



## Emotion Metaphors In Uzbek: A Cognitive Analysis Of Phraseological Patterns

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines emotion metaphors in Uzbek phraseology from a cognitive perspective. It aims to identify the main phraseological patterns through which emotions are metaphorically represented in Uzbek and to explain their source domains and cognitive motivations. The study is based on a qualitative cognitive-semantic approach and uses O'zbek tilining frazeologik lug'ati as the main data source. A focused mini-corpus of emotion-related phraseological units was selected for analysis. The results suggest that the analyzed material is organized around four dominant models: somatic, heat-pressure, pain-damage, and attachment-severance. Love and affection are mainly conceptualized through inward commitment and attachment, sadness through pain and bodily weakening, anger through heat and emotional disturbance, and hope through connection or rupture. The study shows that Uzbek phraseology reflects an embodied and culturally shaped model of emotional conceptualization expressed through stable figurative patterns.

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### Introduction

Metaphor is widely understood in cognitive linguistics as a basic mechanism for structuring abstract experience through more concrete and experientially grounded domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010). This approach is especially relevant to emotions, since emotional states are often conceptualized not directly, but through bodily, spatial, dynamic, and material imagery (Kövecses, 2000; Wierzbicka, 1999). Thus, the linguistic representation of emotions provides important evidence for how speakers categorize and interpret inner experience.

Phraseology is a particularly productive domain for the study of emotion metaphors because phraseological units preserve stable figurative meanings, culturally shared associations, and conventionalized ways of evaluating reality (Telia, 1996; Maslova, 2001). Research in linguoculturology and cognitive semantics has shown that emotional meanings are frequently encoded in idioms and other fixed expressions, where they reflect both embodied experience and culturally specific models of interpretation (Shakhovskiy, 1987; Belaya, 2008; Silinskaya, 2008). In this respect, phraseology offers especially rich material for examining how emotions are conceptualized in language.

This perspective is directly relevant to Uzbek. The O‘zbek tilining frazeologik lug‘ati defines phraseological units as stable expressions characterized by semantic integrity, figurativeness, and transferred meaning, emphasizing that their meanings cannot be reduced to the simple sum of their components (Rahmatullayev et al., 2022). The dictionary also notes that metaphor is one of the main mechanisms of phraseological meaning formation and that the material was compiled mainly from Uzbek original literary prose, which makes it a reliable source for identifying conventionalized figurative models.

At the same time, although previous studies have examined emotion concepts, phraseological worldviews, and metaphorical representation in different languages, the cognitive organization of emotion metaphors in Uzbek phraseology has not been sufficiently systematized as a separate research problem. In particular, it still remains underexplored which emotions are most productively metaphorized in Uzbek phraseological units, which source domains structure these expressions, and what cognitive motivations underlie them. Therefore, this study aims to analyze emotion metaphors in Uzbek through phraseological patterns, with special attention to their dominant source domains and cognitive motivations.

### Methods

This study adopted a qualitative cognitive-semantic approach to the analysis of emotion metaphors in Uzbek phraseology. The research was grounded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory, according to which abstract experience is commonly structured through more concrete and embodied source domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010). In addition, the study draws on phraseological and linguocultural approaches that treat idiomatic expressions as stable carriers of figurative meaning and culturally sedimented knowledge (Telia, 1996; Maslova, 2001; Silinskaya, 2008).

The primary source of data was O‘zbek tilining frazeologik lug‘ati (Rahmatullayev et al., 2022), which contains 5,198 phraseological units and was compiled mainly from Uzbek original literary prose. The dictionary defines phraseological units as stable expressions characterized by figurative meaning, semantic integrity, and structural stability, which makes it an appropriate source for identifying conventionalized emotion metaphors in Uzbek.

