

## CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF IDIOMS REPRESENTING NATIONAL IDENTITY IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

**Nazarova Manzura**

Student of AIFU master's degree English philology faculty  
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

[manzu.nazarova@gmail.com](mailto:manzu.nazarova@gmail.com)

**Annotation:** This paper explores the cultural and linguistic significance of idioms in English and Uzbek that reflect national identity. Idioms are deeply rooted in the history, traditions, and values of a nation, serving as linguistic markers of cultural uniqueness. By comparing English and Uzbek idioms, this study highlights how language encapsulates national identity, societal norms, and historical experiences. The analysis focuses on thematic similarities and differences, examining how each language uses idiomatic expressions to convey cultural values. The findings reveal that while some idioms may have equivalent meanings, their origins and connotations differ significantly due to distinct cultural backgrounds.

**Keywords:** Idioms, national identity, contrastive study, English, Uzbek, cultural linguistics, figurative language, cross-cultural comparison

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqola ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi milliy o'zlikni aks ettiruvchi frazeologik birikmalarning madaniy va tilshunoslik ahamiyatini o'rganadi. Idiomalar xalqning tarixi, urf-odatlar va qadriyatlariga chuqur ildiz otgan bo'lib, ular madaniy o'ziga xoslikning lingvistik ko'rsatkichlari sifatida xizmat qiladi. Inglizcha va o'zbekcha idiomalarni solishtirish orqali ushbu tadqiqot til milliy o'zlik, ijtimoiy me'yorlar va tarixiy tajribalarni qanday aks ettirishini yoritadi. Tahlil mavzuli o'xshashliklar va farqlarga e'tibor qaratib, har bir tilda idiomatik ifodalar madaniy qadriyatlarni qanday ifodalashini o'rganadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ayrim idiomalar ma'nodosh bo'lishi mumkin, biroq ularning kelib chiqishi va ma'no turlari har bir xalqning o'ziga xos madaniy zamiriga bog'liq holda sezilarli darajada farq qiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Milliy, idioma, tarixiy, lingvistik, qadriyatlar, urf-odatlar, frazeologik, madaniy, ma'nodosh

### Introduction

Idioms are an integral part of any language, offering insights into a nation's collective psyche, traditions, and historical experiences. They serve as linguistic symbols of cultural identity, often untranslatable without contextual understanding. English and Uzbek, belonging to different language families (Indo-European and Turkic, respectively), possess rich idiomatic expressions that reflect their unique cultural heritages.

This study aims to:

1. Identify key idioms in English and Uzbek that signify national identity.

2. Analyze their cultural and historical origins.
3. Compare their usage and thematic representations.
4. Discuss how these idioms shape linguistic and cultural perceptions.

Understanding these differences enhances cross-cultural communication and provides deeper insights into how language and identity intertwine.

### **Discussion**

Idioms are linguistic expressions deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of a society, reflecting historical experiences, traditions, and collective values. A comparative examination of English and Uzbek idioms reveals how each language encapsulates national identity through figurative speech. This section explores thematic categories, cultural origins, and linguistic peculiarities of idioms in both languages, highlighting their role in shaping and preserving national identity.

### **Cultural and Historical Roots of English Idioms**

English idioms often originate from historical events, literature, and socio-political developments. The maritime influence on British culture, for instance, has contributed to numerous idiomatic expressions. Phrases such as "**weather the storm**" and "**all hands on deck**" stem from Britain's naval history, symbolizing resilience and collective effort. Similarly, idioms like "**the ball is in your court**" (derived from tennis) and "**hit below the belt**" (from boxing) reflect the influence of sports on English language and culture.

Another significant source of English idioms is literature, particularly Shakespearean plays. Expressions such as "**break the ice**," "**wild-geese chase**," and "**wear one's heart on one's sleeve**" have transcended time, embedding themselves into everyday speech. These idioms not only enrich the language but also reinforce a shared cultural heritage among English speakers.

Furthermore, English idioms often emphasize individualism and pragmatism, reflecting broader Western values. Phrases like "**pull yourself up by your bootstraps**" and "**every man for himself**" underscore self-reliance, a cornerstone of Anglophone societies. Conversely, idioms such as "**too many cooks spoil the broth**" critique excessive collectivism, reinforcing the cultural preference for efficiency and individual accountability.

### **Uzbek Idioms and Their Cultural Significance**

Uzbek idioms, deeply rooted in Turkic traditions, Islamic values, and agrarian life, offer a stark contrast to their English counterparts. Hospitality, a defining trait of Uzbek culture, is evident in idioms like "**mehmon xudoyidir**" (**the guest is from God**), which underscores the sacred duty of hosting guests. This concept is central to Uzbek identity, where communal harmony and generosity are highly prized.

