

ETYMOLOGY OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract. This article investigates the etymology of phraseological units in English and Uzbek from comparative linguistic and cultural perspectives. The study examines the historical origins, semantic development, and cultural significance of idiomatic expressions in both languages. Special attention is devoted to the influence of folklore, religion, literature, social traditions, and historical processes on the formation of phraseological units. The research identifies both universal metaphorical patterns and culturally specific symbolic representations reflecting national worldview and collective experience. Comparative analysis demonstrates that phraseological units function as carriers of cultural memory and linguistic identity. The study also highlights the importance of etymological analysis in translation studies, intercultural communication, and foreign language teaching. The findings confirm that phraseology represents an important intersection of language, cognition, culture, and history in both English and Uzbek linguistic traditions.

Keywords: phraseology, etymology, phraseological units, idiomatic expressions, comparative linguistics, English language, Uzbek language, cultural linguistics, semantic analysis, intercultural communication.

Introduction. Phraseological units constitute one of the most expressive and culturally significant layers of language. They reflect the historical development, worldview, traditions, and collective experiences of a speech community. In modern linguistics, the study of phraseology has become increasingly important because phraseological expressions preserve national identity while simultaneously demonstrating universal cognitive mechanisms shared across languages. The etymology of phraseological units, in particular, offers valuable insight into the origin and evolution of fixed expressions, revealing how social, historical, religious, and cultural factors influence linguistic formation. In this regard, the comparative analysis of English and Uzbek phraseological units presents a productive field for investigating both common and distinctive features of linguistic and cultural development. Phraseological units are stable combinations of words whose meanings are partially or completely transferred from their literal interpretations. Unlike free word combinations, phraseological expressions are characterized by semantic integrity, structural stability, and figurative meaning. Their origins are often connected with ancient customs, folklore, mythology, religion, historical events, literature, and professional activities. Because of these characteristics, phraseology occupies an intermediate position between language and culture, functioning not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a repository of collective memory. The etymological investigation of phraseological units therefore contributes to a deeper understanding of intercultural communication and linguistic consciousness.

English phraseological units have developed under the influence of multiple historical and cultural sources. The English language itself emerged through centuries of interaction among Germanic, Latin, French, Scandinavian, and Celtic traditions. Consequently, many English idioms originate from the Bible, classical mythology, medieval customs, maritime life, military practices, and literary works. A significant number of English phraseological expressions are associated with the socio-historical development of Britain, including colonial expansion, industrialization, and scientific progress. Expressions derived from the works of famous writers and dramatists also occupy a central place in English phraseology, demonstrating the strong relationship between literature and linguistic enrichment. Moreover, the globalization of English



has facilitated the international spread of many idiomatic expressions, making English phraseology an influential component of global communication. Uzbek phraseological units, on the other hand, are deeply connected with the historical experience, traditions, and cultural values of the Uzbek people. The Uzbek language belongs to the Turkic language family and has been shaped by centuries of interaction with Persian, Arabic, and Russian linguistic traditions. Uzbek phraseological expressions frequently originate from oral folklore, proverbs, agricultural practices, family relations, hospitality customs, and moral values rooted in Eastern culture. Many Uzbek idioms reflect concepts associated with collectivism, respect for elders, social harmony, and spiritual beliefs. In addition, historical processes such as trade along the Silk Road, the spread of Islam, and socio-political transformations have significantly contributed to the enrichment of Uzbek phraseology. Therefore, the etymological analysis of Uzbek phraseological units enables researchers to trace the historical and cultural evolution of the Uzbek nation.

