

**A COGNITIVE STUDY OF NUMERICAL COMPONENT PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS****Madaminova Umida**

Student. Student of foreign language and literature

University of exact and social sciences.

**E-mail address:** [madaminovau032@gmail.com](mailto:madaminovau032@gmail.com)**<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18046549>**

**Abstract.** *This article provides a comprehensive cognitive analysis of lexical units containing numerical components, with an emphasis on how numbers function as culturally and conceptually important elements in figurative language. Based on theoretical foundations in cognitive linguistics, this study investigates the mental representations, conceptual metaphors, and associative frameworks underlying numerical representations in English and Uzbek.*

*Particular attention is paid to the symbolic meanings ascribed to certain numbers, their differences between cultures, and their role in the structure of human thought. This study also investigates how numerical elements contribute to semantic motivation, categorization, and idiomatic meaning creation. This study uses comparative descriptive methods to show that digital idioms are not arbitrary combinations but cognitive expressions that reflect shared cultural patterns, experiential knowledge, and linguistic creativity. The results contribute to a deeper understanding of the cognitive mechanisms that form representations and provide insight into the linguistic representation of quantitative concepts in different languages.*

**Keywords:** *Cognitive linguistics, phraseological units, numerical component, conceptual metaphor, figurative language, semantic motivation, cross-cultural analysis, English and Uzbek, symbolic meaning, mental representation.*

**Introduction:** Phraseological units are one of the most expressive and deeply cultural parts of any language. They show the shared experiences, beliefs, and ways of thinking of a group of people who speak the language. Because of this, they are very useful for studying both language and culture. Among all kinds of phraseological expressions, those that include numbers are especially interesting. Numbers might seem simple and universal, but they often have deep symbolic, metaphorical, and cultural meanings that go beyond just their mathematical value. Because of this, numerical phraseological units have become a popular area of study in cognitive linguistics, which looks at how language reflects and influences how people think. The study of numbers in phraseology has become more popular among scholars because numbers serve as both conceptual tools and cultural symbols.

In many languages, certain numbers are linked to specific ideas. For example, the number seven might be connected with completeness or sacredness, while three is often linked with unity, balance, or harmony. These connections are not random; they come from historical traditions, cultural stories, shared memories, and the ways people mentally organize their thoughts. Cognitive linguistics, with its focus on conceptual metaphors, mental images, and mental representations, provides a strong framework for looking into the meanings and ideas behind numerical phraseological units.

Phraseological units that include numbers are especially good for exploring the connection between how people think and how their culture shapes that thinking. These expressions often show the values, expectations, and how people see the world within a language community.

For example, sayings like “to be in seventh heaven,” “to give a hundred percent,” or “measure twice, cut once” show how numbers are used to express ideas about quantity, intensity, and precision. Similarly, in Uzbek, phrases like yetmishga kirmoq (meaning 'to reach old age') or bir og‘iz gap (meaning 'a single word') show how numbers can be used metaphorically to express ideas about time, value, or quantity. These expressions show how numerical thinking is closely tied to cultural beliefs and how language expresses those beliefs.

### **Main Part:**

Cognitive linguistics sees language as a mirror of how humans think and understand the world. It suggests that the way we structure language comes from how we observe, group, and connect with our environment. In this view, phrases and sayings aren't just fixed parts of language but are shaped by our mental frameworks and cultural beliefs. Especially numbers, which are more than just counting tools, carry deeper meanings that come from how people think and what they believe. The human mind uses numbers a lot to make sense of the world. Numbers help us sort things, judge them, and compare them. But numbers also have meanings beyond math. They can mean things through ideas like comparing one thing to another, using parts to stand for whole, or thinking in patterns. For instance, the idea that more is better explains phrases like "give your all" or "put your heart into it." Similarly, the idea that a number can show complete ideas, like seven, is behind expressions such as “the seven seas” or “seven days a week.” These expressions come from real-life experiences and become common through repeated use.

In terms of meaning, certain numbers like three, seven, nine, and forty show up a lot in many languages. They become important because they represent ideas like completeness, balance, or sacredness. These numbers show up in English and Uzbek sayings because people share similar thinking patterns. But even though the numbers are the same, the meanings can change based on culture and history, showing how different groups think about the world in their own ways.

Conceptual metaphor theory offers a vital way to grasp how numerical phrases gain their figurative meanings. Numerous idioms depend on ingrained cognitive metaphors that connect abstract ideas with more tangible numerical values. For example, the metaphor VALUE IS NUMBER accounts for the reason that higher numeric quantities often indicate quality or intensity in phrases like “a million times better” or “second to none.” While these phrases should not be taken literally, their meaning comes from the human inclination to assess evaluations by using quantitative measures.

In a similar fashion, the image schema of SCALE helps organize numerical thinking by allowing individuals to view increases and decreases through spatial or hierarchical shifts. This schema supports English sayings such as “to go one step further” or “to be ten times more careful,” as well as Uzbek expressions like bir pog‘ona yuqoriga ko‘tarilmoq (‘to rise one level higher’).

The cognitive process behind these idioms involves mapping numeric progress onto spatial elevation, a concept that is deeply rooted in human understanding. Another widely recognized conceptual pattern is the metaphor UNITY IS THREE, seen frequently in myths, narratives, and cultural customs. This metaphor appears in English phrases like “the third time’s the charm,” while Uzbek counterparts such as uch kunlik yo‘l (‘a three-day journey’) typically represent completeness rather than literal time spans. Through continuous cultural reinforcement, the number three becomes mentally linked to concepts of balance, rhythm, and wholeness.

