

## PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH ANIMALISTIC VOCABULARY

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**Abstract.** This study explores the rich diversity of phraseological units containing animalistic vocabulary in English and Kazakh, highlighting their linguistic and cultural significance. Phraseological units featuring animalistic vocabulary serve as a bridge between human traits and animal characteristics, reflecting centuries-old observations embedded in language. These expressions symbolize diligence (bee, ant), cunning (fox), or ferocity and greed (wolf), demonstrating how different cultures conceptualize human behavior through metaphorical associations with animals. The comparative linguacultural analysis reveals three main types of interlanguage relationships, such as full equivalence, partial similarity, and cultural distinctions. The findings contribute to phraseological studies by identifying the semantic nuances of animal metaphors across languages. The theoretical value of this research lies in its contribution to cross-linguistic and cultural studies, while its practical value includes applications in translation, intercultural communication, and language learning. Understanding these idiomatic expressions enhances linguistic competence and deepens cultural awareness, fostering more nuanced communication across languages.

**Key words:** phraseological units, animalistic vocabulary, language and culture, intercultural communication, symbolism.

### Introduction

The phraseology of any nation vividly reflects its national style, characteristics, identity, and cultural mentality. If these linguistic units were lost over time, disappeared from use, and failed to reach the present, a significant part of the nation's heritage would be lost along with them. The phraseological fund widely represents the national cultural landscape, as words, proverbs, aphorisms, and set expressions within a particular nation reflect its mentality and core values. Due to their semantic integrity, stability in usage, and originality, phraseological units are passed down from generation to generation, maintaining their relevance. They serve as a unique testament to the life and history of a nation.

Phraseological units featuring animalistic vocabulary serve as an additional visual tool for broadening linguistic and cultural perspectives. These expressions have emerged from centuries of human observation of animal behavior and habits, later metaphorically linked to human traits. As a result, certain animals have become symbolic of specific characteristics: the bee and the ant represent diligence, the fox embodies cunning, while the wolf is associated with ferocity and greed. Animalistic vocabulary consists of words derived from animal names, while zoomorphisms refer to animal-related terms used metaphorically to describe human characteristics and behavior. Their meanings are realized within phraseological units, shaping cultural and linguistic expression [1, 13].

### Materials and methods of research

This study employs a comparative and linguacultural approach to analyze phraseological units containing animalistic vocabulary in English and Kazakh. The research is based on comparative and linguacultural analysis. The study identifies phraseological units with animalistic vocabulary in both languages and examines their semantic equivalence, partial similarity, or cultural divergence. It also explores how the cultural, historical, and environmental contexts of English and Kazakh influence the perception of animal symbolism. By applying these methods, the study aims to reveal how phraseological units with animalistic components reflect cultural worldviews and linguistic diversity. The findings will contribute to intercultural communication, phraseological research, and translation studies.

The primary sources for this study include dictionaries of phraseological units in English and Kazakh, which provide established idiomatic expressions and their meanings. Folklore, proverbs, and literary texts were as additional materials for understanding the evolution and cultural significance of animal-related idioms.

### **Results and its discussion**

Animalistic vocabulary holds a significant place in a language's overall lexicon and serves as a unique and valuable subject for research. This linguistic layer functions as a cultural code for a particular people, as the animal world is deeply intertwined with human life and shaped by both linguistic and extralinguistic factors. These factors include geographical, historical, national, and cultural characteristics. Speakers use animal-related vocabulary not only to describe everyday situations but also as a literary device, drawing comparisons between human life and animal behavior. O. V. Lavrova classifies the entire lexical and semantic group of "animal names" under the broader category of animalistic vocabulary [2, 6]. Animalistic vocabulary, as an element of the animalistic code, plays a key role in identifying the unique characteristics of a particular culture and language. Throughout history, animals have held symbolic significance in different societies, shaping idiomatic expressions and proverbs that reflect a nation's worldview, values, and traditions. These phraseological units often serve as a linguistic bridge between human qualities and animal traits, allowing speakers to express complex ideas concisely and vividly. In this study, we conducted a comparative and linguacultural analysis of English phraseological units containing animalistic vocabulary, comparing them with their Kazakh counterparts. «Interlanguage comparisons reveal three main types of relations – identity, incomplete identity, and differences» [3, 24]. These relations influence three aspects of phraseological units:

1. The figurative basis – the underlying metaphor or image associated with the phrase.
2. The component composition – the specific words or elements making up the phrase.
3. The actual meaning – the idiomatic or cultural interpretation of the phrase.

When comparing English and Kazakh phraseological units, it is essential to consider both the three types of interlanguage relations and the three aspects of phraseological signs [4, 57]. We can give the following examples of animalistic vocabulary:

#### **1. Identity (Full Equivalence)**

Some phraseological units in both languages convey the same meaning and are based on the same figurative image. For example, the equivalent of the English «As sly as a fox» is «Tülkidei ailaker». Both cultures associate foxes with cunning and deception.

