

COMPARISON AS A NATIONAL-CULTURAL CONNOTATIONAL
UNIT

Doc. G.A.Usenova

*Nukus state pedagogical
institute*

National-cultural connotative units are an important aspect of linguacultural studies, which studies the relationship between language and culture. These units help to understand how linguistic signs carry cultural meanings specific to a certain nation or ethnic group. Connotation is an additional meaning that a word or expression acquires in the context of its use, and it is often associated with cultural, historical and social aspects.

Connotation is a set of associations that arise in native speakers when using a certain word. Unlike denotation, which denotes the direct meaning of a word, connotation includes emotional, cultural and stylistic nuances. For example, the word "home" can evoke different associations in different people: for some it may be coziness and safety, while for others it may be limitations and boredom.

National-cultural connotative units are words or expressions that carry specific cultural meanings and associations characteristic of a particular nation.

V. Teliya interprets connotation as a unique or occasional essence that is included in the semantics of language units and reflects the emotive-evaluative attitude of the speech subject to objectivity [2:163]

In Yu.Apresyan’s interpretation, the connotative meaning of the lexeme represents the non-essential but stable features of the lexeme, which reflect the value attitude adopted by the language community in relation to the concept it represents, and is not part of the denotation. [1:5]

In the realm of the English language, comparisons serve as a significant national-cultural connotational unit, often laden with subtleties that reflect the intricacies of British culture and its historical context. Such comparisons not only illustrate linguistic finesse but also provide a window into the societal norms, values, and idiosyncrasies of the British people.

Consider, for instance, the phrase “*as British as fish and chips.*” This comparison conjures an image entrenched in the cultural fabric of the United Kingdom, where fish and chips are more than just a culinary delight—they symbolize a deep-rooted tradition that dates back to the 19th century. The phrase evokes not merely the taste of the dish but an aura of nostalgia, encapsulating seaside towns,

bustling chippies, and Friday night treats. It demonstrates how a simple gastronomic preference can become emblematic of national identity.

Another striking example is “*as stubborn as a mule*,” a comparison that might appear universal but carries distinct connotational nuances within British parlance. Here, the mule symbolizes not just obstinacy but a certain British stoicism and resilience. This phrase historically aligns with the British portrayal of themselves as unyielding, particularly in times of adversity. The cultural implication is one of silent perseverance, a trait often romanticized in wartime rhetoric and the austere landscapes of rural England.

Meanwhile, the phrase “*as mad as a hatter*” plunges one into the whimsical world of British literature, drawing from Lewis Carroll’s “Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.” The expression is rooted in the historical reality of hatmakers who suffered from mercury poisoning, causing erratic behaviour. Beyond its literary and historical origins, this comparison highlights a British propensity for blending absurdity with reality, thus capturing a national affinity for eccentricity and humour. The British fondness for the absurd, as seen in Monty Python's sketches, is mirrored here, reflecting a unique cultural lens through which the world is viewed.

Similarly, “*as cool as a cucumber*” offers insight into a cultural ideal of composure and understatement. Amidst the unpredictable British weather, the comparison suggests a characteristic response of measured calmness and poise, traits often attributed to British manners and etiquette. It subtly endorses the value placed on maintaining one's equilibrium, regardless of external circumstances.

In the political sphere, the comparison “*as cunning as a fox*” often comes into play. The fox, an animal native to the British countryside and a frequent figure in British folklore, signifies not just cunning but also resourcefulness and survival. This connotational layer sheds light on the British admiration for wit and strategic thinking, traits aspired to by statesmen and decried in adversaries.

The richness of these comparisons and their embedded cultural meanings illustrates a broader connotational matrix that defines British English. Each comparison offers a snapshot into historical contexts, societal values, and collective psyche, which might otherwise remain elusive to outsiders. The use of these comparisons goes beyond mere linguistic function; they serve as cultural artefacts, preserving and perpetuating national identity through everyday language.

In understanding these connotational units, one gains deeper insight into the cultural heartbeat of the nation. Navigating these comparisons within British English can thus become an enriching journey, offering both linguistic proficiency and

cultural literacy, essential for any advanced learner aiming to fully engage with the subtleties of the English language and the nuanced tapestry it weaves.

Reference:

1. Teliya V. N. Connotative aspect of semantics of nominative units. – M.: Nauka, 1986. – P. 5.
2. Apresyan Yu. D. Selected works. Volume II. Integral description of language and systemic lexicography. – M.: School “Languages of Russian Culture”, 1995. – P. 163.
3. Usenova, G., & Rashidova, L. (2023). “CONCEPT” AS A MAIN NOTION OF LINGUOCULTUROLOGY. QUALITY OF TEACHER EDUCATION UNDER MODERN CHALLENGES, 1(1), 999-1001.
4. Оразгалиева, А., & Усенова, Г. (2024). Concept of “child/perzent” in the English and Karakalpak linguaculture. *Преимущества и проблемы использования достижений отечественной и мировой науки и технологии в сфере иноязычного образования*, 1(1), 142-144.
5. Usenova, G. A. (2023). The Image of Mother in Karakalpak Literary Discourse.
6. Усенова, Г. А. (2020). ЛИНГВОСТИЛИСТИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ КОНЦЕПТА «АНА» В КАРАКАЛПАКСКОМ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОМ ДИСКУРСЕ. МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ ЖУРНАЛ ИСКУССТВО СЛОВА, 3(2).
7. Усенова, Г. А. (2018). ВЕРБАЛИЗАЦИЯ КОНЦЕПТА " АНА (МАТЬ)" НА УРОВНЕ ЛЕКСИЧЕСКИХ ЕДИНИЦ КАРАКАЛПАКСКОГО ЯЗЫКА. In International Scientific and Practical Conference World science (Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 27-28). ROST.