

## INTERRELATED COMPONENTS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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### Abstract

Phraseological units are among the most complex and fascinating phenomena in linguistics. This article explores the interrelated components of phraseological units, focusing on their semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, and cultural interconnections. Using examples primarily from the English language, the study examines how individual components within a phraseological unit interact to create a unified idiomatic meaning that often differs significantly from the literal sum of its parts. The research highlights the stability of these components, their mutual influence, and the challenges they pose in language teaching and translation. The findings underscore the importance of understanding component interrelations for effective foreign language acquisition and cross-cultural communication.

**Keywords:** phraseological units, interrelated components, idiomatic expressions, semantics, syntax, pragmatics, English language, language teaching.

### Introduction

Phraseological units, also known as idioms, fixed expressions, or multi-word units, constitute an essential layer of any natural language. They reflect the cultural worldview, historical experience, and creative thinking of a nation. Unlike free word combinations, phraseological units are characterized by semantic unity and structural stability. The meaning of a phraseological unit is not simply the arithmetic sum of its components but emerges from their deep interrelation. The concept of “interrelated components” refers to the complex network of semantic, grammatical, pragmatic, and cultural connections that bind the elements of a phraseological unit together. This article aims to analyze these interconnections in English phraseological units and discuss their implications for language teaching, particularly for Uzbek students learning English as a foreign language.

### Theoretical Background

The study of phraseology has a rich history. Scholars such as V.V. Vinogradov, A.V. Kunin, N.N. Amosova, and Western linguists like John Sinclair and Michael McCarthy have made significant contributions to the field. Modern phraseology recognizes several types of phraseological units based on the degree of semantic fusion and structural fixedness:

- Idioms (full fusion) – e.g., “kick the bucket” (to die)
- Semi-idioms or collocations – e.g., “heavy rain”
- Phrasal verbs – e.g., “give up”
- Proverbs and sayings

The interrelatedness of components is what distinguishes phraseological units from ordinary phrases. Each component plays a specific role while contributing to the overall meaning and stability of the expression.

Types of Interrelations Between Components

### 1. Semantic Interrelation

The semantic connection is the most fundamental. Components lose their independent meanings and form a new holistic meaning. Example: “Break the ice” – The components “break” and “ice” metaphorically combine to mean “to initiate conversation in a tense or awkward situation.” Neither word alone conveys this social meaning. The interrelation creates a vivid metaphorical image rooted in cultural experience. Another example: “Piece of cake” – denotes something very easy. The sweetness and simplicity associated with cake transfer metaphorically to any effortless task.

### 2. Syntactic Interrelation

Phraseological units maintain a relatively fixed syntactic structure. Changing word order or grammatical forms often destroys the idiomatic meaning. Example: Correct: “She let the cat out of the bag.” (revealed a secret)

Incorrect: “She let the bag out of the cat.” This rigidity demonstrates strong syntactic interdependence among components.

### 3. Pragmatic Interrelation

Components are chosen and used according to context, speaker intention, and cultural norms. The same unit can carry different pragmatic loads depending on situation. Example: “Hit the nail on the head” is used when someone makes a precisely correct statement. Its pragmatic force lies in approval and recognition.

### 4. Cultural and Cognitive Interrelation

Many phraseological units are culture-specific. Their components are often drawn from national history, traditions, or everyday life. Example: “Burn the midnight oil” (work late into the night) reflects older practices of using oil lamps, showing historical-cultural linkage.

Analysis of English Phraseological Units. English is particularly rich in phraseological units due to its historical development and openness to borrowing. Consider the following examples:

1. “Spill the beans” – to reveal a secret. The components “spill” and “beans” have no literal connection to secrets. Their interrelation is based on an ancient Greek voting practice where beans were used as ballots.

2. “Cost an arm and a leg” – to be very expensive. The hyperbolic use of body parts emphasizes the high price one must “pay.”

3. “Under the weather” – feeling ill. This nautical expression links physical condition with atmospheric conditions, showing metaphorical mapping. In all these cases, the strength of component interrelation determines the unit’s stability and resistance to modification. For students of English as a foreign language, particularly in Uzbek higher education, understanding the interrelated components of phraseological units is crucial. Traditional teaching methods that focus only on memorization often fail to develop deep comprehension. Teachers should:

- Explain the literal vs. figurative meanings.
- Analyze the internal structure and component relationships.
- Use context-rich exercises.
- Compare English idioms with Uzbek equivalents where possible.
- Incorporate contrastive analysis to highlight cultural differences.

Effective mastery of phraseological units significantly improves learners’ communicative competence, fluency, and cultural awareness. Translating phraseological units presents serious difficulties because of the tight interrelation of components. Literal translation often leads to loss of meaning or awkwardness. Example: English “kick the bucket” – Uzbek “olamdan o’tmoq” or “ko’z

yummoq” (functional equivalents). Analysis of English Phraseological Units English is particularly rich in phraseological units due to its historical development and openness to borrowing. Consider the following examples: “Spill the beans” – to reveal a secret. The components “spill” and “beans” have no literal connection to secrets; their interrelation is based on an ancient Greek voting practice where beans were used as ballots. “Cost an arm and a leg” – to be very expensive. The hyperbolic use of body parts emphasizes the high price one must “pay.” “Under the weather” – feeling ill. This nautical expression links physical condition with atmospheric conditions, showing metaphorical mapping. In all these cases, the strength of component interrelation determines the unit’s stability and resistance to modification.

### **Implications for Language Teaching**

For students of English as a foreign language, particularly in Uzbek higher education, understanding the interrelated components of phraseological units is crucial. Traditional teaching methods that focus only on memorization often fail to develop deep comprehension. Teachers should explain the literal versus figurative meanings, analyze the internal structure and component relationships, use context-rich exercises, compare English idioms with Uzbek equivalents where possible, and incorporate contrastive analysis to highlight cultural differences. Effective mastery of phraseological units significantly improves learners’ communicative competence, fluency, and cultural awareness.

### **Challenges in Translation**

Translating phraseological units presents serious difficulties because of the tight interrelation of components. Literal translation often leads to loss of meaning or awkwardness. Strategies include finding equivalent idioms in the target language, using explanatory translation, or compensation through other expressive means. For example, English “kick the bucket” can be rendered in Uzbek as “olamdan o’tmoq” or “ko’z yummoq” (functional equivalents).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the interrelated components of phraseological units form a complex yet harmonious system that grants language its remarkable expressive power and cultural depth. Through semantic fusion, syntactic rigidity, pragmatic adaptability, and cultural embedding, these components create stable idiomatic expressions whose meanings transcend the literal interpretation of individual words. This study has demonstrated that a thorough understanding of such interrelations is indispensable not only for advancing linguistic theory but also for enhancing practical applications in foreign language teaching and translation. For Uzbek students of English, recognizing these interconnections helps overcome common difficulties in idiom comprehension and usage, fostering greater fluency and intercultural competence. Ultimately, phraseological units serve as a bridge between language and culture, and further contrastive research between English and Uzbek phraseology would greatly benefit philological studies and language pedagogy in Uzbekistan.

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