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**Buchinformation:** Anita Naciscione: *Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse*. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2010. 292 pp.

The Phraseological Unit (PU) as a linguistic element worth investigating has a long history of being underestimated and under-resourced as a field of study. This state of affairs has fortunately changed; especially with the foundation of EUROPHRAS in 1999, research into phraseology and the number of publications therein saw an upswing. Today, there are numerous scholars whose work is well-known in the field, and who made and continue to make vital contributions to phraseological research. One of them is Anita Naciscione, who first caused a stir with her book *Phraseological Units in Discourse: Towards Applied Linguistics* in 2001, introducing an innovative way of thinking about phraseology, discourse, and stylistics in a transdisciplinary way.

Anita Naciscione's new book under review here is in fact an extended and revised version of her 2001 publication *Phraseological Units in Discourse: Towards Applied Linguistics*, which has been critically acclaimed and welcomed by phraseologists even then. With her new *Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse*, the author takes into account more recent findings, adding more illustrative examples and chapters. The book takes its theoretical foundation from the European and American linguistic schools, but also draws from Eastern European scholars who might be less well-known in a Western European context, and thus all the more interesting.

*Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse* tackles the important issues of the links between phraseology, stylistics, and discourse by taking a cognitive perspective on the stylistic discourse-level features of phraseological units. As the problem of a certain lack of continuity in the terminology of phraseology exists, especially in the polysemous use of the word “idiom”, the author defines the most basic terms at the beginning of the book, and also introduces concepts necessary to her interdisciplinary approach, which she calls “theory constitutive concepts for stylistic use of phraseological units” (8). The book consists of two parts, namely a theoretical section and one with a more practical view on the topic containing a number of illustrative examples of applications of the theory. The first part is noticeably longer than the second, and contains six of the seven chapters included in the book.

As could be expected of such a major publication in the field, the book is introduced by a noted scholar, Wolfgang Mieder, whose work in phraseology has contributed to its development as a recognised branch of linguistics. The introductory section includes his personal connection to the author and her book, as well as commentary on the content of the book. As such, it is close to a review of the work presented.

Chapter 1, “Phraseology and cognitive stylistics”, lays the theoretical foundation of the book. It starts with an overview of the most central fields of the stylistic use of phraseological units in discourse, focusing shortly on discourse analysis and cognitive stylistics, before going on to the phraseological explanations needed. Naciscione's choice of terminology for the phraseological concepts involved is highly appropriate and comes with clear and well-written definitions of controversial terms like “idiom”, or “Phraseological Unit”; she argues for the latter, and defines it as a “stable, cohesive combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning” (254). In this, she largely follows the Russian phraseologist Kunin in making a distinction between idiomatic and non-idiomatic, and thus not phraseological in her sense, stable word combinations. In this chapter, the author also justifies her linking stylistics, phraseology, and discourse analysis. She states that in the past, PUs have been considered self-contained units independent of the context in which they occur; her approach differs in that she regards texts as flows of thought, and her “concern is not only stylistic use of PUs but a cognitive approach to stylistic use of PUs in discourse. The PU is one of the modes of reflecting figurative thought” (17). Therewith, Naciscione provides a helpful link to psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics, as she sees stylistic use of PUs as conscious choices made by the language user with a certain intention in mind; a view that goes contrary to the traditional view of PUs and metaphors as having “right” or “wrong” variants with no change involved. At this point, the reader may be reminded of the distinction between prescriptive and descriptive grammar, as the author describes a similar phenomenon here.

The second chapter deals with the “Identification of phraseological units in discourse”, and is largely concerned with the different forms of PUs first mentioned in the theory constitutive explanations in the introduction. The first of these is the *base form*, which is a term introduced to denote the form a PU takes in its archetypical conception as an abstract and decontextualised linguistic unit; thus, the base form is the form in which a PU would usually appear in a dictionary, and which serves as a basis for the formation of other no less eligible variants. The second form included by the author is the PU in *core use*. Essentially, this is the PU in its most common and standard use in discourse, where its meaning is understood by most language users; one might say that core use is the base form of a PU in actual usage, thus, as a realisation. In its core use, the meaning and function of a PU is somewhat predictable and contains no stylistic features other than those inherent. The author argues that any PU has stylistic devices; she provides a list containing examples such as metaphors, understatements and oxymorons, etc., as well as prosodic, lexical, and grammatical features and different registers. The examples given are well chosen and most helpful in understanding the various stylistic possibilities that can be found in PUs in their core use. The third and last concept Naciscione presents is that of *instantial stylistic use*. Having distinguished between PUs in their most common form as both an abstraction and as a realisation, the author now

continues with the eponymous stylistic use in actual discourse: the instantial stylistic use of a PU is described in the book as a unique instance when the PU is used and changed stylistically in both form and meaning. An illustration is used to explain the division into the three forms further; therein, the base form is seen as a linguistic systemic foundation from which to apply both core and instantial use in discourse. These extensive and very detailed explanations may seem slightly too theoretical at this point in the book, but they provide the reader with a solid basis for Naciscione's innovative approach to phraseology, and are typical of the author's writing style.

