

RLMSEE-2020**The Russian Language in Modern Scientific and Educational Environment****INTERPRETATION OF IDIOMS IN DISCURSIVE PRACTICES OF
THE WEB**

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Abstract

In the open communicative environment of the Internet, which has a tremendous cumulative potential and accessibility to any information, the interpretation of idioms is presented in a variety of vectors: from the use of all types of colloquial expressions in discursive practices of informal Internet communication to fundamental scientific studies of idiomatics. The Internet interpretation of an idiom, able to concisely interpret mental characteristics of an ethnicity and express profound content in few words but eloquently, reflects the changes in the contemporary linguocultural space represented by the multifaceted nature of discursive practices. The cognitive approach characterizes discursive practice as a way of social life comprehension and interpretation. The analysis of academic works, presenting studies on the use of idioms and their diverse characteristics in communication Web resources, leads to the conclusion about practical orientation of discourse. Hypothesis based on discursive practices of the Web with the peculiarity of idioms interpretation is suggested. The article aims to identify the main ways of interpreting idioms on the Web. Vectors of modern studies of idioms interpretation in discursive practices of the Web are identified. The article characterizes scientific, didactic, and lexicographic Internet projects as discursive practices interpreting idioms. The significance of academic and popularized versions of idioms interpretation on the Web in the formation of cognitive consciousness among native Russian speakers, as well as among foreigner students, when they meet Russian national culture for the first time, is pointed out.

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Keywords: Discursive practices, idioms, Web, website



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1. Introduction

Interest in the figurative semantics of nominative units, which keep diverse national discursive practices and are able to represent axiological relations in their modern comprehension with usual and occasional meanings, has expanded the boundaries of phraseology as an object of study and phraseographic description. The concept of idioms determines researchers' attention not only to phraseological terms, paremics, aphorisms, and comparative phraseological terms, but also to figurative folk terms and free comparisons based "on ethno culturally determined associations" (Mokienko & Nikitina, 2018, pp. 90-91).

The uniqueness or universality of idioms in any language is determined in modern comparative studies where multilingual objects of research often represent the linguoculture of speakers of unrelated languages. Studying the axiological picture of the world and its ethno-cultural specificity through the objectification of axiological meanings in the phraseological semantics linguists in a comparative aspect refer to Russian, Ukrainian, English and German (Krasnobaieva-Chernaya, 2018), English, Russian, Spanish, Tatar and German (Kayumova et al., 2019), English and Bulgarian (Lavrova & Nikulina, 2020), Russian and Chinese (Shchitova & Shchitov, 2020); English, Serbian and Irish, and prove national and cultural specificity of phraseological expressions in the aspect of translation (Dronov, 2020).

The stimulating potential of the idiomatic semantics establishes real correlations in the formation of the concept sphere of the language, substantiating the interaction of knowledge structures, their categorization, and representation.

The correlation of semiotic essence as the center of discourse organization and social interaction as the basis of discursive practices motivates for studying new forms of communication. Modern communicative environment forms a variety of discursive practices in different areas of social life. Sarna defines discursive practice as a class denoting the speech activity in accordance with the requirements of a certain type of discourse in the process of its production and reproduction (Sarna).

The Internet interpretation of idioms, which keeps mental characteristics of an ethnicity and can express profound content in few words but eloquently, reflects the changes in the modern linguocultural space represented by the multifaceted nature of discursive practices.

2. Problem Statement

Filling the Web with academic publications as the results of study on the idiomatic fund of different languages, reference information interpreting idiomatics through various Internet projects, determined the following problem statements:

- to identify the main ways of interpreting idioms on the Web;
- to determine the vectors of modern studies of idioms interpretation in discursive practices of the Web;
- to characterize scientific, didactic, and lexicographic Internet projects as discursive practices that interpret idioms.

3. Research Questions

The tendency to study print and online media discursive practices is stimulated by the accessibility and maximum efficiency in information dissemination on the Web. Popova presents an overview of current trends in the media Internet space studies and concludes that the focus of research is shifting from private issues to an integrative study of the entire Web (Popova, 2018, p. 266).

