

Phraseological Units with Proper Names Describing Level of Education in English, Russian and Uzbek

Abdullaeva Sanobar

PhD on philological sciences, Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Samarkand, Uzbekistan
sanobar-abdullaeva@mail.ru

Abstract. This article explores the use of proper names in phraseology, focusing on idioms, proverbs, and sayings that contain proper names. Such expressions originate from a variety of sources, including literature, mythology, fables, and everyday language. The study bridges two linguistic branches: phraseology and onomastics. Through the componential, cognitive, contextual, and semantic analysis of various idioms across cultures and languages, the paper illustrates how personal names evolve into idiomatic expressions, acquiring symbolic meanings.

Key words: proper names, phraseology, onomastics, historical figures, linguistic symbolism, irony in language, intellectual capacity, social critique

There are idioms, proverbs, sayings, containing proper names. They originated from people's lifestyle, customs and traditions, prose and poetry, mythology, fairy stories, fables, songs, slang, novels and other sources. It should be stressed, though, that proverbs or phraseological units with proper names are used in speech or writing often. This research involves two branches of linguistics, at first sight phraseology and onomastics at the second. The value of onomastic phraseology is important because it usually reflects not only the national identity of the particular word of this or that nation, but also through colorful names informs about the peculiar customs, ways of thinking, history and mythology of the latter. In works on phraseological units with proper names, it is exactly underlined their national specifics. Actually, personal proper name, being a cultural dominant, functioning in phraseology as a national cultural component, helps to reveal the peculiarities, characteristic features of a particular nation, of one or another type of language personality.

Phraseological units with proper names are referred to the science of onomastics which is relatively new science and appeared in the middle of the last century. Nikonov, Superanskaya, Gardiner, Reformatskiy, Husser, Buhler, Sweet are elaborated in the field of proper names.

Archaic English idiom *according to Cocker* [A.V. Kunin, 2021, p.23] means “according to the rules,” “in the proper way,” or “by the book.” It dates back to Edward Cocker, a British mathematician who wrote popular arithmetic textbooks in the 17th century. His books became synonymous with accuracy and correctness, which led to the given expression meaning something done properly or in accordance with established standards.

The idiom consists of two key components: a prepositional phrase “according to”, a proper noun – “Cocker”, referring to the authority (Edward Cocker).

At first glance, the components seem literally interpretable: “according to (someone).” However, in this case, the name “Cocker” carries a historical and cultural context, representing the idea of correctness and accuracy. From a cognitive perspective, this idiom reflects the concept of authority and precision. The name “Cocker” became associated with correctness because his arithmetic textbooks were considered authoritative sources. Here, a cognitive shift occurs: a proper name turns into a symbol of a general concept of accuracy.

The cognitive mechanism at play is metaphorical, where a specific individual (Cocker) comes to represent an abstract notion (rules and norms).

The idiom was commonly used in the 19th and early 20th centuries and is now considered archaic. Its most typical usage was in situations where the speaker wanted to emphasize the proper execution of a task according to established rules. In modern English, the idiom is rarely encountered but may still appear in literary contexts or for rhetorical effect to add a historical or old-fashioned touch to speech.

Thus, *according to Cocker* is an example of an idiom formed through metonymy and cultural context, tied to a particular historical figure.

Next idiom with proper name is *admirable Crichton* [A.V. Kunin, 2021, p.28] that refers to a person who is capable and talented in many different areas, often viewed as a model of excellence. This idiom originated from the historical figure James Crichton (1560–1582), a Scottish polymath renowned for his remarkable

intellect, physical prowess, and diverse talents. The phrase gained wider cultural recognition from J.M. Barrie's 1902 play "The Admirable Crichton", in which the character of Crichton displays admirable versatility, resourcefulness, and leadership.

The idiom consists of two main components: an adjective "admirable" means "worthy of admiration or respect" and signifies a high level of competence or moral virtue; a proper noun "Crichton" refers to James Crichton, a historical figure known for his exceptional abilities. They transcend the literal meanings to symbolize a person of exceptional talent.

From a cognitive perspective, the abovementioned idiom embodies the conceptual metaphor of excellence and versatility. It conveys the idea that someone can be extraordinarily capable across a wide variety of domains, both intellectual and practical. The idiom taps into the archetype of the universal genius or Renaissance man, a person who excels in all areas of life. This cognitive process involves metonymy, where one person's name (Crichton) represents the broader concept of mastery and talent. The metaphor that underpins this idiom is essentially "person as an ideal model", where Crichton is seen as the paragon of human potential and versatility.

This is an example of a proper noun becoming a common noun in idiomatic use, a common phenomenon in language where names of historical figures become symbolic of broader qualities. The adjective "admirable" reinforces the positive connotations, making the idiom synonymous with exceptional ability and worthiness of admiration.

In summary, the analyzed idiom is a fixed expression that draws on historical and literary references to convey the idea of a person who excels in many areas. Through componential, cognitive, contextual, and semantic analysis, we can see how the idiom evolved to become a symbol of versatility and excellence, much like the historical figure and the character in Barrie's play.

