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METAPHORS AS A SOURCE OF LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL INFORMATION IN IDIOMS

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АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье анализируются темпоральные фразеологические единицы английского и русского языков. Данный анализ позволяет исследовать метафорические основания сравниваемых единиц и выявить систему образов, характерных для рассматриваемых языковых картин.

ABSTRACT

In the article temporal English and Russian phraseological units are analyzed. This analysis allows to research metaphorical bases of compared units and define the system of images characteristic for concerned language pictures.

Ключевые слова. Идиома, образ, культурная информация, этап жизни, этнолингвистическое сообщество.

Key words. Idiom, image, cultural information, lived stage, ethnolinguistic community.

Background. Linguistic and cultural analysis is based on studying of some components such as etymology of the idiom or of its constituents, that allows to reveal metaphorical base of the idiom, find connection with linguistic side of the idiom, semantics of the meaning, having double meaning as its literal sense and its actual sense that enables to understand connection between these two senses and its underlying form. Such analysis is aimed to detection of linguistic specific character of the unit subject to its connection with culture, mental peculiarities of the people. Culture

penetrates into these signs through associative and image-bearing bases of its semantics and are interpreted as through revelation of connection of its images with stereotypes, models, symbols, mythologems, prototypical situations and other signs of national culture [2, p. 55]. The system of images fixed in the semantics of the national language is the zone of concentration of cultural information and enables deeply understand the difference between two compared linguistic cultures, define bases of perception

of lived time stages characteristic for one or another ethnolinguistic community [1, p.1897].

Methods. Analysis of English and Russian idioms with the meaning of lived time allows to reveal certain images distinctive for these communities. In the base of the image you may find certain denotatum, prototypical situation or maybe both. These images are revealed in all idioms characterized by different image bases (phraseological analogues and lacunas).

Idioms are based on different interpretation of phenomena, objects, daily situations, connected with practical experience of learning of reality. Humans interpret reality in four ways: in anthropomorphous sphere, organic sphere, social and artifact spheres. The classification of A.P. Chudinov was taken as the base of our studying. He sorts out four groups of metaphors.

1 Anthropomorphous metaphor. When we are studying this group the concepts connected with anatomy, family etc. are analyzed. English *In the first blush of youth* – in youth; Russian *С (от) младых ногтей* – from childhood; *Увидеть свет* – to be born; *Молоко на губах не обсохло* – still young etc.

2. Nature metaphor. Sources of metaphorical expansion are concept spheres of fauna, flora, abiocoen such as landscape, elements etc. So time concepts are understood through concepts of environment. English *An unlicked cub* – too young; *As green as a gooseberry* – too young; Russian *Желторотый птенец* – too young; *Бесплодная смоковница* – a woman isn't able to have children etc.

3. Social metaphor. The concepts connected with social sphere are analyzed in this group. Such concepts as crime, war, theatre, sport etc. English *Golf (football, cricket, tennis etc) widow* – a woman whose husband is keen on golf; Russian *Ездить с Лениным на броневике* – to live long life etc.

4. Artifact metaphor. Within this group such concepts as house/home, transport, mechanism, household stuff etc. In this group time realities are represented as objects created by men. English *Be born on the wrong side of the blanket* – old-fashioned about bastard child; *От горшка два вершка* – about a little child etc. [3, p.94].

Lived time may be associated with a human, so there are many images in the idioms connected with people. Meanings of all lived stages of a person are transferred with the help of these images in English and Russian.

1) physiological metaphor, connected with human's growth: English idioms *draw one's first breath* – to be born, *cut the (umbilical) cord* – to become independent from parents in 18, *come of age* – to become adult, *draw one's last breath* – to die; Russian idioms *увидеть свет* – to be born, *под стол пешком ходить* – to be a toddler, *молоко на губах не обсохло* – to be young, *войти в возраст* – to become adult etc.

2) body metaphor

To have an old head on young shoulders – to be wise in youth, *a left handed marriage* – misalliance, *make old bones* – to be old, *Be on last legs* – to be senile, Russian idioms *с (от) младых ногтей* – from childhood, *сопли под носом*, *сопля зеленая* – to be

young, *На зубок* – make a present of baby's birth, *бес в ребро* – about an old spark, *выжить из ума* – to be too old etc. These images represent signs of lived stages in the idioms.

3) name metaphor

a) traditional names of a man and a woman in English-speaking society: *Miss/Mr. Right* – future wife/husband, *the old lady* – an informal term for mother or wife, *old Dutch (woman)* – about a wife, *The lady of the house* (леди дома) – a housewife;

б) people by age: *A babe in arms* – about unpractical man, *A young shaver* – about a teenager, *The grand old man* (of smth) – about a wise old man; Russian idioms *Мальчик-с-пальчик* – a little boy, *христова невеста* – a nun, *Подруга жизни* – a wife etc.

