

**VARIOUS CLASSIFICATIONS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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Annotation: This article provides an overview of the major classifications of phraseological units (PUs) in the English language, exploring different criteria such as semantic motivation, structural properties, and functional characteristics. It examines the contributions of prominent linguists like Vinogradov, Kunin, and Gläser, highlighting their respective approaches to categorizing idioms and fixed expressions. The article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities inherent in phraseology and its crucial role in enriching communication.

Keywords: Phraseological Units, Idioms, Fixed Expressions, Classifications, Semantic Motivation, Structural Properties, Functional Characteristics.

Аннотация: В этой статье представлен обзор основных классификаций фразеологических единиц (ФЕ) в английском языке, исследуются различные критерии, такие как семантическая мотивация, структурные свойства и функциональные характеристики. В ней рассматривается вклад таких выдающихся лингвистов, как Виноградов, Кунин и Глэзер, и освещаются их соответствующие подходы к категоризации идиом и устойчивых выражений. Цель статьи - дать всестороннее понимание сложностей, присущих фразеологии, и ее решающей роли в обогащении коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: фразеологические единицы, идиомы, устойчивые выражения, классификации, семантическая мотивация, структурные свойства, функциональные характеристики.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilidagi frazeologik birliklarning (FB) asosiy tasniflari haqida umumiy ma'lumot berilgan, semantik motivatsiya, strukturaviy xususiyatlar va funktsional xususiyatlar kabi turli mezonlarni o'rganib chiqadi. U Vinogradov, Kunin va Glezer kabi taniqli tilshunoslarning hissalarini o'rganadi va ularning idiomalar va iboralarni turkumlashda tegishli yondashuvlarini ta'kidlaydi. Ushbu maqolaning maqsadi frazeologiyaga xos bo'lgan murakkabliklar va uning muloqotni boyitishdagi hal qiluvchi roli haqida har tomonlama tushuncha berishdir.

Kalit so'zlar: frazeologik birliklar, idiomalar, to'plam iboralari, tasniflar, semantik motivatsiya, strukturaviy xususiyatlar, funksional xususiyatlar.

Phraseological units (PUs), also known as idioms or fixed expressions, are an essential component of the English language, contributing significantly to its richness, expressiveness, and nuanced communication. These multi-word expressions, characterized by their semantic indivisibility and relative stability, have long been a subject of fascination and intensive research within linguistics. This has resulted in the development of various classifications aimed at categorizing PUs based on different criteria, providing valuable insights into their nature, structure, meaning, and function. The classification of phraseological units has been a subject of extensive research, with various approaches emphasizing their semantic, structural, and functional characteristics. This article offers a comprehensive overview of some of the most influential and widely recognized classifications of phraseological units in English.

Phraseological units are idiomatic expressions characterized by stability, reproducibility, and idiomaticity. They function as indivisible linguistic units in speech and writing. Their meaning is often figurative and culturally embedded, making them essential for understanding language usage and structure[3][5].

Classifications Based on Structural-Semantic Principles

1. Nominative Phraseological Units: These include word groups with one meaningful word or coordinative phrases like "wear and tear" or "well and good." They primarily name objects or phenomena[1].

2. Nominative-Communicative Units: These consist of verbal word groups that transform into sentences in specific contexts, such as "to break the ice" becoming "the ice is broken"[1].

3. Interjectional Units: These represent emotional expressions or reactions, functioning neither as nominative nor communicative[1].

4. Communicative Units: Proverbs and sayings fall under this category, such as "An hour in the morning is worth two in the evening," which convey complete thoughts or moral lessons[1].

1. Vinogradov's Semantic Classification (1977):[3]

V.V. Vinogradov's classification, arguably the cornerstone of phraseological studies, focuses on the degree of semantic transparency or opacity between the components of a PU and its overall idiomatic meaning. He identifies three key types:

Phraseological Fusions (Idioms Proper): These represent the highest degree of semantic opacity. The meaning of the entire unit bears absolutely no direct relationship to the individual meanings of its constituent words. Examples include "kick the bucket" (to die), and "red herring" (a distraction or misleading clue). The idiomatic meaning is entirely conventionalized.

Phraseological Unities: In these PUs, a metaphorical connection can be traced between the literal meanings of the component words and the overall idiomatic meaning. However, the unit as a whole functions with a single, unified idiomatic sense. Examples include “bury the hatchet” (to make peace), and “spill the beans” (to reveal a secret). While metaphorical, the underlying image contributes to understanding the meaning.

Phraseological Combinations: These display the lowest degree of semantic opacity. One component retains its literal meaning, while the other is "phraseologically bound," meaning it can only occur in combination with specific words to convey a specific meaning. For example, in the expression “to take place,” the verb “take” retains its general meaning, but the noun “place” only acquires its meaning within this particular combination.

2. Kunin’s Comprehensive Classification (1972):[2]

A.V. Kunin’s classification offers a more multifaceted approach, considering both the function and the structural characteristics of PUs. He categorizes them into several distinct types:

Nominative Phraseological Units: These function primarily as nouns, denoting objects, concepts, or qualities. Examples include “white elephant” (a burdensome possession), and “Achilles' heel” (a vulnerable point).

Nominative-Communicative Phraseological Units: These function as complete sentences or propositions, expressing a full thought or statement. Examples include “Every cloud has a silver lining” and “Don't count your chickens before they hatch.” These often carry wisdom or folk sayings.

Interjectional Phraseological Units: These function as interjections, expressing a range of emotions, feelings, or reactions. Examples include “Good heavens!” and “Oh, my goodness!”

Structural-Semantic Classification: Alongside the functional classifications, Kunin also classifies PUs based on their grammatical structure, dividing them into categories such as verbal idioms (e.g., “to call it a day”), nominal idioms (e.g., “a bed of roses”), adjectival idioms (e.g., “as cool as a cucumber”), adverbial idioms (e.g., “by and large”), and prepositional idioms (e.g., “in spite of”).

3. Gläser’s Classification based on Semantic Motivation and Formal Syntactic Criteria (1998):[1]

Rosemarie Gläser’s classification attempts to integrate semantic motivation with formal syntactic considerations. She identifies the following key categories:

Idioms Proper: Synonymous with Vinogradov’s Phraseological Fusions, displaying complete semantic opacity.

Collocations: These represent common and frequently occurring word combinations that, while semantically transparent, exhibit a statistically significant

tendency to co-occur. Examples include “strong coffee” and “heavy rain.” The meaning is predictable, but the combination is common.

Clichés: These are overused and predictable expressions that have lost their original impact and creativity. Examples include “at the end of the day” and “thinking outside the box.”

Proverbs and Sayings: These well-known and widely circulated expressions encapsulate general truths, pieces of advice, or observations about life. Examples include “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush” and “Actions speak louder than words.”

The diverse and evolving classifications of phraseological units in the English language highlight the inherent complexity and multi-dimensionality of these expressions. From Vinogradov’s foundational semantic categories to Kunin’s comprehensive functional and structural analysis, and Gläser’s integration of semantic and syntactic considerations, each classification offers valuable insights into the intricate nature of phraseology. By appreciating these different perspectives, linguists, language educators, and language learners can develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the rich tapestry of idioms and fixed expressions that contribute so significantly to the expressiveness and communicative power of the English language.

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