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**MASTER’S THESIS**

**A CROSS-CULTURAL INVESTIGATION OF COLOR-RELATED IDIOMS  
IN ENGLISH AND AZERBAIJANI LITERARY WORKS: A CASE OF  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S VERSUS NIZAMI GANJAVI’S WORKS**

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### **İNGİLİS VƏ AZƏRBAYCANCA ƏDƏBİ ƏSƏRLƏRDƏ XÜSUSİLƏ VİLYAM ŞEKSPİR VƏ NİZAMİ GƏNCƏVİNİN ƏSƏRLƏRİNDƏ TƏRKİBİNDƏ RƏNG ADLARI İDİOMLARIN MƏDƏNİYYƏTLƏRARASI TƏDQİQATI**

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## INTRODUCTION

**Background of the study.** Language functions as a powerful tool which enables human to express their thoughts and cultural values and personal identity. Idiomatic expressions maintain a special position among various language forms because they shape how people understand and express ideas and emotions and concepts. It serves the best purposes for language. Through metaphors and symbols one culture reflects another's perspective to combine abstract concepts into meaningful interpretations. Linguists have continuously studied idioms from various nations because they both demonstrate linguistic patterns and reveal cultural values and historical background and beliefs.

Idioms that are associated with colors are deeply buried in meaning as colors figuratively indicate emotions, qualities, and range with certain values, whether social or cultural, and the worldviews of the societies through which they are projected. Such idioms are not just linguistic elements but serve as a window into the historical, philosophical, and socio-political contexts of the culture they come from. Exploring them, in this light, poises one for an intellectually successful examination of the intersection of language, culture, and literature through the symbolic import of color in idiomatic expressions.

Research into color-related idioms has become a major focus of linguistic and cultural studies. Color symbolism has become a major focus of scholarly research. Scholars have investigated the metaphorical and cognitive dimensions of color symbolism to show how colors function as emotional and qualitative and being-related symbols. Berlin and Kay (1969) investigated the global distribution of fundamental color vocabulary in languages, but other research has analyzed color metaphors in idiomatic expressions. Kövecses (2010) studied how color metaphors reveal cognitive processes and Gage (2000) analyzed the cultural significance of color in artistic and scientific traditions. The authors Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen (2018) stress that figurative language including idioms originates from cultural and cognitive structures which determine how people create and interpret metaphorical expressions.

Literature benefits from color-related idioms because they enrich literary expression through their ability to deepen characters and themes and narratives. Scholars have examined color symbolism in individual authors' works and literary traditions but there is limited research about how color idioms operate across different cultural settings. The comparison between English and Azerbaijani literature shows a major difference because cultural and historical factors lead to

different ways of interpreting and using color-related idioms. The literary works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi offer an excellent chance to conduct this contrastive analysis.

The research aims to fill this knowledge gap through its examination of color-related idioms in Shakespearean works and Nizami Ganjavi's writings. The European origin of Shakespeare's works and Eastern philosophical and Azerbaijani literary traditions of Ganjavi enable researchers to study how cultural and historical elements shape color symbolism. The research examines color-related idioms in two authors to bridge existing knowledge gaps about cultural color metaphors and their effects on language and literature. The research will both establish the literary importance of color symbolism and increase knowledge about cultural values which exist within language. The thesis employs an interdisciplinary research method which combines linguistic analysis with literary and cultural studies to conduct a comprehensive analysis of color-related idioms across various historical periods and cultural backgrounds.

**Relevance of the topic.** Color-related idioms form a vital part of language and culture because they represent the metaphorical and symbolic meanings of colors across different societies. The idiomatic expressions which represent abstract concepts about emotions and qualities and values provide distinctive perspectives on the cultural foundations of language. Research on idioms including color-related idioms has been extensive but existing studies do not examine how colors function symbolically across different literary traditions through contrastive cultural analysis.

The research on idioms has been mainly confined to the analysis of idioms within individual languages or cultural settings which limits our knowledge of how cultural values and historical influences, and literary contexts affect color-based idiomatic expressions.

Most research has focused on studying idioms within one language or cultural framework which limits our knowledge about how cultural values and historical influences and literary contexts affect color-based idiomatic expressions.

The lack of contrastive studies between English and Azerbaijani literature makes it impossible to achieve a complete understanding of color symbolism in these distinct cultural systems. Research on basic color terms across languages and color metaphors as cognitive reflections exists but there is limited investigation into how color-related idioms function in Shakespearean and Nizami Ganjavi's literary works. The authors base their works in separate cultural and historical and philosophical traditions because Shakespeare writes from Christian European heritage and Ganjavi draws from Eastern and Azerbaijani literary traditions. The cultural difference between Azerbaijani and English traditions provides an important chance to study their investigation. Both

of these traditions offers an important chance to study how each tradition's socio-historical and philosophical background shaped color idiom usage and interpretation.

Most of the previous research has studied modern idiom usage without exploring their historical development and the social and political factors which have modified their meanings throughout time. The existing research lacks analysis of how color-related idioms have evolved throughout history within these literary traditions. The research examines how Western and Eastern worldviews together with socio-political changes affect color idioms by studying Shakespeare's and Ganjavi's literary work.

The interdisciplinary method bringing together linguistics with cultural studies and literature has had little attention in idiom studies. Most of the research in this domain centers on the linguistic features of idioms, neglecting their literary and cultural significance. The gap in research ought to be filled through the integration of linguistic theory with cultural studies and literary analysis toward developing a holistic view of color-related idioms found in English and Azerbaijani literatures.

The research will analyze color-related idioms through comparison to reveal cultural similarities and differences. The research will expand the existing knowledge about language culture and literature by demonstrating how metaphorical language both reflects and influences cultural identity while offering a significant interdisciplinary approach to idiom research.

**The Object and Subject of the Research.** The main object of this research is to investigate contrastive analysis of color-related idioms in English and Azerbaijani literary traditions, particularly in the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi. This research will analyze how color-related idiomatic expressions work as metaphors and symbols in each literary tradition, focusing on their cultural, historical, and philosophical meanings. This study will analyze these idioms to reveal the impact of various cultural values and historical and socio-political changes on their usage and interpretation in English and Azerbaijani literature.

The subject of the research is color idioms in Shakespearean and Nizami Ganjavi's writings by analyzing their distinct cultural and historical and philosophical contexts. The research analyzes color metaphors in both authors' works while studying how their social historical and cultural environments shaped their use and interpretation of color idiomatic expressions. The research analyzes these two literary traditions to identify their shared and distinct color symbolism which enhances knowledge about how idiomatic expressions create cultural identity and social contexts.

**The aims and objectives of the research.** The primary aim of this research is to conduct a cross-cultural investigation into the use of color-related idioms in the literary traditions of English and Azerbaijani, with a specific focus on the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi. The aim of the research is to analyze the operation of color metaphors and symbols in various cultural and literary environments in revealing social values and beliefs and the cultural and historical forces that shaped their emergence. The research carries out a contrastive study of color-related idioms from Shakespearean works juxtaposed against those of Ganjavi's for the advancement of knowledge about the interrelationships of language and culture within the context of literature and cultural symbolism of color in different literary traditions.

**Objectives of the research:**

To examine the usage of color-related idioms in Azerbaijani and English literary traditions by exploring the literary works by Nizami Ganjavi and William Shakespeare.

To investigate the philosophical, historical, and cultural influences: identifying the philosophical, historical, and cultural elements that affect how color-related idioms are interpreted and used in both literary traditions.

To provide a contrastive analysis of color symbolism: Offering a contrastive study of color symbolism in the works of Shakespeare and Ganjavi, focusing on how their respective cultural, and socio-historical contexts influence the usage of color-related idioms.

To contribute to interdisciplinary understanding: Giving broader interdisciplinary understanding of how language, culture, and literature interact using color-related idioms. To achieve the research aims and objectives mentioned above five questions have been formulated:

1. How have the meaning and actualization of color-related idioms changed over time, considering English and Azerbaijani literary tradition and how have these developments been represented in the writings of Nizami Ganjavi and William Shakespeare?

This research attempts to see how social, political, linguistic and cultural changes have contributed to their evolution.

2. How these idioms regarding colors could be seen in the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi and what cultural meanings they cast in respective traditions?

An analysis through Shakespeare's and Ganjavi's texts shows the aspect of color idioms as they are representative of symbolic meanings within the scopes of English and Azerbaijani literary traditions. This highlights their role in reflecting cultural perceptions.

3. What cultural, philosophical, and sociohistorical contexts elucidate the application and meaning of color-related idioms in Ganjavi's and Shakespeare's writings?

Vividly, it indicates how philosophical ideas and historical occurrences have resulted in the problematic interpretation of color idioms in either literature.

4. In what forms do the literary styles and cultural traditions of W. Shakespeare and N. Ganjavi influence the interpretation of color-related idioms in their works?

The narrative techniques, poetic structures, and cultural contexts of Shakespeare and Ganjavi shape the significance of color-idioms in their works.

5. How do color-related idioms manifest in English and Azerbaijani literature, especially in their expressions within works of Shakespeare and Ganjavi that reflect and contrast with the major cultural tenets and values?

A cross-cultural comparison reveals societal norms and values in color idioms, highlighting both shared patterns and unique cultural expressions.

**The Scientific Novelty of the Research.** This research presents a novel cross-cultural examination of color-related idioms through the analysis of English and Azerbaijani literary traditions using the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi.

The research provides unique insights into how color-related idioms function in English and Azerbaijani linguistics by analyzing their cultural and literary value in these two distinct traditions. Through an investigation of color-related idioms across two disparate literary traditions, the study not only casts light on the peculiar cultural and historical contexts freighted meaning onto such idioms, but also exposes common symbolic patterns that transcend such boundaries.

The research introduces a new method of analysis which combines linguistic analysis with cultural studies and literary theory to study language and cultural symbolism. The research brings together linguistics with cultural studies and literary analysis through its interdisciplinary approach. The research provides new insights to the field through its contrastive analysis which reveals both common and unique color symbolism patterns in English and Azerbaijani literature. The research examines Shakespeare's and Ganjavi's works through their cultural backgrounds-European and Eastern traditions- to show how their worldviews connect with the color symbolism in their writing. The study utilizes contrastive analysis to improve our knowledge of metaphorical language across cultures while deepening our understanding of how color symbolism influences and how these interpretations inform cross-cultural understanding of metaphorical language in cross-cultural contexts and contribute a more nuanced comprehension intercultural communication, worldviews



cultural identity and literary expression. The research investigates historical and philosophical factors affecting color-related idioms by addressing a research gap that previous studies neglected to view these expressions through cultural and historical perspectives instead of linguistic or isolated cultural analysis. The research deepens knowledge about how cultural values and societal norms appear in idiomatic expressions while showing their evolution through socio-political changes and linguistic developments.

**The theoretical and practical significance of the research.** The research contributes to theoretical knowledge about language-culture-literature connections by using a contrastive method to study color idioms in English and Azerbaijani literary traditions. The research extends current linguistic theoretical frameworks through cultural historical and philosophical analysis to provide a complete understanding of idiomatic expressions between cultures. The research contributes to interdisciplinary theories by studying color symbolism in these two literary traditions while combining linguistics with cultural and literary studies. The research results introduce a fresh theoretical framework for studying idiomatic expressions which broadens cross-cultural linguistics and sociolinguistics research possibilities.

Practically this research holds significant value for language education practices. The research on cultural meanings within color-related idioms provides educators and students with essential knowledge about idiomatic expressions. The study helps improve intercultural communication because it teaches people about how color symbolism affects language use between different societies. The research findings from this study may help translators achieve better results when translating color-related idioms between English and Azerbaijani languages. The findings from this research have value for translation studies because they may also assist translators understand cultural meanings in idiomatic expressions. The research may contribute to intercultural competence by developing tools which help people understand and respect cultural differences when communicating.

**Methods of research.** The research uses qualitative methods to analyze color idioms in English and Azerbaijani literature through linguistic discourse analysis of Shakespeare and Ganjavi's works. The research uses this method to study how colors function as symbols in the texts while linking them to cultural and historical and socio-political contexts. The research combines contrastive and cultural analysis to study the similarities and variations between these two literary traditions. The combined research methodology enables a complete analysis of how idiomatic

expressions represent cultural values and social norms. The research employs multiple methods to achieve thorough understanding of language and cultural connections to literature.

**The structure of the thesis.** This thesis is structured into several key sections to guide the reader through the study. It consists of an introduction, two chapters, results, and conclusion parts. In the end a list of references is given, in which the sources referred to in the dissertation work are indicated.

The Introduction contains the historical background, aims, objectives, significance, and research questions of the study, and it emphasizes the need for research on color-related idioms cross-culturally. Moreover, it finds a gap in the literature—the contrastive cross-cultural analysis of color-related idioms in English and Azerbaijani literature work—which this study intends to fill.

The Literature Review provides a critical evaluation of existing research and essential scholarly perspectives about idioms and color symbolism and cultural linguistics in English and Azerbaijani contexts. The analysis focuses on how these elements appear in the writings of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi. The section provides the theoretical base and cultural background and literary context of the present study, focusing on color symbolism and idiomatic expressions in the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi.

The Methodology section describes the qualitative research approach which includes linguistic discourse analysis and contrastive analysis and cultural interpretation as the main methods. The section describes the process of choosing and analyzing color-related idioms from Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi to achieve the study's objectives and provide meaningful interpretation of the data.

The Results and Discussion section examines and interprets the study findings through an elaborate contrast-comparison study of color idioms presented in the chosen literatures vis-a-vis some usages with symbolic meanings and cultural implications in English and Azerbaijani literary tradition.

The conclusion summarizes the overall findings of the study, remarks on their theoretical and practical significance, and also provides recommendations and guidelines for further research while discussing implications for intercultural awareness and translation.

The thesis concludes with a reference section that includes all scholarly sources under consideration in respect of academic conventions and those cited during the research period.

## **CHAPTER I. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.1. Theoretical foundations of idiomatic expressions**

Idiomatic expressions function as a core phraseological element which represents one of the most complex linguistic phenomena. The fixed structure of idioms together with their figurative non-compositional meanings enables them to connect precise language with cultural expression. The complexity of idioms emerges from their distinctive linguistic patterns as well as their function to represent social norms and historical influences and shared cultural knowledge.

The analysis of idiomatic expressions requires a multidisciplinary approach which combines linguistics with cognitive science and cultural studies. The combined method reveals how idioms operate as linguistic elements while maintaining their status as cultural artifacts which deepen our knowledge of their role in communication and literature and everyday language. These underscore their importance.

#### **1.1.1. Definition and characteristics of idioms**

The study of linguistic foundations in idiomatic expressions requires an examination of phraseological units because they serve as the classification system for idioms in linguistic research. Linguistic study relies on fixed expressions known as phraseological units which create the foundation for language complexity and richness. The language contains four main types of fixed expressions which are collocations together with proverbs and sayings and idioms each with distinct structural and semantic characteristics. The broad category of phraseological units contains multiple-word expressions which function as pre-assembled constructions that transmit meanings. The field of phraseology started its development during the early 20th century through the work of Charles Bally and later Soviet scholars especially V.V. Vinogradov.

Vinogradov (1947) identifies three main categories of phraseological units which include phraseological fusions, phraseological unities, and phraseological combinations. The meanings of phraseological fusions are completely opaque because they function as highly idiomatic expressions like “kick the bucket.” The metaphorical nature of phraseological unities allows them to maintain some connection between their literal components and their overall meaning as in “spill the beans.” The third category of phraseological combinations consists of collocations which show strong association but lack complete fixity such as “strong tea” and “heavy rain.” These expressions are typical combinations that reflect common usage patterns in a language.

According to Bayramov (1978, p.27-34), phraseological units are linguistic phenomena embedded in the cultural and historical milieu of society, signifying shared beliefs and experiences. Kunin (1986) gives a wider scope to this definition, asserting that phraseological units mean fixed expressions marked by semantic unity and structural stability. Besides, he goes on to explain the dual linguistic and cultural symbolism these units enjoy due to their semantic integrity and structural rigidity, which makes them non-variable and unchangeable.

Idiom works as a rather complex and interesting sort of phraseological unit in this category. Idiom is a non-compositional expression, which means that its figurative sense cannot be inferred from the dictionary meanings of its component words. For instance, the English idiom "spill the beans" signifies the act of revealing what is supposed to be a secret, which is entirely detached from the literal meaning of spilling beans. According to Fernando (1996), idioms can be defined as "linguistic and cultural artifacts" encodings of knowledge and traditions relevant to a group of people; they play an essential role in communicating and expressing culture.

Idioms tend to resist syntactic transformations. The idioms maintain a specific structure that cannot be modified because any change would result in losing their intended meaning. Moon (1998) explains that idioms maintain a stable nature through their lexical and grammatical structure which he describes as "semi-fixed". The semantic opacity of idioms distinguishes them from other phraseological units. The meanings of idioms remain difficult for non-native speakers to understand because they derive from cultural contexts. The meanings of idioms need thorough knowledge of cultural background and metaphorical interpretation to understand them. According to Dobrovolskij and Piirainen (2005) semantic complexity in idioms originates from metaphorical thought which connects them to common cultural and historical experiences.