Comparative phraseological studies between English and Uzbek are particularly important because they reveal both universal cognitive patterns and culturally specific conceptualizations. Some phraseological units in both languages demonstrate semantic equivalence despite having different lexical structures, indicating common human experiences and similar metaphorical thinking. At the same time, many expressions contain unique national imagery that cannot be directly translated without losing their cultural connotations. Such differences create challenges in translation, foreign language teaching, and intercultural communication. For this reason, examining the etymology of phraseological units contributes not only to theoretical linguistics but also to practical applications in translation studies, lexicography, and language pedagogy. The growing interest in cognitive linguistics and cultural linguistics has further increased the relevance of phraseological research. Contemporary scholars emphasize that phraseological units should not be studied solely from a structural perspective; instead, they must be analyzed as conceptual and cultural phenomena embedded in human cognition. Etymological investigation allows researchers to identify how metaphorical associations emerge and become conventionalized within a linguistic community. In English and Uzbek, phraseological expressions frequently encode symbolic representations of animals, colors, body parts, natural phenomena, and social relations. These symbolic associations often reveal similarities in human perception while simultaneously reflecting national specificity. Consequently, comparative etymological analysis helps explain how different linguistic communities conceptualize reality through figurative language. Another important aspect of phraseological etymology is its contribution to preserving cultural heritage. In the context of globalization and rapid technological development, many traditional expressions are gradually disappearing from active usage, especially among younger generations. Recording and analyzing phraseological units therefore plays an essential role in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and maintaining linguistic diversity. English and Uzbek phraseological systems both contain valuable historical information that reflects the lifestyles, beliefs, occupations, and ethical principles of earlier generations. By studying the origins of these expressions, researchers can reconstruct aspects of historical consciousness and cultural continuity that might otherwise be forgotten.

Literature review. The study of phraseological units has become one of the most dynamic areas in modern linguistics because phraseology reflects the interaction between language, cognition, culture, and history. Researchers have increasingly emphasized that phraseological expressions are not merely fixed lexical combinations but complex linguistic structures carrying cultural memory and historical experience. In comparative linguistics, the etymology of phraseological units has attracted considerable scholarly attention due to its ability to reveal the origins of figurative thinking and the development of national worldviews. Investigations of English and Uzbek phraseology demonstrate that idiomatic expressions preserve historical traces of social relations, traditional occupations, religious beliefs, folklore, and intercultural contact. Early approaches to phraseology mainly focused on structural and semantic classifications of



idiomatic expressions. Scholars traditionally analyzed phraseological units according to stability, lexical cohesion, and semantic transfer. These studies established the theoretical foundations for distinguishing phraseological units from free word combinations. Later developments in linguistic theory expanded the scope of phraseological research by introducing cognitive, pragmatic, and cultural perspectives. Contemporary researchers argue that phraseological units should be interpreted as conceptual constructions shaped by collective experience and cultural symbolism. This shift has significantly influenced etymological studies because scholars now examine not only the literal origin of idioms but also the cognitive mechanisms underlying metaphorical transformation.

Modern linguistic studies emphasize the close relationship between phraseology and cultural identity. Researchers have demonstrated that phraseological units encode national values, moral principles, and behavioral norms. In English phraseology, many idiomatic expressions are associated with maritime traditions, industrial development, and religious symbolism. Historical studies show that English idioms were strongly influenced by Biblical narratives, classical mythology, and literary works. Expressions originating from medieval trade, military terminology, and seafaring practices continue to function actively in modern English. Scholars also note that English phraseology reflects the historical expansion of the British Empire and the influence of globalization, which contributed to the spread of English idiomatic patterns across different linguistic communities. Studies devoted to Uzbek phraseology underline the importance of folklore, oral traditions, and collective social experience in the formation of phraseological expressions. Researchers describe Uzbek phraseological units as highly expressive linguistic elements reflecting hospitality, family relationships, respect for elders, and communal solidarity. Many Uzbek idioms emerged from agricultural life, nomadic traditions, craftsmanship, and everyday social practices. Scholars investigating the etymology of Uzbek phraseological units frequently emphasize the role of Islamic culture, Persian literary influence, and Turkic linguistic heritage in shaping the semantic structure of idiomatic expressions. Comparative analyses also reveal that Uzbek phraseology preserves ancient symbolic representations associated with animals, colors, natural phenomena, and human behavior.

