

THE FORMATION AND HISTORICAL ROOTS OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS AND PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN THE UZBEK AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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Abstract

Idiomatic expressions and phraseological units represent a significant layer of the lexical system in both Uzbek and English. These fixed linguistic structures reflect centuries of cultural development, collective cognition, and historical experience. This article examines the processes underlying the formation of idiomatic expressions in the Uzbek and English languages, tracing their historical roots, semantic evolution, and structural characteristics.

Idiomatik ifodalar va frazeologik birliklar o'zbek hamda ingliz tillari leksik tizimining muhim va ajralmas qatlamini tashkil etadi. Mazkur turg'un til birliklari ko'p asrlik madaniy taraqqiyot, jamoaviy tafakkur hamda tarixiy tajribaning til vositasida mujassamlashgan ko'rinishi hisoblanadi. Ushbu maqolada o'zbek va ingliz tillarida idiomatik ifodalarning shakllanish mexanizmlari tahlil qilinib, ularning tarixiy ildizlari, semantik rivojlanish jarayoni hamda strukturaviy xususiyatlari ilmiy jihatdan yoritib beriladi.

Идиоматические выражения и фразеологические единицы представляют собой значительный и неотъемлемый пласт лексической системы узбекского и английского языков. Данные устойчивые языковые структуры отражают многовековое культурное развитие, коллективное мышление и исторический опыт, закреплённые в языковой форме. В настоящей статье анализируются механизмы формирования идиоматических выражений в узбекском и английском языках, а также рассматриваются их исторические корни, семантическая эволюция и структурные особенности.

Keywords: idiomatic expression, phraseological unit, semantic opacity, linguistic heritage, comparative linguistics.

Introduction

Phraseology constitutes a vital domain of linguistic inquiry, as idiomatic expressions and fixed combinations of words embody the cultural memory and cognitive patterns of a speech community. Unlike free word combinations,

phraseological units possess semantic integrity and structural stability, often conveying figurative meanings that cannot be inferred from their constituent elements.

The Uzbek and English languages, belonging to different language families—Turkic and Germanic respectively—provide a compelling basis for comparative analysis. Despite typological differences, both languages demonstrate parallel processes in the emergence, stabilization, and institutionalization of idiomatic expressions

Theoretical Framework of Phraseology

The study of phraseology as an independent linguistic discipline gained prominence in the twentieth century, particularly within structural and functional linguistics. Phraseological units are typically characterized by:

1. **Semantic opacity** – the overall meaning is not deducible from individual components.
2. **Structural stability** – limited grammatical flexibility.
3. **Reproducibility** – usage as ready-made units in speech.
4. **Lexicalization** – gradual integration into the language system as fixed expressions.

These features distinguish idioms from free syntactic constructions and underscore their importance in understanding language as both a communicative and cultural system.

Historical Formation of Uzbek Phraseological Units

The origins of Uzbek idiomatic expressions can be traced to ancient Turkic linguistic traditions, oral folklore, and classical literature. Early Turkic inscriptions and oral epics contributed significantly to the stabilization of metaphorical expressions that later evolved into fixed phraseological units.

Agrarian life, nomadic culture, and tribal social organization played a decisive role in shaping Uzbek idioms. Many expressions reflect pastoral activities, family relations, hospitality customs, and moral values deeply rooted in Central Asian history.

Classical literary works, particularly those of Alisher Navoi, enriched the Uzbek language with refined metaphorical constructions and stylistically elevated phraseological forms. Over time, repeated literary and oral usage contributed to semantic consolidation and lexical fixation.

Furthermore, historical contact with Persian, Arabic, and later Russian cultures influenced the development of Uzbek phraseology, introducing loan translations and hybrid expressions. These intercultural interactions expanded the semantic and stylistic range of Uzbek idiomatic language. Similarly, English idiomatic expressions have developed through a complex historical process shaped by successive cultural and

linguistic influences, including Old English foundations, Norman French impact, and the profound lexical expansion during the Renaissance. The works of authors such as William Shakespeare played a pivotal role in enriching the English phraseological stock, as many idioms in contemporary usage can be traced directly to his writings. In addition, the translation of the Bible into English and the influence of classical antiquity significantly contributed to the establishment and stabilization of numerous phraseological constructions.

From a linguistic perspective, idiomatic expressions in both languages undergo a process of semantic transformation whereby the overall meaning of the phrase cannot be deduced from the meanings of its individual lexical elements. This semantic opacity is often accompanied by structural stability and limited grammatical variability. Over time, repeated contextual usage leads to lexicalization and institutionalization within the language system.

Historical Development of English Idiomatic Expressions

The English phraseological system evolved through multiple historical stages marked by linguistic contact and cultural transformation. Old English provided the foundational lexicon, while the Norman Conquest introduced extensive French influence. Subsequent Renaissance humanism and classical scholarship further enriched English phraseology.

The literary contributions of William Shakespeare significantly expanded the idiomatic repertoire of English. Many expressions now considered conventional idioms originated in his dramatic works. Additionally, the translation of religious texts—especially the King James Bible—introduced numerous metaphorical constructions that became embedded in everyday speech.

The Industrial Revolution and colonial expansion also generated new idiomatic expressions reflecting technological innovation, maritime exploration, and global cultural exchange. Thus, English idioms developed through a dynamic interplay of internal linguistic evolution and external socio-historical forces.

Mechanisms of Formation

In both Uzbek and English, idiomatic expressions typically arise through several key mechanisms:

1. Metaphorization

Abstract meanings emerge from concrete experiences, often rooted in physical or social realities.

2. Metonymy

Associative shifts in meaning create new figurative interpretations.

3. Semantic Shift

Repeated contextual usage leads to gradual divergence from literal meaning.

4. Cultural Symbolism

Historical events, traditions, and collective beliefs contribute symbolic value to expressions.

5. Borrowing and Calquing

Cross-cultural contact results in loan translations and adapted phraseological patterns. These mechanisms illustrate that idiom formation is both a cognitive and socio-cultural process.

Comparative Analysis

Although Uzbek and English belong to different linguistic families and exhibit distinct grammatical structures, their phraseological systems share universal tendencies. Both languages rely heavily on metaphorical thinking, anthropocentric imagery, and embodied cognition.

However, cultural specificity is evident in thematic domains. Uzbek idioms frequently reflect pastoral life, kinship structures, and communal ethics. English idioms, by contrast, often derive from maritime traditions, legal institutions, and industrial society.

The comparison demonstrates that while the cognitive basis of idiom formation may be universal, the semantic content and imagery are shaped by each nation's historical experience.

Conclusion

Idiomatic expressions and phraseological units in Uzbek and English represent the cumulative product of centuries of linguistic evolution, cultural interaction, and historical development. Their formation is driven by metaphorical cognition, semantic transformation, and repeated social usage.

A comparative study of these languages reveals both shared universal principles and culturally specific characteristics. Understanding the historical roots and structural features of phraseological units not only enriches linguistic theory but also deepens insight into the cultural identity embedded within language.

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