

PHRASEOLOGICAL COMBINATIONS WITH NUMBER COMPONENTS USED IN THE EPOS OF KITABI-DEDE GORGUD

Asmar Safarli

Lecturer, Baku Slavic University, Azerbaijan

e-mail: esmer.seferli@bsu-uni.edu.az, orcid.org/0009-0001-1665-0564

Summary

The article examines the structural-semantic and functional characteristics of phraseological combinations with number components used in the epic “Kitabi-Dede Gorgud”. During the research, fixed expressions with number components in the text of the epic were identified, their lexical-semantic characteristics, mythological sources and stylistic functions were analyzed. It was determined that number components act not only as quantitative indicators in the epic, but also form an important element of epic thinking, mythological worldview and poetic expression system. A comparative analysis of phraseologisms containing sacred and ritual numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, 32, 40, 1000) with modern Turkic languages demonstrates the heritage potential of the language of the monument.

Key words: Dede Gorgud, phraseology, number component, epic language, mythological symbolism, sacred numbers.

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1. Introduction

“Kitabi-Dede Gorgud” is an epic monument reflecting the heroic history, worldview and system of moral values of the Oghuz Turks. This epic is not only a historical-ethnographic source, but also a valuable literary and artistic example distinguished by rich linguistic facts.

Fixed expressions, proverbs, similes, metaphors and phraseological units occupy a wide place in the language of the epic. A certain part of such phraseological units is made up of phraseological units with a numerical component. In particular, phraseological units with a numerical component play an important role in the poetic structure of the epic text. These units both create imagery and preserve the traces of ancient Turkic mythological thought.

Purpose of Study. The goal of this article is to identify phraseological units with a number component used in the epic of Dede Gorgud, analyze them from a semantic and functional perspective, and investigate their role in the epic language system.

2. Literature Review

In Azerbaijani linguistics, the phraseology of the “Kitabi-Dede Gorgud” epic has been studied by many scholars. H. Bayramov, while discussing the phraseology of the Dede Gorgud epic in his work “Fundamentals of the Azerbaijani Language Phraseology”, notes: “The number of phraseological units in the facsimile of the Dresden copy of the book-Dede Gorgud epic exceeds 300” (Bayramov, 1978, p. 28).

Tofiq Hajiyev, in his book “The Book of Dede Gorgud: The First Textbook of Our History”, while analyzing the language of the epic, notes that phraseological units with a numerical component are an important indicator of the ancient Turkic worldview, epic thought and poetic

language. In his opinion, the numbers in the epic do not only indicate quantity, but also have a figurative, symbolic and emotional meaning. For example, the greeting “üç otuz on yaşasın” not only means “may you live 100 years”, but also expresses the ancient Turks’ wish for longevity based on the thirty-year number system. Similarly, the expression “on otuz on yaşasın” also expresses an exaggerated wish for a very long life. “The epic contains the greeting ‘üç otuz on yaşasın’ (may you live a hundred years). This clearly indicates that the ancient Turks had a thirty-year number system. As a fact of fiction, there is also an exaggerated version of that number: “üç otuz on yaşasın” / “long live thirty-one!” (Hajiyev, 2014, p. 259).

K. Aliyev writes about the symbolism of numbers in the epic “Dede Gorgud”: “The smallest number in the epic is 2, and the largest number is 16,000. The numbers between 2 and 16000 are approximately as follows: 3, 4, 6, 40, 60, 90, 100, 300, 400, 600...” (Aliyev, 2015, p. 5).

In his article “Somatic phraseologisms in the epic of Dede Gorgud”, Nizami Baghirov studied the somatic phraseological units used in the epic “The Book of Dede Gorgud” and divided them into two groups: 1. Substantive somatic phraseological units; 2. Verbal predicative somatic phraseologisms (Baghirov, 2016, p. 178).

The epic “Kitabi-Dede Gorgud” has attracted the attention of not only Azerbaijani scholars but also Turkish scholars in research. Rza Gul examined the idioms and expressions used in the epic in his article “Word patterns in the stories of Dede Gorgud” (Gül, 2008, p. 100-105). In 2016, Yusuf Can Tıraş and Halil İbrahim Ertürk compared the proverbs and idioms in the epic with the proverbs and idioms in the modern Turkish language in their article “Semantic analysis of the proverbs used in the Book of Dede Gorgud and their equivalents in Turkish” (Tıraş, Ertürk, 2016, p. 135-150).

