

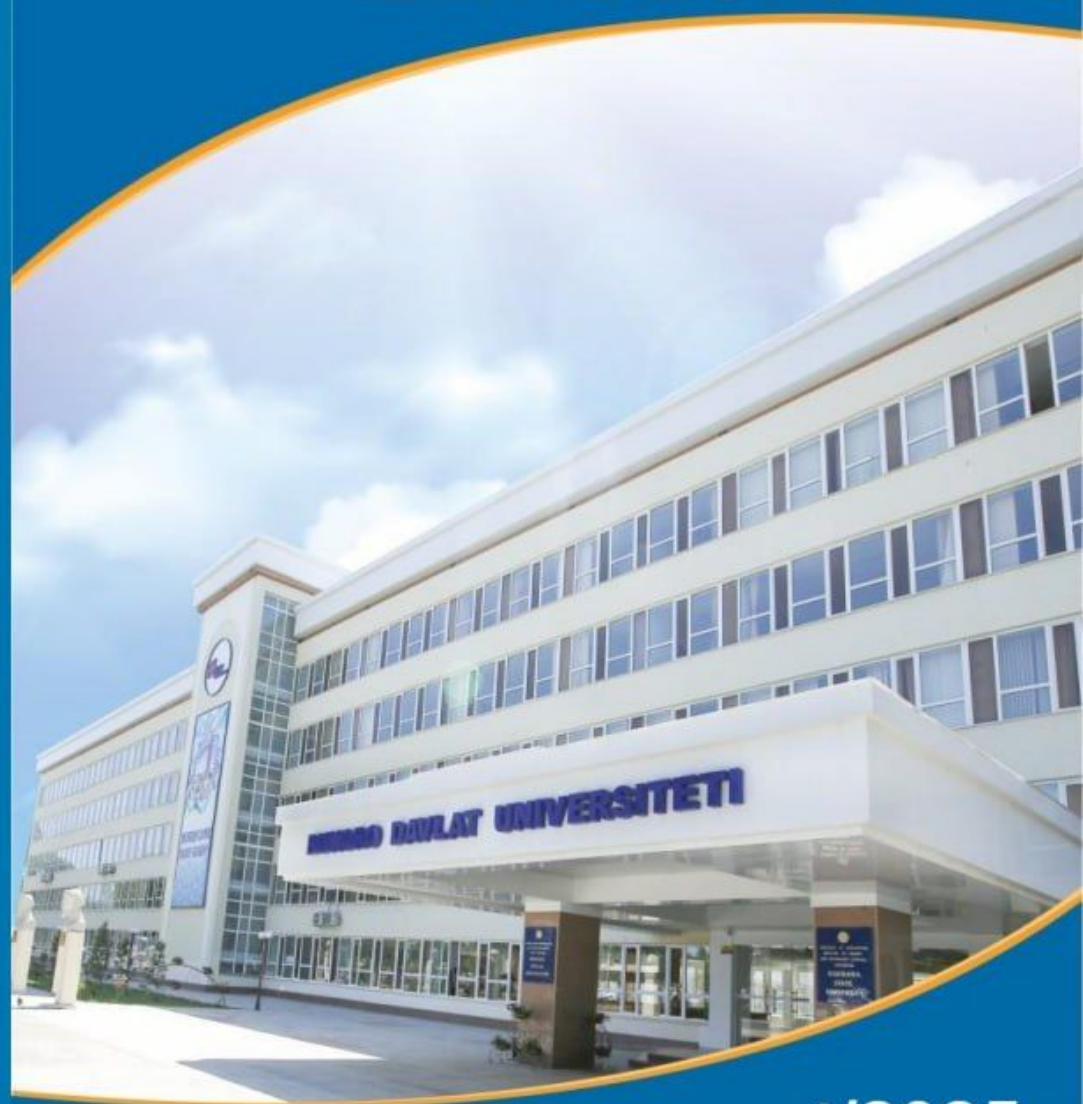


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PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF SOMATISMS IN DAILY COMMUNICATION

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Abstract. Somatisms—words and expressions derived from body parts—play a crucial role in everyday communication by conveying various pragmatic functions. This article explores the use of somatisms in English and Uzbek, emphasizing their denotative and connotative meanings. The study highlights how somatisms function in expressing emotions, strengthening discourse, and reflecting cultural perspectives. Through comparative analysis, the paper demonstrates the similarities and differences in how these expressions shape verbal interactions in both languages.

