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EUPHEMISTIC AND PHRASEOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS IN ENGLISH IN COMPARISON WITH UZBEK AND RUSSIAN

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Annotatsiya. Tezisda ingliz tilidagi sog'liq va kasallik konseptlarining evfemizmlar va frazeologik birliklar orqali ifodalanishi ilmiy adabiyotlar tahlili asosida o'rganiladi. Og'ir kasalliklar, noqulay holatlar, nogironlik va ruhiy salomatlikka oid evfemizmlar guruhlari hamda sog'liq va kasallik haqidagi iboralarning obrazli asoslari tahlil qilinadi. Ingliz tilidagi birliklar o'zbek va rus tillaridagi muqobillari bilan qiyoslanib, ularning milliy-madaniy xususiyatlari aniqlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: evfemizm, frazeologik birlik, sog'liq, kasallik, lingvokulturema, qiyosiy tahlil, ingliz tili.

Аннотация. В тезисе на основе анализа научной литературы исследуется выражение концептов здоровья и болезни в английском языке посредством эвфемизмов и фразеологических единиц. Рассматриваются группы эвфемизмов, связанных с тяжёлыми заболеваниями, неловкими состояниями, инвалидностью и психическим здоровьем, а также образная основа идиом о здоровье и болезни. Английские единицы сопоставляются с их соответствиями в узбекском и русском языках, что позволяет выявить их национально-культурную специфику.

Ключевые слова: эвфемизм, фразеологическая единица, здоровье, болезнь, лингвокультурема, сопоставительный анализ, английский язык.

Abstract. The thesis investigates how the concepts of health and illness are expressed in English through euphemisms and phraseological units, drawing on an analysis of scholarly literature. It considers groups of euphemisms related to serious diseases, embarrassing conditions, disability and mental health, as well as the imagery underlying idioms of health and illness. The English units are compared with their equivalents in Uzbek and Russian in order to reveal their culture-specific features.

Keywords: euphemism, phraseological unit, health, illness, linguoculturema, comparative analysis, English.

Introduction

Speaking about health and illness is rarely a neutral act. People ask about each other's health as a matter of politeness, hide serious diagnoses from relatives, joke about minor complaints and lower their voices when they mention dangerous diseases. Language responds to these social needs in two characteristic ways. On the one hand, it develops euphemisms, softened expressions that allow speakers to refer to frightening or embarrassing conditions without naming them directly. On the other hand, it accumulates phraseological units, fixed expressions with figurative meaning,

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in which the collective experience of illness and recovery is preserved in compact and memorable form. Both phenomena are closely tied to culture, and both are often difficult for foreign learners, because their meaning cannot be deduced from the meanings of the individual words. In English the field of health and illness is one of the richest sources of euphemism. K. Allan and K. Burridge placed disease, death and bodily functions among the central areas of taboo in English-speaking societies and showed that euphemism in these areas protects both the speaker and the hearer from discomfort and offence [1]. At the same time English possesses a large stock of idioms describing health, from fit as a fiddle to at death's door, which reflect the history and everyday life of the people who created them. The aim of this thesis is to analyse the main groups of euphemisms and phraseological units representing the concepts of health and illness in English and to compare them with equivalent means in Uzbek and Russian in order to reveal their common and culture-specific features.

Methodology and Literature Review

The research rests on the analysis of academic literature and on the author's interpretation of examples taken from scientific publications and phraseological dictionaries. The methods used are descriptive analysis, componential and contextual analysis of meaning, the linguoculturological method and comparative analysis. The theoretical framework combines the theory of euphemism, phraseology and linguoculturology. Allan and Burridge's first book introduced the influential distinction between euphemism and dysphemism and offered a general term for alternative expressions of both kinds [1], and their later study of forbidden words described how taboo and censorship operate in modern English, including the vocabulary of illness, disability and mental health [2]. D.S. Likhachev's idea of the conceptosphere of a language explains why such expressions should be studied as elements of a national system of concepts rather than as isolated words [3]. V.V. Vorobyov defined the linguoculturema as a unit uniting linguistic form and cultural content and proposed methods for analysing such units [4]. A. Wierzbicka showed through the analysis of key words that every language encodes specific cultural scripts and that seemingly equivalent words in different languages often differ in their evaluative and social meaning [5]. For English phraseology the fundamental work remains A.V. Kunin's course, in which phraseological units are classified by structure and meaning and their stylistic and cultural characteristics are described [6]. V.I. Karasik's research on concepts and discourse provides a link between linguistic expressions and value orientations [7]. In Uzbek linguistics, M. Hakimov's work on the foundations of pragmalinguistics is important for understanding the pragmatic conditions of polite and indirect speech in Uzbek [8], while D. Khudoyberganova's dictionary of linguoculturological terms [9] and Sh. Usmonova's textbook [10] give the terminological basis for a comparative study of English and Uzbek cultural units.

