

A COMPARATIVE SEMANTIC AND LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF ANIMAL-BASED IDIOMS IN ENGLISH, RUSSIAN AND UZBEK

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Abstract. This article presents a comparative semantic and linguocultural analysis of animal-based idioms in English, Russian, and Uzbek. The study aims to identify the common and culture-specific semantic, evaluative, and figurative features of phraseological units containing animal names and to determine how national worldviews are reflected through such idioms. The research employs comparative, semantic, componential, linguocultural, and contextual methods of analysis. The analysis demonstrates that animal-based idioms constitute an important component of the phraseological systems of all three languages, while their figurative meanings are significantly influenced by the historical, cultural, social, and traditional experiences of their speakers. Particular attention is paid to the representation of such concepts as intelligence, stupidity, courage, cowardice, greed, laziness, diligence, deceit, and strength. The findings reveal both universal metaphorical associations and language-specific semantic interpretations. Although certain animals demonstrate similar symbolic meanings across English, Russian, and Uzbek, the degree of their positive or negative evaluation and the contexts of their use may differ substantially. The study concludes that animal-based idioms provide valuable linguistic evidence for understanding the interaction between language, culture, and collective conceptualization of reality. The results may contribute to comparative phraseology, linguocultural studies, translation studies, and foreign-language teaching.

Keywords: animal-based idioms, phraseology, comparative analysis, semantics, linguocultural analysis, metaphor, national worldview, English, Russian, Uzbek, phraseological units.

INGLIZ, RUS VA O'ZBEK TILLARIDA HAYVONLAR BILAN BOG'LIQ FRAZEOLIGIZMLARNING QIYOSIY SEMANTIK VA LINGVOMADANIY TAHLILI

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada ingliz, rus va o'zbek tillaridagi hayvon nomlari asosida shakllangan frazeologik birliklarning qiyosiy-semantik va lingvomadaniy xususiyatlari tadqiq etiladi. Tadqiqotning asosiy maqsadi hayvon komponentli frazeologizmlarning umumiy va milliy-madaniy jihatdan o'ziga xos semantik, baholovchi hamda obrazli xususiyatlarini aniqlash, shuningdek, mazkur birliklarda xalqning milliy dunyoqarashi va borliqni konseptual idrok etish usullarining aks etishini ochib berishdan iborat. Tadqiqotda qiyosiy, semantik, komponent tahlili, lingvomadaniy va kontekstual tahlil metodlaridan foydalanildi. Tahlil natijalari hayvon nomlari asosidagi frazeologizmlar uchala tilning frazeologik tizimida ham muhim qatlamni tashkil etishini, biroq ularning ko'chma va obrazli ma'nolari muayyan xalqning tarixiy, madaniy, ijtimoiy hamda an'anaviy tajribasi bilan chambarchas bog'liqligini ko'rsatdi. Tadqiqotda aql-zakovat, nodonlik, jasorat, qo'rqqoqlik, ochko'zlik, dangasalik, mehnatsevarlik, ayyorlik va kuch kabi konseptlarning hayvon obrazlari orqali ifodalanishiga alohida e'tibor qaratildi. Natijalar ayrim hayvonlarning ingliz, rus va o'zbek tillarida o'xshash ramziy ma'nolarni ifodalashini, shu bilan birga, ularning ijobiy yoki salbiy baholanish darajasi hamda qo'llanish konteksti tillararo sezilarli farqlanishini ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot xulosalariga ko'ra, hayvon komponentli frazeologizmlar til va madaniyatning o'zaro munosabati, shuningdek, jamiyatning borliqni kollektiv konseptuallashtirish xususiyatlarini o'rganishda muhim lingvistik manba hisoblanadi. Tadqiqot natijalari qiyosiy frazeologiya, lingvomadaniyatshunoslik, tarjimashunoslik va xorijiy tillarni o'qitish metodikasi uchun nazariy va amaliy ahamiyatga ega.

Kalit so'zlar: hayvon nomlari asosidagi frazeologizmlar, frazeologiya, qiyosiy tahlil, semantika, lingvomadaniy tahlil, metafora, milliy dunyoqarash, ingliz tili, rus tili, o'zbek tili, frazeologik birliklar.

