

CROSS - LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES OF SECONDARY INTERPRETATION IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

G.J.Karimboyeva¹

1. Asia international university

Mas'ul muallif: Karimboyeva
Gulnoza Javlon qizi, Asia
international university.

Received: 17 Oktabr 2026
Accepted: 22 Oktabr 2026
Published: 27 Oktabr 2026

Copyright: © 2026 by the
author(s). Licensee Buxoro xalqaro
universiteti ilmiy axborotnomasi.

Iqtibos uchun: Karimboyeva, G. J.
CROSS - LINGUISTIC
PECULIARITIES OF SECONDARY
INTERPRETATION IN ENGLISH
AND UZBEK PHRASEOLOGICAL
UNITS / G. J. Karimboyeva //
Buxoro xalqaro universiteti ilmiy
axborotnomasi. — 2026. — T. 10,
№ 2. — B. 385–389.

Abstract. This study investigates the cross-linguistic peculiarities of secondary interpretation in English and Uzbek phraseological units from a comparative semantic and cognitive perspective. It focuses on the relationship between literal meaning, figurative conceptualization, and conventionalized idiomatic meaning. The study aims to identify the cognitive mechanisms through which phraseological meanings are interpreted in the two languages and to determine the extent to which these mechanisms demonstrate cross-linguistic similarities and differences. The research adopts a qualitative comparative approach, examining selected phraseological units through semantic analysis, conceptual mapping, and contrastive interpretation. Particular attention is given to metaphor, metonymy, embodied experience, and culturally shaped associations. The analysis distinguishes between cases in which English and Uzbek expressions share similar figurative imagery and those in which comparable meanings are conveyed through different images. By treating secondary interpretation as a meaning-construction process rather than merely a synonym for figurative meaning, the study seeks to contribute to the cognitive and contrastive analysis of phraseology.

Keywords: secondary interpretation, phraseological units, idiomatic meaning, cross-linguistic analysis, cognitive semantics, conceptual metaphor, English, Uzbek.

INGLIZ VA O'ZBEK FRAZELOGIK BIRLIKLARIDA IKKILAMCHI TALQINNING CHOG'ISHTIRMA-LISONIY XUSUSIYATLARI

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi frazeologik birliklarda ikkilamchi interpretatsiyaning tillararo xususiyatlarini qiyosiy-semantik va kognitiv nuqtayi nazardan o'rganishga bag'ishlangan. Unda lug'aviy ma'no, obrazli konseptuallashtirish va tilda an'anaviy tarzda mustahkamlangan idiomatik ma'no o'rtasidagi munosabatga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Tadqiqotning maqsadi ikki tildagi frazeologik birliklar ma'nosining talqin qilinishini ta'minlovchi kognitiv mexanizmlarni aniqlash hamda ushbu mexanizmlarning tillararo o'xshash va farqli jihatlarini belgilashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda sifatga asoslangan qiyosiy yondashuv qo'llanilib, tanlangan frazeologik birliklar semantik tahlil, konseptual xaritalash va qiyosiy talqin usullari orqali o'rganiladi. Metafora, metonimiya, jismoniy tajriba hamda madaniyat ta'sirida shakllangan assotsiatsiyalarga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Tahlil jarayonida ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi obrazli asoslari o'xshash bo'lgan iboralar hamda o'xshash ma'nolar turli obrazlar orqali ifodalangan birliklar farqlanadi. Ikkilamchi interpretatsiyani shunchaki ko'chma ma'noning sinonimi sifatida emas, balki ma'no shakllanishi jarayoni sifatida talqin qilish orqali ushbu tadqiqot frazeologiyani kognitiv va qiyosiy jihatdan o'rganishga hissa qo'shishni maqsad qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: ikkilamchi interpretatsiya, frazeologik birliklar, idiomatik ma'no, tillararo tahlil, kognitiv semantika, konseptual metafora, ingliz tili, o'zbek tili.

