



THE USE OF METAPHORICAL PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN THE UZBEK LANGUAGE

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18613160>

Annotation. *This article analyzes the semantic and syntactic features of wordplay and metaphors in the Uzbek language. It explores the linguistic and cultural layers of wordplay, the logical-semiotic essence of metaphors, and their functional role in sentence structure. Based on examples from literary texts and public speech, the article reveals the interaction between semantic coherence and syntactic constructions.*

Keywords: *metaphor, wordplay, semantics, syntax, lexical unit, context, means of expression.*

In modern linguistics, phraseology is increasingly developing as an independent scientific field. In particular, metaphorical phraseological units constitute an important layer that reflects the figurative expressive potential of language. In such expressions, it is not the literal meaning of the words that is dominant, but their figurative and symbolic meaning.

In the Uzbek language, metaphorical phraseological units play a significant role in expressing the people's worldview, culture, national mentality, and spiritual state. Therefore, this article highlights the study and linguistic characteristics of metaphorical phraseological units.

Metaphorical phraseological units are stable expressions whose meanings are formed not directly, but on the basis of figurative, symbolic (metaphorical) interpretation. In them, objects, phenomena, or states are expressed through comparison, analogy, and symbolism via the concept of metaphorical phraseology. The meaning of such expressions does not arise from the simple sum of their components, but from a unified semantic whole.

Regarding the history of the scientific study of metaphorical phraseological units, in world linguistics metaphor and phraseology began to be studied as separate fields starting from the 19th century. Later, their interconnection was identified. The following scholars made significant contributions: **Charles Bally** substantiated phraseology as an independent field. **Viktor Vinogradov** developed a classification of phraseological units. **George Lakoff** and **Mark Johnson** proposed the theory of cognitive metaphor. According to them, metaphor is not merely a stylistic device, but a fundamental mechanism of human thought.

In world linguistics, the field of phraseology was scientifically grounded in the works of scholars such as Charles Bally and Viktor Vinogradov. Later, the theory of



cognitive metaphor developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson created a foundation for studying metaphorical phraseological units from a new perspective.

In Uzbek linguistics, scholars such as Sh. Rahmatullaev, A. Hojiev, M. Mirtojiev, R. Lutfullaeva, and D. Lutfullaeva have researched the theoretical foundations, classification, and semantic features of phraseological units.

Phraseology is a branch of linguistics that studies stable word combinations, that is, units that are used in a ready-made form and possess an integral meaning. One of the most important features of phraseological units is their imagery, which in many cases is formed through metaphor.

Metaphor is a semantic transfer based on similarity between objects, phenomena, or actions. In the Uzbek language, metaphor is widely used in the formation of phraseological units, giving speech expressiveness and emotionality.

From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, metaphor functions as a cognitive mechanism that shapes phraseological meaning. In this view, metaphor is realized through the interaction of two domains: source domain, target domain.

For example: *heart – stone* → *cruelty*; “*his heart is like stone*” → *a cruel person*. Here, the hardness of stone is compared with the hardness of human character. Thus, phraseological meaning does not arise from the sum of components, but as a result of conceptual transfer.

When an extended classification of metaphorical phraseological units is carried out, the formation of the following semantic groups is identified:

Somatic metaphorical phraseological units (based on body parts) are observed to be very actively used in the Uzbek language. In these, the lexical-semantic meanings of somatic units are expanded, and their characteristic features are metaphorically shaped into meanings expected to be understood in the language.

Phraseologism (Uzbek)	Literal Translation	Meaning (English)
ko‘zi ochilmoq	“one’s eyes open”	to realize, to become aware, to understand
qulog‘i og‘ir	“heavy-eared”	slow to understand, dull-witted
yuragi og‘ziga kelmoq	“one’s heart comes to the mouth”	to be extremely frightened
qo‘li qisqa	“short-handed”	poor, financially limited
boshi osmonga yetmoq	“one’s head reaches the sky”	to be very happy, overjoyed

When the **cognitive model of metaphorical phraseological units** is analyzed, it is observed that phraseological units are formed within the semantic fields **body** → **psyche** → **character trait**, based on the functional properties of these lexical units



In the formation of **zoomorphisms** within metaphorical phraseological units, the biological and imagined characteristics of animals are taken as a basis, and the model **animal → human → character trait** is applied. For example:

Phraseologism (Uzbek)	Literal Translation	Meaning (English)
itdek charchamoq	“to be tired like a dog”	to be extremely tired
tulkidek ayyor	“cunning like a fox”	cunning, sly
qo‘ydek yuvosh	“gentle like a sheep”	meeq, mild, gentle
bo‘ridek och	“hungry like a wolf”	very hungry
mushukdek poylamoq	“to stalk like a cat”	to observe secretly, to stalk stealthily

Nature-related metaphors form semantic meanings in language through analogy based on the specific features of natural phenomena, creating imagery through comparison. In other words, figurativeness is produced on the basis of metaphorical resemblance to natural events.

Phraseologism (Uzbek)	Literal Translation	Meaning (English)
ko‘ngli muzlab qolmoq	“one’s soul/heart freezes”	to become indifferent, to grow cold-hearted
g‘azabidan yonmoq	“to burn with anger”	to be extremely angry
boshiga qora kun tushmoq	“a black day falls on one’s head”	to fall into a hard situation, to face misfortune
yuragi yonib ketmoq	“one’s heart burns”	to suffer deeply, to be in pain/distress

When the **metaphorical phraseological units of the Uzbek language** are analyzed within the framework of **structural analysis**, the following grammatical constructions are observed: for example, **verbal:** *ko‘zi ochilmoq* (“to realize”); **nominal:** *sher yurak* (“lion-hearted”); **predicative:** *boshi osmonga yetdi* (“his head reached the sky”). It is determined that the most frequently occurring type is **verbal phraseological units**.

When metaphorical phraseological units are studied according to their degree of idiomaticity, the following forms are observed:

fully idiomatic: *ko‘z bo‘yamoq* (“to deceive”);

partially motivated: *yuragi toshdek* (“stone-hearted”).

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