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Term Paper

Modern English Phraseology: Linguistic and Communicative Aspect

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## INTRODUCTION

At the present stage of development of linguistics, the study of phraseological units in a language is considered necessary for a deep understanding of the specifics of the language, as well as for analysing the mindset of different linguistic communities. Phraseological units are not only a part of the language system, but also an important element of cultural heritage, reflecting the peculiarities of the mentality and socio-cultural context of the speaking communities.

The study of phraseology allows scientists and linguists to explore in more detail the linguistic features expressed in fixed phrases. This becomes key to revealing the internal structure of language, identifying semantic shades and studying phraseological variation.

In addition, phraseology is essential for revealing the peculiarities of national culture and outlook. Expressions and expressive means embedded in the language carry connotations and concepts that are a unique reflection of the peculiarities of the thoughts and experiences of a particular linguistic and cultural group. This approach allows us to understand the peculiarities of a language as a reflection of national character and identity.

Many years ago, the British psychologist, teacher and writer Johnson-Laird wrote: "If natural language had been designed by a logician, idioms would not exist. They are a feature of discourse that makes no simple logical explanation of the dependence of the meaning of a statement on its syntactic parts possible. They are a feature of discourse that destroys any simple logical explanation of how the meaning

of a statement depends on the meanings of its parts and on the syntactic relations between these parts. (...) They are pervasive, poetic, and easy. How they are understood is a mystery..." (Johnson-Laird, 1993).

The creation of new phraseology and idioms is influenced by many factors, such as the professional, technical and cultural awareness of language users. In addition, the growing importance of various media platforms (press, cinema, television, Internet) plays a crucial role in shaping modern social communication. In most languages of the world, phraseological innovations have such basic characteristics as a fixed form, high functional and stylistic variability, linguistic economy, replenishment of terminological and professional vocabulary, and a psycholinguistic communicative basis (they have the ability to influence individual or mass consciousness through language).

Phraseological expressions are combinations of lexical units whose metaphorical interpretation cannot be derived from their individual components. These expressions are part of a wide and diverse field of polysemous expressions, which includes both literal and non-literal word combinations, the cognitive representations of which are stored in semantic memory.

This term paper is devoted to a comprehensive study of the diversity of modern English phraseology. Its **goal** is to consider and analyse various manifestations of phraseological evolution, contextualising them through the prism of communicative contexts.

This paper also aims to fulfil the following **objectives**:

- To form a comprehensive understanding of the concept of "phraseology", including its definition and significance in linguistic research.
- To investigate the unique characteristics and peculiarities of the use of phraseological units in English-language Internet discourse, taking into account their cultural, social and communicative implications.
- To examine modern phraseological units from a linguistic point of view, analysing their role in reflecting and shaping social identities, norms and ideologies in online communities.

- To investigate the cognitive processing mechanisms involved in the understanding and communicating the phraseological units, in particular, how they are stored, accessed and retrieved in the human brain.

- To conduct a corpus analysis of modern phraseology, investigate the frequency, distribution and contextual use on digital communication platforms, thus clarifying the linguistic dynamics.

Furthermore, this paper also **aims** to understand how the human mind navigates and understands the complexity of modern English phraseology. This work contributes to a better understanding of how cognitive aspects are intertwined with linguistic, cultural and communicative aspects, shedding light on the processes that underlie our interaction with modern English phraseology.

The **subject** of the term paper is the phraseology of modern English. The **object** of research, therefore, is modern English phraseology, with an emphasis on understanding its theoretical and practical foundations. Research includes the study of established phraseological units, the creation of new phraseological units, and the analysis of the impact of cultural, social and technological changes on the evolution of phraseological units in modern English.

The main provisions of this paper were presented at scientific conferences:

VI International Scientific and Practical Conference "Human problems and ways to solve them", 23-25 October 2023, Rome, Italy.

XII International Scientific and Practical Conference "Youth, education and science through today's challenges", 04-06 December 2023, Bordeaux, France.

**Approbation** of research results. This paper took 2nd place in the All-Ukrainian competition of student research papers in the speciality of Germanic languages.

## **CHAPTER 1. PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN MODERN ENGLISH**

This section of the paper will analyse the definitions and scope of phraseology, reveal its aspects in linguistics and present the key concepts and theories that form the basis of the study of phraseology.

### *1.1. Phraseology among related sciences*

Phraseology, as an independent branch of linguistics, was formed in the relatively recent past (Баран, 2004). Several decades ago, the basic principles of phraseology were developed, which allowed it to be separated from lexicology, stylistics and syntax. The focus of the study of phraseology is on stable word combinations and, in general, stable expressions. Lexicographic practice plays an important role in this process and covers a significant period.

