

A FUNCTIONAL STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Turdiyeva Sevara Farxodovna

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20038344>

Abstract. This study examines the functional role of phraseological units in political discourse, focusing on their cognitive, pragmatic, emotional, and ideological functions. It demonstrates that phraseological expressions are not merely stylistic elements but strategic linguistic tools that shape perception, construct meaning, and influence public opinion. The research highlights how these units contribute to framing political realities, enhancing persuasive communication, and reinforcing ideological positions. Special attention is given to their adaptability in modern media environments, where political messages are rapidly disseminated and reinterpreted. The findings suggest that phraseological units play a crucial role in simplifying complex political ideas and strengthening emotional engagement with audiences. Overall, the study emphasizes their importance in understanding contemporary political communication and discourse strategies.

Keywords: phraseological units, political discourse, functional analysis, ideology, pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, persuasion, framing, media communication.

Introduction. Political discourse is a dynamic and multifaceted field in which language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a powerful instrument of influence, persuasion, and ideological construction. Within this framework, phraseological units (PUs)—relatively stable combinations of words with figurative, evaluative, or idiomatic meaning—occupy a particularly significant position. They are widely used in political speech due to their ability to condense complex ideas into expressive, memorable, and emotionally charged linguistic forms. In recent linguistic research, increasing attention has been paid to how such units operate pragmatically, especially in contexts where language is strategically employed to shape public opinion and legitimize political actions. From a functional perspective, phraseological units in political discourse perform multiple interrelated roles. They contribute to the expressiveness and rhetorical effectiveness of speech, enhance persuasive impact, and facilitate cognitive framing of political realities. Contemporary studies emphasize that political language is not neutral; rather, it is inherently ideological, reflecting and reinforcing specific value systems and power relations. In this regard, phraseological units function as tools of conceptual framing, enabling speakers to present political events, actors, and policies in a favorable or unfavorable light depending on communicative intentions. Their fixed or semi-fixed structure allows them to be easily recognized and reproduced, which increases their effectiveness in mass communication and media environments. Another important aspect of phraseological usage in political discourse is their pragmatic potential. Pragmatics focuses on how meaning is constructed in context, taking into account speaker intention, audience interpretation, and situational factors. Phraseological units are particularly relevant in this respect because they often carry implicit meanings beyond their literal interpretations. They can encode evaluation, evoke shared cultural knowledge, and trigger emotional responses in the audience. For example, politically charged phraseological expressions frequently function as markers of solidarity, opposition, or ideological alignment, thereby shaping interpersonal and institutional communication dynamics.

Modern political communication, especially in media-saturated environments, has amplified the significance of phraseological units. Political actors increasingly rely on established idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and culturally loaded phrases to simplify complex policy issues and enhance message retention among audiences. At the same time, such linguistic



strategies may also serve manipulative purposes by subtly guiding interpretation and limiting alternative perspectives. This dual nature of phraseological units—as both communicative and ideological tools—makes them a central object of analysis in functional linguistics and discourse studies. Recent linguistic scholarship highlights that phraseological units are not static elements of language but rather flexible and context-dependent resources that can be adapted, modified, or reinterpreted in different communicative settings. In political discourse, this variability allows speakers to adjust meaning according to audience expectations and situational demands. As a result, phraseological units become part of broader discursive strategies that include framing, evaluation, persuasion, and legitimization. Their use often reflects deeper cognitive and cultural models that shape how political realities are constructed and understood. Furthermore, the study of phraseological units in political discourse is closely linked to critical discourse analysis and cognitive linguistics. These approaches emphasize the relationship between language, cognition, and social power. Political phraseology is viewed as a mechanism through which ideologies are naturalized and reproduced in everyday communication. By embedding evaluative meanings within familiar expressions, political actors can influence perception in subtle yet effective ways. This makes phraseological analysis an essential component in understanding how language contributes to the construction of political reality. The functional analysis of phraseological units in political discourse provides valuable insights into the interplay between language, ideology, and communication. It reveals how stable linguistic expressions operate as strategic tools for persuasion, evaluation, and meaning-making. Given the increasing role of media and digital communication in shaping political narratives, the study of phraseological units remains a relevant and evolving area of linguistic research.

