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Grammatical metaphor and functional idiomaticity

Abstract: One of the main challenges for research in the field of Phraseology is to discover how phraseological combinations can be integrated into the grammatical rules they seem to contradict. This paper explains some theoretical concepts which may shed some light on the relation between regular syntax and phraseological fixedness. Firstly, we explain how the concept of *grammatical metaphor*, applied to phraseology, allows to distinguish phrasemes from free combinations, and also to separate the phrasemic subclasses from one another. Secondly, we analyze the different degrees of *fixedness* of phrasemes in terms of *functional idiomaticity*, as a consequence of grammatical metaphor, resulting from the relation between the *inner* and *outer syntax* of the phrasemes, which is parallel to their *semantic idiomaticity*. Thirdly, we focus on some particular cases of this mechanism, such as *discontinuous, interlocking* and *overlapping* phrasemes, as well as the so-called *open-slot idioms*. We conclude that the application of grammatical metaphor to phraseology brings up to surface a parallelism between idiomatic meanings and idiomatic structures, which is an essential property of phrasemes.

Keywords: Phraseology, construction grammar, grammatical metaphor, functional idiomaticity, fixedness

> *The right way to study a so-called* idiom *is to discover exactly what there is about the expressions that exemplify it that needs to be learned by linguistic convention, and in order to discover that, one needs a theory of what is regular or general in the language.* (Fillmore 1997)

1 Fixedness and idiomaticity

1.1 Idiomatic exceptions or idiomatic rules?

In the last decades, *multi-word units* have neither been considered as "long words" nor as "exceptions", but rather as a dynamic sub-domain of grammar, with its own productivity, interacting with the general rules of syntactic constructions. This

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point of view is related with the abandonment of a clear-cut separation between lexicon and grammar, an idea which was already implicit in *Dependency Grammar* (Tesnière 1959), and became more and more explicit in *Text-to-Meaning theory* (Mel'čuk 1981), *Lexique-Grammaire theory* (M. Gross 1981), *Systemic-Functional Grammar* (Halliday 1985), *Cognitive Grammar* (Langacker 1987) and *Construction Grammar* (Fillmore 1988). The emergence of theoretical studies on Phraseology[1] and Corpus Linguistics[2] has also contributed to this methodological shift. According to Gries,

> [t]he recognition of phraseologisms as theoretically relevant entities in their own right (...) begins to undermine the modular organization of the linguistic system into a grammar and a lexicon and to make linguists aware of the way in which the analysis of phraseologisms in performance data reveals many subtle interdependencies on different levels of linguistic analysis. (Gries 2008: 8)

On the one hand, the definitions and taxonomies of idiomatic sequences are still controversial among phraseologists, though, as the principle of linguistic modularity is losing ground, they become more dynamic. On the other hand, the integration of phrasemes[3] into grammar does not entail that they are *regular*, but that they should have their own space in the continuum between constructions and units (Langacker 1991).

Since phraseology involves "the transformation of complex signs into simple signs" (Chleba 2011: 20), theoretical research in this field concerns basically two general trends, depending on whether the *unit* approach or the *construction* approach is privileged, opposing a more paradigmatic view to a more syntagmatic one. The first approach inspired the creation of dictionaries of proverbs and idioms, where complex expressions were collected and described individually, several centuries before the emergence of theoretical phraseology. The second approach arises later, trying to describe the place of *fixedness* and *idiomaticity* in linguistic theory, as opposed to the compositionality of the *free syntax* (Burger 2007: 90). Accordingly, phraseology becomes a syntagmatic concept (albeit only by negation), which implies the existence of *restricted collocational paradigms* instead of a random list of exceptions (Čermák 1998a: 3, 7, 13). For example,

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1 Cf., among others, Mel'čuk (1981, 1998); M. Gross (1988); Mejri (2011); Dobrovol'skij (2011); Mellado Blanco (2014); Vietri (2014); Steyer (2015); González Rey (2016).
2 Cf. Sinclair (1991); Hanks (2013); Corpas (2013); Colson (2016a).
3 We use the term *phraseme* as a hyperonym including all kinds of fixed sequences with more than one lexeme and resulting from a grammatical metaphor. This term is here equivalent to others, such as *phraseologism, phraseological unit, fixed expression, set phrase, multi-word expression, phrasal lexical item*, etc.

according to the *Text-to-Meaning* theory, collocations are not only a closed inventory of units, they are subject to rules, such as *lexical functions* (Mel'čuk 1998; 2003: 27; 2011: 46). For the *Lexique-Grammaire* school, "fixedness is the result of a calculation involving the whole set of grammatical rules" (G. Gross 2005: 6). As Steyer (2015: 279) remarks: "[T]he traditional focus on strongly lexicalized, often idiomatic, multi-word expressions has led to an overestimation of their unique status in the mental lexicon."

Salah Mejri even conceives phraseology as "the third articulation of language" (2006: 218), a procedure that "places the syntagmatic mechanisms at the service of the lexicon" (2012: 141).[4] Multi-lexicality would be a productive process that associates "a plurality of signifiers to a unique signified", contrary to polysemy, which is based on the opposite asymmetry (plurality of meanings for a unique signifier): "multi-lexicality is to fixed sequences what polysemy is to single words" (Mejri 2003: 26). Therefore, it would be a property of the system, not just "repeated speech", thousands of *units* would constitute a constructive dynamic, which explains why the real amount of the phrasemes in a language is greater than the number of words (cf. Mel'čuk 1995).

The Berkeley School has coined the term *construction* to designate symbolic models, more or less recurrent and considered as blocks in all their dimensions: phonological, prosodic, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic (Fillmore 1988; Goldberg 1995: 5). Phrasemes are no longer excluded, quite the opposite, because the concept of grammatical rule is not incompatible with the comprehensive nature of idioms, defined as "things that are larger than words, which are like words in that they have to be learned separately as individual whole facts about pieces of the language, but which have also grammatical structure" (Fillmore et al. 1988: 504), whereas "constructions" would be "learned pairings of form with semantic and discourse function (…) some aspect of [their] form or function is not strictly predictable from [their] component parts or from other constructions" (Goldberg 2006: 5). Languages would be repertoires of *constructions* matching forms and functions in order to link a meaning that is perceived globally, because grammatical structures are not simple combinations of atomic structures, but constructs allowing the transmission of *direct* information from subordinate constituents (Fillmore 1988: 35–37). Particular attention is paid to the most "peripheral" linguistic structures, which may help to understand their central mechanisms: "[T]he realm of idiomaticity includes a great deal that is productive, highly structured, and worthy of serious grammatical investigations" (Fillmore et al. 1988: 534).

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4 See also Colson (2016b).

Cognitive Linguistics considers that, even in the "free" combinations, the global meaning is not a function of the parts (Langacker 1987–1991; Lakoff 1987: 465), so a construction (or *symbolic unit*) is comparable to a sign, just like a lexeme:

> a structure that a speaker has mastered quite thoroughly, to the extent that he can employ it in largely automatic fashion, without having to focus his attention specifically on its individual parts for their arrangement [...] no need to reflect on how to put it together (Langacker 1987: 57).

For example, according to cognitive syntax, collocations such as *to make (someone) laugh* or *to whet (someone's) appetite* would be *causative analytical constructions*, whose verb would be *grammaticalized* as a causative marker (cf. Shibatani 2002; Huelva 2011: 94–97). The only major difference between *symbolic units* and *constructions* is that *constructions* involve non-compositionality, which is not required in the definition of *symbolic units*, while phrasemes are compatible with both concepts (Gries 2008: 10).

