

## BIBLICAL IDIOMS WITH SOMATISMS IN THE PHRASE TRIADA

Науковий вісник Ужгородського університету. Серія: Філологія.

Випуск 1 (43)

УДК 811.111'373.7

DOI:10.24144/2663-6840/2020.1(43).225–230

Михайленко В. Biblical idioms with somatisms in the phrase triada; кількість бібліографічних джерел – 46; мова англійська.

**Abstract.** Our hypothesis is that the biblical unit structurally and semantically indecomposable and meets the characteristics of the idiom. And the assumption is based on the critical analysis of numerous definitions and classifications of each constituent of the triad in the language system and the language in-use [cf. Boye 2019]. (i) The term phrase is defined as one or more words functioning as a unit in a sentence. The premodial concept—one or more is false: as the head word and adjunct are obligatory members of the phrase. (ii) The definition that a phrase is any group of words which are taken to be less than a sentence is not correct because non-sensical words can be also grammatically correct. (iii) The phrase is a group of two or more words functioning as a meaningful unit within a sentence or clause though a phrase is commonly characterized as a grammatical unit at a level between a word and a clause [see also Borsley 1996]. The phrase is a syntactic structure that contains one or more words but does not contain both a subject and a verb. The use of "one word" in the definition makes this definition also dubious.

We understand that idioms and phraseological units do have some distinctions and a superfine operation can separate and secure them from their transformation into Yin and Yang as opposites. And the scholar must search for a precision instrument to separate this concept further on. In linguistics it is the corpora analysis can provide us with numerous samples and their frequency is a crucial point in separating idioms from phraseologisms which can be verified in the process of the discourse analysis.

Our assumption is the idioms are the feature of colloquial style, social dialects, language varieties, professional discourse. The evolution of the units through the stages: from the free syntactical phrase through the fixed syntactical phrases and then to idioms, first professionally marked and then their further penetration into the standard literary language use must be crowned with the status of a phraseological unit characteristic of the literary standard. Somatic idioms constitute a significant part of biblical idioms and can be compared with those function in various professional discourse registers.

**Keywords:** phrase, idiom, phraseological unit, standard, dialect, variety, bibleism, somatism.

**Preliminaries.** The structure of the linguistic system assumes that a language has a limited number of basic elements, though they can produce a large number of combinations. And they are significant only within these combinations [Benveniste 1971, p. 19]. In this case we can compare the 26 letter language system and 7 notes music system, or ten digits of mathematics, or three primary colours of paint palette [see Chomsky 1979, p. 34] whose functioning depends on the semiosis [see Allott 1994, p. 255; Noth 1994] of their constituents. The word is a constituent of the phrase likewise the phrase is a constituent of the sentence. There is a range of various phrases which differ in structure, meaning and form,

**The end-goal and objectives.** In the focus of our investigation is a word combination which bears a variety of terms due to either the linguistic school or a scholar's personal opinion: phrase, phraseme, idiom, phraseological unit, etc. The end-goal of the present paper is a biblical fixed word combination with a somatism to model a phrase taxonomy and reveal its hierarchy. Our hypothesis is that the biblical units under study structurally and semantically indecomposable and meet the characteristics of the idiom.

**State of the art.** There are several terms defining the word combination in use as well as their numerous interpretations. First, the term *phrase* is defined as one or more words functioning as a unit in a sentence. Typically, phrases consist of a headword and an adjunct that makes the original thesis – one or more words – false: the head word and adjunct are obligatory members of the phrase. Second, the definition that a phrase is any group

