

19. "The Adjustment Bureau" (George Nolfi 2011).
20. "The Departed" (Martin Scorsese 2006).
21. "The Fugitive" (Andrew Davis 1993).
22. "The Tourist" (Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck 2010).
23. "Tootsie" (Sydney Pollack 1982).

#### Анотація

У статті розглядається лінгвокультурні зв'язку в дискурсі американського ігрового кіно, темпоральна і культурна обумовленість сприйняття американського кінофільму глядачем-реципієнтом, а також характерні особливості діалогів американського ігрового кіно.

**Ключові слова:** мова, культурне середовище, кінодискурс, глядач, кіноперсонаж, мовний ряд, вербальний фон, фонова інформація, наратив.

#### Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются лингвокультурные связи в дискурсе американского игрового кино, темпоральная и культурная обусловленность восприятия американского кинофильма зрителем-реципиентом, а также характерные особенности диалогов американского игрового кино.

**Ключевые слова:** язык, культурная среда, кинодискурс, зритель, киноперсонаж, речевой ряд, вербальный фон, фоновая информация, навратив.

#### Summary

The article discusses Linguistic Culture communication discourse of American feature films, temporal and cultural conditioning of perception of the American film viewer by the recipient, as well as the characteristics of the dialogues of the American feature films.

**Keywords:** language, cultural environment, cinematic discourse, spectator, movie character, movie dialogue, verbal background, background information, narrative.

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**Stryga E. V.**,  
candidate of pedagogical sciences,  
State Institution "South Ukrainian National  
Pedagogical University  
named after K. D. Ushinsky"  
(Odesa)

## COMMON ENGLISH IDIOMS: MEANINGS AND ORIGINS

**Problem statement.** An *idiom* is a word or, more commonly, a phrase in which the figurative meaning is different than the literal meaning of the grouping of words. There are approximately twenty-five thousand idioms in the English language alone. An idiom is a set expression that has a meaning different from the sum of the literal meanings of its components. For example, if you combine the literal meanings of the words "all, of, a, sudden" in the expression "all of a sudden", you will not get the idiomatic meaning of this expression, which is "suddenly, unexpectedly".

The English language is rich in idiomatic expressions. English idioms present a great variety of constructions and combinations which are mostly unchangeable and may not follow basic rules of grammar. The meanings of some idioms can be easily understood (in general; come out; at first; the root of all evil); the meanings of other idioms cannot be understood from the meanings of their components (on end; pack it in; high

and low; hard cash). Some idioms contain proper names (a Jack of all trades; Uncle Sam; meet one's Waterloo); some other idioms are comparisons (as clear as a bell; as the crow flies). Proverbs and sayings may also have idiomatic character (every cloud has a silver lining; still waters run deep; it never rains but it pours). So the understanding of the native speakers' language is the international problem for non-speakers.

**Analysis of recent publications.** Nowadays English is worth not just knowing, but it is worth really knowing. There is a great importance to understand up-to-date English. English is the chief language of international business and academic conferences, and the leading language of international tourism. English is the main language of popular music, advertising, home computers and video games. Most of the scientific, technological and academic information in the world is expressed in English. International communication expands very fast. The English language becomes the means of international communication, the language of trade, education, politics, and economics. People have to communicate with each other. It is very important for them to understand foreigners and be understood by them. In this case the English language comes to be one but very serious problem. A word comes to be a very powerful means of communication but also can be a cause of a great misunderstanding if it is not clearly understood by one of the speakers (A. Vezhbytska, V. Krasnych, S. Ter-Minosova and others). Idioms come to be a very numerous part of English. Idioms cover a lot of drawbacks of the English language and it is one-third part of the colloquial speech. If we develop non-speakers awareness of using idiomatic sentences, we are sure to bring them closer to the authentically sounding speech.

**The aim of the research** is basically to define the meanings, origins and functioning of some English common idioms.

**The main material.** In linguistics, idioms are usually presumed to be figures of speech contradicting the principle of compositionality. 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.

For example, the following sentence: *Fred kicked the bucket.*

Now, you could take this literally, in that Fred actually walked up to and kicked a bucket in his path. However, the more common meaning is not literal, as the phrase "kick the bucket" has an alternate meaning, implying that a person has died [3].

This idiom has a rather dark origin, making reference to someone hanging himself by standing on a bucket and then kicking it away.

It is interesting to note that while there are different idioms for each individual language, many languages have equivalent translations of idioms found in other languages.

For instance, the phrase "*kick the bucket*" in English which implies, as we've discussed, that someone has died, can be translated into a phrase that means the equivalent in Ukrainian, "*to cut the oak (as in, building a coffin)*"; in German, "*to look at the radishes from underneath*"; or in Swedish, "*to take the sign down*" and so on.