4) Mental metaphor

Russian idioms *пора о боге думать*, *пора о душе подумать* – to be close to death.

Natural metaphor is used for metaphorical transformation of lived stages' ideas in both languages. So in English vegetable images are often used for transferring stages of childhood, youth, maturity and death. In Russian culture these images are used for transferring stages of maturity, marriage/non marriage state, old age and death.

1) Metaphor of plants' maturation (universal)

In idioms plants' maturation and maturity of human are compared.

2) Metaphor of green plants

As a rule this kind of metaphor may be found in the idioms connected with childhood or youth: *salad* (салат), *green as a gooseberry*, *grass*, Russian *молодо-зелено*.

3) Metaphor of substitution of plant by human's death

An oak, a birch, daisies.

4) Metaphor of wormwood as a plant associated with bitterness.

5) Metaphor of chamomile as a source of bad memory, dotage.

6) Metaphor of dandelion as a frail old person.

7) Metaphor of old fruit as an association with senility.

Horseradish, stub.

8) Metaphor of fig tree as an association with barren woman (Bible interpretation).

It's notable that choice of these images is explained by geographical factor. In Great Britain there are wastelands and a few trees. And it's reflected in idioms. Russian idioms are also connected with diverse Russian flora.

In English and Russian there are zoological images. They are used when transferring stages of childhood, maturity and senility. In English they are also used when transferring non marriage state and in Russian they are often used when transferring death.

1) Metaphor of a cub

English examples: *an unlicked cub*, *wet behind the ears/dry behind the ears* – too young, *calf (puppy) love* – childish love, *(spring) chicken*, *желторотый птенец* – too young;

2) Metaphor of too old animal

English *long in tooth* (длинный в зубе), Russian *старее поповой собаки*.

3) Signs of animals' death in comparison with humans' death:

Russian *отбросить копыта, склеить лапы, надуть лапу*.

4) *litotes*

knee-high to a grasshopper (по колено кузнечнику).

5) *hyperbole* (о возрасте):

Russian *с хвостиком/хвостом* (с преувеличением о возрасте)

7) *stereotypes about a man and a woman: stag, hen.*

In both languages direct and indirect images are used. English images are connected with pets and animals, in Russian pets are often used as a base of such idioms.

In these languages there are images connected with social metaphor.

1) *Metaphor of majority*

Age of majority, Join the majority – to die.

2) sports metaphor

golf (football, cricket, tennis, basketball etc) widow, a good long innings.

3) Theatre metaphor

Shut one's light (off), quit the scene;

4) gambling metaphor

cash in your chips.

5) metaphor of solitude/society

in the (pudding) club, single blessedness, The Darby and Joan club;

6) market metaphor

miss one's market.

7) religious metaphor

The better (next, another) world, God rest his soul,

Russian *отойти в селения горние, Селение праведных, Царствие небесное.*

8) military metaphor

Забирать (забрать) в солдаты, Пасть смертью храбрых.

9) historical metaphor

ездить с Лениным на броневике.

10) heathen metaphor

От роду (от рождения), Карачун пришел, кондрашка хватила.

Also in both languages images with artifact metaphor are used.

1) *metaphor of substitution of an object by legal category*

be born on the wrong side of the blanket, be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth, be born to the purple.

2) *metaphor of substitution of an object by stages of socialization*

Russian *школьная скамья, университетская скамья, под венцом*, English *a bread and butter miss;*

3) rite metaphor

English *Hear wedding bells*, Russian *продавать блины, ехать к теще на блины, на ризки, сыграть в ящик, белый саван, дышать на ладан.*

4) decrepitude metaphor as sign of human's old age

старая скворечня, старая калоша, An old bat (старая дубина).

5) metaphor of uselessness as the most necessary object for alive person

English *be waiting for dead men's shoes, pop your clogs*, Russian *отбросить (откинуть) коньки, поставить кеды в угол, лапти.*

6) *metaphor of substitution of an object by happiness*

метафора замещения определенным предметом счастья, удачи:

родиться в рубашке/сорочке (быть удачливым, счастливым)

7) Christian metaphor

the pearly gates.

So objects are used as lived stages and perform different ritual functions in different periods of life.

Conclusion. Analysis of English and Russian idioms showed that differences in the images' system are in the concept or cultural sphere. Among specific images anthropomorphic metaphor is the leader. It's not surprising because it's confirmed by the statement that phraseology possesses dual anthropocentrism. Plant images show connection with flora of concerned countries. In English there are more idioms with social images which sources are games, sport, theatre, market, solitude/society, religion. In Russian language there are less phraseological units with social metaphors. They are connected with history, war, heathenism and religion. In English many idioms with artifact metaphor are connected with legal system of Great Britain, stages of socialization, and in Russian language these images are connected with rites.

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