



**Representation of phraseological units with a zoonym component in the German  
and English linguistic views of the world**

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**ABSTRACT**

Phraseological units with a zoonym component are the focus of the given scientific research. The relevance of this study arouses little doubt, since zoo-phraseologisms are widely used among native speakers, but a person for whom German and English are foreign languages uses these units in his speech extremely rarely, as they are difficult to perceive, and their misuse can lead to failures in intercultural communication. In addition, this layer of language is considered not fully explored. In this regard, it is necessary to conduct a more detailed study considering phraseological units with zoonims, the attempt is presented in the following article.

The material of our research is the data of phraseological dictionaries of the German and English languages, stylistic and explanatory dictionaries, collections of commonly used proverbs in German and English.

As methods of research, discursive analysis, functional analysis, various methods of descriptive and comparative method have served.

The practical and theoretical significance of our research work is that the results of the study can be applied in the study of a foreign language for understanding the culture of native speakers.

**Key words:** phraseological unit, zoonym, linguistic view of the world, idiom, phraseological fusions



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Phraseology captures the vast experience of the people, reflects the ideas associated with the labor, life and cultural life of people. Phraseology is an important and integral part of any language. Over time, it accumulates phraseological units that allow us to look into the past of the people or to know the culture of another country, since phraseological units describe the mentality, national character, lifestyle, as a rule, and much more.

It should be noted that the study of phraseology as an independent science has been conducted for a long time by both foreign and Russian scientists, but the interest in this field of linguistics has not faded to this day. Semantic characteristics and features of phraseological units are the focus of works by P. Kühn, H. Burger, V.V. Vinogradov, N.M. Shanskii and many others.

Animalistic phraseology is a huge layer of phraseological units and is one of the most common forms of the language nomination, because it is through comparing ourselves with the animal world that a person comprehends the reality surrounding him/her, and, to a certain extent, comprehends himself/herself in this reality.

Phraseological units with the names of animals are of great prevalence and universality in many cultures. This is evidenced by the fact that in the languages around the world they are widely used as a characteristic of the image of man and possess high connotative potential. Phraseological units with a zoomorphic component constitute a significant part of the dictionary stock of absolutely any language.

The picture of the world, displayed by the phraseological means of the language and regarded as a linguistic phenomenon of the national and cultural heritage, is a phraseological picture of the world. In the phraseological picture of the world, the national uniqueness and uniqueness of the language is most clearly reflected, since phraseological units often include components of meaning that contain information about the nationally specific features of the people. Phraseological units are special units of the language, in which people's wisdom is displayed, the value-based picture of the world of ethnos, as well as representations and knowledge, both about the outer and inner world of the individual (Verenich 2012: 52).



Thus, we can conclude that each specific language is a special system that affects the consciousness of people and shapes their picture of the world. The language picture of the world, in turn, reflects the complex of ideas about the world. It creates homogeneity of the linguistic essence, contributes to the consolidation of linguistic and cultural identity in the vision of the world and its designation by means of language. The linguistic view of the world exists in the homogeneous unique identity of the linguistic community and is the transforming power of a language that shapes the perception of the world around the human person through language as an "intermediate world" of the speakers of that language (Varlamova, Tulusina, Zaripova, Gataullina 2016).

The term "phraseological unit" denotes several semantically diverse types (Varlamova, Naciscione, Tulusina 2016). Some researchers refer to it the following units of language: the idioms *das schwarze Schaf, ein weißer Rabe / black sheep*, they are joined by combinations-phraseoschemes, in which the syntactic structure and a certain part of the lexical composition are reassessed, and the rest is filled depending on the context; winged words *Buridans Esel*, proverbs and sayings formed as a result of folk art and traditions.

In order to distinguish the phraseological unit from other similar linguistic units, namely, from the word and free phrase, it is necessary to emphasize the characteristic features of phraseological units. They are: repeatability (Vinogradov 2001: 155), integrity of meaning (Vinogradov 1977: 157), stability of structure (Vinogradov 2001: 167), separability (Vinogradov 1977: 193), emotional and expressive coloring (Vinogradov 2001: 151), imagery (Alifirenko 2004: 256), idiomaticity (Gavrin 1963: 106).

