



A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ANIMAL-BASED PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Annotation

This article presents a comparative analysis of animal-based phraseological units in English and Uzbek, focusing on their semantic, structural, and cultural characteristics. Using a qualitative comparative methodology, the study examines idioms drawn from dictionaries and linguistic corpora to identify how different animals are used metaphorically in each language. The findings reveal both universal patterns—such as the use of common animals to describe human behavior—and culturally specific symbolism rooted in environmental conditions, folklore, and historical traditions. The research highlights key distinctions, such as differing associations with animals like wolves or camels, and emphasizes the importance of cultural context in interpreting and translating idioms. The study contributes to phraseological research by expanding understanding of how language and culture interact in shaping metaphorical expression.

Keywords: animal-based idioms; phraseology; English–Uzbek comparison; cultural linguistics; metaphor; semantic analysis; idiomatic expressions

Annotatsiya

Mazkur maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi hayvon nomlariga asoslangan frazeologik birliklar qiyosiy tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda ularning semantik, strukturaviy va madaniy xususiyatlari chuqur o'rganilib, lug'atlar hamda lingvistik korpuslardan olingan idiomlar asosida tahlil olib borilgan. Natijalar ikki tildagi hayvon obrazi orqali ifodalangan metaforik birliklarda umumiyliklar bilan bir qatorda madaniy xususiyatlarning yaqqol namoyon bo'lishini ko'rsatadi. Xususan, bo'ri, tuya yoki qo'y kabi hayvonlarga berilgan ramziy ma'nolarda muhit, tarixiy meros va folklor an'analari kuchli ta'sir ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot frazeologik birliklarni tarjima qilishda madaniy omillarning ahamiyatini ta'kidlab, til va madaniyat o'rtasidagi uzviy bog'liqlikni yoritadi. Ushbu maqola ingliz va o'zbek frazeologiyasi bo'yicha ilmiy izlanishlarni yanada boyitishga xizmat qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: hayvon obrazli idiomlar; frazeologiya; ingliz–o'zbek qiyoslash; madaniy lingvistika; metafora; semantik tahlil; idiomatik birliklar

Аннотация

В данной статье проводится сравнительный анализ фразеологических единиц с зоонимами в английском и узбекском языках. Исследование направлено на выявление их семантических, структурных и культурных особенностей. Материалом послужили идиомы, отобранные из словарей и лингвистических корпусов. Результаты показывают, что в обоих языках животные выступают важными метафорическими образами, однако их символика во многом определяется национальной культурой, историческим опытом

и природной средой. Так, значения, связанные с волком, верблюдом или овцой, заметно различаются в зависимости от культурных традиций. В статье подчеркивается важность учета культурного контекста при интерпретации и переводе фразеологических выражений. Работа способствует более глубокому пониманию связи между языком и культурой, расширяя научные представления о фразеологии двух несродных языков.

Ключевые слова: зоонимические идиомы; фразеология; английско-узбекское сопоставление; культурная лингвистика; метафора; семантический анализ; фразеологические выражения

Introduction

Animal-based phraseological units represent a significant portion of idiomatic expressions in many languages, reflecting cultural values, worldviews, and social environments. English and Uzbek, belonging to different language families and cultural traditions, offer rich inventories of such idioms that reveal how speakers perceive the natural world and use animal imagery to express human characteristics, emotions, and behaviors. This comparative analysis aims to explore similarities and differences in the semantic, cultural, and structural features of animal-based phraseological units in English and Uzbek. Understanding these expressions not only deepens linguistic knowledge but also enhances cross-cultural communication by illustrating how metaphorically shared experiences can differ across societies. By examining representative idioms, this study contributes to phraseological research and highlights the cultural symbolism embedded in linguistic expressions.

