

## REPRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPT HEAD IN THE PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS OF THE ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN LANGUAGES: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

*This research focuses on the concept HEAD, a pivotal term in somatic phraseology, which reflects both universal cognitive patterns and unique cultural insights. The study categorizes phraseological units based on their implications, identifies the universal aspects of employing the concept HEAD in English and Ukrainian as well as points out the meanings specific only to one of the mentioned languages. The conclusion of how HEAD is conceptualized in Ukrainian and English is made. This research underscores the importance of comprehending the concept HEAD to appreciate the rich diversity and complexity of human language and cognition.*

**Key words:** conceptual semantics, phraseological units, somatic phraseology, linguistic concept, comparative analysis.

**Коляда А. В. Репрезентація концепту ГОЛОВА у фразеологічних одиницях української та англійської мови: компаративний аналіз.** Дослідження присвячено фразеологічним одиницям, що містять концепт ГОЛОВА, який відображає універсальні когнітивні моделі, засновані на особливостях культурного та історичного підґрунтя української та англійської мов. Наголошено на важливості аналізу концепту ГОЛОВА для розуміння розмаїття людської мови та когнітивного пізнання оточення людини. Вивчення зазначеного концепту ґрунтується на припущенні, що тіло людини вважається одним з перших об'єктів, доступних для спостереження та відіграє важливу роль у процесі отримання знань про події та явища, що відбуваються навколо людини, саме тому нерідко стає об'єктом для позначення різних сфер людської діяльності. Антропоморфізм концепту ГОЛОВА у фразеологічних одиницях виражається в перенесенні фізичних або інтелектуальних властивостей людського тіла на явища навколишнього світу. Визначено основні особливості концепту, а також відображено категорії, у яких концепт ГОЛОВА є універсальним для обох мов: (1) розумові здібності людини або їх відсутність, (2) контейнер для збереження інформації або знань, (3) фізичне відчуття головного болю або психологічного стану божевілья, (4) емоційний стан людини, її життєво важливі події або наміри). Виокремлено відмінні риси при актуалізації концепту ГОЛОВА у фразеологічних одиницях української та англійської мов. Для визначення семантики концепту ГОЛОВА за вищезазначеними категоріями було дібрана низка прикладів, що містять цей концепт, проведено їх компаративний аналіз, визначено їхню культурну та лінгвістичну цінність. Доведено, що особистості по-різному сприймають

*культурні аспекти кожної мови, визначено експресивність фразеологічних одиниць з концептом ГОЛОВА, а також зроблено порівняльний висновок про концептуалізацію цієї частини тіла в українській та англійській мовах.*

**Ключові слова:** *концептуальна семантика, фразеологічні одиниці, сома-тична фразеологія, лінгвістичний концепт, компаративний аналіз.*

## Introduction

During the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> century conceptology as a cognitive science has become one of the most popular areas of investigation in modern linguistics as a great number of scholars have adopted an anthropometric approach to studying a language.

The first description of the notion ‘concept’ and its basic features are attributed to Aristotle, who introduced the main principles of categorization of objects based on logical reasoning. He also pointed out that concepts are able to change and become more complicated to create ideas and gain new insights (Aristotle, 2019).

Another significant input to studying the notion of concept has been provided by a language philosopher Gottlob Frege, who employed a referential approach to introduce the semantic triangle (denotation (subject), sign (word) and concept (idea)). According to him, a complex expression can be understood by comprehending the senses of its constituents (concepts) (Dummet, 1981).

Nowadays linguistic conceptology is viewed as a branch of cognitive linguistics and is studied by foreign and Ukrainian linguists such as V. L. Ivashchenko, V. O. Kononenko, T. A. Kosmeda, O. O. Selivanova, N. V. Sluhai, V. V. Zhaivoronok and others.

O. O. Selivanova defines a concept as “a structure of consciousness, a unit of memory, which contains a set of knowledge about an object gained from the interaction of five senses, appearing due to onteraction of conscious and subconscious mind.” (Selivanova, 2008). Obtaining both verbal and non-verbal form, a concept is capable of processing, storing and transferring information and experience (Sakaeva, Yahin, Salyakhova & Burenkova, 2018). Concepts form a conceptual mapping of the world, which is reflected in different ways in human’s mind due to cultural differences and individual features of world perception.

