

The Use of Synonymous Phraseological Units in Karakalpak Heroic Epics

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the lexico-semantic characteristics and structural functions of synonymous phraseological units within Karakalpak heroic epics, such as "Edige" and "Qoblan." By analyzing these stable expressions, the study demonstrates how they enhance artistic imagery, emotional depth, and national consciousness. The research highlights the classification of folklore phraseology and its role in reflecting traditional customs and worldviews. Ultimately, the paper underscores the importance of linguistic analysis in preserving spiritual heritage and understanding the evolution of the Karakalpak language.

Keywords: Karakalpak linguistics, heroic epics, phraseological units, synonymy, folklore, lexico-semantic analysis, cultural heritage.

INTRODUCTION

Today, there is a necessity to re-examine our past history, spiritual values, and heritage in accordance with the new requirements of social development and to provide them with a fresh scientific evaluation. This is because it is impossible to imagine the spirituality of any people or nation in isolation from its history, unique customs, traditions, and life values. In this regard, spiritual heritage, cultural riches, and ancient historical monuments naturally serve as the most significant factors. In recent years, all fields of science have been developing rapidly. This, in turn,

creates conditions for the emergence of new scientific directions. The latest innovations in science are also positively influencing the further development of Karakalpak linguistics.

The study of lexical units in our language is one of the most important issues. Since every human being primarily thinks in their mother tongue, learning how to express thoughts correctly and how to select and use appropriate words from a range of synonyms in sentence construction is a requirement of the present day.

Analyzing phraseological units in epic works of the Karakalpak folklore genre, particularly in heroic epics, holds great scientific significance. To date, the language and study of epic works have mostly been evaluated from the perspective of literary criticism. This essentially means that heroic epics are also worthy of investigation from a linguistic direction. This is because phraseological units are not only a lexical component of the language of heroic epics, but they also demonstrate the linguistic richness and the extensive vocabulary of our entire people.

Language and people are an integral and unified concept. Since ancient times, society has identified a nation by its language. The primary distinction of a nation from others is its priceless language. The main characteristics that define the national consciousness of any people are reflected in its language. Phraseological units, which are used in all spheres of life and provide artistic color to our language, demonstrate the unique characteristics of each language. Phraseological units are widely used in both spoken and written language.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on their lexico-semantic nature, phraseological units are considered a very complex phenomenon. They are distinguished from other words and word combinations in the language by their idiomaticity and emotional-expressive features. This unique quality of phraseological units is what allows them to persist in the language over long periods. Emotionality is a subjective evaluation of the phenomena, actions, and objects surrounding us, expressed through feeling. It can always be found within the meaning of

phraseological units. To prove this, let us compare the following phraseological units with their respective meanings:

- **Túyedenpostıntaslaǵanday** (Like throwing a fur coat off a camel) – inappropriate, awkward, rude, clumsy;
- **Iytmutı** (Dog's value/scrap) – cheap;
- **Ishibawırınakiriw** (To enter one's liver/insides) – to flatter, to try to please someone;
- **Nan pispew** (The bread is not baking) – the work is not getting done, failing to reach an agreement;
- **Berseqolınan, bermesejolınan** (If given, from the hand – if not, from the path); by force, through violence;
- **Otrsaopaq, tursasopaqbolıw** (Being 'opaq' when sitting and 'sopaq' when standing) – to be disliked, to fail to please someone regardless of the effort made, etc.

In folklore works, such phraseological units with strong emotional-expressive coloring are selected as artistic tools to decorate the speech of epic heroes and characters, providing various nuances of meaning to their thoughts. Phraseological units possess figurative meanings and do not allow for the individual words within them to be considered in isolation. Such word combinations differ entirely from simple phrases in terms of both meaning and structure. This is because the words within them are, firstly, grammatically unified; secondly, they have lost their primary (individual) lexical meaning; thirdly, they carry figurative or metaphorical meanings; and fourthly, they are formed from the combination of two or more words into a stable unit.

