



National and Cultural Specificity of Phraseological Units in Linguistics

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ABSTRACT

This article gives information about phraseological units in linguistics in many different languages. The primary emphasis rests on the consideration of the concepts "linguistic picture of the world", "national linguistic picture of the world" and the problem of interrelation of language and culture. Phraseological units very often reflect the peculiarities of the culture of the language they belong to; moreover they reflect history of that nation, their attitude towards world, stereotypes they believe in, etc. Furthermore, phraseological units usually are formed from national sayings, prejudices, and cultural traditions. Phraseological units represent quite a large part of linguistics. There are a lot of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages which are not translated literally and perceived by review. In connection with various geographical conditions, historical development, political system and religion, phraseological units, used in the literary text, not always clear.

Keywords:

phraseological units, national, picture of the world, idioms, linguistics, combinations, lexical meaning.

Introduction

National-cultural specificity phraseological units has recently become a traditional topic in the field of phraseology research. Many studies emphasized that idioms are national and cultural unity of language, accumulating and transferring from one generation to the cultural potential of the people. They exhibit features of every national language, a unique way expresses the spirit and identity of the nation.

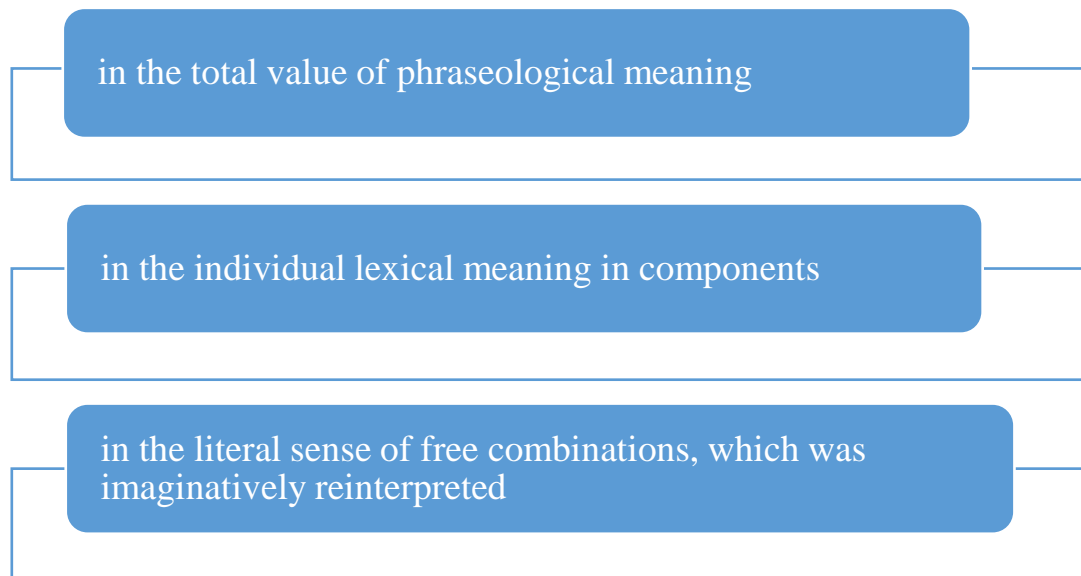
V.A.Maslova indicates a close relationship phraseological units with background knowledge of native speakers, with cultural - historical traditions of the people speaking this language. In her opinion, phraseological combinations related subjects attributed symptoms that are associated with a certain

view of the world, express their attitude to them and give them a rating.¹

Methods

National-cultural specificity of phraseology may occur at three levels:

¹ Маслова В.А. Лингвокультурология : учебное пособие для студентов . – М., 2001. С.98



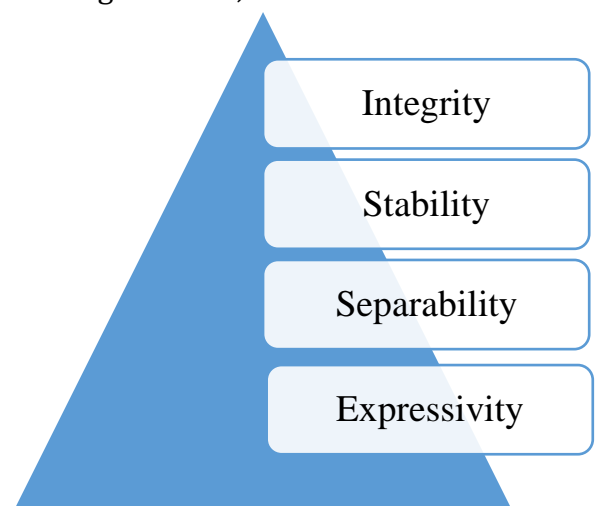
The primary emphasis rests on the consideration of the concepts "linguistic picture of the world", "national linguistic picture of the world" and the problem of interrelation of language and culture.

