

## THE ANALYSIS OF SENTENCE COMPONENTS IN ENGLISH IDIOMS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14205614>

**Abstract.** Idioms are a rich aspect of the English language, containing cultural nuances and linguistic complexities that challenge both native speakers and language learners. This paper explores the structural components of English idioms, aiming to understand how idioms are constructed syntactically and semantically. Through a comprehensive analysis, this research investigates the sentence components that form idioms, focusing on their syntactic roles, meaning construction, and figurative usage. By understanding these components, learners and linguists can gain insight into idiomatic expressions, enhancing comprehension and usage within various linguistic contexts.

**Key words:** structural component, syntactic, semantic, idioms, figurative usage, idiomatic expression, linguistic context.

**Annotatsiya.** Idiomalar ingliz tilining boy jihatidir, u o'zida madaniy nozikliklar va tilga oid murakkabliklarni mujassamlashtiradi, bu nafaqat ona tilida so'zlashuvchilar, balki til o'rganuvchilar uchun ham qiyinchilik tug'diradi. Ushbu maqola ingliz tilidagi idiomalar tarkibiy qismlarini tahlil qilib, ularning sintaktik va semantik jihatdan qanday tuzilganligini tushunishga qaratilgan. Keng qamrovli tahlil orqali, bu tadqiqot idiomalarni tashkil etuvchi qismlarini o'rganadi, ularning sintaktik roli, ma'no qurilishi va majoziy qo'llanilishini tahlil qiladi. Ushbu tarkibiy qismlarni tushunish orqali o'rganuvchilar va tilshunoslar idiomatik ifodalarni yaxshiroq anglay oladilar va turli til kontekstlarida to'g'ri qo'llash malakasini oshiradilar.

**Kalit so'zlar:** tarkibiy qism, sintaktik, semantik, idiomalar, majoziy qo'llanish, idiomatik ifoda, lingvistik kontekst.

**Introduction.** English idioms are a critical part of both spoken and written communication, reflecting the cultural, historical, and social dimensions of the language. An idiom is a phrase whose meaning cannot be deduced from the meanings of its individual components [1]. The complexity of idioms lies in their unpredictable meanings, making them challenging for non-native speakers and even language processing models. This paper aims to analyze the sentence components of English idioms, examining how their grammatical structures contribute to meaning beyond literal interpretations. By investigating the structure and usage of idioms, this research seeks to provide a clearer understanding of idiomatic language within English sentence components, emphasizing syntactic and semantic roles in meaning construction. To analyze the sentence components in English idioms, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative data

collection techniques. First, a corpus of 100 commonly used English idioms was compiled from resources such as The Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms and idiom databases. These idioms were then analyzed based on their syntactic structures, components, and literal versus figurative meanings [4]. A structural analysis was conducted to identify the parts of speech and roles of each component within idioms (e.g., subject, verb, object). Additionally, a survey was administered to 50 advanced English learners to determine their understanding and interpretation of idioms, providing insights into how sentence components contribute to idiom comprehension.

Cacciari and Tabossi's study, "The Comprehension of Idioms", investigates how individuals understand idiomatic expressions, focusing on the cognitive processes involved in interpreting these non-literal phrases. Their research explores whether idioms are processed like literal language or if unique mechanisms come into play [2]. Through a series of experiments, they found that context significantly influences how quickly and accurately people interpret idioms. Specifically, idioms placed within clear, supportive contexts were comprehended more easily than those in ambiguous settings. The study highlights that idioms are not only memorized chunks but are also actively processed, with contextual cues playing a key role in meaning comprehension. This work has been foundational in cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistics, offering insights into the mental mechanisms behind figurative language processing.

English idioms often follow standard syntactic rules yet convey meanings beyond the literal. For instance, phrases like "kick the bucket" or "spill the beans" include a verb and an object, creating a syntactically simple structure but implying a figurative meaning [4]. The analysis revealed that idioms could be categorized based on their syntactic components: verb phrases, noun phrases, prepositional phrases, and clauses. Verb-based idioms were the most prevalent, forming around 60% of the corpus, with structures like "burn the midnight oil" and "hit the sack" where the action is figurative [5]. This structure suggests a preference for action-oriented expressions in idiomatic language, possibly due to the ease with which verbs convey abstract or exaggerated actions.

A significant aspect of idiom comprehension lies in the interplay between literal and figurative meanings. Idioms like "break the ice" utilize familiar sentence components—verb and object—yet possess an abstract meaning not directly related to the action [6]. This dual-layered meaning highlights the cognitive processing

challenges for learners, who must distinguish idioms from literal phrases. The survey results indicated that learners often struggle with idioms where the components align too closely with literal meanings, leading to misinterpretation. For example, idioms like “jump the gun” and “beat around the bush” were frequently misunderstood due to their literal plausibility, emphasizing the importance of context in idiomatic interpretation.

Many idioms act as “frozen sentences,” where word order or component modification changes or obscures the idiom’s meaning [7]. The analysis found that certain idioms resist alteration without losing their meaning, such as “barking up the wrong tree” or “let the cat out of the bag.” Such idioms are structurally rigid and illustrate the formulaic nature of idiomatic language. This rigidity reinforces the notion that idioms are fixed components within language, challenging the fluid syntactic rules typically applicable in sentence construction. The analysis of sentence components in idioms suggests that they operate as set expressions rather than adaptable language units.

Gibbs explores how figurative language, including idioms, metaphors, and other non-literal expressions, is deeply embedded in human cognition. He argues that figurative language is not a peripheral aspect of communication but a fundamental way the mind structures and conveys complex thoughts [3]. Through cognitive and linguistic research, Gibbs demonstrates that people rely on embodied experiences and cultural context to interpret figurative language. This work challenges the traditional view that literal meanings are primary, suggesting instead that figurative thought is a core part of human understanding, shaping how we interpret and interact with the world. Gibbs’s insights have been influential in cognitive linguistics, impacting research on language comprehension, metaphor theory, and the cognitive underpinnings of language.

Context plays a critical role in understanding idioms, especially when sentence components align with literal meanings. The survey results indicated that idioms placed within clear contextual sentences were interpreted correctly more often than those presented in isolation. For instance, “hit the books” was easily understood within academic contexts, whereas “hit the road” was occasionally misinterpreted without contextual clues [8]. This finding aligns with Gibbs, who argued that idioms rely heavily on contextual cues for accurate interpretation. Thus, context not only aids

in deciphering figurative language but also emphasizes the importance of syntactic roles in constructing intended meanings.

The structural analysis of English idioms reveals that idioms are more than simple expressions; they embody fixed sentence components that convey figurative meanings through specific syntactic roles. By examining verb-dominated structures, semantic ambiguities, rigidity, and context-dependent interpretations, this paper highlights the complexities involved in understanding idioms. These findings underline the necessity of context and structural awareness in idiomatic interpretation, offering valuable insights for language educators, learners, and computational linguistics. Future research could further explore idiom acquisition in second language learning and analyze idiomatic comprehension in machine translation systems, addressing the challenges posed by non-literal language in these fields.

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