The numbers used in the Oghuz group of Turkic languages, as well as other modern Turkic languages, are reflected in the epics of Dede Gorgud. Some of these numbers are used in the creation of phraseological units, and some are used as text-building tools. The main goal of using numbers as a text-building tool is to enrich the figurative language.

3. Results and Discussions

Theoretical foundations of phraseological units with a number component.

Phraseological units are stable word combinations that are used in the language in a ready-made manner and have a semantic connection between their components. Phraseological units containing a number form a special group. In such combinations, the number can indicate a specific quantity, carry an abstract and symbolic meaning, perform a hyperbolic (exaggeration) function, and express a mythological-sacral meaning.

The semantic load of numbers in Turkic languages is closely related to ancient mythological concepts. In particular, numbers such as “three”, “seven”, and “forty” have a sacred character and acquire a symbolic meaning in epic texts. For example, in the epic poem of Dede Gorgud, Bayandur Khan sacrifices three types of animals, sets up a tent in three colors, Khizr caresses Bugaj’s wound three times, confirms Deli Qajar’s three times giving his sister to Beyre, and so on, all of which are related to the symbolic meaning of the number three.

Phraseological and semantic features of the number “bir /one”

The number “bir” acts in the epic as a symbol of both real quantity and unity and integrity.

Bir yastığa baş qoymaq – to start a family, to marry, to live a life – “*Göz açıban gördüğüm, gönül ilə sevdiğim, bir yasduqda baş qoyduğum!*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 62). This phraseological unit, which has the semantics of unity and unity, is connected with family life.

“Datlu damağ verüb soruşduğım,

Bir yastıq baş qoyub əmişdigim” (KDQ, 2004, p. 101). This phraseological unit is used in the language of Dede Gorgud’s epics, as well as in modern Turkish as “bir yastığa baş koymak/ bir yastıkta kocamak” (Çotuksökän, 2004, p. 139) and in Azerbaijani as “bir yastığa baş qoymaq” (Valiyeva, 2006, p. 130) with the same meaning and lexical composition. For example, “Axı Zərnigar da yazıq idi, neçə il idi ki, onunla bir yastığa baş qoyurdular” (Shikhli, 2005, p. 23).

Bir döşəyə çıxmaq – “Qızla ikisi bir döşəyə çıqdılar” (KDQ, 2004, p. 148) is a phraseological combination that arose in connection with a wedding, custom, and ceremony. Here, the number “bir” creates a unifying meaning and expresses socio-moral integrity.

Bir ağzı dualı – “Bir ağzı dualının alqışıyla Allah Taala bir əyal verdi: xatunı hamilə oldı, bir neçə müddətdən sonra bir oğlan doğurdı” (KDQ, 2004, p. 26). Nizami Bagirov, in his article “Somatic phraseologisms in the epic of Dede Gorgud”, included the phraseological combination “bir azgı dualı” in the composition of phraseological units that arose in connection with religious lifestyle and customs. He notes: “This type of phraseological units or idioms mainly consist of somatic phraseologisms that arose in connection with the Islamic religion and the ancient customs and traditions of the Oghuz. In epics, the somatic phraseologism “dua” is used in the meaning of “believer, devout”” (Baghirov, 2016, p. 185). This phraseological combination, used in the language of Kitabı-Dede Gorgud, is also found in “Hophopname”:

“Ay nənə, bir qırmızı saqqal kişi!

Ağzı dualı, qoca baqqal kişi!” (Sabir, 2012, p. 155).

Bir can, bir qəlb olmaq – complete solidarity – **“Bir canda nə var ki, sana qıymamışlar?”** (KDQ, 2004, p. 102). This phraseological unit observed in the epic of Dede Gorgud is also applicable to modern Oghuz group Turkic languages. For example, “İki güdükcü bir can, bir qəlb kimi fərş döşənən dəhlizdə xısın-xısın danışa-danışa, bir-biri ilə itələşə-itələşə dolaşırdı” (Rahimov, 2005, p. 109). This phraseological combination with a numerical component used in the language of the epic is also found in the Turkmen language in the form “bir jan, bir ten bolmak” (Turkmen phraseological dictionary, 2016, p. 25): “Dört ýoldaş bir jan, bir ten bolup, tä gün dogýança çay içdiler” (Turkmen phraseological dictionary, 2016, p. 25).

