

**Alla Anisimova, Nataliia Safonova**

*Oles Honchar Dnipro National University, Dnipropetrovsk (Ukraine)*

## **Conceptual and Linguistic Representations of Concept Flora in the Phraseological Worldview: A Multilingual Aspect**

### **ABSTRACT**

The article gives the definition of a notion ‘concept’ and presents its main interpretations in modern linguistics. This research describes the notion of phraseological worldview and its relation to the notion concept. In this article 62 English, 61 French and 57 Ukrainian phraseological units that reveal the concept FLORA, have been analysed. Based on this analysis, the frame structure of the FLORA concept in the English, French and Ukrainian phraseological worldview is proposed and developed. This made it possible to prove that the linguistic actualization of the FLORA concept is associated with the identification of national characteristics of the studied cultures, their worldview and mentality. It is stated in the article that the English, French and Ukrainians use the names of plants in the phraseological units for the characterization of a person, the designation of certain qualities and traits of character, appearance and mental abilities.

**Key words:** *concept, FLORA concept, phraseological worldview, English phraseological worldview, French phraseological worldview, Ukrainian phraseological worldview, frame structure, multilingual aspect.*

### **Introduction**

The national peculiarities of the FLORA concept verbalized by the phraseological units in the three languages English, French and Ukrainian are studied multilingually. Phraseological worldviews are of great interest for the researchers. The phraseological units with the floristic component contain information about archaic beliefs and vision of the surrounding reality that is encoded by representatives of a certain ethnic group. They are the subject of scientific study of many scholars, such as N. Yevtushenko

(2004), T. Popova (2004), N. Dzyuba (2018), G. Miller (1979) etc.

The novelty of this work lies in the fact that the phraseological units with component FLORA have not been compared and contrasted directly in English, French and Ukrainian languages.

The aim of this article is to identify and to analyze national peculiarities of the concept FLORA in the English, French and Ukrainian phraseological worldviews, to examine the basic notions of cognitive linguistics. To reveal the aim it is necessary to fulfill the following objectives:

- to explore the notion of the worldview in linguistics;

- to study the frame structure verbalized by phraseological units in a multilingual aspect;

- to analyze the peculiarities of the frame structure FLORA actualized by phraseological units within three languages: English, French and Ukrainian.

### **Theory**

One of the theoretical key words is the notion concept. The term is originated by works of foreign scholars. There was a problem with its translation. First, the English word 'concept' was translated as 'notion', 'conceptus' - as 'semantic elements', 'conceptual basis' - as 'semantically oriented'. Further, the concept was established in the linguistic science, which led to the emergence of derivative terms from it - such as the 'sphere of concept', 'conceptualization', conceptual signs and others (Humbolt, 1976, Miller, 1991 etc.).

In modern linguistics, the concept is more often interpreted as the form of representation of knowledge in human consciousness (Skorobogatova 2017: p. 105).

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century cognitive linguistics was analyzed with the

help of basic knowledge within a modern anthropocentric paradigm. The modern state of global and Ukrainian linguistics is characterized by an anthropocentric approach. Such a new area as cognitive linguistics was formed thanks to an anthropocentric way of research. The source and formation way of this new scientific field can be found in European linguistic works, namely in Wilhelm von Humboldt's linguo-philosophical conception (1991), and in the U.S. scientific ideas expressed by F. Boas (1943), E. Sapir (1949) and B. L. Whorf (1956). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many scientists paid much attention to B. L. Whorf's research-and-practice theory (Kroeber, 1943, Edward, 1949).

The term 'phraseological worldview' was interpreted as the image of the world, which was formed in science and reflected the patterns of natural phenomena. The worldview is the reality of human consciousness, the creation of which is the goal of human life. The tasks of phraseology as a linguistic discipline include the comprehensive study of the phraseological fund of a language. The key aspects of research of this science are: stability of phraseological units, systemic phraseology and semantic structure of

phraseological units, their origin and functions (Kunin, 1972: p.115).

Objectives of our research were to detect the British, French and Ukrainian mentalities through phraseological units. One of the important issues of modern linguistics is the issue of relations between the language of the people and their culture. In this regard, those linguistic aspects that reflect the national identity and the specifics of a particular nation become more and more relevant. One of these linguistic instruments of the research is the cognitive approach to the phraseological units. According to N. Yevtushenko, the definition of semantic peculiarities of phraseological units of any language allows us to assume that the component composition of phraseological units has its own distinctions (Yvtushenko, 2018: p. 3).

