

## **An experimental study of the modeling of phraseological units based on public discourse in Russian and English**

By

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### **Abstract**

This article discusses the experimental study of the variation of the use of phraseological units in English language in public discourse. Public discourse contains relevant and extensive research material, as there are still no clear boundaries drawn between the Internet and public discourse. The material of the research was taken from YouTube as the most popular and diverse media platform. The analysis of experimental data presented in the article allowed to identify the most specific models of constructing phraseological units by non-native speakers and draw conclusions about the specifics of superimposing structural features of the phraseology of the Russian language on the processing of the PU of the English language. The results of the study demonstrated the frequency of the use of units in the English discourse do not influence their recognition and correct use among non-native speakers. Processing of experimental data let us conclude that phraseological models of native language influence the process of English phraseological units modelling.

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## **1. Introduction**

The processes of modeling phraseological units have been the objects of research for more than one generation of scientists. According to A.V. Kunin, modeling was not included in the main characteristics of phraseological units. Chernysheva I.I., Amosova N.N., Telia V.N. supported this position. The first scientists who proved that the modeling of phraseological units in the process of communication were N.M. Shanskiy, VL Arkhangel'skiy. Later modelling of phraseological units was found in the discourse of different directions and today in linguistics, most scholars are of opposite opinions (Gilmudinova & Sadykova, 2015). Nowadays a significant number of studies are devoted to the modeling of PU, for example, Davletbaeva D.N., Alefirenko N.F., Cowie A.P., Knappe G., etc.

It's a well-known fact that play on words and creative use of language has always been part of the English tradition" (Arsenteva & Arsenyeva, 2016). Thus, Public and Internet discourse contain the most extensive and relevant material for the study of phraseological units and their models. There are no clear boundaries between the Internet and public discourse, rather they can be represented in the form of overlapping sets, since public discourse is aimed at maximum audience coverage, while the Internet is the most versatile platform for broadcasting, serving, sharing and consuming information of a different type and origin. In our research, we used the following definition of discourse, following V.I. Karasik, in which he is viewed as "a text immersed in a situation of communication" (Karasik, 2000; Achor, Zaria, & Achor, 2022; Adegbite & Adeosun, 2021).

Numerous extralinguistic and linguistic factors influence the quality of communication between the interlocutors. The perception and interpretation of realia surrounding us is different among the representatives of different nations of the world (Yarullina et al., 2019). In this study, we focused on linguistic factors that influence communication, in particular phraseology. It is the most complex and dynamic aspect of communication. Thus, the use of phraseological units indicates a high level of speaker's language proficiency. It is the modeling of phraseological units that enriches the lexical composition of the language due to the unique ability of modeled and transformed units to remove the edges of clichéd and erased metaphors that underlie common phraseological units.

Modern linguistic research requires statistical data and its detailed analysis. In this study, an attempt was made to analyze the features of constructing a phraseological model based on a non-native (foreign) language.

## **2. Research Methods**

The units for the study were selected by the method of continuous sampling based on material in public discourse presented on the Youtube platform. Further, based on the obtained material, 15 phraseological units were selected for the experiment with the help of frequency analysis of the use. The results are presented in Figure 1.

