

Grammatical and Semantic Features of Comparative Phraseological Units

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Abstract: This article is dedicated to the comparative analysis of grammatical and semantic features of comparative phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages. The study examines comparative phraseological structures based on syntactic models, semantic aspects, and their linguistic and cultural foundations. The composition of comparative phraseological units and their unique comparative forms in Uzbek and English are explored. The study analyzes the use of adjective and noun components in comparative idioms, highlighting their grammatical and semantic differences. The equivalents of comparative phraseological units in Uzbek and English are analyzed. Additionally, the stylistic and pragmatic aspects of these expressions are examined. The findings contribute to determining the role of comparative phraseological units in linguistics. The results obtained are significant for translation and language teaching. The similarities and differences of comparative phraseological units in Uzbek and English are evaluated based on statistical data.

Keywords: Comparative phraseologisms, comparative analysis, grammatical features, semantic features, comparative units, linguoculturology, adjectival phrases, phraseological units.

Introduction: Analogy, considered one of the important methods of inference in the field of logic, is based on similarities between objects. Through this method, it is hypothesized that if a certain characteristic exists in one object, a similar characteristic may also be present in another comparable object. However, this is not the only method of cognition. In studying and understanding the world, humans actively use methods such as comparison and contrast.

Comparison serves to identify the similarities and differences between objects, thereby enriching our knowledge of the world. This process is also carried out through language. In language, comparison manifests in various constructions, particularly in comparative and simile structures. Regarding this, N. Mahmudov states the following: comparison allows for the easier recognition of an unknown characteristic through a known one. For example, if the hardness of a stone is a known characteristic, then the same characteristic in other objects can be easily perceived either by comparison with a stone (harder than stone) or by likening it to a stone (as hard as stone).

In linguistics, comparison is generally classified into two types based on its purpose. If two objects or concepts are compared to highlight their differences, a pure comparative construction is formed (e.g., the ground is harder than stone). However, if the comparison aims to express similarity, a simile construction is formed (e.g., the ground is as hard as stone).[5]

LITERATURE REVIEW

Regarding the comparator and the compared element, F. Čermák states the following: an adjectival comparison is a firmly established phraseological unit, such as blind as a bat. In this structure, the main component is an adjective, which is combined with the conjunction (as) and a noun (a bat). Typologically, this is considered an explicit type of comparison, as the tertium comparationis is explicitly expressed. [3] This contrasts with implicit comparisons (verb-based), where the tertium is only indirectly understood through the comparison element itself, e.g., look like a clown (meaning masxarabozga o'xshamoq).

According to E. Yaroslov, the standard structure of comparative adjectives is as follows:

Comparandum (Kd) – the entity or person being

compared

Tertium Comparationis (TC) – the primary common characteristic

Comparatum (Kt) – the reference object serving as a standard for comparison

For example: John (Kd) is blind (TC) as a bat (Kt).

Within this structure, the main adjective (TC) represents the shared characteristic between the comparandum and the comparatum. This characteristic typically reflects a prototypical feature but can sometimes involve unconventional associations, such as deaf as a post (butunlay kar).

In comparison, the adjective is linked with a noun (Kt), which consistently represents a characteristic in a fixed manner. Additionally, the comparandum is considered an open component and is often represented by a pronoun or a person's name. Comparative adjective phrases sometimes include an initial (as), such as (as) good as gold. This linking component is optional and is often enclosed in parentheses in dictionaries. Its presence depends on the position of the comparison in the sentence or prosodic (intonation) features.

The fixed part of an adjectival comparison structure is the connection between the tertium and the comparatum, which can be used with various comparandums. However, in some cases, specific comparandums are preferred. For instance, good as gold is typically used to describe children. This preference is derived from the semantic content of adjectival comparisons.

It is important to emphasize that comparative phraseological units are stable in form. These units are generally expressed as word combinations, where attributive components are connected through subordination or coordination.

The grammatical classification of phraseological units allows them to be divided into two main groups:

1. Comparative phraseological units (Comparative FUs): These units express a particular characteristic through comparison with another characteristic. They often convey meanings of similarity, equivalence, or contrast.
2. Non-comparative phraseological units (Non-comparative FUs): These units independently express a characteristic without comparison. Their semantic load is conveyed either through context or directly via the main component.

