



## **PERCEPTIONS OF FOLK THOUGHT AND CULTURE IN ZOOMORPHIC METAPHORS**

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### **Abstract:**

This article analyzes the linguistic and cultural, as well as geographical features of zoomorphic phraseological units, with a specific focus on the representation of the image of the "camel" in phraseological expressions. The study compares the "camel"-based phraseological units in different languages, examining their semantic, stylistic, and geographical aspects. It reveals that the image of the "camel" is more actively used in the languages of peoples living in desert and semi-desert regions, which is closely linked to their way of life, natural environment, and economic activities. Furthermore, the article provides an academic explanation of how the mentality, cultural values, and worldview of these peoples are reflected in these phraseological units. This article is relevant for ethnolinguistics, phraseology, cultural studies, and geographical linguistics, contributing to a deeper understanding of the regional characteristics of language and culture.

**Keywords:** Phraseology, linguistic and cultural studies, camel, white camel, linguoculturology, zoomorphism, zoomorphic phraseology, zoonym, zoomorphs, zoophrazeology.

### **Introduction**

The relationship between humans and the animal world has also influenced language, forming a group of phraseological units with zoonym components in the lexical fund of language. The field of phraseology that studies idiomatic expressions involving animal names is called zoomorphic phraseology or zoomorphism. This area explores how animal images in phraseological combinations express human behavior. The term "zoomorph" (from Greek: *zōon* meaning animal, *morphē* meaning form) refers to concepts related to the shape of animals or based on animal images. In linguistics, it is linked to linguistic units

that represent comparisons between humans or other objects and animals. Zoomorphic phraseology is a branch of phraseology that studies stable expressions involving animal names. This direction analyzes how national mentality, cultural values, and worldview are reflected through animal images in phraseological units. A zoonymic phraseological unit is a stable phrase involving animal names (zoonyms). These phrases often have a metaphorical meaning and are used to describe human behavior or states. A zoonym refers to a lexical unit representing an animal's name. They carry different semantic loads in different languages and are widely used in phraseological units and metaphors. For example, words like "wolf," "snake," and "camel" are considered zoonymic. Zoophraseology refers to stable phrases that include animal names and have a specific meaning. These are used to express human character, social relations, or life situations.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS**

The reason for the prominence of the zoomorph "camel" in Uzbek language phrases can be attributed to the geographical area, religious worldview, and cultural uniqueness of the Uzbek people, which is of particular interest in linguocultural studies. Zoomorphic phrases have anthropocentric characteristics. The language of each nation is closely related to its culture, way of life, and worldview. Specifically, many phrases in the Uzbek language reflect the people's lives and their views of the world. "A person imagines the world through their culture and language, which is an inseparable part of that culture" (Makovskiy M.). Since camels have played an important role in the life of Central Asian peoples, including the Uzbeks, idiomatic expressions related to this animal are frequently used. In this article, we analyze phrases like "Nonni tuya qilmoq" (to make bread a camel), "Tuyaning sumi yerga tegganda" (when the camel's tail touches the ground), "Oq tuya ko'rdingmi?" (have you seen a white camel?) and "Tuya hammomni orzu qildi" (the camel dreamed of the bath) from a linguocultural perspective.

1. "Oq tuya ko'rdingmi?" – referring to something very rare or almost impossible. In the people's mind, "white camel" refers to extremely rare events.
2. "Tuya hammomni orzu qildi" – describing a desert animal dreaming of its natural habitat, symbolizing the human need to return to one's roots.

3. "Nonni tuya qilmoq" – trying to take something that belongs to someone else as one's own; to avoid wasting something and to cherish it. This phrase reflects the people's reverence for bread and food in general.

4. "Tuyaning dumি yerga tegganda" – describing an event that rarely happens. This phrase is used to describe long-awaited but almost impossible events.

Language and culture are interrelated concepts, and in every phrase, the worldview, values, and history of the people are reflected. Camel-related expressions have been used in Turkic-speaking peoples, especially among Uzbeks, to express concepts such as patience, endurance, rarity, and caution. For example, the phrase "Nonni tuya qilmoq" stems from the Uzbek people's tradition of revering and cherishing bread. The phrases "Tuyaning dumি yerga tegganda" and "Oq tuya ko‘rdingmi?" represent symbols of rare and almost impossible events. "Tuya hammomni orzu qildi" symbolizes the human tendency to return to one's origins.

