

REPRESENTATION OF EMOTIONS IN ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGY AND TEACHING IT TO EFL STUDENTS

Nicolaeva Prascovia
Master in Germanic Philology,
University Assistant
Comrat State University

ORCID: 0000-0003-3654-4678

CZU: 37.016:811.111'373.7

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Abstract

This article is based on representation of emotions in English phraseology. Two types of emotions (positive and negative) are discussed. English phraseological units expressing emotions are selected from the Phraseological dictionary by Kunin A.V.. The article points out to the fact that teaching phraseological units is interesting and captivating. Some ways of their teaching to EFL students are highlighted. Three approaches are proposed. The proposed examples allow EFL students to acquire skills in using English phraseological units in their everyday speech.

Key-words: *emotions, positive, negative, teaching method, everyday speech, acquiring skills, expressing emotions.*

Rezumat

Acest articol se bazează pe reprezentarea emoțiilor în frazeologia engleză. Sunt discutate două tipuri de emoții (pozitive și negative). Unitățile frazeologice engleze care exprimă emoții sunt selectate din dicționarul frazeologic. Articolul subliniază faptul că predarea unităților frazeologice este interesantă și captivantă. Sunt evidențiate câteva modalități de predare a acestora studenților EFL. Sunt propuse trei abordări. Exemplele propuse permit studenților EFL să dobândească abilități de utilizare a unităților frazeologice engleze în vorbirea lor.

Cuvinte-cheie: *emoții, pozitiv, negativ, metodă de predare, vorbire, dobândirea de abilități, exprimarea emoțiilor.*

*"Emotion can be the enemy,
if you give into your emotion,
you lose yourself.*

*You must be at one with your emotions,
because the body always follows the mind."
(Bruce Lee)*

Nowadays we can state the fact that “human communication clearly represents the huge role of emotions, and the evidence of this is presented in ethnic, political, economic life of the society, in the relationship with different peoples, and interpersonal relationships” [5, p. 7]. There is always a tension between people. V.I. Shakhovsky states that various types of this tension are explained by the biological nature of human consciousness and the dominant role of emotions in it. He also stresses that modern science has a sufficient amount of knowledge, and many discussions confirm that people are far

from being both “homo sapiens” and “homo sentiens”, because many of their actions are guided by emotions [5, p. 7].

“Emotions are in fashion today”, writes V.I. Shakhovsky in his monograph. They cover all areas of communication “homo loquens” [4, p. 5]. Whether we like it or not, people will always express their emotions, both positive and negative. There is no life without emotions.

The theory of emotions attracted many scientists’ attention. Many branches of science have studied its nature. Initially emotions have been studied by separate sciences, such as psychology, philosophy, linguistics. Later on, there began interdisciplinary studies based on emotions and emotions began to be studied at the intersection of linguistics and cybernetics, biology, mathematics. Emotiology or linguistics of emotions was formed at the intersection of psychology and linguistics. A great interest of many linguists is focused on linguistics of emotions [3, p. 38].

Emotion can be defined as “a special type of mental process or person’s state that is manifested in the situations of experiencing certain feelings, such as joy, fear, happiness, etc. [2]. Emotions can be positive or negative. Positive emotions include the following ones: joy, happiness, pleasure, love, cheer, fun, admiration, delight, calmness and others. As for the negative ones, they include hate, anger, contempt, envy, fear, grief, sadness, mockery, disappointment, discontent, irritation, threat, anxiety, exhaustion, desperation, offence, shame and so on.

Words can be a clue to how people express their emotions. For instance, one may say “I am in the seventh heaven”. By saying these words, he means he is very happy. These words of his or hers include happiness and they are not just simple words, but they represent a combination of words that are inseparable and characterized by their stability. Such phenomena are called phraseological units in linguistics. The representation of emotions in the phraseological system of the English language will be studied in the present research. Different phraseological patterns can be used to express both positive and negative emotional states. This research is aimed at selecting, analyzing English phraseological units and at revealing the ways of their teaching to EFL students. Thus, we can state two main goals of the present article. They are the following:

- studying English phraseological units as language means of expressing a person’s emotional state (positive and negative).
- teaching these language phenomena to EFL students.