СРАВНИТЕЛЬНО-СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЙ И ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЗМОВ, СВЯЗАННЫХ С ЖИВОТНЫМИ, В АНГЛИЙСКОМ, РУССКОМ И УЗБЕКСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ

Аннотация. В статье представлен сравнительно-семантический и лингвокультурологический анализ фразеологических единиц с компонентом-зоонимом в английском, русском и узбекском языках. Цель исследования

заключается в выявлении общих и национально-специфических семантических, оценочных и образных характеристик зоонимических фразеологизмов, а также в определении особенностей отражения национальной картины мира в их семантической структуре. В исследовании применяются сравнительно-сопоставительный, семантический, компонентный, лингвокультурологический и контекстуальный методы анализа. Результаты исследования показывают, что фразеологизмы с названиями животных представляют собой значимый пласт фразеологической системы всех трёх языков, однако их переносные значения во многом обусловлены историческим, культурным, социальным и традиционным опытом соответствующих языковых сообществ. Особое внимание уделяется репрезентации таких концептов, как интеллект, глупость, храбрость, трусость, жадность, лень, трудолюбие, хитрость и сила посредством образов животных. Выявлено сочетание универсальных метафорических моделей и национально-культурной специфики их семантической интерпретации. Несмотря на наличие сходных символических значений отдельных зоонимов в английском, русском и узбекском языках, степень их положительной или отрицательной оценки, а также особенности контекстуального употребления могут существенно различаться. Сделан вывод о том, что зоонимические фразеологизмы являются важным источником изучения взаимосвязи языка и культуры, национального мировосприятия и коллективной концептуализации действительности. Полученные результаты могут быть использованы в исследованиях сравнительной фразеологии, лингвокультурологии, переводоведения и методики преподавания иностранных языков.

Ключевые слова: зоонимические фразеологизмы, фразеология, сопоставительный анализ, семантика, лингвокультурология, метафора, национальная картина мира, английский язык, русский язык, узбекский язык, фразеологические единицы.

Introduction. Language is not merely a system of communication but also a means through which communities conceptualize, categorize, and transmit their cultural experience. This relationship becomes particularly evident in phraseology, where conventionalized expressions preserve culturally significant knowledge, historical experience, social values, and patterns of collective perception. Idioms, as fixed figurative expressions, frequently possess meanings that cannot be fully derived from the literal meanings of their individual components. Consequently, their interpretation requires consideration not only of linguistic structure and semantics but also of the cultural knowledge underlying their formation and use. Dobrovol'skiy and Piirainen emphasize that conventional figurative units operate simultaneously at literal and figurative conceptual levels, making them particularly significant for cross-cultural and cross-linguistic research.

Among the various groups of phraseological units, animal-based idioms occupy a distinctive position because animal names, or zoonyms, frequently function as carriers of figurative, evaluative, and culturally motivated meanings. Human societies have historically observed animal appearance, behavior, physical characteristics, and relationships with humans, resulting in the development of metaphorical associations between animals and human qualities. Thus, animals may be linguistically associated with such characteristics as intelligence, stupidity, courage, cowardice, strength, weakness, greed, laziness, loyalty, deceit, or diligence. These associations, however, are not necessarily universal. The same animal may evoke positive, negative, or ambivalent evaluations in different linguistic communities depending on their historical experience, cultural traditions, religious beliefs, geographical environment, and social practices.

The study of animal-based phraseological units is therefore closely connected with the investigation of the linguistic worldview. Phraseological expressions with zoonymic components have been shown to reflect national identity, cultural and historical experience, and culturally specific ways of conceptualizing reality. Comparative research on English and Uzbek phraseology, for example, demonstrates the coexistence of universal and culture-specific patterns in the metaphorical representation of animals. Similarly, recent research on Russian and Uzbek zoonymic phraseological units emphasizes their role in representing intellectual, emotional, moral, and behavioral characteristics and identifies both common and nationally specific patterns of figurative interpretation.

The relevance of a comparative study of English, Russian, and Uzbek animal-based idioms is determined by the considerable linguistic and cultural differences between these languages. English belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family, Russian represents the East Slavic branch of the Indo-European family, whereas Uzbek belongs to the Turkic language family. Despite these genetic and historical differences, all three languages employ animal imagery as a productive means of describing human behavior and character. This parallel provides an opportunity to distinguish between metaphorical associations that may reflect broadly shared human experience and those that are determined by the cultural and historical development of a particular speech community.

