

УДК 81'22

## LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL PECULIARITIES OF EVERYDAY IDIOMS IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES

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### *Аннотация*

*Бұл мақалада тұрмыстық идиома, және оның орыс, ағылшын тілдердеріндегі лексикалық және грамматикалық ерекшеліктері талданылады. Сонымен қатар, жұмыста идиомалар және оның түрлі топтастырулары қарастырылып, орыс және ағылшын тілдерінде мысалдар алынып, олардың салыстырмалы талдаулары келтірілген.*

### *Аннотация*

*В этой статье речь пойдет о бытовых идиомах, их лексических и грамматических особенностях и сравнительном анализе в русском и английском языках. Также в нашей работе рассматриваются идиомы в целом и их различные классификации, приводятся примеры русских и английских идиом, проводится их сопоставительный анализ.*

### *Abstract*

*In this article we focus on everyday idioms, their lexical and grammatical peculiarities and comparative analysis in Russian and English languages. Also in this work we consider idioms in general and their different classifications, there are examples of Russian and English idioms, present their comparative analysis.*

*Түйінді сөздер:* идиома, лексика және грамматикалық өзгешеліктер, күнбе-күнгі идиомалар, идиоманың топтастыруы.

*Ключевые слова:* идиомы, лексико-грамматические особенности, повседневное общение, классификация идиом.

*Key words:* idioms, lexical and grammatical peculiarities, everyday communication, classification of idioms.

### **1. Introduction.**

Idioms are used regularly and naturally in everyday communication, however, the inner meaning of the concept of idioms is still unclear to a lot of people. Therefore, a study on the subject of idioms in Russian and English is helpful for improving the knowledge of language learners, as well as to better consider lexical and grammatical peculiarities of Russian and English in general.

The aim of the research is to recognize difference and similarity of lexical and grammatical peculiarities of everyday idioms in English and Russian languages.

### **2. Materials and methods.**

To achieve the aim we have determined the nature of everyday idioms; classified everyday idioms; studied grammatical and lexical peculiarities of everyday idioms, and eventually analyzed the grammatical and lexical peculiarities of everyday idioms.

### **3-4. Results and discussion.**

First of all we would like to say some words of idioms in common.

According to J. Seed “an idiom is words collocated together happen to become fossilized, becoming fixed over time. This collocation - words commonly used in a group - changes the definition of each of the words that exist. As an expression, the word-group becomes a team, so to speak.

That is, the collocated words develop a specialized meaning as a whole and an idiom is born. An everyday idiom is a group of words in which the meaning of this group is different than what would be expected". (Michael McCarthy & Felicity O'Del, 2003).

There are two another different meanings according to Cramley and Philip concerning idioms. Cramley understands an idiom as «a complex item which is longer than a word- form but shorter than a sentence and which has a meaning that cannot be derived from the knowledge of its component parts» (Anthony K.A) and Gill Philip «an idiom is class of multy –word units which pose a challenge to our understanding of grammar and lexis that hasn't yet been fully met» (Ginsburg R. S., 2011).

Hocket considers everyday idiom «as a modern linguistic agreement on one composed of two or more constituent parts generally deemed to be words. The closer the wording of an idiom reflects a real world situation the easier it is to interpret» (Arnold I.V., 2002).

Becker made an observation that successful communication is often at odds with the production of novel utterances. Idiomatic and formulaic language can provide a basis for an interweaving network for embedding novel proposition, which results in the fact that a lengthy utterance is likely to contain more prefabricated frames and routine structures. Thus, one of the purposes of the use of formulaic and idiomatic structures is keeping the focus on formulation of one's novel ideas while maintaining fluency through holistic retrieval of prefabricated complex structures from mental lexicon (McCarthy M., 2011).

If we say about classification of idioms, there are two groups of everyday idioms according to their structure: nominal – “a black sheep” (of the family) [shame of the family], and verbal – “to take risks” (to risk). There are four groups of everyday idioms according to the parts of speech: nominal phrases: hard luck [misfortune]; adjective phraseological units: “all fingers and thumbs” [clumsy]; verbal: “to get on like a house on fire” [to make progress]; adverbial: “vice versa” [conversely] (Carter R., 2001).

