

## PHILOLOGY

# PROPERTIES OF ENHANCING UNITY AND STABILITY OF SET EXPRESSIONS

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## ABSTRACT

Language is the major means of communication among people however it impacts the acquisition of the language. This current article making use of an authentic text sheds light upon the classification of set expressions and their property of enhancing unity and stability. The words and word combinations are the main source of enriching vocabulary of a language. Some of them refer to free word combinations while the others are called set expressions. There is a staple unity used for both of them which is called the term phraseological units. Phraseological units are word-groups which comprise proverbs, sayings, clichés, quotations as well as various kinds of allusions may be used for stylistic purpose. Being crystallized metaphors phraseological units enhance the exits expressiveness of which is often intensified by parallelism, antithesis, and alliteration. The basic characteristics of phraseological units are that they exist in the language as ready-made units. It should be noted that they cannot be made in the process of speech. The criterion that assists to distinguish set expressions from free phrases with variable context is the stability of such word-groups which is viewed in terms of statistical probability of co-occurrence for the member words. The whole meaning of a phraseological unit doesn't depend on the meaning of its components which is explained by the feature of a phraseological unit having a fully and partial figurative meaning being a stable, cohesive and fixed combination of words. Phraseology is supposed to merge into an agreed set of terms and frameworks which has captured a considerable interest from a wide range of language related disciplines. Despite the fact that, a number of miscellaneous approaches have been put forward, and the boundaries of this set, its classification and the place of phraseology in the vocabulary still appears as one of the controversial issues of cutting-edge linguistics. The term set expression is on more definite and self-explanatory vice-versa since the first element points out the most significant characteristic of these units, more precisely, their stability, their fixed and ready-made nature. The word "expression" is relevant in this case, because it is deployed as a general term – the words, groups of words and sentences inclusive.

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## Introductory remarks on phraseology and set expressions.

The word «phraseology» has very different meanings, however the term came into usage for the whole unity of expressions where the meaning of one element depends on the other, regardless the structure and properties of the unit. According to some authors, set expressions which, as distinguished from idioms, do not possess any expressiveness or emotional colouring, and also vice versa, only those that are imaginative, expressive and emotional.

"Phraseology" is used to denote the branch of linguistics studying the word. The term "phraseology" is a stylistic one meaning, mode of expression, peculiarities of diction, choice and arrangement of words and phrases. The word "idiom" is even more polysemantic. It is specifically used for denoting a mode of expression peculiar to a language, without differentiating between the grammatical and lexical levels. It can also be employed as a group of words whose meaning is difficult or impossible to understand from the knowledge of the words considered separately. Following this further, "idiom" may be synonymous to the words "language" or "dialect", denoting a form of expression peculiar to a people, a country, a district, or to one individual. There is no point in itemizing further possibilities. The word "phrase" is no less polysemantic. The term set expression is on the contrary more definite and self-explanatory, since the first element points out the most important characteristic of these units, namely, their stability, their fixed and ready-made nature. The word "expression" suits our purpose, because it is a general term including words, groups of words and sentences.

As is stated above, set expressions are called "word equivalents", that the vocabulary of a language consists of words and word equivalents, akin to words in so far as they are not created in speech but introduced into the act of communication ready-made. It has paramount importance to note that here equivalence means only this and nothing more. Set expressions, free phrases and semi fixed combinations are unequivocally different from one another. All these are but different stages of restrictions imposed upon co-occurrence of words, upon the lexical filling of structural patterns which are specific for even a language. The restrictions may be independent of the ties existing in extralinguistic reality between the objects spoken of and be conditioned by purely linguistic factors, or have extralinguistic causes in the history of the people. In free combinations the linguistic factors are chiefly connected with grammatical.

#### **Peculiar use of set expressions.**

In the study of language learning process there are two very crystal clear propensities referring to the problem of word-combination. They are enumerated as follows:

1. the analytical
2. the synthetic

The function of the first one appears to be the analytical tendency which is in quest of dismembering one component from another. The second that is synthetic one is on the search of integrating the parts of the combination into a stable unit. There are distinctive ways of treating these two tendencies in lexicology and stylistics. In lexicology the parts of a stable lexical unit may be separated in order to make a scientific investigation of the character of the combination as well as analyzing the components. As well in terms, in stylistics the component parts are analyzed on the purpose of getting some communicative effect. The challenge that is displayed on this stage is the term cliché demonstrates.

The general description of cliché has become trite on a faster pace. A cliché has lost originality, ingenuity, and impact as in being used over a long period of time. There is a deficiency of this definition that should be highlighted - that is, a cliché strives after originality, whereas it has lost the aesthetic generating power it once had. There is always an opposition between what is aimed at and what is actually attained. Cliché is a kind of stable word combination which has become familiar and which has been accepted as a unit of a language. In accordance with the definitions taken from various dictionaries indicate that cliché is a derogatory term and it is therefore necessary to avoid anything that may be called by that name. But the fact is that most of the widely recognized word-combinations which have been adopted by the language are unjustly classified as clichés. But the process of being acknowledged as a unit of language is slow. It is next to impossible to foretell what may be accepted as a unit of the language and what may be rejected and cast away as being unfit, inappropriate, alien to the internal laws of the language for stable word-combinations to designate new notions. Henceforth, the two conflicting ideas appear: language should always be:

1. vigorous
2. expressive

Analyzing an issue from another prism, language, as a common tool for intercommunication should make use of units that are easily understood and which require little or no effort to convey the idea and to grasp it. Every word sequence in which what follows can easily be predicted from what precedes. A considerable number of expressions are universally understood to be so threadbare as to be useless except in the most casual discourse. All word-combinations that do not surprise are labelled as clichés. If there is an agreement with such an understanding of the term, it should be denoted that stable and necessary word-combinations used in newspaper language must be viewed as clichés. Of

course, if instead of making use of the existing means of communication, the language of the community, people are to coin "their own language".