Each group of adjectival phraseological units follows specific grammatical models, where the adjective component plays a crucial role in expanding their semantic and stylistic potential. For example, in Uzbek

adjectival phraseological units based on comparison typically include words indicating similarity, such as “kabi”, “dek”, “day”, “singari”, and “o‘xshash”. These elements are essential in defining the boundaries of their meanings.

The term “comparativity” originates from the Latin comparativus, meaning comparison. In linguistics, this concept refers to the comparison of two or more linguistic units, phenomena, or concepts. The term comparative phraseological units have traditionally been classified as a distinct category in phraseology, and its structural composition, semantics, and syntactic role are widely discussed in numerous works on English phraseology.

The nature of comparativity is two fold:

1. Indicating difference
2. Indicating similarity

Thus, in the first case, comparison is understood as a means of identifying differences, while in the second case, it is used to establish similarities. These two approaches form the basis of scientific and philosophical analysis, aiding in the accurate and systematic organization of human knowledge.

A.I. Burlak's theoretical directions on “Comparative Phraseological Units” (1978) have served as a crucial foundation in this field. Several researchers have contributed to this direction, including N.M. Sidiyakova, whose studies encompassed English comparative phraseological units (CPUs) and were incorporated into A.V. Kunin's theoretical course on English phraseology. [5]

Additionally, N.M. Prokhorova conducted research on coordination and attempted to describe its semantic structure. Adjectival comparative phraseological units are defined as constructions “based on comparison and associated with adjectives.” [9] V.M. Ogoltsev's fundamental research on fixed comparative expressions in the Russian language (1978) and A.V. Terentyev's structural analysis of CPUs have helped establish their place in lexicology.

A.V. Terentyev's dissertation, titled “Adjectival Comparative Phraseological Units as a Linguistic Universal (Based on English Material),” represents one of the latest scientific studies in this field. [13] Additionally, S.G. Karimova's research, which focuses on the comparative analysis of metaphorical adjectival phraseological units in English and Russian, is an important academic direction. [4] This study has contributed to uncovering the level of imagery and semantic features of phraseological units by identifying the mechanisms of metaphorization.

The Turkish linguist Ömer Asım Aksoy classified CPUs

into two groups: simple comparisons and explanatory comparisons. [1] However, O.A. Aksoy and other researchers have not conducted a detailed analysis of the adjective components within these phraseological units.

In Uzbek linguistics, M. Muqarramov was one of the first scholars to study comparativity, exploring its lexical, morphological, and syntactic expression methods. Later, N. Mahmudov and D.S. Khudaybergenova conducted research on the semantic-stylistic features of simile constructions and compiled an explanatory dictionary of Uzbek comparisons.

METHODS AND RESULTS

Comparative adjectival phraseological units are linguistic structures associated with adjectives and based on the principle of comparison. These idiomatic expressions, from a linguistic perspective, describe an object or phenomenon by comparing it to another object or phenomenon. CPUs typically contain general descriptive words and are widely used to illustrate a specific characteristic of something.

In Uzbek, CPUs serve to define adjectives through comparison with objects or phenomena. These expressions generally include adjective and noun components, which are linked by elements such as "dek," "day," "singari," "qadar." In English, these units are usually connected by the conjunction "as." These phraseological expressions are widely used in both colloquial and literary speech, enhancing imagery through comparison.

Building on the theories of N.M. Sidiyikova and A.V. Kunin, researchers have demonstrated that such English phraseological expressions belong to the phraseological lexicon.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS OF CPUS

Comparative phraseological units consist of two primary components:

1. Adjective – This component describes the quality or characteristic of an object, such as color, shape, or state.
2. Noun – This component represents the object being compared and denotes the subject of the comparison.

These two components interact to illustrate a particular characteristic and define its degree or condition. Therefore, CPUs hold a significant place in linguistics as rich and precise linguistic expressions.

