

## CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND HUMAN CHARACTER IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK PHRASEOLOGY

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**Annotation.** This article explores the conceptualization of physical appearance and human character in English and Uzbek phraseology from a comparative linguocultural perspective. Unlike purely lexical descriptions of human features, phraseological units interpret appearance through culturally shaped images, social expectations and evaluative stereotypes. The study focuses on expressions built around clothing, colour, animal images, bodily condition, social posture and visible behavioural signs. These components reveal how external appearance becomes a symbolic means of judging personality, morality and social status. The analysis shows that English phraseology frequently represents character through contrastive images such as respectable appearance versus hidden danger, neatness versus moral emptiness, or animal comparison as a sign of social behaviour. Uzbek phraseology often connects visible appearance with honour, dignity, modesty, social shame and communal evaluation. The findings demonstrate that appearance in phraseology is not a neutral physical category; it functions as a culturally coded interpretive frame. The article may contribute to comparative phraseology, translation studies and intercultural language teaching.

**Keywords:** phraseology, appearance, character; clothing; colour; animalism; evaluation; culture.

**Introduction.** Human appearance is one of the earliest and most visible sources of social interpretation. In everyday communication people do not evaluate appearance only as a physical feature. Clothing, posture, neatness, facial manner, bodily condition and general visual impression may suggest dignity, arrogance, carelessness, modesty, deception or social belonging. Phraseology reflects this process in a particularly condensed form. Stable expressions store cultural judgements about how a person looks, behaves and is expected to appear before others.

In English and Uzbek phraseology, physical appearance is often transformed into a symbolic system<sup>1</sup>. An external sign may be used to evaluate internal character. A

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<sup>1</sup> Moon R. Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English: A Corpus-Based Approach. – Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. – 338 p.

person may look respectable but behave dishonestly; another may seem simple but possess strong moral qualities. Such meanings are expressed through idioms, figurative comparisons and fixed evaluative phrases.

The present article approaches the topic through several conceptual fields that were not limited to somatic images. Particular attention is given to clothing-based expressions, colour symbolism, animal comparison, bodily condition and social posture. These domains are productive because they connect the visual side of a person with culturally accepted models of behaviour. In English, expressions such as “*a wolf in sheep’s clothing*”, “*black sheep*”, “*dressed to kill*”, “*rough around the edges*” and “*to wear one’s heart on one’s sleeve*” show how appearance may either reveal or conceal character. In Uzbek, expressions such as “*ust-boshi xarob*”, “*oqpadar*”, “*ilonning yog‘ini yalagan*”, “*qo‘y og‘zidan cho‘p olmagan*” and “*kerilib yurmoq*” indicate that external presentation, family honour, cunning, meekness and arrogance are interpreted through culturally recognizable signs.

The comparative aspect is important because English and Uzbek belong to different linguistic and cultural traditions. English phraseology often gives prominence to individuality, behavioural contrast and social impression<sup>2</sup>. Uzbek phraseology tends to connect appearance and character with collective judgement, respect, shame, modesty and family-based moral evaluation. These tendencies do not mean that one language lacks the categories found in the other. Rather, they show which evaluative meanings become more visible in each phraseological system.

The aim of the article is to reveal how physical appearance and human character are conceptually linked in English and Uzbek phraseological units. The study argues that phraseological meaning is shaped by the interaction of image, evaluation and cultural norm. This approach is relevant for translation, since literal equivalence is often insufficient<sup>3</sup>. It is also useful for language teaching, where learners need to understand not only the words of an idiom but also the cultural logic behind it.

The analysis reveals that appearance-related phraseological units in English and Uzbek often work through indirect evaluation. Clothing is especially productive because it marks social presentation. English “*a wolf in sheep’s clothing*” presents harmless appearance as a mask for danger, while Uzbek “*ust-boshi xarob*” may suggest poverty, disorder or neglected social presentation. Colour also carries moral and social meanings. English “*black sheep*” refers to a person who is considered

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<sup>2</sup> Makkai A. Idiom Structure in English. – The Hague: Mouton, 1972. – 371 p.

<sup>3</sup> Gläser R. Phraseologie der englischen Sprache. – Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986. – 201 S.

different or disgraceful within a group. Uzbek “*oqpadar*” expresses severe moral condemnation connected with family and parental honour.

