



LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH ONOMASTIC COMPONENTS IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES

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Abstract

In this article the author analyses national identity and national-cultural aspects of phraseological units with onomastic component in unrelated English and Russian languages. The linguocultural study of onomastic units in phraseological units allows us to get acquainted with the centuries-old history of the English and Russian peoples, as well as with their national values.

Keywords: Nomastic unity, phraseological unity, linguocultural analysis, culture, national identity, component.

Introduction

Nowadays in the world linguistics serious attention is paid to the linguocultural study of phraseological units. Because these units have been expressing the mental features of this or that nation for centuries. As society develops, as new names and titles appear in the history of a nation, the acquisition of national-cultural features by these units over the centuries is, of course, studied in connection with the national language and culture of each nation. As Sh.S.Safarov said: “Culture can never be treated as a frozen phenomenon, because it progresses, passes from one state to another, mixes with other cultures” [12; P. 63].

Nationally colored phraseological expressions of each nation reflect the character, everyday life and centuries-old spiritual experiences of the people speaking that language. The appearance of onomastic units as a cultural



component of language in phraseological phrases can be justified by the formation of names due to internal and extra-linguistic factors. Phraseological phrases with onomastic component represent a kind of abbreviated history of language, covering all periods of life of society.

Since the XXI century, the comparative study of linguocultural features of phraseological units is also observed in the studies of foreign scholars. Among Western scientists S.Susinskiene studied linguocultural aspects of English phraseological units containing names of people and places, M.L.Beshaj studied linguistic and stylistic features of phraseological units in English and Albanian languages, M.Haiduk studied ethno-cultural aspects of phraseological units with onomastic names, M.L.Beshaj studied linguistic and stylistic features of phraseological units in English and Albanian languages. Haiduk studied ethnocultural aspects of phraseological units with onomastic component in English, and A.Vrbinc and M.Vrbinc studied phraseological units with onomastic component in English and Slavic languages in a comparative way.

Russian scientists O.A.Dmitriyeva, S.V.Ivanova, Z.V.Korzyukova, A.V.Urazmetova, V.A.Khokhlova and V.A.Lovyannikova studied linguocultural aspects of phraseologisms with onomastic component in their research on the example of English, French, German, Russian and Ukrainian languages in a comparative way, while among Uzbek scientists only G.S.Kurbanova devoted her research to the study of national-linguistic features of phraseologisms with onomastic component in French and Uzbek languages [10; 50 p.].

Phraseological units have long been introduced into the everyday process of people's communication, so they are considered one of the main factors of studying the history, culture and artistic heritage of the people. Phraseological units with onomastic component not only reflect the socio-cultural, historical-political, as well as everyday life of the people speaking a given language, but also acquire the national spirit and national character.

According to the scientist M. Vrbinc, the cultural-historical formation of many phraseological units having a common basis of origin may have a universal character in different languages [15; P. 138]. Most phraseological phrases arise on a national basis and are the product of centuries-old spiritual creativity of the people. Since phraseological phrases with onomastic component describe events



not found in another culture, they cannot be translated into another language by phraseological means, these aspects express the nationality of phraseological phrases.

Phraseologisms with onomastic component existing in English form a unique scientific system in terms of national-cultural aspects. Since most of them were formed on the basis of the mentality, outlook, customs and traditions of the English people, the names included in these units express the peculiarities of this nation only. At the same time, it should be noted that among them there are also names reflecting general cultural, universal aspects (*«the tower of Babel»*, *«Вавилонская башня»*; *«Sodom and Gomorrah»*, *«Содом и Гоморра»*; *«Aesopian language»*, *«Эзоповский язык»*, *«Эзон тили»*).

A.V.Urazmetova, studying linguocultural aspects of phraseologisms with a toponymic component, divides them into 2 groups in terms of the reflection of culture in phraseologisms:

- 1) national-cultural phraseologisms;
- 2) phraseological phraseological expressions that have arisen on the basis of cultural interaction [14; P. 102].

Phraseological expressions with onomastic component arise on the basis of social and historical phenomena, folk oral culture, everyday life and customs and are associated with the distant past and historical events, customs and traditions of a particular people. Phraseological expressions with onomastic component have roots in the national culture, and their national-cultural specificity can be revealed only with the help of cross-cultural and etymological analysis methods. Let us try to illustrate these aspects with some examples.

In English: **“to go to Canossa”** is used in the sense of *“to give up one’s pride in recognition of defeat”*, *“to humble oneself before someone”*, and in 1077 in Canossa the German emperor Henry IV knelt before Pope Gregory VII, admitting his defeat. This phraseology originated from the above historical event [8; P. 17]; **“Brummagen button”** (an obsolete phraseology) - *“counterfeit coin”* (especially copper coin). “Brummagen” is a corruption of “Birmingham”, where silver coins were counterfeited in the 17th century. The expression is related to the name Birmingham (a historical place) and has fallen out of use today [8; P. 107]; **“to be born within the sound of Bow-bell”** means *“to be born in London”*.



