

Theoretical Foundations Of Phraseologisms And Idiomatic Expressions: A Comparative Study Of Uzbek And English

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Abstract: This article provides a theoretical analysis of phraseological units and idiomatic expressions in Uzbek and English. It discusses their place in linguistics, as well as their semantic, structural, and linguo-cultural features from a comparative perspective. The similarities and differences between Uzbek and English idioms are examined, with particular attention to their role in translation studies and practical applications.

Keywords: Phraseology, idioms, comparative linguistics, linguoculture, semantics, translation, equivalence, national specificity.

Introduction: The expressive potential, national mentality, and cultural worldview of a language are often reflected in its phraseological units and idiomatic expressions. Each language possesses its own unique figurative means of expression that embody the thought, lifestyle, values, and worldview of its people. Therefore, the comparative study of idioms and phraseological units reveals both the universal and culture-specific features of two linguistic communities.

In contemporary linguistics, the study of phraseological units is crucial not only for theoretical research but also for applied fields such as translation studies, linguoculturology, and language pedagogy. The comparative analysis of idiomatic expressions in Uzbek and English helps uncover shared patterns of figurative thought, communicative stereotypes, and cultural semantics.

A phraseological unit is defined as a stable word combination that functions as a single semantic whole. An idiom, as a specific type of phraseological unit, has a meaning that cannot be deduced from the literal meanings of its components. For example:

- In English: spill the beans (“to reveal a secret”),
- In Uzbek: og‘izdan chiqib ketdi (“to accidentally disclose a secret”).

The main characteristics of phraseological units

include:

1. **Stability** – the fixed structure and combination of words.
2. **Semantic integrity** – the unit expresses a unified meaning.
3. **Expressiveness** – rich imagery and emotional coloring.
4. **National specificity** – cultural values and worldviews encoded in language.

1. Semantic similarities

Both languages contain idioms related to human emotions, psychology, and behavior. For instance:

- break one’s heart (English) – yuragini og‘ritmoq (Uzbek),
- lose one’s head (English) – boshi qotmoq (Uzbek).

These parallels highlight the universal features of human cognition.

2. Culture-specific differences

Certain idioms are unique to a particular culture:

- English: carry coals to Newcastle (“to do something unnecessary”), based on Newcastle’s coal-mining history.
- Uzbek: tuyaga minmagan “xo‘p” der (“he who

has never ridden a camel says ‘it’s easy’”), rooted in local cultural experience and folk wisdom.

3. Structural differences

Uzbek phraseology is often shaped by proverbs, folk tales, and oral traditions, while English idioms frequently derive from the Bible, Shakespeare’s works, and historical contexts.

One of the key challenges in translating idioms is non-equivalence, as many phraseological units do not have direct counterparts in another language. For example:

- English: kick the bucket – “to die,”
- Uzbek equivalent: jon taslim qilmoq (“to surrender one’s soul”), which cannot be translated literally without distorting the meaning.

Common strategies in idiom translation include:

1. Using a full equivalent (spill the beans – sirni oshkor qilmoq).
2. Using a partial equivalent.
3. Providing an explanatory translation.
4. Substituting with a culturally appropriate metaphor.

Phraseological units and idiomatic expressions in Uzbek and English serve as powerful tools for reflecting the cultural worldview, national mentality, and figurative thought of each linguistic community. Comparative analysis demonstrates both the universality of human cognition and the specificity of national cultures.

The study of phraseology has significant implications for translation studies, linguoculturology, and language education. Future research should focus on creating electronic corpora of Uzbek and English idioms and mapping their linguocultural features to deepen our understanding of idiomatic language use.

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