

СЕКЦИЯ 22. Филологические науки

ПОД-СЕКЦИЯ 5. Языковедение и иностранные языки

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**ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS DENOTING A PERSON'S
ACTIVITIES**

Key words: phraseological units denoting a person's activities, classification, semantic features, structural features, stylistic features, subgroups, linguistic and stylistic analysis

Introduction. Every language has units which form its nominative stock and determine the laws of combining them into word combinations. The phenomenon of a reversed order is opposed to these linguistic universals: every language comprises syntactic structures which, to some degree, are deviant from general and constant rules of combining nominative units and which are regarded as lexical and syntactic “anomalies” fixed in the dictionaries. They belong to idioms specific for a definite language.

The sources of phraseological units are various. They can serve as the elements of folk, mythological, religious or literary texts; they comprise certain moral in their meaning representing a “narrowing” of a plot

Theoretical background. A number of linguists have devoted their life and work to studying and researching phraseological units including Ukrainian [11], Russian [10; 12] and foreign scholars [13]. We cannot but mention Acad. V. V. Vinogradov who investigated phraseological units separately from speech singling out their

structural and semantic specificities [3]; N. N. Amosova who suggested the concept according to which idioms were defined as units of some kind of a permanent context [1]; A. V. Kunin [4; 5; 6] and V. L. Arkhanhelskyi [2], who have searched for “level” features of phraseological units; V. M. Telia [7; 8; 9] who has investigated the meaning of phraseological units and their use in various aspects (semantic, pragmatic, culture studies etc.).

Research and discussion. Specificity of the idioms is in the fact that they introduce a microcontext the nominative basis of which is all information types which are characteristic of reflecting a situation in the text but they are represented in phraseological units like a model ready to be used as a certain microtext in the text.

As phraseological units are closely connected with people’s everyday life and reflect all the specificities of their activities, behavior, different moral and ethic qualities there is no wonder that the idioms denoting people’s activities have synonyms and variants with various lexical meaning which is considered **topical**. Thus, we will make the attempt to analyze the above mentioned phraseological units from different angles: their semantic, structural and stylistic features which comprise the **objective** of the presented article.

Such idioms can cover any spheres of life and influence which are critical not only for any individual but for society as well. So, we can guess that a person’s activities can be identified and described by a number of synonymous phraseological units. Synonymy is known as a type of semantic correlation when two words (word combinations, phrases) have a similar or approximately similar meaning in the language.

Having singled out and analyzed 92 phraseological units denoting a person’s activities we can classify them according to definite semantic features:

1) *Actions speak louder than words*. Five synonymous phraseological units can be referred to this group, accordingly (*Deeds, not words – Hell is paved with good intentions – Seeing is believing – The proof of the pudding is in the eating – Easier said than done*);

2) *As a man sows, so shall he reap*. Here we can see six synonymous idioms (*As a man lives, so shall he die – As the call, so the echo – Curses like chickens come home to roost – As a tree falls, so shall it lie – You have made your bed, and you must lie on it – As you brew, so must you drink*);

3) *Between two stools one falls to the ground*. This subgroup consists of three synonyms (*If you run after two hares you'll catch none – No man can serve two masters – One cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hounds*);

4) *Don't cross the bridges before you come to them*. This group of phraseological units is rather big as it comprises nine synonymous expressions (*Don't cross the bridges before you come to them – All in good time – Don't cry out before you are hurt – Never jump your fences before you meet them – The devil is not so black as he is painted – Everything is good in its season – The morning to the mountain, the evening to the fountain – Don't halloo till you are out of the wood – Do not boast until you see your enemy dead – First catch your hare, then cook him*);

5) *The early bird catches the worm*. Such subgroup includes six synonymous idioms (*Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise – An early riser is sure to be in luck – He who sleeps catches no fish – First come, first served – He that will thrive must rise at five, he that hath thriven may lie till seven – He that comes first to the hill, may sit where he will*);

6) *Every man to his taste*. Eight idioms-synonyms can be referred to this subgroup (*Tastes differ – There is no accounting for tastes – One man's meat is another man's poison – One man's breath is another's death – What is good for one is bad for another – It takes all sorts to make a world – So many men, so many minds – All bread is not baked in one oven*);