In the center of London is the church of St. Mary-le-Bow, which is famous throughout the country for its bells, so this expression translates as *“to be born in London”* [8; P. 14]; **“have kissed the Blarney stone”** - *“to be a flatterer, a flatterer”*. In Ireland there is a big stone in front of Blarney Castle, and according to English folk beliefs, a person who kissed this stone will acquire the ability to flatter, to flatter, and the origin of the phraseology is connected with this legend [14; P. 104]; **“go for a Burton”** - *“die”, “close your eyes to the world”, “disappear without a trace”, “go bankrupt”*. **“Burton”** is a small town in Staffordshire that produces beer. This phraseology was first used by British pilots during World War II to honor their fallen comrades-in-arms [8; P. 16]; **“Kilkenny Cats”** - *“ferocious enemies”*. In the 17th century, a fierce war broke out between the towns of Kilkenny and Irishtown, after which both towns were turned into ruins. The phraseology was derived from this historical event [14; P. 104-105]; **“London particular”** - *“thick fog”*, this phraseological phrase was first introduced by Charles Dickens [8; P. 47]; **“to grin (smile) like a Cheshire cat”** - *“to smile like a Cheshire cat”*, the Cheshire region is famous for its delicious cheeses, and one of the company’s cheeses featured the head of a smiling cat, which became the company’s logo. Although this phraseological phraseology appeared much earlier, it became popular after the publication of Lewis Carroll’s book *Alice in Wonderland* [8; P. 16]; **“Tweedledum and Tweedledee”** - *“similar to each other”, “similar as two drops of water”*, this phraseology was introduced by J. Byron (1692-1763), and came from the names of two similar schools of music in the XVIII century [8; P. 71]; **“Canterbury story”** - *“long boring story”*, came from the title of **“Canterbury Tales”** by D. Chaucer [8; P. 17]; **“send someone to Coventry”** - *“to stone someone, to persecute”*, Coventry is a small district in one of England’s central cities. The people of Coventry hated the soldiers so much that they immediately stoned a woman when they saw her talking to them. The people of the town had no contact with the soldiers sent to Coventry. According to Clarendon’s **“History of the Great Restoration and the English Civil War”**, during the English Revolution, Coventry was a prison for ardent royalists (supporters of the monarchy) [8; P. 20]. The phraseology was formed on the basis of the above-mentioned customs of the inhabitants of Coventry County. **“Gretna Green (Scotch) marriage”** -



“marriage between teenager”, **Gretna Green** is a small village on the border between England and Scotland. Marriage between teenagers was legal in Scotland until 1969. It was common for young lovers to elope to this village to get married [8; P. 32]. **“People North of Watford”** – *“backward people”* (about the inhabitants of Watford). The people of London and the surrounding area regarded their behaviour as typical of white people, and looked down on the people living in the north of Watford for their backward customs and narrow-minded outlook. People from the north of England and the capital traditionally considered themselves to be of a higher class than those who lived in other regions [14; P. 106]; **“Harley Street”** - *“doctors”*, *“the medical world of London”*, **Harley Street** is where the hospitals of London’s famous doctors are located. Hence the phraseology [8; P. 33]; **“Custom or Kent”** - *“to divide something equally”*, according to the customs of the Kent region, after the death of a father, in the absence of a will, the land was widely distributed among the brothers. This phraseological phrase is related to the customs of the people of the Kent region [8; P. 20]; **“Billy Bunter”** is used in the meanings of *“glutton”*, *“fat”*, *“naughty teenager”*. The name in this phraseological phrase comes from the name of a schoolboy, the hero of the stories by Fr. Richards [9; P. 82]; **“the British lion”** - literally *“the British lion”* - is the national symbol of Great Britain, depicted on the national coat of arms. This phraseological phrase first appears in John Dryden’s story **“The Leopard and the Deer”** (1687) [9; P. 436].

Among the phraseological units of the Russian language there are onomastic units that are used only within this language and reflect the culture, worldview, traditions, religion, history and everyday life of the Russian people. For example, the expression **“where Makar did not chase his calves”** means *“very far away”*, *“where no man has ever set foot”*. The expression is interpreted through the legend of a shepherd named Makar. There are two views on this phraseological unit:

1) In many Russian proverbs Makar is portrayed as an ordinary poor, unhappy man. For example, **“everything falls on poor Makar”**, **“no Makar’s hand is friends with the boyars”**. **Makar** is a poor, landless peasant forced to graze other people's calves in remote, deserted places [3; P. 361-362].



2) Makar is a shepherd leading calves to a place of happiness. According to church hymns, a calf is an animal sacrificed to God for sins [7; P. 46-89].

So, Makar is a purely Russian name, and its appearance in the phraseological phrase was formed on the basis of the above-mentioned real reality, referring to the helpless, hard life of the Russian peasant in ancient times.

