**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE**

**MUKACHEVO STATE UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND METHODS OF TEACHING**

**MASTER THESIS**

**SEMANTIC GROUPS OF IDIOMS IN MODERN ENGLISH IN THE PROCESS OF THE FORMATION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE**

Specialty "GE (LL(E))-2m"

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КАФЕДРА АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ ФІЛОЛОГІЇ
ТА МЕТОДИКИ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ

**МАГІСТЕРСЬКА РОБОТА**

**«СЕМАНТИЧНІ ГРУПИ ІДІОМ В СУЧАСНІЙ АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ В ПРОЦЕСІ ФОРМУВАННЯ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ»**

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**ПЕРЕЛІК УМОВНИХ ПОЗНАЧЕНЬ,
СИМВОЛІВ, ОДИНИЦЬ, СКОРОЧЕНЬ І ТЕРМІНІВ**

IE - Indo-European family of languages

LLS - Language learning strategies

CLL - Cooperative Language Learning

CL - Collaborative Learning

# INTRODUCTION

The English language is considered to be not only the most popular and demandable language in the world, it often has been called a global language or *lingua franca*. Some of the reasons for the English language's popularity today include position of English spreaded countries (the UK, the USA), developments science and technology, broad usage of English in medicine, sports, international diplomacy and trading.

At the same time the English language is particularly rich in lexis. The English language is widely regarded as one of the most difficult to master. This is due to the fact of its unpredictable spelling, pronunciation, definitions, grammar structure, it is challenging for both learners and native speakers.

Learning the English language is impossible without knowing a variety of established entities – idioms, which consist of more than one word, have semantically opaque meaning, and translating them literally will result in a nonsense meaning, conventionalized, in which the expressions cannot be explained logically and the context is very important in understanding the idiom. Idiomatic expressions are typical features for all natural languages. They are widely used in both spoken and written discourse and are considered to be one of the hallmarks of native-like proficiency Idioms have an important stylistic and pragmatic function as they make the language more colourful, subtle and precise.

Without doubt, idioms play a great role in the enrichment of the English language, representing unique cultural and historical information as well as broaden people's understanding and manipulation of English.

The specific structure of idioms attracts many modern scientists. While dealing with idioms the main tasks of their investigation are as follows: translating, understanding and using. Many of them focus on the strategies and problems of the translation of idioms for different nationalties, countries, and cultures.

Different types of classification are the objects of investigations by A. Aljochina, M. Basaj, R. Ekkert, M. Leonidova, S. Skorupka, O. Smirnizjkuj. Features

of English idioms in translation have been analyzed by O.Kurilko and G. Sidoruk. Morphological classification of idioms in English and Armenian has been highlighted by A. Hovhannisyan, R. Ghazaryan. Idioms that include geographical names have been researched by K.Ganenko. Proper names in idioms have been explored by O. Marchak. Idioms of love context have been considered by G. Ydjak. Semantics of English idioms with numerals has been highlighted by G. Zukaljuk. As these works the authors deal with different approaches to classification, description of idioms, they recognize the difficulties, connected with translating, teaching, understanding, and appropriate usege of English idioms for foreign learners.

We consider that effective teaching of semantic groups of idioms in modern English develops communicative competence and adequate using of language for learners of different levels. Idioms are a part of the English language culture, it is very important to comprehend and understand their structure and semantics through the classification acceptable for Ukrainian nation.

The process of teaching idioms permits using additional tools, such as an immersion in British atmosphere, and historical excursus. Oftentimes, the etymological origin and historical exurcus of fixed, institutionalized idiomatic expressions reveal important information about their metaphorical register and imagery. English idioms tightly related to history, illusrate recover not only the essence and content of the phrase, but also acquaint with interesting historical facts, expand the worldview, go beyond linguistics.

Thus the **topicality** of the master thesis is due to systematize semantic groups of idioms in modern English in the process of the formation of communicative competence.

Semantic groups of idioms in modern English in the process of the formation of communicative competence through the classification of English idioms to the size, to the period of occurrence and the history of origin, to the grammatical structure, thematic classification, and successive attempt of systematization, analisis of general principles of methodology, advantages, effective recommendations, techniques in the process of teaching idioms, **determined the choice of selected topic of master theses**.

The **aim** of the thesis is to suggest practical recommendations and useful tools based on the classification of idioms, which would be effective for the development of communicative competence of English language learners. To reach this aim the following **tasks** are to be solved:

1)      to study theoretical basis of studying English idioms,

2)      to analyse the approaches to the understanding of idioms;

3)      to review the general principles of the classification of idioms;

4)      to classify  English idioms according to their size, the period of occurrence and the history of origin, their grammatical structure, and thematic classification;

5)      to ellaborate recommendations and tools for the advantageous teaching of idioms;

6)      to define practical the tools for improving communicative competence of English learners.

