

LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF IDIOMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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Abstract: *This article is devoted to the analysis of the linguocultural features of idiomatic expressions in the English and Uzbek languages. Idioms are considered as an essential linguistic phenomenon reflecting the close interrelation between language and culture. The study examines the semantic structure, connotative meanings, national and cultural peculiarities, as well as the communicative and pragmatic functions of idioms from a comparative perspective. Furthermore, the research highlights the similarities and differences in cultural concepts, values, and worldviews embodied in English and Uzbek idioms. The findings demonstrate that idioms function not only as linguistic units but also as carriers of historical experience, national mentality, and cultural identity.*

Keywords: *idiom, linguoculturology, semantics, connotation, cultural concept, comparative analysis, pragmatics, national mentality, language and culture, phraseological unit*

Introduction: Language and culture are deeply interconnected systems through which human experience, values, and worldview are constructed and transmitted. Within this relationship, idiomatic expressions occupy a unique and significant position as they encapsulate not only linguistic meaning but also cultural knowledge, historical experience, and collective mentality. Idioms, as fixed or semi-fixed expressions with non-literal meanings, reflect the cognitive and cultural patterns of a speech community, making them an essential object of study in modern linguistics, particularly within the framework of linguoculturology.

In recent decades, increasing attention has been paid to the study of idioms from a linguocultural perspective, which emphasizes the interaction between language and culture. This approach seeks to reveal how cultural concepts, traditions, beliefs, and social norms are embedded in language units, especially in phraseological expressions. Idioms often carry strong connotative meanings and symbolic associations, which are shaped by the specific cultural environment in which they emerge. Therefore, analyzing idioms allows researchers to gain deeper insights into the national mentality and cultural identity of different linguistic communities. The English and Uzbek languages, representing distinct linguistic families and cultural traditions, provide a rich basis for comparative analysis. English idioms are often influenced by Western cultural values, historical events, and literary traditions, while Uzbek idioms reflect the heritage, customs, and socio-cultural realities of Central Asian societies. Despite these differences, both languages demonstrate universal tendencies in conceptualizing human experiences through figurative and metaphorical language.

The relevance of this study lies in the growing need for cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding in a globalized world. Misinterpretation of

idioms can lead to communicative misunderstandings, especially in translation and intercultural discourse. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of idiomatic expressions from a linguocultural perspective contributes not only to theoretical linguistics but also to practical fields such as translation studies, language teaching, and intercultural communication. The aim of this article is to investigate the linguocultural features of idioms in English and Uzbek languages. The study focuses on identifying their semantic structures, connotative meanings, and cultural conceptualizations, as well as comparing their similarities and differences. By doing so, the research seeks to demonstrate that idioms function as cultural codes that preserve and transmit the collective experience and worldview of a nation.

Main Body: The study of idiomatic expressions from a linguocultural perspective requires a multidimensional approach that integrates semantic, structural, cognitive, and pragmatic analyses. Idioms are not merely lexical units; rather, they represent complex formations in which language and culture intersect. Their meanings cannot be interpreted solely through the literal meanings of their components, as they are characterized by semantic opacity, figurativeness, and cultural specificity. Therefore, the analysis of idioms in English and Uzbek must consider both their internal linguistic structure and their external cultural context.

Semantic and Structural Features of Idioms. One of the defining characteristics of idioms is their non-compositionality, meaning that the overall meaning of an idiomatic expression cannot be deduced from the meanings of its individual components. For example, the English idiom “spill the beans” does not literally refer to beans but signifies “to reveal a secret.” Similarly, the Uzbek expression “og‘zidan gullar to‘kilmoq” (literally “flowers fall from one’s mouth”) conveys the idea of speaking beautifully or kindly. These examples demonstrate how idioms function as semantically unified units despite their multi-word structure. Structurally, idioms tend to be relatively fixed expressions with limited variability. Although some idioms may allow minor grammatical changes, their core lexical components remain stable. This stability ensures their recognizability and preserves their cultural meaning. In both English and Uzbek, idioms can be classified into different structural types, such as verb phrases (“kick the bucket”), noun phrases (“a white elephant”), or complete sentences (“Actions speak louder than words” / “Har kim ekkani o‘radi”). Despite typological differences between the two languages, the structural organization of idioms reveals certain universal patterns.

