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## FUNCTIONAL-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN BUSINESS ENGLISH

## ФУНКЦІОНАЛЬНО-СЕМАНТИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ ФРАЗЕОЛОГІЧНИХ ОДИНИЦЬ У ДІЛОВІЙ АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ

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This research is centered on the dissection of the intricate world of phraseology within the domain of English business communication. A comprehensive functional-semantic analysis of idiomatic expressions, set phrases, and metaphors has been conducted. The pivotal role played by these phraseological units in enhancing clarity, expressiveness, and the overall efficacy of business interactions has been accentuated. It has been demonstrated that the integration of phraseology within business language transcends ornamental functions, serving as a cornerstone for the fostering of mutual understanding, trust, and effective communication.

It has been elucidated that the methodologies for the formation of phraseological neologisms in business language are congruent with those observed in general language processes. These methodologies encompass the rethinking of stable word combinations, the creation of new fixed expressions, the tracking of linguistic patterns, analogy, and borrowing. Structural-semantic grouping based on shared components and intensive meanings provides a systematic approach for the categorization of phraseological units. This approach reveals the diversity and dynamic nature of business communication and illustrates the contextual dependency and adaptability of language in professional settings.

Furthermore, the impact of globalization and the pursuit of novelty on the formation of diverse neologisms, including phraseological ones, within the business sector has been examined. The term *credit crunch* has been scrutinized to demonstrate how central banks, under the stewardship of individuals such as Ben Bernanke, employed innovative financial instruments and international cooperation to mitigate economic crises. This underscores the interconnectedness of global financial systems.

Practical recommendations derived from the study emphasize the integration of phraseology into business communication training programs to enhance linguistic proficiency and the adept use of idiomatic expressions. It is advocated that business professionals cultivate a nuanced comprehension of the contextual subtleties of phraseological units, ensuring their precise application across various sectors. Sustained scholarly investigation into the evolving nature of business phraseology is promoted to remain abreast of emerging trends and developments.

Additionally, the development of detailed practical guides that exemplify the application of phraseological units in real-world business scenarios is called for. The importance of fostering cross-cultural competence is stressed, highlighting the distinctions and commonalities in phraseological usage across different linguistic and cultural contexts, thus facilitating more effective global business operations.

By bridging the gap between theoretical insights and practical implementation, it is aspired that business professionals will be equipped with the requisite tools and knowledge to enhance their communicative effectiveness and achieve greater success in their professional endeavors.

**Key words:** phraseology, business communication, functional aspect, semantic aspect, set expressions, communicative strategies, business context.

Дане дослідження зосереджене на розборі складного світу фразеології в області англійської ділової комунікації. Проводиться всебічний функціонально-семантичний аналіз ідіоматичних виразів, сталих фраз і метафор. Акцентується увага на ключовій ролі, яку відіграють ці фразеологічні одиниці у підвищенні ясності, виразності та загальної ефективності ділових взаємодій. Продemonстровано, що інтеграція фразеології в ділову мову перевищує декоративні функції, слугуючи основою для зміцнення взаєморозуміння, довіри та ефективної комунікації.

Було з'ясовано, що методології формування фразеологічних неологізмів у діловій мові співпадають з тими, що спостерігаються в загальних мовних процесах. Ці методології охоплюють переосмислення стійких словосполучень, створення нових сталих виразів, відстеження лінгвістичних патернів, аналогію та запозичення. Структурно-семантичне групування на основі спільних компонентів і інтенсивних значень забезпечує систематичний підхід до класифікації фразеологічних одиниць. Такий підхід відображає різноманітність і динамічну природу ділової комунікації та ілюструє контекстну залежність і адаптивність мови в професійних умовах.

Досліджено вплив глобалізації та прагнення до новизни на формування різних неологізмів, зокрема фразеологічних, у бізнес-секторі. Термін *credit crunch* був підданий аналізу для демонстрації того, як центральні банки, під керівництвом таких осіб, як Бен Бернанке, використовували інноваційні фінансові інструменти та міжнародну співпрацю для пом'якшення економічних криз. Це підкреслює взаємопов'язаність глобальних фінансових систем.

