

INTERPRETATION OF THE FIGURATIVE BASIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS CHARACTERISING LABOUR ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN

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Abstract: In contemporary studies on phraseology, where problems of describing the cultural and national specifics of phraseological units are touched upon, and in which the phraseological unit is understood as a "fount of wisdom" of the people, preserving and reproducing its mentality, culture from generation to generation, one of the central places takes the concept of connotation. Although in recent years there has been a growing interest in the connotative aspect of the lexical meaning, as evidenced by numerous works, the concept of connotation itself is treated ambiguously. Connotations in terms of researching the cultural and national specifics of the language are an object of the philological study, which seeks to recreate the spiritual culture and knowledge of the language collective, based on the recognition of associative-figurative motivations of linguistic essences and patterns of their combinations. These associations trace back to the national culture, caused either by "background", or by nonequivalent components of phraseological units, and by the holistic manner of the situation.

Keywords: connotation, image, idioms, English, Russian, comparison.

1 Introduction

The comparative analysis of the figurative and motivational fundamental principles of phraseology of different languages makes it possible to reveal universal and national peculiar logic-semiotic formulas of interpretation the phenomena of the surrounding world. It is evident that introducing a new PU to students can be challenging if the students lack both the background knowledge and vocabulary related to the subject (Yarmakeev, 2016). The study of the peculiarities in the sphere of figurative sources of the English language in comparison with the Russian language is of immediate importance for the study of the real processes of the PU formation in the languages under study.

1.1 Theoretical Framework And Literature Review

In stylistics connotation is considered as "stylistic meaning", linking it with emotional coloring (Vinokur, 1980); in studies related to the problem of translation, they prefer to talk about the "pragmatic meaning" of connotation (Komissarov, 1990); in linguistic and cultural studies connotation is associated with the notion of additional information and national coloring (Vereshchagin, Kostomarov, 1983).

In linguistics, the connotation is understood as additional meaning, coloring and meaning as an invariant (signification, intensional meaning, etc.).

The most successful definition of connotation is contained in the work of V.N. Teliya, considering it as "a bundle or synthesis of information belonging to the meaning of nominative units of a language, which contains the information, creating an expressive effect of an utterance" (Teliya, 1986).

Connotations are conditioned by different uses and depend on the competence of a native speaker. "Cultural competence does not coincide with the language competence: the switching of the linguistic competence into the cultural competence is based on the interpretation of linguistic signs in the categories of a cultural code. The knowledge of this kind of interpretation is the cultural and linguistic competence, which is assimilated together with the mastery of the language, and through it – the texts of culture, reflected in fairy tales, myths, folklore and literature. This indicates the relativization of linguistic essences to culture" (Teliya, 1996).

Cultural connotation, being the interpretation of the components of the meaning of PU in the categories of culture, is overlaid on the connotation as a linguistic concept, generated by it. The denotative macrocomponent of the meaning of PU is a kind of "theme" of phraseological units, and the components of connotation, playing a leading role, give it a new meaning. Each component of the connotation of PU can provide additional information of a national cultural character. First of all, such components of connotation are the emotional, expressive and evaluative macrocomponents of the PU semantics. Reading cultural information from the figurative basis of PU makes it possible to explicate the world outlook, the world perception, the spirit of the people, which received fixation and preserved in PU. The connection between evaluation, emotivity and expressiveness in the structure of connotation is described in the works of many scientists (Fedulenkova, 2014, I.A. Sternin, 1985 and others). The emotive-evaluative macrocomponent forms the "peak" of the connotation of PU, and at its base lies an idea that has prompted the emergence of PU. And such a basis is the motivational-shaped macrocomponent of connotation (Artemova, 1998). The image is associated with the emotional sphere of a person, and, therefore, saturated with a personal meaning, manifested in the fact that the image unites the data coming through different channels of a human connection with the world, and is formed by perception, memory, and accumulated impressions.

2 Materials And Methods

2.1 Methods of study

The specific nature of the material under study and the assigned tasks have determined the choice of methods of the linguistic analysis. The main methods used in the work are: the comparative-typological method, the method of a component analysis, as well as the inductive method in identifying and interpreting the national-cultural specifics of PU characterizing labour activity.

2.2 Figurative sources of PU in the studied languages

Figurative sources of PU characterizing labor activity in the English and Russian languages, as a rule, form the following thematic groups.

1) Somatic lexis. In recent years, the formation of the anthropocentric paradigm has led to a reversal of linguistic problems in the direction of a man. It is important to note that during individual's speech the verbal experience is developed which involves a certain subjunctive conceptualization of hierarchy of speech and structure of speech elements (Gafiyatova, 2016). Parts of the body have had a symbolic meaning in the most diverse cultures since ancient times – from myths and fairy tales to works of fiction, from rock paintings to author's paintings and social emblems.