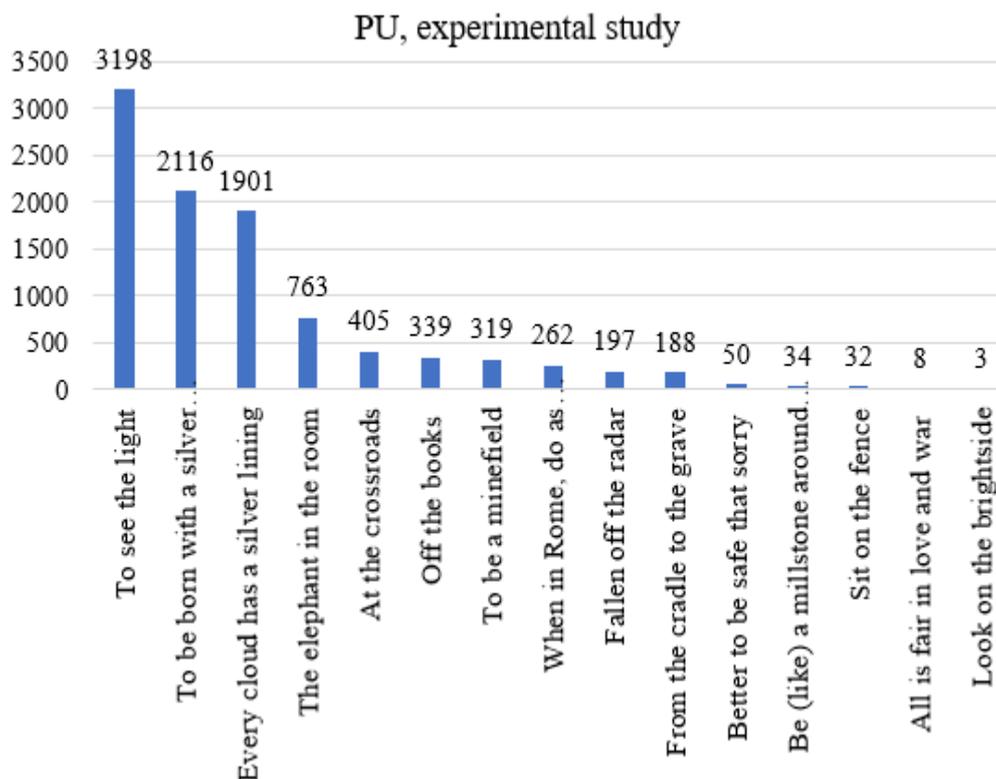


Figure. 1 Frequency distribution of phraseological units of the English language, selected for experimental research

Using the Google Forms tool, a questionnaire was formed, out of 113 students, 88 students were selected who meet the requirements for language proficiency not lower than the Upper-Intermediate level, which meets the requirements of the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). The reason for that is that this level of language proficiency requires knowledge of the idiomatic and phraseological fund of the language.

An instruction was given on the methods of PU modeling according to D.N. Davletbaeva, who distinguishes the following models:

1. Inner-model variance:

- Grammar
- Lexical
- Quantitative
- Mixed

2. Cross-model variance:

- Lexico-grammatical and structural-semantic variation associated with the transformation of meaning
- Phraseological antonyms
- Changing the direction of syntactic links between components
- Diachronous ellipsis [5]

After the briefing, the students were asked to give their versions of phraseological

models for each 15 selected units. The results of the experiment were studied using quantitative analysis. With the use of statistical analysis some patterns were identified.

### 3. Results and discussion

For the convenience of analysis and identifying trends, the results of the experiment were divided into three groups:

	Idiom	Students' success rate
PU that caused less difficulty	When in Rome, do as Romans do	80%
	Be at the crossroads	77%
	Be (like) a millstone around one's neck	74%
	Fallen off the radar	68%
	Look on the brightside	65%
	To see the light	64%
Intermediary results	The elephant in the room	59%
	To be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth	57%
	All is fair in love and war	56%
	To be a minefield	50%
PU that caused the greatest difficulty	Every cloud has a silver lining	49%
	Better to be safe than sorry	49%
	Off the books	43%
	Sit on the fence	36%
	From the cradle to the grave	32%

Figure. 2: Experimental results.

The presented data demonstrate the absence of a strongly marked correlation between the frequency of the use of units in the English discourse and their recognition and correct use among non-native speakers

An experimental study of the modeling of English phraseological units by Russian-speaking students showed that the most frequent type of modeling for them is lexical variance 36%. Students resorted to variations of the grammatical and quantitative types approximately equally - 19% and 22%, respectively. Students also often modeled inter-model units - 13%.

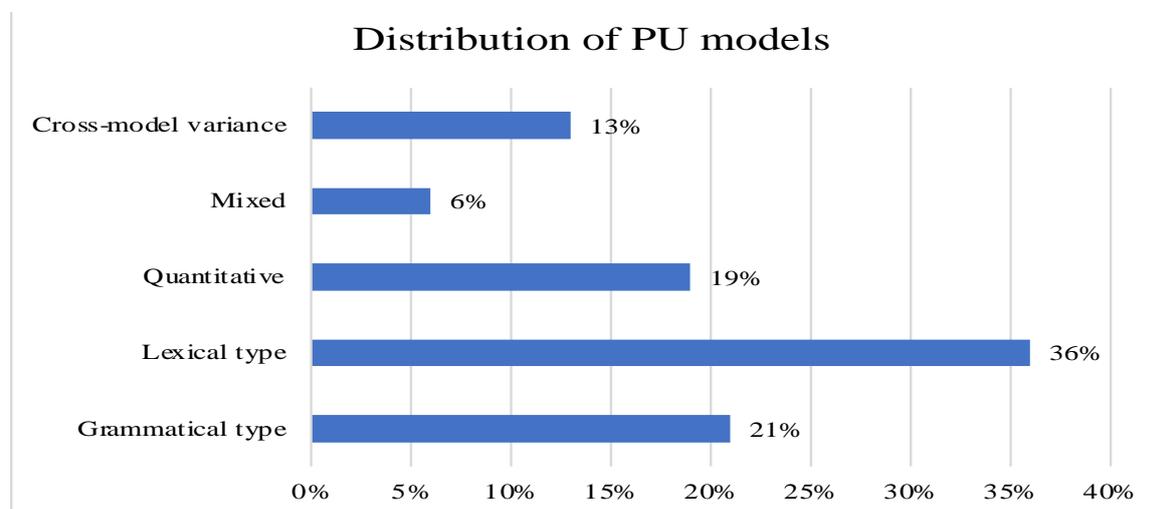


Figure. 3: Percentage of experimental results

## 4. Summary

Let's consider examples of models made by students.