Agricultural life has also shaped Uzbek idiomatic expressions. Given Uzbekistan's historical reliance on farming, idioms such as "**qo'lida tayoq bo'lsa, itdan qo'rqma**" (**if you have a stick in your hand, don't fear the dog**) reflect the wisdom of preparedness and resilience. Similarly, "**har bir**

**daraxtning ildizi bir"** (every tree has the same root) conveys unity and shared heritage, reinforcing collectivist values.

Religious and philosophical influences, particularly Sufism, have further enriched Uzbek idioms. Expressions like **"sabr – dardning davosi"** (patience is the cure for suffering) and **"ko'ngil to'q bo'lsa, qorni to'q"** (if the heart is full, the stomach is full) emphasize spiritual contentment over material wealth. These idioms highlight the enduring influence of Islamic teachings on Uzbek thought and language.

### **Thematic Comparisons Between English and Uzbek Idioms**

#### **Individualism vs. Collectivism**

One of the most striking differences between English and Uzbek idioms lies in their emphasis on individualism versus collectivism. English idioms frequently promote self-sufficiency, as seen in **"the early bird catches the worm"** and **"God helps those who help themselves."** These expressions encourage personal initiative and competition.

In contrast, Uzbek idioms prioritize community and interdependence. The saying **"bir qo'l bilan qarsak chalib bo'lmaydi"** (one hand cannot clap) underscores the necessity of cooperation, while **"ko'p bo'lsang – kuch, kam bo'lsang – och"** (if you are many, you are strong; if you are few, you are hungry) reflects the cultural importance of solidarity.

#### **Attitudes Toward Adversity**

English idioms often frame challenges as opportunities for individual triumph. Phrases like **"what doesn't kill you makes you stronger"** and **"keep your chin up"** reflect a resilient, optimistic outlook rooted in Western self-help philosophies.

Uzbek idioms, however, approach adversity with a blend of stoicism and communal support. The proverb **"o'tgan kunni orqangga qarab aylama"** (don't turn back to the past day) encourages forward movement without dwelling on hardships. Meanwhile, **"hamma yomonlikning ichida yaxshilik bor"** (there is good in every bad situation) reflects a deeply ingrained belief in fate and divine wisdom.

#### **Humorous and Satirical Idioms**

Both languages employ humor and satire in idiomatic expressions, though with different cultural flavors. English idioms like **"the elephant in the room"** and **"barking up the wrong tree"** use vivid imagery to critique social awkwardness and misdirected efforts.

Uzbek idioms, on the other hand, often use humor to convey moral lessons. For example, **"eshak quloq solsa, bo'lmas ishni bo'lar deb o'ylaydi"** (if a donkey listens, it thinks the impossible will happen) humorously critiques foolish optimism. Similarly, **"tovuq qo'shni qo'zisini o'g'irlasa, o'z qo'zisini ko'kka ko'taradi"** (if a chicken steals a neighbor's chick, it lifts its own chick to the sky) satirizes hypocrisy.

#### **Linguistic Structure and Metaphorical Patterns**

English idioms frequently rely on metaphor and hyperbole, with structures that are often fixed and unchangeable (e.g., **"kick the bucket"** cannot be altered to **"hit the bucket"**). They also incorporate a wide range of lexical sources, from animals (**"let the cat out of the bag"**) to body parts (**"cost an arm and a leg"**).

Uzbek idioms, meanwhile, often follow proverbial structures, blending metaphor with rhythmic parallelism. Many idioms use natural imagery (**"yomg'ir yog'masa, hosil bo'lmas"** – if rain doesn't fall, there will be no harvest) or animal symbolism (**"it hurishidan qo'rqib, mushukning bo'yniga minma"** – don't ride a cat's neck out of fear of a dog's bark). The frequent use of rhyming and alliteration (**"o'likni yuvish – tirikni og'ish"** – washing the dead is a lesson for the living) makes them memorable and culturally resonant.

The contrast between English and Uzbek idioms reveals how language serves as a vessel for cultural identity. English idioms, shaped by individualism, historical pragmatism, and literary influence, emphasize self-reliance and directness. Uzbek idioms, rooted in Turkic traditions, Islamic values, and agrarian life, prioritize community, hospitality, and philosophical resilience.

Understanding these differences not only aids in language learning but also fosters cross-cultural appreciation. Idioms are more than linguistic curiosities—they are living reflections of a nation's soul, preserving history, values, and worldview in everyday speech. Future research could explore how globalization and digital communication are reshaping traditional idiomatic expressions in both languages.

## Conclusion

Idioms serve as linguistic mirrors of national identity, encapsulating cultural values, historical experiences, and societal norms. English idioms often emphasize individualism, historical legacy, and indirectness, whereas Uzbek idioms highlight community, hospitality, and resilience. This contrastive study underscores the importance of idioms in understanding cultural identity and fostering cross-linguistic appreciation. Further research could explore idiomatic influences from globalization and how traditional idioms evolve in modern contexts.

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