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Phraseology in Multilingual Society

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Том 1

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A Cognitive Approach to Instantial Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse

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1. Introduction

My theoretical approach is based on a cognitive understanding of the relationship between thought and language. Cognitive processes link thought and language: thought motivates language use[7]. My aim is to have a closer look at the cognitive aspects of phraseological units[8] (PUs) in discourse[9] and uncover cognitive processes in stylistic use. Understanding stylistic use of PUs

reveals fundamental characteristics of the figurative mind. A cognitive approach helps to understand stylistic use as a figurative mode of expression and reveal the role of stylistic patterns in figurative language construction. Thus, figurative meaning is one of the categorical features of a PU, along with intrinsic stability of the form and meaning of PUs. Figurativeness and stability are cornerstones of phraseological theory.[10]

I would argue that the third cornerstone is that of semantic and stylistic cohesion that is first and foremost manifest in its base form[11] (RU *базовая форма*). All the three categorical features are part of core use (RU *основное использование*), that is, use of a PU in its most common form and meaning that never exceeds the boundaries of one sentence. The role and significance of the three cornerstones – inherent stability of the base form, figurativeness, semantic and stylistic cohesion – increase in instantial stylistic use (RU *одноразовое стилистическое употребление*). From the cognitive perspective, I hold that PUs should be viewed as representation of figurative thought. Moreover, it is not only that the phraseological stock constitutes part of figurative language; the same approach refers to all types of its stylistic use.

Instantial stylistic use is a particular instance of a unique stylistic application of a PU in discourse, creating in significant changes in its form and meaning in actual use, and hence a new conceptualisation of human experience and the external world. Human thought and cognitive motivation are driving forces not only for the creation of phraseological meaning in its base form, but also in instantial use.

Instantial stylistic use[12] is determined by the thought and the context. It is a linguistic stylistic means to ensure the creative development of figurative thought and its reflection in discourse. This involves the cognitive processes of

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[7] For more on the inextricable link between figurative thought and language use, see Lakoff and Turner, (1989): 2; Gibbs, [1994] 1999: 11–17, 2008;

[8] According to Kunin's definition, the phraseological unit is characterised by two categorical features: stability and figurative meaning (1970: 210). I believe that the phraseological unit has a third categorical feature: that of cohesion that is manifest in all forms of its existence; hence I would reword the definition as follows: the phraseological unit is a stable, cohesive combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning. See also Kunin 1964.

[9] By discourse I understand language in use that goes across sentence boundaries and also includes broader social aspects and non-verbal representation (see Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton, 2001: 1).

[10] For a closer insight of the concepts of figurativeness, stability and cohesion in phraseology, see Naciscione 2010: 57–73.

[11] For my understanding of the base form of phraseological units (proverbs included), see Naciscione, 2010: 31–35.

[12] For detailed analysis of the phenomenon of instantial stylistic use, see Naciscione, 2010: 39–248.

the mind in creative thinking. A new perception, a different point of view, a novel vision cannot be conveyed without a change in the standard form and meaning of the PU.

2. Patterns of Instantial Stylistic Use

Creation of new forms and meanings is a natural discourse process. Instantial stylistic use is one of the mediums to convey a figurative thought, yielding new discoursal forms that present great diversity. However, a closer study of the diversity of actual use reveals that cases of instantial use are based on certain stylistic patterns (RU *стилистический приём*) that are reproducible[13] in future instantiations, the same as PUs themselves.

A cognitive approach helps to understand not only instantial use as a figurative mode of expression but also the role of stylistic patterns. In the cognitive view, pattern is a structure of thought and a cognitive mechanism, applicable in new cases of stylistic use, e.g., extended metaphor, pun, allusion, replacement, ellipsis, etc. By way of illustration I would like to offer some examples of extended metaphor, as it is the most widespread mental stylistic technique that is used to create new figurative instantiations. For instance:

the root of all evil[14]
Cokane: Ah, my dear fellow, the love of money is **the root of all evil**.
Lickcheese: Yes, sir; and we'd all like to have the tree growing in our garden.

G. B. Shaw, *Widowers' Houses*

The root of all evil goes back to *The New Testament* (1 Timothy 6: 10). This PU is metaphorical in its base form, reflecting human experience. The figurative thought has been sustained across centuries and languages not only due to the spread and popularity of the Bible but also its repeated functioning over time in both core use and instantial stylistic use in various texts and contexts. In this instantiation the base metaphor *the root of all evil* is extended by one sub-image: *the tree growing in our garden*, linked metonymically to the base metaphor. The scope of extended metaphor knows no limits. The extension of its image may easily go across sentence, paragraph, or chapter boundaries.

