

Phytonymic Phraseology and Ethnographic Characteristics of Paremiological Units (Shown with Uzbek and English Examples)

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ABSTRACT

Phraseological units and paremias serve as important linguistic markers that provide insights into the cultural values, worldviews, and traditions of a society. Many of these expressions include phytonymic components, which may reflect the symbolic and practical significance of plants in human life and culture. This study examines phraseological and paremiological units with phytonymic components in Uzbek and English languages from an ethnolinguistic perspective. By analyzing the semantic meanings, cultural connotations, and ethnographic features of these expressions, we can gain a deeper understanding of how language encodes cultural knowledge and beliefs about the natural world, particularly flora. The research takes a qualitative approach, employing lexico-semantic, etymological, and comparative analyses to uncover the linguistic structures, cultural contexts, and cross-linguistic similarities and differences in phytonymic phraseology and paremiology. This investigation aims to shed light on the intricate relationship between language, culture, and conceptualizations of plants in Uzbek and English-speaking societies.

Keywords: Phraseology, paremia, culture, ethnographic feature, phytonym, paremiological units, proverbs, linguocultural aspect

1. INTRODUCTION

Phraseological units and paremias are linguistic signs with unique cultural connotations. They serve as an important source of information about the culture and mentality of the people. The content and form of phraseological units and paremias simultaneously reflect the national and linguistic worldview of a certain linguocultural community. The meaning of phraseological units is mainly connected with the background knowledge of native speakers, personal experience, cultural and historical traditions of the people, and linguistic peculiarities of each person. Plants, their fruits, and their parts occupy a special place in nature and human life. They have long been present in the lives of many people and, over time have become an integral part of human life.

In addition, plants are widely used in medicine, and products derived from them are used in various spheres [8: 174-185]. Therefore, the presence of many phytonyms in phraseological expressions and paremias is explained by the fact that at all stages of human history, plants were considered models of economic activity, appearance or behavior. Since plants are an integral part of human life, over time they have become custodians of multifaceted cultural connotations and reflect the peculiarities of national-cultural thinking of a certain nation or ethnos.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

V. A. Maslova is one of the leading scholars in the field of studying phraseology in its cultural and historical context. In her works she describes cultural and ethnographic aspects of phraseological units, emphasizing the importance of their study not only in the linguistics but also in the cultural and historical [7: 133-142] context [12: 232-235]. A. V. Kunin, in his work *English Phraseology Theoretical Course*, has made a significant contribution to the study of cultural aspects of ethnolinguistics and phraseology. His studies provide extensive information on national and cultural peculiarities of phraseology and

paremiology. M. V. Nikitin, in his work *The Role of Phraseology in Language and Culture*, has made a significant contribution to ethnolinguistic research focusing on the interrelations of phraseology and paremiology and their cultural context.

In Uzbek linguistics, scholars such as A. Nurmonov, N. Makhmudov, M. Hakimov, D. Khudoyberganova, and D. Lutfullaeva have made significant contributions to the study of the relationship between language and psychology. Their studies have brought important innovations in the ethnographic approach to phraseological and paremiological units with phytonymic components [6: 2524]. This article employs an array of research methodologies to analyze phraseological and paremiological units with phytonymic components in English and Uzbek. These methodologies include lexico-semantic analysis, which facilitated an in-depth investigation of phytonymic expressions in both languages. Etymological analysis was instrumental in identifying mythological, folkloric, religious, and cultural information associated with each phraseological unit and paremi. For instance, the analysis of expressions such as *achchiq qalampirday bo'lmoq* (Be as sharp as a chili pepper)" in Uzbek and "as cool as a cucumber" [13: 50-6485] in English was undertaken in the context of their association with cultural communication and national mentality. The comparative analysis enabled the comparison of phraseological and paremiological units with a phytonymic component in Uzbek and English, thus unveiling both common and distinctive features of their semantic content and ethnographic characteristics.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This article also considers examples of phraseological expressions and proverbs with phytonymic components in Uzbek and English. For example, the Uzbek expression *Otang kim – oshqovoq, onang kim – nosqovoq* (Clueless about one's roots, as if born from a pumpkin and a gourd)" is used to describe a person who forgets his roots and behaves arrogantly. This expression is rich in ethnographic and linguistic aspects, which can be analyzed as follows:

- **Semantic analysis:** This expression in Uzbek culture carries a negative evaluation and is used to demean the dignity of a person. It contains two phytonyms: *oshqovoq* (pumpkin) and *nosqovoq* (wild pumpkin). *Oshqovoq* in Uzbek folklore symbolizes simplicity, needlessness, or spiritual emptiness, because it has little weight and value despite its large size. *Nosqovoq*, similar to *oshqovoq* but less common, serves as a synonym for something insignificant or forgotten.
- **Ethnographic meaning:** family relations and dignity this expression is used as a pejorative evaluation coming from a person's family background. In Uzbek culture, family reputation and background are among the determinants of personal dignity. If parents are considered insignificant or shallow, the same qualities are attributed to their children.
- **Social stereotypes:** The use of *oshqovoq* (pumpkin) and *nosqovoq* (wild pumpkin) in oral folklore reflects cultural stereotypes. These expressions are formed on the basis of stereotypes that emphasize a person's appearance or origin rather than inner abilities.