A.I. Smirnitsky worked out structural classification of everyday idioms, comparing them with words. He points out one-top units which he compares with derived words because derived words have only one root morpheme. He points out two-top units which he compares with compound words because in compound words we usually have two root morphemes. Among one-top units he points out three structural types: **a) units of the type «to give up»** – (verb + postposition type), e.g. to art up, to back up, to drop out, to nose out, to buy into, to sandwich in etc.; **b) units of the type «to be tired»** – some of these units remind the Passive Voice in their structure but they have different prepositions with them, while in the Passive Voice we can have only prepositions «by» or «with», e.g. «to be tired of», «to be interested in», «to be surprised at» etc. There are also units in this type which remind free word-groups of the type «to be young», e.g. «to be akin to», «to be aware of» etc. The difference between them is that the adjective «young» can be used as an attribute and as a predicative in a sentence, while the nominal component in such units can act only as a predicative. In these units the verb is the grammar centre and the second component is the semantic centre; **c) prepositional- nominal phraseological units** – these units are equivalents of unchangeable words: prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, that is why they have no grammar centre, their semantic centre is the nominal part, e.g. on the doorstep (quite near), on the nose (exactly), in the course of, on the stroke of, in time, on the point of etc. In the course of time such units can become words, e.g. tomorrow, instead etc.

Among two-top units A.I. Smirnitsky points out the following structural types:

**a) attributive-nominal** – such as: «a month of Sundays», «grey matter», «a millstone round one's neck» and many others. Units of this type are noun equivalents and can be partly or perfectly idiomatic. In partly idiomatic units (phrasemes) sometimes the first component is idiomatic, e.g. «high road», in other cases the second component is idiomatic, e.g. “first night”. In many cases both components are idiomatic, e.g. “red tape”, “blind alley”, “bed of nail”, “shot in the arm” and many others;

**b) verb-nominal idioms** – (phraseological units), e.g. «to read between the lines», «to speak BBC», «to sweep under the carpet» etc. The grammar centre of such units is the verb, the semantic centre in many cases is the nominal component, e.g. “to fall in love”. In some units the verb is both the grammar and the semantic centre, e.g. “not to know the ropes”. These units can be perfectly idiomatic as well, e.g. «to burn one’s boats», «to vote with one’s feet», «to take to the cleaners» etc. Word-groups of the type «to have a glance», «to have a smoke» stay close to such units. These idioms are not idiomatic and are treated in grammar as a special syntactical combination, a kind of aspect;

**c) phraseological repetitions** – such as: «now or never», «part and parcel», «country and western» etc. Such idioms can be built on antonyms, e.g. «ups and downs», «back and forth»; often they are formed by means of alliteration, e.g «cakes and ale», «as busy as a bee». Components in repetitions are joined by means of conjunctions (Lakoff G. and M. Johnson, 2012).

As it was said, in our work we study everyday idioms to identify differences and similarities of grammatical and lexical peculiarities of everyday idioms in English and Russian languages.

First of all consider lexemic idioms. Both in English and Russian languages there are lexemic, phrasal idioms and completely frozen forms. Some of them coincide with their equivalents fully, other correspond partly. Let’s see the examples when English and Russian idioms coincide both in grammatical and lexical aspects.

Table 1.

	<i>Russian</i>	<i>English</i>
<b>1. Russian</b>	<b>Взять себя в руки</b>	To take oneself in one’s hands
<b>English</b>	Взять себя в руку	<b>To take oneself in hand</b>
<b>2. Russian</b>	<b>Висеть на телефоне</b>	To be hanging on the telephone
<b>English</b>	Сидеть на телефоне	<b>To sit on the phone</b>
<b>3. Russian</b>	<b>Выйти из пеленок</b>	To come out of the swaddling-clothes
<b>English</b>	Не быть в пелёнках	<b>To be out of the swaddling-clothes</b>
<b>4. Russian</b>	<b>Вырвать что-либо с корнем</b>	To tear something out with root
<b>English</b>	Вырвать что-либо с корнем	<b>To root something out</b>
<b>5. Russian</b>	<b>Сидеть на пороховой бочке</b>	To sit on a powder keg
<b>English</b>	Сидеть на пороховой бочке	<b>To sit on a powder keg</b>
<b>6. Russian</b>	<b>Замести следы</b>	To sweep over one’s traces
<b>English</b>	Замести следы	<b>To cover up one’s traces</b>
<b>7. Russian</b>	<b>Играть первую скрипку</b>	To play the first violin
<b>English</b>	Играть первую скрипку	<b>To play first fiddle</b>

How we can see from the table series of everyday idioms of Russian and English languages coincide with their equivalents completely.