The set expressions of a language are 'part and parcel' of the vocabulary of the language and cannot be dispensed with by merely labelling them clichés. However, at every period in the development of a language, there appear strange combinations of words which arouse suspicion as to their meaning and connotation.

### **The classification of set expressions**

Colloquial phrases are considered an important characteristic feature of natural spoken English and demonstrate great impediment for foreigners. The choice of entries is not clear-cut: some dictionaries of this kind include among their entries not only word combinations but also separate words interesting from the point of view of their etymology, motivation, or expressiveness, and, on the other hand, also greetings, proverbs, familiar quotations. Other dictionaries include grammatical information.

Thanks to outstanding linguists, phraseological units were rigorously defined as lexical complexes with specific semantic features and classified accordingly. The classification is based upon the motivation of the unit, the relationship existing between the meaning of the whole and the meaning of its component parts. The degree of motivation is correlated with the rigidity, indivisibility and semantic unity of the expression, with the possibility of changing the form or the order of components, and of substituting the whole by a single word.

Set expressions have their own specific features, which enhance their stability and cohesion. These are their euphonic, imaginative and connotative qualities. It has been often pointed out that many set expressions are distinctly rhythmical, contain alliteration, rhyme, imagery, contrast, are based on puns, etc. These features have always been treated from the point of view of style and expressiveness. Their cementing function is perhaps no less important. All these qualities ensure the strongest possible contact between the elements.

These euphonic and connotative qualities also prevent substitution for another purely linguistic, though not semantic, reason — any substitution would destroy the euphonic effect.

It is interesting to note that alliterative phrases often contain obsolete elements, not used elsewhere.

### **Types of phraseological units**

According to the type of motivation, three types of phraseological units are suggested: phraseological fusions, phraseological unities and phraseological combinations.

Phraseological fusions represent as their name suggests the highest stage of blending together. The meaning of components is completely absorbed by the meaning of the whole, by its expressiveness and emotional properties. Phraseological fusions are specific for every language and do not lend themselves to literal translation into other languages.

Phraseological unities are much more numerous. They are clearly motivated. The emotional quality is based upon the image created by the whole.

Phraseological units can be classified according to the ways they are formed, according to the degree of the motivation of their meaning, according to their structure and according to their part-of-speech meaning. Their constant characteristic features are:

- Linguistic stability
- Semantic unity
- Intact syntactical structure

### **Similarity and difference between a set expression and a word.**

It is essentially important to distinguish set expressions not only from free phrases but from compound words as well. There are a couple of criteria that need to be taken into consideration. The first in this list is the formal integrity of words which had been repeatedly emphasized. As in the light of above, there is a compelling evidence in the borderline between a word and a formulaic expression. The fact that it was a phrase and not a word is clearly indicated by the conjugation treatment of the verb and syntactical treatment of the noun. With an analytical language like English this conjugation test is, unfortunately, not always applicable.

It would also be misleading to be guided in distinguishing between set expressions and compound words by semantic considerations, there being no rigorous criteria for differentiating between one complex notion and a combination of two or more notions. The references of component words are lost within the whole of a set expression, no less than within a compound word.

The major point of difference between a word and a set expression is the divisibility of the set expression into separately structured elements which is contrasted to the structural integrity of words.

Despite the fact that they are introduced into speech as ready-made units, a set expression is different from them, based on a fact that it can be resolved into words into morphemes. In compound words the process of integration is more advanced. The methods and criteria serving to identify compounds and distinguish them from phrases or groups of words, no matter how often used together, have been pointed out in the chapter on compounds.

The question of syntactic ties within a set expression is even more controversial. Some maintain the view that set expressions represent one member of the sentence, but opinions vary upon the issue whether there are no syntactical ties within set expressions themselves.

The existence of syntactical relations within a set expression can be proved by the possibility of syntactical transformations (however limited) or inversion of elements and the substitution of the variable member, all this without destroying the set expression as such. By a variable element we mean the element of the set expression which is structurally necessary but free to vary lexically.

**Conclusions.** Phraseological units constitute the “phrasicon” of a language that is the whole inventory of idioms and phrases both word-like and sentence-like set expressions. word-like phraseological units are nominations and designate a phenomenon an object an action a process or state a property or a relationship in the outside world. They are manifest in the traditional parts of speech which are related to these conceptual entities nouns verbs adjectives and adverbs. They represent the centre of the phraseological system (in the model of centre and periphery applied to the phrasicon) and embrace idioms and non-idioms (non-idiomatic restricted collocations).Idioms form the majority and may be regarded as the prototype of the phraseological unit on-idioms have transparent meanings and include technical terms (terminological word groups) onymic entities (i.e. phrases which are proper names) cliches paraphrasal verbs and other set expressions. The term set expression is on the contrary more definite and self explanatory because the first element points out the most important characteristic of these units namely their stability their fixed and ready-made nature. The word “expression” suits our purpose because it is a general term including words groups of words and sentences.

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