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PHRASEOLOGISMS WITH PROPER NAMES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
(etymology and context)

This article presents an analysis of the functioning of the proper names (anthroponyms, toponyms, mythonyms) in the phraseological units of the English language. The semantics of phraseological units with the proper name component comprises cultural connotative meaning that is essential and most clearly dominating. Teaching phraseological units enhances the development of linguistic and extra-linguistic skills of students. Students should learn phraseologisms in the original context backed up by historical and cultural comments that reveal the origin and etymology. In the paper examples of the use of idioms are derived from the texts of British National Corpus and online translator Reverso Context.

Key words: phraseological units, connotative meaning, etymology, corpus of texts, concordance

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Ағылшын тіліндегі жалқы есімдері бар фразеологизмдер
(этимологиясы және пайдалану контекстері)

Бұл мақалада ағылшын тілінің фразеологиялық бірліктері құрылымында кездесетін жалқы есімдердің (антропонимдер, топонимдер, мифонимдер) атқаратын рөлі қарастырылған. Жалқы есімдері бар фразеологиялар семантикасында ұлттық-мәдени коннотативті компоненттер өте маңызды болып табылады және айқын көрінеді. Фразеологиялық бірліктерді оқыту студенттердің лингвистикалық және қосымша тілдік дағдыларын дамытуға ықпал етеді. Фразеологиялық бірліктердің мағыналарын оқыту барысында фразеологияның пайда болуы мен маңыздылығын анықтай отырып, тарихи-мәдени ерекшеліктеріне назар аудару керек, сонымен қатар студенттерге күнделікті қолданыстағы контекст мысалдарын көрсету керек. Біздің зерттеуімізде қолданылған идиомдар Британ Ұлттық Корпусының және ReversoContext онлайн аудармашы бағдарламасының мәтіндері негізінде құрастырылған.

Түйін сөздер: фразеологизмдер, коннотативті мағына, этимология, мәтіннің құрылымы, конкорданс.

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Фразеологизмы с именем собственным в английском языке
(этимология и контексты употребления)

В данной статье представлен анализ функционирования имени собственного (антропонимы, топонимы, мифонимы) в составе фразеологической единицы английского языка. В семантике фразеологизмов с именем собственным национально-культурный коннотативный компонент

является весьма важным и наиболее ярко проявляется. Преподавание фразеологизмов способствует развитию лингвистических и экстра-лингвистических навыков студентов. При изучении значений фразеологизмов необходимо делать историко-культурные комментарии, раскрывая одновременно происхождение и значение фразеологизма, а также предоставить студентам контексты употребления живого языка. В нашем исследовании примеры использования идиом составлены на основе текстов из Британского национального корпуса и онлайн-переводчика Reverso Context.

Ключевые слова: фразеологизмы, коннотативное значение, этимология, корпус текстов, конкорданс.

Introduction

In recent research on foreign language acquisition there is a strong tendency to teach culture and language in symbiosis, for culture is seen as the natural environment of the language, and these two categories cannot be treated and learnt apart.

Wierzbicka (2007) states that every language has the words with positive or negative value that influence people's attitudes and decisions. Wierzbicka quotes Stubbs (2001) «our knowledge of a language is not only a knowledge of individual words, but of their predictable combinations, and of the cultural knowledge which these combinations often encapsulate» (Wierzbicka, 2007, p. 49).

She presents a description of the English adjective *reasonable* and refers to Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary. She wants to find the exact meanings of *reasonably* in different collocations: to behave unreasonably, to have unreasonably broad shoulders, be unreasonably angry or unreasonably obsessed. In this light, she turns to cultural underpinnings, because the emergence of the modern concept of 'reasonableness' is linked with the British Enlightenment.

Kennedy (2008) demonstrates the important role of phraseology in language learning by presenting collocations used with the most frequent words presented in the British National Corpus. He distinguishes prominent features (lexical and grammatical) of collocations, analysing multi-word units in the language. Accent on phraseology in language learning is diverse, ranging from proverbs and sayings (e.g. Make hay while the sun shines) to lexical chunks and idiomatic expressions (e.g. heavy rain, blind dreams). Kennedy explores eight verbs: enjoy, start, give, receive, begin, stop, end, finish.

Phraseology is the most valuable source of linguistic knowledge, the heritage of the people that reflects history, national culture, customs and traditions. Unlike lexicology, which studies the vocabulary of a language, phraseology studies phraseological units, that trace the rich historical experience of the people, their representations of the world, attitudes to work, life, and religion. Correct and appropriate use of phraseological units gives speech unique and special expressiveness.

Lexical chunks and idiomatic expressions are an integral part of any language. Enriching the vocabulary and mastering word skills with idioms is one of the most difficult tasks facing English language learners. The process of memorizing and using them requires a lot of effort from a non-native English language student. Language learners, having a vague idea of phraseological expressions, find themselves in a difficult situation when they listen to English speech, when translating modern English texts. Following on from this, they get simply lost in conversation and discussions.