Keywords: somatisms, pragmatics, communication, Uzbek language, English language, denotative meaning, connotative meaning, cultural linguistics.

KUNDALIK MULOQOTDA SOMATIZMLARNING PRAGMATIK FUNKSIYALARI

Annotatsiya. Somatizmlar – inson tanasining qismlaridan olingan so'zlar va iboralar – kundalik muloqotda turli pragmatik vazifalarni bajarishi bilan muhim hisoblanadi. Ushbu maqola ingliz va o'zbek tillarida somatizmlarning qo'llanishini, ularning denotativ va konnotativ ma'nolarini tahlil qiladi. Tadqiqotda somatizmlarning hissiyotlarni yetkazish, nutqni kuchaytirish va madaniy qarashlarni aks ettirishdagi o'rni tahlil qilinadi. Taqqoslovii yondashuv asosida ushbu iboralar har ikki tilning og'zaki nutqiga qanday ta'sir etishi o'rganiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: somatizmlar, pragmatika, muloqot, o'zbek tili, ingliz tili, denotativ ma'no, konnotativ ma'no, madaniy lingvistika.

ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИЕ ФУНКЦИИ СОМАТИЗМОВ В ПОВСЕДНЕВНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

Аннотация. Соматизмы — слова и выражения, происходящие от названий частей тела, — играют важную роль в повседневной коммуникации, передавая различные прагматические функции. В данной статье рассматривается использование соматизмов в английском и узбекском языках с акцентом на их денотативные и коннотативные значения. Исследование подчеркивает, как соматизмы функционируют в выражении эмоций, усилении дискурса и отражении культурных перспектив. Сравнительный анализ демонстрирует сходства и различия в том, как эти выражения формируют вербальное взаимодействие в обоих языках.

Ключевые слова: соматизмы, прагматика, коммуникация, узбекский язык, английский язык, денотативное значение, коннотативное значение, культурная лингвистика.

Introduction. Language serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a mirror of cultural and cognitive perspectives. Among the intriguing linguistic features present in everyday speech are somatisms — expressions and words associated with body parts. These linguistic elements fulfill various pragmatic functions, including expressing emotions, emphasizing messages, and organizing conversations. These linguistic elements are prevalent in everyday speech across different languages, demonstrating how human cognition links physical sensations to abstract concepts. Somatisms fulfill a variety of pragmatic functions, making them essential components of discourse. They are frequently used to convey emotions, as bodily experiences are often metaphorically extended to describe psychological states. Additionally, somatisms serve to emphasize messages, adding vividness and intensity to speech, whether in casual conversation, literature, or rhetoric. In interactional settings, they help structure discourse by signaling attitudes, intentions, or relationships between speakers. Their widespread use across languages highlights the universal tendency to conceptualize experiences through the body, while their variations reflect the unique cultural and historical backgrounds of different linguistic communities. Somatisms often go beyond their denotative meanings (literal meanings) and take on connotative meanings (figurative or culturally embedded meanings), making them

essential elements of both spoken and written discourse. Despite their common use, the interpretation and function of somatisms vary across languages and cultures. This article explores the pragmatic functions of somatisms in English and Uzbek, highlighting their role in daily communication. By examining their use in expressing emotions, reinforcing discourse, and shaping cultural perspectives, this study aims to demonstrate the similarities and differences in how somatisms contribute to verbal interactions in both languages.

