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Septiembre - Diciembre 2021 Tercera Época Maracaibo-Venezuela Metaphors and linguistic image in the analysis of phraseological units of the archaic Olonkho narrative

> Maximilian A. Zakharov * Svetlana M. Prokopieva ** Agafja E. Zakharova ***

ABSTRACT

The article analyzes metaphors in the linguistic image of the world using the description of the sky (айыы) and underground (абаасы), mythical creatures represented in phraseological units with numbers in T.V. Zakharov-Chääbij's Epic (2018) "Bulkun Wing the Hero". Compositional analysis, context analysis and the method of phraseological identification were used. The general method of investigation is induction-deduction, with theoretical conclusions drawn from the analysis of the material. The study of the linguistic image of the world in the Yakut epic Olonkho provides insight into the hidden creative process of an Olonkho narrator that recreates the structured and almost canonized oral tradition embedded in his repertoire. Phraseological units (PU) with a numerical component reflect a specific worldview through two opposing forces. PU animates the epic image of the world, representing a unique and rich language, and preserving the distant world of ancestors for us and future generations

KEY WORDS: epic poetry; linguistic picture of the world; archaic genre; phraseological unit; hyperbolization; folk metrology.

* Master's Degree student Institute of Languages and Culture of Peoples of the RF North-East M.K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University Russia. ORCID: <u>https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2478-2054</u>. E-mail: maksimilian.zakharov@gmail.com

**Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor, North-Eastern Federal University, Russia. ORCID: <u>https://orcid.org/0000-0003-7528-8243</u>. E-mail: dsmplana@mail.ru

***Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate professor, Research and International Communication Director, Olonkho Center, Russia. ORCID: <u>https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8987-0568</u>. E-mail: solnse18@mail.ru

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Metáforas e imagen lingüística en el análisis de unidades fraseológicas de la narrativa arcaica de Olonkho

RESUMEN

El artículo analiza metáforas en la imagen lingüística del mundo utilizando la descripción del cielo (айыы) y subterránea (абаасы), criaturas míticas representadas en unidades fraseológicas con números en la Epopeya de T.V. Zakharov-Chääbij (2018) "Ala Bulkun el Héroe". Se utilizó el análisis componencial, el análisis de contexto y el método de identificación fraseológica. El método general de investigación es la inducción-deducción, con conclusiones teóricas que se extraen del análisis del material. El estudio de la imagen lingüística del mundo en la epopeya yakuto Olonkho proporciona una visión del proceso creativo oculto de un narrador Olonkho que recrea la tradición oral estructurada y casi canonizada incrustada en su repertorio. Las unidades fraseológicas (UF) con un componente numérico reflejan una cosmovisión específica a través de dos fuerzas opuestas. UF anima la imagen épica del mundo, representando un lenguaje único y rico, y preservando el lejano mundo de los antepasados para nosotros y las generaciones futuras.

PALABRAS CLAVE: poesía épica; imagen lingüística del mundo; género arcaico; unidad fraseológica; hiperbolización; metrología popular.

Introduction

In modern Russian linguistics the concept of the linguistic picture of the world (further, LPW) has become the subject of regional studies. "LPW is one of the most underlying layers in the wider sense of word" (Popova, Sternin 2007). It becomes even more profound and fundamental with respect to epic tradition. The epic picture of the world is based on the conceptual and national pictures that represent its basic, essential part. "If the world is man and environment in their interaction, the picture of the world is "the result of processing of information about environment and man" (Zakharov-Chääbij, 2018).

"The general picture of the world is "appropriated" and perceived by man through the linguistic picture of the world: "the whole language structure may be correlated to the world structure ..., the picture of the world as the totality of man's knowledge of the world is replaced by the picture of the world existing in language, i.e. "the linguistic picture of the world" (Kolshansky, 1990).

These theoretical premises emphasize that the national picture of the world is closely related to mentality of an ethnicity that reflects its conceptual views as the conceptual (cultural) and linguistic picture of the world. An important role in the formation of the picture of the world is played by phraseology, which is a form of ethnic linguistic heritage. Z.B. Khozhieva believes that "ethnic-cultural specific may develop in three different levels of the plane of content in PU: 1) in a total phraseological meaning; 2) in meanings of separate PU components; 3) in the direct meaning of phraseme prototypes (Khozhieva, 2014).

The language of Olonkho has been extensively studied; however, this problem has not received adequate attention. Phraseological units of a specific Olonkho narrative have not been the subject of investigation yet.

