RECENZJE, OMÓWIENIA, SPRAWOZDANIA, KOMUNIKATY

Joanna Szerszunowicz
Uniwersytet w Białymstoku
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6197-5643
e-mail: j.szerszunowicz@uwb.edu.pl

Diana Sidtis: *Foundations of Familiar Language. Formulaic Expressions, Lexical Bundles, and Collocations at Work and Play.* Wiley Blackwell. New York 2022, pp. 450

The study of fixed expressions, i.e. polylexical units familiar to users of a given language opposed to novel word combinations, has been developed intensively over the recent decades, with many analyses offering new insights into reproducibility[1]. The language items in questions have been investigated from various perspectives, including, inter alia, the linguocultural approach, phraseostylistic research, lexicographic studies or the psycholinguistic framework (Granger, Meunier 2008; Skandera 2007; Albano, Miller 2020)[2]. What should be emphasised is the fact that the broadly understood word *phraseology* serves as an umbrella term used for describing a plethora of institutionalised multiword combinations[3]. These polylexical items differ in their nature: idioms, conversational phrases and proverbs tend to be figurative, while most collocations carry literal meanings. The common denominator is their familiarity to language users who store them in their mental lexicon.

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[1] One of the manifestations of novelty is related to new data in phraseology and their implications in theory and methodology (Piirainen, Filatkina, Stupmf, Pfeiffer 2020).

[2] For more references see online *International Bibliography of Paremiology and Phraseology* which contains 10,000 paremiological and phraseological publications written in many languages during the past two centuries. The bibliography is part of the International Proverb Archives built by Wolfgang Mieder from the University of Vermont in Burlington, the USA (Mieder 2023).

[3] This approach to multiword construction emphasises the reproducible character of units composed of at least two words, which differs them from those created spontaneously in the proces of communication (Chlebda 2003; Wray 2002, 2012).

Familiar expressions are of great importance in the proces of communication, since they facilitate and liven up everyday conversations. Then, both canonical forms and creative adaptations can also observed in literature. The phrases at issue are often employed in word play, which is well evidenced in various texts, for instance advertising slogans, headlines or Internet memes. Thanks to their persuasive load, many of them appear in public communication, for instance in political discourse. The language items in question can perform various functions, thus they are useful for language users. Multiword units are not only convenent vehicles of expression, but also attractive items because of many features including familiarity, culture-boundness and figurative character. Their constant development, ubiquity and widespreadness across styles and genres offer great potential for investgation like the one undertaken by Diana Sidtis[4].

The reviewed book is composed of seven chapters. The first chapter is of introductory character and contains the definitions of the main term, i.e. *familiar language* (*fixed, familar phrase*; *fixed, familar expressions*), whose synonyms are *prefabricated language* and *fixed expressions*, along with the explanations of the related ones like *formulaicity*. In the monograph, the terms *fixed, familar phrase* and *fixed, familar expression* „refer to expressions that have unitary structure and are known to a speech community" (p. 3). In turn, formulaicity is defined as the „tendency for words to appear together into recognizable phrases […] tied to frequency counts in corpora" (p. 4). Familiar expressions are also viewed from the translational perspective.

The second chapter, titled *Classification*, focuses on the approaches to dividing multiword expressions into groups[5]. Attention is drawn to the fact that familiar linguistic phenomena are both diverse and copious, which results in terminological abundance and classificatory difficulties[6]. The focus is placed on three classes of familiar polylexical units: formulaic expressions, lexical bundles and collocations. The chapter also contains an overview of characteristics and functions of formulaic language.

The question *How Is Familiar Language Acquired?* is the title of chapter three which presents the role of frequency, connotation, nonliteral meaning, emotion and familiarity in acquiring fixed expressions. It is also undertaken

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[4] Diana Sidtis, formerly Van Lacker, is Professor Emerita of Communicative Science and Disorders at New York University and Research Scientists at the Nathan Kline Institute for Psychiatric Research in Orangeburg, New York. Her scholarly interests include voice, aphasia, motor speech, prosody and formulaic language.

[5] Several divisions proposed by various linguists are offered in Fernando (1996).

[6] For a presentation of terms for multiword expressions see: Wray (2002, 2012), Miller (2020).

to shed light on memory for speech and language. The next chapter, *Acquisition*, continues the discussion with the presentation of several conditions that converge to promote acquisition of multiword expressions. The factor in question include chunking and being salient. Then, acquisition of fixed expressions is discussed from two perspectives: the one of the first language and that of the second. The Author compares familiar language representation in the first and second language. Finally, a subchapter is devoted to simultaneous bilingual acquisition.

