PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS CONTAINING THE COMPONENT “HOUSEHOLD ITEMS” IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

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Abstract

The study of phraseological units of different languages, their comparison and analysis allows linguists to identify the cultural and linguistic characteristics of different peoples, learn more about the mentality of a particular people and create a linguistic picture of the world. In this context, phraseological units containing the component “household items” are of particular linguistic value since everyday life is the keeper of the historical memory of culture and is characterized by stability and relatively slow change. The sphere of everyday life contains universal and ethnic values. It is reflected in the cultural and linguistic picture of the world through concepts formed in the process of human cognition of the world on the basis of both collective and individual experience. The picture of the world is specific to each culture separately and differs from other cultures. This article presents the analysis of phraseological units with the component “household items”. Within the framework of the study, the linguo-cultural features of phraseological units in English and French are noted, their comparison and analysis is carried out. The study allows the authors of the article to draw a number of conclusions reflecting the main similarities and differences in the semantics of phraseological units with the component “household items”, expressing the character of a person, in English and French.

Keywords: Phraseological units, household items, cultural and linguistic peculiarities, comparative analysis, language, culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

The way of life, the organization of everyday life of any nation is of great interest to linguists who conduct research in the field of the linguistic picture of the world.

Phraseology as a linguistic phenomenon is universal, for phraseological units are characteristic of all languages. However, in each language it has its own special forms and expressions. Extra-linguistic factors that play an essential role in the formation and development of phraseological units determine their national character.

In everyday life, the affinity between language and culture is clearly manifested. The study of phraseological units with the component “Household Items” is necessary for understanding the essence of the original
character of the country, individual factors of history, therefore household items are reflected not only in the vocabulary of the language, but also in its phraseological fund. They are the keepers of the national flavor and capture the unique linguistic picture of the world of any nation.

Everyday life is an integral part of our life and one of the most important components of any society. Everyday life is the keeper of the historical memory of the people, therefore, the imprint of the mores, customs and traditions of the ethnus, class, national, ideological differences, the position of women in society, etc. is imposed on it.

Everyday culture to a greater extent contains universal and ethnic values, which, in turn, are self-sufficient. Using the values of everyday culture, a person receives guidelines for life in a given society. Such values arise in the process of everyday practice, do not need clarification and are taken for granted by the carriers of this culture.

Phraseological units with a component “Household Items” are found in any language. The concept of “everyday life” is very broad, therefore in our work we will conduct a study of phraseological units that reflect the character of a person. The anthropocentric approach of our research is explained by the fact that in the process of cognizing the surrounding world, a person cognizes himself. The results of this knowledge are stored in the lexical fund of the language, and, therefore, in its phraseological fund.

A person has versatile interests, therefore, the analysis of a person's character is carried out in several directions. In our study, we consider the relationship of a person with other members of society, his attitude to work, money, family, love, death and disease, to the way of life, as well as external characteristics and some character traits.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Thus, the methodological basis of this study is represented by the works of Russian and foreign researchers.


3. METHODOLOGY

In this work, phraseological units containing the component “Household Items” in the English and French languages were analyzed. In the course of the work 285 English and 97 French phraseological units with the household elements were selected from the above lexicographic sources, which were analyzed and classified.

In the course of the research the following methods were used: the method of analyzing dictionary definitions, the method of component analysis (analysis of semantic components and figurative meanings of lexemes), the method of contextual analysis of the meanings of lexical units, the method of comparative analysis of lexical units and the quantitative assessment of the results obtained.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 The Meaning and Functioning of the Component “Household Items” in Phraseological Units of the English Language

Phraseological units with the component “Household Items” in the English language reflect the national picture of the world of the English people. They assess various traits of a person's character, family and love relationships, as well as relationships between people within society.

Phraseological units of the English language express a certain distinctive feature of a person's character:

1) External data of a person;
2) The mental qualities of a person;
3) Death or near-death condition;
4) Financial situation;
5) Hospitality;
6) Luck and luck;
7) Perseverance and dedication;
8) Eloquence;
9) Attitude to work and work;
10) Family relationships;
11) Attitude to love;
12) Attitude towards other members of society.

