PROPER NAMES WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH IDIOMS

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Annotation: The article focuses on comparative consideration of the two language entities – proper names as separate language units and proper names used within the structure of idioms. The conducted analysis has shown that when used as part of idioms, proper names lose some of their inherent features and at the same time acquire those that converge them with common nouns.
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 As it is known in every language there are idioms which constitute national specificity of the given language; they enrich the language, making it more imagery and, thus, increase its expressive potential. And English is no exclusion in this regard. According to linguists there are about 24,000 phraseological units functioning at present in English. Such a vast number of units cannot be studied simultaneously. For the purpose of thorough study of idiomatic units and also in an attempt to somehow systematize them linguists approach this vast material from the point of view of different criteria to group them. Among such groupings there is the one based on the availability of a proper name in the idiom structure. And, it is just this group that is in the focus of attention in the given work.

 Importance of the study of this layer of vocabulary units can be explained, firstly, by the fact that they make up not a small portion among other groups of idiomatic expressions; secondly, they have not yet been studied fully from different angles, including the one related to the study of correlation between a proper name as such and an adequate proper name functioning within the structure of a phraseological unit.

 The aim of the study is to give a preliminary consideration to the two categories of proper names, mentioned above, taken in their comparison. To achieve this goal, it was necessary to solve a number of tasks, the main of which are as follows:
- to reveal the general linguistic features of proper names;
- to reveal linguistic characteristics related to the behavior of proper names when they acquire the status of components of phraseological units; and to support the procedure by analysis of the usage of the given units in different contexts. To solve these tasks it was necessary to find out whether or not and if yes, then how different characteristics of the proper names taken as a separate linguistic entities are changed when they are used within idiom composition.

 Due to the application of both, analysis of lexicographic definitions and contextual approach which allowed to study numerous examples of the use of the idioms with a proper name element, we, by means of comparison of the data collected both on paradigmatic and syntagmatic level with the data proper names possess as separate language entities, revealed a number of specificities of the onomastic component.

 A proper name is a special category of words in the lexical system of a language, the main function of which is purely nominative; they contribute to the discrimination and identification of a person without resorting to its qualitative characteristics. The concept of proper names as

individualized signs [1] is rooted in the idea that names uniquely identify specific entities in the world. Unlike common nouns, which refer to categories of objects, proper names point to particular individuals, places, or things. Here it is worthy to mention some key points that differentiate proper names from other linguistic signs, such as words:

1. Uniqueness: Proper names are typically unique within a given context or reference frame. They distinguish one individual from others with similar characteristics or attributes. For example, the name "John Smith" refers to a specific person and distinguishes him from other individuals named John or Smith.

2. Stability: Proper names tend to remain stable over time and across different contexts. While the referent of a common noun may vary depending on the context, the referent of a proper name remains constant. For instance, the name "Paris" refers to the capital city of France regardless of the language or situation in which it is used.

3. Direct Reference: Proper names have a direct referential relationship with their referents. This means that when a proper name is used, it directly picks out the individual or entity it denotes without the need for description or definition. For example, when someone says "Mary," they are referring to a specific person known as Mary, without needing to describe her further.

The above characteristics testify to the qualitative originality of proper names and it is this originality that is completely eliminated when they undergo the process of phraseologization. Consideration of proper names used as separate entities against the background of phraseological units with the identical component in their composition is of interest from the point of view of clarifying the specifics of both categories.