The fifth chapter is entitled *Prosodic and Phonetic Characteristics of Fixed, Familiar Expressions.* The focal issue is stereotyped prosody of multiword expressions, i.e. specified intonation contours, timing features etc., at least in their canonic forms. Prosodic modifications may change the discoursal potential of phrases, as illustrated by the examples. The chapter also reflects on the issue of unitary structures reflected in prosody. Then, acoustic studies and their specifics are presented. Finally, the role of literary devises is briefly discussed.

The next chapter titled *Familiar Language in Psychiatric and Neurologic Disorders* moves the discussion of familar language to a different context, mainly it offers an insight into how diagnosed conditions, neurological damage or disfunction influence the production or comprehension of fixed expressions. The first subchapter discusses how familar language functions in four psychiatric disorders. Briefly speaking, in the case of autism, such language units „sometimes stand out or, alternatively, are notably impoverished” (p. 170). In Gilles de Tourette syndrom, expletives tend to be produced semi-compulsively. Lexical bundles predominate in language users who suffer from depression, while in schizophrenia, familar language is impoverished. Then, the neurology of familar language is dealt with. The Author discusses fixed expressions usage in aphatic patients, paying attention to familar proper names.

Furthermore, the phrases in question are presented in the areas of speech therapy and familiar language rehabilitation. Persons with left and right cerebral hemisphere damage are compared in terms of multiword expression usage. The phraseological competence is also viewed in the cortical-subcortical dimension. The cases of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases are also analysed from the perspective of familiar language incidence. The second subchapter presents functional imaging studies, including electroencephalography (EEG), evoked responses (ERPs) and brain scanning techniques. Two separate sections are devoted respectedly to comprehension and production studies. The final part focuses on planning strategies and novel expressions.

The following chapter, *Summing Up: Dual- or Multiprocess Model of Language Function*, begins with the presentation of the linguistic view, Next, the psychological perspective is discussed. The Author also presents the observations from cerebral processing, drawing attention to the fact that there is some contradictory evidence in the „reports from studies of idioms, proverbs, and other familiar expressions regarding hemispheric processing" (p. 258). It leads to the conclusion that it is impossible to indicate exact neurological substrates for all types of formulaic language. Finally, daunting heterogeneity of formulaic language is dealt with. It is stressed that the status of formulaic language is far from peripheral, since it „enjoys an bundant, vital presence in verbal and written communication in countless venues" (p. 259).

The Author proposes three terms, *formulemes*, *templates*, and *constructions*, for formulaic expressions, lexical bundles and collocations, respectively. These terms name abstract, underlying forms that are stored in language users' memory. Each of them possesses a unique combination of features: stereotyped form, conventional meaning, and contingencies for use. It is the canonical form that allows for all kind of modifications, creative use etc.

As pointed out in the chapter, the model of familiar expressions proposed in the monograph complies with the theory and instantiations of construction grammar. The units can be viewed on hierarchy or continuum, with idioms as the least abstract, since a minimum of precise words is required, followed by lexical bundles – less flexible than idioms and showing the highest degree of cohesionn, and collocations varying greatly in flexibility and manipiulability thus resembling constructions the most. The dual proces model comprising the two sets of familiar / prefabricated and novel / grammatical may develop into multiprocess models on the basis of multiaspectual, interdisciplinary research. Furthermore, it is observed that „all language is modulated by the left hemisphere, while formulaic expressions and (most likely) lexical bundles are also efficiently stored in and accessed from the right hemisphere" (p. 262).

The appendices constitute a valuable part of the book. Appendix I contains a list of formulaic expressions collected by Fillmore which is composed of 2050 items (1973). Appendix II offers Baker's (1977) „*New York Times", The 1978 Commandments*, while Appendix III presents selected familiar expressions listed in Chiardi (1987). Appendix IV is composed of well known phrases contributed by students as heard in everyday communication in a class taught by the Author at Carleton College, Northfield, MN, in 1999. Appendix Va is titled *Formulaic Expressions as Encountered Every Day Over a Few Years*, Appendix Vb – *Lexical Bundles Encountered Every Day Over a Few Years*, Appendix Vc – *Collocations Encountered Every Day Over a Few Years*.

