

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. The study examines the semantic, cognitive, and cultural characteristics of idiomatic expressions containing animal names and investigates their role in reflecting national worldviews and cultural values. Using a qualitative comparative approach, phraseological units were collected from dictionaries and scholarly sources and analyzed according to their figurative meanings and symbolic associations. The findings reveal both universal and culture-specific patterns in the conceptualization of animals. While certain animals such as the fox, lion, and wolf symbolize similar traits in both languages, significant differences arise from the distinct historical, social, and cultural experiences of English- and Uzbek-speaking communities. The study highlights the importance of phraseological units as carriers of cultural knowledge and emphasizes their relevance for intercultural communication, translation studies, and foreign language teaching.

Keywords: Phraseology, phraseological units, animal-based idioms, animal symbolism, English language, Uzbek language, comparative linguistics, cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, metaphor, intercultural communication, semantic analysis.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi hayvonlarga oid frazeologik birliklarning solishtirma tahlilini taqdim etadi. Tadqiqot hayvon nomlarini o'z ichiga olgan idiomatik ifodalarining semantik, kognitiv va madaniy xususiyatlarini o'rganib, ularning milliy dunyoqarash va madaniy qadriyatlarni aks ettirishdagi rolini aniqlashga qaratilgan. Sifat jihatidan solishtirma metod qo'llanilib, frazeologik birliklar lug'atlar va ilmiy manbalardan yig'ildi va ularning figurativ ma'nolari va ramziy aloqalari bo'yicha tahlil qilindi. Natijalar ingliz va o'zbek tillarida hayvonlar tasavvurining umumiy va madaniy xususiyatlarga ega bo'lgan naqshlarini ko'rsatadi. Masalan, tulki, sher va bo'ri kabi hayvonlar har ikkala tilda ham o'xshash xususiyatlarni ramziy qiladi, biroq tarixiy, ijtimoiy va madaniy tajribalardagi farqlar natijasida sezilarli tafovutlar mavjud. Tadqiqot frazeologik birliklarning madaniy bilimlarni saqlovchi vosita sifatidagi ahamiyatini ko'rsatadi va ularni madaniyatlararo muloqot, tarjima va chet tillarni o'qitishda qo'llash muhimligini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: Frazеologiya, frazeologik birliklar, hayvonlarga oid idiomalar, hayvon ramziy ma'nosi, ingliz tili, o'zbek tili, solishtirma tilshunoslik, kognitiv lingvistika, madaniy lingvistika, metafora, madaniyatlararo muloqot, semantik tahlil.

Аннотация

Данная статья посвящена сравнительному анализу фразеологических единиц с компонентами-названиями животных в английском и узбекском языках. Исследование рассматривает семантические, когнитивные и

культурные особенности идиоматических выражений, содержащих наименования животных, а также их роль в отражении национального мировоззрения и культурных ценностей. В работе использован качественный сравнительный метод исследования. Фразеологические единицы были отобраны из словарей и научных источников и проанализированы с точки зрения их переносных значений и символических ассоциаций. Результаты исследования выявили как универсальные, так и культурно-специфические особенности концептуализации животных в двух языках. Такие животные, как лиса, лев и волк, символизируют сходные качества в английском и узбекском языках, однако значительные различия обусловлены историческими, социальными и культурными особенностями англоязычного и узбекоязычного сообществ. Исследование подчеркивает важность фразеологических единиц как носителей культурной информации и акцентирует их значимость для межкультурной коммуникации, переводоведения и преподавания иностранных языков.

Ключевые слова: Фразеология, фразеологические единицы, идиомы с названиями животных, символика животных, английский язык, узбекский язык, сравнительное языкознание, когнитивная лингвистика, культурная лингвистика, метафора, межкультурная коммуникация, семантический анализ.

Introduction

Phraseological units represent an important component of every language because they reflect the historical, cultural, and cognitive experiences of a speech community. Among various types of phraseological expressions, animal-based phraseological units occupy a special place due to their vivid imagery and strong cultural associations. Animals have always been closely connected with human life, serving as sources of food, labor, companionship, and symbolism. As a result, animal names frequently appear in idioms, proverbs, and fixed expressions across different languages. The study of animal-based phraseological units provides valuable insights into how different cultures perceive and conceptualize the world around them.

