

## Phraseological Units in V. Vysotsky's Poetry

*Shukurova Olmakhon Odiljon kizi*

*Assistant of the Department of Uzbek Language and Literature, Russian and English Languages at  
Bukhara State Medical Institute*

**Abstract.** Vladimir Vysotsky, a renowned Russian poet, singer, and actor, is known for his unique and deeply expressive poetry, which reflects the complexities of life in the Soviet era. His works often intertwine personal experiences with social and political issues. One of the significant features of Vysotsky's poetic language is his use of phraseological units, which enhance the emotional impact and depth of his works. This article examines the role and function of phraseological units in Vysotsky's poetry, analyzing how they contribute to the formation of imagery, character development, and thematic exploration. Vysotsky often uses idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and colloquial phrases to reflect the common speech of his time, while simultaneously imparting a sense of universal truths and emotional intensity. These phraseological units not only preserve the authenticity of everyday language but also serve as a tool for conveying deeper meanings, adding irony, humor, or pathos to his poems. Through this analysis, the article aims to demonstrate the centrality of phraseological units in shaping Vysotsky's distinct poetic style and his ability to communicate complex emotional states and social realities.

**Key words:** Vladimir Vysotsky, phraseological units, idiomatic expressions, colloquial language, poetry, imagery, character development, social and political themes, emotional intensity, Russian literature.

### Introduction

Vladimir Vysotsky, one of the most prominent and influential figures in Russian literature and music, is renowned for his vivid and dynamic use of language, which captured the essence of Soviet society while simultaneously transcending it. His works, often filled with deep emotional intensity, reflection on human nature, and social critique, also showcase his distinctive use of phraseological units — set expressions, idioms, proverbs, and colloquialisms. These linguistic tools play a central role in shaping the unique character of Vysotsky's poetry, contributing to the formation of his powerful imagery, thematic depth, and emotional resonance.

**Phraseological units in Vysotsky's poetry** are not just stylistic devices; they serve a much deeper function, often offering insight into the social, political, and emotional landscape of the poet's time. Vysotsky's ability to incorporate familiar and often colloquial expressions into his poetry lends an air of authenticity to his work. By utilizing idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and slang, he captured the pulse of everyday Russian speech, making his poems relatable to a wide audience. Yet, his usage of phraseological units is far from superficial. He manipulates these expressions to evoke multiple layers of meaning, infusing his work with irony, humor, or a sense of tragic realism. One of the key features of Vysotsky's style is his juxtaposition of colloquial speech and philosophical reflections. His poetry often touches on complex themes such as freedom, power, identity, and human suffering. Through the lens of everyday language, Vysotsky explores these grand concepts, which imbues his poetry with both emotional depth and accessibility.

## **Types of Phraseological Units in Vysotsky's Poetry**

Vysotsky's creative use of phraseological units spans a variety of categories, each serving different purposes within his poems. These categories include:

### **a) Proverbs and Sayings**

Proverbs are a particularly powerful tool in Vysotsky's work. They often carry a sense of universal truth, and Vysotsky adapts them to reflect the societal conditions of the time. For example, in the poem "*Зачем мне, скажи, эта наука?*" (Why do I need this science?), the poet uses a familiar saying to express disillusionment with intellectualism, drawing attention to the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical reality. In Vysotsky's poetry, proverbs are often used to convey ironic or sardonic messages, reflecting a sharp critique of societal norms. By subtly altering these proverbs or embedding them in specific contexts, Vysotsky imbues them with a unique, contemporary relevance, giving them a fresh, sometimes subversive meaning.

