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A Comparative Study Of Proverbial Phraseological Units With Ethnonymic And Biblionymic Components In Uzbek And English

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Abstract: This article presents a comparative linguistic analysis of proverbial phraseological units containing ethnonyms and biblionyms in Uzbek and English. Such phraseological units reflect ethnic identities, historical memory, cultural values, and religious worldviews of each society. The study examines structural-semantic features, cultural connotations, and pragmatic functions of these proverbs. Despite belonging to different language families—Uzbek to the Turkic group and English to the Germanic branch of Indo-European languages—both languages show parallels in the use of ethnonymic and biblionymic components as symbolic markers. However, the linguistic forms, cultural associations, and metaphorical mappings differ significantly. This research contributes to understanding how languages encode ethnic and religious concepts in fixed expressions and what these structures reveal about cultural cognition.

Keywords: Proverbs and phraseological units, linguistic, cultural, and social evolution.

Introduction: Proverbs and phraseological units serve as an essential component of national worldview, reflecting centuries of linguistic, cultural, and social evolution. Among the structural types of phraseology, proverbial expressions with ethnonymic (ethnic group names) and biblionymic (names from religious texts) components represent a particularly rich layer. Such expressions are culturally loaded and often rooted in historical events, interethnic relations, and religious narratives.

In Uzbek, phraseological units with ethnonyms (e.g. Rus, Arab, Chin, Mo'g'ul) and biblionyms (e.g., Iso, Muso, Iblis, Fir'avn) are widely used in everyday speech and folklore. English also contains numerous ethnonymic (e.g., Dutch, Greek, French, Indian, Chinese) and biblionymic expressions (e.g., Job, Judas, Solomon, Goliath) originating from Biblical tradition, classical antiquity, and early modern European history.

The purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative study of such phraseological units in Uzbek and English, focusing on semantic, structural, and cultural aspects. Through this comparison, we can trace similarities in cognitive metaphorization as well as culturally specific symbolic associations.

Phraseology deals with stable multi-word expressions with idiomatic meaning. Proverbial phraseological units form a special category that includes fixed aphoristic expressions conveying a moral or cultural lesson.

Ethnonyms and Their Linguistic Role

Ethnonyms function not only as names of ethnic groups but also as cultural symbols. In many languages, ethnonyms may evoke stereotypes, historical associations, or metaphorical meanings. For example:

- English: Dutch courage, to go Dutch, Chinese puzzle
- Uzbek: Rus balosi, Arab qizi, Chin ishi

Biblionyms come from religious texts such as the Bible or the Qur'an. English biblionyms primarily originate from the Christian tradition, while Uzbek biblionyms reflect both Islamic and Judeo-Christian heritage transmitted historically.

Examples:

- English: as patient as Job, a Judas kiss
- Uzbek: Muso ishi, Fir'avn zulmi, Iblis vasvasasi

These biblionyms carry strong emotional, moral, and cultural connotations.

Types and Structures

Ethnonymic proverbs in Uzbek usually fall into these categories:

1. Historically motivated proverbs
 - Chin bilan savdolashgan — yutgan
 - Mo'g'ul kelganda — qo'y so'y

These reflect historical interactions or perceptions of foreign groups.
2. Stereotype-based expressions
 - Arabning eri — issiq bo'lsa ham yaxshi

Ethnic stereotypes—positive or negative—often lie behind these units.

Metaphorical and symbolic ethnonym usage

Rusning tili uzun
Here the ethnonym symbolizes a character trait rather than literal ethnicity.

Cultural Contextualization

Ethnonymic proverbs in Uzbek often reflect:

- historical relations with neighboring peoples (Arabs, Persians, Chinese, Russians),
- folk perceptions of trade partners or conquerors,
- ethnographic realities.

These proverbs serve as cultural memory containers.

Categories and Examples

English contains numerous ethnonymic expressions, many of which stem from European historical relations:

Economic and cultural stereotypes

- to go Dutch (share expenses equally)
- Dutch comfort ("Things could be worse")

Expressions rooted in conflict

Dutch courage (bravery induced by alcohol) – originates from Anglo-Dutch wars.

Metaphorical uses

Chinese whispers (distorted communication)

Cultural Specificity

English ethnonymic phraseology frequently reflects:

- colonial encounters (Indian summer, Chinese puzzle),
- ancient classical references (Greek gift, Trojan horse),
- inter-European rivalries.

