

EMOTIONAL METAPHORS IN RUSSIAN AND UZBEK LANGUAGES: COGNITIVE AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: Metaphors serve as a powerful linguistic mechanism in shaping human perception and expressing inner emotional states. Emotional metaphors, in particular, play a pivotal role in conveying psychological experiences through culturally embedded imagery. This study investigates the conceptualization of emotions through metaphors in Russian and Uzbek languages by focusing on their cognitive and linguocultural dimensions. Based on a corpus of 600 metaphorical expressions (300 from each language), this research categorizes and analyzes metaphors related to anger, love, fear, and joy. The study reveals that while Russian emotional metaphors are often grounded in bodily sensations and psychological intensity, Uzbek emotional metaphors tend to draw from spiritual, natural, and religious imagery. Comparative results highlight both universal cognitive models and culturally specific metaphorical frameworks in the expression of emotions.

Keywords: emotional metaphors, cognitive linguistics, metaphorical expression, linguistic worldview, Russian-Uzbek comparison, cultural specificity, metaphor and emotion, conceptual metaphor, figurative language, emotion and language

INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is a fundamental mechanism of human cognition, allowing people to conceptualize one experience in terms of another. Emotional metaphors, in particular, are widely used in both everyday and literary language to express feelings. In Russian and Uzbek, such metaphors not only illustrate linguistic richness but also reveal deep cultural and national perspectives. This paper explores the metaphorical mapping of emotions in both languages through comparative and cognitive lenses.

Research Methods

This study uses cognitive-linguistic analysis, cultural-linguistic comparison, and statistical content analysis. The corpus includes over 600 metaphorical expressions—300 from Russian (literary texts, journalism, and spoken language) and 300 from Uzbek (folk sayings, epic literature, and modern texts). Each metaphor was analyzed for its emotional category, semantic load, and cultural background.

Russian tends to express anger through physical and dynamic imagery, such as “кипеть от злости” (to boil with anger), “вскипеть” (to erupt), and “сорваться с цепи” (to break off the leash). Uzbek expressions like “ko‘ngli qaynadi” (his heart boiled), “yuragi g‘ash bo‘ldi” (his heart became bitter), or “ichidan olov chiqdi” (fire came from inside) are more spiritually and internally grounded, though also reflect intense emotion. Both languages share the metaphor of heat and explosion, but Russian expressions are generally more violent and externalized.

In Russian: “потерять голову” (to lose one’s head), “сойти с ума от любви” (to go crazy with love), and “любовь с первого взгляда” (love at first sight) emphasize the

uncontrollable, irrational nature of love. Uzbek equivalents like “ko‘ngli uchmoq” (his heart flew), “yuragi yorishmoq” (his heart brightened), and “ko‘ngli yorug‘ bo‘ldi” (his heart became enlightened) are more peaceful, tied to nature and inner light. These expressions reflect different cultural aesthetics regarding emotional experiences.

Russian: “сердце ушло в пятки” (heart dropped to heels), “застыть от страха” (to freeze in fear), “мурашки по коже” (goosebumps on the skin) evoke strong physical reactions. Uzbek: “joni og‘ziga kelmoq” (his soul came to his mouth), “qaltirab ketmoq” (to start trembling), and “rangi oqarib ketdi” (his color faded) highlight visible bodily reactions. Both languages demonstrate how fear is mapped onto somatic changes.

Russian uses imagery of movement and lightness: “порхать от счастья” (to flutter with happiness), “сиять от радости” (to shine with joy), “на седьмом небе” (on cloud nine). Uzbek uses expressions such as “ko‘ngli ochildi” (his heart opened), “ko‘ngli yayradi” (his heart rejoiced), and “yuzi guldek ochildi” (his face bloomed like a flower), which are rooted in natural metaphors and inner spiritual harmony.

Russian emotional metaphors often draw from Orthodox Christian traditions, life’s hardships, and psychological states. Uzbek metaphors incorporate Islamic concepts (taqdir – destiny, sabr – patience), spiritual purity (ko‘ngil – the heart/soul), and nature-based imagery. For example:

Russian: “нести свой крест” (to bear one’s cross) – enduring life's trials.

Uzbek: “taqdir yo‘li” (path of destiny), “ko‘ngil ishi” (matter of the soul) – emphasize divine control and inner intention.

Table: Frequency of Emotional Metaphors in Russian and Uzbek

Emotion	Russian (%)	Uzbek (%)
Anger	27%	22%
Love	33%	35%
Fear	20%	23%
Joy	20%	20%

Conclusion

This article highlights the cognitive, semantic, and cultural features of emotional metaphors in Russian and Uzbek languages. The analysis shows that while some metaphorical models are universal (e.g., heat for anger), others are culture-specific and reflect distinct national worldviews. Russian emotional metaphors tend to rely on bodily and psychological imagery, while Uzbek ones often emphasize nature, inner purity, and divine destiny. Future research may focus on diachronic trends, metaphor use among youth, or gender-based differences in metaphorical framing.

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