Idioms demonstrate pragmatic versatility because they function to perform multiple communicative tasks including humor and emphasis and emotional expression. According to Kövecses (2010, pp.235-237) idioms convey emotional and metaphorical meanings through their imagery which enables expressions like "feeling blue" and "in the red" to represent complex emotional and societal concepts. The use of idioms enhances communication through the fact that they add multiple layers of meaning to language. The unique linguistic and cultural features of idioms make them crucial for language and communication research and provide a wide range of opportunities for interdisciplinary study. As such idioms serve as linguistic windows into cultural identity revealing how different societies conceptualize emotions, behaviors, and social norms.

### **1.1.2. Classification of idioms: the case of color-related expressions**

The analysis of the definition of idiomatic expressions and essential features leads to the examination of their classification because categorization reveals their linguistic and cultural diversity. The classification of idioms has been a subject of extensive study, with various linguists offering different systems based on their structure, function, or origin.

The categorization of idioms depends heavily on categorization to understand their structural and semantic diversity as well as their linguistic and cultural importance. The examination of different idiom categories enables researchers to discover advanced understanding about their language-wide operations and cultural value expressions and their ability to fit into specific contexts. The classification system provides useful applications in translation work as well as teaching and cross-cultural communication practices (Baker, 2011; Fernando, 1996).

The exploration of idiomatic expressions leads naturally to classification studies which reveal their linguistic diversity and cultural importance. The foundational categorizations established by Vinogradov (1947) include phraseological fusions, unities and combinations, and idioms represent one of the most fascinating subsets of phraseological units. The classification system developed by Fernando (1996) and Makkai (1972) includes pure idioms, semi-idioms and literal idioms which differ based on their semantic clarity and structural flexibility.

Pure idioms maintain complete semantic opacity because their meanings exist independently from their literal expressions. Semi-idioms contain both literal and figurative aspects while literal idioms function as expressions which can be understood either literally or idiomatically based on the situation.

The research of Kövecses (2010, p.73) and Dobrovolskij & Piirainen (2005) highlights the cultural and metaphorical aspects of idiom classification. Idioms can also be grouped thematically based on shared imagery or symbolism, for example, animal idioms, idioms related to the human body, or color idioms. Among these, color-related idioms occupy a particularly important position because of their metaphorical richness and cultural variability.

Color-related idioms form a vital part of linguistic and cultural analysis because they derive their meaning from the symbolic and emotional associations of colors. Berlin & Kay (1969) demonstrated in their foundational research on basic color terms that although some color meanings exist across cultures, many color meanings are specific to cultures and result from historical, social, and religious factors. The English expression “once in a blue moon” shows how rare an occurrence is but Azerbaijani idioms with “qırmızı” (red) typically represent energy or strong feelings.

Color idioms represent a research area that incorporates linguistic analysis, cognitive science, and cultural studies to study metaphorical and emotional representations in contrastive languages. Wierzbicka (1990) claims that understanding such idioms properly calls for an analysis of their cultural context and background to provide an understanding of their semantic and pragmatic functions. The linguistic structure of these idioms reveals both the speakers' worldview and their emotional state.

### **1.1.3. The role of metaphor and symbolism in idioms**

The classification of idioms needs analysis of metaphor and symbolism because these elements explain how idioms transmit figurative meanings and cultural concepts. Many idiomatic expressions depend on metaphor and symbolism to convey complex ideas and cultural knowledge through imaginative and concise language. Symbolism together with metaphor function as fundamental elements for both the development and understanding of idioms.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) conceptual metaphor theory states that human thought operates mainly through metaphorical structures. The theory holds significant importance for idiom research because metaphors form the basis of figurative meanings in these expressions. The metaphor of weight appears in the expression “a heavy heart” to describe emotional burden or sadness. The metaphorical expressions in English idioms appear alongside Azerbaijani expressions such as “ağır ruh” which convey equivalent meanings.

Metaphors function as cognitive tools which connect abstract concepts to concrete experiences to form how people perceive and communicate their world. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explain that metaphors function beyond simple language decoration because they form the fundamental basis for human thought which generates most figurative language including idioms. The metaphor “Argument is war” supports idiomatic expressions which include win the argument and shoot down an idea.

Wierzbicka (1990) states that symbols within language frequently contain cultural backgrounds and beliefs which influence idiomatic expressions. Blue has a melancholic connotation in many cultures which led to the English idiom “feeling blue”.

The relationship between metaphor and symbolism appears most clearly in idioms. According to Kövecses (2010, p. 65) metaphoric thinking enables idioms to depict common human experiences through examples such as the fire-passion connection in burning desire. Symbolic meanings differ substantially between different cultural contexts. Berlin and Kay (1969) and MacLaury, Paramei,

& Dedrick (2007, p. 339) show how color symbolism affects idioms through English where red means love or danger but in Azerbaijani “qırmızı” typically represents vibrancy or boldness (Bayramov, 1978).

Both the English and Azerbaijani languages give exemplary account of how metaphor and symbolism play a significant role in idioms. In the case of English, “let the cat out of the bag” refers to the exposing of secrets, where the metaphorical act of spilling refers to the metaphorical act of uncovering hidden information. Similarly, in Azerbaijani, it is said that “ağlı başında” (a person with “mind on the head”) stands for a person who acts rationally or in its composure, reflecting the cultural outlook on mental clarity as something commendable.

The metaphors and symbols enrich idioms through the layers of figurative meanings and cultural significance attached to them. By tracing these symbols and metaphors, it is possible to tell how idioms, therefore, browse the line between linguistic phenomena and cultural artifacts, linking human universals with identities.

#### **1.1.4. Cognitive and pragmatic perspectives on idiomatic meaning**

To study idiomatic expressions through their symbolic interpretation researchers, need to analyze their cognitive and pragmatic aspects. Idioms serve more than decorative functions because they represent complex mental operations which serve multiple communication purposes. Researching how idioms function cognitively and pragmatically provides better understanding of their language-specific and cross-linguistic operations.

The cognitive process of idiomatic expression development happens through metaphorical frameworks which connect abstract ideas to tangible experiences. According to Langacker (2008), language reflects human cognition, and idioms, as conventionalized expressions, are rooted in the cognitive processes of metaphor and mental imagery. The cognitive processes behind idiomatic expressions combine different conceptual domains to enable speakers to express complex meanings through brief words.

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) states that idioms originate from embodied experiences which create meaning through culturally structured metaphors. The cognitive mechanism explains why color-related idioms exist across cultures, but their interpretations differ because of historical, philosophical and social influences. Color idioms depend on universal color perceptions which people use to create emotional and state metaphors. The English expression “feeling blue” connects blue with sadness but Azerbaijani speakers use

“qırmızıdan çıxmaq” (literally, “to go out of red”) to describe losing control of their emotions while red represents intense feelings.

Fauconnier and Turner (2002) explain how idiomatic meaning emerges through the integration of multiple cognitive domains in the Conceptual Blending Theory. The idiom "yellow-bellied" which means cowardly combines physical perception of yellow as a pale weak color with cultural associations of fear and timidity. The resulting expression uses color metaphorically to represent emotional states thus showing how idioms develop from social stories and bodily experiences.

The cognitive processing of idioms depends heavily on mental imagery functions. Gibbs and O'Brien (1990) show that speakers use mental imagery to derive figurative meanings from idiomatic expressions. Color-related idioms serve as vivid examples because they create powerful visual and emotional connections. The English expression “green with envy” creates a mental picture of someone who is metaphorically green with jealousy while the Azerbaijani expression “sarı sim” (which means “yellow string”) represents to touch a sore spot through its association with cultural values of sensitivity.

Color-related idioms function pragmatically to perform communicative tasks which extend past their basic meanings. According to Glucksberg (2001, pp. 76-77) idioms function as pragmatic shortcuts which help speakers efficiently transmit complex ideas. The English expression “seeing red” functions as a pragmatic way to express anger while the Azerbaijani phrase “ağ üz” (meaning “white face”) represents honesty or purity which demonstrates cultural differences in color-based pragmatic associations.

Color-related idioms require special attention when studying their cross-cultural implications. According to Dobrovolskij and Piirainen (2005) metaphors exist universally but their pragmatic applications remain specific to cultures. The Azerbaijani idiom “yaşıl işıq” (meaning “green light”) functions as a pragmatic symbol of approval in the same way as the English idiom does which demonstrates parallel metaphorical, and pragmatic uses between languages. From contrastive cultural studies on idioms, such as the one conducted by Wang, Y. (2017, pp.150-153), one can understand that idiomatic meanings are bound up in the practices, norms, and lived experiences of cultures. Although perhaps quite universal and cognitive in makeup, the idiomatic manifestation varies in languages according to the cultural and social contexts of each speech community concerned.

The construction of idiomatic meanings happens through cognitive processes while cultural environments also influence their development. Wierzbicka (1990) emphasizes the need to analyze



idioms through their cultural background because their figurative meanings depend on cultural knowledge. Valiyeva (2010) demonstrates Azerbaijani color-related idioms through examples such as “qara gün” which means “black day” to indicate hardship or bad fortune while showing how black represents negative meanings in Azerbaijani culture. The analysis of color-related idioms through cognitive and pragmatic approaches provides useful applications in translation services and language instruction and intercultural communication practices. The gained understanding helps achieve better cross-linguistic understanding which preserves idiomatic meanings together with their cultural values across different contexts.

## **1.2. Color symbolism in language and culture**

Human experience contains colors as universal elements which function as strong symbols to express emotions and cultural identities and societal values. The connection between red and passion emerges from common psychological and biological elements yet many color meanings develop through cultural backgrounds and historical traditions. The interaction between global and culture-based color meanings demonstrates how colors influence communication systems in different social groups. The analysis of universal and culture-specific color associations serves as the starting point to understand their wider cultural importance.

### **1.2.1. Universal vs. culture-specific color associations**

Color symbolism exists as a distinctive field within linguistic and cultural studies because it unites common human experiences with specific cultural meanings. Color associations exist on two levels: biological and psychological responses which are shared across cultures and cultural values which create unique interpretations. This section examines the connection between general color meanings and culture-specific color meanings by analyzing important scholarly research.

The foundation of universal color associations emerges from biological processes and environmental interactions which occur between humans. Berlin and Kay (1969) transformed color research through their discovery of standard patterns in basic color term organization across different languages. The researchers discovered that linguistic systems include black, white, and red terms because these colors match fundamental human perceptions of light and darkness and blood. From this foundation, Biggam (2012, pp. 40-41) outlines some of the historical and cultural implications of universal color meanings. For example, red is considered a color of passion and danger everywhere because it is so visible and is associated with such things as life and blood. Conversely, blue signifies calmness and tranquility because of the open skies and

oceans. These universal meanings have infiltrated artistic, linguistic, and social domains all over the world.

Culture-specific color symbolism is interesting since it shows different traditional methods and values that make colors acquire various meanings in different societies. Wierzbicka (1990) underscores the growth of color-term symbolic meanings in the context of world culture. For example, white is symbolically associated with purity and weddings in many cultures of the West, while in some Asian cultures it stands for mourning and death.

MacLaury Paramei and Dedrick (2007, pp. 34-37) in their interdisciplinary study “Anthropology of Color” examine how cultural environments influence color meanings. Green represents nature across all cultures, but different societies assign different meanings to this color such as fertility in Azerbaijani folklore and luck and patriotism in Irish traditions. Black represents elegance in Western societies through the “black tie” tradition, but other cultures view it as a symbol of bad luck.

The multiple ways that cultures symbolize colors become clearer through studying their linguistic and cultural systems of color classification. The research by Paulsen Uusküla and Brindle (2016) demonstrates how languages both share universal color perception and develop unique cultural interpretations of color. The Azerbaijani expression “qara gün” (black day) represents difficult times because black has a specific meaning in Azerbaijani culture yet black in English typically means formal or elegant as seen in “black tie.”

Finally, Gage (2000, pp. 21-23) provides an insightful exploration of how color interacts with artistic, scientific, and cultural domains in *Color and Meaning*. His work reveals how universal emotional responses to colors intersect with cultural narratives, enriching the symbolic significance of colors across different societies.

Research of universal and culture-specific color associations, therefore, has become engaging and allows the dynamic interplay among biology, psychology, and culture to play a large role. The universal meanings would be the ones quite important in framing the understanding of the emotional and symbolic link, while the culture-specific meanings bring into view aspects that add depth and diversity to the linguistic or cultural articulation. One could understand how colors mediate all communication and build cultural identity by analyzing these associations. By analyzing these associations one can deeper insight into how colors function as semiotic analyzing these associations one can deeper insight into how colors function as semiotic tools that mediate all forms of communication. Such analysis reveal how deeply color embedded in language shaping

perception and meaning.

### **1.2.2. Historical, Philosophical, and Cultural Influences on Color Symbolism**

The investigation of language and symbolism serves as a foundation to understand color meanings which exist beyond linguistic representation because they are deeply rooted in historical, philosophical, and cultural thought. Color symbolism exists as a dynamic system which transforms based on the historical, philosophical, and cultural elements that form a society's worldview. The way people perceive and understand color in language and literature depends heavily on cultural and historical influences.

Colors acquire their meanings through philosophical theories combined with historical narratives and cultural contexts which create a complex interplay between human perception and symbolic significance. The universal and culture-specific dimensions of color symbolism receive their depth from historical, philosophical, and cultural influences. This subsection examines how colors function as dynamic forces which create identity and meaning across different contexts through their interconnected influences.

Historical developments including societal changes and political transformations and technological progress have influenced how people interpret specific colors. During medieval Europe ultramarine pigment from lapis lazuli became so expensive that blue turned into a symbol which represented nobility and divine protection and truth according to Gage (1993). The Persian culture used gold and turquoise to represent royal status and spiritual purity which appeared in architectural designs and poetic works. (KhayosArt, n.d.) The examples show how historical circumstances create unique cultural meanings for colors.

Color symbolism has undergone significant evolution because of historical events and cultural movements. The meanings of colors have transformed across history and social developments which frequently mirror political systems and dominant beliefs. According to Cultural Cognition Theory (Kahan et al., 2010) societies create meaning by developing historical narratives which match their political ideologies and core values. During major political movements such as the French Revolution red evolved into a revolutionary symbol of freedom. Throughout Western European history blue developed into a royal symbol which represented both loyalty and stability (Hall, 1992). The historical connections show how major historical events have established fundamental symbolic meanings for colors in artistic expression and political symbolism and cultural remembrance.

Philosophical investigation has made substantial contributions to color symbolism research by analyzing its emotional and aesthetic and intellectual aspects. Philosophical investigations serve to connect human sensory experiences with symbolic interpretations. White represented virtue in many cultures but black symbolized ignorance or evil. Eastern classical thought together with Islamic philosophy placed color symbolism at the core of their mystical and metaphysical beliefs. The Sufi literary tradition uses green and black to represent spiritual knowledge and divine understanding as well as mystical development (Nasr, 2006, p. 67).

Goethe's Theory of Colours (Goethe, 1970, pp. 2-5) revealed how light and darkness interact with color perception to show both psychological and symbolic color effects. The research by Paulsen et al. (2016) builds upon these concepts to analyze how societies organize their color systems while uncovering both common patterns and unique cultural elements. Philosophical perspectives currently allow us to recognize how such colors move beyond their physical nature to exist as conveyers of human expression. In such an area interestingly, one would have to look to Goethe for serious foundation work-a study of color as physical phenomenon and psychological effect. Such philosophical frameworks of inquiry enable us to study the way colors activate common emotionally charged reactions with curiously different cultural influences.

Color symbolism develops through cultural influences because meanings in society derive from beliefs and traditions and aesthetic values and linguistic expressions. The deployment of colors in idioms and literary texts depends on cultural context which determines their meaning and usage. The cultural origins and symbolic frameworks of color-related idioms require interpretation through awareness of their cultural background. The cultural associations embedded in color-related idioms require readers to understand their original cultural context and symbolic meanings. Wierzbicka (1990) stresses the need to study color terms through their cultural background and semantic meaning because societies develop distinct symbolic meanings in their color-related expressions. Colors across different cultures function as identity markers while serving as storytelling tools that represent shared aesthetic values. The cultural associations embedded in color-related idioms require readers to understand their original cultural background and symbolic meanings.

Berlin and Kay (1969) in their study of basic color terms show both universal and culturally specific aspects of color perception which demonstrate how cultural context influences symbolic interpretation across different languages and societies. Colors in many cultures represent common values and aesthetic principles which function as identity markers and storytelling tools. The

cultural dimensions show how universal symbolism interacts with local meanings that emerge from societal beliefs.

Color symbolism exists as an intricate system which combines universal patterns with cultural distinctiveness across historical philosophical and cultural dimensions. The examination of these domains reveals the profound meaning of colors which provides understanding about their influence on human creativity and their reflection of identity and societal values.