Kazakh: «Tülkidei bulañdau» – literally: «To be cunning like a fox» – meaning to be sly or deceptive [5]. English: «Cunning as a fox». Meaning: Extremely clever and deceitful. Both cultures associate foxes with intelligence and trickery.

«An old wolf» – «käri qasqyr», means “an experienced, skilled person with a lot of experience and knowledge».

«If you lie down with dogs, you will get up with fleas» – «zamanyñ tülki bolsa, tazy bolyp şal» means «warning about the consequences of careless actions or entering dangerous situations» [6].

#### **2. Incomplete Identity (Partial Similarity)**

Some phraseological units share a similar meaning but differ in the animal used for comparison.

English: «To be as busy as a bee» – to be very hardworking and active.

Kazakh: «Qūmyrsqadaı eñbekqor» – «as hardworking as an ant» in Kazakh, reflecting the cultural preference for ants as symbols of diligence [5].

English: «To be a chicken» – to be afraid or cowardly [6].

Kazakh: «Qoian jürek» – «rabbit-hearted», where the rabbit rather than the chicken represents cowardice in Kazakh culture [5].

#### **3. Differences (Cultural Distinctions)**

Some phraseological units do not have direct equivalents because they reflect unique cultural

English: «A dark horse» – someone who is secretive or unexpectedly successful [6].

Kazakh: There is no direct equivalent, though «jabaiy, asau jylqy» («wild horse») is sometimes used metaphorically.

Kazakh: «Attyñ jaly, tüieniñ qomynda» – literally: «On the horse's mane, on the camel's hump» – meaning being in a difficult or uncertain situation [5].

English: «Don't look a gift horse in the mouth». Meaning: Don't question the value of a gift [6]. Horses are highly valued in Kazakh culture, symbolizing freedom, wealth, and strength. In English, horses often represent power, reliability, and status.

Kazakh: «İt ölgen jer» – literally: «A place where a dog has died» – meaning a remote or deserted location [5].

English: «Let sleeping dogs lie». Meaning: Avoid bringing up past conflicts [6]. In both languages, dogs appear in idioms with both positive and negative connotations, symbolizing loyalty and hardship alike.

Kazakh: «Qasqyrdy qanşa baqsañ da, ormanğa qarap ūlidy» – literally: «No matter how you raise a wolf, it will howl at the forest» – meaning a person's nature cannot be changed [5].

English: «A wolf in sheep's clothing». Meaning: A deceptive person who appears harmless [6]. Wolves are viewed as cunning and dangerous in both languages, though Kazakh idioms often emphasize the inevitability of one's true nature.

Kazakh: «Mysyqqa oıyn, tyşqanğa ölım» – literally: «A game for the cat, death for the mouse» – meaning what is fun for one can be harmful to another [5].

English: «Curiosity killed the cat». Meaning: Being overly inquisitive can lead to trouble [6]. Cats symbolize independence, mystery, and playfulness in both languages, but their idioms can have different implications.

Phraseological units with animalistic vocabulary can be classified based on several criteria, including their semantic, structural, and functional characteristics.

According to semantic classification:

• **Idiomatic Expressions:** These expressions have a figurative meaning that cannot be deduced from the individual meanings of the words. For example:

«Crocodile tears» – insincere sorrow,

«To let the cat out of the bag» – to reveal a secret.

• **Comparative Idioms:** These units express similarities between humans and animals in terms of behavior or characteristics. Examples include:

«As sly as a fox» – very cunning,

«As busy as a bee» – very hardworking.

• **Proverbial Expressions:** These often contain moral lessons or wisdom, such as:  
«A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush» – having something certain is better than taking a risk for more.

«When the cat's away, the mice will play» – people will take advantage of the absence of authority.

According to structural classification:

• **Verbal Phrases:** These include a verb and an animal-related noun, such as:

«To smell a rat» – to suspect something,

«To have butterflies in one's stomach» – to feel nervous.

• **Nominal Phrases:** These consist of nouns and adjectives, for example:

«A dark horse» – an unknown or mysterious person,

«A lone wolf» – someone who prefers solitude.

• **Adjectival Phrases:** These describe a person or situation metaphorically, such as:

«Dog-tired» – extremely exhausted,

Animals have been a source of inspiration for idioms and proverbs in many cultures. In Kazakh, which has strong nomadic traditions, animals often symbolize life experiences and wisdom derived from nature. English, with its agrarian and industrial history, also attributes various characteristics to animals, some of which align with Kazakh perspectives, while others differ significantly.

Despite cultural differences, many phraseological units in Kazakh and English share common themes. The symbolism of animals as representatives of human qualities, such as loyalty (dogs), cunningness (foxes), or wild nature (wolves), is universal. However, some expressions are unique to each culture, reflecting historical backgrounds and lifestyles. For example, Kazakh idioms often emphasize nomadic life and nature, whereas English idioms frequently draw from agrarian and urban experiences.