of words which are taken to be less than a sentence, e.g. by lacking a finite verb, but which are regarded as forming a unit grammatically, it is also not correct because non-sensical words can be grammatically correct as well. Let's recollect Lev Shcherba's famous sentence: *глокая кудра штеко будланула бокра и кудрячит бокрѣнка* (*glokaya kuzdra shteko budlanula bokra and kudryachit bokrionka*) which has become an anecdotal sentence for all linguists who study grammatical relations in the sentence pattern. So in the second definition there is a lack of a semantic component which makes the referred definition incorrect. Third, a phrase is a group of two or more words functioning as a meaningful unit within a sentence or clause. Though a phrase is commonly characterized as a grammatical unit at a level between a word and a clause. Fourth, a phrase is a syntactic structure that contains one or more words but does not contain both a subject and a verb. Here is another delusion of "one word" of a phrase wherein the presence of the subject—predicate relationship (see SIL Glossary of linguistic terms). In the phrase structure grammar, the term 'phrase' stands for a set of syntactic elements which form a constituent (relatively independent group of words [cf Bhatt 1989; Gazder 1985]). The most important phrases are noun phrases (consisting of nominal expressions with corresponding attributive modifiers, verb phrases, and prepositional phrases) among others, see also adjective phrase, determiner phrase and the like. The phrase is the term for word groups without a finite verb. In contrast, the term 'clause' denotes a syntactic construction with a finite verb; thus a clause stands hierarchically between a

phrase and a sentence [Bussmann 2006]. We can share the definition of a *phrase* as a group of words semantically and grammatically related which have an internal structure [Eppler 2013, p.80; cf Gazdar 1985, p.126].

The next term *phraseme* was pioneered to introduce the phrasemic level in the language structure: phonemic → morphemic, lexemic, syntaxemic (or phrasemic), sememic, textemic and discoursemic. Accordingly, in other terms phraseme may be projected as a constituent of the syntaxemic level as a phrase (in a binary relationship: non-predicative (word combination) and predicative (a sentence)). The emic criteria as the Routledge Encyclopaedia reads, is relative to the internal characteristics of the system, and it can be only described as relative to each other [Byram, 2003. Crystal presents a taxonomy of the constituents of linguistics wherein they are hierarchically organized but in their turn they can have their own taxonomies and any combinations possible [Crystal, 1992]. It implies that language is a systematic arrangement of a limited number of elements linked together in variable combinations, see a few in number in themselves, yield a large number of combinations” [Benveniste 1971, p. 19]. Though *phraseme* is often considered to be a lexeme and semantically treated on the level of the word [see Goddard 2001, p.1–2]. This definition is closer to Venzhynovych’s interpreting the phrasemes (1) Greis’ elements should be words which are a form or lemma or lexical items and any kind of linguistic elements, for instance, set of thoughts, set phrase, idiomatic phrase, multi-word expression, or idiom, is a multi-word or multi-morphemic utterance [Greis 2008, p.5] compare: Venzhynovych’s figuratively motivated secondary nominations that reveal associative connections, culturally conditioned frames, and concrete images of abstract concepts [Venzhynovych 2018, p.11]. Mel’chuk suggests his classification of phrasemes: (i) non-compositional (idioms), (ii) semi-variable (collocations), and (iii) invariable (cliches) [Mel’chuk 217; see also Piirainen 2020]. Accordingly, the phraseme is labeled as a syntaxeme, and lexical-semantic phrasemes are phraseological expressions equivalent to an idiom, a word combination, or a cliché. And the author adds that lexical and lexical-semantic phrasemes *set expression, set phrase, idiomatic phrase, multi-word expression*, sometimes simply *idiom*, etc., is a multiword utterance, that is, a linguistic expression formed by several (at least two) lexemes syntactically linked in a regular way. The notorious expression *X kicks the bucket* ≈ ‘person X dies of natural causes, I being flippant about X’ is syntactically and morphologically structured exactly the same way as all similar phrases of the form) [Mel’chuk 1995, p.217–238].

**Corpora analysis.** And we shall consider an idiom as a combination of words or a phrase that means something different than what its words are literally saying. The term dates back to 1565–1575 deriving from Latin *idioma* «special property», and from Greek *idiōma*, «special feature, special phrasing». As McArthur defines in the Oxford Companion to the English Language, idiom means a combination of words which have a figurative meaning owing to their common usage [McArthur 1992, p. 495]. Idioms are either grammatical-

