



## **THE PHRASEOLOGICAL WORLDVIEW AS AN OBJECT OF LINGUOCULTUROLOGY**

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### **Abstract**

This article explores the linguistic and cognitive functions of phraseological units and conceptual metaphors, with a focus on their role in shaping the linguistic worldview. Phraseologisms are described as fixed linguistic expressions with semantic unity, commonly used in colloquial and literary speech. Using the Uzbek verb o‘lmoq (“to die”) as a case study, the article demonstrates how phraseological euphemisms vary across stylistic registers, from everyday speech to poetic and religious language. The second part of the article delves into Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), initiated by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, and examines how abstract concepts (e.g., time, emotion, communication) are understood through metaphorical mappings from more concrete domains (e.g., fire, movement, journey). The metaphor "ANGER IS FIRE" is used to illustrate how metaphorical expressions in Uzbek reflect deep conceptual structures. Drawing on research in cognitive science and neuroscience, the article supports the idea that metaphor is not merely a linguistic device but a fundamental component of human thought and cognition.

**Keywords:** Phraseological units, conceptual metaphors, cognitive linguistics, uzbek language, linguistic worldview, Euphemism, conceptual mapping.

### **Introduction**

Phraseological units (phrases, phrasemes, idiomatic expressions) are considered fixed linguistic units in terms of both structure and composition. They exhibit semantic integrity, function as ready-made expressions in speech, and are indivisible from a lexical perspective. By their very nature, phraseologisms are primarily the product of colloquial and literary language.



All levels of language contribute to the creation of the linguistic worldview. However, it is important to emphasize the special role of the lexical (i.e., phraseological) level, particularly the vocabulary, in the formation and reflection of the linguistic picture of the world.<sup>1</sup> Other stylistic differentiations within phraseological units typically emerge over time. For example, consider the Uzbek verb “o‘lmoq” (“to die”): there are nearly a hundred synonymous phraseological euphemisms that convey its meaning. This wide variety allows for stylistic-functional distinctions among the expressions. In spoken language, we commonly find expressions like:

“olamdan o‘tmoq” (“to pass from this world”),  
“dunyodan o‘tmoq” (“to leave this world”),  
“omonatini topshirmoq” (“to hand over one’s trust [life]”),  
“qulog‘i ostida qolmoq” (“to fall silent under the ear”), and  
“jon bermoq” (“to give up the soul”).

Meanwhile, more neutral or formal registers—such as scientific, popular, or official discourse—employ expressions like:

“vafot etmoq” (“to pass away”),  
“hayotdan ko‘z yummoq” (“to close one’s eyes to life”),  
“dunyodan ko‘z yummoq” (“to close one’s eyes to the world”),  
“hayot bilan vidolashmoq” (“to bid farewell to life”).

In contrast, poetic and literary styles include more elevated or metaphorical expressions, such as:

“Alloh rahmatiga yo‘l tutmoq” (“to set out on the path to God’s mercy”),  
“shahodat sharobini ichmoq” (“to drink the wine of martyrdom”),  
“dorilfanodan dorilbaqoga rixlat qilmoq” (“to depart from the abode of knowledge to the abode of eternity”).

In Uzbek linguistics, the study of phraseological units has attracted the attention of scholars for many years. Numerous monographic studies have been devoted to this issue, examining aspects such as the formation of phraseological units, their distinctive features, development, stylistic properties, etymological characteristics, and comparisons with phraseologisms in other languages.<sup>2</sup> Particularly noteworthy

<sup>1</sup> 3. Махмудов Н. Тилининг сўз хазинаси ва оламнинг лисоний манзараси // Сўз санъати. International Journal of Word Art., vol. 1, issue 1. — 2018. — pp. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Yo‘ldoshev B. O‘zbek frazeologiyasi va frazeografiyasining shakllanishi hamda taraqqiyoti. Samarkand, 2007.