We use some of these phrases every day and yet many of us don't know how these same phrases originated. It's very interesting to learn the origins behind the phrases and how they came into existence. As you learn about idioms, you also learn about culture, as idioms are usually derived from local culture and customs in each individual language.

So, let's explore some common idioms and phrases and take a look at the meanings and origins behind them.

As an idiom, a *loophole* is defined as a way of getting out of something or escaping a difficulty, especially finding a legal technicality that allows someone to evade compliance.

There is a question about origin of this from.

A loophole, in the middle ages, was a small slit like opening in a castle wall that men would fire their bows or, later, musketeers, through. The only openings in a seemingly impenetrable wall were these slits, which a child or small adult could squeeze through. Thus, a loophole is a small opening, or "out" in a seemingly airtight law, which only the clever few can use.

*Red tape* is a very common idiom. We use the term "*red tape*" to denote anything that may delay or hold us up, whatever the process may be. It also refers to a lot of unnecessary bureaucracy or paperwork.

This term originated from the fact that legal and official documents were tied up or bound with red tape since the 16th century. By doing so, it was often difficult to access them. Hence, the term "*red tape*".

"*Break a Leg!*"

How many times have we heard someone shout, "*Break a leg!*" to someone going onstage? This is a phrase that seems to be counter intuitive. Certainly, you don't want someone to actually break their leg onstage, so where did such a saying come into existence?

The phrase was first recorded in print in the early 1900s.

Eric Partridge, in his *Dictionary of Catchphrases*, suggests that the term originated as a translation of a similar expression used by German actors: *Hals- und Beinbruch* (literally, "*a broken neck and a broken leg*"). The German phrase traces back to early aviators, possibly during World War I, spreading gradually to the German stage and then to British and American theaters.

Why would people twist a wish for dreadful injury into one for good luck? It is suggested that it is a reverse psychology of sorts. Popular folklore down through the ages has been full of warnings against wishing your friends good luck. To do so is was thought superstitiously to tempt evil spirits or demons to do your friend harm. Instead, they would wish their friend bad fortune.

There is also evidence that some have pointed to the stage directions for the opening night of the reconstructed Globe Theater in London, which supposedly called for two actors to swing dramatically from a balcony down to the stage on ropes. One of the actors slipped and, you guessed it, broke his leg.

However, this has not been substantiated.

In either case, it has become a common and accepted expression of good luck. We've all heard this one: "*Piece of Cake*". When someone says, "*Oh, that's a piece of cake!*" we know it signifies something that is easy, managed with no difficulties, we can do it with our eyes closed.

Where did this idiom originate?

This one's almost self explanatory. What's easier than eating a piece of cake?

The first reference to this was in the 1930s, when American poet Ogden Nash, who wrote *Primrose Path*, was quoted as saying, "*Life's a piece of cake*" [2]. This sweet idiom has stuck around ever since.

"*It's Raining Cats and Dogs!*"

Now, this is an interesting one.

This must sound like a very odd expression to someone just learning the language for the first time. There are a lot of things we have seen falling from the sky, but cats and dogs are not one of them.

How did this expression come about, then?

It's quite simple, really. It originated in England in the 1500s, when houses had thatched roofs. A thatch roof consisted of straw piled high, with no wood underneath. In cold, foggy England, this was sometimes the only place for an animal to get warm. Cats, and other small animals, like mice, bugs, and the occasional dog would wind up on the roofs.

When it rained really hard, some of the animals would slip off the roof and wash up in the gutters on the street. Hence, the saying, "*It's raining cats and dogs*" ended up referring to a heavy rain [1].

"*Graveyard Shift*", "*Dead Ringer*" and "*Saved By The Bell*".

How about when someone refers to working the graveyard shift, or a dead ringer? How about when you hear someone say, "*Ahhh, saved by the bell!*" What do these phrases have in common? They have a very creepy origin, indeed!

For this, too, we go back to England. If you look at a map, you'll see that England is rather small. Therefore, they started running out of places to bury people. What they did in order to solve this problem was to dig up these existing coffins out of the ground and take the bones to a bone house. They would then reuse the grave.

Sounds like a simple enough solution. However, this practice turned up a very eerie and creepy finding. An average of about one out of twenty five coffins that were being dug up to be reused were found with horrific scratch marks on the inside. They realized that somehow, people were being *buried alive!*

This, obviously, was an unsettling find. In order to avoid this happening in the future, they started placing a string on the wrist of the corpse before it went into the coffin. This string would lead through the coffin, and up through the ground and was tied to a bell on the ground. This way, it was thought, if a corpse was indeed not a corpse and still alive, they could ring the bell (or be a *dead ringer*) and have a chance to be dug up if they were still alive, and thus, *saved by the bell*. Someone would have to sit outside all night, working the *graveyard shift*, and listen for these bells.

