

**SEMANTIC EQUIVALENCE OF EMOTION-RELATED COLLOCATIONS IN  
ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERARY TEXTS (BASED ON CHARLES DICKENS'S  
*OLIVER TWIST* AND XUDOYBERDI TO'XTABOYEV'S *BESH BOLALIK YIGITCHA*)**

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**Abstract:** This study explores how emotions are expressed in English and Uzbek literature by analyzing emotion-related collocations in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and Xudoyberdi To'xtaboyev's *Besh bolalik yigitcha*. Collocations like *burning anger* or *deep sorrow* carry subtle emotional meaning that is often hard to translate. The research classifies expressions as showing Full, Partial, or Zero Equivalence to assess how meaning shifts across languages. Findings reveal which emotions are universally expressed and which reflect culture-specific patterns, offering insights for literary translation and cross-cultural linguistics.

**Keywords:** semantic equivalence, collocations, emotions, literary translation, English, Uzbek

**Annotatsiya**

Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz va o'zbek adabiyotida hissiyotlar qanday ifodalanishini, Charlz Dikkensning *Oliver Twist* va Xudoyberdi To'xtaboyevning *Besh bolalik yigitcha* asarlaridagi kollokatsiyalar orqali o'rganadi. So'z birikmalari To'liq, Qisman yoki Nol Ekvivalentlik asosida tahlil qilinadi. Natijalar universal va madaniy jihatdan xos hissiyotlarni ko'rsatadi, tarjima va lingvistik tadqiqotlar uchun foydali.

**Kalit so'zlar:** semantik ekvivalentlik, kollokatsiyalar, hissiyot, badiiy tarjima, Ingliz tili, O'zbek tili

**Аннотация**

Исследование изучает выражение эмоций в английской и узбекской литературе на примере коллокаций в романах Чарльза Диккенса *Оливер Твист* и Худойберди Тухтабаева *Беш болалик йигитча*. Выражения классифицируются как Полная, Частичная или Нулевая Эквивалентность. Результаты показывают универсальные и культурно специфические способы выражения эмоций, что важно для перевода и лингвистики.

**Ключевые слова:** семантическая эквивалентность, коллокации, эмоции, художественный перевод, английский, узбекский

**Introduction**

Emotions lie at the center of human experience, and literature captures them through familiar word pairings—collocations—such as *profound joy* or *stark fear*. These combinations act as cultural markers, showing how different societies understand and express feeling (Cruse, 2000). This study asks a key question: does the emotional force of an English collocation like *bitter regret* carry over fully into Uzbek, or does something shift in meaning?

To explore this, we compare emotional collocations in the original versions of two major literary works: Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and Xudoyberdi To'xtaboyev's *Besh bolalik yigitcha*. Dickens presents intense, often dramatic Victorian emotions, while To'xtaboyev offers a distinctly Uzbek perspective shaped by local culture and language. By examining how emotions are expressed in these texts, the study investigates how much meaning is preserved—or transformed—when emotional collocations move across languages and cultures.

### **Literature Review**

Understanding how emotions are expressed in different languages involves looking at several connected areas of linguistics. Collocation theory shows that certain words tend to appear together in predictable ways, forming meaningful combinations that influence how we interpret emotions (Firth, 1957; Sinclair, 1991). These patterns are shaped by cultural norms. For example, English often describes anger through fire or heat—expressions like *burning anger* or *heated argument*—while other languages may rely on images of weight, darkness, or pressure. Such choices reveal how each culture frames emotional experience.

Research on semantic equivalence shows that finding perfect matches between collocations in different languages is uncommon. Catford (1965) points out that structural differences limit what can be considered equivalent, and Nida (2001) highlights how cultural distance adds further challenges. Languages within the same cultural sphere often share partial or near equivalence, but this becomes more difficult when comparing languages with different histories and worldviews.

Although metaphor and idiomatic language have been widely studied, emotional collocations in literary prose—especially in their original languages—have received less attention. Existing work on English–Uzbek phraseological equivalence often relies on dictionaries or isolated examples. This study contributes to the field by examining emotional collocations directly from well-known literary texts and analysing how they function within the narrative, not just as standalone phrases.

### **Methodology**

This study uses a mixed-method qualitative and quantitative approach to provide both detailed analysis and broad coverage. The data comes from emotional collocations found directly in the original versions of Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and Xudoyberdi To'xtaboyev's *Besh bolalik yigitcha*, without relying on translations. Emotional collocations were selected only when they

included a word clearly expressing an emotion (such as anger, fear, joy, or sorrow) and another word that formed a stable or semi-fixed combination, following collocation theory.

The analysis followed three steps. First, both novels were read carefully, and all possible emotional expressions were marked. Second, each expression was checked using corpus criteria and previous phraseology research to confirm whether it functioned as a true collocation. Third, each English collocation was matched with the closest emotional expression in Uzbek that captured the same feeling or situation. When an exact match did not appear in the text, broader conceptual equivalents were considered.

After pairing the collocations, they were categorized into three levels of semantic equivalence: full, partial, and zero. This classification, based on Baker's (1992) model, was adjusted to fit the specific features of emotional collocations in the two novels.

### **Analysis**

Preliminary observation indicates that the emotional landscapes of Dickens and To'xtaboyev differ significantly in imagery, metaphor, and cultural framing. Dickens relies heavily on metaphors of physical force, heat, darkness, and burden to convey emotions, consistent with Victorian literary style. To'xtaboyev's collocations, however, tend to derive from everyday Uzbek lived experience, incorporating elements of interpersonal closeness, moral evaluation, and culturally coded metaphors such as the heart, soul, and kinship bonds.