Let me give another example of metaphorical extension of phraseological image across turn boundaries in dialogical discourse:

to play with fire
Lady Caroline: As far as I can make out, the young women of the present day seem to make it the sole object of their lives **to be** always **playing with fire**.
Mrs. Allonby: The one advantage of **playing with fire**, Lady Caroline, is that one never gets even singed. It is the people who don't know how **to play with** it who get burned up.

O. Wilde, *A Woman of No Importance*

This illustration presents a longer chain of extension consisting of two sub-images, tied by associations of contiguity: *to play with fire → get singed … get burned up.* Thus, I would argue that, as a structure of thought, extended metaphor presupposes the presence of metonymy[15] by definition: extended metaphor is an instantial stylistic pattern, comprising a sub-image or a string of sub-images, linked together by associative metaphorical and metonymic ties. This metaphorical extension, coupled with reiteration[16] of the PU, helps to create a paradox that is characteristic of O. Wilde's plays.

Pun is another widespread stylistic pattern that reveals the cognitive complexity of some of the processes of thought and reason. It is based on dual perception of figurative meaning of the PU and the literal meaning of its counterpart, for instance:

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[13] For stylistic patterns as reproducible elements generating innumerable particular manifestations in discourse, see Naciscione 1982, 2010: 65-73. In traditional linguistics, the term "a stylistic device" is most commonly used.
[14] In this article, stylistic instantiation has been highlighted for emphasis: **base forms** are marked bold and underlined; instantial elements are spaced and underlined; replaced elements are underlined double and spaced; cues are marked with an interrupted line.

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[15] For interaction of metaphor and metonymy in conceptual metaphors and conceptual metonymies, see Lakoff and Turner 1989: 104-106. See also Barcelona [2000] 2003: 1-28, 2007: 51-76.
[16] Reiteration is a narrative technique, used to enhance semantic and stylistic cohesion of the stretch of text, reinforcing the meaning.

cometh the hour, cometh the man[17]

They say that **cometh the hour, cometh the man**. Well in 1979 c a m e   t h e
h o u r, and c a m e   T h e   L a d y.

> D. Cameron, *David Cameron's Commons Tribute to Margaret Thatcher,*
> 10 April, 2013

The proverb *cometh the hour, cometh the man* is metaphorical in its base form, meaning when a time of need arises, a man to do the job will appear. Moreover, the proverb is a forceful case of full inversion. Thus, along with the archaic form of the verb[18], the base form of the proverb is emphatic per se. David Cameron resorts to instantial use of this vigorous proverb to pay tribute to Lady Thatcher's services to Britain. The first part of the proverb *cometh the hour* is reiterated to underscore the importance of the message. Reiteration is a typical narrative technique in rhetoric. The reiteration of the second part contains a striking replacement: *man* → *The Lady*[19], which is a clear allusion to Margaret Thatcher. The replacement creates the effect of a pun as *The Lady* certainly has a literal meaning. Note the use of the initial capitals, which is a graphic stylistic means, functioning like a recall cue in establishing the link between *The Lady* and Margaret Thatcher. To sum up this case study, the short stretch of text contains concurrent application of several instantial patterns in realisation of one PU, creating a focal point and reinforcing the message. Employment of several stylistic patterns in one context is commonly used to create figurative meaning in discourse.

Interestingly, pun has remained underresearched in cognitive linguistics though it is exceedingly common in some genres, e.g., plays, especially comedies, media texts, sitcoms, and in visual representation: advertisements, cartoons, etc. This may be mostly because in the 80ies and the 90ies the focus was on metaphor, while research on metonymy came to the fore only at the turn and the beginning of the 21st century. Pun is still awaiting its due exploration.

The pattern of phraseological allusion is among the least researched techniques, which are applied in stylistic use of PUs. Allusion acts as an implicit mental verbal or visual reference to the image of a PU. In discourse it is represented by one or more explicit image-bearing constituents, and their instantial ties, hinting at the image. In English, pattern of phraseological allusion is not merely a pattern of Modern English; it goes back to Old English texts, while in Middle English the pattern is more commonly used, e.g.,

to be/to feel like a fish out of water[20]

Ne that a monk, whan he is cloisterlees,
Is lykned til **a fish** t h a t   i s   w a t e r l e e s.