The multilingual aspect is one of the most significant ones in the study of the phraseological worldview that makes it possible to compare and contrast language revelation of the national character. Each of the world's nations has groups of individuals living within its borders who use other languages in addition to the national language to function in their everyday lives. That is why it is of crucial importance to consider this aspect while studying and

comparing two or more phraseological worldviews (Scorobogatova, 2017).

The German philosopher and linguist W. von Humboldt (1767-1835) was the first who analyzed such crucial notions as language, cognition and reality. In L. Weisberger's opinion, a language cannot express the objective reality, it reveals only a person's subjective attitude to it (Weisberger, 1841). That is why cognition is determined by a certain language. In Miller's term "Language is a key to the world" (Miller, 2004). The scientist assimilated language and cognition (thoughts), and studied them dialectically.

### **Method**

Cognitive linguistics is a scientific sphere that studies the knowledge about the world formed in the human mind, its inner structures, representative methods and regularities. Cognitive linguistics also aims at modeling the world and the structure of the linguistic cognition. The world representation is formed in one's mind through feelings (tactile, visual, taste-bud) on the level of notion (signs, worldview) or thoughts organization. When these matters are being formed in one's mind, they represent the definite information about the world (Sternin, 1985).

Basic methods of cognitive linguistics can be summarized in the following way: collecting information about the world that is formed in the human mind before mastering a language; grouping these data into a single system; defining the world in the human mind; revealing the representation of this world image in the corresponding language etc.

Cognitive linguistics, or cognitive metaphor theory serves as a means to systematize and form linguistics with regard to the concepts of the linguistic worldview. The concept of any given word is determined through its semantic and associative field. Words express the information there and they are regarded as separate elements of cognitive and pragmatic meanings. The scholars state that cognitive science is mostly concerned with human cognitions. Besides these actions, it also studies their mental representations, inner world images, patterns, signs that serve as symbols of the cognitive language model, strategies – all these matters lay in the foundation of human actions. Thus, the human cognitive world is analyzed through actions and activities. The whole human activity and thoughts themselves are formed through the language. It is the language that builds motives and beliefs,

and predicts their possible results (Maslova, 2004).

There are several methods that can help reveal the aim and objectives of the research and these methods are linguocultural and linguocognitive.

Under the linguocultural approach the researcher understands the study of the specifics of the national conceptual sphere during the transition from culture to consciousness. This approach defines the concept as the basic unit of culture, possessing imaginative, conceptual signs. From the standpoint of the linguocognitive approach to the concept study, the field model has been developed, and presented in terms of the core and the periphery. Adherents of this approach (Kybryakova, 1996; Popova *et al*, 2007; Sternin, 1985), etc.) investigate lexemes, the meanings of which forms the content of national speech consciousness, and also form a general worldview of the native speakers of this language.

These two approaches study representations patterns signs that serve as symbols of cognitive language model as it was mentioned all these matters lie in the basis of human actions. So, due to them we can understand the peculiarities of people's mentality, living in definite cultures because the language as a part of the culture

reveals its features and inner world images through the language.

### **Discussion and Results**

In the practical part of our investigation we have analyzed the concept FLORA in the English, French and Ukrainian phraseological worldviews. Some scholars propose different classifications of phraseological units with the concept FLORA (Scorobogatova, 2017, Miller, 2004). Some scientists classify phraseological units according the presence or absence of the equivalents of proverbs in the language we translate into, the syntactic structure and features of the character denoting this or that expression (Maslova, 2004).

For the English, French and Ukrainians, flowers as a part of the concept FLORA verbalized by phraseological units are not just plants, but also expressions of people's preferences, decorations, ceremonial actions, beliefs, customs and superstitions. Considering the traditions of the use of flowers in everyday life, rituals and ceremonial actions, one can trace the origins of a figurative perception, and hence their symbolic names. Englishmen even have the concept of flower language. Flower dictionaries were published throughout the eighteenth century, telling

about the importance of a particular plant. The language of flowers was very popular with both France and England during the days of Queen Victoria (Zolotnitski, 1923) Flowers were intended to provide health to the people, to strengthen the well-being of the family, to increase the fertility of land and livestock, to protect the economy from unclean power, and so on. The rose is ambivalent, insofar as it symbolizes both perfection and earthly passion, time and eternity, life and death, fertility and chastity. This flower symbolizes the perfection, the mystery of life, its surroundings, the unknown, the beauty, the grace, the happiness, but also the sensual comfort and passion.