Russian idiom *Кум Кумыч* (or *Тум Тумыч*) [А.К.Бирikh, 2005, p.301] is used in literary and ironic contexts to describe a cruel, willful, and ignorant merchant.

Personal name "Кит" (or "Тит"), in this case, takes on a generalized, symbolic meaning representing a particular type of person. "Кит" is translated as whale – a huge marine animal symbolizing strength, significance and scale. It is not linked to a specific historical figure but serves as a metaphor or nickname for a merchant characterized by cruelty and willfulness.

Diminutive patronymic form "Китыч" (or "Титыч") is used with a familiar and ironic tone, a play on the name or patronymic. In Russian, this ending is often used to create a humorous effect, giving a name or nickname a humorous and diminutive character. Such forms are typical in creating caricatured or grotesque characters in literature, especially when criticizing certain social types.

Here, the components create a collective image of a merchant — a figure in Russian literary tradition often associated with harsh moral qualities and greed. The diminutive suffix adds an element of irony, emphasizing the exaggerated nature of these traits. From a cognitive perspective, this idiom builds on the archetype of the greedy and cruel merchant, who possesses power but acts ignorantly and viciously. In Russian literature, merchants were often portrayed as a social class endowed with wealth and authority but lacking education and spiritual values. This cognitive model reflects a deep social and moral condemnation of such behavior.

The idiom emphasizes social critique: cruelty and ignorance combined with material power and arrogance. In this context, it serves to mock the unjust and ignorant behavior of individuals in positions of power.

It is clear that within the context of studied idiom, it uses a personal name and patronymic to symbolize negative traits: cruelty, willfulness, and ignorance. Its ironic tone helps illuminate the social critique associated with the merchant class, creating the image of a person who wields power but lacks moral or intellectual qualities.

Uzbek phraseological unit *Aflotun miya* [A. Madvaliev, 2020, p.118] (lit. Platonic brain) refers to having a high level of education and being very smart. Proper name "Aflotun" historically tied to Plato and his philosophy, in this idiom suggests a high level of intellect, education, and intellectual engagement. It reflects a deep, educated understanding of concepts, often tied to philosophical or scholarly knowledge. Mind as an intellectual space — "Platonic" connects the person's intellect with philosophical depth and sophisticated thinking. Plato's philosophy is often associated with abstract reasoning, which here is extended to mean exceptional intellectual abilities. The person is seen as someone who engages with knowledge at a high level.

Lexeme “miya” (brain) describes intelligence or intellectual capacity. In this context, this word symbolizes not just the organ but the overall cognitive abilities of a highly educated person. Together, combination of given words implies a person who possesses both broad and deep knowledge, with a focus on intellectual excellence and high cognitive abilities. Brain as intelligence — the metaphor of the brain represents intelligence and cognitive skills. Phrase suggests a brain capable of processing complex, educated thoughts, and engaging in high-level intellectual activities.

In context, the idiom is used to describe someone with an impressive level of education and intellectual capability. It may be applied in both formal and informal settings, typically in a complimentary or respectful manner. The idiom could be used to praise someone’s intellect, often in academic, professional, or philosophical conversations. Mostly this idiom is used in positive or respectful settings to describe someone with remarkable intellectual skills.

Thus, the analysis of idioms containing proper names demonstrates the rich interplay between language, culture, and history. Proper names in phraseology often transcend their literal meanings, becoming metaphors for broader concepts such as intelligence, versatility, or moral flaws. This linguistic phenomenon, found across various languages, shows how names tied to historical figures or cultural archetypes can evolve into symbolic expressions that convey complex social and intellectual values. Whether through irony, critique, or admiration, these idiomatic expressions offer insights into the cognitive and cultural frameworks of different societies. The study underscores the importance of understanding the cognitive and contextual layers that shape the meaning of proper names within phraseology.

List of references:

1. Бирих А.К., Мокиенко В.М., Степанова Л.И. Русская фразеология. Историко-этимологический словарь. –М.: Астрель: АСТ: Люкс, 2005, – 926 с.
2. Кунин А.В. Большой англо-русский фразеологический словарь. – 5-е изд., стер. – М.: Просвещение, 2021. — XVIII, 1210 с.
3. Никонов В.А. Имя и общество. – М.: Наука, 1974. – 276 с.
4. Реформатский А.А. Введение в языкознание. –М.: Гос. учебно-педагог. изд-во, 1967. – 544с.
5. Суперанская А.В. Теория и методика ономастических исследований. – Москва: URSS, 2012. – 258 с.
6. Мадвалиев А. Ўзбек тилининг изоҳли луғати: 80000 га яқин сўз ва сўз бирикмаси. Ж I. А-Д – Т.: «Ozbekiston nashriyoti» давлат унитар корхонаси, 2020. – 680 бет.
7. Gardiner A.H. The theory of proper names. A controversial essay. – London: Oxford University Press, 1940. –86р.