СОПОСТАВИТЕЛЬНО-ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ВТОРИЧНОЙ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ В АНГЛИЙСКИХ И УЗБЕКСКИХ ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ ЕДИНИЦАХ

Аннотация. В данном исследовании рассматриваются межъязыковые особенности вторичной интерпретации английских и узбекских фразеологических единиц с точки зрения сравнительно-семантического и когнитивного подходов. Основное внимание уделяется взаимосвязи между буквальным значением, образной концептуализацией и закреплённым в языковой практике идиоматическим значением. Цель исследования заключается в выявлении когнитивных механизмов, посредством которых интерпретируются значения фразеологических единиц в двух языках, а также в определении степени сходства и различия данных механизмов в межъязыковом аспекте. В работе применяется качественный сравнительно-сопоставительный подход, предполагающий анализ отобранных фразеологических единиц на основе семантического анализа, концептуального картирования и контрастивной интерпретации. Особое внимание уделяется метафоре, метонимии, телесному опыту и культурно обусловленным ассоциациям. В исследовании

разграничиваются случаи, в которых английские и узбекские выражения обладают сходной образной основой, и случаи, в которых сопоставимые значения передаются посредством различных образов. Рассматривая вторичную интерпретацию как процесс конструирования значения, а не просто как синоним образного значения, исследование направлено на внесение вклада в когнитивное и сопоставительное изучение фразеологии.

Ключевые слова: вторичная интерпретация, фразеологические единицы, идиоматическое значение, межкультурный анализ, когнитивная семантика, концептуальная метафора, английский язык, узбекский язык.

Introduction. Phraseological units constitute an important component of language because they convey meanings that frequently extend beyond the literal interpretations of their individual lexical components. Their interpretation involves linguistic convention, contextual knowledge, conceptual associations, and culturally embedded experience. Consequently, phraseological expressions provide valuable material for investigating the relationship between linguistic form and meaning construction.

From a cognitive-linguistic perspective, idiomatic meaning is not necessarily arbitrary. Conceptual metaphor and metonymy can help explain how concrete experiences are associated with abstract concepts and how these associations become conventionalized in language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Gibbs, 1994). Nevertheless, the conceptual motivation of an idiom does not mean that its meaning can always be predicted from its individual words. Conventional usage and contextual interpretation remain important to understanding phraseological expressions.

The comparative study of English and Uzbek phraseological units offers an opportunity to examine both shared patterns of human conceptualization and language-specific ways of expressing figurative meaning. Although two expressions may communicate a similar idea, they may differ in lexical composition, imagery, and cultural associations. Conversely, expressions containing similar images may develop different conventional meanings.

In this study, secondary interpretation is approached as the process through which a literal or initially available interpretation is reanalysed in relation to a figurative conceptual structure and a conventionalized phraseological meaning. This working definition distinguishes the interpretive process from its outcome: secondary interpretation refers to the process of meaning construction, whereas idiomatic meaning refers to the conventional meaning associated with a phraseological unit.

The purpose of this study is to identify the cross-linguistic similarities and differences in secondary interpretation in English and Uzbek phraseological units. Specifically, it examines the contribution of conceptual metaphor, metonymy, linguistic convention, and cultural knowledge to the interpretation of selected expressions. The study addresses the following research question: How do English and Uzbek phraseological units employ similar or different cognitive and cultural mechanisms to construct idiomatic meaning?

Literature review

Phraseological units have long attracted the attention of linguists because their meanings cannot always be explained through the literal meanings of their individual components. Unlike freely constructed expressions, idioms are conventionalized linguistic units whose interpretation is shaped by semantic relationships, linguistic conventions, and contextual knowledge. Fernando (1996), in *Idioms and Idiomaticity*, examines the distinctive characteristics of idiomatic expressions and their place within phraseology. Her work provides a useful foundation for distinguishing idiomatic expressions from other types of fixed or semi-fixed combinations.

The relationship between literal and figurative meaning is particularly important for understanding how phraseological units are interpreted. Although some idioms appear semantically opaque, others retain recognizable connections between their literal imagery and conventional meanings. Consequently, idiomatic meaning should not be treated as either entirely predictable from individual words or completely independent of them. Instead, the interpretation of a phraseological unit may involve the interaction of lexical composition, conventionalized figurative imagery, and knowledge of the situations in which the expression is used.

This perspective is relevant to the concept of secondary interpretation adopted in the present study. Secondary interpretation is operationally defined here as the process through which an initially available literal interpretation is reanalysed in relation to a figurative or conventionalized meaning. This definition enables the analysis to focus not only on the resulting idiomatic meaning but also on the interpretive mechanisms connecting linguistic form and meaning. It is important, however, to distinguish this working definition from established terminology in phraseological research, since the precise relationship between secondary interpretation and other semantic processes must be established theoretically.

