

METEORONYMS IN TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Nouns denoting objects of inanimate and animated nature and natural phenomena (vocabulary about the nature) and meteoronyms are inherent part of the basic vocabulary of any language, therefore special systematic attention should be given to their learning in classes of the Russian language. Folk omens make up indispensable source of information about realia of the nature. Owing to the presence of special sense bearing socio-cultural and regional information in them, omens, as part of national culture, contain extralinguistic information, alongside with linguistic one. Familiarizing our students with paremiological texts already at the initial stages of learning the Russian language we enable them not only to memorize vocabulary about the nature and enrich their knowledge about it, their vocabulary in general, but also to develop their ability of abstract thinking and get knowledge about the world structure. More than that, learning vocabulary about the nature parallels spiritual and moral developing of students and forming patriotic feeling and love to the nature of the motherland in them. In the paper texts of folk omens are given literal translation by us.

Key Words: vocabulary about nature, meteoronyms, meteolexis, Russian as a foreign language, folk omen.

1. Introduction

It is endearment of archaic people to comprehend the essence of realia of the nature and their origin; know the rules of heavenly office; be closer to the nature that led to appearing folk omens – the genre unique in its semantic and structural characteristics.

Contemporary linguistics claims that appearing in various contexts linguistic units can deliver different types of information [Ayupova, 2014]. So, as components of national cultural realia, phraseological and paremiological units and set expressions, which are endowed with specific information, they participate in revealing this information [Zamaletdinov et al., 2015; Fattakhova et al., 2014; Kulkova et al., 2015; Ayupova et al., 2014; Davletbaeva et al., 2015]. The knowledge about the world acquired empirically is processed through national worldview, which resulted in emerging national specific images of nature, unique comparisons and characterizations of realia of the nature.

Meteoronyms are the earliest words of the language and they make up a big layer of vocabulary known as highly informative words; and they are frequently come across as componential parts of phraseological and paremiological units. Consequently, it would be interesting to consider collocability of meteoronyms with adjectives in the texts of folk omens.

2. Materials and methods

It would be appropriate to emphasize apartness of meteoronyms in the lexical system of a language due to adding to them words denoting objects of the nature (*роса* (dew), *иней* (hoarfrost), *изморозь* (rime)) and definite processes (*ветер* (wind), *гром* (thunder), *гроза* (thunderstorm), *радуга* (rainbow)).

As V.S. Dmitrieva notes, specificity of processual lexis is not only in the fact of realizing double nature of their meaning within the limits of different lexico-semantic variants, but in their ability to implicit

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syncretism of semantics of an object and process [Dmitrieva, 1985]. For example, *дождь* (rain), *снег* (snow), *град* (hail).

Classification of meteorolexis [Dmitrieva, Ildarkhanova, 1998] singles out words denoting:

1) precipitations (*дождь* (rain), *ливень* (downpour), *изморось* (drizzle), *снег* (snow), *град* (hail), *роса* (dew), *иней* (hoarfrost)): *Ласточки летают над самой землею – к дождю* – (If swallows fly very low, soon it will rain); *Если гром глухой – к тихому дождю, гром гулкий – к ливню* (If thunder is dull – it will rain gently, if thunder is booming – it will downpour);

2) motion of air masses (*ветер* (wind), *шквал* (squall), *ураган* (hurricane), *вихрь* (whirlwind)): *Ветер к вечеру усиливается – к ненастью* (If the wind becomes stronger in the evening – the weather will be bad); *Сильный вихрь бывает перед проливным дождем* (Whirlwind usually is followed by heavy rain);

3) complex phenomena (*буря* (storm), *вьюга* (blizzard), *метель* (snowstorm), *буран* (blast)): *Если зимою дул ветер и не было инея, будет буран* (If it was windy in winter and there was no hoarfrost, there will be blast); *На утренней зорьке солнце красно – на метель* (If the sun rises red – there will be snowstorm);

4) congestion of atmospheric agents (*туман* (fog), *дымка* (haze), *мгла* (mist), *облако* (cloud), *туча* (black cloud)): *Если облака плывут высоко – будет хорошая погода* (If clouds float high – the weather will be good); *Если небо затянуло тучами – к потеплению*; (If the sky is overcast by black clouds – it will get warmer); *Если летом стоит туман – хмель уродится* (If summer is misty – there will be good hop harvest);

