

MOTIVATED MEANING OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH COLORATIVE COMPONENTS IN ENGLISH AND TURKISH

Iana Byiyk, Elena Arsenteva, Roza Ayupova

Kazan Federal University, 420008, 18, Kremlevskaya str., Kazan (Russia), rozaayupoa@gmail.com,
Elena Zelenicka Constantine the Philosopher University (Slovak Republic)

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the interconnection of transferred meaning of phraseological units with colorative components and direct meaning of these components. Colorative components with certain evaluation in the Turkish and English languages are under special study. The main criteria of motivation /non-motivation of meaning of native and borrowed phraseological units with colorative components are distinguished on the basis of their thorough study. It is also stated that some English phraseological units under study are borrowings from French and other European languages while some Turkish units are borrowed from English. Non-motivated phraseological units make up only an insignificant part of units being analyzed. Motivation of phraseological unit meaning is conditioned by the following criteria: componential structure of phraseological units, semantic and extra linguistic factors. It is also stated that colorative component symbolic meaning greatly effects motivation /non-motivation of meaning of the whole phraseological unit. Phraseological units in which colorative components display their literal, non-transferred meaning are of special attention. Such units are distinguished in both languages.

Keywords: Motivation, non-motivation, colorative component, phraseological meaning, inner form.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of motivation /non-motivation of phraseological meaning and its dependence on the inner form transparency /non-transparency has not been solved yet in the works of modern linguists. At the same time phraseological unit inner form, its componential (lexeme) structure and etymology are the main factors of motivation /non-motivation of phraseological meaning, in general, and its signification-denotational and connotational components of the meaning, in particular. Our research convincingly proves the fact that these three factors as well as symbolic meaning of phraseological unit colorative components serve as conditions of peculiarities of meaning of English and Turkish units under study.

D.O. Dobrovol'skiy and E. Piirainen pay special attention to the fact that the majority of idioms are semantically motivated, and the relevant traces of motivated mental image of an idiom may be considered as a part of its plane of content in a broad sense [1]. At the same time the researchers restrict idiom motivation and consider that it works only in case of the image codified in its inner form and being alive. It should be also noted that such researchers as D.N. Davletbaeva [2], G.R. Safiullina [3], R.N. Salieva [4] stress the fact that inner form transparency may have a relative character and depend on the level of the receiver's background information. They also consider that meaning motivation of some phraseological units with darkened inner form may be restored by conducting relevant etymological investigations. On the whole, taking into consideration the results of our own research and the findings of our predecessors, we consider that the transparency of phraseological unit inner form promotes phraseological meaning motivation.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Special attention in this research is paid to the relation "phraseological meaning" – "component meaning". According to some scholars component parts of phraseological units completely lose their lexical meaning [5, 159]. Other authors claim that not all components of phraseological unit undergo the process of

abstracting from their lexical meaning; therefore some phraseological units have the meaning that is deducible from that of the component parts [6, 12].

Different methods are used by us to reveal the role of colorative components in phraseological meaning motivation /non-motivation. The use of seme analysis method helps us to find some definite semes in phraseological meaning structure in order to establish the degree of its connection with the meaning of the component under study. We also apply structural-grammatical analysis to deal with direct meanings of both phraseological unit prototypes (which are in fact word combinations) and some definite components of them. Etymological analysis is of great importance in finding out the dynamics of phraseological meaning development and the role of colorative component in it from its appearance in the language up to nowadays. "Phraseological meaning is a conglomeration of various units of sense" [7, 284].

So, thorough study of phraseological meaning demands using different methods of research. Phraseological units for the work were chosen from English and Turkish phraseological dictionaries by using the method of sampling.

DISCUSSION

Our analysis has shown that only about 5% of all English and Turkish phraseological units with colorative components are characterized by non-motivated meaning, their inner form being darkened. To such units belong, e.g., the Americanism *a red dog* with the meaning 'poker (in which the players have 7 cards)', the historical unit *brown Bess* – 'flint-lock (which was used by the British army in the XVIII century)', or the polysemantic jargon phraseological unit *do brown* the meaning of which has an obvious pejorative 'deceive, rob, clean out', and meliorative 'do something thoroughly; up to the mark' evaluations. In the Turkish language there are such phraseological units with non-motivated meaning as *sarı çizmeli Mehmet ağa* (literally: yellow boots Mehmet respected) 'a person nobody knows who he is and where he is from', *dizlerine kara su inmek* (literally: knees black water sink) 'become exhausted by waiting too long or being too tired', *kırmızı dipli mumla davet etmek* (literally: a red bottom of a candle to invite) – 'persuade somebody to come, insist on somebody's coming', *sararıp solmak* (literally: become yellow) 'turn absolutely pale'.

