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## Phraseological Meaning as a Mechanism of Cultural Memory<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** One of the questions that arise within the framework of linguocultural studies is what enables phraseologisms to be a store of a huge amount of cultural knowledge or cultural information. Proceeding from the notion of “cultural memory” we set out to show that the phraseological meaning is a complex structure including semantic information and its conceptual basis. Such two-facet structure is capable of storing historical experience of world-cognition gained by a linguocultural community in the course of its development. Special attention is paid to the elaboration of adequate methodology helping to model the formation and functioning of phraseological meaning.

**KEY WORDS:** cultural information, phraseological image, conceptual model, cultural memory, concept

### 1. Introduction

One of the main distinctive features of modern phraseology is its interdisciplinary character. The study on phraseologisms has advanced greatly since the time of the first structuralistic typologies of multi-word expressions. Extensive work in the field of phraseology has led linguists to explore the boundaries of their discipline with the neighboring fields

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of science such as sociology, philosophy, psychology, computer science, semiotics, cognitive science, anthropology and some others. As a result, phraseology has been equipped with new theories and new successfully applied methods of research, with many different kinds of data prompting a new outlook on classical or traditional issues in phraseology as well as casting light on the problems that remained controversial and / or unresolved for quite a long time.

Phraseology has always been developing as a discipline of many interconnected approaches and the 1990s saw the rise of a new, very promising but at the same time quite challenging approach to the investigation of phraseologisms – the linguoculturological study of phraseology. Nowadays the research on phraseology as a culture-bound phenomenon unites linguists from all over the world: Piirainen (2008, 2011), Colson (2008), Sabban (2008), Pamies (2011), Szerszunowicz (2011), Holandi (2011), Al Jallad (2011), Arboe (2011) and many others. Recent international phraseological conferences held by EUROPHRAS are quite indicative of the growing interest in the approach in question, for instance, “Cross-linguistic and Cross-cultural Perspectives of Phraseology and Paremiology” (Granada, 2010), “Phraseology and Culture” (Maribor 2012).

It is of importance to note that the origins and much of current practice in analyzing phraseology in a culture-oriented perspective reside in the linguoculturological approach developed in the works by Veronika Teliya and her proponents and followers (Kovshova, Krasnykh, Beliaevskaya, Zykova, Oparina, etc). In the introduction to the book “Phraseology: Theory, Analysis, and Applications” Cowie writes:

A second strand can be described as broadly anthropological and is represented here by the contribution of Veronika Teliya and her colleagues, which proposes an extension of the Russian phraseological tradition to embrace the cultural dimension. They argue persuasively that this element must be elaborated in all its richness and complexity if the phraseology of a language is to be fully described and understood. (Cowie 1998: 2)

Drawing upon an exceptionally wide range of Russian examples, Veronika Teliya and her colleagues develop a conceptual framework for describing cultural data as represented in the meanings of multiword units. They argue that phraseology is a particularly fruitful point of focus for ‘linguocultural’ analysis. (Cowie 1998: 8)

Prof. Teliya (1996, 2004, 2006) contributed to phraseology such fundamental notions as cultural connotation, cultural codes, cultural-linguistic

competence, cultural layers of phraseology and worked out an innovative lexicographic principle of culturological description of phraseologisms.

The linguoculturological approach to phraseology means studying different ways and forms of interaction between culture and language resulting in the formation of phraseologisms as embodiments and generations-long transmitters of cultural information. Making the knowledge about the process of this interaction explicit and in this way finding and understanding how cultural information is translated into phraseological meaning is one of the main concerns of the linguoculturological approach to phraseology at present.

Thus, following this line of enquiry, we intend to pay special attention to what enables phraseologisms to act as a store of cultural knowledge. Proceeding from the notion of “cultural memory” we set out to show that the phraseological meaning is a complex semantic-conceptual formation which is capable of reflecting different historical modes of world-cognition and, therefore, of retaining the corresponding types of cultural information (such as archetypal, mythological, religious, philosophical, scientific) (Zykova 2010, 2011). The main assumption advanced in the paper is that **the process of storing cultural information in phraseologisms is possible owing to the conceptual structures underlying phraseological meaning**. To verify the assumption the methods of conceptual analysis of phraseologisms will be applied as well as the logical inference method and the culturological interpretation of the data obtained in the course of research.