In fact, there was so much concern about this for awhile that there were quite an array of devices invented so that *the undead could escape their coffins*, were they buried prematurely. Some of them were rather simple, with spring loaded coffin lids that would open at the slightest movement inside. Others were much more complex in nature, even using electrical switches, early dry cells, and buzzers as a signal someone was alive.

Now, there has been no documented case of any person actually ringing the bell and thus, saved by the bell, to my knowledge. And we must also point out that this explanation is a bit of a controversy. Some disclaim this theory, saying that while the practice of reusing existing coffins did exist, it was a lot less common than reported. It has been said that the graveyard shift simply came from nautical origins when a person had the night shift on a vessel at sea, and the shift was named such for the extreme quietness and loneliness of the shift.

It has also been reported that the term *ringer* simply refers to an old devious practice regarding horse racing and betting, in which a proven racehorse similar in looks was switched out for an old nag with a bad record, in a race, securing a long shot bet. A *dead ringer* referred to an animal that you could not tell apart from the original without a closer inspection.

We think the truth lies somewhere in between, as is the case with most stories. There has to be some truth to the original story, or so much time and effort would not have gone into patenting so many designs of coffins from 1843 to 1913 that you could escape from or signal someone above, as described previously. Maybe all these theories are true, and as is the case with much of language in general, it changes and evolves over time. This is what makes etymology, the study of the history and origin of words and tracing their developments and meanings, so interesting.

“*Minding Your P’s & Q’s*”. This is a phrase we hear a lot when adults are speaking to children. This is a term that has come to signify that you are taking care, watching what you are doing, getting it right.

The origins on this idiom are actually rather simple.

This one dates back to a time when local taverns, pubs and bars served up their patrons drinks by the quart and the pint. Bar maids had to keep an eye on the customers and keep the drinks coming. They had to pay special attention to who was drinking pints, and who was drinking quarts, thus, the term came to be known, “*minding your p’s and q’s*”.

“*That’s going to cost you an arm and a leg!*”

This is a common phrase that means simply it’s going to cost to the point of sacrifice. It’s going to hurt. The price is high.

Where did such a phrase come into existence?

If we step back in time to George Washington’s day, we would not see any cameras. For a portrait to be taken, it had to be painted, or sculpted.

This is a rather interesting fact, but if you notice old pictures, you will notice the paintings are of faces, or perhaps a person with one arm behind their back, or both

arms. The truth is, in these times, portraits were not charged by the number of people who appeared in the picture, but rather, by the number of limbs that were painted.

If they wanted a cheaper painting, then it would “*cost them an arm and a leg*”. Artists knew it took more time and effort since arms, hands and legs were more difficult to paint.

If someone is said to give us the “*cold shoulder*”, this means that they are disregarding, dismissing or otherwise ignoring us and treating us with disrespect. We are not welcome in their presence.

The origin of the term has been disputed over the years. However, one viable theory is that it came from serving an unwanted guest a cold shoulder of mutton, as opposed to a nice hot meal like the rest of the guests.

Another theory is that it came from keeping one’s back, or at least a shoulder, in between yourself and the unwanted person. In either case, it shows disdain and disregard and the message is clear.

Now we have to admit that this one we thought was just a coined phrase mimicking the more common and literal phrase, “*mind your own business*” [3].

However, it turns out this has a more defined origin. Apparently, in the early days before there was Stridex and Clearasil, the ladies would use bee’s wax to smooth their complexion where they had acne.

There were actually several phrases that came from this practice.

If a lady looked too long or stared at another lady’s face, they would say, “*Mind your own bee’s wax!*” If the woman were to smile, it might crack the veneer of bee’s wax on her face, thus the phrase, “*crack a smile*”. Also, the phrase “*losing face*” came from when a girl would sit too close to the fire and then the bee’s wax would melt.

*Gossip* is a single word defined as something that is said between two or more people, usually in a derogatory nature, about someone else.

*Gossip* is just one word, but it actually is derived from more than one word.

Before TV, phones, and other media, politicians of old had to depend on feedback to find out what was important to people in their jurisdiction. They did this by sending their assistants out to the local taverns and pubs, where most of the people hung out, and they would *sip some ale*, and listen to people’s conversations, and thus learn what was on people’s minds and what their concerns were.

They basically were told to “*go sip some ale*”, thus the term “*gossip*” was coined.

A *big wig* is generally thought of nowadays to be a person of high repute, a wheeler and dealer, someone prominent.

Back in early days, men and women used to only take baths twice a year (as bad as that sounds). Women would cover their hair so it didn’t get as dirty. Men would shave their heads and wear wigs. They couldn’t wash their wigs, however, so they would hollow out a loaf of bread, place the wig inside, and bake it. This would kill any lice or bugs in the wig, and the wig came out big and fluffy due to the moisture and heat inside the loaf of bread.

