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Analysis of Stylistic Characteristics of Fixed Phrases in Business English

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Abstract: This article is devoted to the analysis of stylistic features of static phrases in Business English. The article examines phrases found in business English and gives examples of them. Problems and shortcomings encountered in the analysis of stylistic features of stable phrases are studied.

Key words: cognitive mechanisms, business English, stylistics, fixed phrases.

Introduction.

The purpose of this work is to identify cognitive mechanisms for understanding the meaning of stable units in business English. The following tasks are set: to briefly outline the range of theories of cognitive linguistics, to analyze the cognitive mechanisms for implementing the meaning of set units in business English in accordance with their classification into etiquette, content and stylistic. The main subject of cognitive linguistics is linguistic meaning, since it is precisely this meaning that is the link between language and human consciousness.

Literary review and methodology.

There is no single universally recognized theory of cognitive linguistics; science has not yet developed a single theory of cognitive mechanisms for realizing the meaning of words or expressions of a language. Various scholars have proposed a number of different concepts that are common in that they are based on the principles of cognitivism, but differ significantly in the details of understanding the operation of cognitive mechanisms. Examples of such concepts include the theory of conceptual metaphors (orientational, ontological, and structural); the theory of prototypes and categories of the basic level E. Roche; semantic network models for lexical polysemy (in versions by K. Brugman and S. Lindner, P. Norvig and J. Lakoff, R. Langaker); the theory of mental space by J. Fauconnier; the theory of procedural semantics of mental models by F. Johnson-Laird; theory of idealized cognitive models by J. Lakoff [2, p. 55] and a number of other theories, which are not necessary to list in this brief article. But we note that with such a rich spectrum of available theories, each researcher of cognitive processes, in connection with their reflection in the language, has the opportunity to choose the most suitable one for solving a particular issue.

For the topic of this article, the most appropriate tool is the theory of conceptual integration by J. Fauconnier and M. Turner, which develops the ideas of mental spaces. Conceptual integration is defined as a kind of mapping, or projection, between conceptual domains. Its essence lies in the fact that the structures of the original mental spaces are mapped onto a new, constructed, mental space –



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a blend. Blend is not identical to any of the original spaces and is not a simple sum of their elements, but is a new mental space with its own meaning. A blend is a holistic, compact, easy-to-remember construct that is convenient to operate as a whole. The simplest example of conceptual integration is the fitting of an object or situation into an existing frame.

The concept of stable units in the language also has a number of different interpretations, but in general, most researchers agree that stable units in the language (stable phrases) have two common characteristics - ambiguity and reproducibility. Phraseological units have these common characteristics (fusions, unities and combinations, according to the concept of V. V. Vinogradov) [4, p. 146], which are usually called idiomatic expressions in the translated literature, as well as proverbs and sayings. Various kinds of speech cliches and cliches, as well as catchphrases or expressions, can be added to this list.

Business English is defined in terms of stylistics, which considers separate branches of speech that have certain specific means. These tools are used in certain areas of life, called functional styles. The business style as a whole serves the business, both commercial and administrative-official areas of communications. Business style exists primarily in writing, although in certain situations it is also used orally (when speaking at formal protocol events).

Two features of the official business style can be noted:

- > "- the content expressed in an official business style, given its importance, should exclude any ambiguity, any discrepancies;
- > Official business style is characterized by a certain more or less limited range of topics" [8, p. 67].

From the point of view of business English vocabulary, it should be noted that due to the systemic nature of the language, business English vocabulary has its own semantics of words, and words, therefore, require special cognitive mechanisms for their understanding.

Thus, in business English there are additional meanings of individual words and phrases, these phrases become stable over time. Examples:

To meet one's commitments [5, p. 44] - means not to meet, but to fulfill the obligations assumed. Here, according to the cognitive theory of conceptual integration, we have a superposition of two mental spaces – the mental space of movement in ordinary life, from where the idea of the verb meet came from, with a metaphorically changed semantics, and the mental space of "commitments", commitments, in business life. When two mental spaces are superimposed, a blend appears with a new meaning - "fulfillment of obligations". This phrase, of course, once first appeared in the language by chance, but over time it became widely used, became a stable unit of the language.

