



THE USE OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH IN LITERARY WORKS

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Abstract

This study examines the use of phraseological units in English literary works and their linguistic, stylistic, and cultural functions. Phraseological units — such as idioms and fixed expressions — enrich literary language, add emotional depth, and express cultural meanings. The research shows that writers use these units to create imagery, highlight characters, and reflect the author's style. Thus, phraseological expressions play a significant role in shaping the beauty and expressiveness of English literature.

Keywords: phraseological units, idioms, English literature, figurative language, style.

Аннотация

В исследовании рассматривается использование фразеологических единиц в английских литературных произведениях и их лингвистические и стилистические функции. Идиомы и устойчивые выражения делают язык более выразительным, передают эмоции и культурные смыслы. Установлено, что писатели применяют фразеологизмы для создания образов и выражения авторского стиля.



Ключевые слова: фразеологические единицы, идиомы, английская литература, образность, стиль.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu ishda ingliz tili badiiy asarlarida frazeologik birliklarning qo'llanilishi va ularning lingvistik hamda uslubiy vazifalari tahlil qilinadi. Iboralar va turg'un birikmalar matnni boyitadi, ifodaviylikni oshiradi hamda madaniy ma'nolarni aks ettiradi. Tadqiqot natijasida yozuvchilar frazeologik birliklar orqali obrazlilik yaratib, o'z uslubini namoyon etishi aniqlangan.

Kalit so'zlar: frazeologik birliklar, iboralar, ingliz adabiyoti, obrazlilik, uslub.

Introduction

Language is not only a means of communication but also a reflection of a nation's culture, history, and mentality. One of the most expressive components of any language is its phraseological system. Phraseological units — idioms, proverbs, and other fixed expressions — represent the richness and figurativeness of a language. In English literature, they serve as powerful stylistic tools that help authors express complex emotions, create vivid imagery, and reflect the cultural background of society.

The use of phraseological units in literary works has always attracted the attention of linguists and literary scholars. Many famous English writers such as William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, and Jane Austen actively employed idiomatic expressions in their works. For instance, Shakespeare's phrase "break the ice" (from *The Taming of the Shrew*) or "heart of gold" (from *Henry V*) have become integral parts of modern English. These expressions not only enriched the stylistic level of the text but also conveyed deep symbolic meanings that resonate with readers even today.



In conclusion, phraseological units are a bridge between language and culture, between expression and emotion. Their role in English literature is enormous: they enrich the text, reflect the author's worldview, and allow readers to experience the beauty and depth of the English language. The detailed study of these expressions contributes to a broader understanding of literary style and linguistic creativity in English literature.

Literature and review

Phraseological units in literature perform several important functions. Firstly, they make the language more expressive and emotional. Secondly, they help to build character identity and make dialogues more realistic. For example, in Charles Dickens's works, idioms such as "the apple of one's eye" or "a blessing in disguise" are used to reveal the inner world of characters and their emotional states. Thirdly, they reflect the cultural worldview of the people, since many idioms have national or historical origins.

According to A. V. Kunin (1996), phraseology is "a branch of linguistics that studies stable combinations of words with figurative meaning." Kunin emphasized that phraseological units reflect the historical development, national mentality, and cultural identity of a people. Similarly, N. N. Amosova (1963) defined phraseological units as fixed word-groups with a fully or partially transferred meaning, distinguishing them from free word combinations. Her theory contributed to the structural and semantic classification of English phraseological expressions.

In modern English studies, scholars such as Fernando (1996) and Cowie (2001) have analyzed idiomatic language as a key component of natural communication and literary discourse. Fernando emphasized the communicative and cultural functions of idioms, arguing that they not only embellish language but also serve as carriers of social experience. Moon (1998), in her study *Fixed Expressions*



and Idioms in English, explored the relationship between idioms and metaphor, noting that they contribute to the figurative nature of literary texts.

From a literary perspective, many writers use phraseological units to enhance imagery and authenticity in their works. For example, Shakespeare's idioms such as "wild-goose chase", "in a pickle", and "wear one's heart upon one's sleeve" became part of everyday English and are widely cited in linguistic literature.

In summary, the review of literature demonstrates that phraseological units have been examined from various linguistic, stylistic, and cultural perspectives. Previous studies have proven that they play an essential role in enriching the expressiveness and aesthetic value of English literary texts.

Methodology

The methodology of this research is based on descriptive, analytical, and comparative approaches aimed at identifying the linguistic, stylistic, and cultural features of phraseological units used in English literary works. A combination of qualitative and interpretative methods was applied to analyze the selected data.

