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Федуленкова Т. Н. | Прагматические функции современной английской фразеологии

Владимирский государственный университет имени А.Г. и Н.Г. Столетовых,
ул. Горького, 87, г. Владимир, 600026, Россия
e-mail: fedulenkova@list.ru
ORCID: 0000-0002-5039-5827

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Аннотация. Проблема функционирования фразеологизмов – есть одна из самых спорных проблем в современной фразеологии. В данной статье излагаются результаты изучения основных прагматических функций фразеологизмов в современном английском языке. Актуальность исследования состоит в насущной потребности дифференцирования регулярных прагматических функций в английской фразеологии. Целью работы является анализ функций ФЕ на основе Британского национального корпуса (BNC) и оценка их количественных соотношений. Теоретическая база исследования – фразеологическая концепция А.В. Кунина. Исследование выполнено на языковом материале, извлеченном из современных лексикографических источников. Основным методом выборки фразеологизмов из языкового континуума и их семантического анализа является метод фразеологической идентификации, который была предложен основателем английской фразеологии как отрасли лингвистики и как самостоятельной научной дисциплины профессором А.В. Куниным. В качестве дополнительных методов исследования используется ряд непарадигмальных методов и технологий лингвистики, включая описательный метод с его процедурами, методы фразеологического, дефиниционного и контекстного анализа. Важность исследования состоит в его очевидном результате: в работе доказывается, что все функции фразеологических единиц, которые рассматриваются в статье – стилистические, кумулятивные, директивные, оценочные, результативные, текстообразующие – являются базовыми, или нормативными, но не окказиональными функциями. Исследование приводит к заключению, что фразеологизмы наиболее активно используются в оценочном и в стилистических функциях, которые часто действуют одновременно. Что касается кумулятивной и директивной функций, то их квантитативная доля в дискурсе относительно невелика.

Ключевые слова: английский язык; фразеология; фразеологические единицы; прагматические функции.

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Tatiana N. Fedulenkova | Pragmatic functions of Modern English Phraseology

Vladimir State University named after A.G. and N.G. Stoletovs,
87 Gorky St., Vladimir, 600026, Russian Federation
e-mail: fedulenkova@list.ru
ORCID: 0000-0002-5039-5827

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Abstract. One of the most debatable problems in modern phraseology is the **problem of functioning** of phraseological units (PU). The results of studying the basic pragmatic functions of phraseological units in modern English are provided in this paper. The **pertinence** of the study stems from the imminent need to differentiate regular pragmatic functions in the English phraseology. The aim of the paper is to analyze the PU functions on the basis of the British National Corpus (BNC) and estimate their quantitative co-relation. The **theoretical background** of the research is based on the phraseological concept introduced by A. V. Kunin. The research is carried out on the language material extracted from modern lexicographic sources. The main **method of extraction** of phraseological units out of a language continuum and their semantic analysis is the method of phraseological identification that was introduced by professor A.V. Kunin, the founder of the English phraseology as a branch of linguistic science and as a self-contained linguistic discipline. A set of non-paradigmatic methods and techniques of linguistics is employed as additional **methods of the research**, including a descriptive method with its procedures, and methods of the phraseological, definitional and contextual analysis. The importance of the research consists in its evident result, *id est*: it has been shown that all the functions of phraseological units considered in the article – stylistic, cumulative, directive, evaluative, summarizing, text-building functions – are basic, or normative, functions, but not occasional ones. The research leads to the conclusion that phraseological units are most actively utilized in the evaluative and in stylistic functions, and both of these functions are often combined in discourse. As to the cumulative and directive functions, their quantitative share in discourse is relatively small.

Keywords: English; phraseology; phraseological units; pragmatic functions.

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Introduction

The point is that the problem of functioning of phraseological units is considered to be one of the most discussed problems in modern phraseology. The problem is of great importance for any language, and it is especially urgent for English as phraseological units present one of the intensive means of the development of the nominative system in that language, as having turned into an analytical one.