English and Uzbek belong to different language families and have developed in distinct cultural and historical environments. Nevertheless, both languages employ animal imagery to express human characteristics, emotions, behaviors, and social relationships. Certain animals symbolize similar traits in both languages, while others reflect culture-specific meanings. For instance, the fox is commonly associated with cunningness, whereas the dog may carry either positive or negative connotations depending on the linguistic context.

The present study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of animal-based phraseological units in English and Uzbek. The research focuses on identifying semantic similarities and differences, examining cultural motivations behind these expressions, and determining how animal symbolism contributes to phraseological meaning. Understanding these linguistic phenomena contributes to the broader fields of phraseology, cognitive linguistics, and intercultural communication.

Literature Review

The study of phraseology has attracted considerable attention in modern linguistics. Researchers have examined idiomatic expressions from semantic, structural, cognitive, and cultural perspectives. According to Fernando (2012), phraseological units are fixed combinations of words

whose meanings cannot be fully understood from the meanings of their individual components. Such expressions constitute an essential aspect of linguistic competence and cultural knowledge.

Animal-based phraseological units have been investigated within the framework of cognitive linguistics and cultural linguistics. Kövecses (2015) argues that metaphorical thinking plays a crucial role in the formation of idioms. Animals often function as source domains through which human characteristics are conceptualized. For example, courage may be represented through the image of a lion, while stubbornness may be associated with a donkey.

In English phraseology, numerous scholars have explored the symbolic meanings of animals. Moon (2014) emphasizes that English idioms frequently reflect traditional beliefs, folklore, and social stereotypes related to animals. Expressions such as “as busy as a bee,” “a wolf in sheep’s clothing,” and “let the cat out of the bag” demonstrate how animal imagery contributes to figurative meaning.

Research on Uzbek phraseology has also highlighted the significance of animal symbolism. Rahmatullayev (2013) notes that Uzbek idioms preserve national traditions, customs, and values. Animal names in Uzbek phraseological units often reflect pastoral life, agricultural practices, and historical experiences. Expressions involving horses, camels, sheep, and wolves are particularly common because these animals have played an important role in Central Asian culture.

Comparative studies reveal both universal and culture-specific aspects of animal-based phraseology. Dobrovolskij and Piirainen (2018) suggest that some animal metaphors are shared across languages due to common human experiences. For example, the fox is widely associated with cunning behavior in many linguistic traditions. However, other expressions emerge from unique cultural contexts and may lack direct equivalents in another language.

Recent studies have increasingly focused on the relationship between language and culture. Sharifian (2017) argues that cultural conceptualizations influence the interpretation and usage of phraseological units. Consequently, comparative analysis of animal-based idioms can reveal underlying cultural models and value systems. Despite the growing body of research, comparative investigations involving English and Uzbek phraseological units remain relatively limited. Therefore, the present study seeks to contribute to this area by providing a systematic comparison of animal-based expressions in the two languages.

Methodology

The present research employs a qualitative comparative approach to analyze animal-based phraseological units in English and Uzbek. Data were collected from contemporary phraseological dictionaries, idiom dictionaries, linguistic publications, and academic studies focusing on English and Uzbek phraseology. A corpus of animal-related phraseological units was compiled, including idioms, proverbs, and fixed expressions containing animal names.

The selected phraseological units were categorized according to the animals represented and the semantic characteristics associated with them. Particular attention was given to expressions describing human behavior, personality traits, emotional states, intelligence, social status, and interpersonal relationships. The analysis focused on identifying equivalent, partially equivalent, and non-equivalent phraseological units across the two languages.

Semantic analysis was applied to determine the figurative meanings of the selected expressions. In addition, cultural analysis was conducted to examine the historical and social factors influencing animal symbolism. The study considered both denotative and connotative aspects of meaning, allowing for a deeper understanding of how animal images function within phraseological systems.