In general linguistics, the views of the renowned scholar E. Berdimuratov are noteworthy regarding the identification of the main features that distinguish phraseological units from other lexical elements and word combinations in Karakalpak lexicology. More specifically, he identifies several fundamental characteristics of phraseological units in the Karakalpak language. These views are based on established trends and results in general linguistics, as well as in Turkology, regarding the identification of phraseological units. They are as follows:

- Phraseological units are considered ready-made word combinations formed in the language as individual lexical units;
- Phraseological units possess a figurative character in terms of meaning;
- The individual components that make up a phraseological unit have a fixed, stable position;
- Phraseological units cannot be divided into separate parts;
- The individual components of a phraseological unit combine to perform a single syntactic function;
- Phraseological units cannot be translated literally into another language. [5: 76]

Indeed, these fundamental signs are the primary indicators for recognizing phraseological units as a distinct lexico-semantic group, just as they are in other languages. Therefore, one can fully agree with this view and recognize them as key characteristics. When evaluating phraseological units in the Karakalpak language as a distinct lexico-semantic group and researching them based on linguistic facts, these inherent conditions must be fully taken into account.

In linguistic literature, phraseological units are also known by the term "idiom." Their content, description, and the relationship of individual components to the overall meaning have only recently become the object of specific scientific research.

In scientific literature and textbooks, it is well known that when describing phraseological units from a semantic perspective and dividing them into semantic types, the semantic cohesion between individual components is used as the primary criterion. Indeed, the semantic factor – specifically the semantic fusion of components and their relation to the whole meaning – should be the basis for distinguishing the main types of phraseological units.

Currently, in national linguistics, it is widely common to classify phraseological units into four types based on their semantic cohesion. In terms of usage, phraseological units represent a unique aspect of stable word combinations. They are

not only semantically distinct but are generally composed of components that would otherwise have free meanings. They differ from other phrases by the absence of words that do not have phraseologically bound meanings. For example:

- **Shimshiqtanqoriqqantaripekpeydi** (One who fears sparrows does not sow millet) – equivalent to "Nothing ventured, nothing gained."
- **Teñteñimenen, tezektqabimenen** (Equals with equals, a dung-sack with its own) – Birds of a feather flock together.
- **Shártlibaha** – Conditional price.
- **Erkinsawda** – Free trade.
- **Awırdıńıstı, jeńildińastı** (The top of the heavy, the bottom of the light) – Seeking the easiest way out/avoiding hard work.
- **Basıawırıp, baltırısızlaw** (Head aching and shin throbbing) – To feel unwell or to constantly complain of minor ailments.

In the system of phraseological units of the Karakalpak language, just as in other languages, four types of phraseological units can be distinguished based on the aforementioned semantic cohesion. In Karakalpak linguistics, these are recognized as phraseological fusions (idioms), phraseological unities, phraseological combinations, and phraseological expressions. It is well known that the fourth type, recognized as phraseological expressions, was introduced due to its broad recognition as a distinct semantic group in the phraseology of national languages and phraseological research. Indeed, this semantic group of phraseological units possesses its own unique characteristics compared to other groups. At the same time, it forms a significant structural layer within the system of stable word combinations.

Regarding the structure of phraseological units, two main grammatical types are most prominent: phraseological units in the form of word combinations and phraseological units in the form of sentences. Without studying the structure and forms of phraseological units, it is difficult to determine their nature and unique qualitative characteristics. Therefore, alongside the lexico-semantic aspect of phraseological units, identifying their

grammatical structure is also considered one of the most important issues.

In many works dedicated to phraseology, attention has primarily been focused on phraseological units pertaining to word combinations. However, phraseological units pertaining to sentences have not yet been studied comprehensively.

Regarding the scope of research in modern linguistics, J.A. Mankeev notes: "The scope of studying language as a spiritual and cultural treasure of a nation is expanding. The reason is that every language is a symbolic system that preserves the history, national culture, character and consciousness, profession and customs, traditions, and wisdom of a nation in their entirety. In accordance with such a meaningful structure, it is not merely a simple symbolic system – it is a mirror of culture. Consequently, in studying such a system, it is observed that the possibilities of traditional structural linguistics are limited. In this context, the function of language is not only communicative; it is a gatherer, preserver, and transmitter of ethno-cultural information to the next generation – in short, it is the unifier of culture as a whole." This opinion demonstrates the close connection between language and culture and highlights the national identity within a language [12: 72]. This definition is also applicable to folklore phraseological units.