Among multiple problems that modern linguistics studies, studying national – cultural specifics of languages plays an important role. The language is the major way of formation and existence of man's knowledge about the world. Firstly, it is the basis for the development of linguistic picture of the world, one of the deepest layers of the picture of the world. Secondly, language expresses and explicates other pictures of the human world, which enter into the language via special lexicon, introducing the features of a person and his culture². As for the concept "linguistic picture of the world", in modern linguistics it is defined by several linguists such as Pimenova, O.A. Kornilov, Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin in different ways. According to M.V. Pimenova, it is "body of knowledge about the world which is reflected in language, and also ways of receiving and interpretation of new knowledge"³. O.A. Kornilov considers that it is "fixation and storage of all complex of

knowledge of current language community about the world"⁴.

Results

By phraseology, we mean the branch of linguistics dealing with stable word-combinations characterized by certain transference of meaning. Despite differences of opinion, most authors agree upon some points concerning the distinctive features of phraseological units, such as:



Ethno-cultural elements of the semantics of phraseological units can occur at three levels of the content:

² Серебренников А. Роль человеческого фактора в языке. Язык и картина мира. – М., 1988, с.14

³ Пименова М. Введение в когнитивную лингвистику. – Кемерово, 2004, с.54

⁴ Корнилов О. Языковая картина мира как произвольный национальный менталитет. –М., 2001, с.4

1. the aggregate value of verbal phraseological complex;
2. the individual lexical components of phraseologisms;
3. the literal meaning of the total verbal complex.

One more criterion for classification of phraseological units is according to the degree of the national peculiarity of phraseological units. Due to it all phraseological units are divided into three groups:

1. International phraseological units ;
2. Locally unmarked phraseological units;
3. Locally marked phraseological units

The most complete definition of researching the concept is given by Russian linguists Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin, who consider that "linguistic picture of the world is set of people's representations about reality fixated in units of language at a certain stage of development of the people, imagination about the reality reflected in values of linguistic signs – linguistic partitioning of the world, linguistic collating of subjects and the phenomena..."⁵.

So studying various definitions of "linguistic picture of the world", we arrived at a conclusion that "linguistic picture of the world" is a verbal expression of objective reality of a certain language community. "Linguistic picture of the world" is embodied in all national languages, and receives designation "a national linguistic picture of the world".

In turn, "a national linguistic picture of the world" is "national and specific vision of all things in existence which is fixated in lexicon of the corresponding language, where the word "vision" expresses following concepts: logical conception, sensation and estimation, and concept "all things in existence" means not only a real material world, but also all introduced things in it by human mind"⁶. It should be noted that the questions concerning the problem of "national linguistic picture of the

world" were made in scientific works of great linguist W. von Humboldt and the formers of theory of linguistic relativity E. Sapir and B. Whorf.

According to W. Humboldt's doctrine, "various languages are various world visions. Any language, designating separate subjects, forms a picture of the world for the people speaking in it". The base of a hypothesis of Sapir – Whorf makes belief that human beings are very much at the mercy of the particular language which determines nature of thinking of the person, his behavior and a way of cognition of reality, finally more widely – culture of society. "We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation" – writes Sapir ⁷. In other words, the person sees the world as he speaks. Therefore the people speaking different languages see the world differently. Each language reflects reality only in the way inherent in it; therefore, languages differ with their "linguistic pictures of the world".

Later this position was extended by Whorf, declaring in another widely cited passage that: "We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way – an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is, of course, an implicit and unstated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement

⁵ Попова З. и Стернин И. Когнитивная лингвистика. – М., 2007, с.54

⁶ Корнилов О. Языковая картина мира как произвольный национальный менталитет. –М., 2001, с.140

⁷ Sapir, E. and Mandelbaum, D. Selected writings in language, culture and personality. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949, p.8

decrees. In research of “national linguistic picture of the world” the problem of interrelation of language and culture has the big significance. It should be noted that this problem is one of the most difficult and disputable in linguistics.

Even if the interrelation of language and culture seems obvious, this question has not been completely settled. While some scientists consider that language belongs to culture as part of whole, other ones point out that language and culture are independent sign systems which are in close interaction with each other. So, for example, a famous scientist of the American school of ethno linguistics, E. Sapir, adhering to the first idea, wrote: “the culture can be defined as what the current society does and thinks and the language is that how they think⁸. The representative of the school of ethno linguistics, N.I. Tolstoy adhering to similar views claimed that “the relations between culture and language can be considered as the relation of whole and its part. Language can be apprehended as a component of culture or the culture tool, especially when it comes to the literary language or folklore language. However, at the same time language is both independent in relation to culture as a whole and it can be considered separately from culture or, in comparison with culture, with an equivalent and equal phenomenon⁹. In lingvoculturology most of scientists adhere that language and culture are independent sign systems which are in close interaction with each other. From this theory point of view language is considered as a universal form of primary conceptualization of the world; the component of culture inherited by ancestors of person; the tool by means of which culture is acquired; translator, exponent and keeper of cultural information and knowledge of the world.