It should be emphasized that intra-linguistic (from American English) and inter-linguistic borrowings have become a significant contribution to the semantic diversity of native English and Turkish phraseological units with colorative component. The process of borrowing enriched the group of phraseological units under analysis with new images, new meanings and enlarged synonymic groups.

In different periods of its development the English language borrowed phraseological units from various European languages in the form of full or partial loan-translations. For example, the phraseological unit *the black bottle* 'poison' is originally a colloquial Americanism. *Do things under the <red> rose* 'do smth. secretly, stealthily', is a partial loan-translation from Latin existing in English in the form *under the rose*. «Etymol. Lat. sub rosa. Rosa used to be a symbol of silence in ancient Rome» [8, 643]. *The Black Death* is a loan-translation of the German unit *der schwarze Tod*, denoting 'plague epidemic in Europe in the XIV century'.

However, most phraseological borrowings in English are of French origin, which refers us to some extra-linguistic factors: Norman control during more than two centuries, close cooperation of two nations in the following centuries and their close geographical location. Here are some examples:

The proverb *all cats are grey in the dark /in the night* is a translation-loan of the French paremiological unit *la nuit tous les chats sont gris*. The same can be said about the English set-expressions *black comedy*, *local color* and French ones *comédie noire*, *couleur locale*, accordingly.

Some alterations of component parts of phraseological units could take place in the process of borrowing, which, in their turn, could result in changes in the semantics of these phraseological units. For example, the French unit *par Dieu* 'I swear to god!' was substituted by the euphemism with a colorative component *parbleu* in the process of borrowing, as the result of which there is a colloquial phraseological unit in English *by all that's blue* denoting 'I swear to anything!'.

In Turkish one can come across phraseological units with colorative component borrowed from English by means of translation loans. For example, a well-known expression *kara altın* denoting 'oil' is a word-for-word translation of the English expression *black gold*, which also tends to become an international set-expression.

Some more set-expressions with the same colorative component *kara* 'black' were borrowed from the English language: *kara koyun* translation-loan of *black sheep*, *kara borsa* – from the English *black market*.

Some Spanish phraseological units were borrowed by Turkish through the English language, e.g.: *mavi kan* (literally: blue blood) with the meaning 'aristocratic background'; *kırmızı rengin boğayı kızdırmak* (literally: red colour makes a bull furious) denoting 'make someone lose his temper'.

Some French phraseological units came to the Turkish language in the same way, e.g.: *dünyaya pembe gözlükle bakmak* (literally: to look at the world through rose-coloured glasses).

RESULTS

Detailed analysis of semantics of native and borrowed phraseological units with colorative component in Turkish and English enables us to distinguish three criteria of phraseological meaning being motivated or not motivated: 1) criterion of component parts; 2) semantic; 3) extra-linguistic ones. A number of examples demonstrate a combination of two or even three criteria which play an important role in this process. However, in the current paper we deal with only one of these criteria – that of component parts.

Analyzing semantics of phraseological units with colorative component we find out, that this criterion works, as a rule, under the influence of the symbolic meaning of the colour mentioned in the meaning of the whole unit. It should also be mentioned that in the meaning of some phraseological units colorative component realizes its direct meaning. Usually such phraseological units denote a colour of clothes of some special group of people or peculiarities of their appearance. It occurs rather often that such units are etymologically related to some historic events, which means that the fact of their meaning being motivated is also conditioned by the extra-linguistic factor. For example, a unit *a Green Beret* is common name used by people outside of the military to describe one who is a member of English (later also American) commando team, which was determined by the colour of their caps.

The phraseological unit the *Black and Tans* was used to denote 'punitive forces participating in suppressions of Sinn Fein movement in Ireland in 1920'. As the etymological references witness, they were called so due to their uniform colours being black and yellowish brown [8, 86].

Again, it was because of the colour of their uniform, that English soldiers were called metaphorically *red coats* and sailors - *blue coats*. In the American variant of the English language the second phraseological unit has the meaning 'soldiers of the North states during the Civil War in 1861-65' and it is also connected with the colour of their uniform. The Armies of North and South states in that Civil War in the USA were called the Blue and the Gray, as the colour of the uniform of South states soldiers was grey, while that of North states soldiers was blue. The phraseological unit *the boys /men/ in blue* denoting sailors and policemen is also motivated by the colour of their uniform. Black colour of clothes of clergymen was the reason of calling them metaphorically *black coats*. In this case the colorative component *black* realizes

both a direct meaning and a figurative one, since the unit is used in the pejorative meaning of ‘black soutane’. So the emotive component of the connotation of this unit is, as a rule, disdainfulness.

The meaning of the phraseological units *the dark <Oxford> blues* ‘Oxford University sports team’ and *the light <Cambridge> blues* ‘Cambridge University sports team’ (according to the colour of their sportswear) is motivated by the component denoting the colour of these teams sportswear.

