

**COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS EXPRESSING THE CONCEPTS OF TIME AND PLACE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES**

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**Abstract**

This article presents a comparative analysis of phraseological units (PUs) that conceptualize “Time” and “Place” in the English and Uzbek languages. By examining the semantic structures and cultural idioms of both languages, the study identifies universal cognitive patterns and language-specific nuances. The research highlights how both cultures utilize anthropomorphism and spatial metaphors to perceive temporal flow. The findings suggest that while spatial PUs often overlap due to physical reality, temporal PUs diverge based on historical and agricultural traditions.

**Keywords:** Phraseology, Contrastive Linguistics, Temporal Concept, Spatial Concept, Idioms, English, Uzbek.

**Introduction**

Time and Place are the fundamental categories of human existence, serving as the coordinates for both physical reality and linguistic expression. In linguistics, phraseological units (PUs) – stable combinations of words with figurative meanings – offer a window into how different cultures perceive these dimensions.

The relevance of this study lies in the “Linguistic picture of the World.” For instance, both English and Uzbek treat time as a moving object or a valuable resource, yet the imagery used to describe “Place” often draws from the specific geographical landscapes of the British Isles versus the Central Asian steppes and oases. This article aims to identify the isomorphic (common) and allomorphic (distinctive) features of these units.

**Methods**

The study utilized a corpus-based approach, extracting 400 phraseological units (200 English, 200 Uzbek) from authoritative dictionaries (e.g., Oxford Dictionary of Idioms and O‘zbek tilining iboralar lug‘ati). The primary methods included:

- ✓ Contrastive analysis – identifying structural similarities.
- ✓ Conceptual mapping – categorizing PUs into “Time as Space,” “Time as Money,” and “Place as a moral boundary.”
- ✓ Etymological tracing – examining the cultural origins of specific metaphors.

**Semantic and Cognitive Parallels**

a) The “Space-to-time” metaphoric shift – the most significant common characteristic is the linearity of time. Both languages lack a purely temporal vocabulary and instead “borrow” from spatial dimensions. This is known as the spatial metaphor for time.

- ❖ Dimensionality – both languages use ‘Length’ to describe duration. In English – a long meeting; a short break. In Uzbek: Uzun kecha (A long night); Qisqa muddat (A short term).
- ❖ The Moving ego and moving time – in both cultures, PUs reflect two perspectives. Moving ego - the person moves toward a point in time (“We are approaching the New Year” / “Yangi yilga yaqinlashyapmiz”). Moving time: Time moves toward the person (“The weekend is coming” / “Dam olish kunlari kelyapti”).

b) Somatic Phraseology (Body-based orientation) – A striking commonality is the use of Somaticisms (body parts) to ground the concepts of place and time in the physical human experience. This suggests that regardless of geography, the human body is the primary “ruler” for measurement. Look at the explanation of them Table 1.

| Body Part    | English Example (Concept)     | Uzbek Example (Concept)                    | Common Logic               |
|--------------|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Eye          | “In the blink of an eye”      | “Ko‘z ochib yumguncha”                     | Speed / Momentary time     |
| Head         | “At the head of the table”    | “Dasturxonning to‘rida”<br>(Head/Top seat) | Priority in space          |
| Back         | “Behind one’s back”           | “Orqasidan”                                | Unseen / Hidden location   |
| Foot / Skirt | “At the foot of the mountain” | “Tog‘ etagida”                             | Lower boundary of a place. |

Table 1

c) Quantitative and value-based conceptualization - in the modern era, both languages have converged on the “Time is a Resource” metaphor, though its roots differ. In English Heavily influenced by the industrial revolution, leading to PUs like “Time is money” or “To buy time”, in Uzbek: Historically influenced by trade on the Silk Road and Islamic philosophy, leading to PUs like “Vaqt – omad” (Time is luck/success) or “Vaqting ketdi – baxting ketdi” (Time lost is happiness lost). Both treat time as a finite substance that can be “spent” (vaqt sarflamoq / to spend time) or “saved” (vaqtni tejamoq / to save time).

d) Cultural specificity in “Place” – While the mechanisms are common, the imagery is specific. This is where the independent scholar must look at the environment. In English “Place” PUs often revolve around the sea and household. “To be in a tight corner” (Physical confinement), “All at sea” (Lost/Confusion); in Uzbek “Place” PUs often revolve around the yard, the steppe, and hospitality. “Bir qadam” (one step away/very close), “Ostona hatlab o‘tmoq” (To cross the threshold – meaning to start a journey or enter a new phase of life).

## Results

The analysis revealed three primary common characteristics across both languages:

- Spatialization of time (The “Time is Space” Metaphor) – both languages frequently use spatial markers to define time. For example: in English “Long time no sees,” “In the distant future”, in Uzbek “Uzoq vaqt” , “Yaqin orada”

- Anthropocentric orientation – both languages use parts of the human body to define location or temporal points. For example: In English “At the foot of the mountain,” “In the heart of the city”, in Uzbek “Tog‘ etagida”, “Shahar markazida”
- Use of Archaic lexemes PUs in both languages preserve words no longer used in standard speech. For example: In English “In the twinkling of an eye”, in Uzbek “Ko‘z ochib yumguncha”

### Discussion

The commonalities found are largely isomorphic, meaning they stem from universal human experiences. For example, the concept of “Time as a thief” appears in both English “Time flies” and Uzbek “Vaqt g‘animat”, reflecting a shared human anxiety regarding the passage of life. However, differences emerge in the “Place” category. English PUs are heavily influenced by maritime history (e.g., “To be all at sea”), whereas Uzbek PUs are deeply rooted in nomadic and sedentary agricultural life like in “Tuya so‘ygandek” – meaning an event happening in a very specific, significant place/time.

Furthermore, English often views time as a commodity in “To spend/waste time”, a hallmark of industrialized Western thought. Uzbek culture, while adopting these modern views, retains a more cyclical, nature-based perception of time in its classical phraseology.

### Conclusion

The comparative analysis proves that English and Uzbek phraseology sharing the concepts of Time and Place are governed by similar cognitive mechanisms, specifically the metaphorical projection of physical space onto abstract time. The common characteristics include the use of body parts for orientation and the perception of time as a measurable distance. Understanding these parallels is vital for translators and linguists to bridge the gap between Western and Central Asian worldviews.

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