1) denoting objects (*the black arts* – black magic; *blueblood* – to be of the royal or highly descended blood; *brown ware* – pottery; *green hand* – first-timer; inexperienced person; *grey matter* – brain; *red carpet* – route taken by heads of state on ceremonial and formal occasions, and by VIPs and celebrities at formal events; *the pink of perfection* – height of perfection; *white crow* – outsider; *yellow streak* – cowardice); 2) procedural (*to be at black and blue* – to be beaten with bruises; *to give smb. blue* – make smb. depressed; *to do brown*– (colloq.) to cheat, to swindle; *look through green glasses* – to feel jealous; *to turn grey* – to have gray hair, to become old; *to see red* – to be furious; *see pink elephants* – to drink too much; *to stand in a white sheet* – to recant, to repent in public); 3) denoting characteristics (*black as sin (thunder, thunder cloud)* – with a gloomy face; *blue to principles* – faithful to the principles; *browned off* – (colloq.) sad, depressed; *green with envy* – ready to burst with anger/envy; *red-hot* – very hot, very popular and successful; *in the pink* – (obsolete) in a good state of mind (about a human being); *white-knuckle* – making nervous); 4) qualitative and adverbial (*out of the blue* – suddenly; *once in a blue moon* – very rare).

Quantitative data on the semantic organization of idiomatic phrases with colour-naming component in the English language are presented in table 1.

Table 1. The composition of English idioms with colour-naming components from the point of view of their semantic organization

| Class	Number of idioms with colour-naming components
Idioms denoting objects	127
Procedural idioms	52
Idioms denoting characteristics	22
Qualitative and adverbial idioms	4

According to the research data, the class of idioms denoting objects has the greatest number of examples – 127 idioms, the class of procedural idioms is presented less in the English language – 52 idioms, idioms denoting characteristics (22) have even less quantity. The class of qualitative and adverbial idioms is the smallest in number quantity; we have found only four idioms, moreover, all of them belong to the same group of idioms with *'blue'* component.

The idioms denoting objects are present in all groups of idioms with colour-naming components, including the groups with the least quantity – the idioms with *'brown'* and *'pink'* components. The procedural idioms were found in all groups of idioms, except the idioms with the component *'yellow'* – all the idioms from this group denote objects. The group of idioms denoting characteristics is presented widely enough in the English language – such idioms are absent in two groups – in the idioms with the components *'yellow'* and *'grey'*.

3.3 German Idioms with Colour-naming

The research is based on the analysis of 185 German phraseological units found with the use of the method of continuous sampling in the monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

All of the identified idioms were further distributed into nine groups: Idioms with colour: *«blau/blue»*, *«braun/brown»*, *gelb/yellow»*, *«grau/grey»*, *«grün/*

green», *«rot/red»*, *«rosa/rosig/rosy/pink»*, *«schwarz/black»*, *«weiß/white».*
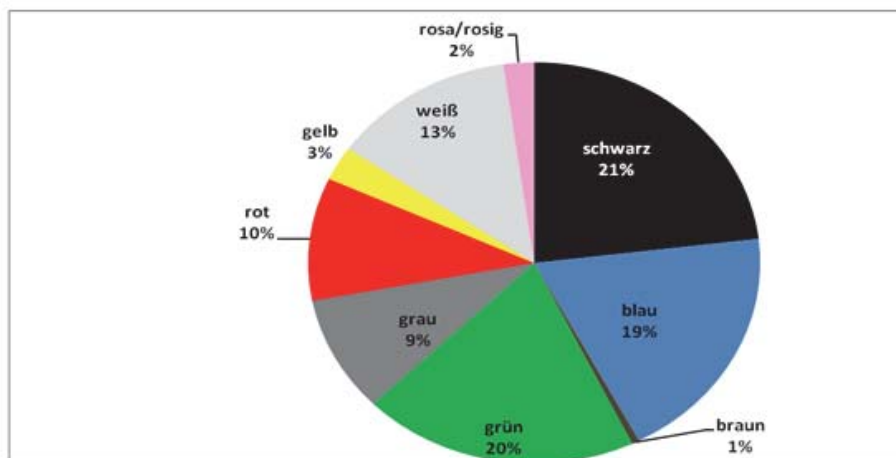
Figure 2. The percentage ratio of colour terms in the German idioms

According to their quantity the idioms with colour terms have been distributed in the following descending way: 42 idioms with the component *black/schwarz*, *green/grün* (36 items), *blue/blau* (35 items), *white/weiß* (24 items), *red/rot* (18 items), *grey/grau* (17 items), *yellow/gelb* (5 items), *red/rosa/rosig* (4 items), and *brown/braun* (1 item).

