

## Symbolic Significance of Numbers in English and Uzbek

IZZATBEK OLIMBAYEVICH REJAPOV

*Uzbekistan State World Languages University, Uzbekistan*

### ABSTRACT

*Specialists in the fields of linguistics, literary studies, cultural studies, psychology, sociology, philosophy, art studies, etc. have conducted studies on the concept of a symbol. In the course of research, each scientist, based on his field, scientifically studies the concept of symbols in accordance with his direction. This is due to the complexity of this concept and the fact that it is one of the most abstract and contradictory concepts. The purpose of this study is a comparative analysis of the symbolic significance of numbers and phraseological units with number components in the English and Uzbek languages. It is known that the sacred and symbolic meanings of numbers are of particular importance in the expression of the linguistic world picture. The scientific novelty of the study is that, attention was paid to the study of the notion of symbols and its characteristics, the general meaning and symbolic significance of numbers. As the results of the research has shown, symbolic meanings of the numbers are represented in phraseological units of both English and Uzbek languages being conditioned by universal symbolic of numbers in the world cultures. The article attempts to study the numbers as culturally marked language units (linguoculturemes) and tries to determine a complex of interwoven symbolic meanings based in deep semantics of phraseological units with number component. It is concluded that the similarities of symbolic meanings of numbers is conditioned by commonalities of anthropocentric worldview and number system as well as by universalness of perception*

*and interpretation of the world, society and humankind with the help of number sacralization.*

**Keywords:** Linguistic world picture, numbers; phraseological units with numerical components; symbol; symbolism; symbolic meaning.

#### INTRODUCTION

The historical development of the term "symbol" can be found in the works of Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Democritus and others. However as noted by Taho-Godi and N. Djusupov, the use of the concept of "symbol" in ancient texts is unique. According to them, in ancient times, a symbol was used autonomously when it represented a specific object or reality and did not represent a symbol of something. He didn't point to anything, and even if he did, he meant something that wasn't hidden from view. In this case, the symbol is understood as a sign and symbol (emblem). (12,29). Symbolism was expressed unconsciously as a holistic phenomenon in the works of ancient philosophers, but with a very wide influence through the processes of creating myths" (5,11).

A. F. Losev defined the symbol as "a structure with an ideological, figurative or metaphorical meaning, containing the indicators of certain objects different from itself" (5,10-11; 6,49; 7,286). He suggested that all these words and signs in ordinary language could be symbols. Yu. M. Lotman emphasizes that the symbol is related to culture and that it has characteristics such as symbolic, archaic and valuable (8,58). According to N.D. Arutyunova, the concept of a symbol is a pragmatic speech unit with a communicative purpose, that is, when a symbol is controlling, it has illocutionary (imaginary) power" (1,59). In the works of E. Sepir, the symbol is interpreted as the main linguistic unit that reflects the cognitive activity of a person. Based on these interpretations, it can be said that any symbol can appear as a conceptual, cultural, and communicative unit at the same time. (11,31)

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The symbolic importance of numbers occupies a special place in the linguistic landscape of the world. Numbers are universal symbols because they appear as symbols in all cultures and their symbolic meanings are interpreted almost the same by people from different cultures. Such numbers are often recognized as sacral, i.e. "holy" numbers, and have a special significance for each linguistic culture.

Even in ancient times, the symbolic meaning of numbers was in the center of attention. Pythagoras, who had a special place in ancient Greek science, and his teachings emphasized that numbers have a special symbolic meaning, that everything in the world is the harmony of the universe, and the relations of the phenomena that make up this harmony are reflected in the number system. The great mathematicians and philosophers of ancient Babylon, Ancient Greece, and later India speculated that numbers could represent principles underlying the creation of the world, concepts of time, and space. Numbers are used as a basis in music, poetry, architecture and art. The concept of the sacred nature of numbers and their relationship dates back to the dawn of mankind, as primitive tribes also used them. Since that time, meaningful, symbolic numbers, distinguished by a specific meaning or another, are an important element of the history of civilization, archaic, ancient, medieval and even new spiritual culture. Consciously or unconsciously, we obey the symbolism of numbers: an odd number of flowers in a bouquet, a service for six or twelve people, the triple return of tea. Certain characteristics, concepts and images are attached behind each number. Numbers are used to determine a person's character, talent, strengths and weaknesses, predict the future, take the best place in life, make decisions and choose the most suitable time for moving. With the help of numbers, people have always thought not only about the environment, the micro and macro universe, its structure and laws of existence, but also determined their place, roles and behavior in it. "During the past period, numbers as an important concept have become the object of various fields of human knowledge and experience, and these

views have been proven in the studies of philosophers such as A. Losev, A. Augustin, and Plato. In recent years, the interest in numbers and their symbolic significance has increased significantly not only among philosophers, but also among linguists (10,39). Also, studies devoted to the problems and the role of the numbers in the life, literature, examples of oral creativity and culture of different peoples began to appear.

#### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A comparative study of a special group of numbers expressing symbolism allows to study the history of their formation and the development of the worldview, features of reality perception, and cultural values of representatives of a certain language and culture.

Numbers, with their symbolic meanings, had a great impact on the meaning of phraseological units. For example, number one, which starts the number system, symbolizes divinity, the beginning of everything, unity, universality, unity in the cultures of different peoples. Its characteristic features are strength, power, will, activity, initiative, inclination to innovation, striving for leadership, striving for fame and power, individualism, egocentrism. It takes part as an important component in the formation of many phraseological units, having a very wide influence on the traditions and culture of the English and Uzbeks.

be one flash (eng)- *bir tan bir jon bo' lmoq* (uz);  
 as one man (eng); one and all (eng) - *birdamlik bilan, yakdil* (uz);  
*bir yoqadan bosh chiqarmoq* (uz);  
*bir ovozdan* (uz);  
*To' rtovlon bitta bo' lsa to' lmaganni to' ldirar* (uz); *oltovlon ola bo' lsa og' zidagin oldirar* (uz);(14,341;)

Opposite to the above meaning, a number can be used to mean loneliness, loneliness, weakness:

*yolg' iz otning dong' ichiqmas* (uz);  
 one swallow does not make a summer (eng)- *bir qaldirg' och bilan yoz kelmaydi* (uz);

In both English and Uzbek, "one" can serve as a means of expressing uncertainty, and this meaning of the number "one" is often used in fairy tales:

once upon a time (eng) - *bir bor ekanda, bir yo'q ekan* (uz). (13,402)

The symbolic meanings of the number two include pair, duality, opposition. The number two is also called the number of contradictions. This is related to a person's widespread use of the binary principle in categorizing the world, that is, a person perceives time, space, nature, astral phenomena, cultural values, and emotions as opposites (4.35; 3.56). The whole world was believed to be divided into two opposite poles, light and darkness, heaven and earth, animate and inanimate, male and female. As an example of the use of two numbers to describe events opposite to each other, we can cite the narration about two angels in Islamic teachings: after a person passes away, angels called Munkar and Nakir come to him and answer questions. According to Islamic ideas, Munkar sits on a person's right shoulder and records his good deeds, Nakir sits on his left shoulder and records his sins. Depending on which cases are recorded more often, Allah will send a person to heaven or hell. Two numbers are also used to indicate the existence of two worlds, that is, the world and the hereafter: *ikkala dunyoda ham-ikki dunyoda ham; ikki dunyo rohatini ko'r; ikki dunyoda aziz bo'l*.

We can see the symbolic meanings of two numbers that represent the opposite with the help of the following examples:

two of a trade never (or seldom) agree (eng) – *ikki qo'chqorning boshi bir qozonda qaynamas* (uz);

when two Sundays come in one week (eng) – *hech qachon, qizil qor yoqqanda* (uz);

if you run after two hares, you will catch neither (eng) – *ikki kemani boshini ushlagan g'arq bo'ladi* (uz);

two-faced (eng) - *ikki yuzlamachi* (uz)

In English and Uzbek, two numbers are also used to denote a couple: double harness (eng) – to marry, to get married (Uzb.

translation). Here, "harness" is a saddle-harness worn on horses, and when two horses are joined to a cart, "double harness" is added, that is, a pair of saddles and harnesses, and this word later became a phraseological unit meaning the marriage of two people in English. Uzbek equivalent of this phraseological units can be: *er-xotin qo' sh ho' kiz* (uz); *bir boshini ikkita qilmoq*. Below number two and their synonyms are also used in the examples that express the meaning of this number as a pair: play double (eng) , see double (eng) a double-edged (or two-edged) sword (eng); a twice-told tale (eng); it takes two to make a quarrel (eng) -*qars ikki qo' ldan chiqadi* (uz). (13,230;)

The number three is symbolic of the completeness of a particular sequence with a beginning, continuation, and end or end, and completion of a particular sub-period or process. In crucial situations of human life, there are also examples of repeating three times to successfully perform any action. (2,12;)

For example, in Uzbeks, a girl who is getting married is asked three times for her consent, and in English, the names of the bride and groom are called three times when they are called to church. Another meaning of the number three, which means completion, from the Uzbek expression *uchdan keyin puch*; three cheers (for) (eng) – is used to express happiness or wish for health three times in someone's honor. The reason for the sanctity or wholeness of the number three goes back to its symbolic meaning. That is, it comes as a solution to the contradiction and conflict of binary meanings caused by number two. The meaning of completion and sufficiency of the number three can be seen in the following examples:

when three know it, all know it (eng)-*uch kishi bilgan narsa sir emas* (uz);  
the best fish hid when they are three days old (eng)-*mehmonning izzati uch kun* (uz).(13,632)

