

# Color-Based Expressions in English, Arabic, and Persian

## A Comparative Study

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### Abstract

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Stressing upon the commonly shared concepts among communities and cultures, this study undertakes an investigation of color-based expressions in English, Arabic, and Persian languages in an attempt to illustrate how different languages with diverse cultural backgrounds can share basic concepts. The data is analyzed semantically to fulfill the objectives of the study which is to highlight the universality of languages. Expressions about color might be in forms of idioms, proverbs, or short sayings. A glossary of color-based expressions is provided for each of the three languages, English, Arabic, and Persian. The similar expressions in the three languages are listed in a separate table. Data collection concerns itself only with those expressions that carry similar semantic contents. The study concludes that languages can share a common ground in terms of expressions \_proverbs or idioms\_ and this can be attributed to the universality of human mind and the similar way human mind works.

**Key words:** Idioms, Color expressions, function, universal, English, Arabic, Persian,

## المخلص:

تعنى هذه الدراسة بالمصطلحات و التعبيرات المتعلقة بالالوان بين اللغات الثلاث الانجليزية, العربية, و الفارسية مسلطاً الضوء على المصطلحات المشتركة السائدة في تلك المجتمعات. تهدف الدراسة الى اظهار كيف لمختلف اللغات بخلفيات ثقافية مختلفة ان تتشارك في المفاهيم الاساسية. تم تحليل العينة دلالياً و ذلك للتوكيد على التشابهات لا الاختلافات لاطهار تشابه محتوى المصطلحات. قد تكون المصطلحات المتعلقة بالالوان على هيئة امثال شعبية أو اقوال و حكم. اللغة الانكليزية غنية بالمصطلحات مقارنة بالعربية و الفارسية, حيث يشيع استخدام الامثال و الاقوال و الحكم في اللغتين الاخيرين مقارنةً بالانجليزية. يتناول البحث فهرسة للمصطلحات و الامثال المشتركة في اللغات الثلاث بعد ادراج المصطلحات المتعلقة بالالوان في جدول منفرد هادفاً لتسليط الضوء على التشابهات اكثر من الاختلافات بين الثقافات و تقليل المسافات بين الشعوب. توصلت الدراسة الى ان اللغات تشترك في بعض المفاهيم الاساسية فيما يتعلق بالأمثال و المصطلحات و يعزى ذلك الى عالمية اللغة و عالمية العقل البشري الذي يتشاركه البشر.

## Introduction

Color based expressions include idioms and proverbs which are related to colors. Loaded with intertextuality, such expressions are not easy to be understood since the linguistic structure and the proposition of the expressions are incompatible. In other words there is no one to one relationship between form and function. In order to comprehend such expressions, one needs linguistic and cultural background about that language. Different studies have been undertaken in this respect. Some focused on the syntactic features of the idioms to undertake a lexical investigation; other studies dealt with the aesthetic features of idioms and proverbs and how they are significant in terms of metaphor, simile, and the wisdom they carry. While other types of studies took an etymological studies to look into the roots of each expression within their language. What is shared among all these studies is the data selected; they focused on either one language or two. The current study dealt with three languages limiting itself with color-related expressions in each language. The

context helps in identifying the meaning of the expression. This paper undertakes a study of expressions which are exclusively related to colors in three different languages: English, Arabic, and Persian. The meaning for each expression is sought after and projected in its actual cultural environment. Only those expressions are picked up that are shared in content among these three languages. Data collection drew upon printed books mainly along with some online websites.

The study aims at projecting an illustration about English, Arabic, and Persian color expressions to see whether there are any semantic binders between these three languages regarding. This work sheds light on the similarities rather than differences between the three cultures, and stresses upon the commonly shared concepts as an attempt of reducing the drift between communities. The study is hopefully beneficial for the researchers and linguists who are interested in such areas of investigation.

The methodology followed in this paper is to list only the expressions which are color-based in three languages along with their meanings according to their real context within their languages. In a separate table those expressions that hold similar meanings in three languages are projected. Although different languages are expected to provide different environments for such expressions, it is hypothesized that in this trilateral linguistic relation (i.e. English, Arabic, and Persian) there are plenty of expressions which have similar propositions despite their different linguistic constructions.

