

## Anthropocentric and Linguocultural Features of Zoonymic Phraseological Units in English and Karakalpak Discourses

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### ABSTRACT

*This article presents an extensive comparative-typological study of phraseological units (PUs) containing zoonymic components in the English and Karakalpak languages. Within the framework of the anthropocentric paradigm, the research explores the cognitive mechanisms through which animal imagery is transformed into evaluative linguistic codes to describe human character, social behavior, and moral values. The study delineates universal cognitive metaphors alongside profound ethnocultural divergences dictated by the historical trajectories—maritime/industrial for the British and nomadic/steppe for the Karakalpaks. By analyzing over 500 units, the research offers a comprehensive understanding of how national mentalities structure the linguistic picture of the world through zoomorphic evaluation.*

**Keywords:** Linguoculturology, zoonyms, phraseology, Karakalpak language, English language, cognitive metaphor, anthropocentrism, steppe code, maritime code.

### INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary linguistic landscape, language is defined as a "mirror of culture," capturing a nation's collective experience, historical memory, and self-awareness [3: 45]. Zoonyms, or animal names, represent one of the most archaic and culturally saturated layers of vocabulary, forming a secondary linguistic

picture of the world. The mechanism by which biological traits of animals are mapped onto human behavior is categorized as a zoomorphic metaphor [22; 112].

The scientific necessity of this research stems from the requirement for a systematic, comparative description of zoomorphic imagery in two structurally and genetically unrelated languages: English (Germanic) and Karakalpak (Turkic). While English reflects an insular geography and later industrial development, Karakalpak preserves a deep-seated connection with nomadic traditions and the environment of the Aral Sea region. The study builds upon the foundational scholarship of E. Berdimuratov, G. Ainazarova, A. Kunin, and R. Moon. The primary objective is to identify the ethnocultural specificity of zoonymic PUs and analyze the cognitive mechanisms regulating their use in diverse discourse types.

#### METHODS

The methodological apparatus of the study is built at the intersection of cognitive linguistics, phraseology, and linguoculturology. The work is based on an anthropocentric approach, allowing zoonyms to be viewed not as biological units but as speech markers of human identity. The study operates on the principle that phraseology is the most "culture-sensitive" level of language. We adopt the theory of "Conceptual Metaphor" by Lakoff and Johnson, which posits that our conceptual system is grounded in everyday experience [16; 45]. In this context, the "Animal is Human" metaphor is a primary tool for social evaluation. Furthermore, we utilize the "Cultural Code" theory (A. Wierzbicka), focusing on the Steppe Code for Karakalpak and the Maritime/Agrarian Code for English. The research process was implemented through the following stages:

1. Using the continuous sampling method from English-Russian, Karakalpak-Russian, and etymological dictionaries, a corpus of over 500 PUs was selected. The classification process relied on the lexicographical principles of Karakalpak linguistics established by E. Berdimuratov and

- developed in the works of A. Dauletov regarding the phonetic-semantic structure of words.
2. To identify the national-cultural specificity of the images, the method of linguocultural interpretation was used, as detailed in the works of G. Ainazarova. This allowed for a comparison of the Karakalpak "steppe code" with Western cultural attitudes described in the works of A. Kunin and A. Wierzbicka.
  3. The analysis of metaphorization mechanisms was conducted based on the conceptual metaphor theory of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, as well as the frame analysis methodology adapted for Turkic languages in the research of A. Mamatov[17; 88].
  4. The comparative method identified isomorphic (common) and allomorphic (specific) features of the studied systems. In interpreting the results, the pragmatic parameters of discourse described in the works of D. Ashurova and K. Aijmer were taken into account.

## RESULTS

Detailed analysis established that the zoomorphic code in both languages serves as a powerful tool for evaluating human qualities; however, the content of this code demonstrates deep ethnocultural variability.

Quantitative analysis showed that the most productive components in both languages are the lexemes "dog" and "horse," but their semantic load is distributed differently:

1. **The "Maritime and Agrarian Code" in English phraseology:** English PUs are heavily influenced by the nation's history as an island and a seafaring power:
  - **The fish:** Used extensively to describe social interaction. "A big fish in a small pond" reflects social hierarchy based on environment. "To have other fish to fry" shows a pragmatic, business-oriented approach to life.

- **The bird:** Represents freedom or intelligence. "A bird's eye view" or "The early bird catches the worm" (valuing punctuality and initiative) [12; 76].
2. **The "Steppe Code" in Karakalpak phraseology:** The Karakalpak world-view is historically centered around the *Tört túlik mal* (the four types of livestock: sheep, goat, cow, and camel).
- **The camel (*tüye*):** This is a sacred animal. In Karakalpak discourse, it represents endurance, high social status, or clumsiness depending on the context. Example: *Tüye tabaqtan suw ishse, iyt shanaqtan suw isher* (Social hierarchy).
  - **The Wolf (*Bóri*):** Unlike the Western "Big Bad Wolf," the Karakalpak wolf often carries a dual meaning of both a dangerous predator and a symbol of bravery/independence.

