THE NOTION OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNIT

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ПОНЯТИЕ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ ЕДИНИЦЫ

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Abstract. The given article deals with issues related to the relationship between phraseological units and words, and provides definitions of the term "phraseological unit". A significant part of the article is devoted to the review and analysis of different views of scientists on the theory of equivalence of phraseological units with words. The results of the analysis are used to formulate conclusions about the relationship between words and phraseological units.

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются вопросы, связанные с соотношением фразеологической единицы и слов. Кроме того, приводятся определения термина "фразеологическая единица". В статье основная часть посвящена изучению и анализу различных взглядов ученых на теорию эквивалентности фразеологической единицы со словами. Результаты анализа используются для формулирования выводов о связи между словами и фразеологическими единицами.

Keywords: phraseological unit, definition of the term, equivalence theory, stable combination, stability, idiom, phrase, phraseological fusions.

Ключевые слова: фразеологическая единица, определение термина, теория эквивалентности, устойчивое сочетание, стабильность, идиома, фраза, фразеологические слияния.

As defined by A. V. Kunin, "a phraseological unit is a stable combination of words with fully or partially reinterpreted meaning" [20, 8]. It points to stability as one of the FE criteria. This stability is based on various types of invariance inherent in it, i.e., invariability of certain elements at all-normative changes. A. V. Kunin highlights the following types of invariance or microstability [20, 6-8]:

The stability of a phraseological unit is interpreted as a measure, the degree of semantic cohesion and inseparability of components. It is a form of expression of idiomatic character with specific phraseology. In other words, stability is a measure of idiomatic character [12, p. 86]. Prof. V.P. Jukov believes that stability, at least in semantic terms, is organically connected with idiomatic, i.e., with semantic inseparability of phraseology.

The issue of phraseological units has been addressed by many scientists. The founder of the theory of phraseology is a Swiss linguist Charles Bally, who first defined phraseology as an independent section of lexicology. A variety of classifications of phraseological units were introduced. V. V. Vinogradov divides them into three types depending on how much the nominal values of the components of phraseology are blurred, how much the figurative meaning is contained in them: phraseological fusions, phraseological units and phraseological combinations. A.V.Kunin distinguishes phraseological units, phraseomatic units and borderline (mixed) cases. In accordance

with Amosova, all phraseological units into phrases and idioms. The absence of at least one of the mentioned features excludes the aforementioned unit from the phraseological structure of the language.

Word is the primary, but not only means of nomination in the language system. In speech it is peculiar to appear in combinations with other words, and the principle of their structure in the word combinations is regulated by syntactic norms and rules. Such combinations are created according to the models existing in the language. For example, in English, model A + N, reflecting the fundamental possibility of combining an adjective and a noun, can be filled with an infinite number of components that meet the requirements of the model, and the result of such operation is quite predictable: the resulted combination will indicate something that has a certain feature. In identical situations, similar phrases are often used: May I come in? Knock at the door, etc. This combination of words is usually used in a fixed form and is reproduced in speech by a ready-made unit. Such combinations are stable, but refer to the general, not the phraseological, fund of the vocabulary. The fact is that there are no semantic changes in the components of such combinations; they preserve their meaning, sometimes changing only the function, as in the stable expression Good morning function is nominative - description of time of day - is replaced by contact - greeting. If stability of an expression is supplemented by semantic changes of a component or components, we deal with a phraseological unit. Despite the fact that phraseological units are combinations of words, they are considered by linguists from the position of lexicology rather than syntax as free combinations. Several reasons are given for this phenomenon [1, c. 57].

Primarily, the reason for this is in a free-form word combination created by the model, which can be replaced by any of the components within this model. Thus, adjective red can be used in combination with a huge number of nouns (red frock, red banner, red strip, red hair, etc.), while retaining its color meaning. Similarly, any noun identifying an object potentially capable of having an attribute will, on the same model, be combined with an infinite number of adjectives, this attribute transmitting (red frock, dirty frock, new frock, expensive frock, etc.). In the same phraseological combination, the connection between the components is rigid and the replacement of any of them is impossible without destroying the meaning of the whole unit. For example, the combination black sheep (= the worst member), although it is constructed according to the regular model A + N, cannot be reproduced with the same value even with minimal semantic substitutions (black ram or grey sheep). Formally corresponding to the language model, the phraseological units are not modeled, i.e., they represent a single use of the language model to transmit in a constant context any semantic structure.

