

New Trends in Applied Phraseology: Languages and Cultures in Comparison

Edited by
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New Trends in Applied Phraseology.

Introduction

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In recent decades, phraseology has developed into a central area of linguistic inquiry, attracting sustained attention across theoretical, descriptive, and applied domains. Advances in corpus linguistics, pragmatics, and cognitive approaches have contributed to a reassessment of traditional classifications and analytical frameworks, while also opening new perspectives on the treatment of phraseological units in translation, lexicography, and language teaching. Against this backdrop, the present volume addresses a gap in contemporary research. Despite the abundance of studies devoted to phraseology, there remains a need for contributions that examine its expanding role across different domains through a contrastive perspective and grounded in specific case studies. Such a contrastive approach has proved particularly productive, as it is rooted in the close analysis of phraseological units across languages and brings theoretical and practical issues to the fore simultaneously (Colson 2008, 192, Cotta Ramusino and Mollica 2020, Nikitina 2018).

The volume is structured into three main thematic areas: phraseography, translation of phraseological units, and teaching phraseology in a second language. These three strands are closely interconnected, and some contributions engage with issues relevant to more than one section.

The first section, *Phraseography*¹, addresses core issues in contemporary phraseological research. A deeper theoretical understanding of phraseological units enables their increasingly comprehensive and holistic description, a process further supported by the new possibilities offered by online dictionaries.

The article opening this section focuses on a highly specific and so far understudied type of dictionary, namely lexicographical resources for children. In her ongoing study, Pinnavaia examines how authors approach the relationship between literal meaning – particularly as it is staged in picture books – and actual meaning, as well as the strategies used to describe the latter. Pinnavaia highlights the highly individual nature of the authors' approaches and points to the absence of shared, contemporary methodological frameworks.

Two contributions address the integration of phraseological components into dictionary entries. Berthemet proposes several methods for introducing the image component in French learners' dictionaries, including semantic explanations, etymological notes, and visual representations. Dal Maso, building on a pilot research project conducted at the University of Venice, focuses on the issue of inflectional fixation in verbal idioms. Although highly relevant for language acquisition, this phenomenon is frequently overlooked in phraseographic practice. The article presents the author's proposal on the basis of a case study, namely the Spanish idiom *quitar de la boca*.

The role of brand names in the creation of new phraseological units is examined in Grezka and Soler Cifuentes' contribution. The aim of the project is the development of a non-standardized corpus of such units. The authors discuss the methodological constraints and challenges involved in constructing this type of resource, most notably the limited availability of data. One possible response to these difficulties may lie in the use of AI-based tools, which could be fruitfully exploited in this area. Just as the advent of corpus linguistics provided a new distributional and pattern-based input to the study of phraseology, including collocations, multi-word lexical units and lexical bundles (Granger and Paquot 2008, 28-32), the introduction of AI tools – largely exploring the conventionalization of language – represents another turning point.

As these contributions demonstrate, a contrastive approach is still among the most widespread perspectives in phraseography. It offers both conceptual insights and concrete proposals for integrating theoretical advances and new methodologies into phraseographic practice, with the aim of improving the accuracy and usability of dictionaries.

Although contrastive and cross-linguistic phraseology is a well-established line of study (see e.g. Piirainen 2008), translation of phraseology receives

1 For a detailed discussion and an overview of phraseography in different languages, see the section *Phraseographie/Phraseography* (909-1025), in Burger *et al.* 2007, vol. 2.

less scholarly attention (Colson 2008, 200). The second section, *Translation of Phraseological Units: Theory and Practice*, addresses two fundamental issues related to the translation of phraseological units. On the one hand, translation brings to the fore discrepancies between languages; on the other, it is required to address these discrepancies by developing methods and strategies aimed at bridging them.

Against this background, if the question of equivalence lies at the heart of translation practice in general (Dobrovol'skij 2011, 2014), it becomes even more crucial in the translation of phraseological units. Schafroth's contribution to this volume engages with this issue from both theoretical and methodological perspectives. Drawing on linguistic data from three languages, the author demonstrates the multilayered nature of equivalence, placing particular emphasis on the role of context and pragmatic factors, while also underscoring the importance of a holistic approach to the description of phraseological units.

The issue of interlinguistic non-equivalence is addressed in Alekseyeva's contribution, which is situated at the intersection of phraseography and translation. The author highlights the importance of bilingual diachronic dictionaries based on corpora of translated texts. Identifying differences in the use of phraseological units across languages, and time, and determining the most appropriate ways of rendering the meaning of a given expression from L1 into L2 are essential for addressing key challenges in both translation and phraseographic practice. The analysis is illustrated through a case study drawn from the author's dictionary of non-equivalent units in the works of Dostoevskij, based on a diachronic parallel corpus compiled specifically for this purpose. On this basis, Alekseyeva discusses the conceptual design, structure, and guiding principles underlying this novel type of dictionary.