Практичні рекомендації, отримані з дослідження, підкреслюють інтеграцію фразеології в програми навчання діловому спілкуванню для підвищення мовної майстерності та вмілого використання ідіоматичних виразів. Рекомендується, щоб фахівці в сфері бізнесу культивували тонке розуміння контекстуальних нюансів фразеологічних одиниць, забезпечуючи їх точне застосування в різних секторах. Заохочується постійне наукове дослідження змінної природи фразеології бізнесу, щоб залишатися в курсі нових тенденцій і розробок.

Крім того, закликається до розробки детальних практичних посібників, які ілюструють застосування фразеологічних одиниць у реальних бізнес-сценаріях. Підкреслюється важливість сприяння розвитку кроскультурної компетентності, висвітлюючи відмінності та спільні риси у використанні фразеології в різних мовних і культурних контекстах, що сприяє ефективнішій глобальній бізнес-діяльності.

Подолавши розрив між теоретичними знаннями та практичною реалізацією, передбачається, що фахівці в сфері бізнесу будуть оснащені необхідними інструментами та знаннями для підвищення своєї комунікативної ефективності та досягнення більшого успіху в професійній діяльності.

**Ключові слова:** фразеологія, ділове спілкування, функціональний аспект, семантичний аспект, сталі вирази, комунікаційні стратегії, бізнес-контекст.

**Statement of the problem.** Despite the significant role that phraseology occupies in augmenting the expressiveness and emotional depth of language, the functional and semantic dimensions of phraseological units within English business communication have not been sufficiently explored. The paucity of research in this domain engenders several challenges. One notable challenge is comprehending the mechanisms by which idioms, set expressions, and metaphors are utilized to facilitate effective communication, foster mutual comprehension, and engender trust in business interactions.

A critical issue is the inadequate documentation of the influence exerted by specific business sectors on the selection and interpretation of phraseological units. This knowledge gap impedes the development of practical guidelines aimed at optimizing communication strategies across diverse professional fields. For instance, idiomatic expressions that are effective within the financial sector may not resonate similarly within the healthcare industry. These sector-specific nuances are imperative for tailoring communication to ensure precision and efficacy.

Furthermore, the underexplored functional and semantic aspects of phraseology in business communication restrict our capacity to fully leverage these linguistic tools. A comprehensive understanding of the functionality of various phraseological units in business contexts could elucidate patterns and strategies that enhance persuasiveness, clarity, and engagement. This understanding is especially vital in multicultural business environments, where misinterpretations can precipitate significant misunderstandings or conflicts.

Therefore, a thorough functional-semantic study of phraseology within English business communication is indispensable. Such an inquiry would address these research lacunae by systematically analyzing the usage and impact of idioms, set expressions, and metaphors across different business sectors. The resultant findings could offer valuable insights and practical recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of business communication. This could encompass the development of sector-specific phraseological dictionaries, the formulation of training programs for business pro-

professionals, and the creation of guidelines for crafting more effective business messages. Ultimately, a profound comprehension of phraseology in business communication can engender more precise and impactful interactions, thereby fostering improved relationships and outcomes within the professional sphere.

**Analysis of recent researches and publications.** Recent researches in the field of phraseology have increasingly focused on the functional and semantic aspects of phraseological units in various contexts, including business communication. Studies by scholars such as Markovic (2018) and Salamzedah (2018) have highlighted the importance of idioms, set expressions, and metaphors in enhancing the expressiveness and emotional impact of language.

Another significant contribution is the paper by Gläser (1998), *Functional Composition and Phraseology in Modern English*, which explores the formation of new words and meanings through phraseological units. Gläser underscores the role of phraseological composition in enriching the language and its application in business communication.

A group of British specialists, including scholars such as J. Munday and Susan Bassnett, have studied the functioning of idiomatic phraseology in oral business discourse. They identified the following areas of phraseological units' functioning in English business communication: Socializing, Telephoning, Presentations, Business Correspondence, and media oriented towards the business world (English media) [1, p. 123].

Additionally, the international conference EUROPHRAS 2025, spearheaded by scholars such as Burger and his colleagues, has called for papers on the topic of phraseology and communication, inviting interdisciplinary discussions on the function and realization forms of formulaic language in various communication contexts, including business.