It is not difficult to notice that the word "hand" is a part of many Russian and English PU that characterize a person's labour activity. The hand symbolizes, first of all, a person's ability to work, do something: English put (or set) one's hand to the plough "get to work" (lit. put a hand on the plough), not to lift (raise, stir, turn) a hand "not to make the slightest effort to help smb." (lit. not to move a hand); Russian не покладая рук "diligently, tirelessly, continue doing something, to do things without ceasing", поджавши руки "doing nothing", валиться из рук "not to manage to do something because of the lack of appropriate forces", живой рукой "to do something very quickly", etc.

The national identity is reflected in the PU denoting the qualities of a person. For example, in the Russian languages, these are the PU with the meaning of "a personal attitude toward work": руки горят "somebody has an irresistible desire to do something", руки опускаются "somebody loses willingness, desire, mood,"

in which the characterization of a person's activity is given from the side of his personal participation.

In the English language, PU with the meaning "responsibility" were fixed, which reflects patterns of behavior, normative settings of a particular society: on smb.'s hands, put in smb.'s hands and etc.

The shoulders in both cultures symbolize responsibility, work, burden, which falls on the person: take on (or upon) one's own shoulders; взвалить что-то на плечи in the figurative sense of "burden with hard work, obligations".

The notion of hard work is connected with the phraseological units containing the component "back/спина", "ridge/хребет", "belly/живот", "hump/горб", "bowels/кишки" – break one's back, put one's back into smth.; не разгибая спины "to work long, hard", ломать хребет "to work to exhaustion", гнуть горб "to be engaged in heavy unbearable labour", etc. This is due to the universal signs of the world cognition, which causes the presence of similar assessments and interpretations of the reality phenomena in the English and Russian cultures.

2) *Zoonyms*. Universal cultural connotations associated with a particular reality of the surrounding world find their reflexion in the semantics of PU. And the most bright example of this are PU, which include the words - zoonyms. So, *the pig* is associated in many languages with slovenliness, ignorance and absurdity of actions, *the dog* - with devotion, on the one hand, and laziness, the hardships of life, on the other hand. For example, make a pig's ear (out) of smth, lazy dog "как свинья в апельсинах "not at all to understand", собак гонять "hanging out without a deal".

However, the images of animals that have culturally conditioned reasons connected with the way of life and type of management are fixed in each language. So, the native for the Englishman is sheep breeding (on the sheep's back – "on the back of a sheep", thanks to sheep breeding, thanks to the trade in wool). Even in the Russian royal landscaped gardens, the taste to which was brought to Russia from England, the farms were represented with grazing sheep. The English image of the sheep is associated with lack of will, as well as with useless and aimless activity: lose the sheep for a half penny worth of tar lit. "lose one sheep for the sake of tar in half a penny".

For the Russian people, the main occupation was farming, and a great role for the Russian peasant was played by the horse and the ox. So the image of the horse/the ox is associated in the minds of the Russian culture bearers, above all, with hard work: работать как лошадь/вол "to work hard, long" etc.

3) *The category of time*. The composition of the PU, characterizing the work activity, in the English and Russian languages includes the nouns, calling different time intervals: a) a fast / slow / long / short process: a split second, work against time; в одно мгновение, в мгновение ока "to work, trying to do something as quickly as possible" (lit. to work against time). Names of long-time slots are used in the PU to indicate duration: work round the clock / around the clock; все время "24 hours a day" The names of time-lengths intervals are used in the PU to denote a slow process (take one's time; тянуть время "not to hurry, not to rush; to wait, to linger" etc).

b) urgency / non-emergency / delay / accuracy - time and tide wait for no man "time is running out" (lit. time and a favorable occasion do not wait for a man); делу время, потехе час etc.

c) always / never - do smth. at all hours; день и ночь "all the time, constantly", etc.

d) early / late - ни свет ни заря, кто рано встает, тому бог подает "early", etc.

e) start / end - do smth. in the day; лиха беда начало, конец делу венец;

4) *Names of concepts and realities of professional and labor activity*. The English and Russian PU of the selected group include lexical units, denoting tools and mechanisms of labor activity (English *hammer, axe, tongs, cylinder, wheel*; Russian *молот, наковальня, лопата, пружина, колесо, железка, баранка* etc.), names of persons by occupation and profession (English *soldier*; Russian *сапожник, мастер*). For example: hammer and tongs "energetically, with all power" (lit. hammer and tongs), a big wheel "an important person, tucked in, a leader" (lit. a large wheel); нажимать на все пружины, на всю железку, взяться за баранку, как сапожник (ineptly, very badly), etc.