Lexical variance.

In 8 cases of modeling phraseological units “*To be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth*”, the subjects made a lexical replacement of the component *silver* with the component *golden* “was born with a *golden* spoon in her mouth”. This replacement is considered by us as the most organic for native speakers of the Russian language since the figurativeness of the unit is practically not disturbed. In the studied discourse of Youtube platform, this model was encountered by native speakers only once.

A similar strategy was used by students when transforming the unit “*Every cloud has a silver lining*”: replacing the component “*silver*” with “*golden*”, “*every cloud has a golden lining*”, which was found in 7 examples. This replacement did not occur in the discourse of native English speakers.

In the unit model “*When in Rome, do as Romans do*”, the following examples of lexical replacements of components “*Rome*” and “*romans*” with other toponyms were given:

When in *Russia* do as *Russians* do” (9 examples); “when in *Paris*, do as *Parisians* do”; when in *Britain*, do as *British* do”; “when in *Georgia*, do as *Georgians* do”; “when in *America*, do as *Americans* do” (4 examples).

The next, according to experimental data, was the grammatical model of PU variance. Here we have noted the following examples:

Variation of articles in the unit “*To see the light*”: the article “*the*” was replaced by the article *a*”, which was found in 7 examples to see *a* light.

A common model was the change in the number of the substantive component, as in the example of the unit “*Off the books*”, where the plural “*books*” was replaced by the only one *book*”: Off the *book*” (5 examples).

The change of the preposition was found in the examples of the unit “*Fallen off the radar*”: the preposition “*off*” was replaced by the preposition “*under*”, under the radar (3 examples).

The quantitative variance model was successfully applied in 19% of cases. Among them, we highlight the following examples:

Expansion of the lexical composition of the unit “*Be (like) a millstone around one's neck*” the components “*big*”, “*geopolitical*”, “*China*” were added: “*a big geopolitical millstone around China's neck*”.

Also, the expansion of the lexical composition was found in the example of the unit model *The elephant in the room*”: “The elephant in the *living* room” in three examples.

Narrowing of the lexical composition, in particular, the absence of an adjective

component, was found in the example of the model “*To be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth*”: He was born with a spoon in his mouth, where the “*silver*” component is absent.

The mixed type of variance was found in only 6% of works.

I hope he chokes on his silver spoon”. In this example, the model of the unit “To be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth”, the quantitative type of modeling is applied (narrowing of the lexical composition - the absence of the components "be born", "with", as well as the expansion of the lexical composition - adding the component "chokes on"), and grammatical (replacing the article "a" with the pronoun "his").

However dark the cloud is, there's always a silver lining”. In this model of the unit “Every cloud has a silver lining”, several types of transformations were used: grammatical variance - changing the order of words in a sentence; and lexical expansion of the phraseological unit, the addition of additional components "however", "dark" and "there's always

Stand at a crossroads”. In this example, we observe lexical variance - substitution based on the synonymous series "be" - "stand", and grammatical - the change of the article "the" to the article "a

Inter-model variance was found in 13% of the proposed models.

The creation of a phraseological antonym turned out to be quite common, as in the example of the unit model “To see the light”, where the antonym was formed by adding an antonym-forming component - a negative particle "not": you do not see the light (4 examples).

A change in the syntactic structure of the phraseological unit was also noted, as in the example of the unit model “(Be) at the crossroads”: “The roads has crossed, so he has to make a choice

Also, a change in syntactic links, and the subsequent expansion of the lexical composition, which led to a change in the value of the unit “Better to be safe than sorry”, was found in the example: “As long as you are safe, why do you care who's sorry

## **5. Conclusion**

Summing up the results of the study, we can conclude that the lexical variance in modeling English phraseological units by native speakers of the Russian language turned out to be predominant in terms of percentage, due to the structural features of the phraseology of the Russian language, which are superimposed on the processing of phraseology of the English language. These features have a dominant influence in the construction of models of phraseological units related to other languages.

According to the research of D.N. Davletbaeva, the grammatical and quantitative ones are the frequency models of the phraseological unit of the English language. In our study, these models took 2 and 3 positions, respectively, in terms of particular and correct use. This phenomenon can be explained by the prevailing role of the grammatical structure inherent in the Russian language in the implementation of modeling. This, in

turn, led to the destruction of the grammatical integrity of the unit of the English language. At the same time, when replacing lexical components, such destruction did not occur.

The mixed type of modeling caused difficulties for most respondents, since it combines several types of variances, and the use of models of this type requires a higher level of language proficiency. It is noteworthy that inter-model variance was successfully applied more often than mixed, which can be explained by the fact that, with inter-model variance, a change in the meaning and expansion of the phraseological unit image is often inevitable, while with a mixed model the integrity of the phraseological unit image should not be violated.

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