

English idioms peculiarities in political discourse (Based on British and American media)

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Abstract

Political discourse is an integral part of cross-cultural communication, a way of interaction between political elites and the population. Various means of stylistic devices of expressiveness are used by many politicians today to have the most significant impact on the audience. According to the research work, ways of intellectual influence are often used in the media, and one of them is an idiom. The author's stress and the variety of idiomatic foundations in modern English are rich and diverse in their representation types. The relevance of the research work is determined by the fact that understanding the meaning of idiomatic units is extremely important in the communication process to determine the semantic load and political orientation of a text or speech. The article deals with the analysis of idioms functioning in the political discourse reflecting characteristic cultural features based on British and American political texts. The authors stress the importance of linguistic and cultural cooperation while process interpretation. According to work, the analysis of idioms meaning in public speeches of famous British and American politicians is a challenging task considering the difference in language and cultural perception of different cultures: British and American. One must mention, to avoid misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication, it is necessary to know the various aspects' ground of such a language phenomenon as an idiomatic unit. The research work aims to study the variability of English and American idioms based on political texts and give their Russian equivalents if possible.

Key words: idioms, political discourse, English culture, American culture, interpretation, semantic meaning

Introduction

An idiom is a linguistically stable expression, an indecomposable combination; its meaning of an entire construction differs from the meaning of its component parts. The scientist who first started analyzing *idiomatics* as a separate branch of science was the Swiss Charles Bally. Linguists such as A. V. Kunin, V. A. Vinogradov, A. I. Smirnitsky, N. N. Amosova, and others made a considerable contribution to the study of Russian and foreign (including English) idioms.

According to the research work, the idiomatic foundation of British linguistics has a long history. Therefore, there is a great number of idioms in the English language. For the convenience of analyzing them, various classifications have been created, and the most famous of them are by A. V. Kunin and A. I. Smirnitsky.

Idioms are used in all spheres of communication, and politics is no exception. Having found out that political discourse is a set of communication processes in the political sphere, we have identified the main functions of idioms, depicting cultural features of the original perception.

Methods

This article is based on the systemic approach to interdisciplinary analysis. Due to the cognitive cross-disciplinary approach, we consider the anthropocentric factor, linguistic and non-linguistic information, intercultural analysis.

Results and discussion

The concept of an idiomatic unit in the English language

Idioms often have a specific national character. In addition to purely national idioms, English has a large number of international idioms in its usage. The English idiomatic fund presents a collection of native and borrowed idiomatic expressions with a noticeable predominance of the former. By their origin, such semantic combinations are dependent on the type of place and time to be used. Therefore, idioms are unique in their nature, and sometimes it is impossible to find an accurate identification close to the natural meaning by the translation process. A distinctive feature of idioms is the presence of archaic words and phrases used exclusively in the roots of the original language.

There is a vast choice of definitions to the term "idiom" in modern linguistics. In our research work, we understand idiom as "the unique, grammatical constructions inherent in a particular language" (Belinskaya, 2003).

Idioms in English can be characterized as a complex and ambiguous phenomenon. There are a vast number of definitions in British language school to this term, one of them mentions an idiom "to be a set of linguistic units, the distinctive feature of which is the discrepancy between the meaning of the whole unit and the meaning of the constituent elements" (ABBYY Lingvo online Dictionary).

This discrepancy is explained by the fact that the value of the components changes in the composition of the whole unit. There are other definitions as well; for example, an idiom is a language unit, a phrase, or even a single word. The primary condition for idiom character is the peculiarity, the specificity of a particular expression for certain language types.

It is necessary to mention that in the formation of idioms, the factor of human perception is of great importance. Since the vast majority of idiomatic expressions are associated with a person's understanding, exactly with various spheres of his life, the addressee factor is an essential element of the communication process. In addition, a person gives human features to various aspects of the external world and inanimate ones (Alyokhina, 1982, Hudcovicova 2019)).

Idioms are characterized by various structures, usually immutable and often illogical; these constructions do not always meet the basic grammatical norms. Idioms are used as a whole expression that is not subject to further decomposition and does not allow the permutation of the components within themselves. The semantic coherence of idioms has a wide variation. They are similar to proverbs, but they are not of a complete sentence structure, unlike them. With the help of idioms that should not be translated verbatim but perceived meaningfully depending on the context, the aesthetic side of the speech is enhanced. However, the use of idioms often causes difficulties in an understanding procedure by humans of different cultures and translating text from one language to another, including idioms, can be a real challenge. In this case, the way to solve this problem is to deal with the cultural elements analysis expressions (Chinenova, 2007, Petrasova et al., 2016).

