

## SIMILAR WAYS OF FORMING IDIOMS IN GEORGIAN, UDI AND RUSSIAN

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As there is a growing interest in the research of phraseological units and, especially, idiomatic expressions, my research focuses on identifying the similarities and differences of idiomatic expressions in different languages. Based on cross-cultural research, any idiomatic expression can be considered as a mental unit of language area. It is well known that

“phraseologisms occur in national languages on the basis of a creative conception of reality, which reflects colloquial-empirical, historical or mental experience of the language community that, of course, is associated with its cultural traditions, for the subject of nomination or language activity is a subject of national culture” (Telia 1981: 13).

If we consider idiomatic expressions as a part of cross-cultural research, we take into account that the same objects represented in different cultures can have different meaning and, appropriately, different mental representation, in other words, in different cultures the same subjects can assume different nuances in meaning or completely change their sense.

An idiomatic expression is a complex unit; its meaning can not be deduced from the meanings of its constituent parts. On the other hand, the parallels that exist between idiomatic expressions of different languages depend on mental similarity between people who speak different languages. Following Noam Chomsky’s theory, we can suppose the existence of a general structural base.

In this paper, I try to reveal cross-cultural and systematic similarities (if any) between idiomatic expressions in Georgian, Russian and Udi. My research focuses on the existence of idiomatic expressions containing body part terminology, the so called somatic idioms. The topic of somatic idioms addressed yet again is a rather old one; indeed, it is very difficult to find a language which does not have this kind of idioms. This notwithstanding, I tried to fulfil the following tasks:

- a) to find similar or different lexical levels in Georgian, Russian and Udi;
- b) to reveal nomination levels and to determine the association between a concrete level of nomination, i.e. metaphorical or metonymical groups, and a phraseological field, and
- c) in case of similar phraseological fields, to find general properties for them.

Of course, I have to mention what exactly is meant by idiomatic expressions involving body-part terminology. Idiomatic expressions containing somatic terminology are phraseological units of various meaning possessing body-part names (at least one), e.g. “hand”, “eye”, “nose”, etc. Also, similar to the other idiomatic units, the meaning of somatic idioms “cannot be predicted from the meanings of the constituent words, as for example, (It was raining) cats and dogs” (Collins 1995: 767).

In order to collect idiomatic material, the following dictionaries have been used: the “Explanatory Dictionary of Georgian” by Čikobava, the “Explanatory Dictionary of Russian” by Ožegov, “Udi Language” by Jeiranishvili and the “Udi-Azerbaijan-Russian Dictionary” by Gukasyan. Furthermore, my research focuses on analyzing concrete idiomatic expressions in concrete linguistic situations. For this aim, I have used, for Russian, the Russian National Corpus (NKRJa), available online since 2004, which contains about 150 million word forms. Taking into account that we don’t have at our disposal a similar corpus for Georgian, I have used the computer program TextSTAT - Simple Text Analyse Tool, and entered 359 literary works of 72 authors (the majority of them were taken from the following web-sites: <http://www.nplg.gov.ge/>, <http://www.literatura.ge/>, <http://www.lib.ge/>). For Udi, finally, the above-mentioned computer program, texts published in “Udi” by Jeiranishvili and the electronic version of some works (20 texts), available online, have been consulted. To sum up, 1039 idiomatic expressions, including 684 Georgian, 248 Russian and 107 Udi idioms, have been considered. Some tendencies are quite apparent; the selected somatic idioms are distributed in the following way:

	Georgian		Russian		Udi	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
<i>xeli/рука/kul</i> “hand”	167	24,42	70	28,23	10	9,35
<i>tvali/глаз/pul</i> “eye”	115	16,81	40	16,13	30	28,04
<i>tavi/голова/bul</i> “head”	101	14,77	33	13,31	31	28,97
<i>pexi/нога/tur</i> “leg”	84	12,28	30	12,10	8	7,48
<i>piri/рот/žomox</i> “mouth”	73	10,67	7	2,82	15	14,02
<i>quri/ухо/itux</i> “ear”	57	8,33	20	8,06	3	2,80
<i>titi/палец/kaša (kăšă)</i> “finger”	24	3,51	11	4,44	3	2,80
<i>cxviri/нос/boxtomox</i> “nose”	22	3,22	21	8,47	2	1,87
<i>çarbi/бровь/net</i> “brow”	22	3,22	3	1,21	0	0
<i>frčxil/ноготь/muq</i> “nail”	6	0,88	4	1,61	0	0
<i>tma/волос/pop</i> “hair”	6	0,88	5	2,02	3	2,80
<i>ṭani/тело/lăšăg</i> “body”	4	0,58	0	0	1	0,93
<i>čipi/пупок/čan</i> “navel”	2	0,29	1	0,40	0	0
<i>muceli/живом/buku</i> “stomach”	1	0,15	3	1,21	1	0,93
Total /14 constituents/	684		248		107	