Among phraseological units describing the external data of a person, phraseological units with negative connotations prevail: “a bag of bones” (lit. a bag of bones), “like a side of a house” (literally like a wall of a house). The height of a person can be determined by the size of his shoes, therefore, the phraseological unit “in one’s shoes” (literally in boots) means a certain height of a person.

In the group of phraseological units characterizing the absence of human mental qualities, units with a negative assessment prevail. When describing low mental abilities of a person, phraseological units are used with such components as “brush”: “as daft as brush” (lit. stupid as a brush); “Clock”: “crazy as two-bob watch” (literally crazy as a clock with two pendulums), “silly as two-bob watch” (literally stupid as a clock with two pendulums). Human insight is metaphorically compared to the gift of seeing through walls: “see into a wall.” In the expression “sharp as a needle”, sharp intelligence and resourcefulness are compared to the point of a needle.

The phraseological fund of the English language is characterized by the presence of a layer of phraseological units that characterize the death or dying state of a person. The components of such phraseological units are the words “bed”: “die in bed” (lit. to die in bed), “take to one’s bed” (lit. to get used to the bed); “Door”: “at death’s door” (lit. at the door of death), “as dead as doornail” (lit. dead as a door nail), “every door may be shut” (lit. every door can be closed).

In the group of phraseological units characterizing a person’s financial situation, phraseological units with a negative assessment prevail (75 %). The component “a pocket” is one of the phraseological units with a positive connotation: “be in pocket” (lit. to be in your pocket) and with a negative connotation: “put one’s hand in one’s pocket” (lit. put your hand in your pocket), “hit smb’s pockets” (lit. to beat pockets). To give up your shirt means to be left with nothing, to fall into poverty: “lose one’s shirt” (literally, to lose your shirt), “not have a shirt” (lit. not to have a shirt).

According to the analysis of phraseological units characterizing human hospitality, in this group of phraseological units, units with a negative assessment prevail (64 %). The composition of these phraseological units includes the component “a door”: “darken smb’s door” (lit. to blacken someone’s door), “show the door” (lit. to show the door), “slam the door in smb’s face” (lit. to slam door in front of the face), “close the door on” (lit. to close the door), “force an open door” (lit. to push an open door), “turn smb out of doors” (lit. to kick someone out the door). The hospitality of the owners is evidenced by the open door of the house: “throw open the door to smb” (lit. to open the door in front of someone).

Luck and luck are reflected in 80 % of phraseological units with the component “Household Items” belonging to this group. The phraseologism “be saved by the bell” (lit. to be saved by the bell) originally referred to boxing and characterized a boxer who escaped a knockout due to the sounded gong. Currently, this phraseological unit characterizes a person saved at the last minute thanks to outside intervention.

Perseverance and dedication are the hallmarks of the English people; therefore the phraseological fund of the English language contains a large number of phraseological units with this connotation (87.5%). For example, “take off the gloves”, “roll one’s sleeves up”, “do one’s homework” (lit. doing homework).

PU, characterizing the lack of eloquence in a person, often have a negative assessment (80 %). Slander and gossip are strongly condemned by the British: “talk through one’s hat” (literally talking through a hat), “chew the rag” (lit. chewing a rag), “filing dirt enough and some will stick” (lit. throwing more dirt and what – somehow it will stick).

PU that characterize a person's attitude to work have both a positive (42 %) and a negative assessment (58%). Phraseologisms “keep the pot boiling” (lit. to keep the pot boiling) and “earn one’s salt” (lit. to earn your salt) mean making a living and feeding a family. Idleness is strongly condemned in phraseological units:
“shoe a goose” (lit. to put shoes on a goose), “look for a needle in a bottle of hay” (lit. to look for a needle in a haystack).

Family life is also reflected in phraseological units with the “Household Items” component. PU with a negative assessment prevail over units with a positive assessment (62.5 % and 37.5 %, respectively). The husband’s dependence on his wife is strongly condemned and is expressed in phraseological units: “tied to smb’s apron strings” (lit. tied to the apron), “be pinned to wife’s apron strings” (literally being pinned to the wife’s apron). The expression “wash dirty linen at public” has the opposite meaning. “Not to wash dirty linen in public”, to keep family secrets. The phraseological unit “wear the pants” (lit. wearing trousers) means to be the master of the house and has historical significance. Previously, trousers were considered an article of clothing only for men, a man established order in the house, and his wife obeyed him. In this case, the phraseological unit indicates that a woman is in charge of the house, i.e. she took on the role of host, wearing men’s trousers.