Discussion

It should be noted that language, being “creator” of culture, develops in it as well.

⁸ Сепир Э. Избранные труды по языкознанию и культурологии. – М., , 2001, с. 140

⁹ Толстой Н. Язык и народная культура. Индик: Москва, 1995, с.16

Existence of language as the phenomena is impossible without culture as well as existence of culture is impossible without language. Summing up, “national linguistic picture of the world” represents language as agent of conceptualization of a national picture of the world and culture of the people as well. Consequently, when studying “national linguistic picture of the world” it is necessary to concentrate attention on language units, especially phraseological units which are carriers of national culture.

Phraseological units very often reflect the peculiarities of the culture of the language they belong to; moreover they reflect history of that nation, their attitude towards world, stereotypes they believe in, etc. Furthermore, phraseological units usually are formed from national sayings, prejudices, and cultural traditions. Phraseological units represent quite a large part of linguistics. According to linguist N.Shansky, phraseologisms are “frozen patterns of language that consist of two or more components and allow little or no variation in form, structure or meaning”¹⁰. A.V. Kunin defines them as “stable word-groups with partially or fully transferred meanings (*“to kick the bucket”, “Greek gift”, “drink till all's blue”, “drunk as a fiddler (drunk as a lord, as a boiled owl), “as mad as a hatter (as a March hare)”*). Phraseological units are common to all languages of the world but have their unique form of expression. Their national – cultural specifics is shown in translation process. Translation is the phenomenon of replacement of a text in a source language (SL) by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language (TL) with the same “illocutionary effect”¹¹.

The definition of translation suggested above implies that producing the same meaning or message in the target language text as intended by the original author is the main objective of a translator. This notion of “sameness” is often understood as an equivalent relation between the source and

¹⁰ Шанский Н. Фразеология современного языка. –М., 1989, с.28

¹¹ House, J. A model for translation quality assessment. Tübingen: TBL-Verlag Narr. 1999, p.28.

target texts. This equivalent relation is generally considered the most salient feature of a quality translation.

The term “equivalence” is actually a key term in translation. According to Ya.I.Resker, equivalence is “constant equivalent compliance, as a rule, not depending on a context”¹².

Vinay and Darbelnet view equivalent-oriented translation as a procedure which “replicates the same situation as in the original, whilst using completely different wording”¹³. They also suggest that if this procedure is applied during the translation process, it can maintain the stylistic impact of the SL text in the TL text. According to them, equivalence is therefore the ideal method when the translator has to deal with phraseological units¹⁴.

There are a lot of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages which are not translated literally and perceived by review. In connection with various geographical conditions, historical development, political system and religion, phraseological units, used in the literary text, not always clear. Therefore, conterminous and in coincident elements come to light. Thereby awareness of values of phraseological units happens by means of equivalent units.

From stylistic point of view, it is possible to mark out two types of equivalences of phraseological units: absolute and relative. Absolute equivalents completely coincide on value and the use. In literary texts of languages considered by us existence of absolute phraseological equivalents in all three languages are rarely met with. They generally consist of neutral expressions. For example: to bring oil to fire – алангага ёғ қуймоқ; to lose one’s head – бошини йуқотмоқ.

It is necessary to consider absolute phraseological equivalents not always present

¹² Рецкер Я.И.

Теория перевода и переводческая практика. – М., 2007., р. 54.

¹³ Зализняк

А.А., Ключевые идеи русской языковой картины мира. // Языки славянской культуры. 2005, с.140

¹⁴ Vinay, J. and Darbelnet, J. Comparative stylistics of French and English. Amsterdam [Netherlands]: J. Benjamins Pub. Co. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/btl.11>. 1995.

in all three languages at the same time. Existence of absolute equivalents can be found in non – related languages: English – Uzbek: black frost – копа совуқ; search one’s heart – кўнглини сўрамоқ.

The next group is made by relative equivalents where semantic compliance of units does not extend on all their values, i.e. when not all elements are equivalent. For example: *to get out of bed on the wrong foot* – *чан ёни билан турмоқ* (*get up on left side*).

Relative equivalents are used and in these compared languages: English – Uzbek: *heart in one’s mouth* – *жони бўғзига тикилди* (*soul in one’s mouth*); *make one’s blood boil* – *қонини қайнатмоқ* (“*to boil one’s blood*”).

