

## THE SCIENTIFIC-CULTURAL CONTENT AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS (IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK)

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17498677>

**Authors: Saidova Zulfizar Khudoyberdievna**

*Associate professor (PhD) of  
English linguistics department  
of Bukhara state university  
[z.x.saidova@buxdu.uz](mailto:z.x.saidova@buxdu.uz)*

**Aminova Muhayyo Fazliddinovna**

*Master student of Bukhara  
International university  
[muhayyoaminova7799@gmail.com](mailto:muhayyoaminova7799@gmail.com)*

*Affiliation: Bukhara International University*

### Abstract

“Phraseological unit is a separable combinability of words with the analyzed meaning and a definite stability at a phraseological level” (Kuzmin, 2007)

Phraseological units play an essential role in interpreting a nation’s linguistic and cultural worldview. This research explores the scientific and cultural significance of English phraseological expressions and their semantic properties, while also comparing them with Uzbek counterparts. Phraseology reflects the collective experiences, moral principles, and traditions of a society. The article reviews different theoretical approaches to classifying phraseological units, analyses their figurative and semantic frameworks, and explains how they embody national identity. Findings indicate that idioms and set expressions operate not only as linguistic tools but also as cultural symbols that preserve shared wisdom. A comparative study highlights both parallels and distinctions between English and Uzbek phraseological systems, illustrating how language and culture are intrinsically linked.

### Keywords

phraseology, idiom, semantics, cultural meaning, metaphor, linguistic worldview, Uzbek phraseology

### 1. Introduction

Language functions not merely as a means of communication but as a mirror reflecting the cultural and historical evolution of a nation. Within the linguistic structure, phraseological units (PUs) hold a distinctive position as stable

expressions that convey meanings beyond their literal interpretation. They offer valuable insights into how language intersects with culture and cognition. In recent linguistic research, phraseology has gained considerable attention since idiomatic expressions encapsulate the mentality, values, and worldview of a community. English phraseology often represents humour, pragmatism, and metaphorical thought, whereas Uzbek phraseology is rooted in morality, collectivism, and traditional wisdom. This paper examines the semantic and cultural aspects of phraseological units, their types, and the comparative features of English and Uzbek idioms. The primary purpose of this study is to determine how phraseological expressions embody cultural identity and reveal semantic nuances through metaphorical use. The research also considers their communicative, creative, and preservational functions within language and society.

## 2. Theoretical Background

The field of phraseology has been extensively explored by many scholars. A.V. Kunin (1970) described phraseological units as fixed combinations of words that carry a figurative meaning not predictable from their components. N.N. Amosova (1963) defined phraseology as a separate subsystem of language with distinct semantic and structural qualities. Western linguists such as Charles Bally and Cowie (1998) have also made valuable contributions to idiom and fixed expression theory.

Semantically, phraseological units differ from free word combinations due to their non-compositional nature—the meaning of the whole cannot be inferred from individual elements. For example, the idiom 'to kick the bucket' means 'to die,' which has no logical link to the literal meanings of 'kick' or 'bucket.'

Kunin (1970) identified three primary categories of phraseological units:

- Idioms (wholly figurative expressions, e.g. 'spill the beans'),
- Collocations (semi-fixed expressions, e.g. 'make a decision'),
- Proverbs (fixed moral sayings, e.g. 'A stitch in time saves nine').

In Uzbek linguistics, similar distinctions exist. For example, the Uzbek phrase 'ogʻzidan chiqib ketdi' (literally 'it escaped from his mouth') aligns semantically with the English idiom 'spill the beans', as both refer to unintentionally revealing a secret.

### 3. Semantic Features of Phraseological Units

The semantic depth of phraseological units stems from their figurative and cultural resonance. Idioms often rely on conceptual metaphors that shape human understanding of reality. The expression 'under the weather' (feeling unwell), for instance, originates from maritime traditions, while 'break the ice' metaphorically symbolises overcoming social awkwardness.

Within cognitive linguistics, idiomatic meaning is viewed as a unified semantic entity stored in long-term memory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Consequently, idiom comprehension requires not only linguistic proficiency but also cultural awareness.

Uzbek phraseology also demonstrates rich semantic and metaphorical content. Phrases like 'ko'ngli osmonda' (his heart is in the sky) indicate happiness, revealing how space and emotion interact metaphorically. Both English and Uzbek idioms employ imagery from nature, animals, and the human body, though their symbolic meanings differ across cultures.

### 4. Cultural and National Specificity

Cultural context plays a crucial role in shaping each language's phraseological system. English idioms reflect an individualistic and pragmatic worldview, whereas Uzbek expressions often highlight collective values, morality, and respect for elders.

For example, the English idiom 'time is money' expresses the Western principle of productivity and efficiency. Its Uzbek equivalent 'vaqt oltindan qimmat' (time is more precious than gold) conveys a similar concept, yet with a more ethical and reflective undertone.

Idioms also function as repositories of national values. The English phrase 'keep a stiff upper lip' embodies the British ideal of emotional control, while the Uzbek 'ko'nglini og'ritma' (do not hurt someone's feelings) reflects compassion and sensitivity – traits highly valued in Eastern societies.

Such comparative insights reveal that phraseological units are linguistic records of a people's mindset. They capture collective experiences, social norms, and moral principles. Therefore, analysing phraseology is vital for comprehending intercultural communication and translation nuances.

## 5. Conclusion

Phraseological units stand at the crossroads of language, thought, and culture. Their study demonstrates how deeply linguistic expressions are embedded in a society's moral and historical consciousness. Both English and Uzbek idiomatic systems display the creative role of metaphor, the expression of cultural identity, and the safeguarding of national traditions.

A deeper understanding of idioms' semantic and cultural functions not only enhances linguistic knowledge but also fosters intercultural competence. Future investigations might examine cognitive-semantic models of idioms across languages or explore their pedagogical value in language teaching and translation studies.

## REFERENCES:

1. Kuzmin, S. S. (2007). Idiomatic Translation from Russian into English (Theory and Practice) (pp. 7-291). Moscow: Flinta: Nauka.
2. Amosova, N. N. (1963). An English Phraseology as a Linguistic Science. Leningrad: Leningrad University Press.
3. Cowie, A. P. (1998). Phraseology: Theory, Analysis, and Applications. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4. Kunin, A. V. (1970). The English Phraseology. Moscow: Vysshaya Shkola.
5. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). Metaphors We Live By. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
6. Moon, R. (1998). Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English: A Corpus-Based Approach. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
7. Telia, V. N. (1996). Russian Phraseology: Semantic, Pragmatic, and Cultural Aspects. Moscow: Nauka.