Previous studies have established the importance of zoonymic phraseology in comparative linguistics and linguocultural studies. Research on English and Uzbek idiomatic expressions indicates that animal-based phraseological units can share common conceptual meanings while differing in their structural realization, semantic nuances, and cultural connotations. Studies of English, Russian, and other languages within the broader framework of conventional figurative language have likewise demonstrated that figurative expressions are influenced by both conceptual mechanisms and culture-specific knowledge. Dobrovol'skiy and Piirainen's cross-linguistic research, which includes English and Russian among the languages examined, demonstrates the importance of analyzing figurative units in relation to the conceptual and cultural knowledge that motivates their meanings.

At the same time, the existing literature reveals a research gap. A considerable number of studies focus on the comparison of zoonymic phraseological units between two languages, particularly English and Uzbek or Russian and

Uzbek. Although such studies provide valuable evidence concerning linguistic and cultural similarities and differences, a systematic three-way comparison of English, Russian, and Uzbek animal-based idioms from both semantic and linguocultural perspectives remains insufficiently explored. A tripartite analysis makes it possible to examine not only direct similarities and differences between language pairs but also more complex patterns of convergence, divergence, semantic shift, and cultural evaluation across all three linguistic systems.

The semantic analysis of animal-based idioms is particularly important because the meaning of a zoonymic expression frequently extends beyond the denotative meaning of the animal name itself. The figurative meaning may involve additional evaluative and emotional components that have become conventionalized within a particular linguistic community. For example, an animal associated with strength in one cultural tradition may acquire connotations of stubbornness or aggressiveness in another. Therefore, identifying semantic equivalents alone is insufficient for establishing genuine phraseological correspondence. The analysis must also consider connotation, evaluative orientation, metaphorical motivation, contextual usage, and culturally determined associations.

The linguocultural dimension of the present study is based on the assumption that idioms encode culturally significant knowledge and contribute to the representation of a community's worldview. Recent comparative research confirms that zoonymic phraseological units reflect cultural values, beliefs, social norms, and historically established perceptions of the relationship between humans and animals. Consequently, the comparison of animal-based idioms can reveal how different linguistic communities categorize human qualities through animal imagery and which characteristics are culturally emphasized or evaluated positively and negatively.

The practical significance of investigating such expressions is also associated with translation, intercultural communication, and foreign-language teaching. Animal-based idioms often present difficulties for learners and translators because literal translation may preserve the lexical components while failing to reproduce the figurative meaning and cultural connotations of the source expression. Comparative knowledge of phraseological correspondences and divergences can therefore contribute to more accurate translation strategies and improve learners' intercultural and phraseological competence. Research on English and Uzbek idioms similarly highlights the importance of cultural competence in interpreting and translating zoonymic expressions.

Against this background, the present study aims to provide a comparative semantic and linguocultural analysis of animal-based idioms in English, Russian, and Uzbek. The study focuses on identifying common and culture-specific semantic features, examining the evaluative and connotative meanings of zoonymic components, and determining how animal imagery represents human qualities and culturally established concepts in the three languages. Particular attention is given to the relationship between literal animal characteristics and their conventionalized figurative interpretations.

Literature review. The study of idioms and phraseological units has occupied an important position in modern linguistics because such expressions represent a complex interaction between lexical meaning, figurative conceptualization, cultural knowledge, and conventional language use. In phraseological research, scholars have approached idioms from structural, semantic, cognitive, pragmatic, and linguocultural perspectives. These approaches provide an essential theoretical foundation for investigating animal-based idioms in English, Russian, and Uzbek.

One of the influential approaches to phraseology is associated with the study of idiomaticity and fixed expressions. Fernando (1996), in *Idioms and Idiomacity*, considers idioms as an important category of multiword expressions and emphasizes their fixedness, semantic specialization, and functional diversity. From this perspective, idiomatic meaning cannot always be explained through a simple combination of the meanings of individual lexical components. This observation is particularly relevant to animal-based idioms because the literal meaning of a zoonym does not necessarily correspond to the figurative meaning acquired by the entire expression. Thus, the semantic interpretation of an idiom containing an animal name requires attention to the conventional meaning established within a particular linguistic community.

