

CONSTRUCTIVISM IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

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Abstract — This article examines animal symbolism in English and Uzbek phraseological units, emphasizing their linguocultural significance. It explores how idioms serve as cultural artifacts, encapsulating the essence of a society’s history and values. The study analyzes idioms through qualitative and quantitative methods, revealing the pivotal role of symbolism in phraseology. It discusses the influence of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, such as stylistics, culture, and cognitive linguistics, on the symbolization of phraseological units. By comparing the symbolic meanings of animals like the wolf, fox, and sheep in both languages, the article highlights the deep connections between language, culture, and human experience, offering insights into cross-cultural communication and linguocultural understanding.

Keywords — Animal symbolism, English, Uzbek, phraseology, phraseological units, linguocultural context, cross-cultural communication, cognitive linguistics, linguopragmatics, cultural heritage, metaphorical language.

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of phraseological units across various languages reveals their shared elements, enhancing our comprehension and practical application of these languages. V.N. Telia wrote: "Phraseological of a language is considered to be a mirror in which the community identifies its national identity" [1, 9]. Through continuous sampling, a diverse range of idioms from dictionaries was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Language is not just a tool for communication; it’s a cultural artifact that carries the essence of a people’s history, beliefs, and traditions. Focusing on the concept of linguocultural aspects allows for an enriched understanding of the cultural practices and values of societies, inviting us to delve into the myriad ways in which human culture and language intertwine and shape our collective experiences.

2. MAIN PART

According to Schneider, “culture is a system of symbols, whereas a symbol is something stands for something else where there is no relationship between a symbol and what it symbolizes”. For Persons and Shill (1962), “cultural patterns include a system of ideas and beliefs, a system of expressive symbols or system of value orientation” [2, 20].

Animal symbolism, in particular, plays a pivotal role in phraseology and linguocultural studies, serving as a bridge between language and culture. It allows phraseological units to encapsulate and convey the rich tapestry of cultural knowledge, beliefs, and values. Here’s how animal symbolism enriches phraseology and linguocultural understanding:

It reflects the cultural heritage and collective consciousness of a community. Proverbs like “a wolf in sheep’s clothing” - “bo’rini to’q dema, dushmanni yo’q dema” carry cultural narratives and moral lessons that are passed down through generations, preserving and transmitting cultural wisdom.

Symbolic phraseology also resonates with our cognitive structures, enabling us to conceptualize abstract ideas through concrete images. For instance, calling someone “the black sheep of the family” that comes from a proverb “there’s a black sheep in every flock” - “bitta tiraqi buzoq bir to’p podani buzadi” utilizes the symbolism of color and animal behavior to convey the concept of an outcast or non-conformist within a group.

Understanding the symbolism in phraseology can facilitate cross-cultural communication and translation. Recognizing that “to kill two birds with one stone” in English has a similar counterpart in Uzbek - “bir o’q bilan ikki quyovni urmoq”, helps in grasping the underlying intent and meaning across cultures.

There are some linguistic and extra-linguistic factors that shape the symbolization of phraseological units in English and Uzbek languages. These factors are related to external linguistics such as psycholinguistics, culture, socio, ethno, cognitive linguistics and linguopragmatics. Each language is characterized by national and cultural peculiarities. Linguistic factors do not exist without external one, external one also cannot become in existence without linguistic factors [3, 51].

Stylistics: The style of language use can convey additional layers of meaning. The phraseological unit “a snake in the grass” - “yomon ilon tegirmon boshida aylanar” not only refers to deceit but also carries a negative stylistic connotation due to the cultural perception of snakes.

Cognitive Linguistics: Our mental conceptualization of the world affects language. The English phrase “busy as a bee” and the Uzbek “asalari kabi band” both draw from the bee’s industrious image.

Linguopragmatics: The practical use of language in context can create symbolic meanings. The phrase “to kill two birds with one stone” in English and its Uzbek equivalent analogue “bir o’q bilan ikki quyonni urmoq” both symbolize efficiency.

The physical environment, religious beliefs, historical events, and customs of a people also play a crucial role:

Geographical Environment: The prevalence of certain animals in a region can affect their symbolic representation. For example, the camel, common in Uzbekistan, symbolizes endurance and patience - “barcha yukni ko’targan tuya cho’michni ham ko’tarar.” The same context in English phraseology is expressed by a horse because it was more common to see a horse in England rather than a camel - “all day on the willing horse.”