The frame structure of the concept FLORA in the English phraseological worldview is one of the most abundant. It consists of the frame FLORA which is subdivided into subframes 'flower' and 'plant' which in their turn include the slots. The subframe 'flower' comprises such slots as 'roots', 'leaves', 'flowers' and 'seeds'. The subframe 'plant' consists of 'fruit' and 'vegetables' subgroups. Subgroup 'fruit' includes such slots as 'apple', 'peach' and 'lemon', whereas the subgroup 'vegetables' consists of 'potatoes', 'carrots' slots.

In the course of research we singled out 62 phraseological units in the English

language which verbalized concept FLORA: *beat about the bush, bouquet of orchid, broken reed, demon weed, flowery speech, gild the lily, go to seed, last straw, knock on wood, old chestnut, primrose path, seed money, run around the bush, wallflower, turn a new leaf, come up smelling of roses etc.*

The most widespread subframe is 'flower' which consists of such slots as 'rose', 'lily', 'daisy'.

The rose is ambivalent, it symbolizes both perfection and earthly passion (*bed of roses*); time and eternity (*come up roses*); life (*stop and smell the roses*) and death (*pushing up daisies*); fertility and chastity (*gather rose buds, rose garden*). The flower symbolizes the perfection (*bouquet of orchids*); the mystery of life, the unknown (*under the rose*); the life (*never a rose without the prick, gather rosebuds*); the beauty (*as fresh as a daisy, gild the lily*); the grace (*as beautiful as a flower*); the happiness (*leave the field open, rose garden*); the luck (*come up smelling of roses*); but also the discomfort (*shrinking violet*). As the flower of female deities, the rose means love, life, creativity, fertility, and beauty, the wilting of the rose symbolizes death, mortality and mourning; her pins are pain, martyrdom and blood. In

the ritual of ritual represents eternal life, eternal spring, resurrection.

In the French language the rose is also very symbolic flower and there are a lot of phraseological units with the name of 'rose'. During the era of courtly love in 12<sup>th</sup> century France, the Rose became the chief symbol of the newly re-emerging feminine principle. It represented romantic love, and especially the beloved lady herself, in many of the poems of the troubadours (Zolotnitsky, 2018). The Rose in France is a symbol of the sun, the star, the goddess of love and beauty: '*humeur de rose*' (to have a good mood); '*être sur des roses*' (enjoy the life); '*chemin sem é de roses*' (everything is going well). However, there are examples with negative connotation: '*flairer le pot aux roses*' (have a feeling, that something goes wrong); '*c'est pas des roses*' (to have difficulties).

In the Ukrainian language 'rose' is represented by two lexical items: «*троянда*» і «*ружа*». In the phraseological units these lexemes are mostly associated with beauty and happiness: *гарна як ружа* (it refers to the girl who may be very beautiful), *дорога всипана трояндами* (the life that is very happy and without any problems).

Phraseological units with the name of 'root' in English normally have some

positive connotation: *'get to the root of the problem'* (discover the cause of the problem...), *'to put down roots'* (to feel that one belong in a place), *'grass roots'* (essential foundation or source of something) etc. These phraseological units are associated with stability and we can observe the same connotation with the word «корінь» ('root') in the Ukrainian language: *дивитися у корінь / докопуватися до кореня* (to understand the essence of the situation), *пустити коріння* (to settle in some place) etc.

We can analyze the national peculiarities of this concept in the English phraseological worldview, since it is the frame structure that shows the most generalized principles of categorization and organization of information expressed by the means of the language. It is divided into three subframes *'flower'*, *'forest'* and *'plant'*.

The subframe 'flower' is presented by the following slots: 'daisy', 'rose' and 'lily'. The subframe 'plant' has such slots as 'fruit' and 'vegetables'. The slots 'fruit' includes 'peach', 'apple' and 'lemon' slots, whereas 'vegetables' comprise 'potatoes' and 'carrots' slots. It should be mentioned that all these slots are verbalized by phraseological units.

To do this research, we divided all phraseological units with the FLORA component into two groups: phraseological units with the floristic component and phraseological units containing the names of the plants. Phraseological units with a floristic component contain four substrates: 'root', 'leaf', 'flower' and 'seeds'. From a huge number of flowers, we have chosen three, such as a rose, a lily and a daisy. These three flowers play a key part in the British culture, and, therefore, have an important meaning for the British. Phraseological units containing the names of the fruit are divided into two subgroups: fruits and vegetables. Of all the names of fruits, we chose the most numerous and those that matter for English history, namely 'apple', 'peach' and 'lemon'. Vegetables were the most widely presented by 'potatoes' and 'carrots'.