Linking to the last point, the author provides ample instruction for the identification of the instantial PUs in any discourse, drawing on examples from literature which reach back as far as Old English. She distinguishes four stages in the multi-layered procedure of identifying the instantial use of PUs: recognition, verification, comprehension, and interpretation. The whole identification is based on complex cognitive performance in the brain, and implies mental processes which have, as the reader is made aware of, not yet been fully researched. Nevertheless, the cognitive approach to PUs is vital to the theory, as it “is a tool that helps to perceive, understand, and appreciate stylistic use of PUs, and to draw inferences” (55).

Chapter 3 is called “Key concepts of instantial stylistic use in discourse” and covers two vital determinants of stylistic use of PUs in discourse, namely stability and cohesion. Again, the author includes examples also from diachronic literature, adding more depth and amplitude to her argument. Stability and stylistic use are argued to remain even through changes or loss of variants of a PU; both are seen as intrinsic properties. The same holds true for cohesion, which is investigated for base form, core use, and instantial stylistic use. The author bases her conception of cohesion on Halliday and Hasan, where the elements' interpretation within a certain textual range depends on other elements in the same context. Interestingly, Naciscione argues for cohesion to exist also in a decontextualised base form, stating that it “is also a stylistic relation” (61), and that it makes up part of the meaning of the base form. Additionally, Naciscione develops the concept of instantial use of PUs further by introducing the term *instancial pattern*, referring to regularities in the stylistic variation in the usage of PUs in instantial stylistic use. The author stresses that these regularities can only be found by investigating corpora, instead of simply looking at the creativity involved in instantial stylistic use, which is inevitably going to seem unique. The existence of patterns is demonstrated through a number of examples, and Naciscione makes the reader aware of the need to investigate larger amounts of text from different times to identify them on discourse-level, and as “a logical development of thought and language” (68). At this point, the author prepares readers and learners to always expect PUs in their self-contained base form with a meaning easily understandable, arguing that core use is “largely predictable” and “presents neither novelty nor surprise” (73); this seems an overgeneralisation to me, as I think both readers and learners, even

if they are inexperienced when it comes to linguistics, should be given more credit for expecting and recognising PUs in what Naciscione calls instantial stylistic use, especially when they are native speakers or advanced learners; there may have been a more suitable way to introduce the dynamics of instantial use. In this chapter, the author establishes a feature of PUs in instantial stylistic use, that of sustainability; denoting the occurrence of the spread of a phraseological image over a longer text, reappearing in different stylistic variations. Therein lies the link between the three disciplines Naciscione has provided us with; she manages to connect phraseology, stylistics, and discourse analysis by means of investigating the stylistic sustainability of a PU in a whole discourse, including context and “the whole figurative network of semantic and stylistic interrelationships. [...] Figurative language reflects figurative thought” (77); she opens the reader's eyes to new possibilities in transdisciplinary research.

Chapter 4, “The most common patterns of instantial stylistic use”, continues and deepens Naciscione's observations on the instantial stylistic use of PUs and their resulting instantial patterns. The author stresses the continuity of association of phraseological links in discourse, despite the dynamics displayed by instantial use. For this chapter, four different patterns of instantial stylistic use have been chosen: extended phraseological metaphor, phraseological pun, cleft use, and phraseological allusion, all of which are extensively referenced, illustrated, and exceedingly well explained.