In spite of the fact that the notion ‘concept’ is being defined and characterized in various ways by different scholars, most of them concur that a concept obtains the following features:

1. A concept is a mental representation of an image, which is verbalized by means of word.
2. It stores some universal information about objects and phenomena of an objective reality, allowing for the further acquisition of some new knowledge.
3. Due to its structure and semantic characteristics, it influences a linguistic mapping of the world.
4. Each concept is inextricably linked with some other concepts that create a certain domain due to which a particular concept is being formed.
5. The concept is preserved in both individual and collective consciousness.
6. It is evolving over time, being influenced by historical, social, and cultural factors.
7. The implementation of it is realized in the conceptsphere – a set of concepts that make up an individual's worldview.

Our understanding of concept is based on these grounds and by the notion of 'concept' we rely on the abovementioned principles. They include both linguistic and cultural elements that shape how concepts are formed and understood. These elements involve shared human experiences, cognitive processes, and cultural norms that influence the way language is used to express abstract ideas.

As a human body is considered to be one of the first objects accessible for observation, it plays an important role in the process of acquiring knowledge about the events and phenomena happening around us, therefore, it is frequently used to denote various spheres of human activity. The concept HEAD commonly refers to one of the three general categories of conceptualization – cerebrocentrism (cerebro – of or connected with the brain (Cambridge Dictionary)). Consequently, it is employed to denote a body part, a locus of rational thought, a reference to the head's content, e. g. brain, mind, intelligence and a location of human abilities, such as creativity, perception, imagination, etc (Niemeier, 2011).

Z. Kövecses emphasizes that our bodily experiences are fundamental in shaping our conceptual system. This idea, known as embodiment, suggests that many of our abstract concepts are understood in terms of our physical and sensory experiences (Kövecses, 2005). Z. Kövecses's research into metaphoric transfers gave rise to a great number of studies in the field of comparative linguistics, cognitive linguistics and linguistic conceptology.

The previous research has shown that the concept HEAD in phraseological units can convey multiple meanings that are not related to each other. M. Zheng attributes this fact to metaphorical cognition, due to which the given word extends the basic sense to others (Zheng, 2020).

V. Khmara conducted a comparative analysis of Ukrainian and English phraseological units containing the concept PART OF THE BODY and made a conclusion that employing somatisms in the expressions is characterized by anthropomorphism, i. e. describing a human's emotions, feelings, psychological states, social position, mental abilities, character, appearance and relationships with other people (Khmara, 2011).

A research of the concept HEAD has been carried out Indonesian scholars – A. Sirait, L. M. Indrayani, R. M. Amalia and T. R. Lingga. Basing on the grounds of G. Lakoff's and M. Johnson researches into metaphors, the scholars scrutinized structural, ontological and orientational metaphors containing the concept HEAD to show how it can be conceptualized. The authors demonstrated that the image schemas of containment schemas, path schemas, and force schemas are beneficial to constructing and understanding the abstract ideas conveyed by metaphorical expressions (Sirait, Indrayani, Amalia & Lingga, 2022).

Somatic phraseology in English and Ukrainian languages has many analogies, which can be explained by both borrowings and general psychological and cultural patterns that lead to the emergence of similarly meaningful expressions. Body parts are often used in phraseological units because they are universal and well-understood objects for creating figurative expressions (Arkhanhelska, 2008). Since a concept is a multifaced notion that includes a basic term, historic and cultural background, national character as well as emotions and associations it arouses, identifying its role in certain contexts can remain complicated (Hazuda, 2018). Being one of the oldest lexical word groups, a great number of phraseological units in the English language contain the concept HEAD. Therefore, an important issue of conceptual linguistics lies in identifying cognitive signs of the concept HEAD in phraseological units as well as determining their linguo-cultural value. The aim of our research is to identify the role and describe and compare the value of the concept HEAD in phraseological units of the Ukrainian and English languages. The key objective of the research lies in identifying the universality and culture-specificness of the concept HEAD in phraseological units of the Ukrainian and English languages.

## Research Methods

According to the aim and objective of the research, we have used qualitative and quantitative linguistic methods. The methods of critical analysis of philological publications and definition analysis were applied to gain some information about the theory of phraseological units. The method of sampling was used to provide the examples to illustrate the important points mentioned in the article. The method of conceptual analysis was employed to specify the characteristics under which the given examples can be classified into different groups. The method of cognitive modeling was used to define the most important features and qualities of the phraseological units containing the concept HEAD and compare them in the English and Ukrainian languages.

