

The Function of a Zoonym in English and Russian Phraseology

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Abstract: This article will consider the problem of similarities and differences between phraseological units such as function of zoonyms in English and Russian, based on the criteria of "moral qualities". Zoonyms and stable expressions are an inorganic component of language culture and interpersonal communication, an important feature in terms of the national characteristics of the language under study and at the same time socio-cultural phenomena common to all peoples.

Therefore, when learning a foreign language, students should pay attention to mastering this component of foreign language culture, which gives the language a special color and national flavor. The correct use of phraseological units for students in the practical application of the acquired knowledge gives this knowledge a special depth and versatility. A comparative analysis of the phraseological units of the studied foreign and native languages is also useful, which helps not only to expand the student's worldview, but also to better consolidate the material.

Keywords: function, proverbs, phraseology, phraseological unit, zoonym, moral qualities.

The main role in the formation of the general phraseological meaning belongs to a special component, which is included in the structure of a phraseological unit (PU). One of such components is a zoonym. The transfer of the name by similarity is one of the leading ways of phraseologisms formation. Under the zoonym we understand a nominal name denoting an animal (dog, cat, wolf, fox, etc.).

In most PU with zoonym component there is a type of metaphorical transfer, when animal names are used to describe the characteristic of a person, to denote those or other of his qualities, appearance, character, mental abilities. In addition, zoonyms are often symbols of moral and intellectual qualities of a person [1].

Turning to the study of zoonym in the composition of phraseology, it should be noted that the metaphoricity of zoomorphic phraseological phrases, inherent subjective-evaluative connotation, the specificity of their semantic parameters and syntactic structure are largely due to their referential sphere, the basis of which is implicitly expressed in them anthropocentrism as a manifestation of the ancient folklore tradition of attributing certain traits of human character to animals. In the ethnoculture of different peoples, phraseological expressions including animal names are, first of all, statements about man, his spiritual and social traits [2].

The development of polysemousness is carried out by the transfer of meaning. Historically, secondary meanings are figurative, but many of them are currently no longer realized in their original qualities. The semantic peculiarity of these collocations is that the zoosemic component always dominates in them, standing out due to the opposition of representational and figurative meanings. For phraseological phrases semantically oriented to animals, but metaphorically associated with humans, the connotative meaning acquires special significance, and connotation can be considered as additional information in relation to the significative-denotative meaning [3].

Thus, the formation and functioning of phraseological phrases is influenced by the cultural and human factor. G.A. Zhevako and L.V. Shubina note that phraseological phrases are peculiar standards and stereotypes of national culture, the marked content of which is embodied in the cultural and national connotation of phraseological phrases.

Cultural-national self-consciousness, worldview itself is reflected in the images of phraseological phrases characteristic of the people [4].

For example:

a sly dog - человек в своем уме

to drink like fish - Много пить, напиваться, мелкая муха - мелкий мальчишка

knee high to a grasshopper - с земли не видно.

a fat cat - жирный кот, т.е. важная персона [5].

Typicality of the images underlying the meaning of phraseological expressions, as well as the inclusion in them of symbols or standards of world understanding is the fruit of the collective representation of the linguocultural community about some group experience. The latter can be interpreted in cultural concepts, acquiring in phraseological expressions its stereotypical, symbolic or reference expression [6].

Quite a large number of zoomorphic phraseological expressions have full or partial equivalents in other languages, which is explained by the coincidence of the mental representation of reality in the speakers of different languages and common elements of culture - the so-called "cultural universals" [7].

However, due to the differences in cultural factors, ethnic characteristics, different linguistic pictures of the world and different literary sources, many zoonyms contain some element of meaning that is understood only by the speakers of a given linguoculture. These similarities and differences will be discussed in more detail in the practical chapter.

According to O.I. Glazunova, substantive phraseological combinations reflect one or several characterizing meanings in contrast to the author's metaphorical word-uses, which can potentially actualize a whole complex of predicative features.

Dependent lexemes included in the phraseological combination do not simply limit the sphere of zoomorphism meanings, but transform the parameters of their meaning. Traditional aspects of the realization of dependent words in phraseological combinations are transformed into qualitative components [8]. The connectedness of meanings of zoonyms is also manifested in the composition of other structural-morphological types of PUs.

