

Prikazi knjiga
Book reviews
Rezensionen

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Anita Naciscione, 2010. *Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse*. Amsterdam – Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 289 pp, € 95. ISBN 978-90-272-1176-7.

Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse by Anita Naciscione is an interdisciplinary comprehensive account of idiom behavior, spanning stylistics, cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, and theoretical and applied phraseology. It is the edited and expanded new edition of Naciscione's *Phraseological Units in Discourse: Towards Applied Stylistics*, which was published in 2001. The first part deals with theoretical aspects of phraseological units, defining technical terms, key concepts, and key processes, whereas the second part presents the results of applied research. The book is divided into seven chapters, and includes the preface written by the paremiologist Wolfgang Mieder, a glossary, appendixes, an index of phraseological units, and a subject index.

Naciscione begins the chapter on phraseology and cognitive stylistics by stressing the importance of style in literary and non-literary texts, and the combined methods that literary criticism and linguistics could provide to deal with the form and the function of language. Discourse analysis, as part of a discourse based approach, is a discipline that integrates the study of language and literature and aims to observe and explain language in discourse and text organization. Discourse of literature has become an important field of study for discourse analysis due to its value in language education. Naturally, this led to discourse stylistics, which uses discourse analysis to study literary texts, to become a new discipline and bring stylistic features into the focus of linguistic research. As far as phraseology is concerned, the author points out, style is necessary for the

analysis of phraseological units (PUs) as well as observing their discourse behaviour.

Naciscione further highlights the work on metaphors by cognitivists and the role of metaphor in conceptual organization. She claims that cognitive science paved the road for cognitive stylistics. Furthermore, the author states her aim “to explore phraseological meaning in its stylistic aspects: the instantiation and development of meaning in discourse, the emergence of new associations and their chains, resulting in creation of successive sub-images, coupled with visual development of metaphorical meaning” (p. 17). Finally, the author argues for “a cognitive approach to stylistic use of PUs in discourse” (p. 17) which would go beyond phrase or sentence levels.

In the section on phraseological units Naciscione addresses the issue of proper terminology which is characterized as the bane of phraseology stemming from the lack of standardization. The section on phraseology and stylistics presents the roots of phraseology and phraseological stylistics beginning with Kunin’s pioneer work in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. The author continues with a short presentation of Western development of phraseo-stylistics done by Gläser in the 1980s and the recent higher interest in the stylistic changes of PUs in various text-types and text genres. Naciscione claims that this interest is mostly generated through the focus on lexicography, discourse-based research especially as it is used in pedagogy.

As far as phraseo-stylistics as an autonomous area of research is concerned, Naciscione maintains the importance of examining PUs in textual and visual discourse and cognitive rules that determine stylistic changes. She adds that phraseo-stylistics require a lot of input from disciplines like psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics. Cognitive psychology as “the study of perceptual processes, especially the processing of a flow of words as well as recognition, creativity, and imagery” (p. 21) is singled out as a discipline necessary to manage the issue of creativity in phraseology.

The section on attitudes to stylistic use of PUs includes a discussion about the positive and the negative attitudes toward stylistic changes to PUs throughout history and today. In the area of language teaching, stylistic variation often tends to be marked as incorrect. Naciscione shows that the negative attitudes to stylistic changes are shown in the pejorative terms used to describe the phenomenon. Some linguists however hold that style goes against the norm, or rather that style “taints” the norm, and introduces abnormality and instability into the language. On the other hand, cognitive approaches view stylistic changes as natural processes of the mind, especially evident in discourse.

In the last part of the first chapter Naciscione investigates the treatment of stylistic use of PUs in dictionaries and teaching materials, considering how they reflect attitudes to change. Traditionally, changes have been mostly ignored. The author explains that this was caused by “the insufficient development of both phraseology and stylistics, added to terminological obscurity and specific lexicographical or (...) phraseographic difficulties, as PUs do not easily lend themselves to processing” (p. 24). In other words, change, especially manifest in many individual cases, is difficult to document.

Naciscione remarks that one of the most common approaches is to reflect no stylistic use of PUs. In the examples provided after the base form, she states, the PUs are inserted verbatim, allowing only for the necessary grammatical changes. Other possible, ‘imperfect’ examples are excluded from the entries. Other similar approaches mark familiar PUs as clichés from the onset and are deemed dead and stale. Naciscione underlines the irony of providing only stylistically neutral examples and proclaiming them frozen and lacking freshness.

According to the author, the reasons for the lack of stylistically enriched PUs in dictionaries are “the theoretical premise”, “lack of informed awareness of semantic and stylistic differences in various contexts” and the “choice of example” (p. 26). With regard to the choice of example, Naciscione claims that a large number of dictionaries include examples created by the compilers themselves. Those dictionaries which provide examples from contemporary sources call the stylistic change *nonce variation* that requires some cultural and/or literary knowledge.