### **1.2.3. Color Symbolism in English-Speaking Cultures**

The symbolism of color in English-speaking cultures develops through linguistic expressions together with historical narratives and artistic traditions. The elements have formed the basis for cultural meanings that people associate with colors. The colors blue, red and white have developed unique meanings which relate to power dynamics and personal identity as well as societal values. Color meanings in society derive from cultural values and emotional experiences which create complex connections between global and regional interpretations. The research by Berlin and Kay (1969) demonstrates that color perception exists both universally and in ways that vary across cultures. The emotional responses people have to colors tend to be universal, but the symbolic meanings associated with idioms develop from unique social experiences and linguistic rules (Glucksberg, 2001, p. 89). Color metaphors appear throughout English language usage which demonstrates their deep cultural integration that shapes both communication and interpretation processes.

The symbolic meaning of colors developed through historical periods in English-speaking societies because of political and social and artistic developments. Throughout English-speaking societies red has maintained significant historical meanings. Red symbolizes both intense emotions and dangerous threats and romantic love in various contexts. Red exists as a multifaceted symbol in English-speaking cultures because it simultaneously represents both life force and destructive power. White exists as a symbol with multiple meanings in English-speaking societies because it represents both positive values and the absence of things. Green functions as a cultural symbol in English-speaking societies to represent natural renewal and it symbolizes fertility and growth and prosperity. Green brings luck to people through its association with “green pastures” and “green fields” which represent abundant peace according to Gage (2000, p. 62). It can also represent jealousy or inexperience.

References to color are often embedded in English idioms referring to emotional states and mental conditions. “Seeing red” connoting anger, “being in the red”, “feeling blue” for sadness, or

distinguishing black and white indicate how color metaphors generate social and psychological meanings. These idioms are physical experiences with Conceptual Metaphor Theory as discussed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who argue that metaphorical language forms human cognitions. The idioms show both cultural importance of colors and the intricate relationship between language, culture, and perception. English idioms frequently emphasize social values and common stories which strengthen how language creates shared understanding.

The study by Glucksberg (2001) shows how far metaphor and idioms have gained access into everyday communication; therefore, color idioms provide a treasure trove of cultural identity. Such idioms provide a wealth of figurative richness and symbolic depth and versatility (“out of the blue”-unexpectedly and “golden opportunity”-value of chance) within English-speaking communities.

Color idioms transform throughout history because of cultural developments and social transformations. The English-speaking world uses green thumb to describe gardening ability because nature and growth hold cultural importance. Black sheep (an outcast or misfit) also reflects the idea of conformity and belonging in society. Color idioms in English vividly portray emotions and situations, often rooted in metaphorical associations. The idioms “in the black and in the red” originated from historical accounting practices to represent profit (black) and debt (red). The phrase “black and white” highlights distinct oppositions which represent straightforward and unambiguous facts. The expression represents both simplicity and clarity.

A white lie refers to a small deception which draws its meaning from the association of white with cleanliness and purity. (WordsCoach, n.d.; Phrase Dictionary, n.d.).

Color idioms both enhance communication and strengthen cultural values and aesthetic principles based on color symbolism (Gage, 1993). They function as dynamic tools which make them essential for identity expression and storytelling and shared cultural experiences.

The English-speaking world has several idioms that are based on color and act as potent symbolic metaphors used to represent the intersection between linguistic and cultural perspectives on color symbolism. Idioms, with their metaphorical basis, bear the weight of cultural connotation, and the dynamic relationship between the realms.

#### **1.2.4. Color Symbolism in Azerbaijani Cultural and Literary Context**

Colors have special significance in the culture of Azerbaijan, which has its roots in the traditional customs and historical background of the nation and its sociolinguistic communication mode. Through its vivid folk stories and expressive poetry colors function as meaningful symbols which transmit deep emotions while representing cultural values. Colors in Azerbaijani contexts function

beyond visual appearance because they transmit meaning which helps create identity and generate stories that pass over time.

The Azerbaijani cultural and literary traditions use colors to represent shared beliefs and collective experiences. Colors in Azerbaijani language function as both physical descriptions and deep metaphorical and idiomatic expressions which derive from cultural memory and national identity.

The Azerbaijani language uses colors to describe physical appearances while also expressing profound metaphorical and idiomatic meanings which stem from cultural heritage and national identity. Bayramov (1978, p. 34-49) and Jafarov (1958, 2007) have conducted thorough research on color meanings in Azerbaijani language which demonstrates their importance for idiomatic expression and lexical richness

The cultural significance of colors in Azerbaijani society stems from religious traditions and social customs as well as historical events which appear in both traditional expressions and cultural folklore contains symbolic meanings of colors which appear throughout epic narratives Ashig poetry and oral traditions. Colors function as strong symbolic representations which depict heroism and spirituality as well as sorrow and transformation in major national epics including the “Book of Dada Gorgud” (Kitabi Dədə Qorqud) and “Koroglu” (Koroğlu). (Abdulla, B. 2004).

In Azerbaijani mythological traditions, green stands for fertility and is often contrasted with sacred realms and religious rites. In poetic traditions, “yaşıl ümidi” (green hope) connotes optimism and new beginnings. Green is strongly associated with spirituality and divine linkages, expressing Islamic traditions and the rejuvenation of nature. Green idioms like “yaşıl işıq yandırmaq” (to give green light) symbolically suggest the approval or permission to whatever would add a positive, calm, and peaceful impression general to green.

Red serves as a powerful symbol which represents bravery together with passion and vitality. Warriors and heroes in folk epics display red garments and banners which symbolize their strength and resilience. The historical term “qırmızı döyüş bayrağı” (red battle flag) appears in “Koroglu” epic to represent courageous determination. Red represents both passion and bravery and vitality while serving as a key element in traditional celebrations and traditional clothing.

Red appears in idiomatic expressions such as “qırmızı xətlər” which represents essential boundaries that people should not violate while also symbolizing the powerful nature of red.

Black functions as a symbol of grief and sorrow which appears in mourning rituals and cultural expressions of loss. The Azerbaijani idiom “qara gün” represents both misfortune and black days which demonstrates the symbolic connection between black and somber experiences.

White serves as a symbol of purity and peace which appears during ceremonial events including weddings. The idiom “ağ günə çıxmaq” (“to come into a white day,” meaning to find happiness or relief) expresses overcoming a situation honorably, mirroring the association of colors with integrity and virtue.

Blue represents both wisdom and Turkic heritage while symbolizing authority and stability. Epic stories use blue to represent the loyalty and trustworthiness which rulers and noble figures embody (Obastan, n.d.).

The associations show how colors act as identity markers and traditional symbols which affect Azerbaijani customs and artistic practices while enhancing linguistic expressions. Idioms use colors to transmit cultural values and emotions which connect symbolic meanings to everyday communication.

Colors serve as carriers of collective emotions and values in various proverbs and folk tales and poetic works. The use of color in Azerbaijani idioms and metaphors often coincides with the socio-cultural beliefs. The research of figurative expressions (Guliyeva, 2016; Guliyev, 2012; Valiyeva, 2010) shows how symbolic meanings are embedded in everyday language and affect communication and interpretation.

Furthermore, Gurbanov (2019) and Mammadova (2019) in the *Journal of Philology Problems* (*Filologiya Məsələləri*) stress the inclusion of color-related expressions in the general discourse of national literature and spoken tradition.

The associations appear in different cultural artifacts including textiles and visual arts and function as vital components for encoding meaning in idiomatic speech and aesthetic expression. The linguistic patterns demonstrate how colors function beyond visual signals to serve as conceptual instruments which both national identity and linguistic innovation have molded. This reflects the role of colors in meaning making.

### **1.3. Idioms in literary texts: a cross-disciplinary approach**

Language and culture depend on idioms as essential elements which transmit multiple meanings and cultural associations. Literary texts use idioms to move beyond language functions because these expressions enable authors to express complex emotional and social and cultural meanings. The analysis of idioms in literary texts demands a multidisciplinary method to reveal their symbolic



and functional meanings. The cross-disciplinary method which combines linguistic theories with cultural studies and literary analysis reveals how idioms enrich literary works through their cultural and intercultural significance. The preceding sections demonstrate how color idioms function as cultural value indicators while simultaneously enriching literary works through their traditional and innovative connections.

Through idioms authors create vivid imagery while evoking emotional resonance and preserving cultural identity which makes them essential components for both classical and contemporary works. The analysis of idioms in literary texts particularly those with symbolic and emotional weight such as color-related expressions reveal how language operates as a cultural artifact that interacts with tradition and symbolism and artistic intent. This is when the cultural nature of meaning converges regarding language.

### **1.3.1. Linguistic approaches to literary idioms**

Idioms, as fixed expressions with non-literal meanings, play a significant role in both language and literature. Idioms are interesting from a linguistic point of view because they go against the traditional syntactic and semantic rules of language and at the same time, they add to the aesthetic value of literary works. Through the analysis of idioms in literary works, we can see how language structure, cultural values, and artistic creativity interact (Fernando, 1996).

Research into language has established that idioms exist as nonliteral fixed expressions which often depend on metaphorical meanings. Literary texts use idioms as both stylistic tools and fundamental components which represent fundamental cultural and cognitive models. Scholars study idioms through multiple linguistic approaches including structural analysis and semantic analysis and cognitive analysis and pragmatic analysis to understand their internal structure and their behavior across contexts and their interpretation difficulties. Linguists analyze idioms as multiple-word expressions which do not derive their meaning from the direct interpretation of their separate words. Baker (2011, p. 69-71) explains that idioms function as cohesive semantic units which improve communication through their ability to convey complex ideas in a concise manner.

The cognitive-linguistic paradigm has been remarkably developed by two or three decades of research into idioms. The seminal work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in *Metaphors We Live By* opened the way towards viewing idioms as metaphorical structures that closely tie human mental processes. According to Kövecses (2010, p. 79), idioms function on cognitive metaphors that would place linguistic expressions besides the meanings within grander cultural and emotional

frameworks. Idioms are important for literature since they give very detailed metaphorical meanings through which writers can express deep emotions and complicated ideas.

Literary discourse uses idioms in distinct ways because they function as both stylistic devices and symbolic elements and emotional tools beyond their everyday language functions. Everaert et al. (2014, p. 45) and Gibbs and O'Brien (1990) explain that idioms in poetry or classical literature experience poetic transformation but maintain their idiomatic identity. The work of Kunin (1984; 2006) provides essential information for both theoretical and practical studies of English idioms which are commonly used in translation and applied linguistic research.

Azerbaijani literary texts employ idioms to express cultural wisdom and shared experiences which function as essential linguistic tools. Bayramov (1978) examines the structural and semantic features of Azerbaijani idioms while highlighting their function as cultural indicators.

The Azerbaijani cultural expression "ağ günə çıxmaq" (to step into a white day) represents the achievement of prosperity and happiness and success after facing difficulties. The expression presents an opposite view to hardship while focusing on optimistic transformation. Linguists find idioms particularly interesting because their grammatical patterns differ from standard syntactic rules. Jafarov (1958) states that Azerbaijani idioms use distinctive syntactic patterns which enrich literary texts with depth and fluidity. Azerbaijani poetic language uses metaphorical elements in its idiomatic expressions to create more aesthetic effects.

The study of idioms through linguistic methods creates a complete analytical framework which helps scholars understand both the structural and semantic aspects of idiomatic expressions and their stylistic and cultural meaning in texts. The analysis of color-related metaphorical idioms requires these insights particularly when conducting cross-cultural literary research as demonstrated in the following sections.

### **1.3.2. Cultural and intercultural perspectives on literary language**

Literary language requires an understanding of its cultural and intercultural aspects when analyzing idiomatic and figurative expressions. Through its language repository literary works display cultural identity by expressing societal worldview and traditional values. Language functions as a communication tool while simultaneously carrying cultural knowledge and aesthetic values and societal norms. Literary idioms and metaphors contain connotative meanings which derive from cultural perspectives that do not directly transfer between languages and cultures.

Idiomatic expressions which exist deeply within a language carry cultural meanings that extend beyond their basic linguistic purpose. Idioms serve as cultural bridges that help people from different backgrounds understand each other because they connect universal human emotions across different cultural frameworks (Dobrovolskij & Piirainen, 2005).

Literary works use idioms to express the collective experiences and historical memories and symbolic systems which define a speech community from an intercultural perspective. Color-related idioms and metaphors in literature demonstrate specific cultural associations because they reflect the unique cultural associations of their speech communities. Wierzbicka (1990) demonstrates that color meanings exist beyond universality because they depend on cultural cognitive frameworks and value systems. Gage (1993) supports this perspective by showing how color meanings transform and separate between cultures which affects artistic and literary expressions. The meaning of white purity differs between Western and Eastern traditions because Eastern cultures use white to symbolize mourning which affects literary interpretation.

The research by Dobrovolskij and Piirainen (2005) on intercultural phraseological studies demonstrates the difficulties that occur when translating idiomatic expressions between languages. The translation of literary texts faces particular challenges because both semantic meaning and stylistic elegance need to be preserved. According to Ghazala (2003), translating idiomatic expressions requires both linguistic expertise and profound cultural understanding because direct translations cannot transmit the original connotations and artistic elements of the text.

Hall (1992) also examines how color has expressive power, both in visual arts and literature, and how subjective interpretations of color may vary radically across time and geography. The fact that symbolic system complexities of literary idioms enrich these idioms further complicates interpretative work in cross-cultural studies. Additionally, Wang (2017) points out that cultural connotations embedded in English idioms often reflect Anglo-American values and belief systems.

The Azerbaijani language developed its distinctive idiomatic system through the combination of Turkic and Persian elements with Islamic traditions. According to Gurbanov (2019) the literary application of idioms in Azerbaijani reflects the social environment and traditional imagery and historical consciousness of the Azerbaijani people. The comparison between Azerbaijani idiomatic expressions and English idiomatic expressions reveals distinct intercultural elements which demonstrate linguistic creativity and conceptual differences. The cultural and intercultural analysis of literary idioms demonstrates how language maintains a profound connection with cultural identity and worldview. Knowledge of these elements serves both accurate interpretation and

effective translation and cross-cultural communication in literary discourse. The research shows that idioms and figurative expressions function as cultural artifacts which need detailed context-based analysis.

### **1.3.3. The function of idioms in poetry and classical literature**

Literary texts including poetry and classical literature use idioms as fixed expressions with figurative meanings to achieve multiple rhetorical and aesthetic effects. Idioms in poetry and classical literature function as essential elements to create meaning while adding aesthetic value and cultural significance. Idioms function as powerful carriers of personal emotion and collective cultural knowledge because they exist deeply within the stylistic and philosophical layers of literary texts.

The classical poetic traditions use idioms to convey culturally specific metaphors and common communal experiences which enable readers to discover additional meanings beneath the literal text. According to Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen (2018), idioms in literary languages are not only stylistic devices but also markers of cultural semiotics, thus making language connect with the cognitive frames catered to the speech community. This manifests brilliantly in classical poetry: here, idioms help to anchor the abstract philosophical or emotional theme into culturally recognizable expressions. For instance, metaphorically charged idioms are often used to express states of love, fate, sorrow, or heroism in both Azerbaijani and English literary canons.

Idioms function as cultural identity markers and collective experience symbols in classical literary works. Idioms function as essential storytelling elements because they contain both cultural values and historical backgrounds. Through idioms classical texts create connections between local cultural heritage and universal human experiences in many cultural traditions. Color-related idioms function as thematic symbols which express passion tranquility or despair while their meanings shift between different cultural periods (Berlin & Kay, 1969).

In poetry, idioms serve as stylistic elements that add to the rhythm, metaphorical layer, and emotion inherent in the verses. Poetically speaking, idioms are molded here to suit the thematic aspect and the structure of the poet's work, as such transforming into a poetic kind of language. Transformation sustains the idiomatic essence of that language, which receives new layers of meaning through such transformation (Everaert et al., 2014, p. 127). Universal themes such as love, struggle, and beauty have found idiomatic expression. They also embody structural constraints that are amenable to poetic composition, especially those of classical form. The poetic function of idioms depends on both their opaqueness of meaning and their metaphorical basis. Fernando (1996)

claims that most idioms have their origins in some metaphorical concept that became conventionalized over time; these expressions, however, may be artistically manipulated, thus animated once again, in the context of poetic language. This corresponds with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) view that metaphor-and, therefore, idioms-lies at the heart of human conceptualization and perception. Hence, poets use idioms not only to decorate but also as tools for unveiling, reframing, and contesting reality.

Classical poetry employs idioms as a stylistic device to create rhythm and alliteration and parallelism. The rigid structure of idioms makes them better suited for metered verse than free-flowing expressions which preserves the artistic balance of a poem. The consistent structure of idioms makes them suitable for poetic constraints particularly when used in classical verse forms. Idioms function as memory aids in classical poetry. The repetitive nature of idioms combined with their image-rich content makes them easy to remember and transmit orally which was essential in pre-modern literary cultures. According to Palmer (1996) idioms with metaphorical and rhythmic elements served as essential tools for maintaining cultural and literary traditions between different generations.

As sometimes defined, the primary function of idioms in poetry and classical literature is to deepen the emotional impact of the work while portraying culture and remaining within the bounds of poetic structure. The idioms serve as fundamental aesthetic elements creating an enduring beauty and communicative power in literary expression while refining these expressions into utterances of spiritual wisdom, romantic longing, and verbal grace.

