

Phraseological Units of the English Language in Newspaper Articles on the Topic of Culture: Structural and Semantic Aspects

Iryna Losieva¹, Nataliya Kashchyshyn¹, Alla Malii², Vladyslav Kukushkin³, & Olena Makarchuk⁴

¹ Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv, Ukraine

² Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, Kyiv, Ukraine

³ V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Kharkiv, Ukraine

⁴ Lviv Polytechnic National University, Lviv, Ukraine

Correspondence: Iryna Losieva, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv, Ukraine.

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Abstract

The research examines the features of the structural-semantic approach toward peculiarities of the phraseology of media discourse when studying English. This is an actual problem related to changes in the genre and stylistic palette of modern periodicals. Therefore, it becomes of particular significance to consider the content, classification, and determination of effective means of training specialists, using English-language texts with different stylistic features in their work, regarding the transmission of emotions and content markers in newspaper articles through idioms. The purpose of the research is to determine the dependence of the success rate of students-journalists on introducing innovative methods and thematic blocks to the educational process, as well as establishing an assessment by the participants of the educational process of active study of English phraseology. The research methodology is based on an integrated approach. The descriptive methods, structural and semantic approaches to the classification of idioms were used to study the theoretical material. The experimental method, methods of questionnaires, surveys, observations, were also used in the academic paper. The fundamental hypothesis is that innovative courses containing new approaches and scientific innovations contribute to improving the success and practical skills of students - journalists. The research result is the establishment of interdependence between innovations in the scope and the course content and the improvement of student performance, and interest in learning. In prospect, attention should be paid to a practice-centered approach to the philological component in journalism education in English-speaking countries.

Keywords: idioms, phraseological units, periodicals, journalism, educational innovations

1. Introduction

Phraseological units and their role in the formation of periodical texts in the modern world English-language media space, especially in cultural journalism and art history, require constant, careful consideration and investigation. After all, they convey not only the informational component English-language text, but also provide analytical materials for the expressive and emotional components of civilizational development. Studying media practices on using English idioms on the topic of culture and art is of particular relevance for modern pedagogical thought. It is constantly presented as a part of educational technologies (Bartmiński, 2009; Lowrey, 2017)

A separate issue of modern higher education pedagogy is the development of practice-centered courses. For instance, the Institute of Cognitive Behavior (2021) proposed a number of “self-verbalization” methods (21 methods) designed to develop the ability to create creative English-language texts, the strategy of positive thinking, clear and correct verbal behavior at the level of media text. From the standpoint of the institution (the Institute of Cognitive Behavior (2021), this is an opportunity not only to master and optimize the educational process, but also to learn how to get out of crisis situations. The research experiment was based on the methods proposed by The Institute of Cognitive Behavior; the structural and semantic features of English phraseology were also taken into account.

English idiomatics and mastery of its resources are necessary for professionals in media field in the English speaking space, as it is the phraseological unit that is a component of the nation’s mentality. Phraseological units in the semantic aspect have a multi-layered structure: they are part of ethno-marked conceptual models, carriers of “cultural connotations, part of the language system.

The classification of phraseological units in the English language is correlated with the model of verbalization of cultural contents (Bartmiński, 2009; Damean, 2006). The first level of phraseologisation (*min*) unites a group of linguistic units with a phraseological meaning that an average native speaker easily reconstructs, has a transparent internal form (*eyes full of tears*); the second level (*med*): the reconstruction of the primary content requires using additional knowledge, the idiom has a half-erased internal imagery (*Achilles’ heel*). Idioms of this level in the English language require special knowledge and skills; such units have a rather complex figurative structure. The third level of phraseologisation (*max*) is characterized by an opaque internal form that requires the actualization of special knowledge and studies in a certain field, or the internal content of the idiom cannot be revealed (*Keep away! To see the back of*). Covering the topics

of culture and art in periodicals requires mastering all three levels of English-language phraseologisation, as well as understanding the mechanisms of semantic transposition and secondary nomination. This determines the relevance of developing new pedagogical tools for presenting new philological assets.