5) atmosphere temperature (*холод* (cold), *мороз* (frost), *стужа* (severe cold), *зной* (ardent heat), *жара* (heat)): *Кошка в печурку – стужа во двор* (If a cat creeps into the furnace – it will be severely cold); *Быстрая оттепель – долгий мороз* (Quick thaw – long frost);

1) light phenomena (*радуга* (rainbow), *заря* (dawn), *зарница* (heat lightning), *молния* (lightning)): *Чем больше молний, тем щедрее земля* (The more lightning – the more generous the soil is); *Радуга вечерняя предвещает хорошую, а утренняя – дождливую погоду*; (Rainbow in the evening heralds good weather, in the morning – rainy weather); *Зарница – к непогоде* (Heat lightning heralds bad weather).

Analysis of meteoronyms enabled us to distinguish a group of words nominating natural phenomena with sound (*гром* (thunder), *эхо* (echo)): *Гром зимой – к сильным ветрам* (Thunder in winter is to strong winds); *Гром ранней весной – к похолоданию* (Thunder in early spring is to fall of temperature); *Если в летнюю пору вечером в поле слышится эхо, на следующий день будет хорошая погода* (If in summer evening in the field an echo is heard, next day the weather will be good).

Linguistic experience proves that paradigmatic properties of words are revealed in syntagmatics. One can imagine paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations as two lines crossing each other on horizontal and vertical axis. Each member of the paradigm reveals itself on the syntagmatic axis through lexical collocability with other members of the paradigmatic row, actualizing similar syntagmatic properties. Common syntagmatic properties of linguistic units are major properties witnessing the fact that they belong to this or that paradigmatic group. It can be observed in texts of folk omens.

So, semantic structure of meteoronyms conditions attributive collocability of the lexis under analysis. Adjectives actualizing natural phenomena as a process enter the zone of attributive collocability; they express intensity, length of phenomena. Those adjectives which actualize natural phenomena as substance express the level of consistence, size, quantity etc. Moreover, properties of natural phenomena, characterizing them from the angle of spatial and temporal localization are revealed.

3. Results

Among attributive determinants we analyzed qualitative ones there are adjectives opposite in meaning with characteristics of size, level of consistence, quantity, thermal state and other properties of a substance, also length and intensity of process. These qualitative adjectives are in antonymic relations with each other.

Components of omens can be various antonymic pairs correlating with different qualities (quantitative, qualitative, temporal, spatial) were observed. For example: «высокий – низкий» (*high – low*), «крутой – пологий» (*steep – gently sloping*): *Высокая и крутая радуга к ведру; пологая и низкая – к ненастью* (High and steep rainbow heralds fine weather; gently sloping and low one – rainy weather); «долгий – отрывистый» (*long – staccato*): *Долгий гром – к ненастью, отрывистый – к просветлению* (Long thunder heralds rainy weather; staccato one – clarification); «малый – большой» (*light – heavy*): *Малый дождь землю грязнит, большой дождь ее очищает*; (Light rain makes the land muddy; heavy one – cleanses it); «теплый – холодный» (*warm – cold*): *Если сперва подует теплый ветер, а потом пойдет дождь с холодным*

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ветром – будет град (If warm wind is followed by rain with cold wind, then it will hail); «ранний – поздний» (early – late): *Ранний дождь, как и гость, – до обеда; поздний дождь, как и гость, – с ночевой* (Early rain is like a guest, who stays till afternoon; late one – like the one who stays for the night); «северный – южный» (north – south): *Северный ветер дождь разгонит* (North wind will drive out the rain).