Due to the socio-cultural orientation of the Internet, rapid development of the Web as a popular area of communication explains phraseologists' interest in the Internet discourse as a relevant source of idiomatic material. The study of idioms representation features on the Web has a wide scope, i.e., functional aspect (Dobrova, 2018; Kosmacheva, 2013; Soboleva, 2017), genre aspect (Kryukova, 2017; Molodykh, 2011; Savchenko & Lai, 2020; Zykova, 2017). The oral-written form of speech as a new form of Internet communication has updated researchers' attention to the "network language" both in terms of the use of idioms and their conceptual characteristic. The expansion of the functional field of idioms forms such new concepts as "network idiomatic oxionalisms", "idiomatic neologisms of the Internet language", "Internet idioms", "network idioms", and so forth.

It is possible to consider discursive practices of idioms interpreting as Internet discourse in practical terms. First, these are academic studies, which are now freely available on the Web, focusing on the relevance of modern problems, any sensational topical objects of the reality. Secondly, the diversity of variations, dynamically filling websites with reference information on the phraseological foundations of different languages, in particular Internet projects, representing idiomatics. Several types of such Internet projects can be distinguished to demonstrate an undoubted interest in idioms as the ethno-cultural phenomenon.

4. Purpose of the Study

To determine the main vectors of discursive practices of the Web in the aspect of idioms interpretation, to identify the level of their scientific validity, and to review their cognitive and didactic structure.

5. Research Methods

The peculiarity of the material and the object of study arise from the use of the descriptive method, including observation, comparison, generalization, and classification while analyzing the material, as well as its external and internal interpretation.

6. Findings

The significance of the headline in online media is determined by its form (i.e. the use of syntactic structures and specific vocabulary, and the content, where its connotative (sensational) aspect is determined by pragmatic means (Dementyev, 2020). The discursive connection of a sensation as a denotative situation and connotative sense of the idiomatic meaning are concentrated in the headline idiom and activate the main textual function (i.e. informing and influencing) (Kosmacheva, 2013)

The use of idioms in the structure of headlines in various discursive practices within the cognitive and pragmatic potential motivates the user's intentions in choosing material on the Web. Thus, the choice of an idiom for headlines in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (<https://www.kp.ru>) is predetermined by the semantic identity of its components with the meanings of specific situations presented by a journalistic text (e.g. with “Navalny poisoning” Americans pretend not to notice the log in their own eye (December 24, 2020); Which spots on the map will be hot in 2021 (January 4, 2021) [Leonkov’s military expert opinion on possible conflicts around Russia]; Who will take the Year of the Bull by the horns (January 13, 2021) [political scientists and sociologists’ discussions regarding the development of an election campaign to the lower house of the federal parliament in 2021]

The pandemic being a vital topic reflects in a pragmatic interpretation of idioms in headlines through Update Semantics (e.g. “You Can Take A Deep Breath”: How I Got My COVID-19 Vaccination with Sputnik V (December 20, 2020) [from *Komsomolskaya Pravda* journalist diary, a participant of the first group of senior volunteers]; Putin Sorted Out Virologists’ “Bird's Language”(December 21, 2020) [President’s approval to cooperate on COVID-19 vaccine development of the Gamaleya National Center and AstraZeneca]; Billions Went To The Dogs: which of the richest Russians became the poorest in the pandemic (December 28, 2020); “To Make It To A Golden Wedding”: a couple who has been married for 50 years won the Coronavirus (December 29, 2020); Coronavirus forecast-2021: the year will be hard, but there is light at the end of the tunnel (Jan.14, 2021) [WHO assessment of prospects of COVID-19 spread]; Tightening their belts before the New Year: Russians are saving on shopping in stores (Jan. 15, 2021) [real spendings of the poorest fell by almost 10%]).

Savchenko and Lai investigate the issue of lexical and phraseological “coronavirus neologisms”, reflecting the reality of the pandemic in the Russian- and Chinese-language Web (Taiwan). The materials of the study are collected from information websites, social networks, messengers, forums, blogs, etc. A significant addition is the textual and visual interpretation of the coronavirus topic by Internet memes representing the effect of precedence (Savchenko & Lai, 2020).