For effective media discourse in the English speaking space, it is also significant to understand the processes of forming and using the potential of idiomatics for the nomination of language stereotypes (Bakieva, Teshabaeva, 2019). A phraseological unit can be exactly that part of the text that is a marker of English-language cultural space. The property of the idiom to concretize the most abstract mythologized and culturally marked ideas and concepts through evaluation and emotion is significant for media discourse. For instance, the taboo nature of certain English lexemes (the prohibition to call V. Shakespeare's play "Lady Macbeth" in the acting environment) leads to the creation of "harmless" titles "That play", "Shakespeare's famous work". Under the conditions of preserving the situation and context, such taboo nature creates its special way of linguistic reinterpretation of culture's and art's realities from the standpoint of their mythological perception.

Phraseology is not only able to represent the mythological cultural civilizational consciousness in its variability, but also the conceptual code of cultural English traditions Newspaper text related to cultural and artistic topics often requires a naive and subjective interpretation, an emotional assessment of the phenomena of the surrounding reality, artistic phenomena. They sometimes indirectly fit into human consciousness. They are difficult to connect with practical experience and rational motivation. A phraseological unit, correctly and precisely presented in the media text, can reinforce the impression, contributing to the original understanding of the problem, phenomenon. That is why the problem of searching for algorithms for the effective use of phraseological units in cultural English journalism and criticism remains relevant.

2. Literature Review

The research problem presented for consideration actually has two aspects: theoretical (a complex of innovations in the field of English phraseology as a linguistic discipline) and practical (a number of pedagogical innovations related to introducing new methods and approaches in the context of changed educational conditions). The study of phraseology should take into account two aspects: linguistic and cultural.

The development of modern English linguistics, the transformation of the structural-semantic approach to studying the phenomenon of phraseology is actively ongoing. Primarily, these are works in the field of cognitive ethnolinguistics in the English language (Bartmiński, 2009; Omazić, Čačija, 2020). They represent theoretical developments in the field of lexical semantics, cognitive linguistics, and phraseology; consideration of structural and semantic aspects of transformations and combinations in phraseology and innovations in interpreting the concepts of neoclassical compounds and phrases (Bauer, 2017). The problems of using idiomatics in the English-language media text, stylistic components of the media were also raised in the scientific works of several researchers in the field of social communications (Zhang, Lei, 2019; Allcott, Gentzkow, 2017; Bednarek, Caple, 2017). The scholars (Sharififar, Rahimi, 2015; Hidalgo-Tenorio et al., 2019) consider the role of idioms in the formation of public rhetoric by means of discourse analysis and structural English-language linguistics. The scientists (Jaki, 2014; Harcup, O'Neill, 2017) study issues of using phraseological units in media texts.

Several innovations are being developed in modern pedagogy based on communicative and interactive practices of teaching philological English-language disciplines (Rababah, 2020). Special attention is paid to studying foreign languages, literary and journalistic activities, and legal linguistics. The verbal component of the successful implementation of humanitarian specialists, future media workers is also considered in the context of interactive learning methods involved in the educational process (Synorub, 2019).

The study of the features of using innovative teaching methods for students of media specialties is part of the research paradigm of university education in the English-speaking countries (Ivanova et al., 2020; Hermida, 2012).

The search for establishing and introducing new practice-centered disciplines based on modern discoveries in the field of structural linguistics, semantics, and media education is prospect for further research. The consideration of the genre and stylistic palette of cultural journalism, where an important role is also given to English-language phraseological units is equally relevant.

The purpose of the research is to establish the interdependence of students - journalists' academic performance level based on introducing innovative methods and new thematic blocks in the educational process.

Based on the purpose outlined, the following research goals should be performed:

- to identify the structural and semantic categories of phraseology utilized in English language cultural journalism and art criticism;
- to establish the academic performance level in the process of studying the discipline "Phraseology in Cultural Journalism" in experimental groups;
- to determine the participants' assessments of the educational process during using innovations in studying the phraseology of cultural journalism; to distinguish the extent to which respondents are interested in introducing innovations in education and new thematic blocks in the educational process.

3. Materials and Methods

The pedagogical experiment was conducted in two universities of Eastern Europe: Kharkiv State Academy of Culture (faculty of cultural studies), Kamianets - Podilskyi National Ivan Ohienko University (Educational and Scientific Institute of Ukrainian Philology and

Journalism). The experiment lasted from September to January, during the 1st semester of the 2021/2022 academic year.

