

ANALYSIS OF “FREEDOM” CONCEPT BY MEANS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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Annotation

This article explores the polysemous nature of the lexeme “free” and its phraseological units in English, illustrating how context, collocation, and cultural factors influence its varied meanings. Drawing upon theories of lexical semantics, phraseology, rhetoric, etymology, and paremiology, the analysis highlights the lexeme's flexibility across domains, ranging from legal clarity to casual comfort and metaphors of liberation. By integrating interdisciplinary perspectives, the study deepens our understanding of how freedom is conceptualized and expressed globally, emphasizing the interplay between language and culture in encoding fundamental values.

Key words

Idiomatic expressions, proverbial sayings, colloquialisms, polysemy, lexical semantics, phraseology, rhetoric, etymology, paremiological units.

Introduction. The reflection of national culture in the language is also clearly visible in the example of fixed expressions, that is, paremiological units. Paremiological units attracted the attention of researchers as a subject of linguistic analysis only at the end of the last century, and paremiological units became the object of study of domestic and foreign linguistics. The word “paremial” is derived from the Greek word and means “proverb”. L.B. Savenkova called the fixed expressions mentioned under the term “paremiological units” “secondary linguistic signs”. [7] Linguist V.A. Voropaeva, analyzing paremiological units in the sacred texts, describes them as “signs of wisdom”. [9] G.L. Permyakov [6] noted paremiological indicators of the language in proverbs. In Uzbek linguistics, the study of phraseological units is found in the works of Sh. Rahmatullayev, M.I. Umarmkhodjayev, A.E. Mamatov [3], A.M. Bushuy [2], B. Yuldoshev. The works of N.Z. Nasrullayeva, A.A. Nosirov, D.K. Bakhranova, L.E. Kholmuradova, Z.Q.

Teshaboyeva are devoted to the study of the linguocognitive and national-cultural aspects of phraseologisms.

Methods. The study utilized a qualitative approach to analyze the polysemous nature of the lexeme “free” and its various phraseological units in English. The methodology combined elements of lexical semantics, phraseology, and rhetorical analysis to examine how the lexeme functions across diverse contexts and cultural settings. The primary materials consisted of selected phraseological units containing the lexeme “free” in contemporary English. These included:

- Idiomatic expressions (e.g., “free and clear,” “free and easy,” “free as a bird”)
- Proverbial sayings (e.g., “get out of a jam,” “go scot-free”)
- Colloquialisms (e.g., “have a clear conscience,” “have a field day”)

A corpus of authentic examples was compiled from dictionaries, literary texts, online databases, and popular media to ensure representativeness and contextual accuracy. The study followed a three-step procedure:

1. Data collection: Relevant phraseological units were identified using corpus-based searches and manual extraction from reputable sources. Special attention was paid to expressions commonly used in spoken and written English, ensuring broad coverage of colloquial, formal, and idiomatic registers.

2. Analysis framework: Each phraseological unit was subjected to detailed lexical-semantic analysis, including:

- Identification of component lexemes and their individual meanings.
- Examination of syntactic structures and collocational patterns.
- Interpretation of underlying rhetorical devices (e.g., synecdoche, metonymy).
- Assessment of cultural and historical influences shaping usage.

3. Cross-cultural comparison: Selected expressions were compared with equivalent or analogous units in other languages, particularly Uzbek, to highlight cross-cultural parallels and divergences in the conceptualization of freedom-related ideas.

The study relied primarily on textual data, limiting the scope to documented examples rather than live speech samples. Additionally, comparisons were confined to English and Uzbek due to practical constraints, though the findings may generalize to other languages. Care was taken to respect cultural sensitivities when interpreting idiomatic expressions and their underlying connotations.

Results. The concept of polysemy – where a single word has multiple meanings is evident in the lexeme “free”. Theories of lexical semantics suggest that words acquire different meanings based on context, collocation, and usage over time. For example: “free and clear” emphasizes ownership and lack of encumbrances, “free and easy” describes clothing styles, focusing on physical comfort and ease of movement,

“free as a bird” metaphorically invokes feelings of liberation and independence. This flexibility illustrates how a single lexeme can operate across domains, often reflecting cultural nuances and evolving societal norms.

The study of phraseology examines how fixed expressions function as holistic units rather than sums of individual parts. The phraseological units analyzed here, such as “get out of a jam”, “go scot-free” and “have a clear conscience” illustrate the role of collocations in expressing complex ideas succinctly. These phrases act as building blocks of communication, embedding culturally specific connotations into everyday discourse. Several of the expressions rely on rhetorical devices like synecdoche (a part representing the whole) and metonymy (one thing standing for another): *“free hand” represents a broader idea of assistance or cooperation via the synecdochic association of a helping hand. “scot-free” evokes tax exemption as a metaphor for avoiding consequences entirely, drawing on historical metonymies involving taxation.* These devices allow speakers to compress complex ideas into compact forms, enriching communicative efficiency. Expressions like “have a clear conscience” or “have a field day” demonstrate cross-cultural equivalents, showing how core human experiences find unique yet relatable articulations.

