



Lingua-Cultural Analysis of Periphrasis in English Journalistic Texts

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Abstract: The article examines the connection between language and culture. Cultural aspects of periphrasis in English mass media are deeply examined. The author distinguishes the periphrasis of containing allusion, the periphrasis of proverbs and sayings, and the periphrasis of containing background information.

Key words: language, culture, linguistics, lingua-cultural, allusion, periphrasis of proverbs, background information.

For more than one century, the relationship between language and culture has occupied the minds of scientists, but only at the end of the 20th century, a science arose, lingua-culture, which studies the manifestations of the culture of the people, which were reflected and manifested in the language. Lingua-culture deals with the study of language units that have cultural semantics. Cultural semantics is formed during the interaction of language and culture since any native speaker is also a carrier of culture.

Traditionally, linguists emphasized the importance of phraseological units, metaphors, and comparisons for linguistic and cultural analysis. This point of view is supported by V. N. Teliya¹, V. A. Maslova², N. D. Arutyunova³ and some other authors. Fully agreeing with well-known scientists, in the article we also want to show the importance of periphrasis as a carrier of lingua-cultural information.

Following T. I. Byteva, we consider periphrasis as a communicative unit. T. I. Byteva believes that the periphrasis "... is a unit of a non-lexical and non-syntactic level. The unity of its lexical, grammatical, and intonational semantics in close connection with the actual nominative function takes this unit beyond the limits of both lexical and syntactic levels and allows us to see in it a unit of the communicative level".

The lingua-cultural aspect of periphrasis is considered in the material of the English-language press since the study of the current state of the language should be based on the study of modern types of text. Press texts are a kind of indicator of all processes currently taking place in the language. By newspaper and magazine discourse, we mean the text of the press in conjunction with pragmatic and socio-cultural factors: a text that reflects the nation's idea of the situation in the world and represents this representation of a certain culture.

¹ Телия В. Н. Русская фразеология. Семантический, прагматический и лингвокультурологический аспекты. М.: Языки рус. культуры, 1996.

² Маслова В. А. Лингвокультурология. М.: Академия, 2001.

³ Арутюнова Н. Д. Метафора и дискурс // Теория метафоры. М.: Прогресс, 1990.

Periphrasis, unlike, for example, phraseological units, does not always reflect the process of development of the culture of the people and its cultural attitudes and stereotypes. Only a third of the analyzed periphrases are interesting from the point of view of the intersection of linguistics and culture and to some extent reflect the state of modern culture and materialize it in the language. But even in cases where the periphrasis has a lingua-culturological potential, it is not as noticeable as, say, in phraseological units or metaphors. However, one should not underestimate the lingua-cultural potential of periphrases, since over time these secondary units of the language may become more stable and become part of the vocabulary of the language, while simultaneously reflecting the cultural attitudes and stereotypes of the nation.

Lingua-culturally marked periphrases can be divided into three groups: periphrases based on illusion, paraphrases of proverbs and winged expressions, and periphrases containing background knowledge.

Linguistic and cultural potency of periphrases containing allusion. In several cases, a lingua-culturologically marked periphrasis has an allusion to some historical fact, literary work, or well-known event that is important for a given culture. Such periphrases are always difficult to decode, as they assume that readers have certain background knowledge. Moreover, periphrases with elements of allusion, found in the texts of the press, are doubly complex, as they are designed for an audience with a high educational level.

Periphrases of quotations from precedent texts are very indicative of linguistic and cultural analysis. According to Yu. N. Karaulov, we consider precedent texts that are significant for a particular person in a cognitive or emotional relationship, having a superpersonal character, i.e., well known to a wide circle of this person, including his predecessors and contemporaries, texts that are repeatedly revisited⁴.

Periphrases of quotes from precedent texts have a clear lingua-culturological marking, as they reflect certain changes in society while forcing recipients to associate with information that is part of the cultural fund of the nation. For example, ***“Mr. Fraser, an American banker, liked to say: “It is better to have loaned and lost than never to have loaned at all”*** (The Times. 2007).