Conversely, not all the grammatical rules are blocked in idioms: they may respect agreement rules (gender, number and person). In *mind your own business*, for instance, conjugation agreement is not only possible but obligatory (***he** minds **his** own business*), even if other rules are blocked (nominalization, passivization, synonymic substitution). Some idioms even admit lexical alternations affecting one component, e.g., sp. *meter la pata* (*to stick the paw in) "to say something by accident that embarrasses or upsets someone"[5] (*to put one's foot in one's mouth*) admits the variants *meter la gamba/pezuña* (*to stick the leg/ hoof in) or even hyperbolic expansions: *meter la pata hasta el codo/cuello* (*to stick one's leg in up to the elbow/neck), with no change in the global meaning. With the help of the context, even the so-called *non-decomposable* idioms admit modifications (Kay and Sag 2012; Vietri 2014: 89–97) and corpus studies confirm that the passive transformation is often available. The concept of idiomaticity, understood as *non-compositionality,* becomes contradictory if it does not prevent distinguishing "parts" in a phraseme.[6] In *spill the beans*, for example, several authors see a semantic correlation between *spill* and "reveal", and between *beans* and "secret" (cf. Riehemann 2001: 2; Burger 2007: 95; Dobrovol'skij 2007: 810),[7]

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5 *Cambridge Dictionary* (http://dictionary.cambridge.org).

6 Cf. Baranov and Dobrovol'skij (1996: 40); Čermák (2001: 159); Bosque (2004: LXXXIII–IV); Mejri (2011: 63).

7 In Riehemann's corpus, 25% of the occurrences of *spill the beans* undergo an insertion (*spill <some> beans; spill <a mountain of beans>*, etc. (2001: 33–34).

but to affirm in such a case at the same time that the idiomatic meaning overrides the existence of components would be a paradox (cf. M. Gross 1988: 11; Čermák 1998a: 2).

Idioms are not always monolithic, and the compositional interpretation is not always cancelled by the idiomatic interpretation (Burger 2007: 95), thus, the dichotomy between the *open choice principle* and the *idiom principle* is not always easy to demonstrate in discourse. How can we identify *single choices* if they might appear to be analyzable into segments? (cf. Sinclair 1991: 109–110), and how could *open choices* exist inside a sequence which has no "parts"?

> [T]he crucial question for the theory of phraseology is whether or not the internal semantic structure of an idiom influences its discursive behavior, including its ability to participate in syntactic transformations. (Dobrovol'skij 2007: 808)

The fact that idiomaticity is associated with fixedness seems to suggest a logical relationship between meaning compositionality and grammatical regularity (Langacker 1987: 448) and that both convergent processes would reinforce each other (cf. Granger 2005: 166–167; Mel'čuk 2011: 50; Timofeeva 2012: 145–146), thus, the more idiomatic a sequence is, the more formal restrictions it has (Čermák 2007a: 84). However, fixedness may not be the cause of idiomaticity: it would not be logical to assume that sequences such as *cry over spilt milk* or *hear it on the grapevine* became formally defective first, and acquired an idiomatic meaning later. But, at the same time, idiomaticity is not an unavoidable prerequisite of fixedness: sequences such as *black and white* and *sooner or later* became fixed in spite of their lack of idiomaticity.[8] To avoid the vicious circle, we should redefine *idiomaticity*, giving it a broader sense beyond non-compositionality (cf. Baranov and Dobrovol'skij 1996: 34; Timofeeva 2012: 139).

The main challenge for current phraseological research is, therefore, to discover how phraseological combinations may be included in the system of rules they seem to contradict. Beyond the theoretical limit opposing "free" combinations, where "each of the lexemes is selected by the speaker separately" (Mel'čuk 2015: 59–60) and "frozen" sequences, where "the speaker does not construct a lexical phraseme by selecting each one independently from the others according

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8 In French, the order is the same (*en noir et blanc; tôt ou tard*), whereas in Spanish, the order is the reverse (*en blanco y negro, tarde o temprano*). A Russian sequence like *зубной врач* *dental doctor ('dentist') is not idiomatic although completely fixed. Schapira (1999: 13–14) quotes many examples of French non-idiomatic sequences which, nevertheless, are completely fixed, such as *le cas écheánt* (*the happening case 'if needed'), *en toute liberté* (*in complete freedom 'quite freely'), *sûr et certain* (*sure and certain 'absolutely sure'), *tout est bien qui finit bien* ('all's well that ends well').

to the standard rules" (Mel'čuk 2015: 59–60), we should incorporate *non-standard rules* within phraseology, and lexical constraints into free syntax, a question that has "far-reaching implications for a general theory of language" (Colson 2015: 1).

If "an idiom predicator bridges between the idiom context it governs and the non-idiom context in which the phrases that it projects occur" (Kay and Sag 2012: 3), idiomaticity is not so different from metaphorization or figurativity in the broad sense (Tristá Pérez 1988; Mel'čuk 1995). In discourse, all phrasemes require a *semantic reinterpretation* (Baranov and Dobrovol'skij 1996: 22–26), connecting their *actual* and their *underlying mental image* (Dobrovol'skij 2014: 24).[9] Something similar may happen to their syntactic structure.

1.2 Grammatical metaphor and phraseology

If idiomaticity is conceived in a broader way, it can be defined as the creation of new signs by gathering several pre-existing elements, and attributing a new meaning to the whole (cf. Timofeeva 2012: 139). This is a general semiotic mechanism that affects virtually all the levels of the system, not only the phraseological one. For example, in English spelling, the function of the grapheme ‹*sh*› represents a single phoneme (/š/) with two letters whose function is different when they are not together (‹*s*›, ‹*h*›). In morpho-syntax, the analytic tenses are based on this principle, if compared with synthetic tenses. Conjugations such as *I have read; I was reading* enhance the verbal system joining two words whose function is not the same when they are alone.[10] This type of grammatical non-compositionality can be considered as a case of *functional idiomaticity*.

All these phenomena could also be described as cases of *metaphorization*, where two grammatical forms (A & B) work as a third grammatical form (C) when they are together (A + B = C). This allows words and morphemes to exchange their functional value, a fact that fulfills one of the types of idiomatic *reinterpretation of the conditions of use* mentioned by Baranov and Dobrovol'skij (1996: 24) as a definitory feature of phraseology. All these mechanisms involve a *grammatical metaphor*, because a given morpheme is playing the role of another one.

In order to explain some constructions that generative syntax would interpret as *transformations*, the Systemic Functional Grammar coined long ago the

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9 See also Mellado Blanco (2014: 182) and Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen (2005: 14–17).
10 In other languages the difference between *I have read* and *I was reading* corresponds to a single verb, lexically selected, e.g., in Russian *прочитал* (/pročital /) vs. *читал* (/čital /).

concept of *grammatical metaphor* (Halliday 1985; Halliday and Martin 1993: 79), defined as a "mapping of different grammatico-semantic domains onto each other" (Heyvaert 2003: 93):

> (…) *in the case of grammatical metaphor, the two aspects involved in the movement or meta-phorical extension no longer refer to lexemes and lexical meanings (as with lexical metaphor). Rather, they refer to grammatical forms, or grammatical means of expression, such as a clause and a nominal group*. (Taverniers 2004: 20)

On the other hand, Benveniste had suggested the concept of *métamorphisme* defined as "the **process** of transformation of some classes into others" (1967: 160–162). For Halliday, metaphor permeates all levels of linguistic competence: metaphorical variation is "lexicogrammatical rather than simply lexical" (Halliday 1985: 342), an idea which is shared by Cognitive Semantics: "syntax is not independent of meaning, especially metaphorical aspects of meaning" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 138). For economic reasons, some functional markers "invade" the space of others. Lakoff mentions the example of role exchange between agent and patient (1995: 19), and Huelva (2011: 29) quotes the mapping of transfer structures onto causative structures. Grammatical metaphors include all kinds of "cross-coded phenomena represented by categories other than those that evolved to represent them" (Halliday 1985: xviii).

Cognitive Linguistics enhances the field of grammatical metaphor to other phenomena, such as possessor's promotion. All languages have some kind of possession marks, whose high productivity is due to the fact that their actual function goes far beyond the literal expression of belonging (Langacker 1991: 42; Nikiforidou 1991; Heine 1997), e.g., expressing with (literal) possessive morphemes some relationships that are actually locative (*he works in **my** department*) or agentive (***his** articles are interesting*) (Pamies 2002, Pamies 2004). Conversely, actual possession can be figuratively expressed by (literal) dative markers, such as sp. *me rompió el jarrón* (***to me** he broke the vase "he broke my vase"); *se le murió el perro* (***to him** the dog died "his dog died") (Pamies 2001, Pamies 2004). Therefore, grammatical metaphors are bi-directional.

