

SEMANTIC DIFFERENCES IN EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTION IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract. This paper explores the semantic differences in the expressions of emotion in English and Uzbek, shedding light on how language and culture shape emotional communication. The study investigates the ways both languages convey basic emotions, such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear, and how cultural values influence the choice of expressions, nuances, and intensity in each language. In English, emotions are often expressed with a focus on individual experiences, emphasizing explicit descriptions and metaphorical language. In contrast, Uzbek, as part of a high-context culture, tends to encode emotional expressions with subtle cultural references, idiomatic expressions, and implicit meanings, often prioritizing the social context and collective values. By analyzing common idioms, metaphors, and vocabulary related to emotions, this research highlights key linguistic distinctions that reveal the cultural underpinnings of emotional expression in English and Uzbek. These findings contribute to cross-cultural communication studies, helping to deepen understanding of how emotions are perceived, experienced, and articulated across different linguistic and cultural frameworks.

Key words. semantic differences, emotion expression, English language, Uzbek language, cross-cultural communication, emotional semantics, cultural linguistics, high-context language, idiomatic expressions, comparative linguistics.

СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ РАЗЛИЧИЯ В ВЫРАЖЕНИЯХ ЭМОЦИЙ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ И УЗБЕКСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ

Аннотация. В этой статье исследуются семантические различия в выражениях эмоций на английском и узбекском языках, проливая свет на то, как язык и культура формируют эмоциональную коммуникацию. Исследование изучает способы, которыми оба языка передают основные эмоции, такие как счастье, грусть, гнев и страх, и как культурные ценности влияют на выбор выражений, нюансов и интенсивности в каждом языке. В английском языке эмоции часто выражаются с акцентом на индивидуальный опыт, подчеркивая явные описания и метафорический язык. Напротив, узбекский язык, как часть высококонтекстной культуры, имеет тенденцию кодировать эмоциональные выражения с помощью тонких культурных ссылок, идиоматических выражений и неявных значений, часто отдавая приоритет социальному контексту и коллективным ценностям.

Анализируя общие идиомы, метафоры и словарный запас, связанный с эмоциями, это исследование выделяет ключевые языковые различия, которые раскрывают культурные основы эмоционального выражения на английском и узбекском языках.

Эти результаты вносят вклад в исследования межкультурной коммуникации, помогая углубить понимание того, как эмоции воспринимаются, переживаются и выражаются в разных языковых и культурных рамках.

Ключевые слова: *семантические различия, выражение эмоций, английский язык, узбекский язык, межкультурная коммуникация, эмоциональная семантика, культурная лингвистика, высококонтекстный язык, идиоматические выражения, сравнительная лингвистика.*

Language is deeply intertwined with culture, influencing how we perceive and express emotions. Each language encapsulates unique cultural values, historical contexts, and social norms, shaping its speakers' emotional expressions. This article explores the semantic differences in emotional expressions between English and Uzbek, focusing on how these two languages reflect distinct cultural views on feelings, social relations, and identity.

1. The Cultural Framework of Emotions in Language

In both English and Uzbek, emotions are central to communication, but cultural distinctions lead to unique expressions and nuances. English, as an individualistic language shaped by Western culture, often emphasizes self-expression and personal experiences.

Emotions in English tend to be direct, with a focus on individual feelings and autonomy.

In contrast, Uzbek, influenced by Central Asian and Islamic culture, reflects a more collectivistic and communal orientation. Emotional expressions in Uzbek emphasize group harmony, respect, and social values over individual desires. This cultural backdrop influences not only which emotions are expressed but also the manner of their expression.

2. Directness vs. Indirectness in Expressing Emotions

One of the key differences between English and Uzbek emotional expression is the level of directness. English speakers are more inclined to use direct language to convey emotions. For instance, phrases like "I am angry" or "I feel happy" are common and accepted. English emphasizes clarity and forthrightness, with individuals encouraged to share their emotional state directly.