42 students of the 2nd year of the first (bachelor) educational level studying in the educational program 061 “Journalism” were involved in the experiment. All students were grouped into 4 groups: 2 groups studied according to the usual program, and 2 groups were accepted as experimental (EG1, EG2). A new academic discipline “Phraseology in Cultural Journalism” was introduced in these groups. It involved the application of innovative methods and the latest discoveries in English philology. During classroom training and independent work, they learned to use the potential of phraseological units, worked with the genres of annotation, announcement, review, exploring. In the course of training, the possibilities of structural and semi-component analysis of English phraseological units were involved. Interactive teaching methods of the methodological arsenal were used, providing the involvement of the skills of working with the genre and stylistic palette of cultural journalism.

The research group received permission for its study on the part of the university administration. The experiment’s participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the experiment.

The research provided for conducting the experiment in the three stages. At I (preparatory) stage, the educational and methodological basis of the experiment was formed. Control tasks and questions for the questionnaire were formulated. Consultations were held with scientific and pedagogical staff working on the course. The content and tasks of the discipline, questions in the questionnaires were adjusted. It was stipulated that the answers given by the students are voluntary. The research team guarantees the privacy of the surveys. The personal information received will not be made public by the research team.

At the II stage (at the beginning and at the end), the respondents’ success rate was evaluated (the overall average score of the learning outcomes of the course “Phraseology in Cultural Journalism”). Observation methods were used; questionnaires were distributed and the survey was conducted. At the beginning and end of the semester, control work was performed to determine the experimental discipline’s success level. The research team collected and analyzed the data obtained in the control groups. The data obtained help determine the respondents’ attitude to the proposed discipline.

At the III (final) stage, survey data was collected, and a final analysis of the obtained results was implemented. The research group processed and considered the data obtained, as they are the indicator of determining the effectiveness of this experiment, the answer to the problematic questions of the research. The results of the experiment are presented in the form of the statistics’ description, which took into account the data of the questionnaire and evaluation.

The difficulties of the experiment included the short duration of the experiment, which affected the results of the study, the respondents’ assessments and their success.

4. Results

The effective use of English phraseological units in the media space depends on the understanding that phraseology is an original culturally marked way of conceptualizing the surrounding world. The archetype “culture” is no exception. Media discourse uses phraseological units in order to create imagery and emotionality. Phraseological units are the constructs of such images and the result of collective experience of English-language cultural heritage. From the standpoint of the structural approach, a *phraseological unit* is both a predicate and a subject of verbalization, a product of semantic transposition. Tropes of various kinds are used to create the material for phraseological units. Stylistic means of cultural journalism are also part of *the linguistic and cultural picture of the world*. The latter is a form of modeling reality in a person’s mind, which is determined with the help of language and cultural and national norms inherent in a certain society, group, and profession. English phraseological units as markers of such a linguistic and cultural picture of the world are highlighted in the course as a kind of verbal interpretation of the surrounding world in accordance with conceptual and structural canons. Phraseological units that can be used in newspaper articles can also be classified as idioms (completely connected structures with meaning not divided into components): *yellow press, king of the waltz*; partially connected idiomatic expressions (semi-idioms): *a brilliant wordsmith, traditions of song culture, take someone’s breath away*, and also the so-called phraseological units, which have a transparent internal form and more opportunities for combination: *deep voice, heart of gold, eyes swimming in tears*.

The internal form of phraseological units in the English language presented in the structural and semantic aspect can be classified according to *the classes represented by the archiseme*. This phraseological unit classification determined the educational discipline’s constituent thematic blocks. Accordingly, the texts were constructed with the help of phraseological units, which took into account the following classification and pragmatics of use:

1. “Social class of stereotypes of life” consists of four clauses. The image of a person is presented there in the system of social-cultural and artistic realities reflecting on the artist’s meaningful search. These are such thematic positions as “quality”, “botched”, “weak”, “strong”, “rich”, “poor”, “free”, “deterministic”, “generally accessible” - “exclusive”, “elite” - “popular, folk”. They create a linguistic and cultural picture of the world in its naive worldview. For instance: *the audience sang in unison with the star; symbolic song; economics of beauty*.

2. “Temporal class” of phraseological units refers to actual historical, temporal changes in aesthetics and artistic methods, changes in cultural paradigms in the English-speaking space. The semantics of “changing cultural narratives of time” belongs to one of the most popular topics in cultural journalism. Art is considered from the standpoint of external and internal changes lasting over time. These are primarily problems of long and short life in art, periods of creativity, artistic trends, cultural currents, folk traditions. For instance: *to be*

ahead of one’s own time, a long-awaited premiere.