Modern epic studies include investigation of rhythmic syntactic parallelisms in the Yakut Olonkho and Altai epic Prokopieva S.M., Borisov Yu.P. (2018), symbols in epic texts Pervin Ergun (2018), the mythological image Pavlova O.K. (2018), pagan names Danka, Bálasz (2018), the role of researchers in studying Olonkho Illarionov V.V., Illarionova T.V., Dmitrieva O.N. (2019), perception of Turkic epics in the West Boeschotten H. (2018), the role of Olonkho in the changing world Harris, Robin (2017), etc.

The purpose of the study is to reveal metaphoric content of the linguistic picture of the word through analysis of figurative PU from the archaic Olonkho narrative "Ala Bulkun the Hero" by T.V. Zakharov-Chääbij (2018). For this purpose, PU with a numeral component describing appearance of heaven (*айыы*) and underground (*абаасы*) mythical creatures.

1. Methods

Phraseological units were selected from the Olonkho text for further semasiological and onomasiological analysis. The general research method being induction-deduction, theoretical conclusions are based on the analysis of the material. We used the componential analysis, the context analysis, and the method of phraseological identification.

2. Results and Discussion

Metaphor is a figure of speech based on figurative meaning of a word arisen from external or internal similarity. "Metaphor is a trope, a hidden figurative comparison, assimilation of one phenomenon to another as well as a figurative comparison in general in various arts. In linguistics, it is a figurative use of a word (Moskvin, 2018).

At present, some aspects of the epic and linguistic picture of the world as well as symbolic and semantic set of the phraseological units used in Olonkho poetics are studied by Yakut researchers (Nelunov, 1980).

At the phraseological level all analyzed PU with a numeral component of the modern Yakut language have figurative meaning. Linguistic units of indirect nomination are formed as a result of semantic transformation of the original prototypic free word combination. The relevant PU characteristics are semantic reinterpretation of components, separate formation, fixed structure, and reproducibility. Phraseological units of the Yakut language are referred to here as "stable word complexes of various structural types with unique component cohesion, meaning of which results from full or partial reinterpretation of components (Stepanova and Černyševa, 2003).

The interest in figurative language naturally reflects advances in research of vocabulary. The phenomenon of linguistic figurativeness still needs to be looked at from the cognitive perspective as it is related to world view and world perception originating from ethnic-based knowledge of the world surrounding language speakers. Universal, global knowledge as a result of collective consciousness is recorded in language and is explicated in its lexical and phraseological composition.

All categories of stable word complexes are represented according to structuralsemantic classification in PE with the numeral component of the modern Yakut language:

1. Phraseological units are word combinations with non-motivated or motivated semantics, e.g.: *биир муостанан хаамтар* (lit. make walk on one floor board) – not let someone act or do as one wishes;

сэттэ сирэй (lit. seven faces) – toady, flatterer;

икки илиитинэн түстэ (lit. fall with both/two arms) – fall on something, snatch.

2. Phraseological units are stable word complexes with structure of a sentence, e.g.: *ус өргөстөөх, ађыс кырыылаах* (lit. with three points, with eight edges) – a strong and brave young man;

иккитэ эрбэђин эргитиэ, үстэ сөмүйэтин төгүрүтүө (lit. will turn someone twice around the thumb, thrice around the forefinger) – cheat, rogue.

3. Phraseological units with just one component having figurative meaning, e.g.: *ус дойдуттан* (lit. from three countries) – from all over the world.

Phraseology reflects the ethnic originality of a language. PU are units of indirect nomination, with their relative feature being dominance of the connotative component in semantic structure of PU (Prokopieva, 2001). Although the process of phraseologization is a universal linguistic phenomenon, it has explicative specific features. The reason is that PU, being structurally separately formed and semantically reinterpreted formations, are units of secondary nomination in contrast to the linguistic units of direct nomination such as phoneme, morpheme, and word. As stable word complexes, PU have bot a nominative and axiological function as well as the function of keeping, recording, and passing on the body of knowledge of a language community about the world.

"The use of numerals in Olonkho is very specific. One of the interesting instances is description of characters' appearance with prevailing "hyperbolization and grotesque exaggeration" (Putilov, 1979) and the use of numerical characterization along with folk metrology terms. On this basis, phrases describing characters' epic size are presented as a separate subject group. Yakut anthropometric measures *былас, харыс, тутум, илии*; yakutized [made Yakut in form] Russian measures *саћаан, арсыын*, etc. in alliteration-assonance relationship with numerals describe characters of epic giants" (Illarionov et al., 2019).

