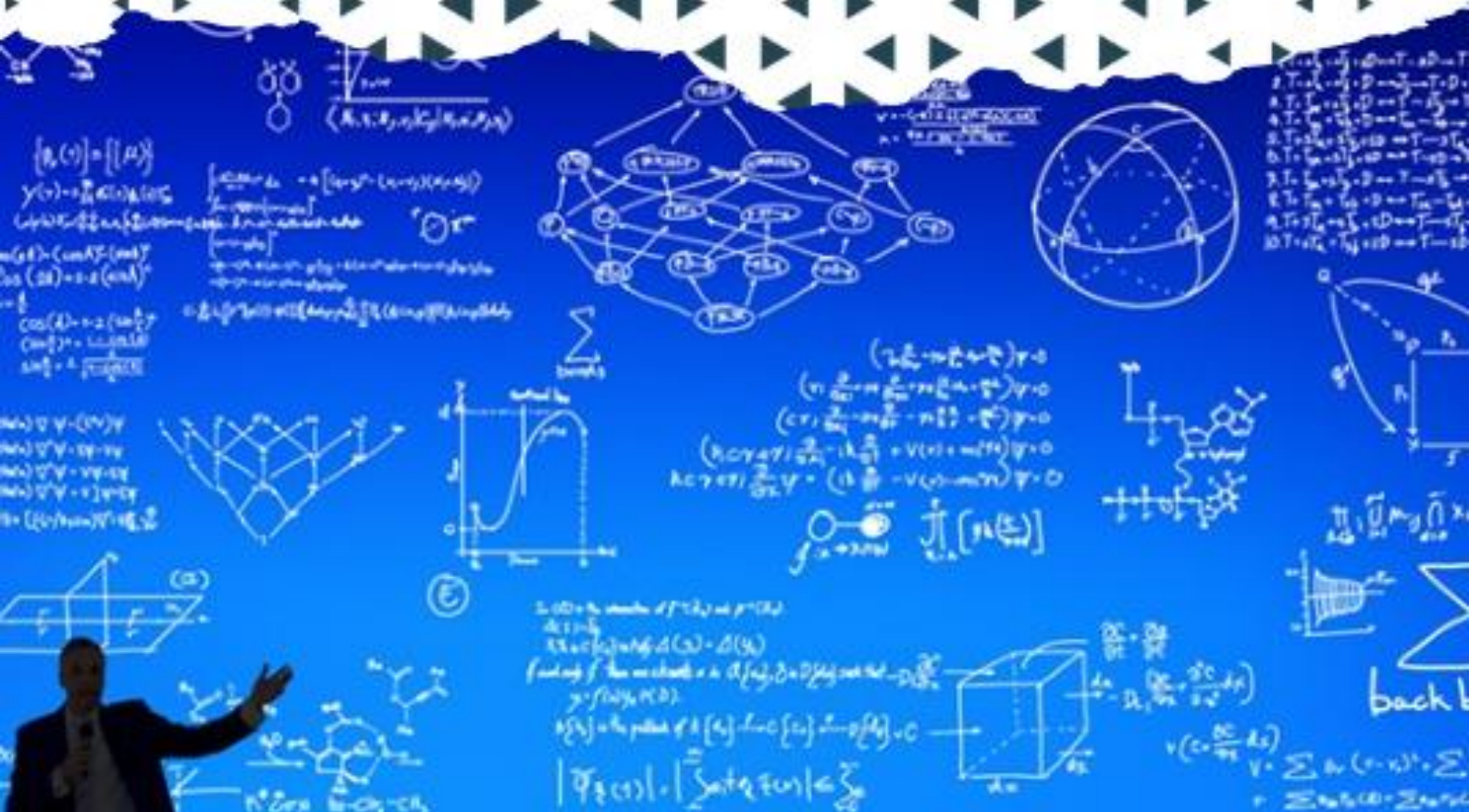




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CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN ENGLISH IDIOMS

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Annotation. This article describes about mainly background of English idioms, how closely culture is related to English language, mainly English idioms and its elements. Idioms are an essential part of everyday communication and reflect the historical background, traditions, and values of a speech community. The study aims to explore how cultural aspects are embedded in English idiomatic expressions. The study demonstrates that English idioms are strongly influenced by cultural factors. Understanding these elements is essential for accurate interpretation and effective communication. The findings highlight the importance of cultural awareness in language learning and translation.

Keywords: *Idioms, cultural, language, meaning, expression, historical, symbolic, traditional, traditions, society.*

Introduction. This study aims to examine how cultural aspects are reflected in English idioms and to identify the main categories in which these cultural elements appear. Idioms are fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be deduced from the literal meanings of their individual components. They represent figurative language and are closely connected to the cultural and historical background of a speech community. Idioms are an essential part of any language, playing a significant role in everyday communication. They are fixed expressions whose meanings are often figurative and cannot be understood from the literal meanings of their individual words. In the English language, idioms are widely used by native speakers to convey ideas in a more expressive and culturally rich way. The study of idioms is closely connected to culture, as many idiomatic expressions reflect the history, traditions, and values of a particular society. Understanding idioms requires not only linguistic knowledge but also cultural awareness. Many English idioms originate from historical events, folklore, and daily life practices, making them difficult for non-native speakers to interpret correctly. Without knowledge of the cultural context, learners may misunderstand or misuse these expressions in communication. Therefore, analyzing the cultural elements embedded in English idioms is important for improving language comprehension and intercultural communication.[4,p44]

The historical background of English idioms reflects the long and complex development of the English language itself, shaped by everyday life, cultural change, and historical events over many centuries. Idioms did not emerge as formal linguistic constructions; rather, they evolved naturally as people began to use figurative language to describe familiar experiences in more vivid and expressive ways. Over time, these expressions lost their literal meanings and became fixed phrases understood by entire speech communities.[2,p21]

The relationship between English idioms and religious or mythological sources is deep and historically significant, as many idioms were shaped by belief systems



that dominated people's understanding of the world for centuries. Before the rise of scientific explanations, religion and mythology provided the primary frameworks through which people interpreted life, morality, and human behavior. As a result, the language they used—including idiomatic expressions—naturally reflected these influences.