**The object** of the study is the idioms in modern English as the means of the formation of communicative competence.

**The subject** of the master thesis is different types of classification of English idioms mainly the historical historical exurcus, the classification according to the size, the period of occurrence and the history of origin, grammatical structure and thematic groupings of English idioms.

In the course of our investigation we have used the following scholarly **methods**: formal and logical, systemic, structural-functional, the descriptive method, the theoretical methods of analysis, comparison and analogy.

**Research materials: T**he American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms, Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms, Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, English Idioms and  how  to Use  Them, English  idioms  and  phrasal  verbs  from Internet resources.

Despite the many scientific investigations by native and foreign scholars in idiomatic sphere and variety of practical instuctors, there are some problems unsolved: learners are not always aware of the figurative usage of the phrases; even if they recognize the figurative use of expressions, due to their limited linguistic

proficiency and vocabulary size, learners often lack the knowledge and the skills to disambiguate the phrase meaning in the way that native speakers may do.

**Approbation of master research:** «Англійська мова і карєра в США, як continual education деякі аспекти». Іноземна мова і кар'єра. The USA: матеріали XI Всеукраїнської студентської конференції (Черкаси, 16 квітня 2021 року). – Черкаси : ЧНУ імені Богдана Хмельницького, 2021. – 120 с.; Підходи до класифікації англійських ідіом: тематичний аспект. Contemporary studies in foreign philology. Research Paper Collection. ISSUE 1(19); The importance of historical excursus in teaching English idioms...

The master thesis has the following structure: **introduction**, where the topicality, aim, tasks, object, subject and methods have been revealed; the **theoretical chapter** («Theoretical basics of studying English idioms») suggesting the definition of notion of an idioms and their main features, problems of their investigation, the approaches to the understanding of idioms, general principles of classification of idioms; the **practical chapter** («Classification of English idioms») highlighting the different methods of grouping English idioms idioms according to the size, to the period of occurrence and the history of origin, to the grammatical structure, and thematic classification; the **methodological chapter** («Methodology of teaching English idioms») systematizing general principles of methodology and advantages of teaching idioms; recommendations in the process of teaching idiom according to the classification of idiom; techniques of semantic competence in the process of teaching idioms.

The master thesis is set out on 78 pages, contains 3 chapters and 71 sources in the list of references.

# GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The master thesis examines the approaches to teaching and learning idioms. The main conclusions of work are following:

The term «idiom» comes from the ancient Greek word «ídiōma» which means «peculiarity, originality». Nowadays, there are many definitions of the term «idiom» for common use: idioms are commonly used phrases where the literal meaning differs greatly from the figurative one; idioms are combinations of words the meaning of which is not obvious through the meaning of the individual words; idioms are phrases which people use in everybody language, which do not make sense literally, but we understand they meaning as a whole. There are main signs of idioms: semantic integrity and indivisibility, stability, reproducibility, national, cultural and communicative character, expressive and emotional connotation.

According to Oxford dictionary, the term «idiom» refers to a group of words fixed by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual word. There are two main characteristics of idioms: semantics and syntax rules or conventions determine the meaning of the sentences in a language. The semantic unity of idioms can be reflected by the fact that the meaning of an idiom is very often not the total sum of the meanings of the constituent words; structural stability means that unlike free phrases, the structure of an idiom is to a large extent unchangeable, the constituents of idioms cannot be replaced, the word order cannot be inverted or changed, the constituents of an idiom cannot be deleted or added to, not even an article, many idioms are grammatically unanalysable.

The history of investigation of idioms and idiomaticity in general seems to be relatively short. The first scholars who investigated and collected English idioms were Samuel Johnson, who in his «Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language» published in August 1747, announced his ambition to rationalize spellings, trace etymologies, offer guidance on pronunciation, and «preserve the purity, and ascertain the meaning of English idiom»; and Logan Pearsall Smith, who in 1925 published a book entitled «Words and Idioms», which was a collection of his essays.

One of the most discussed questions in modern linguistics is the correlation between such notions as «phraseology» and «idioms». Linguists of post-Soviet erea prefer to use the terms: «phrase unit», «phrase», «expression», while foreign linguists use the term «idiom», «collocation» or «set phrase». British and American linguists include to idioms all kinds of phrases, quotes, proverbs, sayings and aphorisms. The concepts «phraseology» and «idiom» intersect but not contradict each other. An idiom is wider than phraseology. Structurally idiomatic units may be a separate word, a sentence, or a qualifier.

Semantics is the linguistic and philosophical study of meaning in the language. Nowadays the term semantics prevails and is used to denote the branch of linguistics which specializes in the study of meaning of linguistic units at all levels of language use.