Idioms are of significant regional and cultural value. Analyzing the idiomatic expressions of the language, one can trace the history of the state, get acquainted with the mentality of its people, get information about its traditions and customs.

Idiomatic units fill "voids" in the lexical system of the language, which can not always provide the name of any objects and phenomena, properties, situations, processes. Thus, they reduce the contradictions between language resources and the needs of thinking. Moreover, they are highly informative language units. Idioms are one of the most important language universals (Baranov, 1991).

It is widely believed that idiomatic units are a bright rhetorical tool that makes speech strong and imaginative, more vivid and convincing. Everyone knows that idioms are formed from a combination of words used in a figurative sense. Over time, the portability is forgotten, and the set of words becomes stable.

The study of idiomatic units is engaged in a particular science called *idiomatics*, which is an integral part of phraseology. According to the definition given in the explanatory dictionary by Ushakov, "idiomatics is a branch of the science of language analyzing the lexical and grammatical composition, meaning, stylistic and syntactic properties of idioms as special units of a language" (Belinskaya, 2003).

The founder of the phraseology theory and idiomatics is the Swiss linguist Charles Bally. His ideas had a significant impact on the formation and development of this science, the author researched French idiomatic expressions, but his developments led to analysis on idioms in other languages, including English. Russian linguists A. V. Kunin, V. A. Vinogradov, A. I. Smirnitsky, N. N. Amosova and were also engaged in research in this area.

Idomatics develops at the junction of several branches of linguistics: stylistics, morphology, lexicology, syntax, semasiology, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics. In the last few years, it has evolved into an independent discipline, which has its own subject and research methods (Dobroklonsky, 2008, Hudcovicova 2019).

The tasks of idiomatics as a discipline of linguistics include a comprehensive study of the idiomatic foundation of the language. Important aspects of the study of this science are the stability of idioms, their consistency, and semantic structure. In addition, idiomatics develops the principles of identifying idiomatic units, methods and techniques for studying them, and classification criteria.

Idioms' classification

In order to simplify the analysis of idiomatic expressions, a particular ordered system is necessary to take into consideration, and it is for this purpose that linguistic scientists have developed idioms' classifications.

Currently, there is a large number of criteria for classifying idiomatic expressions, one of the most common is the thematic classification by A. V. Kunin, according to which there are 8 types of English idioms:

1) Nominal idioms, meaning a phenomenon, a person, an object. They are constructed according to the scheme "adjective + noun", or "noun + noun", for example:

- "A back number" – a backward person or something outdated, antediluvian;

- "The great enemy" - death;

- "A lip in the dark" – jump into the unknown (Explanatory dictionary of Ushakov).

2) Verbal idioms, expressing object-circumstance relations. They can have a different structure, most often – "verb + noun", - "verb + auxiliary pronoun + noun", for example:

- "Search one's mind", "break your head"- solve a difficult problem;

- "To hit the nail on the head" - guess with something, get to the point (Vinareva, 2008).

3) Attributive idioms, denoting the properties of an object, a person, or phenomenon, for example:

- "Blue blood" – a man of noble birth;

- "Armed to the teeth" – armed to the teeth;

- "Nutty as a fruitcake" – a very stupid, narrow-minded person (Filatova, 2004).

4) Adverbial idioms, denoting properties, signs of action, for example:

- "Not at any price" – under no circumstances, not for anything in the world;

- "Let things go hang" - treat the case carelessly, irresponsibly, carelessly;
 - "To look like a million" – look great (Explanatory dictionary of Ushakov).
- 5) Modal idioms, denoting the speaker's attitude to a particular event or situation, for example:
- "It's not my cup of tea" – it is not for me;
 - "It's another pair of shoes" - a completely different story;
 - "That's over my head" – is beyond me (Vinareva, L. A. 2008).
- 6) Comparing idioms, describe the appearance of people, their character, and mood details. In the structure, there are constructions "as...as.../ like...", for example:
- "As good as gold" – worth its weight in gold;
 - "As proud as a peacock" – proud man;
 - "Like a bull in a China shop" - absolutely out of place (Kunin, 2001).
- 7) Idioms describing people, for example:
- "Wouldn't hurt a fly" – would not hurt anybody;
 - "Have green fingers" – "jack of all trades";
 - "To have a heart of gold" – a person with a heart of gold (Shitova, 2000).
- 8) Idioms of feelings and moods, for example:
- "Full of beans" – to be full of energy;
 - "I could eat a horse" - feel hungry;
 - "Looked down in the dumps" – to be depressed, sad (Vinogradov, 1986).