The research is carried out on the language material extracted from modern lexicographic sources and from the British National Corpus. The main method of extraction of phraseological units out of the language continuum and their semantic analysis is the method of phraseological identification that was introduced by professor A.V. Kunin (1970: 38), an outstanding Soviet linguist, founder of the English phraseology as a branch of linguistic and as a self-contained linguistic

discipline. A set of non-paradigmatic methods and techniques of linguistics is employed as additional methods of the research, including a descriptive method with its procedures, methods of the definitional, phraseological and contextual analysis (Komarova, 2018: 564).

In modern linguistic studies, the pragmatic function of any language sign (idioms and phraseologisms inclusive) is considered to be the basic one. It generally implies an intended sway, bringing about a change in another's actions or thoughts. Practically, any text is characterized by its inborn pragmatic function, which, in its turn, has an irresistible impact on the phraseology employed by the author. On the other hand, phraseological units themselves are characterized by their powerful inborn influential value which cannot but intensify the pragmatic force of the text and of the context as part of the text. Bearing that in mind, one may formulate a hypothesis: the varieties of the PU pragmatic function, belonging to regular functions (Kunin, 1996: 115), may be classified into stylistic, cumulative, directive, evaluative, summarizing, text-building functions and their sub-types.

The Stylistic Function

After A.V. Kunin, we maintain that "the stylistic function is a special – in comparison with the neutral way of expression – purposefulness of language means aiming to achieve a stylistic effect alongside with preservation of the general intellectual content of the statement" (Kunin, 1996: 115). The stylistic function appeals to and awakens the connotative potential of idioms and other phraseological units in speech. And in the language, as one might agree with A.V. Kunin, there only exists stylistic colouring. As a rule, the hint of that colouring is made by means of stylistic notes and supplementary remarks in dictionaries. Besides, there is one more means that helps to reveal a PU stylistic colouring, and that is a comparison of the idiom or any other set expression with its variable prototype.

Dwelling upon the stylistic PU functions, one cannot help appealing to Sergey G. Gavrin, who, developing, based on the

Russian language, the phraseological theory in its functional-semantic aspect, finds out a set of functions of phraseological units (Gavrin, 1974: 99). The functional analysis shows that those functions are also peculiar to English phraseological units, namely:

a) "the expressive-imagery function" (Gavrin, 1974: 99): *small dragons; Pandora's box; go to Gretna Green*; as in:

The Church of England has been getting more and more liberal on the matter. Because of the embarrassment of Princess Anne having to go to Gretna Green to get married, it now seems ready to compromise even on that. 'The morality of the one has determined the morality of the other and the disestablishment of the Church could save the monarchy because it would avoid embarrassment.' Anglican Bishop Hugh Montefiore is less keen to accept that his church is losing influence. On Prince Charles's position he says: 'He has said he won't get divorced. Anyway we have already had two divorced kings on the throne...' (BNC: Today. London: News Group Newspapers Ltd, 1992: 129-151).

b) "the emotional-expressive function" (Ibid.): *Dog my cats!; Tell it to the marines!; By the Lord Harry!* As in:

I really do. Take for instance a young couple just married. For a short while it's all sunshine and roses. Then the children start to arrive and the husband has to stay at home at nights with the wife and help look after them. Gradually, all kinds of little problems begin to crop up. Responsibility after responsibility is laid on the husband's shoulders. Then the burden becomes too much for him and he becomes restless. He begins to long for the happy carefree days when he was single. And that, 'by the Lord Harry...' he slammed a fist into the open palm of his left hand, 'is how all the trouble starts!' Then he spread his arms wide.' 'Now a mature man would not do any of these things,' he said. (BNC: The killing frost. Hayden, Thomas. London: Random Century Group, 1991: 155-256.)

c) "the function of speech concision" (Ibid.): – through omitting some components:

when at Rome! instead *When at Rome, do as the romans do;* or *the last straw* instead *It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back,* as in:

*'The last 25 years had been bloody,' Gauntlett winces. Bankers were even tapping David Brown on the shoulder. By the 80s, receivership was a real possibility, and new rulings on safety and emission levels were **the last straw**. The will and even the whim were running out. When Ford offered us a safe harbour, it took me all of 15 seconds to say yes. But a wind of change had already begun to blow at Newport Pagnell. For the two years before Ford's buy-up, Aston Martin Lagonda had actually shown a profit (albeit modest), the first time in its history that it had managed to do so two years running. (BNC: Management Today. London: Haymarket Pub. Group, 1991: 33-147).*