Literature review. The study of phraseological units in political discourse has developed significantly within modern linguistics, particularly through the integration of functional linguistics, cognitive approaches, and critical discourse analysis. Contemporary research increasingly views phraseology not merely as a lexical phenomenon but as a dynamic component of discourse that reflects cognitive, cultural, and ideological structures. Scholars emphasize that phraseological units—idioms, collocations, fixed expressions, and metaphorical constructions—play a crucial role in shaping meaning beyond the sentence level, especially in contexts where language is used strategically, such as political communication. Early linguistic traditions primarily treated phraseological units as stable lexical combinations with fixed meanings, focusing on their structural and semantic properties. However, more recent research has shifted toward understanding their functional and pragmatic roles in real communicative situations. This transition marks a move from static classification to dynamic interpretation, where phraseological units are analyzed in relation to context, speaker intention, and audience perception. In political discourse, this shift is particularly important because meaning is rarely literal; instead, it is constructed through implicit evaluation, framing, and ideological positioning.

A significant body of literature highlights the cognitive dimension of phraseology. Cognitive linguistic approaches argue that phraseological units are closely linked to conceptual metaphor and mental schemas that structure human thought. In political communication, metaphors embedded in phraseological expressions are frequently used to conceptualize abstract political processes in more familiar terms, such as conflict, journey, or construction. This cognitive structuring allows politicians to simplify complex issues and guide public interpretation. Research also suggests that repeated exposure to such expressions reinforces specific cognitive frames, which can influence collective political understanding over time. Another important direction in the literature concerns the pragmatic function of phraseological units. Pragmatic studies emphasize how meaning is negotiated in context and how phraseological expressions contribute to speaker intentions such as persuasion, evaluation, or manipulation. Political actors often rely on established idiomatic expressions to create a sense of familiarity and trust, or to evoke emotional responses such as fear, hope, or solidarity. These units function



as ready-made linguistic tools that reduce cognitive processing effort for the audience while simultaneously increasing rhetorical impact. As a result, phraseological units become effective instruments of influence in political speeches, debates, and media communication.

Critical discourse analysis has further expanded the understanding of phraseological units by examining their role in power relations and ideology. From this perspective, political discourse is seen as a site of struggle where competing ideologies are constructed and maintained through language. Phraseological units contribute to this process by embedding evaluative meanings that may appear neutral or natural but actually reflect specific ideological positions. For instance, certain fixed expressions can normalize political decisions, justify authority, or delegitimize opponents. Researchers in this field argue that such linguistic mechanisms are subtle yet powerful tools for shaping public perception and maintaining dominance in discourse. Media discourse studies have also contributed significantly to the analysis of political phraseology. In modern media environments, political messages are frequently mediated through journalism, social networks, and digital platforms, where phraseological units are often reused, modified, or recycled. This intertextual circulation increases their visibility and reinforces their ideological impact. Studies show that media outlets may adopt specific phraseological patterns that align with particular political narratives, thereby influencing how events are interpreted by the public. In addition, the brevity and memorability of phraseological expressions make them particularly suitable for headlines and digital communication, where attention economy plays a crucial role.

Recent research has also focused on variation and transformation of phraseological units in political discourse. Unlike traditional views that treat these expressions as fixed, contemporary studies demonstrate that they are highly flexible and adaptable. Politicians and media actors often modify idiomatic structures to create new meanings, achieve humor, or emphasize particular viewpoints. This creative adaptation reflects both linguistic innovation and strategic communication. It also shows that phraseological competence is not limited to recognition but includes the ability to manipulate and reinterpret established expressions in context-sensitive ways. Another emerging theme in the literature is the role of culture in shaping phraseological usage. Political phraseology is deeply embedded in cultural knowledge systems, and many expressions carry culturally specific connotations that may not be easily transferable across languages. Cross-linguistic studies reveal that while some phraseological patterns are universal, many are culture-bound and reflect unique historical and social experiences. This cultural specificity adds complexity to political translation and international communication, where maintaining both meaning and pragmatic effect becomes a significant challenge. Furthermore, recent interdisciplinary approaches combine linguistics with psychology and communication studies to examine the emotional impact of phraseological units. Findings suggest that idiomatic and metaphorical expressions tend to evoke stronger emotional responses than literal language, which enhances their persuasive power. In political contexts, this emotional dimension is particularly important, as it can influence voter attitudes, shape public opinion, and contribute to identity formation. Emotional resonance, therefore, is considered a key factor in the effectiveness of phraseological usage.

