Somatic means of emotion verbalization in Ancient Greek and Ukrainian linguocultures

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Abstract. The article explores the somatic phraseological units and metaphors that serve to verbalize emotions in ancient Greek linguoculture in comparison with Ukrainian linguoculture. In particular, it focuses on units with the components “heart”, “liver”, “viscera” and “midriff”. Units with the components “heart” and “liver” are shown to be common in both linguocultures, while phraseologisms with “viscera” and “midriff” are only typical for ancient Greek linguoculture as a reflection of the archaic stage of the interpretation of human inner world. It has been revealed that units with somatic components are mostly used to describe negative emotions in both linguocultures.

Keywords: somatic phraseology, verbalization of emotion, linguoculture, heart, liver, midriff.

Verbalization of emotions in different linguocultures is one of the pivotal areas of research in modern anthropocentric linguistics. Exploration of the human emotional sphere through the prism of interaction of language and cognition has been in the focus of many recent studies within cognitive linguistics and ethnolinguistics. Some researchers, such as A. Wierzbicka [14], V. Shakhovsky [9; 10], have come to distinguish a separate field of studies – linguistics of emotions, which draws upon the methods of lexicology, phraseology, linguopoetics and cognitive linguistics to investigate the verbalization of emotions in particular.

Of all the means that represent human emotions in language, phraseological units and metaphors with somatic components are the most ancient ones [6, p. 13-93]. Somatic phraseologisms verbalize the conceptions of the human inner world, i.e. feelings and emotions, psychological and emotional states. Use of somatic lexical units in an extended sense is considered one of the central manifestations of the somatic cultural code in language.

In their essence, cultural codes are universal, but their significance in every particular linguoculture and their representation in language are always ethnically determined [3, p. 5]. The main cultural codes distinguished in modern linguistics are somatic, spatial, temporal, object, biomorphic and spiritual ones [3, p. 6]. For ancient peoples, somatic cultural code was of primary importance in the cognition of the outer world [4, p. 232-233]. This is particularly made obvious in the numerous occasions of the use of somatic lexical units for the expression of thoughts, emotions and feelings in Ancient Greek as well as other ancient languages. However, even modern languages (Ukrainian being one of them) reveal a large number of linguistic means with somatic component, used to verbalize psychological and emotional states of a person. This study intends to carry out a contrastive analysis of somatic means of emotion verbalization in Ancient Greek and Ukrainian linguocultures with the purpose of identifying the similarities and differences in the implementation of the somatic cultural code in ancient versus modern languages.

Somatic vocabulary belongs to high-frequency words in Ancient Greek literary works, especially those of the archaic period. In both epic and poetic works, emotions are represented by word combinations with the lexemes καρδία “heart”, φρένα “midriff”, πρωσίς “midriff”, σπλάγχνα “viscera”, ἱππος “liver” etc. Literally, καρδία and κήρ mean “heart”, while φρένα (which is typically used in the plural – φρένας) means “midriff”, though figuratively φρένας is also used to denote heart or soul in the poems of Homer and Ancient Greek lyrics of the classical period [1; 11; 12]. Both these lexemes were commonly used by ancient Greeks to denote the center of human soul as the seat of passions and emotions.

In epic and poetic works in Ancient Greek, the cognate lexemes καρδία (i.e. κραδίη) and κήρ are used (often interchangeably) as a somatic component in phraseological units and metaphors to verbalize a broad range of emotions, including:

1) rage or anger, e. g. οὐδέναισθα κραδίη χόρος “heart swelleth with wrath” (Hom. Il. 9, 646); τέταλθ ὢν, κραδίη “endure, my heart” (Hom. Od. 20, 18);
2) fear, e. g. κυνὸς ὄμημα ἔχων, κραδίην δ’ ἐλάφωρο “with the face of a dog but the heart of a deer” (Hom. II. 1, 225), ὀργία καρδία φόβῳ “my heart is dancing with fear” (Aesch. Choeph. 166);
3) sorrow, e. g. ἐν κραδίῃ μέγα πάνθου ἄσπες “nursed in his heart great grief” (Hom. Od. 17, 489), ἀρχος κραδίην ἰκανῆ “grief had come upon his heart” (Hom. II. 2, 171), κελανύμφος δεῖ πάλινται μου καρδία “my heart is darkened and trembling” (Aesch. Supp. 785), κήρ ἄργου ἐν θυμῷ “my heart is grieved” (Hom. II. 6, 523);
4) joy, e. g. κραδία καὶ θυμὸς ιάκηθ “my heart and spirit were warmed with comfort” (Hom. Od. 4, 548), κήρ γρηγύρι ἐνι στῆθησα “hia heart rejoice within his breast” (Hom. II. 14, 139);
5) love, e. g. ἐκ τῆς καρδιᾶς φιλεῖν “to love from one’s heart” (Aristoph. Nub. 86).