Phraseological units, with their figurativeness and deep meaning, are considered the pride and rich treasure of every nation's language. Nonetheless, until now, the differences between a phraseological unit and a word or other word combinations, its semantic types, and especially the issues of their classification have been studied from various perspectives. Regarding this, the Kazakh scholar F. Qaliuli points out: "Phraseology cannot be called a fully researched science. It contains many unresolved, controversial, and debatable issues. Therefore, until recent years, there were very few researchers specializing in it as a separate discipline. It is known that it has mostly been limited to investigation within the scope of lexicology" [13: 186].

The opinions cited above also pertain to Karakalpak linguistics. To date, phraseological units have been considered

within the field of lexicology and studied as a part of it. There are many issues awaiting resolution. In particular, studying phraseological units based on the national oral creativity of the people and the examples of epic works – in connection with the people's worldview and culture – is one of the important tasks of modern Karakalpak linguistics.

Phraseological units occupy a special place in the lexical composition of every language. Word combinations that have taken a stable form in the language since ancient times are one of the primary indicators of a nation's spiritual world, lifestyle, and culture. They reflect the customs, traditions, and worldviews of the people.

Phraseological units, whether used in epic works, written literary texts, or any other type of composition, constitute a specific part of the vocabulary of any language. They can be studied as objects of research from various aspects and perspectives. This is because the customs, traditions, national identity, lifestyle, and beliefs of a people are reflected in their phraseology. They have developed over centuries as a product of the people's consciousness and level of thinking and continue to be used as ready-made units in the language. As noted, "the culture of each people is uniquely reflected in its phraseology" [14: 114].

In Karakalpak linguistics, we first encounter the classification of folklore phraseological units based on various characteristics in B. Yusupova's manual for higher education institutions. She categorizes phraseological meaning into the following six groups:

1. Phraseological meaning;
2. Phraseological synonymy;
3. Phraseological variants;
4. Phraseological polysemy;
5. Phraseological homonymy;
6. Phraseological antonymy.

Furthermore, she divides phraseological units into two large groups based on their stylistic characteristics:

1. Folklore phraseology;
2. Individual-author phraseological units [15: 80-162].

In categorizing folklore phraseology and individual-author styles in this way, it is evident that the author was guided by the division of Karakalpak language styles into literary, scientific, journalistic, and official-business styles.

The phraseology of every people is considered a very valuable linguistic heritage, as it contains the national culture, customs, beliefs, imagination, and history of that people. The Karakalpak people have managed to fit their wisdom and worldview into their language, making it a habit to use speech accurately and precisely. All phraseological units, regardless of their type, initially developed on the basis of the people's spoken language. Therefore, they encompass all spheres of life and are very rich in terms of internal content.

Stable word combinations that consist of at least a few words in a language and are equivalent to the meaning of a single word are considered phraseological units. Since ancient times, phraseological units have been established among the people as a tool for decorating thoughts and ideas. They increase the impact of a thought and enhance the emotional-expressive coloring of an individual word. This proves that phraseological units are the wealth and the "cream" of the language. In this article, we analyze certain phraseological units adapted to the language of folklore works based on the linguistic materials of the "Edige" epic.

The study of folklore phraseological units is one of the important issues in Karakalpak linguistics. Linguofolkloristics has developed as a separate field in other Turkic languages, where the language of folklore works is studied as a unified whole. Mamatov points out: "At the same time, it is necessary to study the phraseological layers of the Uzbek language, their unique usage characteristics in the speech process, deficiencies in specific phenomena, phraseological borrowing, folk language phraseology, Uzbek folklore phraseology, and Uzbek dialectal phraseology" [1].

Karakalpak folklore is very rich, and the publication of its 100-volume collection demonstrates the richness of the folk

language and literature, as well as the eloquence and mastery of words of the Karakalpak people. This is clearly visible in the language of heroic epics, which is one of its genres. In the language of one of these epics, "Edige," the extensive use of folklore phraseological units can be observed.

