



PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS REPRESENTING THE CONCEPTS “MAN” AND “WOMAN” IN ENGLISH AND KARAKALPAK LANGUAGES

Amangeldiyeva Venera Mars kizi

First year master's student of Karakalpak State University

English teacher of school No 34 in Nukus city

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18830198>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 26th February 2026

Accepted: 27th February 2026

Online: 28th February 2026

KEYWORDS

phraseological units, gender concepts, masculinity, femininity, linguocultural analysis, English language, Karakalpak language, metaphor, cultural values, semantic evaluation

ABSTRACT

This article presents a comparative linguocultural analysis of phraseological units representing the concepts “man” and “woman” in English and Karakalpak languages. The study examines how gender images are constructed through stable figurative expressions and how these linguistic forms reflect cultural values, social norms, and collective worldview. Particular attention is paid to somatic metaphors, evaluative semantics, and structural features of phraseological units. The analysis demonstrates that masculinity in both languages is predominantly associated with courage, honor, strength, and social responsibility, whereas femininity is conceptualized through motherhood, modesty, compassion, and domestic harmony. At the same time, the research reveals both universal metaphorical mechanisms and culturally specific evaluative orientations. The findings confirm that phraseological units function as carriers of historical memory and gender ideology within linguistic systems..

Phraseological units constitute one of the most culturally marked layers of vocabulary; therefore, they serve as a linguistic mirror reflecting collective perceptions of gender roles. In both English and Karakalpak languages, phraseological units verbalize the concepts “man” and “woman” not merely as biological categories but as socially constructed and culturally evaluated images. Consequently, the study of such units allows us to reveal the underlying axiological, ethical, and behavioral norms encoded in linguistic consciousness.

According to Karakalpak linguistic tradition, phraseological units are stable lexical combinations possessing figurative meaning and functioning as indivisible semantic wholes. In this respect, they differ from free word combinations because their meaning is reinterpreted metaphorically and culturally. Therefore, when analyzing gender representations, it is essential to consider not only lexical structure but also figurative motivation, stylistic coloring, and evaluative orientation.

First of all, the concept “man” in both languages is strongly associated with courage, strength, and responsibility. In English phraseology, expressions such as a man of iron will, a man of his word, a man of action, and to stand like a rock emphasize determination, firmness,

and moral authority. Thus, masculinity is conceptualized through metaphors of solidity, metal, and stability [2, 57-60].

Similarly, in Karakalpak phraseology masculinity is framed through the ideas of honor and steadfastness. The expression “erkek sózinen qaytpaydı” (a man does not withdraw from his word) highlights moral commitment. In addition, “basın tikti” (he risked his head) symbolizes readiness for sacrifice, while “júregi batır” (his heart is brave) connects courage with somatic imagery. As explained in the structural analysis of phraseological units, body-part components such as bas (head), júrek (heart), and qol (hand) frequently function as semantic centers. Therefore, physical organs metaphorically represent moral and psychological qualities.

Moreover, phraseological constructions like “qolınan kelgenin ayamadı” (he spared no effort), “el qorganı” (protector of the people), and “qara basına qaldırmadı” (did not think only of himself) reveal collectivist values embedded in Karakalpak culture. Masculinity is not limited to physical bravery; rather, it includes social responsibility and communal loyalty. Consequently, the male image in Karakalpak phraseology is closely linked with protecting family, tribe, and homeland.

However, the representation of “woman” follows different semantic pathways. In English, femininity is often associated with beauty, delicacy, and emotional sensitivity. Expressions such as the fair sex, a woman’s touch, and mother hen highlight nurturing qualities. Nevertheless, certain idioms, for instance old wives’ tale or gossip like a woman, reveal historically embedded stereotypes, thereby illustrating ambivalent cultural attitudes toward women [4, 111-114].

In Karakalpak phraseology, the dominant image of woman is connected with motherhood and domestic harmony. The expression “ana júregi” (mother’s heart) symbolizes boundless compassion and patience. Similarly, “aq jelengen ana” (white-scarfed mother) represents purity, dignity, and wisdom. The white scarf functions as a cultural symbol of modesty and maturity, thereby embedding social expectations into phraseological imagery.

Furthermore, the metaphor “úydiń isti-ısı” (the warmth of the house) conceptualizes woman as the emotional center of family life. Thermal imagery (“warmth”) and spatial imagery (“house”) combine to portray femininity as nurturing and stabilizing. Additionally, expressions related to honor, such as “arın saqlaw” (to preserve one’s honor) and idioms containing the component bet (face), emphasize modesty and reputation as essential feminine virtues. Thus, female identity is culturally connected with dignity and moral integrity [3].

At the same time, certain Karakalpak phraseological units reflect evaluative nuances concerning women’s speech or emotionality. These constructions often carry expressive coloring, as described in phraseological theory, where imagery intensifies social judgment. Therefore, femininity may be idealized through motherhood yet stereotyped through behavioral expectations.

From a cognitive perspective, both languages employ universal metaphorical mechanisms. Somatic metaphors (heart, head, hand), zoomorphic images, and spatial symbolism appear in English and Karakalpak phraseology alike. For instance, English idioms such as lion-hearted man parallel Karakalpak expressions emphasizing bravery through

metaphorical bodily strength. Consequently, despite cultural differences, cognitive mapping processes remain similar.

Nevertheless, significant divergences can be observed in value orientation. English phraseology, especially in contemporary discourse, increasingly reflects gender equality, as seen in expressions like career woman or self-made man, which foreground individual achievement. In contrast, Karakalpak phraseology preserves stronger ties to traditional gender roles, where masculinity is associated with communal protection and femininity with maternal devotion.

Importantly, phraseological units do not merely describe gender roles; they actively reinforce them. Through repeated usage, expressions praising male bravery or female modesty become normative cultural scripts. As highlighted in Karakalpak linguistic research, phraseological units function as carriers of historical memory and collective worldview. Therefore, analyzing them allows us to trace the evolution of gender ideology within linguistic systems.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis demonstrates that phraseological units in English and Karakalpak languages encode culturally specific conceptualizations of “man” and “woman.” Masculinity is predominantly linked with strength, honor, courage, and social responsibility, whereas femininity is connected with motherhood, compassion, modesty, and domestic harmony. Although universal metaphorical models operate in both languages, cultural context determines evaluative emphasis and ideological direction. Consequently, phraseology serves as a valuable source for understanding the interaction between language, culture, and gender construction.

References:

1. Dauletbaev, K. D., Esemuratova, R. E., & Beketov, B. B. (1988). Explanatory Dictionary of Karakalpak Language. Uzbekistan, Nukus: Karakalpakstan.
2. Guseynova T.A. Phraseological units, characterizing a man // Scientific Journal of Chelyabinsk State University "Вестник ЧелГУ". - 2010. - № 29 (210). - P.57-60.
3. Yusupova B. Qaraqalpaq tiliniń frazeologiyası. Toshkent «Tafakkur qanoti». 2014
4. Zafarovna, N. N. (2016). GENDER AND GENDER STEREOTYPES IN THE ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGICAL SYSTEM. Восточно-европейский научный журнал, 12(1), 111-114.
5. Zikova I.V. Gender component in the structure and semantics of phraseological units in modern English. Dissertation ... candidate of science. - Moscow: Moscow State University, 2002. - 219 p.