



SEMANTIC AND STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS DENOTING EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL STATES

Sobirova Khusnida

Abstract. The current paper analyzes the semantic and structural features of phraseological units denoting emotional and mental states in various languages. It is found that the emotional phraseology displays not only universal cognitive mechanisms but also language-specific cultural encodings, whereby somatic, color, and nature phenomena are the most used source domains for metaphorical transfer. The research also clarifies how different languages treat the emotional experiences in terms of grammaticalization and lexicalization via fixed multi-word expressions.

Keywords: phraseological units, emotional states, mental states, semantic structure, phraseology, cognitive linguistics, metaphor, cross-linguistic analysis

Аннотация. Данная статья исследует семантические и структурные характеристики фразеологических единиц, выражающих эмоциональные и психические состояния в различных языках. Результаты исследования показывают, что эмоциональная фразеология демонстрирует как универсальные когнитивные механизмы, так и языково-специфические культурные коды, при этом соматические, цветовые обозначения и природные явления служат основными исходными доменами для метафорического переноса. Исследование способствует пониманию того, как языки грамматикализируют и лексикализируют эмоциональный опыт посредством устойчивых многословных выражений.


Ключевые слова: фразеологические единицы, эмоциональные состояния, психические состояния, семантическая структура, фразеология, когнитивная лингвистика, метафора, межъязыковой анализ

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola turli tillarda hissiy va ruhiy holatlarni ifodalovchi frazeologik birliklarning semantik va strukturaviy xususiyatlarini o'rganadi. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko'rsatadiki, hissiy frazeologiya universal kognitiv mexanizmlar va tilga xos madaniy kodlashtirishlarni namoyon etadi, bunda somatik, rang va tabiat hodisalari metaforik o'tkazish uchun asosiy manba domenlari sifatida xizmat qiladi. Tadqiqot tillarning barqaror ko'p so'zli iboralar orqali hissiy tajribalarni grammatikalashtirish va leksikalashtirish jarayonlarini tushunishga hissa qo'shadi.

Kalit so'zlar: frazeologik birliklar, hissiy holatlar, ruhiy holatlar, semantik tuzilma, frazeologiya, kognitiv tilshunoslik, metafora, tillararo tahlil

INTRODUCTION

Among the most thoroughly developed and culturally important parts of any language's~phraseological system are the phraseological units denoting emotional and mental



states. Apart from that, these natural mental and emotional states are expressed by means of fixed phrases, which are idioms, proverbs, sayings, and other multi-word combinations allowed for. Previous studies have shown that the phraseological units denoting emotional states marked a large area of semantics that was dominated by rich metaphors and that the semantic opacity was of varying degrees [1]. Cognitive studies in phraseology have shown that metaphors like ANGER IS HEAT, SADNESS IS DOWN, or FEAR IS A NATURAL FORCE have been used to structure the understanding of emotional concepts and that this is true for all languages with the presence of both common trends and specific variations per language [2]. The cross-linguistic examination has indicated that the basic emotional categories seem to be recognized universally, yet their phraseological expressions reflect the cultural models, the value systems, and the emotional experience interpretations that are specific to that culture [3].


METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The methodological framework applied in this research combines various analytical approaches from structural linguistics, cognitive linguistics, and phraseology theory. The cognitive-semantic analysis is an essential methodology, exploring the metaphorical and metonymical roots of emotional phraseology through the lens of conceptual metaphor theory conceived by Lakoff and Johnson. This method enables one to pinpoint source and target domains in metaphorical mappings, thereby showing systematic correspondences between concrete experiential domains and abstract emotional concepts [4]. Teliya's studies on the cultural-national connotations of phraseology underline the point that phraseological units are the carriers of cultural knowledge and the collective worldview, which is particularly applicable to emotional expressions that may reflect culture-specific values and behavioral norms [5]. Her investigation into the connection between phraseological meaning and cultural concepts gives the researcher the methodological tools necessary for recognizing the cultural dimensions that are embedded in emotional phraseology.

