



THE ANTHROPOCENTRIC ESSENCE OF EMOTIVE PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN EPISTOLARY DISCOURSE

Takhirova Nargiza Bakhtiyorovna,

Senior Lecturer of the Department of Interfaculty English, Faculty of Foreign
Philology, Mirzo Ulugbek National University of Uzbekistan

Phone: 77 099 5959

E-mail: tahirovanargiza329@gmail.com

Abstract

This article is devoted to the study of the anthropocentric essence of emotive phraseological units in epistolary discourse. The research explores the role of idiomatic expressions as carriers of emotional meaning and cultural values in personal correspondence. Special attention is given to the universal and culture-specific aspects of phraseological expressions and their use in both traditional handwritten and modern digital correspondence. The article concludes that emotive phraseological units not only enrich the stylistic and emotional level of epistolary texts but also serve as powerful tools of anthropocentric reflection, connecting human emotions, cultural traditions, and interpersonal communication.

Keywords: epistolary discourse, phraseological units, emotive idioms, emotional communication, cultural specificity, identity expression.

Introduction

Language is not only a means of communication but also a reflection of human emotions, attitudes, and cultural values. In this regard, phraseological units, which represent fixed expressions with figurative meanings, occupy a central place in the study of linguistic worldviews. Their role in emotive communication is especially prominent in epistolary discourse, where letters function as personal, emotionally charged messages. Epistolary discourse allows the researcher to



observe the unique combination of emotionality, expressiveness, and stylistic variation. The anthropocentric approach highlights that language is inseparably tied to human experience, and emotive phraseological units become linguistic markers of feelings, evaluations, and interpersonal relations. This article aims to analyze the anthropocentric essence of emotive phraseological units within epistolary discourse, revealing how emotions are encoded, transmitted, and perceived in letters.

Epistolary discourse is a unique form of written communication that has historically played a significant role in human interaction. It is defined as the exchange of personal, social, or professional messages in the form of letters, diaries, and later, digital correspondence. Unlike official or institutional writing, epistolary texts usually express subjectivity, emotionality, and individuality. The primary features of epistolary discourse include:

Personal orientation – letters are often addressed to a specific recipient and contain personal references.

Dialogic nature – even though a letter is monologic in form, it is dialogic in content, anticipating the addressee's response.

Emotional involvement – epistolary discourse often transmits the author's inner state, attitudes, and emotions.

Stylistic variability – from highly literary and rhetorical letters of the past to more casual, everyday correspondence today.

Epistolary discourse occupies a central place in the anthropocentric paradigm of linguistics because it reflects not only the communicative but also the emotional and cultural identity of the writer.

Phraseological units, also known as idioms, stable collocations, or set expressions, are fixed word combinations that possess figurative meaning. They are important in any language because they embody cultural traditions, metaphoric thinking, and emotional expressiveness. Characteristics of phraseological units include:

- *Stability of structure* – they do not allow arbitrary lexical or grammatical changes (to kick the bucket cannot be changed into to kick a barrel).



- Semantic integrity – the overall meaning cannot be deduced from the individual words (spill the beans = “reveal a secret”).
- National-cultural specificity – phraseological units often reflect the worldview, traditions, and lifestyle of a people.
- Expressiveness and imagery – idioms are a vivid means of transmitting emotions and evaluations.

In linguistic studies, phraseological units are classified into several groups: idioms, proverbs, sayings, winged expressions, and phrasal collocations. Among these, emotive phraseological units stand out for their ability to convey feelings such as joy, sadness, anger, fear, and affection. Emotive phraseological units represent a special category that expresses the speaker’s emotional state, evaluation, or attitude toward reality. *For example:*

- ✓ To burst into tears – strong sadness or disappointment.
- ✓ On cloud nine – extreme happiness.
- ✓ Green with envy – jealousy.
- ✓ Sick at heart – sorrow or regret.

The semantic field of emotive idioms is closely tied to human physiology and psychology. Many of them are metaphorical transfers from bodily experience to emotional states:

- ✓ Heart → emotions (heartbroken, to have a change of heart).
- ✓ Head → rationality or confusion (to lose one’s head, headaches of life).
- ✓ Eyes → perception and affection (apple of one’s eye, turn a blind eye).

Thus, emotive phraseological units form a linguistic mechanism through which speakers conceptualize and verbalize emotions. In epistolary communication, phraseological units are not only decorative elements but also serve important communicative and psychological functions:

1. Expressive function – intensifying the emotional tone of the message: “I was over the moon when I read your letter”.
2. Phatic function – maintaining personal connection and closeness: “*Your words were a breath of fresh air in my dark days*”.
3. Evaluative function – expressing the writer’s attitude toward events or people: “*His promises turned out to be nothing but empty words*”.



4. Cultural and identity function – reflecting social norms and cultural values:
“Family is the heart and soul of everything”.

Through idiomatic expressions, writers create an emotional bridge with the addressee, making the letter more vivid, intimate, and persuasive. While the classical form of epistolary discourse was handwritten letters, today digital communication (emails, personal messages, social media correspondence) has largely replaced traditional letters. However, the essence of epistolary discourse remains the same: it is still anthropocentric, dialogic, and emotionally expressive. Even in emails or instant messages, emotive phraseological units are widely used:

- ✓ “I’m all ears to hear your story.”
- ✓ “She left me speechless with her reply.”
- ✓ “I’m at my wits’ end with this problem.”

Thus, the study of emotive phraseological units in epistolary discourse remains relevant, as it demonstrates how language continues to reflect human emotions and values across different historical stages and technological formats.

