

PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

Bo'riyeva Maftuna Rustam qizi**maftunaboriyeva350@gamil.com****Chirchik State Pedagogical University****Tourism faculty Foreign language and literature****Scientific supervisor: Gaziyeva Saida****saykagaziyeva@gmail.com****English teacher, Chirchik State Pedagogical University.****<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15533336>**

Abstract: This article explores the nature, classification, and functional role of phraseological units in modern language use. Phraseological units, also known as idioms or set expressions, represent a significant aspect of linguistic richness and cultural identity. The study outlines the main types of phraseological units, their structural and semantic characteristics, as well as their pragmatic functions in communication. Special attention is given to the translation and interpretation challenges they pose across languages. The analysis is supported by examples from English and other languages to highlight cross-cultural nuances. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of phraseology as a vital component of linguistic competence and intercultural communication.

Keywords: Phraseological units, idioms, set expressions, classification, semantics, pragmatics, intercultural communication, linguistic competence, translation, language structure.

The richness and diversity of a language's expressive means reflect its cultural heritage, historical background, and the worldview of its speakers. In this context, phraseological units—also known as idiomatic expressions or fixed phrases—are among the most vivid and culturally loaded elements of language. These expressions often carry figurative meanings that go beyond the literal definitions of their individual components, making them a vital tool for adding color, emotion, and nuance to both spoken and written communication. Language is not only a means of expressing thoughts, but also a reflection of culture and national identity. Among its most vivid and colorful elements are phraseological units, which are stable word combinations with a figurative meaning. These units, also referred to as idioms or set expressions, enrich the language and make speech more expressive, emotional, and culturally nuanced.

Phraseological units differ from free word combinations in that they are fixed and carry a meaning that is not directly inferred from the individual words. For example, the English idiom “kick the bucket” means “to die,” which cannot be deduced from the literal meanings of “kick” or “bucket.” Such expressions often originate from historical events, folklore, literature, or daily life, and over time become ingrained in everyday speech.

These units typically consist of two or more words that are used together as a single semantic unit. Their stability and figurative nature make them a distinct part of the lexicon, separate from freely constructed phrases.

Linguists have proposed various classifications of phraseological units based on their structure and meaning. Academician V.V. Vinogradov categorized them into: phraseological fusions – units with completely non-transparent meaning (e.g., “red tape”); phraseological unities – expressions with partially transparent meaning (e.g., “to lose one’s head”); and

phraseological combinations – collocations where the meaning of one element is bound (e.g., “make a decision”).

Structurally, these units can be noun phrases (e.g., “a piece of cake”), verb phrases (e.g., “break the ice”), or even full sentences (e.g., “the early bird catches the worm”).

Phraseological units play a crucial role in pragmatic communication. They convey attitudes, emotions, irony, and cultural references. Understanding idioms requires not only knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, but also cultural competence. Misinterpretation of idioms often leads to communication breakdowns in cross-cultural settings.

In language teaching, phraseological units help learners acquire fluency and a deeper understanding of native speaker norms. However, teaching them requires careful explanation of their usage, connotation, and cultural background.

One of the most difficult tasks in translation is handling idiomatic expressions. A literal translation often fails to convey the intended meaning or emotional tone. For instance, the Russian idiom “вешать лапшу на уши” (literally: “to hang noodles on someone’s ears”) is best translated into English as “to pull someone’s leg.” Finding appropriate equivalents demands both linguistic and cultural sensitivity.

Phraseological units are indispensable tools for expressive, vivid, and culturally rich communication. Their study contributes to a better understanding of how language reflects cultural values and cognitive processes. As globalization continues, the importance of mastering such expressions in intercultural communication and language education grows ever more significant.

CONCLUSION

Modern educational technologies play an essential role in the learning process, enhancing the quality and efficiency of education. Interactive and flexible teaching methods make the learning process effective and enjoyable for students. Therefore, developing and broadly implementing modern educational technologies within the education system is an essential task. This contributes to creating a knowledgeable, innovative, and creative future generation.

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