

COMPARATIVE LINGUOCOGNITIVE STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGICAL WORLDVIEWS IN RUSSIAN AND UZBEK

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ABSTRACT

The article examines how Russian and Uzbek phraseology encodes culturally significant models of speech, emotion, labor, proximity, surprise, social evaluation, and collective action. The analysis is based on 52 units selected for semantic comparability, including full equivalents, partial equivalents, and nationally marked items without direct correspondence. The results show that bodily imagery forms the most stable comparative zone, whereas food, everyday objects, and symbolic numbers more often produce asymmetry. Special attention is given to translation relevant contrasts, since similar meanings in the two languages are regularly verbalized through different figurative motives.

Keywords: Phraseology, worldview, Russian language, Uzbek language, linguocultural analysis, idiom semantics, somatic code, equivalence, comparative linguistics.

INTRODUCTION

Phraseology offers access not to isolated lexical meanings but to condensed cultural judgments, habitual evaluations, and socially stabilized imagery. For that reason, a comparative study of Russian and Uzbek set expressions reveals not only semantic overlap, but also different preferences in how experience is verbalized and remembered.

A broad theoretical frame for such work has been laid down in major studies of formulaic language and cultural semantics. A.Wray writes that “A considerable proportion of our everyday language is “formulaic””. [13] A.Wierzbicka states that “Every language has its own key words, which reflect the core values of the culture”. [12] A.P.Cowie’s volume formulates the object of the field even more directly through the definition “Phraseology can be loosely defined as the study of conventional phrases”. [1]

These positions are methodologically important for the present comparison. They shift attention from isolated idioms to recurrent models of collective categorization, and they make

it possible to ask why speech restraint is encoded through the tongue in one case, through food or silence in another, and through a moral stance in a third. Phraseological meaning is therefore treated here as a junction of image, evaluation, and cultural habit. The article proceeds from the assumption that Russian and Uzbek share several anthropological bases of metaphorization, yet differ in the concrete repertory of images that gain social authority. That assumption is fully compatible with corpus and contextual approaches to idiomaticity. “The principle of idiom is that a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices”. [9]

The cognitive dimension of the problem also remains central. G.Lakoff and M.Johnson insist that “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action”. [2] When such a claim is applied to phraseology, the comparison of Russian and Uzbek material ceases to be a list of equivalents and becomes an inquiry into structured cultural experience.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The working sample includes 26 Russian units and 26 Uzbek units. Selection followed three criteria. The expression had to be stable in usage, semantically recognizable outside a single text, and suitable for crosslinguistic comparison either through equivalence or through a productive contrast.

The material was grouped into four zones. These are somatic imagery, spatial and temporal representation, evaluative characterization, and socially marked collective behavior. The procedure combined semantic description, contextual interpretation, and contrastive pairing. For Uzbek phraseology, the analysis also takes into account the central role of the national lexicographic tradition associated with Sh.Rakhmatullayev. A study of Uzbek linguistics summarizes this tradition in the statement “He founded Uzbek phraseology with a series of researches”. [6] The choice of a phraseological rather than purely lexical unit as the main analytical object is further supported by I.Mel’čuk’s formulation “Two main families of phrasemes are distinguished”. [4]

A second methodological premise concerns fluency and conventionality. A.Pawley and F.H.Syder open their classic paper with the sentence “This essay discusses two linguistic capacities which we term native like selection and natively like fluency”. [8] In phraseological comparison, this means that the relevant question is not whether two languages can denote the same state, but whether they choose the same image to do so. G.Nunberg, I.A.Sag, and T.Wasow sharpen the point when they observe that “Idioms typically involve metaphors, metonymies, hyperboles, or other kinds of figuration”. [7]

RESULTS

The most stable comparative area is the somatic code. Russian *держат язык за зубами* and Uzbek *tilini tishlamoq* both encode speech restraint through the tongue. Russian *ломать голову* and Uzbek *bosh qotirmoq* represent difficult thinking through pressure on the head. Russian *золотые руки* and Uzbek *qo’li gul* characterize skill through the hand, although Uzbek introduces the culturally positive image of the flower. Russian *сидеть сложа руки* and Uzbek *qo’l qovushtirib o’tirmoq* mark passivity through a nearly identical bodily posture.

Russian водить за нос and Uzbek burnidan yetaklamoq express manipulation through the nose and bodily control. Russian не видеть дальше собственного носа and Uzbek burnidan narini koʻrmaslik reduce intellectual horizon to the immediate front of the face. Russian душа ушла в пятки and Uzbek yuragi orqasiga tortmoq verbalize fear through the downward or backward displacement of an inner organ. These parallels confirm that bodily experience offers a dense zone of semantic contact, even when lexical composition differs.

At the same time, complete sameness is rare. Russian душа нараспашку has no exact Uzbek copy, while Uzbek koʻngli ochiq is close in value but lighter in emotional texture. Russian рука не поднимается and Uzbek qoʻli bormaydi are also comparable, yet the Russian unit foregrounds inhibited action, whereas the Uzbek one profiles reluctance more broadly. Phraseological convergence, therefore, should be described as motivated similarity rather than lexical coincidence.