The symbolic meanings of animalistic phraseological units reflect a broad spectrum of characteristics, including:

1. Physical properties – strength, speed, agility, clumsiness (e.g., as strong as an ox).
2. Appearance – beauty, unattractiveness, size (as proud as a peacock; aqquдай sūlu – «beautiful like a swan»).
3. Mental traits – intelligence, wisdom, foolishness (as wise as an owl; tülkınıñ qulyğy – qyryq – «a fox has forty tricks»).
4. Behavioral qualities – cunning, cowardice, laziness (as sly as a fox; tülkınıñ qūiryğyn bұлғағаны – aılası – «a fox wagging its tail is a trick»).
5. Habits and skills – hard work, perseverance (to work like a horse; qūmyrsqadaı eñbekqor – «as hardworking as an ant»).

These phraseological units gain their meaning through the figurative interpretation of their structural components. Rather than being direct descriptions, they rely on metaphorical associations that reflect cultural perceptions of specific animals.

### **Conclusion**

Animalistic phraseological units serve as more than just linguistic expressions – they are a reflection of cultural identity, history, and worldview. The comparative analysis of English and Kazakh phraseology reveals both universal patterns and unique cultural perspectives. While some animal metaphors remain consistent across languages, others diverge due to cultural, environmental, and historical influences.

By studying these phraseological units, we gain a deeper understanding of how different societies perceive the natural world and how these perceptions shape language over time. The presence of animal symbolism in idioms and proverbs demonstrates the enduring connection between human thought, linguistic creativity, and the rich world of nature.

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## АНИМАЛИСТИК ЛЕКСИКАСЫ БАР ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЯЛЫҚ БІРЛІКТЕР



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**Андатпа.** Бұл зерттеу ағылшын және қазақ тілдеріндегі анималистік лексикасы бар фразеологиялық бірліктердің бай алуан түрлілігін зерттеп, олардың тілдік және мәдени маңыздылығын көрсетеді. Анималистік лексикасы бар фразеологиялық бірліктер тілге енген ғасырлар бойғы бақылауларды көрсете отырып, адамның қасиеттері мен жануарлардың ерекшеліктері арасындағы көпір қызметін атқарады. Бұл өрнектер еңбекқорлықты (ара, құмырсқа), айлакерлікті (түлкі) немесе қатыгездік пен ашкөздікті (қасқыр) бейнелейді. Сонымен қатар, әртүрлі мәдениеттердің жануарлармен метафоралық ассоциациялар арқылы адамның мінез-құлқын қалай тұжырымдайтынын көрсетеді. Салыстырмалы лингвомәдени талдау толық эквиваленттілік, ішінара ұқсастық және мәдени айырмашылықтар сияқты тілаларлық қатынастардың үш негізгі түрін анықтайды. Нәтижелер әртүрлі тілдердегі жануарлар метафораларының семантикалық нюанстарын анықтау арқылы фразеологиялық зерттеулерге ықпал етеді. Бұл зерттеудің теориялық құндылығы оның тілаларлық және мәдениеттануға қосқан үлесінде, ал практикалық құндылығы аударма, мәдениетаралық коммуникация және тіл үйренудегі қосымшаларды қамтиды. Осы идиомалық тіркестерді түсіну тілдік құзыреттілікті арттырады және мәдени сананы тереңдетеді, тілдер арасындағы қарым-қатынасты дамытады.

**Түйін сөздер:** фразеологиялық бірліктер, анималистік лексика, тіл және мәдениет, мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынас, символизм.

## ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЗМЫ С АНИМАЛИСТИЧЕСКОЙ ЛЕКСИКОЙ

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**Аннотация.** Это исследование исследует богатое разнообразие фразеологических единиц, содержащих анималистическую лексику, в английском и казахском языках, подчеркивая их лингвистическое и культурное значение. Фразеологические единицы, содержащие анималистическую лексику, служат связующим звеном между человеческими чертами и характеристиками животных, отражая многовековые наблюдения, заложенные в языке. Эти выражения символизируют трудолюбие (пчела, муравей), хитрость (лиса) или свирепость и жадность (волк), демонстрируя, как различные культуры концептуализируют поведение человека посредством метафорических

ассоциаций с животными. Сравнительный лингвокультурологический анализ выявляет три основных типа межъязыковых связей, таких как полная эквивалентность, частичное сходство и культурные различия. Полученные результаты способствуют проведению фразеологических исследований, выявляя семантические нюансы метафор животных в разных языках. Теоретическая ценность этого исследования заключается в его вкладе в кросс-лингвистические и культурологические исследования, в то время как его практическая ценность заключается в применении в области перевода, межкультурной коммуникации и изучения языка. Понимание этих идиоматических выражений повышает лингвистическую компетентность и углубляет культурную осведомленность, способствуя более тонкому межъязыковому общению.

**Ключевые слова:** фразеологические единицы, анималистическая лексика, язык и культура, межкультурная коммуникация, символика.