Linear measures are differentiated in colloquial speech, literary language, and epic. The first researcher who emphasized that was the Olonkho poet P.A. Oyunsky (2013). He revealed linear measures in epic *былас, тутум* etc., explaining their folklore use. "Length is measured in *былас* which is the distance between tips of arms stretched sidewards. Thickness is measured by girth also called *былас. Былас* is equal to two *былас ангаара*, a measure from the middle of the chest to finger tips. *Былас ангаара* is divided into cubits *тоголох устата*, which is divided into palms *тутум*, which consists of fingers *илии* or *тарбах* (Popova, 1980). Oyunsky pointed out that each linear measure contains subordinate ones which testifies to people's inquisitiveness, powers of observation, and knowledge of human anatomy. N.S. Popova emphasizes that despite "relative nature of folk linear measures, they had been used throughout history" which is shown in each language. The most common measure in Yakut epic *былас* is equal to about 1.5 m (Popova, 1980).

V.V. Vinokurov summarizes the most common folk measures in Olonkho, providing their detailed explanation, such as: *тыны кыл* 'thin hair', *илии* 'arm', *тарбах* 'finger',

тутум 'fist', *сүөм* 'little span', *харыс* 'great span', *уллунах* 'foot', *суор холото* 'crow's leg', *кирис* 'bow string', *хардыы* 'step', *түөс анара* 'half of chest', *уунар былас* 'fathom', *былас* 'distance between tips of arms stretched sidewards', *тутум* 'for finger (in a fist) high' (Vinokurov, 2017).

The analyzed passage describing appearance of the hero Ala Bulkun contains PU with numerals 4, 10, 3, and 5 (Izbekova, 2014).

Olonkho narrators have a unique "panoramic" view and perception of space and time. To show the scale and integrity of the world and universe they appeal to various combinations of numerals. Numerals have different functions in Olonkho poetics: compositional, stylistic, and descriptive. As a result, numerals in an epic text lose their original function, turning into a symbol specific for each ethnicity.

In Olonkho, the numerals from 1 to 10 prevail (Illarionov et al., 2019). The most common of them are *yc* 'three', *сэттэ* 'seven', *ађыс* 'eight', and *тођус* 'nine'. These numerals are considered sacred in Yakut traditional culture and epic. For example, the numeral three *yc* is used as the beginning of time reference in the introducing Olonkho formula: *Yc* caxa **уөскүү илигинэ**, *түөрт* caxa төрүү илигинэ 'Before three Sakha were conceived, before four Sakha were born', i.e. before the Yakut originated. There are three worlds the vertical epic model of Universe: the Upper World, the Middle World, and the Underworld. A person has three souls (салгын-кут 'air soul', ийэ-кут 'mother soul', буор-кут 'earth soul') that each have their own destiny after death. Various acts of rituals and traditional etiquette manners are performed three times, e.g. make three rounds, make three bows, sprinkle kumis three times, speak sacred key words three times, etc.

The numeral eight *аҕыс* is often used as an epithet in description of major objects in the epic world: *Аҕыс* иилээх-саҕалаах Аан Ийэ дойду 'Eight border-rim Mother Earth', *Аҕыс* хаттыгастаах өндөл манган халлаан 'Eight layer high bright sky', *Аҕыс* салаалаах Аал Луук Mac 'eight branch sacred tree', etc.

The numeral nine *тођус*, being a sacred number, is used to denote objects in descriptions of rituals and ceremonies: *Тођус* томторђолоох Тойон Сэргэ 'The head serge [tethering post] with nine rings of carving', *Тођус* халлаан дуомньута 'female shaman of nine heavens', *Тођус* субан туруйа курдук уолаттар 'nine free cranes like young men', etc.

Let us analyze the example with description of a hero's ride using PU with the numerals five and ten in epic measures *биэс күннүк сир/уон күннүк сир*:

Бигээн-дайбаан <i>биэс күннүк сир</i>	'Having nonstop ridden five days land there
буолла,	was',
Уунан-дайбаан <i>уон күннүк сир</i> буолла.	'Having without rest ridden ten days land
	there was'.
	(Ala Bulkun the Hero, column 1210)

