

PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH FAUNA

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Abstract: *The article explores the least studied and, thus, the most disputable and variable aspect in describing phraseological units, which is semantics. The research is based on the semantic and grammatical analysis of phraseological units with a zoonymic component in the English language collected by means of continuous sampling from the English-Russian phraseological dictionaries by professor A.V. Kunin. This is an essential part in the long process of compiling a dictionary of phraseological units.*

Key words: *phraseological units, linguistics, fauna, idioms, name of animals, animate and inanimate, world picture, zoonymic component.*

Phraseology (derived from Greek word – expression and logic) is one of the main branch of linguistics and a source of knowledge of any language as a developing system, which reflects and carefully stores the centuries-old skill of the working and cultural people, customs, traditions, and religious views.

Phraseological units are defined as a lexicalized reproducible bilexemic or polylexemic word group in common uses, that has comparative syntactic and semantic stability, can be idiomatized and carry on combinations. Moreover, they may have an emphatic or intensifying function in a text.

Lexicalized words groups of the language are called phraseological units. They have their polylexical form and single meaning.

The main role in the formation of the general phraseological value belongs to a special component, which is included in the structure of the phraseological unit. One of these components is the fauna. The transfer of the name by similarity is one of the

leading ways of forming phraseological units. By fauna we mean a common name denoting an animal (dog, cat, wolf, fox, etc.). In most phraseological unit with component-fauna there is a type of metaphorical transfer, with which uses animal names to describe characteristics animals, the designation of one or another of his qualities, features of appearance, character, mental abilities.

Turning to the study of the fauna as part of a phraseological unit, it is necessary note that the metaphorical nature of morphic phraseological units inherent in it subjective-evaluative connotation, the specifics of their semantic parameters and syntactic structure is largely due to their referential sphere, the basis of which is implicitly anthropocentrism expressed in them as a manifestation of ancient folklore traditions of attributing certain human traits to animals character. In the ethnic culture of different peoples, phraseological units, including the names of animals are, first of all, statements about a person, his spiritual and social features. For phraseological units semantically oriented towards animals, but metaphorically associated with a person, acquires special significance connotative meaning, and the connotation can be considered as additional information in relation to the significative denotative meaning. Cultural and national self-consciousness, the worldview itself is reflected in images of phraseological units characteristic of a given people.

For example:

a sly dog - a man of his own mind

to drink like fish - drink a lot, get drunk

a small fly - small fry

knee high to a grasshopper - can't see from the ground

and fat cat is a fat cat, i.e. important person

Phraseological units that denoting animate or inanimate objects, and it is expressed in their lexicographical description:

the cat's meow "someone or something wonderful or remarkable";

a Trojan horse "someone or something intended to defeat or subvert from within usually by deceptive means";

a sacred cow “a person or thing that is never criticized, laughed at, or insulted even if it deserves such treatment”;

the big bad wolf “threatening or sinister person or thing”, etc.

The main grammatical component is usually expressed by such zoonyms as horse, cow, duck, fly, wolf which supplies the semantic structure of phraseological units.

Units denoting concrete things of actual reality; there have been units with the zoonym component denoting concrete things of actual reality though it is not typical of phraseological units:

a dead dog “a thing of no use or value”;

the iron horse “a railroad locomotive”;

the lion’s mouth “a dangerous place”,

a blind tiger / pig “(informal, archaic) an illegal bar

It is well known that the significant role of animals in the picture of the world is adequately reflected in the linguistic picture of the world. Emotive phraseological units with a zoonym component, like this has been repeatedly shown in our work, represent a special layer language.

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