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## INGLIZ TILIDAGI IDIOMALARNING TABIATI VA XUSUSIYATLARI

Аннотация

Mazkur maqola ingliz tilidagi idiomalarning tabiati va asosiy xususiyatlarini o'rganishga bag'ishlangan. Tadqiqotda idiomalarning semantik, strukturaviy va pragmatik jihatlari ko'rib chiqilib tahlil qilinadi. Shuningdek, ularning o'zbek tilida so'zlashuvchi o'rganuvchilar tomonidan qabul qilinishi va tushunilish darajasi ko'rib chiqiladi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, idiomalar til o'rganishda murakkab, ammo muhim birliklar hisoblanadi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** idiomalar, semantika, frazeologiya, metafora, til o'rganish, pragmatika.

## ПРИРОДА И ОСОБЕННОСТИ АНГЛИЙСКИХ ИДИОМ

Аннотация

Данная статья посвящена изучению природы и особенностей английских идиом. В исследовании анализируются семантические, структурные и прагматические характеристики идиом. Также рассматривается уровень их понимания узбекскими изучающими английский язык. Результаты показывают, что идиомы являются сложными, но важными элементами языка.

**Ключевые слова:** идиомы, семантика, фразеология, метафора, изучение языка, прагматика.

## THE NATURE AND FEATURES OF ENGLISH IDIOMS

Annotation

This article investigates the nature and features of English idioms from linguistic and cognitive perspectives. The study explores semantic opacity, structural stability, and pragmatic functions of idioms. It also examines how Uzbek learners of English comprehend idiomatic expressions. The findings indicate that idioms represent complex yet essential components of language competence.

**Keywords:** idioms, semantics, phraseology, metaphor, language learning, pragmatics.

**Introduction.** Idioms constitute one of the most distinctive and challenging aspects of any language, particularly in English. They are fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be deduced from the literal meanings of their individual components. For instance, expressions such as “spill the beans” or “break the ice” convey meanings that extend beyond their lexical composition [1]. This semantic non-compositionality makes idioms both fascinating and difficult for language learners. The study of idioms falls within the broader field of phraseology, which examines multi-word expressions and their functions in language use. Linguists have long debated the defining characteristics of idioms, focusing on their fixedness, figurativeness, and institutionalization within a speech community [2]. Furthermore, idioms are closely linked to cultural knowledge, as they often reflect historical and social contexts [3]. In spite of their importance, idioms pose significant challenges for non-native speakers, especially those whose first language differs structurally and culturally from English. Uzbek learners, for example, may struggle with idioms due to differences in metaphorical systems and lack of direct equivalents [4].

This research aims to explore the nature and features of English idioms and to analyze how they are understood by Uzbek learners of English. The study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the defining features of English idioms?
2. How do learners interpret idiomatic expressions?
3. What difficulties arise in idiom comprehension?

**Methods.** This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative linguistic analysis with quantitative data obtained from learner performance. The design allows for both theoretical exploration and empirical validation.

**Participants.** The participants consisted of 60 Uzbek undergraduate students studying English at an intermediate level. Their ages ranged from 18 to 22. All participants had studied English for at least 5 years. **Materials.** The material included a list of 30 English idioms categorized by transparency (transparent, semi-transparent, opaque), a comprehension test with multiple-choice and open-ended questions, a short questionnaire on learners' familiarity with idioms. Examples of idioms used:

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Transparent      | “see the light”   |
| Semi-transparent | “lose one's head” |
| Opaque           | “kick the bucket” |

Procedure. Participants were given 45 minutes to complete the test. They were asked to choose the correct meaning of idioms, use selected idioms in sentences, explain idioms in their own words. The questionnaire was administered afterward to gather additional insights into their learning experiences.

**Data analysis.** Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, measured in percentages and averages. Qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to identify common patterns in misunderstanding and interpretation.

**Results.** The results revealed significant variation in learner's comprehension depending on the type of idiom. Comprehension rates:

| Idiom type       | Correct responses (%) |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Transparent      | 78%                   |
| Semi-transparent | 54%                   |
| Opaque           | 29%                   |

These findings show that learners perform better with idioms whose meanings are more inferable from context. Only 40% of participants were managed to correctly utilize idioms in sentences, recommending that productive knowledge is weaker than receptive knowledge. Questionnaire findings. 1. 70% of students reported that idioms are "difficult". 2. 65% stated they rarely use idioms in their speaking. 3. 80% expressed interest in learning and using more idioms.

**Discussion.** The findings confirm that idioms are complex linguistic units characterized by semantic opacity, structural rigidity, and cultural specificity. These features make them difficult for language learners to acquire and use effectively. First, semantic opacity plays a crucial role. As noted by Fernando [5], idioms vary in transparency, and this directly affects comprehension. The low performance on opaque idioms supports this claim. Second, the fixed nature of idioms limits learners' ability to manipulate them grammatically. Unlike regular phrases, idioms often resist modification, which adds to their complexity [6]. Third, cultural knowledge is also very important. Many idioms are rooted in cultural metaphors that may not exist in the learner's native language [7]. For example, idioms which are related to sports

or historical events may be unfamiliar to Uzbek learners like the idiom "throw in the towel", which originates from boxing, means "to give up" or "to admit defeat". The results also illustrate the gap between receptive and productive competence. While learners may recognize idioms, they struggle to use them appropriately. This aligns with previous research suggesting that idiom acquisition requires extensive exposure and practice [8]. Pedagogically, this suggests that idioms should be taught explicitly, with attention to context, usage, and cultural background. Visual aids, flashcards, storytelling, and comparison with native-language equivalents can improve learning [9]

**Conclusion.** This study has examined the nature and features of English idioms and their comprehension by Uzbek learners. The results demonstrate that idioms are important yet difficult components of language proficiency. Last conclusion can be seen as: idioms are characterized by semantic non-compositionality, fixedness, and cultural specificity; learners may challenge most with opaque idioms; cultural and contextual knowledge significantly impact understanding; productive use of idioms remains limited among learners.

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