Since this conception of *metaphor* also includes the dynamic exchange of categories and/or functions (Halliday 1985: 320–342; Heyvaert 2003: 67–68, 76–85), why not to apply it also to a syntagm playing the role of a lexeme? It is not a coincidence that in the initial proposal of Halliday, many examples of grammatical metaphor were light verb collocations, therefore, phrasemes (cf. Taverniers 2003: 21–28; Heyvaert 2003: 93). If an element of a higher level in the combinatorial hierarchy fulfills the function of an element of a lower level, we can consider it as a special kind of grammatical metaphor.

Not all the grammatical metaphors are phraseologisms, but all the phraseologisms contain a grammatical metaphor, and this feature becomes distinctive in the case of three particular types of grammatical metaphor, which affect exclusively the phraseological level: *pseudo-syntagms*, *semi-syntagms* and *pseudo-discursive sequences* (Pamies 2007, Pamies 2014a, Pamies 2014c, and Pamies 2016). These three grammatical metaphors constitute a kind of *functional idiomaticity* since the grammatical function of the whole is not deduced from the category of the parts. As we shall try to demonstrate in the next section, they also justify a discrete taxonomy of phrasemes, in spite of the gradualness of other criteria such as fixedness and idiomaticity.

1.3 Phraseological taxonomy revisited

Depending on the kind of grammatical metaphor they contain, all phrasemes may be distributed into three corresponding macro-categories.

1.3.1   The PSEUDO-SYNTAGM is a syntagm that functions like a lexeme, thus a metaphor between phrases (as a source domain) and words (as a target domain): the syntagmatic structure of these sequences is only apparent since they undergo a process of lexicalization (or *de-grammaticalization*) that converts them, functionally, into lexemes (Pamies 2007; 2014a; 2016). This category almost coincides with Martinet's *synthème* (1960: 101–119): several monemes which are the result of a single choice by the speaker.[11] A literal function is mapped onto a figurative function. For instance, *to give up the ghost* functions globally as a single verb ("to die"), thus its direct object is not a "true" one. In *his blood has frozen,* there is also a predicate whose subject is not the "true" one. The most prototypical representative of this type of grammatical metaphor are **idioms**[12] (eng. *lame duck, hear*

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11 According to Martinet (1960, 1965) the *synthème* is a larger category also including derivates, but, among his examples he quotes basically idioms (*avoir l'air* *to have the air 'to seem'; *bon marché* *good market 'cheap'). The inclusion of derivates comes from the fact that Martinet's *monemes* do not distinguish between lexemes and morphemes. Avoiding this terminological obstacle, Georges Mounin (1974) defines the *synthème* as a segment of utterance which functions as a *minimal syntactic unit* though it may be analyzed into two or more *significant units*. Since our definition of *pseudo-syntagm* involves *lexemes* instead of *monemes*, derived words are automatically excluded.
12 They correspond more or less to *tournure idioms* (Makkai 1972: 148) / *phraseological nominations* (Fiedler 2007) / *full phrasemes* (Mel'čuk 1998) (in other languages: sp. *locuciones / expresiones idiomáticas* / fr. *locutions / expressions idiomatiques* / grm. *Redensarten / Redewendungen / Idiome* / rs. *фразеологические сращения* [Vinogradov 1947] / *идиомы / полные фразы* [Mel'čuk 1997]).

on the grapevine, once in a blue moon), but it also includes **compounds**[13] (eng. *town hall, brother-in-law, honeymoon, greenhouse, deadline*),[14] **phraseo-terms**[15] (*value-added tax, hard disk, black hole, mad cow disease, abyssal plain*), **onymic word-groups**[16] (*the White House, Latin America; the Low Countries, the Holy Father, the Desert Fox, Scotland Yard, the Supreme Court*)[17] and **phrasal verbs**[18] (*run into, stand by, give up, look for*).[19]

1.3.2 The SEMI-SYNTAGM is a syntagm-like sequence working neither as a word nor as a real syntagm, since one of its lexemes behaves as if it were a morpheme of the other one, playing only a *lexical function* (as defined by Mel'čuk 1998, and Mel'čuk 2003). It includes **collocations**[20] (*heavy smoker, fatal mistake, blithering idiot, broad daylight, commit suicide*), and also **light verb collocations**[21]

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13 On the inclusion of compounds into phraseology, see Pottier (1967, 1972); G. Gross (1988, 1996), Baránov and Dobrovol'skil (1996); Martins (2002); Čermák (2007a, 2007b); Burger (2007: 103–104); Benigni et al. (2015).

14 Also called *phrasal compound idioms* and *verb-incorporating idioms* (Makkai 1972) / *lexical phrasemes* (Čermák 2007a: 114) / *morphological phrasemes* (Mel'čuk 2008: 2, Mel'čuk 2015: 55). Technically, it is more difficult to distinguish them from idioms than from words.

15 Also called *termemes* (Mel'čuk 2015: 71) (sp. *fraseotérminos* [Zuluaga 1980; Pamies 2007] / grm. *phraseologische Termini* [Burger 1998]).

16 Also called *named entities* (Colson 2016b), *nominemes* and *nicknames* (Mel'čuk 2015: 66, 70) (sp. *construcciones onímicas* [Zuluaga 1980] / grm. *önymische Einheiten* / *önymische Wortgruppen* [Gläser 1986: 54, 183] / *önymische Phraseologismen* [Burger 1998: 49]).

17 Mel'čuk (2015: 68) considers that, from a theoretical point of view, even personal proper names belong to this category. Colson (2016b) remarks that, in languages such as Chinese or Arabic, where proper names have generally a literal meaning, and where spelling has no equivalent of capital letters, the recognition of a proper name in a corpus presents exactly the same problems as an idiom, or even more so.

18 Concerning the existence of *phrasal verbs* in Romance languages, cf. Calvo Rigual (2008) and Iacobini (2009).

19 Unlike Čermák (2007a) and Fiedler (2007), we do not include *irreversible binomials*, because their definition is based on formal criteria, therefore they are spread out among several of our categories, which are only functional: they may be verbal idioms (*rant and rave*), nominal idioms (*peaches and cream*), adjective idioms (*cut and dried*), or averbial idioms (*high and dry*).

20 Also called *unilateral idioms* (Weinreich 1969 *apud.* Fiedler 2007: 23); *restricted collocations* (Fiedler 2007) / *semi-phrasemes* (Mel'čuk 1998) (sp. *colocaciones* / fr. *collocations* / grm. *Kollokationen* / rs. *фразеологические сочетания* [Vinogradov 1947] / *коллокации* / *полуфраземы* [Mel'čuk 1997]).

21 Also called *paraphrasal verbs* (Fiedler 2007) / *function verb constructions* (Steyer 2015) (sp. *lexemas verbales compuestos* [Zuluaga 1980: 162–163] / *unidades sintagmáticas verbales* [Ruiz Gurillo 1997: 111] / *perífrasis verbo-nominales* / *construcciones de verbo soporte* [cf. Corbacho 2005: 38] / *colocaciones funcionales* [Koike 2001] / *construcciones con verbo de apoyo* [Alonso 2004] / *colocaciones de verbo soporte* [Pamies 2007] / fr. *constructions à verbe support* [Giry-Schneider 1987] / grm. *Funktionsverbgefüge* [cf. Corbacho 2005: 36] / rs. *устойчивые глагольные словосочетания* / *глагольные коллокации*).

(*pay attention, take a walk, make a decision*),[22] as well as **stereotyped comparisons**[23] (*swift as an arrow, light as a feather, poor as a churchmouse, drunk as a fish; sleep like a log*).

Semi-syntagms are not mere *statistical* or *preferential* combinations of words, since they are also markers of *lexical functions* (Mel'čuk 2008). We call them "semi-syntagm" because in *heavy smoker* the literal adjective is not a real one, but rather a morpheme of intensification (equivalent to *smokerissimus). In light verb collocations (*to pay attention; to make a decision*), the verb is also a mere operator which converts a noun into a predicate (Oper. lexical function).[24] As for stereotyped comparisons (*as dead as a door nail*), their lexical function is exactly the same as that of a lexical collocative (Van der Wouden 1997: 54–55): it is an intensifier (Magn. lexical function), whose fixedness blocks the logical inversion of the proposition (*a fish is as drunk as he). The common denominator of the three subclasses is that they have a *base* that behaves like a true lexeme, and a *collocator,* that only assimilates this word into a mere functional morpheme of the base.

