

## IDIOMS TYPES AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION

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*Deși există numeroase ghiduri și materiale de cercetare privind dificultățile de traducere în general, până în prezent s-a acordat puțină atenție dificultăților de traducere a expresiilor idiomatice. Acestea sunt caracteristice limbii engleze, dar precum traducerea are un rol primordial în prezent, este o mare nevoie de traducerea expresiilor idiomatice în alte limbi. Așadar, prezentul articol este bazat pe studiul expresiilor idiomatice din perspective atât lingvistice, cât și de traducere.*

Most linguists, authors, poets, translators, interpreters, language teachers, and language learners agree that idioms may aid in providing vivid descriptions and that they often prove to be more powerful and efficient than plain, non-idiomatic language. However, they also believe that idioms are difficult to categorize and present a problem for language instructors. In K. Bromley's opinion, "*just as idioms are disruptive, ambiguous, and difficult for the language user, so also are they interesting and colorful*" [1, p.274]. And for sure, idioms can add a note of humour and spice to language. Following the given criteria, Sam Glucksberg [2, p.217] classifies idiomatic expressions into four types: *Transparent idioms*, *Semi-transparent idioms*, *Semi-opaque idioms* and *Opaque idioms*. In conformity with Michael McCarthy & Felicity O'Dell [3, p.76] idiomatic expressions are associated with various topics such as food and drinks, body parts, animals, sports, colors, sea, names of people together with names of places.

The difficulties related to their classification are pointed out also by Kövecses Z., who compares the linguistic expressions called idioms to a "mixed bag" which "involves metaphors (e.g. *spill the beans*), metonymies (e.g. *throw up one's hands*), pairs of words (e.g. *cats and dogs*), idioms with it (e.g. *live it up*), similes (e.g. *as easy as pie*), sayings (e.g. *a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*), phrasal verbs (e.g. *come up*, as in "Christmas is coming up"), grammatical idioms (e.g. *let alone*), and others. As a result, idiom categorization is a crucial subject. If there are several sorts of idioms, there may be variations in how they are comprehended, picked up, and translated. Numerous attempts have been made to classify them." [4, p.231].

Logan P. writes that one of the largest class of English idioms consists of terse adverbial phrases formed by the collocation of a pre- position with a noun or adjective, phrases like "*at hand*", "*at length*", "*at leisure*"; "*by chance*", "*by fits*", "*by far*"; "*for once*", "*for ever*", "*for good*", "*for instance*"; "*in fact*", "*in general*", "*in truth*"; "*of course*", "*of late*" [5, p. 5].

Idiomatic phrases are ones that a speaker cannot "*work out*" by merely understanding the syntax and vocabulary of a language, according to Vyvyan Evans. Idi-

omatic phrases are referred to as “*non-compositional*” for this reason. Instead, like individual lexical elements, a speaker must “*learn them whole*”. She developed a typology of idiomatic expressions based on four main parameters:

- Decoding and encoding idioms, like “*kick the bucket*”. On the other hand, encoding idioms, like “*wide awake*”.
- Grammatical idioms like “*spill the beans*” that follow the usual rules of grammar and extra grammatical idioms like “*all of a sudden*” that do not adhere to the regular grammar rules.
- Substantive “lexically filled” like “*kick the bucket*” versus formal idioms like “*let alone*”:
- Idioms with, such as greetings or conveying attitudes, and without pragmatic point like “*by and large*” [6, p. 643].

Overall, there are three sub-classes of idioms that we can distinguish: *Pure idioms*, *semi-idioms* and *literal idioms*.

- *Pure idioms*: they are always nonliteral. Additionally, these idioms are seen as being ambiguous (for example, *to spill the beans* has nothing to do with the beans).
- *Semi-idioms*: may consist of one or more literal components as well as ones with non-literal subsense. As a result, this kind of expression is seen as largely opaque (for example, “*foot the bill*” simply means “*pay*”).
- *Literal idioms*: do not give much room for change or are always the same. They are regarded as transparent since their individual pieces (such as *naturally, in any event, for certain*) may be used to understand them [7, p.1223].

Idioms can have a variety of forms and patterns, including regular, irregular, and even grammatically incorrect ones. The clarity of the message, however, is not determined by the form. There are three primary types: Idioms that have a strange shape but a clear meaning. *Cut no ice, bring the house down* are examples of idioms with regular form but confusing meaning. “*Be at large*” and “*be with daggers drawn*” are examples of idioms with irregular form and unclear meaning. Most idioms belong to the second group, but even within this group there might be differences regarding the clarity of the idioms.

There is also classification of idioms based on their construction. From this point of view, there can be *verbal*, *verbless*, *sentence*, and *minimal idioms*. *Verbal idioms* have verbal syntagmatic structures, they often consist of a verb and an object (e.g. *make up one’s mind, open somebody’s eyes, sleep like a log*). The syntagmatic structure of verbless idioms lacks a verb. A non-verbal idiom can be nominal, adjectival, or adverbial (e.g. *black sheep, a square peg in a round hole, (as) fit as a fiddle, once in a blue moon*). Sentence idioms have the complex structure of a sentence (e.g. *the coast is clear, talk of the devil and he’ll soon appear, make hay while the sun shines*). According to some linguists, there is also a category of *minimal idioms*, which refer to idiomatic expressions consisting of at least one word (e.g. *by heart, like hell*) [3. p.160].

Subsequently, it can be seen that there have been several attempts to classify idioms. It is believed that a certain awareness of the existence of different types of idioms can be of great help in the process of their recognition, understanding, and ultimately their translation; therefore, it is believed that it is important to include both theory and practice regarding idiom typology in translator – training programs.

### References:

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*Recomandat*

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