

MYTHOLOGICAL METAPHORS OF ENGLISH
USED TO EXPRESS INSULT

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Annotation. This article is devoted to the study of the use of English mythological metaphors used in the offensive speech. The dictionary meaning of the words are supported with examples taken from the famous English novels.

Key words: mythonyms, mythology, metaphor, insult, creatures, mythometaphors, folklore.

Mythology is a linguistic phenomenon studied in the field of folklore and linguistics. Mythonyms, which represent a specific field of onomastic space in the language, include the names of people, animals, plants, people, geographical and cosmogonic objects that do not exist in real life, but are created based on fantasy.¹ The linguistic landscape of the world characteristic of the nation cannot be determined without studying its mythological images. Mythological images are manifested in the form of images, which summarize the external appearance and behavior of the object. Such images are abstract and are not visible to the human eye in real life.

Mythological images used for insults in English have similarities with mythological images in Uzbek. For example, "ajdarkho" in Uzbek corresponds to "dragon" in English. This word is defined in the dictionary in the following way:

Dragon n 1 an imaginary animal like a large LizaRD with wings and claws and able to breathe out fire. 2 (derog) a fierce person, esp a woman.²

The dictionary definition describes the appearance of a "dragon" as a "legendary large snake" and a "dragon" as a "flame-breathing, giant reptile with wings and sharp claws". When applied to a person, "dragon" means a bloodthirsty, evil person, "dragon" means a ruthless person, often a woman. Let's see how this word is used in fiction:

"It's useful to us both, Mr. Butler," Julia said. " You're miserably ill-groomed as usual, Rosemary, but I'm glad to see you. Introduce your sister-in-law. "My grief, she really is a dragon, Scarlett thought nervously. I wonder if she expects me to curtsy? " This is Scarlett, Miss Julia,"³

According to the extract, Julia tells Rosemary to her face that she is "as bad as ever". Scarlett, seeing such a rude treatment towards her, likens Julia to a "dragon". Since the dragon is depicted as a cruel creature in fairy tales, this quality of it is transferred to people who have such behavior in speech.

According to the beliefs of some African countries, a creature that is dead and reanimated under the influence of supernatural forces is called a zombie. And in life, this is what is said about a boring person who acts without thinking or is unaware of what is happening around him⁴.

¹ Ниязалиева, Р. А. Из истории изучения мифонимов в русском языке / Р. А. Ниязалиева // Русский язык в глобальном научном и образовательном пространстве : сборник материалов Международного научного конгресса, Москва, 06–10 декабря 2021 года / Министерство науки и высшего образования Российской Федерации; Государственный институт русского языка им. А. С. Пушкина. Том Часть III. – Москва: Государственный институт русского языка им. А.С. Пушкина, 2021. – С. 457-462. – EDN YUKYMV.

² Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1995) [by] A.S. Hornby ; Editor Jonathan Crowther. Oxford, England : Oxford University Press, p.351.

³ Alexandra Ripley Scarlett. Time Warner: New York. 1991 <https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>

⁴ Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1995) [by] A.S. Hornby ; Editor Jonathan Crowther. Oxford, England : Oxford University Press, p.1392

In European mythology, a corpse that leaves the grave at night and bites the neck of the living to drink its blood is called a vampire. At the core of insulting a person by calling him by this name is the existing expression in psychology "energy vampire". This word is usually applied to people who absorb the available emotional energy of others and become energized by it. Also, negative similes are widely used, based on the appearance of the vampire, his blood-sucking habit.

Momma said, " And Bitsy looks like a "vampire" had sucked her blood. And so ill natured. I don't remember Sara ever going through a stage like that.⁵ (юзидә қизиллик йўк, ўта даражада оппоқ юзли кишиларга шундай таъриф берилди)

Originating from Greek and Roman mythology, the lexemes monster, beast, harpy are the names of mythical creatures, containing the symbols of giant, fearsome, abominable.⁶ When a person is defined using these words, a phenomenon of transfer of these symbols to another lexeme occurs.

According to beliefs, nymphs took care of trees, meadows, springs, and protected animals and plants, which were the blessings of nature.

nymph 1 (in Greek and Roman myths) a spirit of nature in the form of a young woman. Nymphs lived esp in rivers and woods.⁷

In the linguistic mind of people, this word has a positive meaning, when this word is used in relation to a woman, it means a compliment aimed at her. However, nymphomaniac is used in a completely negative sense when combined with the word maniac, which has a negative meaning.

nymphomaniac /,nmfo'meiniek/ n (often derog) a woman who has an excessive desire for sex.⁸

This word, applied to a woman with an extremely high sexual desire, is also used in some texts:

" I'm sorry, no, " Adela replied. " I just happened to come across this while I was looking for something else. " " I can guess what you were looking for, " Mrs. Biddle harrumphed. " And what's wrong with it? I've met some very nice gentlemen on the internet. In fact, I have a date for brunch on Sunday. " " That's five dates in three weeks, " Mrs. Biddle said indignantly. " You're an eighty-year-old nymphomaniac " " I am not, " Adela protested.⁹

Mrs. Beadle insults Adela as an "eighty-year-old nymphomaniac" for going on five dates with men in three weeks.

Such words, which are actually used in a positive sense, but are used in a negative sense under the influence of a word attached to it in some compound words, are often found in the English dictionary.

In cognitive linguistics, metaphor is viewed as a characteristic of human thought.

In ancient times, the people of England believed in the existence of witches and sorcerers, and in some periods it was forbidden to practice magic, and those who engaged in such work were executed. The word witch in English is also a character that is a product of people's mythological imagination. The dictionary defines it as "a woman with evil magical powers (in fairy tales, usually a witch who wears a pointed hat and flies on a broomstick)".¹⁰

⁵ Packer, Nancy Huddleston. I Never Said a Word. # Winter90, Vol. 75 Issue 1, p41, 15p, 1990 **FIC**: Southwest Review <https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>

⁶ Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1995) [by] A.S. Hornby ; Editor Jonathan Crowther. Oxford, England : Oxford University Press, pp. 753, 91,544

⁷ Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1995) [by] A.S. Hornby ; Editor Jonathan Crowther. Oxford, England : Oxford University Press, p.795.

⁸ Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1995) [by] A.S. Hornby ; Editor Jonathan Crowther. Oxford, England : Oxford University Press, p.795.

⁹ Phillips, Christi. The Rossetti letter. New York ;: Pocket Books, Edition: Pocket Books hardcover ed., 2007. **FIC**: The Rossetti letter <https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>

¹⁰ Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1995) [by] A.S. Hornby ; Editor Jonathan Crowther. Oxford, England : Oxford University Press, p.1370

This word is applied to people whose appearance or behavior resemble a witch because this creature, which is a symbol of evil in people's minds, causes negative experiences. The word witch is also used to refer to those who create discord between people and harm their harmony.

“You think we’re a family,” Cody said, turning back. “You think we’re some jolly, situation-comedy family when we’re in particles, torn apart, torn all over the place, and our mother was a witch.”

“Oh, Cody,” Ezra said.

“A raving, shrieking, unpredictable witch,” Cody told Beck.¹¹

Based on these and the above examples, it is worth noting that metaphor has developed as an important cognitive tool for forming meaning. Mythometaphors are formed as a result of the transfer of certain signs in a word representing a mythological image to another object or person. Images with a negative definition make up a certain part of the language material used as an insult.

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¹¹ Anne Tyler. Dinner at the homesick restaurant. A Ballantine Books/New York. Published by The Random House Publishing Group 1982, p. 237

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