The next one is the frame structure of the concept FLORA in the French phraseological worldview. It looks as follows: the frame FLORA is divided into two subframes 'flower' and 'fruit' which are verbalized by phraseological units with floristic component and phraseological units containing the name of fruit. Phraseological units with floristic component fill the following slots: 'daisy', 'rose', 'peon', 'lily'. Phraseological units

containing the name of fruit verbalize the slots of 'fruit' and 'vegetables': 'peach', 'apple', 'lemon' and 'vegetables' – 'onion', 'cabbage'.

In the course of the research we analyzed 61 French phraseological units, which verbalize the concept FLORA. Due to this the analysis we may reveal the national peculiarities of this concept in the French phraseological worldview. This frame structure shows the most common peculiarities of categorization and organization of information expressed by the means of language. During the research we divided all phraseological units with the FLORA component into two groups: phraseological units with the floristic component and phraseological units containing the names of the plants. Phraseological units with a floristic component contain two substrates: 'forest' and 'flower'. From a huge number of flowers, we have chosen four ones, such as 'rose', 'lily', 'daisy' and 'peon'. These four flowers play a key role in the French culture. Phraseological units containing the names of the plants are divided into two subgroups: fruits and vegetables. Of all the names of fruits, we chose the most numerous and those that matter for French people, namely 'apple', 'peach' and 'lemon'. Vegetables were the most

abundantly presented by the 'onion' and 'cabbage'.

As for the Ukrainian phraseological worldview, in the course of the research 57 Ukrainian phraseological units, which actualize the concept Flora, were selected: *міцний як дуб; березова припарка; як виросте гарбуз на вербі; пишна як калина; дівчина, дівчин; хлопець молодий як барвінок etc.*

The modeled frame structure turned out to be almost the same as in the English and French phraseological worldviews, only with two added subframes – 'tree', 'grass'. Also such subframes as 'seeds' and 'leaves' were excluded.

It should be noted that we analyse the peculiarities of the concept FLORA presented by the phraseological units. We analyse similarities and differences of all the concepts in English and French languages. It should be emphasized that the term concept FLORA and the phraseological units with floristic component may coincide in the meaning.

Finally, we analyzed the peculiarities of the concept FLORA covered by phraseological units. There we have compared and analyzed the similarities and differences of phraseological units in the English and French languages. According to the analysis of the frame structure of the

concept FLORA the phraseological units with the concept 'rose' is the most widely spread in both languages. The red rose is widely recognized as the national flower of England. For Englishmen this flower symbolizes perfection, the sacrament of life, its focus, ignorance, beauty, grace, happiness, but also sensual pleasure and passion. Usually red is used for instance, in the emblems of the English Golf Union and England national rugby union team. In England, the rose became known only in the 14th century, shortly before the hostility between the houses of York and Lancaster. This flower fascinated them with their beauty so much that they both placed her on his coat of arms, and the first one chose white and the second one red. As a result, the enmity for the throne was called the White and Red Rose War. The Rose in France is a symbol of the sun, the star, the goddess of love and beauty. During the era of courtly love in 12<sup>th</sup> century France, the Rose became the chief symbol of the newly re-emerging feminine principle. It represented romantic love, and especially the beloved lady herself, in many of the poems of the troubadours (M. Ashraf, 2004).

However, in the Ukrainian language the most abundant group of phraseological units verbalize the slot 'poppy'. It is a

special flower for Ukrainians. Ukrainians associated the importance of poppy seeds with youth and beauty: *як маківка; як маків цвіт*. Embroideries of unmarried girls were decorated with poppies. The poppy was also considered as a symbol of the fertility, as it contains many grains: *хоч мак сій; черен мак etc.*. All these facts tell us about linguacultural relevance through the language.

A considerable number of English idioms contain the component 'root'. The British are very respectful of their origin. Therefore, it is not accidentally that this component occurs in English idioms.

The situation with the French phraseological picture of the world is slightly different. The important place is taken by the concept 'onion'. It is explained by the fact that onions are grown on the territory of France and added to the rich number of classic French dishes (Ashraf, 1995: p.95).

However, a lot of English and French phraseological units are exemplified by the component 'apple': *comparing apples and oranges* (very different people or things); *apple of my eye* (someone very special); *big apple* (a very important occasion). Apples are the most popular fruit in many countries of the world. The English proverb says: 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away'. The

Apple Day is an annual event dedicated to apples, which is organized on the initiative of the Common Ground Charitable Organization since 1990 (Ashraf et Miannaym, 1995).

