



A STRUCTURAL AND SEMANTIC STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS EXPRESSING EMOTIONS (ON THE EXAMPLE OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES)

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Abstract. *This article explores the structural and semantic features of phraseological units expressing emotions in English and Uzbek. These idiomatic expressions are viewed not merely as fixed linguistic patterns but as cognitive models reflecting emotional experience and cultural worldview. Drawing on the theoretical insights of W. Wundt, P. Anokhin, P. Simonov, Y. Reykovsky, and K. Izard, the study examines how emotional meanings are embedded in the structure of idioms. The analysis identifies both universal and culture-specific mechanisms of emotional evaluation and intensity, demonstrating how languages conceptualize emotions through metaphor and national imagery.*

Keywords. *emotional phraseology, semantics, structure, evaluation, intensity, cognitive model, cultural connotation.*

Language is not only a tool of communication but also a mirror of human thought and emotion. Phraseological units represent the most expressive layer of a language, capturing both collective and individual emotional experience. Every nation encodes its feelings, moral values, and worldview in these idioms, making them an invaluable resource for understanding cultural cognition. In recent decades, linguistic research has moved beyond structural description toward the study of language and emotion, cognition, and culture. Within this framework, phraseological units are interpreted as a bridge between linguistic form and emotional consciousness.

This article focuses on English and Uzbek idioms that express emotions, analyzing their structural and semantic properties. The aim is to identify how emotional meaning is encoded, intensified, and evaluated through linguistic and metaphorical structures, and how these mechanisms differ or coincide across two cultures.

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that emotional language serves as an interface between psychology, cognition, and social interaction. Understanding how emotions are conceptualized and verbalized through idioms contributes not only to linguistics but also to translation studies, intercultural communication, and language pedagogy.

The theoretical foundation for analyzing emotions in language can be traced back to Wilhelm Wundt, who described emotions through the dimensions of



intensity, direction, and quality. These parameters are reflected linguistically in idioms such as “to burst with anger” and in the Uzbek equivalent “g‘azabdan yonmoq” (“to burn with anger”), both of which express maximal emotional intensity and loss of control.[5,1896] P. Anokhin later defined emotion as a “signal of the motivational system,” a physiological regulator of human behavior. From this perspective, phraseological units can be seen as external linguistic manifestations of internal emotional states. Idioms like “my heart sank” and “ko‘ngli cho‘kdi” both denote a decrease in emotional energy or motivation, revealing a universal psychophysiological mechanism.[1,1964:106] P. Simonov’s informational theory of emotions suggests that feelings arise from the discrepancy between expected and actual outcomes. This notion explains idioms such as “to be left out in the cold” expressing emotional frustration and social exclusion due to unmet expectations. [4,1970:63]

Y. Reykovsky viewed emotion as an evaluative mechanism in social interaction. His theory clarifies how idioms encode moral and emotional assessments. Expressions like “to have a heart of gold” and “ko‘ngli keng” convey positive evaluation rooted in shared cultural ideals of kindness and generosity.[3,1973] According to K. Izard, each basic emotion has a distinct semantic core that manifests linguistically. From this standpoint, idioms such as “to tremble with fear” and “qo‘rquvdan titramoq” exemplify the linguistic embodiment of fear, connecting physiological reaction and emotional meaning across different cultures.[2,1977:19] Structurally, emotional idioms often rely on metaphor to transform subjective feelings into concrete imagery. In “to boil with anger” and “g‘azabi qaynamoq,” the physiological metaphor of heat conveys emotional intensity, showing that both English and Uzbek associate anger with bodily tension and rising temperature. In terms of cultural specificity, English idioms frequently employ visual and color imagery — for example, “green with envy” — whereas Uzbek idioms favor somatic metaphors centered around the heart, such as “yuragi achimoq” (“the heart aches with jealousy”). This reflects the centrality of the heart concept in Uzbek emotional cognition and folklore. From a semantic standpoint, emotional idioms contain two main layers:

1. Denotative meaning — the direct description of an emotional state or reaction.
2. Connotative meaning — the culturally shaped evaluation or emotional coloring of the state.

For instance, “to cry over spilt milk” literally refers to crying about a trivial loss but connotatively expresses “o‘tgan ishga salovat.” The Uzbek equivalent “o‘tgan



ishga salovat” follows the same cognitive model, reinforcing the universality of emotional reasoning across cultures.

Understanding these mechanisms helps explain why emotion-rich idioms are often untranslatable word-for-word: they rely on shared cultural scripts rather than direct denotative meaning. Recognizing this deep structure has practical implications for translation, cross-cultural communication, and language teaching — especially when emotional nuance matters as much as literal accuracy.

Conclusion

The study of emotional phraseology highlights the intricate link between language, emotion, and culture. English and Uzbek idioms show that emotions are not universal reactions alone but culturally mediated constructs encoded in metaphorical patterns. The emotional component within phraseological meaning serves as a key to understanding the collective psychology of a nation.

By integrating theories of Wundt, Anokhin, Simonov, Reykovsky, and Izard into phraseological analysis, this research offers a unified view of how structural and semantic layers of language embody emotional cognition. Further studies may develop computational models of emotional idioms, contributing to artificial intelligence systems that recognize human affect in multilingual contexts.

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