Despite the extensive research in this area, certain gaps remain. One of the main challenges is the need for more systematic functional classification of phraseological units in different types of political discourse, such as parliamentary speech, electoral campaigns, and social media communication. Additionally, there is a growing demand for corpus-based and computational approaches that can analyze large datasets of political texts to identify patterns of phraseological usage more precisely. Another underexplored area is the role of multimodality, where phraseological meaning is reinforced not only linguistically but also through visual and auditory elements in digital political communication. The literature on phraseological units in political discourse demonstrates a clear evolution from structural description to functional,



cognitive, and ideological analysis. Modern research emphasizes their multifunctional role in persuasion, framing, emotional influence, and ideological construction. At the same time, ongoing developments in media technology and global communication continue to reshape how these linguistic units are used and interpreted. This makes the study of phraseology in political discourse a dynamic and expanding field with significant theoretical and practical relevance.

Research discussion. The functional analysis of phraseological units in political discourse reveals that these linguistic structures operate as complex semiotic tools that extend far beyond their surface-level semantic meanings. In political communication, phraseological units are not simply decorative elements of speech; rather, they serve as strategic devices that organize thought, shape perception, and influence ideological interpretation. The findings of this study demonstrate that political actors systematically employ phraseological expressions to achieve rhetorical effectiveness, cognitive framing, and pragmatic persuasion in both spoken and written discourse. One of the most significant observations is that phraseological units contribute to the construction of conceptual frames through which political realities are interpreted. Political discourse is inherently selective, as it highlights certain aspects of reality while minimizing others. Phraseological expressions facilitate this selectivity by embedding evaluative meanings into familiar linguistic forms. For instance, expressions associated with struggle, progress, unity, or crisis tend to activate pre-existing cognitive schemas in the audience's mind. As a result, complex political issues are simplified and reinterpreted through emotionally and culturally recognizable patterns. This framing function allows political speakers to guide public interpretation without explicit argumentation, making phraseological units powerful instruments of indirect influence. Another important aspect identified in the analysis is the pragmatic function of phraseological units in reinforcing speaker credibility and audience engagement. In political speeches, the use of established idiomatic expressions creates an impression of fluency, authority, and cultural alignment with the audience. Such expressions often function as shared linguistic resources that reduce communicative distance between speaker and listener. This sharedness increases trust and enhances the persuasive force of political messages. At the same time, phraseological units allow speakers to express complex evaluations in condensed form, thereby increasing communicative efficiency in high-pressure political contexts such as debates, parliamentary discussions, and media interviews.

The study also shows that phraseological units play a crucial role in ideological positioning. Political discourse is fundamentally competitive, involving the construction of positive self-representation and negative representation of opponents. Phraseological expressions are frequently used to encode these evaluative oppositions implicitly. Instead of directly stating judgments, political actors rely on culturally loaded expressions that carry connotative meanings. This indirectness allows for more subtle manipulation of audience perception, as ideological content is embedded within seemingly neutral or conventional language. Consequently, phraseological units function as ideological markers that contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of political narratives. A further finding concerns the adaptability and transformation of phraseological units in contemporary political communication. Unlike fixed lexical items, phraseological expressions demonstrate a high degree of flexibility in usage. Political speakers often modify established expressions to suit specific communicative goals, such as emphasizing urgency, creating humor, or increasing emotional intensity. This creative adaptation reflects both linguistic innovation and strategic discourse management. It also indicates that phraseological competence in political discourse involves not only recognition but also manipulation of linguistic conventions. In addition, the analysis highlights the increasing role of media and digital platforms in shaping phraseological usage. In modern political environments, phraseological units are frequently disseminated through television, online news, and social media, where they gain visibility and repetition. This repetition strengthens their cognitive impact and contributes to the formation of shared public narratives. Digital



