

UNRAVELLING PHRASEOLOGY: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF ITS VARIATIONS IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

Abstract

This article explores the intricate field of phraseology, a language subsystem extensively studied in Russian and Uzbek linguistics. Phraseology, encompassing both phraseological units and idioms, plays a crucial role in conveying cultural characteristics within language. The study delves into the stylistic value of these units, emphasizing their impact on understanding the culture, mindset, and traditions of a community. The article also addresses the challenges in classifying and translating phraseological units, highlighting issues related to semantics and cultural nuances. Additionally, it discusses variations in phraseological units and their distinct characteristics, such as content stability, integrity, immediate availability, imagery, and semantic reshaping. In essence, the article underscores how phraseological units serve as linguistic reflections of customs, culture, and national mentality, enriching communication with depth and cultural significance.

Keywords: Phraseology, idioms, customs, culture, and national mentality.

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Phraseology is a language subsystem that was extensively investigated in both Russian studies and Uzbek linguistics in the second half of the twentieth century. In modern linguistics, phraseology is a specific area within lexicology that focuses on word groups that are distinguished by structural stability and transferred meaning. Despite the Greek origin of the term "phraseology" from the word "phrasia" (phrasia - expression, speech package), it holds various meanings in the field. In linguistics, "phraseology" is employed in two senses: referring to the entirety of existing phraseological units in a language and denoting the field that examines these units. Therefore, phraseology can be understood as the study of phrases.

Linguoculturology hypothesizes that the cultural characteristics embedded in the vocabulary introduce variations in idiomatic expressions. Consequently, phraseological units hold significant stylistic value in the study of different languages and greatly contribute to understanding the culture, mindset, and traditions of a particular community. This linguistic and cultural aspect of research shows promise in providing a unique perspective, as it explores the intricacies of a people's thinking, worldview, and culture, interconnecting language, and culture in a symbiotic relationship. So, language, culture, and ethnicity become inseparably linked and intersect within an individual, shaping their physical, spiritual, and social identity. While in the cognitive linguistics tradition, idioms are believed to have conceptual motivation, meaning that their figurative meanings can be traced back to underlying cognitive concepts or mental images. On the other hand, there are numerous phraseological units in which the meaning cannot be inferred simply by understanding the meaning of each individual component. Instead, to comprehend the meaning of such units, one must employ the compositional analysis method. This method aids in exploring the semantic relationships within the semantic field, allowing for a deeper understanding of the intended meaning behind these phraseological units.

In every language, the existing stable phrases are known as phraseological units, commonly known as phraseme or idioms which are the expressive lexicon of language vocabulary. Professor Smirnitsky categorizes phraseological units based on the functional principle, resulting in two distinct groups: 1) phraseological units and 2) idioms. Phraseological units, such as "get up," "fall asleep," and "in the meantime," are neutral and non-metaphorical in nature when compared to idioms. On the other hand, idioms, such as "Through thick and thin" "Call it a day" and "Raining cats and dogs" are characterized by their metaphorical and stylistically coloured expressions. According to phraseologist Prof A.V. Kunin, Phraseological units have meanings that are partially or fully transferred from their individual components. These are consistently employed by native speakers in familiar or established patterns. These phraseological units effectively convey the essence and elegance of a language, shaped over centuries for oral and written communication. But according to linguist Rosemarie Gläser, a phraseological unit is a lexicalized combination of two or more words, referred to as billexemic or polylexemic words. The meaning of a phraseological unit can be inferred from one of its components.

According to numerous linguists, phraseological units can be classified into two categories: figurative and non-figurative. In figurative phraseological units, the meaning is metaphorical or symbolic, and it cannot be directly inferred from the literal meanings of the words within the unit. For example; "Kick the bucket" means to die or pass away, and "Bite the bullet" means to face an unpleasant situation with courage. In contrast, non-figurative phraseological units have a more literal meaning, where the combined words convey a

specific concept that is not readily apparent from the meanings of the individual words. For example; “Bread and butter” means one's main livelihood or primary source of financial support, and “On the other hand” means to present an alternative viewpoint.

