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COGNITIVE-SEMANTIC FEATURES OF METAPHORICAL AND PHRASEOLOGICAL EMOTIONAL-EXPRESSIVE UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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Abstract

This article explores the cognitive-semantic features of metaphorical and phraseological emotional-expressive units in English and Uzbek languages. The study examines how these linguistic units convey emotions, reflect cultural-specific conceptualizations, and function within different communicative contexts. Comparative analysis highlights similarities and differences in the cognitive mechanisms underlying metaphorical and phraseological expressions in the two languages. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of cross-linguistic emotional expression and provide insights for applied linguistics, translation studies, and language teaching.

Keywords

metaphorical units, phraseological units, emotional-expressive language, cognitive semantics, cross-linguistic comparison, English language, Uzbek language

INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a system of signs and symbols; it is a complex reflection of human cognition, culture, and emotion. Among the various linguistic phenomena, metaphorical and phraseological units play a crucial role in expressing emotions, attitudes, and cultural-specific meanings. These emotional-expressive units allow speakers to convey complex mental states, values, and social norms in a condensed and vivid form. In both English and Uzbek languages, such units are central to everyday communication, literary expression, and intercultural understanding. Metaphors, as a fundamental cognitive mechanism, enable individuals to conceptualize abstract emotions through concrete or familiar experiences. Phraseological units, including idioms and fixed expressions, similarly encode emotional and evaluative meanings that often cannot be deduced from their literal components. These units not only enrich the expressive potential of a language but also reveal the underlying conceptual structures shaped by cultural and cognitive factors. Comparative studies of emotional-expressive units in English and Uzbek highlight both universal patterns and language-specific features. While certain metaphorical mappings and idiomatic expressions may reflect shared human experiences, others are deeply rooted in cultural context, historical development, and social conventions. Understanding these similarities and differences is essential for effective communication, translation, and language education. This study aims to explore the cognitive-semantic characteristics of metaphorical and phraseological emotional-expressive units in English and Uzbek. By analyzing their structure, semantic components, and contextual functions, the research seeks to provide insights into how emotions are encoded and conceptualized across languages. The findings are expected to contribute to the fields of cognitive linguistics, contrastive linguistics, and applied language studies, offering a theoretical foundation for future research in cross-linguistic emotional expression.

MAIN BODY

1. Theoretical background

Emotional-expressive units, including metaphorical and phraseological expressions, are fundamental components of human language that encode both cognitive and affective information. According to cognitive linguistics, metaphors serve as a mechanism for structuring abstract experiences, including emotions, through more concrete domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). For instance, expressions such as *"over the moon"* in English or *"quvonchdan osmonga uchmoq"* in Uzbek conceptualize happiness using spatial metaphors, reflecting universal cognitive tendencies. Phraseological units, particularly idioms and fixed expressions, operate as semiotic wholes whose meanings are often culturally specific. These units encode emotional connotations that cannot be directly inferred from the individual words, such as *"to bite the bullet"* in English or *"og'rini ko'tarib yashamoq"* in Uzbek, illustrating how language integrates emotion and experience within conventionalized forms.

2. Cognitive-semantic features of metaphorical units

Metaphorical units in both English and Uzbek show systematic cognitive mappings that link concrete and abstract domains. Common emotional domains, such as joy, sadness, anger, and fear, are often conceptualized through spatial, natural, or bodily experiences. For example, anger is frequently associated with heat or movement in both languages: *"to boil with anger"* (English) and *"g'azabdan qaynab ketmoq"* (Uzbek). These metaphors reflect embodied cognition, illustrating how physical experience shapes emotional conceptualization. Additionally, metaphorical expressions in both languages reveal culture-specific nuances. For instance, in English, *"heartbroken"* emphasizes emotional fragmentation, whereas the Uzbek equivalent *"yuragi sinmoq"* reflects a bodily organ metaphor with similar emotional intensity. These patterns demonstrate the interplay between universal cognitive mechanisms and cultural variation in emotional conceptualization.

3. Cognitive-semantic features of phraseological units

Phraseological units, including idioms, proverbs, and set expressions, are rich in emotional content and often carry evaluative or normative connotations. In English, idioms such as *"wear one's heart on one's sleeve"* or *"jump out of one's skin"* communicate emotional states vividly, relying on metaphorical imagery. Similarly, Uzbek phraseological units like *"ko'ngli tog'dek"* (extremely happy) or *"jonini qo'yib ishlamoq"* (work passionately) illustrate how emotions are encoded in fixed linguistic forms.

These units demonstrate several cognitive-semantic properties:

- Holistic meaning: The meaning cannot be deduced from individual words.
- Cultural specificity: Units often reflect societal values, historical contexts, and collective experiences.
- Expressive function: They enhance the emotive and aesthetic quality of language, serving communicative, literary, and persuasive purposes.

4. Comparative analysis

Comparing English and Uzbek reveals both similarities and divergences in emotional expression. Universal patterns include metaphors based on spatial orientation, bodily experience, or natural phenomena. For example, happiness is frequently mapped as upward or bright: *"on cloud nine"* (English) and *"osmonda uchmoq"* (Uzbek). Differences emerge in cultural imagery and conventionalization. English metaphors often rely on Western conceptual traditions, whereas Uzbek expressions may draw from local culture, folklore, and historical experiences. For instance, fear in English can be described as *"to have butterflies in one's stomach"*, while in Uzbek a culturally embedded expression is *"ko'ngli orom topmaslik"* (restless or anxious). These differences highlight the significance of cultural context in shaping emotional semantics.

5. Contextual and communicative functions

Metaphorical and phraseological emotional-expressive units function beyond mere lexical meaning; they play crucial roles in pragmatics and discourse. They facilitate nuanced emotional communication, signal social attitudes, and contribute to rhetorical and literary effects. In translation and cross-cultural communication, awareness of these cognitive-semantic properties is essential to preserve emotional intensity and conceptual accuracy.

CONCLUSION

The present study has examined the cognitive-semantic features of metaphorical and phraseological emotional-expressive units in English and Uzbek languages. The analysis demonstrates that these linguistic units play a fundamental role in conveying emotions, reflecting cultural values, and shaping conceptual understanding. Metaphorical expressions provide a cognitive mechanism for mapping abstract emotional experiences onto more concrete domains, such as bodily sensations, spatial orientation, or natural phenomena, while phraseological units encode culturally specific emotional meanings in fixed, conventionalized forms. Comparative analysis revealed both universal and language-specific patterns. Universal tendencies include the embodiment of emotions through metaphors, such as associating happiness with upward movement or anger with heat and motion. At the same time, cultural differences are evident in the imagery, conventionalization, and evaluative nuances of emotional expressions. English and Uzbek languages, while sharing some conceptual mappings, exhibit distinct ways of representing emotional experiences, reflecting their unique historical, social, and cultural contexts. These findings have significant implications for several areas of applied linguistics, including translation, intercultural communication, and language teaching. Awareness of the cognitive-semantic and cultural properties of emotional-expressive units can improve cross-linguistic understanding, facilitate accurate translation, and enhance pedagogical strategies for teaching metaphorical and idiomatic language.

In conclusion, the study underscores the inseparable link between cognition, culture, and emotion in language. By exploring metaphorical and phraseological emotional-expressive units, researchers gain insights into how humans conceptualize and communicate feelings across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Future research could expand this investigation to other languages, dialects, and communicative contexts, further enriching our understanding of emotional semantics in cross-linguistic perspectives.

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