## 2. Phraseological meaning with reference to the notion of “cultural memory”

Memory refers to phenomena of complex higher cognitive functions and for a long time the term resided mainly in psychology and its various trends of interdisciplinary character. Memory as an object of a keen scientific interest has quite a long-lasting history. The term “cultural memory”, however, is a rather recent coinage. It appeared in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century owing to joint scientific efforts of representatives of different sciences, such as semiotics, anthropology, sociology, philosophy and some others (for instance, investigations by Halbwachs, Moles, Duby, Namer, Trubetskoy, Cassirer, Lotman, Assmann). Work in this field has changed the entire conception of the nature of memory giving way to its investi-

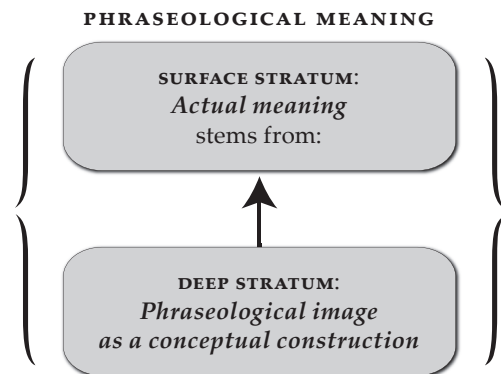
gation as a **supra-individual phenomenon** described as group, collective, social, national, historical, cultural and even world memory. The variation in terminology (group memory, collective memory and so forth) in some researches may be of principal character and counts much. For instance, Halbwachs (2005) makes a clear distinction between collective memory and historical memory. However, it is not like that in all cases, and some investigators use the terms interchangeably.

A great contribution to the elaboration of the notion of “cultural memory” has been made by Lotman (2001). According to the scientist, culture is a collective intellect and collective memory, i.e. a supra-individual “mechanism” of keeping and transmitting some messages or some information as well as a “mechanism” of generating new messages or new information. In his works Lotman especially emphasizes the regenerative character of cultural memory which makes it possible to not just keep cultural information but augment or multiply it by continuous adding new cultural information to the store obtained earlier. Such approach actually depicts the process of cultural memory in action as **a process of storing cultural information layer by layer**. We adopt this idea as a point of departure in our research to further develop it in the course of our linguistic investigation (see Section 3). It is also noteworthy that resting on Turner’s division of symbols into simple and complex ones, Lotman takes up the problem of the degree of information density in different signs. He comes to the conclusion that simple signs, such as, for instance, language signs, have far greater degree of information density than complex signs of culture, such as, for instance, statues (or sculptures). Thus, according to Lotman (2001), language units, being the result of human activity, are capable of actually storing and transmitting the greatest amount of cultural information, or, in other words, of possessing **the largest extent of cultural memory**.

Many linguists who are engaged in research on culturological aspects of language could agree with the latter point. However, as far as phraseology is concerned, a set of such related questions as what makes phraseologisms an element of cultural memory and what kind / type of information they store hasn’t yet found acceptable theoretical and adequate methodological solutions. We suppose that possible solutions are most likely to be found in a profound study of the nature of phraseological meaning, in the way the phraseological meaning is formed and structured as well as in the way it functions.

Methodologically, the tasks set might be solved if we view the meaning of both words and phraseologisms as a two-strata structure including **the surface stratum** and **the deep stratum** (see: Beliaevskaya 2007). The surface stratum is constituted by the semes forming what is known as “the meaning” of language units, and might be called the actual (lexical or phraseological) meaning registered in dictionaries. The peculiarities of the actual meaning stem from the deep stratum which structures the actual semantic set-up. The deep stratum is a conceptual stratum; it is formed by various conceptual constituents. We claim that it is to the deep (conceptual) stratum that the phraseological image belongs (see Diagram 1).

**Diagram 1. Phraseological meaning: stratification**



Thus, as provided by this approach, the phraseological image is in essence a conceptual formation. Such a view on the nature of the phraseological image seems to give reliable grounds for relating it to cultural memory. It is primarily the conceptual character of phraseological images that makes them operative “instruments” or “cells” of cultural memory. Therefore, in research on the problem of phraseological meaning with respect to cultural memory the study of the deep – conceptual – stratum as the stratum of phraseological images comes to the fore.

In recent years, image as a mental-visual representation (of knowledge, of some experience) has been comprehensively explored in different linguistic trends, and especially in cognitive linguistics, for instance, in the works by Langacker, Lakoff, Johnson, Turner, Fauconnier, Kovecses, Moon and many others. Resting on current results in the field we will dwell on

some of the relevant points of understanding phraseological images as conceptual formations.