It is noted that attention to stable phrases has been inherent in researchers since ancient times. Lexicographers, studying the linguistic wealth of different nations, aimed to collect and preserve phraseological expressions such as proverbs, sayings, maxims and others, clearly defining and explaining their meaning in terms of stylistics. They also indicated the source of their origin. The process of compiling dictionaries containing stable combinations of words has been going on in different countries since the last centuries.

Phraseological units are widely represented in English periodicals. It is important to note that phraseological composition is a source of enrichment of the language through its own means, due to the ability to create new signs based on those already known in the language system itself (Onishchenko, 2017). Relevant for this work is the fact that as one of several branches of linguistic research, phraseology includes word combinations, idioms, and multi-word expressions (Inoue, 2014). At the same time, the fundamental units of analysis in phraseology are usually called phrases or phraseological units.

Analysing some aspects in more detail, it should be noted that lexical and phraseological meanings have different levels of linguistic abstraction, since phraseological units perform a secondary reproduction of the world through its reflection by lexical and semantic structures. The phraseological meaning is filled with intellectual and emotional experience of native speakers of a particular reality. The internal form of phraseological units is more stable than the verbal form. This is a kind of epigrammatic core of these units, which maintains the derivational and cultural unity

of their components. Such a stable cultural and connotative connection allows phraseological units to play the role of the "language" of culture (Мізіл, 2007: 8). This aspect is important, and we will refer to it again.

Considering phraseological units and paying attention to their semantic feature known as imagery, we can compare them with metaphors. A metaphor is a product of the natural development of language, arising from human social practice in accordance with its needs. The comparison shows that both phenomena arise because of secondary lexical nomination, in which "meanings are produced on the basis of comparing two concepts on a common feature, the emergence of which is due to the unity of processes in the human mind" (Камінська, 2011: 124). This makes phraseological units and metaphor effective stylistic devices used in various spheres of speech, in particular in everyday and household language. It is worth noting that due to the intertwining of different cultures, English phraseological expressions contain numerous expressions borrowed from the vernacular of other European countries. However, by their nature, humour, images and associations, they are deeply national (Кириллова, 2021). The origins of all forms of English language and national art are rooted in their own culture and traditions.

In cognitive linguistics, idioms are believed to be conceptually motivated. However, there are many phrases whose meaning cannot be derived by understanding the components separately, which makes them unmotivated. In such cases, the meaning needs to be elucidated using the method of compositional analysis. This method becomes important when it is necessary to reveal the semantic meaning within a broader semantic field, as it involves the study of the interaction and interrelationships between the components of a phraseological unit. Although idioms can demonstrate conceptual motivation, the diversity of phraseological units emphasises the need to apply compositional analysis to comprehensively understand their semantic nuances.

Phraseology serves as a cornerstone of effective communication, providing speakers and writers with ready-made expressions that concisely convey ideas. By relying on established phraseological units, people can navigate different social contexts with linguistic dexterity and convey their intentions with clarity and precision.



Furthermore, phraseology reflects the cultural and historical vibrancy of a language community. Through idiomatic expressions, phraseology preserves traditions, values and collective experience, contributing to a sense of shared identity among speakers. This cultural resonance endows phraseology with layers of meanings and connotations that go beyond their literal interpretation, enriching the language with depth and complexity.

Learning phraseology provides valuable information about language acquisition and proficiency. By working with idiomatic expressions and repetitive phrases, learners master lexical and syntactic structures while also learning the pragmatic nuances of the language. Understanding and mastering phraseology is an essential step on the road to fluency in English and other languages and communicative competence.

### *1.2. Phraseological units in English-language Internet discourse*

Over the past decades, similar to the historical stages of the English language evolution, numerous new words have appeared in the process of word formation. Such words in English are not only complex in their structure, but also in their semantic meaning. Often, the meaning of a composite does not simply derive from the sum of its constituent parts but tends to be partially or even completely redefined. Therefore, some compound words can be classified as phraseological units (Zatsnyi, 2020).

A great example of this phenomenon is the composite phrase "*stay-at-home*". The first thing that may come to mind is that this phrase is a consequence of the 2020 pandemic. In fact, according to the Cambridge English Dictionary, it means "someone who does not like to go to parties or events outside the home and is considered boring" (Cambridge Dictionary). What seems to be a perfectly normal social phenomenon has taken on a new meaning with the rise of social media trends such as Instagram and TikTok. The new unit of "*stay-at-home girlfriend*" has become a cause for sexist comments and speculation, as it denotes a lifestyle of women who are completely financially dependent on their loved ones (Corbett, 2023). Due to media manipulation, bloggers who adhere to the stay-at-home lifestyle have been battered and harassed in

the so-called "cancel culture", labelled as unmotivated and spoiled, leading to heated and offensive discussions in the comments section.

