



Lexical And Semantic Features Of Idioms In Modern English And Uzbek Languages

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the lexical and semantic features of idioms in Modern English and Uzbek, examining how they reflect cultural, historical, and social values. It highlights the fixed structure of idioms, the use of archaic words, and the unique imagery rooted in cultural symbolism in both languages. The semantic analysis underscores the non-literal meaning of idioms, their dependence on cultural context for interpretation, and the role of cultural connotations in shaping their meaning.

Keywords:

idioms, lexical features, semantic features, cultural connotations, modern English, Uzbek language.

Introduction:

Idioms are an integral part of every language, encapsulating cultural values, historical events, and social conventions in short, often metaphorical phrases. They contribute to the richness of a language by conveying ideas in an imaginative and culturally specific manner, which transcends the literal meanings of their individual words. This article examines the lexical and semantic features of idioms in Modern English and Uzbek, comparing how idioms function and the distinct cultural nuances they encapsulate. By analyzing idioms in these two languages, we can better understand how linguistic expressions reflect cultural values and how each language uses idiomatic expressions to capture both universal and culture-specific ideas.

Literature analysis and methodology:

In both English and Uzbek, idioms are characterized by a certain rigidity in their structure. This fixed nature means that idioms are typically unalterable in terms of word choice or word order; any attempt to change their structure often results in a loss of meaning. For

instance, the English idiom "kick the bucket," which means "to die," cannot be modified or reordered without losing its idiomatic sense. If one were to change "kick" to another verb or "bucket" to another noun, the phrase would no longer convey the intended meaning. Similarly, in Uzbek, an idiom like "kimnidir yuragini sindirmoq" (literally "to swallow one's heart," meaning to gather courage) has a precise structure that cannot be altered. Any lexical modification would diminish the cultural and figurative sense of the expression.

Additionally, idioms in both languages often retain archaic words or expressions that may not be widely used in modern discourse. In English, idioms such as "spill the beans" use somewhat dated concepts, in this case, "spilling," in a figurative way that differs from its literal sense. This retention of older language forms helps preserve historical expressions within contemporary usage, creating a bridge between past and present linguistic practices. Similarly, Uzbek idioms may contain terms or expressions that evoke a historical or traditional context, often unknown to younger

generations. The use of these antiquated lexical elements not only enriches the language but also preserves cultural heritage within modern speech.

Results:

Both languages use idioms that feature vivid imagery and symbolism, often drawn from cultural artifacts, animals, and other locally significant objects. English idioms may reference animals or foods familiar within English-speaking cultures, such as "raining cats and dogs" (meaning heavy rain) or "piece of cake" (meaning something easy). These idioms reflect a Western cultural perspective and often rely on symbols that are widely understood within English-speaking societies. Uzbek idioms, however, tend to incorporate symbols that are meaningful within Central Asian culture. For instance, the idiom "Qo'ydek yuvosh" (literally "to bite like a sheep," meaning to yield or not to resist) reflects imagery that resonates with agrarian life in Uzbekistan. This type of idiom reinforces the cultural connection to agriculture and regional identity, grounding expressions in a context that is familiar and meaningful to Uzbek speakers.

Discussion:

The most significant semantic feature of idioms in both English and Uzbek is their non-literal meaning. Idioms derive their meaning from figurative rather than literal interpretations, making them semantically opaque to those unfamiliar with their metaphorical context. In English, the phrase "break the ice" is widely understood to mean initiating a conversation to ease social tension, rather than referring to the literal act of breaking ice. This reliance on figurative meaning highlights the importance of cultural context in interpreting idioms, as literal interpretations often fail to capture the true intent of these expressions. In Uzbek, idioms function similarly, with expressions like "Ko'ngli yostiqqa o'xshash" (literally "having a heart like a pillow") being understood as describing a kind-hearted or compassionate person. Here, the imagery of a "pillow" conveys softness and comfort, which translates into the figurative sense of kindness or empathy.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the semantic interpretation of idioms is closely tied to cultural familiarity and context. In both languages, an understanding of idioms often requires not just linguistic knowledge but also a deep familiarity with cultural references and historical background. English speakers, for instance, instantly recognize the meaning behind the idiom "let the cat out of the bag" (to reveal a secret) due to its cultural entrenchment in English-speaking societies. This idiom, however, may not have the same impact or be readily understood by non-native speakers or those from different cultural backgrounds. In contrast, Uzbek idioms may draw on symbols and values that are unique to Uzbek society. For instance, the idiom literally "to sell one's own skin" means to betray someone, an interpretation that resonates within a cultural context where personal loyalty and honor are highly valued. The meaning of this idiom would likely be lost on English speakers without understanding the cultural connotations associated with "skin" in this context.

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