In Figure 2 we see the percentage ratio of the German linguistic idiomatic view of the world which is characterized by the domination of the *black/ schwarz* colour (21 %), followed by *green/grün* (20 %), *blue/blau*(19 %), *white/weiß* (13 %), *red/rot* (10 %), *grey/grau* (9 %), *yellow/gelb* (3 %), *pink/rosa/rosig* (2 %), *brown/braun* (1 %). The analysis revealed the black colour as the most dominant one (*black/schwarz* – 21 %), followed by *green/grün* (20 %) and *blue/blau* (19 %). The red colour *(rot)* as well as grey (*grau*) are represented in about equal amounts – 10 % and 9 % respectively. The study allows us making a conclusion that *black, green, blue* and *white* are the core colours in colour world-image of the German language. Idioms with *yellow/gelb, pink/rosa/rosig* and *brown/braun* components are rarely introduced that proves their insignificant importance in German everyday life and culture.

Using the classification by V.G. Kulpina (2001) who analysed colour-naming data in the Polish and Russian languages from semantic side, we can identify the following groups of the English idioms. The analysis revealed that all colour idioms can be divided into nine groups by analogy:

1. Idioms characterizing a person (their character, background, etc.) *blaues Blut* – (iron.) blue blood; *eine graue Maus* (lit. "grey mouse") – nondescript, inconspicuous personality; *Grün horn* – a person who lacks life experience, but believes that he knows better; *das schwarze Schaf* – (lit. black sheep) – «white crow».
2. Idioms denoting a profession, membership in a party or any other organization, type of activity or functions: *blaue Jungen* – (col.) sailors; *den grauen Rock anziehen* – to become soldiers; *eine weiße Maus* – (joke) traffic controller (GDR).
3. Naming a phenomenon: *der weiße Tod* – death from snow avalanches; *die weiße Frau* – ghost; *schwarzer Zynismus* – rough cynicism; *der gelbe Neid* – green envy.
4. Symbolic nomination of a phenomenon (symbol of freeway/lack of hazard, symbol-substitution, and symbol of dreams): *die blaue Blume* – *blue flower* (the symbol of something ideal, symbol of German daydreamers); *die rote Fahne* – the red flag of the revolution.
5. Proper names (country names, names of organizations, institutions): *das Blaue Kreuz* – Blue Cross (movement against drug addiction in Germany); *Rote Liste* – the Red Book; *das Grüne Gewölbe* – the Museum of Art Industry.

6. Periphrastic substitutions (anthroponyms, toponyms, names of residences, different segments of the territories, time periods, nutrients: energy, precious metals, useful plants, etc.): *weiße Kohle* – white coal (hydraulic power); *weißes Gold*– white gold (cotton, sugar, porcelain, etc.); *schwarze Diamanten* – Black Diamonds (about the stone coal).

7. Negative, unpleasant or hazardous substances, phenomena, events (diseases, particularly expressive and figurative names of negative phenomena): *j-m den schwarzen Peter zuschieben* – to give somebody something nasty, to shift the blame on somebody; *rot sehen* – get into rage; *eine schwarze Tat* – a black fact; the heinous act.

8. Set of people*: grüne Witwen* – (lit. green widows) living in green suburbs unemployed women, whose husbands spend the whole day at work; *die grüne Hochzeit* – wedding.

9. Terms (medical, polygraphic, etc.): *die weiße Wand* – (lit. the white wall) screen.

3.3.1 Semantic Analysis of German Idioms with Colour-naming

German idioms with color-namimg reveal the following meanings in idioms: characterizing a person (character, profession), negative events, proper names and periphrastic substitutes. "Term" idioms and "Set of People" idioms are the least represented classes. The most part of the idioms under the study is interlaced with a person, his profession, nationality, status, etc.

Phraseological units, which are connected with people and their activities, can be divided into several groups:

- Phraseological units that denote a person according to his profession (*blaue Jungen* – (inf.) seamen; *eine weiße Maus* –(jok.) patrolman), social status (*Grüne Witwen* – unemployed women who live in green suburbs and whose husbands spend all their time at work; *eine weiße Weste haben* – to have spotless reputation), political and religious position (*schwarz sein* – to be a catholic, a member of CDU); race (*schwarzes Elfen bein* – "black ivory" or black slaves in America) and other statuses (*blaues Blut* – (ironic.) blue blood);

- Phraseological units that denote one's age (*alt und grau werden* – to get old and grey; *eing rüner Junge* – a greenhorn);