More illustrative examples are given in chapter 5, titled “Phraseological units in the web of discourse”. Herein, the author stresses the interrelationships and interconnections within any given discourse, stating that the “thread of phraseological meaning persists from one segment of discourse to another as the semantic process continues and the discourse unfolds” (121). Thus, the focus moves from stylistics to discourse analysis, but all the time covering phraseological units; a feat achieved seemingly effortlessly by Naciscione, who retains her clear and accessible style throughout the whole book. In this chapter, she offers more detailed and specific insights into concepts such as phraseological reiteration as a form of cohesion, drawing on Halliday and Hasan; or demonstrating instantial cumulative use through the example of the diminutive form in English phraseology. The author convincingly presents the letter in Lewis Carroll's poem *The Little Man that Had a Little Gun*. Another section deals with the concept of *concurrent use*; Naciscione uses the term to “denote simultaneous occurrence of several instantial changes within the framework of one PU” (146), linking it back to some of the stylistic devices mentioned before. She concludes the chapter with two shorter sections on comprehensive instantial use and the use of phraseological units in codas. Here, the author introduces the aspect of text division into the work by taking into consideration the form and structure of a text and the position of the PU therein, especially for headlines and codas.

The last chapter of the first part of the book is called “Visual representation of phraseological image”, and is the only chapter to deal exclusively with non-verbal modes of phraseological expression. The author assembled a number of illustrations, not only from the English language, which underlines and supports the interdisciplinary and cross-linguistic approach. Naciscione presents her findings based on the first few chapters, including visual representation of instantial stylistic use, and an application of usage in actual discourse. By choosing the media, the author chose the field wisely, as the world of media and advertisements can be counted on to deliver creative examples in abundance. Additionally, she observes the possibility of implicit visual messages, where the meaning is understood without any accompanying text, showing the interconnection of stylistic techniques and presenting more means of visual representation in multi-modal discourse. Placing visual representations into a discourse dimension, the author rounds off her chapter and stresses the importance of context, as well as the necessity of cognitive skills for the recognition of visual representation of phraseological images as a “further development of thought” (201).

The second part of the book consists of the 7<sup>th</sup> and last chapter on “Applied stylistics and instantial stylistic use”. The author's aim for this chapter is “to explore the practical worth and application of this theory” (205), meaning the theory introduced in the first theoretical part of *Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse*. The applications covered by Naciscione come from a variety of fields in which an interdisciplinary approach to phraseology is useful and necessary. The author shows her broad knowledge of such fields and supplies a number of examples. Therewith, she argues for applied stylistics to serve as an umbrella term for a possible usage and greater awareness of stylistics in any area of research, leading to *stylistic literacy*, a term denoting the competence of understanding and applying stylistic devices consciously. This skill could be applied, as Naciscione demonstrates, on fields such as teaching and learning, especially since PUs always constitute a difficulty for L2 learners; on translation of PUs, which are rightly called the stumbling blocks of a translator; on lexicography, glossography, notes, and comments, which are important fields considering the problems a researcher might encounter with incomplete or faulty dictionary or glossary entries, and the like; and, last but not least, advertising, which, having been mentioned before, is a true gold mine for any phraseologist looking for examples. Especially in the area of teaching and learning, the author has excelled by viewing the matter from different angles and taking into account many questions and problems that might occur. These sections are therefore particularly valuable for any teacher of a foreign language, as they provide insights into linguistic aspects seldom considered in more mainstream teaching manuals. In the section on translation, it is beneficial for the reader to have some basic understanding of Latvian, as a number of examples given are from English-Latvian translations, with little or no explanations given. The author

concludes by stating that instantial use of PUs can serve as a resource for applied stylistics, giving an outlook on future research possibilities in the field.

The book ends with an extensive glossary of the most central terms used, followed by a list of references, and also eight appendixes, which she might have included in the text of the book, as there were other examples given there anyway. At this point, criticism goes to the publisher for the insufficient quality of the pictures. For a book like this, relying partly on printed images as examples, somewhat less blurry pictures would have been better occasionally. *Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse* closes with an index of phraseological units and a subject index, both of which are helpful to the reader to navigate through the rather densely written book more easily. With its clear and appealing style, the book can be recommended to students and scholars alike. Students may benefit from the interdisciplinary approach, which is rarely found in the rather strict subdivision of linguistics, and from the inclusion of works and examples by Eastern European scholars, as those are not very common in a Western European context. Furthermore, students will find the glossary incredibly helpful for a more thorough understanding of the topic, as it provides a quick way of going back to a term or concept from the earlier chapters. Anita Naciscione's book is written in a very concise and understandable manner suitable for both phraseologists and newcomers to the field, and it is sure to remain a major contribution to a better appreciation of phraseology in its unique position among, and its links to, other linguistic disciplines.

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[http://www.europhras.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=121:anita-naciscione-stylistic-use-of-phraseological-units-in-discourse&catid=51:rezenionen&Itemid=97&lang=en](http://www.europhras.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=121:anita-naciscione-stylistic-use-of-phraseological-units-in-discourse&catid=51:rezenionen&Itemid=97&lang=en).