As can be seen from the above, units with the somatic components καρδία (i.e. κραδίη) and κήρ mostly denote negative emotions (namely fear, anxiety, sadness) rather than positive ones. Semantics of some phraseological units generally identifies heart as the place where human emotions and mood are generated; e.g. Plato uses the phrase τὸν νέον τίνα ὡς καρδίαν ἤτυχεν; lit. “how do you think, what heart does he have?”, which can be translated as “what do you think are his feelings?” (Pl. Rp. 492c).

Apart from the cognate words καρδία and κήρ, Ancient Greek authors of the classical period also use the word φρένας “midriff” in phraseological units and word combinations in the meaning “heart” and “soul” to verbalize the following emotions:

1) fear, e. g. τρομοῦντο δὲ οἱ φρένας ἔντεκ “and his heart (lit. midriff) trembled within him” (Hom. II. 10,
10), φόβος μ’ έχει φρίνας “fear possesses my heart (lit. midriff)” (Aesch. Supp. 379);
2) grief, sorrow, pain, e.g. σε φρίνας ἵκετο πένθος “sorrow has come upon your heart (lit. midriff),” “pain grieves your heart (lit. midriff)” (Hom. II. 1, 362); ἄρος πόκας φρίνας “the soul (lit. midriff) clouded with dread sorrow” (Hom. II. 8, 124);
3) anger, e. g. χολόσατο φρένα κοψή “lest the maiden’s heart (lit. midriff) should be wroth” (Hom. Od. 6, 147);
4) hatred, e. g. σταγεῖν μιὰ φρενίς “hate with one’s heart (lit. midriff)” (Aesch. Eum. 986);
5) joy, gladness, e. g. φρένα τέρπεσθαι φόρμιγι “to delight one’s heart / soul (lit. midriff) with a clear-toned lyre” (Hom. II. 9, 186); γάνάτω φρένα “joyeth in his heart (lit. midriff),” “gladdened the heart (lit. midriff)” (Hom. II. 13, 493);
6) love, e. g. έρως φρένας ἀμφεκάλυπον “hath desire so encompassed my soul (lit. midriff)” (Hom. II. 3, 442).

Similarly to καρδία and κύριη, the word φρένες is chiefly used to represent negative emotions. As mentioned above, φρένες literally means “midriff” and in this meaning it is synonymous to the word πραπίδων (the plural from πραπίς), which is occasionally used in poetic language in phraseological units to denote emotions [13]. It is noteworthy that word combinations with πραπίδως are more often used to verbalize desire, reasoning or physical abilities, e. g. ἀπὸ πραπίδων ἔλθ’ ἱμος “the longings therefor had departed from his heart (lit. midriff)” (Hom. II. 24, 514), Ἀμάχας ἦσσα ἰδίγημα πραπίδεσσα “Heracles had fashioned with cunning skill (lit. midriff)” (Hom. Od. 7, 92). However, in epic works there can be found occasional phraseologies and metaphors with πραπίδως that verbalize negative emotions; particularly, in the poems by Homer and the Orphic Hymns they are used to denote sadness, e. g. ἢ κ’ κι αϊνὸν ἀπὸ πραπίδων ἔχως ἐλθο “so would dread sorrow depart from my heart (lit. midriff)” (Hom. II. 22, 43), σαμν νεράλη πραπίδοσσαι καλάνθη ἀμφεποτελέσθηκα “a black cloud enfolded their hearts (lit. midriff)” (Orph. Lith. 79).

Emotions in Ancient Greek language are also verbalized by phraseological units with the lexeme σπλάγχνα, which literally means “inward parts”, esp. the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, which in sacrifices were reserved to be eaten by the sacrificers at the beginning of their feast [5, p. 1628]. Figuratively, σπλάγχνα can be used in the meaning “soul” or “heart” as the seat of affections. Common in ancient Greek language are metaphors and phraseological units that verbalize the following emotions:

1) anger, e. g. σπλάγχνα χτημαίνει κόστος “heat up one’s innards with wrath so angrily,” (Aristoph. Ran. 844); τὰ σπλάγχνα άγανακτεί “my innards are boiling” (Aristoph. Ra. 1006);
2) indignation, e. g. μωρώς ὑπὸ σπλάγχνων ἔχειν “hold the blame deep inside the viscera” (Eur. Alc. 1009);
3) anxiety, e. g. σπλάγχνα δὲ μου καλαινάουσα “my viscera are darkened” (Aesch. Choeph. 413);
4) love, e. g. ἐκδύμενα τὰ σπλάγχνα ἐρωτη συναφίθηκε “his viscera boiled up with love, exciting the heart” (Herod. Mm. 1, 56); παιδὸς ὑπὸ σπλάγχνων

έχει πόθον “he has in his viscera a passionate longing for the girl” (Theoc. 7, 99).

