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DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THE CLASSIFICATION OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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Annotation: Phraseological unit or an idiom is a phrase or expression whose total meaning differs from the meaning of the individual words. Idioms come from language and generally cannot be translated literally (word for word). Foreign language students must learn them just as they would learn vocabulary words.

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English is the main language of popular music, advertising, home computers and video games. Most of the scientific, technological and academic information in the world is expressed in English.

Professor Smirnitsky also distinguishes proper phraseological units which, in his classification system, are units with non-figurative meanings, and idioms, that is, units with transferred meanings based on a metaphor"(1, 248-250p.).

Professor Kunin, the leading Russian authority on English phraseology, pointed out certain inconsistencies in this classification system. First of all, the subdivision into phraseological units (as non-idiomatic units) and idioms contradicts the leading criterion of a phraseological unit suggested by Professor Smirnitsky: it should be idiomatic.

Professor Kunin also objects to the inclusion of such word-groups as black art, best man, first night in phraseology (in Professor Smirnitsky's classification system, the two-summit phraseological units) as all these word-groups are not characterised by a transferred meaning. It is also pointed out that verbs with post-positions (e. g. give up) are included in the classification but their status as phraseological units is not supported by any convincing argument.

"Functional classification suggested by prof. Arnold I.V., is based on the grammatical unity typical of all Pus and on their functioning in the language as word equivalents. Pus are subdivided into:

1)noun equivalents-maiden name, cat's paw, green room

2)verb equivalents-take advantage, to give up, pick and choose

3)adjective equivalents-as old as the hills

4)adverb equivalents-tooth and nail, by heart

5) Pus functioning like interjections: Take your time! My eye!"(3,102).

Contextual classification was suggested by prof. Amosova N.N.. She considers PUs to be units of fixed context. "Fixed context is characterised by a specific and unchanging sequence of definite lexical components and peculiar relationship between them. Units of fixed context are subdivided into two types: phrases and idioms.

Phrases are two-member groups in which one of the members has a particular meaning dependent on the second components it is found only inn the given context, e.g. in small hours – the second component (hours) serves as the only clue to this particular meaning of the first component. Phrases are always binary, e.g. in small talk, husband's tea, one of the components has a phraseologically bound meaning, the other serves a s a distinguishing context.

Idioms are distinguished from phrases by the idiomaticity of the whole word-group. They are semantically and grammatically inseparable units, e.g. red tape – "bureaucratic methods".The meaning of the idiom is created by the unit as a whole: to let the cat out of the bag-to divulge a secret.

The difference between phrases and idioms is based on semantic relationship without accepting the structural approach, and the demarcation line between the two groups seems rather subjective"(3, 102-103p.).

We may see that the approaches to the classification of phraseological units differ from native linguists to foreign linguists. This fact should be included while studying of the critical literature and manuals. The proper understanding gives the

better result of the research work and helps in searching of the idioms concerning the subject.

Phraseological units can be also classified according to the way they are formed. A.V. Kunin pointed out primary and secondary ways of forming phraseological units.

Primary ways of forming phraseological units are those when a unit is formed on the basis of a free word-group:

a) the most productive in Modern English is the formation of phraseological units by means of transferring the meaning of terminological word-groups, e.g. launching pad in its terminological meaning is "стартова площадка" , in its transferred meaning – "выдправний пункт" , to link up – "стикуватися" , in its tranformed meaning it means – "знайомитися";

b) a large group of phraseological units was formed by transforming the meaning of free word groups , e.g. granny farm – "пансіонат для старих людей", Trojan horse – "a person or thing used secretly to cause the ruin of an enemy";

c) phraseological units can be formed by means of alliteration , e.g. a sad sack - «нещасний випадок», culture vulture – "людина";.

d) phraseological units can be formed by means of expressiveness , especially it is characteristic of forming interjections, e.g. My aunt!, Hear, hear! etc;

e) phraseological units can be formed by means of distorting a word group , e.g. odds and ends was formed from «odd ends»;

f) phraseological units can be formed by using archaisms , e.g. in brown study means "in gloomy meditation" where both components preserve their archaic meanings;

g) phraseological units can be formed by using a phrase in a different sphere of life , e.g. that cock won't fight can be used as a free word-group when it is used in sports (cock fighting); it becomes a phraseological unit when it is used in everyday life, as it is used metaphorically;

Secondary ways of forming phraseological units are those when a phraseological unit is formed on the basis of another phraseological unit; they are:

a) conversion, e.g. to vote with one's feet was converted into vote with one's feet;

b) changing the grammar form, e.g. Make hay while the sun shines is transferred into a verbal phrase - to make hay while the sun shines;

c) analogy, e.g. Curiosity killed the cat was transferred into Care killed the cat;

d) contrast, e.g. cold surgery – "a planned before operation" was formed by contrasting it with acute thin cat – "a poor person" was formed by contrasting it with fat cat;

e) shortening of proverbs or sayings, e.g. the phraseological unit to make a sow's ear with the meaning "помилятись" was formed from the proverb You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear by means of clipping the middle of it;

f) borrowing phraseological units from other languages, either as translation loans, e.g. living space (German), to take the bull by the horns (Latin), or by means of phonetic borrowings, e.g. meche blanche (French), corpse d'elite (French), sotto voce(Italian) etc. (8, 280-284p.)

We may see how phraseological units are formed. Trying to select phraseological units from the great variety of them this knowledge helps to shortcut the list and to find certain idioms faster.

Different views on the problems and approaches give the better understanding of what the phraseological unit is, or if there is any difference between phraseological unit and an idiom. We should also note the differentiations between phraseological units and free word-groups or set expressions. All these views from different angles give the whole picture of the idiom, which is the analized subject.

One should use idioms carefully, when you are sure that you are using them correctly. Idioms, like slang and swear words, are among the hardest parts of a language because your use must be exactly correct. You may use an idiom that is not right for the situation, and if you use an idiom wrongly, it sounds rather strange. You may use an idiom that means something different to your intended use. In order not to offend somebody try to omit idioms meanings of which are not clear for you.

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