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СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ БРИТАНСКИХ И АМЕРИКАНСКИХ СОМАТИЧЕСКИХ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЗМОВ

Статья посвящена проблеме выявления национально-культурной специфики в семантике фразеологических единиц, принадлежащих британскому и американскому вариантам английского языка. На основе сопоставительного анализа одной из наиболее многочисленных групп фразеологизмов - с компонентами-соматизмами выделяются и описываются основные виды межвариантных семантических отношений. Особое внимание уделяется факторам, отражающим национально-культурную информацию.

Адрес статьи: www.gramota.net/materials/2/2015/8-3/47.html

Источник

Филологические науки. Вопросы теории и практики

Тамбов: Грамота, 2015. № 8 (50): в 3-х ч. Ч. III. С. 165-168. ISSN 1997-2911.

Адрес журнала: www.gramota.net/editions/2.html

Содержание данного номера журнала: www.gramota.net/materials/2/2015/8-3/

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УДК 811.153/81'373

Филологические науки

The article is devoted to the problem of revealing national-cultural information in the semantics of phraseologisms belonging to the British and American variants of the English language. On the basis of the comparative analysis of somatic phraseologisms, one of the most numerous groups in the British and American phraseology, two basic types of interviant semantic relations are differentiated and described. Special attention is paid to the factors showing the national-cultural information they contain.

Key words and word combinations: somatic phraseologism; Briticism; Americanism; national-cultural specificity; interviant semantic relations; equivalent unit; non-equivalent unit.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN SOMATIC PHRASEOLOGISMS[©]

The problem of regional variation of the English language has long been the matter of heated discussion. Its main variants – British and American have differences in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. The two nations using these variants are characterized by their peculiarities in social, political and economic life. They have their own history, culture and traditions. A special place in reflecting of all these peculiarities belongs to phraseological units or phraseologisms.

This article is considered to be one of the experiences of interviant comparative investigation made on the material of the most widespread thematic group of phraseologisms existing in British and American English – somatic (from Greek “body”) phraseologisms. Its aim is to show the new results on the problem of revealing the unique and universal features in the semantics of phraseologisms belonging to the main variants of the English language.

The basic units of our investigation are **phraseologisms** or stable combinations of words having a completely or partially transferred meaning, reproduced in speech as ready-made units [7, p. 8]. The phraseological units under analysis contain **somatic components** defined as stylistically neutral words related to the organism of human beings and animals which are not exclusively used as medical or anatomic terms. Following the so called anatomic approach [1; 2; 6; 9] we chose 56 somatic words denoting: *parts and organs of the body* (arm, nose, head, leg, tail, etc.), *elements of the systems of the organism* (blood, brain, liver, lung, heart, etc.), *bony and tectorial structures* (backbone, skin, hair, hoof, etc.), some *manifestations of the organism* (tear, sweat).

The research of phraseoactivity of the chosen somatisms allowed us to make a conclusion that the names of the outer parts and organs of the body such as *eye, mouth, nose, head, finger, leg, etc.* are the most productive in the formation of British and American phraseologisms.

We proceed from the fact that the two variants of the English language make up two crossed systems or Microsystems coming into the Macrosystem of the common literary language, forming the so called “common core” [13]. Thus, the main units of our comparative analysis are:

- British units or Briticisms (Br);
- American units or Americanisms (Am);
- General English units or “common core” (GE).

Briticisms and **Americanisms** are considered in this article as phraseologisms, originating or peculiar to the British or American English, performing the functions of nominating the universal or specific (national-cultural) phenomena for this or that variant: tread one’s toes (Br) “to hurt smb’s feelings” [19], have square eyes (Br) “to watch TV a lot” [14], Black Hand (Am) “black hand (the name of the famous American gangsters’ group having the emblem of a hand)” [8], bad mouth (Am) “evil or slanderous talk (esp. among Black speakers)” [4; 18], etc.