#### **1.4. Cross-cultural and contrastive studies on idioms**

The study of idioms attains a more profound dimension when contrasted across languages and cultures. Idioms do not simply constitute linguistic systems; they are vectors for cultural sharing of some common human experience and local traditions. They work to reveal universalistic patterns in the usage of idioms contrasted to culture-specific nuances.

Idioms indicate varying cultural influences based on use in one or another idiomatic expression, which evidences historical, social, and cognitive contexts.

The origins of everyday idiomatic expressions reveal cultural characteristics which stem from different historical backgrounds and social structures and cognitive patterns.

Color-related idioms represent particularly fertile areas for cross-cultural analysis because color symbolism exists both as a cultural phenomenon and as a universal human experience. The analysis of color idioms across various literary traditions shows how languages use color to represent

emotions and values and perceptions which reveals cultural worldviews. The identification of common metaphorical patterns and culture-specific meanings in color idioms depends on contrastive approaches. The analysis of idioms through color and emotional examples demonstrates both cultural similarities and differences in symbolic meanings.

#### **1.4.1. Overview of Existing Research on Idioms in English and Azerbaijani**

The study of idioms has received extensive attention by linguists and literary scholars because these units express cultural values and historical narratives and linguistic creativity. Researchers have studied idioms through different analytical approaches which include structural analysis and cognitive semantics and cultural symbolism and translation challenges. Color-related idioms together with other idiomatic expressions hold essential positions in both English and Azerbaijani languages. These expressions transmit meanings which exceed word-by-word interpretations because they contain profound cultural and social and historical meanings. The examination of idioms continues to be a significant field of study in linguistic and literary research but the comparison of idioms between languages through literary works needs further development. The two languages English and Azerbaijani possess extensive idiomatic expressions, yet researchers have not conducted enough contrastive studies between them.

Research on idioms within linguistic frameworks has examined their syntactic structure and semantic meaning as well as their cognitive functions. Fernando (1996) establishes a theoretical framework for English idiomatic studies by categorizing idioms according to their fixedness and metaphorical depth. Makkai (1972) investigates idiomatic structures to differentiate between phraseological units and idiomatic expressions which cannot be interpreted literally. The Azerbaijani scholars Bayramov (1978) and Gurbanov (1963) studied the phraseological system of Azerbaijani idioms to analyze their linguistic and functional characteristics. The research has substantially advanced knowledge about Azerbaijani idiomatic phraseology by explaining its linguistic and functional characteristics.

Idioms carry cultural significance, reflecting societal values, traditions, and beliefs. Jafarov (2007) in Azerbaijani research discusses idiomatic expressions as representations of national identity, stressing their deep cultural roots in oral and literary traditions. Glucksberg (2001) takes a cognitive approach to English idioms, examining how figurative language is processed and understood within cultural contexts. Although there are many studies on idioms within individual

linguistic traditions, there are few contrastive analyses of the role of idioms in English and Azerbaijani literature in the formation of cultural narratives.

Studies about idioms have sometimes explored color symbolism in expressions but there is limited research about English-Azerbaijani comparisons. Berlin & Kay (1969) establish a fundamental understanding of color terminology which shows how cultural differences in linguistic color classification affect meaning systems. The Azerbaijani idioms “qızıl fürsət” (golden opportunity) and “boz həyat” (gray life) demonstrate how colors in language represent permission and prosperity while also symbolizing a dull and uninteresting life which shows how color strongly relates to human feelings and social views. The symbolic meanings of colors in English idioms like “black sheep” and “silver lining” demonstrate how colors operate as symbolic expressions across literary and cultural traditions. Color idioms form an essential foundation of idiomatic studies because they expose unique cultural interpretations between them.

The translation of idioms stands as one of the most difficult tasks. Baker (2011) together with other scholars have studied the problems of maintaining idiomatic meaning during language translation especially when cultural and historical references fail to match. The authors Dobrovolskij & Piirainen (2005) investigate figurative language that crosses linguistic borders while stressing the requirement for contextual modifications. The research by Guliyeva (2016) and Hajiyeva et al. (2009) about Azerbaijani-English translation studies examines phraseological transformations which show how translators modify idiomatic meanings to preserve cultural and literary authenticity. The extensive body of research on idioms has been significantly influenced by major studies but new perspectives in this field require examination.

Despite their enormous scope, the existing literature on idioms tends to favor linguistic structures and contemporary semantic interpretations at the cost of cultural and literary considerations. While this approach is academically plausible, it can inadvertently overlook how idioms, especially those related to color, influence and reflect cultural narratives of literary traditions. The analysis of idiomatic expressions mainly focuses on individual meanings and contemporary usage while neglecting their literary and historical aspects. The narrative functions and symbolic meanings along with cultural heritage connections of these expressions have not received the same level of analytical examination. This reveals an opportunity for further exploration and cross-cultural investigation of color related idioms. It opens new avenues for contrasting the symbolic functions of color idioms diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. It invites cross-cultural investigation of color symbolism.

This study in contrastive and interdisciplinary research demonstrates the necessity for a study which examines color-related idioms in English and Azerbaijani through literary analysis and cultural studies and historical context.

#### **1.4.2. Contrastive analyses of idiomatic usage across cultures**

The study of idiomatic expressions between languages and cultures through contrastive analysis reveals the intricate relationship between language and thought and cultural experience. Idioms develop from the collective historical and social and emotional experiences of people which makes them essential cultural markers of identity and worldview. Research on idioms across linguistic and cultural boundaries reveals both linguistic form variations and fundamental cognitive and cultural patterns. The analysis of idiomatic expressions across different cultures reveals both similarities and differences in linguistic creativity and cultural values and historical influences. The meanings of idioms remain consistent between languages, but their cultural values and historical influences and societal norms differ significantly.

Research conducted across different languages has studied idiomatic expressions through Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) which shows that metaphorical thinking depends on cultural schemas. Kövecses (2010, p. 216) analyzed how English and Hungarian speakers use idioms to express emotions because their cultural backgrounds lead to different conceptualizations. Boers and Demecheleer (2001) studied how time and space idioms differ between French and English because cultural perspectives on temporal movement and spatial orientation vary. The research shows that idioms cannot be translated easily because they develop from knowledge and values which exist in specific locations.

Research on color idioms shows distinctive variations between different cultures. The symbolic meanings of colors make cross-cultural comparison particularly fruitful in this field. The meanings of certain colors match between cultures but others show major differences. Different societies assign symbolic meanings to colors which create opposing emotional and value-based associations and taboos. The meaning of black as a symbol of mourning or formal events in English culture differs from its association with fertility and richness in other cultural traditions. White represents purity in Western societies but functions as a symbol of mourning in East Asian traditions.

The various interpretations demonstrate that context plays a crucial role when analyzing idioms that employ symbolic colors. The idioms demonstrate both linguistic similarities and cultural



differences in how colors are symbolically used. According to Wierzbicka (1990) color terms exist within cultural cognition systems which shape idiomatic expressions across different languages.

The human experience and emotional responses share common ground across linguistic barriers through idiomatic expressions. The analysis of idiomatic expressions between English and Azerbaijani languages demonstrates common conceptual patterns together with distinct cultural meanings especially in color symbolism. Idioms function as artistic instruments and cultural indicators in Azerbaijani and English literary works. Both English and Azerbaijani languages contain idiomatic expressions which describe luck and success as well as difficulties in life:

English: “silver lining” (finding positivity in adversity).

Azerbaijani: “ağ gün” (white day, representing prosperity and happiness).

The following idioms about deception and secrecy demonstrate similarities across cultures:

English: “white lie” (a harmless or minor untruth).

Azerbaijani: “ağ yalan” (white lie, meaning a small and insignificant falsehood).

The idioms demonstrate how white serves as a symbol for innocence even when used to describe deceptive behavior. The usage of color in these idioms explores how language can soften the perception of certain actions, framing them as socially acceptable or morally less severe.

English “red flag” (a warning sign of danger or problems)

Azerbaijani “qırmızı xətt” (a red line, meaning a strict boundary or limit that should not be crossed.)

Both in the English and Azerbaijani languages red is used to symbolize danger or limits. It represents a firm boundary or limit that indicates a point of no return.

Various idioms, though among them some may stick to universal themes, some are too culture-dependent and tradition-bound. This contrast indicates how language reflects human experiences and values and worldviews of individual cultures.

English: “black sheep” (someone who brings disgrace or shame to the family).

Azerbaijani: “qara siyahıya düşmək” (in a sense, to fall into the blacklist, meaning being excluded or labeled in a negative manner).

The idioms share the same “black” meaning for negative aspects, but they apply to different situations which involve family relationships versus general social exclusion. This reflects how cultures assign similar symbolism to colors but different social contexts.

Color idioms provide essential knowledge about how various cultures understand emotional states and protective signals and successful conditions. Additional contrastive studies will improve our knowledge about idioms as living components of language and cultural systems.

### **1.4.3. Cultural and symbolic nuances of color idioms in English and Azerbaijani literary contexts**

Literary traditions use color idioms as stylistic tools which create vivid imagery while expressing emotions and deepening thematic meaning. The symbolic meanings of these expressions emerge from common human perception frameworks and cultural associations which add depth to stories. According to Conceptual Blending Theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) idiomatic expressions develop through the fusion of cognitive spaces which unite general human experiences with cultural narratives.

The meanings of colors in idioms represent basic concepts which people understand universally but their interpretations depend on literary and cultural contexts. Color idioms maintain specific semantic functions which appear throughout literary works including:

#### **1. Symbolizing Emotional States:**

Black represents both sorrow and despair when someone experiences a “black mood”.

Red symbolizes both passion and anger when someone “sees red”.

#### **2. Representing Archetypes:**

The color gold represents both prosperity and excellence during a “golden era”.

Green symbolizes growth and renewal through its representation of “green shoots”.

Literature uses these idioms to bridge language barriers so authors can create powerful connections between readers and basic human experiences. The symbolic nature of these idioms makes them particularly significant in literature because they transform cultural experiences into symbolic language. Literary texts demonstrate substantial cultural differences in color symbolism through their idiomatic expressions. Through their use authors establish metaphorical connections which enable colors to link textual elements to readers' mental images. Through color idioms poets and writers achieve both aesthetic goals and emotional connections with cultural emotional experiences.

Color idioms in English and Azerbaijani languages demonstrate linguistic patterns while also expressing cultural perceptions of emotions and values and life experiences. The Cultural of idiomatic expressions which creates different meanings for common color motifs. Cognition Theory (Kahan et al., 2010) demonstrates how social values and traditional beliefs affect group interpretation. It highlights the role of culture in shaping collective understanding and cultural frameworks.

The Conceptual Blending Theory supports this by showing how literary traditions combine cognitive frames including emotional, moral, and symbolic dimensions to create powerful idiomatic expressions. Blue in English language expresses sadness or melancholy through the phrase “feeling blue”. Azerbaijani color idioms derive their meanings from traditional folklore and natural elements that exist in the local culture. The Azerbaijani expression “qara günlər” (lit. black days) represents difficult periods of life and hardship. The Azerbaijani expression “ağ günə çıxmaq” (lit. to come into a white day) indicates both good fortune and better times ahead. The Azerbaijani cultural symbolism presents black and white as opposing forces where white represents purity and hope but black represents challenges.

Literary traditions of English employ color idioms to convey emotional states and social commentary through both poetry and prose. The color “white” which usually symbolizes purity or virtue takes on meanings of privilege or emptiness depending on the context in Romantic and Victorian poetry. Pastakkaya (2019) examines how late Victorian novelists used “white” to portray the dual meaning of moral purity alongside societal emptiness which reflected the social tensions of that period. The intricate symbolism demonstrates how color idioms have evolved to represent emotional and philosophical elements in literary works.

The color “blue” in modernist works typically represents introspective sadness according to Steinvall (2002). Color idioms in Azerbaijani literature connect strongly to communal values and moral lessons as well as historical traditions. Such idioms appear frequently in folk tales and poetry and narratives to represent cultural wisdom and aesthetic beauty.

The Azerbaijani literary work “The book of Dada Gorgud” (Kitabi Dədə Qorqud) integrates color expressions deeply into its text to convey important symbolic and cultural meanings. The colors in these epic stories represent various concepts which range from moral traits to supernatural and spiritual elements. The term “qara gün” (black day) represents both misfortune and adverse periods which depict the challenges that characters encounter. The expression “ağ üzlü olmaq” (to be white-faced) represents honor and righteousness because it signifies the character's integrity and social respect. The text frequently employs qırmızı (red) to symbolize qan (blood) and bravery and sacrifice which represent battle and heroism and loyalty. According to Abdulla (2004) the symbolic color usage in Azerbaijani epic narratives demonstrates how adversity and honor and bravery and sacrifice create the cultural and literary essence of the text.

Literary analysis of color idioms reveals their deep cultural and semantic value in different contexts. Color idioms in English and Azerbaijani traditions function beyond stylistic elements

because they connect general human emotions to cultural beliefs. Through color idioms English literature expresses personal reflection as well as emotional responses and social observations which both represent individual perspectives and societal patterns. Azerbaijani literature uses color idioms to present communal values and moral lessons and historical narratives which reveal distinct philosophical and spiritual aspects of the culture. The symbolic meanings of these idioms emerge from the cultural and historical contexts of their respective traditions.

The symbolic nature of colors enhances reader engagement with the text while reflecting the cultural values and collective imagination and societal struggles of a particular society.

#### **1.4.4. Broadening the scope of idiomatic studies: a cross-cultural literary analysis of color-related idioms in English and Azerbaijani traditions**

Color-based idiomatic expressions function as essential linguistic and cultural artifacts because they contain the core values and emotional perspectives and worldview of the societies where they exist. Literary traditions use color idioms to create metaphorical depth which authors and poets use to develop narratives and create symbolic connections with readers. Literary texts possess going out of linguistic expressions that create conceptual landscapes of communicating stories and emotions and traditions. They often have their cultural metaphoric weight in individual frames, but they can be comparably analyzed to show how different cultures deal with metaphor, expression, and narrative. The analysis of idiomatic expressions has mainly focused on their linguistic structures and semantic functions but further investigation into their symbolic and contrastive function in literature is essential.

Language and literature illustrate a fluid interrelationship, with color being a common theme for idiomatic expressions. Color idioms enjoy unique connotative power in that they conjure up general human experiences like purity (white), and (red) danger and culture-bound emotional connotations (black). Authors from literary traditions put color idioms to emotional effects and character definitions, as well as philosophical meanings, which relate to their readers.

The existing research about idioms including color-related idioms has not provided a complete contrastive analysis of their symbolic meanings across different literary traditions. Most research on idioms focuses on either analyzing idioms within one language or studying their structural and semantic features or general communicative and cognitive aspects while ignoring their meanings in relation to historical and cultural influences.

Most linguistic studies emphasize the modern usage of idioms. The historical development of color idioms represents a vital component of idiom studies because these expressions stem from cultural narratives, folklore and adapt to changing societal norms. The current literature fails to consider how historical events, traditional practices, ideological transformations affect the usage and interpretation of color idioms in literary texts. The analysis of idioms in literature through contrastive methods reveals how metaphorical language connects different literary identities while preserving linguistic uniqueness.

Color idioms in literary works such as classical poetry and epic narratives function as indicators of courage, fate, morality, and spiritual elevation which strengthen the connection between language and historical tradition. Color idioms carry philosophical meanings which extend past their basic linguistic function to represent introspection and societal changes and collective wisdom. Scholars can discover the profound meaning of color idioms across literary traditions by extending their research to contrastive and historical and interdisciplinary studies of these idiomatic expressions. The combination of linguistic analysis with literary study and cultural research creates fresh possibilities to study how idioms including color-based idioms connect language with culture and artistic creativity. This approach demonstrates how idiomatic language remains adaptable while maintaining its enduring presence which reveals its universal and culture-specific functions.

Contrastive idiomatic studies focusing on Eastern and Western traditions are few and far between. It is from this absence that much of the limitation is felt in discovering intercultural patterns and contrasts that might bring more sophisticated analyses of idiomatic symbolism. Such a limitation has resulted the exclusion of historical and philosophical influences-really through the mediums of literature, mythology, and traditional value systems-to be drawn from the very fact that as much such systems go unexplored. This is what this thesis sets out to accomplish-a comparison of the color idioms in English and Azerbaijani works with respect to their historical, cultural, and philosophical dimensions. It should bridge such voids under an interdisciplinary framework, thereby opening new vistas in the evolution and symbolic function of idioms, within much broader discussions about language, culture, and literary traditions.

Indeed, an idiom is both a cultural and an artistic product; so, researchers become able to see how authors build worldviews from the culture through symbolic language when idioms are looked at within literary texts.