In the Christian religion, the number three has sacred significance and takes an active part in defining many main rituals and important mythological symbols. This can be found many times in the Bible, the holy book of Christians: three angels

came to Abraham with the news of the imminent birth of his son. This is called the Old Testament Trinity. In another example, the three wise men bring three gifts to the baby Jesus, and so on. We can see the sanctity of the number three in Islam, as in Christianity, in the expressions used in Muslim funeral and memorial ceremonies. On the third day after the death of a person, Uzbeks hold a commemoration ceremony: *uchini o' tkazish*; *uchni o' qitish* (The Qur'an is recited) and marking the meaning of the third day of burial and commemoration, showing the sacred limit of time.

In many nations, the number seven is the end of the reckoning, and thus there is a special symbolism and sacredness to this number that is unique to almost all cultures. One of the main symbolic meanings of the number seven is the meaning of happiness or luck. *on cloud seven-yettinchi osmonda*-means happiness, joy, and in the religion of Islam, heaven, the *arsh ala*, consists of seven floors, the closest floor to God is the seventh floor, and on the night of *Miraj*, Muhammad (SAW) ascended to the *arsh ala*, and this is a high status, that is, a high level of happiness level. This phrase has entered other languages with the meaning of expressing a high level of happiness.

The symbolic meaning of the number seven is universal in the culture and mythology of almost all nations. Religiously, this number is considered a sacred number, representing the connection between God and the mystical nature of man. In Christianity, this number is also emphasized: the Bible contains this phrase: Seven deadly sins (eng)- "pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony and sloth."

In the history of the ancient world, the number seven was widely used: the City of Seven Hills (eng) - the city of seven hills; Seven hills of Rome (eng) - seven hills of Rome: Palatine, Capitoline, Aventine, Caline, Esquiline, Viminal and Colline. English phraseological unit *cousin seven times removed* (eng) – in Uzbek corresponds to *yettinchi avlod-begona*, means a distant relative. Here we can see the meaning of the number seven as a complete period or completion. In English, we can see that the number seven is used in the following phraseological units: a

fool may ask more questions in an hour than a wise man can answer in seven years; one lie needs seven lies to wait upon it;

In the Uzbek language, the number seven has a sacred meaning. The number seven is especially important due to its frequent use in many fields. The number seven represents cosmological ideas about the spatial structure of the world. In addition, according to the religion of Islam, heaven consists of seven floors, and those who enter the seventh floor achieve the highest bliss, and the heavenly mythological space where angels and higher powers live is represented by the Uzbek phrase *yettinchi osmon*. As in the views of the Turkic peoples, in the views of the Uzbeks, the earth consists of seven layers. Uzbek phrase: *yetti qat yer osti* – the seven floors refer to the mythological space where the evil forces, the lower beings, live underground. *Yetti dengiz oralig'ida; yetti tog' ortida* - marks the boundaries from which the alien world begins. Achieving this place in fairy tales is accompanied by various difficulties and trials. The symbolic importance of the number seven can be explained by the following tradition related to the distinction of lineage in the worldview of Uzbeks: Uzbeks follow the traditions of the seven-generation system. According to this system, relatives up to the seventh generation are close, and after the seventh generation, relatives are distant. These social and cultural characteristics of the Uzbeks are reflected in the example of the following phraseological units: - *yetti ajdodni bilish* - according to tradition, a self-respecting Uzbek should know his seven by the name of his ancestors; *yetti avlodiga yetadi*-it is meant to reach the whole family in relation to the accumulated wealth. Also, if someone dies, perform a ceremony seven days after his death and is defined by phrases like: *yettisini o'tkazdik, yettisini o'qitdik*. Another meaning of number seven indicates the end of a cycle and carries the meaning of completion. The following examples in the Uzbek language also express the meanings of completeness of the number seven: *yetti bukilib;*- *yetti yoshdan yetmish yoshgacha;**yetti nomusni yerga bukmoq; yetti uxlab tushiga kirmaslik; yetti o'lchab bir kesmoq.* (15,182-184)

The number twelve is very common in the culture and mythology of the peoples of the world. The first thing that comes



to mind when we think of the number twelve is the twelve months of the year, and this number is a symbol of completeness and cycle. Considered the "philosopher's stone" that revolves around the universe, the number twelve is a symbol of wholeness and the divine circle, and is cited by many researchers as being present in everyday, religious, and spiritual traditions. From the religious point of view, this number is associated with the twelve apostles of Jesus and is considered a holy number among Christians. Twelve - the number of constellations and months in a year (six men and six women); Day and night consist of twelve hours; Twelve Fruits on the Cosmic Tree; twelve members of the Dalai Lama's Council; In Christianity, the twelve sons of Jacob in the Old Testament and the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. There are twelve months in a year and many other examples in world literature. This is probably explained by the rotation of the twelve signs corresponding to twelve months at regular intervals throughout the year, or a grand cycle that occurs approximately every twenty-five years. In English, the number twelve is expressed in different meanings within each phraseological unit, which makes it difficult to form a group of sacred phraseological units with the same meaning.

twelve-headed snakes-o' n ikki boshli ilonlar,  
twelve brother's robber's-o' n ikki aka-uka qaroqchilar.

