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# NATIONAL-CULTURAL FEATURES OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS CONTAINING NUCLEAR KINSHIP TERMS IN CHINESE AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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## Abstract

This article investigates the national and cultural characteristics of phraseological units that contain nuclear kinship terms in the Chinese and Uzbek languages. Through a comparative and semantic analysis of selected idioms, the study reveals how deeply kinship terms are embedded in the cultural consciousness of both linguistic communities. The phraseological units not only convey linguistic meaning but also reflect traditional values, family structures, social hierarchies, and worldview patterns unique to each culture. The research highlights the metaphorical functions of kinship terms and the challenges posed by cultural specificity in translation, ultimately aiming to enhance cross-cultural understanding and linguistic competence.

**Keywords:** Phraseological units, kinship terms, Chinese language, Uzbek language, national identity, cultural semantics, metaphor, traditional values.

## Introduction

Language is both a tool of communication and a repository of culture. Among its many layers, phraseological units—particularly those containing kinship terms—are deeply intertwined with the cultural and social fabric of a nation. Kinship terms, especially those referring to nuclear family members such as "father," "mother," "brother," and "sister," carry not only literal but also metaphorical meanings, reflecting norms, relationships, and emotional expressions [3].



Chinese and Uzbek, two languages from distinct linguistic families—Sino-Tibetan and Turkic, respectively—have evolved under unique cultural, historical, and philosophical traditions. Despite these differences, both languages use kinship-based idioms to express complex social phenomena. This article focuses on analyzing how such idioms function in each language and what they reveal about the cultural psychology and national identity of the Chinese and Uzbek peoples.

### **Literature Review**

Numerous studies have addressed the cultural and linguistic aspects of phraseological units within individual languages. Chinese scholars such as Liu Chenglin and Zhou Min have emphasized the role of Confucian values and traditional family structures in shaping Chinese idioms. In contrast, Uzbek scholars like Nazarova T. and Juraev S. have explored how kinship terms in Uzbek reflect respect for elders, hospitality, and community-oriented values rooted in Turkic nomadic traditions [4].

V.P. Anikin's theory on the national uniqueness of aphoristic folklore underlines the importance of viewing proverbs and idioms as cultural artifacts that encapsulate a people's worldview, moral systems, and historical memory. He argues that the challenges in translating such expressions arise from their deep cultural embeddedness, which resists literal or one-to-one translation [2].

However, comparative studies between Eastern and Central Asian linguistic traditions, particularly involving phraseological units based on kinship terms, remain scarce. This article seeks to bridge that gap by offering a cross-cultural perspective on the subject [1].

### **Result and Discussion**

Each nation's repository of phraseological units is unique. It is hard to disagree with V.P. Anikin's statement: "The national originality of aphoristic folklore is primarily expressed in each nation's unique perspective on reality, the worldview developed throughout history, and the nature of social and poetic generalizations." These features cause considerable challenges in translating proverbs from one language into another, as national peculiarities are reflected in



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semantic and stylistic-pragmatic aspects that are difficult to convey in another language [7].

Any form of language is a crucial part of national culture, and national culture is inevitably reflected at various levels of a national language. Proverbs carry rich cultural content—they are not only the result of a nation's productive experience and living standards but also a reflection of its psychology, values, and worldview. They also embody the nation's historical figures, events, legends, and traditions. Proverbs in various national languages reflect the specifics of time and place, region, natural environment, cultural traditions, and the indirect experiences and worldviews of language users.

Under the influence of different social and cultural environments, certain stable aesthetic forms and angles gradually take shape over time.

The cultural features embodied in phraseological units are mainly manifested in two aspects: "Phraseological units, as a form of representing traditional culture, have been passed down orally for thousands of years and are distinguished by their vitality, rawness, and elegance. They are an 'encyclopedia' that encapsulates traditional, technological, and national culture, covering a wide range of topics unmatched by any book. Phraseological units are the main cultural carriers of popular thinking and possess great historical inertia. They form collective cultural identity through the transformation of traditional culture into national character and have allowed the diffusion of traditional culture among the people over millennia."

National psychology is the psychological basis for a nation to preserve its national identity and unity throughout its historical development. The national language reflects this national psychology. In other words, national psychology and national language maintain a close relationship and jointly form the foundation of a nation. Because of different national psychologies and their corresponding values, phraseological units in the real languages of various nations differ in form. We aim to analyze how these differing national psychologies are embodied in Chinese and Uzbek phraseological units.

Certain kinship terms in phraseological units among Chinese and Uzbek peoples reflect the cultural characteristics of the respective language communities.



