

## THE CONCEPT OF PHRASEOLOGY

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Phraseological units, often referred to as fixed expressions, represent a fundamental aspect of language. These units consist of two or more words whose meaning cannot always be derived from the individual meanings of the words that constitute them. They are crucial for understanding both the structural and cultural components of a language. In this section, we will explore the definition, history, and classifications of phraseological units, as well as the theoretical perspectives that inform their study.

Phraseological units are multi-word combinations that function as single units within a sentence. These units are fixed or semi-fixed in form and exhibit a degree of stability in their usage. The key feature of a phraseological unit is that its meaning often deviates from the literal meanings of its constituent words. This characteristic sets phraseological units apart from ordinary phrases, where words can be substituted or rearranged freely without affecting meaning.

Phraseological units are commonly grouped into categories such as idioms, proverbs, collocations, and set expressions, each having distinct features but sharing the fundamental characteristic of being fixed or semi-fixed expressions. They are integral to both the vocabulary and the stylistic richness of a language.

The study of phraseology has evolved significantly over the years, with contributions from various linguistic traditions. The systematic study of phraseological units began in the early 20th century, particularly within Russian linguistics. Scholars such as **V. V. Vinogradov**<sup>6</sup> and **A. A. Reformatsky**<sup>7</sup> played pioneering roles in formalizing the study of phraseological units. Vinogradov's work, in particular, laid the foundation for classifying phraseological units based on their degree of fixedness and their meaning.

In the 1950s and 1960s, linguists began to emphasize the importance of phraseological units in understanding the structure and semantics of a language. This period saw the emergence of a formalized approach to studying idiomatic expressions, with an emphasis on syntactic structure and lexical components.

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<sup>6</sup> Vinogradov, V. V. The Main Types of Phraseological Units in the Russian Language. – Soviet Academy of Sciences, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Reformatskiy, A. A. Vvedenie v yazykoznanie. – Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1967. – 346 p.

In more recent decades, the study of phraseological units has expanded beyond structuralist approaches, incorporating insights from **cognitive linguistics**, **pragmatics**, and **functionalism**. These newer approaches have focused on understanding how phraseological units are processed by the human mind and how their meaning is shaped by context and usage.

Phraseological units are typically classified into several types based on their form, meaning, and syntactic structure. Below are the primary categories of phraseological units:

- **Idioms:** These are expressions where the meaning cannot be directly inferred from the individual words. Idioms are figurative in nature and often carry cultural or historical significance. For example, the phrase "*break the ice*" means to initiate conversation or ease tension, which is unrelated to the literal meanings of "break" and "ice."

- **Proverbs and Sayings:** Proverbs are concise expressions that convey general truths, wisdom, or cultural values. Sayings are similar but may be more context-specific or colloquial. For example, "*A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*" conveys the idea that it is better to value what you have than to risk losing it for something uncertain.

- **Collocations:** These are word combinations that are frequently used together in a particular language. Unlike idioms, the meaning of a collocation is transparent, as it is derived from the literal meaning of the individual words. Examples include "*make a decision*", "*strong coffee*", and "*fast food*."

- **Set Phrases:** These are fixed expressions that are often used in specific social or communicative contexts. Set phrases can be formal or conventional, such as "*Ladies and gentlemen*", "*With all due respect*", or "*At your service*."

- **Clichés and Phrasal Expressions:** Clichés are overused and sometimes trite phrases that have lost their original impact. However, they still function as phraseological units in everyday language, such as "*at the end of the day*" or "*in the nick of time*." These expressions are familiar and often used for convenience in communication.

Each of these categories reflects different degrees of fixedness, meaning, and contextual use, and their study allows us to understand the diversity and complexity of phraseological expressions within a language.

Phrasal verbs and idioms are among the topics that phraseology specialists frequently concentrate on. The English language, in particular, makes extensive use of these two components. Word groups that work as a single verb are called phrasal verbs. Many of these have specific verbs as direct synonyms. Phrasal verbs enable speakers to explain themselves clearly, and they are frequently preferred

over individual verbs due to the latter's tendency to sound overly technical to the average listener.

The study of phraseological units from these diverse theoretical perspectives provides a comprehensive understanding of their role in language, their cognitive and communicative functions, and their contribution to the richness of linguistic expression. One of the most prominent works in the field of phraseology is "Idioms: structural and psychological perspectives" by Martin Everaert and Erik-Jan Smits<sup>8</sup>. This work delves into the structural and cognitive aspects of idiomatic expressions, shedding light on their formation and interpretation processes.

Another noteworthy study is "Phraseology- an interdisciplinary perspective" by Sylviane Granger and Fanny Meunier, which examines phraseological units from an interdisciplinary angle, exploring their use in different contexts and their impact on language processing.

The language form of proverbs and sayings is determined by their folkloric origin, the colloquial sphere of use. It should be noted that not only the proverbial form changes, but also its pragmatic meaning. So, expressiveness, as one of the most important properties of a proverb and a saying, determines the strength of its impact on the listener. Moreover, this expressiveness is achieved due to the tropes.

Phraseology, a subfield of linguistics, delves into the study of set expressions, including idioms, collocations, phrasal verbs, and other types of multi-word lexical units. Unlike single words, these expressions convey meanings that often transcend the sum of their parts, making them a rich subject for linguistic analysis. Understanding phraseology is crucial not only for linguistic theory but also for practical applications in language learning, translation, and natural language processing.

In translation studies, phraseology is crucial because set expressions in one language often do not have direct equivalents in another. Translators must navigate these differences to produce translations that are both accurate and natural-sounding. This requires a deep understanding of the phraseological systems of both the source and target languages.

Furthermore, the advent of computational linguistics has brought new dimensions to the study of phraseology. Natural language processing technologies rely heavily on understanding and generating multi-word expressions. For instance, machine translation systems and conversational agents need to accurately process idiomatic expressions to provide coherent and contextually appropriate responses.

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<sup>8</sup> Everaert M., Smits E.-J. Idioms: Structural and Psychological Perspectives // Everaert M., Smits E.-J., van der Linden J. (eds.). *The Syntax of Idioms*. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

In summary, phraseology is a multifaceted field that bridges linguistic theory, language education, translation, and computational linguistics. Its study not only enriches our understanding of language structure and use but also provides practical tools for enhancing communication in a globalized world. This coursework will explore the various aspects of phraseology, its theoretical foundations, and its practical implications, offering a comprehensive overview of this intriguing and essential area of linguistic study.