

The Importance Of English Idioms

Karimova Munisa Yaxyoyevna

SamSIFL teacher, Uzbekistan

Abstract— *In this article, there are information about an idiom. Moreover, there are also much information idioms expression in English language. Lastly, reader can find some examples about idioms.*

Keywords—An idiom, idiomatic expressions, "break a leg", phraseology, "Chips and dip", irreversible binomials.

1. INTRODUCTION

An idiom is a phrase or expression that typically presents a figurative, non-literal meaning attached to the phrase; but some phrases become figurative idioms while retaining the literal meaning of the phrase. Categorized as formulaic language, an idiom's figurative meaning is different from the literal meaning. Idioms occur frequently in all languages; in English alone there are an estimated twenty-five thousand idiomatic expressions. Idioms are expressions that help us describe an exact situation in a different, more creative way. They share cultural and historical information and broaden people's understanding of a language. Idioms build up some distinctive features which can differ from one language to another. And what's more interesting, idioms can sometimes reflect certain cultural traditions and personalities.

2. MAIN PART

Many idiomatic expressions were meant literally in their original use, but sometimes, the attribution of the literal meaning changed and the phrase itself grew away from its original roots—typically leading to a folk etymology. For instance, the literal "spill the beans" (meaning to reveal a secret) apparently originated from an ancient method of voting, wherein a voter deposited a bean into one of several cups, indicating the candidate they favored. If jars were spilled before the counting of votes was complete, one might see which jar had more beans and thereby could claim which candidate might be the winner. Over time, the 'bean jar' voting method fell out of favor but the idiom persisted and became figurative.

Other idioms are deliberately figurative. For example, "break a leg" is an ironic expression to wish a person good luck just prior to their giving a performance or presentation. It may have arisen from the superstition that one ought not utter the words "good luck" to an actor because it is believed that doing so will cause the opposite result.

In linguistics, idioms are usually presumed to be figures of speech contradicting the principle of compositionality. That compositionality is the key notion for the analysis of idioms is emphasized in most accounts of idioms. This principle states that the meaning of a whole should be constructed from the meanings of the parts that make up the whole. In other words, one should be in a position to understand the whole if one understands the meanings of each of the parts that make up the whole. The following example is widely employed to illustrate the point:

Fred kicked the bucket.

Understood compositionally, Fred has literally kicked an actual, physical bucket. The much more likely idiomatic reading, however, is non-compositional: Fred is understood to have died. Arriving at the idiomatic reading from the literal reading is unlikely for most speakers. What this means is that the idiomatic reading is, rather, stored as a single lexical item that is now largely independent of the literal reading.

In phraseology, idioms are defined as a sub-type of phraseme, the meaning of which is not the regular sum of the meanings of its component parts.[6] John Saeed defines an idiom as collocated words that became affixed to each other until metamorphosing into a fossilised term. This collocation of words redefines each component word in the word-group and becomes an idiomatic expression. Idioms usually do not translate well; in some cases, when an idiom is translated directly word-for-word into another language, either its meaning is changed or it is meaningless.

3. CONCLUSION

When two or three words are often used together in a particular sequence, the words are said to be irreversible binomials, or Siamese twins. Usage will prevent the words from being displaced or rearranged. For example, a person may be left "high and dry" but never "dry and high". This idiom in turn means that the person is left in their former condition rather than being assisted so that their condition improves. Not all Siamese twins are idioms, however. "Chips and dip" is an irreversible binomial, but it refers to literal food items, not idiomatic ones.

To sum up:

- 1) Idioms help us say many things with just a few words.
- 2) They help us enrich our language, they are nicer to listen to and make the conversation less monotonous and more funny.

3) Idioms are often used by native speakers, so if you wanna sound like one, you should start using them.

4) Idioms help us be more confident with our target language and thus be “As cool as cucumber”.

4. REFERENCES

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