

**Abstract.** The study of color has a long history in various sciences including linguistics. However, little attention has been paid so far to the analysis of color words in business lexicon, though they are present in many areas of business from banking and accounting to stock market to economics. The current research is an attempt to fill in this gap and investigate the potential of color words to participate in encoding business concepts. The synchronic analysis of semantics of business terms combined with the diachronic analysis of the evolution of color concepts made it possible to single out psychologically salient features of prototypes which are operative in business concept denomination. The study is carried out within the framework of cognitive onomasiology because it allows bringing to the fore pre-logic aspects of conceptualization. The findings show that meanings of business terms are grounded in conceptual structure of color. In the course of cultural and language history color concepts have acquired additional constituent elements — ontologically and cognitively related to the prototype — which have become a motivation basis for designating new concepts. Changes in the cultural paradigm of society affect conceptual meanings and provide new motivations for nominations.