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LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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Annotation

This article explores the lingo-cultural features of English and Uzbek phraseological units, emphasizing their role as carriers of national culture, historical memory, and collective worldview. Phraseological units are not merely fixed linguistic expressions; they also reflect the traditions, customs, beliefs, values, and social experiences of the communities in which they develop. The study adopts a qualitative comparative approach to analyze the semantic, structural, and cultural characteristics of English and Uzbek idioms, identifying both universal and culture-specific elements. Particular attention is given to phraseogical units related to family, animals, colors, food, religion, and everyday life, as these domains vividly illustrate the interaction between language and culture. The findings reveal that while both languages express common human experiences through figurative language, they differ considerably in their metaphorical images and cultural symbolism due to their distinct historical, religious, and social backgrounds. The study concludes that phraseological units serve as valuable linguistic and cultural resources that strengthen intercultural communication, facilitate translation, and enhance foreign language learning by enabling learners to understand meanings beyond the literal level.

Keywords

phraseological units, linguoculture, English, Uzbek, idioms, comparative linguistics, national worldview, cultural values, intercultural communication, metaphor.

ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ АНГЛИЙСКИХ И УЗБЕКСКИХ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ ЕДИНИЦ

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Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются лингвокультурные особенности английских и узбекских фразеологических единиц как важнейших носителей национальной культуры, исторической памяти и языковой картины мира. Фразеологизмы представляют собой не только устойчивые языковые выражения, но и отражают традиции, обычаи, мировоззрение, духовные ценности и социальный опыт народа. Исследование основано на качественном сравнительном анализе семантических, структурных и культурных особенностей английских и узбекских фразеологических единиц с целью выявления их общих и отличительных черт. Особое внимание уделяется фразеологизмам, связанным с семьёй, животными, цветами, пищей, религией и повседневной жизнью, поскольку именно эти тематические группы наиболее ярко отражают взаимосвязь языка и культуры. Результаты исследования показывают, что, несмотря на наличие универсальных представлений о человеческих качествах и жизненных ценностях, английские и узбекские фразеологизмы существенно различаются по используемым образам и культурной символике, что обусловлено их историческим, религиозным и социокультурным развитием. Сделан вывод о том, что фразеологические единицы являются важным средством сохранения национальной идентичности, развития межкультурной коммуникации, совершенствования переводческой деятельности и эффективного обучения иностранным языкам.

Ключевые слова: фразеологические единицы, лингвокультурология, английский язык, узбекский язык, идиомы, сравнительное языкознание, языковая картина мира, культурные ценности, межкультурная коммуникация, метафора.

INTRODUCTION

Language is much more than a means of communication; it is a reflection of a nation’s history, culture, values, and collective experience. Every linguistic element carries traces of the society in which it has developed, preserving traditions, beliefs, and ways of thinking that have been passed down through generations. Among the various components of language, phraseological units occupy a particularly important place

because they combine linguistic meaning with cultural knowledge. Unlike ordinary words or free word combinations, phraseological units express ideas through figurative language whose meanings are often rooted in historical events, religious beliefs, folklore, customs, and everyday practices. Consequently, they provide valuable insights into the worldview of a particular linguistic community and serve as an essential object of linguocultural research[1].

The close relationship between language and culture has become one of the central issues in contemporary linguistics. Modern scholars recognize that language not only reflects culture but also shapes the way people perceive and interpret reality. This perspective has contributed to the development of linguoculturology, an interdisciplinary field that examines the interaction between language, culture, and national identity. From this viewpoint, phraseological units are regarded as cultural codes because they preserve symbolic meanings that cannot be fully understood without considering their cultural background. Every idiom reflects a specific way of conceptualizing the world, revealing the values, traditions, and social norms of the people who created and continue to use it[2]. Therefore, studying phraseological units from a linguocultural perspective allows researchers to understand not only the semantic structure of idioms but also the cultural knowledge embedded within them.

English and Uzbek phraseological systems present an interesting field for comparative linguocultural analysis because the two languages belong to different language families and have evolved under distinct historical, geographical, and cultural conditions. English, a Germanic language, has been shaped by Anglo-Saxon traditions, Christianity, maritime culture, colonial expansion, and globalization. Uzbek, a Turkic language, reflects the cultural heritage of Central Asia, Islamic civilization, nomadic traditions, agriculture, family-centered social organization, and rich oral folklore. These differences have influenced the formation of phraseological units, resulting in distinctive metaphorical images, symbolic associations, and cultural references. Nevertheless, despite their different origins, both languages contain numerous idiomatic expressions

[1] Kunin A. V. English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary. 4th ed. Moscow: Russian Language Publishers, 1984. - P. 18.
[2] Maslova V. A. Linguoculturology. Moscow: Academy Publishing House, 2001. - P. 27.

that convey universal human experiences such as love, friendship, honesty, courage, hope, patience, and perseverance. While the underlying concepts are often similar, the linguistic images through which they are expressed frequently differ, demonstrating the unique cultural identity of each nation[3].

