Core and boundaries of the notion of phraseme construction*

Núcleo y límites de la noción de construcción frasémica

Katrin Schlund
University of Halle-Wittenberg
katrin.schlund@slavistik.uni-halle.de

Anna Pavlova
University of Mainz
anna.pavlova@gmx.de

Abstract: Phraseme constructions (PhraCons), also known as constructional idioms, can be most simply defined as syntactic patterns consisting of lexically fixed anchor words and empty slots for fillers. The article discusses the most important morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic properties of PhraCons as compared to similar construction types (e. g., lexically fully specified idioms or fully schematic syntactic idioms). It is shown that PhraCons are characterised by a group of features which are all nuanced rather than categorical in nature. This notwithstanding, PhraCons can be discerned by these features as constructions in their own right.
Keywords: phraseme constructions; constructional idioms; syntactic phraseology; syntactic idioms.

Resumen: Las construcciones frasémicas (PhraCons), también conocidas como construcciones fraseológicas, pueden definirse como patrones sintácticos formados por anclajes léxicamente saturados y casillas vacías que se rellenan con ítems léxicos. El artículo aborda las características morfosintácticas, semánticas y pragmáticas más importantes de las PhraCons en comparación con otros tipos de construcciones similares, así como los frasemas léxicamente saturados o los frasemas sintácticos totalmente esquemáticos. Ello nos permite observar que las PhraCons se caracterizan por una serie de características que son más bien graduales y no tanto categóricas. A pesar de esto, las PhraCons pueden identificarse por determinados rasgos particulares que permiten considerarlas como construcciones por sí mismas.

1. Introduction

Construction types located at the intersection of grammar and lexicon occupy a central position in construction grammar (CxG) approaches to language. It is precisely these types of constructions which were the starting point for the emergence of construction grammar in the first place. The last two decades have seen a growing interest of construction grammar in phenomena located further down towards the lexical end of the grammar-lexicon-continuum, which has led to a rapprochement of phraseology and construction grammar (e. g. Dobrovol'skij, 2011; Staffeldt, 2011: 131-134; Ziem, 2018). Semi-formulaic patterns of multiword units represent the major point of intersection between CxG and phraseology. Such patterns have been described under various labels: as lexically open or formal idioms (Fillmore, Kay & O'Connor 1988: 505), constructional idioms (Booij, 2002; Taylor, 2002; Mellado Blanco, in press), phraseological templates (German: *Phraseoschablonen*, Fleischer, 1982: 130-134), phraseological constructions, phraseological schemes (Russian: *frazeologičeskie konstrukcii*, *frazeosxemy*, Šmelev, 1977: 327-330), or syntactic idioms (Mel'čuk, 2022, 2023), among others. A more recent term to capture a specific type of semi-formulaic constructions is the notion of phraseme construction (Russian: *frazeologizm-konstrukcija*; German: *Phrasemkonstruktion*, henceforth: PhraCon) coined by Dobrovol'skij (e. g., 2011: 114, 2012: 328, 2022: 227). PhraCons have been defined as form-meaning templates consisting of lexically fixed elements and one or more empty slots (cf. also Mellado Blanco, Mollica & Schafroth, 2022: 1; Pavlova & Alekseyeva, 2022: 54; Pavlova, 2024: 79f.).

The *anchor* may consist of only one or of several *anchor words*. *Fillers* are the lexical items which can be realized in the lexically unspecified *slots* of a given PhraCon. The factors underlying the selection of slot fillers must be established for every single PhraCon of a given language. With respect to the various labels for similar phenomena mentioned above, we consider Booij's (2002) notion of "constructional idiom"[1] as synonymous with the term PhraCon, while the other labels seem to capture slightly different phenomena.

---

[1] Booij defines constructional idioms as follows: "Constructional idioms are syntactic constructions with a (partially or fully) noncompositional meaning contributed by the construction, in

In our lexicological and lexicographic practice, it is often difficult to determine whether a given syntactic pattern should be classified as a PhraCon or not, which is why we believe it is useful to develop a more elaborate notion of the term. This paper aims to contribute to this goal by highlighting various aspects that have come to our attention over the course of our empirical work with German PhraCons and their equivalents in Russian and Croatian. Our conception of PhraCons is therefore motivated practically (Wray, 2002: 45)[2].

As we will elaborate in section 3, the basic definition of PhraCons given above can be supplemented by a multidimensional catalogue of criteria. Importantly, all these criteria are of a gradient, not categorical nature, which means that idiosyncratic syntactic patterns can be more or less typical cases of PhraCons.

The goal of this paper is to pin down PhraCons as a construction type in their own right, one which deserves special attention in practical disciplines like lexicography, language teaching, and translation. First, we briefly explain the reasons that led us to investigate PhraCons (section 2). We then go on to determine the category of PhraCons as compared to similar phenomena (lexical idioms, routine formulas, lexically non-specified syntactic idioms, and others) with respect to formal, semantic, pragmatic and other criteria (section 3). Section 4 summarises the characteristic properties of PhraCons.

2. Practical background: a multilingual repository of phraseme constructions

The idea for our project came after observing that PhraCons often pose a challenge in translation and L2 acquisition. In translations of literary works, text passages containing PhraCons are sometimes translated incorrectly despite translations otherwise meeting the highest of standards (cf. Pavlova, 2023: 95-97). In L2 teaching, the realisation that successful foreign language learning also requires knowledge of ready-made patterns[3] has led to a stronger focus on idioms proper, that is, lexical idioms (e. g. *bite the bullet*), and routine for-

which–unlike idioms in the traditional sense–only a subset (possibly empty) of the terminal elements is fixed" (Booij, 2002: 302).

[2] For a more theoretically driven account of the phenomenon, cf. Mellado Blanco (in press), which we became aware of shortly before this article was completed.

[3] Lewis' (1993) famous lexical approach to language teaching is just one example of this development.

mulas (e. g. *you're welcome*). PhraCons have received much less attention and are often ignored because of their elusive, lexically semi-specified nature. The teaching of PhraCons in foreign languages is also impeded by the fact that reference materials are not readily available. What is more, native speakers, including teachers, do not always notice the idiosyncratic nature of PhraCons[4]. Although dictionaries in general and phraseological dictionaries in particular are of course capable of mapping blanks in the description of lemmas, they cannot reflect the strong variation potential that is characteristic of PhraCons. PhraCons are semantically and pragmatically complex linguistic signs, which can also be characterized by specific linguistic correlations (Schafroth, 2014: 78). Even though some PhraCons are usually described in large-scale dictionaries and phraseological dictionaries, their descriptions fall short of providing "verstehensrelevante[s] Wissen", that is, 'knowledge relevant for understanding' (Busse, 2012: 29).

At present, AI-based translations do not offer reliable alternatives to reference works either, even in non-professional uses. This applies particularly to automatic translations from or into less studied languages[5]. But even when it comes to translations from Russian into English, AI-based providers such as DeepL or ChatGPT may still provide completely distorted translation suggestions for PhraCons.