The study is limited to investigating expressions –idioms or proverbs- in English, Arabic, and Persian languages. The data deals with expressions about color only. Expressions are obtained from standard as well as colloquial languages. The analysis concerns itself with semantics only; there might be some references to syntax for the purpose of elaboration only.

## 2. Color-Based Expressions

*“Color is a power which directly influences the soul.” Wassily Kandinsky*

This section deals with color expressions in language. The term 'expression' is preferably used throughout the paper to include idioms and proverbs. It is worthy to shed some light on the differences between the two concepts 'idiom' and 'proverb'.

### 2.1. The Concept of Idiom

Crystal (2008) introduces the idiom as a term found in grammar and lexicology to refer to a series of words which work as a single unite because they are semantically and syntactically restricted. Semantically, the meaning of the words in isolation usually do not convey the meaning of the idiom as a whole. Syntactically, idioms have a fixed construction and it is not usual to change some of the words inside it (Crystal, 2008: 236, Crystal, 2003: 225, Cambridge Dictionary of American Idioms, 2003: ix. See also Knoblock, K. & Kathleen N. Kopp, 2008:5). Color expressions, however, may have a direct signification to that color as in 'turn red' which signifies getting blushed when feeling extremely mad or embarrassed. On the other hand, the expression might have indirect binders with its signifier as in 'green thumb' which signifies 'to be able to grow plants' and the color is used metaphorically. (Brenner, 2003: np)

Richards & Schmidt (2010) agree with Crystal in that idioms are expressions which work as single unit whose whole meaning is hardly discovered from its isolated words. As an example, the idiom 'she washed her hands from the matter' refers to the situation in which 'she rejected doing anything more regarding this matter' (Richards & Schmidt, 2010:270, Richards & Schmidt, 2002:246).

Similarly, Spears (2000: xi) identifies idioms as 'fixed' or 'set' phrases. English proverbs are included in this category and as a result the number of the idiomatic expressions is increased. As is introduced by (Brenner, 2003:np ) an idiom cannot be easily identified and it might have different definitions among many dictionaries. A basic definition for idioms is suggested by (ibid) as " two or more words together that, as a unit, have a special meaning that is different from the literal meaning of the words separately." For instance the idiom 'stand out' does not literally mean to stand outside, rather it implies to be obvious, prominent, or to be noticeable due to a unique feature.

Brenner (ibid) suggests the following qualities that an idiom must have one at least:

1. The meaning of the individual words in an idiom do not tell the meaning of the whole construction.
2. They may or may not follow the rules of grammar, syntax, and to some extent, semantics.
3. The word by word translation of idioms into another language might ruin their content.

## 2.2. The Concept of Proverb

Numerous definitions has been given to proverbs. Obiakor (2008: xii) describes the proverb in a lovely way: Proverbs are the oil with which we eat our words. They pencil our tradition, wisdom, power, pride, consistency, continuity, humanity, imperfection, religiosity, etc. Proverbs portray a real picture of nation's originality and provide an illustration of their oral traditions. Obiakor summarizes that proverbs far exceed the boundaries of tribe, culture, linguistics, and religion.

There are other definitions which can be counted to have similar significations. The following randomly chosen definitions are cited from Zolfaghari and Hayat (2012: 97):

1. Lord Russell: A proverb is the child of the folk memory and the unique individual utterances.
2. Obe de saint Pierre: A proverb is a voice resonated from experience.
3. Wolfgang Mieder: A proverb is a folk statement, saying, sentence or expression comprising wisdom, truth, ethical principles, experience, lessons and advices about life which is transferred generation to generation.

Proverbs are defined as Short, epigram or wisdom. It is a traditional saying which expresses similar experience or an obvious truth. (Webster, 2003) Proverbs are also identified as brief sayings used to make statements or phrases for the purpose of advice. Norrick (1985:1-2) provides an illustration about the proverb depending on the *standard proverbial interpretation* (SPI). The SPI is said to be literal when the literal meaning and the interpretation are matching. In "*like father like son*" the proverb's SPI coincides with its literal reading "*father and son are alike*". The proverb is said to have figurative meaning when the SPI and the literal reading are incompatible. The figurative proverb "*there is no rose without thorn*" is different from its signification "*there is no pleasant thing without some unpleasant aspect*".