The phrase "Born with a silver spoon in their mouth" also refers to the influence of family background, but is more often found in a positive context. In English culture it is less common to judge a person through their family, emphasizing the differences between cultures. In Uzbek culture, the gourd is a cheap and everyday product that has been one of the main sources of nutrition since ancient times. Its large size and inner emptiness create an image of "insignificance" or "spiritual lightness." For example, the expression "Come out smelling of roses" is widely used in English and has a predominantly positive connotation [2: 5].

- **Semantic analysis:** This expression refers to overcoming adversity without losing one's dignity and reputation, and sometimes even achieving a positive result.
- **Ethnographic meaning:** the symbol of the rose in English culture is associated with beauty, purity, and ideals. The pleasant fragrance of a rose symbolizes inspiration and purity.

- Cultural values:** this expression reflects English society's values of "maintaining success and reputation" even in difficult circumstances. Context in English culture: this expression is often used in business, politics, and social relationships. For example, if a person comes out of a conflict situation having preserved his reputation, it is said about him: "They came out smelling of roses." Equivalent in Uzbek and comparative analysis – there is no direct equivalent to this phrase in Uzbek, but expressions close in meaning are *yuzi yorug bo'ldi'* or *oqladi*. Historical origin: The rose has long been considered a symbol of purity and spiritual purity. Therefore, the expression "to come out fragrant with roses" appeared as a figurative description of a successful way out of difficult situations. The origin of the phraseological expression dates back to the beginning of the XX century. According to Eric Partridge, the expression originally had a vulgar form: "Fall into shit and come up smelling like roses." It described a person who found himself in an unpleasant situation but managed to keep his reputation. Over time, the expression has become milder and is now known as "come out smelling like roses." We will consider a comparative analysis of phraseological units with phytonymic components (Table 1).

Table1. *A comparative analysis of phraseological units with phytonymic components*

No.	Phraseological Unit	Semantic meaning	Ethnographic feature	Equivalent in the English /Uzbek languages
1	Piyozning po' stidek bo' lib ketibdi	extremely thin	in Uzbek tradition, the onion peel is seen as a representation of something exceedingly thin and insubstantial.	skin and bones

2	Grow like a weed	this means to grow quickly and is often used to describe children.	culturally, weeds are regarded as the fastest-growing and generally neglected plants.	qo'zining bir kunda qirqqa chiqish, g'o'za o'sganday
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Paremiology and phraseology have some distinctions. Phraseology investigates the stable word combinations of language, while paremiology contains these word combinations, including proverbs. Although proverbs are fundamental to paremiology, their borders remain ambiguous and are understood differently by different scholars. Some restrict paremiology to proverbs; others see it as an element of phraseology. Paremiology can also be viewed as an autonomous science, [13: 63-82], which, although related to phraseology, stands out as a separate scientific direction [9]. Along with this, some studies perceive paremiology in the broader framework of phraseology, which increases its terminological borders. In general, the contrasts and similarities between paremiology and phraseology are essential in linguistics, where there are numerous points of view on their interaction and boundaries [14: 60-73]. It is impossible to identify a clear boundary between phraseological statements and proverbs. Nevertheless, certain contrasts can be identified between these two genres. Not all proverbs are figurative. (*Bug'doy eksang, kuzda ek* (If you plant wheat, plant it in autumn; If you want a good wheat harvest); *Bug'doy ekaman desang, qovun polga ek. Paxta olaman desang, jo'xori polga* (For a good wheat harvest, prepare the soil with melons. For a strong cotton yield, let corn nourish the land first), but practically all phraseological units are used in a figurative sense: *bir qop yong'oqdek shaldir-shuldir* (All talk and no substance=A bag full of nuts, rattling with no weight) *osmondagi qushning og'zidagi donni olmoq* (Like plucking a star from the sky) and others. Such expressions typically carry figurative meanings and are commonly used as metaphors. In contemporary language use, the boundary between phraseological units and proverbs is often blurred, with some idioms resembling proverbs and vice versa.

For example, such expressions as “if you caress a dog, it will lick your lips” and “sugar is small but sweet” are quite near to proverbs. There are numerous proverbs in the multiplicity of cultures and languages of the world. They have been gathered and analyzed for centuries as informative and useful language markers of cultural values and thoughts. The earliest proverb collections stem from the third millennium B.C. and were inscribed on Sumerian cuneiform tablets as commonsensical standards of conduct and everyday observations of human nature.