Our project is an attempt to fill this lexicographical gap by pioneering new approaches in lexicography. With the advent of digital text corpora and the associated research possibilities, it has become possible to make more precise statements about the actual use of PhraCons. Our project exploits these resources to build a multilingual digital repository of describing PhraCons in German on the basis of corpus evidence, and to provide literary translations and self-made translations in fifteen languages of Central and Eastern Europe[6]. The constructionist notion of "constructicon", defined as the totality of the constructions or a subset of constructions of a given language (e. g., Ziem,

---

[4] For instance, native speakers of German may consider the PhraCon *sowas von adj/adv/noun* as in *sowas von unverschämt* 'absolutely outrageous' as a very natural way of expressing a high degree of a property and will not notice that the words *sowas, von* + fillers do not normally combine in this way, let alone to express this specific meaning (see Habermann & Herbst, 2022 and Brône & Schoonjans, 2022 for detailed analyses of this PhraCon).

[5] Our project is dedicated to Central and Eastern European languages, some of which are not represented, for instance, in DeepL (e. g., Croatian or Macedonian).

[6] As of July 2024, the languages included in the repository are: Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Macedonian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovakian, Slovenian, Serbian and Ukrainian.

2014; Lyngfelt, 2018) is helpful in this respect, as it is able to also capture partially lexically specified construction types like PhraCons.

Our goal is to create an active dictionary which will enable users not only to discover and understand a construction within existing texts, but also allow them to integrate it into their own text creations. Our lexicographical presentation of PhraCons goes beyond mere semantic explanation, thereby drawing on the experiences of the Moscow Semantic School in their work on the *Aktivnyj slovar' russkogo jazyka* or 'Active dictionary of the Russian Language' (Apresjan, 2024). The lemma entries of such a dictionary not only include detailed semantic and grammatical, but also pragmatic information, accompanied by authentic examples of real-world use. While the active dictionary of the Moscow Semantic School is monolingual and not specifically dedicated to PhraCons, we offer detailed descriptions of the semantics, pragmatics, morphology, syntax, and style of PhraCons in German and provide annotated translations into other languages.

Since November 2023, the endeavour of building a multilingual digital repository of PhraCons in fifteen languages of Central and Eastern Europe is carried out within the framework of the COST-Action network "PhraConRep – A Multilingual Repository of Central and Eastern European Languages"[7]. German and Russian serve as the baseline languages[8] of the repository, which is why most examples given in this paper are taken from them. Translations of literary works, digital corpora, and, if available, parallel corpora, are used to establish equivalences between PhraCons among the various languages represented in the repository.

3. Defining the category of PhraCons: what makes a typical PhraCon?

In the pages that follow, we will discuss four groups of criteria that appear most important in deciding whether a given syntactic structure can be classified as

---

[7] For more information about the COST-Action PhraConRep, cf. www.phraconrep.com and Action CA22115 - COST.

[8] This is not a coincidence. The existence of lexically semi-fixed multiword units has long been acknowledged within the Soviet tradition of phraseological research going back at least to the middle of the 20th century. Soviet studies about German phraseology (e. g. Černyševa, 1986) have been particularly influential in (Eastern) Germany. For a detailed review of the Soviet and pre-Soviet roots of phraseological studies, which can be traced back at least to the end of the 19th century, and about how this research tradition inspired the study of syntactic phraseological units in Western Europe, cf. Melikyan, Melikyan & Dzyubenko (2017: 24-28).

a PhraCon and, therefore, be included in our repository. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 discuss formal criteria, such as the presence of anchor words, empty slots, and morpho-syntactic idiosyncrasies. Section 3.3 reviews the semantic and pragmatic properties typical of PhraCons. Section 3.4 discusses some additional criteria with an emphasis on prosodic features.

3.1 *Presence of anchor words and slots for fillers*

The presence of lexically fixed anchor words and empty slots seems to be a workable criterion upon first glance. However, this criterion actually applies to all kinds of prefabricated patterns allowing for some kind of variation. Consider the following partial list of phenomena which could fall under the category of PhraCons simply due to the presence of empty slots to be filled with different lexical items:

- routine formulas allowing for slight variation, such as *have a nice/pleasant/wonderful stay/day/trip*
- phraseological similes such as *to be dumb as (det) NP*, e. g., *to be dumb as a brick/a box of rocks*
- variants of lexical idioms / idioms proper (e. g. *break/shatter the ice*)
- phraseological twin forms such as N_i *by* N_i (e. g. *step by step*; *day by day*)
- grammatical phrasemes such as *not only... but also ...* or *not to mention X*
- idioms with valency-induced slots (e. g., *to twist someone's arm; to put one's foot in one's mouth*)

Routine formulas and phraseological similes don't usually fall under the definition of PhraCons. This is because variation in routine formulas is typically restricted, nor do routine formulas pose a major problem in translation or teaching. This also applies, by and large, to phraseological similes, although phraseological similes often exhibit a high degree of filler variation and are prone to creative innovation. Phraseological similes are usually semantically transparent because the first comparand is used in its literal sense, which in turn makes them less problematic for learners and translators.

In the case of lexical variants of idioms, the number of acceptable fillers is just too limited to fall under the domain of PhraCons, even though the empirically observable variation of idioms has been underestimated (cf. Geeraert, Baayen & Newman, 2017: 80 and references therein). There is a considerable amount of interoperability between PhraCons and idioms: fully lexicalized

idioms often serve as templates for (new) PhraCons, and frequent fillers of PhraCons may give rise to lexical idioms (Mellado Blanco, 2023). Although the transitions between PhraCons and idioms are fluid, PhraCons are productive in that they allow for a great variety of fillers. Idioms are not as productive, since their variation is limited to a small set of often synonymous slot fillers.

Grammatical phrasemes are another borderline case. German *geschweige denn X* ('let alone X'[9], cf. Dobrovol'skij, 2012: 328), for instance, is very frequent and can be found easily under the lemma *geschweige* in any standard dictionary of German. It is more difficult, however, to find the meaning of Russian *to li delo X* ('X is quite a different matter') under any of its anchor words, even when using a phraseological dictionary[10]. In contrast, a parallelly joint conjunction like English *not only X, but also Y* also requires fillers, but it does not deserve special attention in translation or teaching. One reason for this is that *not only X, but also Y* is semantically more transparent (in other words, its meaning is more compositional) than *geschweige denn* or *to li delo* – a criterion that we will discuss in more detail in section 3.3. Although grammatical phrasemes and PhraCons resemble each other formally, PhraCons are syntactically more autonomous than grammatical phrasemes (Baranov & Dobrovol'skij, 2023: 134f.). This criterion is of course also fluid and not concrete and requires further elaboration. However, it is clear that a complex conjunction such as Russian *potomu čto [X]* ('because [X]') is syntactically less autonomous than a typical PhraCon such as *tože mne X*[11] (e. g., *tože*$_{also}$ *mne*$_{me.}$ $_{DAT}$ *poèt*$_{poet.NOM}$ 'Him, a poet?!'). On the other hand, *potomu čto* is lexically more autonomous than the PhraCon *tože mne X* because the latter requires its slot to be filled, whereas *potomu čto* functions like an independent lexical unit.

