

УЎК (УДК, UDC): 81'367

DOI:10.36078/1565759454

## MODERN APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AND THEIR NATIONAL SPECIFICS



**Nargiza Gennadevna WAHEDI**

Teacher

Department of Linguistics and Literary Studies

Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

[nargizawahedi@gmail.com](mailto:nargizawahedi@gmail.com)

### Abstract

The article presents an attempt to overview different approaches to investigate phraseological units that any researcher is bound to select when studying the national peculiarities of the phraseological system. At present, in linguistics, there are several different approaches to identifying the national-cultural component of phraseological units. The lingua- and cross-cultural approach is aimed at isolating the national characteristics of the language being studied, which were formed in accordance with the culture and traditional lifestyle of one social community; contrastive approach attempts to identify differences in phraseological units decoding the same conceptual element in several languages. The aim of the discussion in the article is also to study the linguacultural approach that focus on examining phraseological units as cultural representatives that form the collective consciousness of a particular culture. In turn, the cognitive approach explores not only linguistic knowledge but also contextual information about the image of the world. The pragmatic approach reveals the pragmatic aspect in PhUs which, in turn, allows us to consider that they also function in verbal communication both as constituents of speech acts and tools for reaching pragmatic intention.

**Keywords:** phraseological units; conceptual world picture; national world picture; linguistic world picture; linguaculturology; cultural information; religious values; pragmatic intention.

## ФРАЗЕОЛОГИК БИРЛИКЛАР ВА УЛАРНИНГ МИЛЛИЙ ХУСУСИЯТЛАРИНИ ЎРГАНИШДА ЗАМОНАВИЙ ЁНДАШУВЛАР

**Наргиза Геннадьевна ВАХЕДИ**

Ўқитувчи

Лингвистика ва адабиётшунослик кафедраси

Ўзбекистон давлат жаҳон тиллари университети

Тошкент, Ўзбекистон

[nargizawahedi@gmail.com](mailto:nargizawahedi@gmail.com)

### Аннотация

Ушбу мақола фразеологик бирликларнинг ўзига хос миллий хусусиятларини очиб бериш жараёнида деярли ҳар бир тадқиқотчи дуч келадиган назарий базани ўрганиш ва тушунишга қаратилган. Бугунги кунда тилшуносликда фразеологик бирликларнинг миллий-маданий хусусиятларини аниқлашнинг бир неча ёндашувлари мавжуд. Лингвистик-маданий ёндашув ўрганилаётган тилнинг миллий хусусиятларини ажратиш, ушбу этник гуруҳнинг маданият ва анъанавий ҳаёт тарзига мувофиқ шакллантирилган; контрастли ёндашув ягона концептуал тушунчани тасвирлаш учун турли хил тил тизимларида ишлатиладиган фразеологик бирликлардаги фарқларни аниқлашга қаратилган. Тадқиқотнинг мақсади, шунингдек, муайян этноснинг маданий ва миллий онгини шакллантирадиган фразеологик бирликларни ўрганишга қаратилган лингвокултурологик ёндашувни ўрганишдир. Ўз навбатида, когнитив ёндашув, нафақат лингвистик характерга эга билимни, балки дунё тасвирини ўз ичига қамраб олган контекстуал ахборотни ҳам ўрганиб чиқади. Прагматик ёндашув фразеологик бирликларнинг прагматик жиҳатини очиб беради, бу эса, ўз навбатида, уларнинг мулоқотда сўзлашув воситалари ҳамда прагматик ниятга эришиш воситалари сифатида қатнашишини кўриб чиқишга имкон беради.

**Калит сўзлар:** фразеологик бирликлар; дунёнинг концептуал манзараси; дунёнинг миллий манзараси; дунёнинг лисоний манзараси; лингвокултурология; маданий ахборот; диний қадриятлар; прагматик ният.

## СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ПОДХОДЫ К ИЗУЧЕНИЮ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЗМОВ И ИХ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ СПЕЦИФИКИ

**Наргиза Геннадьевна ВАХЕДИ**

Преподаватель

Кафедра лингвистики и литературоведения

Узбекский государственный университет мировых языков

Ташкент, Узбекистан

[nargizawahedi@gmail.com](mailto:nargizawahedi@gmail.com)

### Аннотация

В статье представлена попытка рассмотрения и осмысления теоретической базы современных подходов к исследованию фразеологии, с определением и выбором которых сталкивается любой исследователь при изучении национальных особенностей фразеологической системы. На сегодняшний день в лингвистике существует несколько различных подходов к выявлению национально-культурной составляющей фразеологических единиц. Лингвострановедческий подход направлен на вычленение национальных особенностей изучаемого языка, которые были сформированы в соответствии с культурой и традиционным укладом жизни носителей данного этноса; контрастивный подход нацелен на выявление различий в фразеологических единицах, декодирующих один и тот же понятийный элемент. Целью исследования в статье является также изучение лингвокултурологического подхода, направленного на рассмотрение фразеологических единиц в качестве культурных репрезентантов, которые формируют коллективное сознание определенного этноса. В свою очередь когнитивный подход исследует не только знания лингвистического характера, но и контекстуальную информацию об образе мира. Прагматический подход раскрывает прагматический аспект фразеологических единиц, который, позволяет нам считать, что они

также функционируют в вербальном общении как составляющие речевых актов и инструменты для достижения прагматической интенции.

**Ключевые слова:** фразеологические единицы; концептуальная картина мира; национальная картина мира; языковая картина мира; лингвокультурология; культурная информация; религиозные ценности; прагматическое намерение.

Language, influenced by a dynamic flow of life, cultural experiences, and day-to-day activities, is a living phenomenon. It has always been the main communicative channel among users that captures and reflects all new skills and wisdom gained by the speaking community. Continuous development of any language is conditioned by its flexibility which allows accepting new units as equal elements of linguistic resources, created in a number of ways, such as newly coined words, borrowings, compound elements, abundant use of affixes in word-formation and etc. Alongside this, language acquires its richness through bonds with culture as it is "not only the product...but also is the symbol of culture" (5, 7). Undoubtedly, language and culture mutually complement each other, and their close relatedness has produced diversity mostly on the lexical level. One of the most vivid culture-specific basics is phraseological units (PUs) since they have widely associated with the world picture and collective national outlook of native speakers. Regarded as cultural signs of a certain lingo-culture, phraseological units convey myriads of national specifics in the form of fixed knowledge about mentality, lifestyle, historical background, national identity, moral principles, customs and traditions, including religious values and beliefs; in other words, ethnic community's mental constitutive blocks that mold national world picture as a meaningful corporate whole. It is essential, therefore, to outline general basic criteria for PUs. First and foremost, PUs are syntactically inseparable elements, they are stable, fixed phrases. Secondly, from the semantic point of view, PUs attain lexical cohesion which leads to an inability to translate based on their literal meanings. Thirdly, PUs have the degree of expressiveness which is the domain of stylistics.

It is a well-known fact that the phraseological system as an independent science has been in the scope of attention not only for foreign scholars (L. P. Smith, Ch. F. Hockett), but for Russian linguists, (A. V. Kunin A. V., Vinogradov V. V., V. A. Maslova, V. N. Teliya) too. The semantic feature of phraseological units is reduced to their idiomatic character, marked by the semantic cohesion of the components and the non-translatability of their literal meanings. Thanks to the recent shift towards anthropocentric paradigm, there has been an increasing interest in phraseological system as "it is a complex representation of national outlook" (4, 84) i.e.,

peculiar features of national-specific value due to the development of cognitive sciences, cultural studies and cognitive linguistics, in particular.

Concurrently, as the phraseological system becomes a unifying theme for a number of contemporary disciplines, various approaches have been proposed to analyze national specifics of phraseological units, yet there are five of them that are recognized among the majority of linguists: *lingua* — and cross-cultural approach, contrastive approach, linguacultural approach, cognitive approach and communicative-pragmatic approach. All of them have their own set of principles including methodology and multi-level structure.

