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PRAGMASTYLISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ANTONYMIC PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract. This article investigates the pragmastylistic characteristics of antonymic phraseological units in English and Uzbek. The study focuses on stable expressions containing semantically opposite components and examines how such oppositions function at semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic levels. The research applies descriptive, contrastive, semantic, contextual, and pragmastylistic methods. The analysis demonstrates that antonymic phraseological units in both languages perform several important communicative functions, including intensification, inclusiveness, totality, continuity, evaluation, contrast, emotional emphasis, and inevitability. The findings also show that formally different phraseological units may perform similar pragmatic functions in English and Uzbek. Consequently, functional and pragmatic equivalence is often more significant than literal correspondence in contrastive analysis and translation. The results contribute to comparative phraseology, pragmatics, stylistics, translation studies, and intercultural communication.

Keywords: antonymy, phraseological unit, pragmastylistics, English, Uzbek, semantic opposition, pragmatic function, stylistic function, contrastive analysis.

Introduction. Phraseological units constitute one of the most expressive and culturally significant layers of language. They are not merely stable combinations of words but also linguistic structures that reflect cultural knowledge, emotional attitudes, social experience, and conventional ways of interpreting reality. Their meanings are often figurative and cannot always be understood through the literal meanings of their individual components.

One of the important semantic relations found in phraseological systems is antonymy. Antonymy is based on semantic opposition between lexical or conceptual elements such as good and bad, high and low, day and night, young and old, and life and death. Such oppositions represent fundamental cognitive categories through which people organize and interpret the world.

In phraseological units, however, antonymy performs functions that go beyond simple lexical contradiction. Opposite elements may jointly express completeness, continuity, intensity, inevitability, inclusiveness, or emotional contrast. For example, the English expression *sooner or later* contains the temporal opposition between *soon* and *late*, but its pragmatic meaning is usually related to inevitability. Similarly, the Uzbek expression *ertami-kechmi* expresses the idea that something will happen at some point regardless of the exact time. Another clear example can be observed in the English phrase *day and night* and the Uzbek expression *kecha-kunduz*. Although both constructions contain temporal opposites, they may pragmatically express continuous action, intensive effort, or uninterrupted activity. For this reason, antonymic phraseological units should be analyzed not only from the semantic point of view but also from pragmatic and stylistic perspectives. Pragmastylistics studies the relationship between linguistic form, communicative

intention, context, and stylistic effect. It helps reveal why a speaker chooses a particular expression and what communicative impact that choice creates.

The comparative study of English and Uzbek is especially relevant because these languages belong to different linguistic systems and cultural traditions. At the same time, both languages demonstrate similar cognitive mechanisms in the use of semantic opposition. This makes contrastive analysis particularly useful for identifying universal and culture-specific features.

The aim of this study is to investigate the pragmastylistic characteristics of antonymic phraseological units in English and Uzbek and to identify their major similarities and differences. The study addresses several research questions. First, it examines what types of antonymic relations occur in English and Uzbek phraseology. Second, it identifies the pragmatic functions of these expressions. Third, it determines the stylistic effects produced by semantic opposition. Finally, it explores the role of cultural context in the interpretation and translation of antonymic phraseological units.

Materials and Methods. The research is based on a qualitative and contrastive approach. The materials include representative English and Uzbek phraseological and stable expressions containing semantically opposite components. The selected expressions represent temporal, spatial, evaluative, social, age-related, colour-based, qualitative, and existential oppositions.

Several research methods were applied.

The descriptive method was used to identify the lexical structure and bgeneral meaning of each phraseological unit. This method made it possible to determine how opposite lexical components are organized within stable expressions.

Semantic analysis was used to identify the type of opposition represented by the components. For instance, *sooner or later* represents temporal opposition, *young and old* represents age-related opposition, *black and white* represents colour opposition, while *right or wrong* represents evaluative opposition.