Phraseological twin forms have long been analysed within lexical phraseology. Phraseological twins typically contain fillers which occur in high frequency, while others are considerably less frequent and often derived via metonymic or metaphoric extension from the more frequent type(s) to create new meanings. For instance, a twin form like German *von N$_i$ zu N$_i$* ('from N$_i$

---

[9] The English translations given in this paper may represent lexical idioms, PhraCons, or free word combinations of English. As English is not one of our languages of study, we do not discuss these differences.

[10] For instance, as of July 2024, there is no entry for *to li delo* in the Russian phraseological online dictionary Slovar' frazeologizmov (frazbook.ru).

[11] For the sake of legibility, variants of the anchor words and optional anchors are not given in this paper. Exceptions are made only when variants are important for the line of argumentation.

to N$_i$') can express temporal, spatial and relational meanings (Dobrovol'skij & Mellado Blanco, 2021). Phraseological twin forms, here understood in a broad sense as semi-fabricated reduplicative patterns of various kinds, are included in our repository if they are productive enough to allow for a relevant number of slot fillers and, preferably, if their meaning is not completely compositional (cf. section 3.2).

Regular idioms and collocations can have valency slots (e. g., *be under someone's thumb*; *pay someone a visit*; *go to great lengths to do something*; German *jm. einen Korb geben*, 'to turn someone down'). The morphosyntax of these slots is determined by the valency of a lexical element of the idiom or collocation. In the German idiom *jm. einen Korb geben*, the empty slot is a regular valency of the verb *geben*, 'give', which requires dative case marking on the argument encoding the receiver. In contrast, the structure of the German PhraCon *einen auf X machen* or 'pretend to be X' (e. g., *er machte einen auf dumm*, 'he played stupid') is not determined by the valency of the verb *machen* 'make, do'. Likewise, the structure (and meaning) of the Russian PhraCon *komu* N$_{i\,NOM}$ *ne v* N$_{i\,ACC}$ illustrated by the construct[12] *mne obed ne v obed* ('I am not able to enjoy my lunch', lit., 'To me lunch is not into lunch') is not determined by the valency of any of its parts (see also section 3.3).

The criterion requiring the presence of at least one lexically fixed anchor word makes it possible to distinguish PhraCons from more schematic templates further up on the schematicity-idiomaticity scale. Although such structures can be idiosyncratic with respect to syntax and semantics as well, they are usually not included in dictionaries, but rather in detailed grammar books because they are part of the respective language's grammar. One such example is the Russian impersonal construction with a modal infinitive and a semantic subject encoded in the dative case (e. g., *tebe*$_{you.DAT}$ *vyxodit'*$_{get-off.INF}$ *na*$_{on}$ *sledujuščej*$_{next(one)}$, 'you must get off at the next stop') (Baranov & Dobrovol'skij, 2024: 76) or transpositional uses of the Russian imperative (e. g., *vse*$_{everyone.NOM}$ *govorjat*$_{talk.PRS.PL}$, *a*$_{but}$ *my*$_{we.NOM}$ *molči*$_{IMP.2SG}$, 'everyone's talking, but we have to be quiet'). Examples like these belong to the class of what Iomdin (2016) refers to as "non-standard [micro-]syntactic constructions", whereas PhraCons belong to the domain of syntactic phraseology (Baranov & Dobrovol'skij, 2024: 75f.; Melikyan et al., 2017).

---

[12] We refer to a concrete realisation of an abstract construction (here, a PhraCon) as a construct.

There are no definable restrictions with respect to the position of anchor words or empty slots in PhraCons. Both can be located anywhere throughout, and slots can be placeholders for single words, phrases or even entire clauses.

Although most PhraCons have at least one anchor word, some PhraCons may be fully schematic, so in our view, the criterion of the presence of anchor words does not always have to be fulfilled (contra Dobrovol'skij, 2022: 227f., 2023: 28). Examples include Russian morphosyntactic patterns like $N_{i\,NOM}\ N_{i\,INST}$ (e. g., $durak_{NOM}\ durakom_{INST}$,'a real fool; like a fool') or V_i-V_i ($ležal_{was\text{-}lying.M}$-$ležal$; $spit_{is\text{-}asleep}$-$spit$ or 'he was lying for a long time; s/he is sleeping and sleeping'). More peripheral to the domain of PhraCons are cases of morphological word formation, as for instance lexical clones like German N_i-N_i (*Kaffee-Kaffee*, in the sense of 'real [filter] coffee, not a substitute of any kind') or N_i-N_i-N_{ii} (like *eine Hund-Hund-Begegnung*, 'an encounter between dogs'). The German language examples are actually compound words rather than syntagms. Notably, such patterns do not represent lexical units of the respective languages which could be represented in dictionaries. This is because there is typically a wide variety of fillers in such patterns, as in the above examples. For instance, it does not make sense to include German lexical clones like *Kaffee-Kaffee* or *Freund-Freund* ('friend-friend') as lexical entries in dictionaries of German because the meanings of the respective constructs are not conventionalised and thus cannot be concretely demonstrated without contextual information[13]. Although these patterns are governed by the grammatical systems of the respective languages in which they exist[14], they tend to fall through the cracks of both syntax and lexicology because of their intermediate position between these domains. Cases like these are included in the repository as instances of PhraCons without anchor words. On a more abstract level, one can also argue that, for instance, twin patterns like German $N^i\ an\ N^i$ (e. g., *Tür an Tür*, 'door to door') or $N_{i\,PL}\ über\ N_{i\,PL}$ (e. g., *Fragen über Fragen*, 'a lot of questions') are actually subtypes of a more abstract scheme $N_i\ prep\ N_i$.

Pinning down the anchor words is often not an easy task either, as anchors can also be non-obligatory (Pavlova & Alekseyeva, 2022: 56). What is more, there can be considerable variation between the anchor words within a single PhraCon, with some anchor words being completely fixed and others being

---

[13] As shown by Frankowsky (2022), the meaning of lexical clones in German is not purely context dependent. The study also underscores that context still plays a crucial role in determining the meaning of lexical clones.

[14] For instance, a PhraCon like Russian $N_{i\,NOM}\ N_{i\,INST}$ (e. g., *durak durakom*) is possible because the language has inflectional case and no article.

more flexible. This latter case blurs the boundary between anchor words and fillers, and it opens up the question of how much variation is possible within an anchor word before it becomes a filler (or vice versa: how much absence of variation is required to turn a filler into an anchor word?). An example illustrating the immense variation attested within one PhraCon is Croatian *Baš mi je to nek- N* or 'one hell of an N' (lit. 'you are a real N to me')[15], in which only one anchor word, the copula in the form of the verb *biti* ('to be') is obligatory, whereas each of the other four anchor words *baš*, *mi*, *to* and *nek-* can be omitted. In all, more than 70 different realisation patterns are possible within just this one example PhraCon.

