

## Discursive-Modus Mechanisms of Phraseological Semiosis

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**Abstract:** The objective of the study is to examine categorical properties of a phrase-forming domain which are projected by the discursive component and determined by its cognitive-pragmatic synergy. The researchers deal with a special type of cognitive structure discursive-modus domain which needs indirectly-derivative, i.e., phraseological verbalization due to its features. The study proves the statement that semantics of utterances, socio-cultural conditions of text creating and the anthropological factor are the mandatory components of discursive semantics where phrasemes are formed and functioning. The main mechanisms of generating domains of this type cognitive metaphor and cognitive metonymy are described. The study is based on the following methods: identifying semantic potential of phraseological units in different contexts; linguo-cognitive analysis of phraseological value and semantic content, discursive situation analysis.

**Key words:** Discourse, domain, phraseme, phraseological meaning, indirect nomination, discursive-modus domain

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### INTRODUCTION

The search for the ontological nature of domains that generate phraseological units (phrasemes) may come from understanding their communicative and pragmatic purpose. Their purpose consists not in the naming objects of thought but rather in the expressing evaluative and semantic relations to these objects (Alefirenko, 2010). Therefore, phrasemes are selected by speakers in terms of the relevant discursive situation to express adequately the evaluative and emotive meaning which is projected by our verbal and cogitative intentions. In other words, the discourse appears as the “melting pot” where everyday, naive domain which forms phrasemes is molded and its content is represented by evaluative-emotive or modal, semantics. As a result such domain which had appeared in course of discursive activity in order to represent modus semantics, needs not merely indirect but implicit designation. We call such products of discursive consciousness discursive-modus domains which are verbalized by phrasemes. Let us consider two definitions of phrase-forming domain the discursive and the modus one.

### THE ONTOLOGY OF THE PHRASE-FORMING DOMAIN

As we noted earlier, one of the most important creative properties of the discourse is its ability to generate meanings (Alefirenko, 2010). Plus, the semantic content of the emerging domain is non-additive

to the semantics of the linguistic units which serve as their representations. This kind of meaning-forming capacity of the phrase-forming domain is determined by the fact that phrase-forming domain, unlike the domains of primary semiosis, consists of elements of discursive situations which are previously objectified in the language. Sophisticated semantic configurations, requiring a variety of means of indirect derivative semiosis, arise inside the deep layers of reinterpreted discursive situations. It is here where with appropriate communicative needs, the contradictions between discursive structure-forming factors are exacerbated, resulting in striking the first sparks of linguo-creatively stimulated processes of idiomatic semiosis. Such contradictions are found between both linguistic and extralinguistic mechanisms of discourse and within them. To the external counter, we can attribute the causes of updating linguistic or extra-linguistic stimuli of discourse “life”. The internal contradictions literally permeate the language semantics which is actively involved in shaping the phrase-forming discourse. These contradictions determined the emergence of different linguistic semantic theories “reflective”, relative and formal one (Alefirenko, 2010). According to the first one, the semantic content of discourse is determined by integration of the items of nomination, displayed in the minds in accordance with the objectives of the communicative act. Relativity theory focuses on the second discursy phase simulating of different relationships between both the verbalized and extralinguistic objects of thought. Formal logical concept being between khomskian generative grammar and speech

act theory, supplies and strengthens the idea of the discourse creative possibilities of subject-object speech production and the need to consider external (socio-cultural and pragmatic) conditions of communication. The role and importance of each of these aspects in the constitution of discourse depends of course on the understanding the nature and essence of the discourse itself.