Phraseological units are among the most culturally marked elements of any language because they preserve historical memory and national mentality more effectively than ordinary lexical items. Many English idioms originate from the Bible, classical mythology, literature, maritime life, and medieval history, whereas Uzbek phraseological units are deeply connected with traditional customs, family relationships, hospitality, agriculture, and Islamic values. These expressions illustrate how different societies perceive similar situations through culturally specific metaphors. For example, the symbolism associated with animals, colors, food, and parts of the human body often varies significantly across languages, reflecting differences in cultural beliefs and social practices. Such variations make phraseological units particularly important in translation studies and foreign language education, where literal translation frequently fails to convey the intended meaning.

In the context of globalization and increasing intercultural communication, the study of phraseological units has gained practical as well as theoretical importance. Successful communication in a foreign language requires more than grammatical competence; it also demands an understanding of culturally embedded meanings that cannot be interpreted literally. Language learners who possess phraseological competence are better able to comprehend authentic texts, participate in natural conversations, appreciate humor, and avoid intercultural misunderstandings. Likewise, translators must recognize the cultural meanings encoded in idiomatic expressions in order to produce accurate and culturally appropriate translations. Consequently, the investigation of phraseological units contributes not only to comparative linguistics but also to language teaching, translation studies, intercultural communication, and cultural research.

[3] Teliya V. N. Russian Phraseology: Semantic, Pragmatic and Linguocultural Aspects. Moscow: Languages of Russian Culture, 1996. - P. 214.

The present study aims to examine the linguocultural features of English and Uzbek phraseological units through a comparative qualitative analysis. It seeks to identify the linguistic and cultural characteristics of phraseological expressions in both languages, explore the metaphorical models that underlie their meanings, and determine how these expressions reflect national values, traditions, and worldviews. Furthermore, the research analyzes both universal and culture-specific phraseological units in order to demonstrate the complex relationship between language, culture, and human cognition. By revealing the cultural information embedded in idiomatic expressions, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of linguistic diversity and highlights the importance of phraseology in promoting effective intercultural communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Phraseological units have long attracted the attention of linguists because they represent one of the most expressive and culturally significant layers of language. Early studies by V. V. Vinogradov[4] established the theoretical foundations of phraseology by classifying phraseological units according to their semantic cohesion and degree of idiomaticity, while A. V. Kunin[5] further developed English phraseology, emphasizing the stability, figurative meaning, and reproducibility of idiomatic expressions. Within the field of linguoculturology, scholars such as V. N. Teliya[6] and V. A. Maslova[7] argued that phraseological units function as cultural codes that preserve the historical memory, values, traditions, and worldview of a nation. Their research demonstrates that idioms cannot be fully understood without considering the cultural context in which they originated. In Uzbek linguistics, Sh. Rahmatullayev[8] made a significant contribution to the study of Uzbek phraseology by examining its lexical, semantic, and stylistic characteristics and highlighting its close relationship with folklore, customs, and national identity. More recent comparative studies indicate that although English and Uzbek phraseological units often express universal concepts such as love, honesty,

[4] Vinogradov V. V. Selected Works on Lexicology and Phraseology. Moscow: Nauka, 1977. - P. 140.
[5] Kunin A. V. English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary. 4th ed. Moscow: Russian Language Publishers, 1984. - P. 18.
[6] Teliya V. N. Russian Phraseology: Semantic, Pragmatic and Linguocultural Aspects. Moscow: Languages of Russian Culture, 1996. - P. 214.
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[8] Rahmatullayev Sh. O‘zbek Tilining Izohli Frazeologik Lug‘ati. Toshkent: O‘qituvchi, 1992. - B. 37.

courage, and perseverance, they differ considerably in their metaphorical images, symbolism, and cultural references because of the distinct historical, religious, and social development of the two nations. Consequently, phraseological units are now regarded not merely as fixed linguistic expressions but as valuable sources for understanding intercultural communication, translation, cognitive linguistics, and the interaction between language and culture.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study employs a qualitative comparative research design to investigate the linguocultural features of English and Uzbek phraseological units. The research data consist of phraseological expressions collected from authoritative English and Uzbek phraseological dictionaries, explanatory dictionaries, academic books, scientific articles, and literary works. The collected idioms were selected from thematic groups including family, animals, colors, food, religion, emotions, and everyday life because these categories most clearly reflect cultural values and national traditions. The study applies descriptive, comparative, semantic, and linguocultural methods to identify similarities and differences in the meanings, structures, metaphorical models, and cultural symbolism of phraseological units in both languages. In addition, contextual and interpretative analyses are used to explain how historical background, social practices, religious beliefs, and national customs influence the formation and usage of idiomatic expressions. Through this methodological approach, the research aims to reveal the cultural information embedded in phraseological units and to demonstrate their importance as linguistic representations of national identity and intercultural communication.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek phraseological units demonstrates that phraseology is one of the richest linguistic resources through which a nation expresses its cultural identity, historical experience, moral principles, and worldview. Although English and Uzbek belong to different language families and have developed in distinct geographical and historical environments, both languages possess a highly developed phraseological system that reflects universal human experiences while