The contrastive method was used to compare English and Uzbek phraseological units according to semantic meaning, pragmatic function, stylistic value, and degree of equivalence. This method helped identify both direct equivalents and functionally similar expressions.

Contextual analysis was also important because phraseological meaning frequently depends on the communicative situation. The same expression may function as a warning, prediction, evaluation, emphasis, or emotional statement depending on the context. Finally, pragmastylistic analysis was used to examine the relationship between linguistic form, speaker intention, and stylistic effect. Particular attention was given to such functions as emphasis, evaluation, generalization, intensification, inclusiveness, emotional expression, continuity, and inevitability.

Results. The analysis demonstrates that antonymic phraseological units in English and Uzbek perform several major pragmastylistic functions.

One of the most frequent types is temporal opposition. English expressions such as *sooner or later*, *day and night*, and *now or never* illustrate this category. Similar Uzbek constructions include *ertami-kechmi* and *kecha-kunduz*. These expressions do not merely contrast different points or periods in time. Instead, they often express inevitability, continuity, or urgency. For example, in the sentence *Sooner or later, the truth will be revealed*, the phrase *sooner or later* emphasizes certainty rather than simple temporal difference. The Uzbek equivalent *ertami-kechmi* performs almost the same pragmatic function. Likewise, *day and night* and *kecha-kunduz* may indicate continuous or intensive activity. Another important function is inclusiveness. Expressions such as *young and old* in English and *yosh-u qari* in Uzbek refer not only to two age groups but to people of all ages. The

two opposite poles create the meaning of an entire scale. A similar tendency can be observed in the Uzbek expression *katta-kichik*, which may refer to all members of a social group or community.

Antonymic phraseological units are also frequently used for evaluation. Expressions such as *for better or worse* and *right or wrong* combine positive and negative meanings within a single construction. Their function is not limited to lexical contrast. They may express acceptance, categorical judgement, emotional attitude, or evaluation of possible outcomes.

The Uzbek constructions *yaxshi-yomon* and *to'g'ri-noto'g'ri* perform similar evaluative functions. In such expressions, semantic opposition strengthens the speaker's position and gives the utterance greater stylistic force. Another important result concerns stylistic intensification. Compare the neutral sentence *He searched everywhere* with *He searched high and low*. Both sentences describe an extensive search, but the phraseological expression *high and low* is more vivid and expressive. It creates a stronger image and adds rhetorical emphasis.

The same principle can be observed in Uzbek. The expression *kecha-kunduz ishlamoq* is more expressive than a neutral statement meaning simply "to work continuously." The phraseological unit intensifies the action and suggests considerable effort.

Emotional and expressive meaning is also characteristic of antonymic phraseology. The English expression *ups and downs* is based on spatial opposition but refers metaphorically to positive and negative experiences in life. In a sentence such as *They experienced many ups and downs*, the phrase conveys not only information but also emotional depth.

A comparable meaning may be expressed in Uzbek through constructions such as *yaxshi-yomon kunlar*. Although the lexical structure differs, the pragmatic function remains similar. The analysis also reveals the importance of symbolic contrast. English *black and white* may refer to a clear distinction between two alternatives. In Uzbek, *oq-qora* may similarly express distinction, opposition, or evaluation. However, the exact cultural associations of colour terms may differ between the two languages. Another major finding is that antonymic components frequently create generalized meanings. For example, *sooner or later* means "at some point," *young and old* means "everyone," and *day and night* means "continuously." Similarly, Uzbek *ertami-kechmi*, *yosh-u qari*, and *kecha-kunduz* demonstrate the same process.

Thus, two opposite elements may represent not separation but the complete conceptual range between them. This can be considered one of the central semantic-pragmatic characteristics of antonymic phraseology.

The contrastive analysis also shows different levels of equivalence between English and Uzbek. Some expressions have close semantic and pragmatic equivalents, such as *sooner or later – ertami-kechmi*, *day and night – kecha-kunduz*, *young and old – yosh-u qari*, and *life and death – hayot-mamot*.