The first aspect puts discourse into submission to language which in this case by its semantics must determine the semantic content of discourse. The second one is based on the idea of discourse as a grid made of communicative-pragmatic relations and the third one examines discourse as meaning-germinating device. The defectiveness of each of these approaches, discounting their relationship is obvious, since none of them does not meet the synergistic nature of the discourse as a multi-channel verbal and cogitative formation, immersed in life. They constitute an invalid absolutization of one of the discourse ingredients: neither utterances (text) nor their external and internal distribution. In the first case, the utterance is considered to be the foundation of discourse and its external context is regarded as the accompanying background. The second case is the opposite. In fact, both the semantics of utterances, socio-cultural conditions of text genesis and the anthropological (human) factor are the required components of the discursive semantic content in which depths the phraseme is not only functioning but is also generated. The anthropological factor regardless the phraseology was described by Karaulov (2004) of late. All the variety of human interaction with the discourse world is rather aptly reflected in his famous statement: "Behind every text there is a linguistic identity which masters the system of language". The reframing of this statement by Sedov (2004) sounds no less expressive and true: "behind every linguistic identity there is a lot of discourses produced by them". However in order to understand the role of discursive thinking in producing phrasemes, it is important to consider not so much the process of interaction between the discourses and the linguistic identity as the interaction between the discourses and all ethno-cultural community which is directly implemented in speech activity of each person as a member of this particular ethno-cultural community (Van Dijk, 2012). For example, phraseme 'written on the kindred, 'destined' is tied to the well-known discursive situation when one is trying to inculcate the inability to change the complex (and often fatal) life situation. This phrase is the most saving for the spiritless people who believe: whether something is destined, then nothing can not be changed and done but go with the flow, saying there's no flying from fate. Cp.:

- Maybe she was born to be married to him. So how can you run from your destiny!" (A. Ostrovsky)
- Prostakova: Perhaps, God is merciful and the happiness is destined to him [to Mitrofanushka] (D. Fonvizin)

The idiom was born to could be put into any Russian speaker's mouth who is under the magic influence of their ethno-discursive consciousness, despite the fact the word race ('kindred') that it contains as the component can lead the modern Russian speakers away from its true meaning. With a word kindred in ancient pagan mythology God is named, the Creator of the universe, the creator of all things of visible and invisible world. Ideologically the idea of Kindred was close to the Christian idea of Sabaoth God the Father, Creator of all things. The idea of Kindred was associated with light and good arche. The word race in Russian ethnic consciousness has accumulated all the most significant things: Family, Tribe, Dynasty, People, Homeland, Nature, Birth, Harvest. Russians behaved to the Kindred with a special feeling. Considering themselves the heirs of the chief God, they personified in it their kin, its unity and continuing succession (Svyataya, 2000).

The Russian linguo-culture traced two lines of semantic development of a lexeme race. The first one goes back to the Indo-European root, the other one goes back to the Greek. During the translation of the Greek texts, this word became polysemantic. The Greek word genus 'race, origin', 'birth', 'homeland', 'age' in the Old Russian corresponded to the lexemes tribe, generation, and family. In the Modern Russian, the meaning of this word has almost lost such semes as 'birth', 'people', 'sex', 'essence', 'nature', 'homeland', 'compatriot', 'harvest', 'destiny' and others. Some of them have preserved of course in the reduced form, only in the semantics of phrasemes was born to and neither kindred nor tribe. However, non-extant semes are the key to understanding the cognitive stimulus to phrase-forming. The key is as we have tried to show (Alefirenko, 2014) in the vitally important and therefore deeply experienced communicative event. It underlies in particular, the emergence of a phraseme was born to. The ancient Slavs believed that the first visitor to a newborn baby was a Woman in labor some mythical creature whose "obligation" included:

- To read baby's destiny on his or her forehead
- To record it on a special plate which is called the thread of fate

It was also believed that the Woman in labor, looking at the prophecy of baby's destiny, asked God for the right

guardian angel. The magic power of such discursive event is shown in an ancient notion, preserved within mythology that human life and destiny are linked by the mysterious thread. It was in the hands of the three goddesses. They were called the Parcae in Rome, the Moirae in Greece. Clotho, the first, spun the thread of life. The second, Lachesis, recorded everything that has to happen to a person in his life in a special book. Third, Atropos waited for the moment when the thread of life would have to be cut. Phraseme was born to implicitly keep the historical memory of that record which makes the goddess Lachesis for each person. By the way, the legendary goddess associates with the phraseme 'the thread of life is broken'.