1.3.3 The PSEUDO-DISCURSIVE SEQUENCES are phraseological categories that may contain several lexemes but are globally memorized instead of constructed, behaving like autonomous acts of speech.[25] This metaphoric mapping between discourse and system (from *constructions* to *units*) can be considered as a case

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22 Some phraseologists consider light verbs as *semantically empty* (e.g. Vietri 2014: 125).

23 Also called *similes* (Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen 2005; Čermák 2007a) / *standard similes / idiomatic similes / hyperbolic idioms* (sp. *frases elativas* [Zuluaga, 1980] / *comparaciones prototípicas* [Bosque 2004: cxxx] / *colocaciones de cuantificación por comparación / comparaciones proverbiales* [Luque Durán 2005] / *comparaciones estereotipadas* [Pamies 2007] / *comparativas de intensidad* [García-Page 2008b] / fr. *séquences intensives stéréotypées* [Szende, 1999] / *comparatives à parangon* (Anscombre 2011) / *comparaisons stéréotypées* [Pamies 2014c; Martí Solano 2016] / grm. *komparative Phraseologismen* [Burger, 1998]).

24 This explains its intermediary degree of syntactic fixedness, e.g. fr. *il fait l'idiot* (*he makes the idiot: 'he plays the fool') allows gender agreement in *elle fait l'idiote* (*she makes the fool+FEM), though it does not allow passivization *l'idiot a été fait (*the idiot was made).

25 The term corresponds more or less to *sememic idioms* (Makkai 1972); *semantic-lexemic phrasemes* (Mel'čuk 2015) / *pragmatic idioms* (cf. Fiedler 2007: 50) (sp. *enunciados fraseológicos* [Casares 1950; Corpas 1996] / *frasemas composicionales pragmáticos* [Blanco 2010] / *unidades léxicas no descriptivas / secuencias pseudo-discursivas* [Pamies 2014b] / fr. *lexies textuelles* [Pottier 1972: 16] / fr. *séquences pseudo-discursives* [Pamies 2014a]; grm. *satzfertige und textfertige Phraseologismen* [Burger 1998]; фразеологические выражения [Shanskij 1963]).

of pragmaticalization (cf. Dalmas 2013: 7). This category, also known as *prag-mateme* (Mel'čuk 1998; Blanco 2010) involves several subclasses.[26]

The first subclass is composed by **formulae**,[27] subdivided into **social formulae** (*nice to meet you, it's up to you, how do you do?, take it easy!, may he rest in peace*) and **discursive formulae**[28] (*as a matter of fact, strictly speaking, in other words, by the way, are you following me?*).

In spite of their discursive appearance, *social formulae* belong to the linguistic system, they are even one of its most fixed and conventionalized elements, since some of them are the first things that native children or foreign students need to learn. Most of them even have a perlocutionary power, this is why Baranov and Dobrovol'skij (2000) call them "idiom-performatives" (*идиомы-перформативы*). Once phrasemes such as *thank you very much/I am sorry* or *happy birthday* have been pronounced, the social acts of acknowledgment, apology and greeting are automatically realized. This category is difficult to define with accuracy, and its formal structure is heterogeneous, ranging from the simple words (*cheers!*) to phrases (*wet paint*; *hands up! hold the line!*) or complete sentences (*the early bird catches the worm*) as a result of this pragmaticalization (cf. Blanco 2010; Kauffer 2015; Mel'čuk 2015).

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26 Mel'čuk coined the term *pragmatemes* (fr. *pragmatèmes*; rs. *прагматемы* [1998, 2011, 1997]) (esp. *pragmatemas* [Barrios 2008: 211–212; Blanco 2010]) that he defined as a lexical expression *constrained by its situation of use*, a broad category that includes all kinds of pragmatically bound expressions. This term became ambiguous, since some specialists used it to designate all kinds of *fixed utterances* (e.g., Barrios 2008 or Monteiro-Plantin 2014) whereas others (e.g. Blanco 2010, Català 2011 or Kauffer 2015) use it only to designate *social formulae,* a specific sub-class that Mel'čuk called later *formulemes* (2015: 73–84). Mel'čuk himself admits that "the term pragmateme turned out to be problematic. It can be used broadly to denote any linguistic unit that is pragmatically constrained, or narrowly, just for pragmatically constrained formulemes" (2015: 84). For more details, cf. also Blanco (2010) and Kauffer (2015).
27 Also called *situation bound expressions* (Pawley 2007) / *routines* (Benigni et al. 2015) / *routine formulae* (Čermák 2007a; Fiedler 2007) (sp. *locuciones interjectivas* [Casares 1950] / *fórmulas ritualizadas* [Corpas 1996: 171; Pamies 2014b] / *locuciones oracionales* [García Page 2007] / *fórmulas rutinarias* [Timofeeva 2012: 151] / fr. *routines conversationnelles* [Klein and Lamiroy 2011] / *formules routinères / formules stéréotypées* [Blanco, 2010; Mejri 2012; Pamies 2014a] / *phraséologismes pragmatiques / actes de langage stéréotypés* [Kauffer 2015] / *formulèmes* ([Mel'čuk 2015: 73] / grm. *Routinenformeln* [Burger 1998: 55] / *Routinen / pragmatischen Phraseologismen* / rs. *идиомы-перформативы* [Baranov and Dobrovol'skij 2000] / *формулы речевого этикета*).
28 Also called *conversational routines* (Coulmas 1981) / *gambits* (Keller 1979) / *speech act formulae* (Pawley 1985) (sp. *locuciones marcadoras / conectores pragmáticos* [Ruiz Gurillo 2005] / *fórmulas discursivas* [Pamies 2014b] / fr. *énoncés formulaires* [Sfar 2007] / *formules conversationnelles* [Kauffer 2015] / grm. *kommunikative Phraseologismen* [Burger 1998] / rs. *речевые формулы* [Baranov and Dobrovol'skij 2000]).

Pseudo-discursive sequences also include **parœmia**[29], subdivided in its turn into **proverb**[30] (*barking dogs seldom bite*) and **maxim**[31] (*man is wolf to man* [Hobbes]; *cowards die many times before their death* [Shakespeare]); and also **non-didactic quotations**[32] (*my kingdom for a horse* [Shakespeare]; *as God is my witness, I'll never be hungry again!* [Margaret Mitchell]; *I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse* [Mario Puzo]). Pseudo-discursive sequences also include the **proverbial clause**[33], distinguished from proverbs only by the absence of an explicit "lesson" or "general truth" (*who will bell the cat? the coast is clear! it's better than nothing*). Other subclasses are the **motto**[34] (*in God we trust; honni soit qui mal y pense*) and the **slogan**[35] (*yes we can; it's the real thing*).

Tables 1, 2, 3 summarize our complete typology of phrasemes, based on their class of grammatical metaphor. All the resulting subclasses fully coincide with those already proposed for other languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, French and Italian (Pamies 2007, Pamies 2014a, Pamies 2014c, and Pamies 2016).[36]

29 Also called *sentenceme* (Mel'čuk 2015) (sp. *paremia* / fr. *parémie* / grm. *Parömie* / rs. *паремия*). They are memorized concise utterances of anonymous origin, characterized by their *illocutionary force of recommendation* (Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen 2005), which are supposed to express a *general truth*, in a literal or figurative way (Sevilla 1993).

30 Sp. *proverbio* / *refrán* / fr. *proverbe* /grm. *Sprichwort* / rs. *пословица*.

31 Sp. *máxima* / fr. *maxime* / grm. *Maxime* / rs. *максима*. Its only difference with the proverb is that its origin can be traced to a given author (Sevilla 1993).

