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## LEXICAL MEANS FOR DESCRIBING HUMAN APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER

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### ЛЕКСИЧЕСКИЕ СРЕДСТВА ОПИСАНИЯ ВНЕШНЕГО ВИДА И ХАРАКТЕРА ЧЕЛОВЕКА

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*Abstract.* The paper analyses lexical means for describing human appearance. The most productive types of lexical units are compound words and phraseological units. Simple words describe human appearances in general, but compound nouns give specific information.

*Аннотация.* В статье анализируются лексические средства описания внешности человека. Наиболее продуктивными типами лексических единиц являются сложные слова и фразеологизмы. Простые слова описывают человеческий облик в целом, но составные существительные дают конкретную информацию.

*Keywords:* lexical, means, phraseological words, compound words, human appearance, simple words, describe.

*Ключевые слова:* лексика, средства, фразеологические слова, сложные слова, человеческий облик, простые слова, описание.

As a lexical means for describing human appearance, we investigated the most productive types of lexical units, they are compound words and phraseological units. The most productive type of compound words describing human appearances and character in English language are:

Adjectives with the components *looking*: *good looking* — хорошенькая

Solid compounds as N+Adj: *lemon-yellow* — лимонно-желтый

Adj+Adj compounds: *grey white* — серо-белый

Adj+N+ed compounds: *blue eyed* — голубоглазый

Compound words with suffix *-like*: *birdlike* — птицеподобный.

Simple words describe human appearances in general, but compound nouns give specific information. In English: *battleaxe* — *an unpleasant woman who tells people what to do in a determined and rather frightening way*, *chatterbox* — *someone who talks a lot*.

The research shows that such examples we can be found in compounds in the English and Russian language. E.g.: *bald-head* — лысый; *hunch-back* — горбун, *big-belly* — толстобрюхий, *white-skin* — белокожий; *nice-looking* — миловидный.

*The Janitor was a horsey-looking customer (A. Kunin). She patted her mouse-colored hair with the pen [1].*

1. Compound words describing men appearance in English: *bald-coot* — *(with little or no hair on your head: a bald spot on the top of his head; go bald (lose your hair) I started going bald in my twenties. bullet-head* — *(having a small, round head. camel-back* — *(a man who is hunched);*

*clod-hopper* — (clumsy, heavy-footed person, a rough farm worker. *grey-haired* — (a person whose hair is greying or becoming white, *lack-beard* — (without beard-lack – a situation in which you do not have any or do not have enough of something you need).

The material which was used during the research showed that compound words in English language describe the head and face of men.

2. Compound words describing women appearance in English:

*blue-stocking* — (an educated woman who is interested in serious subjects. *damsel-fly* — (a young beautiful girl); *demi-rep* — (a woman who is on the fringe of respectable society; *good-looker* — (physically attractive, especially with an attractive face; *large-eyed* — (with big eyes); *wasp-waisted* — (slender at the waist)); *white-haired* — (a grey-haired woman); *pie-eyed* — (an unpleasant girl).

As you see in this group, together with a description of positive assessment appearance meets the predominance of negative descriptions.

3. Gender unmarked words describing the appearance of person in English:

In English language: *baby-faced* — (a baby-faced adult has a round face like a young child's; *dry-eyed* — (not crying, although you are in a very sad situation. *fair-haired* — (with hair that is light in color) *good-looking* — (physically attractive, especially with an attractive face.

Thus, the gender factor in the appearance and character of the person in compound words acquires particular significance in English language. Gender marked difficult words describing the character and appearance of the man in fiction, is considered moral, behavioral, on the basis of values: good — bad, the good and the evil, beautifully — ugly. The analysis revealed gender marked difficult words describing the character and appearance of the man in the positive and negative evaluation plan [1–5].

Phraseological units describing human appearance are usually based on a joke or irony. But sometimes such units may be offensive. Most of phraseological units were created by people of a particular nation (<http://www.ruscorpora.ru/>).

Compound words describing people can be divided into two sub-groups: connected with positive and negative qualities, for example: *His fingers are all thumbs* (he's clumsy) or *good as a pie* (surprisingly kind and friendly). *How people relate to the social norm, for example: all brawn and no brain* (someone who is physically very strong but not very intelligent).

The class of compound words describing human appearance may be divided into several subclasses, according to the object which is described. It comes as follows:

1. *Facial features, beauty* — one may be attractive or ugly. One's face may express different emotions, such as anger, happiness etc.

- chubby cheeks — refer to full or fat cheeks. Admittedly, on the right person, they can be cute.

- Plain Jane — A plain Jane is a woman who isn't particularly attractive.

How could she win the beauty contest? — She is just a plain Jane.

- graceful as a swan — very graceful.

Jane is graceful as a swan

- fair as a lily — is a very beautiful woman

Her daughter is fair as a lily.

- face is made of a fiddle — means that somebody has attractive appearance

His face is made of a fiddle that's why many people adore him.

- look the picture — if someone looks the picture, they look very pretty.

The little girl looked the picture in her new dress.

2. *Eyes* — one's eyes may have different shape or express different emotions.