3. Spatial class. This is a figurative and mythologized representation of the subject’s position in the linguistic and cultural picture of the world, conveyed through the following semantic components-markers: high, low, far, close, inside and out, external, deep, superficial. For instance: *insightful voice; music for everyone; hit the Oscar long list*.

4. “Tactile-sensitive class” refers to the state of existence, the transfer of the abstract sphere of emotions to the zone of physical sensations. Phraseological units are formed at the level of audio and visual transmission through images embodied in verbal forms: soft – hard, convex, sharp, saturated, bright, and transparent. For instance: a bright star’s appearance.

5. “Sacral-magical class” contains an analysis of structural features and images’ correlations of cultural belonging to the magical, emotional world, the transition from the world of everyday life to artistic heights. These are primarily such markers as “dream”, “extravaganza”, “sorcery”, “infusion”, and “magic”. For instance: to ascend into the world of dreams; the magic of the faery waltz.

At I stage (preparatory), based on the above, a training course was built; materials and forms of working with newspaper texts were selected. The discussion of applied innovative methods was held; the content of questionnaires was prepared and adjusted. The first testing was also conducted regarding the 2nd-year students - journalists’ awareness level and practical skills within the scope of the ability to use phraseological units in cultural journalism texts.

The tests consisted of 2 parts: theoretical (general knowledge of phraseology) and practical (the ability to use phraseology when writing articles for a newspaper, to know the meaning of phraseological units). The results were presented as percentages.

Table 1. Assessing the level of academic performance in experimental groups (1 stage)

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
EG1	10%	34 %	41 %	15%
EG2	12%	36%	38%	14 %
Total average	11%	35%	38,5%	14,5%

Author’s development

The results show that 46% of respondents cannot create cultural journalistic texts well enough, appropriately using the possibilities of phraseology.

At the end of the I stage, which coincides with the middle of the 1st semester, a preliminary knowledge control and an analysis of the respondents’ practical skills was conducted. Based on the results, the students’ academic performance increased in the experimental groups after completing half of the course “Phraseology in Cultural Journalism”. 59% of respondents received “good” and “excellent” grades. This is 15% more than at the beginning of the experiment.

At the II stage of the experiment, the educational process actively continued. Innovative methods were used, contributing to the creative activity of future journalists in the text creation field, using all the figurative and emotional potential of English phraseology.

Table 2. Assessing the level of academic performance in experimental groups (the end of the I stage)

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
EG1	5 %	39 %	44 %	17%
EG2	8 %	35%	40%	17 %
Total average	6%	36%	42%	17%

Author’s development

The final stage (III stage) provided for the final control work and questionnaire, the collection of the obtained results, and their analysis.

Final assessment of the experiment’s success consisted of several indicators. These are the results the students - journalists’ academic performance in the training course “Phraseology in Cultural Journalism”.

Control tasks made it possible to measure the level of mastery of phraseology when expressing an opinion, writing articles in periodicals on the topic of culture, art, artistic and literary criticism. Academic performance at the creative level is an indicator of possessing an arsenal of idiomatics, as well as the ability to self-edit, form the correct emotional sound. It is also significant to possess a complex of knowledge, the ability to navigate modern linguistic theories of expressions, the ability to use the entire arsenal of text-creating skills. The variety of language techniques and idiomatic expressions used by a person is also an indicative criterion.

The final test included a block of tests containing theoretical questions and a creative block that required writing an article on cultural journalism, using all the possibilities of English phraseology.

Table 3. Final assessing the level of academic performance in the experimental groups

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
EG1	3 %	42 %	46 %	19%
EG2	5 %	31 %	44%	20 %
Total average	4 %	36,5%	45%	19,5%

Author’s development

At the final stage, all respondents were also offered a questionnaire, where the research team presented a series of topics and proposed

questions: Which of the presented topics were more interesting and useful for you? Students had to select the training course's most interesting and useful topics, thereby forming a rating of the most popular topics according to the respondents' standpoint. The results were presented in percentages.

While studying in the discipline, students had to focus on achieving several abilities and skills, as well as evaluate how important these opportunities turned out to be for the respondents. Seven positions were presented to respondents for consideration.