It should be especially emphasized that the mental-visual representation of some knowledge or experience by the phraseological image has one significant implication: after acquiring certain stability it lasts over time (without much change). This factor is logically indicative of the fact that the process of representing some knowledge or experience by the phraseological image actually transforms into the process of storing (or “memorizing”) information in it. Moreover, the storing process opens up the opportunity for another cognitive operation – accumulation of what is stored. In general, it is possible to say that the conceptual nature of the phraseological image provides actual retention and accumulation of cultural information in the phraseological meaning. However, in the processes in question much depends, as we claim, on the conceptual complexity of phraseological images and this aspect deserves special attention.

As far as the conceptual complexity of phraseological images is concerned, it can be traced even in the tentative investigation of a few English phraseologisms, such as, for instance: *sing someone’s praises* – ‘commend a person exuberantly’; *beat one’s drum* – ‘immodestly publicize one’s own attributes’; *change one’s tune* – ‘alter one’s publicly expressed views’; and *make overtures to someone* – ‘make suggestions to a person, inviting further negotiations’. The analysis makes evident the synthesized and structured inner conceptual arrangement of the images of the given English phraseologisms. There are several conceptual constituents which are joined together in a particular way to construct the images in question. These conceptual constituents are defined and differentiated by a number of ideas they render, which are: the idea of communicants as musical (vocal / instrumental) performers and as an audience, the idea of communication as a musical play / concert, the idea of words as musical instruments that are skillfully played or objects that can be skillfully used to produce a particular (favourable / unfavourable) musical effect on the audience. Besides, it is important to note that the above described conceptual organization of the images makes another significant fact obvious. All the images turn out to be built up according to one and the same model, in other words, they refer to one and the same model which can be called a **macro-metaphorical conceptual model**. In fact, these images are generated by the macro-metaphorical conceptual model of VERBAL COMMUNICATION AS MUSICAL PLAY-PERFORMANCE.

It seems quite logical to deduce that a macro-metaphorical conceptual model that produces different phraseological images can be considered a structured conceptual medium which integrates all the cultural information about some phenomena that is “captured” and stored in each individual image. Therefore, research on the amount and variety of cultural information that is preserved in phraseological meanings and is continuously multiplied through time rests, for the most part, on the establishment and investigation of macro-metaphorical conceptual models that generate images underlying the phraseological meanings.

Macro-metaphorical conceptual models may be discovered in the course of conceptual analysis. The conceptual analysis conducted in our investigation was based on the theory of metaphorical concepts (by Lakoff and Johnson) and was accompanied in a number of cases by etymological analysis of the semantics of phraseologisms and words constituting them. We have analyzed about 2000 English phraseologisms related to different aspects of communication in its broadest sense, for example: *a full-dress debate* – ‘complete in every respect’; *beyond / without question* – ‘definitely true’; *a conspiracy of silence* – ‘an agreement to say nothing about an issue that should be generally known’; *name names* – ‘tell people who is involved in a secret or illegal activity’; *nothing to write home about* – ‘not exciting or special’; *not breathe a word* – ‘keep something a secret’; *lie through one’s teeth* – ‘tell an outright lie without remorse’; *a pat on the back* – ‘praise’. As a result of the conceptual analysis 11 macro-metaphorical conceptual models producing images of the English phraseologisms under consideration were discovered. They are as follows:

- COMMUNICATION IS PLAY-PERFORMANCE & PLAY-GAME (music, dance, etc performance; sport, war, children’s and other games), e.g.: *as clear as a bell* – ‘very easy to hear’; *meet one’s match* – ‘encounter someone who can equal, or perhaps outdo, one in combat, argument, strength of will, etc’; *piggy in the middle* – ‘someone who is between two people or groups who are arguing but who does not want to agree with either of them’;
- COMMUNICATION IS SOCIAL & LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY, e.g.: *the King’s / Queen’s English* – ‘the English language as written and spoken correctly by educated people in Britain’; *the talk of the town* – ‘be the person or subject that everyone is talking about and interested in’; *read the riot act* – ‘reprimand’;

