

PHRASEOLOGY SERVES AS A TOOL FOR LINGUISTIC COMPRESSION  
IN MODERN DISCOURSE

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**Annotation.** *This article is devoted to the study of the specific functioning of phraseological units in the news texts of modern media. The compression function of phraseological units in media discourse is analyzed based on the publications of the largest news agencies in the United States and the United Kingdom in the social network Twitter. The very nature of phraseology implies semantic compression: the meanings expressed initially by free word combinations are transformed into permanent semantic units, making the expression fixed. The use of set phrases in the texts of news publications not only reduces the volume of statements without loss of meaning, but also complements their semantics with verbally unexpressed nation and culture-bound realities and symbols. The ability of phraseological units to convey the symbolic, evaluative and cultural meanings embedded in their semantics allows the phraseology of military origin to perform a compressive function in media discourse, reducing the publication to the volumes required by the social network Twitter. Thanks to a phraseological unit possessing the symbolic potential and imagery as a special sign of language and culture, the set phrases in the news publications on the social network Twitter clearly demonstrate the orientation to influence the consciousness of the mass recipient, as a text-forming factor of the language of mass media.*

**Keywords:** *phraseology, linguistic compression, media discourse, semantics, national-cultural specificity, impact, economy.*

The confrontation between ideologies and political systems, most clearly manifested in the media, determines the need and



relevance of analyzing the impact potential of the vocabulary and phraseology of the media.

Associated with the technologization of the population of developed countries, the rapidly growing popularity of social networks and the increase in their role in the modern media space have ensured the widespread presence of news agencies on all online platforms, in particular on Twitter. The subject of this study is news reports published by Anglo-American media on their verified Twitter accounts.

In our study of news messages in the media discourse of the USA and Great Britain on the social network Twitter, we aim to identify the peculiarities of the functioning of phraseology of military origin with the ancient archetypes, symbols and stereotypes of thinking included in its figurative basis in the language of the new generation of media.

The research material was based on news publications on the Twitter pages of leading American and British news agencies: ABC News, BBC News, CBS News, CNBC, CNN International, Financial Times, Fox News, Military Times, NBC News, Reuters, Shephard News, Stars and Stripes, The Associated Press, The Guardian, The Independent, The New York Times, The Telegraph, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The White House, Time, USA TODAY.

The methodological basis of the study is the linguoculturological method, which is used to interpret the meanings embedded in the semantics of a phraseological unit to determine the role and functions of stable phrases in the language of the new generation of media.

Network news has features determined by the specifics of Internet communication. Receiving information from the monitor screen, “scanning information” instead of sequential reading, connecting many materials into a single network of hyperlinks - all this dictates its own rules for placing information [2, p. 272]. Network news texts as basic texts of the media space must comply with the laws of the Internet environment, one of which includes the principle of compression, or “compressed text.”



Of particular importance in the conditions of computer-mediated communication is the principle of economy of language activity, the role of which increases due to the pressure of the time factor and certain technological limitations of the environment [1].

The desire to save speech resources is expressed by using fewer linguistic means to convey more information [6]. In mass media discourse, the law of economy of effort is implemented through language compression of the morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic levels.

The mechanism of language compression is based on reducing the expression plan of the text while preserving its full content plan. This kind of reduction of less significant information makes the text concise, dynamic, and enriches it with implicit meanings [5, p. 40]. A priori, the desire to save language resources, characteristic of mass media news publications, is enhanced in the texts of news messages on Twitter by the specifics of this social network, the system of which limits the number of published characters in one post.

We tend to believe that phraseology in news messages on Twitter is one of the means of language compression. For example, in an agency publication Reuters «U.S. arms sales to UAE draw fire from 29 rights groups»[12] the inclusion of the phraseological phrase “draw fire” in the statement instead of a detailed definition of the idiom ‘to become a target of someone’s attacks, to cause criticism’ is dictated by the desire for linguistic economy. The very nature of phraseology presupposes semantic compression: the meanings expressed initially by free phrases are transformed into permanent semantic units, making the statement stable. Evidence of the compressive function of phraseology in news publications on Twitter is the texts of publications on their home pages, where information is presented in more detail in the form of articles. Here's an example of a news post on Twitter: – Reuters: Europeans, Iran to cross swords at nuclear talks <https://reut.rs/2YlQpr0> [12]. Using the hyperlink built into the message, the reader goes to the official page of the news agency, which contains an article whose headline reads: “European powers will demand Iran stop violating their nuclear deal or potentially face renewed U.N. sanctions, but with Tehran locked in conflict over U.S. sanctions, there appears to be little scope for



compromise when they meet on Friday” [11]. It is obvious that the use of the phraseological unit cross swords ‘to cross swords’; enter into a fight, argue fiercely’ [10], along with the ellipsis of the structural element to be going of the construction expressing in English an intentional action in the future to be going to do smth, significantly reduces the news message from 38 to eight characters without losing the main content of the message.

The compressive function performed by stable phrases in media discourse does not cancel the role of phraseological units as a means of emotional impact on the audience, enhancing the persuasive effect of using the linguistic means of the phraseological fund in speech. Phraseologisms, as conductors of culture, appeal to the reader’s mind to a whole gallery of images and meanings that are directly related to the culture, history, geography, and worldview of the ethnic group [3, p. 63]:

– Reuters: Pakistan army chief says ready to bury hatchet with India for peace <http://reut.rs/3lupaWL>;

– The Independent: Marcos Rojo heading to Boca Juniors as Manchester United clear the decks;

– The Telegraph : Debenhams plans to close 22 stores next year in a bid to stay afloat. Here’s the full list of locations being shuttered [12].

Compression is a process occurring at all levels of the language (speech) structure, as a result of which there is a significant reduction in the expression plan of the utterance while completely preserving the content plan. At the same time, the functional significance of the speech compression process is determined not only by the implementation of the principle of speech economy, but also by the desire to increase the expressiveness of the statement [7, p. 6]

– Reuters: BOJ set to hold fire, extend fund programmes to counter pandemic blow <http://reut.rs/3p3PkjK>;

– Task & Purpose: US bombs its own ammo dump in Syria as most troops beat a hasty retreat from the country <http://bit.ly/2IXoEih> via @JeffSchogol;

– ABC News: Thousands of British tourists beat a hasty retreat from France, packing out planes, trains and ferries to return to the



U.K. by the early hours of Saturday morning to avoid a mandatory 14-day quarantine at home; The Independent: The EU is poised to steal a march on the UK in the hunt for a post-#Brexit trade deal with India, as Boris Johnson announced only an «enhanced partnership» with Delhi [12]. The use of stable phrases in the texts of news publications not only reduces the volume of statements without loss of meaning, but also supplements their semantics with verbally unexpressed national-culturally determined realities and symbols:

– Military.com: Iraq Official: Shiite Militia Will Lay Down Arms: <http://mil.com.me/ymn1oT>;

– Reuters: South Syrian rebels lay down arms as Assad seizes crossing <https://reut.rs/2Nxw0th> [12]

To summarize, it should be noted that the ability of phraseological units to translate the symbolic, evaluative and cultural meanings embedded in their semantics allows phraseology of military origin to perform a compressive function in media discourse, reducing publication to the volumes required by the social network Twitter. Due to the symbolic potential and imagery a priori present in phraseological units as a special sign of language and culture, the compressive function performed by phraseological units of military origin in news publications on Twitter clearly demonstrates the focus on influencing the consciousness of the mass addressee, as a text-forming factor in the language of the media.

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