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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract. This article explores idiomatic expressions in English and Uzbek from a comparative linguistic perspective. Idioms are an essential part of the vocabulary of any language because they reflect the cultural values, traditions, historical experiences, and worldview of a particular speech community. The article examines the semantic, structural, and cultural characteristics of idiomatic expressions in both languages. It also identifies similarities and differences in their meanings, formation, and usage. Special attention is given to the challenges of translating English idioms into Uzbek and vice versa. The study demonstrates that although English and Uzbek idioms may have different linguistic structures, many of them express similar human experiences, emotions, and social relationships.

Keywords: idioms, idiomatic expressions, English language, Uzbek language, comparative linguistics, phraseology, cultural identity, semantics, translation, linguistic features.

Introduction

Language is not simply a means of communication; it is also a reflection of people's culture, traditions, history, and way of thinking. One of the most interesting elements of language is idiomatic expressions. Idioms are fixed combinations of words whose meanings cannot always be understood through the individual meanings of their components. They give language a figurative, expressive, and emotional character.

Idiomatic expressions are widely used in both English and Uzbek. For example, the English idiom "a piece of cake" means something very easy, while the Uzbek expression "ipidan ignasigacha" refers to knowing something in complete detail. These expressions demonstrate how languages use figurative meanings to communicate ideas in an expressive way.

The study of idioms is particularly important in comparative linguistics because it helps identify cultural similarities and differences between language communities. Although English and Uzbek belong to different language families, their idiomatic expressions often describe similar situations, emotions, and experiences.

The main purpose of this article is to compare idiomatic expressions in English and Uzbek, examine their semantic and structural features, and identify their role in intercultural communication and translation.

Literature Review

Idiomatic expressions have been extensively studied within linguistics, especially in phraseology, semantics, and cultural linguistics. Linguists consider idioms an important part of the

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lexical system because they represent meanings that are often different from the literal meanings of individual words.

In English linguistics, idioms are generally understood as relatively fixed expressions whose meanings are conventionalized within a language community. Their interpretation frequently requires knowledge of linguistic context and cultural background.

In Uzbek linguistics, idiomatic expressions are commonly studied as phraseological units. They are characterized by stability, figurative meaning, and expressive value. Many Uzbek idioms are connected with national traditions, everyday life, nature, and human relationships.

Comparative research shows that idioms provide important information about the cultural identity of different societies. Their analysis also helps translators understand why literal translation is not always effective.

Research Methodology

This study uses comparative, descriptive, semantic, and contextual analysis. The comparative method identifies similarities and differences between English and Uzbek idioms. The semantic method examines their figurative meanings, while contextual analysis explains how idiomatic expressions function in everyday communication and literary texts. Selected examples from both languages are used to illustrate the main findings.

Main Part

An idiomatic expression is a combination of words that has a figurative meaning different from its literal interpretation. Idioms are usually stable in structure and are commonly used by native speakers in everyday communication.

For example, the English expression "break the ice" does not mean physically breaking ice. Instead, it refers to starting a conversation and making people feel comfortable.

Similarly, the Uzbek expression "ko‘ngli tog‘dek ko‘tarildi" describes a person's great happiness or emotional satisfaction rather than a literal physical movement.

Idioms have several important characteristics:

- Figurativeness: Their meanings are often metaphorical.
- Stability: Their word combinations are relatively fixed.
- Cultural significance: They reflect traditions and social experiences.
- Expressiveness: They make speech more emotional and interesting.
- Semantic unity: The entire expression communicates a meaning as a single unit.

These characteristics make idioms an essential part of natural and effective communication.

English contains a large number of idiomatic expressions that are frequently used in everyday speech, literature, journalism, and informal communication.

Some English idioms have direct or close Uzbek equivalents, while others require descriptive translation.

Examples:

English idiom	Uzbek equivalent or meaning
A piece of cake	Juda oson
Break the ice	Suhbatga kirishib ketmoq
Once in a blue moon	Juda kamdan-kam

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Hold your tongue	Tilingni tiy
Better late than never	Hechdan ko‘ra kech yaxshi
Kill two birds with one stone	Bir o‘q bilan ikki quyonni urmoq
To have a heart of gold	Oltin qalbli bo‘lmoq
Time is money	Vaqt – bu pul

These examples show that some idiomatic expressions have similar equivalents in both languages. However, their lexical structures may differ.