In many academic studies on modern communication resources the natural appeal to idioms is often not defined by a specific task. A variety of modern Internet communication resources has been more recently supplemented by social networks where the user's personal preferences and free communication are much more valuable than free access (Zilberman & Mishankina, 2017, p. 40). Thus, Zilberman and Mishankina’s studies on the basis of the participants’ speech behavior united by a meaningful understanding of “the Soviet”, represents the nominations of that period, which are now established as idioms (e.g. made in the USSR; on the waves of our memory; taste of childhood; Soviet education; Soviet childhood; Soviet idiocy; golden years, etc. (Zilberman & Mishankina, 2017).

World representation by means of different languages depends on “its own original model” of its reality, created by “a certain language” and possessing “absolute reality for speakers of the given language”, which “is only ensured by its intersubjectivity for a certain linguistic group” (Tszin, 2020, p. 124). A specific interpretive potential of idioms in discursive practices in political communication is one of the arguments to support this thought. Zykova presents a phraseological characteristic of modern slogans of the Web. She shows the realisation of “call or declarative statement functions” in modern discursive practices by means of Yeltsin idioms (e.g., “Take care of Russia” (Boris Yeltsin’s speech, the

first president of the Russian Federation, addressing to the citizens and transferring of power to Putin on December 31, 1999).

Prof. Mokienko's interview to the *Vechernij Peterburg* newspaper (December 17th, 2014) “Vladimir Putin's aphorisms are worthy of an entire dictionary” ([http://www.vppress.ru/stories/Valerii-Mokienko-Aforizmy-Vladimira-Putina-dostoiny-tcelogo-slovary-a-27537](http://www.vppress.ru/stories/Valerii-Mokienko-Aforizmy-Vladimira-Putina-dostoiny-tselogo-slovary-a-27537)) is an objective assessment of plentiful Vladimir Putin's emotional sayings. Thus, for several years the Putinism “We'll rub them out in the outhouse” [attitude to terrorists] (1999) is a point of day-to-day discussions and academic studies. Russian linguoculture representatives associate Putin's sayings (e.g., “Dead donkey ears” [attitude to Baltic States on the problem of Pytalovo] (2005); “Hoof prints, horn prints” [attitude to the information about Russian hackers' interference in the U.S. election] (from Putin's interview to NBC journalist Megyn Kelly, 2017) with Ilf and Petrov quotes. The use of idioms in a politician's discursive practice, consisting of “a set of linguistic practices of different intensional orientation” (Romanov & Novoselova, 2020, p. 422), stimulates the recipient's perception of the speaker's subjective and emotional attitude to the problems discussed.

In the open Internet communicative environment with its tremendous cumulative potential and accessibility to any information, the interpretation of idioms is presented in a variety of vectors: from the use of all types of colloquial expressions in discursive practices of informal Internet communication to fundamental scientific studies of idiomatics.

The Internet project of the Phraseological Seminar of Prof. Mokienko (<http://phraseoseminar.slovo-spb.ru/>) is an indicator of a discursive practice representing various scientific discourse types and forms. The structure of the website is multifaceted with diverse information flows, which cover a large part of the world scientific community.

1. Intensity of scientific projects development

The Phraseological Seminar is a permanent scientific center at the Interdepartmental Dictionary Office named after Professor Larin (St. Petersburg State University), which brings together well-known and novice Russian and European researchers. One of the research vectors determining scientific and practical efficiency of the phraseological seminar is the collection and systematization of materials for compiling dictionaries. Modern lexicographic projects expand the phraseological base by means of new idioms based on Russian folklore, fiction, live phraseology of multi-genre media texts, slang dictionaries and files, questionnaires and the authors' own notes (Mokienko & Nikitina, 2018, pp. 82-83).

Announcements of ongoing research projects provide official information and the research rationale. The example of the ongoing research supported by the Russian Science Foundation “The world of the Eastern Slavs in paremiological interpretation: axiological dominants and their linguocultural representation” demonstrates cognitive guidelines of an integrated approach to the comparative description of proverbs of closely related languages such as Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian. According to the participants of the project the most essential spiritual linguistic tie is proverbs and sayings, which are fundamentals of common linguoculture of the East Slavic ethnicity.