Husni & Daniel (2015: n.p.) suggest that although both proverbs and idioms may have metaphorical content, proverbs are meant to convey a folk wisdom or a supposed general truth for the purpose of advice or a moral lesson. Unlike idioms, proverbs resist any modification on their linguistic structure.

They tend to be in full sentences rather than phrases. In Arabic language, proverbs are used a lot.

### 2.3. Proverbs in Arabic

Arabs, as is stated by McLoughlin (2009: 31) use proverbs far more than in common in western society. There's always been a proverb to fit any situation. It is worth mentioning that the impact of religion on Arabic language and culture is clear. As is stated by Stone (2006:xiii) for Arabs "the proverb to speech what salt is to food."

There are numerous number of proverbs in Arabic which are found equivalently in English. The verse of the Holy Quran, Surat Al-Baqara, V: 286:

"لا يكلف الله نفسا الا وسعها"

has an English equivalent " *God does not give you a load that you cannot carry*".

### 2.4. Proverbs in Persian

"Mathal" is an Arabic word derived from the word "Mothoul" which means likeness. It also carries the meaning of 'standing erect on the feet'. In English the word "proverb" is used in the same sense. The following definitions for the term proverb appear in Persian and Arabic dictionaries:

Like, Resembling	Saying, Statement	Sign, Symbol
Reason and Argument	Advice, Lesson	Adjective
Story, Anecdote	Idiom (Proverb)	Fable
Role model	Biography	Stories bearing morals

There is a long list of definitions for proverbs provided. One of those definitions will suffice the purpose here.

A proverb is a concise sentence comprising a simile or sage concept which has become famous among the people for its fluency of expression, clarity of meaning and delicacy of composition, and is used with or without minor changes in daily conversations. (Bahmanyar (2002) cited in Zolfaghari and Hayat (2012: 96).

Habibian (2002: 11-12) sheds light on the similarities rather than the differences between English and Persian regarding the proverbs and idioms used among people to clarify that these two languages always have something in common. There are lots of Persian proverbs that have English equivalent. The Persian proverb, for instance, *"If God closes a door, he opens another"* has an Arabic equivalent *"If God closes a door, he opens thousand doors"* as well as an English equivalent *"If God closes a door, he opens a window"*. Proverbs are loaded with meaning. one of the advantages of which is that it expresses a full meaning by using few words. Furthermore, proverbs reflect the culture and the history of a whole community. It is worth mentioning that 'Persian' is the language of Iranian native speakers.

## 2.5. The Universality of Language

For a number of decades there has been an orientation towards the approach that there are principles shared by all languages and parameters that are language specific which are represented differently in different languages. The focus of the current work is not to point to the originator of this approach since it is attributed to a number of scholars namely Chomsky, Beauzee, and others (for more information see Seuren 2004:54); rather it concerns itself with the idea of languages sharing similar contents as a result of language

universality. This holds that languages share basic principles which are reflected in the current work in terms of semantic significations shared by the three languages Arabic, Persian, and English despite the formal diversity among them. Although the syntactic side is out of the scope of this study, yet it is worth mentioning that the data collected share the conceptual level leaving the structural level diverse due to the diversity of linguistic systems for each language.

### 3. Glossary

This section gathers a list of expressions based on colors in English, Arabic, and Persian standard and colloquial languages. The signification of each expression is provided to cover the semantic representation. It is worth mentioning that not all of the English color-based idiomatic expressions are listed; rather a sample of expressions is provided randomly.

