

The Cultural Codes of the English Comparative Phraseological Units Denoting the Human Appearance

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While reconstructing the language model of the world and its individual parts a special place is given to the system of the so-called cultural codes. The Cultural code is defined in the lingo cultural studies as a system of segmentation, categorization, assessments of the world and the inner experience of a person. It is determined by the culture of a certain ethnos and is represented in semiotic systems of the language, art, rituals, customs, beliefs, etc. [2: 220]. Within the cultural codes that are represented in such a semiotic system as the language by artifacts, proper names, events that appear in the ideas of a particular ethnic group as the generalized images and even characters, there appears a possibility to determine the motivational basis, as well as the images of the linguistic units. In the comparative phraseology (CP) of the English language and its units (CPU), which are used to indicate the human appearance in the English language world view, we can single out such cultural codes:

1) *biomorphic cultural code*, that represents the human appearance using the images of animals, birds, insects, plants, and is based on the metaphorical transfer "animal, plant – human being". On this basis, it can be divided into two subtypes:

a) *zoomorphic cultural code*, which is based on the images of the wildlife. For example: (as) big as an elephant, (as) graceful as a swan, (as) fat as a partridge etc.

Such metaphorical phraseological nominations of the human appearance are very productive in the English language and help people reveal the peculiarities of their ideas in the English language world view not only about the animal world but also about themselves.

b) *phytomorphic cultural code*, that is based on the images of the vegetation. It appears in CPUs, which denote the human appearance, rather rarely in comparison with the zoomorphic cultural code. For example: (as) tall as a tree (an oak), (as) fair

as a lily, (as) fair as a rose, (as) bare as a winter tree and others. The specific character of such CPUs is created with the help of the metaphorical use of images of the vegetation.

2) *anthropomorphic cultural code*, that represents the human appearance using the names of body parts in the component structure of the phraseological units. This cultural code is one of the most ancient and highly productive because the body is one of the most important things in our life and people tend to compare many things with it. For example: (as) dry as a bone, (as) bare as the palm of one's hand etc.

3) *artefactual cultural code*, which represents the image of a human being using the images of objects, buildings, houses, their details, everyday realities and various artefacts. For example: (as) lean as a rake, (as) long as a fiddle, (as) bald as a billiard ball etc. Such CPUs appear as a result of the association of a human being with objects of the reality. Their number is large and diverse, and in different languages it is variable. These CPUs contain a strong national colouring and a great diversity of connotations.

4) *mythological and religious cultural codes*, that represent the images of religious and mythological ideas of a human being. For example: (as) beautiful as an angel, (as) ugly as the devil, (as) ugly as a sin etc. Such CPUs are characterized by the national cultural specificity that allows us to consider them to be culture markers.

5) *geographical or spatial cultural code*, which represents the images taken from the sphere of geographical objects. For example: (as) tall as a mountain, (as) high as a hill etc.

In the imaginative base of English CPUs, which denote the human appearance, some other cultural codes are used: *onymic cultural code*, that represents images using proper names (to be (look etc) like Rip van Winkle); *colourative cultural code*, which represents images associated with colours ((as) red as a cherry (a rose)) and others.

All the above given CPUs state that "the human mind is capable to objectify any quality, ... and in the constant transfer of concepts from one sphere to another one there appears the flexibility of the human mind" [1: 481-482].

Literature

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