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## MODERN TRENDS IN RUSSIAN PHRASEOLOGY: SEMANTICS, CULTURAL MARKEDNESS AND DIDACTIC POTENTIAL

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**Abstract.** The article examines current trends in Russian phraseology, focusing on semantic complexity, mechanisms of ambiguity, cultural markedness, and the didactic value of phraseological units in teaching Russian as a foreign language. A comprehensive linguistic approach reveals how idiomatic expressions accumulate cultural meanings, maintain semantic stability while demonstrating contextual flexibility, and contribute to the development of communicative competence among foreign learners. The study identifies key directions in the evolution of Russian phraseological units in the context of globalization and intercultural communication.

Russian phraseology represents one of the most culturally saturated and linguistically stable components of the national language system. Phraseological units (PUs) encode figurative meaning, emotional and evaluative nuance, and cultural symbolism, which makes them a significant object of study within modern linguistics. Recent scholarly interest has shifted toward the multidimensional nature of PU semantics, pragmatic functions, and the specific challenges these units pose for learners of Russian as a foreign language (RFL). Given the increasing global interaction and linguistic contact, understanding the dynamics of Russian phraseology has become particularly relevant.

### 2. Semantic Multilayeredness of Russian Phraseological Units

The semantic structure of phraseological units is inherently complex and hierarchical. It typically includes:

- a denotational component, which conveys the core meaning (e.g., сидеть сложа руки — “to remain idle”);
- a connotational layer, responsible for emotional and evaluative colouring such as irony, criticism, or emphasis;
- a cultural-symbolic component, reflecting historical and national imagery (e.g., бить челом — “to plead humbly”, rooted in medieval tradition).

This multilayered organisation allows PUs to maintain semantic stability while adapting to diverse communicative environments. The coexistence of literal imagery and metaphorical meaning also facilitates stylistic versatility.





### Ambiguity as a Functional Feature of Modern Phraseology

Ambiguity has become a key characteristic of contemporary Russian phraseology. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon:

#### Expansion of contextual usage.

Many traditional idioms have begun functioning in new discourse types. For instance, *держать марку* ("to maintain one's level or reputation") is now actively used not only in professional but also in everyday communication.

#### Shift in metaphorical motivation.

Younger speakers reinterpret phraseological images and sometimes modify them creatively, which leads to semantic variability and even the emergence of hybrid phraseological units.

#### Interlingual interference in RFL acquisition.

Learners often interpret Russian PUs literally, which results in ambiguity and misunderstanding. For example, *играть первую скрипку* ("to play the leading role") is frequently misinterpreted as a direct musical reference.

Ambiguity thus emerges not as a deficiency but as a functional characteristic reflecting the dynamic nature of modern communication.

#### Cultural Markedness of Phraseological Units

Russian phraseology is deeply embedded in national culture, historical memory, folklore, religious tradition, and everyday practices. PUs often represent condensed cultural meanings:

expressions derived from folklore (водить за нос, как белка в колесе);  
units linked to social norms and etiquette (держать себя в руках, быть на высоте);

idioms expressing culturally specific emotional states (душа болит, сердце не лежит).

For foreign learners, cultural markedness becomes both a challenge and an opportunity: mastering PUs significantly enhances intercultural competence and understanding of implicit cultural knowledge.

#### Didactic Potential in Teaching Russian as a Foreign Language

Phraseological units possess high pedagogical value in RFL methodology. Their systematic inclusion in the curriculum contributes to: development of communicative competence, better understanding of Russian linguistic worldview, mastery of emotional and evaluative vocabulary, enhanced pragmatic awareness.

Effective teaching strategies include contextual modelling, semantic grouping (fields of emotions, actions, character traits), comparative analysis with the learners' native language, and the use of authentic media sources (films, interviews, social media).

Given the rise of digital communication, attention should also be paid to new idiomatic expressions emerging in youth slang and internet discourse.





Modern Russian phraseology demonstrates a combination of semantic depth, cultural symbolism, and functional flexibility. In the context of globalization and expanding intercultural communication, phraseological units continue to evolve, acquiring new meanings and functions. Their study remains essential both for theoretical linguistics and for the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language. A comprehensive approach to phraseology — integrating semantic, cultural, and pragmatic perspectives — contributes to a deeper understanding of linguistic processes and enhances the efficiency of language instruction.

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