

Axiological Characteristics and The Socio-Pragmatic Interpretation of The Female Image in Phraseological Units in English And Uzbek Languages

Korakuzieva Diyora

Doctorate student of Andijan state university, Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This study examines the representation of the male concept in the phraseological systems of Uzbek, English, and Russian languages. It analyzes the axiological, cognitive, and cultural dimensions of masculinity as encoded in language. The research reveals that male identity is constructed through social roles, responsibility, and normative expectations, while also reflecting ambivalent evaluations shaped by patriarchal cultural experience.

Keywords: Male concept, phraseology, gender linguistics, axiology, masculinity, cultural models, social roles, linguistic representation.

Introduction: The male image is tended to be evaluated in the fond of languages primarily through criteria of action, function, and responsibility. Within linguistic memory, masculinity is more often encoded as a “role to be performed” and a “status to be justified.” In units expressing the concept of woman, external appearance, emotionality, verbal behavior, and familial compliance frequently occupy a central position, whereas in the male concept, social agency, decision-making, willpower, profession, strength, and the role of provider constitute the core semantic layer. This asymmetry is not accidental; rather, it reflects the imprint of patriarchal experience embedded in language. At the same time, the male image is not confined to an exclusively laudatory frame: fixed expressions also portray men as cowardly, indifferent, lazy, prone to alcohol abuse, lustful, or lacking personal integrity. Thus, the concept of man is internally contradictory, encompassing both social dominance and the stringent norms imposed by society.

METHOD

Z. D. Popova and I. A. Sternin interpret the concept as a condensed model of cultural experience in human consciousness. In this sense, it is precisely the axiological layer of the concept that is most actively

realized in language, since fixed expressions focus less on “who a man is” than on “what he ought to be.”

Ch. Fillmore emphasizes that specific scenarios and frames underlie linguistic units; accordingly, units related to the male image are also grounded in recurrent frames, such as: “man as head/leader,” “man as protector,” “man as provider,” “man as a man of his word,” “man as a risk-taker,” and “man as a potentially dangerous free agent who may become drunk or a gigolo.”

Researchers such as I. I. Khaleeva, A. V. Kirilina, V. A. Nikolskaya, V. S. Samarina, and D. V. Semenova note that in many societies the image of man has been formed as an androcentric center; that is, the notion of “human” is frequently equated with male experience. Therefore, in analyzing male-related units, it is necessary to consider not only positive privilege but also the mechanisms of normative pressure.

Based on the cross-linguistic material examined, the following models corresponding to the axiological dimension of the phraseological representation of the male image have been identified: (1) ontological identification and social status of man; (2) leadership, power, and responsibility; (3) courage, strength, and willpower; (4) intellect, wisdom, and fidelity to one’s

word; (5) labor, profession, and provision; (6) marriage, family, fatherhood, and kinship; (7) external appearance, age, and physical characteristics; (8) the deviant male model (prone to deviation from norms).

From a positive evaluative perspective, man is represented as a protector, honest, brave, true to his word, a provider, wise, hardworking, and family-oriented. In negative evaluations, he appears as cowardly, indifferent, lazy, hedonistic, prone to alcohol abuse, rude, lustful, dishonest, or weak-willed. Neutral evaluation applies to units that lack strong emotional coloring and primarily denote normative roles. Ambivalent evaluation emerges in cases where authority, silence, independence, and the “head” status of man can be interpreted both positively and as a source of hierarchical pressure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The image of man is often represented not merely as “a man,” but as the “normative center of the human.” For instance, the English lexeme man may denote either a male individual or the general notion of “human”: all sorts and conditions of men, one man’s meat is another man’s poison, no man is so old, but thinks he may yet live another year. This phenomenon points to androcentric neutralization in English, whereby the designation for man incorporates the universal category of humanity.

In Uzbek, masculinity is distinctly centralized through lexemes such as *er* (husband/man), *erkak* (man), *yigit* (young man), *ota* (father), and *o’g’il* (son). Phraseological units such as *Yigit so’zidan, arslon izidan qaytmaydi* (“A young man does not go back on his word, just as a lion does not retreat from its track”), *Yigit kishiga qirq hunar oz* (“Forty skills are too few for a man”), and *Mard maydonda sinaladi* (“A brave man is tested in the arena”) reflect the normative expectations imposed by society on men.

The axiological structure of this group is predominantly ambivalent. On the one hand, the designation of man is frequently associated with prestige, centrality, and normativity. On the other hand, this very centrality generates heightened expectations: it is not sufficient for a man simply “to be”; he must justify his status through action.