In Russian omens of uncommonly high frequency the adjective *сильный* (strong) is observed, which is used as a modifier of such lexemes as *дождь* (rain), *ветер* (wind), *вихрь* (vortex), *роса* (dew), *гроза* (thunderstorm), *гром* (thunder), *холод* (cold) etc. The aforementioned adjective is dominant in quite a long row of synonyms (*сильный* (strong), *большой* (large), *обильный* (affluent), *проливной* (pouring), *крепкий* (hard), *трескучий* (crackling)): *Сильный дождь ночью или рано утром при тихой погоде – жди с обеда солнечной погоды, а при бурном ветре – плохой* (If it rains heavily at night or early in the morning at quiet weather, it will be sunny in the afternoon; at strong wind – the weather will be bad); *Гром зимой – к сильным ветрам* (Thunder in winter heralds strong winds); *Сильный вихрь бывает перед проливным дождем* (Strong vortex is usually followed by pouring rain); *Сильные росы на хороший урожай: без росы и трава не растет* (Heavy dews herald good harvest: without dew no grass will grow); *Летом солнце сильно парит и лучи его темнеют – к сильной грозе* (The sun bakes strongly and its rays darken there will be thunder); *Обильные росы – урожай трав* (Heavy dews – good harvest of grass); *После большого грома, большой дождь* (Heavy thunder precedes heavy rain); *Большой иней – к хлебородью* (Big hoarfrost is to good harvest); *В феврале крепкие морозы только по ночам* (In February hard frosts are observed only at nights); *Ложные солнца зимою – к трескучим морозам* (Sundogs in winter are to severe frosts).

The aforementioned synonyms differ from each other not only with the shades of their meaning, but also with the diverse lexical collocability. So the word *дождь* (rain) collocates with the word *проливной* (pouring); *мороз* (frost) – with *крепкий* (hard), *трескучий* (crackling); *роса* – *обильная* (heavy) etc. Not complying with these rules of collocability results in stylistic errors, and, accordingly, in misunderstanding the text by the reader. Compare: *крепкий дождь* (hard rain), *трескучий ветер* (crackling wind).

Quite often nouns denoting natural phenomena in folk omens are preceded by ordinals *первый* / *первая* (first): *первый снег* (snow), *первый дождь* (rain), *первый гром* (thunder), *первая гроза* (thunderstorm) etc. This numeral “acquires not optional, but mandatory character in such word combinations, thus forming set expressions” [Fattakhova, 2004]. For example: *Первый снег выпадает за сорок дней до зимы* (The first snow falls forty days before winter comes); *Если первый снег падает на деревья, еще не сбросившие листьев, то он скоро растает* (If the first snow falls on trees that haven't thrown off their leaves, soon it melts); *Первый гром весной – признак наступающего тепла* (The first thunder in spring is the evidence of the weather getting warmer); *Если первый гром прогремит в полдень и с южной стороны, то наступающее лето будет теплое и плодородное* (If the first thunder is heard at midnight and it comes from south, the forthcoming summer will be warm and will bring good harvest); *Первая в году гроза всех лягушек и всех гадюк пробуждает* (The first thunderstorm awakens all frogs and vipers).

Coloronyms as components of omens also attract researchers attention as from stylistic, so from pragmatic viewpoints. It has been detected that in the Russian language the most preferable color of the palette is red [Kharchenko, Tonkova, 2008], [Fattakhova, Tarasov, 2005]. For example: *Красная вечерняя заря – к ветру* (Red sunset is to windy weather); *Красная утренняя заря дождь принесет* (Red sunrise brings rain); *Красные облака до восхода – к ветру; тучи – к дождю; красные при закате – к вёдру и ветру* (Red clouds before sunrise herald windy weather; black clouds – rain; red ones before sunset – fine and windy weather); *Красные облака – к ветрам* (Red clouds are to winds).

Our analysis of the lexemes *радуга* (rainbow), *облако* (cloud), *туча* (black cloud), *заря* (dawn) witnesses also frequency of their collocations with the coloronyms *зеленый* (green), *желтый* (yellow), *синий* (blue), *белый* (white) and coloronyms denoting some tints of these colors: *голубой* (light blue), *желтоватый* (yellowish), *золотистый* (golden), *белесоватый* (whitish), *багровый* (purple): *Зеленая радуга к дождю, желтая – к хорошей погоде, красная – к жаре и ветру* (Green rainbow heralds rain; yellow one – good weather, red one – heat and wind); *При дожде появится радуга и голубой цвет в ней не чист, а желтоватый ярк – это лучший признак хорошей погоды* (When it rains there appears rainbow and light blue in it is a bit yellowish, which is a witness of good weather); *Багровые зори – к ветрам* (Purple sunrise is to windy weather).