The sampling procedure was purposive. Only phraseological units that met three criteria were selected for analysis. First, the unit had to express or strongly imply an emotional state, such as love, joy, anger, sadness, hope, disappointment, or emotional agitation. Second, the unit had to display transferred or figurative meaning rather than a purely literal one. Third, the unit had to function as a stable semantic whole whose meaning could not be reduced to the sum of its components. These criteria were based on the dictionary’s own description of phraseological meaning and on previous phraseological studies that reconstruct emotional concepts through dictionary definitions and phraseological semantics (Rahmatullayev et al., 2022; Silinskaya, 2008).

On this basis, a focused mini-corpus of emotion-related phraseological units was compiled. The initial screening of the dictionary identified approximately 35–40 candidate units that met the three selection criteria. From this pool, ten phraseological units were selected as the most analytically representative: units that clearly instantiated a recurrent source domain, covered a range of target emotions, and illustrated distinct cognitive motivations. The selection was not intended to be exhaustive but to reconstruct the dominant metaphorical patterns underlying emotion conceptualization in Uzbek phraseology. This approach follows the logic of theoretical sampling used in qualitative cognitive-semantic research, where the goal is pattern identification rather than statistical frequency measurement (Kövecses, 2000; Silinskaya, 2008). The selected material included such units as *ko‘ngil bermoq* (“to give one’s heart”), *ko‘ngil bog‘lamoq* (“to bind one’s heart”), *ko‘ngli og‘rimoq* (“one’s heart/soul hurts”), *joni chiqmoq* (“one’s soul comes out”), *g‘azabi qaynamoq* (“one’s anger boils”), *umidini uzmoq* (“to cut off one’s hope”), *og‘zi qulog‘ida* (“one’s mouth is at one’s ears”), and *ko‘zi to‘rt bo‘lmoq* (“one’s eyes become four”). These units were chosen because they represent recurrent metaphorical patterns in Uzbek phraseology and illustrate different ways of conceptualizing affective experience through body-based, force-related, and relational imagery.

The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, the selected phraseological units were grouped according to target emotion, such as love, anger, sadness, joy, and hope. Second, the source domain underlying each unit was identified, for example body, pain, heat, movement, or attachment. Third, the cognitive motivation of each unit was interpreted by examining how the figurative image structures the emotional meaning. This

procedure follows earlier studies in cognitive phraseology, where attention is paid to semantic features, metaphorical bases, and culturally specific patterns of conceptualization (Belaya, 2008; Silinskaya, 2008; Kövecses, 2000).

Because the material was lexicographic rather than corpus-statistical, the purpose of the study was not frequency measurement but pattern reconstruction. The analysis therefore focused on identifying the dominant metaphorical models through which emotions are conventionalized in Uzbek phraseology and on explaining the cognitive logic behind these models.

### Results

The analysis of the selected phraseological units suggests that emotion metaphors in Uzbek phraseology are organized around a limited number of recurrent phraseological patterns rather than isolated figurative expressions. The selected material points to four dominant models: somatic, heat-pressure, pain-damage, and attachment-severance patterns. These findings suggest that emotional experience in the analyzed Uzbek phraseological material is largely conceptualized through embodied and culturally stabilized source domains, which is consistent with earlier research in cognitive metaphor and phraseological conceptualization (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2000, 2010; Belaya, 2008; Silinskaya, 2008).

