



Phraseological units and their types in the English language

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ABSTRACT

Phraseological units are considered a subsystem of language. Phraseological units cannot be freely made up in speech but are reproduced as ready-made units. The lexical components in phraseological units are stable and they are non-motivated i.e its meaning cannot be deduced from the meaning of its components and they do not allow their lexical components to be changed or substituted.

Keywords:

Phraseology, fusions, classification

Introduction

The phraseology in English, their types and the problem of translation of phraseological units.

The main purpose of the article is to study the general types of phraseological units as a constituent part of the English vocabulary, to examine phraseological units, idioms and the problems of translation.

In order to achieve the set aim we are to determine the following tasks:

1. To consider the phraseology as a system of language.
2. To study the types of phraseological units, idioms and their classifications.
3. To research the problems of translation of phraseological units.

Phraseological Unit

A.V. Koonin classified phraseological units according to the way they are formed. He pointed out primary and secondary ways of forming phraseological units. Primary ways of forming phraseological units are those when a unit is formed on the basis of a free word-group :

a) Most productive in Modern English is the formation of phraseological units by means of transferring the meaning of terminological word-groups, *For example*. in cosmic technique we can point out the following phrases: «launching pad» in its terminological meaning is «uchish maydoni», in its transferred meaning – “yuborish manzili”, «to link up» -«aloqa o’rnatmoq» in its tranformed meaning it means –«tanishmoq»;

b) A large group of phraseological units was formed from free word groups by transforming their meaning, *For example*. «granny farm» -«qarilar pansionati» «Trojan horse» - «kompyuter uchun dastur»

c) Phraseological units can be formed by means of alliteration, *For example*. «a sad sack» - «baxtsiz voqea» «culture vulture» - «san’atga ishqiboz odam»;

d) They can be formed by means of expressiveness; especially it is characteristic for forming interjections, *For example*. «My aunt!», «Hear, hear!» etc;

e) They can be formed by means of distorting a word group, *For example*. «odds and ends» was formed from «odd ends»;

f) They can be formed by using archaisms, *For example*. «in brown study» means «in gloomy meditation» where both components preserve their archaic meanings;

g) They can be formed by using a sentence in a different sphere of life, *For example*. «that cock won't fight» can be used as a free word-group when it is used in sports (cock fighting), it becomes a phraseological unit when it is used in everyday life, because it is used metaphorically,

h) They can be formed when we use some unreal image, *For example*. «to have butterflies in the stomach» -«xavotir olmoq», «to have green fingers» -«bog'bonlik qo'lidan kelmoq» etc.

i) They can be formed by using expressions of writers or politicians in everyday life, *For example*. «corridors of power» (Snow), «American dream» (Alby) «locust years» (Churchil), «the winds of change» (M. Millan).

Secondary ways of forming phraseological units are those when a phraseological unit is formed on the basis of another phraseological unit; they are:

a) Conversion, *For example*. «to vote with one's feet» was converted into «vote with one's feet»;

grammar form, *For example*. «Make hay while the sun shines» is transferred into a verbal phrase -«to make hay while the sun shines»;

c) Analogy, *For example*. «Curiosity killed the cat» was transferred into «Care killed the cat»;

d) Contrast, *For example*. «cold surgery» - «a planned before operation» was formed by contrasting it with «acute surgery», «thin cat» - «a poor person» was formed by contrasting it with «fat cat»;

e) Shortening of proverbs or sayings *For example*: from the proverb «You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear» by means of clipping the middle of it the phraseological unit «to make a sow's ear» was formed with the meaning «xato qilmoq» (ошибаться).

f) Borrowing phraseological units from other languages, either as translation loans, *For example*. «living space» (German), «to take the bull by the horns» (Latin) or by means of

phonetic borrowings «meche blanche» (French), «corpse d'elite» (French), «sotto voice» (Italian) etc.

Phraseological units can be classified according to the degree of motivation of their meaning. This classification was suggested by acad. V.V. Vinogradov for Russian phraseological units. He pointed out three types of phraseological units:

a) Fusions where the degree of motivation is very low, we cannot guess the meaning of the whole from the meanings of its components, they are highly idiomatic and cannot be translated word for word into other languages, *For example*. on Shank's mare - (on foot), at sixes and sevens - (in a mess) etc.