These new phraseological units, which have arisen because of the lexicalisation of verb attributive combinations with nouns, illustrate the evolution of language and its response to social changes and cultural trends. In the case of expressions such as "*get-rich-quick society*", their formation reflects the pervasive influence of consumerism and the attractiveness of rapid accumulation of wealth through questionable means. The lexicalisation of such phrases emphasises the ability of the language to adapt to modern realities and complex socio-economic phenomena in concise and expressive terms. In addition, these phraseological units serve as linguistic artefacts that reflect broader societal views on materialism, ambition and ethical behaviour, encouraging critical reflection on the values and priorities of modern society. As linguistic manifestations of cultural heritage, they offer linguists, sociologists and cultural studies scholars' valuable insights into the collective thinking and aspirations of contemporary communities, highlighting the complex interplay between language, culture and social dynamics.

The evolution of language, especially in the digital age, has led to the transformation of certain terms and expressions, including "*to shade*", which has undergone a semantic shift in the context of modern social platforms. Formerly associated with the literal act of blocking sunlight or creating shade, "*to shade*" now carries a different connotation in online discourse. In modern usage, it refers to the act of expressing contempt or disrespect for someone in a public forum, often through subtle or indirect insults or criticism. This change in meaning reflects the dynamic nature of language and its response to evolving social dynamics and communication trends. As digital interaction increasingly shapes interpersonal relationships and cultural norms, words and phrases are adapting to reflect the nuances of online communication, highlighting the complex relationship between language, technology and social behaviour.

An example of pop culture's reflection on modern English phraseology (and vice versa) is the hit song "*Another one bites the dust*" by The Queen. The phrase "*bite the*

*dust*" has been used in English for many years to mean that someone falls or suffers a defeat, often dramatic or final. It is a common idiom that has been used for a long time, especially in the context of battles or fights. The lyrics are about someone facing a fall or defeat, but there is no direct reference to the historical phrase "*bite the dust*". Rather, the phrase is used metaphorically in the song, referring to the death or defeat of another person. Although the song title may bear a resemblance to the traditional phrase, it seems that the use of the phrase in the song is more of a play on words than a direct reference to the original idiom. However, it is important to note that the references to the historical phraseological unit appeared after the song was released.

The phrase "*I'll be back*" famously uttered by the Terminator in the 1984 science fiction film of the same name, has transcended its original context and become a widely recognised cultural reference. Its adaptability has made it a versatile tool for conveying a sense of return or a resolute promise to reconsider a situation or redo a task. Despite its cinematic origins, "*I'll be back*" has organically entered the spoken language, serving as a symbol of resilience and perseverance. The famous American TV series "The Office" and pop songs have successfully integrated the iconic modern phraseology into their scripts, which are available all over the Internet.

"*Life is like a box of chocolates*" is an amazing phrase from the film Forrest Gump that has become a common phraseology used to express the unpredictability of life and the unknown of what each of us may face. After all, when opening a box of chocolates, you never know what the filling is inside - an allusion to our unpredictable lives. The picturesque metaphorical nature of these phrases always leaves an imprint on people's minds and gives rise to new verbal creations in their expressions at home, at work, in the media or at press conferences.

Inoue mentions another fascinating discovery in language, which is the use of modal verbs as nouns that also can be pluralized (Inoue, 2014). According to the researcher, the plural forms of modal verbs, the so-called nouns, function as obligations and perform metalinguistic functions, raising awareness of the basic functions of each modal verb. In contrast, the noun forms of the past tense of auxiliary verbs are used more frequently because the -(e)s marker added to these forms clearly indicates that

the auxiliary verb functions as a noun. For example: If you live in the country, you need a car. Examples of plural forms can be found on the online platform Corpora of Contemporary American: Castillo raised his hand. *"We've been over this before, Larry. I'm not going to keep an entire country in the Dark Ages over a bunch of maybes and coulds"* (COCA, 2011). Nouns derived from modal verbs in the singular and plural form are an excellent linguistic tool for formulating ideas that originally had the contextual meaning of modal verbs. Such linguistic deformations can also be regarded as idiomatic, phraseological formations, as they give new colours to long-forgotten linguistic tools.

### *Conclusions to Chapter 1*

Thus, modern English phraseology is a testament to the dynamic and adaptive nature of the language, which is constantly influenced by various factors such as social media, pop culture, films and songs. The diversity of modern phraseology demonstrates its ability to transcend conventional linguistic boundaries, facilitating interconnection between different communities and reflecting the ever-evolving social and cultural tapestry. From viral catchphrases originating on social media to enduring idioms that have been incorporated into iconic films and songs, these linguistic transformations highlight the resilience and fluidity of language as it adapts to the changing needs and ways of expressing itself in a globalised world. As we continue to navigate the complex nuances of modern communication, the study of phraseology remains an indispensable channel for understanding the complex interplay between language and culture, serving as a lens through which we can decipher human expression and interaction.