- COMMUNICATION IS RELIGION-RELATED ACTIVITY, e.g.: *read a sermon to someone* – ‘reprimand’; *a sacred cow* – ‘anything that is beyond criticism’; *gospel truth* – ‘something that is completely true’;
- COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT, e.g.: *mend fences* – ‘try to become friends again with someone you have argued with’; *lay it on with a trowel* – ‘to praise someone too much’; *a left-handed compliment* – ‘an ambiguous compliment’;
- COMMUNICATION IS TRADE / COMMERCE, e.g.: *be lavish in one’s praise(s)* – ‘commend someone exuberantly’; *return the compliment* – ‘say something nice to someone after they have said something nice to you’; *take someone’s name in vain* – ‘criticize someone or talk about someone without respect, especially when they are not there’;
- COMMUNICATION IS JOURNEY, e.g.: *talk in circles* – ‘waste time by saying words that don’t mean very much’; *a standing joke* – ‘something that is always funny even though it is often repeated’; *better the foot slip than the tongue* – ‘it is better to take a bad step in walking than to say the wrong thing in talking’;
- COMMUNICATION IS HUNTING, e.g.: *call off one’s dogs* – ‘stop attacking or criticizing someone’; *rise to the bait* – ‘react to something in the way that someone wants you to, especially by becoming angry’; *take a pot shot* – ‘criticize someone suddenly’;
- COMMUNICATION IS EATING / COOKING, e.g.: *call bitter names* – ‘verbally abuse someone, use offensive epithets’; *language that will fry bacon* – ‘swearing; curse words’; *sweet talk* – ‘flattering or pleasing words used to persuade somebody’;
- COMMUNICATION IS MEDICINE-RELATED ACTIVITY, e.g.: *blind someone with science* – ‘confuse or trick someone by using complicated language’; *talk ad nauseam* – ‘repeat something so many times that it becomes very boring or annoying’; *be thin-skinned* – ‘easily hurt by criticism’;
- COMMUNICATION IS PAINTING, e.g.: *paint with a broad brush* – ‘describe something in a very general way without giving any details’; *in black and white* – ‘written down’; *a thumbnail sketch* – ‘a short general description’;
- COMMUNICATION IS HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITY, e.g.: *mop / wipe the floor with someone* – ‘speak very angrily to someone after they have done something wrong’; *sweep something under the carpet* – ‘try to keep something a secret, especially something you have done wrong’; *air /*

*wash one's dirty linen in public* – 'discuss private subjects or problems in public'.

Thus, the eleven macro-metaphorical conceptual models, as it was established, generate about 2000 English phraseologisms related to various aspects of verbal communication. Summarizing, it is worth mentioning that each macro-metaphorical model being a shared conceptual foundation for some number of phraseological images (the amount may vary) becomes an aggregate resource storing cultural information that each phraseological image retains and transmits.

The next task in our research is to deal with the questions concerning cultural information itself in relation to phraseological meaning: it is necessary to determine the criteria for its typology as well as the main layers / types of cultural information that are fixed and stored in the phraseological meaning.

### 3. On layers or types of cultural information "memorized" in phraseological meaning

In our monograph on culture as an information system (Zykova 2011) we put forward and provided with appropriate theoretical grounds the assumption that one of the main driving forces in information processing in culture are three modes of world-perception – emotional, ethical and aesthetical, and five modes of world-cognition – archetypal, mythological, religious, philosophical and scientific. Taking into account these modes, a corresponding typology of cultural information has been elaborated. According to our research, the main types of cultural information are as follows: emotional, ethical, aesthetical information, on the one hand, and archetypal, mythological, religious, philosophical and scientific information, on the other hand.

In the present paper we are going to dwell only on the latter five types of cultural information which will be considered in relation to English phraseologisms whose images are generated by the macro-metaphorical conceptual model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT (about 180 units). In the course of research two methods have been applied – the logical inference method and the method of culturological interpretation of phraseological images.

To begin with, five main modes of world-cognition are regarded primarily as **historical forms** that have evolved through the elaboration of the human intellect. Hence, their historical relatedness to each other can be depicted through the following hypothetical sequence: archetypal → mythological → religious → philosophical → scientific. Each mode is distinguished from the others by specific mental tools used to cognize reality (that will be described in the corresponding subsection below). However, evolving in the course of time these modes of world-cognition become permanent ways of comprehending various phenomena of life. It means that they are at the same time **the actual forms of modern thinking** about things in the world. This assumption logically suggests two basic claims. Viewed historically, the modes of world-cognition disclose the process of gradual accumulation of cultural information. Viewed synchronically, they point at the synthetic matching of different kinds of cultural information. It follows that cultural information in the phraseological meaning is stored in the form of overlapping layers and is transmitted as an integral whole. It is these facts that determine the principle of the consideration and description of cultural information contained in the English phraseologisms under analysis, i.e. the English phraseologisms the images of which are generated by the macro-metaphorical conceptual model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT.