In the repository, each PhraCon is illustrated first as a template, alongside with an example of a construct with typical fillers on top of the lemma entry. Ideally, the construct with typical fillers illustrates the most frequently realised variants of the respective PhraCon, which is established by means of corpus research[16]. So far, this procedure has proved feasible, but it may be necessary to introduce numerical thresholds for "anchorhood" and "fillerhood" in the future (cf. Ungerer's 2023 notion of "constructionhood").

The placement of fixed elements into slots can result in the formation of so-called snowclones (e. g., Mellado Blanco, 2024). Snowclones are a specific kind of PhraCons arising from creative uses of ready-made phrases like aphorisms or winged expressions. For example, one of the most popular quotes from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, "To be or not to be, that is the question," has evolved into a PhraCon in Russian (and many other languages). The original verb *byt'* ('to be') is replaced by other verbs in instances of doubt: *Ženit'sja ili ne ženit'sja, vot v čëm vopros!* ('To marry or not to marry, that is the question!'); *Echat' ili ne echat', vot v čëm vopros!* ('To go or not to go, that is the question'), etc. Speakers' creative potential plays a significant role in the process of creating semi-lexicalized patterns (PhraCons) from such sources.

We have also observed that anchor words are often function words, while content words are fillers (Pavlova, 2022: 596; Pavlova, Najdič & Pëppel', 2021: 10). In around 80 % of the 250 German PhraCons currently in our repository, anchors consist exclusively of function words, and 45 PhraCons have at least one content word as their anchors[17].

---

[15] This translation comes closest to the Croatian original, even if this construction, which is also a PhraCon in English, may seem outdated to some speakers of English.
[16] Determining the most common form of realisation of a PhraCon is of course a complex undertaking. Due to limitations of the scope of this paper, this will not be discussed in detail.
[17] We owe thanks to Vladimir Karabalić for these numbers.

3.2 *Morphology and syntax of PhraCons*

PhraCons occur in various syntactic functions. Some may be complete clauses, such as Russian *N$_i$ i v Afrike N$_i$* (e. g., *Sobaka i v Afrike sobaka*, 'A dog is a dog [lit. also in Africa]'). Others may be syntactically restricted, such as the German PhraCon *N in Person*, which typically functions as a predicative (e. g., *sie ist die Güte in Person*, 'she is goodness personified'). The German PhraCon *kakoj N$_{NOM}$ von N$_{DAT}$* (e. g., *dieser Langweiler von Chef*, 'this bore of a boss') is often used in subject function, but it can also be an object of varying kind.

Interestingly, PhraCons may also have restrictions with respect to morpho-syntactic or lexical variation that are not predicted by the standard rules of a given language. For instance, we could only attest feminine and neuter filler nouns in the Russian PhraCon *N$_{NOM}$ sama/samo N$_{NOM}$* (e. g., *on sama ljubeznost'*, 'he is kindness personified'), but no masculine nouns[18].

PhraCons may also violate grammatical rules. One such example is the Russian PhraCon *kakoj/kakoe tam X* as in *Kakoj$_{which.m}$/kakoe$_{which.n}$ tam$_{there}$ ženitsja$_{get.married.3SG}$!* ('Him, get married?!'). In this construct, regular agreement rules of Russian do not apply, as there is no masculine or neuter noun phrase for the pronouns *kakoj/kakoe* to agree with. It is also impossible to describe the syntactic relation between the constituents of this PhraCon in terms of any regular syntactic functions. Another example is the Russian PhraCon illustrated by *mne obed ne v obed* ('I am not able to enjoy my lunch') or *mne prazdnik ne v prazdnik* ('I cannot enjoy the feast') (Mel'čuk, 2022: 881) introduced above, whose literal structure *N$_{i\,NOM}$ ne v N$_{i\,ACC}$* is not determined by any rule of Russian grammar.

Here again, borderline cases between rule-governed and idiosyncratic properties are the rule rather than the exception, as the following Russian example illustrates:

(1) Moja sobaka – vsem   sobakam   sobaka.

   my   dog-NOM – all-DAT   dogs-DAT   dog-NOM

   'My dog is the ultimate dog'.

---

[18] For instance, we have never encountered a realisation of this PhraCon with a masculine abstract noun like *geroizm* ('heroism'), as in *?on/ona sam geroizm* ('he/she is heroism personified') (with the question mark indicating "unattested").

The pattern literally translates as 'someone/something is an X to (other possible referents of that same) X'. One may argue that the pattern is a real-isation of a general, albeit nowadays outdated copulative sentence pattern of Russian, and it may well be that the Russian PhraCon is derived from this pattern[19]. However, the structure of the PhraCon is not determined by valen-cy or other regular rules of Russian. To name just some peculiarities of the PhraCon as compared to the more abstract copulative pattern: the dative slot is regularly available also for inanimate nouns (e. g., *vsem ulikam ulika*, 'the ultimate proof'), the (only) anchor word in the dative case is restricted to *vsem* ('all'), the dative and nominative slots must be filled by the same noun, and the noun phrases cannot be freely supplemented or expanded (we haven't found any examples like *vsem sobakam sobaka i drug*, 'the ultimate dog and friend').

Violations of the rules of grammar and deviations from the usual and learned are a characteristic feature of PhraCons, though not all PhraCons violate the rules of the respective language's grammar. Examples like German *Du willst mir doch nicht erzählen, dass X?!* ('Do you really want to tell me that X?!') or *Du bist mir ein schöner Held!* ('You're a real hero [sarcastic]!') follow the typical grammatical and lexical structures of German[20]. Their proximity to PhraCons becomes clear with the presence of anchor words and slots as well as their semantics and pragmatics. This brings us to our next section, the discussion of semantic and pragmatic properties of PhraCons.

3.3 *Semantics and pragmatics of PhraCons*

Lexical idioms typically have two readings, an idiomatic[21] and a literal one (e. g., Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen, 2018: 6). For instance, the idiomatic mean-

---

[19] The pattern can be illustrated by a citation from Ivan S. Turgenev's famous poem *Russkij jazyk* ('The Russian Language', 1882):

(i) *ty   odin   mne   podderžka   i*
     you-NOM   alone-NOM.M   me-DAT   support-NOM   and
     opora   hold-NOM
     'you [=the Russian language] are my only support and hold'. (Source: https://rvb.ru/turgenev/01text/vol_10/02senilia/0267.htm, accessed 11/27/2024).

[20] See Mollica (2020) for a detailed analysis of this German construction and its relationship with other constructions involving an ethic dative (German *ethischer Dativ*).

[21] Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen (ibid.), who are mainly concerned with idioms and other kinds of highly figurative language, speak of figurative and literal meaning.

ing of the German idiom *jm. einen Korb geben* is 'to turn someone down', and the literal meaning is 'to give someone a basket'. PhraCons typically also have two readings. An example of this is (2), in which the word combination *to li delo* is not used in the idiomatic meaning of 'X is quite a different matter' expressed by the homonymous PhraCon introduced in section 3.1:

(2) Ne	znaju,	to	li	delo
not	know-1SG	this-NOM	Q	case-NOM
uže		rešeno		sudom.
already		decided-PAST-PTCP		court-INST

'I don't know if the case has already been decided by the court'.