## **CHAPTER 2. LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVES AND COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSIONS OF MODERN ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGY**

In the interdisciplinary field of linguistics, the convergence of neurolinguistics, sociolinguistics and corpus analysis is opening a deeper understanding of idioms and

phraseology. Neurolinguistics delves into the neurological basis of language processing, investigating how the brain understands and produces idiomatic expressions. Sociolinguistics, on the other hand, elucidates the social dimensions of language use, revealing the cultural and contextual factors that shape the adoption and evolution of idioms in different language communities. Complementing these perspectives, corpus analysis offers quantitative information about the frequency, distribution, and semantic variation of idiomatic expressions in huge collections of textual data. By integrating data from these three areas, we begin a multifaceted study of idioms and phraseology, unravelling the complex interplay between cognition, society and linguistic structure.

### *2.1. The cognitive aspect of modern English phraseology*

If certain phraseological units exist in a linguistic community, this is only possible because they exist in the minds of the members of that community. However, investigating how human consciousness works is a complex process, which is why neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic experiments are used to do so. Over the past few decades, experimental approaches to phraseology have expanded, and there are now well-tested experimental methods for investigating what form phraseological units can take in the human brain. Most of these methods focus on idioms, or non-compositional multiword units. This is because native speakers know that the vast majority of idioms have two different semantic readings - literal and figurative. In both speech production and speech perception, it can be assumed that the idiomatic understanding is the meaning of the phraseological unit, but the literal reading, in most cases, is not the result of the lexical unit's existence. Therefore, we can assume that the idiom is listed as a separate unit in the mental lexicon.

Neurolinguistics is a scientific discipline that investigates the neural mechanisms underlying language representation in the brain. The field studies the complex processes involved in the storage of linguistic knowledge, covering the languages we speak, understand, read, and write. Neuro-linguistics researchers seek to unravel the brain's intricacies associated with language acquisition by shedding light on the

dynamic neural processes that occur during language learning. In addition, the discipline seeks to understand the neural activity that occurs when we apply linguistic knowledge in our everyday interactions, providing insights into the neural basis of language use in real-world contexts. In our brains, information is stored in complex networks of brain cells that include both neurons and glial cells. These neural networks are closely connected to the areas of the brain responsible for controlling various functions, including motor control of speech, as well as processing internal and external sensations such as sound, sight, and touch, including those arising from our own movements. The connections in these networks have different strengths, affecting the activity level of neighbouring cells, enhancing or suppressing their functions. Through repeated use, these connections are reinforced, which leads to an increase in their strength. Closely interconnected areas of brain cells are involved in computation, often integrated with information from other areas through feedback loops. This processing occurs simultaneously, which contributes to the brain's ability to process information on a massive scale in parallel. Acquiring information or skills involves making new connections and modifying existing connections. These networks, both local and long-distance, exhibit plasticity, which means that they can undergo changes throughout our lives. This plasticity allows for continuous learning and, to some extent, recovery from brain injury. People with aphasia, a condition that involves the loss of language due to brain damage, can experience significant improvements through intensive therapy, practice and possibly rTMS, depending on the severity of the damage. Modern computer-based methods, under the supervision of speech-language pathologists, are becoming effective tools to facilitate intensive language practice.

Scientists of the twentieth century concluded that the model of speech reception consists of the acts of encoding a message and decoding it. At the same time, the content of the decoded message can and will differ from the content of the message encoded by the addressee (Kapna, 2012: 49). This may be due to the different cultural and psychological backgrounds of the encoder and decoder. However, modern neuroscientific research has confirmed that comprehension is not only based on syntax and semantics, but also that variability in text comprehension is biologically

determined and triggered by linguistic factors (АКИМОВА, 2014: 186). It is important to look at the processes that take place in the human brain (recipient) during the consumption of information and, most importantly, phraseological units.

There are three brain areas involved in the generation and perception of speech: Broca's area, which is responsible for hierarchical constructions in consciousness and the syntactic structure of language; Wernicke's area, which is responsible for recursion and semantics; and the temporal lobe, where auditory information is processed and memory is encoded. The abstract connection between these three areas is made by mirror neurons in the inferior parietal lobes of the brain. It is the activity of these areas that generates variants of interpretation of a statement in the human mind. Neurological studies also confirm that activity in this area of the brain creates a "picture" of what is being said in our minds (АКИМОВА, 2014).

Many English phraseological units demonstrate elements of figurative language by using metaphorical or idiomatic expressions. Cognitive linguistics emphasises how the mind processes metaphor and conceptualises abstract ideas in terms of the aforementioned "pictures" in the brain. Phraseological units often rely on metaphorical extensions or cultural references, engaging cognitive mechanisms to understand abstract or nuanced meanings beyond literal interpretation.