As can be seen from the above examples, word combinations with the somatic component σπλάγχνων are primarily used to verbalize the emotions of anger and irritation, while the negative emotions of sadness and anxiety are not represented by phraseological units with this component.

To denote purely negative emotions, ancient Greek authors use phraseological units with the word ἱππαρ “liver”. As noted by researchers, ancient Greeks considered liver to be the seat of passions, feelings and emotions, mostly negative ones [2, p. 359]. In particular, in ancient Greek tragedies and lyrics word combinations with the somatic component ἱππαρ can represent:

1) anger, e. g. πολλὰ γονὴν θηγάνα πρῶς ἱππαρ “many things pierce the liver” (Aesch. Agam. 432); ὡς μοι Ἠρ’ ἱππαρ γλισάρν δάμα ταράσσει “an ashen fear sits heavily upon my liver” (Eur. Supp. 599); γονὴν ὄρχη ἱππαρ ἱππαρ ἱππαρ “you have no gall in your liver” (Archil. 131);
2) fear, e. g. πρῶς ἱππαρ ῥωμάν “to pierce one’s liver” (Soph. Aj. 938);
3) love as passion, e. g. γογκούσο γὰρ ἑπ’ θεῶς ἱππαρ ἀμφόσον “crucial god tears the liver from the inside” (Theoc. 13,71).

Though Ukrainian linguoculture is quite distant from ancient Greek linguoculture both temporally and spatially, the two share a large number of similarities in terms of somatic code verbalization, which testifies to the universal nature of emotion verbalization via somatic means. First and foremost, the Ukrainian language reveals a wide variety of phraseological units with the words “heart” and “liver” to denote emotions. Similarly to ancient Greek linguoculture, heart is regarded as the abode of emotions, feelings and psychological states. Semantically, phraseological units with the component “heart” are used in the Ukrainian language to denote the following emotions:

1) fear and anxiety, e. g.: тремтить серце “one’s heart is trembling”, i. e. one is worried;
захололо серце “one’s heart is frozen”, i. e. one is scared;
відчували серце “take away someone’s heart”, i. e. to shatter someone’s composure and equanimity;
серце не на місці “one’s heart is out of place”, i. e. one is anxious and worried;
серце рветись “one’s heart is being torn”, i. e. one is extremely worried;
холодна жива на серці “a cold toad is on one’s heart”, i. e. one is extremely anxious;
закверти серцем “one’s heart sank”, i. e. one is scared;
муляти на серці “it hurts on one’s heart”, i. e. one is anxious;
серце ледь не виколюло з грудей “one’s heart almost jumped out of one’s chest”, i. e. one was very scared;
ствискає серце “one’s heart is being squeezed”, i. e. one is anxious;
мочути серце “to gnaw at one’s heart”, i. e. to cause anxiety;
2) mental anguish, sadness, e. g.:
вражати в серце “hit someone in the heart”, i. e. to
cause someone mental suffering;

гнітити серце “to oppress someone’s heart”, i. e. to cause someone gloomy mood, sadness;

давати каменем на серце “a stone sits heavy on one’s heart”, i. e. one is depressed;

серце єсти “to gnaw one’s heart”, i. e. to feel sad; колупати / краяти / надривати / ранити / розбити / пекти серце “to pick at / to tear / to cut / to hit / to break / to burn someone’s heart”, i. e. to cause someone mental suffering;

як гострій ніж у серце “as a sharp knife into someone’s heart”, i. e. to cause someone mental pain, to make someone sad;

п’явки ссуть серце “leeches suck at one’s heart”, i. e. one feels very sad;

роздерти серце на шматки “to tear someone’s heart into pieces”, i. e. to distress someone;

роздроблювати серце “to torment someone’s heart”, i. e. to make someone very sad;

кривавиться серце “one’s heart is bleeding”, i. e. one is in grief;

