

CULTURAL COMPONENT IN ENGLISH IDIOMS

The present research examines the cultural component embedded in English idioms, treating idiomatic expressions as linguistic units that encode shared cultural knowledge, values, and social experience. Idioms are not arbitrary combinations of words; they reflect culturally shaped conceptualizations of reality and reveal how speakers of a language perceive and interpret the world. Scholars argue that idioms are deeply rooted in culture and collective cognition, which makes their comprehension particularly challenging for non-native speakers [1, p. 3; 6, p. 15]. The aim of this study is to identify how cultural meanings are embedded in English idioms and to explain why cultural awareness is essential for their interpretation and use.

Previous research confirms the strong relationship between idiomatic language and culture. Lakoff and Johnson [1, p. 5–6] introduced the idea that figurative language, including idioms, is grounded in culturally shaped conceptual metaphors. Fernando [2, p. 23] emphasizes that idioms function as conventionalized expressions whose meanings cannot be separated from cultural context. Gibbs [3, p. 41] demonstrates that idiom comprehension depends on shared cultural knowledge rather than purely linguistic decoding. Kövecses [4, p. 198] highlights cross-cultural variation in metaphorical and idiomatic expressions, showing that similar concepts may be expressed differently across cultures. Boers [5, p. 234] focuses on pedagogical implications, arguing that culturally motivated idioms require cultural explanation in language teaching. Wierzbicka [6, p. 21] further supports the view that idioms reflect culturally specific values and norms embedded in language.

The study applies a qualitative linguocultural methodology combining semantic analysis, conceptual metaphor analysis, and contextual interpretation. English idioms are examined as manifestations of culturally grounded conceptual models. The analysis focuses on idioms whose meanings derive from historical experience, social practices, or symbolic cultural associations. The theoretical framework is based on conceptual metaphor theory and cognitive approaches to idiomaticity. Comparative observations are used to distinguish culturally specific idioms from those based on more universal conceptual patterns.

The analysis demonstrates that many English idioms encode cultural assumptions and values, such as individualism, pragmatism, and social hierarchy. For example, idioms related to work, success, and competition reflect culturally dominant values in English-speaking societies [4, p. 201]. Literary and everyday idioms often preserve historical and social experiences that are not transparent without cultural knowledge [2, p. 67]. The findings also show that idioms are cognitively motivated but culturally shaped, functioning as cultural models transmitted through language [3, p. 89]. Pedagogical studies confirm that learners who receive cultural explanations demonstrate better idiom comprehension and retention [5, p. 240].

The study is limited by its focus on theoretical and qualitative analysis rather than large-scale empirical data. Cultural interpretation of idioms may involve subjective judgments, as cultural meanings can vary across time, region, and social

group [6, p. 29]. Another limitation is the difficulty of clearly separating universal cognitive metaphors from culture-specific realizations within idiomatic expressions.

The research confirms that English idioms are culturally marked linguistic units that reflect collective experience, values, and worldview of English-speaking communities. Idioms function as cultural carriers rather than purely linguistic phenomena, and their interpretation requires cultural competence. The study supports the integration of linguocultural and cognitive approaches in idiom analysis and emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness in language learning, translation, and intercultural communication. Further research should involve empirical studies and cross-cultural comparison to deepen understanding of cultural specificity in idiomatic language.

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