Bir qaç kəlmə – “Ağız-dildən bir qaç kəlmə xəbər mana!” (KDQ, 2004, p. 114). This phraseological unit, which is characteristic of the language of Dede Gorgud, corresponds to the phraseological units “bir ağız söz”, “bir ağız demək” (Orujov, 1976, p. 79), “bir çift söz / bir kaç söz” (Çotuksökän, 2004, p. 135) used in modern Turkic languages. For example, “Ey oğlan, mən səndən bir ağız söz sorayım öldürməzdən əvvəl,- dedi” (Türkmen love epics, 2022, p. 195).

“Bir ucından qırub kafri, ol bir ucına çıqdı” (KDQ, 2004, p. 115). **“Bu yağının bir ucın manqa, bir ucın sanqa! – dedi”** (KDQ, 2004, p. 115). These phraseological units embody unity and sharing of the process in battles.

“Yerin bir ucından bir ucına yetim!” deyən Savqan Sarı bilə varsun!” (KDQ, 2004, p. 120). This phraseological unit conveys a hyperbolic meaning and expresses infinity.

Mythological and structural function of the number “iki/two”

While the number “one” represents the one God, the number “iki” means conflicts.

Onur Sömen also writes about the number two used in the epic: “The tribes of Dede Gorgud are actually built on many contradictions that we can consider as friend-enemy, good-bad, brave-coward, father-son struggle. The number two is the ideal number to describe this contradictory structure” (Sömen, 2019, p. 35). We see that this idea is also reflected in the examples we have chosen.

İki gözünün biri – “*Oğul atanın yetiridir, iki gözünün biridir*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 20). This phraseological combination expresses that the son is a dear, valuable and protected being for the father. T. Hacıyev notes that in this phraseological unit, the place and value of a son for the family and society is understood (Hacıyev, 2014, 262). This phraseological unit is used in the modern era in the form of “iki gözümün ışığı”. Example, “Mənim iki gözümün ışığı, Məhbubə cadugər deyil. Bundan əlavə, o, sənin qardaşına bu xəstə vəziyyətdə nə eyləyəcək?” (Maragayi, 2006, p. 366).

“İki vardin, bir gəlirsən; yavrum qanı?” (KDQ, 2004, p. 30, p. 85).

Sözünü iki eləməmək – “*Ol zamanda oğul ata sözün iki eləməzdi. İki eyləsə, ol oğlanı qəbul eləməzlərdi*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 83). This phraseological combination, used in the language of the epic of Dede Gorgud, is also seen in the epic of Koroghlu: “Nigarın dilərin arasında o qədər hörməti var idi ki, onun bir sözünü iki eləməzdilər” (Koroglu, 2005, p. 175). We also find the form “*bir dediyini iki eləməmək*” in Azerbaijani (Orujov, 1976, p. 81) and “*bir söylədiyini iki etməmək*” in the phraseological dictionary of the Turkish language (Çotuksökən, 2004, p. 138).

İki halal – life companion, wife – “*Ol iki halala yüz qırq yıl ömr verdim, – dedi*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 102).

Sağına soluna iki qoşa yay çəkmək – beautiful, extremely beautiful – “*Məgər Trabuzan təkürinin bir əzim-görklü məhbub qızı vardı. Sağına-soluna iki qoşa yay çəkərdi*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 104). This phraseological unit is a phraseological unit used in Azerbaijani fairy tales and epics to praise the beauty of girls. In some cases, this phraseological unit is also encountered in everyday speech.

The mythological and structural function of the number “üç/three”

In Turkic mythology, “üç” is a symbol of the cosmic model (earth-sky-underworld). The motif of trinity is often observed in the epic. The number three is in the first place in terms of frequency of use in the epic. K. Aliyev notes that “the most frequently used numbers are 3 and 6, as well as their derivatives: 30, 300, or 600” (Aliyev, 2015, p. 5).

“Ol kafirin üçün atub birin yarmaz oqçısı olur” (KDQ, 2004, p. 82). This phraseological unit is characteristic of the language of Dede Gorgud’s epics. It is not observed in any of the modern Oghuz group Turkic languages.

The mythological and structural function of the number “dörd/four”

The number four is associated with the four elements that are essential for the existence of being – fire, water, earth and spirit. The number four is also often found in the language of the epic. However, as O. Sömen noted, the use of the number four in the epic of Dede Gorgud is mainly expressed in terms of direction (Sömen, 2019, p. 40).