Phraseology reflects the most characteristic and striking features of certain people and therefore quickly memorable. Phraseological units with the zoonym component are considered one of the most numerous and internally diverse groups of phraseological funds: zoonimalistic phraseological units reflect the centuries-old observations of a person over the appearance and habits and behavior of animals, show the attitude of a person to their "smaller brothers", thus being a cultural- informational fund in each language.

Zoonyms are often used as part of phraseological expressions. Such a demand for animal images is due to the fact that the direct meanings of these lexical units have great



opportunities for the formation of connotations. With each of the zonyms a large number of ideas about the traits of human nature is associated, ostensibly inherent in animals.

Man, trying to characterize his/her behavior and appearance, compared himself/herself with what was closest to him, familiar and similar to himself/herself - the world of animals. Zonym components in the German and English language view of the world are distinguished by a special mental natural association that unites people with the animal world, which is based on a deep connection between the evaluation semantics and biological signs of animals.

The zonym in the phraseological unit is its semantic center (that is, zoomorphism), and it is in it where lies the basic metaphorical meaning that gives the meaning to the whole expression.

The German and English phraseological units with the zonym component fund is rich and diverse. The reference to the names of animals is considered natural and normal, since animals, like humans, have their own characteristic habits and peculiar features; each of them has its own way of life and has a unique type of behavior. Many animal names are currently set metaphors. In German, as well as in English, for example, the cow is stupid, the hare is wise, the fox is sly/traitor, the bear is clumsy and so on. Here are some examples:

- da stehen wie die Kuh vom neuen Tor - stare like a stuck pig;
- ein alter Hase sein - old sea dog;
- dem Fuchs beichten - break a secret;
- plump wie ein Bär - play the bear.

The hyper theme Tier includes hyponyms Fish (fish) and Vogel (bird) and Haustier (pets), Nutztiere (livestock), Säugetier (mammals) and Weichtier (shellfish). Lexical-semantic group Insekten (insects) and Würmer (worms) are presented in the following phraseology units: emsig wie eine Biene / the busy bee, zwei Fliegen mit einer Klappe schlagen / nail two birds with one stone.

In most cases, zoomorphic phraseologisms contain names of pets, which can be explained by extra-linguistic factors, and, first of all, the peculiarities of the human relationship with its closest domestic environment (Raykhshteyn 1981: 57). In German and English there are frequent phrases with components Schwein (pig), Katze (cat), Hund (dog), for



example, Schwein haben / hog heaven; Wie Hund und Katze leben / live a cat-and-dog life; Wie die Katze um den heißen Brei herumgehen / like a cat round hot milk.

Phraseological units with the zoonym component as the name of a wild animal are also quite common. The main “heros” of such expressions are Hase (hare), Bär (bear), der Affe (monkey), der Pfau (peacock), e.g., sich wie ein Pfau speizen / strut like a peacock. The phraseological image is formed on the basis of a person's idea of an animal, and the animal's name is sequentially associated with an object that has certain qualities and properties, and with its symbolic meaning. And this is natural, since the whole world around a person is perceived by him through the prism of mythological thinking. One can agree with the view of N.D. Petrova, who focuses on the symbolism of zoonyms in the German language, mentioning that they have an element of symbolization (Kunin 1983: 4). For example, the seme "rigidity, ruthlessness, rapacity" is characteristic of zooseme "wolf" in both the languages, for example, ein Wolf im Schlafpelz / wolf in sheep's clothing.

Thus, it can be concluded that the names of animals are used as certain symbols. That is, the image or habits of a certain animal are transferred to a person or objects of the surrounding reality, and the zoonym acquires a generally accepted associative meaning. Over time, the symbol-animal is filled with profound social and spiritual meaning, which is reflected in the phraseology (Davletbayeva, Larionova, Bashkirova 2016).