We identified three dominant groups of metaphorical transfer:

1. **Intellectual potential:** In English linguoculture, wisdom is traditionally associated with the image of the owl (as wise as an owl). In Karakalpak discourse, the owl (*bayıwlı*) is more often associated with loneliness, abandonment, or a negative omen, while wisdom is conveyed through the concept of an "experienced animal" (an old horse or camel) [2: 92].
2. **Emotional-volitional sphere:** Stubbornness in both cultures correlates with the images of the donkey (donkey/*esek*) and the bull (bull/*ögiz*). However, Karakalpak discourse stands out for its detailed description of endurance through the image of the camel (*tüye shıdamlıq*), which is virtually absent in English phraseology [10; 154].
3. **Work ethics:** A unique Karakalpak unit was identified: *qumırsqaday tınbaw* (tireless as an ant), emphasizing the diligent, creative nature of labor. In English, the focus shifts to the intensity and exhaustion of the process – "work like a dog/horse" [19: 202-211].

4. **Social status and hierarchy:** In English, the "Lion" often denotes the "lion's share" (the largest part) or "lion-hearted" (brave). In Karakalpak, the "Camel" (*tüye*) is the ultimate measure of status. If someone is insignificant, they might be compared to the "tail of a sheep" (*qoydın' quyrig'i*), emphasizing their secondary role in the "herd" of society.

#### DISCUSSION

The results suggest that the landscape-historical factor is the primary determinant in the choice of metaphorical models.

#### *Syntactic structures*

- **English:** Predominance of Similes (As + Adj + As + Animal). These are direct and descriptive. Example: "As slippery as an eel."
- **Karakalpak:** Predominance of narrative PUs. Many units are mini-proverbs with a subject and a verb. Example: *Iyttin' bári tazı bolmas* (Not every dog is a greyhound), which functions as a social commentary rather than just a description.

English phraseology, according to the findings of C. Kinsella, reflects an insular consciousness where animals are perceived either as functional partners in labor or as objects of trade [12: 102]. Karakalpak phraseology, based on the classical studies of E. Berdimuratov [5], demonstrates an inseparable link with the concept of *Tórt túlik mal* (four types of livestock). This confirms the theory of Z. Kövecses that the environment directly dictates the choice of donor zones for metaphorical transfers [13: 18].

A significant divergence is observed in the perception of the image of the dog (*dog/iyt*). In English discourse, melioration (improvement) of connotation occurs: "top dog" (leader), "lucky dog" (fortunate person) [6: 210]. In Karakalpak discourse, despite the recognition of loyalty, pejorative meanings related to hardship prevail: *iyt künin basına salıw* (to subject to suffering) [14: 134]. Similarities in the images of predators (wolf – greed)

confirm the existence of universal cognitive mechanisms for perceiving wildlife [7; 195].

Zoonymic PUs perform several functions in modern discourse:

- **Euphemistic function:** Using animal names to soften a critique of a person's character.
- **Intensifying function:** Adding emotional weight to a statement (e.g., "stubborn as a mule" is more powerful than just "very stubborn").
- **Didactic function:** Especially in Karakalpak, using PUs to pass down moral lessons to younger generations.

Structurally, as noted by A. Dauletov, Karakalpak PUs are often built on verbal components, making them more dynamic [8; 13]. English units tend toward adjectival comparative structures (Similes) described by A. Cowie [6: 210]. The use of these models in live speech is regulated by cognitive attitudes described in the works of D. Ashurova and M. Galieva [4: 114].

#### CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of English and Karakalpak zoonymic phraseology reveals that while the cognitive mechanism of "Animal-Human" mapping is a linguistic universal, the choice of the animal and the evaluation of its traits are strictly cultural.

1. English phraseology is characterized by **individualism, pragmatism, and maritime imagery.**
2. Karakalpak phraseology is characterized by **collectivism, endurance, and the "steppe code" of the four livestock.**
3. Anthropocentrism in both languages allows these units to remain dynamic; as human social structures change, the "meaning" of the animal image often evolves, though the core remains rooted in national history.

A comparative study of zoonymic phraseological units in English and Karakalpak discourses within the framework of the

anthropocentric paradigm allows for the formulation of the following conceptual conclusions:

1. **Universality and specificity of linguocreativity:** It is proved that the zoomorphic code functions as a fundamental tool of human thinking. While universal metaphors rely on general observations of animal behavior, specific layers of phraseology act as strictly determined products of ethnocultural experience.
2. **Dichotomy of cultural codes:** English discourse reflects an insular consciousness and an agro-industrial lifestyle, whereas Karakalpak discourse preserves a unique "steppe code" of the nomadic cycle. The zoonymic phraseology of the Karakalpak language acts as a preserving mechanism of national memory, retaining images (e.g., the camel) that have become sacred for the ethnic group.
3. **Anthropocentric value:** Zonyms in the studied languages are complex evaluative predicates. It has been established that in the Karakalpak language, they more often fix social status and tribal ties, while in English, they are oriented toward characterizing individual effectiveness and the psychological type of the personality.
4. **Scientific and practical prospects:** The results of the work open new possibilities for translation theory and practice, linguodidactics, and modern lexicography. Comparative data can become the basis for creating a new type of bilingual phraseological dictionary that takes into account not only the translation but also the deep cultural subtext of the units.

The findings of this research are significant for the development of modern bilingual lexicography and the improvement of intercultural communication strategies. Further study of the topic may be aimed at analyzing the transformation of zoomorphic images in modern Internet discourse, which will allow for tracing the ways national codes adapt to the realities of the global world.

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