PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF MODERN ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses Pragmatic functions of the phraseological units of modern English, its history and development paths, as well as different types of phraseological units. One of the most debatable problems in modern phraseology is the problem of functioning of phraseological units (PU). The results of studying the basic pragmatic functions of phraseological units in modern English are provided in this paper. The theoretical background of the research is based on the phrase logical concept introduced by. A. V. Kunin. The research is carried out on the language material extracted from modern lexicographic sources.

KEYWORDS: English; phraseology; phraseological units; pragmatic functions.

INTRODUCTION

The main method of extraction of phraseological units out of a language continuum and their semantic analysis is the method of phrase logical identification that was introduced by Professor A.V. Kunin, the founder of the English phraseology as a branch of linguistic science and as a self-contained linguistic discipline. A set of non-paradigmal methods and techniques of linguistics is employed as additional methods of the research, including a descriptive method with its procedures, and methods of the phrase logical, definitional and contextual analysis. The importance of the research consists in its evident result, id est: it has been shown that all the functions of phraseological units considered in the article – stylistic, cumulative, directive, evaluative, summarizing, text building functions – are basic, or normative, functions, but not occasional ones. The research leads to the conclusion that phraseological units are most actively utilized in the evaluative and in stylistic functions, and both of these functions are often combined in discourse. As to the cumulative and directive functions, their quantitative share in discourse is relatively small. Phraseology – this study is fairly recent. Terminology isn't yet fixed. Opinions differ, how this part of speech can be defined and classified. Phraseological unit – a stable group of words, characterized by completely or partially transferred meaning. Phraseological units, or idioms, are described in numerous Eng dictionaries (The Oxford dictionary of idioms, the Collin's, the Longman dict of Idioms). The idiomatic units are colorful, because of linguistic curiosity. Researching to idioms has shown that they have important roles in writing and spoken E. They can appear in informal speech and formal style. Phraseological units referred to lg universals (affixation, compounding), because every lg has phrases, word groups that are ready-made, stable and idiomatic. It means that they are not created in speech, but are introduced as fixed or set expressions. Their meaning cannot be deduced from the literal meaning of the constituent parts ("a snake in the grass" – hidden danger).

Features that characterize the Phraseological units:

1) they are ready-made
2) stable in structure
3) idiomatic or transferred meaning
4) colorful expressive
5) stylistically marked.

Ways of understanding:

1) narrow
2) Wide (presupposes that numerous proverbs, sayings are included into phraseology).

Problems of studying phrasal units:

1) the problem of the adequate term and its definition,
2) the problem of the lg material, which is referred to domain of phraseology,
3) The problem of the classification of the lg material.

Idiom – an expression unique to a lg, esp one whose sense are not predictable from the meaning of arrangement of its element.

Fixed/ set expression – stability of lexical components and gram structure.

Collocation (by Crystal) – a habitual association between particular words, such as "to and fro", "white coffee, "green with envy". They cannot be predicted by the knowledge of the word.

Cliché (by Crystal) – a stereotyped expression, a common place phrase: "fair sex", "much over muchnesss", "from time in memories".

Vinogradov's classification of phras units:

- фразеологические сращения (phraseological fusions); - "to kick the bucket — сыграть в ящик", "red tape".
- фразеологические единства (Phraseological units) – "an old bird", "Achilles' heel";
- фразеологические сочетания (Phraseological collocations) – "white coffee", to take smb for granted, to take advantage of.

Coonin's classification of phras units:

- partially transferred (если хотя бы 1 слово – с прямым значением) – Hobson's choice, to drink like a lord, to eat like a horse,
- Completely transferred – все слова в переносном значении – to burn one's finger, east or west home is best.

