

Contextual-Pragmatic Realization of Phraseological Units with a Hyperbolic Component

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the contextual and pragmatic realization of phraseological units containing a hyperbolic component in contemporary speech. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which context influences the semantic, emotional, evaluative, and communicative potential of such phraseological units. The study explores how hyperbolic elements intensify the meaning of phraseological expressions and contribute to the expression of emotions, subjective evaluation, emphasis, irony, exaggeration, and communicative intention. It also identifies the main functional types of contextual influence that determine the interpretation and pragmatic effect of hyperbolic phraseological units in different communicative situations. The analysis demonstrates that the pragmatic meaning of these expressions is not always determined by their conventional lexical structure but may undergo modification under the influence of contextual, situational, and communicative factors. Special attention is given to the interaction between the figurative meaning of phraseological units and the speaker's communicative intentions. Examples are provided to illustrate how context contributes to the reinterpretation, intensification, or specification of phraseological meanings. The findings highlight the significant role of contextual-pragmatic factors in understanding the functional and communicative potential of phraseological units with a hyperbolic component.

Keywords: phraseological units; hyperbolic component; contextual meaning; pragmatic realization; communicative function

INTRODUCTION

While the dictionary defines the generalized meaning of a lexical unit, the text reveals the pragmatic value that this meaning acquires in a particular context. This aspect is especially significant in hyperbolic phraseological units, since both the degree of intensification and the conventional nature of the expression can be fully understood only within the context [1: 216-238]. Another important principle is that of the goal-oriented nature of speech activity. It is well established that the content of an utterance is intrinsically linked to the speaker's communicative intention and the context in which it occurs [2: 232-235]. In discourse analysis, this relationship should be examined through textual evidence.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The distinctive feature of observation within the textual context lies in the fact that linguistic and speech levels manifest themselves as inseparably interconnected [3: 41-43].

Context is considered at several interrelated levels, including the immediate textual context, the episode, and the broader cultural environment of the work. The immediate context determines syntactic-semantic relations, the episode establishes the situational context, while the text as a whole defines the genre and cultural background [4: 3-25]. In the interpretation of hyperbolic phraseological units, the cultural background, which constitutes the broader contextual level, assumes particular significance, since it is precisely this level that serves as the source from which the imagery derives. It should be noted, however, that once a fixed expression enters a text, it does not remain entirely unchanged. The context activates certain semantic features, suppresses others, and, in some cases, even affects the formal structure of the expression [5: 39-41].

Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge the natural discrepancy between the lexicographic description of a phraseological unit and its actual manifestation in discourse.

In order to determine the role of context, we analyzed selected phraseological units both in isolation from the text and within their respective discourse environments. While some units clearly retain their hyperbolic meaning even in the absence of context, others require textual context for their degree of intensification and conventionality to be fully understood. This distinction makes it possible to determine the degree to which individual phraseological units are context-dependent.

The possibility of identifying hyperbolic meaning without context was adopted as the principal criterion in the analysis. Each unit was compared in both its isolated and contextualized forms. Units that convey impossibility or terminal extremity even in the absence of context were positioned at the context-independent pole of the continuum, whereas numerical and quantifier-based units whose hyperbolic interpretation depends on the referent, norm, and speech situation were placed at the strongly context-dependent pole. Thus, the continuum reflects the diagnostic significance of context in identifying hyperbolic meaning.

In particular, phraseological units based on the imagery of an impossible situation can be interpreted as hyperbolic even without context: expressions such as “when pigs fly” or *tuyaningdumierygatekkanda* explicitly convey their conventional meaning even when presented in isolation. In numerical and quantifier-based constructions, however, context plays a more significant role, since in certain cases they may also denote an actual numerical value or quantity. This difference in the degree of conventionality is consistent with the semantic classification. In the case of numerical and quantifier-based units, contextual evidence was treated as an obligatory criterion, whereas in phraseological units containing explicitly impossible imagery, context serves as a means of refining their semantic interpretation. The degrees of context-dependence are presented as a continuum in Figure 1.

