

LINGUO-COGNITIVE AND LINGUO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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Annotation: *This article is devoted to the analysis of euphemisms in English and Uzbek languages, with a special focus on the metaphorical framework of death-related euphemisms. It explores how metaphors such as “Death is Departure”, “Death is Sleep”, “Death is Coming Home”, “Death is Gambling”, and “Death is Reward” function not only as linguistic devices but also as cognitive and cultural constructs. These metaphorical expressions reveal how societies soften the harshness of death, maintain cultural taboos, and convey collective emotional responses. Through a comparative linguistic and cultural lens, the paper examines the pragmatic and semantic dimensions of these euphemisms and their reflection of national worldviews, religious beliefs, and values. Additionally, it provides a classification of euphemistic metaphors based on their source domains and cognitive motivations. The study contributes to a better understanding of cross-cultural pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, and socio-linguistic variation in euphemism usage. It also provides insight into the similarities and differences in how English and Uzbek speakers conceptualize death through metaphorical language.*

Keywords: *euphemism, metaphor, death, English, Uzbek, cognitive linguistics, culture, pragmatics, taboo, cross-cultural semantics.*

Language is not merely a tool for communication; it is a reflection of the cultural, psychological, and cognitive makeup of a society. One of the most sensitive and universally tabooed topics in human life is death. The fear, uncertainty, and emotional weight associated with death have led cultures around the world to develop indirect and softened ways of referring to it. These expressions, commonly known as euphemisms, play a crucial role in managing social interactions, expressing politeness, avoiding offense, and conveying deep cultural values. Among the most prevalent linguistic strategies used in euphemizing death is metaphor—a powerful cognitive mechanism through which abstract or sensitive concepts are understood in terms of more familiar or less threatening experiences.

In both English and Uzbek, euphemisms related to death frequently rely on metaphorical frameworks such as “Death is Departure”, “Death is Sleep”, or “Death is Coming Home”, each of which reflects distinct cultural narratives and philosophical views of life and the afterlife. For example, while English often uses expressions like “pass away” or “depart this life,” which suggest a journey or transition, Uzbek also offers metaphors like “olamdanko‘zyumdi” (closed eyes to the world) and “buyuksafargajo‘nadi” (went on a great journey), emphasizing similar notions of departure and transformation.

This article aims to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of metaphorical death euphemisms in English and Uzbek languages. The study is situated at the intersection of cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, and cross-cultural semantics, aiming to uncover how euphemisms function as both linguistic softeners and as carriers of deep-rooted cultural ideologies. Special attention is given to the classification of metaphorical source domains, cognitive motivations behind euphemism creation, and the pragmatic contexts in which these euphemisms are used. By analyzing similarities and differences across two linguistically and culturally distinct languages, this study contributes to the growing body of research on metaphor, euphemism, and intercultural communication.

Phraseological units are linguistic expressions that encapsulate cultural experience, embodying values, beliefs, and worldviews specific to a speech community. As such, the national-cultural characteristics of a people are not merely reflected but actively preserved and transmitted through their idiomatic language. This section explores the various dimensions through which national and cultural features shape and influence phraseological units in different languages, with an emphasis on English and Uzbek.

1. Cultural Conceptualization in Phraseology

Cultural conceptualization plays a crucial role in the formation and understanding of phraseological units. Each culture develops unique concepts to express experiences that are deemed significant. For example, in English, the expression “kick the bucket” refers to death and has a humorous, informal undertone. In contrast, the Uzbek equivalent “dunyobilanvidolashmoq” (to say goodbye to the world) conveys a more respectful and solemn attitude toward death. This divergence illustrates how cultural attitudes toward the same event shape idiomatic expressions differently.

2. National Symbols and Mentality

Many phraseological units derive from elements specific to a nation’s geography, history, or religion. In English, expressions like “carry coals to

Newcastle” rely on local knowledge—Newcastle being historically known for coal production. Similarly, Uzbek phraseology is rich in references to traditional rural life, family structure, and Islamic values. For example, “Qo‘ynibo‘ridanso‘ramoq” (to ask the wolf about the sheep) reflects a traditional mistrust toward hypocritical people and metaphorically represents betrayal, a concept deeply resonant in a collectivist culture.