To realize these, the first thing that was done is selecting English phraseological units expressing emotive meaning in the phraseological dictionaries. Secondly, their meaning has been studied. Thirdly, the process of classifying phraseological units as to their belongings to a particular emotive semantic group took place. And finally, some ways of

teaching emotive phraseological units of the English language to EFL students have been offered.

An experiment with first-year students, who study English as a foreign language, has been realized. They had to give answers to the questionnaire. Our aim was to determine what the first-year students know about emotions and whether they use emotive phraseological units in their speech when they have emotions. The questionnaire included the following questions:

- Question 1. Can you define the term “emotion”?
- Question 2. What emotions do you know? Write a list.
- Question 3. Do you use emotive phraseological units to express your emotions? Can you give examples?

According to the results of the questionnaire based on the questions above, we had the following results.

- A great part of students can define the term “emotion”;
- the first-year students can name the verbs expressing emotional state;
- many students know about positive and negative emotions;
- half of the students think that phraseological units can help people express their emotions;
- a large group of students do not use emotive phraseological units in their everyday communication.

These results made us teach emotive phraseological units of the English language to EFL students who were eager to study them. We consider that teaching phraseological units is interesting and captivating. There is no doubt that phraseological units are an important part of language. The first stage in this endeavor was *selection* and the second *practice*.

We have worked work with the English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary by Kunin A.V. and selected English phraseological units denoting positive and negative emotions. After that they have been classified topically. The results can be found below.

Table 1. English phraseological units denoting positive and negative emotions

English phraseological units denoting positive emotions and their structural classification	English phraseological units denoting negative emotions and their structural classification
<p style="text-align: center;">Joy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. tread (walk) on (upon) air [2, p.36]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 2. be in alt [2, p.42]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 3. have a ball [2, p.62]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Hate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. bear smb. malice [2, p.70]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 2. black beast [2, p.72]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i> 3. be after (out of) smb.'s blood [2, p.90]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Happiness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. golden age (happy time of life) [2, p.33]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i> 5. a green old age [2, p.34]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i> 6. Bless my heart! [2, p.88]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Anger:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. be (get, go) up in the air [2, p.35]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 5. as savage as a meat axe [2, p.56]; <i>adverbial multi-top unit</i> 6. get (put, set) smb.'s back up [2, p.58]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 7. one's back is up [2, p.58]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 8. lose one's balance; [2, p. 61]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 9. throw smb. off (his) balance [2, p. 61]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 10. get off one's bike [2, p.81]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 11. rouse smb.'s bile [2, p.81]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 12. to put smb. (smth.) on the blink [2, p.89]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 13. bad (ill) blood; [2, p.90]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i> 14. do one's block [2, p.90]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 15. get (have) one's blood up [2, p.91]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 16. in blood [2, p.91]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i> 17. make smb.'s blood boil [2, p. 91]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 18. one's blood is up [2, p.91]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 19. blow a fuse [2, p.92]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 20. sore as a a boil [2, p. 95]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Pleasure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. be glad to see smb.'s back (the back of smb. [2, p.37]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 8. a bed of down [2, p.73]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i> 9. a bed of roses [2, p.75]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Fear:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. take the alarm [2, p.37]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 22. hold (keep) in awe [2, p.55]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Love:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. fix (set) affair of the heart [2, p.32]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 11. one's affections on smb. [2, p.32]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i> 12. all in all [2, p.38]; <i>phraseological repetition</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Grief:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 23. be in an agony of grief [2, p.34]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>

