

Similarities and Differences in Expressing the Concept of Happiness and Unhappiness among Native and Non-Native English Speakers

RAKHMONOVA ZEBUNISSO ANVARJON QIZI
Namangan State University, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

The study of language use and proficiency among native and non-native English speakers has been a topic of interest for many researchers. In particular, the use of phraseological units and proverbs to denote emotions such as happiness and unhappiness has been the focus of this study. The article examines the frequency of these linguistic units among both native and non-native English speakers, using lexicographic sources, internet sources, and English language corpora. Additionally, the study includes a survey of non-native English speakers in Uzbekistan to compare their usage with that of native speakers. The findings suggest that there are linguistic units that are easily understood by both groups, indicating the importance of studying the universal aspects of language use. Overall, this study contributes to our understanding of language proficiency and usage among different groups of English speakers.

Keywords: Phraseological units, lexicographic sources, linguistic units, communication styles, linguistic concept, linguistic mobile applications.

INTRODUCTION

The study of happiness in linguistics is important because it sheds light on the ways in which language is used to express emotions and attitudes. Understanding how people use language

to express happiness can help us better understand the psychological and social factors that contribute to well-being. Additionally, studying the use of language among different groups of English speakers can help us identify patterns and differences in communication styles, which may have implications for cross-cultural communication and understanding.

Happiness as a linguistic and cultural concept has been studied by Western linguists, including Chris [1], Singh [2], and Alberto [3], and issues such as the fact that the dimensions of happiness differ between cultures and that this process requires great care have been covered in detail. Among the Uzbek linguists, T. Mardiyev [4], N. Eshonkulova[5], M. Kasimova[6] thoroughly studied and analyzed the concept of happiness.

"Happiness is becoming the center of multifaceted research, with new perspectives, goals, and methodologies, from sociology to psychology, from philosophy to economics," notes Antonio Moreno-Ortiz [7], and with his colleagues Chantal Pérez-Hernández and María García-Gámez, they examined the impact and importance of emotional words and phrases within the definitions and identified the sources of happiness mentioned in these definitions. The sentiment analysis results show that positive lexical combinations have a limited role in describing happy moments, and *ACHIEVEMENT*, *AFFECTION*, *BONDING*, *ENJOY THE MOMENT*, *LEISURE*, *NATURE*, and *EXERCISE* have been found as thematic sources of happiness.

ACHIEVEMENT and *AFFECTION* are found as the biggest sources of happiness in the HappyDB corpus, followed by *BONDING* and *ETM*. *EXERCISE*, *LEISURE*, and *NATURE* ranked the lowest among factors influencing happiness.

The traditional approach of evaluating happiness through social surveys has several flaws, according to Zajchowski [8]. The reason is that when a person is asked about his happiness or unhappiness, he answers under the influence of recent events, and other events in his life remain untouched in the general plan.

Taking this problematic feature of the social questionnaire into account, respondents who participated in our survey were asked to explain the scenario that generated happiness and

sadness over the previous 24 hours, as well as the happiest and saddest incident that occurred in their lives.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We gathered the verbalizers of the conceptual binary opposition of happiness and sadness in English from three different sorts of sources as the object of our investigation. The first class of sources is known as lexicographic sources, and it includes Macmillan, Cambridge, Oxford Learner's Dictionary, Webster's online dictionaries, Oxford slang dictionary, and Oxford proverb dictionary. The second type included survey data from the HappyDB corpus containing 100,000 definitions of happy moments collected from American workers and 3,200 questions collected from B2 and C1 English speakers in our country. The third type of source is the English language corpora, which includes the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Modern American English (COCA).

Modern information technologies have created limitless chances for utilizing the language's functional qualities. Computer translation, automatic editing and analysis, speech synthesizers that convert spoken speech into written text, speech recognition programs that convert spoken speech into written text, electronic dictionaries, linguistic mobile applications, thesaurus (language treasure), and language ontology are examples of our point of view. It has been demonstrated, in particular, that developing a culture of making and using current electronic dictionaries is useful in acquiring language abilities. Language corpora, which are being developed at a rapid pace across the world, play an unequalled role in displaying and grasping the language's potential.

Language corpora are collections of written or spoken information that are utilized in linguistic study. They are important in linguistics for several reasons.

The first reason is to provide empirical evidence: Corpora includes a plethora of real-world data that may be used to study language. This data may be analyzed to identify patterns and trends in language use, which can then be used to build language

theories. It also improves language education. Because corpora may be used to provide compelling teaching materials and tools. Another important reason is to assist researchers. Corpora may be used to aid in research in a variety of fields, including syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis. They may also be used to study language change through time and variation among geographies and social groups. Furthermore, the addition of data reflecting actual English produced from linguistic corpora can improve English learning and teaching to a larger extent [9].