**Table 1. Emotion-related phraseological units in Uzbek: target emotions, source domains, and cognitive motivations**

Phraseological unit	English gloss	Target emotion	Source domain	Cognitive motivation
ko'ngil bermoq	to give one's heart	love	inner self / heart-mind	love as inner commitment
ko'ngil bog'lamoq	to bind one's heart	affection / attachment	bond / attachment	affection as emotional tying
ko'ngli og'rimoq	one's heart/soul hurts	sadness / emotional pain	bodily pain	emotional suffering as physical pain
joni chiqmoq	one's soul comes out	strong emotional agitation	body / vital force	emotional agitation as loss of inner balance
g'azabi qaynamoq	one's anger boils	anger	heat / boiling substance	anger as heated internal pressure
umid tutmoq	to hold hope	hope	object / attachment	hope as something maintained
umidini uzmoq	to cut off one's hope	hopelessness	bond / severance	hopelessness as rupture of attachment
og'zi qulog'ida	one's mouth is at one's ears	joy	visible body / facial expansion	joy as outward bodily expression
ko'zi to'rt bo'lmoq	one's eyes become four	expectancy	vision / intensification	expectation as heightened perception
qaddi dol bo'ldi	one's stature bent like a bow	grief / suffering	posture / downward movement	suffering as burden and bodily collapse

As Table 1 shows, the most salient pattern is the **somatic pattern**, in which emotions are represented through inner bodily loci, especially ko'ngil and jon. For example, ko'ngil bermoq ("to give one's heart") and ko'ngil bog'lamoq ("to bind one's heart") are used to express love and emotional attachment, which suggests that affection is conceptualized as an inward act of commitment located in the inner self (Rahmatullayev et al., 2022).

Likewise, ko'ngli og'rimoq ("one's heart/soul hurts") encodes sadness through the bodily schema of pain, showing that emotional suffering is understood via somatic experience rather than as a purely abstract state. This result supports earlier observations that emotional phraseology often relies on somatic and perceptual codes (Silinskaya, 2008).

A second productive model is the **heat-pressure pattern**, especially in the representation of anger. The unit g'azabi qaynamoq ("one's anger boils") conceptualizes anger as an internally heated substance, while joni chiqmoq ("one's soul comes out") occupies a more semantically complex position in the analyzed material. Its phraseological meaning extends across several emotional registers, including extreme fear, shock, exhaustion, and intense agitation, and it is therefore better understood as encoding a general state of vital force disruption rather than anger specifically. In the analyzed material, it is retained within the heat-pressure cluster because its conceptual logic — the inner vital self displaced or expelled — contributes to the broader picture of how Uzbek phraseology represents emotional extremity through bodily destabilization, even when the specific emotion involved remains contextually variable. These expressions show that anger and strong emotional agitation in Uzbek phraseology are metaphorically structured through heat, pressure, and internal force, which corresponds to widely attested cognitive models of anger in metaphor research (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2000). In this respect, the Uzbek material demonstrates that intense affect is not represented as a detached psychological label, but as an embodied and dynamic internal process.

The third recurrent model is the **pain-damage pattern**, which structures sadness, grief, and emotional distress. The phraseological unit ko'ngli og'rimoq occupies a dual position in the analyzed material. As noted above in the somatic pattern, it encodes emotional suffering through an inner bodily locus (ko'ngil), which places it within the domain of embodied selfhood. At the same time, its conceptual content — pain as the direct vehicle for sadness — assigns it equally to the pain-damage pattern. This overlap is not a classificatory inconsistency but rather reflects the co-activation of two related schemas: the inner self as the site of feeling, and physical pain as the experiential structure of negative affect. In the pain-damage discussion, therefore, ko'ngli og'rimoq is examined primarily for its pain-schema motivation rather than its somatic anchoring. It directly represents emotional pain through bodily suffering, while qaddi dol bo'ldi ("one's stature bent like a bow") encodes grief or hardship through bodily deformation and downward collapse. This suggests that suffering is conceptualized as a burden that weakens, bends, or damages the person. Such mappings align with phraseological studies in which negative emotions are commonly built on pain, bodily symptoms, and images of damage rather than on abstract terminology alone (Belaya, 2008; Silinskaya, 2008).

Another major model is the **attachment-severance pattern**, especially in the conceptualization of hope and disappointment. The unit umid tutmoq ("to hold hope") presents hope as something that can be maintained, while umidini uzmoq ("to cut off one's hope") conceptualizes hopelessness as the rupture of a bond or thread. The same relational logic appears in ko'ngil bog'lamoq, where affection itself is structured as emotional attachment. This shows that positive and negative affective states are often organized through opposite transformations of a shared relational schema: attachment produces hope or love, whereas severance produces loss and despair (Rahmatullayev et al., 2022).

