



PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF SUBCOLLOQUIAL PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN FRENCH AND UZBEK

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Abstract

This scientific article provides a comprehensive analysis of the pragmatic features of subcolloquial phraseological units in French and Uzbek, based on both theoretical and applied studies in modern linguistics. Within the scope of the research, the role of these units in the language system has been identified, along with their frequency and activity in spontaneous spoken discourse. Their communicative-functional load, social-discursive role, and stylistic adaptability are examined in detail. In particular, the study focuses on how subcolloquial phraseologisms are pragmatically realized in speech acts and the mechanisms through which they express the speaker's social status, attitude, and emotional involvement. Furthermore, the article analyzes how these units are recorded in lexicographic sources, exploring the criteria for their selection, their affiliation to specific functional and stylistic layers, and their use across various communicative contexts. The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of the linguopragmatic nature of phraseological units and provide new insights into their role and function within informal verbal interaction.

Keywords: Colloquial, subcolloquial, phraseology, functional–stylistic, pragmatic, communicative, expressive, colloquial speech.

Introduction

In contemporary linguistic research, the analysis of colloquial and subcolloquial phraseological units plays a crucial theoretical and practical role in the study of



the functional and stylistic layers of language. Particularly significant is the exploration of their internal formal-component structure, semantic distinctiveness, and expressive-pragmatic potential in spoken discourse, as these factors reveal the actual communicative vitality of such units in real-life contexts. This study systematically investigates the pragmatic and functional properties of colloquial and subcolloquial phraseologisms, focusing on their communicative functions, stylistic positions within discourse, and semantic configurations. The findings provide insights into the communicative-pragmatic significance of this group of phraseological units and allow for the clarification of language's functional-stylistic differentiation through their stylistic classification.

Comparative research in phraseology has emerged over the past decades as one of the prominent trends in linguistics. Analytical comparison of the phraseological systems of both related and unrelated languages helps uncover their formal, semantic, functional, and linguocultural similarities and differences. As noted by E.F. Arsenteva, "developing a general theory of phraseology and studying the common and distinctive features of the languages under investigation are of particular scholarly importance" [5]. From this perspective, interlingual comparative studies in phraseology not only contribute to general linguistics, but also serve as methodological and applied resources for linguoculturology, translation theory, functional stylistics, and foreign language teaching methodology.

Review of the Relevant Literature

An analysis of scholarly works on the subject reveals that the study of colloquial language—its nature and functional characteristics—from a pragmatic perspective has been the focus of numerous leading linguists. Among them are Ch. Bally, Yu.M. Skrebnev, V.A. Khomyakov, A. Mamatov, Sh. Safarov, M. Khakimov, N.D. Arutyunova, L. Calvet, D. François-Geiger, F. Gadet, J.-P. Goudaillier, P. Guiraud, I.G. Rey, and others.

As early as the beginning of the 20th century, Charles Bally compared colloquial language (the language of informal interaction) with literary language and identified spontaneously emerging spoken discourse as its core object of study. According to him, while literary language is directed toward aesthetic goals,



colloquial speech is intrinsically connected to real-life contexts and functions as a direct medium for expressing thought [6]. Bally's ideas were further developed by scholars such as P. Guiraud and A. Frey, who concluded that colloquial speech may be viewed as an independent subsystem within the broader grammatical structure of the national language [8]. This theoretical approach laid the groundwork for treating colloquial language as an autonomous object within linguistic analysis.

The issue of evaluating colloquial and subcolloquial lexis and phraseologisms within the boundaries of the literary language has been widely discussed. Scholars such as V.A. Salyaev [13] and Yu.A. Skrebnev [14] emphasized the necessity of analyzing colloquial and subcolloquial elements within the stylistic system of standard language. Colloquial speech, due to its expressive function, is also considered a valuable linguistic resource even for the higher stylistic registers of literary usage.

Research Methodology

This study employed a comprehensive set of modern phraseological research methods to analyze the role and functional potential of colloquial and subcolloquial phraseological units within spoken communication. In particular, key methodological tools included phraseological identification and analysis methods developed by A.V. Kunin, contextual analysis based on dictionary definitions and real-life usage, as well as componential analysis of the internal structure of the units.

Additionally, the semantic analysis method developed by A.D. Reichstein was applied to determine the frequency of usage and the degree of stylistic coloring of phraseological units. This approach made it possible to refine the semantic structure of colloquial and subcolloquial phraseologisms.

