



EXPLORING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN UZBEK AND ENGLISH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

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Abstract: *Idiomatic expressions are important components of any language, offering insights into the culture, values, and worldview of its speakers. This paper studies the differences between Uzbek and English idiomatic expressions, focusing on their cultural context, metaphorical imagery, structure, and translation challenges. While Uzbek idioms are deeply rooted in the country's agricultural traditions, family values, and Islamic teachings, English idioms reflect a more urbanized and individualistic perspective, shaped by a globalized society. The article examines how both languages use metaphors from nature, animals, and everyday life to convey deeper meanings, and highlights the difficulty in translating idioms due to cultural and linguistic differences. By comparing these idiomatic expressions, the article emphasizes how idioms reflect the distinct cultural and historical backgrounds of Uzbek and English speakers, offering a valuable understanding of both languages.*

Keywords: *Idiomatic expressions, culture, traditions, literal meaning, connotational meaning, metaphors, proverbs.*

Introduction

I will start by introducing the concept of idiomatic expressions and their importance in language. Idioms are phrases or expressions whose meanings are different from the literal interpretation of the words (McArthur, 2008: 495). According to Ambrose



(2008), comprehension of the vocabulary of English requests more than knowing the literal meaning of words. It also requires its speakers to have connotative word comprehension and an understanding of metaphorical dialect, and figures of speech drop into this last category. Yodgarova (2020) suggests that the English language contains at slightest 25,000 idioms and thus they more than once occur within the English dialect. Idiomatic expressions often reflect the culture, history, and values of the people who speak the language. In this article, the key differences between Uzbek and English idiomatic expressions, focusing on their cultural context, metaphorical imagery, and structure will be explored.

The Role of Culture in Idiomatic Expressions

Uzbek Idioms: A Reflection of Traditions and Society

- **Cultural Context:** Uzbek idioms are deeply rooted in the culture of Uzbekistan, which is influenced by traditional agricultural life, family values, and Islamic teachings. They often emphasize hospitality, social harmony, and respect for elders.
- **Example:** "Ko'zni ko'rganing bilan ko'rmay qolding" (Literally: "You saw it, but you didn't see it") — An idiom used when someone misses something obvious, emphasizing the importance of attentiveness and awareness in a society where attentiveness is highly valued.

English Idioms: A Globalized and Urbanized Perspective

- **Cultural Context:** English idioms are influenced by a wide range of cultural sources due to the global nature of English-speaking countries. They often reflect individualistic values, urban life, and modern challenges.
- **Example:** "Can't see the forest for the trees" — This idiom speaks to a more individualistic worldview, where the emphasis is on seeing the bigger picture, especially in busy, modern societies.

2. Metaphors and Imagery: A Visual Language



Uzbek Idioms: Nature and Agriculture

- **Metaphor Usage:** Many Uzbek idioms make use of imagery related to nature, animals, and rural life. This reflects the agrarian background of the country.
- **Example:** "Toshni ko‘rib, qumni ko‘rmaydi" (Literally: “Sees the stone but doesn’t see the sand”) — An idiom used to describe someone who is focused on one thing and ignores the broader context.

English Idioms: Industrial and Urban Imagery

- **Metaphor Usage:** English idioms often incorporate imagery from industrial or urban life. They use concepts that are more familiar in modern, industrial societies.
- **Example:** "Don't put all your eggs in one basket" — A metaphor for not risking everything on a single venture, reflecting a more risk-averse, modern attitude.

Structural Differences in Idiomatic Expressions

Uzbek Idioms: Simplicity and Directness

- **Structure:** Uzbek idioms tend to be more direct, with descriptive, almost literal language. Often, the idiom involves a verb and a clear metaphor.
- **Example:** "Ko‘p narsani o‘rganishdan oldin, bir narsani yaxshi o‘rgan" (Literally: "Before learning many things, learn one thing well") — Focus on depth over breadth in learning.