Another Russian linguist A. I. Smirmitsky divides English stable expressions into two large groups:

- 1) Idioms having bright, expressive color and emotional marking, for example:
- "To pile on the agony" - exaggerate;
 - "To go bananas" – go crazy;
 - "Live under the cat's foot" – be henpecked (Kunin, 2001).
- 2) Idioms devoid of this, neutral in their style, for example:
- "To cry like a baby" - cry bitterly;
 - "Lost in admiration" – get excited;
 - "To put on an act" - to pretend (Shitova, 2000).

There is also a special group of idioms – colloquial expressions, which are usually quite challenging to find in dictionaries, all of them are divided into three subgroups:

- 1) Idioms for creating a conversation. They help to build sentences correctly and avoid repetitions. For example, "as I was saying before" – one can use this phrase to return to the beginning of the conversation (Filatova, 2004).
- 2) Keywords, words around which an entire sentence can be formed. These include expressions such as "in fact", "actually", "practically".
- 3) General expressions that are used to modify statements. For example: "as far as I'm concerned" (Chinenova, 2007).

Also, all idiomatic expressions can be divided depending on the source of their origin. A. V. Kunin carried out the development of this classification. In the research work, he identified 4 groups of idioms:

- 1) Native English idioms;
- 2) Inter-language borrowings – idioms borrowed from other languages when translating;
- 3) Idioms borrowed from the American version of English;
- 4) Idioms borrowed in a foreign language form (Kunin, 2001).

Native English idioms are closely related to the cultural characteristics and traditions of the English, for example, the most common drink in England is tea, so there are a large number of stable expressions with the phrase “*cup of tea*”: *it's not my cup of tea – this does not suits me, an unpleasant cup of tea – an unpleasant person*. Likewise, many idioms are associated with the word rain, since rain is typical weather for England: *rain at seven, fine at eleven – seven Fridays in the week, keep something for a rainy day - to postpone for a rainy day* (Popova, Sausheva, Surikova, Yusupova, Dzyubenko, 2018).

The second category of idioms is inter-language borrowings. They are quite small in number, according to our research. An example of borrowing from the German language is the expression *an ugly duckling*, taken from the fairy tale by H. H. Andersen. In English, there are only a few idioms borrowed from Spanish. Most of them are taken from the work of Miguel De Cervantes “Don Quixote”. Miguel De Cervantes is the author of such idioms as *tilt at windmills – to be a hero in vain, to do a useless thing; blue blood – a man of noble birth* (Vinogradov, 1986).

Many idioms came to England from the USA, but at present, many of these phrases have already been so assimilated that most do not even know about their original background. For example, *up the wrong tree - to attack a false trail; the green light - freedom of choice, action*. Some idioms also include American words, such as in the expression *look like a million dollars – look great*. However, such phrases gradually came into circulation in England and became extremely common (Kovtunenko, Bylkova, Borisenko, Minakova, Rogacheva, 2018).

The English language uses a vast number of borrowings in a foreign language form. Most of them are international phrases, for example, *qui pro quo - confusion, confusion*. In addition, a significant number of loanwords came from Latin and French, for example, *sub rosa - secretly, secretly; per interim – while*.

The role of idioms in modern political discourse

In the 21st century, political discourse plays one of the most important roles in the global information space. That is why the interest of linguists in the problems of this field has recently increased. Moreover, political discourse plays a unique role in the social sphere of society.

This concept does not have an unambiguous definition. Political discourse is a multi-faceted research object since it occupies an intermediate place between such scientific disciplines as social psychology, political science, linguistics, and philology. Political discourse is engaged in the research and analysis process of the content of ongoing communications in various political situations.

Political discourse is the system of speech interaction and communication processes in the political sphere, which includes the transmission channel, the message itself, and various linguistic and pragmatic factors. (Chinenova 2007, Izák 2020).

There are other definitions of political discourse which deserve particular attention. The researcher Altunyan gives the following characteristic to political discourse, stressing it to be a fundamental part of the political and social activity of people.

According to the concept developed by A. N. Baranov and E. G. Kazakevich, political discourse is a set of various speech actions used in political debates and discussions. Political discourse also includes a system of rules for conducting public policy, which is subject to traditions and tested by the experience of generations. They argue that in political discourse, interaction occurs between different social institutions (Baranov, 1991).

In the approaches discussed above, the study of political discourse consists of various semiotic systems' analysis. The language material, in this case, is publications in the media, statements of politicians, materials of specialized political publications. However, at the same time, some researchers prefer to consider political discourse in the context of the public sphere. They define political discourse as the use of language in the social and political spheres of communication. Political discourse is a set of genres, clearly limited to the political sphere. These genres include parliamentary and pre-election debates, party programs, and speeches by political figures. The scientists limit political discourse to a clear professional framework. In addition, many researchers identify another feature of political discourse – a particular institutional environment, which is of great importance.