"One of the unique characteristics of the language of epics is that the folk-folklore tradition holds great significance. In the language of epics, both poetic and prosaic features are used together to serve artistic, expressive, and emotional functions. In the language of epics, synonyms, homonyms, antonyms, paronyms, taboos, and euphemisms, as well as phraseological units equivalent to a single word, are used with artistic mastery," suggests A. Pirniyazova [2].

Stable word combinations that consist of at least a few words and are equivalent to the meaning of a single word are known as phraseological units. Since ancient times, they have been considered a tool for decorating thoughts and ideas, having become firmly established among the people. Phraseological units serve to increase the impact of an idea; they can function as emotional-expressive synonymous counterparts, variants, or antonyms of a single word, or they may possess multiple meanings (polysemy). This proves that phraseological units are the wealth and the "cream" of the language. In this scientific work, we analyze certain phraseological units adapted to the language of folklore works based on the linguistic materials of the epics *Alpamis*, *Edige*, *Qoblan*, and *QırıqQız*.

Folklore phraseological units are an integral and significant part of the general phraseological fund of the language. The phraseological fund is the complete collection or totality of all phraseological units existing in a national language. It consists of various groups of phraseological units with distinct characteristics, such as binary (two-component) units, dialectal, archaic, or ethnographic units, and others. Folklore phraseological units are one of these groups. These are defined as phraseological units adapted to the language of large folklore genres, such as epics and fairy tales, as well as smaller genres like proverbs, tongue twisters, riddles, and more. Such units are primarily distinguished by their productive use within the

language of folklore works; they are frequently utilized in the language of creations belonging to most folklore types, whereas they are found very unproductively or not at all in other types of works. They play a vital role in making the language of a folklore work impactful, artistic, and figurative.

The study of folklore phraseological units is one of the important issues facing Karakalpak linguistics. Linguofolklore studies have developed as a separate field in other Turkic languages, where the language of folklore works is investigated as a unified whole. M. Mamatov points out: "At the same time, it is necessary to define the phraseological layers of the Uzbek language and study their unique usage characteristics in the speech process, the specific shortcomings in these phenomena, phraseological borrowing, folk language phraseology, Uzbek folklore phraseology, and Uzbek dialectal phraseology" [16: 39].

Karakalpak folklore is exceptionally rich, and the publication of its 100-volume collection demonstrates the richness of the folk language and literature, as well as the Karakalpak people's mastery of words and eloquence. This is clearly evident in the language of heroic epics, which is one of its genres. In the language of Karakalpak heroic epics, a wide variety of folklore phraseological units can be observed. They enhance the artistry of the epic's language and serve as an important tool in creating the images of heroes, developing their portraits and characters, and reflecting their various positive qualities or emotions.

"One of the unique characteristics of the language of epics is that the folk-folklore tradition holds great significance. In the language of epics, both poetic and prosaic features are used in an intertwined manner to serve artistic, expressive, and emotional functions. In the language of epics, synonyms, homonyms, antonyms, paronyms, taboos, and euphemisms, as well as phraseological units equivalent to a single word, are used with artistic mastery," suggests A. Pirniyazova [17: 176].

Karakalpak heroic epics stand out among other epics due to their unique ideological and thematic content, the proximity of their language to the everyday speech of the people, and their clarity and simplicity for the general public. They vividly reflect folk traditions, national psychology, customs, and rituals. The

language of heroic epics is characterized by its lexico-semantic richness and artistry. Within them, one encounters professional terminology, archaisms, dialectal words, borrowings, synonyms or antonyms, ethnographisms, polysemy, variations, and lexical units related to various parts of speech. One of these components is phraseology. Phraseological units are considered one of the most fundamental units of the overall vocabulary of the epic language and form a distinct phraseological fund of their own. Phraseological units in the epic language are highly diverse. Among them are balanced two-component units, those characteristic of oral speech, as well as dialectal, archaic, poetic, and ethnographic phraseological units. One group of such units consists of phraseological units adapted specifically to the language of folklore works. These are phraseological units that are not productively used in daily life, oral speech, or the language of modern literary works, but are unique to those specific folklore creations.