Such stable phrases, cliches, usually do not belong to the sphere of phraseology, since they lack idiomaticity. In fact, idiom is present here, only in a very erased form. The verb meet has become so familiar in the meaning of "do" that the idiomatic transfer from the meaning

"meeting" is no longer perceived as a real idiom.

Other examples of the same kind:

➤ to put in a claim for compensation - do not invest, but put forward a claim for compensation; to dishonour a bill - not to deprive of honor, but to refuse a bill; a life policy is not a life policy, but an insurance policy [5, p. 45].

All these expressions, according to the theory of conceptual integration, can be interpreted as an imposition of different mental spaces that create a new semantics of the expression, taking into account the erased metaphorical, idiomatic meaning of the words included in such phrases.

Another aspect of business language, whether English or any other, is its accuracy. The requirement of accuracy, unambiguity is necessarily applied to the business language, since discrepancies, ambiguity of meanings in the business language are unacceptable. This requirement leads to the



terminological nature of the vocabulary and stable units of the language, to a large number of general and special terms, to the absence of connotations in the commonly used vocabulary.

It is often difficult to draw a line between set phrases and terminological phrases. For example:

Ready money down [6, p. 69] - does not mean ready to lower the money, but quite the contrary payment in cash immediately.

Here, as in the examples above, we see an overlay of mental spaces that form a new semantics of a stable expression. But the same expression for a wave can also be considered a terminological expression, since it is used by certain specialists in certain circumstances and with a certain meaning. Moreover, the meaning of this expression does not correspond to the sum of the meanings of the words of the English language included in it - ready, money, down - in their basic, commonly used meanings. Of course, in business materials, not only terminological stable units are used.

According to their role in business English, stable units can be divided into etiquette, content and stylistic units with some conventionality.

Etiquette stable units, without any doubt, include the appeal formulas: Dear Sir, Dear Madam, Dear Mr such-and-such or Dear Mrs such-and-such or Dear Miss such-and-such (if the surname is known), Dear Sir or Madam, Dear Sirs [3, p. 18].

Discussion and results.

There is also quite obviously an overlap of two mental spaces - business and personal. The word dear in all these stable units of business English is no longer perceived by anyone in its original sense as "dear", its semantics has been changed, it means here that the addressee offers the addressee to establish or maintain business relations, and the additional meaning (connotation) of this address The difference lies in the fact that the addresser offers communication within the framework of business English etiquette and business English, that is, it also contains implicit information, the terms of an agreement on the rules of mutual communication. Personal letters, outside the business sphere, do not contain such wording, even if they are addressed to a really dear person.

Etiquette stable units also include many standard business English constructions.

For example:

- thank you for your very nice letter in addition to a polite assessment of the correspondent's letter, indicates that this letter was received and properly evaluated;
- > you are welcome to visit us an invitation to visit the sender;
- if you wish an expression of readiness to accept certain conditions of the addressee;
- > can you let me know please inform;
- ➤ I look forward to meeting you confirmation of the invitation [3, p. 112].

All these formulas, as it is easy to see, are in general a means of expressing politeness. However, unlike the formulas of simple greetings or farewells, they already contain semantic content. However, this group of stable units can also be interpreted as new blends at the intersection of certain mental spaces. Although they do not contain the slightest metaphor or idiomaticity, the meaning of such stable units is understandable as a simple sum of the meanings of the words included in them. However, the very use of such words, their writing or reading already introduces a person into the mental space of business English, one can say that into the frame of business English, and the speaker understands that his correspondent expects an answer in a similar style, within the same frame.

