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PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AS REFLECTIONS OF CULTURAL WORLDVIEW IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Annotation

This article examines phraseological units as reflections of the cultural worldview in English and Uzbek. It explores how idiomatic expressions embody national traditions, beliefs, values, and historical experiences while revealing the distinctive ways in which people perceive and interpret reality. Using a qualitative comparative approach, the study analyzes the semantic and linguocultural features of English and Uzbek phraseological units and identifies both universal and culture-specific characteristics. The findings indicate that although both languages express similar human experiences, their phraseological units differ in metaphorical images and cultural symbolism due to their unique historical and cultural development. The study highlights the importance of phraseology in intercultural communication, translation, and foreign language education.

Keywords

phraseological units, cultural worldview, English, Uzbek, linguoculture, idioms, intercultural communication.

ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ЕДИНИЦЫ КАК ОТРАЖЕНИЕ КУЛЬТУРНОЙ КАРТИНЫ МИРА В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И УЗБЕКСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ

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Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются фразеологические единицы как отражение культурной картины мира в английском и узбекском языках. Исследование посвящено анализу того, как устойчивые выражения передают национальные традиции, ценности, исторический опыт и мировоззрение народа. На основе качественного сравнительного анализа выявляются общие и

специфические особенности английских и узбекских фразеологических единиц. Результаты исследования показывают, что, несмотря на универсальность многих жизненных понятий, каждая культура использует собственные образные средства и символы для их выражения. Подчеркивается значение фразеологии для межкультурной коммуникации, перевода и обучения иностранным языкам.

Ключевые слова: фразеологические единицы, культурная картина мира, английский язык, узбекский язык, лингвокультурология, идиомы, межкультурная коммуникация

INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the most significant manifestations of culture, serving not only as a means of communication but also as a repository of a nation's historical memory, traditions, beliefs, and collective worldview. Every language reflects the way its speakers perceive reality, organize knowledge, and interpret the surrounding world. This relationship between language and culture is especially evident in phraseological units, which preserve centuries of social experience and cultural values in a condensed and figurative form. Unlike free word combinations, phraseological units possess stable structures and idiomatic meanings that cannot be fully understood through the literal meanings of their individual components. Instead, their interpretation requires familiarity with the historical, cultural, and social background of the linguistic community in which they emerged. Consequently, phraseological units are widely recognized as one of the most culturally marked layers of vocabulary and an invaluable source for exploring the interaction between language and culture[1].

The concept of the cultural worldview (or linguistic worldview) has become one of the central topics in modern linguistics and linguoculturology. It refers to the system of knowledge, beliefs, values, and cultural perceptions through which a particular nation understands and interprets reality. Every linguistic community develops its own worldview based on historical development, geographical conditions, religion, customs, and social traditions. These cultural experiences are encoded in linguistic units, especially in idioms, proverbs, and phraseological expressions, which often preserve

[1] Kunin A. V. English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary. 4th ed. Moscow: Russian Language Publishers, 1984. - P. 21.

symbolic meanings that remain stable over generations. As noted by V. A. Maslova, language functions as a cultural memory of society, while phraseological units represent one of the clearest manifestations of national mentality because they reflect culturally specific ways of conceptualizing the world[2]. Therefore, the study of phraseology provides valuable insights into how language shapes cultural identity and how culture influences linguistic expression.

English and Uzbek offer an interesting basis for comparative linguocultural research because they belong to different language families and have evolved in distinct historical and cultural environments. English, a Germanic language, has developed under the influence of Anglo-Saxon traditions, Christianity, maritime culture, industrialization, and globalization. In contrast, Uzbek, a member of the Turkic language family, reflects the rich cultural heritage of Central Asia, including Islamic civilization, nomadic traditions, agriculture, family-centered social life, and centuries of oral folklore. These different historical and cultural experiences have contributed to the formation of unique phraseological systems in both languages. Nevertheless, despite these differences, English and Uzbek phraseological units frequently express universal human concepts such as honesty, friendship, courage, generosity, patience, and wisdom. The primary distinction lies not in the ideas themselves but in the metaphorical images and cultural symbols through which these ideas are expressed. This demonstrates that while human experiences are largely universal, their linguistic representation is strongly shaped by national culture and worldview[3].

