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## **A Comparative Study on Phraseological and Paroemiological Units with Coloronyms Black in German, Russian, and Tatar**

**Albina Fanilevna Mukhamadiarova<sup>1a</sup>, Mariya Alexandrovna Kulkova<sup>2a</sup>, Yuriy Viktorovich Kobenko<sup>3b</sup>, Alina Eduardovna Rakhimova<sup>4a</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This article deals with a comparative analysis of phraseological and paroemiological units with the component coloronym black / Schwarz, черный, кара in German, Russian, and Tatar. We have analyzed 85 phraseological units and paroemias in German, 50 in Russian, and 99 in Tatar, extracted by a continuous selection from etymological, lexical, and phraseological dictionaries. The paper exposes similarities and differences in the perception of the coloronyms black / Schwarz, черный, кара by representatives of different cultures. As a result of the analysis, we have found eight symbolic meanings of the coloronyms, which coincide in all three languages. The explication of the meanings ‘bad, evil, insidious, malicious, dishonest, untruthful’ is of high frequency in German, Russian, and Tatar. The second and third places are occupied by symbolic meanings ‘unhappy, unsuccessful, sad; heavy, difficult’ and ‘shameful’, respectively. In the linguistic world-image, the three symbolic meanings of the coloronym Schwarz are lacunar for the German language.

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<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Email: [fanilevna.mukhamadiarova@yahoo.com](mailto:fanilevna.mukhamadiarova@yahoo.com) (Corresponding Author)  
Tel: +7-892-74706912

<sup>2</sup> Professor, Email: [mkulkowa@rambler.ru](mailto:mkulkowa@rambler.ru)

<sup>3</sup> Professor, Email: [serpentis@list.ru](mailto:serpentis@list.ru)

<sup>4</sup> Assistant Professor, Email: [rahimovaalina@mail.ru](mailto:rahimovaalina@mail.ru)

<sup>a</sup> Kazan Federal University, Russia

<sup>b</sup> Tomsk Polytechnic University, Russia

## 1. Introduction

The linguistic world-image of each language is reflected in phraseological and paroemiological units (hereinafter PhU and PU), to the study of which Kulkova, Rakhimova, and Zinecker (2015), Bochina and Adamka (2015), Sakaeva, Yahin, Bagautdinova, Fatkullina, and Kenzhetayeva, (2017), Khasanzyanova, Zamaletdinov, Sibaeva, and Salakhova (2018), Tarasova, Tarasov, and Chelny (2018), have contributed.

Have you ever been depressed or jealous or very angry at seeing red? Or maybe you are alarmed by the pink color, and you feel like you are in a good position by the golden one? Color plays an integral part in our lives, shaping even the way we can describe it. The methods of different cultures change the meanings of color dramatically around the world. For example, the Libyan people of Libya have only two words to classify colors, while the Inuit (indigenous people living in northern Canada, Greenland, and Alaska) have 17 different terms for white, which are made according to different snow conditions. Humans rely more on their sense of sight than any other sense, recognizing more things by their appearance than by their smell or sound. That is why visual media makers make various things differently so that the audience can recognize and distinguish between them. It can also be a kind of visual shortcut to describe a character so that the audience can make judgments about a character or environment without being said anything directly. One way to make it different is to use color to indicate that two things are different (if different colors are used) or that they belong to the same group (if the same colors are used). Colors can also be used to indicate whether a character is good or bad (Gasparyan, 2019).

For example, blue is considered to be the safest choice in the world. Throughout Europe and North America, blue is a symbol of trust, security, and authority and is used as a soothing and gentle color. Nevertheless, blue can also indicate sadness and loneliness. In some countries, blue is a symbol of Satan's healing, decay, and misery. It is believed that the blue eye - which is in the form of an amulet - has the power to protect against evil forces. This view is more common in countries such as Iran, Greece, Turkey, Albania, and

Afghanistan. In Eastern culture, blue is a symbol of immortality, while in Ukraine, it is a symbol of health. In Hindu culture, blue has the strongest connection with God, which is a symbol of divine love and joy. Of course, green is a symbolic color for Ireland (nicknamed the Emerald Island). In Indonesia, green is traditionally a forbidden color, while it is a national color in Mexico. In West Asia and North Africa, green represents wealth, luck, and fertility. This color is a traditional symbol of Islam. In East Asian culture, green is a symbol of young people, fertility, and new life, but this color also means betrayal. In China, the green hat is a big fear for men because it shows that their wives have committed adultery. Red in Western culture is a symbol of love, passion, excitement, action, danger, and energy.