It is important to emphasize that from the point of the semantic structure the analyzed British and American somatic phraseological units are mostly monosemantic while their lexical units are characterized by polysemy [13]. It means that the main divergences between the two variants on the phraseological level concern the inventory of these units and not the separate meanings and usages of the same phraseologisms.

The results of our investigation show that more than 50% of the analyzed phraseologisms are stylistically lowered units. They have bright images and in most cases negative character of their semantics: put one’s foot into one’s mouth (Am, **inf**) “to say smth tactless” [15; 17; 19], have two left feet (Br, **sl**) “to be an awkward dancer” [4; 14], feed one’s nose (Am, **sl**) “to breathe in cocaine” [4], get one’s feet muddy (Br, **inf**) “to have problems with law” [4; 18], have a mouth like a cow’s cant (Br, **sl**) “be excessively or indiscreetly talkative” [4; 20], etc.

Phraseologisms belonging to the “common core” (**General English units**) are units that are known and used by both the British and Americans. They are either marked in the dictionaries with “Br, Am” (used in Great Britain and the USA) or have no marks at all. Many of them are international and have numerous equivalents in the other languages: *make big eyes* (**Germ.** große Augen machen, **Fr.** faire de grands yeux, **Rom.** a face ochi mari), *tear one’s*

hair (**Germ.** sich die Haare aufrufen, **Fr.** s'arracher les cheveux, **Sp.** tirarse de los pelos), *throw sand in the eyes* (**Germ.** sand in die Augen streuen, **Fr.** jeter de la poudre aux yeux) (The translation is made by the author of article).

Close inspection of the material allowed us to define two kinds of semantic relations between the units of the comparative analysis.

The first kind of semantic relations is based on the presence of semantic correlates *either* in one of the analyzed variants *or* in their "common core" and is called **intervariant phraseological equivalence**. Its units are characterized by the full or partial coincidence of their plane of content and are considered to be adequate correspondences from the point of view of their sense.

Further analysis revealed three types of oppositions between the British, American and General English units: 1) variant :: variant, 2) variant :: General English unit, 3) variant :: General English unit :: variant.

It is important to say that the most widespread opposition in our material is the second type – **variant :: General English unit**. This can be explained by the universally recognized fact that the General English units outnumber variant units. According to the data obtained, there are 111 British, 198 American and 671 somatic phraseologisms belonging to the "common core" of the two variants. Here are some examples of the second opposition:

(Br) pin one's ears back – (GE) be all ears "to listen attentively" [4; 16; 17];

(Am) keep (have) poker face – (GE) keep (have) a straight face "to have inscrutable face" [8; 16].

Having studied the material from the point of view of the plane of content (their full or partial coincidence of meaning), we found two different types of equivalent semantic correlates – phraseological variants and synonyms.

The highest rate of equivalence of the total phraseological meaning that comprises its denotative, connotative components as well as their inner form or phraseological image belongs to phraseological variants. These units coincide in their meaning and are characterized by the likeness of their images [5]: (Am) get the **big** head – (GE) get the **swelled** head "to peacock, show too much importance" [8; 17], (Br) have green **fingers** – (Am) have a green **thumb** "to be an experienced gardener" [4; 14; 16; 19].

The units of the second type fully coincide in their meaning but have different images. They are generally called absolute synonyms [12]: (Br) keep one's head down – (Am) give smb the shut eye "to have a nap" [15].

It should be noted that the images of some absolute synonyms are based on some cultural-historical peculiarities of the British and American nations. The decoding of these images requires the knowledge of ethno cultural information. Thus, the American phraseologism *give smb the finger* and its British equivalent *put two fingers up* are generally used to express scorn, anger, hate. Their images are based on the two well-known gestures which are considered to be obscene in the British and American linguocultures [19; 21].

According to the data of the statistic analysis, there have been revealed about 83,8% equivalent units in the American variant and 82% units in the British variant. This fact may be explained by the following reasons:

- the British and American somatic phraseologisms belong to the same genetic source – their general English vocabulary;

- their notional systems coincide, that is caused by the community of the phenomena of the surrounding reality.