It is also worth dwelling upon phraseological nominations of books related to the colour of their covers. The phraseological unit the *Blue Book* can be used to denote various editions with the same blue colour referring to: 1) official records (of the English Parliament commissions or Privy Councils); 2) American references (reference of names of people working in government positions in the USA); 3) a list of people playing an important role in the life of the society; calendar of the high society life; 4) reference book (e.g.: the address book). Books published in red cover are usually called the *Red Book*. This phraseological unit can denote the following: 1) pedigree book of noble families; 2) the book with the list of dying out species protected by law. *The Red Book* acquired the second meaning due to the symbolic meaning of the component “red” – “attracting attention to some danger”.

A polysemantic phraseological unit *a blue ribbon* demonstrates an interesting way of meaning development. Its first meaning is fully motivated ‘Order of the Garter’. Since members of this order are known for their sobriety, the aforementioned phraseological unit acquires a metaphorical meaning ‘a badge of a member of sobriety society’. This is the way how the phraseological unit *a blue ribbon army* denoting ‘sobriety society’ appeared. This unit has one more meaning ‘the first prize, the highest award’ the development of which can be referred to the fact that it was an honour for members of Order of the Garter to receive this order as the highest award.

The black colour of skin of the African Americans underlies the meaning of *the Black Belt* - Southern regions of the USA in which the majority of the population is African American. *The Black Belt* stretches from Virginia through the North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana to Texas.

The red colour is intensified by the expressive word *agony* in the phraseological unit *agony in red*. The complete expression has a playful sense and means ‘a scarlet outfit’.

In the Turkish language we find a number of verbal and substantive phraseological units where the colour component is used in its direct meaning.

For example, in the phraseological unit *ateş gibi kırmızı olmak* (literally: fire as red become) with the meaning ‘to turn red like fire, to turn red with hatred’ the component *red* extends its meaning completely to the whole phraseological unit.

Substantive phraseological units *kara gözlü* with the meaning ‘dark-eyed, having dark eyes’ and *mavi gözlü* with the meaning ‘blue-eyed, having blue eyes’ contain colour components *kara* and *mavi* which are used in their direct, non-figurative, meaning.

The denotation of red colour *kırmızı* and scarlet colour *al* is used in the Turkish phraseological units *kırmızı dudakları* (literally: red lips) with the meaning ‘red, bright lips’ and *al dudakları* with the meaning (literally: scarlet lips) ‘scarlet lips, beautiful lips’.

For native Turkish speakers the white colour in the expression *yüzü beyaz olmak* (literally: the face turned white) has its direct meaning.

While conducting the research of a motivated/ non-motivated meaning of phraseological units with an onomatopoeic component in the English and German languages, E.F.Arsenteva and A.A.Nurullova came to the conclusion that both the meaning of the onomatopoeic component and the inner form (or the image) of a phraseological unit can determine the motivation/ non-motivation of its meaning [9]. Three groups of phraseological units were determined as a result of the analysis: the meaning of phraseological units of the first group is motivated both by the meaning of the onomatopoeic component and by its inner form; the meaning of phraseological units of the second group is absolutely non-motivated; the third group contains phraseological units the meaning of which is motivated in terms of their inner form but non-motivated in terms of semantics of the onomatopoeic component.

Further research of E.F.Arsenteva and A.A.Nurullova proved that onomatopoeic components in the transferred meaning of German phraseological units play different motivational role. Similar role of realia components related to the “realia of this or that nation connected with their culture, religion, or some geographical or proper names” has been identified in the generalized meaning of phraseological units [9, 267]. Authors of some other works also come to similar conclusions by analyzing formal characteristics of phraseological and paremiological units and their meanings.

The research by European scientists E. Piirainen [1] and B. Lediana [10] also demonstrates that the motivation of phraseological meaning may be determined by certain components. They explain that non-motivation can result from the unawareness of the meaning of a certain phraseological unit component by some modern native speakers.

CONCLUSIONS

In all the researches above, the scholars, while conducting the analysis of the relations of phraseological or paremiological unit meaning and the meaning of their components, or formal characteristics of these units, came to the conclusion that they are related in a certain way. Our research has proved the same. Thus, our analysis of phraseological units with colorative component has demonstrated that the component (lexeme) factor can be revealed when the direct meaning of the colour component is transferred into the semantics of the phraseological unit itself. In a number of cases the meaning can be etymologically motivated by some historical phenomenon and in this case, as a rule, we deal with historicisms in the English language (extra-linguistic factor is added). It is also worth mentioning that some components of the English phraseological units are capitalized, such spelling is historically motivated and is not determined by any spelling rules.

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