Red symbolizes success, luck, prosperity, celebration, joy, and long life. Since red is a happy color, brides often wear red on their wedding day, and red envelopes of money are given to them on various occasions. In some African countries, it is a symbol of death, while in Nigeria, it is a symbol of vitality. Red is an attractive and lucky color in Egypt and is considered a symbol of wealth and courage in Iran. In Western culture, yellow is associated with happiness, vivacity, optimism, warmth (sunlight), hope, as well as caution and cowardice. In Germany, yellow is a symbol of depression, while in Egypt, yellow is a symbol of happiness. Orange is a symbol of autumn, harvest, heat, and special phenomena in Western culture. In Hindu culture, saffron (a kind of soft orange) is a sacred and blessed color. Orange in Colombia is a symbol of gender and fertility. In Eastern culture, this color is a symbol of health, happiness, love, and humility. The robe of Buddhist monks is often orange. Purple is often a symbol of kingship, wealth, spirituality, and decency throughout the world. Purple is also a symbol of piety and faith and is a symbol of repentance, remorse, and forgiveness among Catholics. In Brazil and Thailand, however, purple is the color of mourning. Purple is also a symbol of pride; the Purple Heart is the oldest military award still given to members of the US military.

Color symbolism clearly reveals itself in phraseological units, paroemias, rites, myths, and religious rituals (Mikitchenko, 2016).

Today, there exists a wealth of knowledge of color symbolism (Ennser-Kananen, Escobar, & Bigelow, 2017). According to the traditional arrangement of colors proposed by experimental and optics psychology, colors fall into two groups: cold and warm (Tresidder, 2005). The color designation is becoming the object of study of psycholinguistics (Frumkina, 1984), cognitive linguistics (Dugalich, 2020), and linguoculturology (Levine, Baxter, & McNulty, 1987). The contronyms in relation to the comparative aspect have repeatedly become the object of study in the field of phraseology and paroemiology. At the same time, the symbolic meaning of color designations is analyzed in detail (Pishghadam & Shayesteh, 2017). This determines the relevance of this study. The purpose of the article is to define the role of PhU and PU with the components *Schwarz*, *черный*, *кара* (*black*) in the linguistic-color worldview of German, Russian, and Tatar peoples. In accordance with the purpose of the study, the task is to demonstrate similarities and differences in the perception of color terms *Schwarz*, *черный*, *кара* by representatives of German, Russian, and Tatar cultures.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

There is a wide range of research and scientific resources to study the subject of this article. In this article, an attempt has been made to provide accurate analyses, taking into account the views of different authors. Sayings and proverbs are closely related, but sayings are separate parymological units that differ from proverbs in terms of syntactic imperfection, nominative character, and lack of generalization and analogy. We believe that due to the fact that paremiological units have a metaphorical element, they cannot be translated word for word literally.

According to Mukhamadiarova, Kulkova, Kobenk, and Khomutskaya (2018), as a result of the analysis of phraseological and paroemiological units containing coloronyms *blau/синий/голубой/зэңгэр/күк* (*blue*), a classification of 12 groups has been made, the similarities and differences in the perception of these color names by different peoples have been revealed. In Russian and Tatar, two lexemes *синий/ голубой/зэңгэр/күк* are used to designate dark blue and blue colors. The ambivalence of the analyzed colors is noted.

The high frequency of the explication of the meanings of ‘unknown, action without purpose’ and ‘lie, deception, illusion’ in German has been revealed. It has been established that the symbolic meanings of ‘intensity’ and ‘aristocratic origin’ are characteristic only of phraseological and paroemiological units of the German and Russian languages. The symbolic meanings ‘lie, deceit, illusion’ and ‘beauty’ are inherent in German and Tatar. We have concluded that the symbolic meaning of ‘dream wish, happiness’ is present in all three languages.