The second kind of semantic relations is the semantic **nonequivalence** which is defined in this article as the absence of semantic correlates *both* in the phrasicon of the two variants of the English language *and* in their "common core" because they are considered to be the specifically national attribute of the variants. The revealed nonequivalent somatic phraseologisms are presented by two subgroups: realias and lacunas.

The phraseological realias are set expressions that denote objects, actions, phenomena which are specific for the life of one nation and are alien to the other [3].

The revealed British phraseological realias belong to the following groups: names of national food and drinks (bull's eye, dog's nose, horse's neck), names of some periodicals, TV and Radio programs ('Brain of Britain', 'Face to Face'), some informal geographical and administrative names (the Lungs of London, (the) heart of London), names of national symbols (Blood and Guts Nautical), names reflecting the peculiarities of the UK's political system (catch the Speaker's eye).

The American phraseological realias with somatic components are represented by the groups: names of drinks popular in the USA (flip nail, red eye), informal names reflecting regional and dialectal differences of groups of people (mouth full of South, red skin, rough neck), administrative and territorial names, names of states (the Heart of Dixie, Tar Heel State), names of military insignia and awards (Purple Heart), names reflecting the peculiarities of the social-political system of the USA (eyeball to eyeball, brain(s) trust, swallow tail, long tails).

It is important to notice that the national-cultural specific information can also be found in the component structure of the phraseologisms. In some cases this information is contained both in the meaning and in the component structure of phraseologisms. So, the components of these phraseologisms nominate some phenomena, popular in Great Britain and the USA. On the other hand, the meaning of the whole phraseologism may be connected with the social-political structure, history, material and spiritual culture of these countries.

Thus, the British phraseologism *Nelson's blood* "rum" is interesting from the point of its component which is a proper noun (Nelson) and its meaning denoting a famous drink traditionally associated with the British fleet and pirates. In fact, the appearance of this phraseologism is connected with the well-known Trafalgar struggle (1805) in which the British admiral was killed. In order to keep and carry his body to London, it was placed into the barrel of rum. During the long journey the sailors were trying to drink the rum through the pipes [11]. Nowadays Nelson's blood is the name of the popular brand, and the drink itself is the national pride of Great Britain.

Some phraseologisms denote phenomena observable both in Great Britain and America although one variant has certain set expressions nominating these things and the other one has no counterparts. Such “white spots on the semantic map of the language” are usually called **lacunas** [10].

In most cases the appearance of interviant phraseological lacunas is caused not by the difference of the two nations' cultures but *by the absence of necessity* to name these things and phenomena because they can be named in a different way – by lexemes, free word-combinations or even descriptive definitions.

Let us take some American phraseologisms denoting whiskey: scorpion bile (Am., sl.) “whiskey of bad quality” [15; 18], red eye (Am., inf.) “rough, strong, cheap whiskey” [15; 17; 18], a shot in the neck (Am., sl.) “a portion of neat whiskey drunk at a swallow” [4].

If we look at the definitions of these phraseologisms, we may find some qualities of this drink that make these expressions nonequivalent: *of bad quality; rough, strong, cheap; a portion of neat <... > drunk at a swallow*. In fact, these phraseologisms have no British counterparts although the drink itself is also popular in Great Britain and what is more, according to one of the existing versions, it first appeared in Scotland.

Careful consideration of the material allowed us to come to the conclusion that most somatic phraseologisms-lacunae of substantive structure are considered to be the expressive-evaluating nominations characterizing a person by appearance, features of character and specific qualities. The following American phraseologisms have no phraseological equivalents in the British English: big mouth (Am, inf, derog.) “a person who talks too much” [4; 8; 18], blubber gut (Am., inf) “a fat man” [4]. On the other hand, there is no American counterpart of the British phraseologism greedy guts (Br., inf.) “a person who eats too much” [4; 20].

According to the results of the comparative analysis, the number of nonequivalent units in the British and American somatic phraseology is not so big: only 16,2% of American and 18% of British units. However, these phraseologisms help to understand British and American culture, traditions, history and their modern way of life.