Based on usage frequency, the first two places belong to the idiomatic expressions with “*tvali / глаз / pul*” (eye) and “*tavi / голова / bul*” (head) constituents. Also, we can see that the first place in Georgian and Russian belong to “*xeli/рука /kul*” (hand), which for Georgian is equal to 24,42% (167 units), and for Russian 28,23% (70 units). As for Udi, we can see such sort of idioms only in 9,35% (10 units). On the basis of comparative analysis of the existing idiomatic expressions, I have distinguished the following lexical levels:

(a) Lexical Level (LL), which provides a match between idiomatic expressions in Georgian, Russian and Udi:

(1)

Ge. *tvali daudges // tvalis čera*

Ru. *глаз положить*

Udi *ta ful-qa-n-čeri // ful-biqsun* (to have an eye)

Ge. *cxviridan amoiyo*

Ru. *из носу достать*

Udi *bo<sub>o</sub>xmo<sub>o</sub>yo<sub>o</sub>xoqa-n-bari* (from one’s nose)

Ge. *marčvena xeli*

Ru. *правая рука*

Udi *ačəa kul* (right hand)

(b) Semi-Lexical Level (SLL), which provides a partial match between idiomatic expressions in Georgian, Russian and Udi:

(2)

Ge. *tavši auvarda*

Ru. *ударить в голову*

Udi *ič bel-le-duye* (to get/take into one’s head)

Ge. *enas zvali ara akvs*

Ru. *язык без костей*

Udi *u<sub>o</sub>k<sub>o</sub>e<sub>o</sub>nnut muz* (app. ≈ unruly member)

Ge. *xelis ayeba*

Ru. *бросить*

Udi *kul-aqsun* (to give up)

(c) Post-Lexical Level (PLL), which does not provide a match between idiomatic expressions in Georgian, Russian and Udi. This level consists of so called nationally marked idioms, i.e. this sort of idioms can be considered as units containing mental identity of people. It is well known that it is very difficult to translate this kind of somatic idioms into other languages:

- (3a) Peculiar to Georgian: *čipi moučria* // *čipi akvs močrili*, (to adapt to circumstances; verbatim: to cut a navel)
- (3b) Peculiar to Russian: *без задних ног* (be dead on one's feet, to be tired; verbatim: without hind legs)
- (3c) Peculiar to Udi: *pin neçogo kaç-ne-fe* (to be satisfied; verbatim: to kill eye's eaters)

So, I tried to find general structural properties of idiomatic expressions containing body-part terminology and, on the basis of the above-mentioned analysis, I have developed the following four schemes, where  $L_1$  - is a source language,  $L_2...L_3$  - is a target language,  $X(L_1)$  - is an element of source language,  $Y(L_2)$  or  $Y(L_3)$  - is an element of target language, and  $Z(L_2)$  or  $Z(L_3)$  - is an element of target language, which has not association with idiomatic expressions revealed in the source language:

#### (4) Structural properties

- 1)  $X(L_1) \rightarrow X(L_2...L_3)$
- 2)  $X(L_1) \begin{matrix} \nearrow Y(L_2) \\ \searrow X(L_3) \end{matrix}$
- 3)  $X(L_1) \rightarrow Y(L_2...L_3)$
- 4)  $X(L_1) // Z(L_2...L_3)$

It should be mentioned that there is no difference if we consider Georgian as source language and all others as target languages and vice versa. So, any of the represented languages can be considered as a source in opposition to others.

As far as the schemes are concerned, on the basis of the examined material it can be concluded that nearly all idiomatic expressions are appropriate to the above-mentioned schemes. The first scheme is appropriate to the somatic idioms of Lexical Level (LL), the second and the third schemes are appropriate to the somatic idioms of Semi-Lexical Level (SLL), and the fourth scheme is appropriate to the idioms of Post-Lexical Level (PLL).

Considering the above-mentioned lexical levels, it is easier to reveal nomination levels and to determine the association with phraseological fields. A phrase-

ological field is an association between the concrete language unit and the idiomatic (phraseological) expression. It is well known that

“[...] semantic fields are defined by the association of words or their separate meanings, regularity of such associations, interdependency and interdeterminability of lexical units, relative autonomy of such field, and continuity of semantic field, visibility and psychological reality for language’s standard-bearer” (Kuznecov 1990: 380-381).

Thus, if we follow the theory of Kunin 1970, based on stability at phraseological level, especially on structural-semantic stability, stability of meaning and its lexical components, morphological and syntactical stability, we see that a phraseological unit has two general aspects: meaning and its expression.