2. Catalogue of new editions and website library

As a result of idioms study Catalogue presents new editions of Russian and foreign linguists (i.e. title, abstract, dictionary entries examples, etc.). Thus, the announcement of a new two-volume edition

“Contribution of Biblical Wisdom: Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of Biblical Winged Expressions and Aphorisms with Correspondences in the Germanic, Romance, Armenian and Georgian languages” (Mogilev: Kuleshov MSU, 2019) provides an access to the presentation page of a 16-language dictionary at the House of Culture of Russian-Armenian University (Yerevan, Armenia – 09.10.2019).

One of the novelties of 2021 has become the monograph “Essays on Rusin Phraseology” by Lomakina & Mokienko (Moscow: RUDN). Synchronous genetic connection with the languages of the Eastern Slavs and the influence of languages and multiple dialects of neighbouring territories attract attention to Rusin language idioms. The linguistic specificity of the Rusin language represents the objectification of various contacts with speakers of other language communities, which is a “convincing confirmation of the theory of transfers and linguistic interference. <...> Universal concepts of human existence and moral values common to many peoples are greatly reflected in the content of Rusin phraseology and paremiology” (Bredis et al., 2020, p. 207).

The library of the website, with free access to monographs on phraseology dating back to 1926, as well as fundamental works published in 1981, 1986, deserves special attention (see the items in table 1).

Table 1. Free Access Foundation (PDF) to the electronic Phraseological Library

Collections (2004 – 2020)	Monographs (1926, 1981, 1986, 2003 – 2021)	Articles	Dictionaries
73	46	39	27

We should mention the peculiar experience of the textbooks “Let's Talk” (Materials for Reading, Conversations, and Discussions), presented by Issues 6, 11, 13, 14 (in 2 parts), published in 2006, 2011, 2013, 2014 as outcomes of the 41st, 46th, 48th, and 49th Russian language seminars at Timmendorfer Strand, where phraseology affirms the interconnection of language and culture, language and mentality.

The peculiarity of the phraseological library is both its accessibility and its uniqueness (e.g. the representation of Russian-Kashubian (Greifswald, 2019); German-Russian (Mancheim, 2016); Serbo-Croatian-Russian (Moscow, 2005); Russian-Ukrainian (Kharkov & Prapor, 2000) bilingual and multilingual phraseological dictionaries published in Russia and abroad). I. Naumova's Dictionary of Phraseological Commonalities of the Russian and English languages (in the Convergence of Languages Context) (Kharkiv, 2012) or a multilingual phraseological dictionary “Contribution of Biblical Wisdom: Biblical Idioms and Aphorisms in Russian, English, Belarusian, German, Slovak and Ukrainian” compiled by a multinational team of authors (Mogilev: Kuleshov Moscow State University, 2014) reflect the results of phenomenal research.

The observation “that approximately 15% of idioms and proverbs which descended from one and the same source, such as the Bible or fables, have acquired slightly different connotations” (Lavrova & Nikulina, 2020, p. 853) confirms the importance of the lexicographic discursive practice of the multilingual dictionary. The expansion of the lexicographical database to 16 languages (see 2019 edition), which have etymological proximity and affinity in varying degrees, undoubtedly affects the interpretation of biblicalisms by speakers of different languages, ambitiously demonstrates the reliability of the representation of extralinguistic factors that form extralinguistic meanings highlighted by national men-

tality, and became the source the Bible idiom meaning formation of a given nation in the process of verbalization.

3. Results of active cooperation with Phraseological Commission of the International Committee of Slavist

In addition to presenting numerous scientific works on Slavic and comparative phraseology the Internet project possesses interesting databases. There is a free access to the bibliography of Prof. Mokienko (Russia), von Prof. Dr. Rainer Eckert (Berlin), Prof. Kržišnik (Slovenia), Prof. Telija (Russia) scientific works, the bibliography of Croatian phraseology and the phraseological base studied by Croatian scientists. The archive involves announcements of phraseological and general philological conferences and newsletters from 2003 for each month.