The proper name is a noun that is used to denote a particular person, place, or thing, such as Lincoln, Sarah, Pittsburgh, and Carnegie Hall (https://www.dictionary.com/browse/proper-name). Proper names include anthroponyms, toponyms, mythonyms.

Methodology

Anthroponyms
This group includes phraseological units with the proper name component, historically ascending to the name of a certain person with whom the appearance of this phraseological unit is associated.

Platonic love – platonic, pure love Plato (424/423 BC – 348/347 BC) was a classical Greek philosopher, mathematician, a pupil of Socrates, a writer of philosophical tractates and the founder of the Academy in Athens, which became the first university in the Western world. Together with his mentor Socrates and his pupil Aristotle, Plato helped to lay the foundations of Western philosophy and science. In the modern popular sense, the phrase refers to non-sexual affectionate relationships. At the same time, this interpretation is a misunderstanding of the nature of the Platonic ideal of love, which in its origin was a holistic but passionate love based not on the absence of erotic interest, but on the spiritual transmutation of the sexual power that opens up vast expanses of more subtle pleasures (Shitova, 2013).

Examples of the idiom are taken from ReversoContext (https:// context.reverso.net). The translation is given in Russian.

Look, Mark, *platonic love* affairs have been known to exist.

Slushaj, Mark, platonicheskaya lyubov', kak izvestno, sushchestvuet. (Russian)

Maybe his best friend is in *platonic love* with Snow White.

Mozhet luchshij drug Princa tajno vlyublen v Belosnezhku. (Russian)

What she means is ours is more of a *platonic love*.

Oni imeet v vidu, chto u nas s nej platonicheskaya lyubov'. (Russian)

What's a *platonic love* note?

Platonicheskaya lyubovnaya zapiska – ehto kak? (Russian)

Barbie Doll – Trademark name for a doll representing a conventionally attractive and fashionably dressed young woman, used allusively for a woman who is attractive in a glossily artificial way, but who is considered to lack sense and character.

A small doll originating in the USA in 1959. Her direct ancestor was a German doll called Lilli, based on a German tabloid cartoon character and launched by the Hausser toy firm in 1955. In 1956 Ruth and Elliot Handler, co-founders of the US toy manufacturers Mattel, were on holiday in Lucerne with their daughter Barbara and son Ken when Barbara, then aged 15, pointed out the Lilli doll in a shop window. Mrs Handler bought a few examples and took them home (Dent, 2013).

Ruth Handler watched her daughter Barbara play with paper dolls, and noticed that she often enjoyed giving them adult roles. At the time, most children's toy dolls were representations of infants. The first Barbie doll wore a black and white zebra striped swimsuit and signature topknot ponytail, and was available as either a blonde or brunette. The doll was marketed as a «Teen-age Fashion Model,» with her clothes created by Mattel fashion designer Charlotte Johnson.

The examples from http://context.reverso.net

Regina's like the *Barbie doll* I never had. I'd never seen anybody so glamorous.

Regina slovno kukla Barbi, kotoroj u menya nikogda ne bylo. (Russian)

So, you go out, and you find yourself a little *Barbie doll* wife.

Poehtomu ty ushel i nashel sebe v zheny kuklu Barbi. (Russian)

Growing up, people thought I was this *Barbie doll*.

Vsyu zhizn' menya prinimali za kuklu Barbi. (Russian)

You look like a *Barbie doll* with your... delicate features, your perfect sense of style and spacious guest house.

A ty vylitaya kukla Barbi... Tonkie cherty, bezuprechnoe chuvstvo stilya i shikarnyj dom dlya gostej. (Russian)

Every Tom, Dick and Harry – any common, undistinguished person; anyone at all, indiscriminately.

Linda and Roger Flavell (1992) explain that «this trio dates back to at least 1815 in America, but alternative forms of the phrase, with variations on the names used, are earlier. The obvious explanation is the best one: the commonest names denote the man in the street, or that archetype of normality, the man on the Clapham omnibus. More fancifully, there might be a rather sinister explanation. Harry, as in Old Harry, has for centuries referred to the devil. Similarly, so has Dick – Heywood uses it thus in his Edward TV of 1599. It has been relatively interchangeable over four hundred years with dickens, which is still as familiar to us today as it was to Shakespeare in The Merry Wives of Windsor in 1601: I cannot tell what the dickens his name is. Tom, however, has no known diabolical links, which tends to make this theory fall apart'' (Flavell L. & Flavell R., 1992, p. 104).

We couldn't have *every Tom, Dick and Harry* going around doing it, could we?

