



“Life” and “Death” in Axiological Paradigm

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ABSTRACT This research analyzed the Russian and German phraseological units of the dyad “Life – Death”, on the basis of which the main types of axiologemes are revealed. These types of axiologemes are general and specific images of the phraseological units, which describe traditional concept of life and death of the Russian and German people. The research relevance was substantiated by an increasing role of an axiological aspect in the context of cross-cultural communication. Methods applied in the research included the analysis of lexicographic interpretations and etymology of the Russian and German phraseological units, component analysis to examine the structure of the meaning of the studied units, and equivalent comparison of phraseologisms’ meaning. Therefore, it could be concluded that the value “Life” and the anti-value “Death” in the axiological paradigm have a characteristic of ambivalence. Finally, the results could be helpful for compiling dictionaries, professional activity of translators, and linguist trainings.

INTRODUCTION

Study of the Russian and German phraseological units of the dyad “Life - Death” is aimed to identify the main types of axiologemes, describe general and specific images of phraseological units, and determine axiological vector of the phraseological unit (Ptukha 2019). The theme of life and death is important for every person. In fact, this theme has already been the subject of linguistic research. “Life” and “Death” are defined as timeless and spaceless, kaleidoscopic, ontological, existential, key, basic, and universal concepts of consciousness (Bagautdinova 2008; Bikmuhametova 2016).

This research analyzed phraseological units of the dyad “Life – Death” in the Russian and German languages. Phraseological units, including proverbs, sayings, and aphorisms are part of the axiological paradigm, which, according to Bayramova’s (2008) definition, are “a class of axiologemes (values and anti-values), opposed to each other and united by the presence of their axiological vector (positive or negative), that can change”.

Axiologemes include “axiologically based lexical units/phraseological units, an internal form of the word/a phraseological unit, symbols as a component of the meaning of the lexical unit/a phraseological unit; a prototype/etymon of the lexical unit/a phraseological unit, mentor aphorisms, proverbs, and sayings” (Karasik 2004a; Bayramova 2008).

In addition, proverbs, sayings, and aphorisms are key categories in the axiological paradigm, as far as they involve morality, they are value-oriented, and form a person’s worldview of value. Being axiologemes they can be defined as an “axiological ideal”. This research concluded that the value “Life” and the anti-value “Death” in the axiological paradigm have a characteristic of ambivalence.

Since the Renaissance of Europe, the subject of development has become a serious concern for societies and governments to avoid dangers of falling behind the great European powers. Before that, humans and communities were in a more stable and relaxed state and were less comparable to each other. Moreover, the developments and actions that disrupt the relatively stabilized situation between them usually took longer (Poluzhyn and Venzhynovych 2018).

Russian society and the state have faced with the problem of progress in various forms and in different eras since its emergence as a state for nearly thousands of years (Safina 2015; Gizatullina and Hayrutdinova 2017). In fact, the formation of the Russian government by a variety of Vikings in the first century of its life faced with the challenge of choosing a divine religious model to replace its idolatrous ancient and ethnic religions and in the third century for the three religions of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Then, the glorious beauty of Constantinople and its orthodox church was chosen (Kobiakova et al. 2015; Mefodeva et al. 2016).

Objectives

Identify the main types of axiologemes, describe general and specific images of phraseological units, and determine axiological vector of the phraseological unit.

METHODOLOGY

The question of progress, especially after the 16th and 17th centuries of Europe, became a vital issue for the Russian government, philosophers, and even literature of this country, giving rise to ideas that were rooted in many developments from the eighteenth century to the present day, and still the executive and thinking communities have kept the community active. What model can bring Russia to the position of other advanced states? What does this pattern have to do with the Russian traditions, origins, and position? And what are the implications for society, people, and government? These are some of the most important questions that have been raised since the first intellectual and practical efforts in Russia to adopt a model of progress.

The main ideas of this research include “the patterns of progress in Russia in the last three centuries have been western, but they have usually taken on a native and Russian color. The model of indigenous progress claimed by some Russian scholars has never been so clear and enforceable as to be on the agenda.” Political and practical measures to realize these patterns and practical implications of these issues for the formation of subsequent political and intellectual currents (Karasik 2004b; Zerkina et al. 2015).