English Idioms: Complexity and Indirectness

- **Structure:** English idioms often have a more complex structure, and their meanings are not immediately apparent from the literal translation. There is often an indirect way of expressing ideas. Thus idioms require both cultural and linguistic knowledge for accurate comprehension (Gayurov, 2024).
- **Example:** "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" — This idiom uses a layered metaphor to express the value of securing something reliable over risking it for something uncertain.



Proverbs vs. Idioms: Overlapping Roles in Both Languages

Uzbek Proverbs: Wisdom and Moral Guidance

- **Proverbs:** In Uzbek, proverbs are often used in the same way as idioms. They convey life lessons, wisdom, and moral teachings. The lines between proverbs and idioms are often blurred in everyday conversation.
- **Example:** "Mehnat qilib, o‘z mevasini ko‘r" (Literally: "Work hard, and you will see the fruits") — Emphasizes the value of hard work.

English Proverbs: Practical and Universal Lessons

- **Proverbs:** English also has a wide range of proverbs that offer practical advice or reflect common wisdom. However, idioms in English are typically more focused on colloquial expressions, while proverbs tend to be more formal.
- **Example:** "Actions speak louder than words" — A universal lesson that emphasizes the importance of deeds over mere talk.

The Challenge of Translation: What Gets Lost in Translation?

Discuss the difficulty of translating idioms from one language to another. While some idiomatic expressions can be translated directly, others lose their cultural significance or meaning when translated literally.

- **Uzbek to English:** "Tilni tilga sol" (Literally: "Join the tongue to the tongue") — means to gossip, but translating it literally doesn't convey the meaning accurately in English.
- **English to Uzbek:** "Spill the beans" — An English idiom meaning "to reveal a secret" would need to be expressed in a different way in Uzbek to convey the same meaning.

The Use of Animals and Nature: Symbolism in Idioms

Uzbek:



- **Common Animal References:** Animals like sheep, birds, and wolves appear frequently in Uzbek idioms, often with cultural and symbolic meanings.
- **Example:** "Bodomni top, go'shtni ol" (Literally: "Pick the almond, take the meat") — Encourages focusing on the most important or valuable part of something.

English:

- **Common Animal References:** English idioms also use animals but often in different contexts. For example, "A wolf in sheep's clothing" refers to someone pretending to be harmless when they are not.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of idiomatic expressions between Uzbek and English offers profound insights into the way language mirrors culture, history, and the worldview of its speakers. Through this comparative study, we have observed how idioms from both languages serve as cultural markers, providing a window into the social fabric, values, and traditions of their respective societies. Uzbek idioms, deeply entrenched in the country's agricultural background, family-oriented structure, and Islamic influences, emphasize community, respect for elders, and the importance of attentiveness in both social and familial settings. These expressions reflect the close-knit, rural-based life that still influences the way language is used today in Uzbekistan.

Moreover, while both Uzbek and English idioms make extensive use of metaphorical imagery, the sources of these metaphors differ significantly. Uzbek idioms often draw on nature, agriculture, and rural life, reflecting the agricultural roots of the society. For example, idioms that reference animals or elements of the land, such as the metaphor of the stone or the sand, evoke the agrarian lifestyle and the need for balance and focus in daily life. English idioms, however, frequently use imagery related to urbanization, industry, and modern life, such as the famous idiom "don't put all your eggs in one basket," which speaks to the risk-averse mentality in an



industrial and economic context. These differences in metaphorical sources highlight the diverse environments in which both cultures developed and their contrasting approaches to handling life's challenges.

Ultimately, the study of idiomatic expressions in Uzbek and English reveals the rich diversity of human experience and the ways in which language encapsulates the values, traditions, and worldviews of its speakers. While the metaphors, structures, and imagery of Uzbek and English idioms may differ, both languages offer valuable insights into the lives and worldviews of their people. Understanding these differences not only enhances the learning of both languages but also deepens cultural appreciation, highlighting the importance of idioms as vehicles for conveying cultural knowledge and as essential components of language. By exploring and appreciating these idiomatic expressions, we not only gain a better understanding of each language but also cultivate a greater respect for the unique cultural and historical backgrounds that shape the way people communicate.

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