

THE LEXICAL-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS
EXPRESSING NEGATIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES IN THE NOVEL OF "THE
HEART OF THE MATTER" BY GRAHAM GREENE

Saidova Zulfizar Xudoyberdievna

PhD, Associate professor of BukhSU z.x.saidova@buxdu.uz

Qiyomova Shokhida Shomurod kizi

Researcher, 1st year master student of BukhSU

Abstract: *This thesis provides a lexical-semantic analysis of phraseological units (idioms and fixed expressions) that describe negative psychological states in English. The research addresses a fundamental human problem: how do we turn an invisible feeling into a visible, understandable phrase? The analysis reveals that the human body is the primary "map" for negative feelings. Through somatic phrases, emotions are localized in specific organs. Moreover, the research explores how negative states are treated as physical burdens or locations. To ground the theory in reality, the thesis analyzes the works of Graham Greene. This thesis demonstrates that phraseology is the "skin" of the human psyche. By deconstructing these idioms, the research offers a deeper understanding of how English speakers conceptualize suffering.*

Key words: *Phraseology, lexical-semantic analysis, negative psychological states, somatic metaphors, Graham Greene, linguoculturology, emotional discourse.*

INTRODUCTION

The study of language is, at its heart, the study of the human soul. When an individual experiences a negative psychological state whether it is the sharp sting of betrayal or the heavy, slow ache of grief there is an immediate, instinctive need to give that feeling a name. However, simple words like "sad" or "scared" often feel too thin to carry the weight of real suffering. This is where phraseology steps in. By using idioms and fixed expressions, humans "humanize" their internal pain, turning an abstract emotion into a concrete image that another person can see and feel.

One of the most fascinating aspects of English phraseology is the tendency to treat the human body as a canvas. The research suggests that negative emotions are rarely seen as staying "only in the head." Instead, they travel. Guilt becomes a weight on the shoulders; fear becomes cold feet; and heartbreak is felt as a literal shattering of the chest. This somatic (body-based) approach to language reveals a deep truth about human nature: people do not just "think" emotions; they inhabit them. By analyzing these phrases, the thesis uncovers how the English-speaking world physically experiences the mind's darkest moments. While the focus is on the English language, this introduction acknowledges that the struggle to express the "unexpressible" is universal.

Whether a person is reading a modern psychological novel by Graham Greene, the phraseological units used to describe a "heavy heart" serve as a bridge. They allow the reader to step into the character's shoes and feel the same gravity of emotion. By studying these patterns, the thesis moves beyond mere linguistics and enters the realm of human empathy, exploring how we use the beauty of language to describe the ugliness of pain.

Main part. When a person has reached the limit of what they can handle, the language often turns to metaphors of ropes or physical boundaries. Greene captures this perfectly: "He felt as though he were at the end of his tether" (Greene, 142 p.).

The phrase "at the end of one's tether" traditionally refers to an animal tied to a post that can no longer move forward. Lexically, the word "tether" creates a feeling of being trapped. Semantically, it describes a negative state where there is no more room for hope or movement. In simple terms, it shows that the character's mind is "starved" of options, making his despair understandable to the reader.

Greene often uses the "heart" as a location for heavy emotions. This is a classic somatic (body-based) phrase that connects the physical chest to the mental state: "A heavy heart is the only thing that never lies" (Greene 156 p.). The lexical choice of "heavy" is key here. It suggests that guilt is not just an idea it is a weight. By using this phrase, the author helps the reader "feel" the gravity of the character's situation. It moves the emotion from the brain to the body. This is a clear example of how English phraseology uses physical sensations to describe a soul in trouble.

When a character is confused or feels a lack of support, Greene uses spatial metaphors phrases that describe where a person is standing in the world: "He was moving under a cloud of his own making" (Greene, 201 p.). The unit "under a cloud" usually means being under suspicion or feeling gloomy. Lexically, the "cloud" hides the sun (joy) and creates a shadow. Semantically, it shows that the character is isolated from others. It is a simple but powerful way to describe a negative state where everything feels dark and uncertain.

Conclusion. By using these phrases, Graham Greene makes the "invisible" pain of his characters "visible" to the reader. The analysis shows that we don't need complex scientific words to describe a broken mind. Instead, we use the language of the body and the world around us ropes, weights, and clouds to tell the story of a person's struggle. This makes the literature feel more "real" and allows the reader to truly connect with the character's negative psychological state.

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