Thus, the research results can be helpful for compiling dictionaries, the professional activity of translators, linguists, and the Russian and German language trainings (Parihar 2015).

Methodology of the research includes the analysis of lexicographic interpretations and etymology of Russian and German phraseological units, component analysis to study the structure of the meaning of the studied units, and equivalent comparison of phraseologisms’ meaning. In addition, linguoculturological approach was applied in the research as it recognizes worldview of value as the core of spiritual culture. At the same time, methodological idea guidelines stating that

motivation of an idiomatic meaning is realized in the way included into an internal form of a phraseological unit, was used in the research (Kosmeda 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The axiological dyad “Life-Death” can represent two axiologemes (Life and Death), including several groups. Axiologemes have an axiological vector. This is a value characterized by the motion direction along the axiological scale and is given by some ideals (the absolute value). Movements on the ascending scale of the values determine a positive axiological vector and the movements along the descending scale determine a negative axiological vector. Of course, the movement direction of the axiological vector can vary from an anti-value to a value and vice versa (Alefirenko 2016).

Thus, axiological vector of a phraseological unit is the axiological (value or anti-value) value of a phraseological unit, which is determined by the core of a phraseological unit (its semantics) and can change under the influence of linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

The axiological vector; that is, a value or anti-value meaning, is expressed directly or figuratively in the analysis of the internal form of axiologemes. However, in the axiological paradigm of “Life-Death”, a direct meaning can include:

- Mentor aphorisms: Wenn man das Leben liebt, fürchtet man den Tod. (Luc de Clapiers Vauvenargues) - Если любишь жизнь, то боишься смерти (If you love life, then you are afraid of death),
- Proverbs and sayings: Век живи, век учись - Man lernt nie aus (Live and learn),
- Phraseological units: борьба не на жизнь, а на смерть - der Kampf auf Leben und Tod (A rattle for life or death).

It should be noted that the image included in the internal form of axiologemes is based on archetypes, myths, etalons, rituals, stereotypes, beliefs, customs, and other signs of national culture. However, specific images of phraseological units date back to the Russian and German cultures (Andreyeva et al. 2015; Daniel et al. 2019).

The main criteria for describing an internal form of axiologemes are intra-linguistic features

(component analysis of an axiologeme) and various types of extralinguistic knowledge such as knowledge of the history of origin, etymology of axiologemes, and connection of an axiologeme with different layers of culture (mythological, archetypal, religious, historical, folklore, artistic, and literary, etc.).

Thus, according to the sources of origin, the following main types of axiologemes in the axiological paradigm "Life"- "Death" are emphasized:

- 1) Mythological (Ascending to Mythology): (Between Scylla and Charybdis) (the expression means "to be in a dangerous life situation when there is a threat from two sides"; it comes from the names of two mythological monsters called Scylla and Charybdis, who lived on both sides of the Strait of Messina. When floating between Scylla and Charybdis, sailors faced with the task of avoiding two evils at once: - PDRL: 17);
- 2) Historical (ascending to historical events or personalities): (Massacre of St. Bartholomew) (a mass savage murder of innocent people dates back to the night before St. Bartholomew's Day on August 24, 1572, when Catholics killed Huguenots.) - SPDL: 336); erschossen sein wie Robert Blum (to be absurdly caught/killed, literally - to be shot as Robert Blum; the axiologeme reminds of a famous politician and publicist of the 19th century Robert Blum, who had been taken part in battles at the barricades in rebellious Vienna. He was sentenced to the gallows, but this execution was replaced with death by firing squad. - GRPDLSC: 58);
- 3) Biblical (ascending to the Bible): книга жизни – das Buch des Lebens (a Book of Life) (spent life, according to the Bible, it is a book where the names of all people living on earth are inscribed);
- 4) Cultural (ascending to folk traditions, customs, rituals, beliefs, archetypes, holidays, and everyday life): жить одним домом - to live in one house (in Russia country if a new family lived with the groom's parents, they said that "a young couple live in the same house with their parents". - SPDL: 144); das Tischtuch zwischen sich und j-m

zerschneiden / entzweischneiden, sonorous (to completely break up with somebody, literally - cut the tablecloth between you and another person; the axiologeme goes back to the ancient rite accompanied by divorce, when a piece of canvas was cut by a couple into two parts. - GRPDLSC: 115).