For centuries, society condemned unequal marriages when one of the spouses was older in age. The phraseological foundation of the English language reflected this phenomenon: “rob the cradle” (lit. to steal the cradle) means to get married or marry someone much younger than you.

The attitude of a person to love is also considered phraseological units with the component “Household Items”. For example, the expression “cupboard love” (literally, pantry love) means selfish love, “carry a torch” (lit. to carry a lantern) means to love someone unrequitedly and suffer from this love. However, all life’s inconveniences do not interfere with true love: “love in a cottage” (lit. love in a cottage) means “with a sweetheart there is paradise in a hut”.

In the group of phraseological units characterizing a person’s attitude to other members of society, phraseological units with a positive connotation prevail (74 %). Phraseological expressions “tarred with the same brush” (lit. smeared with one brush), “be in on the ground floor” (lit. to be on the ground floor), “hold sticks with smb” (lit. to support sticks with someone) mean the same social status of people. In order to get into the position of a person, you need to put on his shoes: “be in smb’s shoes” (lit. to be in someone’s boots), “fill smb’s shoes” (lit. to take someone’s boots).

The red carpet symbolically characterizes the good attitude of a person to another person: “the red carpet” (lit. red carpet), “roll out the red carpet for smb” (lit. to unfold the red carpet for someone).

Phraseological units of the English language reflect the unique national picture of the world of the English people, express the attitude of society to work, family, love, money, characterize certain human traits and norms of behavior.

4.2 The Meaning and Functioning of the Component “Household Items” in the Phraseological Units of the French Language

The national picture of the world of the French people is reflected in the phraseological fund of the French language. Various spheres of everyday culture characterize the appearance, character, social position of a person in society and relationships with other members of this society.

Phraseological units of the French language express a certain distinctive feature of a person’s character:

1) External data of a person;
2) Mental abilities;
3) Death or near-death condition of a person;
4) Demeanor in society;
5) Financial situation;
6) Hospitality;
7) Luck and luck;
8) Perseverance and dedication;
9) Eloquence;
10) Attitude to work and work;
11) Commodity-money relations;
12) Attitude to alcohol;
Relations with other members of society.

External data of a person are most often transmitted by phraseological units with a negative assessment: “blanc comme un mur” (lit. white as a wall), “sale comme un pot à colle” (lit. dirty like a pot of glue). The expression “grand comme un mouchoir de poche” literally is translated as “large as a handkerchief,” but means “small, the size of a palm”.

In the group of phraseological units characterizing mental abilities, units with a negative assessment of the absence of mind prevail. A person's mental abilities are compared to a pot, a ladder, a basket, a hat, i.e. mean a low level of intelligence: “ignorant comme un pot” (lit. ignorant like a pot), “avoir l'esprit de l'escalier” (lit. have the mind of a ladder), “panier percé” (lit. a holey basket), “c’est bonnet blanc et blanc bonnet” (lit. this is a white hat and a white hat). The ladder is part of another phraseological unit that has the opposite meaning. “Après lui, il faut tirer l’échelle” literally means “it is necessary to remove the ladder after him”, it describes an intelligent person who occupies a high position in society, i.e. to reach his level, you need to climb the stairs.

Death or dying state of a person is characterized by phraseological units, which include the word “les bottes” (“boots”): “y laisser ses bottes” (lit. leave one’s boots there), “graisser ses bottes” (lit. to grease one’s boots).

In the group of phraseological units characterizing a person's financial situation, phraseological units with a positive connotative meaning prevail (67 %): “avoir de l’argent plein les poches” (lit. to have a pocket full of money). Financial well-being is determined by the presence of bread on the table, therefore the phraseological unit “avoir du pain sur la planche” (lit. to have bread on the board) means to have supplies for a rainy day. The expression “porter le bonnet vert” (lit. to wear a green hat) describes a debtor and a bankrupt and is associated with the old French custom of putting a green hat on a debtor to demonstrate his dependent position to the rest of society.