simultaneously preserving nationally specific cultural meanings. The analysis indicates that similarities between English and Uzbek phraseological units are primarily associated with universal human emotions, interpersonal relationships, ethical values, and social behavior, whereas differences arise from each nation's traditions, religion, history, economic activities, and cultural symbolism.

One of the most noticeable findings of this study is that many phraseological units in both languages are based on metaphorical thinking. Rather than describing reality directly, speakers use symbolic images to express abstract concepts such as courage, wisdom, honesty, patience, happiness, fear, or disappointment. These metaphorical images are rarely arbitrary. Instead, they originate from centuries of cultural experience and collective observation. Consequently, phraseological units function as linguistic representations of conceptual knowledge that has been accumulated throughout the historical development of society.

The analysis reveals that animal symbolism occupies an important place in both English and Uzbek phraseology. Human qualities are frequently described through comparisons with animals because people have traditionally associated particular behavioral characteristics with different species. However, although similar animals often appear in both languages, their symbolic meanings are not always identical.

For instance, the English idiom "as busy as a bee" describes a hardworking and energetic person. The bee symbolizes diligence because of its constant activity in collecting nectar and producing honey. Uzbek also associates the bee with industriousness through expressions describing hardworking individuals as "aridek mehnatkash." In this case, both cultures perceive the same animal in a similar positive way, demonstrating a universal conceptual association between bees and hard work.

A similar parallel exists in expressions describing bravery. English uses "as brave as a lion," while Uzbek employs "sher yurak" (lion-hearted). In both linguistic communities, the lion symbolizes courage, strength, leadership, and fearlessness. This similarity suggests that certain symbolic meanings transcend cultural boundaries because they are based on common human observations of the natural world.

Nevertheless, other animal symbols differ significantly. In English culture, the owl traditionally represents wisdom and intelligence because of its association with ancient Greek mythology and educational symbolism. Expressions referring to owls often imply knowledge or thoughtful behavior. In Uzbek culture, however, wisdom is less frequently associated with the owl. Instead, greater symbolic importance is attached to elderly people whose life experience represents knowledge and sound judgment. This difference demonstrates that symbolic meanings depend not only on natural observation but also on historical and cultural traditions.

The fox provides another interesting example. Both English and Uzbek cultures generally associate the fox with cleverness and cunning. English expressions such as “as sly as a fox” correspond closely to the Uzbek phrase “tulkiday ayyor.” Despite belonging to different linguistic traditions, both languages attribute intelligence mixed with deceitfulness to the fox. Such similarities indicate that some metaphorical associations have developed independently in different cultures because they are rooted in comparable observations of animal behavior.

The study also demonstrates that body-part phraseological units constitute one of the largest categories in both languages. Human body parts frequently serve as metaphorical sources for describing emotions, personality traits, social relationships, and moral values. Since every individual shares the same physical experience, body-based metaphors often display considerable cross-cultural similarities.

For example, the heart symbolizes emotions in both English and Uzbek phraseology. English expressions such as “have a kind heart,” “lose heart,” and “learn by heart” demonstrate the symbolic importance of the heart as the center of emotions, courage, and memory. Similarly, Uzbek expressions such as “ko’ngli oq,” “yuragi keng,” “yuragiga yaqin olmoq,” and “yuragi ezildi” use the heart to represent kindness, generosity, emotional sensitivity, and compassion. Although individual idioms differ structurally, both languages conceptualize emotional life through the metaphor of the heart.

Likewise, the eye functions as an important cultural symbol in both languages. English expressions such as “keep an eye on,” “see eye to eye,” and “turn a blind eye”

emphasize observation, agreement, and deliberate ignorance. Uzbek contains similar expressions including “ko’z qorachig’iday asramoq,” “ko’z yumdi,” and “ko’zi ochildi.” These phraseological units demonstrate that vision represents not only physical perception but also awareness, understanding, protection, and responsibility.

Another significant finding concerns color symbolism, which reflects cultural values and emotional associations. Colors possess metaphorical meanings in virtually every language; however, the symbolic interpretation of particular colors often differs considerably between cultures.