Discussion. Somatisms are commonly used to express emotions such as anger, joy, fear, or affection. They provide a vivid way to describe feelings and states of mind. These idiomatic expressions are often rooted in physiological experiences and metaphorical associations with different body parts. While some somatisms have direct equivalents in different languages, others require adaptation due to cultural nuances. Here are some examples of English phrases: He gave me the cold shoulder (He ignored me), Head over heels in love – Completely in love, Keep your head above water – Manage to survive a difficult situation, Turn a blind eye – Ignore something intentionally, A sight for sore eyes – Someone or something that makes you happy to see, Leave a bad taste in someone's mouth – Cause a negative feeling or bad impression, Wash your hands of something – Refuse responsibility for something, Have a heart of gold – Be very kind and generous, Stand on your own two feet – Be independent. Here are the examples of Uzbek language: Ko'zi ochilgan (Experienced person; literally "eyes are opened"), Quloq tutmoq – Pay attention (literally: "hold the ear"), Burni yerdan ko'tarildi – Recovered from difficulties (literally: "nose lifted from the ground"), Og'zi qulog'ida – Extremely happy (literally: "mouth near the ears"), Tili qisq – Someone who is shy or cannot express themselves well (literally: "short tongue"), Yuragi orqaga tortdi – Got scared (literally: "heart pulled back"), Oyoq osti qilmoq – Disrespect something (literally: "to put underfoot"), Qo'li ochiq – Generous person (literally: "hand is open").

Emotions such as anger and irritation are frequently linked to body parts like the heart, liver, and shoulders, emphasizing tension and distress. To have a chip on one's shoulder – to be easily angered or hold a grudge. The origin of this phrase comes from an old practice of placing a chip of wood on one's shoulder as a challenge to fight. It metaphorically represents a person who is quick to take offense. "Jig'iga tegmoq" (literally: "To touch someone's liver - to deeply annoy or irritate someone. Cultural context of this phrase in Uzbek, the liver (jigar) is metaphorically linked to emotional well-being. This expression illustrates how irritation is perceived as a deep disturbance to one's inner state. Expressions of joy are often associated with upward motion and vast, open spaces, reflecting feelings of elation and freedom. "To be on cloud nine" – to feel extremely happy. Origin of this phrase originates from meteorology, where "cloud nine" refers to one of the highest clouds, metaphorically symbolizing great joy. "Ko'ngli tog'dek ko'tarildi" (literally: "His soul rose like a mountain.") – to feel immense happiness and pride. Cultural context of this phrase is – the imagery of a towering mountain suggests emotional elevation and strength, highlighting how Uzbek culture expresses happiness through metaphors of nature. Fear is often expressed through bodily sensations such as coldness or a racing heartbeat, illustrating the physiological responses to anxiety and apprehension. Many languages use somatisms to describe these intense emotions, highlighting how fear physically manifests. "To get cold feet – to become nervous and hesitate before taking action. This expression likely originates from the literal sensation of cold feet due to fear, which can cause hesitation or withdrawal from a situation. Love and affection are commonly expressed through references to vital organs such as the heart and liver, signifying deep emotional connections. These somatisms illustrate how different cultures associate physical elements of the body with strong feelings of love and attachment. "To wear one's heart on one's sleeve" – to openly display emotions, particularly love. This phrase dates back to medieval times when knights would wear tokens from their loved ones on their sleeves as a public display of devotion. Sorrow is often depicted through metaphors of destruction, heaviness, or internal distress, illustrating the depth of emotional pain. Somatisms related to sadness emphasize how grief can physically and emotionally impact an individual. To have a lump in one's throat" – to feel so emotional (often sad) that one struggles to speak. This phrase reflects the sensation of throat tightness that often accompanies moments of deep sadness or emotional distress. Somatisms provide valuable insights into how different cultures conceptualize emotions through bodily metaphors. While many expressions share common physiological roots, cultural differences influence the specific imagery and meaning of these phrases. Understanding somatisms is crucial in linguistic studies, particularly in translation, where direct equivalents may not always exist, requiring careful cultural adaptation.

Many somatisms in different languages perform similar functions, indicating a shared cognitive basis in human communication. The prevalence of somatisms in diverse linguistic traditions demonstrates how fundamental bodily experiences—such as movement, sensation, and physiological reactions—are closely tied to meaning-making processes. These expressions play a crucial role in everyday communication by enhancing expressiveness, reinforcing messages, and structuring interactions in ways that feel intuitive to speakers. Their widespread use suggests that language is deeply connected to the body as a reference point for understanding the world, supporting the idea that metaphorical thought is a core feature of human cognition. While the