“Qarılalıb dörd yanına baqydınmi, qız!?”

Qarğı kibi qara saçın yoldınmi, qız!?” (KDQ, 2004, p. 74).

“Dili-damağı quruyub dörd yanına baqdırdınmi?”

Qara gözdən acı yaş döküdülmü?” (KDQ, 2004, p. 85).

“Qardaşsız miskin yigit ənsəsinə yumruq toqunsa,

Ağlayuban dörd yanına baqar olur” (KDQ, 2004, p. 148).

“Yaradan haqqıyçun duri gəlgi!”

Dörd yanına kafir bağladı, bəllü bilgil! – dedi” (KDQ, 2004, p. 151). As can be seen from the examples, the number four in the phraseological units of the epic helps to express the meaning of direction.

The mythological and structural function of the number “beş/five”

The number five includes the five religious conditions that are obligatory for Muslims in Islam (prayer, fasting, giving zakat, knowing the testimony of faith, performing the Hajj pilgrimage if possible), five daily prayers, and five categories of jurisprudence.

Beş kəlmə dua – “*Ağ alnunda beş kəlmə dua qıldığ, qəbul olsun!*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 103, p. 118). This phraseological unit is characteristic of the language of Dede Gorgud's epics. This phraseological unit can be observed in the stories “The Internal Oghuz Dash Oghuz turned away and Beyrek died”, “The story of the bloody old man Ganturalı”, “The story of the prisoner of Uruz Bey, the son of Kazan Bey”, etc. The phraseological combination formed with the number five used in the epic also takes its source from Islamic sources.

The mythological and structural function of the number “altı/six”

The number six is in second place after the number three in terms of the intensity of its use in the epic. K. Aliyev writes about the number six used in the epic of Dede Gorgud: “In the epic, the number three is a number belonging to the Oghuz, and the number six is a number belonging to the infidels” (Aliyev, 2015, p. 5). According to the meaning of phraseological combinations formed with the number six, the number formed with the number four indicates direction as phraseological units with a component.

“*Varayın, anı anası yanından alayın, qılıcla paralayayın, altı bölük edəyin, altı yolun ayırdında bırağayın*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 84).

“*Dört yildə gəlməzsən, üç-dört yıl baqam.*”

Altı yol ayırdına çadır dikəm” (KDQ, 2004, p. 148). These phraseological units are typical for the language of the epic of Dede Gorgud.

The sacred nature of the number “yeddi/seven”

“Yeddi” is a sacred number in both Turkish and Islamic culture. This number is associated with Sharia and creation. The most important example of this is that it is one of the seven evident attributes of Allah (knowledge, power, speech, hearing, sight, life and will).

In the epic, this number mostly expresses the concept of time and is used in the following forms:

“*Yeddi gün, yeddi gecə yimə-içmə oldı*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 51).

“*Yedi qız qardaşın yedi yol ayırdında ağlar gördüm, Bamsı!*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 64).

“*Yeddi gün, yeddi gecə yortdılar*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 107).

“*Yedi dərə qoxuların dülkü bilür*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 21).

“*Yettügimdə yel yetməzdi yedi urğunum,*”

Yeni Bayırın qurdına bənzərdi yigitlərim” (KDQ, 2004, p. 121).

Here, “yeddi/seven” is a symbol of wholeness and perfection rather than a real number. This is a symbolic indicator expressing the completeness of the universe in epic thought.

Epic-semantic function of the number “doqquz/nine”

The number nine is one of the sacred numbers. R. Gafarlı notes: “The sacred nine is interpreted as a threefold increase in the trinity of the underground, terrestrial and celestial worlds” (Gafarlı, 2015, p. 401). In ancient times, as in modern times, phraseological units did not have a high frequency in the formation of phraseological units.

Doqquzunu bir yerinə saydırmaq – to collect, to gather – “*Doqquzunu bir yerinə saydurayım / Uruşmadan, döğüşmədən aləmi doldurayım*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 91). This phraseological unit is not observed in modern Oghuz group Turkic languages.

Epic-semantic function of the number “on/ten”

On barmağını qanda görmək – “*Qara dəvə ənsəmdən qarvar gördüm, qarğu kibi qara saçım uzanır gördüm, uzanuban gözümi örtər gördüm, biləgimdən on barmağımı qanda gördüm*” (KDQ, 2004, p. 40). We find this phraseological combination, used in the language of

Dede Gorgud, in the language of Khatai in the form “iki əli qanda”: “İki əlin qızıl qanda,/ Çox günahlar vardır məndə” (*Khatai*, 2005, p. 347).