Previous studies indicate that proemiology can be called a joining section of modern linguistics because of the special character of the object. It presupposes a complex approach to description and classification. This object is located at the intersection of several philological disciplines (the study of folklore, phraseology, text theory, statement syntax, linguistic pragmatics, cultural linguistics, and linguistic cognitive science). The goal of paroemiology is to study the objective picture of the semantic space of paroemiae and how the connections and relations of extralinguistic reality are reflected by paroemiae. It is possible to define paroemiology in a more capacious way: this is a science that studies paroemiae. Paroemiae are folk aphorisms with laconic form, reproducible meaning and, as a rule, edifying sense. Paroemiae, or paroemiologic units, include proverbs, sayings, country lore, riddles, and the rest. Paroemiologia acquired the status of an independent branch of science only at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when G.L. Permyakov created his works on structural paroemiology. In these works, he convincingly justifies the existence of an autonomous paroemiologic level in the language system and the rest (Ennser-Kananen, Escobar, & Bigelow, 2017).

## 3. Methodology

Language is used globally by all human groups but hardly exhibits undeniable universal features, with a few possible exceptions related to practical and communicative limitations. This learning is involved with a very high diversity of about 7000 languages. Despite these differences, Japanese and English do the same for their respective speakers with language systems that play one of the most important roles of verbal

communication, namely the transmission of information (Coupé, Oh, Dediu, & Pellegrino, 2019; Lawrence, 2020). The material of the study is phraseological and paroemiological units with the coloronym German *Schwarz*, Russian *черный*, Tatar *кара*, which have been extracted from phraseological, etymological, explanatory dictionaries of the three languages by the method of continuous sampling. We have analyzed 250 PhU and PU with the component *Schwarz*, *черный*, *кара*, black, including 90 PhU and PU in German, 38 in Russian, and 131 in Tatar.

It should be noted that we have analyzed 85 phraseological units and paroemias in German, 50 in Russian, and 99 in Tatar, extracted by a continuous selection from etymological, lexical, and phraseological dictionaries.

#### 4. Results

Language is a process that lives its life and reacts to the world around it. To understand the emergence and disappearance of certain terms in a particular language, it is sometimes necessary to look at the historical development of a particular country. Russian is the largest mother tongue in Europe. It should be mentioned that the language of the Russian people (the Russian language) is the most common language in Eurasia. It is the most widely spoken Slavic language, with more than 258 million people worldwide. Russian is the seventh most widely spoken language in the world and the eighth most spoken language in the world. Russian is the second most widely spoken language on the Internet after English. The Tatar language is spoken in Russia, Israel, Uzbekistan, Finland, Ukraine, Romania, America, China, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia, and so on. There are more than 7.5 million speakers of Tatar in the world.

German is the most official language in Switzerland, Germany, South Tyrol in Italy, Austria, Liechtenstein, and Belgium. It is one of the three official languages of Luxembourg and an official language in the Opole Voivodeship region of Poland. It should also be mentioned that the German language is the geographically widespread language, after English (Klingler & Marckmann, 2016). Tatar is also a native of several thousand Marises. The Qaratai Mordova group also speaks a type of Kazan Tatar. In the 2011 census, 71% of

Russian Tatars who answered the question about language proficiency claimed knowledge of the Tatar language. The importance of the language comparison has been underlined by Levine et al. (1987, p. 27): “we can clearly see a barrier between languages, but a barrier between cultures can only be seen when a native culture collides ... with another, different, culture”.

Work on the dictionary started in 1978 in the United States at the University of Pennsylvania by Mukhamadiarova et al. (2018). The first volume, -a – bezzisto, was published in 1988. Since 1987, Prof. Dr. Rosemarie Lühr figured as a collaborator, later on as co-editor and starting with vol. V finally as the single editor of the dictionary. In 2004, the dictionary was taken over into the program of the Saxonian Academy of Sciences at Leipzig and had been written since then mainly at the chair of Indo-European Linguistics at the Friedrich-Schiller University at Jena, now held by Prof. Dr. Martin Kümmel. At present, the dictionary is produced primarily by a group of three scholars, Dr. Maria Kozianka as full-time head of the research group and Dr. Roland Schuhmann and the author of this article with a half-time workload each. Some lemmata have always been written by either the editors or by some other colleagues more or less for free, but owing to bad health and/or rising workload in other fields, their portion of the dictionary has fallen to clearly under 5% in the present volume (Kroonen, 2013).

