

“NATIONAL VALUES REFLECTED IN PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS: A LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS”

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Abstract

The article considers phraseological units as linguistic and cultural phenomena that reflect the system of national values, worldview, and cultural traditions of a people. A comparative analysis of phraseological units demonstrating the connection between language and culture is conducted, and the peculiarities of their functioning in the context of the national worldview are identified. Particular attention is paid to the ways of expressing mentality, historical experience, and ethnocultural stereotypes encoded in phraseological units.

Keywords: phraseology, linguaculture, national values, mentality, worldview, cultural code.

Contemporary linguistics increasingly turns to the study of the relationship between language and culture, since language is not only a means of communication, but also a repository of national memory, cultural experience, and traditions. Phraseological units (PUs) occupy a special place in this context, as they embody historical and cultural realities, national images, and the value orientations of a people. The study of phraseological units allows us to identify the characteristics of a national character, attitudes toward work, family, freedom, morality, and other key aspects of life.

Idioms are fixed verbal combinations whose meaning cannot be derived from the sum of their component parts. They reflect the collective consciousness of a people, their figurative thinking, and their cultural and historical realities. For example, the Russian expressions “to keep a stone in one's bosom,” “like a fish in water,” or “golden hands” demonstrate the values of sincerity, hard work, and natural ingenuity. In English,

expressions with similar functions — “a wolf in sheep's clothing,” “to feel at home,” “a golden touch” — show similar, but culturally colored, ideas about human qualities.

The values that form the cultural core of a nation are expressed in phraseology at both the lexical and semantic levels. For example, Russian culture is characterized by the dominance of spiritual and collective ideals, which is reflected in expressions such as “my soul hurts,” “with all my heart,” and “not a penny to my name.” English phraseology, on the other hand, tends to emphasize individualism, rationalism, and pragmatism: “time is money,” “mind your own business,” “the early bird catches the worm.”

Linguistic and cultural analysis involves studying linguistic units in their cultural context. Idioms can be viewed as semiotic signs that convey cultural meanings. For example, the expression “to spill the beans” (to reveal a secret) dates back to the ancient Greek tradition of voting with beans, where “spilling the beans” meant premature disclosure of the result. Similarly, the Russian expression “to sit idly by” reflects a negative attitude toward inaction, which indicates the traditional value of hard work.

Each culture forms its own symbolic code through which reality is interpreted. In phraseology, this code manifests itself through stable images — animals, natural phenomena, colors, everyday objects. For example, in English culture, a cat often symbolizes independence and curiosity (“curiosity killed the cat”), while in Russian culture, it symbolizes cunning (“the cat cried”). Color images also vary: “white lie” (an innocent lie) has no negative connotation, while in Russian, “black ingratitude” carries a clearly negative connotation.

A comparison of idiomatic expressions in different languages shows that many of them have universal roots—work, family, morality—but are interpreted through the prism of national cultures. Thus, the idea of justice is expressed in different ways: the Russian “truth is more precious than gold” and the English “honesty is the best policy” reflect a common moral attitude, but differ in their metaphorical content.

Phraseological units are the most important carriers of national values that shape the cultural identity of a people. They not only convey historical and social experience, but also express an emotional and evaluative attitude towards reality. Linguistic and cultural analysis of phraseological units allows for a deeper understanding of the interconnection

between language, culture, and mentality, reveals similarities and differences between peoples, and contributes to intercultural communication and mutual understanding.

The list of used literature:

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