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NEW PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AND FIXED EXPRESSIONS IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN: ORIGINS AND AREAS OF USE

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Abstract
The development of contemporary Russian is accompanied by continuous changes in its lexical and phraseological systems. Social, political, technological, and cultural transformations contribute to the emergence of new fixed expressions, phraseological innovations, and figurative constructions. The rapid expansion of digital communication, social networks, mass media, advertising, and popular culture has significantly accelerated this process. Many expressions that initially appear as occasional combinations or humorous statements gradually become recognizable and widely used elements of everyday communication. This article examines the emergence, formation, semantic characteristics, and areas of use of new phraseological units and fixed expressions in contemporary Russian. Particular attention is paid to expressions originating in internet communication, media discourse, youth language, professional communication, and popular culture. The study also distinguishes established phraseological units from occasional expressions, quotations, slogans, and newly formed idiomatic constructions. A descriptive and contextual approach is employed to explain how social and communicative factors influence the development of contemporary Russian phraseology. The article concludes that new phraseological units reflect changes in collective experience, cultural identity, and communicative practices, while demonstrating the dynamic character of the Russian language.

Keywords: Contemporary Russian, phraseology, phraseological units, fixed expressions, neologisms, idiomatic expressions, internet language, media discourse, linguistic innovation, semantic change.

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Introduction

Phraseology represents one of the most expressive and culturally significant areas of language. Phraseological units preserve collective experience, historical knowledge, social values, and culturally established ways of interpreting reality. They make communication more vivid and emotionally expressive by conveying complex meanings through relatively stable combinations of words.

The phraseological system of any language is not completely fixed. Although traditional idioms may remain stable for centuries, new expressions continuously emerge under the influence of social, economic, political, technological, and cultural developments. Contemporary Russian provides numerous examples of this process. Changes in public life, the development of mass media, the spread of digital technologies, and the growing influence of global popular culture have created favourable conditions for the formation and circulation of new fixed expressions.

Expressions associated with social networks, online communication, advertising, politics, and entertainment frequently become part of everyday speech. Some are borrowed from English, while others are created through the transformation of existing Russian expressions. Certain expressions originate in popular films, television programmes, public speeches, or internet memes. Their meanings may gradually become independent of the original context and develop into recognizable phraseological constructions.

The study of new phraseological units is important because it provides information about the relationship between language and society. Such expressions reflect contemporary cultural priorities, social attitudes, technological developments, and changing forms of communication.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the origins, structural characteristics, semantic development, and areas of use of new phraseological units and fixed expressions in contemporary Russian. Particular attention is given to the distinction between established idioms and temporary expressions, as well as to the influence of digital communication and mass media on phraseological innovation.

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1. Theoretical Foundations of Phraseology

Phraseology is a branch of linguistics that studies stable word combinations characterized by varying degrees of semantic unity, structural stability, reproducibility, and idiomatic meaning.

Traditional phraseological research has focused on the classification, meaning, structure, and functioning of fixed expressions. One of the important contributions to the study of Russian phraseology was made by V. V. Vinogradov, who developed a classification based on the degree of semantic unity between the components of phraseological units.

According to this approach, phraseological combinations may demonstrate different relationships between their literal components and their overall meanings. Some expressions have meanings that cannot be directly understood from the individual words, while others preserve a relatively transparent relationship between their components and the general meaning.

For example, the Russian expression бить баклуши means to do nothing or waste time. Its overall meaning is not immediately predictable from the literal meanings of its components. By contrast, expressions such as держать слово have a more transparent relationship between their components and their figurative or conventional meanings.

Modern phraseological studies also examine the processes through which new stable expressions are created. These processes include metaphorization, metonymy, semantic transformation, borrowing, abbreviation, quotation, and the modification of existing idioms.

An important characteristic of phraseological units is reproducibility. A phraseological unit is generally not created independently every time it is used. Instead, speakers reproduce a familiar combination that has become recognizable within a linguistic community.