The most popular group of lexemic idioms in English is verbal, i.e. phrasal verbs, it constitutes one of the peculiarities of English. For example:

Table 2.

<b>get a grip on oneself</b> – take control of one's feelings	Контролировать свои чувства	Stop crying! Get a grip on yourself!
<b>get along with</b> – have good relations	быть в хороших отношениях, ладить	Ann gets along with most coworkers, but doesn't get along with Laura
<b>get cold feet</b> – be afraid to do	побояться сделать	I wanted to try it but got cold feet
<b>get even with</b> – have one's revenge	расквитаться с кем-то	I'll get even with him for everything!
<b>Get lost!</b> – Lay off!	Исчезни!	I don't want to see you again. Get lost!
<b>get away with</b> – not be caught after doing wrong	уйти от наказания	The police didn't find the thief. He got away with his crime
<b>get carried away</b> – get too excited and enthusiastic about something	слишком увлечься чем-то	He got carried away with opening a store and lost most of his money

As we can see from examples, although this kind of everyday idioms has a fixed form it changes its grammatical form according to the context.

Another type of lexemic idioms concerns adverbial / comparative everyday idioms. Adverbial everyday idioms can belong to the three following general patterns:

Table 3.

<b>English idioms</b>	<b>Russian idioms</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>as C as B</b> As warm as sunbeam As transparent as glass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>С как В</b> злой как собака ГОЛОДНЫЙ как волк</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>like/ as B</b> Like two peas in a pod</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Как В</b> как две капли воды</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>C like/ as B C</b> To follow like a shadow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>как / словно</b> есть как слон</li> </ul>

In idioms of comparison, the part showing comparative relationship and the things compared (как В – as/ like B) are stable in both surface structure and deep structure. If the comparative structure is broken, the idiom of comparison will be broken, too. The image of comparison is constantly the symbolic one that is full of national identities. Through part “B” – the image of comparative idioms – the way of observing the world thinking, cultural life and the natural scene of a nation can be revealed. For instance, idioms in English exist: *as rich as Croesus* (Croesus was such a rich king that he had every guest takes as much gold as he could carry, upon leaving), *to work like a Trojan* (Trojan originally referred to the inhabitants of Troy, the ancient city besieged by the Greeks in their efforts to retrieve their queen, Helen, who had been abducted by the son of the King of Troy. According to the legend, the Trojans were a hard-working, determined, industrious people). Such in Russian have: *стройна как лань* (as slim as a doe), *спокойный как слон*, (as calm as an elephant), *нежный как цветок* (as gentle as a flower). This puts in plain words why there exist few equivalents between idioms in general and idioms of comparison in particular of two languages. As a matter of fact, with the same content, each people use different images to express. Let's look at the examples and compare:

**English**

*As hot as mustard*  
*Like hot cake*

**Russian**

*жгучий как перец*  
*горячий как пирожки*

Despite the differences in culture, there are still coincidences in ways of thinking and observing the world of English and Russian people. This undoubtedly leads to the similarities in the way of expressing ideas and concepts through idioms. In fact, many English idioms of comparison have

exact equivalents in Russian in terms of both grammatical and lexical aspects. To make this clear, let us consider these following idioms:

Table 4.

<b>English idioms</b>	<b>Russian equivalents</b>
As black as coal	Черный как уголь
As bright as day	Яркий как день
As changeable as the weather	Переменчив как погода
As cold as ice	Холодный как лед
As cunning as a fox	Хитрый как лиса
As old as the hills	Древний как холмы
As light as a feather	Легкий как перышко
As mum as an oyster	Нем как рыба

Also it should be mentioned that the essential features of this kind of everyday idioms is stability of the lexical components. Lexical stability means that the components of set expressions are either irreplaceable like «red tape» or partly replaceable or partly replaceable within the bounds of phraseological or phraseomatic variance. For example, we cannot say “as hot as an ice” or “as cold as a fire”. But nevertheless we can say “as red as a rose” instead of “as red as a beetroot”. The same process we can notice in Russian language. We can say «медленный как черепаха» instead of «медленный как улитка», but we cannot say «злой как заяц» instead of «злой как собака».