PhU and PU store the information about the mentality of the people, a considerable contribution to the previous studies. The characteristic features of the world outlook of the speech community under consideration are illustrated by the examples with the component of a color name. Color symbolism is clearly comprehended in the PhU and PU, rituals, myths, and religious rites (Mukhamadiarova et al., 2018).

In the etymological dictionary of the German language, Gottesman and Gould (2003) explain the origin of the color term *schwarz* as follows: it originates from the Indo-European root *suordos* color of grime, black. According to the etymological dictionary of the Russian language by Wade (1996), the adjective *черный* (*black*) originates from the pre-Slavic

root \*čьгнъ from \* čьгхнъ, which is related to the word Kirsna – the name of the river, in ancient Prussian kirsnan ‘black’ (Wade, 1996). In the etymological dictionary of the Tatar language Gabdullaziyanova, Nurmukhametova, Bolgarova, and Rami (2018) suggested that the adjective *kara* came from the general Turkic *kara* with the meaning ‘black; evil’ (Gabdullaziyanova et al., 2018).

Karpov, Markov, Kipyatkova, Vazhenina, and Ronzhin (2014) in their basic research *Slavic Language Modeling Semiotic Systems* distinguish Chernobog (Чернобог) and Belobog (Белобог), bringing unhappiness and happiness, respectively (<http://www.zeno.org>). Black is the antipode of white, which means it takes on symbolic meanings of “bad, evil, guileful, malicious” in all three languages: *schwarze Seele in schönem Körper ist doppelte Gefahr* (<http://www.zeno.org>), *бойся черного да карего глаза, кара йөрәк* (literally: black heart). In German, Russian and Tatar, there are a number of PhU and PU, which are built on the antithesis of white-black, generating binary characteristics *good-evil, good-bad, honest-dishonest, guilty-innocent, truthful-untruthful: was schwarz ist, muss man nicht weiss nennen* (<http://www.zeno.org>), *вот диво: черная коровка, белое молочко* (Dal, 1955), *караны кара дин, акны ак дин язү* (literally: to write black with black and white with white, write the truth, don’t lie).

The symbolic meaning ‘dishonorable’ of the coloronyms *schwarz, черный, кара* is common to all the three languages: *ein Pünktlein macht die ganze Ehre schwarz* (literally: one pointlet makes honor black) (<http://www.zeno.org>), *черное (темное) пятно* (black (dark) spot) *кара тән* (literally: black spot) (Татар теленең аңлатмалы сүзлеге: өч томда). This is connected with the negative symbolism of black (Sakaeva et al, 2017). The symbolic meaning ‘pessimistic’ is also reflected in German, Russian, and Tatar: *er sieht alles schwarz* (he had a black outlook) (<http://www.zeno.org>), *видеть все в черном свете* (see everything black) (Sakaeva et al., 2017), *зәңгәр күзлек кигәнгә зәңгәрледер бу дөнъя; кара күзлек кигәнгә караңгыдыр бу дөнъя* (literally: those who see through dark blue / blue-colored glasses, the world is dark blue / blue-colored, those who see through black-colored glasses, the world seems dark).

The black color is associated with sadness, misfortune, and mourning (Isanbet, 1989).

The symbolic meaning ‘illegal’ of the analyzed color terms has been revealed in all three languages: *der schwarze Markt* (black market), *кара эшне караңгыда эшлэсәң дә, яктыга чыга* (literally: Even if you do black work in the darkness, it all equally will leak out). Forbidden, bad deeds and actions that are to be concealed from human eyes are associated with the darkest hour.

Color terms *schwarz, черный, кара* may be the markers of intensity: *er ist schwarz vor Hunger* (<http://www.zeno.org>), (Sakaeva et al., 2017), *кара ачу* (literally: black malice) (Isanbet, 1989).