Cognitive linguistic approaches have become especially influential in recent phraseological research. According to cognitive scholars, phraseological units are motivated by conceptual metaphors and embodied human experience. This perspective explains why many idioms across languages share similar semantic structures despite lexical differences. Researchers studying English and Uzbek phraseology have identified common metaphorical models related to emotions, intelligence, physical strength, and social interaction. For example, both languages frequently associate the heart with emotional states and the head with rational thinking. At the same time, culturally specific metaphors create unique phraseological patterns that reflect national mentality and social traditions. These findings support the view that phraseology combines universal cognitive mechanisms with culture-specific conceptualization. The role of etymology in phraseological analysis has also received increasing scholarly attention. Contemporary researchers argue that understanding the origin of phraseological units is essential for interpreting their semantic evolution and cultural significance. Etymological studies reveal that many idioms undergo gradual semantic shifts over time, losing their original literal meanings while preserving symbolic associations. In English, numerous phraseological units originally connected with agriculture, hunting, or religion are now used metaphorically in everyday communication. Similarly, Uzbek phraseological expressions often contain historical references that are no longer transparent to modern speakers. Scholars therefore emphasize the necessity of historical and cultural contextualization in phraseological interpretation.

Translation studies constitute another important direction in phraseological research. Researchers widely acknowledge that phraseological units present serious challenges for translators because idiomatic meanings are deeply rooted in cultural context. Comparative



studies between English and Uzbek demonstrate that literal translation often fails to convey the pragmatic and emotional nuances of phraseological expressions. Scholars propose various translation strategies, including functional equivalence, descriptive translation, and cultural substitution. Recent research particularly focuses on preserving metaphorical imagery and cultural connotations during translation. Investigations in bilingual lexicography also highlight the importance of etymological commentary for improving intercultural understanding and translation accuracy. Corpus linguistics has significantly contributed to the development of modern phraseological studies. Using digital corpora, researchers can now analyze the frequency, contextual variation, and semantic development of phraseological units across large collections of texts. Corpus-based investigations of English idioms reveal changes in usage patterns influenced by media discourse, technological communication, and globalization. Similar methods applied to Uzbek phraseology demonstrate the coexistence of traditional idiomatic expressions with newly emerging phraseological patterns shaped by social modernization and linguistic borrowing. Scholars argue that corpus analysis provides objective data for tracing semantic change and identifying contemporary trends in phraseological usage.

Interdisciplinary approaches have further expanded the field of phraseological research. Linguists increasingly cooperate with historians, anthropologists, psychologists, and cultural theorists to examine phraseological units from multiple perspectives. Historical linguistics contributes to identifying the origins of idioms and reconstructing their semantic evolution. Anthropological studies explore the relationship between phraseology and cultural rituals, while psychological approaches investigate the cognitive processing of idiomatic language. In English and Uzbek studies alike, interdisciplinary methodologies have enabled scholars to analyze phraseological units as complex cultural artifacts rather than isolated linguistic forms. Recent comparative studies highlight the importance of national worldview in shaping phraseological semantics. Researchers observe that English phraseology often reflects individualism, practicality, and rationality, whereas Uzbek phraseology frequently emphasizes collectivism, morality, and interpersonal harmony. Such differences are especially visible in idioms related to family relations, hospitality, social responsibility, and emotional expression. However, scholars also note significant similarities between the two languages in phraseological representations of universal human experiences such as love, fear, success, failure, and wisdom. These similarities suggest that phraseological systems combine culturally specific imagery with shared patterns of human cognition.