At present, *lingua*- and cross-cultural approach, mainly rests on the works of many notable linguists, namely E. M. Vereshchagin, V. G. Kostomarov, R. Lado, Ch. Friza, N. Komlev, D. Maltseva, G. Tomaxin and etc. This approach is focused on the national specifics of the target language formed throughout historical past conditioned by traditional way of life. The researches' investigations of non-equivalent elements have shown that phraseological units contain the so-called lacunar components, i.e. extra linguistic realities peculiar to one specific ethnic community. In addition, one of the prominent linguists in this field, E. A. Arsenteva (1, 7) suggests a three-stage framework for further division of PUs within this approach:

1. The first group includes PUs with the non-equivalent element, though the philosophical notion of which exists in any language. This can be exemplified by following PU "*the land of Leal*". Despite that PU "*the land of Leal*" represents the foundational belief of Christian religion — the life after death, it is almost impossible to grasp metaphorical relation, which is an inseparable part of the cultural background and perceives incorporated idea for those who do not possess sociocultural competence of Scottish community. Another example is PU "*in seventh heaven*" which clearly reflects a notion of ecstasy equaled to heavenly pleasures, and yet if a person is not familiar with Islamic conceptions, it is almost impossible to surmise the multi-level nature of heaven.

2. PUs with a nationally specific component that, in turn, is familiar not only for one particular nation but several neighboring nations as well, historically conditioned to share religious conceptions and cultural identity. For example, Irish PU, "*away with the fairies*" which people use to describe someone who is not really about life. This PU, derived from the local folklore about fairies picking people up and taking them away, nowadays is widely used throughout England, Scotland and Wales.

3. The third group contains nationally specific PUs that present a clearly historical reflection of the nation, involving unique traditions, customs, and activities. PU, "Canterbury story" rooted in literature may serve as an appropriate example meaning long and boring narrative; "*to astonish the Browns*" — to challenge socially accepted norms and stereotypes, "*to keep up with the Joneses*" — to attempt to gain priority in terms of social prestige.

It has been suggested that the linguistic research dealing with national and cultural aspects of phraseological units should focus on revealing both etymology and successive evolution in meaning. At the outset, phraseological units had denotative meanings and were used as free expressions; however, due to some advancements in households and lifestyle, they acquired additional connotations gaining idiomatic characteristics. Taking into account that cultural information is stored implicitly in phraseological units and figurative representations add supplementary options in context, as V. A. Maslova notes, the primary objective is to seek for connotations in meanings based on contextual information along with the need for national-cultural specifics to be identified (4, 82).

The lingua — cross-cultural approach analyzes the extra-linguistic factors reflected in phraseological units that do not have any equivalents in other linguistic communities. It is important to acknowledge that analyzed PUs possess non-equivalent vocabulary, i.e. cultural markers of national mentality and cultural code commonly used among native speakers that still have implicit characteristics for representatives of other cultures who are not familiar with the sociocultural competence.

The second approach in the study of PUs is based on the profound contribution of comparative studies that apply contrastive analysis as their primary method of research. A growing body of literature has examined national markers of PUs (E. M. Soloducko, A. D. Reichstein, A. V. Kunin), and it is admitted that typically the classical comparative approach mainly focuses on identifying general patterns which exist in compared languages. In the more restricted interpretation, the given approach is developed within the central tenets of structural linguistics; preliminary work in this field focused primarily on in-depth analysis of equivalent samples of PUs in different languages, revealing disparities in their national specifics. It is interesting to note that the contrastive approach, for its part, attempts to determine discrepancies in PUs that express a single denotational meaning in different linguistic systems. Let us exemplify it with the universal concept **Death** which has multiple representations in two languages. PUs in English language, *give up the ghost*, *go to heaven*, *kick the bucket* may serve as an equivalent to convey the same message in