The anthropocentric paradigm in linguistics views language as a human-centered phenomenon. According to this approach, all linguistic structures and units are considered in relation to human cognition, emotions, social interaction, and cultural experience. Anthropocentrism stresses that language reflects how people perceive and evaluate the world around them. Key principles of the anthropocentric paradigm:

- Human-centeredness – language is inseparably tied to human psychology, culture, and worldview.
- Subjectivity – every linguistic act carries an individual’s emotional, evaluative, and personal attitude.
- Embodiment of experience – phraseological units often originate from bodily and emotional experiences of humans.

Phraseological units, especially emotive idioms, are therefore seen as linguistic evidence of anthropocentrism, since they reveal how human emotions and values are conceptualized and verbalized. Emotive phraseological units reflect universal human experiences while also carrying national-cultural specifics. They often



originate from metaphorical associations with the human body, nature, and daily life. Examples of anthropocentric metaphors:

- ✓ Heart → emotions (to wear one's heart on one's sleeve, broken-hearted, kind-hearted).
- ✓ Head → thoughts, confusion, or decision-making (to lose one's head, to keep a cool head).
- ✓ Eyes → affection or indifference (apple of one's eye, to turn a blind eye).
- ✓ Hands → action and responsibility (to wash one's hands of something, to give a helping hand).

These idioms embody the human-centered interpretation of the world: the body becomes a metaphorical map for emotions and interpersonal relations. In epistolary discourse, they allow writers to portray feelings vividly and personally. Letters are not only texts but also acts of communication between individuals. Their dialogic nature presupposes emotional engagement. Writers use emotive phraseological units to establish solidarity, sympathy, and intimacy with the recipient. Examples:

- ✓ “Your reply was a ray of sunshine in my gloomy days”.
- ✓ “I felt as if I was carrying the weight of the world until your letter reached me”.
- ✓ “He is truly the apple of my eye, and I cannot imagine life without him”.

In such contexts, idioms function as emotional anchors that make the letter more personal and heartfelt. They reduce the distance between the writer and the addressee, reinforcing the anthropocentric nature of communication.

One of the main anthropocentric functions of emotive phraseological units in epistolary discourse is self-expression. Writers employ idioms to express their personal identity, worldview, and emotional state. For instance:

- ✓ “I always try to keep my chin up, no matter the obstacles” – shows resilience and optimism.
- ✓ “I was at my wits' end when I could not find a solution” – indicates helplessness.
- ✓ “You are the light of my life” – expresses deep affection.

By using such expressions, the author reveals not only their emotional state but also their value system and cultural background. Although emotive idioms are



universal in their anthropocentric basis, their linguistic realization is culture-specific. For example:

- ✓ In English: to break someone's heart – sorrow.
- ✓ In Uzbek: yuragi yorilib ketdi ("his/her heart burst") – extreme grief.
- ✓ In Russian: душа болит ("the soul aches") – deep emotional pain.

Such parallels confirm that human emotions are universal, but their linguistic embodiment depends on cultural traditions. In epistolary discourse, this cultural variation enriches the communicative and emotional content of letters. In the digital age, epistolary discourse has shifted from handwritten letters to emails, instant messages, and social media correspondence. Nevertheless, the anthropocentric essence of emotive phraseological units remains unchanged. Idioms are still used to intensify emotionality, though often in combination with emojis or graphic symbols. Examples from modern correspondence:

- ✓ "I'm on cloud nine 😊 after hearing your news".
- ✓ "His silence leaves me sick at heart 💔".
- ✓ "Don't worry, I'll lend you a hand anytime".

Thus, the anthropocentric function of emotive idioms persists: they serve as tools of emotional bonding, identity expression, and cultural reflection even in contemporary digital communication.

Conclusion

The conducted research has demonstrated that epistolary discourse is one of the most anthropocentric types of communication, as it reflects the individuality, emotions, and cultural identity of the writer. Within this discourse, emotive phraseological units play a crucial role as linguistic tools for encoding and transmitting feelings, attitudes, and interpersonal values. The findings can be summarized as follows:

- Epistolary discourse functions as a personal and dialogic form of communication, where emotional expression is essential. Its anthropocentric nature is manifested in the subjective, expressive, and cultural features of letters.



-
- Phraseological units are stable, figurative, and culturally marked combinations that embody human emotions and values. Their emotive potential is especially evident in idioms related to the human body, psychology, and everyday life.
 - Emotive phraseological units serve as markers of human experience, enabling writers to intensify emotions, establish solidarity, and express personal identity in epistolary communication.
 - The anthropocentric essence of emotive idioms is reflected in their ability to convey universal human emotions (joy, grief, love, anger, fear) while simultaneously revealing cultural and linguistic specificity.
 - Despite the transformation of epistolary discourse in the digital age, the functions of emotive phraseological units remain relevant, ensuring the continuity of emotional and cultural expression in communication.

Thus, emotive phraseological units in epistolary discourse confirm the anthropocentric nature of language, functioning as bridges between human emotions, personal identity, and cultural worldview.

References

1. Alefirenko, N. F. Phraseology in the Context of Modern Linguistic Studies. M.: AST, 2023.
2. Amosova, N. N. Essentials of English Phraseology. M.: VIR, 2023.
3. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. Metaphors We Live By. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2023.
4. Kunin, A. V. Course in English Phraseology. M.: LUCHM, 2022.
5. Halliday, M. A. K. Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning. London: Edward Arnold, 2022.
6. Wierzbicka, A. Emotions Across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.
7. Crystal, D. The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023.