The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) 1990–2017 includes 560 different genres, and one billion words are composed of equal amounts of genre-balanced oral texts, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and scholarly texts [10]. There are 485,202 texts in the corpus, and these texts are formed from various sources. These resources are divided into 5 groups as follows:

- Verbal: (85 million words) transcripts of about 150 different TV and radio program interviews.
- Fiction: (81 million words) Short stories and plays, book chapters from 1990 to present, and film scripts.
- Popular Magazines: (86 million words) About 100 different magazines in a variety of fields, including news, health, home and gardening, women's, finance, religion and sports.
- Newspapers: (81 million words) Ten newspapers from across the US, with text from various newspaper sections such as local news, opinion, sports and finance sections.
- Academic Journals: (81 million words) About 100 different peer-reviewed journals[11].

The British National Corpus BNC contains 100 million words and consists of samples of spoken and written speech from a wide variety of sources. The last edition was the BNC XML edition, released in 2007. The written part of the BNC (90%) includes, for example, extracts from regional and national newspapers, specialist periodicals and all-ages magazines, academic books and popular fiction, and published and

unpublished letters and memoranda, school and university essays, and many others. contains text types. The spoken part (10%) consists of orthographic transcriptions of informal conversations (recorded in a demographically balanced manner by volunteers selected from different ages, regions, and social classes) and spoken language collected in various contexts and formal business or government meetings. including radio broadcasts and phone calls [12].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

We analyzed the frequency of six different types of English phraseological units (*over the moon*, *on cloud nine*, *like a dog with two tails*, *paint the town red*, *full of joys of spring*, *happy camper*) denoting happiness with the help of English corpora and the findings have been compared with the results of a survey conducted in Uzbekistan.

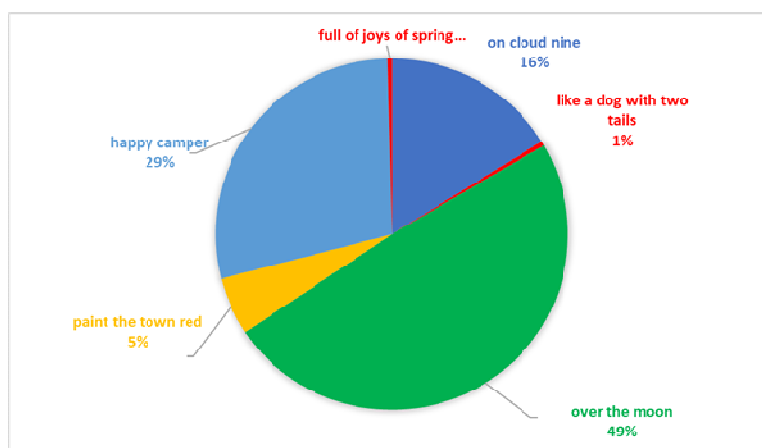


Figure 1. The frequency of phraseological units expressing happiness in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)

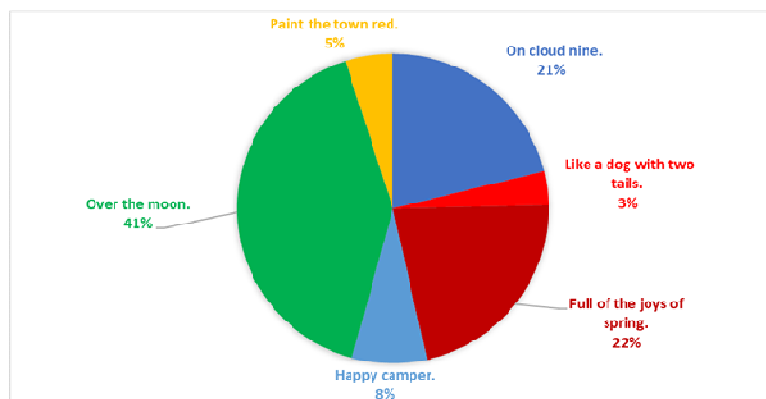


Figure 2. The frequency of phraseological units expressing happiness according to the results of an offline survey conducted among UzbekEnglish language learners, in March 2023.

According to the results of both analyses given above, the phraseological units "over the moon" and "on cloud nine" are actively used by both native and non-native speakers of English. For native English speakers, the phraseological unit "over the moon" was used 349 times in the COCA corpus, with an activity rate of 49 percent. This indicator was 41 percent for English speakers in our country. "On cloud nine" idiom was 21% in our survey and 16% in COCA. It was found that the phraseological units "Paint the town red" and "like a dog with two tails" are actively used in the speech of speakers of both languages in the amount of 5 and 3 percent.