32 Also called *winged words* (Fiedler 2007; Szerszunowicz 2016) (sp. *citas no sentenciosas* / fr. *citations non-sentencieuses* [Pamies 2014c] / grm. *geflügelte Worte* [Burger 1998] / rs. *крылатые фразы* / *крылатые слова* [Vinogradov 1947] / *цитаты* / *интертекстемы* [Mokienko 2005]). Contrary to *maxims*, these concise quotations from a known author do not contain any explicit "lesson" (Casares 1950: 194).

33 Also called *sentence idioms* (Dobrovol'kij and Piirainen 2005) / *propositional phrasemes* (Čermák 2007a: 85) (sp. *frases proverbiales* [Casares 1950; Sevilla 1993; Pamies 2014b]; *enunciados de valor específico* [Corpas 1996]; fr. *phrases idiomatiques* [Klein and Lamiroy 2011]; *phrases proverbiales* [Sevilla 1993]).

34 (sp. *lema*; fr. *devise*; grm. *Devise*; rs. *девиз*)

35 (sp. *eslogan*; fr. *slogan*; grm. *Slogan* rs. *лозунг*)

36 This taxonomy is currently being applied to Chinese, with slight differences, in a doctoral thesis by Lei Chunyi (University of Granada 2017).

Tab. 1: Pseudo-syntagms

(source) **Input function**	(target) **Output function**	**Grammatical Metaphor**	**PHRASEME**	
Syntagm	LEXEME	PSEUDO-SYNTAGM	idiom	*big shot; second hand; to push up the daisies; to hear on the grapevine*
			compound	*town hall; deadline; brother-in-law; honeymoon; greenhouse*
			onymic construction	*the White House; the Low Countries; the Holy Father; the Supreme Court*
			phraseo-term	*Value-Added Tax; hard disk; past perfect progressive*
			phrasal verb	*run into; give up; look for; keep up with*

Tab. 2: Semi-syntagms

(source) **Input function**	(target) **Output function**	**Grammatical Metaphor**	**PHRASEME**	
SYNTAGM	LEXEME +MORPHEME	SEMI-SYNTAGM	collocation	*heavy smoker; fatal mistake; commit suicide*
			light verb collocation	*make a decision; pay attention; take a walk*
			stereotyped simile	*swift as an arrow; drunk as an Irish sailor; poor as a church mouse*

Tab. 3: Pseudo-discursive sequences

(source) **Input function**	(target) **Output function**	**Grammatical Metaphor**	**PHRASEME**		
DISCOURSE	SYSTEM	PSEUDO-DISCURSIVE SEQUENCE	formula	social formula	*nice to meet you; how do you do? take it easy!*
				discursive formula	*as a matter of fact; strictly speaking; in other words*

Tab. 3 (continued)

(source) Input function	(target) Output function	Grammatical Metaphor	Phraseme		
		parœmia	proverb	*barking dogs seldom bite; the early bird catches the worm*
			maxim	*man is wolf to man* (Hobbes); *cowards die many times before their death* (Shakespeare)
		proverbial clause	*who will bell the cat? the coast is clear; the mountain gave birth to a mouse*	
		non-didactic quotation	*my kingdom for a horse!* (Shakespeare); *I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse* (Mario Puzo)	
		motto	*In god we trust; Honni soit qui mal y pense*	
		slogan	*Yes we can! It's the real thing!*	

2 Inner syntax vs. outer syntax in multi-word expressions

2.1 Functional idiomaticity

According to Fillmore, Kay and McConnor (1988), any construction has an internal and an external syntax ruling its insertion in a larger context. This also applies to idioms, where Burger distinguishes between *interne Valenz* and *externe Valenz* (Burger 1998 [2010]: 19–20). These two levels are complementary:

a) **inner syntax:** even in fixed structures such as *kick the bucket*, the verb can be conjugated, however, since its direct object is not a "real" one, the sequence undergoes transformational restrictions (*the bucket that he kicked / *his bucket was kicked, etc.);

b) **outer syntax:** and idiom may need external arguments in the rest of the construction (e.g. *kick the bucket* needs an agent).

As a consequence of grammatical metaphors, both levels may influence each other, adding or suppressing an argument inside the output structure, or replacing a category of arguments by another one (cf. Soehn 2006). For example, *to see* is transitive, but it becomes intransitive in *to see red*, whereas *to give* is normally ditransitive, but all its valences are not filled in phrasemes such as *to give up*; *give it up!*. Conversely, *to sleep* is intransitive, but it may admit a direct object in *to sleep it off*. These valence alterations contrast with non-idiomatic predicators, which, by definition, are "lexically specified as requiring all members of their valence list" (Kay and Sag 2012: 7). Therefore, the term *functional idiomaticity* refers these apparent contradictions between the literal and the figurative syntactic functions, as a parallelism with the semantic behavior of phrasemes.

This interaction may also be more subtle, and affect the function of elements which are present in both the source and target structures. For example, in *she threw dust in the eyes of the jeweler by pretending to be a well-to-do lady*[37], the patient slot is filled, but *dust* is not a "real" direct object here, and the *eyes* are not the "real" addressee (Fig. 1). The fooled *jeweler* of this semantic script cannot occupy the patient's slot, already filled by the pseudo-object (*dust*), so it moves to another functional status; but, since *dust* was not a "real" direct object, it hardly becomes the subject of a passive, unless recovering its literal sense (?*dust was thrown by her in the eyes of the jeweler*).
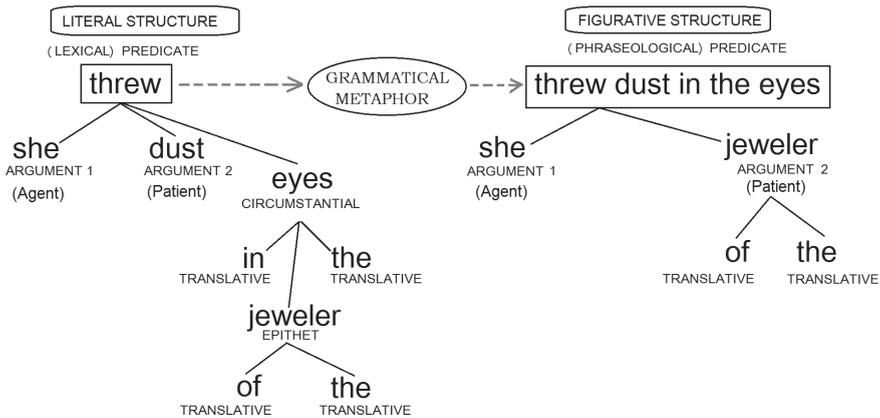

Fig. 1: Inner (literal) structure vs. outer (figurative) structure[38] of a grammatical metaphor

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37 www.http://idioms.in (accessed February 2017).

38 The graphical analysis uses Tesnière's dependency *stemmas*, where prepositions are *translatives*, subordinated to the arguments they precede (1959).

Internal and external syntax interact (Wotjak 1998: 263–264; 313; Bustos 2008: 57–60; Stumpf 2015), suggesting an inverse proportionality between the degree of fixedness of a phraseme and the degree of compatibility between its inner and outer argumental structures.

For example, in the idiom *to give someone a hand* ("to help someone"), the verb is trivalent in the literal input, but bivalent in the metaphoric output. In the idiom *not to cut the mustard* ("not to be as good as required"), the verb is bivalent in the literal input, but intransitive in the metaphoric output (Fig. 2).
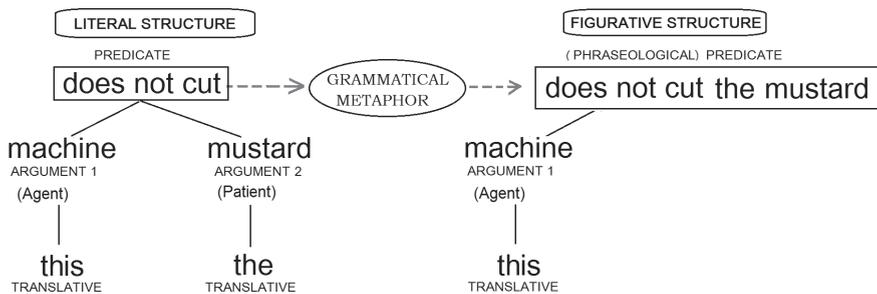

Fig. 2: Inner (literal) vs. outer (figurative) structures of a grammatical metaphor

The two structures, literal and figurative, are not syntactic *transformations* one from another (in the Chomskyan sense), because they have completely different meanings (thus, they cannot be related to the same deep structure). There is no *incorporation* either, since, in a polysynthetic language, incorporation would not modify the meaning of the whole, and would be a systematic feature.[39] The transformational defectivity of the phrasemes is rather due to the fact that *reinterpretation* is not limited to the content plane, it also involves the syntactic level. Therefore, we may call *functional idiomaticity* the reinterpretation of a grammatical function in terms of another one. This other kind of *idiomaticity* is parallel and inseparable from the semantic one, and fixedness is a consequence of the interaction between the source and the target functional structure of a conventionalized grammatical metaphor.