Along with relative equivalents where incomplete compliance of units is observed, there are interlingual elements, absolutely not coincident among themselves. In our case phraseological units of one language have no phraseological conformities in other languages. “In each language the phraseology is especially personal most peculiar part of dictionary structure. And a large number of phraseological units keep a certain national color. This national originality is reflected at the same time both on stylistic, and expressional aspect of phraseological unit” – writes Russian linguist Rezcker¹⁵. Thus, the maintenance of some phraseological units of different languages can’t be compared among themselves. These are English phraseological units: *first line of defense*; *eat one’s heart out*; *when pigs fly*; *to set the Thames on fire*; *put it into your pipe and smoke it*; *queen’s head*; *funky chicken*.

Uzbek phraseological units: *тарвузи қўлтиғидан тушди* (*someone’s watermelon fell down*); *мена сочи тика бўлди* (*someones’s upper hair rose*); *аммамнинг бузоғи* (*aunt’s calf*); *данасидан мағзи ширин* (*inner is sweeter than seed itself*); *қозонда бори чўмичга чиқади* (*what is in the kettle does come out*).

When translating units of this kind it is advisable to use ways of transfer. According to

¹⁵ Рецкер Я.И.

Теория перевода и переводческая практика. – М., 2007, с.164.

Rezcker, there are four main translation possibilities for transferring the meaning of phraseological units: 1) completely preserving the meaning, expressivity and form of the original phraseological unit; 2) partly preserving the meaning, expressivity and form of the original; 3) changing the expressivity of the original phraseological unit; 4) completely eliminating expressivity of the original phraseological unit.

To the first translation strategy belong such phraseological units that have international features and can be transferred by using phraseological units with the same meaning but different form in the target language, for example: eng. *cold war*– uzb. *совуқуруш*. Examples above illustrate translation that preserves the meaning of the original without any change in it. The second translation strategy preserves expressivity of phraseological units, however with some change of its lexical or grammatical features. Expressive components of the phrase can be changed by other expressive or meaningful components and some components are just changed by other components in the target language. For example: eng. *as the apple of an eye*–uzb. *қўз қорачиғидек* (as pupil of the eye).

The third translation strategy is applied when it is necessary to exchange the expressivity of the phraseologisms.

The last translation strategy is a complete elimination of expressivity of the original idiom. It is not the best solution for the translation as the expressive function is lost in the translation, for example: eng. a skeleton in the cupboard - *оилавий сир* (family secret).

Summing up we can say that phraseological units play an important role in literary style, giving figurativeness and expressiveness to the literary text, and also make emotional impact on the reader. The special attention should be paid on that phraseological equivalents of different languages not always coincide among themselves. They have no identical or similar compliances in compared languages, are painted by national traditions, household realities, customs, legends and other cultural historical values. Untranslatable phraseological

units exist in all languages because each culture, each language in its own way unique. Thus, the correct and pertinent use of phraseological units gives speech a unique originality, special expressiveness, emotionality, accuracy and an expressional saturation.

Conclusion

Phraseology appeared in the domain of lexicology. It undergoes the process of segregating as a separate branch of linguistics. The reason is clear, lexicology deals with words and their meanings, whereas phraseology studies such collocations of words (phraseologisms, phraseological units, idioms), where the meaning of the whole collocation is different from the simple sum of literal meanings of the words, comprising a phraseological unit. "The assignment of certain entities to phraseological phenomena or, conversely, removing them out of the set phrases is caused not by this nominative units or communication, and whether they are retrieved from memory entirely or are created in the process of communication.

Overall, phraseological units, even if they present a certain pattern, do not generate new phrases. They are unique.

Phraseological units very often reflect the peculiarities of the culture of the language they belong to; moreover they reflect history of that nation, their attitude towards world, stereotypes they believe in, etc. Furthermore, phraseological units usually are formed from national sayings, prejudices, and cultural traditions. Phraseological units represent quite a large part of linguistics. Phraseological units are common to all languages of the world but have their unique form of expression. Their national – cultural specifics is shown in translation process.

Some phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages are not translated literally and perceived by review. In connection with various geographical conditions, historical development, political system and religion, phraseological units, used in the literary text, not always clear. The equivalence is actually a key term in translation. From stylistic point of

view, it is possible to mark out two types of equivalences of phraseological units: absolute and relative.

As the result of the investigation of various definitions of "linguistic picture of the world", we arrived at a conclusion that "linguistic picture of the world" is a verbal expression of objective reality of a certain language community. "Linguistic picture of the world" is embodied in all national languages, and receives designation a national linguistic picture of the world.

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