## The Main Material

Phraseological units are an integral part of a language, which can be characterized by the following stylistic features – fixed form, figurative meaning, expressiveness, cultural specificity, metaphoric nature and idiomaticity. We divided all phraseological units containing the concept HEAD according to the implications they carry.

The results of the research have shown that both in Ukrainian and English languages the concept HEAD is used to denote the semantic field of mental abilities, in which head is perceived as a locus of reasoning (*to have a good head on one's shoulders; to have a head for smth; to have one's head screwed on right; clear head; two heads are better than one; put ideas into sb's head; мати голову на плечах; голова варить; світла голова, золота голова; одна голова добре, а дві - краще*). Phraseological units which imply that a person lacks intelligence or mental abilities and these qualities are viewed as a serious drawback and have negative connotations (*have rocks in one's head; I've seen better heads on nickel beers; he wears a ten dollar hat on a five-cent head; soft in the head; weak in the head; use your head for more than smth to keep your ears apart; голова з вухами; голова не половию набита; порожня голова; без голови*). As we can see from the examples above, phraseological units referring to this group obtain a low or medium degree of idiomaticity, so their correspondence to the characteristics of the concept such as mental representation of an image, storing information and realization in the conceptsphere is similar in the two languages. Being employed in a phraseological field, they preserve their basic

meaning, which can be guessed from the context. However, some idioms still require some cultural comprehending. For instance, the idiom *to have one's head screwed on right* relies on the cultural understanding that having a properly attached head is essential for rational behaviour. Historically, the UK maintained a higher level of industrialization than Ukraine. Carving in the UK has a rich and diverse history, spanning from prehistoric times to the present day. Consequently, the vocabulary related to this craft was frequently used and extended its meaning to this phraseological unit. The Ukrainian expression *голова не половою набита* also involves agricultural background, as chaff is the remains of grain thrashing, which have no nutritional value and are used as animal feed or bedding, therefore, it is associated with something completely unnecessary and places emphasis on the value of rational thinking. Taking examples of the Ukrainian and English languages into consideration, a conclusion can be made that both languages appreciate mental abilities and good judgement and use universal images to highlight the presense of these traits or express scorn in case of their absence.

The concept HEAD denoting a container to store information or knowledge can be also traced in the phraseology of both languages (*drum smth into sb's head; out of sb's head; bring matters to a head; come to a head; fill sb's head with smth; put smth into sb's head; stuff sb's head with smth, take smth into sb's head; have rocks in one's head; вбити в голову; іти в голову; мати нушту голову*). The English idiom *at the top of sb's head* means something is being said or done without much thought or preparation, usually relying on somebody's immediate knowledge or intuition. Correspondingly, a number of phraseological units denote a state of forgetfulness or inability to perceive some information (*get smth out of sb's head; go out of sb's head; не лізти в голову; мати дірку в голові; не береться до голови; не вкладається в голові; в голову не приходиться; викидати з голови*). In English an idiom *need something like you need a hole in the head* shows that something is totally unnecessary (compare to the image of a container with a hole that can not serve its original purpose). A Ukrainian phraseological unit *дірява голова* is seemingly similar because it employs the ides of a hole but actually has different semantics and means 'have poor memory'. An expression *повна голова* carries a negative connotation and means 'to have a lot of work'. If a person is overloaded with information or work, Ukrainians use an expression *голова пухне*. It is worth mentioning that having much

knowledge is perceived as a serious drawback in both languages (*too much knowledge makes the head bald*; *багато знатимеш, скоро постарієш*). Based on these phraseological units, a universal logic chain can be formed (knowledge – baldness – old age). In the analyzed examples one can often observe expressions consisting of an action verb and a preposition showing spatial relationship. G. Lakoff and M. Johnson classify such metaphors as orientational and point out they rely on an individual's physical and cultural experiences), for this reason using head as a container can be a universal example of a metaphor for both languages (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Idiomatic expressions are often used to describe the experience of a headache in colorful and metaphorical ways (*feel like one's head is going to explode*; *голова розвалюється; в голові гуде*). In the examples one can trace the physical conditions of having a headache. These phraseological units are based on primary metaphors as they arise from bodily interactions with the world. More complex examples of metaphorization can be found in phraseological units in which headache is used to denote a psychological state (*bang one's head against a brick wall*; *голова йде обертом*). P. McAllister points out that in the recent years headaches have become extremely stigmatized by being considered as an annoyance or worry rather than a physical pain in one's head (McAllister, 2018). In some cases the concept HEAD carries an implication of inability to think straight or even psychological state of madness (*have one's head in the clouds*; *touched in the head*; *off one's head*; *голова йде обертом / круїться; голова тумані; голова не варить; втратити голову*). They are employed to reflect the subjective nature of pain and its intensity.

