

Synonymy and variants of phraseological units with the component “clothing”

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Abstract: The given article touches upon the issues of synonymy and variants of phraseological units under the component “Clothing” in English, Russian and Uzbek languages. In distinguishing between the terms of synonymy and variants it has been approached to the views of different scholars. The equivalence of phraseological units has also been considered.

Keywords: Phraseological units, component “Clothing”, synonym, variant, expressiveness, equivalence.

Introduction: Phraseological synonymy plays a significant role in enriching the phraseological fund of any language, as it reveals the semantic-paradigmatic relationships among phraseological units. It is important to distinguish phraseological synonymy from the phenomenon of phraseological variants, a distinction that has been examined in detail. Phraseological units containing the component “clothing” (“kiyim”) have been analyzed from a comparative-contrastive perspective in English, Russian, and Uzbek, thereby highlighting both their divergent and convergent features.

METHODS

The issue of phraseological synonymy has been thoroughly examined in English, Russian, and Uzbek linguistics. In particular, in English studies, it was addressed by A. V. Kunin [4], in Russian by T. A. Bertagayev and V. I. Zimin [1], and in Uzbek linguistics, aspects of phraseological synonymy have drawn the attention of Sh. Rahmatullayev [5]. The researcher emphasized that phraseological synonyms, based on varying imagery, should nevertheless convey the same concepts and identical meanings [3]. In this article, phraseological units containing the component “clothing” (“kiyim”) in English, Russian, and Uzbek are analyzed from a comparative-contrastive perspective, including a detailed examination of their components.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

When language manifests through various linguistic units, the emergence of these units in a synonymous

capacity is of particular interest. In addition to lexical items, phraseological and paremiological units, enriched by their own synonymous forms, also contribute to the expansion of the lexical layer of the language. One concept, object, or state can be described and conveyed in multiple ways, employing different methods and expressive tools.

Hence, the language features a considerable number of phraseological units that are close in meaning. However, the phraseological units that form a synonymous set do not necessarily originate within the same era or region. For instance, two phraseological expressions containing the component “kiyim” (“clothing”) reflect a single, similar meaning: Два сапога пара (“two of a kind”; lit. “two boots make a pair”) and Одного сукна епанча (“a cape made from the same cloth”). While the first unit is tied to Russian customs, the second appears to be borrowed from the Tatar language. The notion of “taking someone else’s money” is represented by a set of phraseological units in Russian: класть в карман (“to pocket”), залезть в карман (“to dig into someone’s pocket”), запускать руку в карман (“to put one’s hand into someone’s pocket”), набивать карман (“to line one’s pockets”). Another series of expressions illustrates a lack of money: В кармане вошь на аркане, В кармане ветер свистит, В кармане ветер гуляет, Карманная чахотка (“there’s a louse on a leash in one’s pocket,” “the wind whistles in one’s pocket,” “the wind blows through one’s pocket,” “pocket consumption (tuberculosis),” respectively). While the lexeme pocket metaphorically

denotes money or means, the images of a louse (вошь), consumption (чахотка), and whistling wind (ветер свистит) convey negative connotations, signifying poverty. In each case, the phraseological units reveal associative links: the social ills of lice and tuberculosis metaphorically represent a decline in one's material status, while the whistling wind is compared to a portrait of destitution. Thus, phraseological units, even when synonymous, can reflect different cultural and historical layers. Their figurative motives (e.g., illness, parasitic creatures, or the howling wind) demonstrate how speakers conceptualize financial hardship and material insufficiency. At the same time, these close-in-meaning phraseological expressions highlight the richness of the language's semantic and imaginative possibilities.

In the online Academic Dictionary, the phraseological units “Держать в ежовых рукавицах” (“to keep under tight control”) and “Брать в ежовые рукавицы” (“to take into an iron grip”) are classified as synonyms. We would, however, register our objection to such a classification, underscoring the need to differentiate between a synonym and a variant. In this regard, we follow the viewpoint of Sh. Rahmatullayev. Discussing A. Isayev's position on the correct identification of the component structure in phraseological units, Sh. Rahmatullayev notes how “ko'z yummoq,” “abadiy ko'z yummoq,” “olamdan ko'z yummoq,” and “dunyodan ko'z yummoq”—all conveying the notion of death—are presented as independent phraseological units. According to him, the lexemes abadiy/olamdan/dunyodan constitute a facultative (additional) component, whereas ko'z yummoq forms the structural variant of the phrase. Drawing on this perspective, we likewise assert that if a phraseological unit includes a facultative—i.e., supplementary—component, it should not be regarded as a synonym but rather as a variant. For instance, “Ежовые рукавицы” itself signals severity; when coupled with supplementary components as in “Держать в ежовых рукавицах” or “Брать в ежовые рукавицы,” the meaning shifts toward “to act strictly” or “to maintain a strong grip.” If the noun phrase transforms into a verb phrase by means of an additional component, we are not dealing with a case of synonymy but of variation. In the aforementioned phraseological units “Класть в карман,” “Залезть в карман,” “Запускать руку в карман,” and “Набивать карман,” the verb element appears as a mandatory rather than facultative component, since “карман” (pocket) alone cannot serve as a full-fledged phrase. At the same time, each of these phraseological expressions exhibits subtle semantic distinctions. Phraseological variation, as a phenomenon, is a broad topic that has been explored

by numerous scholars. For example, to distinguish phraseological synonyms from variants, Sh. Rahmatullayev cites the following key criteria: the internal integrity of the phrase's form, the uniformity of its expressive coloring and semantic unity, its identical functional usage, and the absence of stylistic divergence.