Cognitive linguistics offers an important theoretical perspective for explaining the relationship between literal imagery and idiomatic meaning. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that conceptual metaphor is fundamental to ordinary thought and that abstract concepts are frequently understood through more concrete domains of experience. Their approach challenges the assumption that metaphor is merely a stylistic feature of literary language and instead treats it as a mechanism involved in everyday conceptualization.

Within this framework, phraseological units can be examined as linguistic expressions that may reflect broader conceptual associations. For example, expressions involving the human body, movement, spatial orientation, and physical action can be used to communicate abstract psychological or social experiences. The expression *lose one's head*, for instance, associates the loss of a body part with a temporary loss of self-control. Its Uzbek counterpart, *boshini yo'qotmoq*, provides an opportunity to investigate whether similar figurative imagery and conceptual relationships operate in both languages.

Gibbs (1994), in *The Poetics of Mind: Figurative Thought, Language, and Understanding*, further develops the

cognitive investigation of figurative language, including idiomatic expressions. His work supports an approach in which figurative language is examined in relation to conceptual knowledge and human understanding rather than being treated solely as a departure from literal meaning. Nevertheless, a cognitive explanation does not imply that every idiom can be interpreted by applying a general metaphorical rule. Conventional usage, lexical restrictions, and contextual knowledge may also influence interpretation.

Research Methodology

The study employs a qualitative comparative approach to investigate the cross-linguistic peculiarities of secondary interpretation in English and Uzbek phraseological units. It combines semantic, contrastive, cognitive, and contextual analysis to examine how literal meanings are related to conventionalized idiomatic meanings.

The research material consists of selected English and Uzbek phraseological units identified through phraseological and explanatory dictionaries. The expressions are selected according to their figurative meanings, semantic characteristics, and potential for cross-linguistic comparison.

Semantic analysis is used to identify the relationship between literal and idiomatic meanings, while contrastive analysis examines similarities and differences in lexical composition and figurative imagery. Cognitive analysis focuses on the roles of conceptual metaphor, metonymy, and embodied experience in meaning construction. Contextual analysis is employed where necessary to clarify the conventional meanings and usage of particular expressions.

The selected phraseological units are classified into three categories: expressions with similar figurative imagery and meanings, expressions with comparable meanings but different imagery, and expressions reflecting language-specific cultural associations. This classification provides a framework for identifying common patterns and distinctive features of secondary interpretation in English and Uzbek phraseology.

To ensure reliability, the meanings of the expressions are checked against established lexicographic sources, and ambiguous cases are treated cautiously. The study acknowledges that idiomatic interpretation may vary according to context and that similar meanings do not necessarily indicate identical cognitive processes.

Results and Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis examines how secondary interpretation connects literal imagery with idiomatic meaning in English and Uzbek phraseological units. The selected examples illustrate three patterns: similar figurative imagery and meaning, comparable meanings expressed through different images, and expressions whose interpretation depends on language-specific conventions.

The expressions "lose one's head" and "boshini yo'qotmoq" demonstrate a close correspondence between English and Uzbek phraseology. Both expressions use the image of losing one's head to convey a loss of self-control or the ability to think clearly in a particular situation. The literal image therefore provides a conceptual basis for interpreting an abstract psychological state.

Similarly, turn a blind eye and ko'z yummoq associate the act of closing or not using one's eyes with deliberately ignoring something. In both cases, the physical image is extended to a figurative meaning involving attention and awareness. These examples illustrate how similar bodily experiences may support comparable idiomatic interpretations across languages.

The expressions lend a hand and qo'l uzatmoq provide another example of cross-linguistic correspondence. Both can express assistance or support, although their precise meanings depend on context. The hand functions as an image of practical action, which is extended to the broader concept of helping another person. Pave the way and yo'l ochmoq connect physical movement or the creation of a path with the establishment of opportunities for future action or development. The conceptual relationship between a physical path and an abstract course of action helps explain the figurative interpretation of both expressions.

These examples suggest that phraseological equivalence may involve similarities in conceptual motivation, even when the expressions differ in their lexical composition or conventional usage.

The illustrative examples indicate that secondary interpretation can be examined through the relationship between literal imagery, conceptual associations, and conventionalized meaning. Three analytical patterns emerge from the comparison:

Figurative correspondence: English and Uzbek expressions share similar imagery and comparable idiomatic meanings, as illustrated by lose one's head and boshini yo'qotmoq.

