

COGNITIVE MODELING IN PHRASEOLOGY

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Annotation: This article investigates phraseological units as cognitively structured and dynamically evolving semantic formations within the framework of cognitive-hierarchical modeling. The study is grounded in the analysis of indirect nomination and its ontological, nominative-functional, communicative-functional, and pragmatic dimensions. Special attention is given to the mechanisms of imagery formation in phraseological units and their development within the natural evolution of phraseology, including the transition from semantic discreteness to phraseological coherence, from coherence to variability, periodic transformation, and the emergence of new phraseological units.

Keywords: phraseology; cognitive modeling; phraseological units; indirect nomination; cognitive linguistics; hierarchical modeling; figurative language; pragmatic level; discourse adaptation; semantic dynamics; metaphor and metonymy; communicative-functional classification

Introduction

A deep semantic analysis of figurative phraseological units requires a comprehensive study of the linguistic foundations of indirect nomination, including its ontological, nominative-functional, communicative-functional, and pragmatic dimensions. Deductive reasoning also plays a crucial role in modeling the semantic structure of phraseological units. This study examines the mechanisms of imagery formation in phraseological units within the context of the natural development of phraseology. In particular, the following evolutionary stages are identified:

- transition from semantic discreteness to phraseological coherence;
- transition from phraseological coherence to phraseological variability;
- periodic transformation of phraseological units;
- emergence of new phraseological units.

From this perspective, the phraseological system of any language is understood as a dynamic structure in constant development and renewal, consisting of multiple semantic and functional layers.

Methods. The methodological framework of the study is based on a cognitive-hierarchical modeling approach to phraseological units. This model builds on the three-level hierarchical system proposed by D.O. Dobrovolsky, to which a fourth level — the pragmatic level — is added in this study. Hierarchical model of phraseological units: Lexical-syntactic level Determines the position of phraseological units in speech based on traditional part-of-speech classification. Nominative-functional level Identifies the descriptive meaning of a phraseological unit, its naming function, and its semantic characterization based on hyperonymic structures. Communicative-functional level Defines the communicative classes of phraseological units. The theoretical foundation of this typology is linked to the works of D.O. Dobrovolsky, N.D. Arutyunova, and Yu.S. Stepanov, who argue that the lexicon of any natural language is structured around a fundamental dichotomy: nominations vs. predicates. Pragmatic level (authorial extension) This level analyzes: variability in the component structure of phraseological units, contextual adaptability in real discourse, enrichment of the phraseological system, formation and renewal of new phraseological units. It enables the study of phraseological units as adaptive and context-sensitive discourse phenomena.

Results. 1. Lexical-syntactic classification of phraseological units. Phraseological units are classified into the following groups:

1) Verbal phraseologisms

Examples: to play a leading role, to be unlucky. Their syntactic functions in discourse:

Predicate: He played the leading role in this society.

Subject: Playing the leading role in this society was easy for him.

Attribute: His wish to play the leading role came true.

2) Adverbial phraseological units

Examples: off the cuff (without preparation), face to face (in private, directly)

3) Stable comparisons

Example: like a picture of misery

4) Paired constructions

Examples: with great difficulty, fifty-fifty

5) Substantive phraseological units

Examples: golden rule, old friend

6) Pronominal phraseological units

Examples: this and that

7) Interjectional phraseological units



Examples: Good heavens!, Oh my God!

8) Sentence-equivalent phraseological units (proverbs and sayings). Examples:

The apple does not fall far from the tree

There is a mess we are in!

2. Grammatical and cognitive classification

Rejecting the traditional part-of-speech-based classification opens a new stage in the grammatical interpretation of phraseological units. Grammatically dominant nouns or verbs may perform different functional roles:

Verbal idioms may express qualitative attributes;

Nominal idioms may function as predicates. Examples:

воды не замутит — a quiet, harmless person

травленый волк — an experienced person

Sentence-form idioms: куры не клюют — a very large amount

Grammatically differentiated classes

Names of objects (artifacts and natural entities): адамово яблоко — Adam's apple

Processual names: бить баклужи — to idle, loaf around

Attribute-denoting expressions: на всех парах — at full speed

Structural-functional expressions: по меньшей мере — at least

Text-forming expressions (clichés). These include discourse markers and fixed formulas.

The term cliché (from French, meaning “mold” or “ready-made form”) refers to expressions that are: frequently used, stylistically neutral and standardized, lacking expressive novelty, discursively conventional. Examples:

The future of our country is in the hands of youth.

Knowledge is invaluable wealth.

Independence is the greatest blessing.

Knowledge is light, ignorance is darkness.

Interjection-type idioms. This class is based on the communicative-functional approach, where the primary criterion is meaning rather than form.

Discussion. The results demonstrate that phraseological units are not merely lexical or grammatical constructs, but cognitively modeled semantic structures. They arise through mechanisms of indirect nomination, are shaped by metaphorical and metonymic cognitive mapping, undergo pragmatic transformation in discourse, renew themselves in response to communicative and discursive needs. The proposed four-level hierarchical model (lexical-



syntactic, nominative-functional, communicative-functional, pragmatic) enables the interpretation of phraseology as a multilayered cognitive system. The inclusion of the pragmatic level is especially significant, as it reveals the adaptive, dynamic, and discourse-driven nature of phraseological units, conceptualizing them not as static linguistic units but as dynamic discursive constructs.

Conclusion. This study has demonstrated that phraseological units constitute not merely fixed lexical combinations but complex, cognitively structured, and dynamically evolving semantic formations. Through the application of a four-level hierarchical model (lexical-syntactic, nominative-functional, communicative-functional, and pragmatic), phraseology has been conceptualized as a multi-layered cognitive system rather than a static inventory of idiomatic expressions.

Overall, the proposed cognitive-hierarchical framework provides a theoretically grounded and methodologically flexible model for the analysis of phraseology across languages. It offers perspectives for future research in comparative phraseology, discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and pragmatics, and may serve as a productive foundation for interdisciplinary studies of figurative language and conceptual systems.

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