> G. Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, A, 179–180

Allusion brings out the inherent strength of cohesion inherent in the PU: one or more constituents are in a position to arouse associations with the whole PU. The explicit image-bearing constituent or constituents of the PU perform a metonymic function by alluding to the PU, providing an associative vision and evoking its image.

3. Diachronic and Stylistic Stability in Phraseology

My aim is to offer a brief insight into diachronic and stylistic stability of phraseological units in their use across centuries. I will turn to extended metaphor that is the most common stylistic pattern not only in Modern English but also in the history of English. Diachronically, extended metaphor is an entrenched figurative pattern, used to convey a figurative thought while, cognitively, extension of figurative meaning discloses the workings of the human mind. I would like to illustrate instantial stylistic use of the PU **the salt of the earth** over time, instantiated by the pattern of extended metaphor. We are used to encounter cases of instantial use of PUs in literary and media texts in Modern English:

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[17] The proverb *cometh the hour, cometh the man* goes back to *The New Testament* (John 4: 23).

[18] It might be of interest to note that some PUs with archaic elements have survived beautifully throughout centuries, in this case – the ending -th in the Present Tense, 3rd person, sing. The survival of archaic forms and constituents in the structure of PUs reveals the force of cohesion.

[19] With the development of gender equality in the 90ies, we find records of a new replacement of the constituent *man* by *woman*. More instances emerge at the beginning of the 21st century after the publication of an analytical article, entitled *Cometh the Hour, Cometh the Woman* by Bruce Anderson in *The Independent* on 4 May, 2009, presenting an evaluation of Margaret Thatcher's legacy. We may be witnessing the appearance of a new phraseological variant.

[20] For more examples of use of this PU in Middle English, see Whiting 1968: 186.

the salt of the earth[21]

She took life too seriously. She was one of the Marthas[22]. She was **the salt of the earth**, as they say, and too much salt makes a man dry. She did me good, but too much good and not the good I wanted. She sent me to bed at nine o'clock and when I tried to object that I wasn't sleepy, she pushed me about.

<div align="right">J. Cary, The Horse's Mouth</div>

In this stretch of text, the PU *the salt of the earth* is used to denote an excellent person who is very reliable. It is only the cues (here underlined with an interrupted line) that act as a guide and impart the message to the reader that *too much salt makes a man dry*, which is a metaphorical extension of the PU, ironically meaning too much of a good thing.

The salt of the earth is a diachronically recurring PU. In English its earliest records go back to the end of the Old English period[23] as a loan translation from Latin. Middle English texts present numerous cases of its use. In the following example Chaucer has used it with a metaphorical extension that is a typical case of extended metaphor – the associative closeness of *salt* and *savour* is beyond doubt:

Ye been **the salt of the erthe** and the savour.

<div align="right">G. Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales, D, 2196</div>

It is common knowledge that the PU *the salt of the earth* goes back to the Bible:

salt of the earth

Ye are **the salt of the earth**: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

<div align="right">The New Testament, Matthew 5: 13</div>

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[21] The PU *the salt of the earth* is polysemous in its semantic structure: 1) a representative of the best or noblest elements of society; 2) a person of great worth and reliability.
[22] The Sisters of St. Martha were founded as a religious congregation in 1900 in Nova Scotia, Canada.
[23] Whiting (1968: 501) registers several examples of *the salt of the earth* dated by the year c1000, both in core use and instantial stylistic use. Likewise, the PU has been recorded in Middle English.

Surprisingly, in this gospel the PU is not employed in core use as it might have been expected in a biblical text, but constitutes a striking case of extended metaphor, covering the whole of Verse 13. This leads to the thought that extended metaphor must have been in use as an abstract pattern of a figurative thought at the time when the New Testament was written and most probably before it. Unfortunately, too little of the old texts have been preserved to prove it, and to my knowledge, no research has been done on the diachronic pathways of stylistic patterns as yet. Diachronic aspects of use of PUs are a new area of exploration.[24] This opens up new avenues for further research.