However, newly emerging expressions may initially have unstable forms. They can circulate in different versions before a relatively established structure and meaning develop. This makes contemporary phraseology a dynamic field of linguistic research.

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2. The Emergence of New Phraseological Units in Contemporary Russian

The formation of new phraseological units is closely connected with social and cultural change. When new phenomena become important in public life, speakers often develop figurative expressions to describe them.

In contemporary Russian, several factors contribute to phraseological innovation. Social and political developments. Public events, political discussions, and social transformations frequently generate memorable expressions that become widely repeated in media and everyday communication.

Technological progress. The development of the internet, smartphones, digital platforms, and artificial intelligence introduces new concepts and communicative practices. These developments encourage the creation of expressions associated with online activity.

Mass media and popular culture. Films, television programmes, interviews, advertisements, and public statements provide memorable phrases that may spread beyond their original contexts.

Youth language. Young speakers actively create and modify expressions to establish group identity, communicate humour, and distinguish their language practices from those of other generations.

Globalization and language contact. English-language expressions are frequently borrowed or adapted into Russian, particularly in technological, commercial, and entertainment contexts.

These factors interact with one another. For example, an expression originating in a television programme may become popular through social networks and later enter everyday spoken communication.

It is important to distinguish between a phraseological innovation and a fully established phraseological unit. A newly created expression may initially be used only by a small group of speakers. Its status as a stable unit becomes more evident when it is reproduced by different speakers, appears in various communicative contexts, and develops a relatively consistent meaning.

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3. Main Sources of New Phraseological Units

3.1. Internet communication and social networks

Digital communication is one of the most productive sources of contemporary phraseological innovation. Social networks allow expressions to spread rapidly through comments, videos, memes, reposts, and online discussions.

Many expressions are initially associated with specific digital activities but gradually acquire broader figurative meanings.

For example, уйти в офлайн originally refers to leaving online communication or disconnecting from the internet. In informal speech, it may also be used metaphorically to describe a person who temporarily withdraws from social interaction.

The expression выйти из чата is associated with leaving a digital conversation. It can also be used figuratively to indicate that someone has withdrawn from a discussion, stopped participating in an activity, or no longer wishes to be involved.

Another expression, поймать хайп, is connected with attracting public attention or becoming popular through widespread discussion. The word хайп comes from English hype and is used in contemporary Russian to describe intense public attention, often generated through media or online platforms.

Such expressions demonstrate how the vocabulary of digital communication can develop additional figurative meanings.

3.2. Mass media and public discourse

Mass media play an important role in the circulation of new fixed expressions. Journalists, television presenters, public figures, and commentators often use memorable linguistic constructions that are subsequently repeated by audiences.

Expressions originating in public speeches or media discussions may become recognizable quotations. Some gradually lose their connection with the original speaker or event and acquire a broader meaning.

Media discourse also contributes to the transformation of traditional phraseological units. Journalists frequently modify familiar expressions to make headlines more expressive, humorous, or attention-grabbing.

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For example, a traditional idiom may be adapted by replacing one of its components with a word associated with a current event. Such modifications create a connection between familiar cultural knowledge and contemporary reality.

3.3. Advertising and commercial communication

Advertising is another productive source of memorable fixed expressions. Commercial slogans are designed to attract attention, remain in the audience's memory, and establish associations with particular products or services.

Although not every slogan becomes a phraseological unit, some expressions enter everyday speech and are used outside their original advertising contexts.

Advertising language often relies on repetition, rhyme, metaphor, parallel structures, and emotional evaluation. These features make slogans easy to remember and reproduce.

Over time, a slogan may acquire a figurative meaning and become a familiar expression used independently of the product or company with which it was originally associated.

3.4. Popular culture and entertainment

Films, television series, music, comedy programmes, and online videos provide a continuous source of new expressions. Memorable quotations may become part of everyday communication, especially when they express emotions or situations in a concise and humorous way.