Russian language, *отправиться к праотцам, сыграть в ящик, кончить свой век, протянуть ноги, откинуть копыта, склеить ласты*, yet with the help of other lexical units. Similarly, the notion of affluent lifestyle can be illustrated by another set of PUs involving similar semantic meaning, *как сыр в масле, купаться в роскоши/ в золоте* that are presented in English language by PUs, *live on the fat of the land, the flesh-pots of Egypt, the land flowing with milk and honey, loaves and fishes*, both sets of PUs define the state of complete well-being. Contrastive markers are observed in the following lexical pairs, *ghost, heaven, bucket — праотцы, ящик, век, ноги, копыта, ласты; fat, flesh-pots, milk, and honey, loaves, and fishes — сыр, малина, золото, роскошь*. It is notable that the selection of lexical units in the process of formation of PUs in contrasted languages, largely conditioned by the surrounding environment. The contrastive approach reveals equal samples of phraseological units and their different representations on all levels of analyzed languages.

Recent trends in the anthropocentric paradigm have led to a proliferation of human factor in linguistic researches that gradually formed the third, namely linguacultural approach to the study of PUs. The linguacultural approach is oriented "to examine the correspondence in PUs and cultural signifiers which mirror the system that includes etalons, stereotypes, symbols and etc. so that national specific features could be defined" (9, 79). As provided by this approach, PUs are cultural representatives, that shape individual perception marked by national specifics along with building the collective mentality of a particular nation. Following an in-depth and thorough investigation of the issue scholars V. V. Vorobyov, V. I. Karasik, O. I. Kourova, V. V. Krasnykh, E. I. Sheigal, V. A. Buryakovskaya have claimed that linguacultural approach appears to be the most effective and comprehensive in essence, allowing researches to study PUs in a complex way, as the latter has always been one of the most problematic and challenging phenomena of the language system. Based on close interaction of culture and language, this approach aims at eliciting cascades of culture-marked material which includes national values, customs and traditions, the speaking manners, social behavioral patterns, daily experiences, historical background and environmental conditions, the entire complex that constitutes first, conceptual world picture, which in turn, is verbalized partially in linguistic world picture. The main unit of linguacultural analysis is "linguacultureme — dialectical unity of linguistic and extra-linguistic (conceptual and objective) content" coined by a prominent linguist V. V. Vorobyev.

However, at present scholars have concerns about not only the current status of linguaculturology whether it is an independent discipline or a branch of linguistics but also about methods of linguacultural research. It is generally accepted that linguacultural approach is designed to identify culturally significant content based on available language material manifested in discourse. Contemporary analysis attempt to reveal culturally specific information that reflects the national identity of a particular ethnicity. The study of PUs along with parameological system help to gain deeper insight into the national background and better understand the collective mentality.

Drawing on an extensive range of cultural markers, a number of researchers set out the different ways to study PUs. Accordingly, a prominent contemporary scholar D. O. Dobrovolskiy established two directions in this field: comparative and introspective. Comparative approach strives to reveal semantic peculiar characteristics in a non-equivalent lexicon, specifically, words, lacunas, and ethnic-lexemes; while introspective method investigates national mindset through subjective image-perception of native speakers of the given language resulted in empirical data collected by means of oral questioning, and interviewing (6, 41). Another approach to studying the national labeling of phraseological units was proposed by scholar V. G. Gak: objective and subjective. An objective approach incorporates the characteristic features of a given culture, i.e., without equal elements in vocabulary. The subjective approach investigates single concept interpretations in different communities (3, 55). The task of linguacultural approach is to identify and interpret nationally specific concepts, analyze associative links;

The cognitive approach has also received much attention over the last two decades. It is essential that cognitive linguistics own unique methodological foundation, which can be applied in the process of phraseological analysis. From the cognitive perspective, PUs are regarded as a "micro-text". A number of researchers, (V. Z. Demyankov, S. M. Pankratov, Y. S. Kubryakova) hold the view that the process of decoding the implicit information in PUs, require an extensive linguistic knowledge in line with sociocultural competence, in other words, contextual information about world picture, social and cultural aspects of social life, mental understanding of speech production and perception on a verbal level. Thus, in cognitive approach language and its units present cognitive mechanism which stores, processes and transforms different types of data and, in turn, characterized by systematic, multi-level structure and semiotic representation. In this connection, it is appropriate to mention the groundbreaking considerations of a prominent linguist Jerry