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39 In a European language, the closest feature to incorporation is probably the Spanish compound verb *maniatar* (*to+tie+hands [someone]), because the verb "includes" its object, formally and semantically (*mano* "hand" + *atar* "to tie"), and the possessor of the hands occupies the object slot. However, strictly speaking, in order to be an *incorporation*, it should result from a productive and generalized rule, not from an isolated lexical fact.

2.2 Variation into fixedness

Not everything is blocked in an idiom, e.g. in *mind your own business,* person agreement is not only possible but obligatory (***he** mind**s his** own business*). All the specialists accept that phraseological fixedness is a gradual feature (cf. Moon 1998 for English), and, as Maurice Gross pointed out, "les phrases figées ne sont qu' exceptionnellement figées. Même dans les cas les plus contraints, elles possèdent des degrés de liberté" (1988: 22). Passive transformation, whose blocking is often mentioned as a prototypical example of fixedness, occurs frequently in text corpora (*the benefit of the doubt was given; the blame was put on him; injury was added to insult; sleeping dogs were let lie; the can of worms was opened,* etc.). Conversely, the passive of many "free" constructions is blocked, defective, constrained, or modifies the meaning (Vietri 2014: 19, 37–49, 106–108). It is the case of those containing a reflexive verb, or a verb such as *have, cost, fit, equal, lack, hold, mind, weigh, contain, resemble, must, can...*

An additional argument against the traditional concept of *non-compositionality* is the fact that, in the euphemistic and dysphemistic variants, the modifications are generally undergone by only one component, confirming the "survival" of a certain autonomy of this word (*don't give a damn = don't give a shit = don't give a fuck*).

Some psycholinguists assume that there are "non-compositional" idioms (the *kick the bucket* model) opposed to "compositional" idioms (the *spill the beans* model), where *spill* would mean "reveal" and *beans* would mean "secret" (cf. Nunberg 1978; Swinney and Cutler 1979; Gibbs et al. 1989; Nunberg et al. 1994). Experiments have been carried out, measuring the reaction times of understanding *constructed* meanings (free combinations and *compositional idioms*) and *recognized* meanings (*non-compositional idioms*), assuming that retrieving is faster than calculating (cf. Häcki Buhofer 2007), although with dissenting conclusions.[40] *Intuitive* tests by means of questionnaires also obtain contradictory data, some

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40 Glucksberg (2001) considers that the results could be used equally against both hypotheses. Other experiments conclude that no inherent property of phrasemes makes them more quickly recognizable (cf. Cacciari and Tabossi 1993; Häcki Buhofer 2007). None of both hypotheses is confirmed, because the results do not change appreciably for each class. As for the comparison with free constructions, the slight advantage of idioms over the free combinations could be explained by the influence of another psychological factor: some of the components of phrasemes are predictable in relation to others, whereas free combinations are unpredictable by definition (Tabossi et al. 2009: 533–538). Besides, this mutual predictability of components is quite variable from one phraseme to another (Timofeeva 2012: 124–125). For example, the sequence *...and the deep blue sea* is easily predictable after *between the devil...* whereas, by contrast, *...compliments* is hardly predictable after *fishing for...*

respondents attribute meanings to the components, whereas others treat them as "empty words" (Cserép 2012).

Cognitive linguistics has related the internal syntactic variation to the global meaning of the idiom. The *kick the bucket* structure cannot be passive because "to die" is intransitive, whereas *spill the beans* admits passivization because "to reveal a secret" is transitive (cf. Croft and Cruse 2004; Soehn 2006).[41] Passivization would be more likely available for idioms whose literal and metaphoric structure both correspond to an event which has a "logical" direct object, able to be topicalized in discourse, e.g. *the baby was thrown out with the bath water* (Dobrovol'skij 2007: 807). However, Kay and Sag (2012: 2) point out that two idioms may have the same global meaning (e.g., "to die"), and only one of them would accept the passive (*ghost was given up*), whereas the other one would not (**the bucket was kicked*), so the actual meaning cannot be the unique responsible. Synonymy with an intransitive monolexical verb is not a sufficient criterion to block the passivization of a (literally) transitive idiom. As for the attribution of autonomous meanings to the words *spill* and *beans,* it is undemonstrable, since there are no other metaphors where both components are separately associated to these referents (Čermák 2001). From a methodological point of view, arguments which explain internal variation by means of a segmentation of the idiomatic meaning are hardly compatible with the "classical" definition of idiomaticity, which states that "the idiom's meaning is not compositional, irrespective of all sorts of seemingly analyzable parts of it" (Čermák 2001: 155).

Here also, the concept of *grammatical metaphor* may help us to avoid the contradiction pointed out by Čermák. Recategorization is a diachronic change, which makes a linguistic item acquire a new functional status, even without any affix (e.g., the verb *to murder* is also a noun). The verbs that are nominalized by recategorization produce *full nominals,* which obtain all the syntactic properties of their new category. Once *murder* is a noun, it may have a nominal plural or genitive, articles, adjectives, prepositional complements, it can work as the argument of a predicate, or switch from direct object to subject in a passive sentence, etc. By contrast, grammatical metaphor is a synchronic phenomenon, where, in a certain context, linguistic signs change their (literal) function for another (figurative) one, and they do not inherit all the syntactic properties of their new status, they may keep something of their original nature.

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41 Although there are some examples on the web of {?daisies are being pushed up} or {?the bucket was kicked}, they are metalinguistic, humouristic, or literal. By contrast, *the beans have been spilt* is quite common and systematic in discourse (cf. Dobrovol'lskij 2007: 810).

For example, the derived noun *possession* is a full nominal when it designates metonymically the "possessed things", so it accepts a nominal plural (*possessions*) and it cannot be replaced by *possessing* in *he has lost all his possessions*. By contrast, when the meaning of *possession* refers to the act of owing something, it does neither accept nominal plurals nor prepositional complements where it can be replaced by *possessing* (*they charge him for possession of stolen goods*) (Derewianka 2003: 188–190). It is also a noun but, as a result of a grammatical metaphor, it keeps some properties of its "former" category and it does not inherit all the properties of the "new" one, as *full nominals* would do.

Langacker (1991: 32) also remarks that, in *Sam's washing of the windows*, the re-categorized verb may be the subject of a predicate, to be preceded by an article, or followed by a prepositional complement. By contrast, in *Sam's washing the windows,* the metaphorically nominalized verb neither admits determiners nor adjectives, it requires an agent and admits an adverb (e.g. subject, as in *Sam's meticulously washing the windows surprised me* (Heyvaert 2010: 71). Metaphorically nominalized verbs are recognizable because of the verbal features they retain in spite of their nominal function. This applies also to the Spanish pseudo-reflexive construction *aquí se venden coches* (*here cars sell themselves), which is literally reflexive but functions metaphorically as a passive with an unknown agent ("cars are sold here"). In a "true" reflexive, the patient might be transformed into a beneficiary if the action affects only one of its parts (*Juan se lava* *John washes himself → *Juan se lava las manos* *John washes to himself the hands), a transformation which would be forbidden in a pseudo-reflexive construction: it is impossible to say *aquí coches se venden las ruedas (*here cars sell themselves the wheels), so the reflexive pronoun can be used only for the direct object (*se venden ruedas de coche* *wheels of cars sell themselves "car wheels are sold"). The output of a syntactic metaphor has less transformational possibilities than its literal counterpart.