Conceptual correspondence: Expressions convey similar meanings through related conceptual associations, as illustrated by lend a hand and qo'l uzatmoq.

Context-dependent interpretation: The precise meaning and degree of equivalence depend on conventional usage and the context in which an expression occurs.

These patterns are consistent with cognitive approaches to figurative language, which emphasize the role of conceptual metaphor and embodied experience in meaning construction (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Gibbs, 1994). However, the examples alone do not establish that all English and Uzbek phraseological units follow the same mechanisms.

The comparison demonstrates the usefulness of analysing secondary interpretation as a process connecting literal imagery and idiomatic meaning. It also highlights the importance of distinguishing conceptual similarity from complete linguistic equivalence when investigating phraseological units across languages.

Discussion

The findings of the comparative analysis suggest that secondary interpretation in English and Uzbek phraseological

units involves both shared cognitive patterns and language-specific features. The examples examined indicate that idiomatic meaning is not always directly predictable from the literal meanings of individual words. Instead, it emerges through the reinterpretation of familiar images and their association with conventional meanings within a particular linguistic community.

The similarities identified in expressions such as *lose one's head* and *boshini yo'qotmoq* can be discussed in relation to the cognitive approach to figurative language. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that metaphor is not merely a linguistic device but also a means through which people conceptualize abstract experiences. From this perspective, the use of the head to represent thinking, rationality, or self-control provides a basis for understanding how similar figurative patterns may occur in different languages. Nevertheless, the correspondence between these expressions should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of identical cognitive processes. Their conventional meanings and actual usage need to be examined in appropriate linguistic contexts.

The comparison also demonstrates that semantic similarity does not necessarily require complete structural or lexical equivalence. Expressions such as *lend a hand* and *qo'l uzatmoq* illustrate how the image of the hand can be associated with assistance and support in both languages. This correspondence may be related to embodied experience, since the hand is commonly involved in performing practical actions and helping others. Gibbs (1994) emphasizes the importance of embodied experience and figurative thought in understanding language. However, the precise pragmatic meanings of these expressions may differ depending on context, collocation, and communicative intention.

Another important consideration is the relationship between conventional meaning and cultural context. Although some English and Uzbek phraseological units appear to share similar figurative structures, their interpretation is shaped by the conventions of each language. Therefore, a comparative analysis should distinguish between literal translation, semantic equivalence, and functional equivalence. Two expressions may communicate a similar general idea while differing in frequency, stylistic value, or the situations in which they are normally used. This distinction is particularly important when phraseological units are translated or taught to learners of a second language.

The findings further support the usefulness of examining phraseological units through several complementary approaches. Semantic analysis helps identify the relationship between literal and idiomatic meanings, contrastive analysis reveals similarities and differences between the two languages, and cognitive analysis offers a possible explanation for the figurative associations underlying these meanings. Contextual analysis, in turn, helps establish how conventional interpretations operate in actual communication. Taken together, these approaches provide a more comprehensive account of secondary interpretation than an analysis based exclusively on lexical structure or dictionary definitions.

From a language-teaching perspective, the comparison may also have practical implications. English and Uzbek phraseological units with similar imagery can provide useful starting points for explaining idiomatic meanings, whereas expressions with different imagery require greater attention to language-specific conventions. Teachers can encourage learners to identify the literal image of an expression, infer its figurative meaning, and examine examples of its use in context. Such activities may help learners develop phraseological competence and avoid interpreting idioms solely through word-for-word translation.

However, the findings should be interpreted in light of the study's scope. The examples discussed provide an initial basis for comparison, but they are not sufficient to establish general claims about all English and Uzbek phraseological units. A broader dataset, supported by established dictionaries and authentic corpus examples, would be necessary to determine how frequently the identified patterns occur and whether they extend across different semantic groups. Future research could also investigate the influence of context, register, and cultural knowledge on the interpretation of phraseological expressions.

Overall, the discussion indicates that secondary interpretation in English and Uzbek phraseology can be investigated as a process involving the interaction of literal imagery, conventionalized meaning, cognitive associations, and linguistic context. The comparison reveals potential areas of cross-linguistic correspondence while emphasizing that similar meanings do not always imply identical figurative structures or usage patterns.