Moon (1998), in *Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English: A Corpus-Based Approach*, examines fixed expressions from a corpus-based perspective and demonstrates that idiomaticity involves different degrees of fixedness, variation, and semantic transparency. Her approach is significant for comparative phraseological research because it shows that fixed expressions should not be treated as completely homogeneous linguistic units. Instead, their meanings and structural patterns may vary according to lexical, grammatical, and contextual factors. This perspective is particularly useful for analyzing animal-based idioms because zoonymic expressions may demonstrate different degrees of semantic transparency, ranging from relatively transparent combinations to highly conventionalized figurative units.

A major theoretical contribution to cross-linguistic phraseology was made by Dobrovolskiy and Piirainen. In *Figurative Language: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Perspectives*, the authors develop a theory of the figurative lexicon based on conventional figurative units. They argue that such units are conventionalized elements of the mental lexicon and involve two conceptual levels: the literal reading and the figurative meaning, which can be activated simultaneously. Their research is particularly important for the present study because it demonstrates that figurative expressions should be analyzed not merely as combinations of words but as conventionalized linguistic units associated with culturally and cognitively motivated knowledge.

Dobrovolskiy and Piirainen also place particular emphasis on the cross-linguistic equivalence of idioms. Their analysis demonstrates that formal similarity between idioms in different languages does not necessarily guarantee semantic or cultural equivalence. This principle is highly relevant to animal-based idioms because two languages may employ the same animal image while assigning different evaluative meanings to it. Conversely, two languages may express

the same conceptual meaning through completely different animal images. Therefore, the comparison of English, Russian, and Uzbek idioms requires an analysis of semantic equivalence, partial equivalence, cultural correspondence, and culture-specific phraseological meaning rather than simple lexical matching.

The cognitive approach to figurative language provides another important theoretical basis for the present research. Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in *Metaphors We Live By*, challenged the traditional view of metaphor as merely an ornamental feature of language and argued that metaphor is deeply connected with human conceptualization. Their theory demonstrates that people frequently understand abstract domains through more concrete domains derived from bodily, social, and environmental experience. Within this framework, animal imagery can be regarded as a significant source domain for conceptualizing human characteristics and behavior. Although not every conventional idiom can be reduced to a single conceptual metaphor, the cognitive approach provides an important explanation of why particular animal characteristics become associated with human qualities.

Kövecses further develops the cognitive approach by emphasizing both the universality and cultural variability of metaphor. In *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*, he argues that conceptual metaphors may have universal tendencies while simultaneously demonstrating considerable cultural variation. His discussion of cultural variation shows that metaphorical conceptualization is influenced by cultural experience and the specific knowledge available to members of a linguistic community. This theoretical position is particularly relevant to the comparison of English, Russian, and Uzbek because it provides a framework for distinguishing shared metaphorical patterns from culturally specific animal associations.

Kövecses's concept of metaphor variation is especially important for zoonymic phraseology. His research emphasizes that metaphorical conceptualization may differ across cultures even when the conceptual target is identical. Consequently, human characteristics such as courage, intelligence, greed, weakness, or laziness may be conceptualized through different animal images in different languages. Such differences cannot always be explained by linguistic structure alone; they may reflect geographical conditions, historical experience, social practices, traditions, and culturally established beliefs.

The linguocultural interpretation of phraseological units has also become increasingly important in studies of national worldviews. From this perspective, idioms are viewed as repositories of culturally significant information because they preserve collective experience and culturally determined evaluations. This approach is especially productive in the analysis of zoonymic phraseological units, since animals occupy different symbolic positions in different cultures. The same animal may represent a positive quality in one cultural context and a negative characteristic in another. Therefore, the semantic structure of an animal-based idiom may contain not only a denotative component but also evaluative, emotional, symbolic, and culturally motivated components.

Recent studies directly concerned with zoonymic phraseology in English and Uzbek provide important empirical evidence for this assumption. Muzaffarova's comparative study of English and Uzbek phraseological units with zoonymic components argues that such expressions constitute a distinct layer of phraseology and reflect national identity, cultural and historical experience, and the worldview of a speech community. The study identifies both universal and culture-specific characteristics in the representation of the world through animal imagery. This finding supports the necessity of examining animal-based idioms not only from a semantic perspective but also through their cultural motivation.

Nishonova's research on phraseological units with zoonyms in English and Uzbek similarly demonstrates that animal-based idioms may have equivalents in both languages, while other expressions lack direct counterparts. This distinction is important for comparative analysis because the existence of an apparent lexical equivalent does not automatically indicate complete phraseological equivalence. Differences in figurative meaning, stylistic value, emotional evaluation, frequency, and cultural associations must also be considered.