In the Karakalpak language, the formation of synonyms through phraseological word combinations is quite prominent. In these cases, we find instances where a single word forms a synonymous pair with an entire phraseological unit, or where one phraseological unit is synonymous with another. For example: the word *ashıwlandı* (got angry) corresponds to the phrase *qabaǵúyildi* (frowned/scowled); the word *talastı* (disputed/struggled) corresponds to *qızılqanatboldı*; and the word *aytpaw* (not to tell/keep silent) corresponds to the phrase *awızǵabekkembolıw* (to be tight-lipped).

Meanwhile, the following synonymous pairs consist entirely of phraseological units: *kózinjoǵaltıw* – *qarasınbatırıw* (to disappear/vanish from sight), *qaspenenkózdińarasında* – *kózdiashupjumǵansha* (in the blink of an eye), *úskiniquyılıw* – *eńsesitúsiw* (to be dejected/dispirited), and others. In these cases, one phraseological unit is a synonym of another because they are identical in meaning. In phraseological synonyms, emotional-expressive and stylistic meanings are predominant. Folklore phraseological units are objects of linguofolklore research. Regarding the importance of epic works, Sh. Abdinazimov shares the following views: "The international conferences

dedicated to the study of heroic epics, which play a special role in educating the younger generation in the spirit of patriotism, serve as a clear example. The international scientific-theoretical conferences held in Nukus – in 1997 dedicated to the Karakalpak folk epic *QırıqQız* and the study of folklore works of Turkic-speaking peoples, in 2001 dedicated to the study of the Karakalpak folk epic *Edige*, and in 2008 on the topic 'National Folklore of Central Asian Peoples and Problems of Spiritual Development of Society' – demonstrated how significant oral folk creations truly are" [1: 34-39]. A. Bolganbaev divides synonyms in the Kazakh language into stable and variable synonyms [5: 32]. H. Jamolxonov, in the "Lexical Synonymy" section of his work *Modern Uzbek Literary Language*, categorizes lexical synonyms into semantic synonyms (ideographic synonyms), stylistic synonyms, and contextual/speech synonyms [7].

In M. Qálenderov's work *Synonyms in the Karakalpak Language*, which is specifically dedicated to the study of Karakalpak synonyms, he categorizes synonyms in the literary language based on their grammatical and structural characteristics into: 1) synonyms formed from root words; 2) synonyms formed from derivative words; and 3) synonyms formed from both root and derivative words. Regarding the lexico-semantic and stylistic features of synonyms in the Karakalpak literary language, he divides them into: 1) semantic or ideographic synonyms; 2) emotional-expressive synonyms; and 3) stylistic synonyms. Furthermore, based on their usage characteristics, he groups them into: 1) stable and variable synonyms; 2) idiomatic and phraseological synonyms; and 3) synonyms borrowed from or through the Russian language [8]. Relying on various scholarly perspectives on the classification of lexical synonyms, E. Berdimuratov, in his work *Modern Karakalpak Language: Lexicology*, distinguishes synonyms in Karakalpak into stable, contextual, and stylistic synonyms [5].

Sh. Rahmatullaev, in his work *Explanatory Dictionary of Uzbek Language Phraseological Units*, deeply studied the issue of phraseological synonymy and revealed its semantic aspects [11].

The study of the usage properties of stable and variable synonyms in the lexicon of the modern Karakalpak literary language holds both theoretical and practical significance for Karakalpak linguistics. This is a problematic issue that has not yet been fully studied or researched. Therefore, words in a language can be used in their literal sense as well as in figurative or modified senses. They express various shades of meaning and serve different stylistic purposes. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in the study of synonymy. Consequently, one can see how stable and variable synonyms are described in certain works. Based on these properties, synonyms in the Karakalpak language are divided into several types. Many stable synonymous words are used as synonyms even in their literal meanings. In our literary language, synonyms whose general meanings can be identified as similar even when standing alone, without interacting with other words, are called stable synonyms. Stable synonyms can be used in place of one another in any situation as synonymous counterparts; their synonymous relationship is clearly felt whether they stand alone or within a sentence. In linguistics, such synonyms are also called absolute synonyms. A. Bekbergenov views these types of synonyms as ideographic synonyms. Ideographic words are neutral words that differ from one another only through the nuances of their primary meaning [2: 71-79].

