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A CORPUS-BASED COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS EXPRESSING LOVE AND HATRED IN ENGLISH, RUSSIAN, AND UZBEK MEDIA DISCOURSE

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Abstract. Phraseological units constitute an essential component of media discourse because they communicate emotions, encode culturally grounded interpretations of social relationships, and convey evaluative meanings in a concise and expressive form. Among the semantic categories represented through phraseology, love and hatred are particularly significant because they reflect both private emotional experiences and public attitudes toward individuals, social groups, political actors, and contemporary events. This study aims to investigate the semantic, structural, pragmatic, and linguocultural characteristics of phraseological units expressing love and hatred in English, Russian, and Uzbek media discourse through a comparative corpus-based framework. The research combines phraseological identification, semantic classification, contextual analysis, contrastive comparison, and discourse-pragmatic interpretation. The qualitative pilot analysis considers such English expressions as *wear one's heart on one's sleeve*, *head over heels in love*, and *no love lost between someone and someone*; Russian expressions such as *души не чаять в ком-либо* and *точить зуб на кого-либо*; and Uzbek expressions such as *кўнгил қўймоқ* (*ko‘ngil qo‘ymoq*), *кўрарга кўзи йўқ* (*ko‘rarga ko‘zi yo‘q*), and *миш қайрамоқ* (*tish qayramoq*). These examples illustrate shared tendencies toward metaphorical conceptualization alongside language-specific patterns of emotional expression and evaluation. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which media discourse employs phraseological units to construct intimacy, admiration, rejection, hostility, interpersonal conflict, and ideological opposition. The study proposes a balanced multilingual media corpus and a reproducible annotation procedure for investigating frequency, distribution, collocational behaviour, and pragmatic functions. Since the present analysis does not report results from a completed, quantitatively measured three-language corpus, its comparative findings are qualitative and exploratory rather than statistical. The proposed framework contributes to contrastive phraseology, corpus linguistics, media discourse analysis, and the study of emotion in intercultural communication.

Keywords: phraseological units, corpus linguistics, love, hatred, English, Russian, Uzbek, media discourse, comparative linguistics, emotional semantics, linguoculturology, discourse pragmatics.

1. Introduction

Phraseological units occupy an important position in contemporary linguistic research because they combine relative structural stability with figurative meaning, cultural associations, and pragmatic expressiveness. Unlike freely constructed word combinations, phraseological units frequently convey meanings that cannot be fully predicted from the literal meanings of their individual components. Their interpretation therefore depends not only on lexical and grammatical structure but also on conventional usage, shared cultural knowledge, contextual expectations, and communicative intention. In media discourse, these characteristics become especially significant because journalists, commentators, editors, and other media producers must communicate evaluations and emotional

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perspectives within relatively restricted textual spaces, particularly headlines, captions, introductory paragraphs, and commentary. Phraseological expressions can consequently function as instruments of emotional intensification, ideological positioning, interpersonal evaluation, and audience engagement. Recent research on corpus-based phraseology demonstrates the value of examining formulaic language in authentic contexts rather than relying exclusively on isolated dictionary definitions (Buerki, 2020, pp. 70–100; Lisboa, 2021, pp. 596–621). Media discourse is therefore a productive domain for investigating how relatively stable expressions acquire context-dependent meanings and how their communicative functions vary across languages, genres, and cultural environments.

Love and hatred represent particularly suitable semantic categories for comparative phraseological analysis because they are universal human experiences whose linguistic representations reflect different cultural conceptualizations and communicative conventions. Love may be associated with emotional attachment, devotion, admiration, intimacy, loyalty, idealization, or sacrifice, whereas hatred can be expressed through direct animosity, concealed resentment, social rejection, hostility, rivalry, and the desire to distance oneself from another person or group. These emotional categories are not always linguistically independent: affection may be represented ironically, apparent love may imply dependency or manipulation, and expressions containing the lexical component *love* may communicate antagonism rather than positive emotion. For example, the English expression *no love lost between them* indicates hostility or mutual dislike, demonstrating that the literal presence of an emotion word does not necessarily determine the evaluative meaning of the entire phraseological unit. Comparative research on English and Uzbek representations of love similarly identifies culturally patterned associations involving the heart, visual perception, wealth, loyalty, and the evaluation of relationships (Ashurov & Mirzakulova, 2021, pp. 78–83). Against this background, the present study addresses three research questions: (1) What semantic, structural, and metaphorical patterns characterize phraseological units expressing love and hatred in English, Russian, and Uzbek? (2) How do these units perform evaluative, persuasive, interpersonal, and ideological functions in media discourse? (3) To what extent do the languages share phraseological patterns, and where do culturally or linguistically specific differences create challenges for cross-linguistic interpretation and translation? The main objective is to establish a comparative analytical framework that treats phraseological meaning as the interaction of conventional semantics, contextual interpretation, and discourse function rather than as a simple correspondence between dictionary equivalents.

