

УДК 81'367.623:[811.161.3+811.111]

UDC 81'367.623:[811.161.3+811.111]

## РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ ПЕЙОРАТИВНЫХ И МЕЛИОРАТИВНЫХ ОЛЬФАКТОРНЫХ НОМИНАЦИЙ В БЕЛОРУССКОМ И АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ

## REPRESENTATION OF PEJORATIVE AND MELIORATIVE OLFACTORY NOMINATIONS IN THE BELARUSIAN AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

**В. И. Жук,**

*аспірант кафедры языкознания и лингводидактики Белорусского государственного педагогического университета имени максима Танка*

**V. Zhuk,**

*Postgraduate Student of the Department of Linguistics and Linguodidactics, Belarusian State Pedagogical University named after Maxim Tank*

Поступила в редакцию 17.01.22.

Received on 17.01.22.

В статье исследуется репрезентация мелиоративных и пейоративных номинаций в белорусском и английском языке на базе ольфакторных субстантивов, адъективов и глаголов. Рассматривается вопрос количественного соответствия кодифицированных лексем каждой категории, а также специфика синонимов английского языка по отношению к их белорусским эквивалентам, благодаря чему прослеживается специфика восприятия и когнитивной интерпретации феномена запаха в белорусском и английском языках.

*Ключевые слова:* лексема, ольфакторная номинация, синоним, эквивалент, белорусский язык, английский язык.

The article studies representation of meliorative and pejorative nominations in the Belarusian and English languages on the base of olfactory substantives, adjectives and verbs. It considers the question of quantitative correlation of codified lexemes of each category as well as the specificity of English synonyms related to their Belarusian equivalents. Due to it we can trace the specificity of perception and cognitive interpretation of the phenomenon of smell in the Belarusian and English languages.

*Keywords:* lexeme, olfactory nomination, synonym, equivalent, the Belarusian language, the English language.

Every natural language is a reflection of a certain way of perception and function of the world. Any phenomena of the surrounding world is first perceived by the senses, then logically comprehended by categorization. A combination of ideas about the world, combined in the meaning of different words and expressions, develops into the system of views of native speakers. Being significant from the point of view of the carrier of the consciousness of these reality imprints becomes, they become the property of not only a person, but also national culture [1].

Both linguists and psychologists note the hierarchical nature of the components of the perception system, which depends on the amount of information perceived by a person's consciousness: vision is traditionally considered the main type of perception for humans. Meanings reflecting auditory and, even more so, olfactory and tactile impressions, have a greater degree of diffusion [2, с. 42].

Despite the relatively modest (compared to the audiovisual) role of olfactory perception in a person's life, it is essential for studying the reflection of perception in the language. The abundance of language means of expression of olfactory perception in both Belarusian and English is a sign of the multi-facetedness and ambiguity of its definition.

Olfactory perception affects people on both physical and psychological levels. Most often, a person describes the smell only through its correspondence with a certain social or cultural norm, which partly explains our compassionate attitude to pleasant smells and disgust to unpleasant. The specificity of this situation lies in the fact that a person is able to distinguish and retain in memory a sufficiently large number of odors, but this feature is combined with lacking differentiation when verbalizing the concept of «smell» [3].

Pleasant smells can provoke a deep emotional reaction. The smell associated with positive experiences can cause intense positive emotions. At the same time, many olfactory preferences are based on emotional associations and are very subjective. This is evidenced by the results of surveys and research on the study of the features of olfactory perception. For example, researcher Anthony Sinnott conducted a survey of 270 students and professors of Concordia Montreal University. They were asked to speak out on the topic of the role of smells in their lives, and the question of favorite smells received extremely diverse answers: from the predictable «smell of freshly mowed grass», «aroma of roses», «the smell of homemade bread» to the most unexpected – «smells of Montreal Forum and Olympic stadium, «the

smell of the body», «my dog», «smell of gasoline» [4].