So, the comparison of the two entities has made it possible to disclose the fact that when used as a part of an idiom, a proper name, on the one hand, loses its property as an individualized sign, but, at the same time, acquires features that functionally and semantically converge it with a common noun, We can demonstrate it by the examples given below. Firstly, upon entering the structure of an idiom, a proper name expands its systematic connections which creates the possibility for its inclusion into various paradigmatic groups. One of the types of such relationship inherent in the idiom, in contrast to the structurally adequate proper names in free use, is synonymy. For example, **Jack Tag** is defined as 'sailor'; **Jack Ketch** has the lexicographic definition of 'an executioner'; **Tommy Atkins** is identified as 'an ordinary soldier'; **a coal-oil Johnny** is a spendthrift (Amer).**; Joe Bloggs** is defined as 'an ordinary person' etc. Here are some examples of their contextual use: *Pvt Danny Cain, a modern Tommy Atkins, from Wlmstanston, a London suburb, joined the British army as soon as he was 18; The problem for a writer is getting Joe Bloggs to buy his books. Not spent his money like a coal-oil Johnny...* (U. Sinclair, 'The Moneychangers').

Apart from synonymy, there is another item through which the entities under discussion can be differentiated, and, it is polysemy. Like synonymy, this type of semantic relations is not alien to proper names that have undergone the process of phraseologization. In the examples below we see that the category of idioms under investigation can have more than one meaning: **long Tom=1)** a heavy cannon (which was in service with small ships); **2)** military long-range gun (caliber 155 mm) (...I was already sergeant when we made a night attack and captured and blew ' up long Tom. (H. O. Wells, 'The Passionate Friends', ch. V); **Johnny Raw=1)** rookie; **2)** newbie, sucker (*You took me for a country Johnnie Raw, with no more mother-wit or courage than a porridge-stick. (R. L. Stevenson, 'Kidnapped3, ch. V)*; **John Q.**

Public =1) the general public; **2)** the ordinary, average American (*It is John Q. The Public's duty to vote at each election. DAI),* etc.

So, all the above given examples testify to the fact that the semantic content of idioms can be determined not only by the paradigmatic category of synonymy but also polysemy which are at the same time unique parameters of common nouns that outline their semantic boundaries.

One more feature disclosed in a proper name–component of an idiom is the notion of variability. The investigated material has shown that the given category of idioms can allow the following name variations: **Joe Bloggs/Fred Bloggs**=the ordinary or average person; **Jack/John of all trades=** a person who has the ability to do many different kinds of work; **Jack /Tom o' Bedlam**=a crazy man; **John/Tom long the carrier**; **Jack/Tom fool; John/Tom Collins,** etc. It is worthy to point out the limited number of varying names, there are usually two, maximum three names. This fact, in its turn, explains that an arbitrary set of names to express a certain concept is impossible. What is of interest here is to find an answer to such selectivity. The thing is that in the process of historical development these proper names have absorbed the meaning of 'a person in general', becoming synonymous with such common nouns as 'a man', 'a person'; and it is in this very meaning they, in fact, function in the structure of idioms. Exception is constituted by cases when they move into the normatively nonrelated nominative sphere. For example, **long Johns=**warm underwear *(Willoughby heaved a deep sigh; gathered the papers, locked the briefcase, and I stowed it away among his long Johns in his pack. S. Heym, 'The Crusaders', i book VI, ch. 8;);* **Yellow Jack** = yellow fever; **tin Lizzie =**Amer. cheap car (*I got no family, I'm too old to be chasing skirts; I might as well have a tin Lizzie (A Saxton, 'The Great Midland', part I).* Other examples are: **Jack Johnson** = a heavy projectile; **Union Jack**= national flag of the united kingdom of Great Britain, etc.

In regard to variability in the proper name sector, we can observe another picture. As such, they lack variational potential in relation to a specific denotation. The use of different names pertaining to one person would complicate the act of communication; it would be contrary to the nature and purpose of a proper name.

Finalizing the conducted analysis it is possible to draw the following conclusions: a) phraseologization of a proper name and with it the expansion of its intrasystem connections is possible only if it breaks with both general, onomastic and individualized meaning, and consists in overcoming its such feature as semantic isolation; b) the transformation of a proper noun as part of a phraseological unit follows the line of its convergence with a common noun; like the latter, it acquires the ability to express a concept corresponding to a class of homogeneous objects; c) as for the notion of variability, it is quite applicable to proper names functioning within the idiom while for proper names functioning as free linguistic unit, this feature isn't relevant.

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