The main differences were in the idioms "happy camper" and "full of joys of spring". The phraseological unit "happy camper" made up 29% of the corpus of the American English language, while it made up only 8% of the speech of English speakers in our country.

According to the Cambridge online dictionary, the phraseological unit "happy camper" is defined as someone who is happy with their situation: (someone who is happy with their situation:

She's just found out about the pay cut and she's not a happy camper

Amazing! It's a wonderful program, it's free and easy! DONE!
Makes me a happy camper, to say the least.

According to the Dictionary of American Slang, the etymology of the phraseological unit "*happy camper*" is believed to have originated among California film and show business people, and it refers to young customers at summer camps. They like camping very much and feel happy there. According to the lexical meaning, the happy camper is translated as "*baxtiyor lagerchi*". However, since this type of metaphor does not exist in the Uzbek language, it became known that the number of people who use this phrase in their English speech is less than that of native speakers.

The phraseological unit "*full of joys of spring*" also means to be very happy in the Cambridge Online Dictionary:

You're full of the joys of spring. - Am I? - I was right about London.

The next day I rise early full of the joys of spring, I have to admit to be pleasantly surprised that I don't feel as though I've been hit by a truck. It's been a very long time since I spent the whole day hiking at speed.

This phraseological unit was used only 2 times in the corpus of the English language, but it was used in 22% of the speech of English language users in Uzbekistan, and it was recognized as one of the 3 most active idioms. In our opinion, this situation is related to the positive interpretation of *spring* and *joy* related to it in Uzbek culture and its recognition as a symbol of happiness and joy. And this shows that it is expressed not only in the Uzbek language, which is an integral part of our culture but also in the foreign language they have learned by the representatives of this culture. But according to the fact, this is not so common in English culture.

The next step of our research is to figure out which proverbs denoting happiness and sadness are more active in the speech of

English language learners in Uzbekistan and in the English language corpora.

Although 14 proverbs were given in the survey in a mixed state, we divided them into 3 different categories during the analysis. The first category includes proverbs found in the English language, listed in the Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, related to English culture and history according to their lexical-semantic meaning, and embodying linguistic and cultural signs:

1. Happy is the bride that the sun shines on
2. Call no man happy till he dies
3. Happy is the corpse that the rain rains on
4. If you would be happy for a weak person to take a wife; if you would be happy for a month kill a pig; but if you would be happy all your life plant a garden
5. If Saint Paul's day be fair and clear, it will be a happy year
6. Bad things come in threes

In the second category, we included English proverbs listed in the Oxford English Proverbs Dictionary, but whose meaning is universal and have equivalents in other languages.

1. Happy is the country which has no history
2. A deaf husband and blind wife are always a happy couple
3. It never rains but pours
4. Misfortunes never come singly
5. Bad news travels fast
6. Money can't buy happiness

In the third category, we included proverbs whose origin does not go back to the English language and which are not listed in the Oxford English Dictionary of Proverbs but have an English version and a universal semantic meaning. They are as follows:

1. **Happiness invites envy:** The origin of this proverb goes back to Japanese culture and embodies the idea that "happiness causes envy" typical of Eastern culture.

2. **Unhappiness can be a bridge to happiness:** The idea of "unhappiness can be a bridge to happiness" in this proverb is universal and there are equivalents of this proverb in many cultures.

Among the English proverbs expressing the conceptual binary opposition of happiness and unhappiness in English, the following 6 proverbs expressing the concept of happiness listed in the Oxford English Proverbs Dictionary were not reported to have ever been used in either the British National Corpus BNC or the Modern American English Corpus COCA:

1. Call no man happy till he dies
2. Happy is the country which has no history
3. A deaf husband and a blind wife are always a happy couple
4. Happy is the corpse that the rain rains on
5. If you would be happy for a weak person to take a wife; if you would be happy for a month kill a pig; but if you would be happy all your life plant a garden
6. If Saint Paul's Day be fair and clear, it will be a happy year

It should be noted that these proverbs belong to the 1st category in chapter 3.2, that is, they are included in the Oxford English proverbs book and are related to the culture and history of the English people. The analysis shows that despite the fact that these proverbs have a special value in linguistic culture, they are not used in this form in modern English today. Most likely, we can say that these proverbs were replaced by other linguistic units.

At the same time, neither the proverb *happiness invites envy* nor *the proverb unhappiness can be a bridge to happiness*, which entered the English language based on a translation from other languages, was ever repeated. According to the analysis of the questionnaire, it was noted that the first of these proverbs is used by 21%, and the second by 37%. However, it turned out that these proverbs were never used in the English language's BNC and COCA corpora.

