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Tetiana VERAКSYCH,

orcid.org/0000-0002-6077-2825

Postgraduate Student, Lecturer at the Department of Theory, Practice and Translation of German National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" (Kyiv, Ukraine) tetiana_veraksyich@ukr.net

Olena LAZEBNA,

orcid.org/0000-0002-0212-4993

Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Theory, Practice and Translation of German National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" (Kyiv, Ukraine) o.a.lazebna@gmail.com

LINGUISTIC AND STYLISTIC POTENTIAL OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AND SET EXPRESSIONS IN THE FORMATION OF A LINGUISTIC PORTRAIT OF A MAN (CASE STUDY: THE TEXTS OF INTERVIEWS IN GERMAN PERIODICALS)

The article studies the use of phraseological units and set expressions in the speech of modern German men (based on the material of the interviews, which were selected by the method of continuous sampling from the modern German periodicals Die Zeit, Die Welt, Die Zeit Magazin). The aim of the paper is to characterize the functioning of set expressions and phraseological units in the speech of modern German men, as well as a further analysis of the revealed units in the contextual situation. All aspects of male and female speech are studied. The views of famous linguists on this problem were analyzed. Linguists compare, contrast, search for the common and the different in the communicative behavior of men and women. Such studies do not aim to establish male or female speech as a standard, but only try to identify common and distinguishing features, analyze and characterize them. Socio-cultural space is an important factor in such studies, and the speech of this environment becomes a core of the research. In our case, the article deals with the particularities of the speech of modern German men. The male speech was believed to be a standard in many languages of the world for a long time, while female speech was supposed to be a deviation. Therefore, the study of the particularities of men's communicative behavior is highly relevant and critically important, since it is necessary to confirm empirically that gender-specific features of a language cannot be considered a standard, but are only certain characteristics inherent in men or women. In the article we consider the use of set word combinations and phraseological units in speech of modern German men of different professions and ages. The study revealed that men use both colloquial phraseological units and phraseological units of biblical, ancient Greek origin; operate set expressions with ease and successfully use them to mark their speech with a special connotative colour.

Key words: *man, male speech, phraseology, phraseological unit, phraseological phrase, set expression, communicative behavior.*

Тетяна ВЕРАКСИЧ,

orcid.org/0000-0002-6077-2825

аспірантка, викладач кафедри теорії, практики та перекладу німецької мови Національного технічного університету України «Київський політехнічний інститут імені Ігоря Сікорського» (Київ, Україна) tetiana_veraksyich@ukr.net

Олена ЛАЗЕБНА,

orcid.org/0000-0002-0212-4993

кандидат філологічних наук, доцент, завідувач кафедри теорії, практики та перекладу німецької мови Національного технічного університету України «Київський політехнічний інститут імені Ігоря Сікорського» (Київ, Україна) o.a.lazebna@gmail.com

ЛІНГВОСТИЛІСТИЧНИЙ ПОТЕНЦІАЛ ФРАЗЕОЛОГІЧНИХ ОДИНИЦЬ ТА СТАЛИХ ВИРАЗІВ У ФОРМУВАННІ МОВНОГО ПОРТРЕТА ЧОЛОВІКА (НА МАТЕРІАЛІ ТЕКСТІВ ІНТЕРВ'Ю НІМЕЦЬКИХ ПЕРІОДИЧНИХ ВИДАНЬ)

У статті розглядається використання сучасними німецькими чоловіками фразеологічних сполучень та сталих виразів у мовленні, на матеріалі інтерв'ю, що були виокремлені методом суцільної вибірки із сучасних німецьких періодичних видань "Die Zeit", "Die Welt", "Die Zeit. Magazin". Метою наукової розвідки є характеристика

функціонування сталих виразів та фразеологізмів у мовленні сучасних німецьких чоловіків, а також подальший аналіз виявлених одиниць у контекстних ситуаціях. Вивчаються всі аспекти чоловічого та жіночого мовлення. Аналізується досвід провідних мовознавців щодо цього питання. Лінгвісти порівнюють, зіставляють, шукають спільне та відмінне у комунікативній поведінці чоловіків та жінок. Такі дослідження не ставлять за мету встановлення чоловічого чи жіночого мовлення як стандарту, а лише намагаються визначити спільне та відмінне, проаналізувати та дати характеристику виявленим особливостям. Важливим фактором таких досліджень є також соціокультурний простір, мовлення представників котрого вивчається. У пропонованій статті йдеться про особливості мовлення сучасних німецьких чоловіків. Досить довгий час у багатьох мовах світу вважалося, що чоловіча мова є стандартом, тоді як жіноча є девіацією. Саме тому дослідження особливостей комунікативної поведінки чоловіків є дуже актуальним і важливим, адже необхідно дослідним шляхом підтвердити те, що гендерно зумовлені особливості мови не можуть вважатись стандартом, а є лише певними характеристиками, що притаманні чоловікам чи жінкам. У статті розглядається вживання сучасними німецькими чоловіками різних професій та віку сталих словосполучень та фразеологічних одиниць у мовленні. У ході дослідження виявлено, що чоловіки вживають як розмовні фразеологізми, так і фразеологізми біблійного, давньогрецького походження, з легкістю оперують сталими виразами та вдало вживають їх задля надання своєму мовленню особливого забарвлення.