The emotional response to odors is largely determined by the socio-cultural context, in particular such parameters as early olfactory impressions, cultural traditions, hygienic attitudes, etc. So, for example, the results of special studies have demonstrated a rather large variety of national preferences on the «pleasant smells» scale: Germans have pleasant associations caused by smells of candles, clean sheets, forest and herbs, Japanese – objects associated with the bathroom, flowers [5].

The problem of assessing the surrounding reality has always attracted close attention of researchers in the field of philosophy, logic, psychology and linguistics. This is due to the complexity of the evaluation process, during which various phenomenon should not only be perceived, but also compared with the existing world model or with special representations of a person passed through the mental sphere and the sphere of feelings, and classified as a result.

It should be noted that a person assesses the smell not only as the aggregate of all its properties, but also gives an estimate to each property separately: intensity, persistence, concentration, duration, etc. Moreover, the assessment of the individual property often affects the smell assessment as a whole. The usual “good-bad” opposition is not enough to characterize the full manifold of the means of olfactory effects, since the same smell can be interpreted in different ways. Exceptionally high intensity can give a negative assessment to a pleasant smell and, thus, transfer it into the unpleasant category. At the same time, very thin concentrations of substances may not cause a negative olfactory sensation, but in higher concentrations the smell turns out to be unpleasant [4].

From this it can be concluded that people are not interested in smells by themselves, but the positive or negative sensations they deliver. Neutral smell is quite rare and relative phenomenon in nature, and lexical units with a neutral evaluation component may also transmit the meaning of pleasant or unpleasant odors depending on the context. Many olfactory associations of representatives of different cultures are reflected in the language. The translation of lexical units containing olfactory images from one language to another is often a problem of both linguistic and extralinguistic nature.

When analyzing codified lexemes with the meaning of «pleasant smell» in the languages under consideration, the nominations of olfactory perception can be divided into subgroups, depending on affiliation to parts of speech:

- nouns – *арома* (водар), *fragrance* (водар), *perfume* (водар), *scent* (пах);

- adjectives – *aromatic* (духмяны), *fragrant* (духмяны), *perfumed* (духмяны), *scented* (араматызаваны), *odorous* (пахкі);
- verbs – *to aromatize* (араматызаваць), *to scent* (араматызаваць), *to perfume* (араматызаваць), *to odorize* (араматызаваць).

Analysis of the selected vocabulary with the «pleasant smell» meaning in English language shows that it contains a significant number of lexemes describing the manifestations of pleasant odor in various grades and intensity. However, the presence of a much smaller number of relevant lexical units is characteristic of the Belarusian language.

For example, among codified nouns with a meliorative lexical-semantic variant (LSV), the Belarusian unit of *водар* corresponds to 3 words: *aroma*, *fragrance*, *perfume*.

The noun *арома* may denote the intense smell of natural origin or the appetizing smell of food, is often used to define pleasant smells of cosmetics and perfume products along with the word *perfume*. *Fragrance* characterizes the olfactory sensation of a lesser degree of intensity, thin whiff of pleasant smell. Just like the word *арома* it may define pleasant smells of natural origin and the smell of food. Substantive *perfume* is used mainly to designate aromatic substances and smells they produce.

Lexical unit *пах* does not have such distinctly pronounced meliorative connotation, which is also characteristic of its English equivalent *scent*, which contains secondary LSV of neutral connotations to determine the smells of low intensity, similar to the word *fragrance*.

Adjective *духмяны* has 3 equivalents: *aromatic*, *fragrant* and *perfumed*.

*Aromatic* denotes the ability of an object to issue a smell and is used more often in relation to cosmetics, household items, while *fragrant* can be used to describe the pleasant natural smells of flowers, plants and herbs. Also both of these words can be used in the description of the pleasant smells of food. Lexeme *perfumed* refers primarily to the smells of artificial origin applied on objects, and can also be translated as *парфумаваны* (such object or person to which perfumes were applied to give a pleasant aroma).