13. an angel of light [2, p.43]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i>	
14. the baby of the family [2, p.56]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i>	
Cheer: 15. The best of British luck to you! [2, p.78]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i> 16. blood from (out of) a stone (turnip) [2, p. 90]; <i>prepositional-substantive unit</i>	Sadness: 24. cry like a baby [2, p.56]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 25. fight one's battles over again [2, p.67]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 26. as black as night [2, p.87]; <i>adverbial multi-top unit</i>
Admiration: 17. have (lay, send) smb. (rolling) in the aisles [2, p.37]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 18. lost in admiration [2, p.31]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 19. like an angel [2, p.44]; <i>adverbial multi-top unit</i> 20. go ape (for, over smb./smth.) [2, p.46]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 21. one's blood turned to ice [2, p.91]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>	Mockery: 27. give smb. down the banks [2, 64]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 28. laugh at smb's beard [2, p.71]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>
Delight: 22. alive and kicking [2, p.38]; <i>phraseological repetition</i> 23. bill and coo [2, p.81]; <i>phraseological repetition</i>	Disappointment: 29. Rude awakening [2, p.55]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i>
Calmness: 24. come up for air [2, p.35]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 25. keep one's balance [2,p.61]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>	Discontent: 26. make (turn) the air blue [2, p.56]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>
	Irritation: 30. my giddy (sainted) aunt! [2, p.54]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i> 31. be on smb.'s back [2, p.57]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i> 32. give smb. the bellyache [2, p.75]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>
	Threat: 33. the strong arm [2, p.56]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i> 34. be (hang, swing, tremble) in the balance [2, p. 61]; <i>verb-nominal phrase</i>
	Anxiety: 35. anxious on the bench [2, p.45]; <i>attributive-nominal phraseological unit</i>

Summarizing this stage of our research, *Selection*, we can state that English phraseological units really express different emotions and can be used in our everyday communication. Thanks to our selection, we can notice that phraseological units expressing negative emotions prevail. In our opinion, the explanation is quite clear – we tend to think negatively more than positively. But it should be vice versa. We should always think positively. That is why all teachers' task is not just teaching English phraseological units for expressing different emotions, but also educating their students by making them think positively.

In order to realize the second stage of our research, *Practice*, we tried to highlight some ways of teaching English phraseological units. Three approaches have been suggested.

It is worth to mention that foreign language acquisition is a challenging process. One of the approaches to make students speak is through *including emotive phraseological units in various communicative situations*. The teacher should create real-to-life speaking situations and motivate students by introducing phraseological units. One of the main advantages of this approach is that having mastered communication skills through

phraseological units, students face fewer problems. In addition, phraseological units make their speech more expressive and vivid.

The second approach we suggest is *including certain video material into the stage of the lesson where new vocabulary is taught*. The material should contain emotive phraseological units that will help students to understand their meaning. This will serve the basis for speaking activities. One of the main advantages of this approach is that some visual additional material to a vocabulary section will help in better assimilation.

The third approach of ours is *including emotive phraseological units into the narrative*. The teacher should ask students to make up a story where emotive phraseological units have to be used. One of the main advantages of this approach is that making up a story encourages learners to create a connected narrative speech.

It is noteworthy that all these three approaches suggested above worked quite well. The students enlarged their vocabulary with many new phraseological units expressing emotions. Also they were able to speak in real-to-life speaking situations using emotive phraseological units, to watch video material containing emotive phraseological units and understand the language spoken there, to narrate a story where emotive phraseological units were introduced.

Summarizing, we must state the fact that emotions are of paramount importance in our life. Emotions never leave us. It goes without saying that phraseological units help us to express our emotions, thus they should be taught to EFL students. Teaching emotive phraseological units is very interesting and captivating. It is a great challenge for university lecturers. They can use different ways of teaching. This research suggests three approaches to teaching them: *including emotive phraseological units in various communicative situations, including certain video material into the stage of the lesson where new vocabulary is taught, including emotive phraseological units into the narrative*. We highly recommend these three approaches and we do believe that they will help students to speak English emotionally and overcome all language barriers.

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