5) *Monetary lexicon*. Russian culture being accentuated by lack of money-grubbing, contempt for pursuing the profit, of course, did not mean the labor person being inclined to work for "thank you". Well-done work should be fairly rewarded. And here the main role for the employee is played by money as a measure of labor: «мера – всякому делу вера». The linguistic units of both cultures emphasize the labor nature of earnings: earn (make or turn) an honest penny "to earn by honest labour" (lit. to earn an honest penny); кровные деньги "money earned by honest work". Reading the cultural information from the figurative base of this source, in our opinion, most vividly allows us to explicate the worldview, that received its fixation and preservation in phraseological units. So, in Russian PU, according to the cultural connotation, a smart person is believed to be rich without money (умный без денег богат), whereas in English – a smart one is believed to be rich (he is wise that is rich).

6) *Food* - for example, English be worth one's salt "to be a valuable, worthy worker", (lit. to be worth one's salt), lay an egg "to fail, to fail because of lack of interest" (lit. lay eggs); Russian раздвигать под опех "to do masterfully, well, impeccably", соль земли "masters, the best people", etc.

The universal image of bread as a symbol of wealth and prosperity lies at the heart of the PU with the component "bread" - зарабатывать (свой) хлеб "to earn one's living", добывать кусок хлеба "to earn a crust of bread" - in Russian and "bread" in English - earn one's bread "to earn one's food" (lit. earn one's bread), bread and butter "means of subsistence, a source of subsistence" (lit. bread and butter).

The composition of English and Russian PU includes nouns that denote traditional dishes, food. The choice of these realities (English *turkey, pie, bacon*; Russian *каша, блины, квас*, etc.) is not incidental and is explained by the lifestyle of both the Russian and English people. For example, English bring home the bacon, be easy as a pie; Russian как блины печет "quickly and in large numbers to create something", заваривать кашу "to start a difficult, troublesome or unpleasant business" and etc.

7) *Articles of everyday life*. The composition of Russian and English PU of this imaginative source includes various words of everyday life. This is due to the fact that in everyday life a person uses a variety of everyday objects. For example, English put smth. to bed, have got a foot in the door; Russian по служебной лестнице - "on the ascending line, from the lower position to the higher one", etc. Images of everyday life objects, reflecting the national specificity of the Russian people culture find their fixation in phraseological units: хамовный двор "in Moscow Rus: the enterprise engaged in weaving manufacture. In English, also interesting associations were fixed with the images of everyday life and objects of use: throw in the sponge, be used as a doormat), etc.

3 Results

The comparative analysis showed that figurative sources of PU, reflecting labor activity (except the time category), are characterized by approximately the same quantitative composition in both

English and Russian. This is due, in our opinion, to the fact that in the PU of the languages being compared, universal assessments and interpretations of reality are consolidated.

The selected fundamentals reflect the most extensive and significant, in our opinion, groups of figurative sources of PU, characterizing labor activity, in both languages, accounting for 88% of the total number of figurative sources in the English language and 88.6% in the Russian language.

National-specific indicators of a particular characteristic are estimated in the prism of the social attitudes and traditions of the people. Thus, the figurative source "category of time" prevails in the PU of the English language. In our opinion, this reflects the purely practical attitude of the British to reality. Careful attitude to their time, lack of emotions in decision-making and practicality are typical of the English. The category of time of PU "early / late" is characteristic of the Russian people, which reflects the peculiarities of the labor activity of the Russian people: *ни свет ни заря*.

4 Conclusion

The represented groups of figurative-motivational foundations can not reflect all the details of the conceptual sphere of the of the PU system of the type being investigated. We also identified non-productive small groups of figurative sources, such as: natural phenomena; proper names; images of plant species are characteristic of the PU, expressing work activity.

Thus, the universal is manifested in the fact that the thematic groups of figurative sources of English and Russian PU, characterizing labor activity, are generally classified in the same way. This is due to the fact that the subsystems of the PU, characterizing the labor activity of the two compared languages, obey the general phraseological tendency towards anthropocentrism, mainly the man description and the world around him.

5 Discussion

National identity is manifested primarily in the figurative composition of English and Russian PU, characterizing labor activity, which is associated with the cultural and historical development of peoples, national psychology, way of life and type of management, entrenched in the mentality of peoples in the form of behavior patterns, customs, norms. Phraseological units represent a "psychological matrix" on which the image of a nation is preserved.

The national originality of the PU of the English and Russian languages is also determined by the fact that the division of one and the same reality can be different for different peoples, hence the same concept acquires different connotations.

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