As a head is a highly expressive part of the body and its movements, positions, and orientations can convey a wide range of emotional states and intentions, isomorphic features of this concept can be found both in English and Ukrainian. In the further examples HEAD is employed to indicate a complete or intense state of emotion or action (*head over heels*; *lose one's head over sb or smth*; *голова запаморочилася*). The personal traits of the British are generally associated with politeness and modesty. This is why, phraseological units that describe being reserved are specific to English (*cooler heads prevail*). On the other hand, Ukrainians are known for being sincere, emotional and sometimes impulsive, therefore, such characteristics of a person are reflected in Ukrainian phraseological units (*гаряча голова; вітер у голові грає*). The Ukrainian phrase *понурити / похнюпити*

*голову* describes a state of becoming frustrated, English equivalents do not contain the concept HEAD in phraseological units with a similar meaning.

A number of phraseological units containing the concept HEAD are historically associated with executions (*head on a platter; off with one's head; heads will roll; голова злетіла / впала / покотилася; голова з пліч*). Any threat to the head is a direct threat to life, making it a high-risk area. Consequently, the connection between 'head' and 'risks' in a language and idiomatic expressions is deeply rooted in the importance of the head as a vital part of the body (*put one's head on the block for sb or smth; пузикувати головою; покласти голову за щось*). An English idiom *give sb their head* means 'to allow someone to do what they want to do without trying to help or give them advice' and has no analogy in Ukrainian (Cambridge Dictionary).

The usage of the concept HEAD to denote a social status or describe the way a person acts in social situations is specific only to the English language (*better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion; head and shoulders above; keep one's head above the water; keep your head down; bury one's head in the sand*). Social status has historically been crucial as it determined one's place in a society and dictated behavior, manners and etiquette. The level of stylistic colouring in such expressions is very high as most of them are based on multi-level metaphors.

To show that the action happened unexpectedly and to great surprise of the speaker Ukrainians use the idiom *як сніг на голову*. The English equivalent *out of the blue* does not contain the concept HEAD.

Another phraseological unit having no analogue in English is *морочити голову*, which means 'cause sb troubles, worries, or make a fool of sb'.

Phraseological units that are specific only to one language obtain a high level of semantic expressiveness as they are rooted in the cultural history, values or experiences of a particular language community.

### Conclusions

To sum up, phraseological units offer some new insights into the unique aspects of each culture and language, providing us with the understanding how one perceives and articulates world in distinct ways. The research has shown that the concept HEAD is extremely expressive and semantically loaded in both English and Ukrainian. Obtaining a rich variety of semantic meanings in both languages, it shows a great potential in creating new



phraseological units. Phraseological units comprising the concept HEAD carry cultural and historical significance, reflecting the values, beliefs, and traditions of a speech community. A great number of implications the concept HEAD carries coincide in both English and Ukrainian due to universality of certain ideas, shared human experiences as well as historical and cultural connections. The universal categories for both languages are presence or absence of mental abilities, a container to store information, a physical state of feeling a headache, a psychological state of madness, a complete state of emotions and actions, a capital punishment by beheading, a social status and behaviour. Such concepts are preserved in collective consciousness and be considered to be universal within cultures. Although some phraseological units are universal for both English and Ukrainian, they can carry different semantic shades and stylistic colouring. For Ukrainian these categories encompass poor abilities to memorize information, a state of frustration, an unexpectedness of an action, a process of causing sb troubles; for English – a level of necessity of smth, an action happening without prior preparation, an action of providing sb with freedom. Unique conceptualizations are result of differences in perception and cognitive processing of the same concept by different people. These differences highlight the rich diversity of human experience and the various ways in which languages adapt to and reflect their unique contexts.

We hope that our research will be helpful and insightful in terms of studying the concept HEAD and its manifestations in modern linguistics. However, it cannot be viewed as exhaustive. One can analyze this concept on a syntactic and discourse levels.

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