Idioms of Biblical origin often diverge in many ways from their biblical prototypes. This is due in some cases to the fact that the biblical prototype has been reinterpreted over time in it may also have changed the word order or archaic word forms have been discarded. For example, to kill the fatted calf in the parable of the prodigal son literally means "to slaughter the fatted calf". Later the phrase took on a new meaning, "to treat with the best at home". Some of the phrases go back to the biblical story. Thus, we find biblical images and concepts in such phrases as Forbidden fruit, Job's comforter, Juda's kiss, A prodigal son, A dead letter that has lost their meaning. [1,p3]

English idioms play a vital role in language and everyday conversations. The everyday use of English idioms is closely connected to the environments in which people live and interact, because idioms originally emerged as natural expressions of daily experience and continue to function as practical tools of communication. Historically, idioms were formed in specific physical and social environments—such as farms, markets, ships, or households—and although their meanings have become figurative, they still reflect those original contexts. In modern usage, idioms are no longer limited to their original settings, but they remain deeply embedded in everyday speech, especially in informal communication.

Research Methods. This study employs a qualitative approach in order to analyze the cultural elements embedded in English idioms. A qualitative method is appropriate because the research focuses on interpreting meanings and cultural significance rather than numerical data.

The data for this study were collected from different reliable sources, including idiom dictionaries, linguistic books, and online resources. These sources were selected to ensure accuracy, authenticity, and relevance of the idiomatic expressions.[6,p32]

A total of several English idioms were selected based on specific criteria. Only idioms that reflect clear cultural elements, such as references to animals, food, traditions, and historical events, were included. In addition, commonly used idioms were preferred to ensure that the findings are relevant to real-life communication. Idioms with unclear meanings or rare usage were excluded from the study.

The data were analyzed using semantic and comparative methods. First, the idioms were classified into thematic categories according to their cultural content. Then, their literal and figurative meanings were examined to identify how cultural elements are expressed. Finally, a comparison was made between different categories to determine patterns and similarities in the representation of culture.[3,p29]

Results. The results show that Food idioms reflect everyday life, history-related idioms show the influence of past events, and tradition-based idioms represent



social norms and beliefs. Together, they demonstrate how deeply culture is embedded in language. Different types of idioms are mainly related to religion which were taken from biblical book. One notable pattern is that idioms are separated into animals, food, history, traditions.[5,p35]

Animal-based idioms are used and common in spoken language. For instance, 'it is raining *cats and dogs*' meaning that the rain is falling *heavily*. In this situation, animals are not relevant, but has different meaning. 'Let the cat out of the bag' has a meaning that "to reveal a secret accidentally". Another example, "a dark house" refers to a person whose abilities are hidden or unknown. Meanwhile, food-related idioms often reflect daily-life, habits, and social practices. "Piece of cake" is the popular idiom that is used to describe a task that requires little effort. And, "spill the beans" means to reveal a secret. It is used when someone shares confidential information. Based on History-related idioms, they come from historical events or ancient traditions. "Cross the rubicon" has a meaning of making an irreversible decision. This idiom is used when someone takes a serious step with no return. These kinds of idioms are commonly used and can not be translated word-for-word. **Discussion.** The findings of this study suggest that English idioms serve as important carriers of cultural meaning. Food-related idioms reflect the significance of everyday activities and shared experiences in shaping language. Since food is a universal part of life, these idioms are easily understood within cultural contexts but may still present challenges for non-native speakers due to their figurative meanings. History-related idioms demonstrate how language preserves important events and collective memory. Expressions such as "cross the Rubicon" and "meet your Waterloo" show that historical references continue to influence modern communication. This indicates that understanding idioms often requires background knowledge beyond language itself.[7,p4] Tradition-based idioms highlight the role of social norms and behavioral expectations. Idioms like "break the ice" and "by the book" reflect common practices and accepted ways of interaction in society. These expressions show how language is shaped by cultural rules and traditions.[8] Overall, the results confirm that idioms are deeply connected to culture and cannot be fully understood without cultural awareness. This highlights the importance of teaching idioms alongside cultural context, especially for language learners.

Conclusion. To sum up, this study has demonstrated that English idioms are deeply embedded with cultural elements that reflect the everyday life, historical background, and social traditions of English-speaking communities. The analysis of food-related, history-related, and tradition-based idioms shows that these expressions are not only linguistic units but also carriers of cultural knowledge and shared experience.

The findings highlight that idioms play a significant role in expressing ideas in a more vivid and meaningful way. However, their figurative nature and strong cultural associations can create difficulties for non-native speakers, especially when idioms are interpreted literally without understanding their background. This



emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness in both language learning and communication.

Furthermore, the study confirms that language and culture are closely interconnected, and idioms serve as a clear example of this relationship. Understanding idioms requires more than vocabulary knowledge; it involves recognizing the cultural context in which these expressions are formed and used.

Therefore, it is recommended that idioms be taught alongside their cultural meanings in educational settings. Future research may focus on comparing idioms across different languages to further explore cultural similarities and differences.

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