#### 3.1 English Color-Based Expressions

Expression	Signification
<b>Add color to something</b>	including some details and descriptions to make it more interesting. (John, 2005:1)
<b>Off color</b>	To feel ill.(john, 2005:160)
<b>See someone's true color</b>	To understand someone's real character, usually for the first time. (Llyas, 2014)
<b>With flying colors</b>	To complete something with great success. (Lee & Erik, 2011:24)
<b>Black and white</b>	Words printed on paper. (John, 2005:110, Ganske,2008:174)
<b>Black as night</b>	So dark that is hard to see anything(Llyas, 2014)
<b>Pitch black</b>	

<b>Black and blue</b>	Badly bruised. (Lee & Erik, 2011:27)
<b>Black eye</b>	
<b>Black out</b>	Dimming the lights or to lose consciousness. (Llyas, 2014)
<b>Black market</b>	A place where goods are illegally sold for a profit. (ibid)
<b>Blacklist someone</b>	To write someone's name on a list if break any rule and prevent them to take part again. (ibid)
<b>Black sheep</b>	Someone who is odd one out of a group. (ibid)
<b>White elephant</b>	An expensive item that is costly to maintain, or useless possession. (ibid)
<b>White lie</b>	Harmless lie, trivial lie. (ibid)
<b>As white as a sheet</b>	Being in a state of great anxiety and fear. (ibid)
<b>Raise a white flag</b>	To show being defeated and surrendered in a war or quarrel. (ibid)
<b>Green with envy</b>	To feel jealous, feeling envy towards someone's good fortune (Knoblock,2008: 22)
<b>Green eyed monster</b>	A strong feeling of jealous, usually with unkind wishes (ibid)
<b>Green thumb</b>	To have the skill or talent for growing plants. (Brenner, 2003: np)
<b>To be Green</b>	Naïve, inexperienced, immature (ibid )
<b>Get/give the green light</b>	To get/give the approval to go ahead with a plan or project/refers to the traffic green light signaling one to go. (ibid)
<b>Green belt</b>	An area of trees and fields around a town. (Llyas, 2014)

<b>Once in a blue moon</b>	Not very often, hardly ever occurring. (Knoblock, 2008:20)
<b>Out of the blue</b>	Not expected, seeming to appear from nowhere. (ibid)
<b>Looking/feeling blue</b>	Looking/feeling sad (ibid:24)
<b>Turn blue</b>	To feel cold because of cold temperature, or lack of oxygen, or to laugh so hard that one can hardly catch breathe. (Brenner, 2003: np)
<b>Blue hair</b>	The hair color of an elderly woman ( ibid)
<b>Blue-collar</b>	Manual labor that traditionally dresses a shirt with blue coveralls with a blue collar. (ibid)
<b>Blue pencil</b>	To censor something. (Llyas, 2014)
<b>A blue-eyed boy</b>	The critical description of a boy who receives a special treatment by someone in high position. (ibid)
<b>Blue blood</b>	Someone noble, aristocratic or wealthy (ibid)
<b>Blue ribbon</b>	To be of superior quality, the best of a group (ibid)
<b>Talk a blue streak</b>	Talking too much and very rapidly (ibid)
<b>Caught red-handed</b>	Discovered in the act of doing something wrong (Knoblock, 2008:21, Ganske,2008:173)
<b>Red-faced</b>	Embarrassed (ibid, Lee & Erik, 2011:23)
<b>beet red</b>	
<b>Red with anger</b>	To become extremely angry (Brenner, 2003: np)
<b>Turn red</b>	
<b>to see red</b>	
<b>Red-carpet treatment</b>	Treat with special importance. (Knoblock, 2008:23, Ganske,2008:174)

<b>Roll out the red carpet</b>	Special royal welcome and attention (Brenner, 2003: np, Lee & Erik, 2011: 23)
<b>Paint the town red</b>	To go out and have a fantastic evening of fun and enjoyment. (Brenner, 2003: np)
<b>Red tape</b>	A set of rules which stop progress. (Llyas, 2014)
<b>Red card</b>	Dismissal from the job. (ibid)
<b>Blood red</b>	The description for the deep red color. (ibid)
<b>Browned off</b>	To feel bored or annoyed with someone or something. (ibid)
<b>Tickle with pink</b>	Delighted, pleased, happy. (Knoblock, 2008:23)
<b>Pink Slip</b>	A notice of dismissal from employment. (ibid)
<b>See Pink elephants</b>	To see things that are not really there, because they are in their fancy. (ibid)
<b>Silver lining</b>	Something good that comes out of something bad. (Knoblock, 2008:24)
<b>Give something on a silver plate/platter</b>	To offer something wholeheartedly. (Llyas, 2014)
<b>Silver screen</b>	The film industry. (ibid)
<b>A yellow streak</b>	To have cowardice in their character(ibid)
<b>Yellow bellied</b>	To seem as a coward (ibid)
<b>Golden opportunity</b>	A very good chance to achieve something(ibid)