The cognitive content of the website resources is wide-ranging and provides direct access to the portals of the European Phraseological Society (e.g., EUROPHRAS (<http://www.europhras.org/de/>), Slavistik-portal (<https://slavistik-portal.de/>), Association of Italian Phraseology and Paremiologia PHRASIS / Associazione Italiana di Fraseologia & Paremiologia (<http://www.phrasis.it/>) and others; to the websites Phraseologie und Phraseodidaktik (<https://www.ettinger-phraseologie.de/>); Public lectures – Belgrade, Serbia (<http://balkanrusistics.blogspot.com/>), Professor Zoltan’s, a member of the Phraseological Commission at the International Committee of Slavists and others, personal website (Hungary); the video channel “Language Glazary”.

4. Accessibility to all scientific interactions

The geography of the phraseological seminar of Prof. Mokienko unites Russian and foreign scientific phraseological communities, many scientific schools from Russia, (e.g., Belgorod, Kostroma, Magnitogorsk, Novgorod, Pskov, etc.) as well as other countries (e.g. Belarus, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Germany, Croatia). Researchers, studying an idiom, actively use the results of collaborative research projects. As a result of studies on phraseological semantics and numerous international conferences on Slavic and comparative phraseology reliability of historical and etymological dictionaries and dictionaries of Slavic phraseology, bibliographical indexes on Slavic phraseology, monographs is a permanent basis for scientific knowledge. Video podcasts of Professor Mokienko's lectures on lexicography of the modern Russian language and phraseological dictionaries of the Russian language are an example of non-fiction storytelling available to all the website visitors.

The dynamism of the linguistic picture of the world corresponds to the evolutionary features of socio-cultural life. If idioms reflect impliedly axiological linguocultural characteristics of the ethnic group, then their popularization on the website of Prof. Mokienko’s phraseological seminar is explicit. Along with the scientific discursive practices presented above, the daily changing rubrics “Aphorisms” and “As the people so the proverb” are represented through the popup-window of the project (see table 2).

Table 2. Objects of discursive practices of the Russian language popularization and idioms in the interview genre

Audio and video podcasts	Online interviews	Internet and print media
Radio “Petersburg” 5th channel Radio “Ekho Peterburga” “Russia 24”	Russkiy Mir Foundation Information and education website “Russkij na 5”	Newspapers “Utro Peterburga”; “Moscow News”; “Vechemnij Peterburg”; “Smena”, “Novgorodskij universitet”; Russian newspaper “Kul’tura”;

Discursive practices of scientific discourse have a clear purpose. Communicative tactics in the process of popularization of the Russian language in the media, particularly of idioms, vary by the participants of the phraseological seminar according to the purpose, audience as social space, and communicative strategies based on different communicative situations.

The multilingual discursive practice of scientific and practical interpretation of idioms is presented on Dr. Stefan Ettinger's website (Germany) *Phraseologie und Phraseodidaktik* in German, French, and Portuguese (<https://www.ettinger-phraseologie.de>). The phraseological database, represented by more than 1,000 idioms, is freely accessible to website users and has a linguodidactic / phraseodidactic orientation. As an active dictionary the discursive practice of the database is characterized by thematic organization in the aspect of two complementary interpretive approaches (i.e., onomasiological or ideographic). The passive dictionary has an access through an alphabetic index and allows to expand one's knowledge of a particular idiom.

The dynamic organization of contextual regional interpretations of idioms guides the user to perceive a figurative expression in an extended authentic context. The website technical capabilities allow users to get quicker advice and find right information, get acquainted with the phraseological overview, bibliography, and articles on the thematic focus of the site.

Although, culturological approach to the study of Russian idioms in a foreign-language audience is aimed at forming linguocultural linguistic competence, there is not any Russian-language website of similar linguodidactic orientation. Russian teachers actively implement phraseological material into the learning process through linguodidactic potential (Katsyuba et al., 2020, p. 92).

The cognition of Russian idioms for a foreigner is a very difficult activity. Young foreign researchers and students of the Russian language departments do not have access to Russian language phraseographic sources. Foreigners cannot sign up to libraries, including the Russian State Library, to use their online resources. Therefore, the interpretations of idioms on the Web are the most authoritative source for them.

A. Fedorov's *Phraseological Dictionary of the Russian Literary Language* (<https://rus-phraseology-dict.slovaronline.com/>; <https://gufo.me/>, etc.) is actively represented among dictionaries of phraseological expressions, proverbs and sayings, and idioms of the Russian language online.