Fodor. The researcher points out that "human mental processes including the basic understanding of speech production and perception implemented via mental representatives which considered to be in the role of mediators" (7, 109). In addition, linguist M. L. Kovshova claims that the process of interpretation of PUs is complex and has a multi-level structure. The first layer offers a conventional understanding of PUs through fundamental cultural knowledge involving archetypical forms of mentality and world picture, in particular. The second layer deals with correlations between images of PUs and cultural codes, i.e. anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, somatic and so on. The third layer of cognitive-cultural interpretation determines what types can be assigned to PUs in the description process of world picture; it can be the role of symbol, etalon or stereotype (8, 87). Moreover, from a cognitive perspective, PUs are analyzed on the basis of various concepts which overlap their conceptual zones. Due to that, the cognitive approach is applied in the phraseological analysis of cultural specifics via mental process; as a result, peculiar features of national world picture, cultural connotations along with extra-linguistic factors are revealed. The cognitive approach aims to analyze peculiar characteristics of national outlook and its reflection in CWP as well as LWP along with conceptual zones of PUs.

The last approach to the study of PUs is the communicative-pragmatic approach which has been the basis in the domain of pragma-linguistics. Regarding the fact that external signs have traditionally been considered as categorical signs of phraseological units, the progressive direction of this approach is that it deals mainly with implicit pragmatic features of PUs, which could be used as distinctive patterns for the further development of theoretical grounds of the phraseological system. Since the contemporary linguistic community has accepted the fact that PUs contain pragmatic aspect, it allows us to consider that they also function in verbal communication both as constituents of speech acts and tools for reaching pragmatic intention. From the perspective of communicative-pragmatic approach linguists (V. N. Teliya, L. Y. Krutikova, A. M. Emirova, A. V. Kunin), have investigated the communicative nature of PUs, peculiarities of the communicative-pragmatic situation, pragmatic intention of speech acts, reasons and factors that contribute to the selection of PUs while speaking, shifts and alternations in structural composition of speech acts when PUs are incorporated instead of ordinary words, pragmatic potential of PUs and etc. According to D. U. Ashurova the pragmatic effectiveness of PUs' application is attained only when mutual understanding between the addresser and the addressee is achieved, the goal of the pragmatic intention is reached along with maintaining balanced relations (2, 67). Also, the pragmatic aspect in PUs is



accounted for by the fact that they are charged with strong evaluative, emotive, and expressive characteristics which in turn, outweigh ordinary words. By way of example, in the pragmatic meaning of PUs, an assessment of the attitude towards others, the social superiority of the communicants can be implied. The contextual situation is as follows, "*I can't stand your holier-than-thou attitude on some of the employees*"; the addresser in the dialogue with the addressee expresses his/her condescending attitude towards a certain type of people who behave themselves as if they were in a more superior position concerning moral issues. Thus, the choice of PUs is often due to the need to characterize the evaluative component in the speech acts. Another illustration is PU "*all brawn and no brain*". The contextual situation is "*He's an impressive player to watch, but he's all brawn and no brain*"; the pragmatic focus of this example is realized in the manifestation of diverse expressive and evaluative relations of the subject of speech. The informative component being evaluated conveys the idea about a person who is very strong but at the same time is not intelligent enough. So, the communicative-pragmatic approach functions as a valuable asset in the study of phraseology permit us to find a solution to many issues related to the operation of phraseological units in language.

Thus, humans communicate their associations through the process of mental cognitive mechanism, so that mental images of their prior experience gradually develop into stable expressions in the language, the latter being the product of human active thinking ability. Suffice it to mention, that it is not always possible to explain the meaning of some phraseological units by means of translation; for this reason, sociocultural competence is of paramount importance in the process of enclosing symbolic meanings and interpretation of cultural specifics. The pragmatic component of phraseological meaning is, in our opinion, one of the most important distinguishing features of phraseological units, which characterizes the essence of a given language unit.