### 3.2. Arabic Color-Based Expressions

Signification	Expression
كذبة بريئة لا يقصد بها الاذى (البعليكي, 2013: 1349)	الكذبة البيضاء

الضوء الاخضر	إذن بالانطلاق في خطة (البعليكي, 2013: 509)
الفرصة الذهبية	فرصة نادرة
يفتح صفحة بيضاء	كناية عن بداية جديدة و ترك الماضي
اذخر القرش الابيض الى اليوم	يضرب تنبيها للاقتصاد و عدم التبذير (الناصري, 1979: 68)
الاسود	
قرش الابيض ينفع بيوم الاسود	نفس المعنى (زلزلة, 2006: 160)
ادخلوا سوادا في بياض	يضرب في التخطيط لامر ما (الميداني, ج1, 2002: 642)
لفلان كحل و لفلان سواد	كثرة المال تمنع عده كما كثرة السواد تمنع ادراك الشيء (الميداني, 2002, ج3: 133)
ليس كل من سود وجهه قال: انا حداد	المظهر لا يدل على حرفة الشخص (الميداني, 2002, ج3: 270)
موت احمر	شديد (الميداني, ج1, 2002: 496) للتعبير عن الصعوبة البالغة في الامر (الزمخشري: 126)
أشد حمرة من الصريرة	الصمغة الحمراء (العسكري, ج1: 399)
اشد حمرة من بنت المطر	دابة شديدة الحمار تظهر غبّ المطر (الميداني, 2002, ج2: 231)
اشد حمرة من المصعة	ثمرة العوسج ناصعة الحمرة (الميداني, 2002, ج3: 568)
الحسن أحمر	الحسن و الجمال في حمرة اللون مع البياض (العسكري, ج1: 366, 367)
احمرت عينه	كناية عن شدة الغضب
ابيض الوجه, بياض وجهك, قلبه	التعبير عن الطيب بالابيض, أو حسن النية (الناصري, 1979: 230)
ابيض, نية بياض	
التبن ابيضه فضة و اصفره ذهب	يضرب للنهي عن استبخاس الاشياء الضئيلة (البغدادي, 1962: 239)
ما كل بياض شحمة و لا كل سوداء	شيئان متشابهان في المظهر و لكن المعدن يختلف (الميداني, 2002, ج3: 323, العسكري, ج2: 287)
تمرة	
قرب الوساد و طول السواد	يضرب للامر يلقي صاحبه في المكروه (العسكري, ج2: 126)
مأتي انت ايها السواد	التوعد, أي سألقاك و لا ابالي بك (الميداني, 2002, ج3: 406)
اسود الوجه, قلبه اسود, نية	تعبير عن العار, التعبير عن الخبث بالاسود (الناصري, 1979: 1979)