By examining the data through the lenses of lexical semantics, phraseology, rhetoric, etymology, and paremiology, we gain deeper insights into how the lexeme “free” operates in diverse contexts. Its malleable nature reflects both the creative capacity of language and the ways in which culture imbues words with layered meanings. The integration of historical and anthropological perspectives adds depth to our understanding of how freedom is conceptualized and expressed globally.

Analysis. The phrase “free and clear” expresses the meaning of complete clarity, freedom from doubt. M: Jane owned the car free and clear. (There is no doubt that Jane owned the car). The phrase “free and easy” is used in American culture mainly in the sense of wearing clothes that are loose and easy to move in, in relation to the style of dress. M: I recommend to buy a free and easy wear. In the phraseological units Free as a bird, free as (the) air, the lexeme “free” is used in its own meaning, creating a semantic relationship with the nouns “bird” and “air” as a sign of freedom. In the phrases “free gift, free lunch, free ride”, the word “free” is used in the meaning of “free, without asking for anything”. The phraseological unit “free hand (with someone or smth.)” expresses the meaning of a person who voluntarily helps in a task through the synecdoche method of meaning transfer. The phraseological units “Get out of a jam”, “get out of a mess” express the meaning of getting rid of a certain problematic situation, of being free. The phrase “Give one one’s freedom” expresses the meaning of “divorce”. In the Uzbek

language, the phrases “to answer” and “to divorce” are used synonymously with this paremiological unit. The expression “Give someone a blank check” means to give someone authority to perform a certain task and in this sense is synonymous with the phraseologism “carte blanche”. The phraseological unit “Go scot-free” means “to escape punishment”. The expression “Scot-free” in the 10th century in English countries meant a person who was exempt from taxes. In Scandinavian, “skat” meant “tax”. Later, it was adopted into English in the form of “scot”, which underwent phonetic changes. The expression “go to scot-free” is used in English to mean to commit a crime and escape its fine. [5] The expression “Have a clear conscience about (someone or smth.) [8]” means “to be free from guilt”, “to have nothing to do with any problem”. M: I have a clear conscience about John and his problems. (I have nothing to do with John and his problems). The phrase “Have a field day” expresses the meaning of spending one’s time doing whatever one wants. This phrase is sometimes used in the sense of getting rid of the hectic work process, as a synonym for the Uzbek paremiological unit “Sulaymon o’ldi – devlar kutuldi”. M: The boss was gone and we had a field day today. No one got anything done.

The phrase “Be one’s own man // be one’s own master” expresses the meaning of “freedom in one’s own hands, independence”. M: I am my own man. (I am free).

At this point, it is appropriate to dwell on the etymology of the lexeme “uzbek”. Although there is no clearly proven postulate about the origin of the word “uzbek”, several scholars put forward different views on this issue. One of these theories is that this concept means “an independent person who is his own boss, his own master”. Another number of scholars associate the ethnonym “uzbek” with the name of a Mongolian khan “Uzbekkhan” (1312-1342). In historical sources, this name is also mentioned as a description given to him for his unruly, free-spirited nature. The purpose of mentioning this information is not to list a number of hypotheses about the etymology of the lexeme “Uzbek”, but to show that this concept has a synonymous relationship with the phraseologism “be one's own master” used in American national culture. Because, while in American national culture the concept of “Statue of Liberty” is embedded in the mentality of the nation, among Uzbeks the concept of “liberty” is reflected in the name of the nation itself. This can be illustrated in the following drawing:

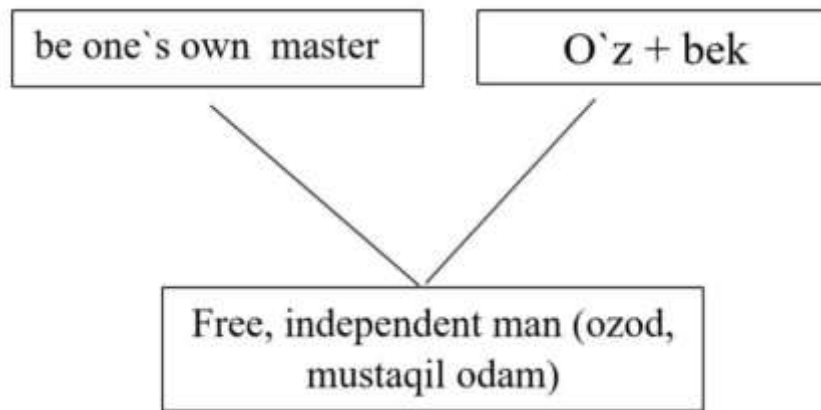


Figure 1. The synonymy between the phraseological unit "be one's own master" and the morphological structure of the term "Uzbek".

Conclusion. This study has demonstrated the rich polysemy of the lexeme “free” and its various phraseological units in English, illuminating how context, collocation, and cultural factors shape its meanings. The integration of lexical semantics, phraseology, rhetoric, etymology, and paremiology offers a multidisciplinary perspective on how freedom is conceptualized and articulated worldwide. By exploring the interplay between language and culture, this analysis deepens our understanding of the fluidity and expressive power of words, shedding light on the intricate ways societies encode and communicate fundamental values like freedom. Ultimately, this investigation highlights the critical role of interdisciplinary inquiry in unpacking the layers of meaning embedded in seemingly simple lexemes, encouraging further exploration of how language mirrors and shapes human thought and experience.

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