N.S. Popova pointed out the origins of the measures $\kappa \theta c$ and $\kappa \gamma \mu \mu \gamma \kappa cup$ from traveling on foot or on horses (*camыы көc* 'walking' $\kappa \theta c$, *am* $\kappa \theta c$ 'horse' $\kappa \theta c$). It is also true for $\kappa \gamma \mu \mu \gamma \kappa$ used for long distance travel: *camыы* $\kappa \gamma \mu \mu \gamma \kappa cup$ 'days of walking [far] land' and *am* $\kappa \gamma \mu \mu \gamma \kappa$ *cup* 'days of riding [far] land'. She believes they resulted from making distance equal to time necessary to reach it based on notions of time (Popova, 1980). V.V. Vinokurov agrees with that, adding that in the epic they are used in this very ancient meaning. G.U. Ergis in his commentary to K.G. Orosin's Olonkho "Nyurgun Bootur the Swift" differentiates *camыы* $\kappa \theta c$ 'walking' $\kappa \theta c$ equal to about 7-8 km and *am* $\kappa \theta c$ 'horse' $\kappa \theta c$ equal to about 10 km. (Ergis, 1947). Both Popova and Vinokurov provide etymology of the word $\kappa \theta c$. Popova suggests it originated from $\kappa \theta h \theta p$ 'move', while V.V. Vinokurov believes that it originated from Turkic $k \delta c$ meaning one period of travel of a nomad family, kin, or tribe between stops for a rest or overnight (Vinokurov, 2017). Thus, semantics of Yakut measures of travel goes back to nomad lifestyle of our ancestors in the south.

Vinokurov characterizes *күннүк cup* as a measure equal to one day travel of about 30 km. He believes that the difference between walking and riding is not relevant in Olonkho since it is often used in combination *ammaax күннүк* 'on a horse' meaning hero's horse rides.

The PU бигээн-дайбаан биэс күннүк сир буолла consists of three components: 1) бигээн-дайбаан – combination of verbal forms, 2) биэс күннүк сир – metaphoric fixed expression, 2) буолла – modal postposition. This PU as well as previous ones is presented by the narrator in an evaluating manner by the word combination бигээн-дайбаан which he often uses in descriptions. It is the key PU component meaning a careful and fast ride over unknown land. The second component биэс күннүк сир shows the length of hero's travel represented by an Olonkho stock phrase with the numeral five. As we mentioned above, semantics of these folk measures is based on traditional views applied in practical life. Based on practical experience, this PU is easily interpreted by the listener as a way 5 days long (equal to 150 km). At the same time, this measure *биэс күннүк cup* agrees with people's views on a distance made by an epic hero.

The second PU уунан-дайбаан уон күннүк сир буолла eliminates the first distance of 5 days (биэс күннүк сир) by referring to it as a 10 day travel (уон күннүк сир), i.e. 300 km. However, it doesn't describe a real distance; PU is used to emphasize the length and duration of the ride. Although the structure of this PU is identical to that of the first PU, its semantics differs. The first key component бигээн-дайбаан implies difficulty and dangers of the ride in the first place. It can be translated as 'feeling one's way/jumping over'. It cannot be used to describe a rollicking, breaking through ride, but a careful and dangerous one. On the other hand, the word combination *уунан-дайбаан* is equivalent to *ууннары дайбаан/ууннары* сыыйылыннаран 'stretch/flow' used in other Olonkho texts to describe such a fast ride that it creates an integral image of a "flying" horse with a rider who travel great distances at one go. When riding fast, a horse "stretches" in one string and its "flowing" mane and tail make up an image of a "flying" hero's horse. Thus, the first PU component уунан-дайбаан provides the metaphoric image with expressiveness and dynamics, creating a visual image of high speed. The second component *уон күннүк сир* characterizes hero's travel as long, far, and difficult which only a hero is capable of. The third component, the modal postposition буолла 'happened' summarizes and confirms the situation described by PU.

Thereby, these two examples with complex structured numerals and figurative components demonstrate the unique style, expressiveness, and figurativeness of language in this Olonkho. The narrator provides an image of a "flying" rider on his long and dangerous way in concise form.

Unfortunately, Yakut PU are usually lost when translated and only the long distance is adequately conveyed in Russian through numerals which have become clichés for translating epics, including the Yakut one. Translation doesn't convey the epic nature of the narrative and the visual image of a "flying" rider which are much more pronounced in Yakut.

Good qualities of a hero are described in Olonkho through hyperbolization of appearance, his existence in nature and material world, emotions during battles with enemies (hero's wrath), his actions (long epic travel, battles in all three worlds). In this text, the narrator often uses numerals with complex structure along with folk metrology, epic categories of time and space. He utilizes not only well-established traditional figures of speech, but archaisms, obsolete vocabulary typical for folklore texts which certainly expands the linguistic picture of the world in the Olonkho.

In the given Olonkho, antagonist underground world creatures *абаасы* (opposition of *own/alien*) are described within the tradition, yet, the linguistic picture of the world here shows its specific features too. In contrast to the protagonist, the description of appearance of an underground creature is more detailed, contrasting, and three-dimensional. The hyperbolized image is drawn using simple numerals with extreme negative connotation.