Other expressions do not have exact lexical equivalents. For example, *ups and downs*, *high and low*, or *for better or worse* may require contextual or functional equivalents in Uzbek. This suggests that pragmatic equivalence may be stronger than formal equivalence.

Discussion. The findings demonstrate that antonymic phraseological units should not be interpreted merely as combinations of opposite lexical items. Their communicative functions are much broader.

One of the most important observations is that semantic opposition often develops into semantic completeness. The expression *young and old*, for example, does not refer only to two age groups. Instead, it represents all age groups. Similarly, *day and night* may represent the entire temporal cycle and therefore acquire the pragmatic meaning of continuity.

This phenomenon indicates that antonymic phraseology often operates through a cognitive principle in which two extremes represent the whole scale.

Pragmatic intention is another essential aspect. The meaning of a phraseological unit depends not only on its lexical structure but also on the communicative situation. For example, *sooner or later* may function as reassurance, warning, prediction, criticism, or an expression of certainty depending on context.

Stylistic expressiveness is equally important. Neutral expressions generally communicate information directly, while antonymic phraseological units often add vivid imagery and emotional intensity. The expression *high and low* is more expressive than *everywhere*, while *ups and downs* is more emotionally marked than a neutral description such as *different experiences*.

The comparative analysis also reveals that English and Uzbek share many universal conceptual oppositions. Both languages use temporal, spatial, evaluative, age-related, and existential contrasts. However, the exact lexical realization and cultural associations may differ.

This difference becomes particularly important in translation. A translator should not rely only on word-for-word correspondence. Instead, it is necessary to identify the phraseological meaning, pragmatic intention, stylistic effect, and cultural appropriateness of the expression. For instance, if a direct equivalent exists, such as *sooner or later – ertami-kechmi*, it can be used without significant modification. If no exact equivalent exists, a functional equivalent or contextual paraphrase may be more appropriate. Therefore, phraseological translation should prioritize pragmatic and stylistic equivalence rather than literal lexical similarity. The findings also have implications for language teaching. Learners should not study antonymic phraseological units only as vocabulary items. They should understand their figurative meaning, communicative function, stylistic value, and cultural context.

Teaching expressions such as *black and white*, *high and low*, or *ups and downs* together with their pragmatic functions can improve learners' ability to interpret and use idiomatic language naturally.

The present study demonstrates that antonymic phraseological units play an important role in both English and Uzbek. Their significance extends beyond lexical opposition. They function as complex linguistic devices that combine semantic contrast, pragmatic intention, stylistic expressiveness, and cultural meaning. The analysis shows that the main semantic types of antonymic phraseological units include temporal, spatial, evaluative, age-related, colour-based, experiential, and existential oppositions. These expressions perform several pragmatic functions, including expressing inevitability, continuity, inclusiveness, totality, evaluation, emotional intensity, and rhetorical emphasis.

The study also confirms that antonymic components often transform binary opposition into semantic completeness. Opposite poles may represent an entire conceptual scale, as seen in expressions such as *young and old*, *day and night*, *yosh-u qari*, and *kecha-kunduz*.

English and Uzbek demonstrate considerable similarities in the conceptual organization of antonymic phraseology. However, their lexical forms and cultural associations may differ. For this reason, translation should not always rely on direct lexical correspondence. Functional and pragmatic equivalence may be more appropriate in many cases. Overall, a pragmastylistic approach provides a broader understanding of antonymic phraseological units because it considers not only semantic structure but also speaker intention, discourse context, stylistic effect, and cultural knowledge. Future studies may investigate larger collections of phraseological units in literary texts, media discourse, spoken language, and social media. Corpus-based analysis may also help determine their frequency, distribution, and contextual behaviour in English and Uzbek. Further research could focus on how antonymic phraseological units vary across different genres and

communicative situations. Such studies may also reveal how cultural factors influence their interpretation, translation, and stylistic use in the two languages.

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