These aspects enable us to reveal phraseological nomination. Implementing the analysis, two groups of nomination levels can be distinguished: metaphorical and metonymical. Let us consider each level separately:

a) metaphorical nomination is an additional meaning of idiomatic expression, conveyed by the use of a word instead of another. According to the definition by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, a metaphor refers to the understanding of one idea, or conceptual domain, in terms of another, while a metonymy refers to the understanding of an idea by the name of something intimately associated with that thing or concept;

b) metonymical nomination is an additional use of constituents by the name of something associated with that thing. I have revealed several units of metonymical nomination in Georgian and Russian language, but their total number did not exceed 4.23% of the whole base. In addition to levels of metaphorical and metonymical nomination, I have defined phraseological fields containing concrete idiomatic expressions with body-part terms determined on the basis of their identification and computer analysis.

It should be borne in mind that the idiomatic expressions included in a metaphorical group generally belong to Lexical, Semi-Lexical and Post-Lexical levels, i.e. to all schemes given above. Also, I have revealed the following phraseological fields: fear, excitement, astonishment, shame etc.:

#### (5) Fear

In Georgian: *ena mucelši čauvarda*, in other words, *ena gadaqlapa*, *xma veyar amoiyo* (to swallow one’s tongue; verbatim: one’s tongue fallen into stomach); this somatic idiom has been revealed in 6 sentences.

## (6) Excitement

In Georgian: *cxviridan žmars adens*, in other words, *šav dyes daaqenebs* (to be in difficulty, to have problems; verbatim: to knock vinegar out of nose); this somatic idiom has been revealed in 2 sentences.

In Udi: *bez bo<sub>o</sub>xmo<sub>o</sub>yo<sub>o</sub>xo oqo-ne-barsa* (to be in difficulty, to have problems; verbatim: vinegar runs out of nose]); this somatic idiom has been revealed in 1 sentence. Both samples belong to the third scheme.

## (7) Astonishment

In Georgian: *tvalebi šublze auvida*, in other words, *tvalebi gadmoqara* (his eyes are popping out of his head, to be surprised; verbatim: his eyes are moving to his forehead); this somatic idiom was revealed in 3 sentences.

In Russian: *глаза на лоб полезли* (his/her eyes are starting/popping out of his head); this somatic idiom was revealed in 70 sentences. Both samples belong to the third scheme.

## (8) Attractiveness

In Georgian: *tvalši uvardeba* (to attract smb's attention; verbatim: to strike one's eye); this somatic idiom was revealed in 8 sentences.

In Russian: *бросается в глаза* (he/she is striking, he/she strikes one's eye, he/she arrests one's attention); this somatic idiom was revealed in 406 sentences.

In Udi - *šeta fel-lu-bajsa* (verbatim: to enter one's eye); this somatic idiom was revealed in 1 sentence. All three samples belong to the first scheme.

What do we expect from the revealing of the above-mentioned fields and levels? Actually, in this way, we reveal general and additional units of encoded meanings of somatic idioms, by which I mean the following:

- 1) the main meaning of a phrase and,
- 2) the possible meaning of a phrase revealed after the comparison.

An idiomatic expression sometimes does not possess this possible meaning, sometimes it has an incomplete form. Using the above-mentioned units, it becomes possible to find a connection between associated meaning and appropriate unit. I tried to find this type of association in different fields.

Sometimes, it was quite difficult to find such kinds of parallels. For example, why do we have “eye” in Russian for a context where in Udi the word “head” is employed:

## (9) Udi

*уйти куда глаза глядят* (to follow one's nose; verbatim: to go, where somebody's eyes are looking to)

*bul aqi tajsun* (to follow one's nose; verbatim: to run without head].

Or, why do we have “nose” in Georgian and Russian for the context where in Udi the word “finger” is used:

## (10)

Ge. *cxviris čaqofa*

Ru. *совать нос* (to thrust one's nose (into smth.))

Udi *o qäšä-besun* (to thrust one's finger (into smth.))

Anyway, such types of samples reflect the identity of people, which is expressed by figurative metaphors and expressivity of idiomatic expressions, and, also, the associative understanding of people who speak different languages. Thus, based on recent research we get the following picture:

- a) The existence of similar and different lexical levels in Georgian, Russian and Udi. On the basis of these levels I have developed the above-mentioned four schemes (see above);
- b) The existence of two groups (metaphorical and metonymical) revealed on the basis of nomination levels and their association with a phraseological field possessing concrete meaning/semantics;
- c) The existence of differences and similarities between people revealed on the basis of cross-cultural review, which reflects the people's mental relationship to reality. This sort of relationship may be of two kinds: 1) with concrete traditional systems of values, and, 2) with universal systems of cultural values.

To conclude, future research work will be the analysis of concrete properties of idiomatic expressions, revealing cultural identity of people and providing its association with universal culture.

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