For PUs semantically oriented to animals, but metaphorically associated with humans, connotation, as a particularly important component of phraseologism, can be considered as "additional information in relation to the significative-denotative meaning, as a set of semantic layers, including evaluative, expressive, emotional and functional-stylistic component" [9]. All components of connotation in a phraseological meaning usually appear together, but sometimes they can be in different combinations with each other.

The evaluative component, i.e. approving or disapproving evaluation, contained in the meaning of the phraseologism, is the main one in the connotative status of PU due to its sociolinguistic nature. "In different civilizations and in different epochs the concepts of good and evil, negative and positive are thought differently. Members of the same society evaluate the same phenomenon individually, although there is a generally accepted point of view, in connection with which a positive or negative evaluation is included in the structure of the meaning of the FE" [10].

In the interpretation of PU, as a rule, negative, positive and neutral components of phraseological meaning are distinguished, which are based on judgment, approval or lack of pronounced approval or condemnation as a statement of socially established assessment of a phenomenon.

"The associative and figurative connection underlying indirect phraseological nomination not only contributes to the adequate decoding of the meaning of an utterance, but also is a stimulus for the addressee to have an appropriate evaluative and emotional reaction" [11].

In general, in the paremiological semantics of animals, mixed evaluative connotation is most often traced, reflecting the ambivalence of our perception of wildlife, with a predominance of negative subjective-evaluative component. Apparently, the general semantic asymmetry of the phraseological system (a shift towards negative meanings) can be explained by "a more acute emotional and speech-thought reaction of people to negative phenomena".

The last component of connotation - functional and stylistic - indicates the belonging of PUs with the zoonym component to this or that style of speech, their prevalence and usage. Zoomorphic PUs used in all language styles are considered neutral or interstyle. However, as A.V. Kunin notes, "insufficient development of phraseological stylistics, mobility of the boundaries of different stylistic categories, as well as changes in the norms of phrase abuse to a great extent complicate the attribution of a phraseologism to one or another functional style" [12].

The component-zoonym has an important function for the formation of the individual meaning of phraseological phrases. When a zoonym becomes a component of a phraseological phrase, it loses its lexical meaning, respectively, it loses the ability to denote an animal. Some scientists, in particular A.M. Melerovich, believe that the component-zoonym as a result of phraseologization acquire special, non-systemic meanings that are not characteristic of these words in free use and can be revealed only when "decomposing" the phraseological meaning .

According to A.M. Chepasova's concept, which helps to understand the mechanism of transformation of a word into a component of a phraseology, when forming a phraseology on the basis of a non-phraseological word combination, each word of this structure loses its semantic core, preserving some specific semes, from which another, new semantic core of a new linguistic unit of a phraseology emerges.

In this case, the zoononym acquires a new function of actualization of the most characteristic, from the human point of view, properties of the animal: mode of movement, way of life, habits, external signs, sound activity, practical use of the animal by man. When forming the individual meaning of a phraseologism, these semes are transformed into semes reflecting new, other, signs and properties of a person.

It follows that zoonyms can perform different functions in the language and can characterize a person from different sides. From this, in turn, it follows that phraseological units with a zoonym component can reflect the following characteristics of a person:

- physical properties of the subject (strong as a horse, sharp as a lynx, etc.);
- external appearance (fat as a hog, with a goatee, etc.);
- mental properties of the subject (angry like a dog, stubborn like a bull, etc.); mental appearance (fat like a hog, with a goatee, etc.);
- the presence of intelligence or lack thereof (stupid as a blue gelding, staring like a sheep at a new gate, etc.);
- habits, skills of the subject (repeats like a parrot, cunning like a fox, etc.).

The above examples show that the peculiarity of phraseological units containing zoonyms is that their symbolic meaning is built on the basis of the figurative meaning of structural components.

Thus, the dependent lexemes included in the PU are the decisive factor influencing the connotation of zoonyms and determining the connectedness of their meanings in the composition of a particular PU. The component-zoonym plays an important role in the formation of the phraseological meaning and is included in the internal form of the phraseologism as the main component.

PUs with a zoonym component form a peculiar zoonymic phraseological picture, which is considered to be a figurative "humanized" model of the world, interpreted through animals. It is man who through the prism of his sensations creates new images in his imagination. It follows that both intralinguistic (linguistic) and extralinguistic (related to the history of the people speaking the language) factors play a role in the formation of PUs with a zoonym component. Zoonym components of phraseological units create the marking of national-cultural specificity of the figurative semantics of phraseological units.

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