#### 3.1. Archetypal information in phraseological meaning

As a first step it should be pointed out that mental tools that characterize the archetypal way of thinking are archetypal binary oppositions, such as up / down, inside / outside, left / right, close / distant, big / small, light / dark, clean / dirty etc. (see: Teliya 2006). They give rise to the formation of primary or basic conceptions of movement, structure, direction, number, border, identity, etc. These basic conceptions can be referred to as archetypes. It seems quite reasonable to claim that archetypal binary oppositions and archetypes as cognitive entities result basically from the immediate physical contact with reality in the course of which they are endowed with certain primary cultural implications. In fact, they prove to lay down not only the conceptual basis for macro-metaphorical conceptual models but also the information basis which is the source of connotative and semantic potential of phraseologisms.

As far as the English phraseologisms under consideration are concerned, the study of their images has shown that the archetypal information is revealed through the repertoire of interdependent archetypal

binary oppositions which convey certain experience in creating something as made, produced, built, erected, constructed, designed, shaped, clothed, etc by means of some tool in a particular way. These archetypal binary oppositions pertain to such archetypes, as structure and quality: inside / outside, left / right, part / whole, top / bottom, open / closed, simple / complex, short / long, solid(firm) / soft, similar / different, suitable / unsuitable. For instance, the archetypal binary oppositions part / whole, inside / outside, top / bottom serve as conceptual foundations for the images of such English phraseologisms, as: **part / whole**: *make words* – ‘talk about something; mention something’; *make conversation* – ‘say things to someone whom you do not know well, in order to be polite’, *not the whole story* – ‘not all, only part, of what there is to be known, learned, about something’; **inside / outside**: *hedge one’s bets* – ‘try to avoid giving an opinion or choosing only one thing, so that whatever happens in the future you will not have problems or seem stupid’, *put something into words* – ‘express something such as your feelings in words’, *lay it on thick* – ‘exaggerate or over-state praise, excuses, or blame’; **bottom / (top)**: *basic English* – ‘a simplified form of English limited to 850 selected words, intended for international communication’, *lay down the law* – ‘tell people what they should do, without caring about how they feel’, *get down to brass tacks* – ‘start talking about the most important or basic facts of a situation’.

The elementary conceptual constructs contain and render some bits of relevant cultural information. For instance, **inside** entails the implication of something ‘safe’, ‘protected’, ‘not risky’ (in *hedge one’s bets*), ‘come to be known’, ‘private’ (in *put something into words*); **bottom** implies the idea of ‘simple’, ‘easy (for understanding)’ (in *basic English*), ‘steady’, ‘immovable’, ‘unbreakable’ (in *lay down the law*), ‘start’ (in *get down to brass tacks*). It is necessary to note that all these information elements are indicative of assessment scaling within the range of such oppositions, as ‘good / bad’, ‘effective / ineffective’, ‘useful / useless’ and, in general, ‘approved / disapproved’.

Thus, cultural implications of archetypes and archetypal oppositions as elementary conceptual constructs of phraseological images form the archetypal information layer of meanings of the phraseologisms under consideration.

### 3.2. Mythological information in phraseological meaning

One of the main mental tools of the mythological mode of world-cognition is anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism, in its turn, gives rise

to such elementary beliefs as animism, fetishism, totemism, magic, etc. Within this mode of world-cognition human consciousness is syncretic as man perceives himself as an inseparable element of the universe. Besides, the mythological way of thinking contributes much to the sacralization and ritualisation of human activity.