Ключові слова: чоловік, чоловіче мовлення, фразеологізм, фразеологічна одиниця, фразеологічне сполучення, сталий вираз, комунікативна поведінка.

Statement of the problem. Gender studies is a very popular area of scientific thought of the XXI century. Scientists from all fields of knowledge try to identify differences and emphasize common features in the linguistic portraits of men and women. Such trends can be explained by the rapid pace of societal development and such a movement as feminism. In modern linguistics, the study of gender-specific features of a speech is also a very popular research area. Despite the extremely rapid development of society and the leveling of boundaries between men and women, in many languages of the world male and female variants of communicative behavior are still quite clearly evident. Although society and culture change rather quickly, the pace of changes in language is somewhat slower and longer. For modern linguists, the issue of language differences caused by social factors is very interesting. Scholars conduct research literally on every aspect of the communicative behavior: grammar, vocabulary, gestures, pronunciation features. The results of such studies can be both a comparative analysis of a certain aspect of the communicative behavior of men and women, and a thorough characterization of this aspect in the speech context of only one gender.

Many linguists still believe that it is the male version of the language that is a norm. Thus, men are considered to be more reserved and less expressive. Speaking about German men, this idea is reinforced even further, as Germans, as a nation, are considered to be quite laconic. The present article focuses on the stylistic particularities of the modern German men's speech, namely, the use of set expressions and phraseological units in their language. The use of such lexical units as a set expression or phraseology is a means of a more vivid, stylistically colored way of producing a certain thought. Phraseology is an

extremely large layer of language, which is multilevel and complex. There are both set expressions that are characteristic of colloquial or even slang language, and those that belong to higher stylistic levels within phraseology. The study of men's use of such expressions in their speech is quite relevant and interesting, as it provides an opportunity to explore the level of expressiveness of a male speech, as well as the means of achievement of this expressiveness.

Analysis of research and publications. An important contribution to the study of phraseology was made by such researchers as: D. Ignatenko, V. Vinogradov, L. Skrypnyk, N. Todorova and others.

The **aim** of the article is to characterize the functioning of set expressions and phraseological units in the speech of modern German men, as well as a further analysis of the revealed units in the contextual situation.

In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to solve the following **tasks**:

1) to study the texts of interviews with German men of different professions in terms of their use of set expressions and phraseological units;

2) to analyze the selected units with regard to the social role, profession and age of the man in whose speech they occurred;

3) to characterize the particularities of the use of set expressions and phraseological units in the speech of modern German men.

The **object** of the study is the communicative behavior of German men, and the **subject** is the stylistic features of the use of phraseological units and set expressions in the speech of German men.

Research results. Phraseology is a very rich layer of language, which is constantly expanding and replenishing. First of all, it is necessary to outline and characterize the basic concepts of phraseology.

In modern linguistics there is still no common and generally accepted definition of the concept of ‘a phraseological unit’.

Thus, according to the researcher N. Yu. Todorova, phraseological units are “capable of performing the nominative function of separately formed, stable, reproducible, semantically integral linguistic entities, the components of which have acquired a complete or partial rethinking” (Todorova, 2018: 34).

Linguist L. G. Skrypnyk describes a phraseological unit as “a lexical and grammatical unity of two or more separately formed components, grammatically organized according to the model of a phrase or sentence, which, having a holistic meaning, is reproduced in the language by tradition, automatically”. Also, the linguist distinguishes two layers of phraseological units, namely set expressions that can be structurally correlated with a sentence and phraseological structures or phrases that correlate with a word combination (Skrypnyk, 1973: 71; 81).

As D. Ye. Ignatenko fairly claims phraseology is a complex linguistic structure, since their formation and functioning are inextricably connected with the units of other linguistic levels, namely phonetic, morphological, lexical, and syntactic” (Ignatenko, 2018: 60).

K. A. Nadtochiy and O. A. Lazebna in their academic research (Nadtochiy, Lazebna, 2019: 66) claim that “regardless of the obvious linguistic and cultural value of the phraseological units, the question of their typology remains unsolved: the scholars did not reach a compromise in outlining the principles of attributing/non attributing the language elements to phraseology”.

