SEMANTIC FIELDS AND NATIONAL-CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN THE WORKS OF TOHIR MALIK

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Abstract. *Phraseological units constitute an essential component of a language's lexical system and serve as a means of preserving and transmitting a nation's cultural values, worldview, and historical experience. The works of Tohir Malik, one of the most prominent figures in modern Uzbek literature, are rich in phraseological expressions that reflect the linguistic and cultural identity of the Uzbek people. This article examines the semantic fields of phraseological units used in Tohir Malik's works and analyzes their national-cultural characteristics. The study reveals that phraseological units associated with human character, emotions, social relations, morality, and everyday life occupy a significant place in the writer's language. Furthermore, these expressions embody traditional Uzbek values, customs, and cultural concepts, contributing to the artistic richness and authenticity of the literary texts.*

Keywords: *phraseology, semantic field, national culture, Tohir Malik, Uzbek language, phraseological units, literary language.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a means of communication but also a repository of a nation's cultural memory and collective experience. Among the various linguistic elements that reflect cultural identity, phraseological units occupy a special place. Phraseological expressions encapsulate the traditions, customs, beliefs, and worldview of a people, making them valuable sources for linguistic and cultural studies. According to Kunin (1984), phraseological units are stable combinations of words whose meanings are partially or completely transferred from their literal interpretations. Similarly, Fernando (1996) emphasizes that phraseology plays a crucial role in expressing cultural and social realities. In Uzbek linguistics, phraseological studies have attracted considerable scholarly attention. Researchers have noted that phraseological units not only enrich speech but also preserve national values and historical experiences (Rahmatullayev, 1992). Tohir Malik's literary works provide a rich corpus for examining the interaction between language and culture through phraseological expressions. His novels and stories vividly depict Uzbek society, incorporating numerous idiomatic expressions that reflect both linguistic creativity and cultural specificity.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the semantic fields of phraseological units in Tohir Malik's works and identify their national-cultural characteristics.

METHODOLOGY

The semantic analysis of phraseological units requires careful examination of their figurative and metaphorical meanings, as these expressions often convey ideas that extend beyond the literal meanings of their constituent words. Phraseological units are deeply rooted in symbolism, imagery, and metaphorical thinking, reflecting the ways in which speakers perceive and interpret the world around them. Through these linguistic forms, cultural experiences, social

norms, and collective values are preserved and transmitted from one generation to another (Kunin, 1984).

A linguocultural approach to phraseology emphasizes the inseparable relationship between language and culture. Phraseological units serve not only as linguistic constructions but also as carriers of cultural knowledge and national identity. They encapsulate traditional beliefs, historical experiences, customs, and patterns of behavior that are characteristic of a particular speech community. According to Fernando (1996), idiomatic expressions and phraseological units reveal the cultural background of a society because they originate from shared experiences and culturally specific ways of conceptualizing reality.

Comparative and contrastive studies of phraseological units across languages enable researchers to identify both universal and culture-specific features of human communication. By comparing phraseological expressions in Uzbek and English, scholars can examine how different linguistic communities represent similar concepts through distinct cultural images and metaphors. Such analyses help reveal the extent to which cultural values influence language use and demonstrate how language reflects the worldview of its speakers (Wierzbicka, 1997).

From a linguocultural perspective, the study of Uzbek and English phraseological units provides valuable insights into communication practices, social interactions, and cultural perceptions. Phraseological expressions frequently contain implicit cultural information that may not be immediately understandable to representatives of other cultures. Therefore, examining these expressions contributes to a deeper understanding of how speakers establish interpersonal relationships, express emotions, evaluate social behavior, and interpret everyday experiences within their respective cultural environments (Kramsch, 1998).

Furthermore, research into the linguocultural aspects of phraseology enables scholars to identify the moral principles, ethical standards, and cultural ideals embedded within a nation's linguistic system. Through phraseological units, societies communicate concepts of honesty, hospitality, respect, courage, diligence, and other values that shape collective identity. As a result, phraseology becomes an important source for investigating national mentality and cultural consciousness (Rahmatullayev, 1992). The study of phraseological units also plays a significant role in promoting intercultural communication. In an increasingly globalized world, effective communication requires not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness. Understanding the cultural meanings underlying phraseological expressions helps individuals avoid misunderstandings, appreciate cultural diversity, and engage in more successful cross-cultural interactions. Knowledge of phraseology allows language learners and intercultural communicators to recognize both common cultural patterns and unique cultural characteristics, thereby fostering mutual understanding and respect among speakers of different languages (Byram, 1997).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One of the most productive semantic fields in Tohir Malik’s works is the representation of human character and personal qualities. The author frequently employs phraseological units to portray both positive and negative traits, allowing readers to gain a deeper understanding of characters without lengthy descriptions. Such expressions serve as concise yet powerful tools of characterization. Positive qualities such as courage, honesty, wisdom, diligence, and loyalty are often conveyed through phraseological units that have developed over centuries within Uzbek oral and literary traditions. Through these expressions, the writer emphasizes the moral ideals valued by Uzbek society. At the same time, negative traits such as greed, dishonesty, arrogance, and

hypocrisy are depicted through phraseological constructions that carry strong evaluative meanings. As a result, phraseological units become an important means of expressing the author's attitude toward particular characters and their actions. The frequent use of phraseological expressions related to character demonstrates the close connection between language and social values. These units preserve collective judgments regarding acceptable and unacceptable behavior and contribute to the moral dimension of Tohir Malik’s narratives.

