

SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SOMATIC PHRASEOLOGICAL
UNITS IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

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O‘ZBEK VA INGLIZ TILLARIDA SOMATIK FRAZEOLOGIK BIRLIKLARNING SEMANTIK
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СЕМАНТИЧЕСКАЯ И ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКАЯ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА СОМАТИЧЕСКИХ
ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ ЕДИНИЦ В УЗБЕКСКОМ И АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ

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Tayanch so‘zlar: somatik frazeologizmlar, idiomalar, o‘zbek tili, ingliz tili, semantika, pragmatika.

Rezyume. Maqolada o‘zbek va ingliz tillaridagi somatik frazeologik birliklarning (SFB) semantik va pragmatik xususiyatlari o‘rganiladi. Somatik frazeologik birliklar inson tana a‘zolari bilan bog‘liq bo‘lgan va o‘zining bevosita ma’nosidan tashqari ko‘chma ma’noni ifodalovchi iboralar hisoblanadi.

Ключевые слова: соматические фразеологизмы, идиома, узбекский язык, английский язык, семантика, прагматика.

Резюме. В статье рассматриваются семантические и прагматические особенности соматических фразеологических единиц (СФЕ) в узбекском и английском языках. Соматические фразеологические единицы представляют собой идиоматические выражения, связанные с частями человеческого тела и передающие переносное значение, выходящее за рамки их буквального смысла.

Key words: somatic phraseological units, idioms, Uzbek language, English language, semantics, pragmatics.

Summary. The article examines the semantic and pragmatic features of somatic phraseological units (SPU) in the Uzbek and English languages. SPU are idiomatic expressions that involve human body parts and convey figurative meanings beyond their literal sense.

Introduction. Figurative language is key to the manner in which people talk. It shows what's important to a culture, how people think, and how creative we can be with words. Body idioms – phrases that use parts of the human body – are special since they relate so closely to what we feel and how we see the world. Both Uzbek and English use body idioms to say more than just the basic meaning of the words. These idioms show feelings, opinions, and how we judge each other.

However, not many people have directly compared body idioms in Uzbek and English. So, this study investigates further what these phrases mean and how they're used in both languages. By comparing them, we can learn more about how language reflects culture and thought. This work illuminates not just the words we use, and furthermore, the way we use our bodies and experiences to convey concepts that go deeper mere lexical meaning.

Methods. This research looks at somatic phraseological units (SPUs) – phrases using body parts – In Uzbek and English. It uses ideas from cognitive linguistics and pragmatics to compare the manner in which these expressions are structured and how they function in each language. The aim is to discover similarities and cultural differences in how body-related idioms are used.

This investigation involved a few steps. To begin with, a collection of SPUs was put together, with 500 phrases, 250 from each language. The Uzbek phrases came from dictionaries, folklore, books (both old and new), and current

media like newspapers and blogs. The English phrases came from idiom dictionaries, big collections of texts like the Cambridge English Corpus, books, and online lists of idioms.

Selected idioms are all connected to body parts utilized as tropes, not just literal descriptions. Each phrase was written down with its denotation, its figurative meaning, and instances of its usage.

Following the collection of the phrases, they were classified by body part: head, eyes, hands, heart, mouth, and legs. Phrases about the head often relate to thinking, intelligence, and mental states. Topics concerning eyes are related to seeing, watching, and understanding. Hand phrases relate to actions and effort. Heart phrases show emotions. Mouth phrases deal with talking or being quiet. Leg phrases describe moving or staying still. This sorting facilitated the organization of the study of meanings and uses, and to make language comparisons [4].

The research also looked at how SPUs are used in real situations, like in books, media, and text collections. It investigated how these phrases express emotion, judge behavior, and give advice. For example, “qalbi xafa bo‘lmoq” in Uzbek or “break someone’s heart” in English show sadness. Phrases such as “boshini baland ko‘tarmoq” or “put your foot down” evaluate actions. Idioms like “qo‘lini tortmoq” and “watch your back” give guidance. Analyzing how these phrases are used in context facilitated the understanding of if their intention was to show feeling, make a judgment, or issue an order.

Results. Classification of SPUs.

The SPUs in Uzbek and English demonstrate a wide variety of semantic fields. Table 1 presents the distribution of SPUs by body part:

Body Part	Uzbek SPUs	English SPUs
Head	60	70
Eyes	40	50
Hands	50	40
Heart	40	35
Mouth	30	30
Legs	30	25

Semantic Characteristics.

The semantic examination of SPUs demonstrated a strong reliance on metaphorical extension, in which the literal meaning of a body part is mapped onto abstract cognitive or emotional concepts. For instance, the Uzbek idiom “*Boshini baland ko‘tarmoq*” (literally “to raise one’s head”) metaphorically conveys pride or self-confidence, whereas the English expression “*Keep your head*” is used to signify composure or maintaining calmness in stressful situations [5].

Across both languages, several conceptual metaphors were recurrent. The most prominent include the association of the mind with the head, reflecting thinking, reasoning, or confusion; the heart with emotion, representing love, courage, or fear; and the eyes with vision, denoting perception, comprehension, or deceit. These patterns demonstrate a cross-linguistic tendency to link bodily experience with abstract domains, consistent with the principles of cognitive linguistics.