Since idioms always contain a grammatical metaphor, they may produce *pseudo-transitive verbs* with *pseudo-objects* (Kay and Sag 2012: 12]). A few idioms are completely "frozen", because they have undergone a complete lexicalization (*red herring; blind date*), but the majority maintains certain properties of their literal function, as any grammatical metaphor may do. It applies to idiom passivization (*the cat was let out of the bag*), relativization (*the strings that Pat pulled* [Kay and Sag: 2012: 57–59]), pronominalization (*we worried that Pat might spill the beans, but it was Chris who finally spilled them* [Hardwood et al. 2017: 48]) or adjunction (*to pull certain strings* [Čermák 2001: 150]).

The metaphoricity of the syntactic level bears a clear parallelism to that of the content plane, which "also includes traces of the literal reading underlying the actual meaning" (Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen 2005: 14). Both *idiomaticities* are

similar, and their particular configuration depends, ultimately, on *who did it, who it happened to, and what got changed* (Fillmore 1968: 23). Therefore, the concept of grammatical metaphor avoids the paradox between the variation and the fixedness of phraseological syntax.

3 Some particular cases of functional idiomaticity

3.1 Discontinuity

Charles Bally pointed out long ago that there are "groupements phraséologiques à éléments séparables" (1909: 76–77), phrasemes which are intrinsically discontinuous, such as fr. {*ne<....>que*} "only" (e.g., il *ne* mange *que* des légumes "he eats only vegetables"). This applies to English units such as *the more... the more* (e.g., *the more* I see you *the more* I want you). Another type of idiom has been considered as a *clausal idiom*, because it "contains" a variable subject[42] (*my [/your/ his/...] legs turn into jelly* "being scared"). Some researchers consider that both types are *open-slot idioms,* a specific class of phrasemes with *empty cells,* that would be *partially fixed and partially free*, since these empty slots are filled with variable elements (cf. Wotjak 2008; Montoro 2011; Martí 2013).[43] For example, eng. *to pull* (*one's /my /his...*) *leg*; *to bite off more than* (*one /you /he...*) *can chew*; or more complex structures such as *to have until <X> to <Z>*, where X refers to a deadline, and Z refers to an action which must happen before this moment (eng. you *have until* tomorrow *to* finish your paper). These combinations would also include *relatively idiomatic* sequences such as *what's <X> doing <Y>?* (e.g., Waiter! *What's* this fly *doing* in my soup? [Kay and Fillmore 1999; Kay and Sag 2012: 30–34]). There is no need to create a paradigm to describe this phenomenon which is purely syntagmatic. *Mind your own business* has no "hole", and *my heart*

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42 Also called *subject idioms* (Vietri 2014: 73) (sp. *locuciones clausales* [Corpas 1996: 109; Penadés 2012] / *locuciones semioracionales* [García-Page 2008a: 152–153] / *locuciones propositivas* [cf. Corpas 1996: 109] / grm. *festgeprägte predikative Einheiten* [cf. Corpas 1996: 109]).
43 Also called *lexically open idioms* (Fillmore et al. 1988) / *schematic idioms* (Croft and Cruse 2004: 248) / *partially lexically filled multi-word units* (Steyer 2015) / *superflexible idioms* (Kay and Sag 2012) (sp. *locuciones con casillas vacías / esquemas fraseológicos* [Zuluaga 1980; Ruiz Gurillo 1997; Álvarez de la Granja 2005; G. Wotjak 2008; Montoro 2008, 2011] / *construcciones frasémicas* / fr. *locutions à cases vides / expressions lexicalement ouvertes* [González Rey 2015] / grm. *lexikalisch offene Phraseme / Phraseologismus mit Leerstellen / Phraseoschablonen / modellierte Bildungen / phraseologisierte Satzmuster* [Dobrovol'skij 2016 (2011): 77–80] / *Phrasem-Konstruktionen* [Dobrovol'skij 2016: 78] / rs. *фразеосхемы* [Dobrovol'skij 2016 (2011): 80]).

stood still is not really *clausal;* their variable elements are only external actants (subject, object, addressee, etc.), participating in a larger construction, which includes the idiom ([one's] *blood froze in* [one's] *veins*). Consequently, *to drown one's sorrows* is not a *possessive idiom* (as assumed by Hardwood et al. 2017: 54) but a verbal idiom, whereas the supposed "possessor" of the sorrows is just an external actant.

As Kay and Fillmore pointed out, the sequence {what's X doing Y?} "cannot be represented as an object with fixed phrase structure", but as a type of construction with fixed elements whose valence requires external arguments: "X is the subject of *be*, *doing* is the lexical head of a complement of *be*, and what and Y are the complements of *doing*" (Kay and Fillmore 1999: 22–23). Constructions may "interrupt" idioms into larger structures that Dobrovol'skij calls *Phrasem-Konstruktionen* (2011).[44] Though we do not question the existence of this category, we think that it cannot be an additional kind of idiom, but only a combination (not always continuous) between an idiom and its necessary valence-fillers. Arguments are required by the idiomatic predicate, and, since word order rules are not generally violated into idioms, their only available place may divide the phraseme[45] (Fig. 3).

you | have until | tomorrow | to | finish your paper

Fig. 3: Discontinuous idiom inside a construction

Idioms rarely include "empty cells", they just interact with the larger regular constructions where they are integrated: "one cannot analyze an idiomatic construction without simultaneously discovering and setting aside all the aspects of the data that are **not** licensed by the construction one is studying" (Kay and Fillmore 1999: 36). If the actant is expressed by a possessive, it must precede the nominal possessed, so the interruption is unavoidable in *to pull one's leg* (Fig. 4), but there would be no interruption if this slot were occupied by a noun phrase instead, as in *he was always pulling the leg **of his followers***. The possessor of this *leg* is not a part of the idiom (cf. Fillmore 1997).

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44 Cf. also González Rey (2016).
45 Cf. also Laporte (1988: 119–123); Svensson (2004: 135); Burger (2007: 106); Mel'čuk (2011: 50).

they | were pulling | my | leg
IDIOM

what were | you | doing | talking to that awful man?
IDIOM

Fig. 4: Discontinuous idiom inside a construction

Similarly, the "construction with a gap" quoted by Fillmore, *I wouldn't marry Louise for all the tea in China*, is a good example of *Phrasem-Konstruktion*: neither the actants (*I, Louise*) nor the predicate (*would marry*) belong to the idiom, whose inner form is just *not for all the tea in China*, an adverbial idiom[46] which becomes discontinuous because of a general syntactic rule affecting the whole construction: the negation must precede the verb and follow the modal auxiliary. Therefore, a mutual interruption is unavoidable (Fig. 5).

CIRCUMSTANTIAL
I would | not | marry Louise | for all the tea in China
IDIOM
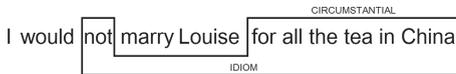
Fig. 5: Discontinuous adverbial idiom inside a construction with a discontinuous predicate

On the one hand, *I know which side my bread is buttered on* admits variations within fixedness, but, on the other hand, "any verb that can take an embedded interrogative complement may appear as the governing verb in this pattern (e.g. senators are paying careful attention to the side their bread's buttered on)" (Kay and Sag 2012: 20). Instead of an unpredictable "open" category, it is more economic to consider the whole as a construction, whose head is the verb *know* and whose argument is an idiom: "contrary to what one finds frequently claimed – there is no matrix verb in the 'side-bread-buttered-on' idiom" (Kay and Sag 2012: 51).

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46 In fact, this is the canonical form adopted by the *Dictionary of Idioms* (E.M. Kirkpatrick & C.M. Schwarz, Wordsworth Editions, 1993), the *American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms* (Ch. Ammer; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013), or by general dictionaries such as *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (www.merriam-webster.com 2016), *McMillan English Dictionary* (www.macmillandictionary.com 2016), *Oxford Dictionary of English* (www.oxforddictionaries.com 2016) and *Collins English-Spanish Dictionary* (www.collinsdictionary.com 2016).

3.2 The interlock principle

A phraseme can also be inserted in another phraseme, the same way it is inserted in a construction (Pamies et al. 2013; Pamies 2014a, Pamies 2014c, and Pamies 2016; Colson 2016a) (Fig. 6).