The transformation of quotations into fixed expressions depends on their recognizability and relevance to common experiences.

A phrase originally used by a fictional character may later be applied to real-life situations. In this case, the expression develops a new pragmatic function while preserving its connection with the original cultural context.

4. Structural and Semantic Characteristics of New Phraseological Units

New phraseological units in contemporary Russian demonstrate considerable structural and semantic diversity.

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4.1. Metaphorical formation

Metaphor is one of the most productive mechanisms of phraseological innovation. It allows speakers to describe abstract concepts through familiar images and experiences.

For example, the expression информационный шум refers to an excessive amount of information that makes it difficult to identify important messages. The metaphor of noise transfers characteristics of sound into the sphere of information and communication.

Similarly, цифровой след describes the information that a person leaves through online activities. The metaphor of a trace presents digital information as evidence of an individual's actions.

These expressions illustrate how new technological realities are interpreted through familiar conceptual structures.

4.2. Semantic transformation of existing expressions

New meanings can develop through the modification or reinterpretation of established expressions.

A traditional phraseological unit may be used in a new context and acquire an additional semantic or pragmatic function. In digital communication, this process is particularly common because users frequently adapt familiar expressions to memes, comments, and humorous posts.

For instance, держать руку на пульсе traditionally means to remain informed about current developments. In discussions of technology or social media, it may refer specifically to monitoring online trends and following rapidly changing digital events.

The expression preserves its basic meaning while becoming associated with a new sphere of activity.

4.3. Borrowing and adaptation

Borrowing from English has become an important source of contemporary Russian phraseological innovation.

Some English expressions are translated directly, while others are adapted phonologically, grammatically, or semantically.

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For example, быть в тренде is associated with being fashionable or following current tendencies. The expression combines a Russian grammatical construction with an English-derived lexical element.

Another example is ловить вайб, which is used informally to describe experiencing or understanding a particular atmosphere, mood, or emotional state. The noun вайб originates from English vibe and has developed an active role in contemporary youth communication.

Borrowed expressions may become more widely accepted when they fulfil a communicative need or acquire a stable meaning within a particular community.

4.4. Abbreviation and compression

Digital communication encourages concise forms of expression. Abbreviations and shortened constructions may become part of stable online language.

However, not every abbreviation should be considered a phraseological unit. An abbreviation generally represents a shortened linguistic form, whereas a phraseological unit is characterized by a stable combination of words and a recognizable meaning.

Nevertheless, abbreviations may participate in phraseological constructions, particularly when they are combined with other words and repeatedly used in similar contexts.

4.5. Irony and humorous transformation

Humour and irony are important mechanisms in the development of new expressions. Speakers frequently modify familiar phrases to create unexpected meanings or criticize social behaviour.

Internet memes provide especially favourable conditions for this process. A familiar expression may be reproduced with a small modification that changes its meaning and produces a humorous effect.

Such expressions often depend on shared cultural knowledge. Their interpretation requires familiarity with the original phrase, the context of its modification, and the social situation in which it is used.

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5. Areas of Use of New Phraseological Units

New phraseological units are not distributed equally across all communicative contexts. Their frequency and stylistic characteristics depend on the social environment, communicative purpose, and audience.

5.1. Everyday spoken communication

Many expressions originating in digital communication gradually enter everyday spoken language. People use them in conversations with friends, colleagues, and family members.

Expressions such as выйти из чата, быть в тренде, and ловить хайп can be used to describe situations that are not directly connected with internet activity.

This transition demonstrates the interaction between digital and spoken communication. An expression may originate online but later become part of informal everyday speech.

5.2. Youth language

Youth communication is particularly receptive to linguistic innovation. Young speakers frequently use new expressions to establish group identity, express emotional attitudes, and demonstrate familiarity with contemporary cultural trends.