Religion: Religious texts and beliefs contribute to symbolism. The lamb is a symbol of sacrifice in both Christian and Islamic cultures, which influences its use in English and Uzbek phraseology: “if one sheep leap over the dyke, all the rest will follow” - “podani qo’chqor yetaklar.”

Customs: Daily practices and traditions influence symbolism. Both in English and Uzbek cultures, the horse (“ot”) is a symbol of grace and nobility, reflecting its historical importance in daily life and warfare: “a ragged colt may make a good horse” - “toychani toy deb xo’rlama, erta-indin ot bo’lar.”

If we talk about specific animals in the realm of English and Uzbek phraseology, the fox, sheep, and wolf emerge as emblematic figures, each carrying a trove of cultural symbolism and wisdom.

The idiom “as hungry as a wolf” in English and “bo’ridek och” in Uzbek both vividly express an intense hunger, likening a person’s appetite to that of a wolf’s. It conveys a sense of ravenous hunger, driven by a primal instinct to hunt and consume. It’s often used to describe a deep, almost animalistic hunger, where one could seemingly eat a substantial amount of food.

In Uzbek, “bo’ridek och” carries a similar meaning, with “bo’ri” meaning wolf and “och” meaning hungry. It suggests an extreme level of hunger, as if one has not eaten for a long time, much like a wolf that is driven by its natural instincts to seek food. This expression is used to describe a person who feels a strong, urgent need to eat, emphasizing the intensity of their hunger.

Both expressions draw on the wolf’s well-known characteristic of being a fierce and efficient hunter, capable of enduring long periods without food and then eating voraciously when the opportunity arises. These phrases are evocative examples of how animal behaviors are used metaphorically in human language to describe our own experiences and sensations.

The fox, with its reputation for shrewdness and adaptability, often features in English expressions like “sly as a fox,” which encapsulates its notoriety for intelligence and guile. This portrayal aligns with the animal’s behavior in nature, where it employs clever tactics to evade predators and secure its prey. Similarly, in Uzbek, the phrase “tulkidek ayyor” translates to “cunning like a fox,” reflecting a comparable view of the fox’s crafty disposition. Both expressions highlight the fox’s symbolic status across cultures as a figure of wit and cunning, often used metaphorically to describe someone who is quick-witted or deceitful.

The metaphor “like lambs to the slaughter” in English and “qo’ydek yuvosh” in Uzbek both evoke images of innocence and passivity. In English, the phrase “like lambs to the slaughter” suggests a state of being unaware and unprepared for the danger that lies ahead, often used to describe someone going into a situation without understanding the negative consequences. In contrast, “qo’ydek yuvosh” translates to “as gentle as a lamb,” reflecting a demeanor that is mild, gentle, and compliant. While the English phraseological unit carries a sense of impending doom, the Uzbek metaphor focuses more on the docile and serene nature of the sheep, without the connotation of danger. Both expressions, however, draw from the inherent traits of the sheep, its meekness and lack of resistance to convey deeper human emotions and behaviors.

These metaphors and proverbs, rich in animal imagery, offer a window into the values and lessons esteemed by both English and Uzbek-speaking people, illustrating the profound role that animals play in the expression of human experience and wisdom.

3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the exploration of phraseological units across languages such as English and Uzbek offers a unique lens through which we can observe the interplay between language and culture. As V.N. Telia aptly noted, phraseology acts as a mirror reflecting a community’s national identity, and this study has affirmed that idioms are not mere linguistic constructs but repositories of cultural heritage [1, 9]. The symbolic use of animals in phraseology, ranging from the cunning fox to the industrious bee, serves as a testament to the shared cognitive structures that underpin human expression across cultures. These symbols are not arbitrary but are deeply rooted in the geographical, religious, and customary landscapes that shape a society’s worldview.

The intricate relationship between language and culture is further emphasized by the stylistic, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions of phraseology. Idioms like “a snake in the grass” or “busy as a bee” are not just phrases but encapsulate complex cultural narratives and cognitive patterns. They resonate with the collective consciousness, offering moral lessons, encapsulating societal values, and enhancing cross-cultural communication.

Through this lens, we gain insights into the essence of a people’s history, beliefs, and traditions, and we are reminded that language is a living, breathing element of human culture, ever-evolving and rich with wisdom passed down through generation.

This study underscores the significance of understanding the linguocultural aspects of phraseology to appreciate the full spectrum of human experience. It invites us to recognize the profound impact of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors on the symbolization of phraseological units and to acknowledge the role of language as a vibrant cultural artifact.

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