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**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SOMATIC PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS  
IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN**

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**Rezumat:** *Articolul dat se axează pe analiza unităților frazeologice ce includ în componența sa elementele somatice “hand”, “heart”, “head” în limbile engleză și rusă.*

*Inițial se pune accent pe cercetarea elementelor componente ale frazeologismelor somatice selectate, care ne-a determinat să concluzionăm că o parte considerabilă a acestora se conțin în structura unităților frazeologice ale limbilor engleză și rusă aproximativ în raport egal. Totodată articolul descrie motivele și cauzele posibile a rezultatelor obținute privind cele mai productive somatisme din cele selectate inițial pentru analiză, finalizând cu prezentarea materialului factologic sub formă de tabele, care conțin datele finale exprimate prin procentaj și cantitate numerică.*

**Cuvinte-cheie:** frazeologie, unități frazeologice, elemente somatice, somatism, comparare, productiv.

Phraseology is a constantly developing science of a great interest from many points of view. It is one of the most essential sides of the language and may be one of the key factors of enriching the vocabulary of a language. Phraseological units are a vivid expression of numerous traditions, customs, and people's history. G. B. Antrushina describes phraseology as *"an amusing picture gallery in which are collected vivid and amusing sketches of the nation's customs, traditions and prejudices, recollections of its past history, scraps of folk songs and fairy-tales"* [1, p. 174]. Namely this reason motivated the choice of this topic for the present research. Besides, phraseological units play an important role in human communication. They produce a considerable expressive effect, except conveying information. They appeal to the reader's emotions, to his aesthetic perception and to his literary and cultural associations. That is why it seems interesting to study these lexical units. Further, somatic phraseology presents a considerable part of phraseological units. Phraseological units with somatic elements reflect the human's understanding of the world by medium of the body. Also, there are reflected the centuries-old observations of a person over the appearance and structure of the body, and the perception of the person of different parts of the body. Perceiving himself the man started to describe the world transferring the knowledge about him onto the surrounding reality. That is why very often while describing different emotions or states of the mind or of the body the speakers of different languages use various expressions that include parts of the body. My studies at the Medical College had a significant impact on my choice of the research topic as well. There I studied in detail the structure of the human body and it seemed appealing to relate the medical and linguistic studies concerning the parts of the body.

Besides, somatic phraseological units present a research interest namely from a comparative point of view, as this could permit to reveal some similarities and differences between the phraseological units of different languages. So, we intended to compare a number of somatic phraseological units in the English and Russian languages. These two languages have different structures and belong to different groups of languages. English belongs to the Germanic group, and Russian - to the Slavonic group of languages. At the same time, they both belong to one and the same family of languages - Indo-European. While carrying out this research we would like to see if there exist some similar somatic phraseological units in these languages and if there exist specific somatic phraseological units characteristic of one lan-

guage separately. The evolution of these two languages, having common ancestors, makes us suppose that there may be both similarities and differences between the phraseological units of these two languages. Thus, the aim of the present research is to analyze the correspondences between some somatic phraseological units including the words *heart*, *head*, and *hand* in the English and Russian languages.

The somatism *heart* is one of the most active in both languages. It enters the phraseological units expressing most various shades of feelings of grief, sorrow, joy, love, etc. At the same time, the heart is one of the vital organs of the human body and its emotional coloring is approximately the same in both languages. The intellectual activity is expressed on the whole by the somatism *head* (where the brain is placed). Head is the organ of abstraction and deductions which contributes not only to the development of the speech, but to the functioning of the human organism as well. It may be regarded as a synonym of the notion of spirit, intellect, reason, intelligence, thought and wit both in English and Russian. It must be natural for this somatic element to form a considerable number of phraseological units in these languages. And, as it is known, the most different actions are performed with the help of the hand. So, the somatic element *hand* must be one of the most productive in the phraseology of all languages, too.