In the given article we follow the classification of phraseological units proposed by V. V. Vinogradov (Vinogradov, 1977), which is holistic, in our opinion. The scholar considers it expedient to create a classification of these units on the basis of their semantic unity. He classifies all the units into three categories:

- phraseological fusions;
- phraseological combinations;
- phraseological unities

V. V. Vinogradov considers phraseological fusions to be inseparable, in case they cannot be understood word for word and whose meaning is not dependent on the lexical elements. The meaning of the entire phraseological fusion has nothing to do with the meaning of each of its individual component. The meaning of such phrases is not predetermined and it can be revealed only as a result of etymological and historical analyses.

According to this classification, phraseological unities include such phrases in which the general

meaning of the expression may have a potential connection with the meaning of its individual components. This group also includes sayings, proverbs, aphorisms.

In phraseological combinations, the meaning of the entire combination is based on the main meaning of a particular word. That is, all derived variants are related to the direct meaning of the main word. Several series of phraseological units can be grouped around polysemous words (Vinogradov, 1977).

The phraseological fund of any language is an extremely valuable source of knowledge about the mentality of the people, their ideas about morality, history, habits. German phraseology is not an exception. It can even be argued that phraseology in a certain way reflects stereotypes about its people.

Phraseological unities are not always unambiguous. Besides, they can perform different functions. One of the characteristic features of phraseological units is their imagery. Most often the meaning of a phrase does not coincide with the individual meaning of its components. Such imagery allows phraseological units to perform the functions of expressiveness in speech.

It is not an easy job to translate phraseological units, because quite often there may simply be no suitable equivalent in the target language. In such cases, the translator often resorts to the method of descriptive translation to convey the initial meaning of the original phraseological unit as accurately as possible.

Most often, phraseological units in speech are used for concise, but vivid and expressive producing of a certain thought. They are a marker of emotionally colored speech, which is considered more typical for women. That is why the study of the use of phraseological units by men is extremely interesting.

A person's speech is a bright marker of their personality, character, level of education, social status. Language is a means of communication and serves all the spheres of public life. This includes politics, official business communication, scientific and cultural life.

Studying the use of phraseological units in the speech of modern German men, the interviews with representatives of different professions and ages were scrutinized. The analyzed interviews were selected from such German periodicals as *Die Welt*, *Die Zeit*, *Die Zeit Magazin*.

Thus, 34-year-old chairman of the Youth Union of Germany Tilman Kuban in his interview for the newspaper *Die Welt* “*Ein bisschen Demut täte uns im Augenblick ganz gut*” discusses the issue of legalization of cannabis. In his speech, we find the following examples of the use of the phrase:

“*Wir werden jetzt nicht in Sack und Asche gehen, sondern diese Partei modernisieren*”. And also:

“Die CDU befindet sich in einer Legitimationskrise unserer Gremien. weil **das Damoklesschwert** “Es ist dreimal gegen die Basis entschieden worden” **über uns schwebt** (Exner, 2021).

In the first case we see the use of the phraseology **in Sack und Asche gehen**. This expression comes from the Old Testament and used to indicate that a person repents or is in mourning. Kuban uses this expression to indicate that the party cannot follow the old patterns, stand still and repent for the mistakes of the past, but must improve and change for the better instead.

Another phraseological unit used by Kuban, **das Damoklesschwert über uns schwebt**, is of ancient Greek origin and in its original meaning indicates how tyrant Dionysius taught Damocles a lesson. In the modern world, this phraseological unit is used in many languages and means being in permanent danger. By using this phrase Kuban emphasizes the precarious position of the issue of legalization.

Tilman Kuban uses the phraseological unit of biblical and ancient Greek origin to add more emotionality to his statements, which indicates a deep awareness of the politician and the ability to use stylistic means.

Quite interesting is the interview of the German diplomat Christoph Heusgen (66) for the newspaper *Die Zeit*. In the interview entitled “*Sie merken, sie kriegen Gegenwind*”, the diplomat also refers to phraseological combinations:

*Unsere mögliche Reaktion sollte man innerhalb der Europäischen Union abstimmen und **ins Fenster stellen**.*

*Dem bei ihr habe ich gelernt, dass man auch bei schwierigen Partnern nicht **um dem heißen Brei herumreden muss** (Heusgen, 2021).*

In the first case the diplomat talks about possible problems in Taiwan and emphasizes that the reaction to the conflict should be discussed by the European Union, and there should be a warning about it. To convey the warning, Heusgen uses the expression **ins Fenster stellen** with the aim to warn that if someone does not change their behavior, they will face unpleasant consequences. The expression has a colloquial stylistic coloring and is used in everyday speech.

