



Phraseological Units as a Reflection of Gender Norms in English and Uzbek Languages

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Abstract:

This study explores the intersection of language, culture, and gender by analyzing phraseological units in English and Uzbek, specifically focusing on how these linguistic elements reflect and shape gender norms. Phraseological units, such as idioms, proverbs, and sayings, offer insight into societal perceptions of gender roles, expectations, and stereotypes. Through a comparative linguistic analysis, the thesis identifies common patterns, cultural differences, and underlying values associated with masculinity and femininity. The findings emphasize both the preservation of traditional gender roles and the evolution of gender dynamics in modern society, providing a deeper understanding of language's role in conceptualizing gender across cultures (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Aitchison, 2012).

Introduction

Research Background: Language reflects cultural values, and phraseological units often encode deep-seated societal norms, including views on gender (Paremia & Smith, 2005). This thesis investigates how gender norms are expressed and perpetuated through language in English and Uzbek cultures.

Significance of Study: By comparing English and Uzbek phraseological units, this research contributes to cross-linguistic studies on gender and language (Pinker, 2007), providing insights into how different societies conceptualize gender roles.

Objectives and Research Questions: The primary objective is to examine how phraseological units reflect gender norms. Key research questions include: How are masculinity and femininity represented in English and Uzbek phraseological units? What cultural values do these units reveal about gender? (Holmes, 2008)

Structure of the Thesis: The thesis is divided into several chapters that discuss relevant



literature, methodology, analysis of data, and conclusions drawn from the comparative study.

Literature Review

Definition and Types of Phraseological Units: A phraseological unit is a stable, fixed expression with figurative meaning (Bally, 1909). This section reviews idioms, proverbs, and set phrases.

Gender as a Concept in Linguistic Studies: This section discusses how gender is conceptualized and represented in linguistic studies (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003), including sociolinguistic and cognitive approaches.

Overview of Gender Norms in English and Uzbek Cultures: A brief exploration of historical and modern gender roles in English-speaking and Uzbek societies, focusing on how these norms are reflected in language (Safarov, 2008).

Previous Research on Gender in Phraseology: Review of existing studies on phraseological units and their connection to gender, with examples from both languages (Dobrovolskij & Piirainen, 2005).

Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Metaphor Theory: Phraseological units often embody metaphorical representations of gender roles (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This theory helps explain how abstract concepts like gender are understood through metaphor.

Cognitive Linguistics and Gender: Gendered phraseology reflects societal cognition about masculinity and femininity. This section explains how cognitive linguistics approaches gender (Langacker, 1987).

Cultural Linguistics: This theory explores the relationship between language, culture, and worldview (Sharifian, 2017), providing a framework for analyzing cultural influences on gendered expressions.

Methodology

Data Collection: Phraseological units are collected from English and Uzbek dictionaries (Moon, 1998; Usmonov, 2011), literature, media, and native speakers.

Criteria for Selection of Gendered Phraseological Units: The selected units must directly or indirectly refer to gender, either through gender-specific language or by conveying



gender stereotypes (Jones, 2012).

Comparative Linguistic Analysis: The analysis compares phraseological units from both languages, focusing on their semantic, pragmatic, and cultural aspects (Dobrovolskij & Piirainen, 2005).

Tools and Frameworks for Analysis: Linguistic software and frameworks from cognitive linguistics are employed to analyze the data (Sharifian, 2017).

Gender Norms in English Phraseological Units

Masculine and Feminine Roles in English Phrases: English phraseology often reflects traditional roles, with men associated with power, strength, and rationality, while women are linked to emotion, domesticity, and beauty (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

Representation of Gender Roles in English Proverbs, Idioms, and Sayings: Examples include "man of the house" (leadership) and "old wives' tale" (dismissal of women's knowledge) (Moon, 1998). These expressions reveal underlying gender biases.

Analysis of Phraseological Units Reflecting Stereotypes: English phraseological units tend to reinforce stereotypes, such as men being brave ("man up") and women being fragile or irrational ("acting like a girl") (Jones, 2012).

Gender Norms in Uzbek Phraseological Units

Masculine and Feminine Roles in Uzbek Phrases: In Uzbek phraseology, men are often associated with honor, courage, and provision, while women are connected to modesty, nurturing, and loyalty (Safarov, 2008).

Representation of Gender Roles in Uzbek Proverbs, Idioms, and Sayings: Examples include "Erkak bo'lsa, og'ir bo'lar" (A man is weighty) and "Ayol kishi – uy bekasi" (A woman is the keeper of the home), reflecting the patriarchal structure (Usmonov, 2011).

Analysis of Phraseology Units Reflecting Stereotypes: Uzbek phraseology often reinforces traditional gender expectations, with men depicted as leaders and protectors, and women as caregivers and homemakers (Safarov, 2008).

Comparative Analysis of English and Uzbek Phraseological Units

Cross-Cultural Differences and Similarities in Gender Conceptualization: Both languages reflect patriarchal values, but the ways in which they express gender roles differ. English tends to reflect more modern shifts in gender roles, while Uzbek phraseology remains



deeply rooted in traditional views (Sharifian, 2017).

Phraseology Units that Reinforce Traditional Gender Roles: Both languages have units that perpetuate traditional gender roles, such as "bring home the bacon" (English) and "Er – bosh, xotin – bo'yin" (Uzbek, meaning "the man is the head, the woman is the neck") (Moon, 1998; Usmonov, 2011).

Units that Challenge or Redefine Gender Norms: Modern phraseology in English includes expressions that challenge stereotypes (e.g., "girl boss"), while in Uzbek, shifts are emerging in the urban context, though still rare (Paremia & Smith, 2005).

Discussion

Implications of Findings on Gender Representation: The findings suggest that language both reflects and shapes gender perceptions. English is moving towards more gender-neutral or egalitarian phraseology, while Uzbek continues to emphasize traditional gender roles (Safarov, 2008).

The Role of Language in Perpetuating or Challenging Gender Norms: Language plays a crucial role in either maintaining or challenging societal gender norms. English phraseology is evolving, while Uzbek is slower to change due to cultural conservatism (Sharifian, 2017).

Contribution to Cross-Linguistic Gender Studies: This research adds to the understanding of how different linguistic cultures encode gender and highlights the need for further studies on non-Western languages like Uzbek (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

Conclusion

Summary of Findings: English and Uzbek phraseological units both reflect and reinforce gender norms, with notable cultural differences. While English phraseology shows signs of evolution towards gender equality, Uzbek phraseology remains largely traditional (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Safarov, 2008).

Limitations of the Study: The study is limited by its focus on a specific set of phraseological units and may not represent the full range of gender expression in either language.

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