specific wording and cultural interpretations of somatisms may vary, their underlying functions remain consistent, reinforcing the idea that language is shaped by both biological and cultural influences. This shared cognitive foundation makes somatisms a valuable area of study for linguists, cognitive scientists, and anthropologists, as they offer insights into the intersection of language, thought, and human experience. Both English and Uzbek use body-related idioms to describe emotions, physical conditions, or character traits. One of the key reasons somatisms appear in so many languages is their connection to embodied cognition—the idea that human thought is shaped by bodily experience. Since people experience the world through their senses, emotions, and physical actions, they naturally use body-related expressions to describe abstract concepts. Somatisms often serve as a **linguistic shortcut** for expressing emotions in a way that is easily understood. They provide vivid imagery that can **enhance storytelling, jokes, and even insults**.

English: A heavy heart (Feeling sad)

Uzbek: Yuragi ezildi (Feeling deep sorrow; literally: "heart got crushed")

English: Butterflies in my stomach (Feeling nervous)

Uzbek: Ich-eti yeb qo'ymoq (Feeling anxious; literally: "to eat one's own flesh") Since emotions are often difficult to describe, somatisms allow people to communicate feelings more effectively and evoke shared experiences.

Many somatisms reflect traditional beliefs, superstitions, and values. In Uzbek culture, for example, some body-related expressions relate to destiny, social hierarchy, and respect, while English idioms often emphasize personal agency and independence.

Uzbek: Ko'z tegdi (Suffering bad luck due to envy; "the evil eye touched him") – reflects belief in the evil eye.

English: Knock on wood (To prevent bad luck) – reflects superstitions about fate.

Uzbek: Og'zi pishiq (Someone who is wise and doesn't reveal secrets; literally: "cooked mouth") – reflects the value of discretion.

English: Loose lips sink ships (Talking too much causes problems) – reflects a culture of caution in speech.

In many languages, direct speech can be considered rude or too harsh, so somatisms help speakers soften their words or convey their meaning indirectly. Somatisms are often used in sarcasm, humor, and politeness strategies, making communication more socially appropriate and engaging.

English: She has a sharp tongue (She speaks harshly).

Uzbek: Tili uzun (She is disrespectful; literally: "long tongue").

English: He has his head in the clouds (He is absent-minded).

Uzbek: Oyoq-qo'li qaltiroq (He is nervous; literally: "his hands and feet are shaking").

Somatisms are often difficult to translate directly because their meanings are culturally bound. It can be a real struggle to a translator to find an appropriate word or expression to give the exact meaning of the somatism. Because word-for-word translation often fails, translators must adapt expressions while preserving their intended meaning. This is because of cultural differences and other factors. These expressions are not merely linguistic constructs but reflections of how different societies interpret physical sensations and associate them with abstract emotions, behaviors, or states of being. As a result, their meanings may not have direct equivalents in other languages, requiring careful adaptation to preserve both the literal and figurative significance. Since somatisms are shaped by cultural perceptions, their interpretation depends on shared knowledge and experiences within a particular linguistic community. What is intuitive in one language may seem unfamiliar or even nonsensical in another if translated word-for-word. Additionally, somatisms often rely on metaphorical extensions that are culturally specific, making their meaning inaccessible without an understanding of the broader social and historical influences that shaped them. This presents a significant challenge for translators, linguists, and language learners, who must find ways to convey the intended meaning without distorting the original expression. Strategies such as using functional equivalents, paraphrasing, or providing contextual explanations are often necessary to ensure effective cross-cultural communication. Successfully translating somatisms requires not only linguistic proficiency but also cultural competence, as it involves recognizing the underlying associations that give these expressions their meaning within a particular society.

LINGUISTICS

English	Literal Translation in Uzbek	Actual Uzbek Equivalent Meaning
Break a leg! (Good luck)	Oyog'ingni sindir!	Omadingni bersin! (May you have good luck)
Let your hair down (Relax)	Sochingni tushir!	Xotirjam bo'! (Be calm)
Cold feet (Feeling nervous before doing something)	Sovuq oyoqlar	Yuragi dov bermadi (He lacked courage)

Additionally, certain body parts may have symbolic meanings in one culture but not in another. For example, the heart, head, eyes, and hands often symbolize different things in different languages.

