



Phraseological units with antonymous components in English and Uzbek languages

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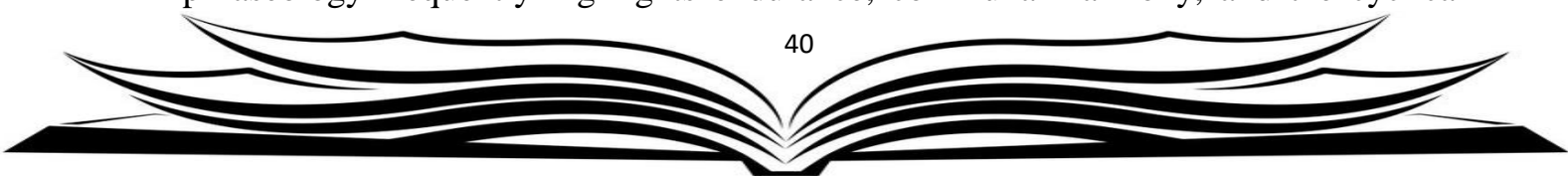
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Abstract Phraseological units (PUs) with antonymous components represent a distinctive category of fixed expressions that juxtapose opposing lexical or semantic elements to convey nuanced meanings, cultural insights, and rhetorical effects. This comparative study examines the structural, semantic, and cultural features of such units in English and Uzbek. In English, examples like "ups and downs," "black and white," "sink or swim," and "better safe than sorry" highlight individualism, pragmatism, and risk assessment. In Uzbek, equivalents or parallels such as "Boriga baraka, yo'g'iga sabr" (Blessing to what there is, patience to what there isn't), "Ertami kechmi" (Sooner or later), and contrasts involving "yaxshi/yomon" (good/bad) or "oliy/past" (high/low) reflect communal values, wisdom, and resilience. The analysis reveals both universal patterns of linguistic duality and language-specific cultural encodings. Through contrastive methods, the study underscores challenges in translation and the role of these units in enriching expressive capacity. Findings contribute to comparative phraseology and cross-cultural linguistics.

Keywords: Phraseological units, antonymous components, antonymic phraseology, English-Uzbek contrastive linguistics, linguistic duality, cultural idioms, binomial expressions, comparative phraseology.

Introduction Language serves as a mirror of culture, encoding worldviews through its lexical and phraseological resources. Phraseological units—stable combinations of words with holistic meanings—play a vital role in this encoding. Among them, units with antonymous components stand out by deliberately pairing opposites (e.g., light/dark, success/failure, presence/absence) to create tension, emphasis, or balance.

These units are not mere stylistic devices but carriers of cultural philosophy. English often emphasizes individual agency and binary clarity, while Uzbek phraseology frequently highlights endurance, communal harmony, and the cyclical





nature of life. This article provides a comparative analysis, drawing on structural classifications (e.g., binomials, idiomatic contrasts) and semantic types (temporal, moral/ethical). It aims to deepen understanding of how antonymy functions in phraseology across typologically distinct languages.

Literature Review Phraseology as a field has roots in the works of scholars like A.V. Kunin, who classified English phraseological units and noted repetitions built on antonyms (e.g., "ups and downs," "back and forth"). In English studies, antonymic PUs are discussed in relation to binomials and their rhetorical power.

Uzbek and Russian-influenced scholarship, including works by A. Mamatov on Uzbek phraseological dictionaries, provides foundational material. Recent comparative studies explore antonymic relations in English and Uzbek phraseology, focusing on structural, semantic, and cultural dimensions. Researchers highlight how antonyms in PUs create incompatible contra-semes that mutually presuppose each other.

Cross-linguistic works note universal duality (e.g., hope vs. despair) alongside culture-specific realizations. Challenges in equivalence and translation are recurrent themes.

Methodology This study employs a contrastive linguistic approach, combining qualitative analysis of selected corpora of English and Uzbek PUs. Sources include phraseological dictionaries (e.g., Kunin for English, Mamatov for Uzbek), academic articles, and proverb collections. Units were classified structurally (binomial, repetitive, idiomatic) and semantically (temporal, spatial, moral, quantitative). Examples were chosen for frequency and cultural representativeness. Translation equivalence was assessed using functional and cultural criteria. No quantitative statistical tools were applied due to the interpretive nature of phraseology; instead, illustrative comparison and cultural contextualization form the core.

Results Antonymous component PUs appear in both languages but differ in prevalence and realization.

English Examples and Features:

- Binomials: "Ups and downs" (good and bad times), "black and white" (clear, unambiguous), "give and take" (compromise), "pros and cons."
- Idiomatic contrasts: "Sink or swim" (succeed or fail), "better safe than sorry" vs. implied "fortune favors the bold," "a blessing in disguise" (opposed to apparent curse).





• These often use conjunctions ("and," "or") and reflect pragmatic, individualistic orientations.

Uzbek Examples and Features:

• "Boriga baraka, yo'g'iga sabr" — appreciation for abundance, patience in scarcity.

• "Ertami kechmi" (sooner or later).

• Contrasts like "yaxshi kunlar / yomon kunlar" (good days / bad days), "to'lib yashamoq / o'lib yashamoq" (live prosperously / miserably), "oliy martaba / past martaba" (high/low rank).

• Proverbs: "Do'st kunda sinarlar, dushman tunda" (friends tested by day, enemies by night); "Birlikda baraka" (blessing in unity, contrasting individualism).

Structurally, English favors concise binomials; Uzbek integrates more proverbial wisdom with contextual oppositions. Semantically, both cover temporal and moral domains, but Uzbek emphasizes communal endurance.

Discussion The presence of antonymous components creates semantic tension that enhances expressiveness and memorability. In English, such units often underscore personal choice and binary clarity, aligning with cultural emphases on individualism. Uzbek units frequently promote balance, patience, and social harmony, reflecting collectivist tendencies.

Translation poses challenges: literal rendering may lose cultural nuance (e.g., "Make hay while the sun shines" ≈ "Temirni qizig'ida bos" — strike while the iron is hot). Functional equivalence requires adaptation.

These units reveal universal human experiences (duality of life) while highlighting linguistic relativity. They serve rhetorical, didactic, and identity-forming functions in both languages. Further research could explore frequency in corpora or psycholinguistic processing.

Conclusion Phraseological units with antonymous components enrich English and Uzbek by encoding cultural worldviews through opposition. While sharing structural and semantic patterns, they diverge in cultural priorities—individual action in English versus communal wisdom in Uzbek. Comparative study of such units fosters deeper cross-cultural understanding and aids translation pedagogy. Future work should expand to other Turkic or Germanic languages for broader typological insights.





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