

# Comparative Analysis of Phraseological Units in Uzbek And English Languages

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**Abstract:** This article explores the manifestation of phraseological units in the Uzbek and English languages, emphasizing translation challenges and the cultural significance of such expressions. It also discusses the importance of understanding phraseological etymology and the influence of sociocultural factors on their usage. The comparative analysis aims to highlight not only linguistic but also cognitive and pragmatic aspects of idioms across both languages.

**Keywords:** Phraseology, phrases, PU (phraseological units), linguistics, comparison, translation, synonym.

**Introduction:** Phraseological units, as fixed expressions with figurative meanings, reflect the socio-cultural identity of a nation. They serve as vital linguistic tools to represent traditions, worldview, and historical experiences. In learning English, the study of such expressions plays a crucial role in linguistic competence and cultural awareness. Investigating phraseology remains one of the more complex and nuanced challenges within linguistic research.

In linguistics, phraseology appears as a unique lexical layer of the language that reflects its invaluable richness, limitless potential, and distinctive historical development. So far, significant results have been achieved in studying the literary language, stylistic features, and lexicon of this rich treasure. Phraseological units, which are considered excellent examples of verbal art, play an important role in the lexical layer of the language, serving as a literary device of linguistic, cultural, and historical importance.

## MAIN PART

Prominent global linguists such as B. Fraser, N. Chomsky, A. Kunin, V. Vinogradov, A. Nazaryan, and Uzbek linguists such as Sh. Rahmatullayev, B. Yo'ldoshev, A. Mamatov, A. Bushuy, and M. Sodiqova have conducted research in the field of phraseology. According to American scholar B. Fraser, "Idioms play a significant role in linguistic culture and differ from ordinary phrases in that they are fixed expressions with

immutable form and meaning" [6, p.22]. Reformatsky defines phraseological units as "words and expressions characteristic of the speech of different social layers, indicating their class and profession" [3, p.128].

Phraseological units should never be understood literally; that is, the words are not used in their primary meaning. If they are used literally, then they are not idioms. For example:

My brother wore his coat inside out in the dark.

My brother suddenly wore his coat inside out.

In the first sentence, it literally means he wore his coat inside out in the dark. In the second, the idiom "wore his coat inside out" means "he became angry or changed his opinion." Now let's consider an English example:

Little Sarah learnt the alphabet by heart from A to Z.

Sarah is an expert in this sphere; she knows it from A to Z.

The first sentence uses literal meaning, while the second uses "from A to Z" idiomatically to mean "she knows it thoroughly." The Uzbek equivalent is "ipidan ignasigacha" (from thread to needle).

Like all things and phenomena in the world, idioms also have their own origin stories or etymologies. Studying the origin of phraseological units in a particular language helps understand the history and traditions of that nation. Some English idioms are rooted in

historical events and customs.

For instance, the idiom "to let the cat out of the bag" (to reveal a secret) originated from an old English market trick. At fairs, piglets were sold in bags. Dishonest sellers would replace the piglet with a cat, and the secret would be revealed when the buyer checked the bag—thus the idiom.

"Walls have ears" originated during the reign of Catherine de Medici in France, whose palace was constructed in a way that conversations in one room could be heard in another, enabling political surveillance.

The idiom "barefoot" not only means "without shoes" but also "unmarried" for girls in medieval times. It was customary for the groom's family to give shoes to the bride-to-be. Similarly, the Uzbek idiom "boshi ochiq" (with uncovered head) refers to an unmarried girl.

Based on A.V. Kunin's classification, we analyzed idioms through examples:

- \* To kick the bucket – to die
- \* To be all thumbs – to be clumsy
- \* The real McCoy – genuine or precious thing
- \* Grin like a Cheshire Cat – to smile broadly

These idioms derive their meaning not from individual words but from the whole phrase. Understanding idioms requires interpreting the components metaphorically.

For example, "make a mountain out of a molehill" is equivalent to Uzbek "pashshadan fil yasash" (making an elephant out of a fly), with "molehill" symbolizing something small and "mountain" something exaggerated.