More recent research by Yo'ldosheva (2025) examines zoonymic elements in Uzbek and English idiomatic expressions from semantic, structural, and cultural perspectives. The study reports that both languages display universal tendencies in the metaphorical use of animals, while cultural, religious, and environmental factors contribute to differences in idiomatic meaning and usage. The author also emphasizes the relevance of cultural competence for interpreting and translating zoonymic idioms. This finding reinforces the importance of a linguocultural approach in the present research.

The Russian-Uzbek dimension of zoonymic phraseology has also received scholarly attention. Sattarova's comparative study of Russian and Uzbek zoonymic phraseological units focuses on their national and cultural features and examines how animal names participate in the representation of intellectual, emotional, moral, and behavioral characteristics. The study identifies both universal and culture-specific patterns in the figurative interpretation of animal images. Such findings are particularly valuable for the present research because they provide a basis for comparing the Russian-Uzbek relationship with the English-Uzbek and English-Russian dimensions.

The available literature therefore demonstrates that animal-based idioms can be investigated through several complementary theoretical perspectives. The semantic approach explains the relationship between the literal lexical meaning of the zoonym and the figurative meaning of the entire phraseological unit. The cognitive approach explains the conceptual mechanisms through which animal characteristics are mapped onto human qualities. The linguocultural approach reveals how historical experience, traditions, beliefs, and cultural values influence the interpretation of animal images. Finally, the comparative approach makes it possible to identify equivalent, partially equivalent, and culture-specific phraseological units across languages.

Despite the substantial body of research on phraseology, several aspects remain insufficiently explored. Existing studies frequently concentrate on two-language comparisons, particularly English and Uzbek or Russian and Uzbek. Although these studies provide valuable information about individual language pairs, a systematic three-way comparison of English, Russian, and Uzbek animal-based idioms combining semantic and linguocultural analysis remains comparatively underdeveloped. Such a comparison is necessary because a three-language framework allows researchers to distinguish not only direct similarities and differences but also patterns that become visible only when three distinct linguistic and cultural systems are considered simultaneously.

Research methodology. This study employs a comparative qualitative approach to investigate the semantic and linguocultural features of animal-based idioms in English, Russian, and Uzbek. The research material consists of selected idiomatic and phraseological expressions containing animal names, collected from authoritative English, Russian, and Uzbek phraseological and explanatory dictionaries, as well as relevant scholarly studies. The selection of linguistic material was based on three main criteria: the presence of a *zoonymic* component, a conventionalized figurative meaning, and relevance to the description of human characteristics, behavior, emotions, and social relations. The analysis combines comparative, semantic, componential, contextual, and linguocultural methods. Semantic analysis was used to identify the figurative meanings and evaluative connotations of the selected idioms, while componential analysis determined the semantic features associated with particular animal images. The comparative method was applied to establish full, partial, functional, and culture-specific correspondences among the three languages. The linguocultural analysis focused on the influence of historical experience, traditions, social practices, beliefs, and national worldviews on the interpretation of animal imagery. The study also draws upon the principles of Conceptual Metaphor Theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and developed by Kövecses (2002), particularly in examining the conceptual mapping of animal characteristics onto human behavior and personality. Following Dobrovol'skiy and Piirainen (2005, 2022), idioms are treated as conventionalized figurative units whose interpretation may involve both linguistic and culturally specific knowledge. The results are interpreted through systematic cross-linguistic comparison in order to distinguish universal metaphorical associations from culturally determined semantic and evaluative meanings. This integrated methodology provides a reliable basis for identifying similarities and differences in the ways English-, Russian-, and Uzbek-speaking communities conceptualize human qualities through animal imagery.

Analysis and results. The comparative analysis demonstrates that animal-based idioms constitute a productive and culturally significant layer of phraseology in English, Russian, and Uzbek. Despite considerable linguistic and cultural differences between the three languages, the analyzed expressions reveal a number of common semantic patterns through which animal characteristics are metaphorically transferred to human behavior, personality, and social relations. At the same time, substantial differences were identified in the choice of animals, their evaluative meanings, and the cultural associations attached to them.