1. 谷父蚕母 [gǔ fù cán mǔ] – “Valley Father, Silkworm Mother”. This phrase refers to fertility deities in Chinese legend. It first appeared in the Leishuo: Xuxianzhuan (《类说·续仙传》) written by Zeng Cao during the Song Dynasty: 世人厌弃五谷，地司已收其种矣，可相率祈谢谷父蚕母，当致丰穰。

If society abandons the five staple crops, the Earth God will collect their seeds. One should offer prayers and thanks to the Valley Father and Silkworm Mother to ensure an abundant harvest.

The idiom “谷父蚕母” [gǔ fù cán mǔ], literally “Valley Father, Silkworm Mother,” is used to describe a family where the father works the land or engages in physical labor, and the mother is responsible for domestic tasks and child-rearing, particularly nurturing like raising silkworms. It reflects traditional gender roles and labor division in Chinese society. From a linguistic perspective, the idiom consists of four characters, each with specific meaning:

- 谷 [gǔ] – valley or field,
- 父 [fù] – father,
- 蚕 [cán] – silkworm,
- 母 [mǔ] – mother.

Together, they suggest that the father is associated with agricultural work in the fields, while the mother is responsible for nurturing tasks requiring patience and care, such as raising silkworms.

Culturally, this idiom reflects the traditional gender roles and expectations in Chinese society, where men are typically seen as providers and women as caretakers of the home and children. It represents a division of labor based on gender: men working outside in physical jobs, and women managing domestic responsibilities.

However, it is important to note that this expression is based on traditional roles, and society has evolved over time. In modern China, there is a growing recognition of gender equality, and more women are actively participating in the workforce and public life.

2. 父为子隐 [fù wéi zǐ yǐn] – “A Father Hides for His Son”



This Chinese idiom translates into Uzbek as “**Ota o‘g‘li uchun yashiradi**”. It originates from an ancient Chinese story and is used to describe a situation in which a father sacrifices or suppresses his own desires or needs for the benefit and success of his child.

The combination of these characters reflects the idea of a father willingly concealing or sacrificing for the sake of his child's interests and protection.

Culturally, this idiom emphasizes the value placed on **filial piety** and **family loyalty** in Chinese society. It portrays the father as a devoted figure who is ready to make sacrifices for the well-being of his child. This concept is deeply rooted in **Confucianism**, which holds honoring and respecting parents in high regard.

Additionally, this idiom reflects the hierarchical nature of family relationships in Chinese culture, where the father is seen as the head of the household and the bearer of authority and responsibility. It highlights the expectation for fathers to serve as role models and make decisions in the best interest of their children.

An example of this idiom is found in the Yuan Dynasty work "Nine Generations Under One Roof" (《九世同堂》):

**彼各都忍了也波哥，因此上父为子隐，上下家和顺。**

They all endured and tolerated each other. Therefore, the father concealed things for his son, and harmony prevailed among both the elders and the younger ones.

**江东父老** [jiāng dōng fù lǎo] – “Elders of Jiangdong”

This Chinese idiom translates into Uzbek as “**Jangdong oqsoqollari**” and is derived from the historical novel "Romance of the Three Kingdoms". It refers to the respected and wise elders of the Jiang dong region. Together, the idiom denotes the respected elder men from the eastern region of the Yangtze River.

Culturally, this idiom reflects the high regard for **age and wisdom** in Chinese society. It honors elders for their knowledge, experience, and guidance. The term **父老** [fù lǎo] is often used to refer to the elderly as guardians of tradition, culture, and wisdom.

The mention of **Jiangdong** carries specific historical significance. In "Romance of the Three Kingdoms", Jiangdong is the region ruled by the warlord Sun Quan. The elders of Jiangdong were known for their **loyalty, wisdom, and influence**. Thus, the idiom “**江东父老**” collectively conveys respect for the wisdom and



influence of honorable elders. It reflects the Confucian emphasis on respecting the elderly and the cultural value placed on intergenerational knowledge and continuity in Chinese society.

## **Conclusion**

The comparative analysis of phraseological units containing nuclear kinship terms in Chinese and Uzbek languages reveals the profound interrelation between language and culture. While both linguistic traditions use kinship terms to express respect, hierarchy, affection, and social norms, the idioms are deeply influenced by the unique cultural frameworks of Confucianism in China and traditional communal values in Uzbekistan.

These idioms serve as mirrors of societal roles, especially in terms of family structure, gender expectations, and generational responsibilities. Moreover, the metaphorical use of kinship terms enhances the emotional expressiveness and cultural resonance of language. Understanding such phraseological expressions contributes not only to linguistic knowledge but also to intercultural competence. Ultimately, this research underscores the significance of culturally sensitive approaches in language learning, translation, and cross-cultural communication.

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