In (2), the syntagma *to li delo* represents a free word combination which is homonymous with the PhraCon *to li delo* introduced in section 3.1[22]. In contrast, the meaning of PhraCons is idiomatic, which indicates that the meaning cannot be derived from the individual lexical and grammatical meanings of their anchor and slots (slots can naturally only involve grammatical meanings such as word class, mood, tense, etc.).

Idiomaticity is thus associated with the criterion of semantic non-compositionality. The meaning of a multiword unit is non-compositional when it cannot be derived solely on the basis of the lexical and grammatical meanings of its constituents and of the syntactic relations between them. Therefore, language users must know the meaning of a pattern as a whole to use and understand the constructs formed on its basis. This criterion applies to most PhraCons. A strong example is the Russian PhraCon N_{NOM} *xot' kuda*, which indicates a high degree of correspondence between the (usually positive) lexical semantics of N and the referent of N (e. g., *nevesta xot' kuda*, 'a wonderful fiancée'). The PhraCon cannot be translated in a literal way: *xot'* is a concessive conjunction or particle, *kuda* an adverbial interrogative pronoun meaning 'where [to]'. The illocutive meaning of praise and approval cannot be determined by "adding up" the lexical and grammatical meanings of the constituents of the structure[23].

---

[22] The homonymous forms of PhraCons and non-idiomatic word combinations are often distinguished by prosodic features (cf. section 3.4).

[23] This PhraCon is derived from the PhraCon *xot' na vystavku/bal/parade posylaj* (lit. 'Send$_{IMP}$ this even to an exhibition/ball/parade)', which means that the speaker considers a reference object so good/beautiful or otherwise superior that one could send it or them to an exhibition/

Importantly, and as noted by Ungerer (2023) and others, non-compositionality is also a matter of degrees, and idioms proper may likewise be more or less semantically opaque. In addition, evaluations of the (non-)compositionality of a linguistic unit (be it an idiom proper, a PhraCon, a compound noun or some other kind of complex word or multiword unit) may also vary greatly among the speakers of a language, even native ones[24].

Although not all idioms have literal readings[25], and although the idiomatic meaning is typically used more frequently than the literal one, most idioms do have a literal meaning. This becomes apparent in a specific kind of humour resulting from playing with the literal and idiomatic meanings of idioms (e. g., Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen, 2023: 17). As the non-literal meaning of PhraCons is typically idiomatic but not figurative (see below), this kind of humoristic use is less available for PhraCons. Sometimes, it is not even possible to distinguish between literal and idiomatic meanings of PhraCons. This can be true of PhraCons located in proximity to grammatical phrasemes (cf. section 3.1), such as German *geschweige denn X*, but these PhraCons are nevertheless atypical. More importantly, it appears that the class of PhraCons exhibiting grammatical irregularities do not have a literal, non-idiomatic meaning. For instance, the Russian PhraCon exemplified by *mne obed ne v obed* ('I am not able to enjoy my lunch') introduced in sections 3.1 and 3.2 does not seem to have any other readings than the idiomatic one precisely because it undermines rules of Russian grammar. Furthermore, on the topic of "Phraseoschablonen" ('phraseological schemes'), Schafroth (2014: 77) notes that the idiomaticity of such models is represented by "unübliche Syntax" ('unusual syntax') or an "idiosynkratische, nicht-vorhersagbare zweite Lesart" ('idiosyncratic, non-predictable second reading'). It thus becomes clear that deviant syntax also results in an idiosyncratic meaning. Therefore, PhraCons (or *Phraseoschablonen*, in Schafroth's terminology) always have idiosyncratic semantics and may additionally have idiosyncratic syntax.

---

ball/parade and the like (Pavlova et al., 2021: 14). From this perspective, the meaning of the PhraCon N_{NOM} *xot' kuda* becomes somewhat more obvious, but it is definitely difficult to grasp for a non-native speaker of Russian confronted with it for the first time.

[24] We owe thanks to Laura Janda (p. c.) for this observation. Since she pointed this out to us, we have been observing this phenomenon ourselves more and more often.

[25] E. g., the German idiom *in Bausch und Bogen* ('completely, totally') cannot have a literal meaning, because *Bausch* is a unique word (a noun) without any referential meaning outside of this idiom in contemporary German (the word *Wattebausch* 'cotton ball', which contains {bausch} as a root morpheme, is not helpful to determine the meaning of the idiom, either).

Closely linked with these observations is the notion of figurativeness. Figurativeness means that a linguistic unit evokes an image (Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen, 2023: 13 speak of an "image requirement"). As abstract entities of the language system, PhraCons are typically non-figurative or only faintly so, but they may become figurative in actual use. This is because the figurativeness of PhraCons is determined by slot fillers rather than by anchor words or structures of patterns. For instance, the figurative nature of the following example is based solely on the choice of the filler *Leuchte*[26] with reference to a person: *Du bist mir eine Leuchte!* ('You are a real genius!', sarcastic). An instance of a strongly figurative PhraCon is the English pattern *V one's N$_{\{body\ part\}}$ off* (e. g., *to talk one's head off/to play one's fingers off*) (Mellado Blanco, in press).

The second characteristic of figurativeness given by Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen (2023: 21-24) is "additional naming", namely the fact that there is also a non-figurative, alternative way of expressing an idea available in a given language[27]. It seems that PhraCons meet this criterion, because even highly idiosyncratic PhraCons which do not have a non-idiomatic meaning can be usually expressed also by other means of the respective language. However, PhraCons, like idioms, typically offer some additional semantic and pragmatic features which leads to speakers opting for them over other, less or non-idiomatic ways of expression. PhraCons often serve as a means of expressing a point of view in a pointed and condensed way, and they are also often tailored to specific discourse situations[28].

This latter property of PhraCons has to do with the fact that semantics and pragmatics are often conflated in the meaning of PhraCons (Mellado Blanco, 2015: 13). Crucially, PhraCons can often be described in terms of illocutions (e. g., "denial" in the case of German *von wegen X*, 'absolutely not X'), which is why the illocutionary value attached to PhraCons is also provided in the lemma entries of our repository. Therefore, the meaning of a PhraCon often cannot be determined without reverting to pragmatic categories, including, at times, specific information about the contexts in which a given PhraCon can be used. Many PhraCons belong to linguistic expressions whose correct

---

[26] *Leuchte* means 'lamp, lanter' and is commonly used to refer to a bright person in German.

[27] For instance, Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen (2023: 22) maintain that *seahorse* is not an instance of figurative language because there is no other way to name this animal in English (except for technical terms).

[28] One might object and say that these observations dismantle the commonly held idea that there exists no real synonymy in natural languages, but there is also something specific in the pragmatics of PhraCons, as we will argue in the next paragraph.

use requires such background knowledge. For instance, the German Phra-Con *von wegen X* ('not at all X') expresses denial of a previously claimed fact or state. The statement *Von wegen aufgeräumt!* ('Tidy?!? My foot!') implies the rejection of a previous judgment by another person that the location or object the PhraCon refers to is tidy. Thus, the meaning of *Von wegen aufgeräumt!* can be translated as 'I deny that it is tidy here, [in contrast to what has previously been claimed]'. The illocutionary act of denial is thus conventionally performed by the use of the PhraCon *von wegen X*[29].