It should be noted that phraseological units characterizing human hospitality often include the words “table”: “tenir la table ouverte” (lit. to keep the table open), “se tenir bien à table” (lit. to keep well at the table), “mettre couteaux sur la table” (lit. to put knives on the table), “courir les tables” (lit. to run on tables) and “door”: “mettre quelqu’un à la porte” (lit. to kick someone out for door), “trouver la porte close” (lit. to keep the door closed). The ratio of PU with positive and negative assessments is almost the same (55 % and 45 %, respectively).

Among phraseological units characterizing luck and luck, phraseological units with a positive assessment (75 %) prevail: “avoir de la corde de pendu dans sa poche” (lit. to have a hanging man’s rope in his pocket), “tirer son épingle du jeu” (lit. pull the needle out of the game), “l'affaire est dans le sac” (lit. case in the bag). There are significantly fewer phraseologisms with a negative assessment (25 %): “filer un mauvais cotton” (lit. spinning bad cotton).

French phraseology is characterized by the absence of phraseological units that characterize purposefulness in achieving their goals. Phraseologisms express unwillingness to fight difficulties: “se rendre la corde au cou” (lit. to appear with a noose around your neck), “battre de sa tête contre un mur” (lit. to beat your head against a wall).

Lack of eloquence in humans is assessed negatively in most phraseological units (71 %). “Casser le sucre sur la tête” (lit. breaking sugar on the head) means gossiping about someone, “vendre la mèche” (lit. selling a lantern) means giving away a secret.

Labour and work are of great importance for every person, therefore idleness and unwillingness to work are strongly condemned by the French people. In the group of phraseological units characterizing a person's attitude to work, phraseological units with a negative connotation prevail (60 %): “rester les mains dans les poches” (literally leave your hands in your pockets), “chercher une aiguille dans une botte de foin” (lit. look for a needle in a haystack). Phraseological units with a positive connotation include the phraseological units “sortir par la belle porte” (lit. go out through the front door), “faire bouillir le pot” (lit. boil a pot).

The phraseological fund of the French language is characterized by the presence of phraseological units describing commodity-money relations, namely the purchase or sale of something dishonestly: “acheter chat en poche” (lit. to buy a pig in a poke), “faire danser l'anse du panier” (lit. to make the basket handle dance).

The group of phraseological units expressing attitude to alcohol is not numerous. Such phraseological units include the word “table” when describing the degree of intoxication of a person: “mettre sous la table” (lit. place under the table), “rester sous la table” (lit. stay under the table). The state of intoxication is metaphorically compared to hitting a bottle: “avoir un coup de bouteille” (lit. having a hit from a bottle).
PU with the component “Household Items” express the relationship between the members of a given society. For example, the phraseological unit “dîner à la table de son maître” (lit. to dine at the table with your owner) means to be under the wife’s heel, “disputer sur la pointe d’une aiguille” (lit. to argue over the tip of a needle) means quarrel over trifles.

Phraseological units with a component “Household Items” in French reflect certain traits of a person's character, both positively and negatively. They characterize a person’s attitude to work, family, money, alcohol, as well as the relationship between members of society. Phraseologisms convey the unique national picture of the world of the French people and reflect the history, culture, rules and norms of behavior in society.

5. CONCLUSION

Household items are reflected in the phraseological fund of the language, therefore, they reflect the linguistic picture of the world of a certain people and the values characteristic of all mankind. Phraseological units with a component “Household Items” express a person's character from various angles, consider a certain character trait and evaluate it. The English language is characterized by the predominance of phraseological units with negative connotations. A positive assessment prevails in the groups of phraseological units describing the purposefulness and attitude of people among themselves, in the remaining groups of phraseological expressions, phraseological units with a negative assessment prevail. This phenomenon characterizes the linguistic picture of the world of the English people.

The French language is characterized by the predominance of phraseological units with a positive assessment in the group of phraseological units describing a person's financial situation, luck and luck, while there are no phraseological units that characterize perseverance and purposefulness. French society sharply criticizes the excessive use of alcoholic beverages, and this negative attitude is reflected in the phraseological fund of the French language. A specific feature of French phraseological units is the presence of a group of phraseological units that characterize commodity-money relations, namely, cheating when buying and selling something. Such characteristic features form a unique linguistic picture of the world of the French people.

REFERENCE LIST