

**PRAGMATIC USAGE OF “HEART / YURAK” PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS
IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK****Javliyeva Lobar Akbar qizi**

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Ilmiy rahbar: f.f.f.d. (PhD), dotsent Kayumova Shaxnoza Kobiljonovna**Abstract**

This article examines the pragmatic usage of phraseological units with the somatic component “heart” in English and “yurak” in Uzbek. The study focuses not only on their semantic meanings but also on their communicative functions in real speech situations. In both languages, the heart is conceptualized as a symbolic centre of emotion, courage, sincerity, moral character, inner pain, anxiety, and interpersonal attitude. English expressions such as “to break someone’s heart,” “to have a heart,” “to take heart,” “by heart,” “heart-to-heart,” and “from the bottom of one’s heart” demonstrate a wide range of pragmatic functions, including emotional evaluation, encouragement, sympathy, sincerity, memorization, and intimate conversation. Uzbek phraseological units such as “yuragi ezilmoq,” “yuragi orqasiga tortmoq,” “yuragi keng,” “yuragi toza,” “yurakdan gapirmoq,” “yuragi dov bermoq,” and “yuragiga qil sig‘maslik” similarly express emotional, moral, volitional, and evaluative meanings. The research applies a qualitative comparative method based on semantic-pragmatic classification, contextual interpretation, and cross-cultural analysis. The findings show that English and Uzbek share several universal metaphorical models, especially HEART AS EMOTION, HEART AS COURAGE, and HEART AS SINCERITY. However, Uzbek usage more frequently connects “yurak” with moral purity, patience, compassion, and collective interpersonal sensitivity, while English usage often emphasizes individual emotional state, courage, sincerity, and psychological resilience. The study concludes that “heart / yurak” phraseological units function as culturally loaded pragmatic tools that help speakers evaluate people, soften criticism, express empathy, intensify emotion, and regulate interpersonal relations.

Keywords: phraseological units, pragmatics, heart, yurak, somatic idioms, English, Uzbek, comparative linguistics, cultural semantics, speech act.

Introduction

Phraseological units occupy a central place in the expressive system of any language because they preserve cultural memory, social experience, emotional

evaluation, and national worldview in compact linguistic forms. Unlike free word combinations, phraseological units are characterized by semantic stability, figurative meaning, reproducibility, and pragmatic force. They are not used merely to name objects or events; rather, they help speakers evaluate situations, express emotions, mark social relations, and influence the listener's perception.

Among somatic phraseological units, expressions with the component "heart" in English and "yurak" in Uzbek are especially productive. This productivity is not accidental. In many cultures, the heart is perceived not only as a biological organ but also as the symbolic centre of feelings, sincerity, courage, moral value, and human character. English dictionaries define "heart" not only as a physical organ but also as a metaphorical centre of emotions, love, courage, determination, and inner nature. Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, for example, presents "heart" as the place where feelings and emotions are thought to exist, while Cambridge Dictionary also records its use in the meaning of courage, determination, and hope. In Uzbek, "yurak" is likewise explained both as a vital organ and as the figurative centre of a person's feelings, spirit, and inner experiences.

The pragmatic importance of "heart / yurak" phraseological units lies in the fact that they are used in communication to perform specific social and emotional actions. When an English speaker says "I thank you from the bottom of my heart," the expression does more than communicate gratitude; it intensifies sincerity and reduces social distance. When an Uzbek speaker says "yuragim ezilib ketdi," the phrase does not simply describe sadness; it creates an emotional appeal and invites empathy from the listener. Therefore, the study of such expressions requires not only semantic analysis but also pragmatic interpretation.

The relevance of the present research is determined by three main factors. First, comparative study of English and Uzbek phraseological units helps reveal universal and culture-specific models of emotional conceptualization. Second, pragmatic analysis shows how idioms function in real communication rather than only in dictionary meaning. Third, the topic is important for translation studies, intercultural communication, foreign language teaching, and discourse analysis, because literal translation of such units often leads to pragmatic loss.