- Phraseological units that denote inner state of a person: one's emotions (*sich grün und blau ärgern* – to be green with anger; *vom blauen Affen gebissen sein* – (inf.) to be mad); one's physical conditions (*blau sein* – to be drunk);

- Phraseological units that denote one's appearance (*braun und blau* – black and blue or to be badly bruised; *Rot wie ein Krebs* – red as a lobster);

- Phraseological units that denote one's traits of character and behaviour (*graue Eminenz* – a grey cardinal; *eine schwarze Seele* – black soul);

- Phraseological units that denote human relations (*j-n schwarz ärgern* –to rouse smb. to white fury, to infuriate; *j-mden schwarzen Peter zu schieben* – to lay the blame on smb.);

- Phraseological units that are connected with professional, political, economic, household, religious and other spheres of human life (*grauer Händler* – a person who has a half-legal business; *schwarze Ware* – a product from a black market; *die Schwarze Woche* – (relig.) Holy Week).

On the basis of semantics, according to the classification of A.M. Chepasova (1983), all phraseological units have been divided into 5 classes: 1) objective (*die blaue Ferne* – (inf.) hazy distance; *der gelbe Neid* – envy; *graue Eminenz* – grey cardinal; *die Grüne Minna* – police car; *Rote Liste* – the Red Book; *die schwarze Liste* – black list; *weiße Woche* – a week sale of clothes); 2) procedural (*das Blaue vom Himmel herunterschwören* – to swear by all the saints; *j-n braun und blau schlagen* – to beat smb.; *grün und gelb werden vor Neid* – to be green with (envy); *alles in grau sehen* – to see everything in black; *j-m grün sein* – to have sympathy on smb.; *keinen roten Heller haben* – to be broke; *etw. in rosigem Lichte sehen* – to see smth. in pink; *schwar zmalen* – to express everything in black; *einen Mohren weiß waschen* – to do smth. impracticable); 3) qualitative (*braun und blau* – black and blue or to be badly bruised; *Rot wie ein Krebs* – red as a lobster); 4) circumstantial (*ins Blaue hihein* – at random; *grau in grau* – in black; *schwarz auf weiß* – in black and white); 5) modal *(Ach) du grüne Neune!* – (inf.) well, I never!

The figures which reveal the semantic organization of phraseology the German language with colour terms are presented in Table 2.

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Table 2. Content of German idioms with the colour terms on the basis of semantic organization

Class	Quantity of idioms with the color component
Idioms denoting objects	92
Procedural idioms	81
Qualitative idioms	7
Circumstantial idioms	5
Modal idioms	1

According to the research, objective and procedural idioms are predominant: 92 and 81 respectively. The classes of qualitative and circumstantial idioms are not numerous: only 7 and 5 idioms respectively. Procedural phraseological units have been found in all groups of idioms with the colour terms, while there are no objective idioms in the groups with *braun* and *rosa/rosig* colour terms. In German the group of qualitative phraseological units is rather restricted – such idioms have not been found in four groups with *braun, gelb, grau, weiß* colour terms. The group of modal phraseological units is represented by only one idiom and is the smallest one.

Thus, the disclosed nine groups and five classes of phraseological units with colour terms represent the idiomatic worldview of the German language of the examined fragment.

3.4 Mari Idioms with Colour-naming

The phraseological units with the element of colour in the Mari language have been analysed. According to this analysis the category of colour does not have a wide distribution in the Mari phraseology. However, some of the basic focal colours are represented in it. First of all it is to be noted that *ош* 'white' and *шем* 'black' are the most spread. But *йошкар* 'red' and *ужар* 'green' appear in a restricted number of units.

The element *ош* 'white' has been noticed in some idioms: *Ош вӱльӧ (нерген) йомак* 'a tale of a white horse' that means «doubtful story», «cock-and-bull story». This element is also a part of the phraseological units with the nouns *кече* and *тӱня.* The noun *кече* has two meanings: «the day» and «the sun». Both meanings are actualized in semantics of different units: *Ош кече ончылно* 'in front of the sun' that means «true»; *Ош кечым ужаш* 'to see a clear day'. The meaning of this idiom is «to get happy, glad»; *Ош кечым ужаш огыл* 'don't see a clear day, don't see the world'. It means «don't have quietude, to be anxious, to suffer from backbreaking job, illness or ache».

The word *тӱня* implies «the world around us, the earth, universe, the life itself»: *Ош тӱня гыч каяш* 'to leave the world', «to die»; *Ош тӱня мучко* can be translated in two ways: 1) «all over the world, everywhere» and 2) «beg from door to door»; *Ош тӱням ужаш* has two meanings: 1) to be born, to see the light, 2) to be declared, to be published.