These differences suggest a likelihood of high occurrence of partial and zero equivalence due to divergent metaphorical systems. Yet, certain universal emotional concepts—fear, grief, maternal affection—show potential for more direct equivalence. By examining these patterns, the study seeks to reveal how deeply emotional expression is embedded in cultural cognition.

### **Results**

The initial results indicate notable contrasts in the structural patterns of emotional collocations in the two novels. In *Oliver Twist*, adjective-noun pairs dominate, producing expressions like deep sorrow, fierce anger, or sudden terror. These constructions highlight intensity and immediacy. In *Besh bolalik yigitcha*, however, verb-based collocations and culturally grounded expressions appear more frequently, such as *yuragi orqaga tortdi* (the heart pulled back, expressing fear) or *ko'ngli yorishdi* (the soul brightened, expressing relief or joy). These reveal an emphasis on internal states conceptualized through culturally meaningful bodily metaphors.

When mapping English expressions to Uzbek equivalents, a pattern quickly emerges. Few collocations achieve full semantic equivalence because even when the emotional meaning aligns, the imagery does not. Deep sorrow, for example, may be rendered conceptually in Uzbek but often through words involving the heart or soul rather than depth metaphors. Conversely, some Uzbek collocations, such as *dili xufton bo'ldi* (the heart became dusky), have no direct English

counterpart and rely on poetic imagery tied to traditional emotional symbolism.

English Collocation (Oliver Twist)	Uzbek Collocation (Besh bolalik yigitcha)	Equivalence Type	Notes
deep sorrow	chuqur qayg‘u	Full	Direct metaphorical match; depth imagery present in both languages.
burning anger	qaynagan g‘azab	Full	Fire/heat metaphor used similarly across both languages.
bitter regret	achchiq pushaymon	Full	Shared metaphor of bitterness in emotional pain.
sudden fear	birdan qo‘rquv	Partial	Intensity preserved; nuance of “shock” less explicit in Uzbek.
growing anxiety	xavotiri ortib bordi	Partial	Verb-based structure in Uzbek shifts focus to process, not state.
overwhelming grief	yuragi ezilib ketdi	Partial	Emotional intensity preserved but metaphor shifts from “force” to “heart pain.”
cold anger	sovuq jahli	Partial	Meaning roughly preserved; cultural connotations differ.
silent despair	dili xufton bo‘ldi	Zero	Uzbek metaphor of “dusky heart” does not map to English imagery.
fierce joy	ko‘ngli yorishdi	Zero	English uses intensity metaphor; Uzbek uses “brightened soul.”
heartfelt relief	yelkasidan tog‘ ag‘darilganday bo‘ldi	Zero	Complete metaphorical divergence: Uzbek uses “mountain lifted off shoulders.”

A clear distinction emerged in structural preferences. English favors adjective-noun collocations that foreground direct emotional qualities (deep sorrow, fierce joy), while Uzbek frequently uses verbs or heart/soul-based metaphors to depict internal states (ko‘ngli yorishdi, yuragi ezildi). This structural divergence directly impacts equivalence levels because adjective-based emotional descriptions in English rarely correspond neatly to bodily metaphors in Uzbek.

### Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that emotional collocations are deeply embedded in cultural

cognition, supporting prior research on the cultural shaping of metaphorical language (Wierzbicka, 1999; Kövecses, 2000). Full semantic equivalence was comparatively rare, occurring only when both English and Uzbek drew upon universal embodied metaphors—such as heat for anger and depth for profound sadness. Partial equivalence was the most common category, reflecting that many emotional experiences are universal in concept but culturally distinct in their linguistic encoding. For example, both English and Uzbek conceptualize emotional pressure or emotional burden, yet English may express this through weight metaphors (“overwhelming grief”), while Uzbek turns to expressions involving pain or internal collapse (“yuragi ezilib ketdi”). Zero equivalence collocations demonstrate the strongest cultural divergence. Expressions like *dili xufton bo‘ldi* evoke imagery rooted in Uzbek traditional and poetic symbolism, particularly linking emotion to dusk, heart, and spiritual dimming. These differences highlight the limitations of relying on literal translation or dictionary-based equivalence when dealing with emotionally charged collocations. They also emphasize the translator’s role as a cultural mediator, navigating not only lexical disparities but also underlying metaphorical networks.

## Conclusion

This study analyzed emotional collocations in *Oliver Twist* and *Besh bolalik yigitcha* to assess how closely English and Uzbek emotional expressions align in meaning. The results show that although some emotions draw on shared universal metaphors, many expressions differ in imagery, structure, and cultural associations. Full equivalence appeared only when both languages used the same metaphorical model. Partial equivalence was the most common, indicating that similar emotional ideas are often expressed differently. Cases of zero equivalence revealed deeper cultural and symbolic differences in how emotions are conceptualized. These findings contribute to contrastive linguistics and translation studies by highlighting the difficulty of translating emotionally loaded language between English and Uzbek. Translators must pay close attention to cultural context, especially in narrative prose, while linguists can view emotional metaphors as important markers of cultural thinking and linguistic identity.

Future studies may widen the data set, examine more genres, or apply computational methods to track patterns across languages, offering a broader understanding of how emotions are shaped and translated across cultures.

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