The symbolic meaning ‘physical, heavy work’ of the coloronyms *schwarz, черный, кара* is actualized in German, Russian, and Tatar: *ein Bauer ist immer unter den Nägeln schwarz* (<http://www.zeno.org>), *черны ручки, да бела копеечка, кара хезмәт* (Dal, 1955).

In linguistic world image, the three symbolic meanings of the coloronym *schwarz* are lacunary for the German language:

1) ‘positive, profitable, successful’: *schwarze Zahlen schreiben* (rake in large profits). Но Hana Bergerová does not agree with the opinion of Hoffmannova (Bergerová, 2006) that the coloronym *schwarz* may symbolize something positive, and calls this phenomenon Scheinsymbol (‘a feigned, false symbol’). To prove up, the author compares two-word combinations: *ein schwarzer Tag* (symbolism refers only to the color designation), *etw. schwarz auf weiß haben, schwarze Zahlen schreiben* (it is impossible to separate *schwarz* from *weiß*; it means that positive connotation belongs to the whole phraseological unit, and not only to the coloronym. (Bergerová, 2006).

2) ‘ambiguous’: *bei Nacht sind alle Kühe (Katzen) schwarz, alle Weiber schön* (<http://www.zeno.org>). This symbolism can be either positive or negative, since what we perceive in the dark may deceive us (Aidarova & Bashirova, 2020).

3) ‘the marker of the impossible, absurd’: the coloronym *schwarz* is used with the objects which are a priori white-colored (*Wenn die Sonne schwarz aufgeht*), in the Tatar language to express an indefinite future or action which

is most probably not to come or happen, the color term *кызыл* (red) is used, *кызыл кар яугач* (literally: when the red snowfalls, когда рак на горе свистнет / when shrimps learn to whistle).

Black color remains a steady symbol of negative properties, which is reflected in the symbolism ‘deprecativе, negative’. This category in Russian is special since its composition is represented by another coloronym from the group of black: *прокатить на вороньих* (black horses) / *to blackball* (colloquial, ironical, jokingly); black is correlated with black horses (Vassileva, 1998).

PhU and PU in which black and white can be equaled unite Russian and Tatar: *Черная собака, белая собака, а все один пес* (Dal, 1955), *Ак эт, кара эт – бар да эт* (Isanbet, 1989). These paroemias are based on the opposition of good and bad; the coloronyms for readers are reduced to one generalized meaning.

After analyzing the semantics of color designations, A. I. Kononov comes to the conclusion that the coloronym *кара* has the meaning of collectiveness and indefinite generalization. In the etymological dictionary of the Tatar language, Gabdullaziyanova, Nurmukhametova, Bolgarova, and Rami (2018) express doubts about the connection between the meaning ‘crowd’ and the coloronym *кара* (Gabdullaziyanova et al., 2018). In the coloronym *кара* of the phraseological unit *кара яу булып килү* (to gush in torrents; to move in swarms), a marker of the multitude is observed.

The coloronym *черный* may have the meaning of ‘absorbing’, which is expressed in the

phraseological collocation *черная дыра*, a loan translation from the English language *black hole* (a space object, the result of catastrophic gravitational compression of stars). It is noted that the meaning has been generated on the basis that all other objects in that zone of the space object are absorbed.