Wierzbicka's semantic research has focused on the emotion concepts of different languages and fruits and has provided very useful insights into the cultural scripts, the language-dependent nature of the emotion categories, the assumptions about universal emotional lexicons and the role of phraseology in the expression of the emotional nuances that are particular to the culture.[6] These theoretical frameworks offer a way of thinking about the relationship between the universal cognitive mechanisms and the culture-specific patterns that are revealed in the emotional phraseology and thus they guide the present analysis. The phraseology has been studied structurally through several classification schemes. The dividing line drawn by Vinogradov which is the heir to the fusions, unities, and combinations of phraseology, still plays a major role in the study for he is based on the conditions of the meaning and the quality of the compositionality.[7]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION


The study of idiomatic expressions representing emotional and mental states discloses consistent tendencies both in the area of meaning organization and in the aspect of forming



structure. Considering the semantics, the expressions related to emotions can be subsumed under several primary semantic fields that correspond to both the basic emotional categories and the more complex psychological states. The categories that have developed the most and are, therefore, the most representative of human feelings and relationships, include such opposites as happiness and laughter, sadness and mourning, anger and irritability, fear and worry, astonishment and curiosity, love and friendship, and repugnance and avoidance, not to mention the range of mental states including clarity, confusion, interest, and boredom among others. Each category is represented by different kinds of phraseological units that vary in terms of semantic specificity that can go from general indicators of emotional states to very subtle expressions that particularize the shades or intensities of emotions. For example, in the case of the expressions of anger, there are wide-ranging usage of phrases from very general ones like "lose one's temper" to very detailed and dramatic forms such as "blow one's top," "fly off the handle," or "go ballistic," each of which represents a particular intensity aspect of the anger experience whether it is an aspect of very high and sudden intensity or its suddenness or loss of control.

The metaphorical bases of emotional phraseology reveal a high degree of systematicity, as many of the same conceptual metaphors appear concurrently in various emotional areas. The conceptual metaphor EMOTIONS ARE FORCES is shown in countless figurative expressions that depict emotions as if they are outside forces influencing people, for instance, "swept away by emotion," "overcome with grief," or "consumed by jealousy." This metaphor corresponds to the common feeling that powerful emotions are akin to outside forces that take away one's autonomy and control. The container metaphor, represented by BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR EMOTIONS, has a wide range in the case of "burst with joy," "bottle up emotions," "full of anger," and "overflow with happiness," portraying emotions as liquids that are inside the body and can either be let out, held back or flow beyond the limits[arg.8]. The orientational metaphors HAPPINESS IS UP and SADNESS IS DOWN which derive from the physical correlation between emotional states and body movements, produce phrases like "lift someone's spirits," "raise one's mood," "feel down," "sink into depression," and "hit rock bottom."

One of the most fruitful emotional expression genres is somatic phraseology, which uses terms related to body parts. Metaphors and expressions related to heart function are particularly common in different languages and depict the close relationship between the feelings and the heart, which is often referred to in terms of "heavy heart," "sink heart," "warm heart," "broken heart," and "heart driving fast." These metaphors illustrate metonymic connections where the physiological effects or sites of emotional experience represent the emotions themselves, following the principle of PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF EMOTION STAND FOR EMOTION [2]. Besides heart, there are other body parts, which often appear in emotional phraseology such as head ("lose one's head," "keep a cool head"), face ("pull a long face," "red in the face"), blood ("blood boils," "makes my blood run cold"), nerves ("get on someone's nerves," "bundle of nerves"), and various internal organs. The




extensive use of somatic lexicon in emotional phraseology emphasizes the bodily aspect of emotional experience and the metonymic principle that intertwines bodily sensations with mental states.