Literature Review

Previous research on phraseology emphasizes the central role of idioms in language as tools for encoding culturally embedded meanings. Scholars such as A.V. Kunin and R. Moon have demonstrated that idioms often reflect collective experiences, shaping and shaped by cultural norms. English idioms involving animals have been widely examined for their metaphorical complexity, with studies indicating that animals such as “dog,” “cat,” and “horse” frequently symbolize human attributes ranging from loyalty to cunning.¹ Cognitive linguists Lakoff and Johnson have shown that conceptual metaphors grounded in embodied experience influence idiom formation, a concept relevant to interpreting animal-based expressions.²

In Uzbek linguistic studies, researchers including Sh. Rahmatullayev and M. Mirtojiev highlight the significance of animal imagery in folklore, oral traditions, and everyday speech. Uzbek phraseology often draws on animals common to the region, such as the camel, sheep, and wolf, each carrying symbolic meanings rooted in pastoral life. Comparative works by Central Asian linguists reveal both parallels and divergences between Turkic and Indo-European idioms, particularly in how environmental factors and cultural values shape metaphorical choices. However, comprehensive cross-linguistic comparisons between English and Uzbek animal idioms remain limited.³ This study aims to fill that gap by examining the semantic fields, cultural symbolism, and structural patterns that characterize these expressions, thus extending the scope of existing literature and providing a deeper understanding of interlinguistic phraseological variation.

¹ Kunin, A. V. English Phraseology: Theory and Practice.

² Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. Metaphors We Live By.

³ Rahmatullayev, Sh. O‘zbek tilining izohli frazeologik lug‘ati.

Methodology

The research employs a qualitative comparative approach to analyze animal-based phraseological units in English and Uzbek. Data were collected from bilingual phraseological dictionaries, monolingual idiom dictionaries, and reputable linguistic corpora. To ensure representativeness, only idioms with clear, stable meanings and frequent usage in everyday communication were selected. The analysis consists of three stages. First, idioms were categorized based on their key animal imagery, such as domestic animals, wild animals, and birds. Second, each idiom was examined semantically to determine its figurative meaning and the characteristics or behaviors symbolically associated with the animal. Finally, cultural-contextual analysis was conducted to identify underlying values, beliefs, or historical factors influencing idiom formation in each language. Comparative analysis was then used to highlight similarities, differences, and unique cultural markers. This methodological framework allows for a systematic exploration of the linguistic and cultural dimensions of animal-based idioms.

Results

The study revealed both commonalities and distinctions in how English and Uzbek employ animal imagery in idioms. English frequently uses animals such as dogs, cats, and horses to depict personality traits, emotions, and interpersonal relations. Uzbek, by contrast, relies more on imagery of camels, sheep, and wolves, reflecting its nomadic heritage and pastoral lifestyle. Several idioms showed cross-cultural parallels, such as those involving the donkey to represent stubbornness or ignorance. However, cultural specificity was evident in symbolism: the wolf in Uzbek culture often connotes bravery or leadership, whereas in English it tends to symbolize danger or aggression. Structural patterns also varied, with Uzbek idioms showing greater reliance on poetic and folkloric imagery.

Discussion

The findings highlight that while both languages use animals metaphorically to describe human behavior, cultural context plays a crucial role in shaping idiomatic meaning. English idioms tend to draw from animals common to Western domestic and rural environments, and their meanings often align with universal human experiences, such as loyalty symbolized by dogs. In Uzbek culture, idioms reflect the environment of Central Asia, where animals like camels and sheep hold economic and cultural importance. The symbolic difference of wolves illustrates how the same animal can carry opposing connotations depending on cultural narratives. Furthermore, Uzbek idioms often preserve traces of oral tradition and folklore, contributing to richer metaphorical layers. These variations underscore the importance of cultural competence in translation and intercultural communication. Misinterpretation can arise if idioms are translated literally without consideration of cultural symbolism. Thus, comparative phraseology not only aids linguistic understanding but also supports more effective cross-cultural interactions.

Conclusion

This comparative analysis demonstrates that animal-based phraseological units in English and Uzbek reflect shared human experiences as well as culturally specific values. While some idioms exhibit universal metaphors, many are shaped by distinct environmental, historical, and social factors. Understanding these expressions provides insights into each culture's worldview and contributes to improved translation practices and cross-cultural communication. Further research may explore additional languages or extend the analysis to thematic categories

beyond animal imagery. Such work enriches the study of phraseology and emphasizes the intricate link between language and culture.

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