7) *Faint heart never won fair lady*. This subgroup is one of the largest since it has eight phraseological units with a similar meaning (*None but the brave deserve the*

fair – Nothing venture, nothing have – Fortune favors the brave – The race is to the swift – First come, first served – He that comes first to the hill, may sit where he will – He that feareth every bush must never go a-birding – He that hesitates is lost);

8) *It's a poor heart that never rejoices.* Five phraseological units can be referred to this subgroup (*Never say die – Every cloud has a silver lining – It is an ill wind that blows nobody good – It is a great life if you don't weaken – While there is life, there is hope);*

9) *A man can die but once.* This phraseological unit has six synonyms in the English language (*He that fears death lives not – Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die – Life is but a span – As well be hanged for a sheep or for a lamb – In for a penny, in for a pound – Over shoes, over boot);*

10) *Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.* This subgroup comprises twelve synonymous units and it is the most widespread one among the idioms being analyzed (*Strike while the iron is hot – Make hay while the sun shines – Time and tide wait for no man – There is no time like the present – Procrastination is the thief of time – Lost time is never found again – One cannot put back the clock – Things past cannot be recalled – Things done cannot be undone – Delays are dangerous – Time is money – Time flies);*

11) *You never know what you can do till you try.* Five synonymous units can be referred to this subgroup (*Practice makes perfect – Practice is the best master – Experience is the mother of wisdom – It is dogged that does it – Repetition is the mother of learning).*

Thus, semantic analysis of the phraseological units denoting a person's activities has shown that the most widely used are those units which encourage a man to do his duties immediately to save time as wasted time cannot be returned and badly done actions cannot be redone; phraseological units which warn against reckless actions and boasting; phraseological units approving of good taste and courage.

The less wide spread are phraseological units denoting a person's activities which describe appropriate/inappropriate completing of work; idioms expressing peasants' hard work as they have to get up early in the morning to do a lot of work because if they fail to do it, they will not gather a good harvest; phraseological units about reckless people who are ready to be responsible for every action, either good or bad; phraseological units which motivate to trust deeds rather than words; phraseological units which urge not to give way to panic but believe in a better fate or future; phraseological units which indicate to the necessity of studying and revising to become wiser and more intelligent. And there is a very little amount of phraseological units denoting a person's activities which condemn uncertainty, promiscuity and greediness.

On analyzing structure of the phraseological units denoting a person's activities we can draw the conclusion that they are divided into following subgroups:

1) Phraseological units which are a simple sentence: *Fortune favors the brave. Delays are dangerous. Hard words break no bones. The early bird catches the worm. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. No man can serve two masters.* Moreover, such units can comprise homogeneous members of the sentence: *One cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Time and tide wait for no man.* Besides, simple sentences can be extended by means of comparison: *Curses like chickens come home to roost.* Simple phraseological units can also be used in Passive Voice: *Hell is paved with good intentions. All bread is not baked in one oven.*

Thus, the analysis has shown that such phraseological units are used in the Present Simple Tense.

2) Phraseological units which are comparative constructions of various types: *Easier said than done.* – It comprises a comparative degree of the adjective *easy* . The comparative structure of the following phraseological unit is quite different: *The devil is not so black as he is painted.* In this case the comparison of a real devil with an imaginary one is due to the conjunction *not so ... as*. Comparison of the

phraseological unit *As a tree falls, so shall it lie* occurs due to the conjunctions of comparison *as ... so*.

Comparison in the English language can be by means of a formal indicator *like*, which points to simile, i.e. when two subjects belonging to different classes are compared: *There is no time like the present*.

3) Phraseological units comprising subordinate clauses of time and condition which express real future: *If you run after two hares you'll catch none*. The analysis has shown there is only one such phraseological unit among the investigated idioms.

4) Emphatic phraseological units which include a conjunction *that* and an interrogative *who* are attributive subordinate clauses in the sentence: *He that comes first to the hill, may sit where he will. He who sleeps catches no fish*.

