

The importance of idioms in speech

Matqurbonova Ro'zaxon Zokirjon qizi
Uzbekistan, Samarkand, SamSIFL, student

Abstract: In this article you will gain main information about idioms and using them correctly. In addition, you may find the number of replies for questions like what are idioms, what are the types of idioms, how are idioms structured and why are idioms used? You will be given information to increase IELTS score by using idioms, give tips for using them in exact place and examples of idioms. Finally, given interesting exercise in order to understand the meaning and learn utilizing them correctly.

Key words: idioms, peculiar phraseology, pure idioms, binomial idioms, partial idioms and prepositional idioms.

What is an idiom?

An idiom is a type of phrase or expression that has meaning that cannot be deciphered by defining the individual words. The idioms contain more than two or three words, however the meaning of them equal one word. Approximately, the word “idiom” is derived from the ancient Greek word “idioma”, which means “peculiar phraseology”. Maybe, you have troubles to realize the meaning of idioms, therefore you do not pay attention for only one word. To understand idioms is to see the forest for trees, or to look at phrase as a whole rather than focusing on the individual words, example: pull yourself together = calm down.

What are the types of idioms?

Frankly speaking, in our speech there are four types of idiom such as pure idioms, binomial idioms, partial idioms and prepositional idioms.

1. Pure idioms: this is your typical idiom, the meaning of which cannot be deduced by its individual components. When someone says, “Spill the beans”, they are asking someone to reveal a secret, not pour out a can of beans. But you would not know that by looking at each word of that phrase.
2. Binomial idiom: this idiom is a phrase that contains two words joined by a conjunction or a preposition. Some examples include “by and large” (everything considered), “dos and don'ts” (guidelines on what to do and/or avoid in a certain situation), and “heart-to-heart” (a candid conversation between two people).
3. Partial idiom: this idiom is one that's been shortened into one part, with the second part generally being understood by fluent speakers. People often use the partial idiom “when in Rome”, with understanding that the other person knows the second part: “do as the Romans do”.
4. Prepositional idiom: this idiom is a phrase that combines a verb and a preposition to create a verb with a distinct meaning. The phrase “agree on” is a prepositional idiom that combines the verb “agree” with the preposition “on” and is used to express that you share an opinion with someone.

How are idioms structured?

The structures of idioms are essentially their syntactic behaviour. This behaviour cannot be predicted solely on the basis of their form or figurative meaning alone, but it must be due to some relation between the form and meaning. An idiom is an institutionalized and conventionalized sequence of at least two words or free morphemes that is semantically restricted so that it functions as a single lexical unit, whose meaning cannot or can only to a certain extent be deduced from the meaning of its constituents. Idioms are characterized as having conventional meaning, figuration, inflexibility of form, and provability. Idioms have been called ‘multiword units’, metaphors, phrasemes, fixed expressions and formulaic expressions. Structurally, idioms do not form a unique class of linguistic items such that all idioms belong to it, but that they share many of the same properties normally associated with more literal expressions.

Why are idioms used? Idioms are really fundamental for our speech. When we use idioms for our speech or sometimes writing, this helps in order to add to variety and color, as well as they can be used to emphasize a point, or to make a statement more memorable. In addition, idioms are based on historical events and mostly common human trials (experiences)

REMINDER

If you use idioms in IELTS speaking exam, this helps to increase your level.

Using idioms during speaking of IELTS, it becomes more beautiful your speech. Since most native speakers utilize idioms in their everyday conversation without much thought. Most importantly, using idioms correctly is really essential in your speech. Here are a few tips on how to do so:

1. Make sure you understand the meaning of the idioms before using it
2. Pay attention to the context in which the idiom is being used.
3. Be careful not to overuse idioms.

Exercises:

Match the give idioms with definition.

1. To be tickled pink	a. To fell little sick/ill
2. It is not my cup of tea	b. I could not sleep well
3. To love someone to bits	c. To be very sad
4. To be fed up to the back teeth	d. To think carefully before making decisions
5. To be down in the dumps	e. To love someone a lot
6. To feel under the weather	f. To be very happy
7. To sleep on it	g. To be really fed up
8. I could not sleep a wink	h. I do not like it

The best 10 examples of idioms

1. To be tickled pink – to be very happy
2. It is not my cup of tea – I do not like it
3. To love someone to bits – to love someone a lot
4. To be fed up to the back teeth – to be really fed up
5. To be down in the dumps – to be very sad
6. To feel under the weather – to feel a little sick/ill
7. To sleep on it – to think carefully before making a decision
8. I could not sleep a wink – I could not sleep well
9. It drives me round the bend – it makes me crazy
10. It blew me away – it impressed me

Try to use them during your communication because of beauty in your speech. I give information about research which carried out between students about using idioms. Given some questions for students like do you use idioms in your daily speech? and what do you think using idioms good or not? 20 students gave response for these above ones and most of them said 'I do not utilize idiom my daily communication since catching the meaning may be a bit difficult for others', for next question they said 'using idiom is fundamental and useful for our speech but we need to utilize with limit because if we use lot of idioms during interaction, this can change the meaning of our sentences'. As for me, using idioms correctly in my daily speech is a bit challenging but sometimes I use them in order to be more beautiful my speech, additionally we could express our feeling and emotions by helping with idioms. In my opinion, idioms decorate our speech and sentences like ornaments, as well as this helps to increase our mark during exam. To conclude, learning idioms with examples and their meaning is the best way to master them and make your speaking more engaging. Only when they are utilized correctly and in the appropriate contexts can idioms be an effective language tool.

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