The adopted methodological framework allowed for the identification of the communicative-pragmatic functions of these phraseological units, the assessment of their expressive load within speech context, and the classification of their stylistic affiliation within the functional layers of the language.



Analysis and Results

As noted by A.V. Kunin, a phraseological unit is defined as “a stable combination with a complex semantic structure that is not generated through structural-semantic models used for free word combinations”[9]. Colloquial and subcolloquial phraseological units, positioned at the periphery of the phraseological system, hold a special place in linguocultural analysis due to their association with genres located on the functional-stylistic margins of language.

Initially, there was a prevailing tendency to evaluate colloquial and subcolloquial lexis from a normative-stylistic standpoint. In French linguistics, the relationship between literary and spoken language had long been considered antagonistic. Particularly in the first half of the 20th century, spoken language was often characterized as the speech of the socially lower classes unfamiliar with literary norms. This perception was shaped by extralinguistic factors, especially socio-political changes. For instance, the 1917 revolution drastically altered the social structure of society, introducing various lexical layers—including jargon and argot—into the realm of literary language [11].

During the years of hardship and famine, jargon vocabulary became widespread; however, this wave later subsided and stabilized. This process marked a step toward the democratization of language and the weakening of rigid literary norms. Consequently, issues such as distinguishing normative from non-normative elements and codifying newly emerging lexis became central concerns in linguistic scholarship [13].

The scientific reevaluation of spoken language in the 1970s is closely linked to the works of F.P. Filin, who supported the idea that spoken language constitutes a necessary expressive component of the literary standard. He emphasized: “A literary language cannot consist solely of neutral means. Certain elements of colloquial speech may be appropriately employed by any educated speaker in a relevant communicative situation” [15].

F.P. Filin classified the vocabulary and expressions used in colloquial speech into two main categories: literary and non-literary. The first group includes coarse but active lexical items and constructions that are part of the literary language, while the second encompasses elements typical of the speech of illiterate or



uneducated speakers. Filin's approach helped broaden the stylistic functions of colloquial speech [15].

For instance, in French, we can find expressions such as: régaler ses amis avoir barbe; tomber dans la dèche; emballer une fille; pisser de la copie (or sa copie).

In Uzbek, similar phraseological expressions include: to'nkaga o'xshagan – referring to someone indifferent to others or to their surroundings; go'rga kirgizmoq – to embarrass or shame someone; ado qilmoq – to shame someone; to finish or eliminate; o'zini o'tu-cho'qqa urmoq – to attempt different tasks despite lacking the skill; boshini aylantirmoq – to make a girl fall in love; oyoqda turolmaydi – to be barely able to walk due to drunkenness; dimog'iga qurt tushdi, dimog'idan eshak qurti yog'iladi – to be extremely arrogant or conceited [12].

Examples of vulgar colloquial French phraseological units labeled as “vulgaire” include: aller à l'as = prendre son nez pour ses fesses; manger des briques = manger de la merde; être dans le lac = être dans la merde.

As for jargon-based and argotic phraseological expressions, we can observe: collet rouge – commissaire of the auction house in Paris, in the language of secondhand dealers; dégringolade à la flûte – for a prostitute, robbing a client and running away at full speed; avoir du flambeau – a) to be lucky (in cards or life); to hold strong cards; b) to be successful with women.

Subcolloquial phraseological units often emerge from culturally specific mindsets, realia, and worldviews. For instance, in French, one finds: être vacciné avec une aiguille de phono; marchand de mort subite – a sarcastic term for a doctor.

At the same time, the following expressions can be considered examples of coarse or vulgar subcolloquial phraseological units: pisser un vulgaire, cravate espagnole, polir le chinois, face du grand turc, un baisé à la russe, bander comme un turc, une chose de congolège, capote anglaise, parapluie vulgaire, les poules comme pisseront, se piquer le nez, avoir un verre dans le nez.

As E.M. Beregovskaya notes, labeling jargon and colloquial speech as “inappropriate” does not reflect a proper scientific approach. A linguist's task is not to judge a particular lexical stratum, but rather to examine it as a phenomenon and explore its expressive potential [7]. From this perspective, the scientific



investigation of colloquial and subcolloquial phraseological units is highly relevant today.

F. Gadet, in his studies, emphasizes that simple colloquial language in earlier times was perceived as poor and unsystematic, and that scholarly resources on this subject were significantly lacking [4]. He suggests that lexicographic sources can be broadly divided into “corrective” (correcteurs) and “descriptive” (descripteurs) categories—the latter aiming to reflect the actual state of the language.