The aim of this article is to analyze the pragmatic usage of "heart / yurak" phraseological units in English and Uzbek. The main research objectives are: to identify the major semantic-pragmatic groups of these units; to compare their communicative functions in both languages; to determine universal and culture-

specific features; and to explain the implications of these differences for translation and intercultural communication.

Literature Review

The theoretical basis of this study is connected with phraseology, cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, and cultural linguistics. In phraseological theory, idioms and fixed expressions are understood as stable lexical combinations whose meanings cannot always be derived from the meanings of their individual components. Fernando (1996) emphasizes that idiomaticity includes both structural stability and figurative semantic unity. Cowie (1998) also treats phraseological units as significant elements of language competence because they combine lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and pragmatic features.

From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, phraseological units are closely related to conceptual metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued that metaphor is not only a literary device but a fundamental mechanism of thought. This idea is essential for understanding “heart / yurak” expressions because they are based on metaphorical models such as HEART IS THE CENTRE OF EMOTION, HEART IS COURAGE, HEART IS MORAL CHARACTER, and HEART IS INNER TRUTH. Kövecses (2000) further demonstrated that emotion concepts are strongly embodied and culturally shaped. This means that while different languages may share bodily metaphors, they may organize them according to different cultural priorities.

In pragmatics, meaning is studied not only as a property of words but also as a result of communicative intention, context, speaker-listener relations, politeness, and inference. Therefore, the pragmatic analysis of phraseological units asks the following questions: What does the speaker intend by using this expression? What effect does it create? Does it express sympathy, criticism, warning, praise, persuasion, intimacy, or emotional pressure? Such questions are especially important for somatic idioms because they often carry strong emotional and evaluative force.

Recent comparative studies of English and Uzbek phraseology show increasing attention to somatic phraseological units. Research on English, Uzbek, and other languages indicates that body-part idioms often reflect both universal human experience and specific cultural interpretation. For example, comparative studies of somatic phraseological units in English, Uzbek, and Russian highlight that body-related idioms express emotional state, cognition, social relation, and cultural worldview. Studies on Uzbek phraseology also emphasize that phraseological units preserve national-cultural knowledge and perform an accumulative function in language.

However, many existing studies focus mainly on semantic classification or translation equivalence. Less attention has been given to the pragmatic functions of “heart / yurak” expressions in context. This article addresses that gap by examining how such units work as communicative tools in English and Uzbek.

Methodology

The study uses a qualitative comparative method. The object of analysis is phraseological units containing the somatic components “heart” in English and “yurak” in Uzbek. The material includes commonly used English idioms recorded in learner dictionaries and phraseological sources, as well as Uzbek phraseological units found in explanatory and phraseological dictionaries, literary usage, and everyday speech practice. English examples include “break someone’s heart,” “have a heart,” “take heart,” “lose heart,” “heart-to-heart,” “from the bottom of one’s heart,” “learn by heart,” “heart of stone,” and “set one’s heart on something.” Uzbek examples include “yuragi ezilmoq,” “yuragi orqasiga tortmoq,” “yuragi dov bermoq,” “yuragi keng,” “yuragi toza,” “yurakdan gapirmoq,” “yuragiga qil sig‘maslik,” “yuragi siqilmoq,” and “yuragida saqlamoq.”

The analytical procedure consists of four stages. First, the phraseological units were grouped according to their dominant semantic field: emotion, courage, sincerity, moral character, fear, anxiety, memory, and interpersonal relation. Second, each unit was interpreted according to its pragmatic function in speech: expressing empathy, giving encouragement, intensifying gratitude, criticizing moral coldness, indicating fear, creating intimacy, or evaluating personality. Third, English and Uzbek examples were compared to identify equivalence, partial equivalence, and culture-specific usage. Fourth, the results were interpreted through the frameworks of cognitive metaphor and pragmatic meaning.

