



## THE CONCEPT “YOUTH” IN THE VIEW OF PROVERBS AND METAPHORS IN ENGLISH LINGUACULTURAL SYSTEM

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**Annotation.** The aim of the article is to study the content structure of the concept “youth” represented by phraseological and paremic units as some integral constructs in the English language pictures of the world and reveal the cultural-specific features of their verbalization.

**Key words:** concept, youth, verbalization, phraseological units, assessments, cognition, phenomena, proverbial fund, figurative meaning.

The term “concept” is widely used in various fields of linguistic science. The authors of the “Concise Dictionary of Cognitive Terms” interpret concepts as ideal abstract units, meanings that a person operates in the process of thinking, and which reflect the content of experience and knowledge, the content of the results of all human activity and the processes of cognition of the world around him in the form of certain units, “quanta of knowledge”.

At the same time, it is noted that the content of the concept includes information about what the individual knows, assumes, thinks, imagines about this or that fragment of the world. Concepts reduce the whole variety of observed phenomena to something unified, structuring the information received into certain categories and classes developed by society [1, 56p].

The set of views of the people as a whole and of each person individually on the surrounding reality, embedded in the concepts, is a national concept sphere, and the formation of which the proverbial fund of the language plays an important role. Proverbs, sayings, phraseological units are a kind of exponents of cultural knowledge and, as part of the language system, act as a repository of cultural traditions, most clearly reflecting the views, assessments and observations of the reality of representatives of a certain linguistic society.

Among the many concepts that reflect the perception of reality by speakers of different languages, the concept of “age” occupies a special place, representing a universal component of human culture.

We have tried to analyze the totality of ideas about “youth” as one of the components of the concept of “age” presented in English proverbs and phraseological units. In the research we have identified the characteristics of this concept in the English-speaking lingua society. The proverb is considered by us as a clichéd sentence (closed structure) that has a direct, direct and figurative or only figurative meaning.



The material for this study was selected by the method of continuous sampling from various lexicographic works [7].

Examples were selected according to the principle of the presence of the lexeme youth or their cognates in the proverbial unit.

From the selected corpus of examples, we have excluded the thematic group “opposition of youth-old age”, since we are interested in the ethno cultural idea of “youth” regardless of its comparison with other life stages, which is qualified as a stereotype of the corresponding culture.

According to the explanatory dictionary of S.I. Ozhegov “Youth is the age between adolescence and maturity; period of life at that age”. Ushakov's dictionary defines “youth” as follows: “young age, age from adolescence to adulthood”. At the same time, both of the above-mentioned dictionaries define “youth” as a synonym for “juvenescence”: “Age intermediate between adolescence and maturity; period of life at that age; young age, young years of life”. The “Big Academic Dictionary of the Russian Language” (Большой академический словарь русского языка) defines “juvenility” rather as a “sub-period” of “youth”: “Juvenility is youth, early youth”. [8]

Thus, at the level of the dictionary definitions given above, it becomes obvious that, unlike the previous definitions, the English one includes not only the age period, but also the qualities inherent in young people. In the proverbial picture of the world of the English language, the concept of “youth” has the following connotations.

Youth is associated with lack of life experience, naivety and stupidity:

“The young will sow their wild oats”;

“Youth has a small head”;

“Youth is easily deceived because it's quick to hope”;

“In youth and beauty, wisdom is but rare”.

Within this thematic group, a subgroup is clearly distinguished, characterizing the recklessness inherent in young people due to a lack of knowledge of life:

“Youth is the brother of madness”;

“Youth never casts for peril”;

“What would a young cat do but eat mice”;

“Youth doesn't mind where it sets its foot”.

Note that this is the most numerous of the thematic groups we have identified.

It is impossible not to note the paradoxical nature of the assessment of this age stage. What is found in the presence of the idea of the independence of the mind and wisdom of a person from the number of years he has lived:

“Young folks think old folks to be fools, but old folks know young folks to be fools”;

“An old head on young shoulder”.

The idea of the malleability of the young mind to learning:

“Soft wax will take any impression”;

“A tree must be bent while young”;

“Throw the wand while it is green”. [6, 617 p]

It is noted that youth does not yet have formed views on life and the surrounding reality and needs support and encouragement to move and develop further in the

chosen direction: "Praise youth and it will prosper". The analyzed period is associated with the stage when moral guidelines are laid and a coordinate system for later life is formed: "What is learned in youth is carved in stone". [5, 345 p]

A thematic group that combines proverbs characterizing the way of life of young people, associated with fun and carelessness, is characterized by a positive connotation:

- "Youth will have its course";
- "Youth will have its fling",
- "Youth likes to wander";
- "Youth will be served".

There is also a group of proverbs expressing the idea of the transient nature of youth:

- "Youth sheds many a skin";
- "You are only young once";
- "The young are not always with their bow bent";
- "The steed does not retain its speed forever".

Note also the idea of the potentially negative and destructive influence of money on youth: "On fat land grow foulest weeds"; "An abundance of money ruins youth", which may be related to the idea of malleable mind and attitudes characteristic of young people [3,310 p].

Finally, a group is fixed, represented by proverbs-ethical dogmas, peculiar moral maxims, instructions to youth:

- "Look after honor from your youth";
- "Guard your honor from your youth, and your weapons once you've got them in hand";
- "Cherish your honor from a tender age".

A necessary characteristic of any concept is not only the nominative density, but also metaphorical diffuseness, since it also embodies the value priorities of linguistic culture [4,73p]. We will analyze the metaphorical diffuseness of the age concept "youth" through textual implementation.

In American youth linguistic culture, appeals to the concept of "immature behavior" are expressed through the characteristics of a given age period: immature, youngest. For example:

Some people may be too immature, but sometimes you have to grow up and realize you need to be more mature to be recognized in life.

The associative connection of the concept of "youth" with the concept of "immature behavior" is also carried out through comparison. For example:

In the American youth linguistic culture, appeals to the concept of "immature behavior" are also carried out through a set expression. For example:

A comparative analysis showed that the American youth lingua-culture is characterized by the presence of associative links between the concept of "youth" and the concepts of "tenderness" and "education" expressed in catachresis. [2, 146 p]

Appeals to the concept of "tenderness" are carried out through catachresis, represented by addressing guys to parents:

The time has come: I thank you both for all your help during these 18 years. I still remember when you guys used to say.

To conclude, the following definition of the concept “youth” is the most accurate “the stage of a person's life, which occupies the period of life after the age of a teenager and up to middle age”. According to explanatory dictionaries, mature age begins at the age of forty (the period of life between youth and old age, usually considered to be from 40 to 60 years of age. Therefore, based on the definitions of young, adolescence and adulthood, we come to the conclusion that youth occupies the period of a person's life from twenty to forty years. The specified age limits are rather conditional, due to the fact that the concept of “youth” is not a clearly structured mental entity, but is a continuum in which neighboring zones intersect and overlap each other.

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