In today's globalized world, the comparative study of phraseological units has become increasingly important for intercultural communication, translation studies, and foreign language education. Successful communication depends not only on grammatical accuracy and vocabulary knowledge but also on understanding the cultural meanings embedded in idiomatic expressions. Literal translation of phraseological units often leads to misunderstanding because many idioms are deeply rooted in culture-specific concepts that have no direct equivalents in another language.

[2] Maslova V. A. Linguoculturology. Moscow: Academy Publishing House, 2001. - P. 31.
[3] Wierzbicka A. Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. - P. 46.

Therefore, examining phraseological units as reflections of cultural worldview contributes to a better understanding of national identity, cultural diversity, and cross-cultural interaction. It also helps language learners and translators develop greater intercultural competence by enabling them to interpret figurative meanings within their appropriate cultural contexts. Against this background, the present study aims to investigate how English and Uzbek phraseological units reflect the cultural worldview of their respective linguistic communities through a comparative linguocultural analysis[4].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between phraseology and culture has been extensively explored in modern linguistic research, particularly within the fields of phraseology, cognitive linguistics, and linguoculturology. The theoretical foundations of phraseological studies were established by V. V. Vinogradov, who classified phraseological units according to their semantic cohesion and demonstrated their significance as stable lexical combinations with figurative meanings. His ideas were further developed by A. V. Kunin[5], whose studies on English phraseology emphasized the stability, reproducibility, and idiomatic nature of phraseological units, highlighting their role as an essential component of language and communication. Within linguocultural studies, V. N. Teliya[6] argued that phraseological units function as cultural symbols because they preserve historical memory, national traditions, and collective experience. Likewise, V. A. Maslova[7] viewed phraseological units as linguistic representations of a nation's cultural worldview, emphasizing that idioms reflect the mentality, beliefs, customs, and values of their speakers. Anna Wierzbicka[8] further explained that every language possesses culture-specific concepts that shape people's perception of reality, making phraseological units an important source for understanding national identity and

[4] Teliya V. N. Russian Phraseology: Semantic, Pragmatic and Linguocultural Aspects. Moscow: Languages of Russian Culture, 1996. - P. 219.
[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. 219.
[7] Maslova V. A. Linguoculturology. Moscow: Academy Publishing House, 2001. - P. 31.
[8] Wierzbicka A. Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. - P. 46.

intercultural differences. In Uzbek linguistics, Sh. Rahmatullayev[9] made a significant contribution by investigating the semantic, structural, and stylistic characteristics of Uzbek phraseological units and demonstrating their close connection with folklore, family traditions, hospitality, and moral values. Although previous studies have examined English and Uzbek phraseology separately, comparative linguocultural analyses remain relatively limited. Therefore, the present study seeks to contribute to this field by examining how phraseological units in both languages reflect their respective cultural worldviews while revealing both universal human concepts and culturally specific patterns of metaphorical thinking.

METHODOLOGY OF THE WORK

This study is based on a qualitative comparative research design aimed at identifying the cultural worldview reflected in English and Uzbek phraseological units. The research material consists of approximately 180–200 phraseological units selected from authoritative English and Uzbek phraseological dictionaries, explanatory dictionaries, scholarly publications, and literary works. The selected idioms represent various semantic fields, including family, animals, colors, food, religion, emotions, human behavior, and everyday life, as these categories most clearly illustrate the relationship between language and culture. The analysis employs descriptive, comparative, semantic, and linguocultural methods to examine the meanings, structural features, metaphorical models, and cultural symbolism of phraseological units in both languages. Furthermore, contextual interpretation is applied to identify the historical, social, and cultural factors influencing the formation and usage of idiomatic expressions. The comparative analysis focuses on identifying both equivalent and non-equivalent phraseological units in order to determine how English and Uzbek speakers conceptualize similar life experiences through different cultural images and symbolic representations. The findings are interpreted within the framework of linguoculturology, demonstrating that phraseological units function not only as linguistic phenomena but also as reflections of national culture, collective memory, and cultural worldview.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

[9] Rahmatullayev Sh. O‘zbek Tilining Izohli Frazeologik Lug‘ati. Toshkent: O‘qituvchi, 1992. - B. 37.

