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Anthropocentric Worldview In English And Uzbek Phraseology: Comparative Analysis Of Cultural Models

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Abstract

This thesis examines how anthropocentric worldviews are encoded in English and Uzbek phraseology and how these encodings reflect broader cultural models. Building on cognitive-linguistic and linguocultural approaches, the study compares idioms and proverbs referring to the human body, emotions, character, social roles, and moral evaluation. A purpose-built mini-corpus of 420 English and 410 Uzbek units was compiled from reputable dictionaries and proverb collections and analyzed through conceptual metaphor and frame-semantic lenses with attention to usage notes where available. The findings reveal convergent universals—such as the body as a primary experiential source domain for emotion—and salient divergences shaped by value hierarchies, sociality norms, and evaluative pragmatics. English phraseology privileges individual agency, self-regulation, and contractual sociality, while Uzbek phraseology foregrounds communal harmony, honor, and intergenerational ethics. Cross-domain mappings like HEART/KO‘NGIL→EMOTION, HEAD→REASON/CONTROL, and FACE/CHEHRA→REPUTATION occur in both languages but are distributed and evaluated differently. The article argues that phraseological units function as culturally saturated mini-narratives that stabilize moral expectations and interactional scripts. Implications are offered for translation studies, intercultural communication, and EFL/Uzbek FL pedagogy.

Keywords

Anthropocentrism; phraseology; conceptual metaphor; cultural models; English; Uzbek; linguoculture; pragmatics.

Introduction

Phraseological units are among the most condensed carriers of cultural knowledge because they encode recurrent evaluations of human experience in prefabricated verbal form. Within an anthropocentric paradigm, language is viewed as a repository of embodied cognition and social practice, hence idioms and proverbs become privileged sites for reading a community’s “models of the person.” English and Uzbek, though historically and typologically distinct, exhibit rich inventories of idioms that construe emotions, character, and social behavior through body-based metaphors and socially anchored frames. Prior scholarship has established the centrality of conceptual metaphor for emotion talk and the cross-linguistic salience of body parts as source domains, yet the comparative grain of evaluation and pragmatics often remains underdescribed for non-Indo-European languages, including Uzbek. This study addresses that gap by aligning English and Uzbek phraseology against a common set of anthropocentric domains and by asking how culture-specific moral logics shape idiomatic meaning and use.

The study aims to identify universal and culture-specific features of anthropocentric phraseology in English and Uzbek through a comparative analysis of conceptual mappings,

frame structures, and evaluative pragmatics across five semantic terrains: emotions, cognition and control, character traits, social roles and relationships, and moral assessment of action. It also seeks to propose a compact analytic model useful for cross-cultural pedagogy and translation.

A balanced mini-corpus was constructed from major idiom dictionaries, proverb handbooks, and national lexicographic sources. The English subset includes multiword idioms such as "lose one's head," "keep a straight face," and "have a heart," as well as proverbs like "Strike while the iron is hot." The Uzbek subset comprises idiomatic expressions and maqollar like "ko'ngli tog'dek" (a heart like a mountain), "yuzini yorug' qildi" (made the face bright, i.e., brought honor), and "boshingni yo'qotma" (do not lose your head). Each item was coded for domain, source-target mapping, syntagmatic structure, polarity of evaluation, and notes on usage such as formality and politeness. Analytical procedures combined Conceptual Metaphor Theory for mapping identification, frame semantics for role-relation profiling within social scripts, and a pragmalinguistic layer to capture honorifics, relational stance, and expectation management. Qualitative comparison emphasized prototypical exemplars and near-equivalents rather than one-to-one lexical matches.

Both languages privilege the heart/ko'ngil complex as the conceptual hub of emotional life; however, the Uzbek ko'ngil extends beyond affect to a social-moral sensorium that monitors generosity, susceptibility to offense, and spiritual attunement. Expressions praising a "wide" or "mountain-like" ko'ngil index an ethic of capacious hospitality and patience, whereas English laudatives like "big-hearted" converge semantically but foreground charitable agency of the individual rather than harmony as a social equilibrium. The head remains the anchor for reason and control in both languages, yet English idioms often dramatize self-management in task-oriented frames—"keep your head," "use your head"—while Uzbek prefers admonitions embedded in relational etiquette, where losing one's head risks not only error but also a breach of propriety. Face operates as a reputational surface in both traditions; English "keep a straight face" is affective-behavioral, while Uzbek "yuzini yorug' qilish" links face with honor circulating among kin, indicating that reputational outcomes are collectively borne.

Character evaluations demonstrate further cultural modeling. English idioms about backbone, spine, or guts appraise resolve and boundary setting; Uzbek idioms more frequently calibrate modesty, respectfulness, and reliability within asymmetric relationships. When courage is praised, it is often tethered to responsibility to elders or community rather than to self-assertion per se. Social roles and kinship phraseology in Uzbek are densely populated and pragmatically weighty; advice and warning formulae presuppose multi-party coordination and long time horizons. English phraseology, while rich in workplace and contractual metaphors, normalizes dyadic reciprocity and equitable exchange, producing idioms that regulate fairness and effort without invoking lineage or communal honor.

Moral assessment idioms reveal overlapping metaphors but different argumentative loads. Both languages mobilize path and balance schemas, yet Uzbek proverbs lean toward consequentialist communal accounting in which shame and reputation are salient currencies, whereas English idioms more often operationalize efficiency, opportunity, and personal accountability. For example, "strike while the iron is hot" enjoins timely initiative; its Uzbek functional analogs tend to embed timeliness within counsel from elders or within seasonal cycles, thereby naturalizing prudence as collective wisdom rather than entrepreneurial

alertness. The asymmetry becomes more visible in speech-act potential: many Uzbek idioms are deployable as softeners or upgrades in advice-giving and conflict mitigation, reflecting the high value of respectful alignment, while English idioms, frequently argument-strengtheners, index speaker stance in negotiations and problem solving.

Despite these contrasts, important universals persist. Embodied experience anchors the idiom stock in both languages; thermal, container, pressure, and verticality metaphors structure anger, pride, and sadness in parallel ways. Conventionalization produces schematic predictability that speakers exploit for rhetorical finesse. Finally, phraseology in both traditions works as cultural pedagogy: through repetition across generations, idioms circulate scripts for handling emotion, resolving disputes, and calibrating aspiration with obligation.

Pedagogically, these results suggest that equivalence should be sought at the level of frame and evaluation rather than literal metaphor only. Translators and language teachers can map idioms to their interactional functions—warning, consolation, exhortation, self-control cue—thereby preserving the moral stance encoded by the source language. Materials for EFL in Uzbekistan and for Uzbek FL should include micro-dialogues that stage idioms in typical adjacency pairs to make visible the social logic each idiom presupposes.

Anthropocentric phraseology in English and Uzbek converges on embodied source domains while diverging in the moral and social grammars that structure evaluation and use. English idioms prominently encode individual agency and contractual reasonableness; Uzbek idioms privilege honor-sensitive sociality and communal equilibrium. Recognizing idioms as carriers of cultural models enables more accurate translation, nuanced intercultural communication, and curriculum design that teaches not only what idioms "mean," but how they position speakers and hearers within locally intelligible moral orders. Future work should broaden the empirical base with spoken corpora and perception studies that test native intuitions about appropriateness and strength of evaluation across contexts.

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