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# MAIN SOURCES OF PHRASEOLOGISMS IN MODERN ENGLISH

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## Abstract

This article discusses the problems of phraseology and their structural classifications in Modern linguistics. It gives information about main sources of phraseological units.

**Keywords** Sources, semantics, components, approach, international word.

## INTRODUCTION

Phraseological unit is more complex language unit, than a word, in structural and in semantic spheres. However, for majority of them functional vicinity to word is characteristic. Semantic wholeness is a constancy of components. The structure of the phraseological units defines other important peculiarity of the phraseological unit approaching them with. This means that in system of the language, they exist as readymade units in they are not made, but are extracted from memory and are used in the lexical meanings, grammatical forms and functions, which are to express. Phraseological units of both English and Russian languages have a long history; include a significant amount of international words and idioms, related to human knowledge about the surrounding world. There are phraseological units in the Russian and English languages with a similar conceptual semantics which are not as numerous as the phraseological units with the phraseological equivalents in the other language. So, a phraseological unit is a word-group or a sentence with full or partial transformation meaning and with stability at

phraseological level.

The classification system of phraseological units suggested by academician V.V. Vinogradov is based on the degree of semantic cohesion between the components of a phraseological unit, where the criteria is akin to the one in Bally's classification. The more distant the meaning of a phraseological unit from the current meaning of its constituent parts, the greater is the degree of semantic cohesion. The given typology, worked out on the material of the Russian language, was widely used by phraseologists for describing phraseological systems of other languages, including English. According to Vinogradov's classification, phraseological units are divided into three big groups: phraseological fusions, phraseological unities and phraseological combinations. The sources and origin of phraseological units in modern English and Russian languages can be similar.

The main source of phraseological unit is the Bible. Bible is the main literal source of phraseological units. Over the centuries Bible was a widely read

and quoted book in England. Number of scriptural constructions and expressions is so high that it is not an easy task to collect and to count them. The following biblical expressions are used in contemporary English: The apple of Sodom — красивый, но гнилой плод; обманчивый успех; Can the leopard change his spots? — букв. Может ли леопард переокрасить свои пятна?; Горбатого могила исправит. The English phraseological units cannot be translated into Russian language word-for-word, otherwise it will lose its expressiveness and linguistic curiosity. Here is one more interesting example Rus. «намылить голову» in English would be: haul somebody over the coals. The Russian language has its own psychological, sociolinguistic peculiarities, that's why the phraseological units can't be translated word-for-word: плясать под чужую дудку — come under somebody's influence, submit to the influence of somebody; English to lock the stable door after the horse is stolen, to ride the high horse (means to behave a superior, haughty way), to show one's teeth (to take a treating tone, show an intention to injure), to wash one's dirty linen in public (discuss of make on public one's quarrels) Rus. «выносить сор из избы» because Russian people used to live in the houses called «izba». To carry coal to Newcastle — возить товар туда, где его и без того много; ехать в Тулу со своим самоваром; заниматься бессмысленным делом (Ньюкасл — центр угольной промышленности) it means to do unnecessary thing. There have been suggested several classifications of phraseological units.

L.P.Smith suggests the classification in accordance with those sources, from which the English language adopted phraseological units. He distinguished idioms, derived from the language of sailors, fishers, soldiers, hunters as well as he pointed out idioms, concerning different kinds of domestic and wild animals, birds, nature phenomena; idioms concerning agriculture,

kitchen, different kinds of sport, art, parts of human body, etc. L.P.Smith there is no clarification of the semantic structure. To him, the persistent word combinations, determined as «idioms» is of interest mainly because they are «verbal anomalies», «which break grammatical or logical rules [1]. At the same time, Smith tried to demonstrate wealth and multiplicity of English phraseology, to determine from which sources it has penetrated into the general language.

L.P.Pastushenko suggests naming such multitude of phraseological units combined on the basis of their logical-subjective, communicative commonality which cover the peculiar sphere of knowledge as phraseo-thematic area, she gives the following classification: 1) firearms; 2) fighting or hostilities; 3) military symbolism; 4) shooting or firing; 5) soldier, rank; 6) guard duty; 7) military tactics [7]. There are following examples of such phraseological units: дать шпоры — spur on; бедный родственник — a poor relation, i.e. a humble person who depends on others; go nuts — рехнуться; hit the high spots — говорить о главном; обращать внимание на самое существенное. Phraseological units in the compared languages can have the same meaning, however, they are based on different images with the features of national character, a typical example of this phenomenon are phraseological units ездить в Тулу со своим самоваром and carry coals to New castle, including national-specific toponyms [2].