Let us analyze the first example describing an unexpected appearance of an underground creature *aбaacы* in the Middle World:

Оруомна <i>уон быластаах</i> хагдан [.] от сађа	As big as <i>ten былас</i> [the distance between tips of arms stretched sidewards] big faded
	haystacks
Күтүр улахан хара түһэн үллэ сытар	Heaving, a big black [something] fallen
yhy.	[having come here from somewhere] is
	lying, they say.
	(Ala Bulkun the Hero, column 760)

We deal with a three-dimensional description of an underground creature that suddenly appeared out from nowhere. It is unknown where it came from and it is unknown what it actually is. The narrator, to attract listeners' attention, describes it as something mysterious and frightening at the same time. He draws comparisons conventional for cattle breeders what his audience are. The size of the faded last year's haystack is described using the numeral *yoh былас* 'ten bïlas'. The measure *былас* equal to about 1.5 m is considered to be the most common in Yakut epic (Popova, 1980). *Bïlas* is the distance between tips of arms stretched sidewards. If one bïlas is about 1.5 m, it makes the circumference of the haystack of 10 *bïlas* equal to 15 m.

Having a closer look, we are presented with its repulsive, hideous appearance, facial features, and clothes. The description utilizes simple and complex numerals. Here is how the narrator describes the creature *aбaacы* that looked like a haystack at first sight:

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Its single miserable crooked shin [it] stuck
out,
[like] one-armed human [it] leaned on it,
[like] Two-faced human [it] fell prone. (Ala Bulkun the Hero, column 820)

The narrator conveys the image of a non-human creature that act unlike a human with two arms and two legs. The beast trying to copy human actions looks caricature-like, hideous, and ridiculous. In addition to that, the creature has two faces unlike any human. The narrative emphasizes its features using simple numerals *coŋomox/бииp/икки*. *Coŋomox* 'single, the only' is equivalent to one, *бииp* is the numeral 'one' as well as *икки* 'two'.

Later, the narrator describes the face of the underground creature:

<i>Тођус</i> илии кирдээх	Nine fingers [thick] dirty
Тордохтоох ньуура	soot-covered muzzle
бу ньололло сытар.	here [it] lies, pulling its long thin face.
А <i></i> ыс илии кирдээх	<i>Eight</i> fingers [thick] dirty
Ардахтаах сирэйэ	sour [mould-covered] face
Ардьалла сытар.	[it] lies, grinning with large rake teeth.
	(Ala Bulkun the Hero, column 830)

The face description emphasizes slovenliness, untidiness of the creature through the amount of dirt covering its face: *тођус* 'nine' fingers thick, *ађыс* 'eight' fingers thick. The description of the foot reveals its major feature:

Ол алын кырыытыгар	On the end of that shin
Сэттэ мастаах сиитик оночону	As big as a seven-board-boat
Иттэннэри кэбэн кэбиспит курдук,	As if fallen prone
Тимир лэмпээрийэ	An iron ugly
Уллунахтаах эбит.	Foot it has, they say.
	(Ala Bulkun the Hero, column 780)

The gigantic foot of the creature, as big as a flat-bottomed boat made of seven boards, is iron. It means that the creature is made of iron; it cannot be defeated as it is immortal. The evil always returns and it must be constantly fought for sake of the good.

When describing the underground, the narrator makes use of formulas based on the opposition of own and alien to make listeners feel repulsion towards it. The narrator provides a very detailed description of creature's hair, teeth, clothes, demonstrating his ability to create a metaphoric comic image.

The narrator uses complex structure numerals to describe the heaven creature, the hero, and generally simple numerals to describe the underground creature.

Conclusions

The analysis revealed specific characteristics of the linguistic picture of the world represented in figurative PU with numerals that are used to describe appearance of the heaven hero and the underground creature from the Olonkho "Ala Bulkun the Hero" by T.V. Zakharov-Chääbij. The epic picture of the world comes to life through PU with a numeral component that contribute to uniqueness and richness of the epic.

Numerals are used to contrast the protagonist and the antagonist. The hero is described using hyperbolization of his features – appearance, emotions, and actions. Complex structures with numerals are composed of folk measures embedded into epic categories of time and space. The underground creature is described through comic and repulsive details emphasizing its inhuman nature. The numerals used make these images even more vivid and effective.

Investigation of figurative force of PU in related and non-related languages is of great interest as it demonstrates inexhaustible richness of native and foreign languages. Studying the figurative layer of a language may be beneficial for further reconstruction of general and specific characteristics, ethnogenetic conclusions on mental worldview of a person. Dictionaries and Olonkho play a great role in this process, serving as an inexhaustible source for research not only in Yakut philology, but in cognitive-typological studies of various families of languages.

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