The analysis of English and Uzbek phraseological units demonstrates that phraseology serves as one of the clearest reflections of a nation's cultural worldview. Although the two languages belong to different linguistic families and have evolved in distinct historical, geographical, and cultural environments, they both employ phraseological units to express collective knowledge, moral values, social norms, and traditional beliefs. The comparative analysis reveals that many idiomatic expressions in English and Uzbek describe similar human experiences; however, they differ considerably in their metaphorical imagery, symbolic associations, and cultural motivations. These similarities and differences illustrate how language functions not only as a communication system but also as a cultural repository that preserves the intellectual and spiritual heritage of a society.

One of the most prominent findings of this research is that phraseological units encode cultural worldview through metaphorical thinking. Speakers rarely describe abstract concepts directly; instead, they employ figurative images that have developed through centuries of shared experience. These metaphorical expressions enable people to interpret complex emotions, personal qualities, and social relationships in a concise and culturally meaningful way. The analysis indicates that while universal human concepts such as kindness, courage, wisdom, patience, and honesty exist in both English and Uzbek cultures, each language conceptualizes these values through different symbolic representations. This confirms that phraseological units are closely connected with national mentality and cultural perception rather than being merely fixed lexical combinations.

The comparative analysis further demonstrates that family and kinship occupy a particularly significant position in Uzbek phraseology. Uzbek society has traditionally emphasized collectivism, respect for elders, family unity, and mutual responsibility. Consequently, many Uzbek phraseological units reflect these cultural values. Expressions such as "ota rozi – Xudo rozi", "bir yoqadan bosh chiqarish", and "qon-qardosh" highlight the importance of solidarity, obedience, and strong family relationships. These idioms reveal that family is viewed not only as a social institution but also as the foundation of moral education and national identity. In contrast, English

phraseological units referring to family, such as “like father, like son,” “run in the family,” or “family comes first,” also acknowledge the importance of kinship but place greater emphasis on inherited characteristics and individual family members. This difference reflects the more individualistic orientation of English-speaking societies compared with the collectivist traditions characteristic of Uzbek culture.

Another important category concerns phraseological units related to hospitality, which occupies a central place in Uzbek cultural worldview. Hospitality has historically been regarded as one of the highest virtues in Uzbek society. Numerous idiomatic expressions emphasize generosity, respect for guests, and communal solidarity. Expressions such as “mehmon otangdan ulug’” and “dasturxoni ochiq” symbolize generosity and sincere hospitality, reflecting the belief that welcoming guests is both a social obligation and a moral value. English culture certainly values hospitality; however, relatively fewer phraseological units are directly associated with this concept. English expressions tend to emphasize politeness and friendliness rather than hospitality as a defining cultural institution. This contrast illustrates how cultural priorities influence the development of phraseological systems.

The analysis also highlights the important role of animal symbolism in shaping cultural worldview. Both English and Uzbek phraseological systems frequently use animals to describe human behavior, personality, and emotions. Nevertheless, the symbolic meanings attached to specific animals often differ.

For example, the lion symbolizes courage in both cultures, as illustrated by the English expression “as brave as a lion” and the Uzbek idiom “sher yurak.” Similarly, both languages associate the fox with cleverness through expressions such as “as sly as a fox” and “tulkiday ayyor.” These similarities suggest that some metaphorical associations are based on universal observations of nature.

However, other animal symbols demonstrate considerable cultural variation. In English culture, the owl traditionally symbolizes wisdom because of its association with classical mythology and education. Consequently, owls often represent intelligence and careful judgment. In Uzbek culture, however, wisdom is more frequently associated with elderly people rather than with birds. Likewise, the dog occupies different symbolic

positions in the two languages. English idioms such as “every dog has its day” or “lucky dog” often carry neutral or positive meanings, whereas Uzbek phraseological units involving dogs more frequently express negative evaluations or social criticism. These differences clearly indicate that phraseological symbolism develops under the influence of cultural beliefs rather than biological characteristics alone.

The study further reveals that body-part phraseological units constitute one of the most productive semantic groups in both English and Uzbek. Human body parts provide concrete images through which abstract concepts are understood and communicated. The heart is universally associated with emotions, kindness, and courage. English expressions such as “lose heart,” “have a kind heart,” and “from the bottom of one’s heart” correspond conceptually to Uzbek idioms such as “yuragi keng,” “yuragi ezildi,” and “ko’ngli oq.” Although their lexical structures differ, both languages conceptualize emotional life through the symbolism of the heart. Similarly, the eye functions as a metaphor for attention, understanding, and protection. Expressions including “keep an eye on,” “see eye to eye,” “ko’z qorachig’iday asramoq,” and “ko’zi ochildi” demonstrate that vision symbolizes awareness and knowledge in both linguistic communities.