Naciscione points out the use of authentic examples enabled by computer technology in some dictionaries. These dictionaries provide a large number of genuine data and make a better description of idioms in English possible. Thus it is quite indicative of the attitude to stylistic change when some dictionaries based on a large corpus do not include stylistic use. Naciscione provides examples from a few dictionaries showing that Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Idioms (1995) leads the way by showing possible avenues of variation, going so far as to cite stylistically marked examples first. Furthermore, she condemns the use of examples to support the definition when in fact the definitions should reflect the use. Finally, Naciscione points out that corpus-based research and inclusion of stylistic changes can only help lexicology and foreign language teaching, while advancing phraseology and cognitive stylistics.

Naciscione dedicates the second chapter to the proper definition of PUs, starting with their base form and their realization in discourse in order to facilitate their identification. The second term covered in this chapter is core use of PUs, a

stylistically neutral use of the base form in text, adapted only grammatically. It is the fruition of the potential of the base form. Core use is easily recognized in the text and has been used in foreign language teaching. The second part of the second chapter (2.4 *Identification procedure*) provides a procedure or identifying instantial stylistic use of PUs in discourse which does not depend on intuition and is devoid of subjectivity. Naciscione proposes several steps to be taken in the process of identification: recognition, verification, comprehension and interpretation.

In Chapter 3 Naciscione addresses the concepts of stability, cohesion, stylistic pattern and sustainability. The first section discusses the significance of stability of PUs and Naciscione adds *stylistic stability* evident in the preservation of the image and type of figurativeness in the base form as well as in use and *diachronic stability*. Using the example of the PU *a snake/serpent in/under the grass/flowers*, Naciscione shows that the PU has existed for centuries exhibiting minor lexical variation and still maintaining stability due to the strong metaphorical image. The author also points out that stability should not imply frozenness. It is a necessary feature of PUs ensuring their place in the language system of a certain period. Furthermore, variants do not pose a threat to stability. Finally, Naciscione enumerates the three types of variation: parallel variants in the base form, grammatical changes in the core use and creative variation. Language stability, the author claims, does not contradict discursal flexibility.

The next section introduces another important notion – *phraseological cohesion*. It is active both in decontextualized base forms and instantial use. Naciscione divides the section on cohesion to discuss cohesion of the base form and cohesion in discourse, in core and, in more detail, instantial use. In section 3.3 the author defines patterns of instantial use. Figurative patterns serve as cognitive models that enable and facilitate the construction of meaning. Variation in instantial use may seem endless and chaotic, but Naciscione points out that there are patterns of instantiation that PUs follow. Instantial patterns are diachronically stable techniques employed to construct meaning, tools used to transform base forms to instantial use. They provide cohesion in discourse and belong to human mental capabilities and resources. The author likens them to stylistic equivalents of base forms, finite in number providing infinite uses. In the final part of the third chapter sustainability of the phraseological image is presented as one of the key concepts of instantial use. Since instantial use goes beyond the core function and often surpasses sentence boundaries, PUs need to remain decipherable by maintaining the phraseological image. Naciscione claims that sustainable ability of figurative thinking enables us to process even complex figurative language. A sustained phraseological image ensures cohesion and facilitates interpretation of the discourse. The author also discusses the discursal flexibili-

ty of the PU stemming from the key features of the base form. It is the multi-constituent structure of the PU and the interplay of literal and figurative meaning between the parts and the whole that allow for the creation of new links and meanings, however it is stability and cohesion that allow sustainability.

In Chapter 4 Naciscione extends the study of patterns and focuses on the most common ones, those of extended metaphor, pun, cleft use and phraseological allusion. In the first section on the extended phraseological metaphor, Naciscione defines metaphors in their traditional as well as the modern cognitivist sense and moves to extended or sustained metaphors as opposed to single metaphors. She points to conceptual layering evident in language and metaphors and the ability to see the layers at the same time. Naciscione reiterates that extended phraseological metaphors constitute the largest portion of all instantial use of PUs.

Extended metaphors use a single pattern which means that there is a string of subimages, i.e. extensions of the image of the PU, which create associative metaphors. Several types of the pattern are provided, with the metaphorical extension of one of the PU constituents being the simplest type. Another type includes a string of sub-images with the metaphorical developing happening in what Naciscione describes as “a chain reaction” (p. 81). The final and the most complex type involves the extension of more than one base component and their own further expanding. The section on phraseological punning deals with phraseological puns which depend on ambiguity borne on polysemy or homonymy. The author singles out the process of *demetaphorisation*, the opposite of image creation present in the formation stage of PUs, as the key to understanding how phraseological images come to life.

The third type of pattern covered in this chapter is cleft use, an instantial pattern first described by the author herself. Base form is perceived as a whole, and the wholeness is mirrored in the PU’s core use. In its instantial use, a PU can undergo insertion of instantial constituents which affect the meaning but do not cause discontinuity. On the other hand, cleft use is core use broken for stylistic effect. Cleft structures belong to discourse management features. Cleft use is closely associated with speech patterns where pauses or interruptions aid the organization of the discourse. This pattern depends on the meaningful nature of silence in conversation. Various stylistic choices are involved in employing cleft use, ranging from expression of conflict and hesitation to agreement.