Schemata, like ___ *is a few ___ short of a full ___,* collected from current communications are listed in Appendix VI[7]. The next one contains German proverbs excerpted from Hain (1951), set up in a survey style to evaluate the knowledge of current German native speakers. A dialogue made of movie titles is included in Appendix VIII, followed by another related to the film which contains formulaic expressions from on-line viewing of *Some Like It Hot.* In turn, Appendix X focuses on familiar expressions from newspapers, while Appendix XI presents the essential terms for celebral structures.

Some of the appendices contain tests used in several previous studies on formulaic language. The twelfth appendix is composed of matched novel and familiar phrases that served as stimuli for Rammel, Pisoni and Van Lancker Sidtis study (2018). It was „designed for a dychotic listenining study and for the FANL-C" (p. 345). The next one is devoted to Northridge evaluation of formulas, idioms, and proverbs in social situations. It is divided into two parts, both of which contain questionnaires used to gather the information. In part a, respondents had to provide the missing part of a phrase most suitable in a described context and part b contains eighteen multiple choice questions. The next two include protocols: Appendix XIV comprises a familiar and novel language comprehension protocol with instructions and an answer sheet, while XV – *Some Like It Hot* protocol. There are two more appendices containing tests applied in the studies conducted in the past: one offers a sample „grid" used in preliminary studies to document subsets of familiar expressions in healthy and neurological patients (XVI), the other presents a responsive naming tests with expected answers (Garidis, Van Lacker Sidtis, Tartter, Rogers, Sidtis, Javitt (2009)).

Finally, the Author offers a list of selected dictionaries, monographs and articles that focus on formulaic expressions, lexical bundles, and collocations (XVIII). The works included in this section deal mostly with the English language, some of them also concentrate on German. All of them belong to the canon of studies on formulaicity, viewing this phenomenon from various perspectives. The list is followed by a glossary of the key terms used in the chapters, an extensive bibliography (pp. 386–438), and an alphabetically arranged index of proper names and terms.

The book is an important contribution to the studies on formulaic langauge for many reasons. First of all, it one of comprehensive character. As the Author states in the Preface: the aim of the monograph is „to bring together

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[7] On the linguistic schemata as an intermediary between formulaic language and spontaneously created expressions see Van Lancker Sidtis, Kougentakis, Cameron, Falconer, Sidtis (2012).

as much understanding of the topic, gleaned from personal observation, home-grown research, and from the many published works, as can fit between two covers" (p. xii). This objective has been achieved, as the reader is offered a panoramic view of familiar language, its status and peculiarities.

Furthermore, the concept of analysing multiword language items in three classes of units, mainly formulaic expressions, lexical bundles and collocations seems to be an advantageous from the perspective of the broad understanding of phraseology and its implications for research. It introduces a clear view of the units under analysis, which is of great importance, especially taking into consideration the terminological and classificatory problems observed in phraseological studies (cf. Miller 2020).

The monograph draws attention to several important aspects of phraseo-logical studies, beginning with identification and classification of familiar expressions, through acquisition in both the first and second language, pro-sodic aspects which tend to be neglected in research on reproducible items. Special attention is paid to familiar language in psychiatric and neurologic diseases, an issue that is particularly significant in modern research.

Finally, what should be highlighted is the fact that the book contains rich illustrative exemplification of the issues discussed. It comprises a plethora of authentic occurrences of phrases, for instance cartoons in which formulaic language is employed, which shows how fixed expressions are used to perform the ludic function. Furthermore, numerous visualisations of the presented contents, like tables and diagrams, contribute to the clarity of the discussion and facilitate the reception.

To sum up, it can be concluded that the book addresses various problems from the vast area of language reproducibility, thus it can be expected that it will attract a wide readership. Since it discusses many problems from the field of phraseology, it is of interest to linguists interested in multiword expressions, phraseologists and paremiologists. Next, it is of use to scholars who focus on mother tongue and foreign language acquisition, too. Those who conduct studies on formulaic language in patients with psychiatric and neurologic illnesses will also benefit from reading this work.

The book is both highly informative and interesting, because the Author shows perfectly how important it is to analyse formulaic language from various perspectives and different angles, adopting an interdisciplinary perspective. The monograph offers an insight into the essence of phraseo-logical character of language units and illustrates their potential with rich and varied examples, thus it is an important and valuable contribution to reasearch on reproducible word combinations.

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