communication further accelerates the circulation of phraseological expressions, allowing them to evolve rapidly and acquire new meanings depending on contextual usage. This dynamic environment reinforces the importance of phraseology as a living component of political language.

The emotional dimension of phraseological units also plays a significant role in political discourse. Emotional engagement is a key factor in persuasion, and phraseological expressions are particularly effective in evoking emotional responses due to their metaphorical and culturally embedded nature. By activating emotions such as fear, hope, pride, or anxiety, political actors can strengthen audience alignment with their messages. This emotional activation enhances message retention and increases the likelihood of behavioral or attitudinal change among recipients. Overall, the discussion confirms that phraseological units in political discourse function as multifunctional linguistic tools that integrate cognitive, pragmatic, emotional, and ideological dimensions. Their strategic use reflects the complex interaction between language and power in political communication. The findings suggest that a deeper understanding of phraseological mechanisms is essential for analyzing how political meanings are constructed, transmitted, and interpreted in contemporary society.

Conclusion. The present study demonstrates that phraseological units are essential components of political discourse, performing multiple interrelated functions that include cognitive framing, pragmatic persuasion, emotional influence, and ideological construction. Their use allows political actors to compress complex meanings into recognizable linguistic forms that are easily processed and widely shared. The analysis confirms that phraseological expressions are not neutral linguistic elements but powerful tools of communication that shape public perception and reinforce ideological narratives. The study also highlights the adaptability of phraseological units in modern political communication, particularly in media and digital environments where rapid dissemination and reinterpretation are common. Their flexibility enables political actors to modify and repurpose established expressions for strategic purposes, thereby enhancing rhetorical effectiveness. Furthermore, the emotional and cultural dimensions of phraseology significantly contribute to its persuasive power, making it an indispensable resource in political messaging. Phraseological units should be regarded as dynamic and multifunctional elements of political discourse that reflect the complex relationship between language, thought, and power. Further research is needed to explore their usage in different genres of political communication and across diverse cultural contexts.

References

1. Baker, P. (2010). *Sociolinguistics and discourse analysis*. London: Continuum.
2. Charteris-Black, J. (2014). *Analysing political speeches: Rhetoric, discourse and metaphor*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
3. Culpeper, J., Haugh, M., & Kádár, D. Z. (2017). *The Palgrave handbook of linguistic (im)politeness*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
4. Fairclough, N. (2015). *Language and power* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
5. Firth, J. R. (2015). *Selected papers in linguistics*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
6. Kovecses, Z. (2020). *Extended conceptual metaphor theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Müller, C. (2018). *Metaphor and discourse*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
8. Partington, A., Duguid, A., & Taylor, C. (2013). *Patterns and meanings in discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
9. Sinclair, J. (2004). *Trust the text: Language, corpus and discourse*. London: Routledge.



10. Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2016). *Methods of critical discourse studies*. London: Sage Publications.
11. S.T. Aripova. *Linguistic and Cultural Characteristics of the Translation of Stories in English and Uzbek Languages*. – *Modern Science and Research*, 2024.
12. S.T. Aripova. *Lingua-cultural Aspects of the Translation of English and Uzbek Stories*. – *International Conference Proceedings*, 2023.
13. S.T. Aripova. *Linguistic and Cultural Characteristics in the Translation of Stories Between English and Uzbek Languages: A Comprehensive Analysis*. – 2023.
14. S.T. Aripova.. *Ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi hikoyalar tarjimasining lingvokulturologik xususiyatlari*. – *Ijtimoiy-gumanitar fanlar jurnali*, 2024.