The symbolism of the number twelve is primarily related to the basic concepts of astronomy and the knowledge of astrology that exists in Western and Eastern nations. In addition, in Christianity, this number means "chosen number" and the number is confirmed by the presence of the apostles of Jesus Christ, the sons of Jacob, the 12 tribes of ancient Israel, the twelve Olympian gods of the Greek Pantheon, etc. (Colson, 2005). According to Hittite and Anatolian traditions, the body of a sacrificial animal is believed to consist of twelve main parts, and during religious ritual it is divided into twelve parts. (In Uzbek: molning 12 muchasi- 12 parts of an animal).

## CONCLUSIONS

Numbers have sacred meanings in the worldview of many peoples, and their origins go back to the early stages of human history. Numbers form the elements of a special cultural code, with the help of which the description system of the universe and humanity is manifested. The universality of the symbolism of numbers in world culture is determined by the anthropocentric worldview and the universal system of human development, as well as man's desire to explain the structure of the world, society and himself through the sacred power of numbers. The presence of number-component phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages, the fact that their semantics have complex symbolic meanings makes it possible to interpret numbers as important cultural units.

## REFERENCES

1. Arutyunova N. D. *Yazik i mir cheloveka*. Moskva-1999. C.905
2. Gizatullina L. R. *Numerologicheskie frazeologicheskie yedynisi v angliyskom i tatarskom yazikax*. Avtoref.diss. ... k.f.n. Ufa – 2004 C.32
3. Galieva M.R. *Kognitivniy prinsip binarnosti v religioznoy kartine mira//Kognitivnaya lingvistika*. Nauchno-teoreticheskiy jurnal. – Tambov. 2014. -№ 2 – S.56-65
4. Galieva M.R. *Simvolicheskaya znachimost' mifologo-religiozno markirovannix yazikovix yedynisi//O'zbekistonda xorijiy tillar//Ilmiy metodik elektron jurnal*. –Toshkent, 2018. –№4 (23). – S. 33-40. Rejim dostupa: <https://journal.fledu.uz>
5. Djusupov N.M *Tyurkskiy simvol v xudojestvennom tekste*, Monografiya, Astana. 2011 C.177
6. Losev A. F. *Simvol // Filosofskaya ensiklopediya*. T. 5. M., 1970. S. 10–11.
7. Losev A. F. *Problema simvola i realisticheskoe iskusstvo*. M., 1976. C.51
8. Losev A. F. *Grecheskaya mifologiya // Mifi narodov mira*. Ensiklopediya. T. 1. M., 2003. S. 321–335.
9. Lotman, Yu.M. *Semantika chisla i tip kul'turi // Tipologiya kul'turi*. Izd-vo Tart. gos. un-ta. - Tartu: Vip. 1. - 1970. - S. 58-63.

10. Pirs Ch. S. Iz raboti «Elementi logiki» // Semiotika: antologiya. 2-e izd., ispr. i dop. M., 2001. S. 165–226.
11. Romanovskaya A.A. Priroda antichnogo simvola kak lingvisticheskogo znaka, Mir russkogo slova, 2009. S-452
12. Sossyur F. de. Kurs obshey lingvistiki // Sossyur F. de. Trudi po yazikoznaniyu. M., 1977. S. 31–285.
13. Taxo-Godi A.A. Termin «simvol» v drevnegrecheskoy literature // Obraz i slovo. Voprosi klassicheskoy filologii, – Vip. VII. – M.: Izd-vo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1980. – S. 16 – 57
14. Kunin A. V. Anglo-russkiy frazeologicheskiy slovar'//– M.: Russkiy yazik, 1984. – 942 s.
15. Sodiqova M. Kratkiy uzbeksko-russkiy frazeologicheskiy slovar'//. – T.: SE, 1989. – 336 s.
16. Rahmatullaev Sh. O'zbek tilining frazeologik lug'ati/– T.: O'qituvchi, 1977. – 224 b.

**IZZATBEK OLIMBAYEVICH REJAPOV**  
PHD STUDENT, DEPARTMENT OF  
LINGUISTICS AND LITERARY STUDIES,  
UZBEKISTAN STATE WORLD LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY,  
TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN.  
E-MAIL: <IZZATBEKRIO@GMAIL.COM>