Summarizing all the definitions of political discourse, we can conclude that its primary purpose is to arouse interest in the audience, give ground for the reasoning, and mobilize for future action. Of course, the effectiveness of political discourse is determined depending on the implementation of the goals set. In their speeches, politicians use various symbols, and the effect of speech depends on the extent to which these symbols are close to the audience; a successful politician must be able to influence the public. Often it is enough to make it clear to the audience that their interests coincide with the speaker's interests. Therefore, written and oral political speech requires a clear syntactic structure and speech expressiveness to impact the audience significantly.

The main distinguishing feature of political discourse is the veiled goals of the speaker. In the English-language media, a whole range of different means of expression is used to solve this problem. Idiomatic expressions occupy a special place among them (Filatova, 2004, Petrasova et al., 2016).

Idioms in political speech perform various functions. Firstly, they give the speech imagery and liveliness, create the so-called “feedback effect” with the audience. It is because, on a subconscious level, the “joy” of recognition is manifested. Idioms help to influence listeners, to some extent, to manipulate their minds; they attract listeners with their brightness, expressiveness, and clearly expressed emotional expressiveness.

Idiomatic expressions, as means of expression, help to concretize thoughts while expressing their emotional assessment. Idioms help not only to identify a particular subject but also to describe the feelings and emotions of the speaker. Politicians, resorting to the use of idioms, can covertly express their attitude to a particular event or phenomenon and voice their goals and plans.

Moreover, many colloquial idiomatic expressions that do not have a bright, expressive color (“*as I was saying before*”, “*for certain*”, “*in any case*”) are used to build competent syntactic and grammatical constructions. Unlike other idioms, expressions of this category do not carry a semantic load and emotional mood ideas. Instead, they perform an exclusively binding function (Filatova, 2004).

Modern political discourse is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. The implementation of communication in its framework without the help of idioms is almost impossible. Idioms help politicians to gain popular support, which leads to the approval and legitimization of their policies.

Features of English idioms in the speech of modern British politicians and their Russian equivalents' interpretation

To identify the features of English idioms, we analyzed the speeches of British politicians over the past 50 years to identify idiomatic expressions in their speeches.

Firstly, we considered and analyzed David Cameron's first speech as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. In his first words, we see a steady idiomatic

expression: *“I'd like to pay tribute to the outgoing prime minister for his long record of dedicated public service”*. The Russian equivalent of this idiom is the expression *“to pay tribute, to bring gratitude”* (Pavlina, 2017). David Cameron uses the phrase to express his respect and homage to his predecessor, Gordon Brown. This expression can help to gain support and trust from both the population and other politicians.

Further, in the sentence *“And I think the service our country needs right now is to face up to our really big challenges...”*, one can notice an expression that in this context means *readiness to face difficulties, confidence in one's own strength*, and the strength of the people. This idiom helps to raise the spirit of the people, motivate and mobilize them to action. In Russian, there is a similar expression: *“to face trouble”*.

David Cameron has high hopes for the future, and in the sentence *“And I want a political system that people can trust and look up to once again”*, the idiom *“look up to”*, meaning *to look up to someone, to take an example from someone*, helps to express the thoughts more vividly. As for the Russian language, there are no idiomatic expressions with a similar meaning to the analyzed idiom, which proves the unique connection of language and culture cooperation (Pavlina, 2017).

In the research work, we analyzed several speeches of Margaret Thatcher. The first of these is a performance at Kensington Town Hall. The first stable expression that was discovered is the expression *“by heart”*: *“They know them all by heart; they reel off the facts and figures, claiming this is the rich harvest of this system”* (Great speeches: Margaret Thatcher). This idiom means *to know something very well*. In Russian, the equivalent of *“know by heart”* is used in the context *“to know something perfectly”*. In English, this idiom does not have a bright, expressive color, but it still makes speech more expressive.

Comparing the position that the UK occupied in the past and occupies at present, Thatcher, in one of her proposals, uses the idiom *“hark back”*: *“We're not harking back to some nostalgic illusion about Britain's role in the past”*. In this case, this expression means *“do not indulge in illusions”*, but it has no Russian equivalent (Great speeches: Margaret Thatcher).

We also analyzed the speech that was delivered by Margaret Thatcher on October 10, 1975, at the Brighton Conference of the Conservative Party. On this day, she presented her program and proposals for the country's recovery from the crisis. She uses all the idioms and other means of expression to make her speech expressive, attract her listeners' attention, win their approval, and draw them to action.