are the contributions of linguists such as Sh. Rakhmatullaev, B. Yuldoshev, A. Mamatov, A. Rafiev, Sh. Almamatova, and others. According to B. Yuldoshev, "the current state of research in Uzbek phraseology demonstrates that linguists in our republic have achieved significant success in this field. However, there still remains a great deal of work to be done by Uzbek phraseologists in the future."<sup>3</sup> In his research, Sh. Rakhmatullaev conducted monographic studies on the semantic properties of phraseologisms and their formal-semantic relations, and also compiled explanatory dictionaries of Uzbek phraseological units. B. Yuldoshev contributed to the development of Uzbek phraseology through his studies on the stylistic features of phraseologisms, while A. Mamatov focused on their formation processes. In addition, many other linguists have conducted extensive linguistic investigations of phrasemes. However, to date, no dedicated research has been undertaken in Uzbek linguistics to create a linguistic infrastructure for phraseologisms from the perspective of computational linguistics, which is a relatively new field.

A conceptual metaphor is a type of metaphor used to explain abstract concepts. It is often employed to clarify the relationships between abstract ideas and is frequently used in literature and speech to convey additional meanings. Conceptual metaphors are essential for enhancing our understanding of the world and can help explain relationships between people, objects, and phenomena. For example, the abstract concept of time can be explained through the metaphor of a river, where time flows forward just like the current of a river. Conceptual metaphors can also be used to explain the structure of language and the ways in which thoughts and concepts are expressed within it. For instance, the structure of a narrative can be explained using the journey metaphor, where the story progresses from a starting point to an end, much like a traveler moving along a path. Similarly, a metaphorical map can be used to explain the structure of language, where specific words or phrases are used to clarify particular concepts. Conceptual metaphors can also be utilized to explain cognitive processes. In scholarly articles, metaphors are used to illustrate how we conceptualize and understand the world around us, helping to frame our thoughts and interpretations of reality.

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<sup>3</sup> Yo'ldoshev B. Hozirgi o'zbek adabiy tilida frazeologik birliklarning funktsional-uslubiy xususiyatlari : Filol. fan. dokt. diss. avtoref. Toshkent, 1993.



A conceptual domain can be defined as any mental organization of human experience. The frequent and systematic use of similar metaphors across different languages-often grounded in perception-has led to the hypothesis that mappings between conceptual domains correspond to neural mappings in the brain.<sup>4</sup> Although some researchers have questioned the empirical validity of this theory, it has nonetheless gained wide academic recognition. In recent decades, neuropsychological studies, particularly those utilizing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and electroencephalography (EEG), have demonstrated a direct connection between metaphor processing and brain activity. For example, research by Lakoff and Johnson<sup>5</sup> revealed that specific areas of the cerebral cortex, including the motor and sensory cortices, are actively involved in metaphorical cognition. This supports the idea that conceptual mappings have a neurophysiological basis. Further studies have shown that sensorimotor systems play a crucial role in the formation of metaphorical concepts, indicating that conceptual domains may be grounded in actual sensorimotor neural maps. Experimental evidence also suggests that humans rely on conventional metaphors to understand abstract concepts. For instance, the use of spatial metaphors to conceptualize time (e.g., “*moving forward*,” “*looking back*”) is a clear and practical demonstration of how conceptual mappings between domains manifest in cognition.

This idea and its core processes were first explored in depth by George Lakoff<sup>6</sup> and Mark Johnson in their groundbreaking 1980 work *Metaphors We Live By*. Since then, the study of metaphor has rapidly evolved within the broader discipline of cognitive linguistics, supported by decades of academic conferences, scholarly societies, and research laboratories contributing to the field. In the field of psychology, Raymond W. Gibbs<sup>7</sup> has conducted numerous psychological experiments investigating the cognitive basis and mental representations of conceptual metaphors.

Conceptual metaphors are useful tools for understanding complex ideas using simpler terms, and are therefore often employed to explain abstract theories and

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<sup>4</sup> Cienki, A. and Müller, C. Metaphor, gesture, and thought,’ In R.W. Gibbs Jr. The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2008. 25 – p.