Camel-related phrases reflect the life and spiritual values of the Uzbek people. These phrases are vivid examples of folk wisdom and serve as important tools for understanding national mentality and customs. In a linguocultural analysis, these phrases are key instruments in understanding the mentality and customs of a people. Tales, proverbs, and folklore are objects that need to be studied in linguocultural research. Such phrases are not only historical heritage but also serve as a moral guide for future generations. The stories and proverbs about the white camel appear in the cultures of many peoples, mostly symbolizing patience, endurance, good fortune, or rare occurrences. Over time, these tales have evolved into idiomatic expressions in folk speech. In some Eastern cultures, the white camel is depicted as a rare and miraculous animal. It is said to appear only to chosen people, bringing them great fortune. Based on this legend, the expression "Oq tuya ko‘rdingmi?" came to refer to extremely rare or almost impossible events and became entrenched in the Uzbek language as a linguocultural unit.

The expression "Tuya hammomni orzu qildi" also has its roots in folk traditions. According to a folk legend, a white camel appeared in a dream to a person and promised to fulfill all their wishes, taking them to distant lands. However, upon awakening, the person realizes they are still lying in the desert, understanding that their dream will not come true. Hence, the expression "Tuya hammomni orzu qildi" is used to describe someone who desires more than their means or dreams of impossible things.

The geographical location, religion, cultural traditions, and worldview of a people inevitably influence their language, resulting in linguocultural units like zoomorphic phrases. The zoomorphs present in each nation's phrases vary, creating distinctions in linguocultural studies. For example, in English, the equivalent of "Tuyaning dumi yerga tegganda" is expressed with the phrase "When pigs fly," which refers to something almost impossible. This phrase is similar to the Uzbek expression "Oq tuya ko‘rdingmi?" used to describe rare or almost impossible events.

In Russian: "Когда рак на горе свистнет" ("When the crayfish whistles on the mountain") is used to describe events that rarely happen, similar to the phrase "Tuyaning dumi yerga tegganda" in Uzbek.

In French: "Chasser la chimère" ("Chasing the chimera") refers to chasing dreams that are far from reality or impossible, akin to the phrase "Tuya hammomni orzu qildi."

In Arabic: ("Seeing the Phoenix") refers to the mythical bird Phoenix in Arab folklore, used to describe a very rare event or something that doesn't exist.

In Turkic languages: "Devenin beli bükülmez" ("The camel's back cannot bend") is a phrase reflecting the enduring quality of camels, symbolizing patience, endurance, and resilience.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, phraseological units featuring the image of the "camel" are not merely linguistic elements but also significant sources reflecting a nation's historical and cultural experience. They encapsulate people's worldview, their attitude towards social phenomena, and their philosophy of life. Additionally, such expressions hold linguistic and ethnographic significance, serving as crucial tools in studying the cultural context of language.

The analysis of zoomorphic expressions demonstrates that each language and culture assigns distinct semantic values to animal-related concepts. These expressions are not just linguistic constructs but also reflections of a people's worldview, mentality, and historical background. For instance, in Turkic languages, the lion symbolizes strength, courage, and bravery, while the leopard represents agility and dexterity. In contrast, in Western cultures, the fox is commonly associated with cunning, and the mouse symbolizes timidity. The study has revealed that zoomorphic expressions are deeply intertwined with

national culture and folklore, making their usage and semantic analysis valuable resources for linguistic and cultural studies. At the same time, the impact of globalization has led to the transformation or even disappearance of certain expressions. Specifically, in the Uzbek language, traditional expressions are being enriched with new conversational forms, while some older expressions are gradually falling out of use.

The research findings indicate that zoomorphic expressions constitute an essential part of linguistic richness, and studying their origins, logical foundations, and semantic changes is of great importance for linguistics. Moving forward, conducting more extensive analyses in this field, comparing expressions related to the same animals across different cultures, and delving deeper into their semantic transformations would be highly beneficial.

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