Thus, to reach the objectives of the research we have selected a number of English and Russian somatic phraseological units containing the words *heart*, *head* and *hand* from the existing phraseological dictionaries in these two languages. The English factological material has been selected from the *English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary* by professor A.V. Kunin and the Russian somatic phraseologisms have been selected from the *Translators' Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary* by professor S. S. Kuzmin.

The total number of the English selected somatic phraseological units is 170, out of which 63 (37,05%) include the somatism *hand*, for example: *to give a helping hand, one hand washes another, an open hand*; 59 (34,70%) phraseological units include the somatism *heart*, e.g. *to break somebody's heart, to take something to heart, a heart of gold*; 48 (28,25%) phraseological units have in their structure the somatic element *head*, for example: *to have a head on one's shoulders, come into one's head, to have a clear head*.

The number of the selected Russian somatic phraseologisms is also 170, out of which 66 (38,82%) contain the somatism *hand*, for example: *золотые руки, сидеть сложа руки, быть правой рукой*; 58 (34,11%) phraseological units include the somatism *heart*, examples of which can serve such phraseological units as: *сердцу не прикажешь, принять что-либо близко к сердцу, с легким сердцем*; and 46 (27,07%) phraseological units have the somatism *head* in their structure, for example: *окунуться с головой, вскружить голову, сломя голову*.

The above results are presented in the following tables, where the investigated somatic elements present in the phraseological units of these two languages are arranged according to their frequency of usage.

**Table N1. English Somatic Elements**

<b>N</b>	<b>Somatic Element</b>	<b>Number of Somatic Phraseologisms</b>	<b>Percentage of Somatic Phraseologisms</b>
1.	Hand	63	37,05%
2.	Heart	59	34,70%
3.	Head	48	28,25%

**Table N2. Russian Somatic Elements**

<b>N</b>	<b>Somatic Element</b>	<b>Number of Somatic Phraseologisms</b>	<b>Percentage of Somatic Phraseologisms</b>
1.	Hand	66	38,82%
2.	Heart	58	34,11%
3.	Head	46	27,07%

Analyzing the above results we can observe that the most productive of the three somatic elements in both English and Russian are the somatisms *hand* and *heart*. This proceeds from the general functions of these parts of the body and the physical processes characteristic for the people of the whole world. The somatism *hand* is one of the most productive in the phraseology of these both languages. Hands are very important and practical parts of the body. It was the hands that helped the man to comprehend this world by touch. As well, the hands are involved most often in the work processes of a person and it is natural that there exist quite a big number of phraseological units that will contain this element in their structures. *Heart* is the second most productive somatism in the phraseology of the English and Russian languages. The heart is the locus of the physical and spiritual being, and represents the center of feelings. This organ of the body is so important to human life that for much of recorded history it has served as a symbol of not only life but also love, compassion and emotion.

A somewhat less number of phraseological units include the somatism *head*. At the same time, this number is also relatively big. The head is not a less important organ in the human's body in comparison with the heart and the hand. It is the sphere of human mental activity. Another way of looking at this question is to think of the head as a computer. The brain is both the "hard drive" and the "processor". It is where everything is stored - "all programs, files and memory". But it is also the "device" that executes these actions, sending them through the rest of the system. Namely these facts justify the existence of various phraseological units with the somatism *head*, expressing different attitudes and the mental activity of a person.

So, as we see, the number of the investigated somatic phraseological units in both the English and Russian situations is approximately the same. This is a proof that the considerable number of somatic phraseologisms in these languages is determined by the functions of the body parts, as well as by the emotional experiences and human feelings that are similar among all people. It can be assumed that this assertion is typical for every language.

Although all humans come in many shapes and sizes, genetically they are alike, they have the same body structure, perform similar activities in similar situations,

express their judgments and feelings in the same way. The reason of the presence of nearly the same percentage of the selected somatic phraseological units in both English and Russian may not only be the same structure of the body, but also our ancestors' tool confectioning, eating habits, survival activities, which had a great impact in the process of the evolution of people's thinking and language development.

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