One more reason why phraseological units are referred to the objects of lexicological research is that such a combination has common features with words. Like a word, phraseological units are not created in the process of speech from lower-level units, but are reproduced in a ready-made unit. This feature indicates that the phraseological unit, as well as the word, has a single lexical value; the ability to relate to any part of speech and act as a single for the whole combination of the sentence member signals the presence of the phraseological unit has a grammatical value. For instance, a phraseological unit "sit on the fence" has a single lexical value "waiting" and fulfils a general grammatical function of the name part of a compound predicate (and not of a predicate part and circumstances of a place, as it would be in case of a free combination of the type ...chose sitting in the pub).

The capacity of phraseological units to reinterpret is also reflected in the stylistic component of its meaning. As an example, the steady combination of "wear and tear" can be applied to describe both the physical wear and tear of something (breaking down) and the emotional state (overstrain).

In the latter case, the expression is rather rigidly attached to the conversational stylistic layer, while the first value can be used even in the terminological function.

The cohesion of a phraseological unit allows it to undergo word-formative processes, such as affixation. The phraseological unit brain-trust is formed by addind -er to a brain-truster and single-rhymer. However, unlike a word, the phraseological unit in speech can vary more strongly, allowing grammatical changes of components within a fixed form. This is especially clear when the phraseological units have a verb component: I ground my teeth; he was grinding his teeth; let her grind her teeth then, etc. The changes are also possible in the adjective components, although they are less frequent and give additional expressiveness to the phraseological units: You are the coolest cucumber I've ever met. In this way, phraseological units are functionally and semantically similar to words, although formally they are word combinations.

As a result, a phraseological unit is a non-semantic word combination associated with semantic unity. Such unity is not created in speech, but is reproduced in a ready-made form (not modeled) and functions as a single member of a sentence. Minor variations in the structure of a phraseological unit do not affect these basic features.

In spite of their non-modeledness, the phraseological units are quite clearly distributed by the types of structures that form them. First and foremost, they are phraseological units that coincide in form with corresponding free phrases (take silk; break the ice, etc.). The second group consists of compositional structures (pick and choose; lick and promise; rain or shine; light to darkness; for love or money; by hook or by crook; etc.). The third group consists of phraseological units with predictive structure (as the matter stands; before you could say Jack Robinson; as the crow flies). The third group consists of predicative units (as the matter stands; before you could say Jack Robinson; as the crow flies). It is adjoined by phraseological units of imperative mood character (Take it easy! Draw it mild! Bless my soul! Take your time; etc.), and also units of comparative character (as dead as a door-nail; as mad as a hatter; etc.). Several peculiar structures are single-peer structures, consisting of one full-figure and one or more function words (behind the scenes; in the blood; for good), and verb-positive phraseological units, which are on the border of the phraseological fund (to bear up; to give in; etc.).

According to the classification offered by A.V. Kunin, phraseological units form two main groups according to the nature of their functioning in speech. Nominative units refer to objects, phenomena, signs and may have different structure (a bitter pill to swallow; a wolf in a sheep clothing; a cock-and-bull story; to stir up a hornets' nest; much cry and little wool; to call a spade a spade; etc.). Nominative-communicative phraseological units perform functions of speech enhancement and frequently are close to interjections, despite a variety of structural types (as hell; birds of a feather; this cat won't jump; the fat's in the fire; etc.) [14, p. 27].

The topic of national and cultural specifics is quite traditional for research in the field of phraseology. Over the years, studies on phraseology (especially if they were carried out within the framework of traditional linguistics) have argued that the phraseological units are national specific units of language, accumulating the cultural capacity of the people. This topic was studied by such scientists as A.A. Vezhbitskaya, V.N. Telia, V.A. Maslova and others. V.N. Telia writes that the phraseological composition of language is a "mirror" in which the linguistic-cultural community identifies its national identity, namely the phraseological units impose a special vision of the world and situations on native speakers [13, p. 34].

Different linguistic communities, using different tools of conceptualization, form different pictures of the world, which are essentially the basis of national cultures. V.A. Maslova notes that the true preservers of culture are texts. Not a language, but a text reflects a person's spiritual world.

It is the text that is directly related to culture, because it is permeated with a multitude of cultural codes, it is the text that stores information about history, ethnography, national psychology, national behavior, that is, everything that constitutes the content of culture. Besides direct associations, text is a set of specific signals, which automatically evoke from the reader, brought up in the traditions of this culture, a large number of indirect ones. In its turn, the rules of text construction depend on the context of the culture in which it appears. The text is created from linguistic units of lower levels, which at the appropriate choice can amplify the cultural signal. Such units are first of all phraseological units.

V. A. Maslova believes that: "phraseological units, reflecting in their semantics the long process of development of people's culture, record and transmit from generation to generation cultural attitudes and stereotypes, standards and archetypes" [9, p. 80]. When considering the phraseology, the researcher made the following hypotheses:

1) Most of the phraseologies have "traces" of national culture that should be identified;

2) cultural information is maintained in the internal form of phraseological unit, which is a figurative representation of the world and gives cultural and national color to phraseology;

3) The main thing when identifying cultural-national specificity is to open the cultural-national connotation.