*Араматызаваны* corresponds the most to the English lexeme *scented*, and denotes an object endowed with a pleasant smell. As well as *perfumed*, it is used to describe non-native fragrances, which were applied to the object. It should be noted that *scented* and *perfumed* are rarely used to describe the smells of food products, the stylistically neutral word *flavored* is much more likely to be used in that case.

*Пахі* is the closest equivalent of the English lexeme *odorous*, denoting a pleasant, well-distinguishable smell. It should, however, be noted that *odorous* has a pronounced meliorative

connotation, while *пахкі* is a stylistically neutral lexical unit.

Among the verbs, all units correspond to the Belarusian equivalent *араматызаваць*: *to aromatize, to scent, to odorize, to perfume*.

*To aromatize* is the closest equivalent to the word *араматызаваць*, while *to scent* has a less pronounced meliorative meaning and can be used to designate the process of applying neutral-smelling substances. The verb *to odorize* is used quite rarely in modern English, but its derivative form *to deodorize* is actively used.

The verb *to perfume*, as well as the adjective *perfumed*, describes the process of giving the space or objects pleasant smell by applying or spraying aromatic substances, and can be translated as *парфумаваць*.

The following words were included in the subgroups with the «unpleasant smell» meaning:

- nouns – *stench* (*смурод*), *pong* (*смурод*), *stink* (*смурод*), *reek* (*смурод*);
- adjectives – *fetid* (*смуродны*), *foul* (*смуродны*), *fusty* (*затхлы*), *malodorous* (*непрыемны*), *musty* (*затхлы*), *noisome* (*ташнатворны*), *putrid* (*гниласны*), *rancid* (*прагорклы*), *reeking* (*смуродны*), *smelly* (*пахкі*), *stinking* (*смуродны*), *whiffy* (*пахкі*);
- verbs – *to stink* (*смярдзець*), *to pong* (*смярдзець*), *to reek* (*смярдзець*).

The thematic group of pejorative olfactory nominations has the lexeme distribution close to the meliorative group analyzed earlier. The number of codified lexemes describing the olfactory sensations of various grades and intensities in English language significantly exceeds the diversity of those in the Belarusian language.

So, for the Belarusian lexeme of *смурод* there are at least 4 equivalents in English – *stench, pong, stink, reek*.

The meaning of the *stench* and *stink* lexemes in modern English is quite wide and most often associated with smells arising in the process of rotting, decomposition and decay, but are not limited to them. *Pong* and *reek* express the feeling of an unpleasant, disgusting smell of about the same degree of intensity. The *pong* substantive is used to describe strong, sharp unpleasant odors. *Reek* can characterize various unpleasantly memorable natural odors, which are difficult to confuse with any other – smells of garbage, paraffin, oil, tobacco, etc.

Pejorative olfactory adjectives have a wide compatibility. Most of the adjectives with the meaning of unpleasant odor are combined with neutral nouns, but some of them can be combined with the substantive *stench*, mutually reinforcing each other's meaning when describing the extreme degree of manifestation of unpleasant odors. Depending on the context, they can describe the olfactory sensations perceived from the environment and places

where they manifest themselves, inanimate objects, animals and plants, humans and products of their existence. Frequently, such adjectives are used in the context of description of an unpleasant taste, indicating a high degree of adjacency for such types of perception as olfactory and gustatory.

In the subgroup of adjective lexical unit *смуродны* (and its synonym *смярдзючы*) has the greatest number of equivalents (four): *fetid, foul, reeking, stinking*.

Two equivalents correspond to the Belarusian adjectives *пахкі* (*smelly, whiffy*) and *затхлы* (*fusty, musty*).

Words such as *непрыемны* (*malodorous*), *ташнатворны* (*noisome*), *гниласны* (*putrid*) and *прагорклы* (*rancid*) have only one identified codified equivalent.