Expressions such as ловить вайб, быть в тренде, and поймать хайп illustrate the influence of digital culture and English-language vocabulary on informal Russian.

However, youth expressions are often characterized by rapid changes in popularity. Some remain limited to a particular generation or online community, while others become more widely recognized.

5.3. Media and journalism

Journalists use phraseological expressions to make headlines, reports, and commentaries more expressive. Modified idioms and memorable quotations can attract readers' attention and communicate an evaluative attitude.

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In media discourse, phraseological units may perform several functions:
attracting attention;
expressing criticism or approval;
creating emotional impact;
summarizing complex events;
establishing an ironic or humorous tone.
The use of new expressions in media can also accelerate their circulation and contribute to their wider recognition.

5.4. Professional and business communication

Certain new expressions emerge in professional environments, especially in technology, marketing, management, and digital business.
Examples include цифровая трансформация, информационный поток, выйти на новый уровень, and быть на одной волне.
Some of these expressions are established combinations rather than newly formed idioms. Nevertheless, they demonstrate how stable and figurative constructions are used to communicate professional concepts.
In business communication, the choice of phraseological expressions depends on the level of formality. Informal idioms may be appropriate in internal conversations, whereas official documents generally require more neutral and precise language.

5.5. Digital marketing and online communities

Digital marketing frequently uses memorable expressions to establish emotional connections with audiences. Slogans, hashtags, and short verbal constructions are designed to be repeated and shared.
Online communities also develop expressions that function as markers of group membership. Such expressions may be difficult to understand for people who are unfamiliar with the community's history, interests, or communication practices.
Thus, phraseological innovation contributes not only to vocabulary development but also to the formation of digital identities.

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6. The Difference Between Neologisms, Occasional Expressions, and Phraseological Units

An important methodological issue in the study of contemporary phraseology is the distinction between different types of linguistic innovation.

A neologism is a newly created word or a new meaning of an existing word. For example, the spread of digital technologies has encouraged the use of words such as стриминг, репост, and блогер.

An occasional expression is a linguistic construction created for a particular communicative situation. It may be original and expressive but does not necessarily become widely reproduced.

A fixed expression is a relatively stable combination of words that is repeatedly used in a linguistic community. Its structure and meaning are recognizable to speakers.

A phraseological unit is generally characterized by stability, reproducibility, and a certain degree of semantic unity or figurative meaning.

These categories may overlap during the development of a new expression. An occasional construction can become popular through repeated use, acquire a stable form, and eventually function as a phraseological unit.

However, popularity alone is not sufficient evidence of phraseological status. Researchers should examine the frequency of use, stability of structure, semantic consistency, and distribution across different contexts.

For this reason, expressions such as выйти из чата or ловить вайб are useful examples of contemporary phraseological tendencies, but their degree of conventionalization may vary among speakers and communities.

7. Methodological Approaches to the Study of New Russian Phraseology

The study of new phraseological units requires a combination of descriptive, contextual, semantic, and sociolinguistic methods.

A practical research framework may include the following stages.

First stage: Collection of linguistic material. Researchers collect examples from newspapers, online publications, social networks, blogs, interviews, television programmes, and other publicly accessible sources.

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Second stage: Classification of expressions. The collected material is divided into groups according to its origin, structure, semantic characteristics, and communicative sphere.

Third stage: Semantic analysis. Researchers identify literal and figurative meanings, examine semantic changes, and determine whether the expression has acquired a conventional interpretation.

Fourth stage: Contextual analysis. Each expression is examined in relation to the communicative situation, participants, genre, and intended audience.

Fifth stage: Evaluation of stability and reproducibility. Researchers determine whether an expression is used repeatedly by different speakers and whether its structure and meaning remain relatively stable.

Corpus linguistics can provide additional opportunities for this research. Digital text collections make it possible to examine the frequency and distribution of expressions across different genres and periods.