2. Materials and Methods

The study adopts a comparative corpus-linguistic approach supported by qualitative semantic analysis and discourse-pragmatic interpretation. For the purposes of this research, a phraseological unit is understood as a conventionalized multiword expression whose meaning, structure, or communicative function exhibits a degree of stability and may involve semantic specialization, figurativeness, or restricted lexical variation. The analysis distinguishes relatively fixed idioms from conventional phraseological combinations, recurrent evaluative expressions, and phraseologically transformed constructions in headlines. This distinction is necessary because media discourse frequently incorporates both established idioms and creative modifications that reproduce the structure of familiar expressions while changing their lexical components or contextual implications. Following a data-led approach to formulaic language, identification should therefore combine linguistic criteria with evidence from authentic usage rather than treating every emotionally meaningful combination of words as an idiom (Buerki, 2020, pp. 70–100). The principal analytical procedures are semantic classification, componential analysis, identification of metaphorical models, contextual interpretation, contrastive comparison, and pragmatic analysis. The initial classification covers positive attachment and affection, emotional devotion, idealization, rejection, resentment, antagonism, interpersonal

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rivalry, and mixed or ambivalent emotional evaluation. Each candidate expression is examined in terms of its conventional meaning, emotional polarity, intensity, target, degree of idiomaticity, contextual function, and potential cross-linguistic equivalent. Particular attention is paid to the distinction between an expression's conventional semantic orientation and its actual evaluative meaning in a specific media context, since irony, quotation, negation, and headline-level modification can alter the interpretation of a phraseological unit.

For a reproducible full-scale empirical investigation, the proposed corpus should contain parallel collections of contemporary English-, Russian-, and Uzbek-language online media texts drawn from a common period, preferably 2020–2025. Potential sources include *The Guardian* and *BBC News* for English, *РБК* and *Коммерсантъ* for Russian, and *Gazeta.uz* and *Kun.uz* for Uzbek; the final selection should depend on accessibility, genre comparability, and the availability of complete textual records. A balanced design could include 150 texts per language, divided equally among general news, opinion or commentary, and sports or entertainment reporting, with the final word counts recorded and balanced as closely as feasible. These figures represent a proposed sampling design, not a claim that such a corpus has already been collected. Candidate expressions should initially be compiled from phraseological dictionaries and relevant comparative studies, then searched in the media texts using spelling variants, inflectional forms, and language-specific constructions. Concordance lines should be examined manually to exclude literal uses, accidental word sequences, duplicates, and examples whose meaning cannot be established from context. Each confirmed occurrence should be annotated for language, publication, date, genre, phraseological form, lemmatized form where appropriate, target of emotion, polarity, intensity, metaphorical source domain, communicative function, and degree of phraseological transformation. Quantitative comparison should use normalized frequency per million words, the proportion of documents containing each expression, and collocational evidence; statistical significance should be assessed only when the dataset and frequency distributions justify it. This methodological orientation is consistent with corpus-based studies that investigate phraseology through contextualized textual evidence and comparative distribution rather than isolated examples alone (Lisboa, 2021, pp. 596–621; Goźdź-Roszkowski, 2021, pp. 1515–1540). For the present draft, however, the analytical material consists of an illustrative contrastive inventory, and no corpus-wide frequency totals, inferential statistics, or claims of quantitative dominance are reported.

3. Results

The qualitative comparison of the selected phraseological candidates indicates several analytically important patterns in the representation of love and hatred across the three languages. First, emotional experience is frequently conceptualized through embodied and psychological domains, particularly the heart, soul, eyes, bodily orientation, temperature, and physical contact. English expressions such as *wear one's heart on one's sleeve* and *head over heels in love* represent love through bodily imagery and unconventional spatial orientation, emphasizing either the public display of emotion or an overwhelming affective experience. Russian expressions such as *души не чаять в ком-либо* foreground profound attachment and emotional devotion, while *любить всем сердцем* explicitly associates affection with the heart. Uzbek expressions such as *ko‘ngil qo‘ymoq* and *jon-dilidan sevmoq* represent emotional attachment through the concepts of *ko‘ngil* and *jon-dil*, which evoke inner feeling, personal involvement, and wholehearted devotion. These expressions should not be treated as exact semantic equivalents merely because they belong to the same emotional category: the images, connotations, grammatical patterns, and culturally established conditions of use differ. The distinction is especially relevant in translation, where literal substitution may preserve the general emotional meaning but fail to reproduce conventionality, register, or pragmatic force. This observation corresponds with comparative research emphasizing that emotional phraseology reflects both shared

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human experiences and language-specific cultural associations (Ashurov & Mirzakulova, 2021, pp. 78–83; Fayziyev, 2024, pp. 23–26).