Connotative Meaning and Cultural Symbolism. Idioms are rich in connotative meanings, which go beyond their denotative or literal sense. These connotations are deeply rooted in cultural associations, historical experiences, and symbolic interpretations. For instance, in English, the color black is often associated with negativity or misfortune (“black day,” “black mood”), while in Uzbek, similar associations can be observed in expressions conveying grief or hardship. On the other hand, the color white in both cultures may symbolize purity or honesty, as seen in expressions like “white lie” (a harmless lie) and Uzbek “oq ko‘ngil” (pure-hearted). However, not all symbolic meanings coincide across cultures. Certain idioms reflect culturally specific imagery that may not have direct equivalents in another language. For example, English idioms derived from maritime life (“learn the ropes,” “in the same boat”) reflect the historical importance of seafaring, whereas Uzbek idioms

often draw from agricultural life, traditional customs, and social relations. This divergence highlights the role of environment and lifestyle in shaping idiomatic expressions.

Linguocultural Features and National Mentality. Idioms serve as a mirror of national mentality, encapsulating the values, beliefs, and worldview of a particular linguistic community. In Uzbek culture, many idioms emphasize collectivism, respect for elders, hospitality, and moral behavior. Expressions such as “mehmon otangdan ulugʻ” (a guest is greater than your father) reflect the cultural importance of hospitality and social harmony. In contrast, English idioms often highlight individualism, practicality, and personal responsibility, as seen in expressions like “time is money” or “stand on your own two feet.” From a linguocultural standpoint, idioms can be interpreted as cultural codes that transmit shared knowledge across generations. They often originate from folklore, proverbs, religious beliefs, and historical events. For instance, biblical references play a significant role in many English idioms, while Uzbek idioms may be influenced by Islamic traditions, oral literature, and classical poetry. These cultural sources contribute to the richness and diversity of idiomatic language.

Cognitive and Conceptual Mechanisms. The formation and interpretation of idioms are closely linked to cognitive processes, particularly metaphor and metonymy. According to cognitive linguistics, idioms are not arbitrary but are motivated by underlying conceptual metaphors. For example, the metaphor “ANGER IS HEAT” is reflected in English idioms such as “boil with anger,” while similar conceptualizations can be found in Uzbek expressions describing emotional intensity. Conceptual metaphors allow speakers to understand abstract concepts through more concrete experiences. This universality explains why some idiomatic meanings are similar across languages. However, cultural differences influence how these metaphors are realized linguistically. Thus, while the cognitive basis of idioms may be universal, their linguistic expression remains culturally specific.

Pragmatic Functions of Idioms in Discourse. In communication, idioms perform various pragmatic functions, enhancing expressiveness, emotional impact, and stylistic richness. They are widely used in both spoken and written discourse, including literature, media, and everyday conversation. Idioms can serve to:

- intensify meaning and emotional tone,
- create humor or irony,
- establish social identity and group belonging,
- convey attitudes and evaluations indirectly.

For example, using an idiom instead of a literal expression often makes speech more vivid and persuasive. In political discourse and media language, idioms are frequently employed to influence public opinion and simplify complex ideas. Similarly, in Uzbek oral communication, idioms play a crucial role in making speech more culturally resonant and emotionally expressive.

Cross-Linguistic Similarities and Differences. A comparative analysis of English and Uzbek idioms reveals both universal features and culture-specific differences. Universal aspects include the use of metaphor, semantic opacity, and structural stability. Both languages employ idioms to express emotions, social relationships, and moral judgments. At the same time, differences arise from distinct

cultural, historical, and social contexts. Some idioms have direct equivalents in both languages, while others are unique and require explanation or adaptation in translation. This poses challenges for language learners and translators, as literal translation often leads to misunderstanding.

For instance, the English idiom “break the ice” has a functional equivalent in Uzbek (“muzni eritmoq”), but many idioms lack such parallels. In such cases, translators must rely on contextual interpretation and cultural knowledge to convey the intended meaning accurately. Overall, the analysis demonstrates that idioms are multifunctional linguistic units that operate at the intersection of language, culture, and cognition. Their study not only enriches our understanding of linguistic structure and meaning but also provides valuable insights into the cultural identity and worldview of different societies.

Conclusion. In conclusion, idioms in English and Uzbek languages represent a unique intersection of language, culture, and cognition. They function not only as expressive linguistic units but also as carriers of cultural values, national mentality, and historical experience. The comparative analysis reveals both universal features, such as metaphorical thinking and semantic opacity, and culture-specific characteristics shaped by each society’s worldview. Therefore, studying idioms from a linguocultural perspective is essential for deeper linguistic understanding, effective translation, and successful intercultural communication.

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