

PHRASEOLOGICAL UNIT AS A SPECIAL TYPE OF NOMINATIVE UNITS IN THE LEXICAL SYSTEM OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract. A language's vocabulary is enhanced by both words and phraseological units. Phraseological units are word groups that are established and cannot be created during speech. They are collected in specialized dictionaries. Similar to words, phraseological units are one component of a sentence and convey a single idea. Beyond their stylistic value, idioms and set phrases provide semantic compactness, metaphorical reinterpretation, and cultural embeddedness, making them essential tools for naming and conceptualizing reality. This article explores the structural stability and flexibility of phraseological units, particularly the phenomena of interchangeable adjectives, drawing on the works of academics like V.V. Vinogradov and V.N. Telia. The study emphasizes the significance of phraseological units for comprehending how language reflects society, history, and philosophy by stressing their role in communication, cognition, and cultural transmission.

Keywords: Phraseological units, semantic compactness, nominative function, cultural embeddedness, idioms, interchangeable adjectives, structural stability, figurative reinterpretation

Introduction. Phraseological units represent a very distinct and crucial purpose. They make it possible to communicate ideas concisely and vividly and provide an utterance with a semantic complexity that would be challenging, if not impossible, to obtain through other means. They give the speaker prepared for use phrases of humor, irony, wisdom, etc. that are rarely worn out. Unlike other vocabulary units, phraseological units have a distinct national stamp and provide details about a nation's history, culture, and populace.

Phraseological units as linguistic phenomena have been extensively investigated by prominent scholars such as V.N. Telia, V.V. Vinogradov, G.S. Gavrin, Yu.N. Karaulova, V.M. Mokienko, N.F. Alefirenko, E.I. Dibrova, T.I. Vendina, and P.A. Lekant. Their combined efforts show how important phraseology is to the study of semantics and language structure. The distinguishing characteristics of phraseological units, such as their semantic indivisibility, structural stability, and cultural embeddedness, have been recognized and organized by these academics.

Their collaborative efforts demonstrate the significance of phraseology in the study of language structure and semantics. These scholars have identified and categorized the distinctive features of phraseological units, including their semantic indivisibility, structural stability, and cultural embeddedness. These arguments are important because phraseological units are essential nominative devices in the lexical system rather than just stylistic accents. In fixed linguistic forms, they encapsulate cultural knowledge, collective experience, and figurative thought. Scholars advance our knowledge of how language names and conceptualizes reality by examining their characteristics and categorizations. Therefore, the study of phraseological units is crucial for understanding the cognitive and cultural processes that underlie language expression in addition to being a matter of terminological accuracy.

Phraseological units are categorized as semantically varied word combinations by V.N. Telia in her writings. She claims that idioms have a comprehensive nominative function and are distinguished by the reinterpretation of their lexical and grammatical structure. Phraseo-schemes

—structures in which a portion of the lexical composition and syntactic framework is reinterpreted while another portion is filled contextually—are also included in this category by Telia. Examples of phrases that mix a fixed syntactic pattern with changing lexical parts to create a stable phraseological meaning include “what every day/hour/year brings.”

Telia also finds pairings where the nominative function of the other lexical components is unaffected, but only one lexical component experiences semantic reinterpretation. For instance, in “to enter into conversation,” the verb takes on a figurative meaning while the noun maintains its direct nominative function. According to her, these combinations are comparable to formulaic expressions or speech clichés, which serve as repeatable units in communication.

The Purpose and Function of Phraseological Units. In the English language's lexical system, phraseological units play a highly specific and important role. They are set, fixed statements that cannot be formed on the spur of the moment during speaking, in contrast to free word combinations. They are similar to words because of their consistency and repeatability; they serve as distinct parts of a phrase and express a single notion. What sets them out as a unique kind of lexical unit is this nominative function. They actively take part in naming and comprehending reality rather than just embellishing discourse.