Such variety of the stylistic function as that 'of speech laconicization', as A.V. Kunin puts it (in his 'Course of Phraseology of Modern English' written in Russian), is especially evident in communicative phraseological units, or proverbial phraseology (Fedulenkova, 2003: 11). Let us, for instance, consider the following proverbs:

a) *Hypocrisy is a homage that vice pays to virtue* which means 'even the worst sinners value the good opinions of their fellow men; to gain those good opinions they try to hide their real natures by acting as though they are persons of good repute – and that is hypocrisy' (Ridout, Witting, 2000).

b) *Live and let live* which means 'other people have as much right to live as we have, and all of us have failings, so to remain on friendly terms with our neighbours we should overlook their shortcomings in the hope that they will overlook ours' (Ibid.)

c) *Too much curiosity lost Paradise* which means 'it does not do to be curious or inquisitive; the proverb is a quotation from *The Lucky Chance*, a play by Aphra Behn. The reference is, of course, to the story of Adam and Eve, who were expelled from the garden of Eden because they had tasted the forbidden fruit (Ibid.).

By simply comparing the given proverbs with their definitions one might see that their length is much shorter than their explanations. So, we maintain after A.V. Kunin that "the semantic compression, characteristic of phraseological units, is one of the instances of language economy" which is particularly evident in the use of usually or occasionally clipped proverbial phraseologisms, as with (a) *a new broom* > *A new broom sweeps clean;* (b) *pay the piper* > *He who pays the piper calls the tune;* *desperate remedies* > *Desperate diseases must have desperate remedies,* e.g.:

(a) *In the general election campaign Carter continued to harp on the need to clear up the 'mess' in Washington, constantly re-echoing the theme of his acceptance speech: 'We want to have faith again! We want to be proud again! We just want the truth again.... We can have an American government that's turned away from scandal and corruption and official cynicism and is once again as decent and competent as our people.'* Given the widespread feelings of disillusionment abroad in 1976, Carter's strategy of offering himself as **a new broom** was electorally well judged, but if he impressed the voters, his relentless and sanctimonious moralizing irritated and alienated legislators whose support he would eventually need. (BNC: Ronald Reagan and the American presidency. Mervin, David. Harlow: Longman Group UK Ltd, 1990 : 12-124.).

(b) <...> *one day as he was driving the birds down towards the guns. He was the official gamekeeper and knew the job inside out but for some reason what he was doing didn't suit Sir Emmanuel and the air turned blue. <...> and Uncle and Sam got into trouble. They had been so busy collecting the birds and tying them up. Completely innocent they were, too, but it made no difference. Still, Sir Emmanuel had the money. He was **paying the piper**.* (BNC: *Daughter of the Dales*. Hauxwell, Hannah and Cockcroft, Barry. London: Century Hutchinson, 1991: 173-318.).

(c) *But although a great deal of solid matter had soon accumulated on one or other side of the ramparts and sometimes on both, it*

*had little or no effect. It was like trying to shore up a wall of quicksand. The Collector resorted to even more **desperate remedies**. He had the banisters ripped off the staircase, for example, but that did no good either. So in the end he took to pointing at the last and most precious of 'the possessions'... tiger-skins, bookcases full of elevating and instructional volumes, embroidered samplers, teasetts of bone china, humidors and candlesticks <...>. (BNC: The siege of Krishnapur. Farrell, J G. London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1988: 205-313.).*

One more variety of the stylistic function, i.e. the function of hyperbolization and intensity is to be mentioned, such as, *wear one's heart upon one's sleeve for daws to peck at, out-herod Herod, split the hairs*, etc., e.g.:

*'That may be pure coincidence, of course, and I may be a sceptic.' He glared at her over his beer, daring her to agree with his last assertion. Meredith was not to be led away from the point at issue. 'The causes may have a high profile because Deanes campaigns for them! Good for him, he's doing his job.' He was gazing at her with an infuriating world-weariness suggesting he'd heard her argument a hundred times before. 'This is turning into one of those mediaeval disputes which **split the hairs** endlessly,' he said. 'Are you playing devil's advocate, by any chance?' 'No, I'm not!' exclaimed a heated Meredith, bouncing about in her chair. (BNC: A season for murder. Granger, Ann. London: Headline Book Pub. plc, 1991: 21-134.).*

It has been found out that the phraseological units with a proper-name component in their structure are extremely powerful in the function of hyperbolization:

a) biblical names: *play Judas, a piece of Jesuitry, the mark of Cain*, etc.,

b) classical and mythical names: *play Cupid, like a Sphinx, the Midas touch*, etc.

c) names from literature: *be a Shylock, a Jekyll and Hyde, waiting for Godot*, etc., e.g.:

(a) *Any other time, they'd believe anything they heard as long as it was bad. Nelson's experience was of an organisation*

*that had its regular human share of good soldiers, time-servers, wasters, whiners, climbers, saints, piss-heads and heroes; and when the pressure was on, probably more of the latter than it was fair to expect. Things happened, one heard stories, but overall you got on with the job. But then along came someone like Lucas, and put **the mark of Cain** on everybody. Handling him was going to be a delicate business, and Nelson was more than relieved that the job wouldn't fall to him. (BNC: Rain. Gallagher, Stephen. Sevenoaks: New English Library, 1990 : 135-293.).*

(b) *Richard Dreyfuss once looked like an actor who could do no wrong. He appeared to have the **Midas touch**. By the age of twenty-nine he had appeared in two of the most successful films of all time and had won an Oscar for *The Goodbye Girl*. He could have been forgiven for thinking that he was God's gift to acting. But nobody could overlook the fact that the box-office receipts for *Jaws* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* had little to do with any actor's presence. But Hollywood is fickle and the success of *Jaws* made Dreyfuss a huge star. (BNC: Hollywood rogues. Munn, Michael. London: Robson Books Ltd, 1991: 47-173.).*

(c) *...workers receive the instruments of their liberation (comfort, gadgets) which, however, are purely fictitious liberation since power controls the ways in which all material equipment can be used. All were 'poisoned by the spectacle', the problem was to break it. Our guiding element could be the *Durutti's Brigade* moving from village to village, liquidating the bourgeois elements and leaving the workers to see to their own organization. 'It was an appealing image, and an appealing movement for radicals hunting their red shark, and tired of **waiting for Godot**. It promised involvement, rationalized non-organization, it dramatized outcast status, and offered the possibility of action, and, as the next decade opened, provided it for a few.' (BNC: Underground: the London alternative press. Fountain, Nigel. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul plc, 1988: 1-94.).*

The Cumulative Function

The cumulative function presents one of the main instances and mechanisms in the economy of language means. And that function appears to be one of the leading functions that are inherent in such communicative phraseological units as proverbs, because they generalize the life and cultural memory of people: *Art is long, life is short; Life is not all beer and skittles; Evil communications corrupt good manners; Distance lends enchantment to the view; A stitch in time saves nine*, etc., e.g.:

(a) *My aunt said I'd be wanting to go to the coal merchant's next, and my uncle said: 'Evil communications corrupt good manners'*. (W.S. Maugham, *Cakes and Ale*)

(b) *Tis distance lends enchantment to the view, And robes the mountain in its azure hue* (Th. Campbell, *The Pleasures of Hope*).

(c) *Even with fees added on, the final bill would still be 500,000 less than anticipated. Plans to install new mortar in inside walls and to alter air conditioning equipment had to be abandoned but the move would save taxpayers' money. But Conservative Coun. Peter Jones said the bill would have only been a fraction of that if the controlling Labour group had taken action when defects in the building were detailed in reports in 1985 and 1986. 'A stitch in time saves nine,' he said.* (BNC: [Northern Echo]. World affairs material, 1998: 5-43.).