### **b) Colloquialisms and Slang**

Vysotsky was a master of capturing the colloquial speech of his time, infusing his poetry with the raw, unrefined language of the streets, soldiers, workers, and other social groups. His use of slang and everyday expressions serves to deepen the authenticity of his characters and their struggles. Phrases such as "*пошел на обед*" (went for lunch) or "*дело житейское*" (a matter of everyday life) reveal the underlying social realism in Vysotsky's poems, showing the lives of people caught in the struggles of the Soviet era. These colloquial expressions are often embedded within the poems' larger philosophical questions. For instance, a phrase like "*заблудиться в трех соснах*" (to get lost in the three pines) takes on a deeper significance when applied to characters in Vysotsky's songs who are caught in a web of bureaucratic confusion or existential despair.

### **c) Metaphorical Expressions**

Metaphors are another powerful feature of phraseological units in Vysotsky's poetry. He frequently uses established metaphorical phrases and twists them, subverting their typical meanings to create new, often darker interpretations. For example, expressions like "*погибать по чьей-то вине*" (to die because of someone's fault) or "*плакать по ушедшим*" (to cry over the ones who are gone) gain additional weight when applied to the political and personal context of Vysotsky's time. These familiar phrases evoke a sense of collective loss and tragedy, while also creating a space for personal grief and rebellion.

## **The Role of Phraseological Units in Vysotsky's Thematic Exploration**

The use of phraseological units in Vysotsky's poetry is intricately linked to his thematic concerns. Vysotsky was deeply engaged with the realities of life in the Soviet Union, particularly the psychological and social struggles of ordinary individuals. His phraseological choices reflect the contradictions and ambiguities of this era, often highlighting the disillusionment, confusion, and suffering that pervaded daily life.

Many of Vysotsky's poems feature phrases that reflect his critique of Soviet bureaucracy, corruption, and the rigid ideological constraints of the time. By using idiomatic expressions that people of his era would instantly recognize, he exposes the absurdity and injustice of the system. For example, in his song "*Я – не юродивый*" (I am not a holy fool), the phrase "*пытаться выжить в своем государстве*" (trying to survive in your own country) resonates with a sense of alienation, illustrating the everyday struggle to navigate an oppressive system.

Vysotsky's poetry also grapples with questions of human existence, freedom, and meaning. His use of phraseological units such as "*положить жизнь на алтарь*" (to give one's life for a cause) or "*пить до дна*" (to drink to the bottom) reflects his exploration of human endurance and sacrifice. These expressions take on added layers of meaning as they are used to explore not just the personal conflicts of his characters, but also their struggles against broader societal forces.

Vysotsky often uses familiar phrases with a twist to convey emotional intensity, irony, and even humor. For example, his use of the phrase "*все прошло*" (it's all over) in the context of a poem about

unfulfilled dreams or broken relationships gains a tragicomic nuance. In this way, Vysotsky imbues everyday expressions with a profound sense of loss, as well as an acknowledgment of life's absurdity.

### **The Impact of Phraseological Units on Vysotsky's Legacy**

Vysotsky's mastery of phraseological units is part of what makes his poetry so accessible, emotionally resonant, and enduring. By integrating common expressions with profound philosophical and emotional content, he bridges the gap between the intellectual and the ordinary, between the personal and the collective. His use of idioms, proverbs, and slang allows his poetry to capture the universal human experience while staying firmly rooted in the specific cultural and historical context of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Vysotsky's manipulation of these expressions challenges the listener or reader to reconsider their meaning. By using familiar phrases in unfamiliar ways, he invites an engagement with language that is both intellectual and visceral, encouraging reflection on the nuances of everyday speech and the complexity of life itself.

### **Conclusion**

Vladimir Vysotsky's use of phraseological units is a fundamental aspect of his poetic style, which intertwines colloquial language with deep philosophical reflections on life, society, and human existence. Through the manipulation of idioms, proverbs, and metaphors, Vysotsky creates a unique and powerful linguistic universe in which familiar expressions take on new meanings, reflecting the emotional intensity and existential concerns of his time. His ability to capture the essence of Soviet life while simultaneously addressing universal themes ensures that his poetry remains as relevant and impactful today as it was during his lifetime.

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