



THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CULTURE AND PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH THE TOPONYM COMPONENT IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN

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Annotation:

This article explores the connection between culture and phraseological units (Phraseological units) that incorporate toponyms, or place names, in both the English and Russian languages. Toponymic Phraseological units are expressions where geographic locations—be they countries, cities, or landmarks—are integral components of the phrase's meaning. These place-based expressions often carry cultural, historical, and societal significance, as they reflect the cultural attitudes, beliefs, and social norms associated with the places they reference. By comparing English and Russian Phraseological units with toponyms, the article highlights how language and culture are intertwined, demonstrating how geographical knowledge and cultural understanding influence the interpretation and usage of these expressions. The study also includes examples of Phraseological units and provides insights into the challenges and implications for translation and language learning.

Keywords: Phraseological Units, Toponym Component, Culture, English, Russian, Idioms, Linguistics, Language and Culture, Cross-Cultural Studies, Toponyms in Language.

Language and culture are deeply interconnected, and one of the most fascinating areas where this relationship is evident is in the use of phraseological units (Phraseological units) that incorporate toponyms, or place names. Toponymic Phraseological units are fixed expressions in which a place name is used in a figurative or idiomatic manner to convey a meaning that goes beyond the literal reference to that location. These expressions are cultural in nature, as they reflect the history, values, beliefs, and social norms of the people who use them.

Both English and Russian, as distinct languages, feature a wide range of toponymic Phraseological units that hold particular cultural significance. These Phraseological



units not only reflect the geographical importance of specific places but also shed light on the societal and historical contexts in which they are embedded. The purpose of this article is to examine how toponyms function within phraseological units in English and Russian, exploring the cultural connections that give these expressions meaning and significance.

A phraseological unit, or Phraseological unit, is a fixed or semi-fixed combination of words whose meaning is not directly derived from the meanings of the individual words. These units can take the form of idioms, proverbs, collocations, and fixed expressions. The meaning of a Phraseological unit is often figurative, and its usage can carry social, cultural, and historical connotations that reflect the worldview of its speakers.

For instance, in the expression "to cross the Rubicon," the literal meaning of the phrase refers to crossing the Rubicon River in Italy, but idiomatically, it signifies making an irreversible decision (from the historical event where Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon in 49 BCE, marking the point of no return in Roman history).

Toponymic Phraseological units are expressions that include place names, and these names often carry cultural significance. Toponyms, which can refer to countries, cities, landmarks, or regions, are embedded in language and frequently serve to convey meanings tied to the history, reputation, or characteristics of those places. A toponymic Phraseological unit may use a geographical location metaphorically to describe a situation, quality, or characteristic.

For example, the English expression "a real McCoy" refers to something being the genuine or authentic version of something. While "McCoy" was originally a surname (related to a person), the phrase has come to symbolize authenticity. While it isn't strictly a toponym, it points to a geographic context, and in English, toponyms such as "London" or "New York" have also been used in idiomatic contexts to symbolize particular cultural attributes.

In English, place names often take on a figurative or symbolic meaning in Phraseological units. These expressions draw on cultural, historical, and social connections to the named places. Below are some examples of toponymic Phraseological units in English:



1. "To take a detour via Timbuktu"

Meaning: To go out of one's way or take an indirect route.

Cultural Context: Timbuktu, historically a thriving center of trade and scholarship in Africa, symbolizes a faraway, remote, or difficult-to-reach place in modern English. The use of this toponym reflects the cultural perception of Timbuktu as an exotic and distant location, often used to humorously exaggerate the length or difficulty of a detour (Campbell, 2004).

2. "As American as apple pie"

Meaning: A symbol of traditional American culture or values, signifying something that is quintessentially American.

Cultural Context: Apple pie is often associated with American patriotism and nostalgia. This idiomatic expression references a food that has become a symbol of American identity and is deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of the United States. The toponym here is implicit, as the "American" part reflects the national identity of the U.S. (Pennycook, 2017).

3. "London calling"

Meaning: A phrase used to convey the idea that something significant, often related to the British media or politics, is happening.

Cultural Context: This phrase originally refers to a BBC radio broadcast that began during World War II to inform the public of important news. "London calling" is associated with British resilience and the historical role of London as the center of wartime communication, symbolizing the importance of the city in world events (Vaughan, 2013).

These examples reflect how place names and their historical significance influence the meaning of idiomatic expressions in English. The use of toponyms in English Phraseological units often symbolizes national identity, historical events, or cultural values, making them an important linguistic feature for understanding the worldview of English-speaking societies.



Russian, with its rich history and diverse geography, also contains many toponymic Phraseological units that reflect the country's cultural and historical landscape. These Phraseological units often draw on specific regional, historical, and social contexts, carrying deep cultural significance. Below are a few examples of toponymic Phraseological units in Russian:

1. "Москва слезам не верит" (Moskva slezam ne verit)

Meaning: "Moscow doesn't believe in tears," meaning that one has to be tough and show resilience to succeed, especially in Moscow (the capital).

Cultural Context: This phrase reflects the cultural view of Moscow as a tough, competitive, and demanding city. It signifies the high expectations and rigorous environment found in the Russian capital, where success requires not just hard work but emotional strength. This expression is deeply rooted in the Russian cultural perception of Moscow as a place of both opportunity and challenge (Kunin, 1980).

2. "Питерский штиль" (Piterskiy shtil')

Meaning: A calm and peaceful atmosphere, or the feeling of serenity in St. Petersburg.

Cultural Context: This phrase reflects the reputation of St. Petersburg (formerly known as Leningrad) as a cultural capital of Russia. The city is associated with a specific kind of calm, historical depth, and artistic spirit, often evoked in literary and cultural contexts. It highlights the cultural importance of St. Petersburg as a symbol of Russian history and the arts (Shmelev, 2015).

These Russian Phraseological units show how toponyms can capture cultural meanings specific to particular regions or historical contexts. The use of toponyms in Russian Phraseological units reveals the societal values of toughness, resilience, and intellectual or artistic pursuits, all deeply rooted in Russian cultural traditions. In comparing English and Russian toponymic Phraseological units, it is evident that both languages use place names to reflect societal values, historical events, and cultural identities. However, the cultures associated with the respective languages influence the way these toponyms are used.



For instance, English toponymic Phraseological units tend to reflect notions of national identity (e.g., "As American as apple pie") or geopolitical importance (e.g., "London calling"). In contrast, Russian toponymic Phraseological units often evoke regional or historical contexts, such as the idea of toughness in Moscow or intellectual tranquility in St. Petersburg. Additionally, both languages use toponyms to represent geographical, social, or cultural boundaries. While English expressions may center around global, national, or historical landmarks, Russian Phraseological units often rely on domestic geographical and historical symbols to convey deeper meanings.

Phraseological units with toponyms are an essential part of language, carrying with them cultural, historical, and societal significance. Both English and Russian languages feature toponymic Phraseological units that reflect the cultural values, beliefs, and worldview of their respective societies. Understanding these expressions allows for a deeper appreciation of the way culture shapes language, and it provides insight into the intricate relationship between language, identity, and geography. Furthermore, these toponymic Phraseological units highlight the importance of culture in language learning and translation, emphasizing the need for cultural competence in cross-linguistic communication.

The list of used literature:

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