

IDIOMS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS IN CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT

This article notes that explanation of idioms, how to and their characteristics in context with particular examples. That is, an idiom is a statement that signifies something other than what its words appear to imply. Thus, an idiom is a frequent term or phrase that implies something other than its literal meaning, yet may be comprehended due to its widespread use and context. The article looked through the works of authors based on their analyses. This helps to linguistics and translators while explaining the meaning of idioms in the context to readers. Idioms are context dependent and context has a substantial impact on idiom comprehension.

Keywords: words, idioms, meaning, context, language, linguistics.

INTRODUCTION

We can express our opinions with words, phrases, sentences which include multi-units and multi-words. In this matter, it is important to say that we can use collocations and idioms which can influence significantly the feeling of people rather than simple words. Among them, an idiom can be suggested with its different meaning in context. Idioms serve various functions in context. Some of these functions include: a) expressing meaning more vividly and memorably than plain language; b) conveying cultural and historical information; c) creating a sense of belonging and shared identity among speakers of a particular language or dialect; d) providing a humorous or ironic effect; e) conveying emotions or attitudes of the speaker or the context.

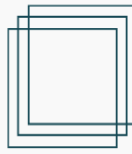
As Ngugi and Ongoda mentioned all of us can know what is idiom and it is controversial but they do not comprehend the literal meaning given in context [5]. Additionally, Violetta mentions that idioms and collocations are two main categories in language. The aim of this present investigation is to analyze idioms structures and functions in particular context and expressing their same meaning in language. In translation studies, we come across some difficulties because of the fact that there is no equivalent peculiar character in another language [7]. The context provides many points of reference for the retention of new words, including idiomatic expressions. Overall, it seems that context plays a crucial role in the meaning and function of idiomatic expressions.

METHODS

Idioms are special kind of phrases. According to the definition in Collins Cobuild Dictionary, “an idiom is a group of words that has different meaning when used together from the one it has, if it took the meaning of each word separately” [1].

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Idioms make language appear more vibrant and engaging, as well as friendlier and more informal even when employed in formal contexts and situations. Additionally, their meaning is figurative. In idioms, the creative approaches to nomination based on associative thinking, imagination, fancy, emotions are used. Idioms reflect people's attitudes, feelings, judgments, mood, sense of humor, irony, sentiments, etc. It is evident that the considered issues may differ for people belonging to different cultures and speaking different languages.

On the basis of research literature, we have identified seven more characteristic features of idioms: 1) conventionality; 2) institutionalization; 3) flexibility; 4) semantic transparency; 5) figurativeness; 6) formality; 7) affect [7].

RESULTS

Since language is a compositional system, this characteristic of idioms might suggest that they are atomic building blocks of language with no internal syntax. Idioms do have an internal syntactic structure that is actually variable to an extent and, despite being superficially similar, different idioms exhibit different syntactic properties.

Institutionalization refers to the degree of recognition a particular phrase meets in a speech community. Idioms are widely recognized and familiar [6]. This type of idiom is conventionally fixed and accepted among communities of native speakers. It is used in specific fields, particular events or novels.

Idioms of institutionalization refer to phrases or expressions that have become so ingrained in a particular community or culture that they are considered an accepted and recognized part of the language. These idioms are often used in everyday conversation and can be difficult to understand for non-native speakers.

Some examples of idioms of institutionalization include phrases such as “salt and pepper”, “traffic light”, and “to kindle excitement”. These expressions are used so frequently that they have become a part of standard English vocabulary.

The concept of institutionalization is often cited as one of the defining properties of idioms, along with compositionality and degree of frozenness. Institutionalization refers to the acceptance and recognition of an expression among the native speakers of a community. Once an expression is institutionalized, it often becomes a part of the shared understanding and culture of that community.

Understanding idioms of institutionalization can be an important part of language learning, as these expressions are often integral to effective communication within a particular cultural context.

“Bureaucratic red tape” – this idiom refers to the excessive and often unnecessary bureaucracy that can become institutionalized within an organization or system [2]. Overall, institutionalization is a complex phenomenon that can take many forms, and there is no definitive list of idioms that relate to it. However, these are some examples that might give you a sense of how idioms can be used to talk about institutionalization.



Flexibility relates to the ability of idiomatic phrases to undergo grammatical transformations and lexical variations [7]. Idioms that tolerate such changes are characterized as flexible; the ones resistant to them are termed inflexible, frozen or fixed. Frozenness or lexico-grammatical-fixedness refers to the restricted lexico-grammatical behaviour of idioms. Typically, their behavior is not open to modification since it will change the meaning and lose its idiomaticity. For example, (1) will lose its idiomatic sense if the constituent words changed into semantically-related words like (2) or (3). It is also impossible to passivize such a type of idiom as (4) that will sound unnatural. That is why most idioms are restricted to changes.

- (1) kill two birds with one stone
- (2) annihilated two birds with one stone
- (3) kill two birds with one rock
- (4) With one rock, two birds were killed [9].