A diachronic insight into stylistic use of PUs and a discourse-based approach to use of stylistic patterns yield a number of important theoretical conclusions that help to comprehend the inherent qualities of development and functioning of PUs over time. The most important of all the key concepts in phraseology is the concept of stability. Diachronic studies reveal diachronic stability of the PU in the system of language throughout the period of its use due to its figurative meaning, and semantic and stylistic cohesion. Phraseological stability includes all types singled out by Kunin: stability of use, structural-semantic stability, lexical stability, morphological stability, syntactical stability (Kunin 1964, 1970: 89–112). However, I would argue for stylistic stability of the PU as another type of stability that is crucial for understanding of figurativeness in phraseology, namely, the preservation of the same image and the type of figurativeness in its base form and its use in discourse (in this case – metaphor). Importantly, diachronic studies reveal another essential aspect of stability that enables us to understand function of the PU in discourse: stability of pattern of instantial use across centuries (in this case – pattern of extended metaphor) as a mental framework of figuration. Cognitively, a diachronic approach asserts a characteristic of the human mind to retain figurative thought and hand it down from generation to generation. I may conclude that there exists another key concept of instantial stylistic use of PUs – diachronic sustainability of figurative thought: the PU is retained in the long-term memory of language users.

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[24] For analysis of instantial stylistic use of PUs in the history of English, see Naciscione 2010.

Thus, both the PU and the pattern are stable reproducible elements in figurative meaning construction. A cognitive approach helps to explain diachronic stability of instantial stylistic use of PUs across centuries and the innumerable cases of use today, as well as the great similarity in its functioning in different languages and types of language. Thus it is not a matter of the particular language or its stage of development; it is a matter of the creativity of human thought.

4. Multimodal Use of Phraseological Units

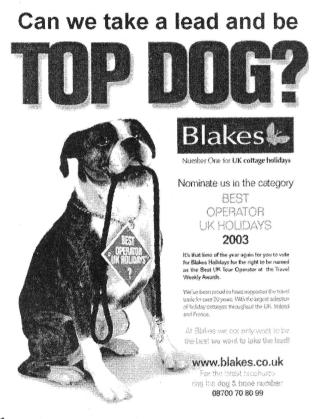As figurative language formations, PUs are often employed in multimodal discourse, see Figure 1:

Figure 1

Multimodal use is only natural, as figurative thought may be expressed in a number of semiotic modes, not only in verbal representations[25], but also in a number of non-verbal forms in creation of new meaning in instantial metaphorical and metonymic conceptualisations.

I would like to offer a visual representation *(Travel Weekly*, 25 August, 2003, p. 45) that features sophisticated use of figurative thought for purposes of advertising. *Blakes Holidays* has won the title of the Best UK Tour Operator at the *Travel Weekly* Awards. The headline reads: "Can we take the lead and be TOP DOG?" It contains concurrent use of two PUs – **to take a/the lead** and **a top dog**, linked metonymically by associations of contiguity: usually a dog has a lead, so has this excellent specimen of a pedigree breed, holding his lead in his mouth as a prize. Moreover, both the PUs are used as puns, preserving their figurative meaning at the same time. *To take a/the lead* means to win the first place, to be a leader (Kunin 1967: 535), while *a top dog* is the most important competitor who has beaten all others (*Encarta World English Dictionary* 1999). The significance of the *top dog* is highlighted graphically by the use of bold capital letters and a picture of a well-groomed dog, creating a visual pun and a multimodal discourse.

In the right-hand bottom corner of the advertisement we read that *Blakes* wants not only to be the best (which means to be a top dog) but also *to take the lead* which is a reiteration of the PU in the headline. For the latest brochures of *Blakes* we need to ring their **dog and bone** number which is best-known Cockney rhyming slang, denoting a phone – another case of figurative use of "dog" in this visual representation. I would like to offer this text in an enlarged version (see Figure 2).

At Blakes we not only want to be the best we want to take the lead!

www.blakes.co.uk
For the latest brochures
ring the dog & bone number:
08700 70 80 99

Figure 2

Thus, the associative ties created by use of two PUs cover a whole advertisement, creating a dense figurative network that cannot be perceived at first glance: there is much more to it than meets the eye.

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[25] For more on representation of figurative thought in visual discourse, see Naciscione, 2005: 71-83.

Training in stylistic awareness and visual perception is invaluable both in teaching and learning to promote recognition and comprehension of stylistic use both in verbal and visual representation. Hence the need for applied stylistics as a special area of study.

Another important aspect for teaching and learning as part of applied stylistics is creativity and its identification for purposes of comprehension and interpretation. The expression of new ideas and thoughts require creativity in language. This is the reason why PUs acquire new features and ways of expression in discourse, adding novelty value to the existing base form. Instantial use is a tool of creativity: it creates space for novel reflection of thoughts and nuances that cannot be expressed by the standard base form. To be creative means to be flexible and go beyond core use of the PU in its standard form and meaning, and conventional vision. A new creative instantiation is made possible due to the base form of a PU as a language unit and a pattern of instantial stylistic use as stable elements in our mind and the language system.

