



PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN THE SEMANTIC FIELD OF “CRIME”

Dilorom Ismoilova

EFL teacher, Fergana State University

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7834815>

Annotation: Phraseological units are considered as components of semantic field and play a crucial role in verbalizing criminal concepts. They are more powerful in comparison with words to express the cultural features of the national languages and also, they are emotional and stylistically colored units as well. The article discusses the linguacultural peculiarities of the idioms in semantic field of “crime”. The author highlights the etymological roots and phrase semantic meanings of idioms in the article.

Key words: phraseological unit, phraseologism, phrase, metaphor, microfield, expression, idiom.

Language as a social phenomenon is born in society and develops based on the thinking of members of this society. The expansion of the vocabulary of a particular language is primarily based on the use of all the possibilities of the language by the speakers of this language. Naturally, this process is characterized by language reflection of the concepts, actions, and objects that the speakers feel the need for in their lifestyle, during interaction. Under the influence of the living conditions, historical development, material-spiritual, religious-spiritual world of each nation, words and expressions with their own meaning can be formed.

The idiom *stool pigeon*, which arose at the heart of the lifestyle and daily activities of the English people, has elements of nominative (a spy in a criminal gang) and evaluative (negative) meaning. The name of the bird - pigeon, as the main component of the phrase, also has imagery function is providing that English people liked pigeon meat from a long time ago. Because of the damage to the quality of the meat when hunting it with a hunting weapon, they caught it by trapping. The trained pigeon was tied to a stool and attracted other pigeons. As a result, pigeons fell into a trap, and based on this metaphor, an idiom with the content of *stool pigeon*, that is, an agent revealing the secrets of a criminal group, was born. It seems that if the pigeon was not the favorite food of the English people, this expression describing the ways to have it by itself would not have appeared in the language.

As lexical units of the language, the phraseological layer is constantly enriched and expands its content. The lexical diversity of each language causes the diversity of the phraseological units on which they are based. It confirms our





opinion that the lexemes belonging to the borrowed layer in the English language are also structural components of phraseological units. For example, the word *cahoot*, which is the main component of the phrase *in cahoots*, is borrowed from the German language, and this lexeme means the slums where criminals find shelter in the history of Germany. The phrase formed the content of "any criminal partnership" in a holistic way in English.

There are expressions in the English language that show the types of crimes that are typical for this nation. It is known that the culture of raising horses and preparing them for competitions is highly developed in English-speaking countries. From this group of expressions, *get one's goat* expresses the interest of the English nation in horse riding and horse sports for many centuries. In modern English, the expression used in the context of "getting angry" was first formed because of the semantic transformation of the free combination "get one's goat" - "to steal a goat from a racing horse". That is, the gamblers bet on the horses in the race, and they stole the "friend" of the racing horse from the stable and made him lose the race in exchange for angering him. It seems that the thoughts of the nation, although they have a negative color, are sealed in the language through expressions. In addition, this phrase acquires a linguistic and cultural meaning, showing the cunning of criminals in the past of the English people, together with the nominative, connotative and figurative characteristics of them.

Phraseologisms belonging to the microfield of "theft" also indicate that the English people have their own methods and means of crime. For example, *pulling one's leg* nominates the behavior of "couples" who steal on the streets of the city until recent years. In this case, one of the thieves knocks down the passenger with a crooked stick or rope, and the second thief uses the opportunity to pickpocket him. Now, this method of theft, which is carried out based on the secret plans of British thieves, has lost its power. As a result, the criminal semantic meaning of the expression became blurred, and "to laugh at someone" acquired a general phraseological meaning.

We can see the toponym-components as the logical basis of expressions that reflect aspects specific to the social and political life of the English nation. For example, the lexeme *Halifax*, which is the main element in the idiom *go to Halifax*, refers to the city in England, which is famous for being the region with the largest number of executions in the world. According to the current legislation, if the value of the stolen property was thirteen pence, the death penalty was imposed. The scary and horrible atmosphere in the city is embodied





in this idiom by means of a metaphor and is still used in the context of "the most terrible place" in the process of communication. As culturally colored, this idiom embodies the geographical location of the English people, their living conditions, and feelings.

In conclusion, English idioms denoting criminal semantics conveys the linguacultural features which include social, political life, the daily life style, activities as well as religious beliefs.

References:

1. Humboldt W.V. Diversity of the human language structure. – Berlin, 1836. – P. 18.
2. Mamatov A. Uzbek phraseology. Tashkent, 2019. – P. 45
3. Nasirov A. Semantic-stylistic and national-cultural characteristics of proverbial phraseology in French, Uzbek, and other languages. Tashkent, 2016. – P. 14.
4. Umarxudjaev M. German lexicology and phraseology. – Andijan, 2010. – P. 10.
5. Vanoni M. Great expressions. Crafton books, 1989. – P. 136