Phraseological units originate from various sources:

1) legends, traditions, religions, narrations and beliefs of the English folk. Here the following phraseological units can be referred: to beat the wind — to waste time, to be busy with vain work; to show the white feather — to show timidity (a white feather in a tail of fighting cock was a sign of bad breed); to leap apes in hell — to die as an

unmarried woman (according to old English narrations old unmarried women were intended to leap apes after their death);

2) English realias: blue stocking — learned woman (one of English admiral Boscawen's literary meetings in the 18th century in London was called «the meeting of blue stockings», because scientist Benjamin Spelling flete came in blue stockings); blue book — reference book that contains surnames of persons who occupy state posts in the USA; to carry coals to Newcastle — to do something absurd (Newcastle is the centre of English coal industry);

3) personalities of English writers, kings and scholars: King Charles' head — obsessive idea (according to Charles Dickens' novel «David Copperfield»); Queen Anne is dead — nothing new; a Sherlock Holmes — a detective; a Sally Lunn — sweet roll;

4) historical facts: as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb — if one is to be executed because of stealing a sheep, so why not steal a lamb (an old English law according to which one who steals a sheep is executed); the curse of Scotland — nine of diamonds in cards (the card is called in honor of the resemblance with the blazon of Duke Stair, who hated Scotland);

5) fables and fairy-tales Fortunate's purse— purse full of money; the whole bag of tricks — very sly;

6) family relations: henpecked husband — a man habitually subdued by his wife; a marriage portion — a bride's dowry, to marry a fortune — to take as a husband a rich and well-respected man, Miss Right — smb.'s future wife, Mr. Right — smb.'s future husband;

7) seasons and weather: rush season — period when people are especially busy doing something; out of season — not available for sale, out of point, not in a proper place; settled weather — period of calm weather, free from storms and extremes;

under the weather — ill.

Phraseological units of different subcultures have their own specific characteristics, reflecting the imaginative thinking of the people. The national features of English phraseological units are qualities such as courage, bravery and nobility: fight the Kilkenny cats (отчаянно драться); share one's last crust with smb. (делиться последним куском хлеба); bear the brunt of smth. (принять на себя главный удар), kind hearts are more than coronets (доброта в людях ценится выше, чем их общественное положение); and for Russian culture — sacrifice, heroism and dedication of the Russian people: or chest in crosses, or head in the bushes; it did not disappear; a hero falls — raise, a coward falls will be crushed; the stomach to spare no [9]. Imaginative peculiarities of the notion «heroism» in English and Russian phraseology often contain descriptions and comparisons of feats, enemies, heroes: brave as a lion (смел, как лев); firm (steady) as a rock (крепкий, как скала); a tough nut (крепкий орешек) [3].

However, there are characteristic differences of feat's imaginative content in compared cultures. For example, in the Russian culture heroic feats are often made for the sake of the motherland: the Motherland is a mother, be able to defend it, the first thing in life is to serve the Motherland; for the Motherland not sorry and life; the patriot is able to make any exploit. Moreover, in Russian culture special attention is paid to idioms related to the feat: где наше не пропадало; двух смертей не видать, а одной не миновать; от смерти на волосок; очертя голову; риск — благородное дело. And in English culture there are more expressions and idioms conveying the meaning of overcoming difficulties: to go through fire and water (пройти сквозь огонь и воду), to drink the cup to the end (выпить чашу до дна), batten down the hatches (готовиться к худшему; закрывать все люки на лодке перед штормом), beat one's

brains out (ломать голову над чем-либо; сильно трудиться, чтобы добиться чего-либо) [4].

Here is an example of phraseological equivalence: the Russian unit « » and the English phraseological unit «cast (throw) a stone (stones) at smb (somebody)» are characterized by common semes «a person», «a person's action», «human relations», semes, depicting such actions as «to accuse smb», «to slander smb», negative evaluative seme and the emotive seme of disapproval. Both idioms belong to inter style units and are deprived of expressive seme. So we can consider them full semantic equivalents.

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