Frozen idioms were deemed insignificant. More idioms, on the other hand, are changed easily. The majority of idiomatic statements containing phrasal verbs may be adjusted by inserting a noun in the midst of the sentence. A pronoun or a noun, for example, can be used. The idiomatic expressions with phrasal verbs can be mostly modified by adding a noun in the middle of the phrase. For example, a pronoun or a noun can be inserted into (a) to emphasize the action performed or completed. Another example of idiomatic expressions is shown in (b) that can be substituted (c). Both idioms are synonymous or bear a similar meaning.

- a) pull off; b) can't bear; c) can't stand

When an idiomatic statement is transparent, the link between its literal and figurative meanings is clearer and closer than when the term is opaque. In the phrase Her words were a slap in the face, the figurative meaning of disappointment or insult is closely related to the literal meaning; however, it is difficult to see a logical connection between a literal interpretation of John kept beating around the bush and the figurative meaning of John kept avoiding something because the relationship between the literal and figurative meanings is obscure or opaque [6]. The search results suggest that the transparency of idioms is a topic of interest and study.

Some of the results suggest that certain idioms may be more transparent than others, and that this can pose challenges for second language learners. Additionally, it appears that there may be a relationship between a given idiom's transparency and its ability to undergo semantic and structural changes.

Idioms and proverbs are not always clear, and their meanings might be unclear. Nonetheless, they engage students because they are drawn to expressive, vivid language. Figurative language, which creates cultural knowledge, also includes idioms and proverbs. Idiomatic phrases are distinguished by the usage of terms figuratively. As an example, the novel "Godfather" by Mario Puzo has an idiom whose figurative and literal meanings are different :



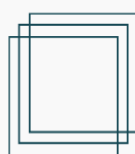
It's a Sicilian message,' Tessio said in his deep but strangely gentle voice. 'It means that Luca Brasi sleeps with the fishes.' [4]. The phrase "sleep with the fishes" is an idiom meaning that someone has been killed and their body has been disposed of in the water. Some characteristic features of this idiom include: a) it is a metaphorical expression - the literal meaning of the words is not the same as the figurative meaning; b) it is usually used in a negative context, to describe a situation where someone has suffered harm.

As a result, the surface structure has minimal significance in interpreting the meaning of the entire utterance. For example, in to bury the hatchet, meaning to become friendly again after a disagreement, the meanings of the words to bury and the hatchet are different from the meaning of the whole expression [10]. Idioms can be considered a form of figurative language that adds depth and nuance to language use.

The formality of idioms is suitable in formal, neutral, and informal circumstances, which is indicated by formality. Some idiom dictionaries, such as Cambridge dictionary published in 1998, identify the degree of formality of a given idiom. For example, to be on cloud nine, which means to be exceedingly joyful and thrilled, is informal, but to bear fruit, which means to create a successful outcome, is formal [1]. Concerned with the feelings and attitudes given to and communicated by certain idiomatic terms, the affect property shows that idioms are not just employed to represent neutral actions (e.g. talking informally – chewing fat) but also emotionally positive (e.g. having a great success – making the killing) and negative events and states (e.g. failing – dropping the ball). Hence, evaluation is what idioms can apply to the things they figuratively describe [7]. For instance, the evaluation of idioms in language textbooks and how they compare to authentic idioms used in current language usage.

DISCUSSION

Other idioms in which the two groups did not significantly differ from each other, represent different types. For example, we cannot examine criteria for defining idioms: flexibility or institutionalization. It may arise wide range of difficulties for readers. By the way, figurative language of idioms plays a significant role. The construction of idiomatic phrase study materials took place in numerous processes, including the selection of the kind of idioms and the choice of idiom subjects (health, home, work, business), the selection of the idiomatic phrases (adverbial, phrasal verbs, adjectives), the organization of the idioms, and the selection of the types of idiom activities (analyzing idioms for context) and the teaching techniques (guessing, discussing and determining the use of idioms). But it is important to accept the exact meaning of idiom in context. This appeals readers and gives a clear understanding of a particular meaning of each idiom.



Idioms can be perplexing for non-native speakers. Wray believes that idioms, along with collocations and sentence frames, are essential components of successful language learning; possible reasons for this statement include, for example, the need to understand native speakers' discourse, sound native-like, and thus demonstrate language mastery, and grasp the target language culture and identity of the native population [8]. This helps to identify the meaning of idioms by the exact understanding of culture and language.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, idioms are a type of multi-word expression that are syntactically and semantically fixed and cannot be understood from the literal meanings of the individual words. Some idioms require context-specific subjects or objects, and using idioms in appropriate contexts can enhance comprehension and facilitate effective communication. Additionally, idiomatic language can be more colloquial and use non-standard features, which may require external context for full understanding. They often have culturally-specific meanings and are frequently used in everyday conversation. Idioms are an important part of language and culture, and their features make them both challenging and rewarding to learn and use effectively. Further in my research, I will make syntaxeme analysis of idioms collected from "Godfather" by Mario Puzo.

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