The cognitive processing of these figurative elements involves conceptual mapping and blending, activating mental schemas or frames to infer predictable meanings. The understanding of phraseology in the mind of an English native speaker involves associative processing with familiar phrases (automatic in nature) and compositional processing required for less familiar expressions. This duality of cognitive processing reflects the cognitive flexibility required to understand and create phraseology that goes far beyond the basic understanding of lexical or grammatical units.

Further examples for analysis were found on the well-known English language learning platform *Italki* to show the practical implementation of the above theoretical positions in modern English phraseology. "*To pull oneself together*": this phrase has a metaphorical meaning (bringing oneself into a unified/quiet state), activating the

cognitive processing associated with understanding the metaphor. This may include activation of circuitry related to emotional control and resilience. Theoretically, the brain processes this phrase through contextual understanding and activation of emotional regulation zones. Let's look at one example sentence: "*Advice such as 'Pull yourself together' or 'It's not as bad as all that' does not help the affected person*". The first "picture" that arises in the recipient's mind is a physical representation of the unit. Depending on the context, neurons transmit information through different parts of the brain to retrieve the knowledge necessary to understand the phrase in the communication situation.

Another example that can be found on the Internet is "*comfort food*". This term refers to food that evokes a feeling of emotional comfort or nostalgia. It consists of two elements that are initially perceived separately by the brain. The neuronal movement lasts no more than half a second until the recipient realises the true meaning of the two separate words combined. This phrase triggers emotional connections and memories by engaging cognitive processes related to sensory experience and emotional associations. Theoretically, the brain processes this phrase by activating areas associated with memory, emotion and sensory perception.

"*Oldschool*" means something traditional or nostalgic, often used on social media to express appreciation for retro or classic elements. This modern phraseological unit involves the activation of cognitive schemes related to the comparison of the past and the present. Theoretically, the brain processes this phrase by activating memory-related areas of the temporal lobe and engaging in comparative analysis between different eras or styles. The areas responsible for listening comprehension are also involved. "*No-brainer*" means something that does not require much mental effort or is obvious. This phrase triggers cognitive processing associated with making decisions and judgements. It engages areas associated with quick assessment and intuitive thinking. Theoretically, the brain processes this phrase by activating areas associated with decision-making and quick assessment.

## 2.2. *The sociolinguistic and communicative aspect of phraseological units*



Sociolinguistics, as the study of language in its social context, provides a lens through which we can understand the complex relationship between social dynamics and linguistic innovation. From a contemporary theoretical perspective, sociolinguists view language and society as mutually determining factors: each influences the other in inseparable and complex ways. Language is imbued with social, cultural and personal meaning. By using linguistic markers, speakers symbolically define themselves and society. Simply put, language is not just content; rather, it is what we do, and it affects how we act and interact as social beings in the world (Mallinson, 2009).

For this reason, it is context that matters in sociolinguistic research. Social categories such as gender, race or ethnicity, social class, nationality, etc. are socially constructed and have significant differences within and between categories. Thus, sociolinguistic research aims to study social and linguistic diversity to better understand how people use language to live and negotiate multiple personal, cultural and social identities and roles.

Sociolinguistics and phraseology are two distinct but interrelated branches of linguistics. Sociolinguistics investigates the relationship between language and society, focusing on how language varies and changes in different social contexts, while phraseology is concerned with the study of stable, wordy expressions and how they function in language. In essence, the intersection of sociolinguistics and phraseology offers a comprehensive understanding of how social factors influence the creation, use and evolution of phraseological units.

Building on Barbara M. Horvath's (2013) seminal ideas in sociolinguistics, this study lays the foundation for a modern analysis of phraseology in a dynamic context. In the context of modern communication on Internet platforms, where language is rapidly evolving, both quantitative and qualitative methods can be used to thoroughly analyse new phraseological units.

The qualitative approach involves in-depth analysis and interpretation of phraseological units in specific cultural and linguistic contexts. Methods such as discourse analysis and ethnographic research contribute to a deeper understanding of

the shades of meaning embedded in idiomatic expressions. A qualitative researcher often works with small, purposefully selected samples in an effort to unravel the cultural intricacies surrounding phraseology (Horvath, 2013: 10).

The quantitative approach, in contrast, tries to identify statistical regularities and patterns in phraseological units. Using computational tools and large data sets, this approach helps to identify frequency distributions, variations and trends in the use of phraseological units. Statistical analysis contributes to a broader understanding of the prevalence and distribution of idiomatic expressions. This approach often requires the use of large databases compiled because of expressions and language trends of native speakers.