The Directive Function

One more function is closely connected with the cumulative function: "directly managing, directing, influencing, and, in a certain way, bringing up, forming a person. We named it directive" (Vereshchagin, Kostomarov, 1990: 98). The following proverbs can serve as an illustration of the directive function: *Kill not the goose that lays the golden eggs; Don't take your harp to the party; You must lose a fly to catch a trout; Don't make a rod for your own back; Let the cobbler stick to his last; Let bygones be bygones; Strike while the iron is hot; Never say die; Get off your high horse*; cf.:

(a) *'Peggy? Adam here. Level Five. I need to see Franklin D. When can he fit me in?' 'That could be difficult. He has a tight schedule...' 'Damn! Adam had a date with a promising Finnish brunette for that evening. He was confident he'd brought her to the stage where he could lay her. Strike while the iron is hot.' He asked me to check data on a recent employee. I've checked. He wants me to take action. There are queries before I can do that.' 'Which employee?' Peggy's American voice was a whiplash.* (BNC: Whirlpool. Forbes, Colin. London: Pan Books Ltd, 1991: 1-120.).

(b) *<...> Nuffin' wrong with poofsters. Monica's got one at home and he's brilliant.' I smiled weakly at the line of eyes fixed on me and Jan. Miracle of miracles, a bus hove in sight. 'Give us a kiss then, Monica. And you and Basil come up my place one day.' Jan Indian-striped my cheek with lipstick and hopped on to the platform, turning to shout: 'They'll think I'm one too, Monica! Never say die, eh?' I took the long cut home.* (BNC: I believe in angels. Cooper, Fiona. London: Serpent's Tail, 1993: 1-128.).

(c) *...that this may have been one small way in which I had a slight advantage over Gittel. But that was long after the moment when my pathetic attempt to enlist the so-called forces of darkness on my behalf had backfired. 'I'm getting vexed.' 'You watch your mouth out there, Apostate!' 'Why don't you just climb back into your tree?' 'Rainbow speaks up.' 'Could you both stop squabbling?' 'That... ghouls out there has no right to impugn my professional abilities. Get off your high horse, Kokos'.* (BNC: The dyke & the dybbuk. Galford, Ellen. London: Virago Press Ltd, 1993: 98-245.).

The Evaluative Function

The pragmatic character of phraseology is also seen in the evaluative function of phraseological units which may be positive or negative, intellectual or connotative.

Phraseological units having a positive evaluative function are as follows: *on top of the world* – elated by one's own success (Cowie, 2000: 183), *be as gentle as a dove* –

to behave in a peace-loving, tender manner (Gulland, 1994: 67), *keep oneself unspotted from the world* – keep oneself morally and spiritually uncorrupted by worldly practices and pleasures (Cowie, 2000: 332), *beat one's sword into a ploughshare* – to turn from war to peaceful pursuits (Gulland, 1994: 208), *bear/carry the palm* – to signal one's triumph (Gulland, 1994: 50), *go with a swing* – be very successful (Longman, 1997: 326), *be born with a silver spoon in the mouth* – to have wealthy parents (Longman, 1997: 310), etc. Cf.:

(a) *However, his new design was arranged so that it could be retained. He then said: as to cheerfulness of character, I really think that any unprejudiced person would come to the conclusion that, if compared with the Post-office, the Museum, the Palace, or even the Board of Trade or Whitehall Chapel, my design would **carry the palm** in this respect. He asked MPs for fair consideration as he said: I propose to erect a building which friends and foes have agreed in praising. It will contain one of the finest and openest quadrangles in this country; its details will be more than ordinarily lively and cheerful; <...> .* (BNC: The Foreign Office: an architectural history. Toplis, Ian. London/New York: Mansell Pub. Ltd, 1987: 13-109.)

(b) *If you are planning to give your child a good old-fashioned birthday party, but are pushed for time, you might find the <...> Club's Party Book and Fun Book are invaluable. They include almost everything you need to make a party **go with a swing**, such as invitations, prizes, goodie bags and gifts.* (BNC: Parents. London: EMAP Consumer Pub. Ltd, 1991: 111-137).