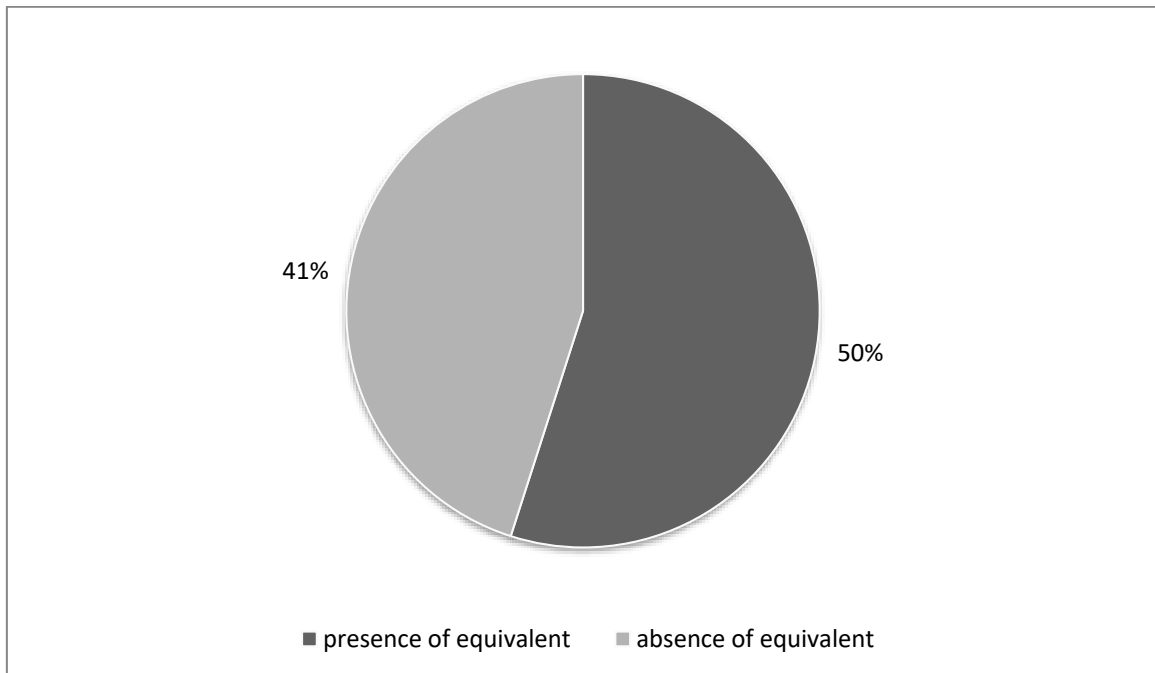
## **2. METHODS**

The material was collected by the following groups of research methods: analysis, comparison, included observation, modeling method, continuous sampling method. With the use of modeling method the main characteristics of the phraseological units with zoonym component in the English and German languages has been introduced.

The material for this study comprised 200 German and English phraseological units selected from authoritative German and English phraseological dictionaries: Der Grobe Duden, Redewendungen und sprichwortliche Redensarten, The Contemporary Dictionary of the English Language.

## **3. RESULTS**

It was found out that of the 200 phraseological units of the German language 118 have the equivalent in English.



From the presented diagram it follows that almost 2/3 of the selected phraseological units have an analogue in the English language. Analysis of these phraseological units allowed us to identify the following groups of idioms by the presence (or absence) of equivalents.

1. Full phraseological equivalents. Full equivalents are phraseological units that completely coincide with the set expressions of another language in the image, component composition, phraseological meaning and style. That is, phraseological units that completely coincide at the lexical and grammatical levels:

- schwätzt wie eine Elster - to be as garrulous as a magpie;
- essen wie ein Spatz - eat like a bird;

In the above equivalents, there is a coincidence of the seminal composition of the phraseological meaning of the matched phraseological units on both the connotative and the significative-denotative level, which leads to their functional and semantic equality.

Partial equivalents are traditionally defined as phraseological units with the same or close image, close meaning, similar or slightly different component composition and structural and grammatical organization. In this study, we divided the partial equivalents into two groups.

