

**ENGLISH, RUSSIAN AND UZBEK PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WHICH DEFINE
SOCIAL STATUS IN PUBLICISTIC TEXTS**

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Abstract. The article examines English, Russian and Uzbek phraseological units that function as markers of social status and collective evaluation in contemporary publicistic discourse. Drawing on examples from leading newspapers in all three languages, the study shows that idioms and other fixed expressions are not only expressive ornaments, but also powerful semiotic tools that condense complex social experience into compact, culturally loaded formulas. On the basis of componential, cognitive, linguocultural and pragmalinguistic analysis, the paper reveals how such units encode metaphorical models of social processes, articulate attitudes toward political actors and events, and actualize nationally specific scenarios of pride, responsibility and collective emotion.

Key words: phraseological units, idioms, publicistic discourse, social status, cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, pragmatics.

Introduction. Phraseological units are stable, reproducible word combinations whose overall meaning is partially or completely not equal to the simple sum of the meanings of their components. They are characterized by structural stability, that is, the relative fixity of their lexical composition and grammatical form, and by semantic integrity, since the whole expression functions in speech as a single semantic unit, often comparable to a word. The speaker does not create such combinations freely in each act of communication; rather, they are reproduced as ready-made elements of the language system. A key property of phraseological units is idiomaticity: their meaning is frequently figurative and culturally conditioned, and therefore cannot always be deduced from the meanings of individual words.

In publicistic texts phraseological units function as an important means of evaluation, expressivity and persuasion. Journalists use idioms, proverbs and other set expressions to condense complex social experience into compact, easily recognizable formulas, thus activating readers' background knowledge and shared cultural values. Through their figurative and often axiological nature, phraseological units help the author to express approval or disapproval, irony, criticism or support, thereby shaping the reader's attitude to events, politicians, social groups and phenomena described in the text.

At the same time, phraseological units increase the emotional impact and memorability of publicistic discourse. They make headlines and leads more striking, introduce elements of colloquiality and "live speech" into the media language, and create an illusion of dialogical communication with the reader. By alluding to well-known cultural texts, stereotypes and national images, they perform a linguocultural function: they actualize collective historical memory, national mentality and socially significant stereotypes of behaviour. In this way phraseological units become not only expressive ornaments of the text, but also an effective tool for influencing public opinion and constructing the ideological and value space of the media.

Main body. Let's to analyse example:

Terry Farrell, a British architect and urban designer whose work encompassed the extremes of late 20th-century building styles, swinging from Modernist austerity to postmodernist cheek before landing somewhere in between, died on Sept. 28... He **rode a wave of hostility** to Modernist architecture, whose chief critic at the time was Charles, Prince of Wales [1]. Idiom

rode a wave of hostility means that someone successfully took advantage of a popular feeling or trend (in this case, hostility towards Modernist architecture) to achieve their own goals or rise to prominence. The phraseological unit consists of three key components: Verb “ride” literally means “to sit on and control a moving animal/vehicle” (horse, bicycle, surfboard). Noun “wave” denotes a moving mass of water; in figurative use, a powerful mass phenomenon (wave of crimes, protests, criticism). In English media and public discourse, “wave” is a culturally entrenched metaphor for any large-scale, collective phenomenon. Adding the verb “to ride” evokes associations with surfing and with skilled exploitation of circumstances. Prepositional noun group “of hostility” is a specifying the type of “wave”: a strong, collective negative attitude toward something (here, Modernist architecture). Thus, in this sentence the phraseological unit “rode a wave of hostility” is not a mere stylistic ornament; it is a compact tool that encodes a conceptual metaphor, evokes a specific British cultural-historical situation, and pragmatically guides the reader’s evaluation of the architect and of the period he worked in.

Next example is given from the Russian newspaper:

Американские чиновники выражают **осторожный оптимизм** и подчёркивают: Уиткофф и Кушнер “не покинут Египет без заключённого соглашения”, передает Axios [2]. (American officials express cautious optimism and emphasize that Witkoff and Kushner “will not leave Egypt without an agreement,” Axios reports). Phraseological unit **осторожный оптимизм** (literally cautious optimism) means a restrained, balanced hope for a positive outcome of the situation, while being aware of possible risks and obstacles. Qualitative adjective **осторожный** (cautious) indicates unresolved issues, potential difficulties, or incomplete information, abstract noun **оптимизм** (optimism) defines positive expectation, belief in favorable outcome, hope for success. The idiom **осторожный оптимизм** is a fixed evaluative formula of political and journalistic discourse. The idiom encodes a cognitive scenario of risk-aware hope. The speaker evaluates a future event (negotiations, deal, reforms). Evidence suggests a potentially positive outcome. At the same time, the speaker is clearly aware of obstacles and uncertainty. Therefore, they choose a stance: “we cautiously expect success but admit the possibility of failure.” The idiom functions as a linguocultural label of “responsible optimism”, opposed to naive enthusiasm or blind faith. serves as a stance marker: it explicitly encodes the officials’ attitude toward the negotiations. From pragmatic point of view, expression serves as a stance marker: it explicitly encodes the officials’ attitude toward the negotiations, performs an evaluative-act: not just describing reality, but shaping how the situation is perceived.

Lastly, let’s research Uzbek idiom in mass media discourse:

Maydonlar to‘ldi, bayrogimiz hilpiradi, ko‘ngillar quvonchdan yayraydi. Har bir yurakda fahr, ko‘zlarda **quvonch yoshlari** – bu halqimizga xos tuygular [3]. (The squares are full, our flag is waving, hearts are bursting with joy. Pride in every heart, tears of joy in the eyes - these are the feelings inherent in our people). Phraseological unit **quvonch yoshlari** (literally tears of joy) means not just “being happy”, but emotionally overwhelmed by happiness and pride. Noun **quvonch** is translated as joy, delight, happiness, plural noun **yoshlari** means tears and indicates a climax of positive emotion so strong it overflows into tears. Tears in Uzbek culture are not only sadness; they can mark satisfaction, gratitude, pride, contentment. Thus the idiom becomes a linguocultural symbol of deep, noble, patriotic feelings. In the publicistic passage it intensifies pathos, constructs positive national identity, and emotionally mobilizes the audience.

Conclusion. The analysis confirms that phraseological units in English, Russian and Uzbek publicistic texts perform a complex of interrelated functions that go far beyond simple expressivity. They serve as condensed carriers of cultural knowledge, encode metaphorical models of social and political reality and participate directly in the construction of social status images of individuals, groups and nations. Moreover, the comparative material demonstrates that

analysed phraseological units in mass media discourse are key instruments for encoding and negotiating social status, as well as for shaping the ideological and axiological space of contemporary media communication.

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