

SEMANTIC FEATURES OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

Muzaffarova Asila Bakhtiyor kizi

1 st Year Master's Student

University of Economics and Pedagogy,
Karshi city, Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract

Phraseological units represent an important component of the lexical system of any language. They reflect the cultural, historical, and social experience of a speech community and contribute to the expressiveness of language. The present article examines the semantic features of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages. The study focuses on the figurative meanings, semantic structure, and cultural specificity of phraseological expressions. Through comparative analysis, the research identifies both similarities and differences in the semantic organization of phraseological units in the two languages. The results demonstrate that phraseological units often carry metaphorical meanings and reflect national cultural traditions and worldview.

Keywords: phraseology, phraseological units, semantics, idioms, figurative meaning, English language, Uzbek language, comparative linguistics.

Introduction

Phraseological units constitute a significant part of the vocabulary of any language. They represent fixed combinations of words whose meanings often differ from the literal meanings of their individual components. Such expressions play an important role in enriching speech, making it more expressive, emotional, and culturally meaningful. The study of phraseological units has long been an important field of linguistic research. Linguists analyze these units from different perspectives, including semantic, structural, stylistic, and cultural aspects. Among these, the semantic features of phraseological units are particularly significant because they reveal how figurative meaning is formed and interpreted in language. English and Uzbek languages possess rich phraseological systems that reflect the historical development and cultural traditions of their respective

societies. Many phraseological expressions contain metaphorical meanings that arise from everyday experiences, natural phenomena, or social relations. At the same time, phraseological units often demonstrate national specificity, which makes them an important subject for comparative linguistic analysis.

The aim of this article is to analyze the semantic features of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages and to identify similarities and differences in their semantic structure and figurative meaning.

Literature Review

Phraseology has been widely studied in linguistics by scholars who examine the structure, meaning, and usage of fixed expressions. One of the pioneers of phraseological theory, V. Vinogradov, classified phraseological units according to the degree of semantic cohesion between their components. He distinguished phraseological combinations, phraseological unities, and phraseological fusions. Another important contribution to phraseological studies was made by Kunin, who investigated the semantic and structural characteristics of idioms in the English language. According to Kunin, phraseological units represent stable word combinations with partially or completely transferred meanings. Western linguists have also explored idioms and phraseological expressions from semantic and pragmatic perspectives. Researchers such as Fernando and Moon emphasized that idioms are characterized by figurative meaning, lexical stability, and cultural specificity. In Uzbek linguistics, phraseology has also received considerable attention. Scholars have studied phraseological units as reflections of national culture, traditions, and worldview. Uzbek phraseological expressions often originate from folk traditions, daily life, and historical experiences.

Comparative studies of phraseological units show that different languages may express similar meanings through different metaphorical images. Such comparisons reveal both universal cognitive patterns and culturally specific linguistic features.

Methodology

The present research employs descriptive, comparative, and semantic methods in the analysis of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages. The descriptive method is used to identify and analyze phraseological expressions in both languages. Various examples of idioms and phraseological units were

collected from phraseological dictionaries, linguistic studies, and literary sources. The comparative method allows for the identification of similarities and differences between English and Uzbek phraseological units. This method helps reveal how similar meanings may be expressed through different lexical and metaphorical structures.

The research also applies semantic analysis, which focuses on the figurative meanings and semantic structures of phraseological expressions. This approach helps determine how metaphor, symbolism, and cultural associations contribute to the formation of phraseological meaning.

Materials and Discussion

One of the most important features of phraseological units is their figurative meaning. Unlike free word combinations, phraseological expressions often convey meanings that cannot be interpreted literally. For example, the English idiom “spill the beans” means “to reveal a secret.” The literal meanings of the words do not correspond to the overall meaning of the expression. Similarly, the Uzbek phraseological unit “og‘zidan gullar sochilmoq” literally means “flowers fall from one’s mouth,” but figuratively it describes someone who speaks kindly or beautifully. Another semantic feature of phraseological units is metaphorical representation. Many expressions are based on metaphorical associations derived from everyday life, nature, or human experience.