2. Partial equivalents having the same meaning, but different zoonym:

- wie ein Dachs arbeiten - work like a horse;



- gesund wie ein Bär - as strong as a horse;

3. Partial equivalents without zoonym. The analogue in English carries the same meaning, but does not contain the zoocomponent:

- auf der Bärenhaut liegen - to be idle;
- sich aufs hohe Pferd setzen - be haughty.

4. Nonequivalent phraseological units are phraseological units that have no similarity in grammatical structure and lexical (component) composition in different languages (Mellado 2009: 89):

- um einen Lachs spielen - play for money;
- ein toller Hecht- merrymaker.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

The presence of nonequivalent phraseological units can be related to the following reasons.

First of all, the peculiarities of the geographical position and the prevalence of certain species of animals in connection with this. Long ago, the territory of Germany was inhabited by a huge number of hares and wild rabbits. In this connection, in German there is a considerable number of phraseological units with the name of this animal. Among men, hunting for these animals was popular, but hares were described as dodgy animals, which were difficult to catch even for the fastest hunting dogs. Hares double on their traces, making huge leaps in different directions. Hence, for example, there were such phraseologisms as "wissen wie der Hase läuft" (literally: to know how the rabbit runs); or "ein alter Hase" (old hare) / old hand.

Secondly, it is not uncommon for phraseological units to arise as a result of etymological errors. For example, the phraseological unit *Das kann kein Schwein lesen* has nothing to do with the image of a pig. The history of this phraseology is related to the name Swyn. Once upon a time there lived a very intelligent Swyn family in Germany. But one day none of the members of this family could decipher the document, and therefore the peasants began to say: "Dat kann keen Swyn lesen". And this popular expression caught on, which, of course, can not have any analogue in other languages, including English.

Third, national specificity. In German, nationally specific is the phraseological unit *das geht auf keine Kuhhaut!* / *This does not describe!* (Literally: this can not be written on the



parchment). Parchment was made from the skin of animals, and, quite often, from the skin of cows. Under the word "Kuhhaut" superstitious people understood the parchment with the list of sins, which Satan reads to the person at the time of his/her death. In English, the same meaning is conveyed by exclamatory sentences that are not phraseological.

The reason for the occurrence of nonequivalent phraseological units can also be caused by history, folk games, customs, peculiarities of the life of peoples, rituals and many other features.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

As a result of the research it was also found out that 18% of phraseological units in the German language have a full equivalent in English. This fact can be explained by the features of some animals that vividly manifest themselves in their appearance or behavior. Representatives of different peoples noticed these features and, since people tend to compare themselves with the animal world, they made a parallel between themselves and them. So, phraseological units: *rot wie ein Krebs* / red as a lobster, *stark wie ein Pferd* / strength of a horse, *schwimmt wie ein Fisch* / swim like a fish - completely coincide in the two languages according to the meaning that they carry in themselves (Kulkova, Rakhimova, Zinecker 2015).

The next reason for having equivalents is the common origin, that is, one source. An example is the phraseological unit *ein Wolf im Schlafpelz* and its analogue in English - *wolf in sheep's clothing*. This expression became widely known thanks to the Bible. In the Gospel of Matthew there are these words: "Beware of false blamers: they come to you in sheep's clothing, but inside they are predatory wolves."

In the course of the study it was found that some phraseological units of German and English have the same meaning, but they contain different zoocomponents. That is, to characterize the same phenomena, peoples resort to different names of animals. This can be explained by the fact that in one country one animal is more popular and more common, and in another country is another one. In addition, a single ethnic group can attach greater importance to specific qualities due to some national characteristics (Rakhimova, Sharipova, Zaripova, Olegovich 2015).





Despite the commonness of semantics, various inner forms begin existence, images that arise in the German and English linguistic consciousness on the basis of various associations. The fact that 1/3 of the phraseological units of German has an equivalent in English, but does not contain a zoonym can be explained by the difference in views on the surrounding world. The phraseological image is often based on realities, which are known only to one nation. The national peculiarity of the phraseological image reflects the way of life and character of the people, their spiritual life, historical events, unique traditions, peculiar customs and ethnic life in the special selection of the lexical components of this or that phraseology.

#### **6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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