The German PhraCon *dieser N_{NOM} von N_{DAT}*, as in, for instance, *dieser Langweiler von Chef* ('this bore of a boss') expresses a qualification of a reference object: namely, the qualification of one's boss as boring. The PhraCon *dieser N_{NOM} von N_{DAT}* is also a device of information structuring in discourse. Thus, this PhraCon can function as a topicalisation strategy, as its use makes it possible to include a statement about a person (the comment) into the topic and then make a subsequent comment about it. Compare (3) and (4):

> (3) Dieser Drecksack von Hausmeister hat tatsächlich wieder mein Fahrrad umgeparkt.
>
> 'This scumbag of a janitor has actually moved my bike again'.

> (4) Der Hausmeister ist echt ein Drecksack. Er hat tatsächlich wieder mein Fahrrad umgeparkt.
>
> 'The janitor is a real scumbag. He has actually moved my bike again'.

In both examples, *the janitor* serves as the topic. Example (3), however, makes it possible to include a statement about the janitor into the topic and make subsequent comment about it. The PhraCon, in this case, not only adds to the expressiveness of the statement, but it is also an economical way of making two comments about one topic within one sentence[30]. In (4), two sentences are necessary to make these two statements. Given such observations, the investigation of the information structural functions of PhraCons may warrant further investigation in future.

---

[29] We refer here only to the most frequent, oppositive meaning of the construction. In fact, the construction is polysemous (cf. Mellado Blanco, 2022: 176–179).

[30] This view seems all the more plausible when one considers that the first filler is strongly emphasised in this PhraCon and thus becomes a focus in information structural terms – a focus embedded in the topic.

Another trait distinguishing PhraCons from regular idioms is that the strong pragmatic component within PhraCons typically cannot be explained by means of a simple lexeme or even a simple multiword equivalent. For this reason, we often faced some difficulty when looking for handy translations of PhraCons into English for this paper[31]. For instance, the denotation of the idioms *(to cost) an arm and a leg* is simply '(to be) expensive' or *once in a blue moon* means 'very rarely'. To explain the meaning of a PhraCon, it is often necessary to provide the pragmatic context(s) in which it can be used. For instance, the Russian PhraCon *ot N$_{GEN}$ slyšu* (e. g., *ot$_{from}$ duraka$_{fool.GEN}$ slyšu$_{hear.1SG}$*, 'you are an idiot yourself') implies a preceding statement in which the filler of the PhraCon has been used, often as an offence directed towards the speaker, who may then reply with the PhraCon *ot N$_{GEN}$ slyšu*.

The meaning of PhraCons has therefore also been dubbed "non-summative". The project FRASESPAL defines non-summative meaning as "additional pragmatic meaning that does not derive from the mathematical sum of the individual meanings of the constituent units" (https://frasespal.com/). We could therefore say that the meaning of a typical PhraCon is idiomatic in two ways: it is non-compositional and non-summative. Both characteristics contribute to a certain level of expressiveness, which is also typical of PhraCons.

3.4 *Other typical characteristics of PhraCons*

PhraCons occur in all styles and registers, but they are particularly frequent in the colloquial style and substandard varieties (Pavlova et al., 2021), which is another reason why they are not usually part of traditional L2 education in schools or at universities.

It is also typical that PhraCons have a distinctive prosodic structure. If non-idiomatic, homonymous free word combinations are available, PhraCons often distinguish themselves from them through prosody. For instance, in the German PhraCon *V$_{IMP}$ ja [nicht] X!* ('Don't you dare X'), the anchor particle *ja* carries the sentence accent, as illustrated by the following example of the modal variant of this PhraCon:

---

[31] Ideally, a translated PhraCon remains a PhraCon in the target language, but often, no such equivalent is available, especially in terms of structure, semantic and pragmatic function(s) (cf. Pavlova, 2024).

(5) M: Guck doch mal, wie der sie angräbt! Und wie sie schon wieder kichert **Der soll <u>ja</u> die Finger von ihr lassen!**

MK: (grinst) Mein Gott, bist du eifersüchtig

M: Ich bin überhaupt nicht eifersüchtig.

(German Web 2018, deTenTen18)

'M: Look how he is hitting on her! And how she is giggling **He should back off**!

MK: (grins) My God, you are so jealous

M: I'm not jealous at all'.

The homonymous, non-idiomatic structure has a different accentuation pattern, in which the particle *ja* is unstressed. In the following example of such a non-idiomatic use, the sentence accent is on the accusative object:

(6) Und ob das Publikum applaudiert, ist ihm völlig gleich,

er soll ja keinen <u>Beliebtheitspreis</u> gewinnen.

(German Web 2018, deTenTen18)

'And he doesn't care whether or not the audience is applauding. He's not out to win any popularity contests'.

Prosodic idiosyncrasies fall among the non-segmental characteristics that Mel'čuk (e. g., 2022, 2023: 184-192) considers essential for the distinction of what he refers to as syntactic idioms. According to Mel'čuk (2022: 890), a syntactic idiom has the following characteristics: its meaning is non-compositional, it consists of at least two words, and its signifier includes at least one non-segmental element. Non-segmental elements can be prosodic structures or specific syntactic operations, such as restrictions with respect to word order, reduplicative structures, and others (Mel'čuk, 2022: 890).

PhraCons appear to belong to Mel'čuk's category of syntactic idioms. However, Mel'čuk's definition does not distinguish between syntactic idioms with slots and those without. From our practical perspective, which is concerned with L2 acquisition and professional translations, this distinction is important not only in terms of analysis and description, but also for teaching.

4. Conclusion

Our observations regarding the category of PhraCons support the "gradient view of constructionhood" (Ungerer 2023): just as other instances of constructions can be evaluated along a "cline of constructionhood" (Ungerer, 2023: 6), PhraCons can be described along a "cline of phraseme constructionhood". We believe to have shown that the properties associated with PhraCons justify considering them as a specific kind of formulaic language (Wray, 2002) in their own right. PhraCons constitute a highly insightful object of study for CxG, specifically in respect to the notorious issue of what kinds of relationships (horizontal and vertical, continuous and categorical) exist between constructions (Ungerer, 2023: 9-13).

PhraCons are multi-word pairings of form and meaning, whose structure includes one or more empty slots and, typically, but not necessarily, one or more fixed elements (anchor words). These criteria can wholly be referred to as semi-schematicity[32]. Crucially, transitions between anchor words and slots are fluent (cf. section 3.1). In addition, the following criteria can be used to establish whether a given pattern can be regarded as a PhraCon:

- Productivity with respect to fillers: many different fillers are available.
- Idiomaticity (or non-compositionality): the meaning cannot be derived compositionally by simply "adding up" the semantic and grammatical meanings of its constituents.
- Structural idiosyncrasy: there is something in the structure of a PhraCon that is not predicted by general rules of the language. This may include prosodic features, reduplication, and other non-segmental operations.
- Non-summativity: not only semantic, but also pragmatic categories are relevant to the determination of the meaning and function of a PhraCon.
- Semantics of anchor words: anchor words tend to be function words rather than content words (though content words are also regularly observed).