Semantic zone	Russian unit	Uzbek unit	Comparative relation
Speech restraint	держат язык за зубами	tilini tishlamoq	close equivalent
Intense thinking	ломать голову	bosh qotirmoq	close equivalent
Skill	золотые руки	qoʻli gul	same value, different image
Passivity	сидеть сложа руки	qoʻl qovushtirib oʻtirmoq	close equivalent
Manipulation	водить за нос	burnidan yetaklamoq	close equivalent
Narrow mindedness	не видеть дальше собственного носа	burnidan narini koʻrmaslik	close equivalent
Fear	душа ушла в пятки	yuragi orqasiga tortmoq	partial equivalent
Joy	быть на седьмом небе	boshi osmonga yetmoq	same emotion, different image
Crowdedness	яблоку негде упасть	igna tashlasa yerga tushmaydi	same situation, different object
Escaping blame	выйти сухим из воды	suvdan quruq chiqmoq	full equivalent

These examples show three recurrent relation types. Some units are near replicas of each other. Others keep the same evaluation but replace the central image. Still others retain only a general situation and reconstruct it through another culturally salient object. Recent comparative work on Russian and Uzbek material repeatedly confirms such combinations of proximity and divergence.

Spatial and temporal phraseology displays a different profile. Russian быть на седьмом небе correlates with Uzbek yettinchi osmonda and with the more nationally specific boshi osmonga yetmoq. Russian как снег на голову finds a functional counterpart in Uzbek osmondan tushganday, where suddenness is linked not to snow but to a fall from above. Russian ни свет ни заря corresponds well to Uzbek tong sahardan. Russian яблоку негде упасть and Uzbek igna tashlasa yerga tushmaydi both depict extreme density, but the Russian unit chooses fruit while the Uzbek one prefers a needle. Russian выйти сухим из воды and Uzbek suvdan quruq chiqmoq are among the clearest full equivalents in the whole sample. Russian не разлей вода

may be compared with Uzbek et bilan tirnoqdek, though the second image is more intimate and corporeal. Uzbek phraseology with number and sky imagery also intensifies joy in a way that is especially productive in colloquial discourse.

A more asymmetrical layer appears where national everyday culture enters the image directly. Russian вешать лапшу на уши and Uzbek qulog'iga lag'mon ilmoq both signify deception, yet Uzbek inserts a marked food image tied to a recognizable cultural object. Uzbek chuchvarani xom sanamoq has no compact Russian equivalent of the same figurative density and points to a specifically local culinary frame. Uzbek dunyoni suv bossa o'rdakka ne g'am encodes carefree indifference through a zoomorphic scene, whereas Russian seven day instability is often captured by семь пятниц на неделе, a calendar based social image of unreliability. Uzbek qovog'idan qor yog'moq presents displeasure through falling snow from the eyebrows, while Russian сердитая or gloomy characterization usually activates another lexical field. Such units are the most resistant to direct transfer and the most informative for cultural analysis.



DISCUSSION

The evidence supports a layered view of phraseological worldview. At the deepest level, Russian and Uzbek share anthropocentric patterns grounded in body, movement, speech, manual work, fear, and joy. At the next level, however, each language chooses its own preferred figurative triggers. One and the same emotion may rise to the sky in Uzbek, move into heaven in Russian, or appear through a wholly different evaluative script.

This is why contextual analysis remains indispensable. R.Moon's formulation is methodologically exact here. She writes that "fixed expressions can only be fully understood if they are considered in the context of the texts in which they occur". [5] The present material

confirms that contextual environment decides whether a unit functions as an emotional marker, an ethical judgment, an ironic signal, or a condensed cultural allusion.

The results also align with research on figurative creativity. A. Langlotz remarks that “Whenever speakers vary idioms in actual discourse, they open a linguistic window into idiomatic creativity”. [3] This matters for Russian and Uzbek alike, since stable units are not mechanically repeated fossils. They preserve a conventional core, yet their pragmatic force shifts across genres, speakers, and communicative goals. P. Skandera’s volume, meanwhile, drew attention to a long neglected area by observing that “the study of the relation between English phraseology and culture in particular has been largely neglected”. [10] In the Russian and Uzbek comparison, that relation proves impossible to ignore.

A further implication concerns translation and teaching. Direct equivalents such as *выйти сухим из воды* and *suvdan quruq chiqmoq* are comparatively easy. Partial matches such as *золотые руки* and *qo’li gul* require image sensitive commentary. Culture specific units such as *qulog’iga lag’mon ilmoq* or *chuchvarani xom sanamoq* demand interpretive expansion, because the national object is part of the meaning rather than a decorative shell. For that reason, phraseological competence cannot be reduced to lexical substitution. It involves recognition of image source, evaluative force, discourse register, and cultural memory.

CONCLUSION

The comparison demonstrates that Russian and Uzbek phraseology converges most strongly in somatic modeling and diverges most clearly in culturally marked object imagery. Shared bodily experience creates a zone of relative semantic stability, whereas food, symbolic numbers, household objects, and local ethnocultural associations generate nationally specific figurative choices.

From a broader linguistic perspective, phraseological worldview should be described as a structured interaction of universal embodiment and culture bound selection. Russian and Uzbek do not merely name identical realities with different words. They distribute attention differently, privilege different images, and package evaluation through distinct mnemonic forms. That is precisely why phraseology remains one of the most productive fields for contrastive linguistics, translation studies, and linguocultural interpretation.

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