ly unusual, or their meaning cannot be taken literally, as in, «No use crying over spilt milk «don’t worry!» This expression does not reflect the situation of somebody crying when the milk is spilt, it is a metaphorical expression) meaning an advice not to worry in vain. Bobrovnyk defines idioms are social and cultural phenomena that reflect social psychological characteristic of behavior, they relate to the communicative human behavior which implies norms, rules and traditions of communication of this or that lingual-cultural community [Bobrovnik 2019, p.7]. According to Frazer, idioms organize one important part of the language and culture: «Knowing a language means knowing idioms of the language. Unlike commonplace phrases, idioms tend to be frozen in form and denotation and don’t allow change in structure and meaning [Frazer 1970, p. 22]. In other words, Moon underlines that while collocations and idioms are both idioms – a type of multiword unit (MWU) defined as being non-compositional ... core idioms. The multi-word character is an essential condition for idiomaticity on which basically all scholars are agreed (see Wendland 2013, p.103). But this sequence of words is semantically and often syntactically restricted, so that it functions as a single unit [Crystal 1992, p.180–181]. Tighter collocations come under the heading of what have been called ‘phrasal lexemes’ [Moon 1998, p.79–80] see also Grant who writes that: “the whole range of fixed and semi-fixed complex items...that for reasons of semantics, lexical grammar, or pragmatics are regarded as holistic units» [Grant 2003, p. 9–20].

And now we are approaching the apple of discord between the British/American scholars exploring idioms indiscriminately and European scholars separating a phraseological unit and a linguistic branch of phraseology. The term *unité phraséologique* «phraseological unit» was first introduced by Charles Bally (1951) in his *Précis de stylistique* which was employed and developed by Vinogradov (1947), Amosova (1961), Kunin (1964), Mokiyyenko (1976) and then subsequently followed by others. The majority of their followers researching English idioms just rebaptize them to phraseological units because either they do not see any difference, or they cannot draw a demarcation line between them due to the vague definition, or they attempt to elaborate key terminology and theoretical concepts in phraseology, like Naciscione as if she started phraseology studies from scratch. The author’s prelude is quite traditional: «Recent decades have witnessed increasing interest in various aspects of phraseology». Frankly speaking, the explorers of idioms have the same trait: Idioms constitute one of the most difficult areas of foreign language learning for both teachers and learners – for both practical and theoretical reasons [Kövecses, Szabo 1996, p.326]

Naciscione would argue for the term phraseological unit as a stable, cohesive combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning, as well as for the excommunication of idioms from phraseological units [Naciscione 2010, p.19] fully sharing Kunin’s opinion (Kunin 1970, p. 210). Naciscione also supports Kunin’s connecting two large groups of phraseological units and stable word combinations of non-phraseo-

logical character (Kunin 1964). Though the latter are non-figurative set phrases. Some authors treat idioms and phraseological units as synonymous see Babkin 1979; Nehrych 2013, 2014, etc. entitling their publications like the terms «idiom» and «phraseological unit» – similar and different in linguistic sense

«Phraseological units have always attracted the attention of linguists»,... although there is still no unambiguous definition of the subject of phraseology. The recent explosion of interest in phraseology undoubtedly has a great deal to do with the development of corpus linguistics research. Shtoltzel highlights the nature of the phraseological units and the criteria for their classification [Shtoltzel 2018, p. 10]. All these and other authors' attempt is aimed to protect phraseological units at least on the European scale

But still the definitions are overlapping: Weinreich regards *multi-word character* as an essential feature of idioms, since he defines *idiom* as a “phraseological unit”, implying two or more words [Weinreich 1969, p.42] and also ambiguous requiring a meticulous interpretation of each of them with the hypothetical-deductive method to comprehend their interaction and single out their identity. Primarily, we will attempt to model a taxonomy with the *phrase* atop which distinguishes the next level of free and non-free word combinations, the non-free must be indecomposable. Then in their turn they can be further subclassified according to their figurative and non-figurative meaning: idioms and phraseologisms which on this level are a kind of Siamese twins.

No doubt that every stage of the phraseological unit development must needs a numerous fact finding in its evolution. At a cursory glance the number of researches on idiom issues prevails on the worldwide scale over the number of researches on phraseological units mostly limited by the borders of the FUSSR., cf.: biblical idioms [Cacciari 1992; Barkema 1994; Čermák 1995; Walker-Jones 2003; Piela 2008; Crystal 2010; Raymond 2011; Hunter 2011; Heever 2013; Dzera 2015; Proctor Andrews 2016; Urain 2017; Stein 2017; Yuan 2017; Lamsa 2020, etc.], biblical phraseological units [Kunin 1964; Gak, 1997; Gjergji 2007; Fedulenkova 2011; Pravednikova 2013; Kuznetsova 2013; Artiomova 2017; Smolyanskaya 2019; Adamia 2019 et al.].