Nel'zya, chtob kazhdyj zhelayushchij smog ehtim zanimat'sya. (Russian)

You want to throw away everything we've built just to pay back *every Tom, Dick, and Harry* who's ever invested in clothes over bros?

Hochesh' lishit'sya vsego, chto my sozdali, prosto chtoby vernut' den'gi kazhdomu Tomu, Diku, i Garri, kotorye vlozhilis' v kompaniyu? (Russian)

Not now *every Tom, Dick and Harry* seems to have a motor.

Sejchas kazhdyj vtoroj gonyaet na avto. (Russian)

Mythonyms

This group includes proper names from biblical legends and ancient myths. Phraseological units of this type have a high degree of semantic integrity, since they are non-motivated and the meaning of single components is not transparent. Representing laconic formulations of ideas and complex images, ancient myths and biblical legends evoke a number of associations. Insufficient acquaintance with the specific conditions of origin leads to the fact that the meaning of idioms is understood incorrectly.

Therefore it is necessary to know the etymology that tries to show the origins, since phrases develop idiomatic sense.

Doubting Thomas – an incredulous or sceptical person.

Thomas [Bible] One of the twelve apostles in the New Testament, known also as Thomas Didymus, meaning 'twin' in Aramaic. After the Crucifixion, when Jesus appeared before the disciples to show them that he had risen from the dead, Thomas was not present. When the other disciples told Thomas that they had seen Jesus, he said he would not believe that it was true 'except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side' (Delahunty & Dignen, 2010).

The examples if the idiom are taken from the online translator Reverso Context which gives not only the translation but the idiom use in different contexts. (http://context.reverso.net)

He is not a *doubting Thomas*.

On daleko ne Foma neveruyushchij. (Russian)

Come here, *Doubting Thomas…*

Idi syuda, Foma Neveruyushchij… (Russian)

In fact, legend has is that when *Doubting Thomas*, the Apostle, Saint Thomas, landed on the shores of Kerala, my home state, somewhere around 52 A.D., he was welcomed on shore by a flute-playing Jewish girl.

Soglasno legende, kogda Foma Neveruyushchij – apostol, svyatoj Foma – prichalil k beregu moego rodnogo shtata Kerala, primerno okolo 52 goda n.eh., ego vstretila na beregu evrejskaya devochka, igravshaya na flejte. (Russian)

Well, having a *doubting thomas* in the house can't help.

Nu da, Foma neveruyushchij u vas doma ne smozhet pomoch'. (Russian)

Mark of Cain – the sign placed on Cain after the murder of Abel; (figurative) a sign of infamy.

[Bible] The first-born son of Adam and Eve, according to the book of Genesis, who murdered his younger brother Abel. Cain was a tiller of the ground and Abel a keeper of sheep. When they brought their offerings to God, Abel's lamb was accepted but Cain's offering from his harvest was not. In jealous anger Cain killed his brother. Once his crime was revealed, Cain was cursed by God for ever. He was cast out from his homeland and forced to live a life of vagrancy as an outcast for the rest of his life (Delahunty & Dignen, 2010).

The *Mark of Cain* never lets its host die easy.

Pechat' Kaina ne pozvolit hozyainu umeret' spokojno. (Russian)

I need the *Mark of Cain* off of my brother.

Nuzhno snyat' Pechat' Kaina s moego brata. (Russian)

Cut the Gordian knot // Alexandrian solution – (myth) cut the Gordian knot; quickly and crucially solve the problem. The phrase is often used as a metaphor for a difficult problem solved by a bold stroke.

Gordius, the king of Phrygia, had tied such a complex knot that no one could untie. Anyone who did would become the ruler of Asia. Alexander the Great came across this puzzle in his conquests and solved it by cutting through the knot with a blow of his sword. A quick, decisive action, perhaps by unexpected and unorthodox means, is the sense the phrase has had in English since the days of Shakespeare:

Turn him to any cause of policy,

The Gordian knot of it he will unloose

(Henry V, Act 1, scene i)

What if, by fact, I could introduce you and Miss Randolph to an individual who could *cut the Gordian knot* that is your mutual conundrum with the attorney general?

A chto esli, skazhem, ya by poznakomil vas i miss Rehndol'f s chelovekom, kotoryj by mog razrubit' Gordiev uzel ehtoj vashej vzaimnoj golovolomki o General'nom prokurore? (Russian)

On Ambassador Selebi's part, it was yet another effort by him to *cut the Gordian knot* of an impasse.

So storony posla Selebi rech' idet eshche ob odnoj popytke razrubit' tot gordiev uzel, kakim yavlyaetsya obrazovavshayasya u nas tupikovaya situaciya. (Russian)

Mr. President, we will support any initiative you may want to take to *cut the Gordian knot* of this impasse.