English	Uzbek Equivalent	Difference
Keep an eye on it (Watch carefully)	Ko'z-quloq bo'!	Uzbek adds "ears" (quloq) to emphasize attentiveness.
To have a big mouth (Talk too much)	Og'zi bo'sh	Uzbek uses "loose mouth" instead of "big mouth".
To put one's foot down (Be firm)	Qattiq qo'l bo'lmoq	Uzbek uses "hand" instead of "foot" to indicate strictness.
To keep a straight face (Not show emotion)	Yuzini burishtirmaslik (Not frown)	Slight variation in facial expression interpretation.

Some somatisms contain **puns**, **humor**, or **rhymes** that do not exist in another language. Translating them word-for-word may result in losing the joke or impact. These linguistic features often rely on wordplay, phonetic similarities, or double meanings that do not have direct equivalents in another language. As a result, a literal translation may strip the expression of its wit, rhythm, or cultural resonance, reducing its impact or making it incomprehensible to speakers of the target language. The challenge in translating such somatisms lies in preserving both the meaning and the stylistic elements that contribute to their expressiveness. Humor, in particular, is highly culture-dependent, and what is amusing in one language may not have the same effect in another due to differences in societal norms, historical references, and linguistic structures. Rhyming somatisms, on the other hand, may lose their phonetic appeal if translated literally, as the sounds and rhythmic patterns do not align naturally in the target language. To maintain the essence of these expressions, translators often have to find creative solutions, such as substituting them with culturally appropriate idioms, restructuring the sentence to maintain a similar rhythm, or explaining the humor through adaptation. This process requires not only linguistic skill but also a deep understanding of the cultural and cognitive aspects of both languages to ensure that the original intent, tone, and emotional effect are retained in translation. In cases where no direct equivalent exists, a well-crafted adaptation or explanatory rendering may be necessary to bridge the gap between linguistic and cultural differences. Achieving this balance requires not only advanced linguistic proficiency but also a deep cultural awareness of both the source and target languages. Understanding how different societies conceptualize emotions, actions, and relationships through bodily metaphors allows translators to make informed choices that enhance clarity and preserve the intended nuances. By adopting a creative and culturally informed approach, translators can ensure that somatisms remain effective, expressive, and relevant across languages, ultimately supporting more meaningful and accurate cross-cultural communication.

English: He has **itchy feet** (He always wants to travel).

Uzbek Literal Translation: Oyoqlari qichiydi (Implies a medical issue, not restlessness).

Uzbek Equivalent: Joyida o'tirmaydi (He can't stay in one place).

English: She has a **big heart** and always helps people in need.

Uzbek Literal Translation: Uning yuragi katta. (Implies a physically large heart, not kindness)

Uzbek Equivalent: U juda saxiy odam. (She is a very generous person)

English: I wanted to tell him off, but **I bit my tongue**.

Uzbek Literal Translation: Tilimni tishladim. (Sounds like a physical injury, not self-restraint)

Uzbek Equivalent: Gapirmay turdim. (I remained silent)

English: Tell me the story, **I'm all ears**!

Uzbek Literal Translation: Men butunlay quloqlarman! (Sounds strange)

Uzbek Equivalent: Men diqqat bilan eshitayapman! (I'm listening attentively)

As seen in the example of He has itchy feet → Joyida o'tirmaydi, a literal translation can lead to confusion or even unintended meanings, emphasizing the importance of finding culturally appropriate equivalents rather than translating word-for-word. A literal translation of somatisms can often lead to confusion or unintended meanings because these expressions are deeply tied to cultural perceptions, historical contexts, and metaphorical associations that may not exist in the target language. When translated word-for-word, somatisms may lose their figurative essence, resulting in phrases that sound unnatural, nonsensical, or even misleading. This highlights the importance of prioritizing meaning over direct linguistic equivalence to ensure that the intended message is accurately conveyed. Different languages conceptualize emotions, actions, and states of being in unique ways, often linking them to body parts or physiological experiences that carry specific connotations within a cultural framework. A phrase that makes perfect sense to native speakers of one language may not be understood—or could even be misinterpreted—by speakers of another if translated too literally. This is particularly problematic in contexts where somatisms carry humor, irony, or symbolic depth, as these elements may not translate effectively without cultural adaptation. To preserve clarity and impact, translators and language learners must seek culturally appropriate equivalents rather than direct translations. This often involves using idiomatic expressions that serve the same function in the target language, paraphrasing to retain the core meaning, or providing contextual explanations when necessary. Successfully conveying somatisms in translation requires an understanding of both linguistic structure and cultural nuance, ensuring that communication remains accurate, natural, and meaningful across different languages. Since idioms often reflect unique worldviews and cultural associations, successful translation requires an understanding of both linguistic nuances and the cultural context in which they are used. By focusing on pragmatic meaning rather than direct translation, we can ensure that expressions maintain their intended emotional and communicative impact in the target language.