But we understand that idioms and phraseological units do have some distinctions and a superfine operation can separate and secure them from their transformation into Yin and Yang as opposites. And the scholars must search for a precision instrument to separate this concept further on. In linguistics it is the corpora analysis which can provide us with numerous samples and their frequency necessary to separate idioms from phraseologisms which can be verified in the process of the discourse analysis.

**The corpora analysis.** The British National Corpus (BNC) contains over a hundred million words of mostly written British English, the American National Corpus comprises a total of over 14.5 million words and 3.2 million of which are spoken data; the Corpus of Contemporary American English comprises 450 million words of spoken and written English. The volume

of the words and the quality of corpora – oral and written – make the analysis highly reliable. The outcome of the corpora analysis gives quantitative information for a scholar to draw a conclusion [see Lindquist, 2009]. The BNC analysis did not reveal any biblical idioms but one “*millstone around your neck*” (Luke, 17:2). Then we decided to determine the frequency of the dominant constituent of the idiom in the BNC – their frequency varies greatly, for instance, *head* (35359), *hand* (331840), *foot* (20449), *heart* (14612), *eye* (9045), *mouth* (8738); *skin* (6710), *neck* (5164), *throat* (2922), *flesh* (2325), *tongue* (2283), *bones* (2172), *side* (954), *belly* (798), *loins* (94). Then we compared the frequency of some of those somatisms in the biblical texts (Goodrick, 1990): *hand* (847), *eye* (594), *heart* (574), *head* (335), *mouth* (322), *tongue* (138), *flesh* (130), *foot* (86), *skin* (75), *neck* (60), *belly* (9), *loins* (7), *throat* (7), *bowels* (4). The following illustrations demonstrate the indecomposability of the structure and meaning of the idioms:

Hand: *washing the hands was a symbol of innocence. Psalms 26:6.*

Heart: *to speak to one's heart* ‘to console, to cheer smb up, to appease; to encourage, to persuade’. Gen. 34, 3.

Eye: “*You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’*” 2 Samuel 14:3. Matthew 5:38.

Mouth: *The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life.* Prov. 10:11a.

Tongue: *Tongue struts through the earth arrogantly order everyone.* Ps.73.9.

Neck: *once you've untied yourself from this man who's been like a millstone around your neck for the last four years.* Luke, 17:2.

Throat: *Their throat is an open grave “they speak deceitfully”* Ps.5.9.

Bowels: *one's bowels are humming* ‘to feel love or pity’. Song 5

Face: *hide one's face from sb.* ‘to ignore sb’. Ps. 143, 7

Loins: *you gird (up) your loins* “you prepare yourself mentally to do something” 1 Peter 1:13

Skin/teeth: *My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.* Job 19:20

Side or Flesh: *A thorn in your side or thorn in your flesh.* Numbers 33:55.

Bowels: *Put on ... bowels of mercies...* Col 3:12.

From the cognitive point of view idioms, as Kövecses and Szabo insist, the majority of them, are conceptual, and not linguistic, in nature [Kövecses, Szabo 1996, p.330].

The given text fragments reveal the possibility of describing the human with somatic idioms. The fact is that somatic idioms play a special role in the formation of cultural specificity of the language such as: bones, bowels, eye, flesh, head, hand, heart, loins, mouth, neck, side skin, teeth, throat, tongue, etc. Andrews admits that speakers use nominations of the body parts figuratively conveying a vivid image of the utterance

[Andrews 2015, p.173]. It is due to the universal functions assigned to the somatic terms and their reference field. The corpora analysis of these idioms relates them to the Biblical discourse. If we analyze the idioms functioning in other discourse registers, like discourse of economics, law, or medicine we can determine the core idioms' characteristic of that very discourse register.

Our assumption is the idioms are the feature of colloquial style, social dialects, language varieties, phraseological discourse. The evolution of the units through the stages: free syntactical phrases to the fixed syntactical phrases and then to idioms, first professionally marked and their further penetration into the standard literary language use must be crowned with the status of a phraseological unit characteristic of the a Literary Standard.