Russian linguists V. P. Zhukov and A. V. Zhukov offer definitions of phraseological synonymy that closely align with Sh. Rahmatullayev's views [2]. In their interpretation, phraseological synonymy involves units that are similar in meaning and belong to the same part of speech category, yet differ in stylistic coloring and expressive nuance.

Therefore, in order to distinguish phraseological synonymy from phraseological variation, we adopt the aforementioned explanations and turn our attention to phraseological units containing the component “kiyim” (“clothing”). We have elected to analyze only those expressions that include the “kiyim” component for the purpose of contrasting synonymy and variation. Certainly, phraseological expressions with other components may also serve as synonyms for “kiyim”-based units. However, our primary aim is to focus specifically on those phraseological units that incorporate this particular component.

When examining the variant forms of phraseological units, one can observe the breadth of their usage. For example, we believe it is incorrect to classify the phraseological expressions “Быть под каблуком” (“to be under someone's heel”) and “Быть под башмаком” (“to be under someone's shoe”) as synonyms; rather, we acknowledge them as variants. Furthermore, phraseological units may, through their variants, enter different stylistic layers of the language. The variant forms mentioned above belong to a neutral layer, while in colloquial speech they may change form, becoming подбашмачник or подкаблучник. The English equivalent is somewhat partial, differing by a single component: “to be under smb.'s thumb.” This phraseological unit also has synonyms, as indicated by Lingvo's electronic dictionary: “be in smb.'s pocket,” “be in the hollow of smb.'s hand,” “be henpecked,” “be tied (pinned) to one's wife's apron strings,” “be petty-coat-ridden,” “be under smb.'s thumb (heel, hoof),” “be beneath (under) smb.'s foot (feet).” The expression “to be under smb.'s thumb” itself is accompanied by variants such as “to be under smb.'s heel,” “to be under smb.'s hoof,” and “to be under smb.'s foot.” While the Russian phraseological unit refers primarily to the concept of being a “husband under his wife's control,” the English phrases have a broader meaning, encompassing both a wife's domination and subjugation by anyone else's oppression. Examples

that specifically convey the meaning of “a husband under his wife’s control” include “be tied (pinned) to one’s wife’s apron strings” and “henpecked.” Meanwhile, the Russian expression “Тупой как валенок” (“dumb as felt boots”) also has several variants: “Тупой как Сибирский валенок,” “Тупой как Тамбовский валенок.” As another illustration of phraseological variation in Russian, we can cite “Отбросить штиблеты” / “Отбросить сандалии” / “Отбросить коньки.” In all three of these examples, a type of footwear serves the same function in the underlying meaning, activated through a single semantic notion.

Likewise, in Russian, phraseological variation is exemplified by the following sets of expressions. For instance:

Толстый карман / Тугой карман – indicate wealth, a pocket full of money;

Тощий карман / Пустой карман – denote having no money;

Вытрясти карман / Вывернуть карман – to end up impoverished;

Костюм Адама / Костюм Евы – to be without clothing;

Снимать шапку / Снимать шляпу – to show respect;

Остаться без рубашки / Остаться без штанов – to become destitute;

Держаться за бабулю юбку / Держаться за мамину юбку – to be dependent on a woman;

Как раку фрак / Как щучке брюки / Как рыбе нижнее бельё – something that is utterly unnecessary;

Пеньковый галстук / Столыпинский галстук / Муравьевский галстук – a metaphor for a noose.

In such cases of phraseological variation, substituting one component for another does not alter the connotative or semantic coloring of the given expression. Each variant preserves the same expressive effect, stylistic significance, and semantic load as the others.

Turning to English, one finds a comparable pattern in the phraseological units to hide behind a mother’s skirt, to be tied to mother’s apron strings, to be tied to one’s/wife’s apron strings, to be pinned to wife’s apron strings, which illustrate both variation and synonymy. When we compare to be tied to one’s apron strings, to be tied to wife’s apron strings, and to be pinned to wife’s apron strings, we observe that they differ by a single lexical component while maintaining an identical level of expressive connotation; thus, they constitute variant forms of one another. Meanwhile, to hide behind a mother’s skirt differs semantically and in terms of expressive nuance from the aforementioned

variants, thereby forming a synonymous relationship with them. The first group of variant expressions signifies “being dependent on a woman,” whereas to hide behind a mother’s skirt implies “remaining behind a woman’s protection” or shifting responsibilities onto a woman’s shoulders—subtly distinct in meaning. According to Sh. Rahmatullayev, phraseological variants are set apart from phraseological synonyms by their shared core lexical component, which remains constant.

In Uzbek, among the set of phraseological expressions involving the concept of “clothing” (kiyim), one finds variant-like units such as Yelkasi chopon ko’rmagan (“his shoulders have never felt a cloak”) and Elkasi to’n ko’rmagan (“his shoulders have never seen a robe”). These share the same core lexical components and convey essentially the same semantic content, thus constituting variational forms. By contrast, synonymic expressions like Eti qo’rpsig’a sig’may (“his body cannot fit inside its sheath” – implying boundless excitement), Do’ppisini osmonga otmoq (“to throw one’s doppi/cap into the air”), and Ko’ylagini to’rt yirtish (“to tear one’s shirt into four pieces”) all signify that the person in question is overcome with joy or excitement. Meanwhile, Yelkasi cho’pon ko’rmagan (“his shoulders never wore a cloak”) and Bir to’ni ikki bo’lmadi (“he never owned even two robes”) describe a person’s poverty.

CONCLUSION

In analyzing the synonymy and variability of phraseological units, we examined their etymology in English, Russian, and Uzbek. This approach revealed distinct cultural and national characteristics of each people. Within the framework of phraseological expressions containing the component “clothing” (kiyim), instances of both synonymy and variation were observed.

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