Completely frozen forms of everyday idioms are inherent to both English and Russian languages. Let’s see some of them.

Table 5.

	<i>English</i>	<i>English</i>
<i>Russian</i>	<b>Быть на седьмом небе</b>	To be in the seventh heaven
<i>English</i>	Ходить по воздуху	<b>To tread on air</b>
<i>Russian</i>	<b>Водить кого-либо за нос</b>	To lead someone by the nose
<i>English</i>	Натянуть шерсть на глаза кому-либо	<b>To draw the wool over someone’s eyes</b>
<i>Russian</i>	<b>Виллами по воде писано</b>	Written with a pitchfork on the water
<i>English</i>	Это ещё всё в воздухе	<b>It’s still all up in the air</b>
<i>Russian</i>	<b>В подмётки не годится</b>	Not fit to be soles of someone’s shoes
<i>English</i>	Не годится, чтобы держать свечу кому-нибудь	<b>Not fit to hold a candle to someone</b>
<i>Russian</i>	<b>Зарубить на носу</b>	To make a notch on one’s nose
<i>English</i>	Положите в свою трубку и выкурите	<b>Put it into your pipe and smoke it</b>
<i>Russian</i>	<b>Водой не разольёшь</b>	You couldn’t split them apart with water
<i>English</i>	Быть такими близкими (друг другу), как воры	<b>As thick as thieves</b>

The lexical peculiarity of the given type of everyday idioms is concluded in the fact that no words can be replaced, i.e. a combination of words is sustainable. And one more lexical peculiarity is that it is difficult to understand the meaning of the given everyday idioms without an awareness of it.

The grammatical peculiarity is that verbs of the idioms of completely frozen forms can be placed in any Tense; sometimes nouns can be put in plural form while adjectives are not changeable and cannot be comparative.

Now consider phrasal everyday idioms. What they have in common is that they do not readily correlate with a given grammatical part of speech and require a paraphrase longer than a word.

For example:

Table 6.

	<i>Russian</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<i>Russian</i>	Душа ушла в пятки	One's soul has gone into one's heels	To get scared
<i>English</i>	Сердце опустилось в пятки	<b>One's heart sank into one's boot</b>	To get scared
<i>Russian</i>	Как об стенку горох	Like throwing peas against the wall	In vain
<i>English</i>	С таким же успехом можно разговаривать с кирпичной стенкой	<b>You might as well talk to a brick wall</b>	In vain
<i>Russian</i>	Как дважды два четыре	Like two times two is four	Easy, clear
<i>English</i>	Ясно, как нос на твоём лице	<b>As plain as the nose on your face</b>	Easy, clear
<i>Russian</i>	Волосы становятся дыбом	One's hair stands on end.	To get scared
<i>English</i>	Волосы становятся на кончиках	<b>One's hair stands like a mountain</b>	To get scared
<i>Russian</i>	Вставать с левой ноги	To get up with one's left foot foremost	To be disgruntled
<i>English</i>	Вставать не с той стороны кровати	<b>To get out of bed on the wrong side</b>	To be disgruntled

To understand the everyday idioms of this type they should be paraphrased because of lack of motivation. Still we can see lexical stability in these idioms as we can change them only partly. As to grammar we can conclude that verbs in such idioms are changeable.

### **5. Conclusion.**

So, through the analysis of everyday idioms of two languages we found out that everyday idioms of Russian and English languages have similar lexical and grammatical peculiarities, even more they have full equivalents common for both languages.

Thus the biggest number of equivalents in two languages can be found in the group called "lexemic idioms" which is the most flexible group as to lexical and grammatical changes of words in idioms. Completely frozen forms of everyday idioms have fewer equivalents common for both languages than the first group because of differences in cultural aspect but still there some

coincidence. Phrasal idioms rarely coincide in both English and Russian languages but as to lexical and grammatical aspects we can conclude that this group of everyday idioms has something common for two languages, and that is the fact that they do not readily correlate with a given grammatical part of speech and require a paraphrase longer than a word.

Idiomatic expressions create a significant portion of our everyday communication. Even at present modern times we use expressions whose original sense lies far away from their present communicative function.

Concentration on larger (preferably holistically processed) meaning units makes it possible for language user to use larger language chunks to communicate recurrent stereotypes of everyday life without losing time with permanent re-formulation of linguistic material.

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