Table 3. Questionnaire regarding assessing by the experiment's participants of the methods used within the discipline "Philosophy of service" (author's development)

Verbal means of activating mental activity	EG1	EG2
Semantic classes of English phraseological units	54%	52%
Typology of English phraseological units	28%	37%
Phraseology in cultural journalism: stylistics and genre features	28%	30%
Structural aspects of forming phraseological meaning	26%	30%
Stylistic markers of using phraseology	20%	29%
Problems of defining the concept of "phraseology"	18%	13%

Author's development

Based on the obtained results, it can be stated that students were interested in applying modern approaches and analysis and using features of English phraseology in writing articles for cultural journalism. That is why the work with semantic classes of phraseological units is the most popular topic (in general, 53% of respondents). The problems of the typology of phraseological units were also interesting (32,5% of respondents). By the way, particular attention was paid to problems of stylistics, the main directions of the development of linguistic thought, applied issues in journalistic creativity.

In prospects, it is worth conducting similar experimental works that have a practice-centered nature and relate to the genre-stylistic potential of tropes used in the media. The activation of verbality in the student's practical activity also provides an opportunity to implement a set of abilities and skills. It will help train professionals in various branches of modern journalism, as well as contribute to developing critical thinking and communicative competence.

5. Discussion

Based on studies of the structural aspects of English idiomatics (Parizoska, 2022), using an idiom to describe events, and life realities involves a choice for the speaker. One can choose a traditional structure, or deliberately change some part of it, that is, give a different perspective on the event. Thus, the researcher assumes modifications that form a certain system of units transforming according to the same mechanisms. Semantic restrictions affecting the structural stability of the English phraseological unit presuppose certain grammatical changes in the structure of the idiom. However, they must be compatible with the figurative meaning. The structural-semantic features of the English phraseological unit in our research dictate its stylistic and emotional-evaluative features. This makes phraseology a valuable source for expressing the meanings of cultural journalism. That is why the research interest in semantic classes of idioms demonstrated by students - journalists (53% of respondents) is based on the high level of practical value of idiomatics for art and culture. In general, the style of a newspaper article depends on the language features, as well as the discursive practice involved and the communicative situation. It becomes a peculiar form of communication with the audience (Hapsari, 2018). Due to their substantive importance, these problems regularly became the subject of consideration in the educational course. Consequently, respondents had a significant interest in the topic of stylistics and the classification of idioms.

The advantages of introducing a systematic approach to journalism education are considered in several scientific works (Ivanova, et al. 2020; Prince et al., 2020; Baxter, 2021). Their principal position is determining the success of applying knowledge in the field of media linguistics. For instance, the study on introducing the basics of public journalism (Ivanova, et al. 2020; Smeijers, et al. 2020), volunteering in parallel with the practice of learning foreign languages and internships in foreign media gives positive results in changing the students' motivation. Thus, the motives for acquiring professional communication skills and personal interest in the work of a volunteer journalist increased. At the same time, motives for self-affirmation, an indicator of professional growth, and personal interest tend to decrease.

The research results confirmed that the practice-oriented course on cultural journalism, dealing with issues of tropes, English phraseology, creative text creation, is popular, interesting and useful for students. During the semester, students' "excellent" and "good" grades increased by 20% compared to the initial stage. This testifies to students' motivation to study relevant topics, focusing on practice and innovation in approaches to educational material.

6. Conclusion

The research has established that there is a dependence of students - journalists' academic performance rate on introducing actual practice-oriented courses, within which innovative methods are applied. This is evidenced by the dynamics of increasing academic performance: "unsatisfactory" grades decreased by a total of 7%; the number of "good" and "excellent" grades increased by 20%.

These indicators also testify to a positive assessment of the course. The final stage's survey showed that 53% of respondents favorably assessed the work with semantic classes and theoretical aspects of the classification of English phraseological units (32,5% of respondents). It is closely related to the genre-stylistic orientation of media creativity in English cultural journalism and art criticism.

Theoretical materials on considering phraseology in the framework of structural and semantic positions were presented within the academic discipline "Phraseology in Cultural Journalism". Accordingly, for ease of use in writing periodical texts, phraseological units of cultural discourse were divided into structural-semantic classes: temporal class, spatial class, social class, magical-sacred class, tactile-sensual class.

The active use of courses, innovative in content and form, leads to increasing the students-journalists' motivation, encourages creativity in self-expression in writing texts for periodicals. It is important for successful studying and further career growth.

Further investigations should consider the issues of continuous introduction of new discoveries in the English-language linguistics sphere into the educational process, work on focusing academic disciplines towards the practical benefits of education for future media professionals.

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