- pie-eyed — completely drunk.

He had never taken an alcoholic drink so after one beer the boy was pie-eyed.

- eyes like saucers — eyes opened widely as in amazement.

Our eyes were like saucers as we witnessed another display of the manager's temper.

- saucer eyes — having large round wide-open eyes.

She had saucer eyes when she's got the present.

3. *Nose* — one's nose may be big or small, hooked or straight.

- snub nose — a small nose that curves up at the end.

Jane's face is really beautiful with full lips and a snub nose.

- nose to light candles at — red nose.

After playing snowballs our noses were to light candles at.

4. *Hair* — one may have hair or not or lose hair. Different hair-conditions may be described.

- thin on the top — If someone, usually a man, is thin on the top, they are losing their hair or going bald.

Dad's gone a bit thin on the top in the last few years.

- bald as a coot — a person who is completely bald is as bald as a coot.

My grandfather is bald as a coot.

- hell of hair — used to tell that somebody's hair is untidy and scruffy.

Albert Einstein usually had a hell of hair on his head.

5. *Beard* — PUs are used to describe the shape of it.

- Vandyke beard — is a style of facial hair named after 17<sup>th</sup> century Flemish painter Anthony van Dyck.

A young gentleman with a Vandyke beard was talking loudly.

6. *Body shape* — one may be fat or thin [2].

- turkey neck — refers to what is otherwise called a "double chin". It's an extra fold of fatty, loose skin that hangs under the chin. It is said to look similar to the neck of a turkey.

You should exercise your body otherwise you will have a turkey neck.

- pot belly — is simply another term for a fat belly.

Santa has a pot belly!

- mountain of flesh — very high and clumsy person.

John, a mountain of flesh, was the biggest man in the village.

- all brawn and no brain — Someone who is physically very strong but not very intelligent.

He's an impressive player to watch, but he's all brawn and no brain.

- fat as butter — somebody is extremely fat.

I saw the woman as fat as butter.

7. *Height* — one may be tall or short.

- head and shoulders above — very tall or having far superior to.

He looked like a leader, head and shoulders above.

- mushroom growth (grow up like a mushroom) — to grow rapidly

My son grew up like mushroom.

- vertically challenged — This term is a humoristic way of referring to someone who is not very tall.

High shelves are difficult for vertically challenged shoppers.

8. *Age* — one may be young or old.

- old head on young shoulders — his expression refers to a child or young person who thinks and expresses themselves like an older more-experienced person.

When she heard Emily warning her brother to stay out of trouble, her mother thought: “That’s an old head on young shoulders”.

- be too long in the tooth — a bit too old to do something.

She’s a bit long in the tooth for a cabaret dancer, isn’t she?

- old as a Methuselah — very old (A biblical patriarch said to have lived 969 years)

His grandfather was old like a Methuselah.

9. *Clothes, tidiness* — clothes may be tidy or untidy, fit well, be fashionable etc.

- be a bad fit — when something doesn’t suit someone.

Her new dress was a bad fit.

- down at heel — A person who is down-at-heel is someone whose appearance is untidy or neglected because of lack of money.

The down-at-heel student I first met became a successful writer.

10. *Health* — state of one’s health.

- like death warmed up — you look very ill or tired.

My boss told me to go home. He said I looked like death warmed up.

- full of beans — active and healthy.

He may be getting old but he’s still full of beans.

- full of piss and vinegar — very lively, healthy, boisterous or full of youthful vitality.

I had to look after a group of kids full of piss and vinegar.

The most common classification of English phraseological units is thematic. Different scholars have identified the meaning by semantic composition of phraseology. This report examines the significance of phraseology with the component of a person’s appearance. The problem of a person’s appearance is not particularly difficult, because the very concept of “appearance” is interpreted relatively unique in dictionaries and references. So, by definition, S. I. Ozhegov [3] “Appearance” — 1) the appearance of something; 2) the outer shape of the person. On the other hand, a person's appearance is quite complex and offer the formation of a system of elements that can be identified by visual learning object. Moreover, a person’s appearance should be attributed not only the elements that make up the physical type of person — the sex (as pretty as a picture), age (as green as gooseberry), figure (a bag of bones), and anatomical features of the outer structure of the human body, but also functional features: posture, gait (it is a good horse that never stumbles), habits, behavior (be on one’s best behavior). Phraseological units characterizing a person’s appearance also can be attributed to the manner of dressing (dressed up to the nines).

Thus, while using phraseological units in the analysis of a person's appearance it should be taken into account all the characteristics of the external appearance of the person: sex, age, physique, gait, etc. These compound words are quite diverse in its lexical composition and structure and can have positive and negative evaluative component. Most of them are adjectival (i. e. having a key element of an adjective) and substantive (having the main element of a noun). This situation is quite explained by the large descriptive potential of these parts of speech.

To sum up, appearance of people plays a great role in creating compound words. On the contrary to the classical dictionaries, where phraseological units are combined accordingly to the word used in the construction of it, but not due to the object described, here you may find phraseological units describing human appearance selected especially for the topic. Such approach may be very useful while studying the theme “human appearance”.

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