However, the semantic patterns also reveal cultural specificity. In Uzbek, idiomatic expressions often highlight social hierarchies and relational norms. For example, “*bo‘yni egmoq*” (literally “to bow one’s neck”) reflects humility and deference, emphasizing social conduct within collective contexts. In contrast, English idioms frequently stress individual initiative or assertiveness.

An example is “*put your foot down*”, which conveys the idea of personal authority and taking decisive action. This contrast illustrates how metaphorical mappings are shaped by cultural values and social organization.

Pragmatic Functions. Pragmatic analysis revealed that SPUs in both languages perform multiple communicative roles, functioning as vehicles for emotion, social evaluation, and advice [2].

Firstly, SPUs frequently serve to express emotions. In Uzbek, “*Qalbi xafa bo‘lmoq*” (literally “the heart is upset”) communicates sadness or emotional hurt, whereas the English “*Break someone’s heart*” conveys deep emotional pain or disappointment. Such expressions allow speakers to convey complex emotional states succinctly and figuratively [6].

Secondly, SPUs often function to offer advice or issue warnings. For instance, the Uzbek expression “*Qo‘lini uzmoq*” (literally “to stop extending one’s hand”) cautions against interfering in situations, providing indirect guidance [5].

Similarly, English idioms like “*Watch your back*” function as warnings, signaling potential risks in a social or practical context [1].

Thirdly, SPUs are used for social evaluation, allowing speakers to judge or influence social behavior. In Uzbek,

“*Boshini baland tutmoq*” is employed to comment on pride or arrogance, while in English, “*Keep your chin up*” encourages optimism or resilience in challenging circumstances. These functions demonstrate that SPUs carry pragmatic weight beyond mere figurative meaning, embedding social and emotional nuances into discourse [5].

Cross-Linguistic Comparison. A comparative perspective reveals both universal tendencies and language-specific differences. Universally, both Uzbek and English extend the semantics of body parts metaphorically to represent cognitive processes, emotional states, and social functions.

For example, the head is associated with thought and reasoning, the heart with emotion, and the eyes with perception in both languages.

At the same time, cultural specificity is evident. Uzbek SPUs frequently reflect a collectivist orientation and emphasize social hierarchy, respect, and relational norms. Expressions such as “*Boshini egmoq*” underline humility and deference to authority or social convention [6].

Conversely, English idioms often highlight individualistic values, personal courage, and agency, as exemplified by “*Bite the bullet*”, which emphasizes personal resolve and proactive action. These contrasts demonstrate how cultural context shapes the selection, meaning, and pragmatic use of somatic idiomatic expressions [4].

Overall, the analysis indicates that while metaphorical patterns are broadly shared across languages, the pragmatic deployment of SPUs is strongly influenced by cultural norms, social organization, and communicative conventions. This underscores the importance of integrating both semantic and pragmatic perspectives in cross-linguistic studies of idiomatic language.

Discussion. The present investigation highlights that somatic phraseological units (SPUs) perform a wide range of semantic and pragmatic functions, demonstrating both universal cognitive patterns and culture-specific characteristics. The analysis confirms that human body parts often act as metaphorical reference points, or conceptual anchors, which allow speakers to map concrete bodily experiences onto abstract notions such as thought, emotion, perception, and social behavior.

In both Uzbek and English, the prominence of idioms associated with the head and eyes underscores their centrality in conceptualizing intellectual and perceptual processes. This observation is consistent with previous findings in cognitive linguistics, which suggest that body-part metaphors are grounded in embodied cognition and play a critical role in structuring conceptual systems [3].

The pragmatic analysis further reveals that SPUs are not merely figurative expressions but also serve key communicative functions. They provide a means to express complex emotions, convey social evaluations, and deliver guidance or advice in indirect ways. In Uzbek, idioms frequently encode social norms, hierarchical relationships, and collective values. Expressions such as “*Boshini egmoq*” or “*Bo‘yni egmoq*” reflect respect for authority and adherence to community standards, illustrating the role of SPUs as instruments of social regulation and cultural

continuity [5]. In contrast, English SPUs often prioritize individual agency, assertiveness, and practical problem-solving. For instance, idioms like *"Bite the bullet"* or *"Put your foot down"* emphasize personal initiative, self-reliance, and the capacity to confront challenges independently [3].

The interplay of semantic and pragmatic features also highlights the importance of contextual understanding.

Many SPUs cannot be interpreted literally; their meaning emerges only through shared cultural and linguistic knowledge. This has significant implications for fields such as language teaching, translation, and intercultural communication. Learners and translators must recognize both the figurative meaning and the cultural associations of SPUs to interpret or render them accurately. Misinterpretation can occur if idiomatic expressions are

translated word-for-word without considering pragmatic context or socio-cultural norms [4].

Conclusion. In conclusion, SPUs in Uzbek and English exemplify the intricate relationship between embodied experience, language, and culture. Their semantic richness and pragmatic versatility make them essential for understanding not only figurative language but also the cognitive and cultural frameworks of the speech communities in which they are used. Future research could expand this comparative analysis to other languages and cultural contexts, further illuminating universal and culture-specific patterns in the conceptualization of the human body in language. Overall, the study underscores that a thorough understanding of SPUs requires an integrated approach combining semantics, pragmatics, and cultural knowledge.

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