Another example of the use of the diplomat phraseology is the expression **um dem heißen Brei herumreden**. It also comes from colloquial speech and is derived from the metaphorical cat that circled around the place for sleeping choosing its warmest area. Nowadays, the expression is used to indicate that someone does not want to talk directly about the necessary topic, but instead bypasses it in all sorts of ways. In his statement, Heusgen uses this expression to point out that one has to speak directly even to the

most difficult opponents without trying to hide or smooth something over.

We can see that the 66-year-old diplomat easily uses colloquial phrases in his speech, which organically fit into his utterances and clearly convey his intentions.

Behavioral coach Louis Levitan (66) in an interview for *Die Zeit* newspaper “*Quengeln, drohen, schweigen*” talks about the German government and the people in it. In his speech he uses the following set expressions:

*Wie der Papa, der sagt: Kinder, genug jetzt, da **steht mehr auf dem Spiel***

*Wer die Fähigkeit hat sich emotional abzugrenzen, sich nicht persönlich angeritten zu fühlen und manches zu verdrängen, wer **Elefant-** oder besser gesagt **Telefonhaut hat**, der hat zwar die bessere Chancen, letztlich aber bedeutet führen überzeugen (Hildebrandt, 2021).*

Speaking about the new German chancellor Olaf Scholz, Levitan compares him to a father who oversees the parties and warns: **da steht mehr auf dem Spiel**. The expression **auf dem Spiel stehen** means being in danger and is considered colloquial.

Interestingly, the same expression is also used by another German politician, namely 56-year-old Norbert Röttgen. In his interview for the newspaper *Die Zeit* “*Sind Sie konservativ, Herr Röttgen?*” the politician also uses this expression:

*Mit der Zäsur der Bundestagswahl ist vielen klar geworden, was **auf dem Spiel steht** (Geis, 2021).*

Here the politician speaks about the parliamentary elections and conservative values that are in danger and uses the above-mentioned phraseological unit to express this.

Turning back to Levitan, we can see that he uses another set expression, namely **Elefantenhaut zu haben**. Here the psychologist says that people who are invulnerable to criticism have a better chance to succeed in politics. To convey invulnerability, the set expression **Elefantenhaut zu haben** is used in this case, which usually means that a person lacks sensitivity.

Another interesting interview is “*Warum haben Sie das gesagt, Herr Precht?*”, which was given to the German newspaper *Die Zeit* by the philosopher and publicist Richard David Precht (57), where the issues of the coronavirus, vaccinations including children’s vaccination were discussed. Precht used the following set expressions:

*Alle Hoffnungen, die Pandemie schnell loszuwerden, haben sich zerschlagen. Wir haben dieses Virus unterschätzt. **Die Nerven liegen blank**.*

*Ich weiß das. Und **drücke** allen, die so argumentieren, **die Daumen**, dass sie recht haben.*

Aber Äußerungen in der Öffentlichkeit werten hundert Mal mehr auf die Goldwaage gelegt, und die moralische Empörung verliert jedes Maß (Gilbert, 2021).

In the first case, the philosopher uses the expression *die Nerven liegen blank* to convey a state of helplessness, nervousness caused by disturbing and turbulent events happening in the world in connection with the pandemic. The expression is used in a colloquial style.

Discussing the vaccination of children, Precht says that although he agrees with all the arguments in support of vaccination, he does not consider it right to vaccinate children. He expresses his support for the arguments with the set expression *die Daumen drücken*. It is used both to demonstrate support and to show caring for someone. Once it was believed that the thumbs were the fingers of luck, which gave a solid ground to form this expression.

Discussing public speeches and statements of politicians, the philosopher uses the expression *auf die Goldwaage legen* to indicate the huge responsibility that such words bear. This phrase is used to evaluate

the words of the speaker, to emphasize the need for balance and careful deliberation of the statement.

Conclusions. Thus, we see that modern German men of different ages and professions frequently and masterfully use set expressions and phraseological units in their speech. Highly educated men taking important offices are not afraid to use colloquial phrases to emphasize and express their thoughts and ideas more vividly. Seemingly, we can also trace the use of expressions with the historical and biblical background, which may indicate a wide awareness and broad outlook of the speaker.

It is worth noting that expressiveness and stylistically colored language means are typical for modern German men. Moreover, they skillfully use phraseology to make their speech more imaginative and vivid.

It is crucial to understand that as the world, its culture, society, and norms change, so does the language. Stereotypes are being dispelled and replaced by research supported by facts. Thus, for instance, we see that despite the common perception of brevity and restraint, modern German men regardless of their age and social status can express their ideas using emotionally coloured language.

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