In the framework of the anthropocentric paradigm we may outline a substantial outcome of the five approaches to the study of PUs and their cultural identity:

1. PUs play significant role in the language, they are considered to be inseparable constituents of CWP and LWP and the cultural signs that represent the collective mentality of a certain community;
2. Contemporary linguists have developed several approaches to the study of PUs, such as the lingua — cross-cultural approach, the contrastive approach, the linguacultural approach, the cognitive approach and the pragmatic approach.

3. All the above-mentioned approaches focused on the investigation of PUs and their national-specifics; they possess mutually complementary nature and united around single purpose. The researches may select and use the approaches separately or they can combine them with one another depending on the aim of a study.

In spite of some differences, the aforementioned approaches to the analysis of PUs are oriented to investigate phraseological constituents of language and reveal their national specifics. The complex implementation of the discussed approaches leads to complete research in the phraseological system of a language in terms of both semantic and structural organization of national specifics of PUs.

#### LIST OF USED LITERATURE

1. Арсентьева Е. Ф. Фразеология и фразеография в сопоставительном аспекте// Казан. гос. ун-та им. В. И. Ульянова-Ленина. — Казань, 2006. — 171 с.
2. Ashurova D. U., Galieva M. R. *Stylistics of Literary Text*. — Tashkent, Turon-Iqbol, 2016. — 203 p.
3. Гак, В. Г. Особенности библейских фразеологизмов в русском языке (в сопоставлении с французскими библеизмами) / В. Г. Гак // Вопросы языкознания. 1997. - № 5. — С. 55-65.
4. Галиева М. Р. Отражение религиозной картины мира в художественном тексте// Вестник Национального университета Узбекистана. — Ташкент, 2013, № 4. С. 83-87.
5. Gleason, H. S. Jr., (1961). *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics*// New Delhi. — Oxford and IBH Publishing Company, 1961. — 176 с.
6. Добровольский Д. О. Национально-культурная специфика во фразеологии// Вопросы языкознания. 1997. — № 6. — С. 37-48.
7. Fodor, J. A. *The Language of Thought*// Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 1975, — 237 с.
8. Ковшова М. Л. Идиома как культурный текст// Фразеология и миропонимание народа. Материалы Международной научной конференции. — Тула: Тульский государственный педагогический университет им. Л. Н. Толстого, — 2002. С. 29-34.
9. Маслова В. А. Когнитивная лингвистика. — Минск: Тетра Системс, 2004. — 256 с.

#### REFERENCES

1. Arsent'eva E. F. *Frazeologija i frazeografija v sopostavitel'nom aspekte* (Phraseology and Phraseography in the comparative aspect), Kazan', 2006, pp. 171.
2. Ashurova D. U., Galieva M. R. *Stylistics of Literary Text*, Tashkent: Turon-Iqbol, 2016, pp. 203.
3. Gak, V. G., *Voprosy jazykoznanija*, 1997, No 5, pp. 55-65.
4. Galieva M. R., *Vestnik Nacional'nogo universiteta Uzbekistana*, 2013, No 4, pp. 83-87.
5. Gleason, H. S. Jr. *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics*, New Delhi: Oxford and IBH Publishing Company, 1961, pp. 176.
6. Dobrovol'skij D. O., *Voprosy jazykoznanija*, 1997, № 6, pp. 37-48.
7. Fodor, J. A., *The Language of Thought*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975, pp. 237.

8. Kovshova M. L., *Frazeologija i miroponimanie naroda, Materialy Mezhdunarodnoj nauchnoj konferencii* (Phraseology and nations' mentality, International Scientific Conference proceedings), Tula, Tul'skij gosudarstvennyj pedagogicheskij universitet im. L. N. Tolstogo, 2002, pp. 29-34.
9. Maslova V. A. *Kognitivnaja lingvistika* (Cognitive Linguistics), Minsk: Tetra Sistems, 2004, pp. 256.