Comparative phraseological units in different languages exhibit distinct structural patterns. The most basic, standard, and dominant structure in English is:

As + adj + as + (a/the) + N

Uzbek equivalent: sifat + day (dek) + ot

A large portion of comparative phraseological expressions are formed based on this construction. This structure helps determine the function of the phrase and the type of imagery it conveys. Moreover, it ensures the correct usage of phraseological units by establishing the proper arrangement of components and their syntactic relationships. Below, we will examine examples of these structures in more detail.

Comparative phraseological units in English follow the structure (as) + adj + as + (a/the) + N, which can be translated into Uzbek as sifat + day(dek) + ot. Examples of such phraseological units include:

- As soft as silk – ipakday mayin (as soft as silk)
- As red as a cherry – gilosdek qip-qizil (as red as a cherry)
- As busy as a bee – chumolidek mehnatkash (as hardworking as an ant)
- As dull as dishwater – o'lgudek zerikarli (extremely boring)
- As yellow as a guinea – oltinday sariq (gold-like yellow)
- As white as paper – qog'ozdek oppoq (paper-white)
- As straight as an arrow – qilichday to'g'ri, o'roqdek to'g'ri (as straight as a sword/sickle)
- As blind as a bat – ko'rshapalakdek ko'zi ko'r (blind like a bat)
- As dry as a bone – suyakdek qurib ketgan (dried up like a bone)
- As hard as stone – toshday qattiq (hard as a rock)
- As clear as daylight – kunday aniq, ochiq-oydin (as clear as daylight)
- As black as ink – ko'mirdek qora (coal-black)

Despite the similarities between English and Uzbek comparative phraseological units, they differ in structure, morphology, and grammatical features. These differences are particularly evident in the use of articles, the number and definiteness of nouns, as well as the degrees of adjectives.

In English, comparative phraseological expressions require either the indefinite article (a/an) or the definite article (the) before singular countable nouns, depending on whether the comparison object is specific or general. For example:

- As red as a cherry (gilosdek qip-qizil) uses an indefinite article.

- As old as the hills (tog'lar kabi eski) uses a definite article.

In contrast, Uzbek lacks morphological equivalents of articles. The definiteness or indefiniteness of the noun is understood through context. For instance:

- Ko'z qorachig'iday (as the pupil of the eye).

In Uzbek, comparative phraseological units are mostly formed using suffixes such as -day, -dek, which play a crucial role in linking adjectives to nouns. The primary model in Uzbek is N + day (dek) + adj (with a subordinate relationship), which corresponds to the English as + adj + as + N structure. Due to structural differences between the two languages, Uzbek expressions have a reversed word order compared to their English equivalents, with the adjective placed at the end.

For example:

- Pichoqdek o'tkir (as sharp as a knife).
- Go'dakdek masum (as innocent as a baby).
- Zaharday achchiq (as bitter as poison).
- O'lguday ziqna (as stingy as death).

Additionally, in Uzbek, phraseological comparisons frequently appear in literary and conversational contexts:

- Kelinimdan o'tdek kuyanman. (I am deeply hurt by my daughter-in-law.)
- O'g'ilginamni yaxshi bilasan, qo'ydek yuvosh bola. (You know my son well; he is as gentle as a lamb.)

These examples highlight the grammatical flexibility of the Uzbek language in forming comparisons through suffixation.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that while comparative phraseological units in English and Uzbek are similar in meaning, they differ significantly in grammatical structure and usage. In English, these phrases are primarily constructed using the as...as or like structures, whereas in Uzbek, suffixes such as -dek, -day, -singari, -qadar serve as the main comparative markers.

Comparative phraseological expressions enhance the vividness of language, strengthen expressiveness, and effectively convey meaning. The connection between the adjective and noun components in these expressions determines their semantic load. The study shows that in English, these expressions have a fixed lexical structure, while in Uzbek, they exhibit syntactic and morphological flexibility.

The findings confirm that studying comparative phraseological units is valuable for linguistics, cultural

studies, and translation studies. Identifying the similarities and differences between English and Uzbek comparative idioms helps in understanding translation challenges and improving language teaching methodologies.

Future research could expand by comparing such expressions in other languages and analyzing them using corpus linguistics to gain deeper insights.

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