Pragmatic meanings are kept in the architectonics of a phraseme which sounds to put it mildly as a verdict as a kind of fatality. Indeed is everything already decided for us a long time ago? Can we change the script of life which as mythologeme inculcates was already written many centuries before our birth? These and similar pragmatic meanings are included in the semantics of the expression was born to 'pre-ordained by destiny'. Understanding the specific pragmatic meanings, therefore is achieved whether it:

- Corresponds to ethno-cultural standards
- Relates to cognitive base which is the same for the entire community
- Is subject to the dictates of ethno-discursive consciousness, system of semantics and laws of the discursive strategy

In general discourse synergy which is generating the phrase-forming domain is itself formed by several semantic energy flows:

- Verbal and cogitative
- Ethnocultural
- Modus

Categorical features of the phrase-forming domain which are produced by its modus component, largely determine phraseological semantics and pragmatics, representing this domain. Modus (from the Latin modus 'measure', 'means', 'image') is formed by idiomatic denotatum properties which are inherent only in an appropriate discursive context. It is caused by the associative-semantic connections that are in fact, a form a secondary denotative situation needing indirectly-derivative nomination.

According to modus of the appropriate domain, phrasemes cover as a rule, two semantic fields. Modus

vivendi is the basis for such property of phrasemes as designating people's lifestyle. It serves as the condition for their understanding. Conversely's modus procedendi gives to phrasemes a circumstantial sense, including displaying a way to achieve the object. In general, modus rectus and modus obliquus are associated with the figurative embodiment of verbal and cogitative intentions. The presence of figurative component in the domain is defined by the neurolinguistic nature of universal objective code: sensual image encodes a domain, forming universal objective code unit.

### **MECHANISMS OF CREATING PHRASE-FORMING DOMAIN**

The main mechanisms for the formation of phrase-forming domains are cognitive metonymy and cognitive metaphor which serve as means of displacement and condensation of meaning primarily at the subconscious level.

Cognitive shifts can be objective (denotative) and abstract (significative). In both cases by identifying with direct meaning, phraseological meaning includes all its main features. When a trope or a figure fulfills the characterizing function as Shelestyuk (2004) remarks, the figurative meaning is replaced or combined with the name of an attribute. Cp.: a black box 'a flight recorder', a tongue without bones 'loose tongue' a white crow 'odd person', a gray mouse 'ordinary person'. In such cases, the semantic component is the characterizing one.

In terms of a particular discursive situation, cognitive metaphor is designed to create communicatively meaningful domain, filled with non-standard modus meaning. Arising on the basis of cognitive metaphor, phrase-forming domain is the result of cooperation between the two juxtapositioned conceptual spheres the source (familiar, substantive and exact object) and goal (something less exact, subject to reflection and indirect semiosis) (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). The essence of the domain-forming role of cognitive metaphor is that it is "looking for" on the one hand, similar features of matched objects (otherwise it can not be understood), on the other hand, their differential features. Their comparative overlay is resulting in emerging of a hybrid (discursive-modus) which partially inherits the original conceptual properties but nevertheless represents a new formation.

Metaphor is the product of associative and symbolic thinking. It is based on the comparison. A person may compare something well-known to the unknown and this shows his or her attitude to objective reality. Referring sensually perceived signs to abstract and directly not observable objects, metaphor fulfills epistemological (cognitive) function.

Analyzing phrasemes which arose after the cognitive metaphor model, we get “access to ‘hidden’ or forgotten semes that have been actualized by the metaphor” (Boriskina, 2003). The fact is that “human thought processes are largely metaphorical. This is what, we mean when we say that the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined. Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person’s conceptual system” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