In the above example, the paraphrase is based on the well-known line from the verse In Memoriam (1850) by Alfred Lord Tennyson. It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all and lose love than never love. Periphrasis translation is *“never yell”*.

The quotation from the poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson, which was the material for periphrasing, is used so often and for a long time that it can be considered part of the cultural fund of the nation, that unit of the complex of knowledge that a typical representative of Western English-speaking culture possesses. In a somewhat ironic form, the author of the statement defines the new values of modern society: the ability to take risks, the need to act, and the desire to achieve results at any cost. New attitudes of culture are expressed using a periphrasis.

Such periphrases call into question the cultural values of the nation and try to fix new categories in the mentality. The number of periphrases with allusion is 34% of the total number of lingua-culturologically marked periphrases.

Periphrases of proverbs and popular expressions in the lingua-culturological aspect. Proverbs and popular expressions are the most valuable source of information about the culture of the people, they reflect the ideas of the nation about morality, behavior, habits, etc.

We believe that in periphrased form, proverbs and winged expressions have no less cultural connotation, and in some cases their pragmatic and lingua-culturological potential even exceeds the connotative load of the original unit. Periphrases of proverbs, sayings, and popular expressions help the authors to express a whole range of emotions based on the categories of national culture. In addition, the periphrases of proverbs reflect that there are emerging changes in the mentality of nations and help to understand and accept them. For example, ***Fatness is in the eye of the beholder***

⁴ Караулов Ю. Н. Русский язык и языковая личность. 4-е изд. Стер. М.: УРСС, 2004. С. 216

to whom society's power structure, always eager to foment new forms of discrimination, has given false consciousness (Newsweek, 2006).

The author, using a periphrasis, draws a parallel between seemingly incompatible concepts, namely: *fatness* and *beauty*. But this paraphrase is far from accidental; it very clearly reflects the changes that are typical of Western society at the present stage of development. An unusual periphrasis in which priorities are shifted is a protest against the imposed standards of beauty, against slender, skinny bodies, which have forced out all possible variety of forms from life and led to discrimination.

Thus, we see that the periphrasis of proverbs, starting from the deep cultural content of the original unit, brings its pragmatic potential, which only increases due to the cultural component of the proverb.

In several cases, the authors periphrase not a proverb, but a popular expression that functions in the language as a proverb. For example, ***Never underestimate a computer*** (The Economist, 2007).

Here is a periphrasis of the famous catchphrase: “***Never underestimate your enemy***”. Periphrases of this saying are not uncommon in modern newspaper and magazine discourse. The above example is especially interesting from the point of view of linguistic and cultural connotations. Using a well-known saying as a basis, the author draws a parallel between the two concepts - "enemy" and "computer". This is very unusual in a society where the computer is considered the main invention of the second half of the 20th century.

Linguistic and cultural aspects of periphrases containing background knowledge. Periphrases affecting national realities, non-equivalent language units, reflect the national-cultural perception of the world, and the attitude of cultural bearers to certain phenomena and events. Let's look at some typical examples.

It has been asked by David Cameron not to appoint more than two per year. Pressure for action to cut the size of the upper chamber swelled in August when the prime minister used the dissolution honours list to send another 26 Tories to the red benches – sparking claims of cronyism. (The Guardian, 2015. October 13)

The periphrasis is not just a carrier of interesting linguistic and cultural information (the red benches are seats in the House of Lords that can only be occupied by peers). It is very informative in terms of reflecting the culture and worldview of the whole nation.

In general, the number of periphrases containing background information is 35% of the total number of lingua-culturally marked periphrases.

Cultural information, encoded in lingua-culturologically marked periphrases, is of great importance for lingua-culturology, since, among other things, it reflects the attitude of a modern bearer of Western culture to traditional national values and stereotypes. In addition, periphrases that are interesting from the point of view of cultural connotations allow us to analyze the changes taking place in the mentality of the nation and about its cultural values.

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