This research investigates color symbolism in idiomatic expressions by analyzing the works of William Shakespeare who represents English literature and Nizami Ganjavi who represents Azerbaijani literature to compare Western and Eastern perspectives. The study of color idioms in Shakespearean literature and in the poems of Nizami Ganjavi presents a most interesting opportunity to study the different ways in which philosophical and socio-political frameworks may have determined the meanings of the idioms. This focus will enable a more detailed comprehension of how idiomatic language maintains cultural ideologies through reinforcement or challenges them in English and Azerbaijani literary works. The following sections of this thesis will analyze the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi because their writings showcase the extensive literary and symbolic richness of color idioms in their respective cultures. The research may provide fresh perspectives about idiomatic evolution and symbolism which will enhance studies about language and culture and literary traditions.

## CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGY

The research aimed to investigate a cross-cultural analysis of color-related idioms in English and Azerbaijani literary traditions through Shakespearean and Nizami Ganjavi's works. The research intended to identify how color meanings appear through idiomatic expressions in these texts while analyzing how these meanings develop based on cultural, historical, and philosophical elements of each tradition. In addition, the study aimed to determine the main elements that affect the creation and understanding of color idioms across literary settings. The researcher used a qualitative cross-cultural contrastive method which combines literary discourse analysis and cultural studies approaches.

The chapter outlines procedures for analyzing a carefully constructed corpus of primary texts to uncover metaphorical and symbolic meanings of color idioms. The contrastive and cultural analysis method shows how color idioms reflect and shape cultural values as well as historical influences and literary conventions of their respective traditions. The analysis of idioms in their literary settings will show both common and culture-specific aspects of color symbolism to enhance knowledge about language-literature-cultural identity connections. The methodology chapter contains sections that explain data collection procedures and data preparation methods and analytical approaches for addressing the research questions outlined in the introduction.

The research study used a systematic framework which leads readers through the entire research process starting from corpus selection of Shakespeare's and Nizami Ganjavi's works until the analysis of idiomatic expressions. The research methodology followed a structured approach to analyze color idioms' metaphorical and symbolic dimensions in order to reveal their cultural and historical and literary importance across both traditions while providing a contrastive analysis of their influence on linguistic and artistic development.

### **2.1. Data gathering instruments of the study**

The main tool for data collection in this study was a detailed analysis of selected literary works from English and Azerbaijani traditions. The analysis includes the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi which offer extensive contexts for studying the metaphorical and symbolic dimensions of color-related idioms and their importance in representing English and Azerbaijani literary traditions respectively. The analysis required a thorough and organized examination of the texts to identify figurative language components including idiomatic expressions and metaphors.

To facilitate this process both physical and digital versions of the selected texts used to support this process. The digital sources including online libraries and Google Books and academic repositories enabled text searching which helped identify color-related idioms in a structured manner. The digital texts underwent systematic analysis through keyword searches to identify both color terms and idiomatic expressions which resulted in an efficient and comprehensive examination of linguistic and cultural meanings in the corpus. Additionally, the research used manual close reading methods to enhance digital searches for achieving a detailed contextual understanding of color-related idioms and symbolism in their literary settings.

The research method allowed the study to maintain its focus on revealing how color idioms represent cultural, historical, and literary values in English and Azerbaijani traditions. The research combined digital text analysis with manual interpretation to achieve a systematic and detailed investigation of idiomatic expressions that influence linguistic and literary creativity.

## **2.2. Main data**

The data of this study includes selected literary works from the English and Azerbaijani literary traditions, with special reference to the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi. The authors were chosen because of their historical, cultural, and literary importance. The texts were chosen because they are rich in color idioms which offer a good opportunity to explore their metaphorical, symbolic, and cultural significance in both traditions. The English tradition relies on Shakespeare's works including his plays and sonnets and narrative poems to study complex figurative language and symbolic imagery. The literary texts offer essential understanding of how color idioms enhance thematic depth and emotional resonance across various literary contexts while transmitting cultural values from Elizabethan society.

The Azerbaijani tradition also includes Nizami Ganjavi's extensive literary works which include his epic poetry and narrative compositions. The texts demonstrate how color symbolism functions as a fundamental element to convey cultural values and moral teachings and historical narratives thus making them crucial for the study's contrastive framework.

Selected texts were studied within their original language and under reliable academically accepted translations into a source language using the idiomatic content. The major focus was identifying and comparing color-related idioms from the two corpora to discover the cultural, historical, and philosophical underpinnings surrounding these idioms and contribute to a broader understanding of how idioms work across literary and linguistic traditions.



A few primary texts were consulted, some from physical resources, and others from digital ones; namely online libraries, and other academic platforms. A digital format of the texts was systematically searched through keyword searches for occurrences of colors and idiomatic expressions; thus, ensuring both the efficient and inclusive exploration of linguistic as well as cultural meanings present in the corpus. Secondary data, comprising scholarly articles, books, and theses, complemented the primary texts by providing critical insights into the cultural and literary relevance of idiomatic expressions.

The extensive collection serves as the basis for the research to conduct its contrastive and interdisciplinary examination of color-related idioms while studying their linguistic, cultural, historical, and literary aspects in the extensive traditions of English and Azerbaijani literature.

### **2.2.1. Data- source-sampling**

In this research, literary works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi are the primary data sources, especially emphasizing how these two masters of their respective languages promote the use of color-related idioms. The selection of these two names is based on the authors' prominence in English and Azerbaijani literatures and for their very rich metaphorical and symbolical use of language within these works. Shakespeare stands as an iconic figure of Elizabethan English literature, and Ganjavi's poetry is what guides Azerbaijani literary traditions. So, there is an abundance of materials on the two authors to aid the study in cross-cultural color symbolism in literary idioms.

The research used the most famous literary works of both authors which are established within their literary traditions. The research analyzed multiple Shakespearean plays across different genres (tragedies, comedies, histories) together with his sonnets which offer abundant metaphorical and symbolic language. The research analyzed Ganjavi's *Khamsa* (Five Treasures) epic narrative poems together with his ghazals, odes and quatrains. The Azerbaijani literary tradition rests on these poetic forms which demonstrate Ganjavi's skill in lyrical and metaphorical writing. The chosen works represent important cultural artifacts from their time periods and utilize color symbolism and metaphor alongside idiomatic language effectively. The selection of texts followed methodological rigor by choosing works that were linguistically and culturally relevant and historically significant and comparable across traditions and included frequent color idioms and major themes and cross-cultural analysis opportunities. This careful selection ensured a balanced framework for investigation.

The sampling of color-related idioms relied on the occurrence and visibility of color terms in the works especially when they occur in metaphorical, symbolic, or idiomatic expressions. The aim was to investigate how color terms operate within the cultural and literary contexts of both traditions. A range of genres from both authors was included to give a full view of how color symbolism is used in different literary forms.

The study used edited versions of Shakespeare's original texts because only these versions were available for analysis to maintain consistency in the analysis. The study used Azerbaijani translations of Ganjavi's works to examine how color symbolism was translated and presented in translation. This selection process ensured that the data represented those key works and provided a good base for a thorough investigation of the cross-cultural and literary differences in color-related idioms.

### **2.2.2. Preparing the Data for Analysis**

The preparation of data for analysis required a thorough methodical approach to select appropriate texts which would be suitable for the study. The initial step involved gathering a complete corpus which included Shakespeare's and Ganjavi's literary works obtained from physical and digital sources. The selection of texts occurred through a deliberate process which focused on both their abundant color-related idioms and their ability to demonstrate cultural and historical and literary aspects under study.

The process started with a close reading of edited and modernized versions of Shakespeare's texts, collected and selected Azerbaijani poetic and prose translations of Ganjavi's works. Edited versions were collected and selected for clarity and consistency to target and interpret color-related idiomatic expressions we'd find across both corpora. Expressions where color terms were metaphorically, symbolically, or idiomatically employed were treated with extra emphasis.

Relevant idioms based on the corpora occurrences in different literary contexts were extracted, and further analysis centered on more contextual information like surrounding text and thematic relevance. Special consideration was given to the cultural and historical and philosophical meanings of color symbolism in both authors' works. The idioms were organized thematically according to dominant color terms (black, red, white, and green) for the purpose of a more focused and coherent analysis in the following stages of research. Each of the idioms was also accompanied with contextual annotations that discussed its role within the narrative structure as well as character development and the broad socio-cultural themes of the respective tradition.

This preparatory phase also includes the translation of the selected Azerbaijani texts wherever necessary preparing for a contrastive analysis. Special care was taken to preserve the idiomatic usages in this process to be able to make an appropriate and significant comparison with equivalent idioms in English literary traditions.

This stage of preparation established a basis for a deep contrastive study on how the color idioms reflect and shape vast cultural values, aesthetic principles, and worldviews with their philosophical, historical, and linguistic significances from various literary canons, thus ensuring a strong and multifaceted basis for analysis.

### **2.2.3. The procedure of data analysis**

Once the data were identified and prepared, the actual analysis commenced. The analytical process at this stage included a careful qualitative analysis of color-based idiomatic expressions from selected literary works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi. This analysis concentrated on the metaphorical and symbolic use of color terms in their respective cultural and literary contexts.

Color idioms became the objects of analysis for most narrative contexts in which they were embedded to discover their role in the work as they pertained to reader involvement, theme development, and cultural flavoring. Thus, idioms were classified according to their function—whether they were metaphorical, symbolic, or cultural in nature. In addition, their relative frequencies, connotative significance, and literary value were also considered.

A contrastive study dealt with an analysis of the idioms in Shakespeare in opposition to those in the works of Nizami Ganjavi. Emphasis was laid on how history, philosophy, and socio-cultural elements would interfere in giving meaning and usage of each idiom within both literary traditions. From this contrastive analysis, a few patterned areas, and differences in the representation of color within the culture were discovered, which enabled the researcher to discuss how each tradition considers color symbolism as an expression of the respective view of life and literary aesthetics.

The research also examined how particular color idioms either support or contradict social values and poetic conventions and ideologies in English and Azerbaijani cultures. The analysis of idioms extended beyond lexical interpretation to include their connection with literary themes and character development and cultural metaphors. The study included examples from different literary forms (drama, narrative poetry, prose, etc.) to minimize researcher bias and ensure objectivity. This

allowed for a thorough and representative comparison of the use of color-related idioms in both corpora.

This approach to data analysis, structured yet culturally informed, ensured greater reliability and depth of interpretation in this study because it grounds linguistic observations in literary and cultural analysis. The research also enabled a critical analysis of how color idioms function as a connection of language, literature, and cultural identity.

## **CHAPTER III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1. Overview of identified color idioms and emerging theme**

Colors profoundly contribute to the construction of symbolic, emotive, or cultural narratives within literary traditions. Color idioms are powerful devices in William Shakespeare's drama and Nizami Ganjavi's poetry that, on the one hand, add differentiated meaning to the text; on the other, reinforce the themes and mirror the society and philosophical outlook of that time. This section presents color idioms studied considering the emerging themes that characterize their literary and cultural significance.

The methodical process of idiom collection and classification has revealed multiple fundamental patterns. The idiomatic expressions go beyond physical color references because they represent abstract meanings including emotional states, moral values, destiny and knowledge and authority. Color idioms in Shakespeare's works depict psychological states of jealousy ambition and sorrow but Nizami Ganjavi uses color to create philosophical narratives which serve as tools for moral contemplation and mystical understanding.

The chapter follows a systematic approach to analyze the material through Corpus Design and Literary Spectrum. The subsection explains the selection criteria and textual sources and classification methods used to identify the idioms and establish their connection to literary and intercultural interpretation. The following sections analyze thematic continuities and symbolic contrasts and culturally specific interpretations in English and Azerbaijani literary landscapes.

This chapter examines how color symbolism interacts with narrative construction through an analysis of these idioms in their original texts and historical period. The discussion aims to situate the research within both cross-cultural literary frameworks and broader philosophical and cultural perspectives to understand how Shakespeare's and Ganjavi's idiomatic expressions maintain their significance in modern linguistic and literary scholarship.

#### **3.1.1. Corpus design and literary spectrum**

The research corpus contains specific works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi to demonstrate linguistic richness and cultural depth. The authors received special attention because of their profound use of symbolic and figurative language particularly color language and their enduring influence on English and Azerbaijani literary traditions. The analysis concentrated on idiomatic expressions that use color terms to convey meanings beyond their basic definitions. The research analyzed color idiomatic expressions in selected works from William Shakespeare and

Nizami Ganjavi through their complete literary collections. The research used a cross-textual method instead of focusing on particular works to analyze the wide range of color-related expressions.

The analysis of Shakespeare included his dramatic works such as tragedy, comedy, history and romance alongside his sonnets which presented symbolic and emotional language in intimate reflections. The analysis of Nizami Ganjavi concentrated on his major narrative poems from the “Khamisa” collection which combine romantic and philosophical and mystical and historical elements with his lyric poetry that expresses personal and spiritual themes. The balanced selection framework allowed for a thorough investigation of color idioms in various literary structures and cultural perspectives.

The identification process proceeded along certain criteria: (1) The idiom must have contained a color term, (2) the expression must have had metaphorical or symbolic meaning, and (3) indeed, the idiom must have been embedded contextually in a character's speech or in the narrative voice or poetic imagery. In the case of Shakespeare, idioms found in the modernized editions of the original English texts with the support of academic commentary were the data sources. For Nizami Ganjavi, idioms were identified and examined based on scholarly Azerbaijani translations of his Persian works for linguistic and cultural accessibility. All idioms in question were cross-checked with idiomatic dictionaries and relevant secondary literature to confirm their symbolic and metaphorical applicability.

The corpus contains a large collection of color-related idioms which were extracted from Shakespearean texts and Nizami Ganjavi’s poetic works. The idioms were organized into thematic categories based on the recurring color motifs including black, white, red, green, blue, and gold according to their symbolic meaning, cultural associations, and narrative functions. This thematic organization allows for a comparative analysis of how color symbolism operates across different literary traditions and cultural backgrounds. It also highlights the universality and variability of color meanings in expressing human emotions, values, and experiences.

The chosen corpus demonstrates a purposeful cultural methodology for identifying color-related idioms between English and Azerbaijani literary traditions. The analysis benefits from a diverse selection of poetic dramatic and narrative texts which provide adequate representation. The established corpus provides the starting point for thematic and symbolic analysis which begins with a general analysis of color term distribution in the selected idioms.

### **3.1.2. General distribution of color idioms in literary contexts**

The study approaches this issue from the standpoint of English and Azerbaijani literary traditions, revealing patterns whereby particular colors are attributed with relatively stable symbolic and emotional, as well as cultural meanings. The analysis focuses on qualitative aspects to understand how color idioms create symbolic meanings throughout various poetic and dramatic settings. Both literary traditions use colors as symbolic anchors which create emotional resonance and societal commentary and philosophical depth. The literary contexts of Shakespeare's works and Nizami Ganjavi's poetry gain depth through color-related idioms which demonstrate specific patterns and trends.

According to one aspect of classification, idioms were grouped into categories of black, white, red, green, blue, and gold based on the dominant color elements they contained. These colors were associated with several different aspects, which were conditioned by their socio-cultural and philosophical parameters in the larger traditions of literary texts. For instance, idioms associated with black could often be characterized by concepts of sorrow, malice, or moral contamination, while white evoked connotation of purity, truth, or spiritual upliftment. Similar emotions were evoked by red, whether concerning feeling intensity, love, or violence. On the other hand, green came in context with nature, growth, jealousy, or possibly mystical renewal. Blue and gold colors are few but carry their meanings in royal dignity and sacred understanding and divine transcendentness. The color black often creeps into the plays of Shakespeare with its meaning of death and secrecy and treachery whereas red pertains to passion and violence and guilt. White holds a special meaning in Ganjavi's poetry because it represents purity and spiritual love and divine presence while green symbolizes nature and mysticism and harmony.

The English texts which included dramatic genres and sonnets showed color idioms that served to develop characters and contrast emotions and analyze society. The Azerbaijani literary idioms presented a complex network of mystical and ethical and philosophical symbolism. The literary contexts of these idioms shaped their expressive depth—where idioms were not merely decorative but served as integral carriers of cultural worldviews and poetic imagination.

The classification shows that color associations share some similarities between traditions, yet most idioms maintain unique cultural interpretations of their meanings. The different approaches to color idioms demonstrate their dual role as literary devices and symbolic instruments which literature uses to express cultural values and emotional and belief systems. The overview

establishes a thematic framework which supports the detailed analysis of idioms throughout the following sections of this chapter.

### **3.2. Color Idioms in the works of William Shakespeare**

The works of William Shakespeare provide an exceptionally rich tapestry of language, where idioms about color serve not just as aesthetic adornment but also as the main channels of emotional tenor, character building, and cultural resonance. Throughout his various literary works including tragedy, comedy, history, romance and sonnets, color-related expressions occur in ways that mirror his inner thoughts, social structures, ethical judgments, and philosophical perspectives.

This subsection examines the function of color idioms in Shakespeare's literary framework, analyzing how they work in dramatic characterization, thematic symbolism, and narrative progression. Through the analysis of the distribution and contextual significance of these idioms, we discover how Shakespeare's language creates meaning, shapes interpretation, and reflects early modern beliefs about color, emotion, and human experience, and the broader Elizabethan worldview they articulate.