---

[32] If a pattern has no fixed elements at all, it is a potential PhraCon when it operates below the clause level, but (slightly) above the word level or at least at the intersection of syntax and morphology (cf. section 3.1).

In addition, there are a few rules of thumb which are applicable when encountering a linguistic pattern suspected of being a PhraCon:

- Would L2 learners of a given language be able to predict that a certain structure is an appropriate way of expressing a specific meaning, and will they be able to predict that meaning? (cf. also Taylor, 2002: 520). If not, chances are that we are dealing with a PhraCon.
- Is it possible to find the structure of the linguistic pattern in a grammar textbook of the language? If yes, we may be dealing with a non-standard syntactic structure in the sense of Iomdin (2016), but not with a PhraCon.
- Is it possible to discover the meaning of the linguistic pattern by looking up its anchor words in a phraseological dictionary? If yes, chances are that we are dealing with an idiom. If not, the phenomenon under scrutiny might be a PhraCon.

Finally, in the specific context of our contrastive lexicographic work, we have developed a further criterion for the selection of PhraCons for the repository: patterns representing borderline cases in the area of PhraCons in German will be included preferably into the repository if their equivalents in other project languages represent clear cases of PhraCons.

In future, it may be necessary to establish meaningful thresholds of "phraseme constructionhood", including frequency, productivity, similarity and variation measures (Ungerer, 2023: 7). Such endeavours can contribute greatly to our understanding of the relationships between constructions. With regard to the multilingual lexicographic recording of PhraCons, it will be important to develop standardised procedures that provide consistent, replicable results and can be applied to different languages. This will be one of the central pillars of our work in the upcoming years.

In the spirit of the "gradient view" (Ungerer, 2023), we do not see the catalogue of criteria presented here as categorical or final. Rather, this paper is an invitation for other researchers to review, refine and enlarge this catalogue; to subject it to empirical testing and apply it to other languages.

References

Apresjan, Jurij. 2024. Active Dictionary. In Greenberg, Marc L. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Slavic Languages and Linguistics Online*. Brill. doi: https://doi.org/10.1163/2589 -6229_ESLO_COM_032490

Baranov, A. N. & Dobrovol'skij, D. O. 2024. *Očerki obščej i russkoj frazeologii*. Moskva: JASK.

Baranov, A. N. & Dobrovol'skij, D. O. 2023. Ob odnom klasse frazeologizmov v russkom jazyke (frazeologizmy-konstrukcii) [About one class of idioms in Russian]. *Social'nye i gumanitarnye nauki. Otečestveannaja i zarubežnaja literatura. Serija 6, Jazykoznanie* (3), 130-139. doi: https://doi.org/10.31249/ling/2023.03.00

Booij, Geert. 2002. Constructional Idioms, morphology, and the Dutch lexicon. *Journal of Germanic Linguistics* 14(4): 301-329.

Brône, Geert & Schoonjans, Steven. 2022. "So was von spannend": Zur Distribution der „so was von X"-Konstruktion." *Zeitschrift für germanistische Linguistik* 50(3): 499-532. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/zgl-2022-2029

Busse, Dietrich. 2012. *Frame-Semantik. Ein Kompendium*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110269451

Černyševa, Irina I. 1986. Phraseologie. In Stepanova, M. D. & Černyševa, Irina I. (eds.) *Lexikologie der deutschen Gegenwartssprache*. Second edition. Moscow: Vysšaja škola, 175-230.

Dobrovol'skij, Dmitrij. 2011. Phraseologie und Konstruktionsgrammatik. In Lasch, Alexander & Ziem, Alexander (eds.) *Konstruktionsgrammatik III. Aktuelle Fragen und Lösungsansätze*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 110-130.

Dobrovol'skij, Dmitrij. 2012. Phrasem-Konstruktionen in Parallel-Korpora. In Prinz, Michael & Richter-Vapaatalo, Ulrike (eds.) *Idiome, Konstruktionen, „verblümte rede". Beiträge zu Geschichte der germanistischen Phraseologieforschung*. Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 327-340.

Dobrovol'skij, Dmitrij. 2022. Deutsche Phrasem-Konstruktion [X hin, X her] in kontrastiver Sicht: eine korpusbasierte Analyse. In Mellado Blanco, Carmen; Mollica, Fabio & Schafroth, Elmar (eds.) *Konstruktionen zwischen Lexikon und Grammatik. Phrasem-Konstruktionen monolingual, bilingual und multilingual*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 227-245. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110770209-009

Dobrovol'skij, Dmitrij. 2023. Phraseologie – offene Fragen. ul.qucosa.de/api/qucosa%3A86568/attachment/ATT-0/. https://doi.org/10.36730/2023.3.wp.3

Dobrovol'skij, Dimitrij & Mellado Blanco, Carmen. 2021. Von Jahr zu Jahr. Das Pattern [von Xsg zu Xsg] und seine Entsprechungen im Russischen und Spanischen: eine Korpusstudie. *Aussiger Beiträge* 15(21): 113-138.

Dobrovol'skij, Dmitrij & Piirainen, Elisabeth. 2018. Conventional Figurative Language Theory and idiom motivation. *Yearbook of Phraseology* 9(1): 5-30. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/phras-2018-0003

Dobrovol'skij, Dmitrij & Piirainen, Elisabeth. 2023. *Figurative language. Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic perspectives* (2nd ed.). Berlin/ Boston: De Gruyter. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110702538

Fillmore, Charles J., Kay, Paul & O'Connor, Mary Catherine. 1988. Regularity and idiomaticity in grammatical constructions: the case of Let Alone. *Language* 64(3): 501-538. doi: https://doi.org/10.2307/414531

Fleischer, Wolfgang. 1982. *Phraseologie der deutschen Gegenwartssprache*. Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110947625

Frankowsky, Maximilian. 2022. Extravagant expressions denoting quite normal en-
tities. Identical constituent compounds in German. In Eitelmann, Matthias
& Haumann, Dagmar (eds.) *Extravagant morphology. Studies in rule-bending,
pattern-extending and theory-challenging morphology*. Amsterdam, 155-179. doi:
https://doi.org/10.1075/slcs.223

Geeraert, Kristina, Baayen, Harald R. & Newman, John. 2017. Understanding idio-
matic variation. In *Proceedings of the 13th Workshop on Multiword Expressions
(MWE 2017)*. Valencia, 80-90. doi: https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/W17-17

Habermann, Mechthild & Herbst, Thomas. 2022. The German so-was-von Con-
struction. In Gallez Françoise & Hermann, Manon (eds.), *Cognition and Con-
trast*, Presses universitaires Saint-Louis Bruxelles, 97-118. doi: https://doi.
org/10.4000/books.pusl.27857

Iomdin, Leonid. 2016. Microsyntactic phenomena as a computational linguistic is-
sue. In *Proceedings of the Workshop on Grammar and Lexicon: interactions and
interfaces (GramLex), Osaka, Japan*. The COLING 2016 Organizing Commit-
tee, 8-17. https://aclanthology.org/W16-3803.pdf

Lewis, Michael. 1993. *The Lexical Approach*. Hove: Language Teaching Publications.