<div style="text-align:center">
LIGHT VERB
COLLOCATION
As you make your bed, so you must lie on it
PROVERB

COMPOUND
gentleman farmer
COMPOUND
</div>
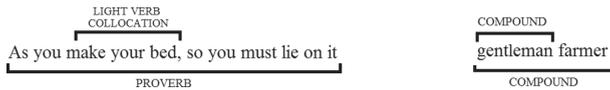
Fig. 6: Phrasemes interlocking into another one

This phenomenon that Colson (2016a) calls *encapsulation* is an important factor of noise in the statistical identification of phrasemes in electronic corpora. A technical solution may consist in keeping only the larger collocation, according to the *Russian puppet principle*, but to calculate the number of occurrences and to identify the limits of the phrasemes will be more difficult (Colson 2016a: 7). This applies for the compound *snowman* into the onymic word-group (*Abominable Snowman*), and also for the collocation *stand still* ("to stop"), which is included in the above mentioned idiom *one's heart stands still* "to be scared".

We agree with Mogorrón when he says that sp. *llover a cántaros* (*rain at jugs "rain cats and dogs") or *pagar a tocateja* (*pay at touch-tile "pay cash on the nail") are *"constructions including an idiom"* (2011: 220), but, since their verb is always the same, such constructions become automatically *collocations including an idiom* (cf. also G. Gross 1996: 71, 113–121). A light verb may be part of such constructions (Vietri 2014: 129),[47] but the fixed combination between this *Funktionsverb* and an idiom becomes automatically a collocation at a higher level.

This *interlock principle* explains that a sequence such as *to shoot at point blank range* does not belong to an additional class of phrasemes, as it has been claimed,[48] because what can be produced by a rule does not need to be stored, as this collocation formed by a literal verb (base) and a figurative adverbial idiom,

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47 For example in Italian, *i grilli in testa* (*the crickets in head "flights of fancy") is combined with the verbs *avere* ("have"), *mettere* ("put"), and not with *prendere ("take") or *perdere ("lose") (Vietri 2014: 129).

48 Zuluaga (1980) calls them "mixed idioms" (*locuciones mixtas*), whereas García-Page (2011) and Koike (2012) call them "complex collocations" (*colocaciones complejas*).

more or less specialized for this base (collocator) (Fig. 7).[49] A semi-syntagm may contain a pseudo-syntagm in the same way a verbal phrase may contain a noun phrase. This rule also applies for eng. *to rain cats and dogs*, which is not an idiom, but a collocation including an adverbial idiom, which is the lexical intensifier of this verb.

ADVERBIAL IDIOM   ADVERBIAL IDIOM

to shoot at point blank range   to rain   cats and dogs

COLLOCATION   COLLOCATION

Fig. 7: Interlocking idioms into collocations

Interweaving phrasemes must not be confused with polysemic phrasemes whose meanings belong to different phraseological classes, such as *to take a bath*, whose original meaning ("to enter into water") is a light verb collocation (where *take* fulfils the Oper. lexical function), whereas its metaphoric global meaning is an idiom ("to accumulate large losses on a business transaction or an investment").[50]

Homonymy between a construction and an idiom may also produce confusion, especially for automatic processing, as in the Spanish sequence [*ir de* +NP] (*go of +NP), which may correspond to several kinds of patterns:

a) it can be a (literal) free construction if the NP is the name of a place, in such a case *de* really means "from"; and *ir* really means "go" (e.g. *ir de Granada a Sevilla* "go from Granada to Seville");

b) it can be a light verb collocation if the NP is a name of clothing, narcotic substance, quality or profession (*ir de uniforme* *go of uniform "to wear a uniform"; *ir de pastillas* *go of pills "be addicted to pills"; *va de guapa* *she goes of pretty woman "she believes she is pretty"; *va de catedrático* *he goes of professor "he behaves as a professor");

c) it can be an idiom if the NP is much more restricted lexically, since these idioms do not constitute an open class[51]: e.g. *ir de culo* (*go of arse: "to be very stressed"), *irse de la lengua* (*go of the tongue "to spill the beans"), *irse de rositas* (*go of little roses "to remain without punishment"/"get away with"), *ir de gorra* (*go of cap "to scrounge" [for something]) (cf. Pamies et al. 2013).

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49 According to the *Lexique-Grammaire* theory, sequences such as *dormir à poings fermés* (*sleep at closed fists "sleep like a log") are considered as verbs "associated" to *adverbes figés* (*fixed adverbs "adverbial idioms") cf. (M. Gross 1988: 12; G. Gross 1996: 113–121).

50 http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com /take+a+bath

51 For a complete description of these expressions, including statistical analysis in a large corpus, see Pamies et al. (2013).

Interlock may even lead to *overlap*. In law terminology, the collocations *violent crime/influence peddling* may overlap the collocations *to commit crime/to commit peddling,* giving rise to other collocations which merge both types: {*to commit* [*violent crime*]}; {*to commit* [*influence peddling*]}] (Fig. 8).
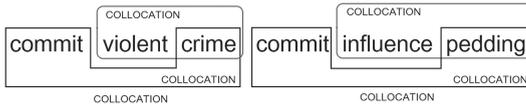

Fig. 8: Two interlocking and overlapping collocations inside a superordinate collocation

Though interlock and overlap do not exclude each other, they can be distinguished as independent variables. For example, in French, *problème délicat* overlaps *résoudre un problème* in the sequence [*résoudre* (*un problème*) *délicat*]; whereas, in English, interlock is added to overlap: [*to solve a* (*delicate problem*)] (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9: Overlap in French vs. overlap and interlock in English

Once again, a general word order rule is responsible for interlock, therefore the outer syntax of phrasemes influences their inner syntax and conversely.

4 Conclusions

If phrasemes do not follow the rules of many theoretical models, it is partially because of the restrictive assumptions inherent to such models (Kuiper 2007: 62; Gries 2008: 13). Modern theories, such as Cognitive Linguistics and Construction Grammar, do not exclude *a priori* that phrasemes may have their own grammatical properties, once they reject the formalistic clear-cut limit between grammar and lexicon (Benigni et al. 2015: 280–282).

A. The mere application to grammar of the (traditionally semantic/pragmatic) concept of metaphor is a direct consequence of this rejection. The *grammatical metaphor*, defined by Halliday as a lexicogrammatical phenomenon (1985: 342), makes it possible to extend the notion of idiomaticity to syntax: grammatical metaphor thus becomes to syntactic functions what idiomaticity is to lexical meanings.

What makes this extension more profitable is that it shows that, although all grammatical metaphors are not phrasemes, all phrasemes are grammatical metaphors, three of which are exclusive to phraseology: *pseudo-syntagm, semi-syntagm* and *pseudo-discursive sequence*. Even fixed sequences whose meaning is not idiomatic have at least one linguistic function "usurped" by another one. All phrasemes result therefore from the mapping of a *construction* towards a *unit*. In this sense, all of them would be "pseudo-constructions". This view also justifies a discrete taxonomy of phraseological classes, depending on the kind of grammatical metaphor they contain.

B. The fixedness of phrasemes belongs to their *internal syntax,* whereas their contextual behavior depends on their *external syntax,* which may contradict this fixedness, since a figurative syntactic form may keep certain properties of its literal structure (passivization, discontinuity, interlock, etc.), just as idiomatic meanings may keep some semantic features of their literal *mental image*. This *functional idiomaticity* is an additional evidence of a parallelism between the figurativeness of form and meaning in phraseology.

C. The so-called *open slots idioms* and *clausal idioms* are not specific classes of phrasemes, but combinations between a phraseme and its external arguments, inside a larger construction. The actants which are not lexically restricted do not belong to the phraseme, even if, formally, they interrupt its linear structure, as a consequence of more general syntactic rules, producing interlocks or overlaps between phrasemes and their valence-fillers, or even between two phrasemes. As any other kind of phraseme, their fixedness affects only their internal syntax, while their external syntax is necessarily variable, in order to integrate them within a larger context, which may also include other phrasemes. Discontinuity, interlocking and overlapping phrasemes are particular cases of *functional idiomaticity* of phrasemes.

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