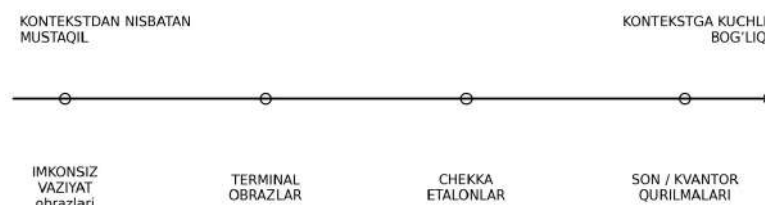


Figure 1. *Continuum of context dependence*

The functions of context are not rigidly separated from one another [6: 17-19]. The same passage may not only activate hyperbolic meaning but also intensify or mitigate it. Genre, historical period, and cultural context exert a significant influence on interpretation. While strong hyperbole tends to be perceived as more conventional within the classical poetic tradition, in modern realist prose it acquires particular emphasis. Therefore, the assessment of the degree of hyperbole should not be separated from the aesthetic and cultural context in which the text was produced [7: 84-99]. The influence of the cultural context also becomes more pronounced as the historical distance increases [8: 158-159]. For the contemporary reader, hyperbole in an older text may sometimes appear stronger or weaker than originally intended.

Accordingly, several principal functions of context can be distinguished:

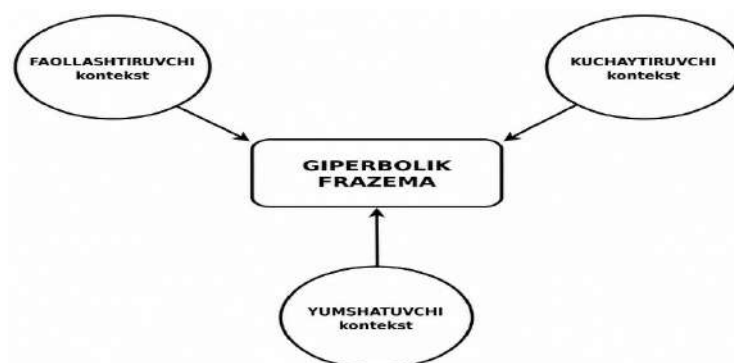


Figure 2. *Three functional types of contextual influence*

One of these is the activating context, which brings the hyperbolic potential of a phraseological unit into effect. Another is the intensifying context, which further increases the degree of hyperbolic intensity. There is also the mitigating context, which emphasizes the conventional nature of the hyperbolic phraseological meaning while reducing its impact.

The activating context provides the motivation for the selection of a hyperbolic phraseological unit within the text, enabling the reader to interpret it in accordance with the demands of the situation. In the absence of such contextual motivation, the hyperbole may appear inappropriate and fail to produce the intended effect. Therefore, in literary texts, a hyperbolic expression often occurs at a point where its use has been semantically prepared by the preceding discourse: Read continuously, they produced a sort of vertigo, and set her asking herself in despair what on earth she was to do with them? (V. Woolf, *Night and Day*).

The description of the situation precedes the hyperbolic interrogative construction, thereby preparing the contextual basis for the expression in advance.

Among the means of activation, contrast occupies a significant position. When the hyperbolic component of a phraseological unit is presented against the background of neutral narration, its effect becomes more pronounced. By contrast, when surrounded by other hyperbolic expressions, it may become less perceptible. For this reason, authors generally combine hyperbole with neutral narration: *Ulyerdanbichibolg'andekpak-pakana, ko'ziquqqanqoziqo'rnidekchup-chuqur, og'ziqulog'Ibil anqoshiqsolishardarajadajudakatta* (A. Qodiriy, *Mehrobdan chayon*); the portrait concludes with the comparison *yuziqirqyillikog'riqlarnikidek sap-sariq* (A. Qodiriy, *Mehrobdan chayon*). The juxtaposition of neutral description and hyperbolic comparison serves to intensify the effect of the latter.

Another type of activating context is the expectation established by the preceding discourse. The text creates a certain expectation in the reader, which the hyperbolic expression either confirms or disrupts. In the latter case, its effect is intensified due to the additional element of unexpectedness. The forms of such

contextual preparation may include a description of the situation, the narration of events, and the character's preceding speech.

