

ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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ABSTRACT: *Phraseological units, including idioms and proverbs, serve as linguistic reflections of a nation's culture, history, and worldview. This study examines the linguocultural and comparative aspects of phraseological units across different languages, focusing on how cultural values and societal norms influence their formation and interpretation. Through a cross-linguistic analysis, the research identifies both universal and language-specific features of phraseological expressions, shedding light on their semantic, metaphorical, and pragmatic dimensions. The findings contribute to a better understanding of intercultural communication, translation studies, and language acquisition.*

Keywords: *phraseological units, linguocultural analysis, idioms, cross-linguistic comparison, cultural meaning*

INTRODUCTION

Language is more than just a tool for communication; it also reflects the culture and mindset of its speakers. One of the most culturally rich aspects of language is phraseology, which includes idioms, proverbs, and other fixed expressions. These linguistic units are deeply connected to a nation's history, traditions, and beliefs, making them an important subject of study in both linguistics and cultural research.

This study focuses on the linguocultural and comparative dimensions of phraseological units, exploring how different languages express cultural values, historical events, and conceptual metaphors through idiomatic expressions. By analyzing phraseological units across various languages, the research aims to highlight both universal trends and unique language-specific characteristics that shape their meanings and usage.

Furthermore, a linguocultural understanding of phraseological units plays a key role in cross-cultural communication and translation. Since idiomatic expressions often carry culturally embedded meanings, failing to interpret them correctly can result in confusion or miscommunication. This highlights the necessity of phraseological competence in language learning and intercultural interactions.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the connection between language and culture through a comparative analysis of phraseological units. It will investigate how different linguistic communities conceptualize similar ideas using idiomatic expressions and how these expressions reflect cultural identity and worldview.

Phraseology (from Greek φράσις phrasis, "way of speaking" and -λογία -logia, "study of") is a scholarly approach to language which developed in the twentieth century. It took its start when Charles Bally's notion of locutions phraseologiques entered Russian lexicology and lexicography in the 1930s and 1940s and was subsequently developed in the former Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. From the late 1960s on it established itself in (East) German linguistics but was also sporadically approached in English linguistics. The earliest English adaptations of phraseology are by Weinreich within the approach of transformational grammar, Arnold, and Lipka. In Great Britain as well as other Western European countries, phraseology has steadily been developed over the last twenty years. The activities of the European Society of Phraseology and the European Association for Lexicography with their regular conventions and publications attest to the prolific European interest in phraseology. European scholarship in phraseology is more active than in North America.

❖ Phraseological fusion is a semantically indivisible phraseological unit which meaning is never influenced by the meanings of its components. It means that phraseological fusions represent the highest stage of blending together. The meaning of components is completely absorbed by the meaning of the whole, by its expressiveness and emotional properties.

Once in a blue moon – very seldom;

To cry for the moon – to demand unreal;

Under the rose – quietly.

Sometimes phraseological fusions are called idioms under which linguists understand a complete loss of the inner form. To explain the meaning of idioms is a complicated etymological problem (tit to tat means "to revenge", but no one can explain the meaning of the words tit and tat).

❖ Phraseological unity is a semantically indivisible phraseological unit the whole meaning of which is motivated by the meanings of its components.

In general, phraseological unities are the phrases where the meaning of the whole unity is not the sum of the meanings of its components but is based upon them and may be understood from the components. The meaning of the significant word is not too remote from its ordinary meanings. This meaning is formed as a result of generalized figurative meaning of a free word-combination. It is the result of figurative metaphoric reconsideration of a word-combination.

To come to one's sense – to change one's mind;

To come home – to hit the mark;

To fall into a rage – to get angry.

Phraseological unities are characterized by the semantic duality. One can't define for sure the semantic meaning of separately taken phraseological unities isolated from the context, because these word-combinations may be used as free in the direct meaning and as phraseological in the figurative meaning.

❖ Phraseological combination (collocation) is a construction or an expression in which every word has absolutely clear independent meaning while one of the components has a bound meaning

It means that phraseological combinations contain one component used in its direct meaning while the other is used figuratively.

To make an attempt – to try;

To make haste – to hurry;

To offer an apology – to beg pardon.

Some linguists who stick to the general understanding of phraseology and refer to it communicational units (sentences) and winged words, define the fourth type of phraseological units. Phraseological expression is a stable by form and usage semantically divisible construction, which components are words with free meanings.

East or West, home is best;

Marriages are made in heaven;

Still waters run deep.

Phraseological expressions are proverbs, sayings and aphorisms of famous politicians, writers, scientists and artists. They are concise sentences, expressing some truth as ascertained by experience of wisdom and familiar to all. They are often metaphoric in character and include elements of implicit information well understood without being formally present in the discourse.

Prof. A.I. Smirnitsky worked out structural classification of phraseological units, comparing them with words. He points out one-top units which he compares with derived words because derived words have only one root morpheme. He also points out two-top units which he compares with compound words because in compound words we usually have two root morphemes.

Among one-top units he points out three structural types:

a) units of the type “to give up” (verb + postposition type);

To back up – to support;

To drop out – to miss, to omit.

b) units of the type “to be tired”. Some of these units remind the Passive Voice in their structure but they have different prepositions with them, while in the Passive Voice we can have only prepositions «by» or «with»:

To be tired of;

To be surprised at.

There are also units in this type which remind free word-groups of the type “to be young”:

To be aware of.

The difference between them is that the adjective “young” can be used as an attribute and as a predicative in a sentence, while the nominal component in such units

can act only as a predicative. In these units the verb is the grammar centre and the second component is the semantic centre:

c) prepositional-nominal phraseological units:

On the doorstep - quite near;

On the nose – exactly.

These units are equivalents of unchangeable words: prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, that is why they have no grammar centre, their semantic centre is the nominal part.

Among two-top units A.I. Smirnitsky points out the following structural types:

a) attributive-nominal such as:

A month of Sundays;

A millstone round one's neck.

Units of this type are noun equivalents and can be partly or perfectly idiomatic (if the expression is idiomatic, then we must consider its components in the aggregate, not separately). In partly idiomatic units) sometimes the first component is idiomatic: high road; in other cases the second component is idiomatic: first night.

In many cases both components are idiomatic: red tape, blind alley, bed of nail, shot in the arm and many others.

b) verb-nominal phraseological units:

To read between the lines;

To sweep under the carpet.

The grammar centre of such units is the verb, the semantic centre in many cases is the nominal component: to fall in love. In some units the verb is both the grammar and the semantic centre: not to know the ropes. These units can be perfectly idiomatic as well: to burn one's boats, to vote with one's feet, to take to the cleaners' etc.

c) phraseological repetitions, such as:

Now or never;

Part and parcel (integral part).

Such units can be built on antonyms: ups and downs, back and forth; often they are formed by means of alliteration: cakes and ale, as busy as a bee. Components in repetitions are joined by means of conjunctions. These units are equivalents of adverbs or adjectives and have no grammar centre. They can also be partly or perfectly idiomatic: cool as a cucumber (partly), bread and butter (perfectly). Phraseological units the same as compound words can have more than two tops (stems in compound words):

To be a shadow of one's own self,

At one's own sweet will

As a conclusion, we can say cultural linguistics as an independent direction of linguistics considers language as a cultural phenomenon and an exponent of national mentality. The subject and methods of cultural linguistics are in the stage of formation, nevertheless, this discipline has developed its own intentionality in a

number of other linguistic disciplines that also work within the framework of the relationship between language and culture.

Culture and language are brought to an equivalent level in cultural linguistics, and their consideration in interconnection becomes the central task of this discipline.

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