The constituent part *шем* 'black' can be found in a wide range of units. In combination with the noun *кече* 'day' (*шем кече, шем кечылан* 'for a black day') this idiom means «rough time, poverty». The phraseological unit *шемыште илаш* 'to live in a black' has several meanings – «to be beggar, to be on short rations, don't have dairy products; to be in a distress».

The adjective *шем* 'black' in combination with the noun *пырыс* 'cat' forms a new phraseological unit with the signification «quarrel; misunderstanding»: *Шем пырыс кудал эртен* 'a black cat has ran past'. It means «quarrel or misunderstanding has happened»; *Шем пырысым колташ (пурташ)* 'let a black cat in'. This unit has the signification «set by the ears, to disharmonize». The adjective *шем* makes also a word combination with the noun *чодра* 'forest': *шем чодра* 'somber forest' that is thought of as «indistinctness, a complete incomprehension».

Some phraseological units with the constituent element *шем* are used to characterize a man – *шем чон, шем чонан (кӧрган)* 'a black soul': a bad, malicious, dangerous man'. The semantics of the idiom *шем шӱргӧ* 'a black face' has also a negative connotation (its synonym is *тегыт шӱргӧ* 'a tar face'): a shameless person; unscrupulous.

The use of the adjective *шем* in the phraseological units as *шем кӱч нарат* 'of black nail'– 'by no means'; *(шем) кӱч ок (огеш) шого* 'it is not worth a black nail' – 'worthless, good-for-nothing, regardless' is of special interest.

The constituent element *ужар* 'green' can be found only in a singular phraseological unit – *ужар вуян* 'a green head'. It tells about such a side of a character as inexperience, youth, or insufficient knowledge.

As for the element *йошкар* 'red' it is also used only in one idiom – *йошкар агытан* 'красный петух' with the meaning «fire, burning».

So, in conclusion it ought to be noted that *ош* 'white' and *шем* 'black' are predominantly used in the Mary phraseology. Thereby the amount of phraseological units with the element *шем* 'black' is similar to the amount of units with the constituent part *ош* 'white' (8:8). The idioms with the constituent part *ош* possess a positive connotation (except

one of them – *Ош вӱльӧ (нерген) йомак* 'a tale of a white horse'), referring to verity, gladness and life itself. These idioms are opposed by their semantics to the phraseological units with the element *шем*. They express such negative phenomena as throng time, privation, disagreement and some bad personality traits. To sum this comparison an example can be provided: *шеме дене ошым палаш (ужаш, ойырен мошташ)* 'to know, (to see, to can distinguish) black and white'. This idiom contains both elements. The meaning of this phraseological unit is to see into something, to be a good judge of something; to know the difference between right and wrong.

4. Conclusion

The results of the research allow concluding that the percentage ratio of the English linguistic idiomatic view of the world which is characterized by the domination of the *black* colour (23 %), followed by *blue* (19 %). *White* as well as *red* are represented by 32 idioms each which makes 16 % of all idioms; 10 % belongs to green. The result shows that *black, blue, red, white* and *green* form the core of linguistic colour categories of the English language.

The percentage ratio of the German linguistic idiomatic view of the world which is characterized by the domination of the *black/ schwarz* colour (21 %), followed by *green/grün* (20 %), *blue/blau*(19 %), *white/weiß* (13 %), *red/rot* (10 %), *grey*/*grau* (9 %), *yellow/gelb* (3 %), *pink/rosa/rosig* (2 %), *brown*/*braun* (1 %). The analysis revealed the black colour as the most dominant one (*black/schwarz* – 21 %), followed by *green/grün* (20 %) and *blue/blau* (19 %). The red colour *(rot)* as well as grey (*grau*) are represented in about equal amounts – 10 % and 9 % respectively. The study allows us making a conclusion that *black, green, blue* and *white* are the core colours in colour world-image of the German language.

According to the analysis, the category of colour does not have a wide distribution in the Mari phraseology. However, some of the basic focal colours are represented in it. *Ош* 'white' and *шем* 'black' are the most spread. But *йошкар* 'red' and *ужар* 'green' appear in a restricted number of units.

It should be emphasized that the component *black* is dominating in all the languages under analysis (Table 3). The Mari idiomatic view of the world is represented with a dualistic opposition of black and white.

Table 3. Dominating colour terms of the linguistic world image

Language	Dominating Colours			
English	**black**	blue	white	red
German	**black**	green		blue
Mari	**black**	white		

As far as the semantic organization of idioms is concerned, objective and procedural idioms are predominant in all of them. It is necessary to point out an obvious anthropocentric orientation of idioms with colour components: a considerable part of idioms is connected with a human being, his state and character.

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