The means employed by the intensifying context are diverse and, as discussed in the preceding chapters, include degree adverbs, repetition, comparative constructions, and coordinated sentence elements: *Wanting a thousand little things* (E. Thomas, *What Shall I Give?*); *Qanchabo'stonlarvaboayyomidabo 'ldixazon, / Zo'rjahannamichrayondiqanchanomus, qanchajon* (H. Olimjon). In the latter couplet, the enumerative sequence merges with the image of hell, resulting in a two-layered intensification.

The mitigating context occurs relatively infrequently, yet it is of particular interest. In the description of the moneylender's joy (presented at the beginning of 'Chapter Three'), the action continues even after the expression has reached its ultimate limit; in this way, the text itself reveals the conventional nature of the expression.

Another form of mitigation involves imparting a humorous tone to a hyperbolic expression. In such instances, the text encourages the reader not to interpret the expression too seriously. This was illustrated by the remark of Ayni's character, in which the loss of appetite was regarded as a fortunate occurrence. The humorous tone does not diminish the effect of hyperbole; rather, it redirects it towards a different pragmatic effect.

The relationship between the usual meaning and contextual intensification is also noteworthy. The degree encoded in the lexical meaning of a phraseological unit is not a fixed value: the text may either increase or decrease it. This dynamic nature is one of the principal factors determining the functioning of hyperbolic units in discourse.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In order to identify the discrepancy between lexical meaning and textual usage, a comparison between dictionary definitions and context-based interpretations also yielded significant findings. In most cases, the two were found to correspond closely. Where

discrepancies were observed, however, it became evident that the text may either extend the meaning of a phraseological unit or, conversely, restrict certain aspects of it. The following passage provides an example of semantic extension: *Birqopsomon, o'n-o'nbeshtaxoda, biraravaqamish – uy, ho'kiztopishuchunnechaza monlarqozonnisuvgatashlabqo'yishkerakbo'ladi* (A. Qahhor, *O'g'ri*).

In the dictionary, the phraseological unit *qozonnisuvgatashlamog* denotes being left without food; in the text, however, the addition of the quantifier *nechazamonlar* (“for many ages/a long period of time”) broadens its meaning from a single day of hunger to poverty extending over an entire period. In cases of semantic expansion, the text adds a new semantic nuance to the unit; in cases of semantic narrowing, by contrast, it activates one component of the meaning while suppressing the others. Both phenomena demonstrate that a lexicographic description cannot fully encompass the actual realization of meaning in discourse.

The phenomena of semantic fading and reactivation can also occur within the textual context. Through linguistic play, the author reactivates an image that has begun to lose its expressive force, thereby restoring the perceptual salience of the phraseological unit. Within the theory of phraseological creativity, such reactivation is likewise regarded as one of the significant manifestations of phraseological variation [9: 45-48]. The clearest example of this technique can be observed in the following passage: “Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail. Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade” (Ch. Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*). The author first introduces the faded comparison in its conventional form, then explicitly questions its inner form and contrasts its standard of comparison with an even more emphatic alternative. In this way, the image is brought back into the focus of attention, while the phraseological unit regains its perceptual salience.

Another means of contextual intensification is the use of a hyperbolic expression within a negative construction. In such cases, negation does not reduce the degree of intensity; on the contrary, it enhances it: "Kingdoms are not enough" (P. Shuttle, *Missing You*); *yozarbo 'lsakecha-kunduzsanivasfing ado bo 'lmas* (Hamza). In both passages, an extreme value the magnitude of kingdoms in the first instance and writing sustained day and night in the second is presented as insufficient, thereby raising the degree of intensity to an even higher level.

The logical structure of this technique is particularly noteworthy: first, the standard of comparison is placed at an extreme limit, and then even this limit is presented as insufficient. In this way, the hyperbole moves entirely beyond any measurable boundary. This technique constitutes one of the most powerful forms of expressive intensification in both languages.