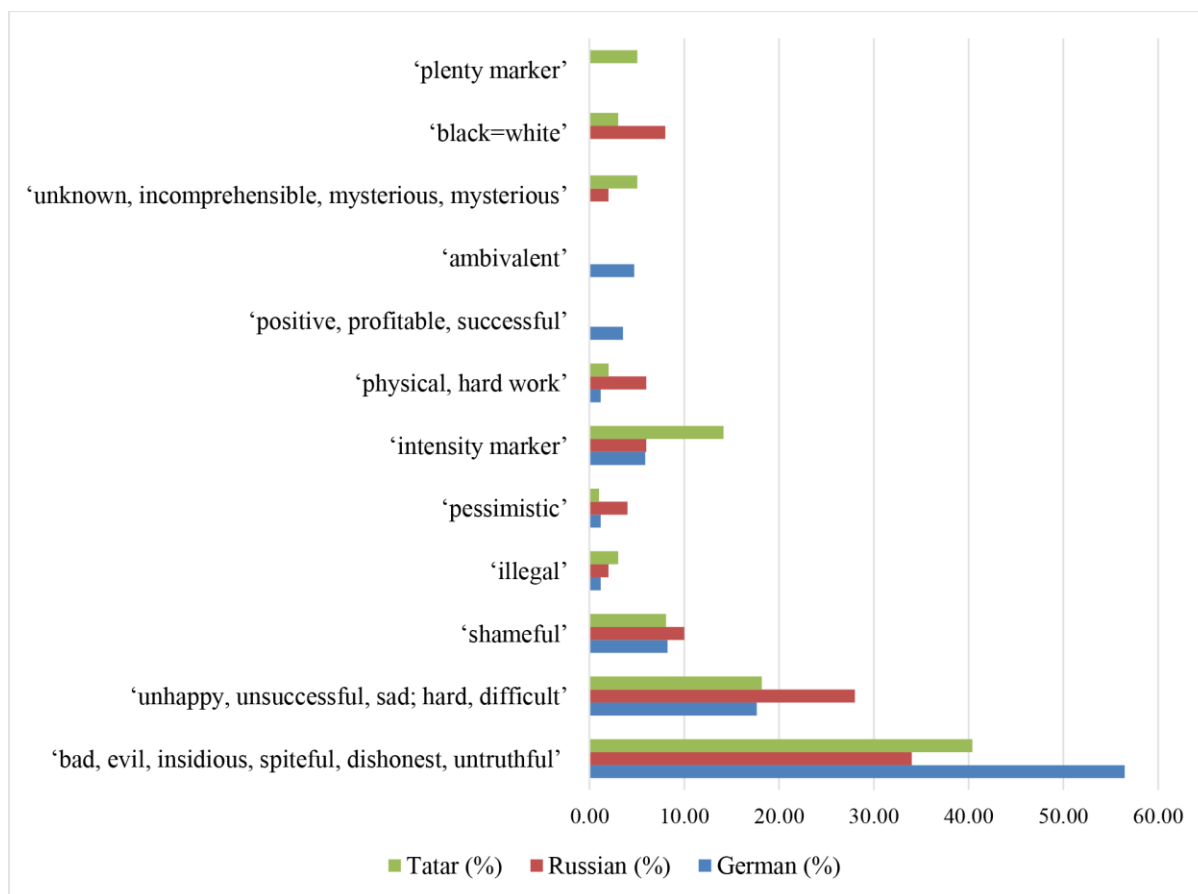
The coloronym *кара* in the Tatar linguistic world image is a reminiscence of the ideas about something gloomy, dark, dense: *кара урманның карыны киң* (literally: a black forest has a big womb). A dense forest is fraught with danger and obstacles, that is why, in the phraseological unit *кеше күңеле – кара урман* (another man’s soul is always dark), the coloronym *кара* acquires the meaning unknown, strange, mysterious, enigmatic. (Isanbet, 1989).

Due to various historical, geographical, political, and other factors, each country has its own characteristics. When comparing Germany and Russia, there are huge differences. Germany is the most populous country in Europe: it covers an area of 357,021 square kilometers and has a population of more than 80 million. In Russia, about 143 million people live in an area of 17,125,187 square kilometers. As a result, Germany is known for its discipline, punctuality, and effort to organize its life according to the rules. The overall volume of extracts of phraseological and paroemiological units with the coloronym *schwarz / черный / кара* in German, Russian, and Tatar are presented here (Table 1). Also, for more details, the quantitative analysis of phraseological and paroemiological units is shown in Figure 1.