The mythological mode of world-cognition is a higher cognitive form of comprehending reality that actually gives rise to metaphorical thinking (see, e.g.: Cassirer 1992). Within this way of thinking archetypal binary oppositions and archetypes are combined in such a way as to build composite conceptions of verbal communication as a process of creating something. In the images of the English phraseologisms in question verbal communication may be presented as handicraft in general (e.g. *make words*, *make a living with one’s pen*), as a builder’s work (e.g. *basic English*), as a carpenter’s work (e.g. *be on the square*, *nail a lie*), as a plasterer’s work (e.g. *lay it on (thick) with a trowel*), as a blacksmith’s work (e.g. *strike a bargain*, *hammer something home*), as a stone-cutter’s work (e.g. *(words, proposals etc) carved in stones*, *sermons in stone*), as a fitter’s work (e.g. *suit the action to the word*), as a tailor’s work (e.g. *a lie out of the whole cloth*, *lose the thread of something*), as a cutter’s work (e.g. *cut someone down to size*), a florist’s work (e.g. *say it with flowers!*, *the flowers of speech*), an interior designer’s work (e.g. *paper over the cracks*). As a result, owing to this mode of world-cognition the integral conceptual construction – the macro-metaphorical model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT – actually comes into being.

The mythological information that is conveyed by the given macro-metaphorical conceptual model finds its way into numerous phraseological images it generates, and it can be discovered in these images as traces of anthropomorphism and animism. For instance, in the image of the English phraseologism *one lie makes many* a lie is viewed as a human being or as an animate object. The phraseological images under analysis also retain references to such ancient elementary beliefs as fetishism and magic-making according to which inanimate things as spiritual beings are endowed with supernatural powers and become objects of worship. For instance, the image of the English phraseologism *sermons in stones* is based on cultural information to the effect that stones for a long time were regarded as sacred objects of rites. In general, it can be said that mythological information is concerned with the depiction of different aspects of verbal communication as a ritualized craft activity. However, the cultural implications may come to be different. This is obviously connected with two opposite ancient processes that are equally peculiar to the mythologi-

cal mode of world-cognition, i.e. sacralization and de-sacralization. The traces of sacralization are retained in the phraseological images which discover a high relevance of this or that craft or high value of certain craft skill, and, therefore, render positive cultural connotations (e.g. *hit the nail on the head* – ‘describe exactly what is causing a problem’). Lack / absence of skill in some craft and improper way of making something that find their reflection in the phraseological images are indicative of traces of the de-sacralization process. In the latter case the mythological information becomes the source of negative cultural implications (e.g. *a left-handed compliment* – ‘a remark that seems approving but which is also negative’).

All bits of mythological information conveyed by the individual images of the English phraseologisms are merged and come to present the mythological information layer (or the mythological type of cultural information) of the macro-metaphorical conceptual model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT, and, further on, of the meanings of the phraseologisms under consideration.

### 3.3. Religious information in phraseological meaning

The religious mode of world-cognition is characterized by a human’s awareness of himself as something opposed to nature. As a result the world comes to be divided into the natural and the supernatural. The relations between these two worlds are understood through the idea of God. As a result, various polytheistic, henotheistic, monotheistic and other religious beliefs or religions appear. They can be regarded as special mental tools peculiar to the religious way of thinking.

As far as the religious information is concerned, the English phraseologisms under consideration reveal one of the core Christian conceptions of God as the Creator or the supreme Craftsman which creates by His Word all the things in the world: “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” (Genesis 1: 3), “And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters” (Genesis 1: 6), “And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so” (Genesis 1: 9), etc. (King James Version).

This fundamental biblical view on communication gives rise to a great deal of correlated religious implications concerning moral aspects of communication as a process of creation (or craft) in which man is the individual who expresses his creative personality, manifests his (considerable

or insignificant) skill in reasoning (that may be good or bad / evil) and is capable (or otherwise) of achieving certain perfection in his verbal craft. All these religious senses that come about in the Christian tradition can be found in the images of the English phraseologisms under analysis, for instance<sup>2</sup>: *coin a phrase* – ‘invent a new expression’, *put into words* – ‘express something such as your feelings in words’, *the operative word* – ‘the most important word in a phrase, which explains the truth of a situation’, *a likely story* – ‘an improbable version, account, of something that has happened’, *a hatchet job* – ‘a false accusation of an offense or a malicious misrepresentation of someone’s words or actions’, *counsel of perfection* – ‘advice that is ideal but not feasible’.

Thus, the religious information is part and parcel of the information resource of the macro-metaphorical conceptual model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT and, consequently, can be regarded as another information layer or information type in the meanings of the English phraseologisms in question.

### 3.4. Philosophical information in phraseological meaning

The mental tools of the philosophical mode of world-cognition are the logical analysis, rational deductions, arguments, proofs, etc aimed at the critical thinking of fundamental problems of existence. Speculative, or theoretical, constructions that are characteristic of this mode of world-cognition enable people to reveal the most intimate regularities and laws of the universe and the essence of human life.

