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THE ROLE OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN THE IDEOLOGICAL AND THEMATIC CONTENT OF CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

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ABSTRACT

This article extensively investigates the role and artistic functions of phraseological units in shaping the ideological and thematic content of George Gordon Byron's poem "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage". Within the scope of the research, the stylistic and semantic potential of phraseological units in illuminating the themes of freedom, homeland, despair, and human values is analyzed. It is proven through a linguopoetic approach that phraseologisms in Byron's lyrics manifest as units carrying an ideological burden.

Keywords: Byron, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, phraseological units, ideological-thematic content, linguopoetics, Romanticism, stylistic function, semantic analysis.

INTRODUCTION

George Gordon Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812–1818) is widely recognized as one of the pinnacles of world Romantic literature. Comprising four cantos, this monumental lyric-epic work not only reflects the author's profound intellectual and emotional vision but also offers a poetic panorama of the socio-political life of 19th-century Europe. The ideological and thematic content of the



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poem embodies the eternal conflict between freedom and oppression, the anguish and longing of the exiled soul, and the quest for lessons from human history.

In conveying the ideological load of the literary text, the role of linguistic means is invaluable. Among these, phraseological units hold a special status: on one hand, they preserve the historical and cultural memory of the language, while on the other, they serve as a powerful, concise, and expressive instrument for conveying the author's intent. To date, the ideological and thematic functions of phraseological units in Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* have not been sufficiently examined as a distinct object of study. Therefore, this article seeks to explore previously under-investigated aspects of the topic.

The aim of this study is to analyze, through a linguopoetic approach, the artistic-stylistic and semantic functions of phraseological units in shaping the ideological and thematic content of the poem, covering all four cantos. The theoretical framework of the research is based on the works of scholars such as Viktor Vinogradov, Alexander Kunin, Shavkat Rahmatullayev, and Nikolai Shansky in the field of phraseology.

MAIN BODY

1. The Ideological and Thematic Structure of the Poem and the Role of Phraseological Units

The ideological and thematic layer of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* is built around several interrelated themes: the struggle for freedom against tyranny; homeland and exile; history and contemporary crisis; loneliness and psychological anguish. In each of these thematic domains, Byron employs phraseological units as a powerful means of artistic expression.

Phraseological units contribute to the semantic richness of the poem in three ways:



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1. **Conventional meaning:** used in their traditional sense to establish the general thematic background;
2. **Semantic expansion:** employed in a new context to carry additional layers of meaning;
3. **Transformational function:** modified consciously to express the author's intent more sharply and effectively.

This tendency is already evident from the very first canto of the poem.

2. The Function of Phraseological Units in the Theme of Freedom and Tyranny

The central idea of the poem—the struggle for freedom—is most vividly expressed through phraseological units. While depicting the landscapes of Spain, Greece, and Italy, Byron conveys the courage of these peoples in their pursuit of liberty by using traditional English phraseological expressions and imbuing them with a new political and publicistic spirit.

For instance, in the first canto, when describing the Spanish resistance against French invaders, Byron elevates the phrase **“to pour out one's blood”** from an ordinary military metaphor to a symbol of national sacrifice. In this context, the unit denotes not only physical sacrifice but also the moral and volitional essence of the nation. This semantic expansion greatly intensifies the ideological weight of the phrase.

In the third canto, during the depiction of the Belgian battlefield, phraseological units such as **“to stand one's ground”** are employed to analyze the Battle of Waterloo. Through this, Byron not only narrates military events but also philosophically explores the human attitude towards fate and history.



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3. The Function of Phraseological Units in Themes of Exile and Psychological Suffering

Byron skillfully uses phraseological units to construct the psychological portrait of Childe Harold. Units that convey the protagonist's inner state reflect alienation from society and a profound sense of loneliness.

Examples such as **“a broken heart,”** **“to be a stranger in one's own land,”** and **“to wander without aim”** poetically encapsulate Harold's Romantic mood, known as Weltschmerz—the world-weariness of his time. These units mirror not only the hero's condition but also the sentiments of Byron's contemporary generation of Romantic dissenters.

In the fourth canto, during Harold's travels through Italy, the poet employs **“the ghost of glory”** to juxtapose the decline of the Roman Empire with contemporary political subjugation. This phraseological image allows Byron to sharply contrast past grandeur with present oppression.

4. The Function of Phraseological Units in Themes of History and Human Destiny

The fourth canto is particularly rich in phraseological units conveying historical and philosophical meaning. While surveying the histories of Rome, Venice, and Florence, Byron uses phraseological expressions to reflect the perpetual cycles of human civilization—its rise and decline.

Units such as **“the sands of time,”** **“to leave one's mark on history,”** and **“the ruins of empire”** enrich the poem's historical-philosophical layer, poetically articulating Byron's blend of pessimism and idealism. Through these phrases, the poet illustrates humanity's dual role in history—as both creators and destroyers. It is important to emphasize that Byron does not merely employ conventional phraseological units; he transforms them according to the context, imparting new



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meanings and ideological significance. This demonstrates his linguistic mastery and stylistic skill.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Based on the conducted analysis, several important scholarly conclusions can be drawn. First and foremost, in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, phraseological units are not incidental aesthetic elements; rather, they constitute an integral part of the poem's ideological and thematic structure. Their usage, density, and functional deployment within the context serve to fully convey the author's intended meaning.

The study demonstrates that phraseological units perform distinct stylistic and semantic roles across the poem's four main thematic layers—struggle for freedom, psychological suffering, historical-philosophical reflection, and exile. A single phraseological expression may simultaneously relate to multiple thematic layers, thereby ensuring the poem's conceptual coherence.

Furthermore, a notable feature of Byron's use of phraseological units is his frequent employment of the conventional English phraseological repertoire, which he imbues with a political and Romantic spirit. This approach allowed contemporary English readers to recognize familiar expressions while encountering them in novel ideological contexts, contributing significantly to the poem's widespread acclaim and enduring popularity.

CONCLUSION

The study of the ideological and thematic functions of phraseological units in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage allows us to draw the following main conclusions:



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First, phraseological units act as independent and semantically powerful elements within the poem's ideological and thematic structure, serving to poetically express themes such as freedom, exile, history, and human destiny.

Second, Byron not only employs phraseological units in their conventional meanings but also transforms them according to contextual needs, thereby achieving new ideological and artistic significance. This method constitutes a key aspect of his stylistic mastery.

Third, the poem's Romantic ideological orientation—including the struggle against tyranny, the pursuit of psychological freedom, and the human responsibility in history—is most effectively conveyed through phraseological units.

Fourth, this study confirms that linguistic-poetic and phraseological analysis provides an effective methodological tool for examining Byron's work. Future corpus-based and comparative studies in this field are considered promising for further research.

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