The classification of English idioms gives opportunity to get a general idea about idioms, to comprehend the history of their occurrence, to systematize, to generalize their main characteristics, to work out the teaching methodology. In English textbooks, idioms are often classified alphabetically. The English «The Free Dictionary» uses several ways to classify idioms: by meaning, by emotional saturation, by parts of speech. According to F.R. Palmer idioms can be divided into three types: phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs, and partial idioms. Semantically idioms are divided into three classes: pure idioms (opaque), semi-opaque idioms or semi-transparent idioms, figurative idioms, idioms with non-words.

The English and the Ukrainian languages belong to the same Indo-European family of languages; they have common grammatical categories of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, numerals etc.; morphological composition of words and similar way of word formation; cognate roots of base-words, i.e. lexical similarity. The above mentioned relation of English and Ukrainian languages will contribute to our research to the point of better understanding, studying and relevant usage of idioms. From this point of view we suggest the classification of English idioms according to: the size; the period of occurrence and the history of origin; the grammatical structure and thematic groupings.

We suggest the order in studying idioms from easy and simple to difficult and complex. From this point of view the basic grouping of idioms is the classification according to the size. Long idioms are more complex in syntactic and semantic structure and demand higher level of language acqusition. Having direct Ukrainian equivalents, some idioms are easier in understanding and learning.

The latest idioms can be traced back as far as 3,000 years. . All idioms – from the ancient to the most recent – owe their creation to the development of human thought and language evolution. In English there are idioms borrowed from Celtic, Latin, Scandinavian, French, German and other cultures such as Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, Indian and Chinese. According to the period of their occurrence idioms can be classified into traditional, which were used for a long period of time, and modern which have emerged relatively recently. As around 150,000 words of the English language are derived from ancient Greek, it should come as no surprise then, that many sayings and idioms also have their roots in ancient Greek. The Bible is the ground of religions Christian religion in Europe. Majority Hebrew or Greek idioms have become part of many languages in the world, with the English and Ukrainian not an exception. The Biblical idioms being tightly connected with Ukrainian mentality are common, popular and often used.

Idioms are highly interactive items. They are strong and colorful examples of cross-cultural relations. The source of their origin is sometimes difficult to ascertain. A large number of idioms are of folk origin; however, there are huge numbers of the biblical, mythological and authorspecific idioms. Knowing culture, literature and traditions of different nationalities will help the language learner to communicate with a native speaker adequately. Idioms related to history, interesting legends not only explain the essence and content of the idiom, but also acquaint the learners with interesting history facts, expand the worldview, go beyond linguistics. Phrases that can be translated literally, or if they have Ukrainian counterparts, are easy to understand.

According to the grammatical functions English idioms can be classified into idioms of nominal nature (Noun idioms), idioms of adjectival nature (Adjective plus

noun), idioms verbal in nature (Verbal), idioms adverbial in nature and sentence idioms according to the criterion of grammatical functions.

In dictionaries of idioms the traditional and oldest principle for their classifying and the most used is the thematic principle. This principle of classification is sometimes called «etymological». In our research, thematic grouping of English idioms include the follow subgroups: relationship, emotion, family, work, body, time, character, animals, culture, tradition, money, success, entertainment, food, fruit idioms.

The effective method in teaching English idiom provided with various activities to practice and utilize English idioms in different contexts. For our opinion  specific peculiarities in the process of teaching idiom are: age of learners, speech level, hobby, area of interests, mentality and culture.

According the above mentioned classification of English idioms we suggest methods of working in the process of teaching idioms: listening, translation, explaning, practical work. Methods of working in the process of teaching idioms according to the Table 3.2 (listening, translation, explaning, practical work) are easy to combine with the classification of idioms elaborated in this master thesis. The first type of classification of idioms according to the size considering the principle from easy to complex is usefull as for beginners as to advancers. For beginners there are many short idioms which have full or partial equivalents in Ukrainian language. On this stage of teaching idiom it is advisable to use the principle of study from simple to difficult, from the studied to the unknown; repetition of the studied material should be taken into consideration.

The using of idioms in the teaching process and in the different communicative situations is the best reason and the unique opportunity to teach both language and culture from a multitude of sociocultural perspectives, leading to learners' development and attainment of idiomatic competence. Through idiomatization, students develop and attain high levels of communicative competence, and in such way they use language in socially responsible way.

We consider the usefull general principlels of teaching idioms for speaking learners of English as follows: from easy (one, two-word) to complex (more than

three words); including historical aspects in teaching idiom; using modern, popular books, movies, songs, fashion tendency in teaching idioms; parallel teaching with other subjects like History, Geography, Culture; discussion of approximation to similar analogues; teaching idioms in context. The main gap in understanding of semantic groups of idioms in modern English is caused by cross-cultural differences. In scientific research there is a pragmatic theory that leads from what is conveyed literally by the idiom in context to what is implied idiomatically by the dictionary definitions of the individual words comprising the idiom, a meaning that cannot be deduced from the ordinary meanings of the words in it. This theory suggest the development of native-like idiomatic competence – the ability to understand and use idioms appropriately and accurately in a variety of sociocultural contexts, in a manner similar to that of native speakers, and with the least amount of mental effort in second and foreign languages.