5) Phraseological units comprising non-finite forms of the verb:

a) the gerund which fulfils a function of the subject and predicative in the sentence: *Seeing is believing*.

б) the subjective infinitive construction: *An early riser is sure to be in luck*.

6) Phraseological units which form the compound sentence: *You have made your bed, and you must lie on it*. – In this example two predicative units complete each other by means of a coordinating conjunction *and*.

Let us have a look at one more phraseological unit: *Words may pass, but blows fall heavy* where two predicative units are joined by means of the adversative conjunction *but*.

7) Imperative phraseological units: *Make hay while the sun shines. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die. Never say die. Do not boast until you see your enemy dead*. The analysis has shown that such units can be either affirmative or negative and the percentage of their use is approximately the same. The such like idioms can be both simple and complex as well.

8) Phraseological units comprising subordinate attributive clauses: *It is an ill wind that blows nobody good*.

So, we can make the conclusion that the most widely used are phraseological units denoting a person's activities which can be simple, complex and compound, imperative, comparative and emphatic sentences.

Phraseological units are a source of wisdom because they reflect the peoples' history and their attitude to this or that action or event. Such idioms can show either positive or negative experience due to expressive means and stylistic devices of the English language:

1) Phraseological units which include a stylistic device of exaggeration: *You never know what you can do till you try. It's a poor heart that never rejoices. Lost time is never found again. Practice is the best master. Time flies.* The analysis has shown that the effect of exaggeration is expressed in the first three examples not only by means of intonation but with the help of the *never* lexeme as well as it assumes a logical loading.

2) Metaphoric phraseological units: *Repetition is the mother of learning.* This idiom indicates that the more a man revises the material, the more he/she knows. Unfortunately, however, it is not always true, as there are sometimes completely hopeless cases. *Procrastination is the thief of time* is a metaphoric usage because delay equals to theft in this example.

3) Phraseological units comprising antithesis: *One man's meat is another man's poison. One man's breath is another's death.* – The above mentioned units include three cases of antithesis: *one – another, meat – poison, breath – death.*

What is good for one is bad for another. – Antithesis is expressed by means of reciprocal pronouns *one – another* and qualitative adjectives in positive degree: *good – bad.*

Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. – To our mind, this phraseological unit denoting a person's activities contains contextual antonyms *to bed – to rise*. Besides, there is a distant repetition of *early* lexeme and the use of a combined enumeration *healthy, wealthy and wise.*

The morning to the mountain, the evening to the fountain. – Antithesis is expressed by noun antonyms denoting daytime *morning – evening* and contextual antonyms *mountain – fountain*, as the mountains are usually situated somewhere in the highlands and the fountains near which one can have a rest, especially in the summer heat, are in the valley.

Things done cannot be undone. – Antonymous use of Participle II. 4) Inverted phraseological units: *As a man lives, so shall he die.* – In this example the auxiliary verb of the Future Simple *shall* is inverted as it is used before the subject in the affirmative sentence.

As you brew, so must you drink. – The presented phraseological unit denoting a person's activities is considered to be inverted as the modal verb *must*, which is a part of a compound verbal predicate, is used before the subject paying the recipient's attention to what he needs to do.

Between two stools one falls to the ground. – In this inverted idiom the adverbial modifier of place is used at the beginning of the sentence instead of its habitual use at the end of the statement.

5) Phraseological units comprising syntactic parallel constructions: *In for a penny, in for a pound. Nothing venture, nothing have. So many men, so many minds.*

6) Elliptical phraseological units: *Every man to his taste. As the call, so the echo.* – The verb *to be* in the Present Simple is omitted in the given phraseological units.

Conclusions. So, according to the results of researching stylistic features of phraseological units denoting a person's activities, we can draw the conclusion that comparison, inversion, antithesis and exaggeration are most frequently used.

After carrying out linguistic and stylistic analysis of the phraseological units denoting a person's activities, we paid a great attention to their translation into Ukrainian as well to see their similarities and differences.

Thus, we can make the conclusion that the Ukrainian equivalent does not always coincide with the source language lexically; these idioms contribute to the language

treasure not only due to lexical loading but thanks to specificities of their translation and a wide range of using various translation methods as well.

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