

# A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF SOMATIC LEXEMES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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**Abstract.** This article investigates somatic lexemes in English and Uzbek, focusing on their linguistic and cultural characteristics. Somatic lexemes, derived from body parts, are deeply rooted in the cultural and cognitive frameworks of a language. This study explores their structural, semantic, and cultural features, comparing how English and Uzbek languages reflect human experience through somatic expressions.

**Keywords:** Somatic lexemes, body parts, English, Uzbek, contrastive analysis, linguocultural features

Language reflects human experiences, with somatic lexemes—words and expressions related to body parts—playing a central role. These lexemes often go beyond their literal meanings to represent abstract ideas, emotions, and cultural concepts. By comparing somatic lexemes in English and Uzbek, this study reveals similarities and differences in how the two languages encode human perception and cultural identity.

Somatic lexemes refer to words and idiomatic expressions involving body parts such as the head, heart, eyes, hands, or legs. These lexemes appear frequently in idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and proverbs.

English: "Have a big heart" (to be kind and generous).

Uzbek: Yuragi keng (to be broad-hearted, generous).

English: Somatic lexemes are often single words or concise phrases (e.g., "Headstrong," "Cold feet").

Uzbek: These lexemes can appear as compound expressions, often with poetic or descriptive elements (e.g., Ko'zi qiymoq – "to feel pity," literally "the eye aches").

English somatic lexemes tend to be fixed expressions.

Uzbek lexemes often incorporate suffixes and grammatical markers to enhance meaning (Qo'lidan kelmoq – "to be capable," literally "to come from one's hand").

**Literal and Figurative Meanings**

Both English and Uzbek somatic lexemes exhibit dual meanings:

Literal: Referring to physical body parts (e.g., "hand" – qo'l).

Figurative: Conveying abstract ideas or emotions:

English: "Give someone a hand" (to help).

Uzbek: Qo'l uzatmoq (to lend help, literally "to extend a hand").

**Universal and Culture-Specific Meanings**

While some somatic lexemes convey universal concepts, others are unique to cultural contexts:

English: "Cold feet" (to hesitate).

Uzbek: Oyog'i sovib qolmoq (to hesitate, literally "feet becoming cold").

**Culture-Specific:**

English: "Keep your nose clean" (to stay out of trouble).

Uzbek: Burnining uchida o'ynash (to be careless, literally "playing at the tip of one's nose").

Somatic lexemes reflect cultural values, traditions, and beliefs:

Highlights practicality and individualism.

Example: "Think on your feet" (to think quickly).

Uzbek: Emphasizes emotional depth and collectivism.

Example: Ko'ngli ochiq (to be open-hearted).

Head (Bosh)

English: "Use your head" (to think wisely).

Uzbek: Boshingni ishlat (similar meaning, "use your head").

Heart (Yurak)

English: "Have a change of heart" (to change one's mind).

Uzbek: Yuragi bo'sh (to be soft-hearted, literally "a weak heart").

Hands (Qo'l)

English: "Wash your hands of something" (to disengage from responsibility).

Uzbek: Qo'l qovushtirib turmoq (to stand idly, literally "fold one's hands").

Somatic lexemes are central to language, embodying physical and metaphorical concepts derived from human anatomy. However, translating them from one language to another is not straightforward due to linguistic and cultural differences. This article examines the complexities involved in translating somatic lexemes between English and Uzbek, focusing on idiomatic expressions and figurative meanings.

Common Challenges in Translating Somatic Lexemes

### 1. Literal vs. Figurative Meaning

Somatic lexemes often have meanings that extend beyond their literal definitions. A literal translation may fail to convey the figurative sense:

English: "Break a leg" (to wish good luck).

Literal Uzbek Translation: Oyoqni sindirib tashla.

Correct Uzbek Equivalent: Omad! (Good luck).

### 2. Structural Differences

The grammatical structure of idiomatic expressions often varies:

English: "Lend a hand" (to help).

Uzbek: Qo'l uzatmoq (to extend a hand).

Although similar in meaning, the verb structures differ.

### 3. Lack of Direct Equivalence

Some somatic lexemes lack a direct equivalent in the target language, requiring creative adaptation:

English: "To put one's foot in it" (to say something inappropriate).

Uzbek Equivalent: Qovun tushurmoq (to make an embarrassing mistake, literally "to drop a melon").

Translation Strategies

#### 1. Idiomatic Equivalence

The translator should prioritize finding culturally and contextually appropriate equivalents:

English: "To keep something at arm's length" (to maintain a distance).

Uzbek Equivalent: Masofani saqlamoq (to keep distance).

#### 2. Contextual Adaptation

When a direct equivalent does not exist, the translator must adapt the phrase to fit the cultural context:



English: "To have a chip on one's shoulder" (to harbor resentment).

Uzbek Adaptation: Ichida g'ubor bo'lish (to have resentment, literally "to have dust inside").

### 3. Literal and Figurative Balance

In some cases, the literal aspect can be retained while adjusting the figurative meaning:

English: "Heart of stone" (to lack empathy).

Uzbek Equivalent: Tosh yurak (stone heart).

Translating somatic lexemes requires an understanding of cultural nuances to maintain their figurative meanings:

Literal translation can distort meaning:

English: "Break a leg" = Oyoqni sindirib tashla.

Correct Uzbek equivalent: Omad! (Good luck).

Idiomatic translations capture the cultural essence:

English: "Have a big heart" = Keng yurakli bo'lish.

**To sum up**, the contrastive study of somatic lexemes in English and Uzbek reveals both universal and culture-specific features. While both languages use body parts metaphorically to express emotions and ideas, cultural differences shape their semantic and structural characteristics. Understanding these contrasts enhances cross-cultural communication and translation practices.

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