"Phraseology is a fragment of the linguistic picture of the world. Phraseological units always address the subject, i.e., they emerge not so much in order to describe the world as to interpret, evaluate and express subjective attitude towards it" [9, p.84].

In the study of national specifics D. O. Dobrovolsky identifies two approaches. The first approach is called comparative, in which the national-cultural specificity of one language is determined in relation to another language. The second approach is introspective, in which the national specificity of a language is considered through the eyes of its speakers, i.e. self-examination, self-observation.

In a comparative approach, all the facts of language 1 with respect to language 2 that seem non-trivial in terms of traditional folk culture from the perspective of language 2 (and the corresponding culture) are considered specific. At the same time, it is not significant that many of the facts highlighted as specific may also occur in other languages (cultures).

The introspective approach is based on the idea that there are "immanent" national cultural characteristics without regard to the specifics of other languages and cultures. The task of the study is formulated as a search for an answer to the question, what is the national specificity of a language 1 through the eyes of its speakers. The most adequate research methods in this case are a survey of informants and various tests aimed at finding out the attitude of native speakers to the relevant linguistic facts. So, the signal of "immanent" national specificity can be the opinion about inappropriateness of this statement in the mouth of the foreigner.

In comparative analysis, one of the most important criteria is the erectability of the established interlinguistic differences to the specifics of the respective cultures, while the introspective approach implies a reference to the intuition of native speakers, characterizing some phenomena as their own and only their own, that is, strictly national. The phenomena selected as specific on the basis of the comparative approach may not coincide with the circle of phenomena selected on the basis of the introspective approach, but may even have no points of contact with it [5, p. 62].

Cultural connotations are a very essential component in phraseology. The cultural connotation of idioms is determined by the values of a certain culture. This is what is specific to a particular nation or culture. Cultural connotation arises as a result of interpretation of associative-like base of phraseological units by correlating it with cultural-national stereotypes [3, p. 55]. As a consequence,

we reveal their cultural and national meaning and character of phraseological units that construct time and are characterized, depending on cultural value, as positive and negative, are constructed in a language with a certain connotation. For instance, phraseology to toil and moil, where "toil" often has a negative connotation and is associated with something long, slow, stretched in time, and has the Russian equivalent of "pulling the strap". Thus, it is the cultural connotation that gives cultural significance to the phraseological unit and even to the whole text. In A.A. Vezbitskaya's opinion, the means of transmission of this cultural connotation are the key words, which are in the center of phraseology. By forming certain properties central to some cultural area and functioning in this capacity in phraseology, the key words "can lead us to the core of the whole complex of cultural values and attitudes" [7, p. 38]. Analyzing the above, we come to the conclusion that phraseologies are carriers of culturally-national information. Phraseological units preserve and reproduce the mentality of the people and their culture.

Since phraseology is connected with a stereotype, then it is phraseology that is the means of expressing this stereotype, which is connected with a certain representation or image expressed in this phraseology. In cognitive linguistics and ethnolinguistics the term stereotype refers to the content side of language and culture, i.e. it is understood as a mental stereotype that is associated with the linguistic picture of the world. In E.V. Bartminsky's case the language picture of the world and the language stereotype are treated as a part and whole, and the language stereotype is understood as "a judgment or several judgments related to a certain object of the extra-linguistic world, subjectively deterministic representation of the subject, in which descriptive and evaluation characteristics coexist and which is the result of interpretation of reality within the framework of socially developed cognitive models". [16, c.58].

A language stereotype is not only a judgment or a few judgments, but also any stable expression consisting of several words, for example, Indian summer - Indian summer – бабье лето, and whole hour - битый час. The use of such stereotypes facilitates and simplifies communication, saving the power of communicators. In addition, they reflect in their semantics the long process of development of people's culture, convey national character, historical and cultural flavor. We can learn a great deal about the way of life, the mentality of the people, based on the inner form of a linguistic unit. In other words, a phraseological unit is shaped through a stereotype. Nevertheless, the reverse process may also occur when a stereotype is formed through a phraseological unit. For example, let's take the phraseology of a "humpty tomb will correct". Perceiving this structure, a stereotype is formed in our consciousness that a bad person can't be changed, he will never be corrected.

While interpreting phraseological units on the basis of correlation of their figurative perceptions with stereotypes reflecting folk mentality, we reveal their cultural and national meaning and character, which is the content of national and cultural connotation.

In conclusion, the reflection of stereotypes in phraseology is expressed very vividly, as only together, associating images with concepts, meaning, we can reveal cultural and national significance of the expression [17].

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