A comparative framework was utilized to identify similarities and differences between English and Uzbek expressions. Similarities were evaluated based on shared metaphorical concepts and symbolic associations, while differences were examined in terms of cultural specificity and linguistic structure. Examples from both languages were analyzed in context to ensure accurate interpretation of meaning.

The methodological approach provides a comprehensive perspective on animal-based phraseology and facilitates the exploration of intercultural linguistic patterns. Through systematic comparison, the study aims to uncover the cognitive and cultural mechanisms underlying phraseological expression in English and Uzbek.

Results

The analysis revealed a number of significant similarities and differences between English and Uzbek animal-based phraseological units. Several animals were found to symbolize comparable characteristics in both languages. For example, the fox is associated with cunningness, the lion with bravery, and the wolf with aggression or danger. Such similarities suggest the existence of universal cognitive patterns in human perception of animals.

At the same time, notable differences were observed. In Uzbek phraseology, animals such as horses, camels, and sheep occur more frequently than in English. These animals reflect the historical importance of nomadic and agricultural lifestyles in Central Asia. English phraseology, on the other hand, contains numerous expressions involving cats, dogs, and birds, reflecting different cultural and social experiences.

The study also identified cases where equivalent meanings are expressed through different animal images. An expression describing foolishness in one language may employ a different animal metaphor in the other language. Furthermore, certain idioms possess no direct equivalents because they are deeply rooted in culture-specific traditions and beliefs.

Overall, the findings indicate that animal-based phraseological units serve as important carriers of cultural knowledge while simultaneously reflecting universal aspects of human cognition and metaphorical thinking.

Discussion

The results demonstrate that animal-based phraseological units represent a rich intersection of language, culture, and cognition. Similarities between English and Uzbek expressions can be explained by common human experiences with animals and shared cognitive mechanisms. Throughout history, humans have observed animal behavior and used these observations to conceptualize abstract human qualities. Consequently, traits such as bravery, cunningness, and loyalty are frequently associated with similar animals across cultures.

However, the differences identified in the study highlight the influence of cultural environment on phraseological development. Uzbek phraseological units reflect the traditional lifestyle of Central Asian communities, where horses, camels, and livestock played a central economic and social role. In contrast, English expressions often arise from urban, rural, and literary traditions specific to English-speaking societies.

The findings support the view that phraseological meaning is shaped not only by linguistic structure but also by cultural conceptualization. Animal symbolism serves as a cognitive tool through which speakers interpret social reality. Moreover, the existence of non-equivalent idioms demonstrates the importance of cultural competence in translation and intercultural communication.

From a pedagogical perspective, understanding animal-based phraseological units can enhance second-language learning by improving learners' awareness of cultural nuances and figurative language. Language educators should therefore incorporate phraseological competence into language instruction. Further research may expand the comparative scope by examining additional Turkic and Germanic languages or by employing corpus-based methods to investigate phraseological usage in authentic discourse.

Conclusion

Animal-based phraseological units constitute a significant and culturally meaningful component of both English and Uzbek phraseological systems. The comparative analysis conducted in this study demonstrates that while many animal symbols reflect universal human perceptions, substantial differences emerge as a result of distinct cultural, historical, and social experiences. Animals such as the fox, lion, and wolf often carry similar symbolic meanings across the two languages, indicating common cognitive foundations. At the same time, the prominence of particular animals and the specific meanings attached to them vary according to cultural context.

The research confirms that phraseological units serve not only as linguistic expressions but also as repositories of cultural knowledge and collective experience. Through animal imagery, speakers convey complex evaluations, emotions, and social attitudes in a concise and expressive manner. The findings underscore the importance of integrating cultural and cognitive perspectives into phraseological studies.

Moreover, comparative examination of phraseological units contributes to intercultural understanding and facilitates more effective translation and language learning. Future studies may explore larger datasets, employ corpus linguistics techniques, and investigate diachronic changes in animal symbolism. Such research will further enhance our understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and cognition.

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