One of the most prominent common patterns concerns the representation of intelligence and stupidity. In English, expressions such as a dark horse, a sly fox, and a silly goose demonstrate different conceptualizations of human abilities and behavior. The fox is conventionally associated with cunning and cleverness, whereas the goose may acquire a negative evaluation associated with foolish behavior. Comparable associations can be observed in Russian expressions such as хитрый как лис and глупый как гусь. In Uzbek, expressions involving tulki (fox) similarly convey the concept of cunning, while animal imagery may also be used to characterize a person as unintelligent or naïve. The similarity of these associations suggests the existence of a shared metaphorical mechanism in which observable animal behavior serves as a source domain for conceptualizing human intellectual and behavioral characteristics.

Another significant semantic category is courage, strength, and aggression. English idioms such as as strong as a horse and the lion's share demonstrate the symbolic association of certain animals with physical strength, power, and dominance. Russian phraseology similarly employs expressions such as силен как бык, while Uzbek contains comparable animal-based descriptions in which the bull, horse, or lion can symbolize strength, endurance, or courage. However, the analysis shows that similar conceptual meanings are not always represented by identical animal images. This indicates that the underlying conceptualization may be relatively universal, whereas its linguistic realization is culturally conditioned.

The semantic field of negative human behavior is particularly productive across the three languages. Animal images are frequently used to express greed, laziness, dishonesty, stubbornness, and aggression. English expressions such as greedy as a pig, a wolf in sheep's clothing, and to be a copycat illustrate different negative or marked behavioral characteristics. Russian phraseology contains comparable expressions, including голодный как волк and упрямый как осёл, while Uzbek phraseological usage also employs animal imagery to characterize greed, stubbornness, cunning, and other socially disapproved forms of behavior. The comparison indicates that negative evaluations are often more strongly conventionalized than neutral descriptions because idioms traditionally function as expressive and evaluative units.

The analysis also reveals significant differences in the cultural evaluation of particular animals. An animal that carries a predominantly positive association in one language may have a negative or ambivalent meaning in another. For example, the horse occupies an important position in Uzbek cultural and historical consciousness and is frequently associated with endurance, mobility, strength, and service. Similar positive associations with the horse are also present in English and Russian; however, the frequency, stylistic value, and cultural motivation of horse-related expressions differ between the languages. In Uzbek, such associations can be connected more directly with traditional pastoral life and the historical importance of horse breeding and riding, whereas in English and Russian the same animal may participate in

somewhat different metaphorical and phraseological patterns.

The fox provides another clear example of cross-linguistic convergence. In English, Russian, and Uzbek, the fox is predominantly associated with cunning and strategic behavior. This convergence may be interpreted as evidence of a relatively stable conceptual metaphor based on the widely perceived behavioral characteristics of the animal. Nevertheless, the particular idiomatic structures through which this concept is expressed differ according to the grammatical and phraseological systems of each language. Therefore, semantic equivalence does not necessarily imply structural equivalence.

The analysis further identifies the importance of culturally specific animal symbolism. Certain zoonymic expressions have no direct equivalents in the other languages because their meanings depend on specific historical, folkloric, religious, or social associations. In such cases, literal translation may lead to semantic distortion. A translator must therefore identify the underlying human characteristic expressed by the idiom and search for a functional or culturally appropriate equivalent. This finding confirms that phraseological equivalence should be determined at the level of meaning and communicative function rather than through lexical correspondence alone.

From a linguocultural perspective, the results indicate that animal-based idioms encode two interconnected types of information: universal experiential knowledge and culturally specific knowledge. Universal patterns are primarily associated with easily recognizable animal characteristics, such as the fox with cunning, the lion with strength or dominance, and the donkey with stubbornness. Culture-specific patterns, in contrast, are influenced by the historical relationship between a community and particular animals, traditional occupations, folklore, religious beliefs, and social values. Thus, zoonymic idioms provide evidence of both shared human conceptualization and national linguistic worldviews.

The evaluative analysis shows that the majority of the examined animal-based idioms possess a clearly marked positive or negative orientation. Positive evaluations are commonly associated with strength, courage, loyalty, endurance, and diligence, whereas negative evaluations tend to represent stupidity, greed, laziness, cowardice, deceit, and stubbornness. However, the evaluative meaning of a zoonym is not absolute and may change according to the phraseological context. This demonstrates that the semantic value of an animal name should be analyzed within the complete idiomatic expression rather than independently.