The internal structure of a hyperbolic sequence should not be overlooked either. Our analysis has revealed that such sequences are generally arranged in ascending order of intensity: "freeze thy young blood,/ Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,/ Thy knotted and combined locks to part/ And each particular hair to stand on end,/ Like quills upon the fretful porpoentine" (W. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*). Here, the effect progresses from the blood to the eyes and from the eyes to the hair, becoming increasingly tangible at each successive stage.

The reverse order may also occur, with the text beginning with an intense expression and subsequently providing its explanation: *Dehqonninguyikuysakuysin, ho 'kiziyo 'qolmasin* (A.Qahhor, *O'g'ri*). The story opens with an extreme judgement in which even the burning of a peasant's house is presented as a lesser misfortune than the loss of his ox. The subsequent sentences gradually reveal the reasoning underlying this judgement: a house can be rebuilt, whereas the loss of an ox may condemn the peasant to years of poverty.

The length of a hyperbolic sequence also depends on the genre: in poetic texts, it tends to be relatively short, whereas in prose narratives it is generally more extended. In longer sequences, the final component usually carries the greatest

degree of intensity and brings the entire description to its culmination: *Qanchaorzu, qanchaarmonlarkuyibbo'ldi ado, / Qanchaerlarbirumrlig'ambilano'ldigado* (H. Olimjon). The final line bears the main semantic and expressive weight of the entire statement, since the magnitude of loss is measured against the span of a whole lifetime.

According to its position within the text, a hyperbolic unit may occur in three positions: initial, medial, and final. A hyperbole in the initial position serves to engage the reader, one occurring in the medial position heightens the intensity, while a hyperbole in the final position summarizes and brings the discourse to a conclusion. An example of the final position is: *Bitsunabadiyyeryuzidanqonliyo'sunlar* (Hamza). Here, the hyperbolic component occupies the final line of the text and conveys the concluding judgement of the entire discourse. A similar positional pattern is also widely observed in English poetry.

In prose discourse, hyperbolic expressions are distributed in accordance with the development of the narrative: they occur relatively infrequently in the exposition but become more frequent at points where the conflict intensifies. Thus, the increasing frequency of hyperbole within a text signals a corresponding rise in emotional tension.

Another function of hyperbole in prose is to regulate the pace of the narrative. A hyperbolic expression slows down the narration, momentarily focusing the reader's attention on a particular point. The neutral narration that follows subsequently restores the narrative pace. This alternation contributes to the formation of the rhythmic structure of the text.

The following passage may be cited as an example of narrative pace regulation: *uningholio'zgaribboshlar, yuragiq inidanchiqardarajadao'ynamoqqaolur, ayniqsapoyafzalrastasiga yaqinlashgach, uningbuitirobishiddatlanur* (A. Qodiriy, *O'tkankunlar*). The hyperbolic component expands the description of the character's emotional state and momentarily suspends the progression of events: the action in the marketplace scene comes to a halt, while the narrative focus shifts to the character's inner state.

In poetic discourse, however, the distribution follows a different pattern: hyperbole may be distributed evenly throughout the text or concentrated within a single couplet: *Meniqalbimdaolovlaryongan, Baxtliboshimgazolimlarqo'ngan.../ Dengizdekko 'zyoshimto'kkan men edim* (H. Olimjon). Across these three lines, three hyperbolic expressions – the images of fire, oppression, and the sea – occur in succession, collectively creating a unified field of emotional intensity.

Another distinctive feature of poetic discourse is the combination of hyperbole with conventional poetic patterns. In the tradition of classical poetry, hyperbole was specifically examined as a rhetorical device, and its three degrees – plausible hyperbole, ighraq (extreme hyperbole), and ghuluw (impossible hyperbole) – were theoretically described [7: 84-99]. *O'nsakkizmingolamoshubi agar boshindadur,/ Ne ajab, chunsarvinozimo 'nsakkizyoshindadur* (A. Navoiy). In the couplet, the suffering of love is elevated to the scale of the eighteen thousand worlds. The continuation of this tradition remains clearly discernible in modern poetry.