Second, the phraseological candidates expressing hatred and hostility reveal that negative emotional meaning is not always realized through direct equivalents of the verb *hate*. It may instead be communicated through expressions of bodily rejection, concealed ill will, social distancing, or confrontation. English examples include *give someone the cold shoulder*, *have it in for someone*, and *at each other's throats*; Russian examples include *точить зуб на кого-либо*, *держать камень за пазухой*, and *не переваривать кого-либо*; and Uzbek examples include *ko'rarga ko'zi yo'q* and *tish qayramoq*. These expressions represent related but distinguishable semantic patterns: unwillingness to associate with someone, a persistent intention to cause harm, concealed resentment, an inability to tolerate another person, and an openly antagonistic relationship. The distinction matters because hatred, dislike, resentment, jealousy, rivalry, and social rejection are related but not interchangeable categories. An expression may communicate hostility without explicitly naming hatred, while another may describe a temporary disagreement rather than a durable negative emotional attitude. For corpus annotation, therefore, the relevant unit should be assigned both a broad polarity label and a more specific semantic category, with contextual evidence used to determine which interpretation is justified.

The following table summarizes the principal contrastive patterns and provides illustrative phraseological candidates for further concordance-based verification. The English, Russian, and Uzbek examples are presented as semantic comparison points, not as evidence of measured frequencies in a completed media corpus.

Semantic category	**English examples**	**Russian examples**	**Uzbek examples**	**Principal interpretative feature**
Emotional attachment and devotion	*wear one's heart on one's sleeve*; *head over heels in love*	*любить всем сердцем*; *души не чаять в ком-либо*	*ko'ngil qo'ymoq*; *jon-dilidan sevmoq*	Openness, intensity, inner attachment, and wholehearted affection
Idealization and emotional involvement	*a match made in heaven*; *love at first sight*	*любовь с первого взгляда*	*ko'ngil qo'ymoq* in a context of growing attachment	Idealized compatibility, immediate attraction, or emotional commitment
Cooling affection and rejection	*give someone the cold shoulder*	*не переваривать кого-либо*	*ko'ngli sovimoq*; *ko'rarga ko'zi yo'q*	Emotional distancing, loss of affection, or inability to tolerate someone
Resentment and concealed hostility	*have it in for someone*	*точить зуб на кого-либо*; *держать камень за пазухой*	*tish qayramoq*	Persistent ill will, concealed resentment, or a desire for retaliation
Open conflict and antagonism	*at each other's throats*	*быть на ножах*	*tish qayramoq* in an appropriate conflict context	Escalated disagreement, rivalry, and interpersonal opposition

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Ambivalence or irony	*no love lost between them*	Context-dependent constructions describing mutual неприязнь	Context-dependent expressions of dislike or estrangement	A nominal or apparent association with love may communicate hostility

The table also shows why formal equivalence cannot serve as the sole criterion for comparing phraseological units. Some expressions have a relatively close semantic counterpart in another language, whereas others require a functional paraphrase that preserves the emotional intensity and communicative intention rather than the literal image. Moreover, the same expression may receive different interpretations depending on whether it appears in a celebrity profile, a sports report, a political commentary, or a personal interview. In a media headline, a phraseological unit can intensify a conflict, dramatize an interpersonal relationship, attract attention, or establish a simplified opposition between social actors; within the body of an article, the same expression may be clarified, qualified, or used ironically. Recent studies of English and Uzbek media phraseology highlight the role of phraseological expressions in creating stylistic effects and communicating pragmatic meanings, while research on Russian, English, and Uzbek media texts identifies phraseological innovation as a relevant feature of contemporary media language (Nuriddinova & Mannonova, 2025, pp. 180–186; Niyazmetova, 2025, pp. 545–548). Accordingly, contextual distribution and discourse function are indispensable analytical dimensions, although their relative frequency across the three languages can only be established through a completed and systematically annotated corpus.