Since etiquette stable units also contain practical information, they are adjacent to meaningful cliches. Content stable units are understood as stable units that have information content, that is, they inform the addressee of certain information that is important for this text. Here, already stable units have a certain impact on the addressee, that is, their semantics comes to the first place in importance. For example, consider the following bank statement text.



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Stable units in business English also reveal a number of grammatical features. Of course, there is no specific grammar for business units; they use the same syntactic structures and morphological forms as other functional styles. However, a number of grammatical phenomena are noted in stable business style units more often than in others, some phenomena, on the contrary, are relatively rare in it, others are used only with characteristic lexical content.

Thus, for such materials as a whole, the definitions of concepts and the description of real objects by pointing to their properties are especially characteristic. This predetermines the widespread use of structures of type A is B, i.e. simple two-part sentences with a compound predicate consisting of a linking verb and a nominal part (predicative), which we can easily see, in particular, in the following examples taken from the charter of some ordinary English company:

- ➤ "shares shall be issued" shares must be issued; "the authorized share capital is divided into" the authorized share capital is divided into;
- > "the shares of the Company shall comprise" the shares of the Company shall include;
- > "the rights shall be as stated" the rights must be as stated;
- ➤ "The designs etc. shall be fixed" designations, etc. should be fixed [6, p. 72].

All of these are standard formulas that must be used in certain types of documents, and, moreover, they are legally enforceable formulas. An attempt to use some other words instead of them may lead to a contestation of the text. Here the matter is also explained by the fact that in legal practice the meaning of each word is very great, and lawyers use strict and established formulas and words that cannot be interpreted in any other sense.

This feature can also be explained from the standpoint of cognitive linguistics in terms of the intersection of two mental fields - the mental field of practical business life and the mental field of the legal sphere. At the intersection of these fields, its own special language arises, filled with its own special stable units, for the understanding of which and, moreover, for use, special training is required.

The stylistic role of stable units in business English deserves special attention. In general, as already noted, the characteristic features of the business style are its information content (content), accuracy and objectivity, and the clarity and understandability arising from these features. Individual texts belonging to this style may have these features to a greater or lesser extent. However, there are notable variations within this style.

Although in both languages the business style is characterized by an objectively descriptive manner of presentation, devoid of emotionality and imagery, in the English business language there are still emotional epithets, figurative expressions, rhetorical questions and similar stylistic devices that enliven the narrative and are more characteristic of colloquial style or artistic speech.

We also note that the stable units of business English have their own system of synonymy, and the choice of one or another stable expression means a more official or more friendly version of the relationship between the participants in communication. For example, in this list of synonymous expressions, the first column consists of more formal expressions; the second column consists of more informal ones:

- as per you request as you requested at your request; inform let us know tell us;
- > on the order of according to according to;
- right at the present time at present currently; check to cover check for check for payment;
- in accordance with according to in accordance with;
- in compliance with as you requested at your request; in the event that in case in case.



The choice of one or another stable expression from pairs of synonyms in the cognitive aspect includes the understanding that the addresser introduces the addressee into the mental field of more or less official communication. As a general conclusion, we note that stable units in business English in terms of their semantic meaning can be divided into three main groups - etiquette, content and stylistic. Each of these groups has its own characteristics.

But all these expressions from the standpoint of cognitive linguistics and in terms of the theory of conceptual integration can be interpreted as an imposition of different mental spaces that create a new semantics of the expression, sometimes taking into account the metaphorical, idiomatic meaning of the words included in such phrases, sometimes without metaphor and idiomaticity. When understanding such expressions, a person who does not actively use business English in his daily life must make some cognitive efforts, understand the meaning of both mental spaces and realize the semantics of the blend created at their intersection. Such semantic originality creates a special stylistic coloring of this style.

Conclusion.

It should be noted that a person who actively uses business English in his daily life and work will not and should not make such cognitive efforts. He is accustomed to such expressions; he does not need to think about their meaning, he understands them immediately, as a whole, without reflections on the meaning of individual words included in such stable constructions.

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