Then in folk omens very often we can observe species characteristics of natural phenomena, expressed by relative adjectives, e.g: *Если первый гром грянет при северном ветре – к холодной весне, при восточном – к сухой и теплой, при западном – к дождливой, при южном – к теплой весне* .: (If the first thunder is heard

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when north wind is blowing, the spring will be cold; when east wind is blowing – it will be dry; when west wind is blowing – rainy; when south wind is blowing – warm).

Temporal characteristics of natural phenomena in the folk omens are expressed by qualitative and relative adjectives among which one can distinguish the following subgroups, which have:

a) **reference to some season, month, day, times of the day or other period of time:** *Весенний день год кормит* (A day in spring feeds a year); *Февральский снег весной пахнет* (Snow in February smells summer);

b) **relation to some time:** *Послеобеденный дождь долгий* (Afternoon rain lasts long);

c) **nomination of the time of the phenomenon occurrence:** *Ранняя гроза предвещает дождливое лето* (Early thunder heralds rainy summer); *Поздний грибок – поздний снежок* (Late mushroom heralds late snow);

d) **nomination of the length of the natural phenomenon:** *Зимой кольцо вокруг солнца и луны предвещает продолжительные метели с морозами* (If there is a ring around the moon and sun, there will be long lasting blizzards and frost).

Here are several exercises given as guidelines in teaching Russian as a second. They are recommended for applying to practice the use of meteoronyms at the initial stage of learning Russian as a second language.

Exercise 1. Underline words denoting natural phenomena in the sentences below. Write them out in three columns dividing into three grammatical forms of gender (муж.р. (masculine), ср.р. (neuter), жен.р. (feminine)). They should be given in the form of singular number, nominative case.

1) Коли в мае дождь, будет и рожь. 2) Если ночью был иней, днем снег не выпадет. 3) Кошка скребет пол – на ветер, на метель. 4) Тетерева и куропатки в лесную чащу прячутся – жди бурана. 5) Синие облака – к теплу. 6) Если летом часто были туманы – грибов будет много. 7) Молоко в грозу скисает. 8) После очень сильной изморози наступает оттепель.

Exercise 2. In these folk omens try to find as many antonymic pairs characterizing natural phenomena as possible.

1) Если сперва подует теплый ветер, а потом пойдет дождь с холодным ветром – будет град. 2) Ранний дождь, как и гость, – до обеда; поздний дождь, как и гость, – с ночевой. 3) Долгий гром – к ненастью, отрывистый – к просветлению. 4) Когда весной поверхность снега шершавая – к урожаю, гладкая – к неурожаю. 5) Высокая и крутая радуга к вёдру; пологая и низкая – к ненастью.

Exercise 3. On the basis of the given texts of folk omens make up a synonymic row, which will include the word *мороз* (frost). Then give an antonymic pair to each word denoting natural phenomenon.

1) В одном гнезде несколько белок – на сильный мороз. 2) В большие морозы эхо уходит далеко. 3) В феврале крепкие морозы только по ночам. 4) Ложные солнца зимою – к трескучим морозам. 5) Жестокие морозы и глубокие снега – к урожайному году.

It is recommended to review the definitions of synonyms and antonyms providing examples of synonymic and antonymic rows written down on the blackboard.

4. Summary

The structure and stable character of binary oppositions as well as detection of synonymic rows of attributive means of characterizing meteoronyms allows us to judge about constancy of the semantic content of meteolexemes and the fact of their being attached to definite linguistic form. Texts of folk omens are a good material for enriching the vocabulary of students with meteolexemes and enhance their skills of making up synonymic rows and antonymic pairs, which, in its turn, enables students to understand the systematic relations of words within the lexical system of the Russian language.

5. Conclusion

So, the semantic structure of meteoronyms enables the presence of attributes extending them and characterizing them from the angle of the length, intensity of the movement, the degree of consistency, size, quantity, thermal state and also their spatial and temporal localization.

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