For instance, the English idiom "a piece of cake" is translated into Uzbek as "juda oson". Its figurative meaning is preserved, although the original image of a piece of cake is not necessarily maintained.

Idiomatic expressions are closely connected with the culture and historical experiences of a nation. They often contain references to traditional occupations, food, animals, nature, and social relationships.

English idioms frequently reflect historical customs, everyday activities, and cultural experiences.

Examples include:

- "A blessing in disguise" – an apparently negative situation that turns out to be positive.
- "Let the cat out of the bag" – to reveal a secret.
- "The last straw" – the final problem that makes a situation unbearable.
- "Burn the midnight oil" – to work or study late at night.

Uzbek idioms, in contrast, frequently reflect traditional lifestyle, family relationships, hospitality, and national values.

Examples include:

- "Qo‘l uchida qilmoq" – to do something carelessly.
- "Yuragi orqasiga tortmoq" – to become very frightened.
- "Ko‘z qorachig‘idek asramoq" – to protect something very carefully.
- "Boshiga ko‘tarmoq" – to treat someone with great respect or attention, depending on context.
- "Og‘zi qulog‘ida" – to be extremely happy.

These expressions demonstrate that idioms are not merely linguistic constructions. They also preserve cultural knowledge and national identity.

The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek idiomatic expressions reveals several similarities.

First, both languages use idioms to express emotions, describe human behavior, and communicate complex ideas in a short and expressive form. Second, metaphor and comparison are common methods of creating idiomatic meanings in both languages. Third, many idioms have equivalent meanings even when their structures are different.

However, some differences can also be observed.

English idioms frequently contain references to animals, food, weather, and historical customs. Uzbek idioms often reflect family relationships, traditional social values, human character, and everyday life.

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For example, the English idiom "to keep an eye on someone" and the Uzbek expression "ko‘z-quloq bo‘lmoq" have similar meanings related to watching or looking after someone.

Another example is "to lose one's temper" in English and "jahli chiqmoq" in Uzbek. Although their structures are different, both expressions communicate anger.

Therefore, understanding idioms requires not only linguistic knowledge but also cultural awareness.

Translating idioms between English and Uzbek is one of the challenging aspects of language learning and translation studies. The main difficulty is that the literal meaning of an idiom may not communicate its actual meaning in another language.

There are several common approaches to translating idiomatic expressions.

Equivalent translation is used when both languages have idioms with similar meanings and structures.

Example:

- English: Better late than never.
- Uzbek: Hechdan ko‘ra kech yaxshi.

Analogical translation involves using a different idiomatic expression that communicates a similar idea.

Example:

- English: To kill two birds with one stone.
- Uzbek: Bir o‘q bilan ikki quyonni urmoq.

Descriptive translation explains the meaning of an idiom when no suitable equivalent exists.

Example:

- English: A piece of cake.
- Uzbek: Juda oson, qiyinchiliksiz bajariladigan ish.

The translator must consider the meaning, context, stylistic function, and cultural background of an expression. Literal translation may sometimes lead to misunderstanding or loss of the original message.

Discussion

The comparative study demonstrates that English and Uzbek idioms share important semantic and communicative functions. Both languages use figurative expressions to make speech more expressive and to communicate cultural knowledge.

One of the most significant findings is that similar human experiences often produce idioms with comparable meanings in different languages. Happiness, fear, anger, hard work, friendship, and personal relationships are reflected in the phraseological systems of both languages.

At the same time, differences in cultural traditions and linguistic structures influence the way idioms are formed. Consequently, studying idiomatic expressions comparatively can improve language competence and intercultural understanding.

Conclusion

In conclusion, idiomatic expressions play an essential role in the lexical and cultural systems of English and Uzbek. They enrich communication, express emotions, and reflect the historical and social experiences of different nations.

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The comparative analysis reveals that although English and Uzbek idioms differ in their lexical structures and cultural references, many of them share similar meanings and communicative functions. Some expressions have direct equivalents, while others require analogical or descriptive translation.

The study also confirms that successful communication in a foreign language requires more than grammatical knowledge and vocabulary. Learners must understand idiomatic expressions and the cultural meanings behind them. Therefore, the systematic study of English and Uzbek idioms is important for language teaching, translation, comparative linguistics, and intercultural communication.

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