РАЗДЕЛ VIII. ФИЛОЛОГИЯ

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The pragmatic aspect of the functioning of English phraseological units with ethno cultural semantics

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the problems of studying the structure of the value of ethnocultural phraseological units of English origin from the standpoint of cognitive semasiology. The leading role of the internal form in the formation of the value of ethnocultural phraseological units is established, the place of the ethnocultural component in their semantic structure is determined.

Keywords: phraseological units, ethnocultural semantic component, image, language picture of the world, language, culture.

Аннотация

Статья посвящается проблемам исследования структуры значения этнокультурных фразеологизмов английского происхождения с позиций когнитивной семасиологии. Установлена ведущая роль внутренней формы в формировании значения этнокультурных фразеологизмов, определено место этнокультурного компонента в их семантической структуре.

Ключевые слова: фразеологизмы, этнокультурный семантический компонент, образ, языковая картина мира, язык, культура.

Today in modern linguistics a considerable attention is paid to the study of language in close connection with the culture of the people who speak it. The ethnocultural originality of phraseological units has been recognized by researches since the inception of phraseology as a separate philological field.

For the formation of the linguistic-culturological direction in the field of phraseology, an important role was played by the ideas of the relationship of language and culture, proclaimed in the framework of the linguistic tradition (N.F. Alefirenko [1], V.A. Maslova [3], M.I. Makrushina [4], A.M. Molodkin [5] and others).

According to the structural, functional and semantic or anthropocentric approach to the study of phraseological units, in the development of phraseology as a linguistic science, classical, post-classical and modern stages can be identified. They have their own priorities in the study of idioms. Ethnocultural issues become extremely relevant for anthropocentric-oriented phraseology.

Idioms have ethnocultural, they reflect the national culture both dismembered and complex, as well as through their prototypes which describe certain customs, traditions, peculiarities of life, culture, historical events.

A phraseological image often retains the national specificity of the phraseologism because it relies on realities that are known only to one people, representatives of one nation. The national specificity of the phraseological image reflects the way of life and character of the people, its history, spiritual life, unique traditions, customs and ethnic life in a special selection of lexical components of a particular phraseological unit.

The national specificity of the phraseological units of English is a multidimensional phenomenon, which should be investigated for a number of parameters in the process of

semantic analysis of a phraseological unit: identifying the components of a phraseological unit, their etymology, their semantic analysis.

Phraseological units that characterize denotation by appealing to the views of native speakers about a particular phenomenon of national culture are called ethnic units. They may be spiritual or material. Internal form determines the ethnic and cultural specificity of the phraseological units. It fixes verbal associations in the semantic structure, evokes a figurative representation of the subject. The brightness of the image depends on the degree of transparency of the internal form. The disappearance of the corresponding realities, traditions, social or cultural phenomena destroys the derivational semantic link between the phraseologism and its prototype.

From the point of view of cognitive semasiology, the nature of the ethnocultural component of a phraseological meaning and its place in the general semantic structure of phraseological unit are determined in accordance with the type of structure of consciousness with which this component is associated. The value of any language unit is qualified as an element of two structures of consciousness –cognitive and pragmatic. It gives the basis for selection of cognitive and pragmatic components of value.

Phraseological units with an ethnocultural semantic component can be viewed from two points of view: an Englishman as an individual subject, an Englishman as a subject of interaction with society.

According to the general methodological setting of anthropocentrism, the personality which has a variety of its properties and states is the core of denotative sphere of phraseological units with the ethnocultural component.

There are phraseological nominations of a person's social origin, his gender and age characteristics, mental abilities, moral qualities, character traits and appearance among the phraseological units with ethnocultural component. The social origin of a person can be prestigious, for example, 'to grow up with the rituals of Henley and Wimbledon' (grow up in a wealthy family, belong to the upper classes), or not prestigious, for example, 'country blood' (a person who has dark-skinned ancestors). Gender signs of the individual are illustrated by such phraseological unit as 'blue stocking' (a pedantic woman devoid of femininity), age signs – 'Tyburn blossom' (a young offender), phraseological unit expresses mental abilities 'wise man of Gotham' (a man who makes unreasonable things), moral qualities – 'Sir Galahad' (noble). Human traits that are reflected in the meaning of phraseological units with ethnocultural component are predominantly negative – 'pudding heart' (coward).

The human condition is divided into mental and physical. Among the mental states are allocated emotional state is allocated among the mental ones. Such idioms can illustrate this: 'to get the hump and pleased as Punch' (satisfied), 'two stops from Becontree' (crazy). Mental states may be both positive and negative. As for physical conditions of a person which are reflected in the phraseological units with ethnocultural semantic component are always negative. For example, 'one over the eight' (being drunk), 'to sup with Sir Thomas Gresham' (being hungry), 'Drury Lane ague' (venereal disease), 'Davy Jones's locker' (grave of sailors who drowned in the sea) [2].

From the point of Englishman as a subject of interaction with society, phraseological units with ethnocultural semantic are the most numerous. There are fragments that express natural, man-made and symbolic environment. A special place is occupied by idioms, in which the estimated component dominates. Englishman's habitual life is reflected in the phraseological names that contain the plants, for example, 'Cheddar pink' (a kind of carnation) (flowers), creatures, for example, a 'furry thing' (rabbit), stars, for example, 'Charles's Wain' (Ursa Major), geographic regions such as 'the Land of Cakes' (Scotland).

Culture of the British also may be expressed in the phraseological names of buildings, for example, 'Anderson shelter' (Anderson bomb shelter), vehicles, for example, 'the two penny tube' (London Underground), tools, for example, 'Brummagem screwdriver' (hammer), clothes, for example, 'British warm' (short warm overcoat) [6, c. 65-68].

The group of phraseological units with ethnocultural semantic component consists of units in which the ethnocultural component is associated with the cognitive component of phraseological meaning. The correlation of the ethnocultural semantic component with different

layers of cognitive meaning predetermines the peculiarities of the interaction of the cognitive component of phraseological units with the pragmatic one.

The linguo-culturological parameter of the semantics of phraseological units is the way of ethnic commentary of the internal form. The figurative basis is the national vision of the surrounding reality which is presented by a stable unit and called the phraseological picture of the world.

Linguistic and cultural commentary of idioms shows the hidden, not evident features of the embodiment of culture in idioms. Phraseologisms are considered as an ethnocultural text that can be interpreted by indicating cultural meanings that are embedded in the semantics of a phraseological unit.

In the conclusion it should be noted that the phraseological system of the language represents a form of reflection in the minds of its carriers of objective reality, systemic relations of the realities of the world. It is structurally embodied in a phraseological fragment of the linguistic picture of the tongues of native speakers that systematizes knowledge of the surrounding reality and represents language knowledge of the means of linguistic phraseologies. The phraseological corpus of a language, being part of the linguistic picture of the world, is a strictly ordered system of phrases, each of which performs certain functions in the process of reflecting certain fragments of the surrounding reality.

The ethnocultural identity of the linguistic community is most clearly revealed in phraseology. The phraseological system of the language, that is an integral part of the language system, reflects the dialectical unity of language and culture, language and society.

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