This is how the term, “*big wig*” came into existence.

Also interesting to note is that the term “*to pull the wool over someone’s eyes*”, which we know as trying to fool someone, came into existence because of referencing pulling a man’s wig over his eyes, in effect, blinding him to what you did not want him to see.

When we hear someone say, “I heard it *straight from the horse’s mouth*”, we know what they mean. It’s truth. You cannot contest it. Although being an odd phrase, since horses obviously don’t talk, we understand that it means it is something you cannot deny, it’s an actual fact.

The truth is, horses have always been a prized commodity down through the ages. There were a lot of dishonest people who would try to sell less than quality horses to potential buyers. They would also lie about a horse’s age. However, anyone who knew anything about horses knew that you could tell the age by examining the size and shape of the teeth, literally getting the truth *straight from the horse’s mouth*. This is how the phrase later came to mean getting the literal truth [3].

The phrase “*Heard It Through the Grapevine*” has come to reference something that is heard, unofficially, or indirectly. This phrase originated at the turn of the century when the telegraph was getting off the ground. Important information was transmitted across country using the telegraph system. The system required thousands of miles of wire to be installed, and this wire was held in place several feet above the ground with poles at equal intervals. People thought the wires and poles looked like the strings used to train vines so the telegraph lines became known as “*the grapevine*”.

People then started referring to hearing things “*through the grapevine*”.

*Cold Enough to Freeze the Balls off a Brass Monkey (It’s Not What You Think).*

Sailing ships, including war ships and freighters, carried cannons. Cannons fire round iron balls. It was important to keep a steady supply of cannon balls, ready at a moment’s notice. However, they were not easy to secure on a moving ship.

They would stack the balls in a square based pyramid with one ball on top resting on four, four resting on nine, and so on. They would stack the cannon balls in supplies of 30 this way. They would then make a metal plate of iron (called a monkey) with 16 round indentations to hold the cannon balls on the bottom layer.

There was only one problem. Since the balls and the plate were both made of iron and the ship was a very moist environment, the balls would easily rust to the plate, making them difficult to move.

In order to solve this problem, they made them instead out of brass. However, they didn’t realize that brass does not have the same properties that iron does, and it contracts faster and more than iron when it is chilled. When the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannon balls would come right off the monkey.

Thus, it was quite literally, “*Cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey*”.

**Conclusion.** This paper has discussed the nature of idiomaticity versus non-idiomaticity in learner language and compared and contrasted non-idiomaticity with error. The complementary nature of generated language and formulaic, conventionalized language in discourse has been discussed and the gradational nature of idiomatic

language has been delineated. The metaphorical nature of much idiomatic language has been emphasized and the central importance of metaphorical multiword units in language use has been insisted upon. The origin of idioms is closely connected with people's mentality. The present day English can't be considered full of value without idiomatic usage, as the use of idioms is the first sign of a certain language's developing. Idiomatic sentences enrich a language and the knowledge of idioms signal that the speaker knows the language on the level of a native speaker. The belles-lettres investigated by us revealed a great number of idiomatic sentences used by prominent writers in their works to make their language more expressive and colourful. We concluded that even languages belonging to different families may have similar or hemi similar idioms and those which differ dramatically can be guessed within the context. So idioms are integral part of language which make our speech more colourful and authentically native.

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#### **Summary**

The article deals with the nature of English idioms. The complementary nature of generated language and formulaic, conventionalized language in discourse has been discussed and the gradational nature of idiomatic language has been delineated. The metaphorical nature of much idiomatic language has been emphasized and the central importance of metaphorical multiword units in language use has been insisted upon. It has been proved that the origin of idioms is closely connected with people's mentality.

**Keywords:** idiom, proverb, saying, authentically sounding speech, mentality.

#### **Анотація**

У статті розглянуто походження англійських ідіом. Взаємодоповнюючий характер мови, шаблонні, стилізовані засоби дискурсу описані в статті, а також зроблено акцент на послідовному характері ідіоматичних виразів. Проаналізовано функціонування метафоричних ідіоматичних виразів і їх ключові значення в мові. Доведено, що ідіоми відображають менталітет народу та роблять аутентичне мовлення емоційно забарвленим.

**Ключові слова:** ідіома, прислів'я, приказка, аутентичне мовлення, менталітет.

#### **Аннотация**

В статье рассматривается происхождение английских идиом. Взаимодополняющий характер языка, шаблонные, стилизованные средства дискурса описаны в статье, а также сделан акцент на последовательном характере идиоматических выражений. Проанализировано функционирование метафорических идиоматических выражений и их ключевые значения в языке. Доказано, что идиомы отображают менталитет народа и делают аутентичную речь эмоционально окрашенной.

**Ключевые слова:** идиома, пословица, поговорка, аутентичная речь, менталитет.