Phraseological fusions are such units which are completely non motivated word groups; *For example*. to kick the bucket to get one's goat, to show the white feather. In these word groups the meaning of the whole expressions is not derived from the meaning of components.

b) Unities where the meaning of the whole can be guessed from the meanings of its components, but it is transferred (metaphorical or metonymical), *For example*. To play the first fiddle (to be a leader in something), old salt (experienced sailor) etc. Phraseological units: the meaning of such word-groups can be perceived through the metaphorical meaning of the whole phraseological unit or the meaning of which maybe seen as a metaphorical transference of the meaning of the word group: *For example*. to show one's teeth, to know the way the wind blows, to stand to one's guns, to take care of;

c) Collocations where words are combined in their original meaning but their combinations are different in different languages, *For example*: cash and carry - (self-service shop), in a big way (in great degree) etc. Phraseological collocations include motivated relatively stable word groups. They have a certain degree of stability; *For example*.: to take an interest, to fall in love, to look through one's fingers, meet the demand etc.

Thus, at present the term «phraseological unit» is usually used not to all set expressions but only to those which are completely or partially non-motivated.

Prof N. Amasova gives two categories of phraseological units depending on whether just one component or both are used in phraseologically bound meaning. If all the components have idiomatic meaning such phraseological units are called «idioms», *For example*: to toe the line (to do exactly as one is told), a free lance (a person who acts independently). If one of the components has bound specialized meaning dependent on the second component she called «phrasemes».

For example. dutch courage (courage given by drink), to bring to book (to bring to justice), small years (in the childhood), small beers (weak beer).

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 points out two-top units which he compares with compound words because in compound words we usually have two root morphemes [5, 20].

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

a) units of the type «to give up» (verb + postposition type), *For example*. to art up, to back up, to drop out, to nose out, to buy into, to sandwich in etc.;

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», *For example*. to be tired of, to be interested in, to be surprised at etc. There are also units in this type which remind free word-groups of the type «to be young», *For example*. to be akin to, to be aware of etc.

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. 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, *For example* on the doorstep (quite near), on the nose (exactly), in the course of, on the stroke of, in time, on the point of etc. In the course of time such units can become words, *For example*: tomorrow, instead etc.

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

a) Attributive-nominal such as: a month of Sundays, grey matter, a millstone round one's neck and many others. Units of this type are noun equivalents and can be partly or perfectly idiomatic. In partly idiomatic units (phrasisms) sometimes the first component is idiomatic, *For example*. high road, in other cases the second component is idiomatic, *For example*: first night. In many cases both components are idiomatic, *For example*. red tape, blind alley, bed of nail, shot in the arm and many others.

b) Verb-nominal phraseological units, *For example*: to read between the lines , to speak BBC, to sweep under the carpet etc. The grammar centre of such units is the verb, the semantic centre in many cases is the nominal component, *For example*. to fall in love. In some units the verb is both the grammar and the semantic centre, *For example*: not to know the ropes. These units can be perfectly idiomatic as well, *For example*: to burn one's boats ,to vote with one's feet, to take to the cleaners' etc.

Very close to such units are word-groups of the type to have a glance, to have a smoke. These units are not idiomatic and are treated in grammar as a special syntactical combination, a kind of aspect.

c) Phraseological repetitions, such as: now or never, part and parcel, country and western etc. Such units can be built on antonyms, *For example* ups and downs, back and forth; often they are formed by means of alliteration, e.g. 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, *For example* cool as a cucumber (partly), bread and butter (perfectly).

Phraseological Fusions

In phraseological fusions the degree of motivation is very low, we cannot guess the meaning of the whole from the meanings of its components, they are highly idiomatic and cannot be translated word for word into other languages, e.g. to pull one's leg (to deceive); at sixes and sevens (in confusion); a mare's nest (a discovery which turns out to be false or worthless); to show the white feather (to show cowardice); to ride the high horse (to put on airs).

Phraseological fusions are the most idiomatic of all the kinds of phraseological units.

Phraseological fusions are equivalents of words: fusions as well as unities form a syntactical whole in analysis.

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c) Prepositional - nominal phraseological units. 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, e.g. on the doorstep (quite near), on the nose (exactly), in the course of on the stroke of, in time, on the point of etc. In the course of time such units can become words, e.g. tomorrow, instead etc.