One of the central components of the male image is power and leadership. In English, expressions such as the master of one’s destiny, be one’s own man (master), a strong man, lord and master, and man of the house construct man as a decision maker, a controller of circumstances, and an agent who possesses his own fate. In English linguoculture, male strength is often evaluated less through external command than through internal control. In Uzbek, the

semantics of leadership are closely tied to familial and collective responsibility. The expression *bosh ega* simultaneously evokes the meanings of “head of the household,” “husband,” and “responsible leader,” while *yosh bo’lsa ham bosh* (“though young, he is the head”) denotes a man capable of occupying a central position of authority or wisdom despite his age.

Although leadership is generally positively encoded across languages, it carries a strong ambivalent evaluation, since the boundary between “being the head” and “dominating others” is very narrow. The model of the head of the family signifies, on the one hand, protection, provision, and responsibility, and on the other, hierarchical superiority.

Another subtle feature is the prototype of a man who speaks little but has the final word, which is particularly common in Uzbek and Russian materials. In English, by contrast, authority is more closely associated with individual initiative and self-realization.

Courage constitutes one of the most stable positive attributes of the male concept. Nasrullaeva identifies courage as the most highly valued masculine trait in both English and Uzbek phraseological systems: as bold (brave) as a lion, a man of courage, play the man, *ko’kragida yoli bor, erkaklarcha ish tutmoq, yelkasi yerga tegmagan polvon* all equate masculinity with spiritual resilience and bravery.

Uzbek proverbs such as *mard yigit* and *er yigit* associate masculinity with honor, dignity, keeping one’s word, and standing firm in the face of danger: *Er yigitning aytgani – miltiqdan o’q otgani* (“A real man’s word is like a fired bullet”).

Male courage is typically meaningful not for personal gain but within the framework of responsibility toward family and community:

Er yigit o’zi uchun tug’ilar,

Eli uchun o’lar.

(“A man is born for himself, but dies for his people.”)

Yigit borki, yetti pushtigacha nomi qolar,

Yigit borki, yetti kunda nomi yo’qolar.

(“Some men leave a name remembered for seven generations, others are forgotten within seven days.”)

In English, the concept of courage is closely intertwined with a clear ethical component. Expressions such as knight without fear and without reproach, a man of honour, and a man of his hands present male strength as inseparable from honor, self-control, and social responsibility. Thus, bravery in English is conceptualized not merely as physical or aggressive force, but as a regulated, socially sanctioned form of courage. The association of a strong man with firmness,

determination, and resilience is rooted in this same axiological model.

The male image is also frequently evaluated in terms of intellect and judgment. In English, expressions such as a man of his word, a man of decision, be one's own man, and as sober as a judge emphasize sound judgment, composure, and the weight of one's word. Here, intellect is portrayed less as bookish knowledge than as decision-making capacity, principles, loyalty, and self-possession. A man need not speak much to be considered "wise"; rather, he must remain composed, keep his word, and act with consistency.

In Uzbek, intellect is likewise valued in a pragmatic and ethical sense. In laqzi halol odam, honesty and fidelity to one's word are placed alongside intellect, while aqli salim denotes a sober-minded, balanced, and rational individual. The expression yosh bo'lsa ham bosh indicates not accumulated experience, but the capacity to understand situations and assume leadership.

The positive evaluative component in this group is particularly strong. The "authenticity" of a man is often determined by his ability to work, provide, create, master a profession, and sustain a household. At the same time, a negative periphery emerges: a man who does not work is rapidly devalued socially. Uzbek expressions such as ikki qo'li cho'ntagida ("hands in his pockets"), bekorchilarning begi ("lord of idlers"), and tepsa tebranmas ("unresponsive, inert"), as well as English expressions like lounge lizard and the idle rich, mark disengagement from labor with ridicule and disdain.

The axiological interpretation of the male concept becomes especially salient in the domain of family. In English, expressions such as man of the house, best man, Marriage makes or mars a man, and He knows not what love is that has no children indicate that a man attains full social status through marriage and fatherhood. At the same time, English paremiology also reflects ambivalence, often highlighting the burdens and risks of marriage alongside its value.

In Uzbek, by contrast, the familial status of a man is more central and positively evaluated. The expression bosh ega connects the roles of husband and head of household; o'g'il ko'rdi conveys the joy associated with lineage continuation; bag'ri to'lib qoldi reflects emotional fulfillment through family unity. Within Uzbek cultural stereotypes, a married man is not merely "a husband," but a central figure of responsibility within an extended kinship network. Consequently, roles such as father, husband, son-in-law, elder brother, and son are generally associated with positive prestige.