Educational linguistics has also recognized the importance of phraseological competence in foreign language learning. Researchers argue that mastery of phraseological units enhances communicative fluency, intercultural awareness, and pragmatic understanding. Studies involving English language learners demonstrate that idiomatic expressions are often among the most difficult aspects of language acquisition due to their figurative meanings and cultural references. Comparative analysis between English and Uzbek phraseology has therefore become valuable for developing effective teaching methodologies and bilingual educational materials. Scholars recommend integrating etymological explanation into language instruction because knowledge of origin and metaphorical motivation facilitates comprehension and retention. Overall, the reviewed literature demonstrates that phraseological units represent a multidimensional linguistic phenomenon closely connected with history, cognition, and culture. Contemporary studies increasingly move beyond purely structural analysis toward interdisciplinary and comparative approaches that emphasize cultural semantics and conceptual metaphor. Research on English and Uzbek phraseology reveals both universal patterns of figurative thinking and culturally specific symbolic systems. The etymological investigation of phraseological units thus remains highly relevant for modern linguistics, translation studies, cultural analysis, and intercultural communication.



Research discussion. The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek phraseological units demonstrates that etymology plays a crucial role in understanding the relationship between language, culture, and historical development. The findings indicate that phraseological expressions in both languages emerged through long processes of semantic transformation influenced by social traditions, religious beliefs, folklore, and historical experience. Although English and Uzbek belong to different language families and developed in distinct cultural environments, both languages exhibit similar mechanisms of figurative thinking and metaphorical representation. One of the most significant observations is the presence of universal conceptual patterns in phraseological formation. In both English and Uzbek, idiomatic expressions frequently rely on body parts, animals, colors, and natural phenomena to express emotions, behavior, and social relations. Such similarities confirm the cognitive linguistic assumption that metaphorical thinking is rooted in shared human experience. For instance, expressions associated with the heart often symbolize emotions and sincerity, while references to the head commonly represent intelligence or rationality. These parallels suggest that some phraseological structures transcend cultural boundaries and reflect universal aspects of human cognition.

At the same time, the analysis reveals substantial cultural specificity in the etymology of phraseological units. English idioms often reflect maritime traditions, industrial development, and Biblical influence, whereas Uzbek phraseological expressions are closely connected with agricultural life, hospitality customs, family relations, and Eastern moral values. Many Uzbek idioms preserve traces of nomadic culture and collective social organization, while English phraseology frequently demonstrates pragmatic and individualistic tendencies. These differences highlight the role of historical environment and cultural worldview in shaping idiomatic language. The study also demonstrates that phraseological units function as carriers of cultural memory. Many expressions in both languages contain historical references that may no longer be fully understood by modern speakers, yet they continue to preserve elements of earlier social consciousness. Etymological analysis therefore provides important insight into the evolution of national identity and linguistic continuity. Furthermore, the research confirms that phraseological units are among the most culturally sensitive components of language, which explains the difficulties encountered in translation and intercultural communication. Another important finding concerns the dynamic nature of phraseology. Despite their structural stability, phraseological units continuously adapt to contemporary social and communicative contexts. Globalization, digital communication, and intercultural interaction contribute to semantic change and the emergence of new idiomatic patterns. Nevertheless, traditional phraseological expressions remain significant markers of cultural identity and linguistic heritage. Overall, the discussion demonstrates that comparative etymological research contributes not only to theoretical linguistics but also to translation studies, language teaching, and intercultural communication. Investigating the origins and semantic development of phraseological units allows researchers to better understand how language reflects collective experience and cultural values across different societies.

Conclusion. The etymological study of English and Uzbek phraseological units demonstrates that phraseology represents an important intersection of language, culture, history, and cognition. The comparative analysis reveals both universal metaphorical patterns and culturally specific symbolic representations shaped by historical experience and national worldview. English phraseological units largely reflect maritime traditions, literature, and religious influence, while Uzbek expressions are closely associated with folklore, hospitality, agriculture, and collective social values.

The research confirms that phraseological units preserve cultural memory and serve as valuable indicators of linguistic identity. Their etymological investigation contributes to understanding semantic evolution, intercultural communication, and translation challenges.



Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of preserving traditional phraseological heritage in the context of globalization and rapid social change. Comparative phraseological research therefore remains highly relevant for modern linguistics, cultural studies, and foreign language education.

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