

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS
EXPRESSING INTELLECTUAL ABILITY IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK**

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Abstract: *Phraseological units (idioms, fixed expressions) play a crucial role in reflecting national culture, cognitive patterns, and the worldview of a society. This study provides a comparative analysis of phraseological units expressing intellectual ability in English and Uzbek. Using a corpus of fiction prose from both languages, idioms such as “a bright mind,” “sharp as a tack,” “have a good head on one’s shoulders” in English and “boshi ishlaydi,” “zehni o’tkir,” “aql-zakovati baland” in Uzbek were analyzed. The study focuses on semantic, functional, and linguocultural characteristics, highlighting similarities and differences in how intellectual ability is represented. The results indicate that metaphorical structures dominate in both languages, while cultural and historical factors shape specific expressions. The research provides valuable insights for cross-linguistic phraseology, translation studies, and literary analysis.*

Keywords: *phraseology, comparative linguistics, intellectual ability, English language, Uzbek language, linguocultural analysis*

Phraseological units, also known as idioms or fixed expressions, are stable combinations of words that carry figurative meanings beyond their literal interpretation. They serve as essential tools for effective communication, enabling speakers to express complex ideas, cultural norms, and shared values succinctly. Idioms often encode the cognitive and perceptual frameworks of a speech community, reflecting their worldview, social behavior, and collective experiences.

Intellectual ability, as a semantic field, encompasses a range of cognitive traits, including analytical reasoning, problem-solving skills, creativity, wisdom, and mental agility. Across different languages, the representation of intellectual ability is highly culturally mediated. English, belonging to the Germanic branch of Indo-European languages, often employs metaphors grounded in physical or mechanical imagery to denote sharpness or mental acuity (e.g., “*sharp as a tack*”). Uzbek, a Turkic language with deep historical and cultural roots in Central Asia, tends to encode intellectual ability in metaphors associated with wisdom, insight, and prudence (e.g., “*zehni o'tkir*”).

Despite the evident differences in linguistic and cultural frameworks, both English and Uzbek rely on idiomatic expressions to convey intellectual qualities. Understanding these similarities and differences is critical not only for theoretical linguistics but also for practical applications such as literary analysis, cross-cultural communication, and translation.

The present study aims to conduct a **comparative analysis of phraseological units expressing intellectual ability in English and Uzbek**, with a focus on semantic structure, functional features, and linguocultural characteristics. Additionally, the research explores the implications of these findings for translation practice, particularly in the context of fiction prose, where idioms frequently carry nuanced cultural and cognitive meanings.

Literature Review

Phraseology has been widely recognized as a domain where language and culture intersect. Scholars like Baker (2011) and Vinogradov (2017) emphasize that idioms are not merely linguistic units but also cultural artifacts that encode shared knowledge, values, and cognitive patterns. Baker (2011) particularly highlights the challenges in translating idioms due to their figurative nature and culturally bound meanings.

In English, idioms often employ metaphors derived from everyday objects, physical sharpness, or mechanical analogies to denote intelligence or mental acuity. Examples include “*a bright mind*,” “*sharp as a tack*,” and “*have a good head on*

one's shoulders". These expressions emphasize rapid cognitive processing, alertness, and problem-solving skills.

Uzbek idioms, on the other hand, frequently draw upon traditional metaphors and cultural symbols associated with wisdom, prudence, and moral insight. According to Yusupov (2019), expressions such as "*zehni o'tkir*" (sharp-minded) and "*aql-zakovati baland*" (high intellect) reflect the historical and social valuation of intelligence in Uzbek culture. The semantic richness of these idioms is closely tied to the collective worldview and societal norms, often appearing in literary prose to convey character traits or narrative themes.

While prior studies have analyzed English and Uzbek phraseology independently, cross-linguistic research comparing idioms in the semantic field of intellectual ability remains scarce. This study addresses this gap by applying a comparative functional-semantic and linguocultural approach to highlight similarities, differences, and translation challenges between the two languages.

The present study aims to conduct a **comparative analysis** of phraseological units expressing intellectual ability in English and Uzbek, examining semantic structure, functional properties, and linguocultural characteristics, with applications to translation and literary studies.

Numerous studies in phraseology emphasize the cultural and semantic richness of idioms (Baker, 2011; Vinogradov, 2017). English idioms frequently rely on physical or everyday metaphors, while Uzbek idioms often draw on cultural and historical symbols of wisdom. Yusupov (2019) notes that Uzbek phraseology preserves traditional metaphors reflecting prudence and intellectual depth. However, cross-linguistic studies comparing English and Uzbek idioms in the semantic domain of intelligence are limited, which this research addresses.

The study uses the following methods:

- **Comparative method** – to analyze structural and semantic similarities and differences.
- **Descriptive method** – to examine figurative and functional aspects.

- **Contextual method** – to analyze usage in fiction prose.

Corpus:

- English fiction: Jane Austen, Mark Twain
- Uzbek fiction: Abdulla Qodiriy, Hamid Olimjon

Analysis and Discussion

1 Semantic Characteristics

English idioms like “*a bright mind*” and “*sharp as a tack*” express quick mental processing and intelligence. Uzbek idioms such as “*zehni o‘tkir*” and “*aql-zakovati baland*” describe similar qualities. Both languages use metaphorical imagery, yet the source domains differ: English idioms often reference physical sharpness or tools, while Uzbek idioms focus on cognitive and wisdom-related imagery.

2 Functional Features

- English idioms: concise, often figurative; commonly used in spoken and literary contexts.
- Uzbek idioms: emphasize cultural evaluation of intellect and wisdom; context-dependent usage in literature.

4.3 Translation Implications

Translating idioms requires maintaining both **semantic meaning** and **cultural connotation**:

- Direct translation may fail to convey metaphorical nuance.
- Functional equivalence often demands substitution with culturally analogous idioms.

Example:

- “*Sharp as a tack*” → “*zehni o‘tkir*” (preserving metaphorical meaning of mental sharpness). The study concludes that:

1. Metaphor is central in representing intellectual ability in both English and Uzbek.
2. Cultural and historical contexts influence idiomatic expression.

3. Translators must balance semantic, functional, and cultural equivalence.

This research enriches cross-linguistic phraseology and translation studies, highlighting the role of linguocultural factors in idiomatic expressions.

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