#### **3.2.1. Recurrent color idioms and their literary functions**

William Shakespeare uses color idioms in his literary works to create more than visual effects because these linguistic tools deeply influence character psychology and thematic development and audience perception. The repeated use of black, white, red and green color idioms in Shakespeare's works carries multiple layers of cultural meaning and emotional impact and narrative value. A thorough examination of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets reveals that colors function metaphorically to represent personal states and social conflicts and moral differences.

**Example 1:** The color black as emblematic of hidden ambition and moral corruption in *Macbeth*

*"Stars, hide your fires; Let not light see my black and deep desires"*

*(Macbeth, 1.4.55, Folger Edition).*

The idiom "black" functions as a metaphor for hidden evil and suppressed wickedness which matches the character's moral deterioration. The idiom "black deeds" or "black fate" appears in multiple texts to represent the Elizabethan connection between blackness and the unknown or sinister.

**Example 2:** In *Henry V*, the term white is used to denote cowardice.

*"...for Bardolph, he is white-livered, red-faced...."* (*Henry V*, 3.2.29, Folger Edition).



In Henry V, the term “white-livered” shows how color idioms link physical descriptions to abstract meanings. The everyday language uses physical hues to convey symbolic meanings which represent both physical attributes and moral and emotional values of a specific time.

According to Shakespearean standards and Elizabethan views of masculinity, the term “white-livered” in this Henry V passage represents cowardice. The liver served as a symbol of life force and inner power but the text uses “white-livered” to describe someone who lacks courage. The white color in this context functions as a metaphor to show the absence of vital life force needed for bravery. The reversal demonstrates how color meanings transform when viewed through the cultural and historical context. The idiom upholds social norms that valor and fortitude must be essential male characteristics to condemn anyone who fails to meet these standards.

**Example 3.** The use of red as the symbol of violence, and passion.

After Duncan’s murder, Macbeth exclaims:

*“Will all great Neptune’s Ocean wash this blood clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red”*

*(Macbeth, 2.2.74, Folger Edition)*

Red functions as a strong symbol which represents guilt in this passage. During the Elizabethan era red served as a symbol that linked to sin and moral corruption and feelings of guilt. The red transformation of the green seas indicates that natural forces cannot remove spiritual and ethical marks which result from immoral actions. During this time people believed that divine order controlled the universe, so all human actions produced eternal effects. The color which usually represents life force and intense emotions transforms into a symbol of permanent moral destruction.

**Example 4.** Green as a symbol of jealousy

Iago warns Othello:

*“O, beware, my lord, of jealousy; It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on.” (Othello, 3.3.195, Folger Edition).*

The phrase “green-eyed monster” from Othello has become a famous phrase in English idiomatic tradition. The idiom survives to this day because it illustrates jealousy as destructive, and Shakespeare's figurative language continues to have a lasting effect on modern usage. Through his depiction of jealousy as a creature with “green eyes” Shakespeare employs cultural symbolism to show that envy is both unnatural and corrosive. The philosophical meaning of this image demonstrates how jealousy creates a destructive cycle for itself. The monster destroys its host while simultaneously mocking the part of the self which it has destroyed. The complex emotional analysis

reveals a warning about jealousy which shows that its continued presence leads to complete personal and social collapse that mocks its own destructive nature. The three elements of historical envy associations and cultural vice personification and philosophical self-destruction analysis unite to create a deeply meaningful symbol of the “green-eyed monster”.

The following table demonstrates the distribution of these recurrent idioms and their thematic functions through selected examples across genres:

**Table 3.2.1. Selected color idioms in Shakespeare’s works**

Color	Idiomatic expression	Symbolic meaning	Literary function
Black	Black and deep desires	Concealment, inner immorality	Hints at the psychological struggle with ambition
Red	Making the green one red	Guilt, bloodshed, moral consequence	Represents irreversible guilt and violence
Green	Green-eyed monster	Envy, jealousy	Personifies destructive emotions in relationships
White	White-livered	Cowardice, lack of courage	Reinforces valor and bravery in male character ideals

The idioms reflect cultural patterns and narrative structures which strengthen the dramatic texture of Shakespeare's work through color usage. The idioms serve more than ornamental purposes because they create character traits while showing upcoming events and delivering moral lessons. The multiple appearances of these idioms across different play genres prove their extensive cultural importance during the Elizabethan era. The study analyzes color idioms in their original dramatic settings, thereby demonstrating their deep interconnection with Shakespeare's poetic creation. Through the chosen examples, color references linked by Shakespeare symbolize psychological states and social values, thus adding to the symbolic texture of his literary pieces.

### **3.2.2. Genre-specific idiomatic patterns**

Shakespeare demonstrates both emotional sensitivity and genre awareness through his command of idiomatic language. The distribution of color-related idioms throughout Shakespeare's works follows a specific pattern which changes based on the dramatic genre including tragedy, comedy, history, romance, and lyric forms like the sonnet. This section analyzes how genre affects the choice of idioms and their occurrence rates and usage patterns to uncover advanced thematic and stylistic elements. Shakespeare uses color idioms in his comedies to create both lighthearted and ironic effects.

In *Twelfth Night*, the term fears no colors is used by Maria mockingly to refer to the boldness of someone, comparing it to that of military bravery or boastfulness.

**Example 5:** Colors as symbols of fate and identity

*“FOOL Let her hang me. He that is well hanged in this world needs to fear no colors.”*

*(Twelfth Night. 1.5.5, Folger Edition)*

During the Elizabethan era colors functioned as powerful symbols which represented moral and social attributes. The fool claims that when someone is hanged their fate becomes fixed, so external signs of status or identity lose their meaning. The fool argues that true worth and punishment remain unchanged by superficial embellishments in a society that uses colors to signal affiliation and honor and vice. The historical context and cultural significance and philosophical meaning of color in Shakespeare's work demonstrate his mastery of using color to create visual effects while delivering deeper insights about identity and fate and how external appearances can be misleading.

Color idioms in historical accounts function to achieve political and ideological objectives. The idioms reinforce honor, lineage, or cowardice—elements central to the construction of national identity and heroism.

**Example 6:** Gold as a symbol of virtue and nobility

*“PISTOL The King's a bawcock and a heart of gold, a lad of life, an imp of fame, of parents good of fist most valiant. I kiss his dirty shoe, and from heartstring I love the lovely bully. What is thy name?”* (Henry V, 4.1.46, Folger Edition)

Color idioms in historical accounts function to achieve political and ideological objectives. The idioms reinforce honor, lineage, or cowardice—elements central to the construction of national identity and heroism.

The expression “heart of gold” which people use today as an idiom first appeared in Henry V. Through his words Pistol shows that gold represents moral purity and bravery. During the medieval and Renaissance periods gold functioned as a symbol for divine favor and wisdom and royal legitimacy because of its deep-rooted association with virtue and legitimacy. The Tudor myth served as a historical force which molded how people viewed English monarchs especially Henry V because he was seen as a leader blessed by God who represented national greatness. Through his historical dramas Shakespeare during Elizabeth I's rule strengthened the monarchic authority by portraying Henry as a heroic figure who legitimized divine right monarchy. The philosophical content of Pistol's speech explores how identity relates to leadership while also examining the

worship of heroes. The idioms demonstrate the public and often propagandistic characteristics of historical drama.

Color idioms in Shakespearean comedies such as *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* function to portray emotional transformation and mischief through themes. The idioms function as entry points to understand Shakespearean psychological complexities about love and mischief by combining humor with deep emotional understanding.

**Example 7.**

*"A blank, my lord. She never told her love,  
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,  
Feed on her damask cheek. She pined in thought,  
And with a green and yellow melancholy."*

*(Twelfth Night, 4.2.22, Folger Edition)*

The analysis of color idioms in this passage reveals themes about hiding things and unmet yearnings and inner emotional battles which provide deep insights into the subject matter. During the Elizabethan era green symbolized sickness as well as unfulfilled desire yet yellow represented cowardice and decay and emotional weakness. Together, "green and yellow melancholy" communicates suffering deep in the heart, in terms of the body, mind, and spirit; it speaks of a love discolored, almost on the verge of decay. Philosophically, this suggests that love has become an act of nourishment in addition to suffering, the unspoken nature of the love consuming the very essence of the individual. The tragic romance "*Romeo and Juliet*" depends on poetic devices to convey both passion and fate. Through color imagery Shakespeare reinforces the romantic idealism and the inevitable fate of death.

**Example 8**

FRIAR LAWRENCE      Benedicite.

*"What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?  
Young son, it argues a distempered head  
So soon to bid "Good morrow" to thy bed.  
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,  
And, where care lodges, sleep will never lie;  
But where unbruised youth with unstuffed brain''  
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign."*

*(Romeo and Juliet, 2.3.33, Folger Edition)*

The term “golden sleep” and comparable expressions create associations with nobility and transformative healing and divine blessings. The idioms enhance the poetic tone which defines the genre through its focus on forgiveness and rebirth and resolution. The expression golden sleep functions as a symbol for youth's pure and untroubled essence which stands in opposition to adult responsibilities. Gold functions as a symbol of divinity and perfection and richness in traditional literary and cultural traditions. The term symbolizes the perfect rest which young people experience before their minds become troubled by aging concerns. Through his metaphor Shakespeare shows that mental disturbances cause sleep disturbances rather than physical aging which matches Renaissance-era beliefs about health and emotional states. The phrase appears during a peaceful interval before the disorder begins thus becoming a powerful symbol of brief moments of joy.

### **Example 9**

*“DOGBERRY: Moreover, sir, which indeed is not under white and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass. I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment”.*

*(Much Ado About Nothing, 5.1.319, Folger Edition)*

It is meant to signify that something is informal. Shakespeare uses the phrase as part of a satirical commentary on bureaucracy and human error. This pursuit of "absolute truth" is often laden with misunderstanding and incompetence, Dogberry's ludicrous phrasing being part of a satire against the entire construct of government interference in a procedural manner. It draws attention to typified miscommunication as well as the social scale in which such miscommunication would occur. In legal philosophy, black and white are representations of certainty; Dogberry subverts such authority behind the absolute, thereby reinforcing mistaken identity and misinterpretation.

This genre-based perspective shows that different color idioms may recur in Shakespeare's works, but that their functions are sensible for the thematic and emotional imperatives of the relevant genre. In this light, Shakespeare shows not only linguistic creativity but an awareness of the articulation of form and audience expectation. Shakespeare creates a sense of flexibility that adds complexity to his writing and makes his plays more impactful.

### **3.2.3. Symbolism in the Elizabethan historical and cultural imagination**

Language was not purely a means to communicate in Elizabethan England; it was also a reflection of contemporary shades of beliefs, social hierarchies, religious ideologies, and various philosophical traditions. Within this world view, colors had an inherent meaning, so color idioms were laden with all that history, culture, and morality the period represented in Shakespeare's

works. During the Elizabethan era people used systems of thought which combined Christian moral principles from the medieval period with humanist ideas from the Renaissance and the ancient doctrine of humors. Colors in this period held symbolic meanings which extended beyond visual representation into moral and emotional and cosmic realms.

The color black appeared in literature to represent darkness as well as evil and secrecy and melancholy. Through his use of idioms such as “black and deep desires” Shakespeare tapped into a common cultural understanding which linked blackness to hidden immoralities and inner corruption. In contrast white represented purity and innocence together with truth in the Elizabethan era. The symbolism of white appeared most strongly in female characters because it reflected Elizabethan cultural values about chastity and virtue. The opposing colors black and white served to reinforce fundamental philosophical dualities between good and evil and heaven and hell and light and darkness.

Red, which was often associated with blood, power, and passion, had both noble and violent connotations. It could represent bravery and strength in battle, which were important for Elizabethan men, but also shame and uncontrolled feelings, especially when blood was spilled without cause, as in “Macbeth”.

Meanwhile, yellow had ambivalent valences. It was a color associated with warmth and light, yet its symbolic significance was less than flattering. Shakespeare sometimes threw just such shadows in his use of yellow in his comedies and histories, not the least to hint at secret motives or mock the vulnerability of a character. This duality allowed yellow to convey both charm and caution, making it a powerful tool for irony and character development. Thus, the idiomatic use of yellow in Elizabethan literature expresses a deeply entrenched social suspicion of insincere and emotionally unstable individuals-things that were considered disruptive to the social and moral order of the time.

Gold meant fortune, status, and heaven's grace. Under the Elizabethan worldview, gold meant eternity and flawlessness in the world. The heart of gold now became a moral judge of a character in terms of generosity and inner nobility.

**Table 3.2.2. Cultural and historical symbolism of colors in Shakespearean idioms**

White	Purity, innocence, virtue	Associated with femininity
Red	Passion, violence, courage	Related to warfare, emotional intensity, and nobility
Yellow	Greed, treachery, deceit	Often linked with cowardice or betrayal, especially in attire and heraldry
Gold	Wealth, nobility, moral excellence	Connected with divine favor and timeless virtue

The cultural background of these idioms needs to be understood in order to understand their meaning and function in Shakespeare's literary production. These idioms were not randomly created; they were formed by a shared consciousness that highly valued symbolic meaning and moral allegory. Shakespeare, through his use of color idioms, tries to convey both a type of literary device as well as social commentary, a striving into the artistic representation of the values, terrors, and ideals of his time.

### **3.3. Color idioms in the works of Nizami Ganjavi**

Nizami Ganjavi stands as one of the most important literary figures in Azerbaijani literary heritage because his poetry contains deep philosophical and mystical and allegorical elements. The *Khamsa* (Quintet) by Nizami Ganjavi presents a poetic language which combines metaphysical reflection with vivid imagery thus making it an appropriate text for color-related idioms research. His works have been composed primarily in Persian; their Azerbaijani translations and interpretations have made them foundational for the literary and cultural identity of Azerbaijan.

The poetic colors of Nizami Ganjavi serve more than visual representation because they carry spiritual meanings alongside emotional power and moral differences. Color idioms in his metaphoric expressions show inner conflict and divine beauty and passion and sorrow and moral contrasts. Through his skillful use of figurative language, he depicts ethical conflict, moral struggles, and psychological tension which show the intricate connection between personal experiences and cultural stories. The idioms from his time's spiritual and philosophical heritage function as essential elements to enhance both the poetic aesthetic quality and narrative complexity.

The analysis in this section examines specific color idioms found in Ganjavi's works. The investigation of idioms will focus on their symbolic meanings together with their contextual meaning and literary functions. The research examines both the socio-cultural, historical, and philosophical elements that shape idiomatic expressions while demonstrating their role in enhancing the eternal appeal of poetical love in Ganjavi's literary world particularly within the Azerbaijani literary tradition.

#### **3.3.1 Color symbolism across poetic forms**

Nizami Ganjavi's use of poetic language, the language with rich imagery and complicated symbolic forms, often employs color idioms that bring to his works an emotional and philosophical depth. Color idioms fit into the various literary devices he employs and hold an important position in the conveying of multilayered meanings alike across the different poetic genres. Through his

medieval Eastern poetic background Nizami Ganjavi employs color as an expressive tool which transcends visual enhancement to convey emotional states and moral dilemmas and spiritual aspirations and cultural values.

The color idioms in his work function at three different levels which combine literal meanings with metaphorical and mystical interpretations while following Sufi symbolism and Persian-Azerbaijani poetic traditions yet maintaining his distinctive lyrical and introspective style. The idiomatic expressions function beyond mere decoration because they enhance both emotional depth and symbolic meaning in his narrative structures.

Nizami Ganjavi uses colors in his idiomatic expressions to depict both inner and outer aspects of reality. Black and blue tones in his work symbolize sorrow and longing and existential uncertainty but white and red tones represent purity and divine love and intense emotional experiences. Black serves as a powerful symbolic element in Nizami Ganjavi's *Leyli və Majnun* because it represents fate and misfortune and existential grief.

**Example 10:** Black as a symbol of misfortune and death.

Azerbaijani:

*“Nədən paltarını qara geymişən?  
Zeyd dedi: "Bəxtimiz gəlmişdir qara,  
İşimiz çox yaman düşmüşdür dara.  
Torpağın bağrından qara su çıxdı,  
Ölüm qapımızın əlini sıxdı.*

(Nizami Gəncəvi, *Leyli və Məcnun*, 12th century/2004, p. 252)

English Translation:

*“And why in melancholy black array'd.  
“Alas!” he cried, "the hail has crush'd my bowers.  
A sudden storm has blighted all my flowers.  
The cypress-tree o'erthrown, the leaves are sear.  
The moon has fallen from her lucid sphere”*

(Nizami Ganjavi, *Leyla and Majnun*, trans. Atkinson, 12th century/2014, p. 117)

Black in medieval Azerbaijani literature typically symbolized both inescapable grief and divine tests which strengthened the emotional impact of Nizami's idiomatic expressions.

Black in Eastern poetry symbolized misfortune and deep emotional suffering as well as loss because traditional Sufi philosophy viewed worldly suffering as a spiritual enlightenment path.