Types:

1) One-summit units: at large; be the way; by heart.
2) subordinate and coordinate word groups:
    a. substantives – "an old bird", "hot dog";
    b. Adjective – as good as gold, as cool as cucumber.
    c. Adverbial – at last, as quick as a flesh.
3) Structures with an embedded clause (a lexim + a clause). – Ships that pass in the night; to see how the land lies.
4) clause idioms (стр-ра придат предлож) – when pigs fly;
5) Nominative-communicative: to break the ice, to pass the rabicon.
6) Sentence idioms: birds of a feather flock together; if you run after 2 hares you will catch neither.
7) Interjectional sentence (эквивалент предлож). – By George, here here, oh God.

The point is that the problem of functioning of phraseological units is considered to be one of the most discussed problems in modern phraseology. The problem is of great importance for any language, and it is especially urgent for English as phraseological unit's present one of the intensive means of the development of the nominative system in that language, as having turned into an analytical one. The research is carried out on the language material extracted from modern lexicographic sources and from the British National Corpus. The main method of extraction of phraseological units out of the language continuum and their semantic analysis is the method of phraseological identification that was introduced by Professor A.V. Kunin (1970: 38), an outstanding Soviet linguist, founder of the English phraseology as a branch of linguistic and as a self-contained linguistic discipline. Practically, any text is characterized by its inborn pragmatic function, which, in its turn, has an irresistible impact on the phraseology employed by the author. On the other hand, phraseological units themselves are characterized by their powerful inborn influential value which cannot but intensify the pragmatic force of the text and of the context as part of the text.

THE STYLISTIC FUNCTION

After A.V. Kunin, we maintain that ―the stylistic function is a special – in compares on with the neutral way of expression –purposefulness of language means aiming to achieve a stylistic effect alongside with preservation of the general intellectual content of the statement‖ (Kunin, 1996: 115).The stylistic function appeals to and awakens the connotative potential of idioms and other phraseological units in speech. And in the language, as one might agree with A.V. Kunin, there only exists stylistic colourig. As a rule, the hint of that colouring is made by means of stylistic notes and supplementary remarks in dictionaries. Besides, there is one more means that helps to reveal a PU stylistic colouring, and that is a comparison of the idiom or any other set expression with its variable prototype.

THE CUMULATIVE FUNCTION

The cumulative function presents one of the main instances and mechanisms in the economy of language means. And that function appears to be one of the leading functions that are inherent in such communicative phraseological units as proverbs, because they generalize the life and cultural memory of people: Art is long, life is short; Life is not all beer and skittles; Evil communications corrupt good manners; Distance lends enchantment to the view; A stitch in time saves nine, etc., e.g.:

Phraseological units having a negative evaluative function are as follows: a skeleton in the cupboard – a source of embarrassment and shame to a family, which is kept secret from stranger's verbal diarrhea – coll. compulsive talk activeness blot on smb 'escutcheons – smb. Who, or smth. Which, brings dishonor or discredit upon a family or other group a wolf in sheep's clothing – a person who appears to be friendly, or harmless, but is really an enemy or evil-doer dig a pit forms. – contrive to trap, or trick, smb. or(through miscarriage or mismanagement of one's plans) oneself have a finger in every pie – take a meddlesome interest in many affairs bark up the wrong tree – to accuse or blame the wrong person lick smb's boots – behave in a servile, toadying way to smb. One hopes to please or conciliate esp smb. ranking as one's superior or smb. Whom one fears sow the dragon's teeth – do smith. … That causes future trouble, dissension, warfare etc the prodigal son – someone who returns home after a long absence, and is received with great joy by his family despite his past behavior

THE SUMMARIZING FUNCTION

The summarizing function of an idiom and any other phraseological unit may be

Interpreted as the ability of that language sign to fulfill the role of a brisk recitative

description, a kind of an outline or a digest of the statement going before, e.g.: That's that with the meaning of ―it is permanently settled and need not to be dealt with again‖ (Spears, 1991: 327); That's the ticket with the meaning of ―that is exactly what is needed‖ (Ibid.); That ain't hay with the meaning of ―that is not a small amount of money‖ (Ibid.); The fat is in the fire meaning ―serious trouble has 'broken out‖ (Ibid.); The coast is clear meaning ―there is no visible danger‖ (Ibid.); for instance:

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