Animal-based phraseology forms another important group. English often uses animal images to classify social behaviour: “*dark horse*” suggests hidden ability, while “*social butterfly*” describes active sociability. Uzbek phraseology also uses animal imagery, but many expressions carry stronger ethical evaluation: “*ilonning yog‘ini yalagan*” describes extreme cunning, and “*qo‘y og‘zidan cho‘p olmagan*” describes excessive meekness or harmlessness<sup>4</sup>. Posture and bodily manner conceptualize arrogance or confidence, as in English “*to hold one’s head high*” and Uzbek “*kerilib yurmoq*”. These examples prove that appearance is interpreted through culturally loaded signs of behaviour.

**Table 1. Different conceptual fields of appearance and character in English and Uzbek phraseology**

| Conceptual field     | English phraseological unit | Uzbek phraseological unit   | Main image               | Character meaning                 |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Clothing as disguise | a wolf in sheep’s clothing  | to‘nini teskari kiyib olmoq | Clothing hides intention | Deception, hidden hostility       |
| Social deviation     | black sheep                 | oqpadar                     | Colour marks exclusion   | Disgrace, moral separation        |
| Hidden ability       | dark horse                  | ichida pishgan              | Unclear outer image      | Reserved but capable person       |
| Over-attractiveness  | dressed to kill             | yasan-tusan qilmoq          | Appearance as display    | Desire to impress others          |
| Neglected appearance | rough around the edges      | ust-boshi xarob             | Untidy outer form        | Social incompleteness or disorder |
| Cunning              | sly as a snake              | ilonning yog‘ini yalagan    | Animal-like cleverness   | Deceptive intelligence            |
| Meekness             | as quiet as a mouse         | qo‘y og‘zidan cho‘p olmagan | Weak or harmless animal  | Excessive softness                |

<sup>4</sup> Dobrovolskij D., Piirainen E. Figurative Language: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Perspectives. – Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2005. – 419 p.

|                  |                 |                |                        |                            |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Arrogant posture | to strut around | kerilib yurmoq | Body movement as pride | Self-importance, arrogance |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|

The table shows that the conceptualization of appearance and character is not limited to body-part imagery. English and Uzbek phraseology actively use clothing, colour, animal symbolism and bodily manner as interpretive codes. In English, the contrast between outer appearance and inner character is especially visible in expressions of disguise, hidden ability and social role. In Uzbek, social evaluation is often sharper because appearance may be associated with honour, modesty, family reputation or public judgement. The same external sign may therefore carry different cultural weight in the two languages<sup>5</sup>.

The comparison demonstrates that phraseological units create a culturally organized link between what is seen and what is morally or socially inferred. Appearance becomes a surface on which character is read, but this reading is never culturally neutral. English phraseology often represents the individual through contrast: appearance may deceive, social behaviour may differ from inner nature, and visible style may create a strong impression.

**Conclusion.** The article concludes that physical appearance and human character are conceptually linked in English and Uzbek phraseology through culturally marked images. Clothing, colour, animal comparison, bodily condition and social posture are used to interpret personality, moral status and behavioural tendencies. Appearance is not treated as a purely visual category; it becomes a sign through which society evaluates inner qualities. The comparative analysis shows both similarities and differences. In both languages, phraseological units may represent deception, arrogance, meekness, hidden ability and social deviation through external images. English phraseology often emphasizes individual impression, contrast between appearance and inner nature, and behavioural visibility. Uzbek phraseology more actively reflects collective evaluation, honour, modesty, social shame and moral responsibility. These tendencies reveal the influence of cultural norms on phraseological meaning.

The findings confirm that phraseological units are valuable material for studying national worldview. They show how a language community interprets the relationship between outer form and inner essence. Further research may expand the corpus by including literary texts, spoken discourse and gender-related phraseological units. A broader corpus-based approach would make it possible to determine which conceptual

<sup>5</sup> Mamatov A.E. O'zbek tili frazeologiyasi: o'quv qo'llanma. – Toshkent: Navro'z, 2019. – B. 26.

fields are most productive in English and Uzbek and how their evaluative meanings change across communicative contexts.

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