These publications and research efforts, led by esteemed scholars, collectively contribute to a deeper understanding of how phraseological units function and convey meaning in business communication, providing valuable insights for improving communication strategies in professional settings.

**The purpose** of the article is to conduct a comprehensive functional-semantic analysis of phraseology in English business communication. The objectives include: 1) **Identification of Phraseological Units:** Cataloging idioms, set expressions, and metaphors commonly used in English business communication; 2) **Functional Analysis:** Evaluating the roles that these phraseological units play in enhancing communication effectiveness, mutual understanding, and trust among business professionals; 3) **Semantic Analysis:** Investigating the meanings and interpretations of phraseological units within different business contexts; 4) **Contextual Influence:** Analyzing how various business sectors influence the selection and usage of phraseological units; 5) **Practical Recommendations:** Providing guidelines and strategies for optimizing the use of phraseology to improve business communication.

The article aims to bridge the gap in existing research by offering a detailed exploration of how phraseological units function in business discourse, ultimately contributing to the field of applied linguistics and offering practical insights for business professionals.

**Outline of the main material of the study.** Firstly, it is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of discourse and business discourse. According to the *Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary*, discourse is a coherent text combined with extralinguistic, pragmatic, sociocultural, psychological, and other factors; a text considered in its event aspect; language viewed as a purposeful social action, a component involved in the interaction of people and the mechanisms of their consciousness (cognitive processes) [2, p. 35].

Business discourse is the verbalization of business mentality, realized in the form of various texts united by business themes, combined with extralinguistic factors [3, p. 52]. The nature of business discourse is revealed when compared with other discourses, especially those with which it is closely related: socio-political and scientific. The specificity of business discourse is based on the competence of its communicants and their cooperation in meeting the need to establish collaboration for the sake of overall commercial success [3, p. 53]. English business discourse is a type of economic insti-

tutional discourse primarily formed in four functional areas of business: trade, production, services, and finance. Additionally, each area has its own features manifested in prototypical places and typical communicative situations, genre forms, the degree of formality and ritualization of speech interaction between communication participants, topics, and precedent texts [4, p. 58].

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English business discourse acts as interpersonal communication, the specifics, structure, and functions of which are determined by human business relations. A characteristic feature of such business communication is the clarity of text construction and the precision in the use of terms and terminological combinations. The functioning of phraseological units serves as semantic markers of modern socio-economic and political-business processes. We recommend identifying factors influencing the choice of phraseological units as linguistic means of constructing business communication: • The desire to avoid excessive expressiveness; • The intention to prevent misunderstandings in various communicative situations.

I. Melchuk notes that «people do not speak in words, they speak in idioms» [5, p. 73], which often convey shades of meaning better than words. Phraseological units in English business communication can be classified into two primary categories: those borrowed from colloquial English and those inherent exclusively to business language, understood by a specialized cohort of professionals.

**1. Phraseological units borrowed from colloquial English (69%):** These expressions, while originating in everyday language, have been adapted to suit business contexts, enhancing their communicative impact. For instance: **Cast into sharp relief:** To highlight vividly or to make something completely obvious and clear. This phrase is often used to underscore key issues or points during business discussions or presentations. **To drive a hard bargain:** To negotiate toughly, often creating difficulties or confusion, thus compelling one to make a swift and challenging decision. This expression is commonly employed in negotiating scenarios where parties seek to maximize their benefits.

**2. Expressions inherent only in business language and understood by a narrow circle of specialists (31%):** These expressions are specific to the business domain and often require specialized knowledge to be fully understood. Examples include: **Fend off:** To parry or defend against something, such as the interests of shareholders. This term is frequently used in the context of corporate governance and shareholder relations. **Rogue trader:** A fraudster who works for a financial institution and engages in unauthorized and reckless transactions in the financial market. This term gained prominence following high-profile trading scandals and is used to describe individuals who pose significant risks to financial stability. **Poison pill:** A financial strategy employed to prevent a hostile takeover by making the company less attractive to potential acquirers. This term is widely recognized in corporate finance and mergers and acquisitions (M&A) contexts.