For the verb *смярдзець* there are at least three lexical units in English language: *to stink, to pong, to reek*. Just like the nouns from which they are formed, *to pong* and *to reek* describe the processes producing an unpleasant odor and sensations from perceiving it. In modern English *to pong* is used primarily in the colloquial speech. The verb *to stink* is used to describe particularly unpleasant odors.

A series of lexemes with sememes of odor perception have figurative meanings that developed on the basis of semantic shifts. Often, the transfer area of the meanings of adjectives is the sphere of the emotional world of human. For example, many pejorative olfactory adjectives develop the meaning of “causing a negative assessment or negative emotion”, while the perception of pleasant smells is associated with approval, positive assessment.

Among the identified lexical units, the most numerous subgroup is the subgroup of pejorative olfactory adjectives, which may indicate the increased attention of society to the phenomenon of an unpleasant odor, which is expressed in the search for new means to verbalize the peculiarities of the corresponding olfactory sensations.

Despite the fact that lexical units in the languages under consideration belong to the same categories (pejorative and meliorative olfactory nominations), significant quantitative differences in the field of codified lexical units indicate differences in cultural olfactory images. The palette of olfactory sensations in English language seems to be wider and more varied than in Belarusian. It is impossible to deny that the linguistic picture of the world has national specifics and has cultural significance, but a number of extralinguistic factors can be the cause of such a distribution, in particular, a high interest in studying English manifested by linguists of many countries for a long period of time, which led to codification of much larger amount of lexical units.

**ЛИТЕРАТУРА**

1. Григорьева, О. Н. Цвет и запах власти. Лексика чувственного восприятия в публицистическом и художественном текстах / О. Н. Григорьева. – М. : Наука, 2004. – 248 с.
2. Арутюнова, Н. Д. Язык и мир человека. / Н. Д. Арутюнова. – 2-е изд., испр. – М. : Языки русской культуры, 1999. – 896 с.
3. Риндисбахер, Х. Д. От запаха к слову: моделирование значений в романе Патрика Зюскинда «Парфюмер» / Х. Д. Риндисбахер // Ароматы и запахи в культуре : в 2 кн. / сост. О.Б. Вайнштейн. – М. : Новое литературное обозрение, 2003. – Кн. 2. – С. 579–608.
4. Романова, Н. Г. Физиология сенсорных систем : учебное пособие для студентов вузов. / Н. Г. Романова, И. М. Воронин, М. А. Ельникова. – Тамбов : Изд-во ТГУ им. Г. Р. Державина, 2004. – 172 с.
5. Ароматы и запахи в культуре: в 2 кн. / сост. О. Б. Вайнштейн. – М. : Новое литературное обозрение, 2003. – Кн. 1. – 608 с.

**REFERENCES**

1. Grigorieva, O. N. Color and smell of power. Vocabulary of sensual perception in journalistic and artistic texts / O. N. Grigorieva. – M. : Science, 2004. – 248 p.
2. Arutyunova, N. D. Language and world of man. / N. D. Arutyunova. – 2nd ed. – M. : Languages of Russian Culture, 1999. – 896 p.
3. Rinedisbacher, H.D. From the smell to the word: modeling of meanings in the novel of Patrick Zyuskind «Perfumer» / H. D. Rinedisbacher // Fragrances and smells in culture : in 2 volumes. / ed. O. B. Weinstein. – M. : New Literary Review, 2003. – Vol. 2. – P. 579–608.
4. Romanova, N. G. Physiology of sensory systems: Tutorial for university students. / N. G. Romanova, I. M. Voronin, M. A. Ylannikova. – Tambov : Publishing House of TSU named after G. R. Derzhavin, 2004. – 172 p.
5. Fragrances and odors in culture: in 2 volumes. / ed. O. B. Weinstein. – M. : New Literary Review, 2003. – Vol. 1. – 608 p.