The meaning behind numerical phraseological units comes from the interaction between direct quantity and figurative interpretation. Certain numbers take on cultural significance, gathering additional meanings that influence idiomatic phrases. For instance, in English, the number seven is often tied to ideas of perfection or divine order, as reflected in expressions such as “to be in seventh heaven” or “the seven wonders of the world.” These sayings are a reflection of ancient beliefs that associated numbers with extraordinary meanings. In the Uzbek language, the number forty holds significant symbolic importance due to its historical and religious associations. Phrases like *qirq kecha-qirq kun* (‘forty nights and forty days’) or *qirq chiroy* (‘forty beauties’) illustrate how this number represents abundance or extended significance. Although these phrases do not express a literal numerical value, they serve as metaphorical representations of intensity, duration, or completeness.

Smaller figures such as one and two generally convey practical and evaluative meanings.

The digit one often signifies uniqueness, significance, or individuality, as seen in the expression “to be number one” in English or the Uzbek phrase *bir og‘iz gap aytmoq* (“to say one word”), where the numeral suggests minimal effort or focus. The digit two frequently represents duality, partnership, or contrast, illustrated in sayings like “to have two minds” or the Uzbek term *ikki tomonlama* (“two-sided”). In such instances, the meanings of numbers arise from basic cognitive sorting instead of cultural symbols. A comparative analysis of cognition shows both global and culture-specific aspects of numerical expressions in English and Uzbek. Globally, numbers that reflect natural cognitive patterns such as the perception of pairs, sets of three, and cycles appear in idioms common to both languages. This resemblance indicates shared cognitive frameworks that influence human comprehension of quantity and order.

Nevertheless, cultural differences affect symbolic meanings. English often relies on Judeo-Christian traditions to attribute significance to numbers, leading to phrases that highlight divine completion (seven), trials (forty), or duality (two). Conversely, Uzbek expressions are influenced by Turkic cultural heritage, Islamic elements, and native storytelling traditions, creating idioms shaped by rituals, social habits, and oral narratives. For instance, the Uzbek saying *uch yigitning biri* (“one of three brave men”) has cultural implications of heroism and a sense of community tied to folklore. In contrast, English features idioms such as “to kill two birds with one stone,” where the numerical aspect interacts with culturally unique imagery but still captures the universal idea of accomplishing more with less effort. These differences illustrate how numerical understanding functions within the cultural contexts of each language, influencing the figurative significance of idiomatic expressions.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, understanding numerical idiomatic expressions involves a combination of direct numerical interpretation and figurative cognitive interpretation.

When encountering a numerical idiom, speakers first access the literal interpretation of the number due to automatic mental retrieval. However, contextual elements and linguistic experience swiftly redirect understanding toward the idiomatic sense. This two-step processing approach indicates that numerical idiomatic expressions necessitate greater cognitive adaptability than non-numerical idioms. For native speakers, idiomatic meanings are retrieved quickly because of their familiarity and cultural context. For those learning the language, however, such phrases can be challenging, as they require awareness of both language conventions and cultural symbolism. Consequently, grasping numerical idioms involves not just a linguistic challenge but also a process of cognitive and cultural learning.

Numerical idiomatic expressions serve multiple communicative roles in both spoken and written communication. They enrich expressiveness by offering colorful imagery, exaggeration, or emphasis, exemplified by phrases like “a thousand times over” or *ming karra rahmat* (“a thousand thanks”). Additionally, they can organize discourse logically by denoting order or significance, as illustrated in “first and foremost” or *birinchidan, ikkinchidan*. Additionally, numerical expressions frequently serve as indicators of social and cultural identity, showing a connection to a language group or common cultural background. Utilizing them in political addresses, literary pieces, and daily discussions strengthens cultural connections and mirrors shared history. Therefore, numerical phrases add not just to meaning depth but also to practical impact and cultural persistence.

### **Conclusion:**

The cognitive think about of numerical component phraseological units uncovers that numbers in dialect work distant past their strict quantitative implications. They serve as effective cognitive, social, and typical rebellious that shape metaphorical expression, conceptualization, and communication. Through the focal point of cognitive etymology, numerical expressions rise as appearances of more profound mental instruments conceptual allegories, picture patterns, social models, and designs of categorization that structure human understanding of the world.

The investigation illustrates that numerical phraseological units in both English and Uzbek reflect all inclusive cognitive inclinations: the human dependence on tallying, scaling, sequencing, and seeing designs. Numbers such as one, two, three, seven, and forty more than once surface since they compare to model develops established in human involvement. At the same time, cross-linguistic comparison appears that whereas cognitive establishments are regularly shared, social translations shift essentially. Devout conventions, verifiable accounts, and fables shape the typical implications of numbers, coming about in expressions that are socially particular however cognitively persuaded. The consider moreover highlights the significance of semantic inspiration in numerical expressiveness. Expressions joining numbers are once in a while self-assertive; they emerge from unsurprising cognitive affiliations and socially acquired imagery. Their metaphorical implications are prepared through a double instrument in which strict numerical understanding interatomic with conceptual deliberation, illustrating the complex mental operations fundamental colloquial translation.

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