These expressions encode moral judgments, irony, or humor, often detached from their literal ethnic origins.

Islamic and Biblical Influences

Uzbek biblionyms primarily derive from Islamic tradition, yet many names are also common in Biblical narratives:

- Odam Ato, Momo Havo, Nuh, Muso, Iso, Iblis, Fir'avn

Common Uzbek Biblionymic Proverbs

1. Positive moral qualities
 - Muso sabrini ber! (Request for patience)
 - Iso nafasi (Healing or blessing)
2. Negative or cautionary expressions
 - Iblis ishi (Devilish behavior)
 - Fir'avn zulmi (Cruel oppression)
3. Wisdom and religious authority
 - Nuhdan qolgan ish (Very old matter)

Pragmatic Function

These expressions serve to:

- reinforce moral lessons,
- invoke sacred authority,
- express evaluation with religious connotations.

Biblical Origin and Usage

English biblionymic expressions are deeply rooted in Christian tradition and the King James Bible.

Examples:

1. Positive attributes
 - as wise as Solomon
 - as patient as Job
2. Negative or moral warnings
 - a Judas kiss (betrayal disguised as kindness)
 - a doubting Thomas (someone who doubts everything)

Aspect	Uzbek	English
Dominant religious source	Islamic tradition	Christian (Biblical) tradition
Ethnonym origins	Arabs, Persians, Chinese, Russians	Dutch, Greek, Indian, Chinese, Biblical Jews
Tone	often serious, moralistic	often ironic or humorous
Function	moral teaching, history reflection	moral evaluation, metaphor, humor

Shared Conceptual Metaphors

Both languages express universal concepts:

- patience → Job (English), Muso or Ayyub (Uzbek)
- betrayal → Judas (English) / Iblis-like behavior (Uzbek)
- great wisdom → Solomon (English) / Luqmon or Sulaymon (Uzbek)

These parallels reflect universal human cognitive patterns even across different religions.

Divergences in Cultural Interpretation

Ethnonymic meanings differ due to separate historical experiences. For instance:

- Dutch courage has no Uzbek equivalent since it relates to Anglo-Dutch war history.
- Uzbek Chin bozoridan kelgan has no corresponding English expression.

Similarly, Uzbek often uses biblionyms from Islamic narratives not prevalent in English idiomatic traditions.

Discussion

Proverbial phraseological units with ethnonymic and biblionymic components serve multiple linguistic and sociocultural functions. They act as:

1. carriers of collective memory,

3. Metaphorical expressions

- David and Goliath (a small force defeating a giant)

Functions in English Discourse

Such expressions convey:

- moral evaluation,
- emotional emphasis,
- cultural symbolism within Western religious worldview.

Structural Similarities

Both languages use:

- ethnonyms as metaphorical carriers of stereotypes,
- biblionyms to symbolize moral virtues or sins,

Semantic Differences

2. tools for moral instruction,

3. reflectors of historical relations,

4. markers of cultural identity.

The typological comparison shows that while Uzbek tends toward moralistic and religiously grounded proverbial expressions, English tends toward metaphorical, humorous, and narrative-driven ones.

Despite differences, both languages use:

- ethnonyms to embody stereotypes or sociohistorical judgments,

biblionyms to convey universal moral values.

This demonstrates that language-specific phraseology, while unique in form, is motivated by shared human conceptual structures.

Conclusion

This comparative study of Uzbek and English proverbial phraseological units with ethnonymic and biblionymic components reveals both universal cognitive patterns and distinctive cultural-linguistic features. Uzbek phraseology is deeply influenced by Islamic worldview and historical relations with neighboring cultures, while English phraseology is shaped by Biblical Christianity, European history, and classical antiquity.

Key findings include:

- Both languages employ ethnonyms metaphorically, but with different cultural coloring.
- Biblionyms function as moral and symbolic markers in both languages but derive from different religious traditions.
- Uzbek tends to maintain a more solemn and moralistic tone, whereas English often incorporates irony or narrative metaphor.
- Cross-linguistic equivalence is limited; many expressions lack full semantic parallels.

This research highlights the importance of phraseology as a window into cultural cognition and provides valuable material for translation studies, intercultural communication, and comparative linguistics.

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