A smaller but still significant model is the **visible-body pattern** in the representation of joy and expectancy. For instance, og'zi qulog'ida ("one's mouth is at one's ears") encodes joy through exaggerated facial expansion, while ko'zi to'rt bo'lmoq (literally "one's eyes become four," conventionally meaning "to watch with intense longing or anxious anticipation") represents expectancy through visual intensification. The literal gloss of this unit is deliberately preserved here to foreground the underlying cognitive logic: the doubling of the eyes iconically encodes a heightened perceptual readiness, where extreme anticipation is expressed as an expanded capacity for seeing. This makes the unit an example of hyperbolic somatic imagery in which a surplus of bodily attention stands for an internal affective state. These units demonstrate that some emotional states are not localized internally, but are externalized through visible bodily change. In this way, Uzbek phraseology not only conceptualizes emotion through inner somatic loci, but also through expressive bodily imagery that makes affect publicly observable. This result is in line with previous studies highlighting the importance of bodily manifestation and hyperbolized expression in phraseological emotion concepts (Silinskaya, 2008).

Taken together, the results suggest that the analyzed Uzbek phraseological emotion metaphors are organized around a limited set of dominant source domains. In the selected material, love and hope are mainly structured through inward commitment and attachment; sadness through pain, damage, and bodily weakening; anger through heat, pressure, and emotional disturbance; and joy through outward bodily expansion. Therefore, the selected data indicate that the emotional worldview reflected in these phraseological units is based on recurrent embodied models that convert inner affective experience into stable figurative meaning.

## Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that emotion metaphors in the analyzed Uzbek phraseological material are organized through a relatively stable set of conventional patterns rather than through figurative usage. The dominance of somatic, heat-pressure, pain-damage, and attachment-severance models suggests that Uzbek phraseology conceptualizes emotions through embodied and experientially accessible domains. In this respect, the Uzbek material supports the general claim of cognitive linguistics that abstract emotional experience is commonly structured through concrete bodily and material schemas (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2000, 2010).

The most productive pattern in the analyzed material is the somatic one. Units such as *ko'ngil bermoq* ("to give one's heart"), *ko'ngil bog'lamoq* ("to bind one's heart"), and *ko'ngli og'rimoq* ("one's heart/soul hurts") indicate that emotional experience is frequently localized in the inner self. This is important because it shows that in Uzbek phraseology emotions are not usually represented as abstract mental labels; instead, they are anchored in an internal bodily or quasi-bodily center. Such a result is consistent with previous studies that emphasize the anthropocentric and embodied nature of emotional phraseology (Shakhovskiy, 1987; Wierzbicka, 1999; Silinskaya, 2008). At the same time, the Uzbek data point to the special significance of *ko'ngil* as a culturally meaningful center of feeling, attachment, and emotional vulnerability. This gives the somatic model in Uzbek a more specific inner-personal and linguocultural dimension than a purely physiological reading would suggest.

The heat-pressure pattern, especially visible in *g'azabi qaynamoq* ("one's anger boils") and partly reflected in *joni chiqmoq* ("one's soul comes out"), suggests that anger and strong emotional agitation may be conceptualized as escalating internal force. This pattern corresponds to one of the most established models in cognitive metaphor theory, where anger is understood through heat, pressure, boiling, or explosion (Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987; Kövecses, 2000). However, the Uzbek phraseological material adds an important nuance: anger is not only conceptualized as heat, but also as a disturbance of inner equilibrium. In other words, these expressions do not merely name anger; they dramatize it as a state of bodily destabilization. This suggests that phraseological metaphor in Uzbek intensifies emotional meaning by combining conceptual structure with evaluative force.