سوداء	(230)	الله خلق السلاية و سود راسها	يضرب عند رؤية صاحب العاهة اذا فعل شرا (الناصري,1979:
بيت اسود	(120)	بيت اسود	اسود بمعنى الكثيف, أي بيت مكتظ بالسكان (الناصري, 1979:
احمر الوجه, احمر خجلا	(231)	احمر الوجه, احمر خجلا	تعبير عن الخجل (الزمخشري: 126)
زرقاء اليمامة, أبصر من زرقاء اليمامة	(309: 2002)	زرقاء اليمامة, أبصر من زرقاء اليمامة	كناية عن النظر القوي (الميداني, 2002: 309)
الاخضر يحترق بسعر اليابس اليابس يعم عل أخضر	(28)	الاخضر يحترق بسعر اليابس اليابس يعم عل أخضر	معاملة المذنب و البريء ذات المعاملة (مراد: 28)
الحزام الاخضر	Green belt	الحزام الاخضر	Green belt
بعدها خضرة	(1979: 218)	بعدها خضرة	يضرب عند السلامة من الحوادث القاضية على النفس (الناصري,
النفس خضرة	(245: 2006)	النفس خضرة	يضرب للرجل الكهل الذي يعجبه ما يعجب غيره ممن هم اصغر سنا منه (زلزلة, 2006: 245)
ساعة السوداء	(160: 2006)	ساعة السوداء	تعبير عن الشؤم
يوم اسود	(160: 2006)	يوم اسود	يوم العوز و الحاجة و الشدة (زلزلة, 2006: 160)
بخت ابيض	Good luck	بخت ابيض	Good luck
بخت اسود, حظ اسود	Bad luck	بخت اسود, حظ اسود	Bad luck
غراب يكلله للغراب: وجهك اسود	(2006: 152)	غراب يكلله للغراب: وجهك اسود	يضرب للرجل الذي يعيب غيره من الناس بما هو فيه (زلزلة,
اصفر الوجه	(2006: 152)	اصفر الوجه	تعبير عن الخوف او المرض
مو كل اصفر ذهب	(237)	مو كل اصفر ذهب	يضرب للتحذير من حكم على الامور من مظاهرها (زلزلة, 2006:
ليس كل ما يلمع ذهباً	(237)	ليس كل ما يلمع ذهباً	(237)
موت احمر	(1669: 1996)	موت احمر	للتعبير عن الصعوبة البالغة و يعني الموت في شدة و جهد (الميداني, 2002, ج:3: 371, العسكري, ج:1: 366)
موت ابيض	(1669: 1996)	موت ابيض	الموت غرقاً او الموت جوعاً (التهاوني, 1996: 1669)

الموت حرقاً, ايضاً احتمال اذى الناس (نفس المصدر)  
الموت مرضاً (نفس المصدر)

موت اسود

موت اصفر

### 3.3. Persian Color-Based Expressions

#### Signification

#### Expression

Off colors (Ahmadi, 2011:29)

رنگ پریده

white as sheet or ghost (ibid: 31)

See the color of someone's money  
(ibid: 29)

رنگ پول کسی را دیدن

When in Rome, do as Romans do.  
(ibid: 38)

همرنگ جماعت شدن

Frank, sincere (ibid:36)

يك رو و يك رنگ

good luck

سفید بخت

Deadly pale (ibid: 37)

مثل گچ سفید شدن

bad luck

سیاه بخت

Black-hearted (Richardson, 1829:864)

سیه دل

Black market

بازار سیاه

It is better to be born lucky than rich  
(Habibian,2002:176)

گلیم بخت کسی یافتند سیاه  
به اب زمزم و کوثر سفیدنتوان کرد

To see pink elephants (Ahmadi, 2011:  
30)

سیاه مست بودن

Black as night (ibid: 31)

به سیاهی نیمه شب

Black as pitch (ibid)

به سیاهی قیر

To ruin someone (ibid: 35)

روزگار کسی را سیاه کردن  
به خاک سیاه نشانندن

To be put to shame (ibid: 37)

روي سیاه

As white as snow (ibid: 31)

به سفیدی برف

To come off with flying colors (ibid:  
39)

روي سفید شدن

A clear conscience fears not false accusation (Habibian,2002:42) اكر پيش همه روي سياهم, پيش دزد روي سفيدم

As well-known as the village water-pump (ibid:184) مثل گاو پيشاني سفيد ميماند

very distinctive

Shining gold for dark day (Ahmadi, 2011:35) سيم سفيد براي روز سياه

Over my dead body (ibid: 38) صد سال سياه

come out of the blue (ibid: 28) ناگهان سبز شدن

Give somebody the green light (ibid: 33) چراغ سبز

Green belt (ibid: 34) كمر بند سبز

Golden opportunity (Ibid: 32) فرصت طلايي

One bitten twice shy. (Habibian, 2002: 180) مار گزيده از ريسمان سياه و سفيد ميترسد

Black is the top of all colors بالاتر از سياهي رنگي نيست

There is no color above black (ibid: 201)