According to the above-mentioned work, the synergy between qualitative and quantitative methodologies is essential for a comprehensive disclosure of the multifaceted nature of phraseology. While qualitative approaches provide an in-depth understanding of cultural nuances and contextual meanings, quantitative analysis provides statistical reliability and insight into broader patterns of phraseological use.

By analysing modern phraseology on the Internet platform of my choice, I am aware of the complexity of this linguistic phenomenon and the need for a comprehensive understanding. To achieve a nuanced study, I intend to combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Discourse analysis will play a key role in revealing the dynamic interaction between language users and the idiomatic expressions they use. At the same time, the quantitative dimension will use large-scale English corpora to identify statistical patterns, frequency distributions and emerging patterns in a wider range of phraseological usage on the Internet platform. This combined approach aims to provide a holistic perspective, combining the depth of qualitative research with the breadth of quantitative analysis, thereby enriching the overall understanding of contemporary phraseology in the digital sphere.

*2.3. Pragmalinguistic features of modern English phraseological units: a practical aspect based on corpus analysis of English-language media*

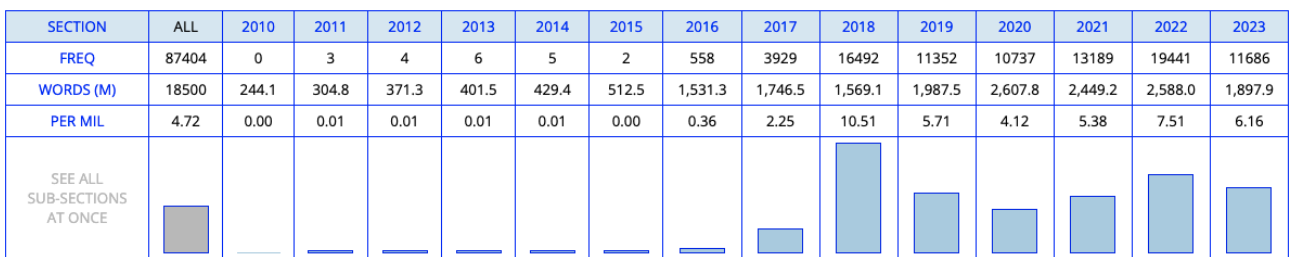
In the context of this study, it is not the fact that the Duchess is the wife of a member of the royal family that is important, but the term that was formed due to her scandalous resignation from royal duties. The emergence of the term, according to The Guardian (2020), "*to Meghan Markle*" reflects the cultural recognition of the importance of prioritising mental health and self-respect in various aspects of life. Whether it's leaving a social gathering early to prioritise sleep and well-being, ending an unhealthy relationship, or seeking better professional opportunities, "*Meghan Markling it*" represents an act of asserting boundaries and prioritising personal happiness. In a social context, *Meghan Markling it* encourages people to prioritise self-care over societal pressure, and in relationships, it encourages people to reflect on whether they are truly valued and respected. Furthermore, in the workplace, *Meghan Markling it* involves recognising one's own value and seeking out an environment where contributions are valued. In general, the term refers to a shift towards embracing autonomy, self-respect and mental well-being in overcoming life's challenges.

Such a relatively new expression as "*to Meghan Markle*" can be defined as a slang term, an idiom, a phraseological unit, depending on its usage, semantic structure and cultural context. While it may initially appear as a slang term due to its informal and contemporary nature, the continued use and symbolic meaning of "*to Meghan Markle*" indicates its evolution into an idiom or phraseology. Idioms typically have figurative meanings that go beyond their literal interpretation, which is in line with the concept conveyed by this expression regarding the priority of mental health and self-esteem. In addition, its lexicalisation and reproducibility in different contexts indicates its integration into the language as a recognisable linguistic unit, resembling the characteristics of phraseological units. As such, it carries a unique cultural and contextual meaning that resonates with people familiar with the history and cultural significance of Meghan Markle's decisions.

In order to find out the frequency and contextual usage of "*to Meghan Markle*", I propose to conduct a corpus analysis using the NOW (News on the Web) corpus, a huge database of online news articles. The aim of this analysis is to quantify the frequency of this term in different news sources and to identify the contexts in which

it appears. Through this corpus study, we will be able to better understand the cultural meaning and linguistic dynamics of "to Meghan Markle" in the digital world.

The corpus analysis, covering the period from 2010 to 2024, provides a detailed understanding of the trends in the use of the words "Meghan Markle" and "to Meghan Markle". While Meghan Markle is becoming a prominent figure in media and cultural discourse, with a frequency of 87,404 occurrences (Figure 1), peaking in 2018 and 2022, the frequency of "to Meghan Markle" remains relatively low at 1,990 occurrences (Figure 2), with a peak coinciding with the increased media attention to Meghan Markle in 2018. Despite the significant number of references to Meghan Markle, the limited use of "to Meghan Markle" suggests that "to" is mainly used as a preposition "to" rather than as a fixed phraseological unit. For example: "According to Meghan Markle, the photographer who captured the shots hid in the bushes while



spying on Meghan".