The pain-damage pattern shows that sadness and suffering are interpreted through bodily hurt, weakening, and deformation. Expressions such as *ko'ngli og'rimoq* and *qaddi dol bo'ldi* ("one's stature bent like a bow") reveal that grief is conceptualized as something that injures, burdens, or physically bends the person. This pattern is significant because it demonstrates that negative emotional states are externalized through tangible bodily consequences. Such a tendency supports linguocultural views according to which phraseological units preserve naïve and culturally sedimented models of experience, especially in relation to pain and hardship (Telia, 1996; Maslova, 2001; Belaya, 2008). In the Uzbek material, suffering is therefore not treated as a purely inward psychological state, but as a condition with visible and embodied impact.

The attachment-severance pattern is particularly revealing for the conceptualization of hope and affection. The opposition between *umid tutmoq* ("to hold hope") and *umidini uzmoq* ("to cut off one's hope") shows that hope is represented as a maintained connection, whereas hopelessness is represented as rupture. A similar relational logic is found in *ko'ngil bog'lamoq*, where affection itself is structured as emotional binding. This means that positive and negative emotional states are not organized through entirely separate metaphorical systems; rather, they may emerge as opposite developments of the same underlying schema. This result is cognitively important because it shows that relational image-schemas play a central role in the phraseological conceptualization of emotion.

The visible-body pattern, reflected in *og‘zi qulog‘ida* (“one’s mouth is at one’s ears”) and *ko‘zi to‘rt bo‘lmoq* (“one’s eyes become four”), broadens the picture further. Unlike the inner somatic pattern, these units externalize emotion through visible bodily change. Joy and expectancy are presented as publicly observable states rather than hidden inner experiences. This suggests that Uzbek phraseology combines two complementary strategies of emotional representation: inward embodiment and outward expressivity. Some emotions are localized in inner centers such as *ko‘ngil* or *jon*, while others are communicated through exaggerated facial or perceptual imagery. This duality is one of the important features of the Uzbek phraseological worldview of emotions.

Overall, the results indicate that Uzbek phraseology encodes emotions through a limited but productive set of embodied source domains. These domains make emotional experience cognitively accessible, culturally recognizable, and communicatively vivid. The study therefore confirms that phraseological units function not only as fixed idiomatic expressions, but also as repositories of conventionalized emotional knowledge. In this sense, Uzbek emotion metaphors reflect both general cognitive tendencies and linguoculturally specific preferences in the verbalization of affect.

### Conclusion

This study has shown that emotion metaphors in Uzbek phraseology are organized through a limited set of recurrent cognitive patterns rather than through isolated figurative expressions. The analysis identified four dominant models: somatic, heat-pressure, pain-damage, and attachment-severance. These patterns demonstrate that emotional experience in Uzbek is phraseologically conceptualized through embodied, relational, and culturally stabilized source domains.

The results indicate that love and affection are frequently structured through inward commitment and attachment, sadness through pain and bodily weakening, anger through heat and internal disturbance, and hope through connection or rupture. In this respect, Uzbek phraseology reflects a strongly embodied model of emotional conceptualization, in which inner states are made meaningful through bodily, material, and expressive imagery.

The study also shows that Uzbek phraseological units function not only as fixed idiomatic forms, but also as carriers of conventionalized emotional knowledge. They preserve culturally shared ways of interpreting affective experience and reveal how the Uzbek linguistic worldview organizes emotions through stable figurative patterns. Thus, the article contributes to the cognitive-linguistic and linguocultural description of Uzbek phraseology by demonstrating the systematic metaphorical structuring of emotion.

At the same time, the study has certain limitations. The analysis was based on lexicographic material rather than on a large corpus of naturally occurring discourse, and the selected mini-corpus focused only on the most salient emotion-related phraseological units. Future research may expand the material by including contextual data from Uzbek fiction, spoken discourse, or comparative English–Uzbek analysis in order to trace both conventional and discourse-specific realizations of emotion metaphors.

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