Within the domain of intellect and verbal integrity, the

negative pole is also highly active. In English, the vicar of Bray denotes a principle-less opportunist, while a man of clouts refers to a weak and irresolute man. Uzbek expressions such as bo'lmag'ur odam, yumshoq supurgi, ammaning buzoqi, and atala polvon ridicule men who appear capable in words or appearance but lack substance in action. In Russian, expressions like маменькин сынок and тряпка sharply devalue men unable to make independent decisions or uphold masculine expectations.

Thus, male intellect is not merely a cognitive category, but also a moral one: if a man's intellect is not aligned with his word, and his word with his actions, language swiftly relegates him to the negative periphery. This pattern is common across Uzbek, English, and Russian materials. A man is valued less for being "intelligent" than for being "true to his word," decisive, and courageous.

Another central axiological domain of masculinity is labor and provision. In English, a self-made man denotes a man who has achieved social status through his own efforts, while the formula men make houses, women make homes reflects the perception of material creation as a primary male function. The proverb He that has a wife and children must not sit with his fingers in his mouth underscores that a man with a family must work, linking male labor to economic and social independence.

In Uzbek, labor is directly tied to male honor. Folk proverbs and phraseological material present the ideal man as skilled, capable of sustaining a household, and supportive of his kin. The formula yigit kishiga qirq hunar oz indicates that social usefulness is measured through labor and skill; male work is valued less as individual success than as fulfillment of familial responsibility.

The axiological interpretation of this semantic group is predominantly positive across languages. A man's value increases when connected to family, and the normative expectations associated with familial roles are particularly high.

One of the key differences between male and female images lies in the non-centrality of external appearance for men. Emphasis is placed instead on physical form, strength, and robustness, which are encoded in linguistic memory primarily as markers of power, solidity, maturity, or, conversely, weakness and disorder.

In English, expressions such as a man of figure, a strong man, and great lion link external appearance with social prestige and physical presence; attractiveness is less important than stature and authority. In Uzbek, bo'z yigit denotes an immature young man, alpqomat erkak

a strong and resilient man, and *yelkasi yerga tegmagan polvon* an undefeated wrestler symbolizing invincibility.

Age also plays a significant role in the male concept, though it is generally tied to social capability. In Uzbek, *bo'z yigit* implies immaturity; in English, Johnny Newcome denotes an inexperienced young man; once a man and twice a child reflects the idea that masculinity is a temporary phase of strength, with old age bringing renewed dependency.

Axiologically, this group is largely neutral-ambivalent: age and appearance acquire value insofar as they signal strength, experience, maturity, or weakness. Thus, male appearance does not constitute an independent axiological domain as it often does for women, but rather functions as a peripheral indicator serving other semantic zones.

The stronger the positive core of the male concept, the sharper its negative periphery. Language grants men numerous privileges, yet it also harshly ridicules those who fail to justify them. This is particularly evident in expressions associated with traits perceived as incompatible with masculinity – cowardice, passivity, laziness, alcoholism, lustfulness, boastfulness, and lack of will.

In Uzbek, expressions such as *yuragi yo'q erkak*, *Ashirvoy qo'rqqoq*, *ammamning buzoqi*, and *atala polvon* sharply degrade men who deviate from the norm of bravery. The criticism targets not merely fear, but the failure to meet masculine expectations. Similarly, *bo'lmag'ur odam* and *yumshoq supurgi* humorously depict men lacking principle and determination.

In English, weak-willed or unprincipled men are likewise strongly stigmatized: a man of clouts denotes a spineless man, while the vicar of Bray refers to an opportunist who changes beliefs according to circumstances. Expressions such as *lounge lizard* and the *idle rich* depict socially unproductive men preoccupied with idleness and superficiality. *Hard-boiled egg* characterizes an emotionally hardened man, while *blind drunk* and *swear like a trooper* describe a lack of self-control.

CONCLUSION

The study confirms that the male concept in phraseological systems is deeply shaped by cultural, social, and axiological factors. Masculinity is not merely a biological category but a normative construct defined through roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

Across Uzbek, English, and Russian languages, the male image is characterized by a strong positive core – associated with leadership, courage, and responsibility

– alongside a sharply defined negative periphery targeting deviation from these norms. This duality reflects both the privileges and pressures embedded in patriarchal cultural models.

Ultimately, phraseological representation reveals that a man is not simply defined by existence but by the continuous necessity to justify his social status through action, integrity, and responsibility.

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