

## ADJECTIVAL PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS EXPRESSING EMOTIONS IN ENGLISH

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**Annotation.** *This article explores adjectival phraseological units expressing emotions in modern English, focusing on their semantic, structural, and functional properties. Phraseological units are fixed combinations of words characterized by stability and idiomatic meaning, and they play a crucial role in conveying emotional states more vividly than single lexical items. The study aims to analyze how such units function as expressive tools in communication and how they reflect cultural and cognitive aspects of emotional perception.*

*The research examines different types of emotional phraseological units, including those expressing positive, negative, and complex emotions. Special attention is given to their metaphorical nature, as many of these expressions are based on conceptual metaphors linking emotions with physical experiences, colors, or spatial orientation. The article also investigates their structural patterns, such as prepositional, comparative, and participial constructions, highlighting their syntactic behavior in sentences.*

**Keywords:** *phraseological units; adjectives; emotions; semantics; idioms; expressive language; linguistics; emotional expression; English phraseology*

**Introduction.** Language serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a powerful medium for expressing human emotions. In linguistic studies, particular attention has been paid to phraseological units due to their figurative nature and expressive potential. Among these, adjectival phraseological units occupy a significant position because they directly characterize emotional states, attitudes, and psychological conditions.

In modern English, emotional expression is often intensified through fixed combinations of words that carry meanings beyond their literal interpretation. These phraseological constructions are deeply rooted in cultural and cognitive frameworks, reflecting how speakers conceptualize emotions. Unlike simple adjectives such as “happy” or “sad,” phraseological units like “over the moon” or “down in the dumps” provide a richer, more vivid emotional description.

The relevance of this research lies in the increasing interest in expressive language and its role in communication, especially in the context of intercultural interaction and foreign language teaching. Understanding how emotions are encoded in phraseological units helps learners achieve more natural and authentic speech.

**Main body.** Adjectival phraseological units expressing emotions constitute an essential component of English phraseology, as they allow speakers to convey psychological states in a more expressive and culturally meaningful way. From a theoretical standpoint, phraseological units are defined as stable word combinations

with partially or fully transferred meanings, and this definition is strongly supported by Viktor Vinogradov, who emphasized the semantic unity and structural stability of such constructions. In the context of emotional expression, adjectival phraseological units function as descriptive tools that characterize a person's inner state through figurative language. Unlike simple adjectives, these units carry connotative meanings that reflect not only the speaker's feelings but also culturally established ways of interpreting emotions. For instance, expressions like "on cloud nine" or "down in the dumps" cannot be understood literally; instead, they represent conventionalized emotional states that have become fixed in the language system. Therefore, their study is important for understanding both linguistic structure and human emotional cognition [6].

The semantic complexity of adjectival phraseological units is further elaborated in the works of Alexander Kunin, who classified phraseological units based on their degree of idiomaticity and semantic cohesion. According to Kunin, emotional phraseological units often belong to highly idiomatic categories where the meaning cannot be deduced from individual components. For example, the phrase "green with envy" does not literally relate to color but metaphorically represents jealousy, demonstrating how semantic transfer operates in phraseology. These units frequently express different emotional polarities, including positive states such as happiness and excitement, as well as negative states like anger, sadness, or fear. Their semantic richness lies in their ability to intensify emotional meaning, making communication more vivid and impactful. In this sense, adjectival phraseological units function not only as linguistic elements but also as cognitive representations of emotional experience [3].

From a broader linguistic perspective, Anthony Paul Cowie highlights that phraseological units should be analyzed within their functional and contextual frameworks. Emotional phraseological expressions are particularly sensitive to context, as their interpretation depends on both linguistic and situational factors. For instance, the phrase "over the moon" may express genuine happiness in one context, while in another it may be used ironically. This contextual variability demonstrates that phraseological units are dynamic rather than static elements of language. Additionally, Cowie emphasizes that phraseology plays a crucial role in achieving fluency and naturalness in language use. Learners who master such expressions are more likely to produce authentic and idiomatic speech, which is especially important in intercultural communication. Thus, adjectival phraseological units serve as indicators of advanced language competence [1].

The notion of idiomaticity and its relation to emotional expression is further explored by Chitra Fernando, who argues that idioms are deeply embedded in cultural and social practices. Emotional phraseological units, in particular, reflect shared cultural knowledge and collective experience. For example, expressions such as "as cool as a cucumber" or "hot under the collar" are based on culturally specific metaphors that associate temperature with emotional states. These idioms reveal how language users conceptualize emotions through familiar physical experiences. Fernando also notes that such units often carry stylistic and pragmatic functions, allowing speakers to convey attitudes, emphasize feelings, or create humorous and ironic effects. Consequently, adjectival phraseological units are not merely descriptive but also perform important communicative roles [2].

A cognitive approach to phraseology is strongly represented in the work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who developed the theory of conceptual metaphor.

According to their theory, human thought is structured by metaphorical mappings that connect abstract concepts, such as emotions, with concrete experiences. This idea is clearly reflected in adjectival phraseological units, where emotions are often described in terms of spatial orientation (“feeling down”), physical pressure (“under stress”), or movement (“carried away”). These metaphors are not random but systematically organized within the cognitive framework of language users. As a result, phraseological units provide valuable insights into how emotions are conceptualized and communicated. Their metaphorical basis explains why such expressions are easily understood by native speakers despite their non-literal meanings [4].

The practical importance of adjectival phraseological units is emphasized in applied linguistic studies, particularly in language teaching, as noted by Michael McCarthy and Felicity O’Dell. These scholars highlight that idiomatic expressions are a key component of communicative competence, as they enable learners to express emotions naturally and effectively. In real-life communication, speakers rarely rely on isolated adjectives; instead, they use phraseological units to add nuance and expressiveness to their speech. For example, saying “I am very angry” is less impactful than using the phrase “I am boiling with anger.” Therefore, incorporating such units into language teaching can significantly improve learners’ fluency and pragmatic skills [5].

**Conclusion.** Adjectival phraseological units expressing emotions play a crucial role in the English language by providing expressive, culturally rich, and semantically complex means of communication. Unlike simple adjectives, these units convey emotional states through metaphorical and idiomatic expressions, making speech more vivid and impactful.

The analysis shows that such phraseological units are characterized by semantic unity, structural stability, and high expressive potential. They can be classified according to emotional polarity and intensity, and their meanings are often rooted in cultural and cognitive models.

From a practical perspective, mastering these units is essential for language learners, as it enhances communicative competence and allows for more natural interaction. In linguistic research, the study of emotional phraseology contributes to a deeper understanding of how language reflects human cognition and cultural values.

Therefore, adjectival phraseological units should be considered an important component of both theoretical linguistics and applied language studies, particularly in the fields of phraseology, semantics, and language teaching methodology.

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