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## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF IDIOMS AS PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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### ABSTRACT

This given article deals with idioms and their background. It classifies idioms as phraseological units in linguistics. Idioms represent a unique aspect of language that combines cultural significance with linguistic structure. In addition to this, it investigates the definition of idioms, characteristics of idioms, the role of idioms in communication, and cognitive perspective on idiom comprehension.

### KEYWORDS

Phraseological units, classification of idioms, types of idioms, linguistic structure.

### INTRODUCTION

Idioms are a fascinating area of study within linguistics, particularly in the field of phraseology. They represent a unique aspect of language that combines cultural significance with linguistic structure. This article aims to explore the theoretical background of idioms as phraseological units, shedding light on their definitions, characteristics, classifications, and the role they play in communication. Idioms are multi-word expressions whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of their individual components. For

example, the English idiom "kick the bucket" means "to die," which is not deducible from the literal meanings of "kick" and "bucket." This non-literal nature makes idioms a compelling subject for linguistic analysis.

Phraseological units refer to fixed combinations of words that function as single semantic entities. According to Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of dialogism, these units can carry significant cultural and contextual

meaning beyond their literal interpretation. Idioms fall under this umbrella, being characterized by their stability (they tend not to change form easily) and semantic opacity (the meaning is not obvious from the individual words).

1. Fixedness: Idioms typically exhibit a level of rigidity in terms of structure; alterations in form often lead to changes or loss in meaning.

2. Semantic Opacity: The meaning derived from an idiom is often metaphorical or symbolic rather than literal, making them hard to interpret without prior knowledge.

3. Cultural Context: Idiomatic expressions frequently reflect cultural norms and values, providing insight into the society from which they originate.

4. Invariance: While idioms may evolve over time, they generally resist changes in wording or syntax. Linguists classify idiomatic expressions based on various criteria:

1. Types based on Meaning:

- Pure Idioms: Completely non-literal phrases (e.g., “spill the beans”).

- Semi-idiomatic Expressions: Phrases that contain both literal and figurative elements (e.g., “a big fish in a small pond”).

2. Types based on Structure:

- Verbal Idioms: Focused around verbs (e.g., “give someone a hand”).

- Noun Phrases: Fixed phrases functioning as nouns (e.g., “a dark horse”).

3. Types based on Usage:

- Proverbs: Traditional sayings that convey wisdom (e.g., “a penny saved is a penny earned”).

- Colloquial Expressions: Informal phrases used in everyday conversation (e.g., “hit the road”). Idiomatic expressions enrich language by adding color and depth to communication. They allow speakers to convey complex ideas succinctly and can evoke strong emotional responses due to their cultural resonance. Understanding idiomatic language is crucial for effective cross-cultural communication since direct translations often fail to capture intended meanings.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion recent cognitive linguistic research suggests that understanding idioms involves mental imagery and cognitive mapping rather than mere memorization. This perspective emphasizes how speakers draw upon their experiences and knowledge when interpreting these expressions. Idioms as phraseological units play an essential role in language by embodying cultural nuances and offering unique ways to express ideas. Their study encompasses various dimensions—from structural characteristics to

cognitive processing—making them an integral part of linguistic research. As language continues to evolve, so too will idiomatic expressions, reflecting changes within culture and society. By exploring the theoretical background surrounding idioms, we gain insight into not only how language functions but also how it shapes our understanding of human experience across different contexts.

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