EXPLORING THE USE OF COLOR IN IDIOMS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK EXPRESSIONS REFLECTING INNER EMOTIONS

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As is widely known, idioms can be likened to riddles because they are language-specific and unique to each individual language. Translating them from one language to another is nearly impossible. The concept of idioms is not a new issue in linguistics, and extensive research has been conducted on this topic. However, it is worth noting that the matter of idiomaticity remains open-ended, as no definitive consensus has been reached. This article aims to shed light on the analysis of idioms featuring elements of *white and black* that reflect the inner world of individuals in both the English and Uzbek languages.

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, the primary definition of an idiom is ‘a group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words’. Many linguists argue that idioms are fixed combinations of words whose meaning is often difficult to discern based on the meaning of each individual word.

McCarthy and O’Dell (2002) claim that idioms are expressions with meanings that are not immediately apparent from the individual words. Furthermore, they assert that the most effective way to understand idioms is to encounter them in context; thus, the meaning of idioms can, in fact, be comprehended from the context in which they appear.

Sinclair (2004) states that idioms are fixed phrases and cannot be translated literally into another language. It is essential to acknowledge that each language has its own set of idiomatic expressions, some of which may have equivalents in other languages, while others may be challenging to find. Therefore, it is crucial to familiarize oneself with idiomatic expressions as much as possible.

White and black are the most frequently used colors in idiom formation in



both the English and Uzbek languages. To illustrate this, we present idioms with white and black elements that convey human traits and emotions in the following tables:

Table 1. English Idioms with Elements of White Reflecting the Inner World of a Person:

Idiom	Meaning
As white as a ghost	To be pale due to fear, shock, or illness
As white as a sheet	To be extremely pale due to fear or shock
As white as snow	To be exceptionally white and pure
As white as chalk	To be very pale, like chalk
As white as milk	To be pure and unblemished
A whited sepulcher	A hypocrite or pretender
White feather	To display cowardice by showing a white feather
White-livered	Fearful or cowardly
White at the lips	To be pale due to fear or shock
White as ashes	To be extremely pale, like ashes
White heat	Wrath or extreme anger
White fury	Extreme anger or rage
White rage	Extreme anger or rage
White with rage	Filled with rage
Work oneself up into a white heat	To become extremely angry
To go white with anger	To become pale with anger



Idiom	Meaning
To be white-hot	To be extremely angry
White-faced	Scared or panicked
White about the gills	Scared or panicked
Whiter than white	Honest, pure-hearted, innocent
White	Honest, pure-hearted, innocent
White hands	Honest, pure-hearted, innocent
To have a lily-white reputation	To have an impeccable reputation

As evident from the table, the English language is replete with idioms that delve into a person's inner world. This color element exhibits significant variation, resulting in the identification of 24 distinct instances.

One could argue that idioms featuring the color white often convey predominantly negative characteristics, such as anger, fear, and malevolence.

Here’s the table with the idioms and their meanings:

Table 2. Uzbek Idioms with Elements of White Reflecting the Inner World of a Person:

Idiom	Meanings
Ko’ngli oq	Pure in heart, innocent, good
Ko’ngli qordek oppoq	Pure in heart, innocent, good
Ko’zining oqini o’ynatmoq	To disagree
Oq ko’ngil	Pure in heart, innocent, good
Oq-qorani farqlamoq	Smart or sharp
Oq-qorani tanimoq	Smart or sharp
Oqlamoq	To defend someone
Rangi bo’zdek oqarmoq	To be pale due to extreme fear or



Idiom	Meanings
	shock
Rangi dokadek oqarmoq	To be pale due to extreme fear or shock
Rangi oqarib ketmoq	To be pale due to extreme fear or shock
Sutdek oq	Pure in heart, innocent, good

Table 3. English Idioms with Elements of Black Reflecting the Inner World of a Person:

Idiom	Meaning
A black soul	Malicious or evil
A black dog	Sad or depressive
Black-browed	Sad or depressive
Black-hearted	Sad or depressive
Black	Sad or depressive
Black in the face	Sad or depressive
Black as Newgate’s knocker	Malevolent or villain
Blackguard	Malevolent or villain
Black ingratitude	Cunning
Black sheep	A shameful person
Black as coal	A shameful person
Black as ink	Low-spirited or angry
Black as sweep	Low-spirited or angry
Black as night	Low-spirited or angry



Idiom	Meaning
To know black from white	Smart or sharp
To ride the black donkey	To be stubborn
To look black	To be melancholic or miserable
To paint black	To see everything as gloomy
To paint a black picture	To see everything as gloomy
To think black thoughts	To think of evil things or be in a depressive state
To look as black as thunder	-
To see something in black	-
To be black as hell	-
To be black as thunder	-
To be black as thundercloud	-
To look black (at)	To feel anger

Table 4. Uzbek Idioms with Elements of Black Reflecting the Inner World of a Person:

Idiom	Meaning
Baxti qora (baxti qaro)	Unhappy, hopeless
Ichi qora	Malevolent, mean
Ko’ngli qora	Malevolent, sad
Yuzi qora	Shameful or disgraced
Yuragi qora	Malevolent, wicked
Qora yurak	Malevolent or wicked



Qora niyatli	Malevolent or wicked
Qoralamoq	To revile or speak abusively
Oq-qorani tanimoq	To be pale due to extreme fear or surprise
Oq-qorani farqlamoq	To be pale due to extreme fear or surprise

From this table, it can be observed that the color black is utilized to convey a range of phenomena. Generally, it predominantly conveys negativity. To be more precise, as indicated in the table, it expresses emotions such as anger, sadness, depression, hatred, and malevolence. Therefore, we can assert that the symbolic significance of the color black and its representation in idiomatic expressions that reflect the inner world of a person largely aligns with negative sentiments. However, there is one exception: the idiom ‘to know black from white’, signifying the ability to discern between good and bad or to describe someone who is intelligent and astute. In our opinion, this idiom carries a positive connotation due to the inclusion of the color white, which generally symbolizes positivity. In fact, there are numerous other idioms with a black element that convey neutral or optimistic meanings. A classic example of this is the phrase ‘black tie’, denoting a dress code for formal events.

As demonstrated in the table above, the symbolic meaning of the color black is closely linked to negative traits such as wickedness, sadness, fear, anger, and disgrace in most cases. Globally, black is often associated with death, evil, grief, and various other negative concepts. Similarly, it is noteworthy that idiomatic expressions featuring the color black to depict our inner world tend to carry these negative connotations. This holds true for both the English and Uzbek languages. Moreover, black is the most frequently used color in idioms in both languages and is extensively employed to portray our emotions and feelings (Bakhronova).

In conclusion, when compared to English, the Uzbek language exhibits a limited number of idiomatic expressions. Even the most commonly used colors (white and black) in idioms in Uzbek do not match the richness found in English



idioms featuring these elements. It is important to acknowledge that the English language boasts a wealth of idioms incorporating color elements, leading to the existence of numerous idiom dictionaries and phraseological references. Conversely, in the Uzbek language, idiomatic expressions with color elements are relatively scarce. However, being aware of the idioms that are present and most frequently used in both languages is essential for successful intercultural communication.

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