One of the defining functions of phraseological units is their ability to achieve semantic compactness. This indicates that they reduce complicated concepts, feelings, or cultural experiences to a single, set verbal form. A phraseological unit captures meaning in a form that speakers of the language can instantly recognize, eliminating the need for long explanations. The expression “*to work one's fingers to the bone*,” for example, expresses not simply the act of labor but also its intensity, sacrifice, and fatigue. An exact description like “*to work extremely hard until physically exhausted*” lacks the idiom's cultural resonance and is much less evocative. Figurative reinterpretation of lexical components leads to semantic compactness. Although it is figurative and overdone, the literal image of fingers worn down to the bone conveys the idea of unrelenting work more successfully than a simple explanation. Because of their compactness, phraseological units can serve as nominative devices, naming complicated facts in a clear, memorable way. Furthermore, these expressions resonate with shared experiences and collective imagination due to their cultural embeddedness, making them effective communication tools.

Their role in expressive communication is another crucial function. Phraseological units give speakers access to pre-formed phrases of humor, irony, wisdom, and emotional intensity. Figurative meanings in phrases like “*to sail close to the wind*” and “*to gild the lily*” offer stylistic richness and deepen conversation. Phraseological units are rarely worn out; they maintain their vitality and continue to resonate with speakers throughout generations, in contrast to many vocabulary items that may lose their impact with time.

Interchangeable Adjectives as Evidence of Phraseological Units' Nominative Function. Phraseological units demonstrate their special role in the lexical system not only through semantic compactness and cultural embeddedness but also through their ability to incorporate interchangeable adjectives while preserving their nominative function. This phenomenon illustrates the balance between structural stability and lexical flexibility, showing how phraseological units remain fixed expressions yet allow for variation without losing their core meaning.

Examples of Interchangeable Adjectives. One clear example is the expression “*a closed book*” versus “*a sealed book*.” Both variants convey the figurative meaning of something inaccessible or incomprehensible. While “*a sealed book*” has been used since the nineteenth century, “*a closed*

book” emerged later in the twentieth century. Despite the lexical substitution of adjectives (*sealed* vs. *closed*), the nominative function remains unchanged: the phrase names the concept of something beyond understanding. Another example is the idiom “*a round peg in a square hole*” versus “*a square peg in a round hole.*” Here, the rearrangement of adjectives does not alter the meaning. Both variants nominate the idea of a person being out of place or unsuited to their environment. The stability of the structure combined with the flexibility of adjective placement demonstrates how phraseological units maintain their semantic compactness while allowing positional variation. Similarly, expressions such as “*odd fish*” and “*queer fish*” illustrate interchangeable adjectives functioning as synonyms. Both variants nominate the concept of an eccentric or unusual person. The substitution of *odd* with *queer* does not disrupt the phraseological meaning but instead reflects stylistic and historical preferences in usage.

In some cases, interchangeable adjectives give rise to structural synonymy, where phrases like “*a good deal*” and “*a great deal*” coexist. Although the adjectives differ in intensity, the overall nominative function—expressing quantity—remains intact. This demonstrates how phraseological units can accommodate lexical variation while preserving their semantic role. These examples highlight those interchangeable adjectives do not undermine the stability of phraseological units. Instead, they reinforce their role as nominative devices by showing that meaning is preserved across variants. The ability to incorporate synonyms or positional changes while maintaining semantic compactness underscores the resilience of phraseological units within the lexical system.

Interchangeable adjectives within phraseological units exemplify how these expressions balance fixedness with flexibility. They remain stable nominative devices that encapsulate complex realities, even when lexical components vary. This phenomenon strengthens the argument that phraseological units are a special type of nominative unit in the lexical system of the English language, capable of adapting stylistically while preserving their essential semantic and cultural functions.

CONCLUSION. Within the English lexicon, phraseological units function as unique nominative devices. Their cultural embeddedness, metaphorical reinterpretation, and semantic compactness show that they are vital instruments for cognition and communication rather than just aesthetic accents. Their resilience and adaptability are confirmed by the harmony between lexical flexibility and structural stability, which guarantees that they will continue to encapsulate cultural information and conceive reality. Understanding their function as a unique kind of nominative unit emphasizes how crucial phraseology is to comprehending the more profound relationships between language, cognition, and society. Phraseological units add color to any language, and it is helpful to comprehend and utilize them effectively. This may be due to the fact that all languages, notably English, contain a great deal of idiomatic expression.

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