For instance: English: “*break the ice*” – to start communication in a tense situation. Uzbek: “*ko‘nglini ochmoq*” – to make someone feel comfortable or open.

Both expressions reflect the idea of removing psychological barriers in communication. Phraseological units often reflect cultural traditions and national worldview. Some expressions contain elements that are specific to the historical or cultural experience of a particular people.

For example: English: “*carry coals to Newcastle*” – to do something unnecessary. Uzbek: “*O‘z uyiga o‘tin tashimoq*” – a similar meaning but expressed differently. These expressions illustrate how phraseological units are closely connected with cultural and historical contexts.

Uzbek phraseological units frequently contain references to ***traditional lifestyle, family relationships, and hospitality***, reflecting the long-standing cultural values and social norms of Uzbek society. For instance, many Uzbek idioms emphasize

respect for elders, communal support, and moral conduct. Expressions such as *“Ota-ona mehridan oshiq yo‘q”* (“There is nothing greater than parental love”) or *“Mehmon – xudo bergan ne‘mat”* (“A guest is a blessing from God”) highlight the importance of family bonds and the cultural virtue of hospitality. Furthermore, a significant portion of Uzbek phraseological units is grounded in **agricultural and pastoral life**, mirroring the historically agrarian society in which these idioms originated. Idioms like *“Molni ko‘p bilmagan, yerni ko‘p ishlamagan”* (“He who doesn’t know livestock well has not worked the land enough”) capture occupational knowledge and everyday realities of rural life.

In contrast, English idioms often reflect **historical practices, maritime culture, or everyday urban and rural activities**, illustrating how the language embodies specific historical and social experiences. For example, idioms such as *“barking up the wrong tree”* (hunting expression, meaning “to pursue a mistaken course”) or *“three sheets to the wind”* (nautical origin, meaning “very drunk”) reveal cultural practices specific to English-speaking societies. English idioms also frequently incorporate **trade, legal, or military experiences**, such as *“rule of thumb”* (legal/practical origin) or *“hit the nail on the head”* (craftsmanship), which are less common in Uzbek phraseology.

This contrast demonstrates that while both English and Uzbek phraseological units serve similar communicative and expressive functions—conveying emotions, moral lessons, and social norms – the **semantic imagery and cultural references embedded in these expressions are highly culture-specific**. Uzbek idioms are deeply connected with social cohesion, family, and hospitality traditions, whereas English idioms are often shaped by occupational, historical, and regional experiences. The comparison underscores the role of **cultural context in shaping semantic patterns** within phraseological units.

Results

The comparative analysis of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages reveals several important findings.

First, both languages possess a large number of phraseological expressions characterized by figurative meanings and metaphorical structures. These expressions enrich language and enhance expressive communication.

Second, many phraseological units in both languages share similar semantic meanings but differ in their imagery and lexical composition. This phenomenon

demonstrates the influence of cultural and historical factors on phraseological development.

Third, phraseological expressions frequently reflect universal human experiences such as emotions, social relations, and everyday activities. However, the linguistic representation of these experiences varies depending on cultural context.

Conclusion

Phraseological units represent an essential component of linguistic and cultural expression. The semantic analysis of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages demonstrates that these expressions are characterized by figurative meanings, metaphorical structures, and cultural specificity. Despite differences in imagery and lexical composition, many phraseological units in the two languages convey similar meanings and reflect universal aspects of human experience. At the same time, national traditions and historical contexts influence the formation of phraseological expressions. The comparative study of phraseological units contributes to a deeper understanding of linguistic semantics, cultural identity, and intercultural communication.

Future research may further explore the cognitive, stylistic, and pragmatic aspects of phraseological expressions in different languages.

References

1. Vinogradov, V. V. (1977). Russian Phraseology. Moscow.
2. Kunin, A. V. (1984). English Phraseology. Moscow.
3. Fernando, C. (1996). Idioms and Idiomaticity. Oxford University Press.
4. Moon, R. (1998). Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English. Oxford University Press.
5. Rahmatullayev, Sh. (1992). O‘zbek tilining frazeologik lug‘ati. Tashkent.