

## VARIOUS APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGY AND THE PROBLEM OF CLASSIFICATION

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### ABSTRACT

It would be interesting now to look at phraseological units from a different angle, namely; how are all treasures of the language approached by the linguistic science? The very miscellaneous nature of these units suggests the first course of action; they must be sorted out and arranged in certain classes which possess identical characteristics.

**Key words:** phraseological unit, classification systems, scholars, different principles, idiom, word-group, a special study of idioms, phraseology, dictionaries of idiomatic phrases.

### INTRODUCTION

It should be clear from the previous description that phraseological unit is a complex phenomenon with a number of important features, which can therefore be approached from different points of view. Hence, there exist a considerable number of different classification systems devised by different scholars and based on different principles.

The traditional and oldest principle for classifying phraseological units is based on their original content and might be alluded to as "thematic". The approach is widely used in numerous English and American guides to idiom, phrase books, etc. On this principle, idioms are classified according to their sources of origin, "source" referring to the particular sphere of human activity, of life of nature, of natural phenomena, etc.

### RESEARCH

The principle of classification is sometimes called "etymological". The term does not seem appropriate since we usually mean something different when we speak of the etymology of a word or word – groups; whether the word (or word-group) is native or borrowed, and if the latter, what is the source of borrowing. It is true that Smith makes a special study of idioms borrowed from other languages, but that is only a relatively small part of his classification system.

Word –groups associated with the sea and the life of seamen are specially numerous in English vocabulary. Here are some examples.

To be all at the sea = to be unable to understand, to be in a state of ignorance or bewilderment about something.  
To sink or swim = to fail or succeed.

Though, as has been said, direct associations with seafaring in all these idioms have been severed, distant memories of the sea romance and adventure still linger in some of them.

It is true, though, that a foreigner is more apt to be struck by the colourfulness of the direct meaning of an idiom where a native speaker sees only its transferred meaning, the original associations being almost fully forgotten.

### CONCLUSION

Two groups are distinguished: phraseological units and idioms. Phraseological units are neutral, non-metaphorical when compared to idioms: *get up, fall asleep, to take to drinking*. Idioms are metaphoric, stylistically coloured: *to take the bull by the horns, to beat about the bush, to bark up the wrong tree*.

Phraseology would not constitute one of the language's main expressive resources. The thematic principle of classifying phraseological units has real merit but it does not take into consideration the linguistic characteristic features of the phraseological units.

Phraseological combinations are often called traditional because words are combined in their original meaning but their combinations are different in different languages, e.g. *cash and carry - (self-service shop), in a big way (in great degree) etc.* It is usually impossible to account logically for the combination of particular words. It can be explained only on the basis of tradition, e.g. to deliver a lecture but not to read a lecture.

Many various lines of approach have been used, and yet the place of set expressions in the vocabulary and the boundaries of this level is one of the great controversial issues of present – day linguistics.

English and American scholars treat set expression mostly as a problem of applied linguistics, they have concentrated their efforts on compiling dictionaries of idiomatic phrases. The approach is partly didactic, partly didactic, partly stylistic.

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