(c) *However, as Jackie said, it isn't too difficult to take adequate care and avoid these problems. Diabetes mellitus does not mean the end of the world. With a little commitment from you, as well as the expert help of your vet and cooperation from your dog, the risks are greatly reduced. Jackie concluded: 'Jasper certainly **wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth**, but there are quite a few*

occasions when he needs one now – of the sugar variety, of course!' ... In the frame ... Old master or not? Everyone dreams of finding a masterpiece in the attic. That picture hanging over your fireplace might just be worth more than your whole house. (BNC: Dogs Today. Windsor: Burlington Pub. Ltd, 1992: 9-123).

Phraseological units having a negative evaluative function are as follows: *a skeleton in the cupboard* – a source of embarrassment and shame to a family, which is kept secret from strangers (Gulland, 1994: 109), *verbal diarrhoea* – coll. compulsive talkativeness (Gulland, 1994: 127), *a blot on smb's escutcheon* – smb. who, or smth. which, brings dishonour or discredit upon a family or other group (Cowie, 2000: 71), *a wolf in sheep's clothing* – a person who appears to be friendly, or harmless, but is really an enemy or evil-doer (Cowie, 2000: 596), *dig a pit for smb.* – contrive to trap, or trick, smb. or (through miscarriage or mismanagement of one's plans) oneself (Cowie, 2000: 141), *have a finger in every pie* – take a meddling interest in many affairs (Gulland, 1994: 161), *bark up the wrong tree* – to accuse or blame the wrong person (Gulland, 1994: 50), *lick smb's boots* – behave in a servile, toadying way to smb. one hopes to please or conciliate, esp smb. ranking as one's superior or smb. whom one fears (Cowie, 2000: 350), *sow the dragon's teeth* – do smth. ... that causes future trouble, dissension, warfare etc (Cowie, 2000: 512), *the prodigal son* – someone who returns home after a long absence, and is received with great joy by his family despite his past behaviour (Gulland, 1994: 132), etc. Cf.:

(a) *If you just spoke roughly to that chap, he **was licking your boots** the next moment.* (J. Braine, Room at the Top).

(b) *But the danger is that Mrs Thatcher will try, that she will **sow dragon's teeth** among the resentful middle class, that she will, in short, sharpen appetites that she cannot satisfy.* (New Statesman).

(c) *He was his own worst enemy. Like **the prodigal son**, he wasted his substance in*

riotous living. (BNC: Black sheep of the family: seminar (Edu/inf). Rec. on 2 Feb 1994.).

For further details on evaluative function of phraseological units, see also S. Bashiyeva (1995), T. Fedulenkova (2014, 37-43) et al.

The Summarizing Function

The summarizing function of an idiom and any other phraseological unit may be interpreted as the ability of that language sign to fulfil the role of a brisk resultative description, a kind of an outline or a digest of the statement going before, e.g.: *That's that* with the meaning of "it is permanently settled and need not to be dealt with again" (Spears, 1991: 327); *That's the ticket* with the meaning of "that is exactly what is needed" (Ibid.); *That ain't hay* with the meaning of "that is not a small amount of money" (Ibid.); *The fat is in the fire* meaning "serious trouble has broken out" (Ibid.); *The coast is clear* meaning "there is no visible danger" (Ibid.); for instance:

<...> *try and persuade him. Good luck with the new arrival. See you all.'* *The two men left. Sarah looked at her sons' faces and smiled. 'It's a girl!' All the boys grinned at her. 'A daughter for me old age.'* *She hugged the child to her. 'I'm going to call her Maura. Maura Ryan. I like that. 'Shall I go and get Mickey, Mum? I saved him some chips.'* *'Yeah, Geoff. Tell him the coast is clear.'* *The doctor stopped packing away his instruments and looked at Sarah sternly.* (BNC: Dangerous lady. Cole, Martina. 1992. Headline Books: 3-123.).

Many proverbial phraseological units proved to realize their summarizing function in the context: *Keep it for a rainy day; Don't tell tales out of school; Put the saddle on the right horse; Two blacks do not make a white; You cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs;* cf.:

(a) *Jack often travels on the train without a ticket, so why shouldn't I?' 'Just because he does it, that's no reason why you should. Two blacks don't make a white.* (Ridout, Witting, 2009: 166).

(b) *'We shall be much more comfortable in our new house, but I'm afraid it's not going to be so cheap to run as this one.'* *'You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs.'* (Ridout, Witting, 2009: 182).