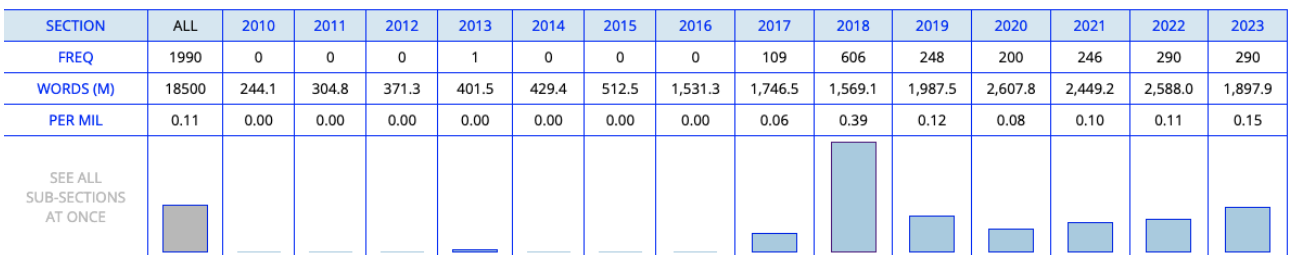


Fig. 1 Frequency of “Meghan Markle” usage in the English-speaking media

Fig. 2 Frequency of “to Meghan Markle” usage in the English-speaking media

The article in The Guardian, published on 24 January 2020, was a turning point in the discourse around Meghan Markle, potentially provoking a further peak in the occurrence of "to Meghan Markle" in linguistic corpora. The timing of the article coincides with increased media attention and public interest in Meghan Markle's

activities, especially amid ongoing discussions about her departure from royal duties and related controversies. The article catalysed wide discussions and analysis on various media platforms, which led to an increase in the number of references to Meghan Markle in various contexts, including the formation of new phraseological units. This surge in linguistic attention emphasises the impact of media coverage and public discourse on the formation of language use and highlights the relationship between socio-political events, media representation and linguistic phenomena.

43	20-01-25 US	International Business Times	🔍	🔍	🔍	complained about the continuous media scrutiny they received. # The term "to Meghan Markle" was created this week and it reflects one's mental h
44	20-01-25 US	International Business Times	🔍	🔍	🔍	self is not welcomed or wanted," the report read. # To Meghan Markle isn't as simple as ghosting. When someone "Meghan Markles" something the
45	20-01-30 US	E News	🔍	🔍	🔍	83535561 Meet the Mom Who Looks Practically Identical to Meghan Markle # If anyone's looking to book a Meghan Markle lookalike, then this mom
46	20-01-31 US	International Business Times	🔍	🔍	🔍	# Prince Harry also emulated Princess Diana's micro-expression during his royal wedding to Meghan Markle. When he saw his wife in her white wedd

Fig. 3 Examples of the use of the phraseology "to Meghan Markle" in the media

The observed linguistic dynamics reflect the complex relationship between language, media representation and the socio-cultural context, emphasising the adaptability of language in reflecting and responding to the evolution of social narratives and perceptions.

### *Conclusions to Chapter 2*

In conclusion, the cognitive processing of modern English phraseology reveals a complex intertwining of language, cognition and neural mechanisms in the human brain. A synthesis of psycholinguistics and neuroscientific principles reveals specialised networks in the brain that decode the meaning of numerous phraseological units. Some practical illustrations demonstrate brain activation during idiom comprehension, connecting the theoretical framework with linguistic understanding. Further research promises a deeper understanding of contemporary human communication, highlighting the need for ongoing research at the intersection of language, cognition, and culture.

Sociolinguistics illuminates the complex interplay between language and society, showing how language choices are shaped by social factors such as ethnicity, class, gender, and age. Through the lens of sociolinguistics, we gain insight into the

dynamic nature of linguistic variation and change, reflecting the diverse identities and social structures within a community. In addition, corpus analysis provides a quantitative framework for studying language phenomena, offering valuable data-driven insights into patterns and trends in language use over time. By integrating sociolinguistic theories with corpus analysis techniques, researchers can elucidate the subtle interrelationships between language, society and culture, revealing the underlying mechanisms that drive language behaviour and evolution.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This term paper study uses different types of linguistic analysis (e.g. sociolinguistic and corpus analysis) to reveal the complex relationship between language and society, cognition and culture, namely, taking into account the phraseological units of our time. In this paper, the concept of phraseology has been clarified. A phraseological unit is a stable combination of words that conveys a certain meaning that goes beyond the literal interpretation of individual components. These linguistic units are an integral part of language use, adding richness and shades to communication, while reflecting cultural and social norms.