Pragmatic aspects are examined in Meterc's contribution, which focuses on unconventional, joke-like replies to formulaic expressions. The analysis centres on the witty response *Time to get a watch* to the question *What time is it?*, as attested in several Slavic languages (Slovenian, Slovak, Polish, and Russian). Other contributions address specific translation issues on the basis of *ad hoc* corpora. Bramati, for instance, examines the strategies adopted in the translation of verbal idioms (*locutions verbales*), drawing on a French–Italian literary corpus. Starting from a definition of this category of idioms, the author proposes an inventory of the techniques employed, including the use of a corresponding verbal idiom, semantic paraphrase, calque, and the creation of a new verbal idiom. Murelli likewise investigates the translation of phraseologisms occurring in comics. The study covers three languages – French, Italian, and German – and adopts both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The analysis focuses on specific strategies such as compensation, dephraseologization, and defrosting.

While the issues addressed in this section are highly relevant to both translation theory and practice, the relatively limited number of contributions devoted

to them in the present volume also points to the need for further, sustained research in this area. This gap is particularly significant in view of the close relationship between contrastive phraseology and translation studies, for which phraseology represents one of the most translation-sensitive areas of language. Research in contrastive phraseology has developed systematic typologies of equivalence, analytical tools for identifying asymmetries between source and target languages, and a strong emphasis on semantic analysis as a means of avoiding misleading equivalence relations (Korhonen 2007). These approaches directly address central concerns of translation studies and provide a solid descriptive and methodological basis for translation-oriented research.

The third area of contrastive applied phraseology explored in this volume concerns language teaching. The importance of phraseology in language education has been well established over the past two to three decades (e.g. Granger 1998 among others). Nevertheless, while phraseology plays a crucial role in language acquisition, its potential remains underutilized in many educational contexts. For example, early studies on Languages for Specific Purposes were dominated by lexical approaches, and only relatively of recent have scholars acknowledged the challenge and the opportunity in teaching phraseology (see e.g. Garzone 2007, 218-219 on teaching legal phraseology). The contributions in this final section address a wide range of issues, highlighting the role of phraseological units in language learning and offering educators practical strategies for integrating phraseological knowledge into teaching practice. All articles share a strong applied orientation: the analyses are grounded in experimental studies involving learner groups of varying sizes and proficiency levels, thereby ensuring that the theoretical and pedagogical issues discussed are supported by solid empirical evidence.

The role of the image component in the memorization of phraseological units is examined in Albano's contribution, which draws on experimental studies conducted with groups of university students. An experimental case study on the comprehension and acquisition of discourse formulas is presented by Maiko. By means of pre-tests, post-tests, and delayed post-tests, the author assesses learners' ability to recognize these formulas following targeted instruction, while also identifying the difficulties involved in achieving productive mastery.

In their contribution, Hallsteinsdóttir and Chrissou likewise address vocabulary enhancement in the learning of phraseology. Building on an evaluation of Peter Kühn's phraseodidactic three-step model – identification, encoding, and active use of phrasemes – they show that this framework is no longer sufficient as a stand-alone didactic principle and propose alternative approaches that can significantly improve the learning of phraseology in foreign languages. A more strongly applied perspective characterizes Bergerová's article, which presents

computer-based learning materials developed as the outcome of an international Bachelor-level project involving students of German as a foreign language, aimed at enhancing phraseological competence. Primary school learners are the focus of Tark's contribution, which emphasizes the importance of phrases not only as linguistic units but also as cultural assets. Their introduction in *DaZ* contexts, the author argues, fosters language awareness and contributes to greater educational equity at the primary level.

Šichová's closing article adopts a perspective closer to language acquisition than to formal instruction, investigating the phraseological competence of German university students with Czech as a heritage language. Based on a series of tests, the study examines which types of Czech phrases heritage speakers retain in their mental lexicon, the strategies they employ, and the role played by the dominant language.

Like the previous volume (Cotta Ramusino and Mollica 2020), the present collection is situated within a multilingual contrastive perspective that is attentive to the plurality of theoretical traditions and descriptive practices. Rather than pursuing uniform models, it seeks to promote and foster the advantages of language-specific and culture-specific studies, treating phraseology as a privileged site for observing the interaction between linguistic structure and cultural knowledge. This perspective is reflected in the volume's three main areas – phraseography, translation, and language teaching – which collectively demonstrate the relevance of contrastive analysis across different levels of phraseological inquiry.

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