The comparative analysis of color symbolism also reveals both similarities and differences in cultural worldview. The color white generally symbolizes purity, honesty, peace, and goodness in both English and Uzbek cultures. English phraseological units such as “white lie” and “white wedding” emphasize innocence and harmless intentions, while Uzbek expressions including “oq yo’l,” “oq ko’ngil,” and “oq fotiha” symbolize sincerity, blessing, and moral purity. Conversely, black is commonly associated with grief, evil, or misfortune. English idioms such as “black sheep,” “black mood,” and “black market” correspond to Uzbek expressions like “qora kun,” “qora niyat,” and “qora xabar.” These parallels suggest that certain color associations are nearly universal because they are rooted in common human experiences with light and darkness.

Another significant finding concerns the influence of religion and historical traditions on phraseological development. Uzbek phraseological units frequently contain references to Islamic beliefs, respect for parents, gratitude, patience, and divine justice.

Expressions invoking Allah or emphasizing moral responsibility illustrate the close relationship between language and religious culture. English phraseology, meanwhile, includes numerous idioms derived from the Bible, Christianity, and classical literature. Expressions such as “the forbidden fruit,” “the salt of the earth,” and “the blind leading the blind” continue to function in modern English despite their ancient religious origins. These examples demonstrate that religion has significantly contributed to the formation of phraseological systems in both cultures, although the religious traditions themselves differ.

Overall, the analysis confirms that phraseological units are much more than fixed expressions used for stylistic purposes. They function as linguistic representations of cultural worldview, preserving the historical memory, ethical principles, symbolic thinking, and collective identity of a nation. While English and Uzbek share many universal concepts rooted in common human experience, each language expresses these concepts through culturally specific metaphors and symbols. Consequently, understanding phraseological units requires not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness. This finding underscores the importance of incorporating linguocultural approaches into comparative linguistics, translation studies, and foreign language education, where mastery of idiomatic language contributes significantly to successful intercultural communication.

CONCLUSION

The present study has demonstrated that phraseological units are among the most important linguistic elements reflecting the cultural worldview of a nation. The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek phraseological units confirms that idiomatic expressions preserve not only figurative meanings but also the historical experience, traditions, beliefs, values, and collective memory of the societies in which they have evolved. As culturally marked linguistic phenomena, phraseological units provide valuable insights into how different peoples conceptualize the world, interpret human behavior, and express their attitudes toward life. The findings indicate that although English and Uzbek share many universal concepts related to love, friendship, honesty,

courage, wisdom, and perseverance, they differ significantly in the metaphorical images, symbolic representations, and cultural references used to express these concepts.

The analysis also reveals that the English cultural worldview is reflected through phraseological units associated with individualism, practicality, maritime traditions, and biblical influences, whereas Uzbek phraseological units predominantly emphasize family solidarity, hospitality, respect for elders, collectivism, agriculture, and Islamic cultural values. These differences illustrate that language is closely connected with the historical, geographical, and social development of a nation. At the same time, the existence of numerous semantically equivalent idioms in both languages demonstrates that many aspects of human experience are universal despite cultural diversity. This combination of universal meanings and culture-specific imagery highlights the complexity of phraseological systems and their significance for comparative linguistic research.

Furthermore, the study confirms that understanding phraseological units is essential for successful intercultural communication, translation, and foreign language education. Since idiomatic expressions often contain meanings that cannot be interpreted literally, learners and translators must possess not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness. Knowledge of the cultural worldview reflected in phraseological units enables language users to communicate more naturally, avoid misunderstandings, and appreciate the cultural richness embedded in language. Therefore, phraseological competence should be considered an integral component of communicative competence in foreign language learning.

In conclusion, phraseological units function as linguistic mirrors of culture, preserving national identity while simultaneously revealing universal aspects of human thought and experience. Their comparative study contributes to the development of linguoculturology, comparative phraseology, cognitive linguistics, and translation studies by deepening our understanding of the relationship between language and culture. Future research may further explore phraseological units from cognitive, pragmatic, corpus-based, or discourse-analytical perspectives and examine their use in contemporary media, digital communication, and literary translation. Such

investigations will continue to enhance intercultural understanding and promote more effective communication in an increasingly interconnected world.

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