Zeyd's black clothing follows traditional mourning customs of his culture, yet the poem gives his black clothes a profound spiritual meaning. Through black symbolism the poet portrays Majnun's deep despair about Leyli's death according to Sufi traditions which use colors to represent intricate emotional and spiritual states. The phrase *bəxtimiz gəlmişdir qara* (Our fate has turned black) shows how destiny reveals itself as an inescapable darkness which Eastern philosophical thought fully comprehends. Through his work Nizami Ganjavi demonstrates how human suffering connects with cosmic forces.

The color white typically represents purity and truth and divinity, yet the white lie idiom disrupts this perception by showing how language influences our moral and deceptive perceptions. The analysis of white idioms reveals the complex relationship between purity and unclear meanings which exists in literary and cultural contexts.

**Example 11.** White as a symbol of hypocrisy and moral contradiction

Azerbaijani:

*“Qasid “Hayıf o xal, o saç!” deyərkən,*

*Əfsus, lal olmadı dili bu sözdən.*

*Belə alçaqlığa vicdan uyarmı?*

*Ağ yalan danışıb, cana qıyarmı?”*

(Nizami Gəncəvi, *Xosrov və Şirin*, 12th century/2004, səh.316)

English translation:

*“The messenger cried, “Alas, that mole, that hair!”*

*Yet, his tongue was not silenced by those words of despair.*

*Can a conscience stoop to such disgraceful aim?*

*Could one tell a white lie and bear such shame?”*

(Nizami Ganjavi, *Khosrow and Shirin*, 12th century/2004, p.316)

This extract from Khosrow and Shirin reflects the sophisticated use of language by Nizami Ganjavi; among these wonderful examples: the color idioms “ağ yalan” (white lie). Here, then, white will serve as a metaphor for dishonest innocence, where the phrase “white lie” speaks with all the purity overtone to its very grave immorality of betrayal. White serves as a traditional symbol in classical poetry to represent purity and truth and virtue while also signifying spiritual enlightenment and innocence. The term “ağ yalan” (white lie) creates an ironic situation because it presents something innocent yet produces moral effects. The idiom “white lie” has roots in

medieval ethical discourse, where minor falsehoods were often justified if they served a greater good.

The analysis of white idioms reveals the complex relationship between purity and unclear meanings which exist in literary and cultural contexts.

The poet doubts this explanation by inquiring about the possibility of using this term to justify acts of treachery or betrayal. Through his use of “white lie” Ganjavi questions conventional moral standards. Nizami Ganjavi uses color symbolism and philosophical investigation to portray the conflict between appearance and reality. The Islamic and Sufi philosophical tradition views white as divine purity so any connection to dishonesty becomes deeply disturbing.

Through his poetry Nizami Ganjavi uses color-related idioms to express deep emotional and moral conflicts.

### **Example 12.**

Azerbaijani:

*“Günahı ucbatından qaçdı xeyli uzağa,  
O, üz qaralığını tökdü qara torpağa.”*

(Nizami Gəncəvi, *Sirlər Xəzinəsi*, 12th century/2004, səh.90)

English Translation:

*“Because of his sin, he fled far away,  
He cast the blackness of his shame upon the dark soil.”*

(Nizami Ganjavi, *The Treasury of Mysteries*, 12th century/2004, p.90)

During the 12th century in Azerbaijani literature black represented sinful behavior and spiritual contamination and feelings of guilt. The symbolism of blackness in Nizami's work matches the Islamic beliefs of his time. The term “üz qaralığı” (blackness of shame) demonstrates how Eastern traditions linked facial expressions to personal honor. A person who experiences face blackening becomes dishonored or disgraced. Such expressions throughout history supported the social importance of maintaining honesty and integrity and presenting a good public image. This idiom reflects a moral framework where shame is seen as both personal suffering and a public consequence, reinforcing the value of societal norms. From a philosophical perspective, “üz qarası” conveys the universal struggle of guilt and redemption.

Nizami Ganjavi uses color-related idioms throughout his epic compositions as well as his lyrical poetry which includes ghazals qasidas and rubais. Through his symbolic use of colors Nizami Ganjavi vividly expresses love sorrow purity loyalty and spiritual depth while

demonstrating his unique poetic language. A close analysis of one of Nizami Ganjavi's ghazals reveals how idiomatic expressions function as essential elements in his poetic language to express deep meanings. His idiomatic expressions reveal emotional depth together with cultural values and philosophical insights which make his lyrical works valuable for analysis. The combination of idioms with cultural symbolism in his poetry creates both an enhanced aesthetic quality and a unique perspective on the social and cultural environment of his era.

**Example 13.** Red as a symbol of sacrifice and healing

Azerbaijani

*‘Mümkünmüdür məni qurban edəsən?*

*Dərdlərimi görüb dərman edəsən?*

*Göz yaşım ilə islanmadan bədənəm,*

*Al qanıma məni qəltan edəsən?’*

(Nizami Gəncəvi, *Lirika*, 12th century/2004, səh.42)

English translation:

*‘Is it possible for you to sacrifice me?*

*To see my sorrows and cure them for me?*

*Without my body being soaked in tears,*

*Would you drench me in my own red blood?’*

(Nizami Ganjavi, *Lyrics*, 12th century/2004, p.42)

The medieval Azerbaijani literature used “al qanına qəltan etmək” to describe the act of being completely submerged in “red blood” which represents selfless devotion and enduring pain. Throughout history red blood functioned as a powerful metaphor for bravery and martyrdom which poets used to express deep feelings about love and honor and loyalty. In Islamic literary traditions blood imagery served to connect suffering with purification while demonstrating that love and sacrifice cannot exist separately. This symbolic use of red intensified the emotional and spiritual weight of poetic expression. The Islamic literary traditions linked blood imagery to purification through suffering because love and sacrifice cannot exist without each other.

This finding reflects Nizami’s perspective on devotion which accepts that only true love entails sacrifice as well as suffering. “Immersed in red blood” is therefore, giving oneself completely-

having stripped off the ego and embracing the original self. This idiom illustrates the poet's ability to dip into human features and use them with universal themes.

### **3.3.2. Cultural and philosophical depths of idiomatic usage**

Literary history demonstrates how colors function as strong symbolic elements which enhance storytelling while expressing emotions and deepening thematic content across different cultural backgrounds.

The idioms in Ganjavi's work contain deep cultural and philosophical meaning which represents the beliefs of his era. The complete understanding of Nizami's language requires analysis of how color idioms operate within his entire philosophical framework. The idioms in classical Azerbaijani and Persian literature function beyond their literal interpretations to preserve cultural heritage and spiritual wisdom.

During the 12th century Nizami Ganjavi lived under the cultural and political rule of the Seljuk Empire. During this time Turkic, Persian and Islamic traditions merged while symbolism especially color symbolism became essential in literature, art and courtly life.

White symbolized divine purity and spiritual enlightenment and moral integrity during this time but black represented mourning and destiny and hidden truths. Red symbolized love and sacrifice and passion and sometimes martyrdom. The spiritual tradition of Sufism shaped literary language through its core principles of inner purification and divine love and ego annihilation. The Sufi tradition transformed ordinary expressions into sacred spiritual allegories.

These colors served as essential elements in miniature art as well as textiles and architecture because they combined visual attractiveness with profound philosophical meanings during the pre-Mongol period. The Seljuk Empire courts where Persian became the administrative and artistic language deeply influenced Nizami's perspective. The royal power and natural beauty and romantic feelings in courtly literature were typically described through color metaphors. The court used gold and white to symbolize divine kingship and noble character because these colors evoked authority, reflected the justice and enlightenment values of the court. Ganjavi's writing demonstrates the dual nature of court and cloister through language which serves both decorative and revealing purposes to enable idioms to operate on physical and abstract levels.

**Table 3.3.1. Color-related idioms from *Leyli and Majnun***

Idiom	Literal meaning	Cultural significance	Philosophical depth
Ağ gün	Bright, white day, prosperity	Associated with happiness, success, and divine favor	Represents hope and fulfillment, contrasting with hardship
Dümağ ağarmaq	To become completely white	Represents aging, sorrow, and wisdom	Signifies enlightenment through suffering
Yaşıl geyinmək	To dress in green	Symbolizes renewal, vitality, and nature	Reflects continuity of life and spiritual awakening
Qara qul	Black slave	Represents servitude and oppression	Explores freedom versus fate and power dynamics
Qara pul	Black money	Refers to illicit wealth, linked to corruption or secrecy	Questions materialism versus ethical integrity
Qara bəxt	Black fate	Represents misfortune and doomed destiny	Reflects existential struggles with fate
Qara bağlamaq	To blacken (close) something	Denotes permanently ending or sealing something off	Symbolizes finality, detachment, and irreversible choices
Qara qızdırma	Black fever	Denotes severe illness or hardship	Symbolizes endurance through trials and suffering
Qara geyinmək	To dress in black	Worn for mourning, grief, or solemnity	Highlights duality of love- joy interwoven with sacrifice
Qara gün	Black day	Used to signify times of sorrow or hardship	Represents struggle as a path to transformation

**Table 3.3.2. Color-related idioms from Nizami Ganjavi's *Lyrics* (ghazals, odes, quatrains)**

Idiom	Literal meaning	Cultural significance	Philosophical depth
Gözünə ağ gəlmək	To turn white in one's eyes	Represents defiance or challenge, often toward authority.	Symbolizes themes of justice, rebellion, and moral courage.
Qanı qara	Black mood	Signifies deep sorrow, anger, or grief .	Represents internal suffering and fate's burden.
Könlü al qan olmaq	Heart turning red with blood	Represents intense sorrow, often linked to heartbreak or suffering.	Symbolizes the sacrifice of love and emotional agony.

**Table 3.3.3. Color-related idioms from *Eskandar-nameh***

Idiom	Literal meaning	Cultural significance	Philosophical depth
Üzünə ağ olmaq	To act bold or openly oppose someone	Represents defiance or lack of respect, often tied to societal norms of hierarchy and honor.	Reflects moral courage or rebellion, questioning authority and societal expectations.
Ağ taxta çıxmaq	To rise to the white throne	Symbolizes power, authority and purity, linked to royal or divine ascendancy.	Represents aspiration for greatness, highlighting themes of justice and enlightenment rule.
Qara damğa	Black mark or stamp	Denotes stigma, disgrace, or infamy, marking someone negatively in society.	Philosophically embodies irreversible judgement, exploring themes of societal condemnation and morality.
Qara xəbər	Black news	Refers to bad or sorrowful news, emphasizing grief or troubling events.	Highlights life's unpredictability, with darkness as a metaphor for human suffering and fate

### 3.3.3. Aesthetic function and poetic beauty

Through his masterful use of imagery and rhythmic language and emotional depth Nizami turns idioms into effective instruments for creating poetic harmony and aesthetic sophistication. The idioms deeply integrate with the lyrical and imaginative elements of classical Azerbaijani poetic traditions to create both sonic and visual beauty in the text. The presence of such beauty not only enriches the meaning but also beautifies the form and therefore lends that rhythm, harmony, and emotional appeal to his poetic expression.

Color idioms in Nizami's works often appear in complex metaphorical structures and multi-layered images capable of raising the literary sophistication of poems. The imagery Ganjavi's work uses color idioms to create vivid mental pictures which engage readers' senses and produce strong emotional responses. The idiom "yaşıl geyinmək" (to dress in green) in his works represents both natural renewal and youthful vitality through its combination of natural imagery with human experience. The vivid green color serves as both a visual life cycle representation and a spiritual renewal metaphor while "ağ üz" (white face) symbols represent both sacrifice and purity and are artistically integrated into the verse to enhance emotional impact. Ganjavi's poetic tapestry gains both visual appeal and emotional power through his symbolic language.

Through idioms the poet transforms complex abstract ideas into understandable metaphors. "Qara bəxt" (black fortune) functions as both a direct expression of bad fortune and an allegorical representation of destiny which deepens philosophical meaning and poetic value.

His poetic rhythm becomes more musical because of his deliberate idiom selection which produces balance in his verses. The emotional range of the narrative is enhanced through the patterned use of light and dark imagery between "ağ gün" (white day) and "qara gün" (black day). Through his hyperbolic expression "könlü al qan olmaq" (heart turning red with blood) Nizami Ganjavi creates vivid details to show the deep intensity of sorrow and sacrifice.

Through color idioms Nizami Ganjavi creates poetic beauty which deepens both emotional and sensory engagement for his readers. The poetic expression of "qırmızı geyinmək" (to dress in red) represents both passion and vitality while simultaneously adding visual vibrancy to the narrative through its use of color and motion. The poet uses idioms such as "qara gün" (black day) and "qara qızdırma" (black fever) to express universal feelings of despair and endurance which makes his poetry beautiful beyond cultural and linguistic limitations.

Nizami Ganjavi establishes his poetic legacy through his masterful application of color-related idioms which create a perfect balance between poetic meaning and aesthetic beauty. The poetic symbols emerge from these idioms to provide immediate visuality which transforms inner states into observable poetic symbols. Through this vivid symbolism, Nizami bridges the sensory and the spiritual, allowing readers to experience emotion through color. The reader experiences sorrow and joy directly through idioms such as "göy səmanın qara buludu" (the black cloud of the blue sky) which express emotional turmoil through color changes. The poetic idioms elevate both the artistic complexity and philosophical depth of his works while demonstrating their dual nature as cultural

artifacts and artistic treasures. Nizami Ganjavi creates a complex poetic texture through his artistic use of color-related idioms which continues to captivate readers across multiple centuries.

### **3.4. Contrastive analysis: English and Azerbaijani literary traditions**

Color-related idioms function as cultural windows which reveal both linguistic creativity and fundamental cultural values and philosophical beliefs and emotional sentiments of a society.

The research builds upon previous theoretical foundations and individual analyses of chapters to conduct a contrastive analysis which reveals similarities and differences in color idioms between these two traditions. In its various sections, the study not only investigates how idioms mirror common experiences among mankind, their intrinsic cultural divergences, but also in a broader sense, upon the implications of these observations for cross-cultural literary studies. Furthermore, it emphasizes the implications of these findings for cross-cultural literary studies, focusing on idiomatic expressions as bridges between different literary traditions.

#### **3.4.1. Common color motifs, divergent connotations**

Color idioms in English and Azerbaijani literature demonstrate both cultural beliefs and historical impacts of their respective traditions but they also express universal human experiences beyond language differences.

The Western literary tradition especially in English literature tends to focus on individual emotional states and human-centered moral struggles. This introspective focus shapes how color idioms convey personal feelings and internal conflicts. The use of colors to represent emotions appears in Shakespearean idioms through expressions like green envy which represents jealousy.

The Eastern literary tradition which includes Azerbaijani literature with Persianate influences focuses on spiritual themes and fate and collective experiences so green represents rebirth and vitality instead of personal envy.

The two traditions employ color symbolism to express basic human emotions and social themes even though their frameworks differ because idiomatic expressions connect different worldviews. Idioms develop strongly based on the historical periods through which they progress.

- Shakespeare's Renaissance England: During this period, idioms reflected the themes of drama, emotional intensity, and moral introspection, which shaped Shakespeare's extensive use of color metaphors in expressions like black-hearted (corruption) and green-eyed monster (jealousy).



- Azerbaijani literature during Nizami Ganjavi's time: This period was influenced by Islamic-Sufi and Persian literary traditions which used color idioms to express cosmic balance and fate and wisdom.

Idiomatically, both traditions have red, black, and green colors. However, because these colors are given varying interpretations according to the culture values and philosophies and literary development, they represent different things in the pure idioms. Red exists in both traditions, but it put with a difference of meaning established on different cultural values, philosophical constructs, and literary evolution. The expression "seeing red" indicates rage because to the Western cultures, strong emotions evoke fiery reactions, which fit the red color. In consequence, red, in the Azerbaijani idiomatic expressions, refers to all things ceremonial: honor and joy connected with weddings and festive traditions.

The different idiomatic expressions between English and Azerbaijani languages demonstrate how societies value different aspects of life. English idioms concentrate on personal emotional states whereas Azerbaijani idioms focus on collective cultural practices. The cultural emphasis on individualism in English idioms corresponds to personal emotional states while Azerbaijani idioms that focus on collective practices stem from stronger collectivist values. Azerbaijani literature has historically used these associations because the region maintained active community traditions and symbolic color practices for social events.

Black color carries different meanings across various cultural and philosophical traditions. In Azerbaijani idioms, black is often associated with destiny, mourning, and spiritual depth, echoing the Persianate literary tradition, where black signifies existential themes and cosmic balance. Black serves as a metaphor in Nizami Ganjavi's works to depict sorrow and the inescapable fate. In English idioms Shakespeare uses black to symbolize guilt and corruption and tragedy because Renaissance values emphasized moral conflicts and human errors. The Azerbaijani literary use of black to symbolize spiritual connection and fate stands in contrast to Shakespearean "black-hearted" which reveals treacherous and evil intentions.

Green serves as another motif which demonstrates different interpretations among the two cultures. Green holds significant meaning in Azerbaijani idioms because it symbolizes new life and energy and youthful vitality which stems from the agricultural and natural traditions of the region. The cultural heritage of the region shows its connection to land and agriculture through green symbolism which represents new beginnings and development. The English language uses green to symbolize envy or jealousy according to Shakespeare's famous phrase the green-eyed monster.

