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MANIFESTATION OF NATIONAL-CULTURAL SEMANTICS IN UZBEK PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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Abstract. The article examines the national-cultural semantics of Uzbek phraseological units from a linguocultural perspective. Eighty phraseological units selected from Uzbek phraseological dictionaries and widely used literary and journalistic discourse were analyzed. The units were grouped according to character evaluation, emotional state, social relations, work, hospitality, and other everyday cultural situations. The findings show that phraseological meaning encodes not only figurative content but also historical experience, social norms, value judgments, and culturally shared associations. Body-part components and images related to household life and interpersonal relations were especially productive. The study confirms that Uzbek phraseology is an important linguistic repository of cultural knowledge and can be effectively used in language teaching, translation, and cross-cultural interpretation.

Keywords: Uzbek language, phraseology, linguoculturology, national-cultural semantics, concept, imagery, culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

Phraseological units represent one of the most expressive and culturally rich layers of language. Rather than naming a state, action, or human quality directly, they convey meaning through imagery shaped by historical and collective experience. Consequently, studying phraseological units is essential not only from a lexical-semantic standpoint, but also through a linguocultural lens. In the Uzbek language, idioms such as *"ko'ngliga tugmoq"* (to harbor an intention in one's heart), *"boshiga ko'tarmoq"* (to hold in high esteem / idolize), *"qo'li ochiq"* (generous / open-handed), *"yuragi orqasiga tortmoq"* (to be terrified), and *"bir yoqadan bosh chiqarmoq"* (to act in unity / solidarity) encapsulate speakers' emotional realities, social behavioral norms, and core values.

In Uzbek linguistics, Sh. Rahmatullayev's fundamental research established the theoretical framework for phraseology [1]. Linguocultural studies underscore the profound relationship between linguistic units, cultural codes, concepts, and national worldviews [2; 3]. The primary aim of this study is to examine the linguistic means through which national-cultural semantics manifest in selected Uzbek phraseological units and to characterize them into thematic and semantic groups. The research addresses the following question: through which semantic images and components is national-cultural information most prominently reflected in Uzbek phraseology?

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material for this study was drawn from Sh. Rahmatullayev's *Explanatory Phraseological Dictionary of the Uzbek Language*, the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language*, and active literary and journalistic discourse [1; 4]. A purposive sampling method was employed to select 80 phraseological units. Selection criteria included currency in the contemporary literary language, clarity of underlying imagery, and relevance for cultural interpretation.

The methodology integrated descriptive analysis, component analysis, semantic categorization, and linguocultural interpretation. Initially, the units were classified according to their dictionary definitions; subsequently, their core imagery-bearing components were identified. In the final stage, the connection between these images and traditional Uzbek lifestyle, social interactions, and value systems was

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interpreted. Quantitative results were calculated as percentages across semantic categories. Rather than a large-scale corpus study, this inquiry was conducted as a targeted linguistic observation balancing qualitative depth with quantitative verification.

3. RESULTS

The 80 analyzed phraseological units were categorized into six main semantic groups. Units denoting human character and moral evaluation accounted for 19 units (23.8%), emotional and psychological states represented 17 units (21.3%), social relations and solidarity accounted for 14 units (17.5%), labor and activity comprised 12 units (15.0%), hospitality and generosity formed 9 units (11.3%), and general everyday cultural situations made up 9 units (11.3%).

Semantic Category	Quantity	Share (%)
Character and moral evaluation	19	23.8%
Emotional and psychological state	17	21.3%
Social relations and solidarity	14	17.5%
Labor and activity	12	15.0%
Hospitality and generosity	9	11.3%
Other everyday cultural situations	9	11.3%

The most productive metaphorical motifs were somatic components (body parts). In *"ko'ngliga tugmoq"*, the heart/soul (*ko'ngil*) emerges as the symbolic locus of intent and memory. *"Yuragi orqasiga tortmoq"* expresses acute fear via an embodied physiological sensation. *"Qo'li ochiq"* links generosity with an open hand, transferring a physical gesture into a moral evaluation. The idiom *"boshiga ko'tarmoq"* signifies deep veneration or elevated esteem, while *"bir yoqadan bosh chiqarmoq"* (literally "to bring heads out of a single collar") conceptualizes unity and solidarity through an element of traditional clothing.

Household items and traditional lifestyle elements also formed prominent cultural markers. Components such as *dasturxon* (tablecloth/spread), *non* (bread), *o'choq* (hearth), and *eshik* (door) activate cultural concepts of family, sustenance, hearth, and hospitality. Hence, phraseological meaning cannot be reduced to the sum of its lexical components; it constitutes a secondary semantic structure sustained by historical experience and collective associations.

Among the analyzed units, 46 (57.5%) relied on human anatomy and internal psychological experiences, 21 (26.3%) were centered on domestic or social objects and phenomena, and 13 (16.2%) drew upon nature, spatial dimensions, or physical movement. These findings confirm the pronounced anthropocentric orientation of the Uzbek phraseological inventory.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that human anatomy and daily household life serve as the primary conduits for encoding national-cultural meaning in Uzbek phraseology. While similar metaphors exist across languages, an idiom's evaluative weight and associative scope are rooted in the speech

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community's collective history. For instance, while an open hand (*"qo'li ochiq"*) is widely recognized as a sign of generosity, idioms invoking hospitality, the *dasturxon*, bread, or communal solidarity carry distinct pragmatic and axiological significance within Uzbek culture.

From a linguocultural standpoint, phraseological units combine at least three distinct layers: nominative meaning, figurative motivation, and cultural connotation. This third layer often presents substantial challenges in translation and teaching Uzbek as a second language. Rendering an idiom solely through a functional equivalent can obscure its emotional, evaluative, and culturally nuanced colorings. Consequently, phraseological instruction is far more effective when framed within situational contexts and cultural commentary.

The prominence of somatic imagery aligns directly with an anthropocentric linguistic model. Humans routinely map internal psychological states and interpersonal dynamics onto visible bodily phenomena. In Uzbek, components like *ko'ngil* (heart/soul), *yurak* (heart), *bosh* (head), *qo'l* (hand), and *ko'z* (eye) denote not merely anatomical structures, but abstract domains such as will, emotion, deference, capability, and moral appraisal. This highlights the close link between language and cultural cognition.

A key limitation of this study is its sample size of 80 units. Future research would benefit from using electronic corpora to examine the frequency, genre distribution, and regional variations of phraseological units across contemporary digital discourse. Furthermore, contrastive studies comparing Uzbek phraseologisms with their functional counterparts in English, Russian, or other Turkic languages will help distinguish universal cognitive patterns from culture-specific semantic features.

5. CONCLUSION

Uzbek phraseological units serve as vital linguistic repositories for preserving and transmitting national worldviews. Across the examined dataset, imagery related to the human body, emotional states, domestic life, hospitality, work, and communal relations occupied a central role. The fact that 57.5% of the 80 units rely on somatic imagery confirms that phraseological semantics is fundamentally anthropocentric. Linguocultural analysis of phraseology deepens our understanding of figurative thought in Uzbek, refines translation methodologies, and supports the development of intercultural communicative competence in language education.

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