G-n Predsedatel', my podderzhim lyubuyu iniciativu, kotoruyu Vy zahoteli by predprinyat', chtoby razrubit' ehtot gordiev uzel i vyjti iz tupika. (Russian)

I shall take my responsibilities seriously, but it will be indispensable for me to have the firm support and political will of all delegations if we are to break the vicious circle and *cut the Gordian knot* which is paralysing the Conference.

Ya vser'ez vosprinimayu svoi obyazannosti, no mne ponadobitsya i tverdaya podderzhka i politicheskaya volya so storony vsekh delegacij, chtoby nam udalos' razorvat' tot porochnyj krug i razrezat' tot gordiev uzel, chto paralizuet Konferenciyu. (Russian)

Toponyms

Realities, denoted by phraseological units with toponyms, are closely related to the geography and

history of the country, traditions that exist in one specific area.

From Dan to Beersheba

1. Bible from one end of Israel to the other: Judg. 20:1

2. from end to end; throughout; everywhere (https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/ english/from-dan-to-beersheba)

Castles in Spain (castles in the air)

1. thinking of some impossible task

2. make plans or hopes that have very little chance of happening

3. imaginary unachievable plots

4. daydreams miles away

The idiom was first used in the 1500s. The idiom seems to have evolved from the original «To build castles in Spain.» Much of Spain was under Moorish control, so the idea that a castle could be built there was an unattainable dream.

The original phrase was first used in *Le Roman de la Rose*in the 13th century. It was translated from the original French into English in 1365.

Thou shalt make *castles* than in Spaine, And d As time moved on the cultural reference did not make sense anymore. Thus, it was changed to «castles in the sky.» The first known use of it was by writer and translator William Painter (1540 – 1594)

Which was a building of *Castels in the ayre*, fantasying a thousand deuises in his minde.

The original phrase is still used in French as this is where it originated. It has also been changed to «Castles in the sky» by some users. It has the same meaning and origin. (https://www.theidioms.com/ castles-in-the-air/)

Concordances by the results of British National Corpus

«One of the major problems mentioned in the process of foreign language teaching is the lack of adequate educational text materials and relevant vocabularies, while the daily workload of teachers in the current preparation of new aids for motivating activities remains consistently high. In this area, much assistance can be provided by applying the methods of corpus linguistics: automated extraction of information, corpus-based data teaching, textual search in large-scale corpora using natural language processing techniques.

Among the rapidly developing current projects a very important place is occupied by the British corpus of the English language which represents a variety of genres and types of the language: from the records of spoken English and newspaper articles to full texts of novels. British National Corpus (BNC) is one of the most famous and well-known corpora of the English language. It is one of the first national corpora which served as a model for creating modern corpora of different other languages.

The corpus can be used primarily as a source of live speech samples in teaching English or for research purposes in order to identify new trends in the development of language» (Madieva et al., 2015, p. 6415).

British National Corpus consists of 100 million words with 10% of spoken discourse and 90% of written discourse. It contains lemmas consisting of a headword and its inflected forms. For each lemma frequency data are provided that shows how often the word and its derivatives occur in the corpus (Nation, 2004).

The analysis of contexts is based on the results of BNC. The concordances reflect different contexts of idioms distributed in the corpus which are shown in the pictures.
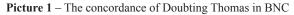
Results and Conclusion

The idioms collected from dictionaries (Dictionary of idioms and their origins by Linda and Roger Flavell; Shitova, L. Proper name idioms and their origins); Oxford Reference database http://www.oxfordreference.com; online Idioms Dictionary https://www.theidioms.com compose the practical material of the research.

The results of the research show that understanding idiomatic expressions involves complex knowledge of the culture studies, history and literature. The etymological analysis should be accompanied by the real-context examples of language corpora. In our study we came to the conclusion that for EFL students, it is crucial to use online translator programs like Reverso Context which give examples of real life language use of words with translation. For more sophisticated, advanced students it is possible to use the concordances of British National Corpus.

Linda and Roger Flavell (1992) call idioms «anomalies of language, mavericks of the linguistic world», focusing on the etymology of the word *idiom* that comes from the Greek «idios» – «strange» (Flavell L. & Flavell R., 1992, p. 6). Violating the semantic rules, idioms cannot be perceived literally. One of the indicators of the level of language proficiency is the ability to combine words idiomatically in accordance with the norms of semantic and lexical compatibility which are sometimes practically non-motivated.

Picture 1 – The concordance of Doubting Thomas in BNC

Picture 2 – The concordance of Cut the Gordian knot in BNC

The etymologies of the idioms with proper names were explored by the information presented in phraseological dictionaries which present practical implications. However, the use of a phraseological unit in the process of communication presupposes knowledge of the language situation where it functions appropriately. Therefore, the main task of the active type dictionary is to provide the reader with a complete, explicit and sufficient description of all aspects of the semantics of the phraseological unit. In this sense, the use of language corpora with concrete examples of the context is essential for language learning development and translation techniques skills.

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