

SEPARATE FORMATION OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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Abstract: *This article explores the ways of how phraseological units form. Formation methods were discussed in the article and relevant examples were provided. Through detailed comparisons, the article highlights both the universal and the unique formation types found in the phraseological units of the English language.*

Key words: *formation, phraseological units, metonymy, metaphor, proverbs, idioms, semi idiomatic phrases, compounding, blending.*

Phraseological units, also known as idiomatic expressions, are an integral part of language. They encapsulate cultural wisdom, historical references, and linguistic creativity. Their formation can be traced through various linguistic processes, each contributing uniquely to the richness of a language. This article delves into the primary mechanisms behind the formation of phraseological units.

One of the most common ways phraseological units are formed is through metaphorical extension. A metaphor involves transferring meaning based on a perceived similarity. For example, the phrase “spill the beans” originally referred to an ancient voting practice using beans but now means to reveal a secret. The metaphorical shift allows the phrase to capture a broader and more abstract meaning. Metonymy is another way of the formation of the phraseological units. Metonymy involves a direct association where one thing stands for another. For instance, “the crown” represents royal authority. This form of semantic change allows for concise and potent expressions, enabling complex ideas to be conveyed succinctly.

Exaggeration is a powerful tool in language, creating vivid and impactful phrases. An example is “break the bank”, which means to spend all of one’s money

or resources. Hyperbolic expressions often become idiomatic because of their expressive strength.

New phraseological units often emerge through compounding, where two or more words are combined to form a single expression. “Honeymoon” is a classic example, blending “honey” and “moon” to describe a post-wedding vacation period[1]. There is blending that’s similar to compounding but they are not the same. Blending merges parts of words to create new terms, such as “brunch” (breakfast + lunch). These blends often enter the lexicon as convenient and catchy alternatives to more cumbersome phrases.

Proverbs are big parts of phraseological units expressing cultural experiences. They complete sentences that convey collective wisdom or moral lessons, like “A stitch in time saves nine.” They often encapsulate cultural norms and societal values, passed down through generations[2].

Languages frequently borrow phrases from one another. For example, “déjà vu,” borrowed from French, is used in English to describe the sensation of experiencing something that has happened before.

There are expressions where the meaning cannot be deduced from the individual words, such as “kick the bucket,” meaning to die. Idiomatic phrases often reflect cultural nuances and require contextual understanding. In Semi-Idiomatic Phrases, one word retains its literal meaning while the others are idiomatic. An example is “make a decision,” where “make” is used idiomatically in combination with “decision”. Phrases can also arise from significant historical events. “Achilles’ heel”, for example, refers to a vulnerability, originating from the Greek myth of Achilles. Popular culture, literature, and media significantly contribute to the formation of phraseological units. “Catch-22,” from Joseph Heller's novel, describes a no-win situation and has become a part of everyday language. Authors often coin new phrases that become widely adopted.

Shakespeare, for instance, contributed numerous expressions to English, such as “break the ice” which describes the act of initiating a conversation, typically in a social situation where people don't know each other well[3].

The formation of phraseological units is a multifaceted process, reflecting the dynamic and evolving nature of language. From semantic shifts and lexical innovations to cultural and historical influences, these expressions enrich communication, offering depth and color to everyday language. Understanding their origins not only enhances linguistic competence but also provides insights into cultural and societal values.

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