

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15851506>

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Abstract. *This article explores the evaluative function of phraseological units in the Uzbek language, focusing on how such expressions reflect aesthetic, ethical, and emotional judgments within communicative practices. Phraseologisms not only enrich the language with cultural color but also serve as a powerful tool for expressing various forms of evaluation—positive or negative—toward people, actions, events, and phenomena. The study provides a classification of evaluative phraseological units based on their semantic orientation, discusses their discursive functions, and highlights their cultural specificity. Comparative insights with other Turkic and Indo-European languages are also included to underscore both universal and unique features.*

Keywords: *Uzbek phraseology, evaluation, semantics, cultural linguistics, figurative language, idioms, discourse.*

Phraseological units (PUs), also referred to as idioms or fixed expressions, constitute a vital part of the lexical and semantic system of any language. In Uzbek, as in many other languages, PUs are deeply embedded in cultural experience and are often used to express evaluation—whether moral, intellectual, aesthetic, or emotional. Evaluative phraseologisms play an essential role in everyday speech, folklore, journalism, and literature, providing nuanced ways to express approval, criticism, irony, admiration, or contempt.

Evaluation in linguistics refers to the speaker's subjective attitude toward an object, event, or individual, often expressed through lexical and grammatical means. Following frameworks from Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) and linguistic anthropology, this paper identifies phraseological units as carriers of social and moral norms within discourse. Uzbek phraseologisms encapsulate societal values, folk wisdom, and collective judgments that have evolved over centuries.

Semantic typology of evaluative Uzbek phraseologisms.

Positive evaluation.

Phraseologisms that reflect admiration, respect, or praise include:

- **Ko'ngli ochiq** ("open-hearted") – used to describe a generous and kind person.

• **Oltin qo'l** ("golden hands") – refers to someone with great skill, especially in craftsmanship.

• **Yuragi toza** ("pure heart") – denotes moral purity and kindness.

These idioms reflect positive traits highly esteemed in Uzbek culture, such as hospitality, honesty, and talent.

Negative evaluation.

Negative evaluative PUs are widely used to criticize undesirable behavior:

• **Ko'zbo'yamochilik qilmoq** ("to whitewash") – to deceive or cover up flaws.

• **Oyoq osti qilmoq** ("to trample") – to humiliate or devalue someone.

• **Qo'li yengil** ("light-handed") – ironically refers to a thief or someone who steals easily.

Such idioms often function as social control tools, discouraging dishonesty, arrogance, or betrayal.

Irony and sarcasm.

Idioms with ironic or sarcastic evaluation express criticism in a humorous or culturally coded way:

• **Tiliga qulf solmoq** ("to put a lock on the tongue") – suggests that someone talks too much or needs to remain silent.

• **Kalla bor, aql yo'q** ("has a head but no brain") – criticizes foolishness or thoughtless behavior.

Functions of evaluative phraseologisms in discourse

• **Emotive function:** They express emotions such as joy, anger, disappointment.

• **Didactic function:** They transmit moral lessons and cultural norms.

• **Stylistic function:** PUs add expressiveness, vividness, and a colloquial tone to the discourse.

• **Identity and solidarity:** Use of culturally bound idioms strengthens in-group identity.

Cultural specificity.

Uzbek phraseological units are tightly linked to national traditions, folklore, and Islamic moral codes. Evaluative idioms often reflect collectivist values, such as respect for elders, community honor, and the importance of hospitality. For instance, "**Mehmon otangdan ulug'**" ("A guest is greater than your father") emphasizes the sacred status of guests in Uzbek culture.

Comparative remarks

While evaluative idioms exist in all languages, their imagery and value-laden meanings differ. For example, the Uzbek "**Ko'ngli tor**" ("narrow-hearted") is semantically close to the English "small-minded," yet carries stronger cultural condemnation in Uzbek. Similarly, "**Ko'ngli ochiq**" shares features with "big-hearted," but with deeper hospitality connotations.

The study of evaluative phraseological units in the Uzbek language reveals a deeply rooted connection between linguistic expression and cultural worldview. Uzbek phraseologisms serve not only as fixed linguistic expressions but also as carriers of collective social experiences, moral standards, and emotional attitudes that have been preserved and transmitted across generations.

Evaluative phraseologisms reflect a broad spectrum of human judgment, including admiration, disapproval, sarcasm, and humor. Positive idioms often glorify kindness, generosity, skill, and moral integrity, while negative ones criticize ignorance, dishonesty, selfishness, or disrespect. These evaluations are not abstract; they are grounded in everyday Uzbek life, customs, and interpersonal relations. As such, phraseologisms function as a mirror of national consciousness, moral ideals, and social behavior patterns.

One of the key findings of this paper is the multifunctionality of evaluative phraseological units: they perform not only a semantic role in conveying value judgments but also pragmatic and stylistic roles in discourse. They enhance expressiveness, colorfulness, and rhetorical strength of communication, helping speakers to position themselves, influence others, and create emotional resonance.

Furthermore, the cultural specificity of Uzbek idioms adds a unique dimension to their evaluative potential. Many of them are based on metaphors and symbolic imagery rooted in rural life, Islamic ethics, folklore, and social customs. For instance, the idea that “a guest is more honorable than one's father” is not just a phrase—it reflects a whole moral philosophy about hospitality, honor, and duty.

From a comparative perspective, while evaluative idioms exist in nearly all languages, their connotative meanings and imagery often differ, emphasizing the importance of cultural competence in translation and cross-cultural communication. Uzbek phraseology presents a rich field for exploring cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, and intercultural pragmatics.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the analysis of evaluation in Uzbek phraseological units contributes to our understanding of how language encodes values, shapes thought, and guides social interaction. It demonstrates that behind every idiom lies a worldview—a way of seeing and judging the world that is distinctly Uzbek, yet humanly universal in its emotional depth and communicative purpose. For linguists, educators, and translators alike, mastering such expressions is key to unlocking the cultural soul of the language.

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