The core phenomenon the philosophical form of thinking is aimed at cognizing in a comprehensive perspective is the relationship of man with the world. The global opposition ‘Man – World’ takes different shapes within the philosophical mode of world-cognition. One of most prominent is the conception about the world as man’s workshop. WORLD IS A WORKSHOP OF MAN is a concept that is peculiar to cultures of many communities and to the English-speaking community, in particu-

<sup>2</sup> It should be especially emphasized that here we proceed not from the etymological data referring a phraseologism to religious sources but from the conceptual analysis of imagery underlying a phraseologism. It is the macro-metaphorical conceptual model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT that enables different types of cultural information (archetypal, mythological, religious, philosophical and scientific) to be stored and accumulated through time. Every phraseological unit possesses information of all the five types enumerated above, and further on we give the phraseologisms where, in our opinion, the type of cultural information discussed comes to the fore with all other types of information, though present, receding into the background.

lar. The roots of this multicultural concept lie deep in the past. Since the time of ancient thinkers it has been the backbone of profound philosophical speculations (see, e.g., works by F. Bacon). It seems quite reasonable to claim that COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT can be regarded as one of its conceptual derivatives. The philosophical view on communication as craft or creative activity offers important insights into the essence of communication and multiplies the information resource of meanings of the English phraseologisms under analysis by means of various philosophical implications. In fact, the philosophical information specifies the original metaphoric concept adding to it philosophical overtones bringing out the (im)perfect forms language can acquire in the process of communication depending on the skills of those who participate in its creation, on the accurateness with which communication can represent or reflect the essence of the existing things, the manifestation of the inner intentions of an individual who is capable of thought and of self-expression, etc. These philosophical implications are incorporated in the images of the English phraseologisms under consideration making up the philosophical information layer of their meanings, for instance, *strike a bargain* – ‘agree to terms’; *spin a yarn* – ‘tell an amusing or unlikely story’, *stretch the truth* – ‘say something which is not completely true in order to make someone or something seem better than it really is’, *tie oneself (up) in knots* – ‘become very confused when one is trying to explain something’.

### 3.5. Scientific information in phraseological meaning

The mental tools of the scientific mode of word-cognition are theories elaborated on the basis of unbiased observations and systematic experiments.

The scientific information that is stored in the meanings of the English phraseologisms under consideration due to the macro-metaphorical conceptual model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT has much to do with a number of important issues in linguistics and other sciences which linguistics is integrated with. It can be said that the scientific information layer of the macro-metaphorical conceptual model under study reveals mainly the scientific understanding of verbal communication elaborated through different scientific conceptions, approaches, hypotheses, theories, trends as well as through scientific terms and notions. The scientific cognition of communication as a craft activity may be traced in all ‘mainstream’ scientific trends of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – structuralism, generativism, functionalism as well as in scientific (interdisciplinary) approaches to lan-

guage. For instance, in the structuralistic perspective language is understood as a structure and a system, as an organized in a particular way formation produced or manufactured in accordance with strict rules. Besides, one of the scientific trends that nearly literally refer to communication as craft is calligraphy which for a long time has been developing both as an art form and as a traditional craft (see, e.g.: Johnston 1906; Mahoney 1981).

Interestingly, proponents of different scientific trends profile different aspects of the “craft idea” of communication. For instance, the view on communicants as “members of some craft guild” seems quite evident in Grice’s model of communication based on the notion of co-operative principle, i.e. the collaborative efforts of participants in directing conversation towards attaining a common goal. By observing the co-operative principle the participants follow a number of specific conversational maxims, such as ‘be informative’, ‘be truthful’, ‘be relevant’ and ‘be clear’ (Grice 1975, 1999). This scientific principle can be found in the English phraseologisms under study. In their images it is preserved in the form of particular cultural prescriptions, for instance: *say one’s piece* – ‘say what you really think about something’, *make one’s point* – ‘prove that you are right about something’, *in plain English* – ‘in clear language’, *in a manner of speaking* – ‘as could be said’, *in short* – ‘as directly as possible’. Moreover, the terms themselves, such as “construction”, “reconstruction”, “architecture”, “instrument” (of social interaction), “framework”, “network”, “design”, “skill”, “creativity” and the like that are applied in communication (or language) scientific studies as the core ones (see, e.g., the works by Jakendoff (1997) *The architecture of language faculty* and Landau (2001) *The art and craft of lexicography*) are indicative of the rapid and prolific scientific development of this “craft-related” comprehension of communication (or language). This development amplifies the information resource of the model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT providing it with new scientific information and, thus, forming a scientific information layer of the meanings of the English phraseologisms under consideration.