### Conclusions

To sum up, we can state that phraseological units reveal the mentality and culture of the nations. So the concept FLORA in the English, French and Ukrainian phraseological worldviews allows us to assume the similarities and differences of the nations. The methods of research and theoretical basis gave us the theoretical instruments to analyze not only the specifics of cognitive linguistics, but also to use linguocognitive and linguocultural approaches to investigate the peculiarities of the concept in the multilingual aspect within three languages: English, French and Ukrainian. The research shows that the cognitive signs that structure this concept FLORA which is verbalized in phraseological areas of the English, French and Ukrainian languages show that the cognitive signs that structure these concept are practically the same because the flowers are associated with the beauty, health, eternity, perfection, life, grace, happiness with the small difference in the particular flowers that grow on the

definite territories e.g. daisies (English), roses (French), poppies (Ukrainian).

Of all the fruit the specific ones are apple and peach for the British, for the Ukrainians – ‘apple’, ‘cherry’, ‘plum’, for the French – ‘apple’ and ‘peach’ which are the slots that are verbalized by the multilingual phraseological units that mean health, wealth, prosperity, luck, grace, fertility. The subframe ‘vegetables’ are represented in all three subframes with a little difference. In French the slot ‘onion’ is dominating: ‘*oignon vrai*’ (someone very special). In the Ukrainian language the slot ‘carrot’ in the subframe ‘vegetables’ is the most abundant and presented by the phraseological units: *моркву терти* (to play joke on someone), *хатня морква* (the quarrel between the husband and wife) etc. In English the slot ‘cabbage’ is also widely verbalized: *cabbage* (money), *how the cow ate the cabbage* (the true things).

The majority of slots in the frame FLORA has positive meanings, but some of them has negative meanings. All of them represent the real life of people.

Prospects for further research lie in the dimension of further investigations the other slots (‘forest’, ‘bush’, ‘branch’, ‘seeds’) and other subframes ‘fruit’ and ‘vegetable’ that comprise the frame FLORA.

## REFERENCES

- Ashraf et Miannaym, 1995 - Ashraf et M. Miannay D. Dictionnaire des expressions idiomatiques francaises. Paris. 1995.
- Dewaele, 2012 - Dewaele J. Multilingualism, Empathy, and Multicompetence. *International Journal of Multilingualism*. 2012. P. 1–15.
- Edward, 1949 - Edward, S., Selected writings in language, culture and personality. Berkeley. 1949.
- Miller, 1979 - Miller, G.A., Images and models, similes and metaphors. In A. Ortonyed, *Metaphor and thought*. Cambridge: Cambr. UP. 1979.
- Humboldt, 1991 - von Humboldt, W., History of linguistics. Kondrashov N.A. Trans. Moscow, pp: 192. 1991.
- Kroeber, 1943 - Kroeber, A. L., Franz Boas: The Man. American Anthropological Association. Memoirs, 61: 5-26. 1943.
- Oxford Dictionary, 2004 - The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004..
- Dzyuba, 2018 - Дзюба, Е. В.: Когнитивная лингвистика. Екатеринбург 2018.
- Kunin, 1972 - Кунин А. В. Фразеология современного английского языка. М., 1972.
- Porova, 2004 - Попова Т. О. Психосемантика універсальних етнічних концептів в етномовній картині світу : дисертація на здобуття вченого ступеня к. філол. н. К., 2004. 194 с.
- Skorobogatova, 2017 - Скоробогатова Т. И., Суралева О. Ю. Мир овощных культур глазами французов (на материале национального фразеологического фонда). *Научная мысль Кавказа*. 2017. № 2. С. 94-100.
- Stepanov, 1997 - Степанов, Ю.С.: Константы. Словарь русской культуры. Опыт исследования. Москва, 1997.
- Sternin, 1985 - Стернин, И.А.: Лексическое значение слова в речи. Воронеж, 1985.
- Tokarev, 2003 - Токарев, Г.В.: Концепт как объект лингвокультурологии (на материале репрезентаций концепта «Труд» в русском языке): Монография. Волгоград, 2003.
- Zolotnytski, 1913 - Золотницкий Н. Ф. Роза в Западной Европе. Царица из цариц – роза. Н. Ф. Золотницкий *Цветы в легендах и преданиях*. М., 1913. URL: <http://lgranina.narod.ru/library/zolotn/rosa2.htm>
- Yevtushenko, 2004 - Євтушенко Н. Семантичні особливості фразеологізмів-кольоризмів у сучасній англійській мові. *Семантичні особливості фразеологізмів-кольоризмів у сучасній англійській мові*. Київ, 2004. С. 1–4.