The integration of these phraseological units into business communication not only enriches the language but also enhances precision and efficacy in conveying complex ideas and strategies. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of both colloquial and specialized phraseology is crucial for effective business communication, enabling professionals to navigate diverse contexts with greater fluency and confidence.

The semantic structure of a phraseological unit is formed by the combination of its semantic elements, which are in various relationships with each other. It is necessary to emphasize the direct opposition relation manifested in the semantics of phraseological units between their main semantic components, namely: a) Different individual meanings of a polysemantic phraseological unit; b) Different aspects of each individual meaning, including connotative-pragmatic aspects, which contain additional, communicatively significant social and individual characteristics; c) Different planes of

opposition in the semantics of most phraseological units – between the phraseological meaning and the structural-component meaning of the complex [6].

The mentioned components of phraseological semantics are differentiated from semantic components that constitute the primary semantic components of phraseological units. A component of a phraseological unit is a semantically transformed word within the unit; it is not simply a formal application of the phraseological unit, but a unit that fulfills specific semantic roles [7, p. 35]. For example, the term *credit crunch* (кредитна криза) refers to a period during which borrowing money becomes increasingly difficult as financial institutions reduce the amount they lend. This phenomenon typically occurs during economic downturns when banks face heightened risks and uncertainties.

In 2008, the then Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Ben Bernanke, who was an esteemed scholar on the Great Depression, sought to mitigate the effects of the credit crunch by implementing unprecedented measures. He provided unlimited dollar amounts not only within the United States but also extended support through swap lines with major international financial institutions. These included the European Central Bank (ECB), the Bank of England (BoE), and the Swiss National Bank (SNB). This strategic initiative aimed to stabilize global financial markets by ensuring adequate liquidity across borders. E.g. The current Fed chairman, Ben Bernanke, a scholar on the Great Depression, in 2008 tried to alleviate the credit crunch by providing unlimited dollar amounts not only in the USA but via swap lines with the European Central Bank (ECB), the Bank of England (BoE), and the Swiss National Bank (SNB). – Нинішній голова ФРС Бен Бернанке, який вивчав Велику депресію, у 2008 році намагався полегшити кредитну кризу, надаючи необмежені суми доларів не лише в США, а й через своп-лінії з Європейським центральним банком (ЄЦБ), Банком Англії (BoE) та Швейцарським національним банком (SNB). This example highlights the interconnectedness of global financial systems and the critical role of central banks in managing economic crises. Bernanke's actions underscore the importance of international cooperation and the use of innovative financial instruments in addressing systemic risks. By maintaining liquidity and confidence in the financial markets, such measures can help to prevent the escalation of financial instability.

A particular problem in the analysis of phraseological systems is the consideration of the formal-semantic structure of phraseological units. To organize a significant amount of diverse material, a thematic classification can be selected, which allows systematically classifying phraseological units and determining their place in business communication. This method of organization reflects the richness of the semantics of the studied units. For example, we distinguish the following phraseological groups:

**1. People and Business:** *Villain of the piece*: A malefactor (a figure acting as the antagonist in a situation or story). E.g. In the corporate scandal, the CEO was painted as the villain of the piece, orchestrating the unethical practices. *Rogue Trader*: A fraudster (a person engaged in dangerous or illegal financial operations). E.g. The financial crisis was exacerbated by the actions of a rogue trader who executed unauthorized trades. *Boomerangs*: Items or decisions that return to affect their originators (in context, may refer to things that return to their creators). E.g. The company's poorly thought-out policies acted as boomerangs, eventually causing internal strife. *Blue Collar*: Working class (refers to people engaged in physical labor). E.g. The factory employed primarily blue-collar workers, who operated the machinery and handled production. *White Collar*: Office workers (people working in offices or specialized professions). E.g. The finance firm had a predominantly white-collar workforce, specializing in accounting and consultancy. *Diamond in the Rough*: Something with potential that has yet to be realized. E.g. The new intern was a diamond in the rough, showing great promise despite needing further training. *Pink Slip*: Dismissal (a document notifying of job termination). E.g. Receiving a pink slip was a common fear among employees during the company's restructuring phase. *Trustbuster*: An antitrust advocate (a person who supports the breakup of large business conglomerates). E.g. The trustbuster aimed to dismantle monopolies to foster a more competitive market environment. *Be in the Red*: To be in debt (indicates financial losses for a company