Among the proverbs used to express unhappiness, it was found that the proverb *"bad things come in threes"* was used 49

times in the modern American English corpus COCA, while the proverb "*Money can't buy happiness*" was used 50 times.

According to our data obtained from all three sources, i.e. British National Corpus BNC, Modern American English Corpus COCA, and English speakers in our country, two proverbs are equally active. In our opinion, the reason for this is that the idea contained in these proverbs has a universal character, and logically, the idea is very close to the truth. In addition, the equivalents of these proverbs exist in other languages.

"*Bad things come in threes*" is a proverb active in English language corpora but inactive among English speakers in our country, and this proverb is related to stereotypes of English culture. According to English culture, it is believed that when a misfortune, i.e., an unfortunate event occurs, two more disappointments will occur. As proof of our point, we can show that this proverb is used 49 times in the Modern American English Corpus COCA. It should be noted that other verbalizers of unhappiness have been used instead of bad things (Examples taken from the COCA English Corpus):

1. ...every job, every relationship. But wait, didn't disasters come in threes? Harry, did Harry count as number three? Maybe it was true.
2. Sometimes trouble does come in threes naturally but it usually means time has taken a hand in the game.
3. I don't say that if bad things come in threes, we're due for one more. The house was number one. Then, last month, Lori miscarried our child.
4. "Heaven help us! With the power down, the coastline will be in darkness... and now the radio is gone!" Jamie's mother shook her head. "Troubles always come in threes. I broke my best pitcher this morning, and my sister has the flu.
5. Until I get some answers I'm getting on with my life, doing my job. Stocking up on aspirin, because... I got ta tell ya pain's a bitch! They say bad things come in threes. I've had about eight so far today so I got ta think I've had my quota. Maybe not.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this article sheds light on the usage of phraseological units and proverbs that denote happiness and

unhappiness among native and non-native English speakers. The study reveals that linguistic units with universal meanings are equally common among both language users. This finding has important implications for language learners and educators, as it suggests that focusing on universal linguistic units can enhance communication and understanding between native and non-native speakers. However, further research is needed to explore the impact of cultural and contextual factors on the usage of these linguistic units.

REFERENCES

1. Kryś K. Introduction to a culturally sensitive measure of well-being: combining life satisfaction and interdependent happiness across 49 different cultures. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 24, Springer: 2023. – P.607-627
2. Singh S. Health, hope, and harmony: a systematic review of the determinants of happiness across cultures and countries (review). *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*, MDPI: 2023. – 68 p.
3. Alberto A., Rafael D. Tella., MacCulloch R. Inequality and happiness: are Europeans and Americans different? *Journal of Public Economics*, The USA: 2004. – 37 p.
4. Mardiev T.K. Conceptual analysis of the expression of human emotions in English and Uzbek languages. *autoref. philosophy. science. doc. diss. (PhD)*. – Samarqand: 2019. – 50 p.
5. Eshonkulova N. A. Happiness is a phenomenon of happiness and its socio-anthropological essence. *autoref. philosophy. science. doc. diss. (PhD)*. – Bukhara: 2021. – 50 p.
6. Kasimova Z. M. Conceptual binary opposition of happiness and unhappiness in Uzbek and English languages. *Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) dissertation in philological sciences*. - Andijan: ASU, 2021. - 203 p.
7. Moreno-Ortiz A, Perez-Hernandez Ch, Garcia-Gamez M. The language of happiness in self-reported descriptions of happy moments: Words, concepts, and entities. – *Humanities and Social Science Communications*. 2022. – 14 p.
8. Zajchowski CAB, Schwab KA, Dustin DL The experiencing self and the remembering self: implications for leisure science. *Leisure Sci* 39(6): 2017.- P. 561–568.

8. Phoocharoensil S. Language Corpora for EFL Teachers: An Exploration of English Grammar through. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* Volume 64, 9 November 2012. – P. 507-514
9. Electron source: "Mark Davies, Professor of (Corpus) Linguistics, Brigham Young University (BYU)". www.mark-davies.org. Retrieved November 9, 2021.
10. Electron source: "Homepage". corpus of Contemporary American English. Retrieved April 24, 2022.
11. Electron source: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml>

RAKHMONOVA ZEBUNISSO ANVARJON QIZI

PHD STUDENT,

NAMANGAN STATE UNIVERSITY,

UZBEKISTAN.

E-MAIL: <ZEBUNISSO.RAKHMONOVA94@GMAIL.COM>