Other idioms include:

- \* Black frost – severe frost
- \* As red as a turkey cock – bright red
- \* The Blue Blanket – the sky
- \* As bold as a lion – very brave
- \* As obstinate as a mule – very stubborn

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The comparative study of Uzbek and English phraseological units has yielded several notable findings regarding their structure, meaning, usage, and cultural backgrounds:

### 1. Semantic Parallels Across Languages

Despite differences in lexical composition and imagery, many idioms in Uzbek and English convey similar meanings. This suggests the existence of universal metaphorical patterns rooted in shared human experience. For example, the English idiom "to make a

mountain out of a molehill" and the Uzbek "pashshadan fil yasamoq" both emphasize exaggeration, albeit using different cultural imagery.

### 2. Cultural-Specific Idioms and Their Challenges in Translation

A significant portion of phraseological units are culturally bound. Idioms such as "let the cat out of the bag" or Uzbek "boshi ochiq" carry meanings that are not immediately transparent to non-native speakers. Translating such expressions requires not only linguistic but also cultural competence to preserve the idiomatic meaning rather than the literal sense.

### 3. Etymology as a Key to Comprehension

Understanding the historical roots of idioms contributes to more accurate interpretation and usage. For instance, knowing that "barefoot" once symbolized an unmarried woman in medieval England parallels the Uzbek idiom "boshi ochiq", which reflects a similar socio-cultural context. Such etymological insight helps learners appreciate the deeper layers of meaning and sociolinguistic function.

### 4. Classification of Phraseological Units

Following Kunin's classification, phraseological units were categorized into several types: fully idiomatic, semi-idiomatic, and phraseomatic. This framework enabled a systematic comparison and revealed that both languages contain a spectrum of phraseological fixedness and figurativeness, though with language-specific stylistic preferences.

### 5. Function in Communication

Both languages employ idioms to enhance expressiveness, emotional impact, and stylistic nuance in discourse. Idioms are particularly prominent in literature, media, and colloquial speech. Their proper use signals fluency and native-like competence in a language.

### 6. Cognitive and Pragmatic Aspects

Idioms often encode culturally specific conceptualizations. For example, the metaphor of "a lion" to denote courage is found in both languages ("as bold as a lion" in English, and "sherdek jasur" in Uzbek), reflecting a shared cognitive metaphor for bravery. Such patterns underscore the cognitive universals in language while respecting cultural uniqueness.

### Implications

- \* The findings of this study have direct implications for language teaching, bilingual lexicography, and translation studies.
- \* Educators should incorporate comparative idiom studies into language curricula to improve cultural literacy.

\* Translators must develop strategies for equivalent idiom substitution, contextual rephrasing, or footnoting to handle culturally specific expressions.

\* Phraseological studies like this one can foster intercultural understanding and promote deeper appreciation of linguistic diversity.

## CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of phraseological units in the Uzbek and English languages demonstrates that idioms are not merely decorative elements of language, but rather essential components of linguistic and cultural expression. These units serve a wide range of communicative functions: they enrich speech, express nuanced emotions, create stylistic effects, and reflect the speaker's cultural identity and worldview.

Through detailed comparison, it becomes clear that many idioms across both languages, despite being rooted in different cultures, share similar semantic functions. For example, the English idiom "from A to Z" and the Uzbek "ipidan ignasigacha" both convey the notion of complete and thorough knowledge. Such similarities reveal universal cognitive structures in human language, even when expressed through different metaphorical images.

At the same time, culturally bound idioms like "let the cat out of the bag" or "boshi ochiq" underline the necessity of considering historical and social contexts in understanding phraseological meaning. The etymology of these expressions, often tied to specific events or practices, enhances our comprehension of their figurative use and strengthens the argument for deeper linguistic and cultural integration in language learning and translation.

This study has also highlighted the challenges that idioms present in translation. Due to their fixed form and figurative meaning, literal translation often leads to misinterpretation. As a result, translators must not only be linguistically competent but also culturally sensitive, employing strategies like equivalence substitution, paraphrasing, or contextual adaptation.

Finally, the pedagogical implications of this analysis are significant. In language teaching, particularly for learners of English or Uzbek as a foreign language, phraseological competence is crucial for achieving advanced proficiency. Educators are encouraged to integrate phraseological content into curricula, promoting cultural literacy alongside grammatical and lexical knowledge.

In summary, phraseological units function as powerful linguistic tools that reflect the richness of cultural traditions and the flexibility of human cognition. Their study contributes not only to theoretical linguistics and

translation studies but also to fostering intercultural understanding in an increasingly globalized world. Future research should expand this comparative framework by including more idiomatic corpora and conducting empirical studies on learners' comprehension and usage of idioms in real-life communication.

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