Thus, the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and lexicographic relationships between argot and simple colloquial language are complex, historically grounded, and dynamic in nature. Investigating them constitutes an important task within modern linguistics.

It is important to note that such expressions may not be part of every French speaker’s active vocabulary, yet they are generally familiar and socially accepted. In line with the French concept of “general argot”, it is possible to use the term “jargonized simple colloquial language” or “general jargon” in the context of the Uzbek language. According to V. Salyaev, this approach enables the establishment of a “vertical link” between argot and colloquial speech [13].

On a global scale, the phenomenon of argot exists in every language. Additionally, languages are often marked by their “color-coded” distinctions—la langue bleue, la langue verte, italien rouge—which, according to D.S. Likhachov, represent a local linguistic color [10].

When discussing argot, it is important to treat it not as “language” (langue) in Saussurean terms, but rather as a lexical expression of speech (parole). Argot is, first and foremost, a lexicon; it is distinguished by its unique vocabulary [1]. As M.Cohen emphasizes, argot is a “metalinguistic phenomenon” that repeats itself through its vocabulary and functions as a mechanism for argotization for the speaker [2].

Thus, as D. François-Geiger asserts, argot remains “the language of petty and major delinquents” (le parler des truands, grands et petits) [3]. In this context, “delinquents” refers not only to age but also to the degree of linguistic deviance or rebellion expressed through speech.



In recent years, there has been a marked increase in scholarly interest in colloquial speech within linguistics. This has led to a growing number of studies based on various languages, including Turkic languages. Notably, analytic research focused on the colloquial face of the Uzbek language has become increasingly common.

Examples of colloquial and subcolloquial (simple or folk) Uzbek phraseological units include: katta xolasini ko'rmoq, og'zi og'rigan buzoqqa o'xshamoq, chaqib olmoq, ko'zingizni qising, sharmandaga shahar keng, jirafamisan yetib borishi qiyin, qo'y og'zidan cho'p olmagan, kuydirgan kallaga o'xshab, dabdalasini chiqarmoq, kattalikdan tushib qolmoq, ilon po'st tashlaydi, qisr hangoma, qisr bordi–keldi, toshini termiq, chumolinikida to'y, borsa tuxumi uzulib tushmaydi, qo'lini yuvmasdan.

These expressions, despite their informal or humorous tone, actively function in everyday spoken language and form a significant part of the living Uzbek colloquial lexicon.

From this perspective, particular attention should be paid to the scholarly work conducted by B. Urinboev, which is dedicated to the syntactic features of Uzbek colloquial speech [16]. In his research, the author thoroughly analyzes the factors influencing the formation of spoken language, its lexical components, as well as the words and syntactic constructions that are most actively employed in conversational practice. This approach makes it possible to form a holistic understanding of the nature of colloquial speech.

In essence, language represents a system composed of interrelated yet relatively autonomous and self-contained subsystems. These subsystems – that is, sublanguages (functional styles of speech) – play a crucial role in interlingual interaction and the process of communication. They encompass not only the universal patterns of language but also the individual features that emerge in each specific act of verbal interaction. Therefore, each functional style within the structure of language possesses its own stylistic and pragmatic function.

Among the factors influencing the thematic content of speech, a significant number of extralinguistic (non-linguistic) factors can be identified. These factors are quantitatively important and largely determine the form of speech and its lexical composition. From a pragmatic point of view, the topics used within



colloquial speech are directly linked to various social, professional, and linguistic domains. The speech styles serving these domains, as a rule, differ according to their functional and stylistic characteristics.

Studying the lexical composition of colloquial speech reveals not only its internal systemic patterns but also clearly reflects the sociolinguistic and pragmatic dimensions of the language. This, in turn, contributes to a deeper understanding of the functional stylistics and lexical system of the Uzbek language.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The emergence of colloquial and subcolloquial phraseological units is often linked to argot, jargon, folk dialects, diachronic evolution, and lexical-stylistic processes. Their pragmatic value is manifested not only at the level of meaning but also through their social connotations, communicative functions, and emotional load. Subcolloquial phraseological units constitute one of the most dynamic, stylistically reduced, yet semantically rich layers of the modern language. Identifying their pragmatic and linguocultural characteristics not only sheds light on the interrelation between language and culture, but also serves as an essential tool for understanding the psychological, social, and ethnic modes of thought within a society.

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