The final section of the chapter explores phraseological allusion as a pattern of instantial stylistic use and the message it conveys. It is shown to be the most sophisticated pattern of instantial use which requires a complex identification procedure. Naciscione stresses the role of the *image* in allusion and shows that

the failure to access the image results in failure to understand the meaning and the intent behind the allusion. Naciscione particularly emphasizes the fact that allusion works on subtlety. Explicit constituents and cues present in the text point to implicit constituents and form an outline for the base form. In one example from *Macbeth* the word *cat* is the only element present from the PU *the cat would eat fish, but would not wet its feet*. Nevertheless, other neighboring words lead to the correct inference.

Chapter 5 explores the potential that PUs have in discourse construction. The author divides the chapter by ways the sustainability of PUs in the web of discourse is achieved apart from the extended use of single patterns: reiteration, cumulative use, concurrent use, saturation and comprehensive use. *Phraseological reiteration* is a form of cohesion, since PUs connect firmly with other elements and reinforce the meaning. A sustained phraseological image in the course of a narrative, according to Naciscione, sustains the narrative itself and may function as a leitmotif or a reflection of a literary character. Reiteration as repetition, a use of a synonym, a near-synonym, a superordinate or a related word is shown in Naciscione's numerous examples to be a conscious stylistic choice made in order to strengthen the phraseological image. In the section on *Instantial cumulative use*, Naciscione deals with successive reiterations of a single pattern which the author shows on the example of the use of the diminutive. The third pattern is that of *instantial concurrent use* as a simultaneous application of more types of changes in the instantiation of one PU. The combination of changes makes the process of identification all the more difficult. However, as the author points out, the effect of the combination is much more powerful due to the strength of cohesion. Concurrent use also displays the complexity of human thought and associative power. The topic of the section on *Instantial phraseological saturation of discourse* is the use of more PUs in a stretch of text. This phenomenon causes phraseological saturation and coexistence of different images which may present a challenge for identification. In some cases when the PUs are closely related or share constituents, the PUs complement one another and the associated images blend. Conversely, there are cases of oversaturation. The final part of Chapter 5 introduces comprehensive instancial use, "encompass[ing] a text by appearing either in titles and headlines or in codas" (p. 162). Naciscione illustrates how the prominent position of the PU increases the scope over which it has influence, and adds to "comprehensive unity" (ibid.). This section is divided into two parts, dealing with *umbrella use*, or the use in titles and headlines, and the use of PUs in codas.

In the last chapter of the theoretical part of the book, Naciscione looks at visual representation as the non-verbal sphere of phraseological use. Considering that figurative language creates images, visual representation can coincide with

the phraseological images, provide variation or an unexpected contrast to the accompanying captions. Naciscione stresses that “in visual representation, the process of creating a mental picture in one’s mind relies on close ties between the visual and the verbal, and knowledge of the political, socio-cultural, and semiotic implications” (p. 175). In accordance with the topic, Naciscione includes plenty of images – cartoons, illustrations, cover-pages and pictures used in newspaper articles.

Naciscione begins by addressing the issue of instantiation of a PU in visual form, which is the changes a PU undergoes either in details or the style of the whole image. She continues with a special focus on visual representation in media discourse and illustrates the interplay of text and visual representation, as well as one between figurative and literal meaning in text and images. Naciscione also covers the use of semiotic elements which represent the perfect blend of meaning and visual representation and are especially well suited for visual representation of PUs.

In the section on Implicit visual messages, Naciscione discusses “concurrent visual and verbal allusion”. Concurrent visual and verbal allusion is visual representation not directly expressed in the text. In case of implicit visual messages, the text only aids the identification of the PU embedded into the image. The subsequent section examines the new dimension added to the discourse already containing creative instantiation by the inclusion of creative visualization. Visual representation, in this case, enhances the effect and sustainability. The final section of the sixth chapter focuses on the skills needed to convert all the interconnected elements between visual representation and the text in order to fully comprehend the meaning and appreciate the stylistic effect.

Naciscione’s last chapter delves into the area of applied stylistics, the discourse based approach to phraseology in teaching and learning foreign language as well as translation practice, lexicography, glossography and advertising.

Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse by Anita Naciscione is the most comprehensive interdisciplinary study of stylistic behavior of idioms available today. The findings presented have implications for teaching and learning a foreign language, translation practice, lexicography, glossography and advertising, as well as for the general stylistics, cognitive linguistics, and ultimately, phraseology. A special added value of this study is the diachronic approach that spans periods from Old English to Middle, Early Modern and Modern English periods, and authors from Shakespeare, Chaucer, D.H. Lawrence and Lewis Carroll, to more contemporary authors and copywriters. All this entitles us to claim that this book is unique in scope, focus and applicability, and that it will

become a landmark piece of discourse-based phraseological research many will turn to for reference and inspiration.