**Table 1**

*Quantitative Analysis of Phraseological and Paroemiological Units with the Coloronym Schwarz / Черный / Кара (Black) in German, Russian, and Tatar Languages*

Symbolic meaning	German	Russian	Tatar
‘bad, evil, insidious, spiteful, dishonest, untruthful’	48	17	40
‘unhappy, unsuccessful, sad; hard, difficult’	15	14	18
‘shameful’	7	5	8
‘illegal’	1	1	3
‘pessimistic’	1	2	1
‘intensity marker’	5	3	14
‘physical, heavy work’	1	3	2
‘positive, profitable, successful’	3	0	0
‘ambivalent’	4	0	0
‘unknown, strange, mysterious, enigmatic’	0	1	5
‘black=white’	0	4	3
‘plenty marker’	0	0	5
Total:	90	38	131



**Figure 1**

*Quantitative Analysis of Phraseological and Paroemological Units with the Schwarz / Черный / Кара (black) in German, Russian and Tatar Languages in Percentage Terms*

## 5. Discussion

As mentioned earlier, this article deals with a comparative analysis of phraseological and paroemological units with the component coloronym black / Schwarz, черный, кара in German, Russian and Tatar. We have analyzed 85 phraseological units and paroemias in German, 50 in Russian, and 99 in Tatar, extracted by a continuous selection from etymological, lexical, and phraseological dictionaries.

In the course of the analysis of PhU and PU with coloronyms schwarz / черный / кара, it has been revealed that the eight symbolic meanings coincide in all three compared languages ('bad, evil, insidious, malicious, dishonest, inercacious', 'unhappy, unfortunate, sad; heavy, difficult', 'dishonorable', 'beautiful', 'illegal', 'pessimistic', 'the markers of intensity', 'physical, hard work'). The analysis of lexicographical sources has shown that the symbolism 'bad, evil, insidious, malicious,

dishonest, inercacious' is reflected in German, Russian and Tatar, and this group is the most multitudinous (in German – 48 PhU and PU (56,47%), in Russian – 17 PhU and PU (34%), in Tatar – 40 PhU and PU (40,4%). The second and third in frequency are the meanings 'unhappy, unsuccessful, sad; heavy, difficult' (in German – 17,65%, in Russian – 28%, in Tatar – 18,18%) and 'dishonorable' (in German – 8,24%, in Russian – 10%, in Tatar – 8,08%), respectfully. This fact is explained by negative symbolism of color designation, schwarz / черный / кара are associated with darkness, dirtiness, death, and evil origin.

The PU and PhU about good and evil, happiness and unhappiness, honesty and dishonesty, truth and lie are built on the antithesis schwarz, черный, кара (black) and weiß, белый, ак (white). Timeless antagonism between good and evil predetermines a considerable volume of PhU and PU binary opposition of black and white / schwarz and

*weiß*, *черный* and *белый*, *кара* and *ак*. Coloronyms play the role of intensifiers in the three languages (in German – 5,58 %, in Russian – 6 %, in Tatar – 14,14%), performing an emphatic function.

Language is what makes us human, and it depends on how people communicate. By studying language, we can use a complex system of words, structure, and grammar to effectively master others. We learn how to communicate even before a conversation, and as we get older, we find ways to manipulate language to express what we want with complex words and sentences. Of course, not all communication is through language, but mastering one language will certainly help speed up the process. This is one of the important reasons for the significance of language. Phraseology can be considered the linguistic repository of a number of cultural traditions that are specific to a particular language. Thus, the study of phonetics among languages is quite natural, as it sheds light on the roots of many of these linguistic and cultural habits. Some of them may be more or less universal, thus showing some interesting aspects of human cognition. However, caution is needed in pursuing such an analysis. Until now, research has focused mainly on European languages, and confrontation with other language families is essential before we can draw firm conclusions about the universality of phraseology. In this survey, we investigated a comparative analysis of phraseological and paroemiological units with the component coloronym black / schwarz, *черный*, *кара* in German, Russian, and Tatar. It can eventually be concluded that symbolic meanings ‘unknown, incomprehensible, mysterious, enigmatic’ and ‘black=white’ are intrinsic only to the Russian and Tatar languages. Furthermore, given the analysis of phraseological and paroemiological units with coloronyms *schwarz* / *черный* / *кара*, we have revealed the peculiarities of linguistic color world image of the German, Russian, and Tatar languages. We have exposed similarities and differences in the apperception of the analyzed coloronyms of the representatives of different cultures.

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