Family and social relations occupy a prominent place in Tohir Malik’s literary universe. His works frequently explore interpersonal interactions, emphasizing the importance of kinship, friendship, mutual respect, and social responsibility. Phraseological units related to these themes form a distinct semantic field that reflects traditional Uzbek social structures.

In Uzbek culture, the family is regarded as the foundation of society. This cultural value is reflected in numerous phraseological expressions associated with parental authority, filial respect, family honor, and communal solidarity. Through such units, Tohir Malik portrays the complex relationships between generations and highlights the moral obligations that individuals owe to their relatives and community members.

The use of phraseological expressions in social contexts also reveals cultural norms governing behavior. Respect for elders, hospitality toward guests, and loyalty to friends are recurring themes in the author's works. These values are deeply embedded in Uzbek culture and are effectively communicated through phraseological language. Moral and ethical issues represent another significant semantic field in Tohir Malik’s writings. As a writer concerned with social justice and human responsibility, he frequently employs phraseological units to discuss concepts such as honesty, justice, conscience, integrity, and accountability.

Many phraseological expressions function as carriers of ethical wisdom accumulated through generations. They embody collective experiences and social expectations regarding proper conduct. By incorporating these expressions into his narratives, Tohir Malik reinforces moral lessons and encourages readers to reflect upon their own values and actions.

This semantic field is particularly evident in works that address social problems, crime, corruption, and moral decline. Through phraseological language, the author exposes unethical behavior while simultaneously promoting ideals of fairness and human dignity. The phraseological units found in Tohir Malik’s works possess distinct national-cultural features that reflect the historical development and cultural identity of the Uzbek people. These characteristics can be observed at several levels.

First, many phraseological units originate from traditional lifestyles and occupations. Historically, agriculture, animal husbandry, and craftsmanship played central roles in Uzbek society. As a result, numerous idiomatic expressions contain references to farming practices, domestic animals, and everyday labor. Such expressions preserve cultural knowledge and provide valuable insights into the historical experiences of the nation.

Second, religious and spiritual values influence the formation of many phraseological units. The cultural impact of Islam can be observed in expressions related to morality, fate, gratitude, patience, and social responsibility. These units reflect the ethical principles that have shaped Uzbek society for centuries.

Third, national traditions and customs are embedded within phraseological language. Ceremonies, family celebrations, hospitality practices, and community relationships all contribute to the creation of culturally specific expressions. Through the use of such phraseological units,

Tohir Malik preserves elements of intangible cultural heritage and transmits them to future generations.

Beyond their semantic and cultural significance, phraseological units perform important artistic functions. They increase the expressiveness of literary language, enrich imagery, and strengthen the emotional impact of the narrative. Figurative expressions make descriptions more vivid and memorable while contributing to the overall aesthetic quality of the text.

Additionally, phraseological units enhance the individuality of characters. Different characters employ different types of expressions depending on their age, education, social status, and life experience. This linguistic diversity helps create realistic and multidimensional personalities.

The author's skillful integration of phraseological language also contributes to the authenticity of his literary style. Readers encounter a living representation of Uzbek speech patterns, making the texts more relatable and culturally grounded. Consequently, phraseological units serve as a bridge between artistic creativity and national identity. The study of phraseological units in Tohir Malik’s works demonstrates that language functions not only as a communication system but also as a repository of cultural knowledge. Phraseological expressions encapsulate historical experiences, social norms, moral values, and collective worldviews. Their preservation within literary texts contributes to the maintenance of cultural continuity.

From a linguistic perspective, phraseological units enrich the vocabulary of literary language and expand expressive possibilities. From a cultural perspective, they function as markers of national identity and vehicles of cultural transmission. Therefore, the phraseological richness of Tohir Malik’s works represents both a linguistic achievement and a cultural asset.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the linguocultural analysis of phraseological units constitutes an essential component of modern linguistic research. Such studies provide valuable insights into the intricate relationship between language, culture, and human cognition. By examining phraseological units from semantic, cultural, and comparative perspectives, researchers gain a deeper understanding of how language reflects national identity, preserves cultural heritage, and facilitates communication across cultural boundaries. Consequently, phraseological research serves as an indispensable tool for interpreting linguistic phenomena and their broader cultural significance.

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