<sup>5</sup> Lakoff G., Johnson M. *Metaphors We Live by*. – Chicago.: University Press.1980. – P. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Lakoff G., Johnson M. *Metaphors We Live by*. – Chicago.: University Press.1980. – P. 89.

<sup>7</sup> Gibbs R.W. *The Poetics of Mind*: Cambridge and New York: - Cambridge University Press. 1994. – P. 42.



models. For example, the conduit metaphor - which conceptualizes communication as sending ideas through a physical channel - is part of a larger metaphorical framework that informs our understanding of human interaction. Thus, our everyday communication is shaped not only by the language of conceptual metaphor but also by how we mentally process and interpret scientific or theoretical knowledge. These metaphors are not only widespread in communication; we also tend to perceive and interpret them metaphorically in cognitive terms. In the early stages of developing Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), researchers collected linguistic metaphors from a wide range of sources, including television and radio broadcasts, dictionaries, newspapers and magazines, conversations, and even their own linguistic repertoires.

As a result, they identified thousands of metaphorical expressions, such as:

"argumentni himoya qilish", "g'azabdan portlash", "nazariya qurish", "kishining ko'zida olov", "sovuq shaxs", "qadam- baqadam jarayon", "g'oyani hazm qilish", "o'tayotgan (vafot etayotgan) odamlar", "hayotda maqsadsiz sargardonlik" "Defending an argument", "Exploding with anger", "Constructing a theory", "Fire in someone's eyes", "A cold person", "A step-by-step process", "Digesting an idea", "Passing away", "Wandering aimlessly through life". These and countless other examples reveal how deeply conceptual metaphors are embedded not only in language, but also in thought and cultural cognition.

A conceptual metaphor is a systematic set of correspondences between two domains. It refers to "understanding one concept in terms of another." This can also be referred to using the term "conceptual mapping" or "conceptual schema", because in such mappings, certain elements and the relationships between them serve to project meaning from the source domain (e.g. fire) to the target domain (e.g. anger). Let us illustrate this with the conceptual metaphor "ANGER IS FIRE". Before presenting the conceptual mappings that make up this metaphor, we will consider some linguistic metaphors in the Uzbek language that reflect this underlying conceptual metaphor:

- *Bu g'azablantiruvchi so'zlar edi. (Those were infuriating words.)*
- *U g'azabdan yonardi. (He was burning with anger.)*
- *Ko'zlari olov bo'lib yondi. (His eyes burned like fire.) - (O. Yoqubov)*



Based on such examples, we can propose the following conceptual mappings:

Source Domain: FIRE

Target Domain: ANGER

Fire → Anger

Intensity of fire → Intensity of anger

A person on fire → A person experiencing intense anger

Fiery eyes → Angry eyes

These mappings explain how the linguistic expressions above function:

Why *burning* conveys *arousing anger*,

Why *flames*, *blazing*, and *igniting* reflect high emotional intensity,

And why different levels of *heat* or *burning* correspond to different degrees of *anger*.

This metaphorical structure is systematic and offers a coherent model of anger conceptualized as fire. For instance, let us take an object in its neutral state. When an external event occurs, the object catches fire and begins to burn with varying intensity.

Similarly, in the case of a person, an event causes the individual to experience anger, which can also range in intensity. The conceptual metaphor ANGER IS FIRE thus allows us to cognitively and linguistically structure the experience of anger using the more concrete and physical domain of fire.

In conclusion, conceptual metaphors are a crucial tool for understanding abstract concepts, the relationships between different languages and cultures, the structure of language, and cognitive processes. They provide us with a means to form a more meaningful understanding of the world. Based on the above discussion and reflections, we can conclude that metaphor is not limited to language, that is, to mere words. On the contrary, human thought processes are largely shaped by metaphor. When we say that the human conceptual system is structured and defined metaphorically, this is precisely what we mean. Metaphors, as linguistic expressions, are significant precisely because the human conceptual system inherently includes metaphorical structures. Thus, conceptual metaphors are not only linguistic phenomena but also reflect the way we think, perceive, and make sense of the world around us.



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