Color words are yet another important semantic element in the emotional vocabulary, as the different colors are culturally and metaphorically represented in the emotional domain. Red is a color that has been already included in anger, and it is present in embarrassment, too. Blue is the color of sadness in English, which is expressed by the idioms such as "feeling blue," and "blue mood." However, this association is not the same for all languages and may even be a retroactive reflection of different cultural developments rather than a universal phenomenon. Green is the color of jealousy ("green with envy"), yellow or white - fear ("yellow-bellied," "white as a sheet"), and black - negative emotions or despair ("black mood," "black thoughts"). Such color-emotion associations are often accompanied by their somatic components giving rise to a complex metaphorical-metonymic interaction as in "red-faced with anger" or "turned white with fear" [9].

Another significant trait of phraseological units is syntactic fixedness, though emotional phraseology is more or less flexible as for the substitution of its components, the change of word order, and the application of grammatical transformations. The rigidity of some units is so extreme that they do not tolerate any alteration, but there are other units that only allow a few such as changes of tense, addition or omission of articles, and pronoun substitution. The case also exists where certain emotional phrases are found to be in variant forms such as the pair "lose one's temper" and "lose one's cool" where near-synonymous words can replace each other without changing the meaning. The connection of semantic and structural features is present in the fact that the most idiomatic expressions tend to be more fixed structurally while the more transparent expressions are the ones that allow more flexibility. This correlation illustrates the rule that semantic fusion tends to go hand in hand with structural fossilization in the process of phraseologization [10].

CONCLUSION

The systematic analysis of semantic and structural characteristics of phraseological units denoting emotional and mental states reveals the complex interplay between universal cognitive mechanisms, embodied experience, and cultural-linguistic specificity in the phraseological encoding of human emotions. Semantically, emotional phraseology organizes into major fields corresponding to basic emotion categories while displaying rich internal differentiation that captures nuanced emotional experiences and intensities. The dominant metaphorical and metonymical patterns underlying these expressions demonstrate systematic conceptual structures, particularly the metaphors of emotions as forces, substances in containers, and vertical orientations, alongside metonymic principles linking physiological effects with emotional states. Structurally, emotional phraseology exhibits diverse grammatical patterns with verbal constructions predominating, while incorporating substantial somatic vocabulary, color terms, and comparative structures that ground abstract emotional concepts in concrete experiential domains. The research findings contribute to



theoretical understanding of phraseology by demonstrating how this linguistic category serves as a crucial interface between cognition, culture, and language structure. The analysis reveals that phraseological units are not arbitrary combinations but systematically motivated expressions reflecting deeper cognitive and cultural patterns.

REFERENCES

1. Kunin, A.V. (1996). *Kurs frazeologii sovremennogo anglijskogo jazyka* [Course in Phraseology of Modern English]. Moscow: Vysshaja shkola.
2. Kövecses, Z. (2000). *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. Dobrovolskij, D.O., & Piirainen, E. (2005). *Figurative Language: Cross-cultural and Cross-linguistic Perspectives*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
4. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
5. Teliya, V.N. (1996). *Russkaja frazeologija: semanticheskij, pragmaticeskij i lingvokulturologicheskij aspekty* [Russian Phraseology: Semantic, Pragmatic and Cultural-linguistic Aspects]. Moscow: Jazyki russoj kul'tury.
6. Wierzbicka, A. (1999). *Emotions Across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Vinogradov, V.V. (1977). *Izbrannye trudy: leksikologija i leksikografija* [Selected Works: Lexicology and Lexicography]. Moscow: Nauka.
8. Barcelona, A. (2000). Introduction: The cognitive theory of metaphor and metonymy. In A. Barcelona (Ed.), *Metaphor and Metonymy at the Crossroads: A Cognitive Perspective* (pp. 1-28). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
9. Apresjan, Ju.D. (1995). *Izbrannye trudy: Tom II. Integral'noe opisanie jazyka i sistemnaja leksikografija* [Selected Works: Vol. II. Integral Description of Language and Systemic Lexicography]. Moscow: Jazyki russoj kul'tury.
10. Gläser, R. (1998). The stylistic potential of phraseological units in the light of genre analysis. In A.P. Cowie (Ed.), *Phraseology: Theory, Analysis, and Applications* (pp. 125-143). Oxford: Oxford University Press.