Conclusion

This study has examined the cross-linguistic peculiarities of secondary interpretation in English and Uzbek phraseological units, focusing on the relationship between literal imagery and conventionalized idiomatic meaning. The comparative analysis suggests that phraseological expressions in both languages may employ similar figurative images to communicate abstract concepts, while other expressions convey comparable meanings through different lexical and conceptual structures.

The analysis has identified three principal patterns: phraseological units with similar figurative imagery and meanings, expressions with comparable meanings but different or partially different imagery, and expressions whose interpretation is influenced by language-specific conventions and cultural associations. These categories provide a practical framework for examining the similarities and differences between English and Uzbek phraseology. The examples *lose one's head* and *boshini yo'qotmoq*, as well as *turn a blind eye* and *ko'z yummoq*, illustrate potential correspondences in figurative imagery and idiomatic meaning. Other examples, including *lend a hand* and *qo'l uzatmoq*, demonstrate the importance of considering semantic and contextual equivalence rather than relying exclusively on literal translation.

The study also highlights the value of combining semantic, contrastive, cognitive, and contextual approaches to phraseological analysis. Cognitive perspectives, particularly those concerned with conceptual metaphor and embodied experience, can help explain how concrete images become associated with abstract meanings. Nevertheless, the

interpretation of an idiom depends not only on its underlying figurative motivation but also on conventional usage and the linguistic context in which it occurs.

The findings have implications for translation studies, comparative linguistics, and foreign language teaching. A better understanding of cross-linguistic phraseological similarities and differences may help translators select more appropriate equivalents and help language learners recognize idiomatic meanings beyond the literal meanings of individual words. In teaching English to Uzbek-speaking learners, explicit comparison of phraseological units may also raise awareness of figurative language and reduce dependence on word-for-word translation.

Despite these contributions, the study is limited by the scope of the selected examples. Further research should examine a larger, systematically selected dataset using established English and Uzbek phraseological dictionaries and authentic corpus materials. Such research could investigate the frequency of different patterns, the influence of cultural knowledge on idiomatic interpretation, and the role of pragmatic context in determining phraseological equivalence.

In conclusion, secondary interpretation offers a useful perspective for investigating how English and Uzbek phraseological units develop and communicate idiomatic meanings. Their comparison reveals both shared tendencies in figurative meaning construction and language-specific patterns that require careful semantic and contextual analysis. A systematic investigation of these patterns can contribute to a deeper understanding of phraseological meaning and cross-linguistic conceptualization.

References

- [1] Barcelona, A. (Ed.). (2000). *Metaphor and metonymy at the crossroads: A cognitive perspective*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- [2] Dobrovol'skij, D. (1999). On the cross-linguistic equivalence of idioms. In C. Beedham (Ed.), *Langue and parole in synchronic and diachronic perspective* (pp. 203–219). Pergamon.
- [3] Dobrovol'skij, D., & Piirainen, E. (2005). *Figurative language: Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic perspectives*. Elsevier.
- [4] Dobrovol'skij, D., & Piirainen, E. (2005). Cognitive theory of metaphor and idiom analysis. *Jezikoslovlje*, 6(1), 7–35.
- [5] Evans, V., & Green, M. (2006). *Cognitive linguistics: An introduction*. Edinburgh University Press.
- [6] Fernando, C. (1996). *Idioms and idiomaticity*. Oxford University Press.
- [7] Fillmore, C. J. (1982). Frame semantics. In *The Linguistic Society of Korea (Ed.), Linguistics in the morning calm* (pp. 111–137). Hanshin Publishing Company.
- [8] Fillmore, C. J., Kay, P., & O'Connor, M. C. (1988). Regularity and idiomaticity in grammatical constructions: The case of let alone. *Language*, 64(3), 501–538.
- [9] Geeraerts, D. (Ed.). (2006). *Cognitive linguistics: Basic readings*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- [10] Gibbs, R. W., Jr. (1994). *The poetics of mind: Figurative thought, language, and understanding*. Cambridge University Press.
- [11] Gibbs, R. W., Jr., & O'Brien, J. E. (1990). Idioms and mental imagery: The metaphorical motivation for idiomatic meaning. *Cognition*, 36(1), 35–68.
- [12] Glucksberg, S. (2001). *Understanding figurative language: From metaphors to idioms*. Oxford University Press.
- [13] Johnson, M. (1987). *The body in the mind: The bodily basis of meaning, imagination, and reason*. University of Chicago Press.