Nevertheless, corpus data should be interpreted carefully. A high frequency in one social network does not necessarily demonstrate that an expression is widely used in the entire Russian-speaking community.

Researchers should also distinguish between temporary online popularity and long-term linguistic conventionalization.

8. Educational Significance of Contemporary Phraseological Innovations

The study of new phraseological units has practical value for teaching Russian as a native or foreign language. Traditional phraseology lessons often focus on established idioms, their meanings, and their equivalents. However, learners also need to understand contemporary expressions used in everyday communication and digital environments.

New phraseological material can make language lessons more relevant to students' communicative experiences.

Teachers may organize activities in which students compare traditional idioms with their modern modifications. For example, learners can analyze the meanings of держать руку на пульсе and выйти из чата, identify their literal and figurative meanings, and explain the contexts in which they are appropriate.

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Another useful activity involves identifying the origins of expressions. Students may investigate whether a phrase originated in social networks, advertising, films, professional communication, or everyday speech.

Contextual exercises can also help learners distinguish between formal and informal registers. They may be asked to rewrite an informal message using neutral or academic language.

Furthermore, students can compare Russian expressions with similar expressions in their native languages. Such comparisons help reveal cultural differences, metaphorical associations, and similarities in phraseological structure.

The educational purpose should not be limited to memorizing new expressions. Learners should understand their meanings, stylistic characteristics, origins, and communicative limitations.

9. Problems and Prospects of Phraseological Development

The rapid development of contemporary phraseology creates several challenges for linguistic research.

One problem is the instability of newly emerging expressions. Some become popular for a short period and then disappear, while others remain in everyday language. It is therefore difficult to determine the long-term status of a new expression immediately after its appearance.

Another issue concerns the influence of English. Although borrowing enriches the vocabulary and supports international communication, excessive or unnecessary borrowing may create difficulties for speakers who are unfamiliar with particular expressions.

A further challenge is the difference between generations and social groups. Expressions that are widely understood among young internet users may be unfamiliar to older speakers or people who do not regularly use social networks.

The rapid transformation of digital platforms also affects phraseological research. Expressions may originate in one online community, spread to other platforms, and change their meanings during circulation.

Future research should therefore combine traditional phraseological analysis with corpus linguistics, sociolinguistics, media studies, and digital discourse analysis. Such an interdisciplinary approach would provide a more comprehensive

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understanding of how new expressions emerge, spread, and become part of contemporary Russian.

Conclusion

The phraseological system of contemporary Russian is characterized by continuous development under the influence of social, technological, cultural, and communicative changes. New phraseological units and fixed expressions emerge in different areas of public life, including social networks, mass media, advertising, popular culture, youth communication, and professional discourse.

The analysis demonstrates that the most productive sources of phraseological innovation include internet communication, media discourse, English-language borrowing, metaphorical transformation, and the modification of established expressions. These processes contribute to the emergence of new meanings and the expansion of the expressive potential of Russian.

Digital communication has particularly accelerated the circulation of new expressions. Constructions such as выйти из чата, ловить вайб, поймать хайп, and быть в тренде illustrate how expressions associated with online and youth communication can acquire broader meanings and enter everyday speech. However, their degree of stability and conventionalization should be examined through contextual and corpus-based research.

An important conclusion is that not every popular expression immediately becomes a phraseological unit. Researchers must distinguish between neologisms, occasional constructions, quotations, slogans, and established fixed expressions. Stability, reproducibility, semantic unity, and contextual distribution are essential criteria for such classification.

The study of new phraseological units is also significant for language education. Introducing contemporary expressions into Russian language lessons can help learners develop communicative competence, understand stylistic differences, and recognize the relationship between language and culture.

Ultimately, new phraseological units reflect the changing experiences and values of society. Their emergence demonstrates that phraseology is not merely a collection of inherited expressions but a living component of language that responds to the needs of contemporary communication.

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