Results and Discussion

The analysis shows that English euphemisms of illness can be grouped according to their function and the mechanism of their formation. The largest group consists of euphemisms that soften the naming of serious and frightening diseases. Instead of saying that a person has cancer, speakers may refer to a long illness or a serious condition, or simply say that someone is unwell, and the phrase after a long illness has become a conventional formula in obituaries. For a long time cancer itself was often avoided and replaced by the big C, an abbreviation that keeps the dangerous word out

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of speech while still making the reference clear. This corresponds to the protective function of euphemism described by Allan and Burridge [1]. The second group includes euphemisms for conditions that are socially embarrassing rather than dangerous. Expressions such as tummy trouble, an upset stomach, to be indisposed, to be under the weather or to have a little accident refer to digestive problems, minor illnesses or loss of control over bodily functions in a vague and polite way. The third group, which has grown considerably in recent decades, concerns disability and mental health. Here euphemism is closely connected with the movement toward politically correct and person-first language: physically challenged, differently abled, a person with a disability, a mental health condition, all replacing older terms now considered offensive. Allan and Burridge observed that such replacements are often subject to a kind of treadmill, when a new expression gradually acquires the negative associations of the old one and has to be replaced in its turn [2]. The phraseological representation of health and illness in English is organized around several recurring images. Health is associated with musical instruments and well-made objects, as in fit as a fiddle and as sound as a bell, with natural freshness, as in fresh as a daisy, and with colour, as in in the pink. Illness is represented through colour and weather, as in green about the gills and under the weather, through pallor and weakness, as in look like death warmed up, and through closeness to death, as in at death's door. Kunin showed that many such units originated in specific historical contexts and became generalized over time [6]; under the weather, for instance, is usually traced to seafaring life, where sailors who felt unwell were sent below deck away from the storm.

Comparison with Uzbek and Russian reveals several important differences. In Uzbek, euphemistic reference to serious illness is also common: speakers prefer phrases such as og'ir kasal, betob or tobi yo'q, or avoid naming a dangerous disease altogether, which agrees with Hakimov's description of the pragmatic norms of indirectness and politeness in Uzbek communication [8]. Uzbek also widely uses well-wishing formulas of religious origin, for example Xudo shifo bersin, which express the speaker's attitude rather than describe the illness and have no direct equivalents in English. In Russian the expressions нездоровится, приболеть and тяжело болен play a comparable softening role. Uzbek phraseology of health tends to evaluate health as the highest value, as in sog'lik tuman boylik, and to connect it with family and community, whereas English idioms more often describe the current physical state of an individual. This difference corresponds to Wierzbicka's thesis that apparently equivalent words in different languages carry different cultural scripts [5] and to Karasik's view of concepts as condensed values [7]. From the linguoculturological point of view developed by Vorobyov [4], Khudoyberganova [9] and Usmonova [10], English euphemisms and idioms of health and illness can be regarded as linguoculturemes that encode attitudes to privacy, self-control and individual responsibility, while the corresponding Uzbek units encode collective care, respect for the sick person and reliance on divine will. Likhachev's notion of the conceptosphere [3] helps to see these differences not as accidental lexical gaps but as reflections of the broader systems of values in the three linguistic cultures. For language teaching and translation this means that an English euphemism or idiom should be rendered not word for word but through a unit performing the same pragmatic function in the target language.

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Conclusion

The study shows that the concepts of health and illness in English are represented by a well-developed system of euphemisms and phraseological units. Euphemisms serve to soften the naming of dangerous diseases, to veil embarrassing bodily conditions and, increasingly, to express respect toward people with disabilities and mental health problems, although many of them lose their neutrality over time and are replaced by new forms. English idioms of health and illness rely on images of musical instruments, colour, weather, freshness and proximity to death, and many of them preserve traces of the historical life of English speakers. Comparison with Uzbek and Russian shows that all three languages avoid the direct naming of serious illness, but they do so in culturally different ways: English stresses privacy and individual responsibility, Uzbek emphasizes collective care, good wishes and the supreme value of health, and Russian combines softened everyday forms with emotional expressiveness. These results can be used in teaching English idioms and euphemisms to Uzbek students, in medical and literary translation and in training for intercultural communication. Further research may address the newest euphemisms connected with mental health and the representation of health in English and Uzbek media discourse.

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