## 4. Conclusions

In the present paper we have set out to elaborate the problem of phraseological meaning within the framework of the notion of cultural memory. Proceeding from the stratificational approach to phraseological meaning considerable attention in the research has been paid to its deep – con-



ceptual – stratum as the stratum of the conceptual construction of phraseological images. The conceptual nature of phraseological images has proved to be a reliable criterion for relating them to cognitive mechanisms of cultural memory. The close consideration of the principles of the formation of phraseological images has testified to their similarly / identically patterned conceptual organizations. Thus, one of the significant results of the study has been the establishment of 11 macro-metaphorical conceptual models that generate images of all the English phraseologisms under analysis (about 2000 units). The further research verified the assumption that it is these models that ensure the process of storing cultural information in phraseology as well as rather high information capacity of phraseological meanings. The results of the analysis have shown that owing to the macro-metaphorical conceptual models phraseological meanings contain a variety of types of cultural information, namely archetypal, mythological, religious, philosophical and scientific information. The cultural information of various kinds is stored in phraseological meanings forming overlapping information layers which are realized in the context as an integral whole.

Thus, any phraseologism built on the macro-metaphorical conceptual model COMMUNICATION IS CRAFT necessarily reflects the English language view of communication as the creative process of sacred significance and of communication as part of the workshop of man together with information of archetypal and mythological nature. All these types of information, in their turn, give rise to modern theories of language and communication which indirectly relates any phraseologism of the set studied to at least some well-known scientific trends.

In general, it should be emphasized that it is **the conceptual stratum of phraseological meanings** that provides the retention, accumulation and transmission of cultural information through time and generations in phraseologisms and makes them **operative cognitive mechanisms of cultural memory**.

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## Znaczenie frazeologiczne jako mechanizm pamięci kulturowej

#### STRESZCZENIE

W celu znalezienia odpowiednich rozwiązań jednego z głównych problemów językowo-kulturowego podejścia do frazeologii, tzn. określenia, co sprawia, że frazeologizmy są „instrumentami” lub „komórkami” pamięci kulturowej, opracowana została koncepcja znaczenia frazeologicznego rozumianego jako ustratyfikowana formacja składająca się z dwóch zależnych od siebie warstw: warstwy powierzchniowej (inaczej semantycznej) i głębokiej (inaczej konceptualnej). Au-

torka przedstawia argumenty mające uzasadnienie teoretyczne, aby udowodnić konceptualną naturę obrazowości frazeologizmu, a zatem jego odniesienie do głębokiej (konceptualnej) warstwy znaczenia frazeologicznego. Przyjęto założenie, że z powodu złożonego konceptualnego charakteru obrazowość frazeologizmu ma zdolność zatrzymywania i kumulowania informacji kulturowych w czasie. O ile chodzi o informacje kulturowe, typologię opracowano, przyjmując kryterium historycznych sposobów poznawania świata. Według tego kryterium można wyodrębnić następujące typy informacji występujących w znaczeniu frazeologicznym: archetypiczne, mitologiczne, religijne, filozoficzne i naukowe. Aby potwierdzić założenia badawcze, konieczne było opracowanie odpowiedniej metodologii, której podstawami są: analiza konceptualna, metoda inferencji logicznej i metoda interpretacji kulturowej. Zastosowanie tej metodologii pozwoliło udowodnić, że: 1) obrazowanie frazeologizmów jako złożony konceptualny twór jest syntetyzowane i porządkowane jako przedstawienie makrometaforycznego modelu konceptualnego; 2) każdy makrometaforyczny model konceptualny zatrzymuje i kumuluje pięć typów informacji kulturowej (archetypiczne, mitologiczne, religijne, filozoficzne i naukowe), które tworzą niezależne, ale nakładające się na siebie warstwy. Przeprowadzone badanie i uzyskane dzięki niemu dane pokazały, że makrometaforyczne modele konceptualne obrazowości frazeologizmów będących podstawą znaczeń frazeologicznych sprawiają, że znaczenia te są jednym z efektywnych mechanizmów pamięci kulturowej.