The scientific research carried out on the material of the British and American somatic phraseology allows us to state that besides universal information the content of these units also includes unique (national-cultural) information which is found in:

- the denotative meaning of the phraseologism, as it may express some unique phenomena peculiar to the UK or the USA;
- the inner form of the phraseologism that may contain information on the history, culture, political and economic life of the nations using these variants;
- the component structure of the phraseologism.

Thus, we may conclude that the national-cultural information of British and American somatic phraseologisms may be presented both in the plane of form and in the plane of content.

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СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ БРИТАНСКИХ И АМЕРИКАНСКИХ СОМАТИЧЕСКИХ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЗМОВ

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Статья посвящена проблеме выявления национально-культурной специфики в семантике фразеологических единиц, принадлежащих британскому и американскому вариантам английского языка. На основе сопоставительного анализа одной из наиболее многочисленных групп фразеологизмов – с компонентами-соматизмами выделяются и описываются основные виды межвариантных семантических отношений. Особое внимание уделяется факторам, отражающим национально-культурную информацию.

Ключевые слова и фразы: соматический фразеологизм; британизм; американизм; национально-культурная специфика; межвариантные семантические отношения; эквивалентная единица; безэквивалентная единица.

УДК 316.776

Филологические науки

Данная работа посвящена единому информационному пространству стран СНГ и проблемам его формирования. В статье описана и проанализирована структура единого информационного пространства, выявлены его границы, компоненты, функции и характеристики. Процесс трансформации и создания принципиально нового информационного пространства был рассмотрен в развитии. В статье проведен полный анализ статуса русского языка в странах Содружества, рассмотрены законодательные акты в данной сфере, а также деятельность государств по данному направлению. Целью статьи является проведение структурно-функционального анализа единого информационного пространства стран СНГ, описание его структуры, функций, характеристик, а также процессов его формирования и развития.

Ключевые слова и фразы: единое информационное пространство; СНГ; язык; телерадиокомпания «Мир»; постсоветское пространство.

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ПРОБЛЕМЫ ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ ЕДИНОГО ИНФОРМАЦИОННОГО ПРОСТРАНСТВА В СТРАНАХ СНГ[©]

Распад СССР в 1991 году затронул каждую из входящих в Союз страну и оказал влияние на многие сферы жизни их народов. Постсоветская эпоха поставила перед странами образовавшегося СНГ новые проблемы и вопросы. Одной из важнейших задач внешней политики стран-союзниц Содружества Независимых Государств в целом и Российской Федерации в частности стало укрепление культурных, языковых и этнических связей между народами. Иными словами, новая эпоха доказала необходимость создания единого информационного пространства стран СНГ, и значение и актуальность данной задачи в современных условиях невозможно недооценивать.

На настоящий момент работа по формированию единого информационного пространства (ЕИП) стран СНГ возложена на Региональное Содружество в области связи (РСС) и, в частности, на Координационный совет государств – участников СНГ по информатизации, деятельность которого регламентируется двумя документами: Регламентом Координационного совета государств-участников СНГ по информатизации при Региональном содружестве в области связи и Положением о Комиссии по информационной безопасности при Координационном совете государств-участников СНГ по информатизации при РСС.

Несмотря на существование организаций, призванных сохранять и укреплять социальные, культурные и языковые связи между народами и бывшими республиками СССР, очевидным является и наличие некоего информационного вакуума в СМИ. Иными словами, среди СМИ на постсоветском пространстве долгое время не существовало того ресурса, который был призван отвечать информационным запросам стран СНГ, соблюдать важнейшие принципы информационного сотрудничества между странами и при этом следовать принципам дружественности и толерантности, сохранять баланс интересов и обеспечивать национальный информационный суверенитет государств [16]. Таким СМИ призвана стать Межгосударственная телерадиокомпания «Мир».

Несмотря на политические и экономические противоречия, жители стран СНГ по-прежнему объединены не только историческим прошлым, но и общей территорией проживания.