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Very close to such units are word-groups of the type to have a glance, to have a smoke. These units are not idiomatic and are treated in grammar as a special syntactical combination, a kind of aspect. Phraseological repetitions, such as: now or never, part and parcel country and western etc. Such units can be built on antonyms, e.g. ups and downs, back and forth; often they are formed by means of alliteration, e.g. 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, e.g. 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), e.g. to take a back seat, a peg to hang a thing on, lock, stock and barrel, to be a shadow of one's own self, at one's own sweet will. Phraseological units can be classified as parts of speech (syntactical classification).. This classification was suggested by I.V. Arnold. Here we have the following groups:

a) Noun phraseologisms denoting an object, a person, a living being, e.g. bullet train, latchkey child, redbrick university, Green Berets.

b) Verb phraseologisms denoting an action, a state, a feeling, e.g. to break the log-jam, to get on somebody's coat tails, to be on the beam, to nose out, to make headlines.

c) Adjective phraseologisms denoting a quality, e.g. loose as a 'goose, dull as lead.

d) Adverb phraseological units, such as: with a bump, in the soup, like a dream, like a dog with two tails.

e) Preposition phraseological units, e.g. in the course of, on the stroke of

f) Interjection phraseological units, e.g. «Catch me!», «Well, I never!» etc.

There is one more type of combinations, also rigid and introduced into discourse ready-made but different from all the types given above in so far as it is impossible to find its equivalent among the parts of speech. These are formulas used as complete utterances and syntactically shaped like sentences, such as the well-known American maxim Keep smiling, Keep your chin up! or British Keep Britain tidy Arnold I.V. ¹A.I. Smirnitsky was the first among Russian scholars who paid attention to' sentences that can be treated as complete formulas, such as How do you do? Or I beg your pardon; it takes all kinds to make the world; can the leopard change his spots? They differ from all the combinations so far discussed because they are not equivalent to words in distribution and are semantically analyze [13, 44]. The formulas discussed by N. N. Amosova are on the contrary semantically specific, e.g. save your breath 'shut up' or tell it to the marines (one of the suggested, origins is tell that to the horse marines; such a corps being

non-existent, as marines are sea-going force, the last expression means 'tell it to someone who does not exist because real people will not believe it') very often such formulas, formally identical to sentences, are in reality used only as insertions into other sentences: the cap fits 'the statement is true'(e.g. "He called me a liar." - "Well, you should know if the cup fits.") Cf. also: Butter would not melt in his mouth; His bark is worse than his bite.

And one more point: free word combinations can never be polysemantic, while there are polysemantic phraseological units, e.g.

To be on the go
To be busy and active
To be leaving
To be tipsy
To be near one's end
Have done with
Make an end of
Give up
Reach the end of

Two types of synonymy are typical of phraseological units:

Synonymy of phraseological units that do not contain any synonymous words and are based on different images, e.g.

To leave no stone unturned = to move heaven and earth

To haul down colours = to ground arms

In free word combinations synonymy is based on the synonymy of particular words (an old man = elderly man).

Phraseological units have word synonyms:
To make up one's mind = to decide

To haul down colours = to surrender

American and English dictionaries of unconventional English, slang and idioms and other highly valuable reference books contain a wealth of proverbs, saying, various lexical units of all kinds, but as a rule do not seek to lay down a reliable criterion to distinguish between variable word-groups and phraseological units. Paradoxical as it may seem the first dictionary in which theoretical principles for the selection of English phraseological units were elaborated was published in our country. It should be recalled that the first attempt to place the study of

various word-groups on a scientific basis was made by the outstanding Russian linguist A.A.Schachmatov in his world-famous book Syntax. Schachmatov's work was continued by Academician V.V. Vinogradov whose approach to phraseology is discussed below. Investigation of English phraseology was initiated in our country by pro. A.V. Koonin.

Attempts have been made to approach the problem of phraseology in different ways. Up till now, however, there is a certain divergence of opinion as to the essential feature of phraseological units as distinguished from other word- groups and the nature of phrases that can be properly termed phraseological units. The complexity of the problem may be largely accounted for by the fact that the border-line between free or variable word-groups and phraseological units is not clearly defined.

Conclusion: Translation has played a role throughout history any time there has been an intersection of two cultures and languages. And each time one culture has produced a written text, translators serve as the bridge that allows literate members of one culture to be exposed to the written material the other has produced. A lot of scholars and translators made their contribution in the progress and developing of translation, however, a lot of them, especially ancient translators, have often remained unknown or in the background and the credit due to them have not been acknowledged. They have done their job with painstaking efforts despite many violent conflicts that have dotted throughout history. Because of skilled translators and their ability to bridge two languages, today we have access to texts as varied as the richly detailed novels of Walter Scott, Victor Hugo and of others great writers, scholarly articles, instruction manuals, and pamphlets for non-native Romanian or other languages speakers about health resources. Each of these examples is made possible because of the craft of translation whose history dates back to the first intersection of two cultures with written texts. To sum up, translation history is rich in inventions and theories. Each era is characterized by the

appearance of new theorists and fields of research in translation.

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