There are certainly five distinct types of variation in phraseological units: lexical substitution, lexical insertion, grammatical transformation, truncation and transcategorisation. Lexical substitution variation occurs when one or more words in a phraseological unit are replaced, while the overall structure and meaning of the unit remain unchanged. For example, the phrase "Kick the bucket" can be replaced with "Kick the pail". In Lexical insertion, additional words are inserted into a phraseological unit without altering its fundamental meaning. For instance, "Bite the dust" can be expanded to "Bite the dust and admit defeat". Grammatical transformation involves changing the grammatical structure of a phraseological unit while preserving its meaning. For instance, transforming "break the ice" into the imperative form results in "breaking the ice". Truncation refers to shortening a phraseological unit by removing one or more words while retaining its original meaning. For example, "Once in a blue moon" can be truncated to "Once in a moon". Transcategorisation involves changing the grammatical category of one or more words within a phraseological unit. For instance, "to butter someone up" (a verb) can be transformed into "a butter-up compliment" (a noun).

Phraseological units present significant challenges when attempting to classify them as a lexical category, and these difficulties can be attributed to several reasons. Firstly, when words with independent meanings become part of a phraseological unit, they undergo a transformation in their semantics, acquiring a new, interconnected meaning. Consequently, simply finding dictionary equivalents for individual components is inadequate to render the complete phraseological expression accurately. Secondly, translators unfamiliar with the phraseology of the source language may struggle to identify phraseological units within the text they are interpreting. This lack of recognition can lead to word-for-word or literal translations, distorting the intended meaning and potentially misinterpreting the information for the target audience. Moreover, linguists not well-versed in both the source and target languages' phraseology may encounter similar difficulties when trying to find suitable equivalents or analogues. Thirdly, even when an equivalent phraseology exists in the target language, it may not align appropriately with the context of the translation. Consequently, interpreters may need to explore alternative ways of conveying meaning to ensure that the expression remains contextually relevant. Additionally, it is important to consider that similar phrases in English and Uzbek languages can carry distinct evaluative connotations, adding an extra layer of complexity to the translation process.

According to the literature, when we further explore the distinctive characteristics of phraseological units, these are distinguished from other word combinations by their unique characteristics, which include content stability, integrity, immediate availability, imagery, and semantic reshaping. Phraseological units exhibit remarkable stability in their content over time. This means that their form and meaning remain relatively unchanged and are transmitted from one generation to another without significant alterations. For example, idioms like "raining cats and dogs" or "kick the bucket" have retained their original forms and meanings for centuries. Also, phraseological units are characterized by a high level of integrity, meaning that they function as cohesive linguistic units with a fixed structure. They are typically resistant to modifications or rearrangements of their elements. For instance, you

cannot alter the order of words in the idiom "spill the beans" to say "beans the spill" without losing its idiomatic meaning. Phraseological units are ready at hand for language users, and they are used as whole units without any need for internal analysis. People recognize and understand these expressions without having to interpret the individual words separately. This ease of recognition and comprehension is a defining feature of phraseological units. Many phraseological units contain figurative language or vivid imagery that adds colours and expressiveness to communication. These expressions often evoke mental images, making language more vivid and engaging. For example, the idiom "butterflies in the stomach" creates a vivid image of nervousness or excitement. Some phraseological units undergo semantic reshaping over time, acquiring additional meanings or shifting in meaning due to extended usage in different contexts. This process is known as semantic extension. For example, the phrase "a piece of cake," which originally referred to a literal cake, now commonly means something easy to accomplish.

Summing up, phraseological units are composed of multiple words characterized by a unified figurative meaning that conveys emotional-expressiveness and vivid imagery. These fixed expressions serve as linguistic reflections of people's customs, culture, ways of life, specific traditions, and national mentality. Through the use of phraseological units, language becomes a vessel for encapsulating the essence and unique characteristics of a community, enriching communication with depth and cultural significance. The study of phraseological issues enriches our comprehension of language as a dynamic and culturally influenced system of communication. Linguists' exploration of these aspects helps unravel the intricate relationship between language, culture, and cognition, leading to a deeper appreciation and understanding of the complexities of human communication.

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