The study does not claim to provide a complete quantitative corpus analysis. Its purpose is qualitative and interpretive. Therefore, the results should be understood as a semantic-pragmatic model that can later be expanded through corpus-based research.

Results

The analysis shows that “heart / yurak” phraseological units in English and Uzbek can be classified into several major pragmatic groups.

1. Emotional pain and sympathy

In English, expressions such as “to break someone’s heart,” “heartbroken,” and “with a heavy heart” are used to express deep sadness, disappointment, or emotional suffering. Pragmatically, these units often function as markers of sympathy, emotional disclosure, or narrative intensification. For example, “It broke her heart to leave her

family” does not merely report sadness; it frames the situation as emotionally severe and morally significant.

In Uzbek, similar meanings are expressed through units such as “yuragi ezilmoq,” “yuragi achishmoq,” “yuragi og‘rimoq,” and “yuragini tilka-pora qilmoq.” These expressions are highly expressive and often used to evoke compassion. For example, “Bolaning holatini ko‘rib yuragim ezildi” means that the speaker was deeply moved by the child’s condition. The pragmatic function is empathetic: the speaker presents himself or herself as emotionally involved and morally sensitive.

A key difference is that Uzbek “yuragi achishmoq” often has a strong compassionate meaning, while English “heartache” may refer more broadly to emotional pain, especially love-related or personal suffering. Uzbek usage more frequently connects the heart with social empathy and pity.

2. Courage, fear, and psychological strength

English uses “heart” to express courage and determination in phrases such as “take heart,” “lose heart,” “have the heart to do something,” and “put one’s heart into something.” Cambridge Dictionary records “heart” in the meaning of courage, determination, or hope, which confirms this pragmatic direction. These units are often used in encouragement, warning, and evaluation. For example, “Don’t lose heart” functions as emotional support and motivational advice.

Uzbek has similar expressions: “yuragi dov bermoq,” “yuragi betlamoq,” “yuragi orqasiga tortmoq,” and “yuragi yorilayozdi.” “Yuragi dov bermoq” means to dare or to have enough courage to do something. Its pragmatic function is evaluative: it can praise bravery or indicate that a person finally overcame fear. Conversely, “yuragi orqasiga tortmoq” expresses sudden fear or shock. It is more vivid than a neutral verb such as “qo‘rqmoq” because it represents fear as a bodily reaction.

The contrast is important. English often conceptualizes heart as inner courage and hope, while Uzbek phraseology frequently gives a more physiological and dramatic image of fear, shock, and emotional tension.

3. Sincerity and intimate communication

English expressions such as “from the bottom of my heart,” “heart-to-heart talk,” “open one’s heart,” and “speak from the heart” are used to mark sincerity, emotional openness, and interpersonal closeness. Their pragmatic function is to reduce distance between speaker and listener. A “heart-to-heart conversation” suggests private, honest, emotionally meaningful communication.

Uzbek has close equivalents: “yurakdan gapirmoq,” “yuragini ochmoq,” “yurakdan aytmoq,” and “yurak so‘zi.” These units signal sincerity and emotional

truth. For example, “Men buni yurakdan aytyapman” pragmatically strengthens the speaker’s credibility and asks the listener to interpret the utterance as honest, not formal or artificial.

In both languages, the heart is connected with authenticity. However, Uzbek “yurakdan” often carries a warmer interpersonal tone and is frequently used in congratulations, apologies, blessings, and emotionally respectful speech.

Comparative Discussion

The comparison reveals both universal and culture-specific tendencies. The universal element is based on human embodiment. Since the heart is physically connected with life, pulse, excitement, fear, and emotional arousal, many languages naturally use it as a metaphorical centre of inner experience. Therefore, English and Uzbek share several conceptual metaphors: HEART/YURAK IS EMOTION, HEART/YURAK IS COURAGE, HEART/YURAK IS SINCERITY, and HEART/YURAK IS MORAL CHARACTER.