- 5) Authorial (ascending to art-literary sources or being aphorisms): сарайная жизнь (shed life) (A.P.Chekhov), das Glück im Winkel, jokular (philistine well-being, literally - happiness in a cozy nook, the axiologeme originates from the title of the drama of Herman Zuderman "Das Glück im Winkel". - GRPDLSC: 300-301);
- 6) Lexical (in case the source of origin is unknown): найти свою смерть - den Tod finden (to meet one's death) (literally - to find your death).

However, according to the axiological paradigm "Life"- "Death" both for the Russians and Germans, life is a conventional value, and death is an anti-value. The category of life as the basic phenomenon of existence is one of the fundamental categories and holds the central place in the linguistic worldview.

Russian and German phraseological units nominating life have a value vector. In the Russian axiologeme белый свет (the whole wide world, literally - white light), meaning "life in all its manifestations", a positive axiological status is determined by a component composition of the phraseological unit.

"The original meaning of the word combination белый свет (the whole wide world, literally – white light) is "bright daylight". The word свет (light) had the meaning "the world, the universe" with the Slavs since ancient times. The adjective белый (white) has always had positive symbolism (PDRLC: 229-230).

A German axiologeme, das Leben und Treiben (literally - life and movement) that are used to refer to life, recalls that life does not stand still. The component of the phraseological unit Treiben is used in the meaning "a movement (forward)", revealing the idea that life is a movement.

It is notable that changes in the axiological vector can affect the value "Life" itself. At the same time, a negative status of life in the axiological paradigm is obtained. Then, the

heaviness, joylessness of life is reflected in the axiologeme fixed in the German language, Bei der Geburt, weinen wir, beim Tode sehen wir warum (literally - at birth we cry, and when we die we understand why we do it).

Unlike life, when knowledge is obtained by a person on the basis of experience, the sphere of death remains inaccessible for a person. Death is a mystery, a puzzle, and thus thoughts about it are based on fear, and sometimes on the regret from the sense of uselessness of life lived.

Traditional anti-value ideas are reflected in the next Russian and German axiologemes:

1. Inevitability, imminence of death: Двум смертям не бывать, а одной не миновать – Einen Tod kann der Mensch nur sterben (Two deaths do not happen, but one cannot be avoided) (literally - a person can die only one death).
2. Indiscriminate nature of death: Смерть всех поравняет – Der Tod, der klopft bei allen an, beim Kaiser und beim Bettelmann (Death will make everyone equal) (literally - Death will knock on both doors – emperor's and beggar's).
3. Suddenness of death: Смерть за воротами не ждет – Der Tod kommt ungeladen (Death does not wait out of the gates) (literally - death comes without an invitation).
4. Omnipresence of death: Не ты смерти ищешь – она тебя сторожит – Der Tod lauert überall, er kommt zu Fest und Ball (You are not looking for death - it is guarding you literally).
5. Death is waiting everywhere: it comes to a holiday and a ball.

If life and death are viewed as the interrelated phenomena, then according to this approach, death can have a positive status in the axiological paradigm. This idea reflects the aphorism of I.V. Goethe *Stirb und Werde!* (J.W. Goethe (1965), “*Selige Sehnsucht*”) and its Russian equivalent *Умри, чтобы родиться заново!* (Die to be born again!)

In the opinion of Demichev (1996), death is “the most accurate reference point”, “orienting and harmonizing beginning”, and “even in cultures with a clear axiological preference for life, death plays the role of a shielding element that forms the horizon of desire and action” (Demichev 1996).

CONCLUSION

During the study, it was determined that the attitude to life and death is characterized by ambivalence, which is reflected in Russian and German phraseology; that is, a value becomes an anti-value and vice versa. In those cases when it comes to patriotism, death may be preferable to life. The medieval Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli in the poem “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin” emphasizes «Лучше гибель, но со славой, / Чем бесславных дней позор» (“It is better to perish, but with glory rather than the shame of disgraceful days”). Thus, the phraseological material makes it possible to determine the place of “Life” and “Death” in the axiological paradigm for the representatives of Russian and German people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

However, over time, there is a gradual evolution in the interpretation of death and life in Russian and German phraseology, therefore future research should investigate this evolution.

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