4. Discussion

The comparative patterns suggest that love and hatred are best approached as interconnected semantic fields rather than as isolated lexical categories. Phraseological units can represent a continuum from attraction and devotion through emotional dependence, disappointment, estrangement, resentment, and active hostility. This continuum is especially important for media interpretation because journalists frequently compress complex social relationships into short, emotionally charged expressions. A phrase associated with love can acquire negative connotations through irony, contrast, or collocational context, while an expression that literally denotes physical distance or bodily discomfort can conventionally communicate rejection or hostility. The English expression *no love lost between them* provides a particularly clear example of the divergence between lexical appearance and pragmatic meaning: although it contains the word *love*, its conventional interpretation concerns mutual dislike. In Russian and Uzbek, phrases associated with concealed resentment, cooling affection, or inability to tolerate another individual demonstrate a comparable analytical need to distinguish literal components from conventional phraseological meaning. Such examples support the argument that a corpus-based analysis should record the complete phraseological construction, its contextual environment, and the communicative relationship between the speaker, the evaluated target, and the intended audience. A methodology that counts only overt emotion words would overlook important expressions of implied hostility and would consequently underestimate the role of phraseology in shaping media evaluation.

A second important issue concerns the interaction between phraseological stability and media creativity. While conventional expressions provide familiar interpretative patterns, journalistic discourse may alter their components, combine them with proper names, adapt them to current events, or use them in a headline with an unexpected literal meaning. Such transformations can increase salience and produce irony, humorous criticism, or ideological polarization, but they also complicate corpus retrieval because a search strategy based solely on canonical dictionary forms may fail to identify modified examples. A complete investigation should therefore distinguish canonical tokens from creative variants, assess whether a transformation preserves the original emotional meaning, and

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record whether the altered expression is used positively, negatively, or ambivalently. The same caution applies to genre: the frequency of emotionally charged idioms in sports commentary may reflect the conventional language of rivalry and competition, whereas their use in political reporting may contribute to the construction of adversarial relationships or collective identities. Corpus-linguistic research emphasizes the importance of contextualized and distribution-sensitive analysis, and comparative work on formulaic expressions demonstrates the usefulness of systematically examining variation in authentic discourse (Buerki, 2020, pp. 70–100; Lisboa, 2021, pp. 596–621). Consequently, comparisons among English, Russian, and Uzbek should account for both the linguistic properties of phraseological units and the communicative conditions under which they become salient.

The findings also have implications for translation, media literacy, and multilingual language technology. Translators need to recognize when a phraseological unit communicates affection, irony, contempt, hostility, or emotional distancing, since literal translation may preserve individual words while changing the target text's conventional meaning or stylistic effect. A functionally equivalent translation may therefore be preferable when the target language lacks an expression with the same imagery and pragmatic force. Similarly, automated sentiment-analysis systems may misclassify an expression if they rely exclusively on individual words: *no love lost between them*, for example, cannot be interpreted accurately by assigning positive polarity to the lexical item *love* in isolation. Corpus annotation that incorporates idiomatic meaning, emotional intensity, target, contextual polarity, and genre can improve both theoretical analysis and the development of multilingual language-processing resources. Nevertheless, the present study has a clear limitation: without a verified and balanced corpus, it cannot establish which units are most frequent, which language uses more expressions of love or hatred, or whether observed differences are statistically significant. The qualitative comparison should therefore be understood as a foundation for subsequent quantitative research, rather than as conclusive evidence of national or linguistic preferences. Future work should test the proposed categories against authentic media concordances, calculate normalized frequencies and dispersion, evaluate annotation agreement, and examine whether differences remain after controlling for publication type, topic, date, and source.

5. Conclusion

The comparative investigation demonstrates the analytical value of studying phraseological units expressing love and hatred as context-sensitive components of English, Russian, and Uzbek media discourse. The illustrative expressions reveal several shared patterns, including the use of bodily and psychological imagery, the representation of emotional attachment through the heart or inner self, and the expression of hostility through distancing, concealed resentment, and interpersonal confrontation. At the same time, the three languages do not necessarily organize these meanings through identical lexical images or conventional phraseological structures, which makes functional equivalence and contextual interpretation essential for contrastive analysis. Media discourse gives these expressions additional pragmatic importance because phraseological units can intensify evaluation, frame social relationships, attract audience attention, and establish positive or negative representations of public figures and events. The central methodological implication is that reliable comparison requires more than a list of dictionary equivalents: it requires a balanced multilingual corpus, contextual verification, semantic and pragmatic annotation, normalized frequency measures, and systematic attention to phraseological variation. The present qualitative pilot provides a framework for that work but does not claim quantitative results from an assembled corpus. Its contribution lies in establishing a transparent analytical model for examining how love and hatred are phraseologically constructed in three linguistically and culturally distinct media environments.

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