Based on the results of this work, it can be stated that the lexical features of phraseological units in English discourse cover both semantic and pragmatic dimensions. Semantically, phraseological units have specialised meanings that may differ from the sum of their individual parts, often conveying idiomatic or metaphorical expressions typical of a language or culture. The pragmatic and communicative function of phraseological units is to reproduce the coherence of discourse, politeness strategies and rhetorical devices. In addition, pragmatic aspects take into account the situational context, the speaker's intentions and the audience's expectations, influencing the appropriate use and interpretation of phraseology in different communicative situations.

The sociolinguistic vector of the study proved that social factors shape linguistic variations, such as the frequent use of social networks by young people, online communication; the neurolinguistic aspect highlighted the neural mechanisms

underlying language processing (levels of language perception by the brain, interpretation of phraseological units). Corpus analysis made it possible to recognise patterns of language use in diachrony. The analysis was conducted on the basis of phraseological units of modern English, which made it possible to show the frequency of use of idiomatic expressions in the media.

By synthesising these multilevel and complex fields, a holistic view of the dynamic nature of phraseology in the twenty-first century was obtained. The interdisciplinary approach emphasises the importance of understanding language in its entirety, from its neural basis to its social manifestations.

## RESUMÉ

This term paper is devoted to the study of the complex dynamics of phraseological units through the prism of sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics and corpus analysis. The work reveals social, cognitive and cultural factors influencing linguistic variations and patterns of language use. Using qualitative and quantitative sociolinguistic analysis, neuroscientific methods and corpus analysis of the phraseological unit as the main research methods, the study aims to deepen our understanding of the role of phraseological units in society and the process of cognition. This interdisciplinary study clarifies the place of phraseology in the context of modern linguistics; examines its manifestations in English-language online discourse; investigates the influence of social context on the emergence and evolution of phraseological units; and traces the mechanisms of processing phraseological units in the human brain, using the cognitive mechanisms underlying their understanding and production. The corpus analysis using quantitative methods to find out the frequency of use of phraseological units confirmed the distribution and semantic shades of the meanings of phraseological units in the English linguistic corpus.

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Дана курсова робота присвячена вивченню складної динаміки фразеологічних одиниць через призму соціолінгвістики, нейролінгвістики та

корпусного аналізу. Робота розкриває соціальні, когнітивні та культурні чинники впливу на лінгвістичні варіації та моделі використання мови. Використовуючи як основні методи дослідження якісний та кількісний соціолінгвістичний аналіз, нейронаукові методи та корпусний аналіз фразеологічної одиниці, дослідження має на меті поглибити наше розуміння ролі фразеологізмів в суспільстві та процесі пізнання. Це міждисциплінарне дослідження уточнює місце фразеології в контексті сучасної лінгвістики; розглядає її прояви в англomовному інтернет-дискурсі; досліджує вплив соціального контексту на виникнення та еволюцію фразеологізмів; прослідковує механізми обробки фразеологічних одиниць в людському мозку, використовуючи когнітивні механізми, що лежать в основі їхнього розуміння та продукування. Корпусний аналіз з використанням кількісних методів для з'ясування частоти вживання фразеологічних одиниць підтвердив розподіл та семантичні відтінки значень фразеологічних зворотів у лінгвістичному корпусі англійської мови.

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### APPENDIX A. CORPUS SERCH RESULTS

SECTION	ALL	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
FREQ	87404	0	3	4	6	5	2	558	3929	16492	11352	10737	13189	19441	11686
WORDS (M)	18500	244.1	304.8	371.3	401.5	429.4	512.5	1,531.3	1,746.5	1,569.1	1,987.5	2,607.8	2,449.2	2,588.0	1,897.9
PER MIL	4.72	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.36	2.25	10.51	5.71	4.12	5.38	7.51	6.16
SEE ALL SUB-SECTIONS AT ONCE															

SECTION	ALL	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
FREQ	1990	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	109	606	248	200	246	290	290
WORDS (M)	18500	244.1	304.8	371.3	401.5	429.4	512.5	1,531.3	1,746.5	1,569.1	1,987.5	2,607.8	2,449.2	2,588.0	1,897.9
PER MIL	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.39	0.12	0.08	0.10	0.11	0.15
SEE ALL SUB-SECTIONS AT ONCE															

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44	20-01-25 US	International Business Times				self is not welcomed or wanted, " the report read. # To Meghan Markle isn't as simple as ghosting. When someone " Meghan Markles " something the
45	20-01-30 US	E News				83535561 Meet the Mom Who Looks Practically Identical to Meghan Markle # If anyone's looking to book a Meghan Markle lookalike, then this mom
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