Cognitive metaphor is a means of perception of one object through another one, means of assigning an object to the class which it does not belong to by the so-called categorical shift. During the metaphorical phrase-forming, traditional categorical grid which defined a standard world vision is being transformed as there are new associative-semantic connections and relationships to reshape the cognitive space, changing the preconceived idea about this or that world fragment. In this regard, the cognitive, or conceptual, metaphor acts as a form of conceptualization and the metaphorization is regarded as a cognitive process which expresses and forms new concepts and which is essential to obtain new knowledge. By its source cognitive metaphor meets a person’s ability to capture and create similarities between different individuals and classes of objects. The most general approach considers metaphor as the projection of one object through another and in this sense, it is regarded as one of the linguo-creative representations of knowledge. Metaphor usually refers not to the isolated individual objects, but to the complex thought spaces (areas of sensory or social experience). During the process of cognition, these complex directly unobservable thought spaces are correlating through the metaphor with the simpler or directly observable spaces. So, the situation which does not fit the generally accepted standards is best characterized by the metaphoric phraseme ‘it does not climb in any gate’ as it includes, except its dictionary meaning, a quantity of additional figurative information: disapproval, outrage, condemnation. Such metaphorical representations demonstrate the shift of conceptualization of the observable area (gate) to the directly unobservable (thoughts, opinions, and actions) which is conceptualized during this process (discursive-modus domain “Outrageous” is formed), adding to the overall ethnic sphere of concepts. Thus, the same thought space (similarity for example) may be represented in Russian by one or more conceptual metaphors. Cp.: One block (lit. ‘the same shoetree’), on the nose (~ ‘to the minute details’), ‘neither give nor take’, ‘of the same color’, ‘smeared with the same myrrh’, ‘berries from the same field’, ‘two boots as a pair’, ‘of the same bread dough’, ‘point to point’.

Metonymic mechanisms of phrase-forming include explicature and implicature. Explicature is extracted by using references and linguistic code (In a healthy body there is a healthy mind). By means of explicature (instead of the original form of the expression) the implicature or what is meant is transmitted. The hidden phraseological meaning may vary significantly from the explicit meaning (“explicature”) and even contradict it (smth spins on the tongue ‘something is about to be remembered’). In this regard, special attention should be paid to the metonymical interference in verbal and cogitative acts and to the interpretation of discourse (MPI, 2003).

Emotively loaded metonymies are presented by two conceptual types inclusive and exclusive. Inclusive metonymies are based on:

- The transferring the name from the attribute to another object (“white crow>a person”)
- The transferring the name from the part of the subject owing a certain attribute to the whole event (“the white flag>surrender”)

The exclusive metonymies (they represent the majority of 60,7%) show interaction of the object image with the state of a person, caused by this image (“black day+human feelings>limitation, trouble, need”). The characteristics of objects, expressed by epithets (often modus and utilitarian attitude) become the basis for the interaction of these terms in both types of metonymy.

## CONCLUSION

A phrase-forming domain is a multilevel discursive-modus gestalt the product of linguo-creative verbal and cogitative process. The epicenter of its semantic content is the image of ethno-cultural type and conceptual and denotative meaning serves as its background. According to our conception, the domain of such special, cultural and pragmatic type is called discursive-modus domain. Gestaltly perceived, discursive-modus domain resembles a shortened form of inner speech. It combines the recognizable and unrecognizable information. The conscious is provided by verbal signals, signs. The unconscious phenomena which are pertaining to either figurative or emotional sphere are expressed in phrasemes implicitly. In other words, the unity of the conscious and the unconscious is the unity of characters, images and emotions the fundamental components of discursive-modus domain. Its discursive component is communicative and eventive fragment of its content. Modus meanings produce communicative and pragmatic connotations for the phraseological meaning. The figurative component of discursive-modus domain is

also quite informative. Behind it there is a gestalt a holistic view of the denotative situation. Hence, the main vector of linguo-cognitive analysis of units that represent discursive-modus domain should be aimed at identifying all the components of its semantic content, projected by means of modus and discourse.

Cognitive metaphor and metonymy determine different types of phraseological meanings. Metaphorical mechanism through the transfer of name to objects of another kind or species, based on similarity of collateral (and often imagined) features (color, shape, size, internal quality, etc. for example, the white crow), forms the figurative dominant of the discursive-modus domain. More often this transfer is based on the association of the human senses (sight, hearing, etc.) with real world objects. In phraseological semantics this layer projects two plans (the image and the prototype), increases the expressive and emotional component of phraseological meaning. Metonymic mechanism (through the transfer of name to objects of another kind or species in virtue of actually existing connection between the objects: 'beyond our budget') forms the semantic structure of the phrasemes due to denotative adjacency of the correlated objects. In general, cognitive metaphor and metonymy are conjugate mechanisms of discursive-modus domain cognitive substrate of phraseological meaning.

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