Squeamish person (Ahmadi, 2011: 10) نازك نارنجي

Much of muchness (ibid: 38) سگ زرد برادر شغاله

Pale (ibid:35) زرد بودن

Every cloud has a silver lining پايان شب سياه سپيد است

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Pot calling the kettle black. (Habibian, 2002: 124, Ahmadi,2011: 31)) ديگ به ديگ ميگه روت سياه

The red tongue talks at the head's cost. (Habibian, 2002: 128) زبان سرخ سر سبز ميدهد بر باد

The worst hog often gets the best pears. (ibid: 139)	سيب سرخ براي دست جلاق خوبه؟
Go beet red (Ahmadi, 2011: 30)	سرخ شدن
Red as blood (ibid)	به سرخي خون
Red as cherry (ibid)	به قرمزي گيلاس
Red as a rod (ibid)	به سرخي گل رز
(as) red as turkey cock (ibid:31)	مثل لبو, قرمز قرمز
To be red; blushed or angry (ibid: 38)	تخم چشمش قرمز شد
Speech is silver, silence is gold. (ibid: 174)	گر گفتن سيم است, خاموشي زر است

### 3.4. Aspects of Similarity among the three languages

The following table gathers a number of the expressions shared by all the three languages. The meanings of expressions, as they are mentioned in the aforementioned tables, prove that colors used in each expression in each language have the same referent.

English	Arabic	Persian	meaning
1.Green light	الضوء الاخضر	چراغ سبز	Allowance, permission
2.Golden opportunity	الفرصة الذهبية	فرصت طلايي	rare chance. Gold signifies preciousness
3.Green belt	الحزام الاخضر	كمر بند سبز	
4.Pot calling the kettle black	غراب يكله للغراب: وجهك اسود	ديگ به ديگ روت ميگه سياه	Black signifies shame and vice.
5.All that glitters is not gold	كل اصفر ذهب ليس كل ما يلمع ذهبا	هر درخشنده اي مو كل اصفر ذهب طلا نبود	Do not be deceived by appearances.
6.Pale face	اصفر الوجه	زرد بودن	To be pale or sick.

		Yellow signifies sickness
7. Beet red	احمر الوجه, احمر خجلا	To be excited, embarrassed, or outraged. Red signifies excitement
8. Black-hearted	روي اسود الوجه, قلبه اسود, نية سوداء	Black signifies shame and vice and evil
9. White-hearted	ابيض الوجه, بياض وجهك, قلبه ابيض, نية بيضاء	White signifies purity and virtue
10. Red with anger	احمرت عينه	Red signifies anger here شد
11. Shining gold for dark day	قرش الابيض ينفع بيوم الاسود	Different colors used referring to the same content: saving money for the day of need
12. Black market	السوق السوداء	Uncommitted market
13. Back box	الصندوق الاسود	Though the box is orange, it is called so because it is looked for after disasters are taken palce.
14. Speech is silver, silence is gold	الكلام من الفضة و من السكوت من الذهب	Different colors used referring to the same content: the value of silence is higher than speech

15. white as sheet      مثل گچ سفید شدن اصفر وجهه  
or ghost      Turning pale out of fear

### Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study

It can be concluded that:

1. English, Arabic, and Persian have a number of color-based expressions in common which can be attributed to the shared concepts in different cultures. This can consequently be attributed to the universality of idioms and expressions in languages.
2. The expressions functionally project almost the same signification modified according to the linguistic environment they appear in. expressions must fit in the cultural system they appear in as well. This means that although they are formally (structurally) different, yet they are functionally (semantically) similar.
3. The amount of color-based expression in English far exceeds those expressions in Arabic and Persian. This has been clearly evident through the research progress where the researcher found that English draws upon great many color-based idioms and expressions compared to the other two languages: Arabic and Persian.
4. The majority of English color-based expressions are idioms; whereas the Arabic and Persian color-based expressions are a mixture of idioms and proverbs. This fact is proven and accepted by the lexicographers of each language the researcher relied upon.

It is suggested that the topic of 'animal-based expressions' to be undertaken in a comparative study between the English, Arabic, and Persian languages to investigate the way animals are represented in each language and given values or symbolism.

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