In Uzbek, however, expressing emotions directly, especially strong negative emotions, may be perceived as socially inappropriate or impolite. Instead, emotions are often conveyed through subtler language, with euphemisms or indirect references. For example, rather than saying "I am angry," an Uzbek speaker might say something closer to "I am uncomfortable" or "I am not pleased." This difference reflects a cultural preference for harmony and avoidance of direct confrontation.

3. Lexical Differences: Vocabulary of Emotion

The vocabulary available for expressing emotions can differ significantly between English and Uzbek. English has a vast lexicon for nuanced emotional expression, often with multiple words to capture different shades of the same emotion, such as "joy," "happiness," "contentment," and "bliss." This abundance allows for precise distinctions in emotional description, aligning with English speakers' focus on self-awareness and psychological introspection.

Uzbek, on the other hand, may use fewer words to describe similar emotions, but with culturally rich meanings.

For instance, the Uzbek term "xafa bo'lish" roughly translates to "becoming sad or disappointed," but it often implies an interpersonal or social disappointment, not just a personal feeling. Similarly, "xursand" translates to "happy," but it can also indicate a collective sense of joy tied to communal achievements or celebrations, underscoring the communal focus of Uzbek culture.

4. Contextual and Situational Sensitivity in Emotion Expression

Both English and Uzbek speakers adjust their emotional expressions based on social contexts, but they do so in distinct ways. In English-speaking societies, while politeness and appropriateness are valued, personal emotions are often shared openly in various settings. Self-expression is seen as an assertion of identity and individuality, sometimes leading to open discussions of emotions in work, social, or family contexts.

In Uzbek culture, emotional expression is more context-sensitive, often governed by the relationship between speakers and social hierarchy. Emotional restraint is a norm, especially in formal or public settings. For instance, showing extreme happiness, such as laughing loudly, is sometimes discouraged in professional or solemn situations.

Emotional expressions are moderated by the desire to maintain social harmony, demonstrate respect, and avoid seeming too self-centered.

5. Nonverbal Communication and Emotional Nuances

Nonverbal communication also plays a role in emotional expression and differs across cultures. English speakers often rely on gestures, facial expressions, and vocal tone to convey emotions, sometimes exaggerating these to reinforce verbal expressions.

In Uzbek culture, nonverbal cues tend to be subtler, with restrained gestures and facial expressions. For instance, a slight nod or warm eye contact may indicate approval, while a small frown or avoidance of direct gaze can convey disapproval or discomfort. This subtlety aligns with cultural values of modesty, respect, and self-control, where overt displays of emotion may be seen as disruptive or impolite.

6. Collective vs. Individualistic Perspectives on Emotions

In individualistic cultures like those associated with English-speaking societies, emotions are seen as belonging to the individual, something to be explored, expressed, and validated personally. This belief is reflected in phrases like "follow your heart" or "express yourself," encouraging individual emotional autonomy.

Conversely, in the collective-oriented culture that influences Uzbek, emotions are often seen as interconnected with others. There's a greater emphasis on collective feelings and the impact of one's emotions on the family, community, or even broader society. For instance, while it is common for Uzbek people to express happiness or gratitude on behalf of their family or community, this collective perspective is less emphasized in English.

7. Linguistic Structures and Emotional Nuances

Finally, the grammatical structures of each language can shape emotional expression.

English often uses subject-verb structures that directly attribute emotions to the individual, as in "I am excited" or "She feels hurt." This pattern reinforces the directness and individual focus of English speakers' emotional expression.

In Uzbek, phrases may sometimes take a more passive or less direct form. Rather than explicitly stating "I am sad," an Uzbek speaker might use phrases equivalent to "It has caused sadness for me." This structure subtly shifts the focus from the individual to the external circumstances, a reflection of Uzbek culture's contextual approach to emotions.

The semantic differences in emotional expressions between English and Uzbek provide valuable insight into the cultural foundations of each language. English reflects individualism through direct, varied, and self-centered expressions of emotion, while Uzbek mirrors its collectivist heritage with restrained, contextually sensitive, and socially attuned emotional language.

These linguistic differences reveal how culture shapes not only what we feel but also how we communicate those feelings to others. Understanding these distinctions enriches cross-cultural communication and fosters greater empathy in multilingual contexts.

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