Of the various verbal folklore genres (i.e., fairy tales, legends, tall tales, jokes, and riddles), proverbs are the most concise but not necessarily the simplest form. The vast scholarship on proverbs is ample proof that they are anything but mundane matters in human communication. Proverbs fulfill the human need to summarize experiences and observations into nuggets of wisdom that provide ready-made comments on personal relationships and social affairs [11: 2004]. The definition of a proverb has long posed challenges to scholars across various disciplines. Many attempts at definition have been made from Aristotle to the present time [3: 807-814]) ranging from philosophical considerations to cut-and-dry lexicographical definitions.

The American paremiologist Bartlett Jere Whiting (1904-1995) reviewed many definitions in an important article on ‘The Nature of the Proverb’ (1932), [10: 173] summarizing his findings in a lengthy conglomerate version of his own: A proverb is an expression which, owing its birth to the people, testifies to its origin in form and phrase. It expresses what is a fundamental truth – that is, a truism – in homely language, often adorned, however, with alliteration and rhyme. It is usually short but need not be; it is usually true, but need not be. Some proverbs have both a literal and figurative meaning, either of which makes perfect sense; but more often they have but one of the two. A proverb must be venerable; it must bear the sign of antiquity, and, since such signs may be counterfeited by a clever literary man, it should be attested in different places at different times. This last requirement we must often waive in dealing with very early literature, where the material at our disposal is incomplete

[15: 1932]. In the Uzbek and English languages, there are several paremiological units with phytonymic components, which we shall analyze by instances and analyze from the ethnographic point of view: We can mention various proverbs in which plant names occur: *ona bilan bola-gul bilan lola, arpaga o'rim, bug'doyga ko'rim, bir yil tariq eksang, bir yil shudgor qil, yomon o'tni o'stirgan bog'bon bo'lmas, daraxtning husni – bargi bilan mevasi, yemas yerga o't bitar, Ichmas yerga suv bitar, mevali daraxt yerga engashar, mevasiz daraxt ko'kka tirmashar, tog'ning ko'rki – lola bilan, uyning ko'rki – bola bilan, Terak ham bog' ziyinati.* (A mother and child are like a flower and a tulip, you reap what you sow – barley for grain, wheat for glory, crop rotation is key – one year of millet, one year of rest, a good gardener does not grow bad weeds, a tree is known by its leaves and fruits, weeds thrive on barren land, and water pools where none is drawn, the more fruitful the tree, the lower it bends, mountains bloom with tulips, homes shine with children, every plant adds beauty to the garden, even the poplar) An example is the proverb *yomon o'tni o'stirgan bog'bon bo'lmas*. From the point of view of semantic analysis, it refers to the issues of upbringing: just as a real gardener will not allow harmful weeds to grow in his garden, no person will bring up a bad child and contribute to the spread of bad habits and vices in society. From an ethnographic point of view, it is known that gardening and agriculture have long been the heritage of the Uzbek people. Our ancestors passed on their knowledge and experience in gardening and farming through phytonyms, harmoniously combining them with life lessons. This proverb emphasizes the necessity of eradicating bad habits and developing positive qualities in the process of upbringing, which is related to the moral values and educational methods of our people. The proverb reminds us of the responsibility of leaders and educators in society and the need to prevent the spread of bad habits and strive for the health of society, which occupies an important place in the ethnographic values of our people. Although there is no direct counterpart in English, we may refer to proverbs such as “As you sow, so shall you reap” and “A bad workman blames his tools,” which express

similar ideas. Let us also consider a comparative analysis of paremi with a phytonymic component (Table 2).

Table 2. *A comparative analysis of paremi with a phytonymic component*

No.	Phraseological Unit	Semantic meaning	Ethnographic feature	Equivalent in the English/Uzbek languages
1	Tog'ning ko'rki – lola bilan, uyning ko'rki – bola bilan	The real beauty of every place and item is revealed in the most precious aspects that correspond to it.	The attitude of the Uzbek people toward nature, family, and children is expressed in their cultural traditions	Everything has its beauty, Children are the crown of the home
2	The apple on the other side of the wall is the sweetest	This means that other people always seem to be in a better situation than you	Dissatisfaction with oneself, envy of what is not one's own.	Qo'shning tovug'i go'z ko'rinadi, kelinchgi -qiz

4. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of phraseological and paremiological units with phytonymic components in Uzbek and English indicates their linguocultural and ethnographic aspects. These units reflect the cultural values, historical events, and personal experiences of each nation [5]. The semantic, ethnographic, and comparative characteristics identified throughout the study reveal that the worldview and cultural preconceptions of the people play an essential influence in the content of phraseological units. In English, phraseological units are more commonly neutral or positive in meaning, whereas in Uzbek, they frequently have a critical or evaluative tone. This underlines the necessity for a closer study of the linguistic and cultural aspects of the two

cultures. This research has practical value in the domains of linguistics, ethnography, and cultural studies, contributing to the development of intercultural and linguistic interaction between different languages. In the future, researching this topic utilizing different languages would further expand the issues of intercultural communication.

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