or individual). E.g. After several unprofitable quarters, the company found itself deeply in the red. **To Drive a Hard Bargain:** To negotiate toughly (indicates persistent bargaining for better terms). E.g. The procurement manager was known to drive a hard bargain, securing favorable terms for the company. **Break-even Point:** The moment when income equals expenses. E.g. The startup reached its break-even point after two years of steady growth and careful cost management. **Carbon Credit:** A certificate allowing the emission of a certain amount of carbon into the atmosphere. E.g. Companies can trade carbon credits to manage their environmental impact and comply with regulations. **Wildcat Strike:** A strike conducted without official approval or announcement. E.g. The workers initiated a wildcat strike, protesting the sudden changes to their working conditions. **Corporate Raider:** An individual or organization that takes over a company by purchasing a large number of its shares. E.g. The corporate raider's aggressive acquisition strategies often led to significant restructuring of the target companies. **Golden Parachute:** A large financial compensation package for a company executive in the event of job loss due to a merger or takeover. E.g. The CEO's contract included a golden parachute, ensuring a comfortable exit regardless of the company's future. **Hostile Takeover:** An acquisition of a company against the wishes of its management. E.g. The board of directors fought against the hostile takeover, but the acquiring company succeeded in buying a majority stake.

**2. Personal and Business Communication:** **Backroom Deal:** A clandestine agreement often made without public discussion, commonly used to describe covert arrangements. E.g. The companies struck a backroom deal that left competitors in the dark. **Take Something Lying Down:** To accept a situation without resistance or protest, typically used in contexts where one might expect objection. E.g. She refused to take the unfair criticism lying down and voiced her concerns. **Ahead of the Pack:** Being in a superior position compared to competitors, often used to describe a leading market position. E.g. With their innovative product, the company is significantly ahead of the pack. **Keep Track of:** Maintaining awareness or control over a situation, often used in project management and organizational contexts. E.g. It is crucial to keep track of all project deadlines to ensure timely completion. **Cover One's Tracks:** Taking measures to avoid leaving evidence of one's actions, commonly used in contexts involving secrecy or evasion. E.g. The hacker attempted to cover his tracks by deleting all the log files. **Put Someone on the Spot:** To place someone in an uncomfortable or challenging situation by demanding an immediate response. E.g. During the meeting, the CEO put the manager on the spot with a difficult question. **Fight a Losing Battle:** Engaging in an endeavor with little to no chance of success, often used to describe futile efforts. E.g. He knew he was fighting a losing battle trying to change the company's long-standing policies. **Smoking Gun:** Conclusive evidence that unequivocally proves guilt or correctness, commonly used in investigative contexts. E.g. The email trail provided a smoking gun that revealed the fraudulent activities. **Shop Around:** Comparing prices or options to find the best deal, often used in consumer behavior and market research contexts. E.g. It is advisable to shop around before making a significant purchase. **Take Back:** Retrieving or reclaiming something that was previously given or sold. E.g. The company had to take back the faulty products from customers. **Ace Up Your Sleeve:** A hidden advantage or resource that can be utilized at a critical moment. E.g. The negotiator had an ace up his sleeve that turned the talks in his favor. **From the Ground Up:** Starting something from the most basic level, creating everything from the foundation. E.g. They built the company from the ground up through hard work and dedication. **Build Bridges:** To improve relations between disparate groups or individuals, fostering cooperation and understanding. E.g. The new CEO aimed to build bridges between different departments. **Cut Corners:** To save time, money, or effort by doing something in a less thorough manner, often compromising quality. E.g. They cut corners to meet the deadline, resulting in substandard work. **In the Loop:** Being informed about and included in ongoing developments or decisions. E.g. It is essential to keep all team members in the loop regarding project updates. **Throw in the Towel:** To give up on an endeavor or admit defeat. E.g. After months of struggling, the startup decided to throw in the towel.

These enhanced and expanded phraseological units reflect the richness and complexity of personal and business communication, providing valuable insights into the linguistic strategies employed in professional interactions.