The color white carries positive connotations in both English and Uzbek phraseology. English expressions such as “white lie” describe harmless deception intended to avoid hurting someone’s feelings, while “white wedding” symbolizes purity and innocence. In Uzbek culture, white represents honesty, blessing, happiness, and good intentions. Expressions such as “oq ko’ngil,” “oq yo’l,” and “oq fotiha” illustrate the association between whiteness and moral purity. Despite certain differences in usage, both languages generally interpret white as a positive cultural symbol.

In contrast, the symbolism of black often represents negativity, though with cultural variations. English idioms such as “black market,” “black sheep,” and “black mood” associate black with illegality, disgrace, or sadness[9]. Uzbek phraseological expressions including “qora kun,” “qora niyat,” and “qora xabar” likewise connect black with misfortune, grief, or evil intentions. These similarities indicate that darkness has universally influenced human conceptualization of fear and uncertainty.

The analysis further demonstrates that family-related phraseological units occupy a more central position in Uzbek than in English. Uzbek society has traditionally emphasized collectivism, respect for elders, family solidarity, and community responsibility. Consequently, numerous Uzbek idioms express the importance of maintaining family honor, respecting parents, strengthening kinship ties, and preserving social harmony. Expressions such as “ota rozi – Xudo rozi,” “bir yoqadan bosh

[9] Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. - P. 54.

chiqarish," and "qon-qardosh" reveal the central role of family relationships in Uzbek cultural identity[10].

English phraseology certainly includes family-related expressions; however, they more frequently emphasize individual responsibility and personal independence. Idioms such as "run in the family," "like father, like son," or "family comes first" recognize the importance of family while reflecting the more individualistic orientation characteristic of English-speaking societies.

Overall, the findings indicate that phraseological units preserve far more than figurative meanings. They function as repositories of national history, traditional beliefs, cultural stereotypes, ethical norms, and collective memory. Through idiomatic language, generations transmit cultural knowledge that might otherwise disappear over time. Consequently, phraseological units remain indispensable resources for understanding both linguistic structure and cultural identity. Their comparative analysis demonstrates that while human beings share many universal experiences, every culture interprets these experiences through its own distinctive system of symbols, metaphors, and linguistic images.

CONCLUSION

The present study has demonstrated that phraseological units are not merely fixed combinations of words but also important linguistic and cultural phenomena that preserve the historical experience, traditions, values, and worldview of a nation. The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek phraseological units confirms that idiomatic expressions serve as cultural codes through which societies transmit collective knowledge, moral principles, and national identity from one generation to another. Since phraseological units are deeply rooted in the cultural environment in which they originate, their meanings often extend far beyond the literal interpretation of individual words.

The findings reveal that English and Uzbek phraseological systems share a number of universal semantic features because both languages express common human emotions, values, and life experiences such as love, friendship, honesty, courage,

[10] Rahmatullayev Sh. Hozirgi O'zbek Adabiy Tili. Toshkent: Universitet, 2006. - B. 214.

perseverance, and hope. At the same time, significant differences were identified in the metaphorical images, symbolic meanings, and cultural references used to represent these concepts. English phraseological units frequently reflect maritime traditions, individualism, historical events, and Christian cultural influences, whereas Uzbek phraseological expressions are closely associated with family relationships, hospitality, agriculture, Islamic values, and the rich traditions of Central Asian culture. These differences demonstrate that although human experiences are universal, every nation conceptualizes and verbalizes them through its own unique cultural perspective.

Another important conclusion is that phraseological units play a significant role in intercultural communication, translation studies, and foreign language education. Successful communication requires not only grammatical and lexical competence but also an understanding of the cultural meanings embedded in idiomatic expressions. Literal translation of phraseological units often fails to convey the intended meaning because many idioms are culture-specific and have no direct equivalents in another language. Therefore, developing phraseological competence enables language learners, translators, and educators to communicate more naturally and accurately while avoiding cultural misunderstandings.

Furthermore, the study confirms that a linguocultural approach provides an effective framework for investigating phraseological units because it integrates linguistic analysis with cultural interpretation. This interdisciplinary perspective makes it possible to identify the historical, social, religious, and cognitive factors that influence the formation and development of idiomatic expressions. The analysis also demonstrates that phraseological units constitute valuable sources for understanding national mentality, collective memory, and cultural symbolism, making them an indispensable component of comparative linguistic research.

In conclusion, English and Uzbek phraseological units represent an important part of the cultural heritage of their respective linguistic communities. They enrich communication, preserve traditional knowledge, and reflect the unique ways in which different peoples perceive and interpret the world. Future research may expand this comparative analysis by examining phraseological units from cognitive, pragmatic,

discourse, or corpus-based perspectives and by investigating their use in contemporary media, digital communication, and literary translation. Such studies will further contribute to the development of linguoculturology, comparative phraseology, and intercultural communication while promoting a deeper understanding of the intricate relationship between language and culture.

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