Epic-semantic function of the number “Qırx/Forty”

The number “forty” is one of the sacred numbers. In Turkish folklore, “qırx” is a symbol of maturity, completion, and abundance. In the epic, the expression “qırx igid”/“forty brave” expresses the idea of strength and unity united around the hero. This number symbolizes the concept of collective strength and integrity rather than a specific quantity. R. Gafarlı notes: “Forty is a ritual model of the world. In mythological structures, forty is not a precise number, but an uncountable multitude” (*Gafarlı*, 2015, p. 402-404). Although “forty” does not actively participate in the formation of phraseological units, it is one of the most productive number components in the epic:

“Atam-anam evinə dönsəm.

Hey qırq eşim, qırq yoldaşım!” (*KDQ*, 2004, p. 107)

The hyperbolic function of the number “min/thousand”

Exaggeration (hyperbole), characteristic of epic texts, is also widespread in the epic poem Dede Gorgud:

“Bin söylərsən, birisini duymaz, ərin sözünü qulağına qoymaz” (*KDQ*, 2004, p. 23).

This phraseological unit aims to increase the scale of the work, to increase the impact of events. Here, the number is not in a nominative sense, but is a means of imagery.

The epic-semantic function of the number “on dörd/fourteen”

“Atundan endi, çilbərini bir dala ilişdirdi. Baqdı gördi kim, ayun on dördünə bənzər bir məhəbub, ala gözlü gənc yigit burcuq-burcuq dərləmiş, uyur” (*KDQ*, 2004, p. 151). This phraseological combination is reflected in the modern Azerbaijani language in the form of “on dörd gecəlik ay” (*Valiyeva*, 2006, p. 627). In addition, this phraseological unit is often used in Azerbaijani fairy tales and epics to praise the immense beauty of girls and brides. For example, “Gülzar özünə yeddi qələm ilə zinət verib, on dörd gecəlik ay kimi şəfəqləndi, onun qabağına çıxdı” (*Azerbaijani dastanları*, 2005, p. 132).

The epic-semantic function of the number “Otuz iki/thirty-two”

“Otuz iki dişdən çıxan bütün orduya yayıldı, “Bəkil atdan düşmüş, ayağı sınmış” deyü” (*KDQ*, 2004, p. 138). Although the phraseological combination “otuz iki dişdən çıxan” with the number component used in the language of Kitabı-Dede Gorgud has preserved its functionality in living colloquial speech, we did not find it in the phraseological dictionaries of the Azerbaijani language. This phraseological combination is also used in other Turkic languages. For example, in Uzbek, “uttiz iki tişdən çıqqan qap” (*Zeynalov*, 2008, p. 138).

4. Conclusions

As a result of the conducted research, it was determined that the phraseological units with a numerical component used in the epic “Kitabi-Dede Gorgud” constitute an important component of the ancient Oghuz epic thought, mythological worldview and poetic language system. The numbers used in the epic not only carry nominative-quantitative content, but also perform symbolic, sacral, hyperbolic and stylistic functions, increasing the semantic and aesthetic load of the text.

The analyses show that the phraseological units formed on the basis of the numbers “one”, “three”, “seven”, “forty”, “thousand”, “fourteen”, “thirty-two” and other numbers reflect the mythological ideas of the people, the religious-ethnic thought model, social-domestic relations and heroic ideals. In particular, the sacral content of the numbers “three”, “seven” and

“forty”, and the use of numbers such as “thousand” and “hundred” in a hyperbolic function play an important role in the formation of the poetic structure of the epic.

In addition, the fact that a number of phraseological units with numerical components continue to exist in various forms in the modern Azerbaijani language and other Oghuz group Turkic languages confirms their historical continuity and importance in the pan-Turkic linguistic and cultural heritage. This fact once again demonstrates that the “Book of Dede Gorgud” is not only an ancient epic monument, but also a rich linguistic source that preserves the common phraseological and cultural memory of the Turkic peoples.

Thus, the study of phraseological units with numerical components allows for a deeper study of the language, poetics and mythological-semantic system of the epic and opens up broad prospects for future research in the areas of comparative Turkic phraseology, ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics.

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