

## ALLUSIVE PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AND THEIR IMPLICATION IN LITERARY TEXTS

Askarova Maftuna Tolkin kizi

The second-year student of comparative linguistics and theory of translation theory  
Tashkent state university of Uzbek language and literature named after Alisher Navoi

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**Abstract.** *This article will explore the potential stylistic characteristics of phraseological units and their allusive features while being implemented in literary texts. Several plays and novels will be discussed as examples of this relation between phraseological units and allusion as a stylistic device. There will be provided with several researches based on the study of allusion and phraseological units.*

**Keywords:** *allusion, fixed phrases, frozen phrases, idiomaticity, metaphoricity, proverbs.*

### Introduction

Allusion has been an integral part of research for many years so far and still continuing to be. Allusion can have different relations to do with other types of linguistic and stylistic features such as metaphor, symbol or phraseological units. Starting from origin and definition of allusion, main focus will be drawn to the relation between allusions and phraseological units.

The origin of the term "allusion" from the Latin "alludere" 'to laugh, hint' ("ludere" - to play) dates back to the mid-16th century and means "an expression designed to call something to mind without mentioning it explicitly; an indirect or passing reference". [2]

Only in the 20th century allusion became the subject of active inquiry when it was linked to any explicit, direct connection, leading to differing opinions and intense debate among academics. Linguists Abramova, O.S. Akhmanova, I.V. Gūbbenet, E.M. Dronova, A.S. Evseeva, M.I. Kiose, A.G. Mamaeva, L.A. Mashkova, I.G. Potylitsyna, E.V. Rosen, I.N. Sofronova, Z. Porat, and others analyzed challenges of allusion and its implication. The allusion is a special method of turning thoughts to the past, helps to understand and organize knowledge about the universe, and acts as a kind of "bridge" that connects the past with the present. It is also a means of cognitive stylistics, a new discipline. Cognitive stylistics has shown that a language is not just a tool to communicate, but a tool of human mind according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980).

Phraseological units or the field of phraseology has been a bit of challenging or controversial issue for years with its terminology challenges and different approaches. According to Cowie (1992) it is called multiword lexical unit, according to Verstraten (1992) fixed phrase and according to Moon (1992) it is called fixed expression and there are other notions that can be enlisted. Unlikely, Kunin stated that phraseology can exist as a separate independent discipline. He also developed the notion of phraseological stylistics and its term by studying stylistic properties of Phraseological units. (1969 71-75). So, the main focus of this research is to analyse the stylistic potential of these phraseological units. The stylistic potential of phraseological units is quite common in nearly all literary genres and its usage depends on author's intention or personal choice.[3] Phraseology is a component of the systematic and orderly use of metaphorical language in human cognition processes (Gibbs [1994] 1999: 450). [1]

The works devoted for stylistic studies of phraseology have developed after Kunin by several other scientists such as Boldireva (1967), Sviridova (1968), Shadrin (1969) in Russia and

now, for example, by Ryzhkina (2003). Gibbs argues against the view that idioms that are often considered as frozen expressions have lost their metaphorical feature. He believes phraseological units retain their metaphoricity and they exist in our schemes of thought and conceptual system. Therefore, the discussion part will be devoted to the study of phraseological units and their allusive characteristics.

Allusive phraseological units, also can be identified as idiomatic expressions or figures of speech, play a significant role in language and communication. These linguistic constructs consist of words or phrases that have acquired a figurative or metaphorical which mean beyond their literal interpretation. Allusive phraseological units are deeply rooted in cultural, historical, and literary contexts of human life, often drawing references from mythology, literature, proverbs, or well-known events. They add richness, depth, and nuance to our language, which allows us to convey complex ideas, emotions, and concepts in a concise and vivid manner. This topic explores the origins, usage, and significance of allusive phraseological units, by shedding light on their cultural and literary connections, as well as their impact on effective communication and the understanding of the broader cultural landscape.

### **Discussion**

Before analyzing the allusive characteristics of phraseological units, one controversial view should be presented at least. It can be stated that phraseological units with high degree of idiomaticity have rights to have allusive characteristics since they have been formed as the reference to an event, object or situation that had happened before and they can be allusion that have been made as the reference to at least real-life situation. Take phraseological unit, proverb, “barking the wrong tree”, for example. In a real life while chasing cats, dogs always stay under the tree and the cats quickly jumps from the tree to the others as their natural character of being so quick. So, the phraseological unit of “barking wrong tree” is commonly used in different discourses and it can be called as an allusive expression. This view can be challenged and requires further research and proofs.

Now another example is proverbial saying “He who sups with the Devil should have a long spoon”. This is a medieval idiom and it was used by Shakespeare twice in his plays. [6] It means if you get involved with the Devil you should keep distance. Metaphorically, it is dangerous to eat with the Devil and so, you should have a long spoon not to get too close. Now one of the plays by W. Shakespeare is the *Tempest*, Act II, Sc. 2. In this part this proverbial saying has been separated a bit into contents in lines, but can be comprehended easily:

*Trinculo. I should know that voice: it should be – but he is drowned; and these are devils: O defend me!...*

*Stephano. ... This is a devil, and no monster: I will leave him; I have no long spoon. [4]*

The components are not in their logical sequence and so, it can be difficult to comprehend it due to disjoint order, so it not explicit. However, it is necessary to comprehend the text. Stephano says it is a devil and not a monster, so he says he needs something to be away from him, but he has no, so he is saying to leave because of not having a long spoon, which is quite opposite comprehension of the phraseological unit. This phraseological unit refers to the original context to be understood and it means its reference is already available and we are referring something that already exists. This is the characteristics of allusion and it is being noticed in the phraseological unit which is fixed or partially inseparable.

Another example is “a cat has nine lives”. It is interesting that phraseological units can be retrieved from a few separate and isolated components and even with a single one. In this case, phraseological allusion is based only on one component, and in order to understand phraseological unit and the context should be carefully analyzed:

*Burge - Lubin. But damn it, man –I beg your pardon, Archbishop, but really, really– Archbishop. Don't mention it. What were you going to say? Burge - Lubin. Well, you were drowned four times over. You are not a cat, you know.[5] ('B. Shaw, Back to Methuselah.')*

The meaning and implication of the phraseological unit is quite implicit and it requires to carefully read the context. In the context Burge was drown and nearly died 4 times already and referring to the proverbial saying, and stating a part of it by saying “you are not a cat”, means you do not have 9 lives like a cat.

The phrase “a cat has nine lives” is thought to have come from different sources and there are different speculations such as:

From Egyptians where cats are valued and considered sacred;

From Celtic myth, cat Sith which was a witch and transformed into cat nine times to be alive

From Greek myths as nine was sacred number in Greek culture.

### **Conclusion**

From what has been analyzed above it can be inferred that phraseological units have their own peculiar stylistic potential in different forms of stylistic devices such as metaphor or pun or allusion. Their stylistic potential can be another research work in the further works in science and a novelty in linguistics. The main focus of the article as an allusive feature of phraseology and its units can be concluded that from the abovementioned discussion examples it is quite clear that allusive feature is mainly available in the phraseological units which are culturally colored and have some origin in culture or history. These features relate to phraseological units which have idiomaticity in a higher level such as proverbs, idioms which have their own place and value as a cultural sign in cultural context of the nation. The researches that are devoted to the study of allusion and intertextuality cannot ignore the importance and role of phraseological units while analyzing literary texts according to their allusive expressions.

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