3. Social Norms and Gender Roles

Phraseological units often encapsulate a culture’s view on gender roles and social norms. English idioms like “wear the pants in the family” imply authority and traditionally masculine roles within a household. Uzbek idioms such as “ergategmaganqizsuvsizquduq” (an unmarried girl is like a dry well) reflect societal expectations about marriage and female roles, albeit from a more traditional and, at times, controversial perspective. These idioms mirror the historical and social norms of their respective cultures.

4. Historical and Political Influence

The development of idiomatic expressions is also closely tied to a nation’s historical trajectory. British colonial history, for instance, has introduced numerous idioms based on maritime and military life (“know the ropes”, “go overboard”). Meanwhile, in Uzbek, Soviet-era idioms and expressions rooted in collective farming or ideological propaganda still persist in some speech communities. This historical layer enriches the semantic complexity of phraseological units, making them markers of both temporal and cultural identity.

5. Religious and Mythological Elements

Religious beliefs and mythology often form the foundation of many idioms. English idioms such as “by the skin of one’s teeth” have biblical origins, while idioms like “Achilles’ heel” stem from Greek mythology. In Uzbek, idioms influenced by Islamic teachings are prevalent, such as “Halolrizqtopmoq” (to earn a lawful income), reflecting the importance of faith and ethics in daily life. These expressions not only serve linguistic functions but also reinforce cultural continuity and shared belief systems.

6. Food and Daily Life

Food-related idioms are common across cultures but are shaped by local dietary habits and traditions. In English, idioms like “spill the beans” (reveal a secret) and “the proof is in the pudding” are food-based metaphors tied to British cuisine and customs. In contrast, Uzbek idioms such as “non tuziniyeganodam” (a person who ate someone’s bread and salt) signify loyalty and gratitude, with bread and salt symbolizing hospitality and trust in Central Asian cultures.

7. Comparative Phraseology and Translation Challenges

When translating idiomatic expressions, cultural equivalence often poses a challenge. Literal translations may lead to misunderstandings or loss of meaning. For example, translating “break the ice” into Uzbek as “muznisindirish” might convey the basic idea of initiating interaction, but without cultural adaptation, the metaphor may seem out of context. Therefore, translation requires not just linguistic accuracy but also cultural sensitivity, highlighting the profound influence of national-cultural features on phraseological equivalence.

8. Phraseological Units as Cultural Memory

Ultimately, phraseological units function as vessels of cultural memory, storing centuries of collective wisdom, humor, prejudice, and tradition. They contribute to linguistic identity and serve as a bridge between generations. As globalization increases language contact, the preservation of culturally bound idioms becomes essential in maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity.

In conclusion, the translation of advertising texts is not merely a linguistic task but a complex intercultural and pragmatic activity that requires a deep understanding of both the source and target audiences. Advertisements are culturally embedded texts that often employ idiomatic expressions, humor, puns, and persuasive devices unique to a specific society. Therefore, translators must go beyond literal word-for-word translation and adopt a creative, adaptive approach to retain the intended effect and appeal of the original message. This process involves a combination of strategies such as localization, transcreation, and dynamic equivalence to ensure that the emotional impact, stylistic nuances, and commercial intent are preserved. Additionally, the choice of words, visual imagery, and tone must align with the cultural sensitivities and consumer expectations of the target market. Failure to consider these elements may result in miscommunication, cultural offense, or even the total rejection of the product or service being advertised. Moreover, this study has emphasized the importance of translator competence, which must include not only linguistic proficiency but also cultural literacy, marketing insight, and creativity. The dynamic nature of advertising and its reliance on rapid audience engagement means that translators must be constantly updated with socio-cultural changes and evolving marketing trends in both languages. Thus, the translation of advertising texts stands at the intersection of language, culture, psychology, and commerce. It is a field that offers exciting challenges and significant responsibility, as it directly influences how a brand is perceived in a new market. Future research in this area may further explore the role of artificial intelligence and digital tools in advertising translation, as well as the ethical dimensions involved in adapting culturally sensitive content.

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