The expression **“Here’s Yuriev Day for you, grandmother”** in Uzbek means *“to despair of something or an event”, “to turn away with all sincerity”*. This phraseological phrase originated in connection with the Old Russian traditions of the Middle Ages. In those times peasants could pass from one nobleman to another. According to the law issued by Ivan the Terrible (1497), such ‘transitions’ had to take place only after the end of agricultural work, namely a week before St. George’s Day (the old style 26 November - the day when St. George the Great, the patron saint of landowners, was celebrated) or a week later. Seven days before St. George’s Day, according to the law, the issues of contractual benefits for peasants and bonuses for elderly peasants for their labour while working for a nobleman-owner were considered. According to folk legends, the nobles of Kostroma and other provinces prepared strong beer on the eve of St George’s Day and served it to the peasants. Naive peasants who spent the holiday drunk and woke up the next day regretted that they had not exercised their right in time. The landlords, in need of labour force, took peasants from each other by deceit. In 1581 Ivan IV temporarily banned the transfer of peasants to the nobility on Yuryev Day. After the death of Ivan the Terrible, Boris Godunov in 1607 completely banned such “transfers”, and then the peasants were deprived of all their rights and attached to the landlords for life. It was on the basis of this historical process that the expression **“here’s Yuryev Day for you, grandmother”** was formed [3; P. 37-38]. Thus, the appearance of the name Yuri in the phraseology is associated with the historical experiences of Russian peasants.

The phraseology **“Belgorod kisel”** also reflects the wise character of the pure Russian people. As it is known, one of the favourite drinks of Russians in Russia is kisel, and the creation of the legendary kisel is connected with the XII century. This information is also reflected in the chronicle **“Tale of Bygone Years”**. Some time ago Bajans surrounded the city of Belgorod and besieged its walls for a long



time. Meanwhile, the besiegers were running out of food. Then an old man suggested to boil a kisel from the rest of flour and bran, pour it into a wooden well, and put a jar with honey next to it. A representative of the Bajans was then summoned to negotiate with them. The deputies are amazed to see a 'bottomless well' in Belgorod, which provides the population with food, and consider it a miracle. After that, the Bajanists realise that it is impossible to save the city by starvation and retrea [3; P. 261]. It is thought that through the toponym Belgorod, used in the above phraseology, one can get acquainted with the historical events of the Russian people. Belgorod is a city located in Russia. Moreover, thanks to the wise measure taken by the wise elder, the inhabitants of the city were saved from the oppression of the Bajan people.

The expression **“(Oh) heavy (you,) hat Monomakh!”** is equivalent to *“heavy labour”*, *“responsibility”*. Vladimir Monomakh was a great tsar of Kiev who ruled in the 12th century. He did much to preserve the integrity of Ancient Russia: he united the forces of tsars and warriors in an attack on the Kipchaks. According to legend, having become a great tsar, Vladimir Monomakh wanted to conquer Byzantium. When he approached its borders, the emperor himself rewarded him with state insignia. Among them was a royal crown. This crown was very heavy, as it was trimmed with marten fur, decorated with precious stones and a christening sign. Later it became known as **“the cap of Monomakh”**. Before Peter the Great, this crown was a symbol of royal power and was placed on the heads of tsars during coronation ceremonies [1; P. 409]. So the national character of the above phraseological expression is connected with ancient customs, traditional for Russians.

The expression **“From a kopeck candle (candle) Moscow burned down”** is about the fact that *“even the smallest words or things can lead to big trouble”*. According to annals of Russian history, the city of Moscow was burnt in 1493 from candles in Nikolayevsky temple in Kumlyuk, and on 29 May 1737 from candles in Miloslavskikh's house. The fire even reached the Kremlin Square. Thus, Moscow, the heart of all Russia, burned because of an ordinary candle. It is because of this historical event that the above phraseological expression was formed in the people [16].



The above analysed phraseological expressions with onomastic component in the Russian language belong to Slavic peoples and reflect such features as pure character, historical experience and ancient traditions of the Russian people.

As can be seen from the examples analysed above, most phraseological expressions with onomastic component are related to people's everyday life, their customs, traditions, historical experience and religious worldviews. Phraseological expressions with onomastic component used in English and Russian languages attract attention by their historical basis. Onomastic units participating in phraseological phrases mainly express mobile, symbolic and figurative meanings. In addition, these names reflect the national-cultural peculiarities of a particular nation.

In conclusion, we can say that, despite the fact that the socio-historical conditions for the emergence of phraseological phrases with national character have long been lost, these units are still used today. As a result, their original form has been formalised with new meaning and content. Based on the analysis of examples, we have witnessed that most of the phraseological phrases with onomastic component in their composition emerged in national-cultural conditions and enriched the phraseological layer of the language. After all, such phraseological phrases are born on the basis of expressing the everyday way of life of the people, values, traditions, spiritual experiences depicted in oral literature, nationality, as well as dreams and aspirations of today and tomorrow.

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