Reference information of Internet-interpretation of idioms is the most accessible source of knowledge popularizing Russian figurative speech. However, some authors duplicate academic sources and place "their dictionaries" on websites (e.g., *Encyclopedium*; *Dictionary of Phraseology – Russian language without problems*, etc.). On Copyright © 2010-2021 Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and reference books – *Slovar.cc* (<https://slovar.cc/>) there is an access to V. Dahl's "Proverbs of Russian People" online dictionary among unnamed dictionaries of proverbs, sayings, and aphorisms.

Dynamic organization of idioms interpretation in discursive practices is reflected by intellectual property objects in databases as a repository of information:

1. "Database of Phraseological Units With the Meaning of a Human Inner World in the Russian Language", authors: Gorshkova, Morozova, Vasilkina, Sorokina, Shashanova

2.Database “Phraseology as a Way of Evaluation Manifestation in Non-Fiction Business Discourse”, authors: Baghyan, Nersesyan, Bzhinaeva

3.Database “Characterological Idioms of the French Argo”, authors: Sinelnikov, Androso-va.

4.Database “Emotive Phraseological Expressions of the French Language in the Field Aspect”, author: Sinelnikova I.I. (RU)

The database format represents dictionary materials (Mokienko & Nikitina, 2018, p. 84) and is the basis of the dictionary. In the future the database will be used to create online phraseological dictionaries.

Thus, the study of the practical communicative and linguistic material interpreting idioms on the Web shows that modern linguoculture is non-identity, which is explained by the specificity and the context of idioms functioning in various discursive practices.

7. Conclusion

The cognitive approach characterizes discursive practice as a way of social life comprehension and interpretation. The analysis of academic works, presenting studies on the use of idioms and their diverse characteristics in communication Web resources, leads to the conclusion about practical orientation of discourse. On the Web discourse is recreated by a variety of discursive practices. Therefore, in our opinion, we can talk about discursive practices of the Web, where the peculiarity of idioms interpretation is presented. The study results of scientifically grounded and popularized versions of websites, interpreting idioms, confirm this assumption.

The study of the aspectual content of the discursive practice of Professor Mokienko's Phraseological Seminar revealed a scientific conceptual thesaurus and corresponding metalanguage correlated theoretically with the key philological and linguistic instrumentarium which is specific for conducting the study of phraseological and paremiological fund, mainly in Slavic languages, as well as focused on the scientific works of foreign specialists in Russian philology.

Reliable proof of the academic basis is 1) the intensity of development of scientific projects, 2) the catalog of recently published dictionaries, monographs, textbooks, journals, and scientific collections, 3) the results of active cooperation with the Phraseological Commission of the International Committee of Slavists, 4) public accessibility for any scientific interaction.

Dr. Stefan Ettinger's (Germany) linguodidactic model Phraseologie und Phraseodidaktik website (<https://www.ettinger-phraseologie.de>) can be used as an example for creating similar projects in the aspect of foreign language learning for both general and special purposes. Foreign students get an opportunity to enter the websites that provide reliable information, academic and linguistic materials, interpreting idioms, and learn more about the peculiarities of the national cultural space of the language they study.

Discursive practices of outreach versions of Internet projects interpreting idioms have a dynamic organization. Such websites present versions of the origin of idioms, author's interpretations of phraseological semantics, allow their visitors to freely post comments for giving their vision of the linguistic picture of the world at the level of everyday thinking. (e.g. “Burido” (<https://burido.ru/razvitiie-i-obuchenie/>); the project “Viktor Kudrjavcev. Esperanto is the whole world” ([191](https://www.esperanto-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

plus.ru/fraz/k/krasnij-petuh.htm); Explanatory Dictionary. Proverbs and sayings. Phraseological expressions (<http://tolkru.com/fraza/>); “STUDOPEDIA” [https://studopedia.ru/9_85775_]). However, as communicative systems, they often provide distorted information that contradicts the cognitive focus of scientifically grounded websites.

Incorrect representation of the meaningful connection between language and culture on the Web affects incorrect cognitive consciousness among native Russian speakers, as well as foreign students when they meet Russian national culture for the first time.

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