PHRASEOLOGICAL EXPRESSIONS IN MODERN ENGLISH LITERARY DISCOURSE

Mukhammadieva Shakhzoda Farkhodovna
Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages
Email: muxammadiyevash@gmail.com
Orcid number: 0009-0007-2120-6840

Abstract: The article examines the role and functions of phraseological expressions in modern English literary discourse. It focuses on their stylistic, expressive, pragmatic, and cultural significance. The study shows that idioms, collocations, proverbs, and fixed expressions contribute to characterization, emotional expression, imagery, and textual cohesion. Their creative modification also allows writers to produce individual stylistic effects.

Keywords: phraseology, idioms, literary discourse, stylistics, expressiveness.

Introduction. Phraseological expressions are an important part of the lexical system of modern English. They include idioms, fixed expressions, collocations, proverbs, and other conventional combinations of words. Their meanings and functions cannot always be understood by considering the individual words separately. In literary discourse, phraseological expressions are especially significant because authors use them not only to convey information but also to create artistic images, express emotions, reveal characters, and communicate cultural meanings.

Modern phraseological studies increasingly emphasize the importance of context. A phraseological unit may have a relatively stable conventional meaning, but its interpretation can change depending on the situation in which it is used. In literary texts, writers frequently exploit this contextual flexibility to create additional meanings and stylistic effects. Therefore, phraseological expressions should be studied as elements of discourse rather than only as isolated lexical combinations. Phraseological expressions have a significant role in the creation of literary meaning. When an author uses an established idiom or fixed expression, the reader usually recognizes its conventional meaning. This recognition makes communication economical and expressive. At the same time, the expression may acquire additional meanings from the surrounding context. Thus, phraseological units can simultaneously preserve their conventional meaning and contribute to the specific meaning of a literary passage.

One of the most important functions of phraseological expressions is

characterization. Writers often use particular expressions to represent the speech habits, social background, education, profession, age, or personality of a character. The language of a character can therefore become an important element of characterization. Informal idioms may create the impression of conversational and familiar speech, while proverbial or formal expressions may suggest a different communicative style. Through phraseological choices, authors can distinguish characters from one another without providing direct descriptions.

Phraseological expressions are also important for expressing emotions and evaluations. English contains numerous expressions associated with anger, happiness, fear, surprise, disappointment, affection, and other emotional states. In literary discourse, such expressions can make emotional descriptions more vivid. Instead of directly stating that a character is extremely angry or surprised, an author can employ an idiomatic expression that communicates the emotional situation in a more expressive way. This contributes to the intensity and naturalness of literary language. Another important function is the creation of imagery. Many English idioms have metaphorical origins and contain images connected with everyday activities, nature, physical movement, objects, or human experience. When these expressions are used in literature, their figurative meanings can interact with the literal context. Such interaction may create humour, irony, ambiguity, or symbolic meaning. The figurative potential of phraseological expressions therefore provides writers with a powerful stylistic resource.

Literary authors also frequently modify conventional phraseological units. A familiar expression may be changed through the replacement of one word, alteration of grammatical structure, expansion, reduction, or combination with another expression. The reader can recognize the original phraseological pattern, but the modification produces a new contextual effect. Such transformations are particularly effective in creating humour and irony. They may also draw attention to an important idea or emphasize the individuality of an author's style. For example, an author may deliberately replace an expected component of a familiar expression with a word connected with the situation of the narrative. The reader's knowledge of the original expression creates an expectation, while the modified version violates that expectation. The resulting contrast can produce a humorous or ironic effect. This demonstrates that phraseological stability does not prevent creativity. On the contrary, conventionality can provide the basis for linguistic innovation.

Phraseological expressions also have an important pragmatic function. In dialogue, they can indicate relationships between speakers and express attitudes such as agreement, disagreement, criticism, solidarity, politeness, or distance.

The same expression may produce different pragmatic effects depending on the speaker, situation, and intonation represented in the text. Consequently, the interpretation of phraseological meaning requires attention to the broader communicative context. The cultural function of phraseology is equally important. Idioms and proverbs often contain information about the history, traditions, values, and everyday experiences of a speech community. Their use in literary texts can establish a particular cultural atmosphere. Readers who share the cultural background of an expression may recognize associations that are not immediately available to foreign readers. For this reason, phraseological expressions are particularly significant in literary translation. A translator must often reproduce not only the lexical meaning but also the figurative, stylistic, and cultural associations of the original expression.

Phraseological expressions can further contribute to textual cohesion. Repeated expressions, synonymous phraseological units, and modified versions of the same expression can connect different parts of a literary work. An author may introduce an expression at one point in a narrative and later repeat or transform it, creating a semantic connection between separate passages. Phraseology can therefore participate in the development of themes and motifs throughout a text. The relationship between phraseology and individual authorial style is also important. Although phraseological units are conventional, authors differ in their selection and use of them. Some writers prefer colloquial expressions, while others employ literary, archaic, regional, or culturally marked phraseology. Individual writers may also transform conventional expressions more frequently than others. Such preferences contribute to the recognizable linguistic style of a literary work.

Corpus-based studies provide additional evidence for the importance of phraseological expressions in contemporary English. Research based on large collections of texts shows that idioms and other phraseological units vary according to genre, register, and communicative context. Kovaliuk (2023), for example, examines idiom frequency and variation across English varieties, while Rafatbakhsh and Ahmadi (2019) demonstrate the usefulness of corpus analysis for identifying patterns in idiomatic usage. These approaches indicate that phraseology should be investigated through both linguistic description and contextual analysis. The study of phraseological expressions is consequently relevant to several areas of linguistics. In lexicology, phraseology helps explain the organization of conventional lexical combinations. In stylistics, it provides insight into expressive and aesthetic effects. In pragmatics, it reveals how conventional expressions function in communication. In literary studies, phraseology helps explain characterization, imagery, cultural representation, and authorial style. A comprehensive analysis therefore requires an

interdisciplinary approach.

Phraseological expressions play a significant role in modern English literary discourse. They participate in characterization, emotional expression, imagery, pragmatics, cultural representation, and textual cohesion. Their transformation provides authors with opportunities to combine linguistic convention and creative expression. Therefore, phraseological units should be understood not simply as fixed combinations but as dynamic resources that acquire additional meanings through context. Their study contributes to a deeper understanding of modern English literary language and its stylistic possibilities.

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