

Editorial (English)

In our new role as editors of the Yearbook, we would like to extend a warm welcome to all readers of the present issue (12, 2021), which contains interesting contributions on older and current topics in phraseology, in German, English, Russian and Spanish. There are articles on morphological and syntactic phrasemes, routine formulas, comparative phrasemes and phrasal verbs, and the focus is on the picture of variability and the modification potential of apparently fixed forms that have been attested in corpora, predominantly in fictional speech.

Erica Autelli (University of Innsbruck) reports on the history and development of the term “phraseology” as well as on the historiography of phraseological and phraseographic studies, an area that continues to arouse great interest in contemporary research. Her study sheds new light on scarcely explored terminology and on phraseological works produced by famous Italian authors between the 17th and the 20th centuries. These monolingual and bilingual “phraseologiae” were intended for phraseographic or didactic purposes, and they contained a variety of units that were phraseological in the broader sense of the term, including chunks and aphorisms. This work does justice to the important contribution of Italian linguists to the emergence and consolidation of the discipline of phraseology.

In his essay on Russian, Igor Mel’čuk (University of Montréal, Canada) deals with two types of phrasemes which, like lexematic phrasemes, have long been neglected in phraseological research. These are morphemic phrasemes – a class of phrasemes within the word boundary first proposed by Mel’čuk in 1964-; and syntactic phrasemes, also called syntactic idioms. Syntactic idioms have received a lot of attention in Russian linguistics, but in English, German, and Romance linguistics they have been treated rather peripherally. Concluding the paper, the author presents an illustrative list of 29 syntactic phrasemes.

The Spanish particle [*ni X*] (engl. [*neither X*]), is present in the context of what can be regarded as syntactic idioms in three diatopic varieties of Spanish. Holgado Lage (Princeton University, U.S.A.) conducted an empirical investigation on informant interviews gathered from Spain, Mexico, and Colombia. She provides numerous examples and figures to show the high diatopic variability of *ni*-expressions in pluricentric Spanish, as well as the discrepancy between forms recorded in the dictionary and their actual creative usage in discourse. Colloquial *ni*-expressions of refutation in Spanish are characterized by a predominantly oral in character which explains their usually short lifespan.

Like Anais Holgado Lage, Oksana Hordii (University of Oil and Gas Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine) examines routine formulas. The topic of her study is communicative and expressive formulas in German (e.g. from the field of emotions and feelings, such as *Da wird der Hund in der Pfanne verrückt!* or *So weit*

kommt's noch!), that represent illocutionary acts such as ‘astonishment’, ‘rejection’ or ‘encouragement’, or convey the speaker’s attitude towards an extralinguistic situation. The high number of hits shown by the Google search engine for the 2140 routine formulas studied is in line with the study finding that they possess immense vitality in contemporary German, and that they are often used as the names of YouTube and forum websites. Hordii concludes by emphasizing the formal flexibility of these formulae at the discourse level, implying that the corresponding sentence form recorded in the dictionary should generally be considered only as the predominant variant of realization.

Fixedness and variability were recognized early on in idiomatic research as the two complementary sides of the phraseological coin. Like Holgado Lage and Hordii, Gabrijela Buljan and Lea Maras (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Osijek, Croatia) also address the controversial and still topical aspect of the variability of phrasemes. A particular type of modification of English comparative phrasemes [(*as*) Adj *as* NP] is examined here, namely the so-called “Matryoshka modification” exemplified in *blood-red as a raw steak* (cf. *red as blood*). Google is used as one of the three research corpora – a noteworthy alternative. Buljan and Maras use quantitative methods to investigate the relations between various distributive and formal features of *as*-comparisons, with special attention to potential modification patterns.

The current issue ends with a diachronically oriented paper. Ljubica Leone’s (University of Salerno, Italy) corpus-based investigation is on the use of English phrasal verbs vs. simplex verbs in the court proceedings of the *London Central Criminal Court* during the late modern English period between 1750 and 1850. A clear preference for Germanic verbs of the type *to go on*, *to leave off* over simplex verbs of Romance origin (e.g. *to continue*, *to desist*) is found in the examined conversations between laymen and lawyers. This is due to the expressivity and greater suitability to the particular communicative situation of the Germanic verbs. The paper takes a phraseologically oriented look at the topic of English phrasal verbs as a distinct type of phraseme, and at their pragmatic specificity compared to their simplex verb counterparts.

The Yearbook closes with eight reviews of exciting new publications in the field of phraseology and phraseography.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank Annelies Häcki Buhofer for her commitment; she and her predecessors have made an outstanding contribution to the success of the Yearbook. We will, of course, do our best to ensure that YoP remains a good address for all scholars interested in phraseology.