In phraseology, there is no way of being creative by sticking to core use! You have to go beyond core use to be creative in discourse and break with conventions of established use. There is no way of sustaining an image across sentence boundaries by remaining within the core framework of the PU, without instantiating a new development in shaping figurative meaning. To be creative means to think from a new perspective, be flexible and go beyond the standard form and meaning, and the conventional vision, challenging the preconceptions.

5. Conclusion

In stylistic use of PUs, a cognitive perspective means appreciation of and a creative approach to figurative meaning. A cognitive insight promotes recognition and comprehension of the mental processes involved: the formation of phraseological meaning and its development in discourse, sustainability of figurative thought and language in the process of creation of a new contextual meaning, identification of the network of associations and cohesive figurative strands. Comprehension and identification of the whole scope of stylistic instantiation of a PU is a cognitive act that involves linguistic and cognitive processing of human sensory perception and experience. Sustained figurative use calls for enhanced cognitive skills of conscious perception, comprehension and interpretation. Training in instantial stylistic use of PUs leads to substantial gains in cognitive skills and stylistic awareness which, I believe, is a cognitive skill in its own right.

In conclusion, instantial stylistic use of PUs stretches the imagination; it is a representation of a novel turn of a figurative thought that is enshrined in the base form of PU as a stable figurative language unit. Hence the importance of learning and teaching the cognitive skills to understand and appreciate phraseological meaning and its development in verbal and multimodal discourse.

Figurative use is a characteristic of the human mind. Instantial stylistic use (metaphor, extended metaphor, metonymy, pun, allusion) is one of the ways how people conceptualise their emotions, experiences and the external world. Stylistic use provides for the development and sustainability of figurative thought and language in discourse.

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Widespread idioms and the lesser-used languages of Europe. New insights into the figurative lexicon of European languages

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1. Preliminary Remarks

In reference to the title of the conference, "Phraseology in Multilingual Society", the focus of this paper will be on Europe's linguistic diversity from a sociolinguistic perspective. The starting point is idioms that are common in a large number of languages, even in geographically, genetically and culturally distant languages, i.e. idioms that are widespread and thus form the core of a "Lexicon of Common Figurative Units". This "Lexicon" is the result of the international project "Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond".[26] The project started in 2005 and is still ongoing. One of the goals is the systematic investigation into idioms that exist in many European languages in a similar lexical structure and the same figurative core meaning. First, we had to develop a theoretical framework and a suitable metalanguage (cf. Piirainen 2012: 59–62); the next objective was to systematically discover *widespread idioms* (*WIs*) across as many languages as possible. With the

[26] Main results have been published in (Piirainen 2012). At that time, the number of actually existing widespread idioms was estimated to be 380. Since then, at least 50 further idioms have been found to exist in a large number of languages. Work on Volume II of a "Lexicon of Common Figurative Units" is in progress. See footnote 7.

help of more than 250 experts who completed many questionnaires for their native languages, about 430 WIs were identified so far. It is not rare to see entries in our "Lexicon" that include idiom equivalents in 40, 50 or more languages. Data were gathered for 75 languages spoken in Europe and 19 non-European languages. Among them are languages that have hardly ever been the subject of idiom research. However, we must keep in mind that there is currently no access to a further 70 languages spoken in Europe, i.e. the many declining or seriously endangered lesser-used languages of Eastern and Southeastern Europe.

Among the European languages we analyzed there are major and minor languages. In this article, we want to look at the smaller languages included in the project: Are there differences between the standard languages and the lesser-used languages in the realm of the common figurative lexicon? Are the smaller languages involved in constituting the uniformity of idioms of European languages, and to what extent? What could be the reasons for the differences? Before we look at some examples, the geographic and linguistic situation of Europe, the term *lesser-used language* and the languages of our project should be considered in more detail.

2. Geographical definition of Europe

Our study on "Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond" started from the geographical definition of Europe. From a geological viewpoint, Europe can be seen as part of the Eurasian continent, whereas political and cultural aspects usually predominate in the definition of Europe as a continent on its own. While this continent has clear northern, western, and southern boundaries in the form of coastlines, it is not clear how far it extends to the east. Since the 18th century the Ural Mountain Range has been regarded as its eastern boundary, with an extension to the Caspian Sea. However, this is an arbitrary border, based on neither geographical nor political nor cultural grounds. The various definitions of *Europe* largely depend on their objectives and intentions or the context in which they are used, highlighting either geographical, political, historical or cultural aspects. Any attempts to demarcate Europe from neighboring cultural and linguistic areas by