серце нос “one’s heart is aching”, i. e. one is sad;

смоктути біля серця “someone has a sucking feeling at one’s heart”, i. e. one is being disturbed, worried;

в’їстися в серці “one’s heart is being scraped”, i. e. one is overwhelmed with sadness, bitterness;

3) anger, e. g.:

серце кипить “one’s heart is boiling”, i. e. one is angry with someone;

зглянути / зірвати серце на комусь “to wreak one’s heart on someone”, i. e. to vent one’s anger on someone;

серце кров’ю обливається “one’s heart is bleeding”, i. e. one is angry with someone;

4) love, e. g.:

влюбити серце “to captivate someone’s heart”, i. e. to be liked by someone;

віддати серце комусь “to give one’s heart to someone”, i. e. to fall in love with someone;

прияти серце “to attract someone’s heart”, i. e. to cause in someone the feeling of love;

прияти / прийняти серцем “to stick to someone with one’s heart”, i. e. to fall in love with someone;

приняти до серця “to attract someone’s heart”, i. e. to make someone fall in love with oneself;

закорінілося серце “one’s heart is moved”, i. e. one feels love for someone;

серце слухати “one’s heart is withering”, i. e. one is exhausted with love;

серце тьомкає “one’s heart is throbbing”, i. e. one is filled with love;

5) joy, e. g.:

серце спиває “one’s heart is singing”, i. e. one is joyful;

зігрує серце “to warm up someone’s heart”, i. e. to make someone glad;

заграло серце “one’s heart has begun to play”, i. e. one has felt joy, elation.

It is thus obvious that in the Ukrainian language, somatic phraseologies with the component “heart” comprehensively represent the emotions of fear, anxiety, disturbance, sadness, mental anguish, whereas a smaller number of these phraseologies are used to denote anger, love and joy. Phraseological units with the somatism “heart” appear in a language mostly as a result of “reinterpretation of metaphorical word combinations that describe the feelings of extraordinary physical condition of the heart, certain deviation in the rhythm of its activity, for example, the feelings of weight, squeezing or freezing” [7, p. 137].

In Ukrainian linguoculture, liver as a place of emotion generation is not as important as in the ancient Greek one (Ukrainian linguoculture is characterized with cordoescentrism). Nonetheless, Ukrainian phraseology encompasses a considerable number of units with the component “liver”, which represent negative emotions and feelings such as hatred, anger, irritation, anxiety, e. g. брати за печінки “take someone by the liver”, i. e. to irritate, bother someone; вивертати печінки “to wrench the liver”, i. e. to get at someone; вимотати печінки “to wear someone’s liver out”, i. e. to annoy, to get at someone; в’їстися в печінках “to gnaw at the liver”, i. e. one is bored or fed up with something; сидити в печінках “to sit in the liver”, i. e. to annoy, to become unpleasant or intolerable; трисця йому в печінках “may fever seize his liver”, an expletive used to express anger, irritation (equivalent to “to hell with you!”).

To sum up, it can be inferred that in both ancient Greek and Ukrainian linguocultures the somatic code is represented with phraseologisms and metaphorical expressions that verbalize emotions, feelings and psychological states. Prevalent in both linguocultures are word combinations with the somatic component “heart”, which denote negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, anger, sadness etc. A significantly smaller number of these phraseologisms are used to verbalize positive emotions. Ancient Greek manifests a wider variety of words that are used as parts of phraseologisms to denote heart or soul; particularly, фρένες, πρατίδες and σπλάγχνον are illustrative of the archaic stage of interpretation of human inner world and the process of generation of emotions and feelings.

REFERENCES


Соматические средства вербализации эмоций в древнегреческой и украинской лингвокультурах
А. В. Левко

Аннотация. В статье исследуются соматические фразеологизмы и метафоры, которые используются для вербализации эмоций в древнегреческой лингвокультуре в сопоставлении с украинской лингвокультурой. Рассматриваются фразеологические единицы с компонентами “сердце”, “печень”, “внутренности” и “диафрагма”. Фразеологизмы с соматизмами “сердце” и “печень” характерны для обоих лингвокультур, а фразеологизмы с лексемами “внутренности” и “диафрагма” – только для древнегреческой лингвокультуры как особенность архаического мировоззрения. Установлено, что фразеологизмы с соматическими компонентами в большинстве случаев используются для выражения негативных эмоций в обоих лингвокультурах.

Ключевые слова: соматический фразеологизм, вербализация эмоций, лингвокультура, сердце, печень, диафрагма.