However, the pragmatic distribution of these metaphors differs. English “heart” idioms often focus on individual emotional experience, private sincerity, personal courage, and psychological resilience. Expressions such as “take heart,” “lose heart,” “heart-to-heart,” and “set one’s heart on something” are commonly used in contexts where individual feeling, motivation, or intention is foregrounded.

Uzbek “yurak” phraseological units more strongly emphasize interpersonal empathy, moral purity, emotional sensitivity, patience, and social evaluation. Expressions such as “yuragi keng,” “yuragi toza,” and “yuragi achishmoq” do not merely describe psychological states; they evaluate a person’s moral and social quality. This reflects a communicative culture in which emotional warmth, respect, compassion, and patience are highly valued in interpersonal relations.

Another important difference is the relationship between “yurak,” “qalb,” “dil,” and “ko‘ngil” in Uzbek. English relies heavily on “heart” as a broad metaphorical centre, while Uzbek distributes similar meanings among several lexical units. “Yurak” is often used for courage, fear, emotional pain, and moral quality. “Ko‘ngil” is commonly used for mood, desire, satisfaction, and interpersonal tact. “Qalb” is more literary and elevated, often used for spiritual and moral inner life. “Dil” is poetic and emotional. This lexical distribution creates translation difficulties because one English “heart” expression may correspond to “yurak,” “ko‘ngil,” “qalb,” or “dil” depending on context.

For example, “from the bottom of my heart” can be translated as “chin yurakdan,” “butun qalvim bilan,” or “samimiy ravishda,” depending on genre and tone.

“Heart-to-heart talk” may be rendered as “samimiy suhbat,” “dildan suhbat,” or “ochiqchasiga gaplashish.” “Learn by heart” should not be translated through “yurak”; the correct Uzbek equivalent is “yod olmoq.” These examples show that phraseological equivalence is not only semantic but also pragmatic.

The pragmatic force of “heart / yurak” units is also visible in politeness strategies. Speakers use these expressions to soften direct statements, intensify emotional sincerity, and create solidarity. In Uzbek, “yurakdan tabriklayman” sounds warmer and more personal than a neutral “tabriklayman.” In English, “I sincerely thank you” is formal, while “I thank you from the bottom of my heart” is emotionally intensified. Thus, these phraseological units function as pragmatic intensifiers.

At the same time, they may function as tools of criticism. “Heartless,” “hard-hearted,” “yuragi qora,” and “yuraksiz” are not simple descriptions; they are moral accusations. Their use can threaten the listener’s social image. Therefore, they are usually used in emotionally charged discourse, conflict, narration, or strong evaluation.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that “heart / yurak” phraseological units in English and Uzbek are important pragmatic instruments that express emotion, sincerity, courage, fear, moral judgement, empathy, and interpersonal attitude. Their meaning cannot be fully understood through literal translation because their communicative function depends on cultural context, speaker intention, and discourse situation.

English and Uzbek share universal metaphorical models in which the heart is conceptualized as the centre of emotion, courage, and sincerity. However, Uzbek “yurak” expressions are more deeply connected with moral purity, patience, compassion, and social sensitivity, while English “heart” expressions often emphasize individual emotion, psychological strength, sincerity, and personal desire. Another significant difference is that Uzbek distributes the semantic field of inner life among “yurak,” “qalb,” “dil,” and “ko‘ngil,” whereas English frequently uses “heart” as a broader metaphorical unit.

The findings have practical importance for translation, language teaching, intercultural communication, and pragmatic competence development. Translators should avoid literal equivalence and instead choose functionally appropriate expressions. Teachers should present “heart / yurak” idioms in context rather than as isolated vocabulary items. Researchers can further develop this study through corpus-based analysis, discourse analysis, and examination of phraseological units in literary, media, political, and everyday speech.

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