Lyngfelt, Benjamin. 2018. Introduction: Constructicons and constructicography. In
Lyngfelt, Benjamin; Borin, Lars; Ohara, Kyoko & Torrent, Tiago Timponi (eds.)
Constructicography: Constructicon Development Across Languages. Amsterdam/
Philadelphia, 1-18. doi: https://doi.org/10.1075/cal.22

Mel'čuk, Igor. 2022. Russian reduplicative surface-syntactic relations in the perspec-
tive of general syntax. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 26(4): 881-907. doi: https://
doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-31357

Mel'čuk, Igor. 2023. *General Phraseology. Theory and Practice*. Amsterdam: John Ben-
jamins Publishing. doi: https://doi.org/10.1075/lis.36

Melikyan, Vadim; Melikyan, Anna & Dzyubenko, Anna. 2017. Syntactic phraseological
units. Syntactic phraseology. Phraseological subsystem of language. *Zeitschrift
für Slawistik* 62(1): 23-47. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/slaw-2017-0002

Mellado Blanco, Carmen. In press. Constructional Idioms. In Wen, Xu & Sinha,
Chris (eds.) *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Cognitive Linguistics*. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press.

Mellado Blanco, Carmen. 2024. The ways of phraseology are mysterious: Humour
and snowclones in Spanish and German Bibleisms from a Construction
Grammar perspective. *Proverbium* 3, 495-512.

Mellado Blanco, Carmen. 2023. From idioms to semi-schematic constructions and
vice versa. The case of [*a un paso de X*]. In Wiesinger, Evelyn & Inga Hennecke
(eds.) *Constructions in Spanish*. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins,
103-128. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/cal.34.05mel

Mellado Blanco, Carmen. 2022. Construcciones semiesquemáticas de valor intensifi-
cador desde los corpus paralelos: el caso de [*von wegen X*] y sus construcciones
equivalentes en español. In Cuartero Otal, Juan; Gutiérrez Pérez, Regina; La-
rreta Zulategui, Juan Pablo & Martínez Vázquez, Montserrat (eds.) *La interfaz*

léxico-gramática. Contrastes entre el español y las lenguas germánicas. Berlín: Peter Lang, 167-186.

Mellado Blanco, Carmen. 2015. Phrasemkonstruktionen und lexikalische Idiomvarianten. Der Fall der komparativen Phraseme des Deutschen. In Engelberg, Stefan; Meliss, Meike; Proost, Christel & Winkler, Edeltraud (eds.) *Argumentstruktur zwischen Valenz und Konstruktion.* Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 217-235.

Mellado Blanco, Carmen; Mollica, Fabio & Schafroth, Elmar. 2022. Phrasem-Konstruktionen in der heutigen Forschung: ein Überblick. In Mellado Blanco, Carmen & Mollica, Fabio & Schafroth, Elmar (eds.) *Konstruktionen zwischen Lexikon und Grammatik. Phrasem-Konstruktionen monolingual, bilingual und multilingual.* Berlin/Boston: Mouton de Gruyter, 1-18. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110770209

Mollica, Fabio. 2020. Die Phrasem-Konstruktion [X$_{NPnom}$ *sein*$_{Kopula}$ *mir*$_{Exp}$ (Modalpartikel) Det$_{ein(e)}$ Y$_{NP}$]$_{Exkl}$ und ihre Relationen innerhalb der Ethicus-Konstruktion und der Dativ-Familie. *Linguistische Berichte* 261, 47-83.

Pavlova, Anna. 2022. Mehrsprachige Datenbank der Phrasemkonstruktionen. In Klosa-Kückelhaus, Annette; Engelberg, Stefan; Möhrs, Christine & Storjohann, Petra (eds.) *Dictionaries and Society. Proceedings of the XX EURALEX International Congress.* Mannheim: IDS-Verlag, 594-604. doi: https://doi.org/10.14618/phpy-6r66

Pavlova, Anna. 2023. *Učebnoe posobie po russkoj frazeologii.* JGU Mainz: Open Access. doi: https://doi.org/10.25358/openscience-8521

Pavlova, Anna. 2024. Äquivalenz bei Übersetzung von Phrasem-Konstruktionen. In Gondek, Anna; Jurasz, Alina; Kamińska, Alexandra; Staniewski, Przemysław; Szczęk, Joanna (eds.) *Interkulturelles und Interdisziplinäres in der Phraseologie und Parömiologie II.* Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 159-178.

Pavlova, A. V. & Alekseyeva, M. L. 2022. Sintaksičeskie i frazeologičeskie konstrukcii: teoretičeskoe osmyslenie v aspekte dvujazyčnoj leksikografii [Syntactic and phraseological constructions: theoretical understanding in light of bilingual lexicography]. *Tekst: neposredstvennyj / Filologičeskij klass* 27(2): 52-67.

Pavlova, A. V.; Najdič, L. È. & Pëppel', L. 2021. Est' kreativnost' i kreativnost'. O granjax i granicax kreativnosti v oblasti frazeologizmov-konstrukcij [There's creativity and creativity. On the facets and boundaries of creativity in the field of phraseme constructions]. *Anzeiger für Slavische Philologie* 49, 9-41.

Schafroth, Elmar. 2014. *Französische Lexikographie: Einführung und Überblick.* Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110281330

Staffeldt, Sven. 2011. In der Hand von Konstruktionen. Eine Fallstudie zu bestimmten Phraseologismen mit *in ... Hand.* In Lasch, Alexander & Ziem, Alexander (eds.) *Konstruktionsgrammatik III. Aktuelle Fragen und Lösungsansätze.* Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 131-147. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/infodaf-2014-2-393

Šmelev, Dmitrij N. 1977. *Sovremennyj russkij jazyk.* Moskva: Prosveščenie.

Taylor, John R. 2002. Constructions. In Taylor, John R. *Cognitive Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 561-585. doi: https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198700333.001.000

Ungerer, Tobias. 2023. A gradient notion of constructionhood. *Constructions* 1(5). doi: https://doi.org/10.24338/cons-54

Wray, Alison. 2002. *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511519772

Ziem, Alexander. 2014. Konstruktionsgrammatische Konzepte eines Konstruktikons. In Lasch, Alexander/Ziem, Alexander (eds.) *Grammatik als Netzwerk von Konstruktionen. Sprachwissen im Fokus der Konstruktionsgrammatik*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 15-34.

Ziem, Alexander. 2018. Construction Grammar meets phraseology. *Linguistik Online* 90(3): 1-18. doi: https://doi.org/10.13092/lo.90.4316