Ultimately, the ability to effectively translate somatisms enhances cross-cultural communication, allowing speakers of different languages to better understand and appreciate each other's ways of expressing thoughts and emotions. Each language encodes emotions and abstract concepts differently through bodily metaphors, reflecting unique cultural perceptions of the human experience. The challenge in translation lies in conveying both the literal and figurative meanings of somatisms while preserving their emotional impact. A direct translation may not always be possible, requiring the use of equivalent expressions or explanatory adaptations to ensure clarity and resonance in the target language. By successfully translating somatisms, individuals can engage in deeper intercultural exchanges, fostering empathy and appreciation for different ways of perceiving emotions and experiences. This process helps break down language barriers, making communication more effective and meaningful in global interactions, literature, diplomacy, and even business negotiations. Moreover, it contributes to the preservation and understanding of cultural heritage, as somatisms often carry historical and traditional significance that reflects a society's collective consciousness.

Conclusion. Somatisms are more than just colorful expressions; they play an essential role in communication by expressing emotions, social relationships, and cultural values. Whether used to soften speech, enhance expressiveness, or reinforce beliefs, they remain a vital part of language across different cultures. By using somatisms, speakers can reinforce their messages, create emphasis, establish social connections, and even structure discourse more effectively.

However, the interpretation and translation of somatisms pose challenges due to cultural and linguistic differences. Since these expressions are deeply embedded in the worldview of a particular language community, their meanings often extend beyond their literal definitions. Effective communication requires an understanding of both the linguistic structures and the cultural connotations associated with these expressions.

As language evolves, somatisms continue to reflect changes in cultural attitudes, social norms, and human cognition. Their study provides valuable insights into how people conceptualize experiences and emotions through metaphorical language. Recognizing their pragmatic functions not only enhances linguistic competence but also fosters better cross-cultural communication by promoting awareness of the underlying meanings embedded in different languages. The continuous development of somatisms highlights the fluidity of language, as new idiomatic expressions emerge while older ones may shift in meaning or fall out of common usage. Studying somatisms provides valuable insights into how people conceptualize their experiences through metaphorical language. Because they often originate from universal physiological sensations—such as warmth for affection or pressure for stress—their meanings are shaped by cultural perspectives, historical contexts, and societal values. This makes somatisms a rich area of study in linguistics, cognitive science, and anthropology, as they reveal the intersection of language, thought, and cultural expression. Recognizing the

pragmatic functions of somatisms enhances linguistic competence by improving one's ability to interpret and use language effectively in different contexts. Understanding their deeper meanings allows for more precise communication, particularly in translation, language learning, and intercultural interactions. By fostering awareness of the embedded cultural and cognitive elements in somatisms, speakers can navigate cross-cultural communication with greater sensitivity, reducing the risk of misinterpretation and promoting mutual understanding. By developing cultural sensitivity in the use and interpretation of somatisms, individuals can minimize the risk of miscommunication, as literal translations or unfamiliar expressions may lead to confusion or unintended meanings. Recognizing that somatisms are shaped by historical, social, and cognitive factors allows speakers to engage more thoughtfully in intercultural exchanges, ensuring that their language use aligns with the expectations and norms of their audience. Moreover, an awareness of somatisms contributes to a deeper appreciation of linguistic diversity and the ways in which different cultures structure thought and communication. This understanding enhances not only language learning and translation but also diplomatic, professional, and personal interactions in multilingual environments. By prioritizing meaning over direct equivalence, speakers can foster more meaningful connections, promote linguistic inclusivity, and strengthen cross-cultural relationships.

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