Phraseological units can also be grouped based on structural-semantic features, which are founded on a common structural component for a series of phraseological units positioned at a fixed place determined by its semantics. Factors for grouping include components that have an intensive meaning, such as: **Ahead of the Curve**: Being in a leading position. E.g. We're investing a lot of money in research and development so we can stay ahead of the curve. – Ми інвестуємо багато грошей у дослідження та розробки, щоб залишатися попереду. **Ahead of the Pack**: Being ahead of others. E.g. The company aims to remain ahead of the pack through continuous innovation. – Компанія прагне залишатися попереду завдяки постійним інноваціям. **Villain of the Piece**: The antagonist in a situation. E.g. The supposed villain of the piece was Steel Partners, an American investment fund that since 2000 has invested more than \$3 billion in some 30 Japanese companies. – Успішним лиходієм цього твору став Steel Partners, американський інвестиційний фонд, який з 2000 року інвестував понад 3 мільярди доларів у близько 30 японських компаній. **Power of the Purse**: Financial power or influence. E.g. The organization's success is largely due to the power of the purse exercised by its major donors. – Успіх організації значною мірою обумовлений фінансовою владою, яку здійснюють її основні донори. **Get/Be on the Good Side of Someone**: To gain or remain in someone's favor. E.g. He always made sure to get on the good side of his supervisors to secure promotions. – Він завжди намагався перебувати на хорошому боці своїх керівників, щоб забезпечити підвищення. These phrases demonstrate how structural-semantic grouping based on common structural components and intensive meanings provides a systematic way to classify phraseological units. This approach reveals the richness of the semantics of the studied units and enhances understanding of their functional roles in business communication.

Phraseology in business language is constantly evolving. The business sector occupies a significant place in the global information space and is gaining momentum. Globalization and the pursuit of novelty contribute to the formation of various neologisms, including phraseological ones. It should be noted that the methods of forming phraseological neologisms in business language do not practically differ from those inherent in ordinary phraseologisms: rethinking stable word combinations of a non-phraseological nature, forming new stable expressions based on potential phraseologisms, tracking and analogy, forming new stable expressions based on potential phraseologisms, and borrowing.

**Conclusions.** The conducted research highlights the complexity and richness of phraseological units in English business communication. By examining their functional and semantic aspects, the study underscores the significance of idioms, set expressions, and metaphors in enhancing the clarity, expressiveness, and efficiency of business interactions. The integration of phraseology in business language is not merely ornamental but serves crucial roles in fostering mutual understanding, trust, and effective communication among professionals. The study reveals that the methods of forming phraseological neologisms in business language align closely with those in general language, involving the rethinking of stable word combinations, creation of new stable expressions, tracking, analogy, and borrowing.

The analysis further demonstrates that structural-semantic grouping based on common components and intensive meanings provides a systematic approach to categorizing phraseological units, reflecting the diversity and dynamic nature of business communication. The influence of various business sectors on the selection and usage of phraseological units emphasizes the contextual dependency and adaptability of language in professional settings.

By conducting this research, we can provide practical recommendations for further studies: **Enhanced Training Initiatives**: It is essential to incorporate phraseology into comprehensive business communication training modules to augment professionals' linguistic acumen and their proficiency in utilizing idiomatic expressions adeptly. **Contextual Proficiency**: Business professionals

should be encouraged to develop a nuanced understanding of the contextual intricacies of phraseological units, ensuring their precise and appropriate use across diverse business sectors. ***Sustained Research Efforts***: Continuous scholarly investigation into the ever-evolving nature of business phraseology should be promoted to remain informed about emerging trends and advancements in business communication. ***Practical Application Resources***: There is a need to create detailed practical guides and resources that exemplify the application of phraseological units in real-world business scenarios, thereby aiding professionals in navigating complex interactions with greater efficacy. ***Cross-Cultural Awareness***: Cultivating cross-cultural competence by emphasizing the variations and commonalities in phraseological usage across different linguistic and cultural contexts is vital, facilitating more effective global business operations.

These conclusions and recommendations aim to bridge the gap between theoretical insights and practical application, providing business professionals with the tools and knowledge to enhance their communication skills and achieve greater success in their professional interactions.

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