

Arsenteva Elena
Kaiumova Albina
Kazan (Volga region) Federal University

Online Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary: presentation of synonyms and collocations

The paper addresses some of the main problems of “Online Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary” compilation.

The dictionary is partially based on “Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms and Set Expressions” compiled by one of the authors of the article and published in Russia in 1999 (Arsenteva 1999). The online dictionary is being compiled by a group of scientists of Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Russia; to be more precise, Arsenteva Elena, Semushina Elena, Salieva Rimma and Kaiumova Albina.

“Online Russian-English Phraseological Dictionary” is designed not only to represent the ways of rendering Russian phraseological units (PUs) into the English language; it aims at demonstrating the wealth of Russian phraseology by means of adding the following extra information: phraseological synonyms, phraseological antonyms, examples, grammar, collocations, and etymological information.

The computer program for the dictionary was created by the specialists of the Laboratory of Computer Linguistics of Kazan (Volga region) federal university, it combines the achievements of Russian and foreign computer dictionary makers, including the so-called functional school from Aarhus university, Denmark.

Let us show the dictionary’s administrative subsystem where administrators can add, delete, edit and view existing data (Picture 1).

Fixed Expression			
Definition	In English	Usage Style	
< СВОЯ> ГОЛОВА НА ПЛЕЧАХ	--	smb can think for himself; smb is clever enough	разг. экспресс.
<ВМЕСТЕ> ХЛЕБ-СОЛЬ ЕСТЬ с кем	-	- be intimate friends; eat often together	

Picture 1

The administrators select a PU from the list and click “edit” button to add new data (Picture 2).

Phrase * Fixed expression (core string) <input type="text" value="<СВОЯ> ГОЛОВА НА П."/> * Meaning <input type="text" value="--"/> English <input type="text" value="smb can think for himself; smb is"/> Usage style <input type="text" value="разг. экспресс."/> Editor's note <input type="text"/> Internet link <input type="text"/> Ignore on search <input type="checkbox"/> Do not display <input type="checkbox"/>	Antonyms <input type="text"/> Synonyms <input type="text"/> Examples <input type="text"/> Collocations <input type="text"/> Etymological Information Grammar <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Add"/> <input type="button" value="Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Edit"/>	<input type="button" value="Add"/> <input type="button" value="Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Edit"/>

Picture 2

Much attention is paid to the presentation of synonyms and collocations.

The dictionary at its present stage includes absolute (equivalent) phraseological synonyms – PUs that completely coincide in phraseological meaning and usage (e.g. *хоть в гроб ложись* and *хоть волком вои*) – and partial (relative) phraseological synonyms – PUs that partially coincide in phraseological meaning and usage.

Partial phraseological synonyms are further subdivided into three groups: a) ideographic (semantic) PUs which have slight differences in phraseological meaning: *сводить счеты с кем* – ‘to take revenge for an offense or injury’ and *смыывать кровью* – ‘to avenge by killing the offender’; b) stylistic (functional) PUs which coincide in phraseological meaning but differ in their stylistic reference: *заключительный аккорд* (bookish), *кончен бал* (neutral), *вот и вся недолга* (colloquial); c) stylistic-ideographic phraseological synonyms

which have difference both in phraseological meaning and stylistic reference: *биться в телячьем воссторге* (ironic) – ‘to display over-expressive or unfounded joy’ and *нотирать руки* (colloquial) – ‘to display pleased anticipation, self-satisfaction, or glee’.

Collocations are widely used by Aarhus dictionary makers, as, for example in the electronic dictionary of new type of stable expressions (Bergenholtz 2007). The problem is to distinguish “real” collocations, lexical variations of PUs, especially of verbal ones, and occasional (authors’) contextual usage of PUs. The majority of scientists agree that PUs with variations should have the same lexical collocability and coincide in meaning. So variation in phraseology affects only such a structural-semantic variability that doesn’t change the meaning of the phraseological unit and doesn’t create a new unit. All possible lexical variants are already presented in the basic form of Russian and English PUs in the dictionary.

Collocations, on the contrary, present possible contextual surrounding of PUs and don’t enter the basic form of this or that PU. They are dictated, first of all, by the grammatical form of PUs: e.g. we can’t present collocations of verbal or interjectional units as any transformation of the base form will be the type of author’s creativity, hence – the example of occasional use of the PU. So collocations may be presented only in a limited number of cases (substantival, adjectival PUs), and their set will be also limited.

Let’s present the example of the PU *ни бельмеса* from the dictionary: *ни бельмеса не знать /не понимать, не смыслить/* – not know a thing; have no idea about something; not have an inkling of anything; not know A from B; not know ‘b’ from a battle-dore /from a bull’s foot, from a buffalo foot, from a broomstick/; not know chalk from cheese; not know beans.

References

- Birikh, A.K., Stepanova, L.I., Mokienko, V.M. Dictionary of Russian Phraseological Synonyms. 2009. Moscow: ACT
- Arsenteva, E. Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms and Set Expressions. 1999. Kazan: Haetaer.
- Bergenholtz, H., Vrang, V. and Almind, R. 2007. Ordbogen over Faste Vendinger. Aarhus: Center for Leksicography. www.idiomordbogen.dk