Overall, the comparative results confirm that English, Russian, and Uzbek share a substantial number of conceptual mechanisms for representing human characteristics through animal imagery, but the realization of these mechanisms is shaped by the cultural and linguistic specificity of each language. The English system demonstrates a rich variety of conventional animal metaphors connected with everyday social behavior, while Russian phraseology frequently combines animal imagery with expressive comparison and characterization. Uzbek phraseology, in turn, demonstrates a close relationship between animal imagery, traditional life, social values, and culturally established perceptions. These differences support the view that animal-based idioms function simultaneously as semantic units and carriers of linguocultural information.

The findings therefore demonstrate that the comparative study of animal-based idioms provides a productive means of identifying the interaction between language, cognition, and culture. The presence of common metaphorical associations across English, Russian, and Uzbek indicates shared patterns of human conceptualization, whereas differences in animal selection, evaluative orientation, phraseological structure, and cultural motivation reveal the uniqueness of each linguistic worldview.

Conclusion and recommendations. The comparative analysis of animal-based idioms in English, Russian, and Uzbek demonstrates that zoonymic phraseological units represent an important linguistic and cultural mechanism for conceptualizing human behavior, personality, emotions, and social relations. The findings confirm that animal imagery is used in all three languages to transfer characteristics attributed to animals onto the human domain. Such characteristics include intelligence, stupidity, courage, strength, weakness, cunning, greed, laziness, loyalty, stubbornness, and aggression. At the same time, the comparative analysis reveals that the semantic interpretation and evaluative potential of particular animal images are strongly influenced by the cultural experience of each linguistic community. The results indicate the coexistence of universal and culture-specific patterns. Universal associations are particularly evident where similar animal characteristics have motivated comparable figurative meanings in the three languages. The fox, for instance, is predominantly associated with cunning, while the lion is commonly connected with strength, power, and dominance. Such correspondences demonstrate the role of shared human observation and experience in the formation of metaphorical meaning. However, the linguistic realization of these concepts varies considerably, and some animal images acquire additional meanings that are determined by national traditions, historical experience, folklore, social practices, and cultural values.

The study also establishes that lexical similarity between idioms does not necessarily guarantee complete semantic or linguocultural equivalence. English, Russian, and Uzbek may use different animal images to express the same human characteristic, or the same zoonym may acquire different evaluative meanings in different linguistic environments. Consequently, animal-based idioms should be classified not only according to formal correspondence but also according to semantic, functional, pragmatic, and cultural equivalence. This finding is particularly significant for translation, where literal rendering of a zoonymic idiom may result in the loss or distortion of its figurative and cultural meaning. From a theoretical perspective, the research confirms the relevance of combining comparative phraseology, semantic analysis, conceptual metaphor theory, and linguocultural analysis in the study of zoonymic expressions. Animal-based idioms

demonstrate that phraseological meaning is closely connected with culturally established conceptualization and that the linguistic worldview of a community can be reconstructed, to a certain extent, through the analysis of conventional figurative expressions. The practical value of the findings is associated primarily with translation studies, foreign-language teaching, lexicography, and intercultural communication. In foreign-language instruction, zoonymic idioms should be presented together with their figurative meanings, cultural motivation, pragmatic restrictions, and appropriate contexts of use rather than through literal lexical equivalents alone. For translation practice, translators should prioritize functional and semantic equivalence and consider the cultural associations of the source and target languages. Phraseological dictionaries and electronic databases should also provide information about connotation, stylistic register, cultural background, and cross-linguistic equivalents of zoonymic expressions.

Future research should expand the empirical corpus through large-scale English, Russian, and Uzbek language corpora and investigate the frequency and contextual distribution of animal-based idioms in contemporary discourse. Quantitative analysis could complement the qualitative findings presented in this study and provide more precise evidence concerning the productivity of individual zoonymic models. Further research could also examine the influence of media discourse, literary texts, social networks, and intercultural communication on the emergence and transformation of animal-based idioms. A broader multilingual comparison involving other Turkic, Slavic, and Germanic languages would provide additional evidence for distinguishing universal metaphorical patterns from culturally specific conceptualizations.

In conclusion, animal-based idioms should be regarded not merely as expressive elements of phraseological systems but as culturally meaningful linguistic units that preserve and transmit collective experience. Their comparative investigation in English, Russian, and Uzbek demonstrates the complex interaction of semantics, cognition, culture, and communication and contributes to a deeper understanding of both universal features and national specificity in phraseological conceptualization.

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