The feature of somatism is a universal part of the body, playing a symbolic role in mythopoetic worldview, acting as a sample carrier of certain qualities that reflect the experience of the speakers. Since ancient times, people have resorted to the symbolization of the world around them, thus, a symbol is a specific element of the cultural space encoding. Linguistic symbols are archetypal in nature and combine different planes of

reality into a coherent whole in the process of semantic activity in a particular culture [Maslova 2001; cf Cherdantseva 2013, p.78].

**Findings and perspectives.** The meaning of idioms is not (i) the result of the of a sum of their constituents; that is why (ii) idioms are transformationally deficient; (iii) they constitute set expressions in a given language; and (iv) they are institutionalized in the language – these are the features of the idiom definition [cf Wulff 2006, p.10–11]. The idiom occupies the intermediary position between a free phrase and a phraseological unit

A biblical idiom is a combination of words that has a meaning differing from the meanings of the individual words making up the indivisible unity. A biblical idiom with a somatic head word may be considered as the virtual units containing information on non-verbal actions of a person and their emotions.

Somatic idioms constitute a significant part of biblical idioms and can be compared with those functioning in other professional discourse registers to undertake the typology of idioms in cross-cultural space [see the author's publications, like Mykhaylenko 2016, p.97].

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#### БІБЛІЙНІ ІДИОМИ З СОМАТИЧНИМ КОМПОНЕНТОМ У ФРАЗОВІЙ ТРІАДІ

**Анотація.** Наша гіпотеза полягає в тому, що біблійна одиниця структурно і семантично неподільна і відповідає характеристикам ідіоми. Це припущення ґрунтується на критичному аналізі кожного складника запропонованої тріади в мовній системі та мовленні (пор. Воє. 2019). Так, (1) Термін «фраза» позначає

одне слово або декілька слів, що функціонують як одиниця в реченні. Первинне поняття – одне слово або більше – помилкове тому, що головне слово та ад'юнкт є обов'язковими складниками фрази.

(2) Твердження про те, що словосполучення – це будь-яка група слів, менша за речення, не є коректним, оскільки слова можуть бути також граматично оформленими за законами певної мови.

(3) Фраза – це група з двох або більше слів, що функціонують як значуща одиниця в середині речення чи пропозиції, хоча фраза зазвичай характеризується як граматична одиниця на рівні між словом і фразою (див. також Borsley1996).

(4) Фраза – це синтаксична структура, яка містить одне або більше слів, але не містить ні підмета, ні присудка. Використання «одного слова» у визначенні робить це визначення також сумнівним.

Ми розуміємо, що ідіоми та фразеологічні одиниці мають певні відмінності, відповідно, необхідно запропонувати суперточний інструмент, щоб виокремити та забезпечити їх від перетворення в Інь та Янь, як своєрідні протилежності. Корпусний аналіз може надати нам функціональні характеристики, а частотність їхнього вживання може бути вирішальним чинником поділу ідіом і фразеологізмів, що далі можна перевірити в процесі дискурс-аналізу.

Наше припущення полягає в тому, що ідіоми є складником мовлення, соціальних діалектів, національних варіантів, професійного дискурсу. Еволюція одиниць: від вільної синтаксичної фрази через фіксоване синтаксичне словосполучення до ідіоми, спочатку професійно маркованої, а далі її поступове проникнення в стандартну літературну мову, де вона одержує статус фразеологічної одиниці. Соматичні ідіоми складають значну частину біблійних ідіом, їх можна порівняти з тими, що функціонують у різних реєстрах професійного дискурсу, для формування спільного фонду ідіом.

**Ключові слова:** фраза, ідіома, фразеологічна одиниця, стандарт, діалект, варіант, біблеїзм, соматизм.

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**Валерій Михайленко** – доктор філологічних наук, професор кафедри перекладу та філології, завідувач кафедри. Університет Короля Данила, Івано-Франківськ, Україна; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3763-7156/>

**Valeriy Mykhaylenko** – Doctor of Philology, Professor, Chair of the Department of Philology, King Danylo University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3763-7156/>