That summarizing effect is evidently felt even when the context turns the proverb into a verbal, i.e. a nominal-communicative phraseological unit: *Keep it for a rainy day > to keep it for a rainy day; Don't tell tales out of school > not to tell tales out of school, Put the saddle on the right horse > to put the saddle on the right horse;* cf.:

(c) *And obviously we would want to take money out of reserves, our original amendment took one point three million pounds out of reserves and it's interesting to see now that you're suggesting almost that figure again and yet for years you've been telling us you can't take this money out of the reserves, <...> you know we had to keep it for a rainy day.* (BNC: St. Lukes School Council meeting (Pub/instit). 5 partics).

(d) *Fowler-Troon had the grace to look embarrassed. 'I must admit I have an ulterior motive. Not that one was necessary, of course. Always a pleasure to entertain a charming young lady.'* *He fiddled with the handle of his cup. 'Oh dear. I don't quite know how to put this.'* *Celia took pity on him. 'Is it something to do with Ivor Newley?'* *'You guessed?'* *Fowler-Troon dabbed his mouth with his napkin. 'It's all rather delicate. I don't want to tell tales out of school.* (Freelance death. Taylor, Andrew. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1993: 52-175.).

(e) *An author's new book had been reviewed unfavourably in a literary weekly. He said to an acquaintance: 'I'll concede that a critic has a right to give an honest opinion but I think John Cartright went a bit too far this time.'* *'How do you know it was Cartright? The article wasn't signed.'* *'I'd recognize his style anywhere, confound him!'* *'You are putting the saddle on the right horse, old man. John Cartright didn't right that review. I did.'* (Ridout, Witting, 2009: 143).

The Text-building Function

The notion of the PU text-building function was first introduced by Irina I. Chernysheva (1974). The proposition that phraseological units can serve a binding means of not only contexts, but also of context fragments seems relevant. Having a diverse embodiment, this function may be made explicit in a number of contexts, such as for e.g.:

'I suppose', she mused, 'it is as bad to have your bee in your shirt as in your bonnet'. He looked at her with round eyes. 'Don't you know what it is to have a bee in your bonnet?' she said. 'No.' 'To have a bee buzzing among your hair! To be out of your wits', she smiled at him. 'So!' he said. 'Ah, the Psaneks have had a ladybird in their bonnets for many hundred years.' 'Quite, quite mad,' she said. (D.H. Lawrence, The Ladybird).

That pun is intriguingly sustained some dozen pages later, closer to the end of the story in the passage revealing the cause "of

the silly obsession with the family crest" (Naciscione, 2010: 100).

The higher the phraseological meaning is abstracted from the grammatical meaning of the phraseological unit, the stronger the PU-function independence of grammar is.

Conclusions

The result of the semantic and contextual analysis testifies to the fact that the varieties of the PU pragmatic function may be classified into stylistic, cumulative, directive, evaluative, summarizing and text-building functions and their sub-types.

By means of the quantitative analysis of the data of the British National Corpus (BNC) it is proved that all the functions of phraseological units considered in the article are basic, or normative functions, but not occasional ones. Below is the table of a ratio of the PU functions made on the basis of selection of 3129 phraseological units out of the authentic texts provided by the BNC and having the volume of 1000 pages (537 thousand words):

Table

The table of a ratio of the PU functions

№	PU functions	Number of PU instances
1	Stylistic function	1856 phraseological units
2	Cumulative function	34 phraseological units
3	Directive function	63 phraseological units
4	Evaluative function	2748 phraseological units
5	Summarizing function	215 phraseological units
6	Text-building	79 phraseological units

The undertaken research allows to formulate the following conclusions: phraseological units are most actively utilized in the evaluative (2748) and in the stylistic (1856) functions, and both of the functions are often combined. As to the cumulative and directive functions, they appear to be utilized in comparatively lesser cases in discourse.

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Tatiana N. Fedulenkova, Doctor of Philology, Professor, Correspondent Member of RANH.

Федуленкова Татьяна Николаевна, профессор, доктор филологических наук, член-корреспондент РАН.