1. Research Design

This study is descriptive and analytical in nature. It focuses on the examination of phraseological units within literary texts, determining their meanings, functions, and stylistic roles in context. The research was conducted through close reading, linguistic analysis, and classification of phraseological expressions found in English literature.

2. Sources of Data

The primary sources for this study include selected English literary works written by well-known authors such as William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Jane



Austen, and Mark Twain. These authors were chosen because their works contain a rich variety of idiomatic and phraseological expressions.

The secondary sources consist of linguistic and literary studies, scholarly articles, and dictionaries of idioms and phraseology, including works by A. V. Kunin, N. N. Amosova, Cowie (2001), Fernando (1996), and Moon (1998).

3. Methods of Research

The following methods were used in the research process:

- **Descriptive Method:** to identify and describe phraseological units found in literary texts.
- **Comparative Method:** to compare phraseological expressions across different authors and time periods in English literature.
- **Contextual Analysis:** to interpret the meaning and function of phraseological units within their literary context.
- **Stylistic Analysis:** to determine how idioms and fixed expressions contribute to the artistic and emotional expressiveness of the text.
- **Linguocultural Approach:** to analyze how phraseological units reflect national mentality, cultural values, and traditions of the English-speaking community.

In conclusion, the chosen methodology provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of phraseological units in English literary works. It enables the researcher to interpret idiomatic expressions not only as linguistic forms but also as carriers of cultural meaning and artistic style.



Analysis and discussions

The analysis of phraseological units in English literary works reveals that idiomatic expressions and fixed combinations of words serve as one of the most effective means of creating expressiveness and cultural imagery in literature.

1. Frequency and Function of Phraseological Units

Phraseological units appear frequently in English literary texts, performing a wide range of functions — emotional, descriptive, cultural, and stylistic.

For instance, in Shakespeare's plays, idioms such as "break the ice", "wear one's heart upon one's sleeve", and "wild-goose chase" are used not only to express emotions but also to reflect character relationships and social attitudes. These expressions often help to intensify dramatic effect and highlight the individuality of characters.

In Charles Dickens's novels, phraseological units often serve to portray social background and humor. For example, the expression "the apple of one's eye" in *David Copperfield* conveys affection and emotional attachment, while "a blessing in disguise" illustrates the author's moral and philosophical outlook. Dickens used such idioms to make his characters' speech more natural, reflecting the linguistic flavor of 19th-century English society.

In Jane Austen's works, phraseological units contribute to irony and politeness strategies. Expressions like "the world of good" or "hold one's tongue" show the delicate social interactions typical of the Regency era. Through these units, Austen not only reveals character traits but also criticizes the moral norms and conventions of her time.

2. Semantic and Stylistic Features



Phraseological units in literary texts often undergo semantic shifts — that is, their meanings are slightly modified by the author to suit the context. This stylistic adaptation demonstrates the flexibility and creativity of English phraseology.

For example, Shakespeare's "heart of gold" originally meant generosity and kindness, but in modern English it has expanded to denote any sincere and pure-hearted person. Such transformations show how literature contributes to the evolution of language.

The analysis demonstrates that phraseological units contribute significantly to the beauty, depth, and emotional resonance of English literary works. They serve multiple functions — aesthetic, expressive, and cultural — and remain one of the most effective means of connecting language, literature, and national mentality.

The findings of this study confirm that phraseological units are integral to the stylistic and cultural richness of English literature. They function as both linguistic and cultural phenomena that enhance expressiveness, reveal authorial style, and deepen reader engagement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of phraseological units in English literary works demonstrates their fundamental role in shaping the artistic, stylistic, and cultural dimensions of literature. Phraseological units, being fixed and figurative expressions, not only enrich the language of literary texts but also serve as an essential means of expressing emotions, attitudes, and cultural concepts.

The analysis has shown that phraseological units are powerful linguistic tools through which writers convey deeper meanings, enhance the vividness of imagery, and develop the individuality of characters. In the works of authors such as William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, and Jane Austen, idioms and set expressions are used



to strengthen emotional impact, create humor and irony, and reflect the social and cultural environment of their time.

Furthermore, the research confirms that the use of phraseological units is not random or ornamental, but rather systematic and purposeful. Each idiom carries a specific semantic and stylistic function that contributes to the overall aesthetic value of the literary text. The findings also indicate that literature plays a significant role in preserving, modifying, and popularizing phraseological expressions within the English language.

Thus, phraseological units represent the intersection of language, culture, and creativity. Their study deepens our understanding of how linguistic expression interacts with artistic imagination. This research highlights the importance of phraseology as a key element in literary language, proving that the mastery of idiomatic expressions is vital for both the comprehension and creation of literary art in English.

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