This philosophical divergence illustrates the socioecological forces resulting in the evolution of idioms: Azerbaijani idioms emphasize themes of life and its cycles, while those from the English language express emotions and moral dilemmas characteristic of Renaissance humanism. The analysis shows that idiomatic expressions function as cultural lenses which reveal both historical narratives and philosophical ideals and cultural worldviews. Azerbaijani idioms which stem from Eastern traditions express both collective and spiritual values whereas English idioms which originated from Renaissance influences focus on individual emotions and ethical conflicts. The comparison exemplifies how some colors can be considered universal, while also somewhat enfolding the richly diverse cultural context shaping their idiomatic use.

### **3.4.2. Idioms with no direct cultural equivalent**

Certain idioms are reflections of deeply ingrained cultural beliefs, practices, or values that are not usually directly translated into another language. Some historical occurrences, societal institutions, beliefs, or daily activities that are not reflected in the other culture are reflected in these colloquial terms. Important facets of any culture might be illuminated by the lack of a clear cultural comparable. The idioms are culturally specific because what is normal or appropriate in one culture may carry a completely different implication in another.

The cultural meaning of idioms disappears when translated literally because their cultural significance remains hidden without context and their meanings do not match even when the words appear similar, and they do not capture philosophical meanings such as how green symbolizes jealousy in Shakespeare but represents rebirth in Ganjavi. The Sufi mystical and Persian literary elements in Ganjavi's poetry create multiple idiomatic expressions which resist straightforward English translation.

Black in Nizami Ganjavi's works represents destiny which often signifies bad fortune or the unavoidable fate that cosmic powers determine (*qara bəxt*, *qara gün*). The meaning of black in Ganjavi's work differs from English idioms because black in English typically represents evil or corruption or despair (*black-hearted*, *black mark*). Nizami Ganjavi uses gold to represent divine wisdom and enlightenment primarily through his philosophical poetic works.

The idiomatic use of gold by Shakespeare functions as a warning about deceptive appearances which serves as a moral lesson instead of an intellectual concept of sacred wisdom found in Ganjavi's poetic symbolism.

The idioms in Shakespeare's works derive from European folklore and Christian symbolism and Renaissance ideology which do not directly match Azerbaijani literature. Green serves as a symbol of envy and jealousy according to Shakespeare when he warns his lord about jealousy in “Othello”. In Azerbaijani literature Ganjavi's works present green as a symbol of spiritual renewal and prosperity and spiritual vitality, as in “yaşıl geyinmək” (dressed in green). The poetic tradition of Ganjavi does not contain any negative connotations of green because this color represents divine favor and new beginnings.

The idioms that lack direct cultural equivalents reveals distinctive cognitive frameworks and cultural and philosophical structures that influence language development. The idioms in Nizami Ganjavi's work stem from Sufi mysticism and cosmology to express collective spirituality and cosmic balance whereas Shakespeare's idioms explore individual emotions and moral dilemmas through European folklore and Renaissance humanism. The observed differences showcase the extensive cultural diversity within idiomatic expressions while showing how language reveals the core values and historical background and philosophical concepts of each culture.

### **3.4.3. Reflections of cultural worldviews through color idioms**

The preceding analysis demonstrated that color idioms in English and Azerbaijani literature sometimes share common color terms; nevertheless, they differ greatly in their connotations and usages, which adapt to their separate cultural worldviews as they were formed in. English idioms, as much used in Shakespeare, tend to employ color in describing individual psychological states or moral judgments, while Azerbaijani ones, as far as Nizami Ganjavi's poetic expression is concerned, refer the color to some cosmic order with fate and spiritual comprehension.

The two traditions show different cultural priorities and philosophical underpinnings through this divergence. The individualistic and moralistic currents of the Renaissance shaped English idioms to focus on the inner lives of individuals and their emotional and ethical struggles. As a result, color idioms in English often highlight personal integrity, flaws, and emotional complexity. According to Renaissance humanism, which emphasizes the individual's moral centeredness with all possibilities of human failure, the idiom “heart of gold” has come to mean moral virtue.

The idiom does not merely equate heart with gold; it is more complex in that it intermingles properties from each. The heart brings in referents involving emotion or character, which pertain to the innermost being of a person, which means that gold as an input brings in properties like

purity, value, and incorruptibility. In the blend, therefore, emerges a person who is essentially good and virtuous.

The Azerbaijani idioms which stem from Eastern traditions and Sufi philosophy present a worldview that focuses on collective and spiritual aspects as well as accepting fate. The use of colors in Azerbaijani idioms typically represents universal cosmic concepts and the interconnectedness of all things. The Azerbaijani idiom “qara gün” (black day) employs black to signify the enigma of destiny or the pain that exists within human nature which aligns with cultural beliefs. Through his Sufi symbolism Nizami Ganjavi demonstrates black as a symbol that extends beyond evil to represent the intense spiritual experiences.

The different patterns demonstrate how cultural narratives and philosophical assumptions deeply influence the metaphorical use of color in language. They reveal how language encodes collective values, shaping how emotions and virtues are perceived across cultures. English idioms based on a tradition of individual agency and moral introspection use color metaphors to analyze human psychology and the conflict between good and evil.

Color idioms in English and Azerbaijani literature function as linguistic windows into distinct cultural souls, showing how these two traditions, shaped by different historical, religious, and philosophical forces, have constructed unique ways of perceiving, and articulating the human experience.

#### **3.4.4. Broader Implications for Cross-Cultural Literary Studies**

The research findings show that color-related idiomatic expressions serve more than just stylistic functions because they embody profound cultural expressions of emotional and philosophical and historical identity. Through the analysis of color idioms in Shakespearean English and Nizami Ganjavi's Azerbaijani works this study reveals how human experiences merge with cultural differences to understand abstract ideas through color.

The two literary traditions use color to convey basic emotions and moral concepts and existential themes yet their specific meanings and metaphorical connections stem from their unique historical and philosophical and cultural backgrounds. The research provides multiple significant findings about how language interacts with culture and literature and about cross-cultural literary studies.

The research helps us understand how language demonstrates cultural elements. The research shows that color idioms function as more than simple linguistic ornaments because they contain deep cultural knowledge and values. The study reveals that Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi both use color imagery to express human emotions, yet their cultural backgrounds produce different

symbolic meanings. Black represents death and sorrow in Shakespeare's works but Nizami uses it to symbolize fate and divine mystery and spiritual trials which stem from Sufi philosophy.

The observed variations of color term demonstrate how cultural priorities together with historical experiences influence the semantic development of language.

### **3.5. Discussion**

Color idioms in Shakespeare's and Nizami Ganjavi's works demonstrate that these stylistic devices extend beyond mere decorative language. These devices function as essential tools to transmit fundamental cultural, moral, and philosophical concepts. Our analysis of cognitive and cultural roots of these idioms demonstrates how language interacts with worldview in a dynamic way.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) abstract concepts are understood through metaphorical mappings which derive from embodied experience. Through his writing Shakespeare uses "black and deep desires" and the "green-eyed monster" to transform abstract emotions of guilt and envy into tangible sensory experiences. Shakespeare uses "black" to represent moral corruption by linking darkness with evil. Through "qara bəxt" and "qara gūn" Ganjavi expresses both the helpless moral state and the unavoidable fate which matches Eastern philosophical views. The research findings demonstrate that black color functions differently in each tradition because its metaphorical meanings vary across cultures. The results are important because they demonstrate that the same color (black) is used in both traditions, but its metaphorical mapping is culturally specific. CMT thus allows us to see how embodied experiences and cultural histories shape the way metaphor works in literature.

The use of "heart of gold" in Shakespeare demonstrates how metaphors connect emotional experiences with moral qualities by uniting the heart with the symbolic meanings of gold as purity and incorruptibility. This fusion elevates personal virtue to a timeless ideal, grounded in both emotional sincerity and ethical strength. The mapping of gold meaning differs from Nizami Ganjavi because his interpretations extend to divine wisdom and enlightenment beyond basic material appreciation.

Conceptual blending theory is an adequately broad analytical framework that encompasses how various conceptual domains merge to produce composite meanings that are rich and layered, as is the construction for idioms. This makes it especially useful for analyzing color idioms, where cultural, emotional, and sensory domains intersect to form complex symbolic meanings. The idiom "green-eyed monster," from Shakespeare, combines green with the concept of a hostile emotion-

in this case, envy. The result is a highly evocative image that exceeds the literal description and recalls an intense emotional state.

Ganjavi uses blending in a distinct manner through the expression “yaşıl geyinmək” which unites natural elements with spiritual renewal and vitality while matching the agricultural and mystical beliefs of Eastern tradition. The CBT (Fauconnier, & Turner, 2002). approach enables us to understand the intricate creative process behind these idioms. The idioms function as living combinations of sensory and emotional and cultural elements which reveal how each literary culture expresses its values and experiences.

According to Cultural Cognition Theory (CCT) (Kahan et al., 2010) our cultural values and historical contexts deeply influence how we interpret language. The research reveals that English idioms which developed during the Renaissance humanist period and individualistic era tend to focus on personal emotional states and moral self-reflection. The idiom “green with envy” reveals jealousy as an emotional state within a person while “black-hearted” indicates corruption through personal moral failure.

The idioms in Ganjavi's work derive from Sufi philosophy and Eastern literary traditions which depict colors through the lens of communal fate and cosmic equilibrium and spiritual evolution. The symbolic meanings of black, red and gold colors in this context represent the communal values and the metaphysical understanding of existence. The CCT analysis shows that idioms maintain a direct connection to their cultural origins. The idioms contain both linguistic beauty and the historical and societal values of their cultural origins.

Cross-culturally, these findings have wider connotations in the domains of literary studies, translation practices, and the general understanding of how language serves as an archive for cultural memory. This means that this analysis combines all these theories to prove that color idioms are great tools for encoding universal emotions and, at the same time, are very specific cultural narratives. Color idioms function beyond mere text decoration because they reveal cultural collective psychological insights and historical awareness of their respective cultures. The analysis deepens the understanding of Shakespeare's and Ganjavi's works by showing how language through poetic idioms creates a dynamic space where sensory experience meets cultural identity and philosophical thought.

The research findings go beyond a thorough literary analysis because they provide important findings which apply to cross-cultural literary studies as well as translation and cognitive linguistics and intercultural communication. The study demonstrates how color idioms function as essential

tools to convey fundamental cultural values and historical memories which makes it clear that language and worldview interact in complex ways.

The core of this research shows that identical color terms produce different meanings based on cultural background. The observed differences between language expressions demonstrate that language functions as a living collection of philosophical ideas and cultural memories of a particular society. The findings support additional research in cross-cultural literary studies while demonstrating the importance of studying various culturally specific expressions to achieve better comprehension of worldwide literary traditions.

The research provides practical applications for translation and intercultural communication practices. The unique cultural elements in these idiomatic expressions demonstrate that direct translation of idioms cannot preserve their complete emotional and philosophical meaning. The literary use of color as an innate perceptual phenomenon demonstrates that cognitive processes exist through cultural and historical filters.

The research contributes new insights to ongoing scholarly discussions about idioms. The existing research on color idioms has mainly focused on individual language systems yet there is limited investigation into how literary traditions influence color symbolism. The research results validate existing theories about idiomatic expressions while presenting fresh insights which demonstrate how historical and philosophical and cultural factors shape their usage. The main contribution of this research shows how color idioms exist as fundamental components of each cultural conceptual framework.

Many linguistic studies only examine contemporary idiom usage without studying their historical development. The color idioms in Shakespeare's works follow Renaissance humanist and Christian moral philosophical principles but Ganjavi's idioms demonstrate Islamic-Sufi philosophical and spiritual elements.

The present study situates idioms in a respective literary context, showing that the use of color idioms in Shakespearean and Ganjavi's works is more than a matter of rhetoric or style; they are cultural artifacts that enshrine the concerns of a community, religious philosophy, and historical consciousness.

This study reinforces the idea that color idioms are far more than just pieces of linguistic creativity by contrasting them in Azerbaijani and English literary traditions. Mirrors of cultural identity, they have context-specific meanings formed by centuries of creative and intellectual growth, as well as universal sensory connotations.

## **Limitations**

The research investigates idiomatic language usage through the analysis of Shakespearean and Nizami Ganjavi's literary works within English and Azerbaijani literary traditions. The two poets represent their respective time periods yet other writers from their historical context and literary movement would enhance understanding of idiomatic development.

A broader corpus could establish a more solid connection in cross-cultures. A few idioms in Azerbaijani carry no direct English equivalents, which may limit slightly the area for comparison. The works of Shakespeare are analyzed in original English; on the other hand, the works of Nizami Ganjavi are being translated into Azerbaijani and English, and this can lead to shifts in meaning and nuance.

This study explores common motifs and semantic divergence, but some historical and social contexts that can influence the usage of idioms can remain beyond the scope. Their interpretations could, of course, be further improved by a more extensive historical analysis.

The research uses linguistic, literary, and cultural analysis but other methods could offer more insights into idiomatic usage across languages.

The reliance on qualitative contrastive analysis, some of the statistical aspects like the frequency of idiom usages in literary corpora remains unexplored.

## **Suggestions for further research**

Future research could broaden its contrastive analysis by studying additional poets and playwrights to provide more extensive insights into idiomatic language usage. A corpus-based linguistic approach would enable researchers to study idiom frequency and evolution across literary texts which could improve understanding. The investigation of cognitive dimensions in idiomatic expressions would reveal how cultural backgrounds affect their interpretation. The study of idioms in William Shakespeare's and Nizami Ganjavi's works in contemporary adaptations would help to understand their enduring impact on modern literature.



## CONCLUSION

The present thesis has undertaken a cross-cultural investigation of color-related idioms in English and Azerbaijani literature with special reference to William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi. The distinction has been made in studying idioms not merely from a linguistic perspective but also from historical, cultural, and philosophical viewpoints with the hope of unveiling symbols and coloring in depth, in their aesthetic function within the literary discourse.

These findings demonstrate that while lots of color motifs - red for passion or danger, black for fate or mourning, white for purity - recur across the two traditions, their connotations often diverge in meaningful ways, depending on each culture's peculiar worldview, spiritual beliefs, and social practices. Through this lens of culture, other color symbols may be interpreted, converging in either meaning or diverging widely.

In Shakespeare's works, color idioms are often used for dramatic, ironic, or psychological reasons, enriched by the vast palette of Elizabethan symbolism. Nizami Ganjavi, by contrast, affected by the Eastern culture and Sufi mysticism, gave colors layers of spiritual and emotional connotations, thereby making colors a means for aesthetic and philosophical meditation.

Furthermore, the study has identified the idioms with no direct cultural equivalent between two traditions, a situation which serves to underscore the interrelation and complexity of language, culture, and literary creativity. The different idiomatic expressions between English and Azerbaijani languages demonstrate how societies value different aspects of life. English idioms concentrate on personal emotional states whereas Azerbaijani idioms focus on collective cultural practices. These idioms reveal the different societies encoding their beliefs, fears, and aspirations with metaphoric language, while posing challenges and opportunities to cross-cultural understanding and translation.

Through its analysis this thesis has added to the wider discussion about the function of idioms in literature and their ability to both unite and differentiate cultures. The contrastive insights brought here label idiomatic expressions not merely as decorative language, but rather as a window on the collective psyche and aesthetic sensibilities of people.

The research demonstrates that studying idioms especially color-related ones reveals important insights about human symbolic behavior and the diverse literary traditions that exist. This research aims to motivate additional cross-cultural literary studies which will investigate the strong links between language, culture, and art.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a cross-cultural investigation on color-related idioms in the English and Azerbaijani literary traditions, while considering only the works of William Shakespeare and Nizami Ganjavi. The principal purpose is to investigate the manner through which cultural, philosophical, and historical factors influence the meanings, symbolic associations, and functions of color idioms in two disparate literary canons from the perspective of culture. Most of the previous research concentrated on the linguistic facet of idioms, whereas this research endeavors to fill this gap by adopting an interdisciplinary framework merging linguistic discourse analysis with cultural and historical contexts.

This study employs a qualitative research method: the data contain color idioms, which were selected from Shakespeare's plays and Nizami Ganjavi's narrative poems. The analysis reveals both considerable agreement and divergence concerning the symbolic implementation of colors, linking to a contrast of cultural values, philosophical worldviews, and historical experiences as inscribed within the English and Azerbaijani literary traditions. For example, certain colors appear to have a similar symbolic meaning in both corpora, whereas some other colors seem to develop differing interpretations from one culture to another, based on its philosophical and historical background.

This study highlights intercultural dimensions that deepen the understanding of idiomatic language as an expression of cultural identity and literary culture. In addition, the results present new insights into the contrastive idiomatic study, giving emphasis to the interdisciplinary cultural and historical framework crucial in linguistic and literary cross-cultural studies. Hence, the present dissertation would also be useful for linguists, comparatists, those interested in translation studies, and scholars of intercultural communication.

**Key words:** color-related idioms, cross-cultural investigation, William Shakespeare, Nizami Ganjavi, English and Azerbaijani literature, cultural symbolism, philosophical influences, historical context, contrastive study

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