Idioms have been used in literature, culture, history, and every day speech. We suggest that ideas and examples of idioms considered in the master thesis can be applied in pedagogical practice for teaching foreign languages. It can be used to provide a theory for learners, enrich and widen their knowledge in the sphere of history, literature, psychology. The usage of idioms in real situations is provided to develop learners' habits and skills of oral speech and writing. As the perspective of our research we also consider the implementation of appropriate study of English and Ukrainian most commonly used idioms in teaching process at all levels of language study, working out worksheets with idioms, teaching idioms through the original works of native English authors.

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# АНОТАЦІЯ

Магістерська робота викладена на 78 сторінках, містить 3 розділи та 73 джерело в переліку посилань.

Об'єктом розгляду є семантичні групи ідіом в сучасній англійській мові в процесі формування комунікативної компетентності.

Предметом магістерської роботи є англійські ідіоми, їх класифікація: за розміром, відповідно до періоду виникнення, історії походження, за граматичною структурою та тематична класифікація.

Метою роботи є запропонувати методи класифікації англійських ідіом, які сприяли підвищенню семантичної компетентності в процесі їх вивчення.

Для досягнення поставленої мети було поставлено вирішення таких завдань:

1. Вичити теоретичні основи сутності та змісту ідіом, підходи до їх розуміння;

2. Розглянути тематику дослідження ідіом;

3. Окреслити загальні принципи класифікації ідіом;

4. Класифікувати англійські ідіоми в залежності від їх розміру, історії походження, періоду виникнення, відповідно до граматичної структури, за тематичним принципом;

5. Дослідити рекомендації, принципи методології, переваги вивчення ідіом;

6. Визначити техніки підвищення семантичної компетентності в процесі вивчення ідіом.

Перший розділ складається з трьох підрозділів. У першому розділі розглянуто теоретико-методологічні засади вивчення ідіом, визначено сутність ідіом, розглянуто історію їх походження, проаналізовано праці вітчизняних та зарубіжних науковців на предмет дослідження ідіом.

Другий розділ складається з трьох підрозділів. Другий розділ присвячено методиці класифікації англійських ідіом: в залежності від розміру, історії походження, періоду виникнення, відповідно до граматичної структури, за тематичним принципом.

Третій розділ складається з трьох підрозділів. У третьому розділі розглянуто методологію вивчення англійських ідіом, загальні принципи та переваги їх вивчення, запропоновано рекомендації щодо вичення ідіом в залежності від запропонованої класифікації, систематизовано практичні інструменти підвищення семантичної компетентності в процесі вивчення ідіом.

Ключові слова: ідіоми, історія виникнення ідіом, класифікація ідіом, методологія вивчення англійських ідіом в залежності від класифікації, практичні інструменти підвищення семантичної компетентності.

# SUMMERY

The master thesis is set out on 78 pages, contains 3 chapters and 73 sources in the list of references.

The object of the study is semantic groups of idioms in modern English in the process of the formation of communicative competence.

The subject of the thesis are English idioms, their classification: according to the size, to the period of occurrence and the history of origin, to the grammatical structure, thematic classification.

To reach the aim of master thesis the following tasks are to be solved:

1.	To study the theoretical essence and notion of an idioms and their main approaches to the understanding;

2.	To consider the problem of investigation of idioms;

3.	To outline general principles of classification of idioms;

4.	To classify English idioms according to the size, to the period of occurrence and the history of origin, to the grammatical structure, thematic classification;

5.	To investigate recommendations, principles of methodology and advantages of teaching idioms;

6.	To define the techniques of semantic competence in the process of teaching idioms.

The first chapter is divided into three sections. The first chapter considers the theoretical and methodical grounds of teaching of idioms, defines the notion of idioms, examines the history of their occurance, analyses works of Ukrainian and foreign scolars on the subject of investigating of idioms.

The second chapter is divided into three sections. The second chapter deals with the classification of English idioms. Particular attention has been paid to the analysis English idioms of according to the size, to the period of occurrence and the history of origin, to the grammatical structure, their thematic classification.

The third chapter is divided into three sections. The third chapter contains methodology of teaching idioms, general principles and advantages of teaching idioms, suggests recommendations to the process of teaching idioms according to

their classification, and systematizes practical tools of semantic competence in the process of teaching idioms.

Key words: idioms, history of occurance of idioms, classification of idioms, methodology of teaching English according to the classification, practical tools of increasing of semantic competence.

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