The relationship between hyperbole and rhyme in poetic texts also merits particular attention: the exaggerated component frequently tends to occupy the rhyming position; in some cases, however, it occurs at the beginning of a line, where emphasis is achieved through contrast: *Nechayuziyildanberihayvonsifa terdikasir,/ Endiinsonnomidao 'rtoqlashibkengashamiz* (Hamza). In this couplet, the hyperbolically extended duration occurs at the beginning of the first line, while the following line is juxtaposed with it by means of contrast. The combination of rhyme and hyperbole in poetic discourse is not accidental: the requirements of metre and rhyme encourage the author to select expressions that are concise yet highly expressive, and hyperbolic phraseological units possess precisely these characteristics. Accordingly, such units occur with a relatively high frequency in poetic discourse.

Transformed phraseological hyperbole constitutes a distinct area of analysis. A fixed phraseological unit may occur in a modified form within a text; such transformations are not arbitrary but exhibit systematic patterns [5: 91-94].

Transformations are classified in various ways in the scholarly literature. In some studies, they are divided into formal and semantic types, whereas in others, they are categorized according to the scope of modification [6: 17-39].

In reduction, a particular component of the unit is omitted, while the retained element assumes the semantic load of the entire phraseological unit: “A thousand lives, a thousand deaths” (D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*); “a hundred indecisions” (T. S. Eliot, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*). In both poetic examples, the construction is presented in a compressed form: the verb and the connective element are omitted, and the reader reconstructs them on the basis of the contextual logic.

In syntactic restructuring, by contrast, the syntactic function of the phraseological unit within the sentence is altered: a predicate may be transformed into an attributive element, or an attributive element into an adverbial modifier. This type of transformation is particularly productive in Uzbek-language material, since participial and converbial affixes facilitate such syntactic shifts: *xonumoningniko'kkasovuruvchi* (A. Fitrat, *Hind sayyohiningqissasi*).

Contamination, that is, the blending of two phraseological units, occurred relatively infrequently in the analyzed material; nevertheless, it was also included in the scope of the analysis. In such cases, elements derived from two distinct phraseological patterns are combined within a single construction, thereby creating a new figurative image [10: 8-10].

Returning to the relationship between transformation and authorial style, the texts analyzed reveal that authors who tend to preserve conventional phraseological forms produce discourse that is relatively stable but less expressive, whereas the texts of authors who systematically modify such forms are more expressive but require greater interpretative effort on the part of the reader. The choice between these two strategies depends on the author's artistic intention. Stylistic choice also correlates with genre: conventional forms tend to predominate in realist prose, whereas transformed constructions are more characteristic of modernist and poetic texts.

The degree of transformational activity is likewise related to genre. It was found to be high in poetic texts, moderate in prose narratives, and relatively low in journalistic discourse. This variation can be attributed to the specific requirements of each genre.

CONCLUSIONS

To summarize the cross-linguistic similarities and differences, the Uzbek-language material demonstrates a greater prevalence of syntactic restructuring and figurative expansion, whereas in the English-language material, expansion and wordplay are more productive. This distinction is consistent with the grammatical distributional patterns described above.

Based on the material analyzed, we identified the following types of transformation: “the insertion of an additional element into the structure of a phraseological unit (expansion), component substitution, reduction, syntactic restructuring, the extension of the figurative image across the text,” and “the simultaneous activation of literal and figurative meanings.”

To summarize the discursive differences, the types of context, methods of transformation, and stages of interpretation are essentially the same in both languages; the differences lie primarily in their relative frequency and in the nature of the figurative imagery employed.

Cross-linguistic differences at the discourse level were also identified. In Uzbek literary discourse, hyperbole is more frequently associated with the representation of emotional states, whereas in English literary discourse, it is more commonly linked to evaluative judgement. This distinction is related to genre conventions and reflects differences in the modes of representation characteristic of the two literary traditions.

Thus, a phraseological unit containing a hyperbolic component constitutes a phenomenon that extends beyond its fixed lexicographic representation. It functions dynamically in discourse, adapts to its contextual environment, renews its figurative imagery, and, in the process, preserves its communicative value.

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