In Karakalpak heroic epics, we see that this type of synonymy is used to avoid the repetition of a single word, to strengthen meanings, and to ensure that sentences harmonize with the rhyme schemes in poetic lines. Many such examples can be found throughout these works. For instance:

*Ata dep atunaytqanday, birperzentkezarboldi.
Xalqumaduwaetkendey, Birnishanbizdebolmadi. (Qoblan epic)*

In the first example, the phraseological unit *birperzentkezarboldi* carries the meaning of being childless, while in the second example, the phrase *birnishanbolmadi* forms a synonymous series. Here, the word *nishan* (sign/trace) is used figuratively to convey the meaning of the word *perzent* (child).

Buldúnyadatarqamaydıqumarım, Etegimealıp, balaasıramasam.
(*Qoblan* epic, p. 401)

From this phraseological unit, we understand one of the traditions of the Karakalpak people: the custom of *irim* (a symbolic ritual), where a childless woman takes a newborn baby from her relatives and places it in the hem of her dress (*eteginesalıw*) as a way of symbolically adopting and protecting the child to be raised.

Haqyaratqanmenibendedemedi, Ne gúnáyimbardimeniñallağa.
(*Qoblan* epic)
Otırıptaqatıbolmay, Turıpparaxatıbolmay. (*Qoblan* epic)

In the examples above, *alla* – *haqyaratqan* (God/The True Creator) and the phraseological unit *otırıptaqatıbolmaw* – *turıpparaxatıbolmay* (having no patience while sitting, no peace while standing) consist of two balanced components in terms of structure and belong to the category of folklore phraseological units.

Qudayaydap, qonaqbolıpkelipsiz, Nesipaydap,
miymanbolıpkelipsiz. (*Edige* epic)

In this example, the phraseological units *qudayaydap* (driven by God/by providence) and *nesip (nesiybe) aydap* (driven by destiny/sustenance) are also considered synonyms. Such examples are found in abundance in Karakalpak epics.

Qulaqsalsözgesenağa, Tıñlasózdi Qıdırbay. (*Qoblan* epic)
Dúnyadankemissizedi, birtırnaqqazaredi, biraqperzentijoqedi.
(*Alpamis* epic)

Synonyms in the Karakalpak language are very rich, both in terms of their synonymous series and the number of words within each series. Sometimes several synonymous series are used to express a single concept. In the example, through both phrases *birtırnaqqazar* (longing for a fingernail [a child]) and *perzentijoq* (has no child), the concept being expressed is a childless person.

Názersalıp, kóztigipbirqarasań, Turqınonıńsomaltunnansoqqanday.
(*Qırqız* epic, p. 7)

In these examples, the units *názersalıw* and *kóztigiw* (to gaze/to fix one's eyes upon) are mutually synonymous units.

In the language of Karakalpak heroic epics, variable synonyms are encountered alongside stable synonyms. Polysemy (multiple meanings) plays a major role in the creation of such synonyms. Once polysemantic words in a language move into a specific context, they may leave their initial synonymous series and become synonymous with other words. For example:

Oqjetkendeyjaqınlap, Alla dep jaydıńladı. (*Qoblan* epic)
Sarı jayınqolǵaalıp, Elindemergenmendegen, Adam bolsajıynadı.
(*Qoblan* epic).

Synonyms create the figurativeness, richness, and impact of the work's language. Through this, we can see that instead of repeatedly using a single word, a vast vocabulary is productively employed within the language of the work.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the lexicon of our language is exceedingly rich. Synonyms provide artistry to our language and are frequently used to describe various objects, things, signs, and actions in different ways. The use of synonyms, which are considered the wealth of the language, is productive not only when they stand alone but also within the structure of phraseological units.

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