One of the phrases she uttered was *“rewriting British history as centuries of unrelieved gloom, opposition and failure”* - contains an idiom, the equivalent of which is the expression *“hopeless gloom”*. The use of this construction makes the statement more emotional, which creates the effect of anxiety, deep indifference to the future of their state.

The sentence *“Head for head we have done better than America, twice as well in fact” shows great patriotism and pride in our country”* (Great speeches: Margaret Thatcher). To achieve this, Thatcher helps with the idiom *“head for head”*, the Russian equivalent of which is *“to give the head to cut off”*. This idiom means *to have absolute confidence* in something.

We examined the speech of Queen Elizabeth, delivered in 2015 at the opening of the Parliament. A high level of formality characterizes her speech, and therefore, there is a small number of idioms in it. We have analyzed some of them. The first idiom is *“play lead role”* – *“My Government will continue to play a leading role in global affairs”* (Great speeches: Margaret Thatcher). It means to take a leading position, and its Russian equivalent is the idiom *“play a key role”*.

Further, in the sentence *“My Government looks forward to an enhanced partnership with India and China”*, one can notice the common expression *“look*

forward to”, which has several meanings and in the context of this speech means “hope”, there is no equivalent of this idiom in Russian.

We also analyzed the political articles of the newspaper “The Guardian”. The first of them is an article from November 11, 2002, was dedicated to Tony Blair’s speech at the banquet of the Lord Mayor of London. In the text of the article, we found several idioms that do not have a bright, expressive color.

In one of the sentences, we may notice the expression “*look for*”, it has no emotional connotation but is a historically well-established construct and belongs to the category of idioms: “*They are looking for ever more dramatic outrages to affect upon the people they claim to be their enemy*” (Pavlina, 2017).

Next, in the sentence “*We were holding back on telling the public*”, we see the idiom “*hold back*,” meaning “*to refrain from anything*”.

The idioms found in the article of the newspaper “The Guardian” have no equivalents in Russian. In English, they are used to make speech more understandable and easy to have the main idea.

In the research work, we analyzed the article “Donald Trump and Theresa May agree the world’s needs to respond to Syria chemical attack in a crisis phone call” from the newspaper “The Mirror”. In the first lines, we notice the idiom “*hands are coated with blood*”: “*But US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley declared Russia’s hands were coated with blood of Syrian children*” (Pavlina, 2017).

The meaning of this expression is guilt, responsibility for an event, most often for someone’s death. In this case, the idiom adds brightness and expressiveness to the whole statement, helps to attract attention. In Russian, there is an equivalent of this construction – “hands in blood”.

Later in this article, in the sentence “*It’s quite clear he does support our strategy of holding the Government to account on the tests that have been put forward*”, we can find an idiom which meaning is “*put forward*”, “*offer*” – “*put forward*”, it has no analogs in Russian.

David Cameron, the Prime Minister of the UK in 2016, used many idioms in his public speech, which were conceptualized in terms connected with natural phenomena. These concepts included such expressions as “*to turn the tide*”, “*to fall through the cracks*”, “*at rock bottom*”, “*to chase the rainbow*”, for example, “*They’re all chasing the same rainbows such as social cohesion, global warming, containing terrorism, and rightly so*” (Pavlina, 2017).

The given example presents the idiom “*to chase the same rainbows*” which means “*trying to do something that you will never achieve*”. This idiom has the equivalent in Russian with the meaning “*to have pink eyes*” meaning “the naïve person who can not deal the reality”.

The British media executive and former politician Sir Nicholas William Peter Clegg, Vice-President for Global Affairs and Communications uses idioms in his speech. For example, while describing the problem connected with migration, which is of great attention today, he uses the idiom “*stuck in the rut*” which has the idea of “*promise not to find easy ways and not to “cut corners*”, for example, “*Your decision made sure that the difficult choices needed to get us stuck in the rut, but taken with compassion and a sense of fairness*” (Vinareva, 2008). The illustrated example proves that idioms are able to represent the peculiarities of the culture they belong to; often, they do not correspond to other languages’ interpretation.

One more example containing idioms is taken from the speech of Nick Clegg: “*If you are trying to persuade people to invest trust again, which was Mary’s question, into politicians, then it’s just not good enough to just talk the talk and not walk the walk*”. The chosen example has two idioms in one sentence: “*talk the talk*” (which means “only talk but not take actions”) and “*not walk the walk*” (expressing the idea of not doing anything but be lazy). In his speech, the politician expresses rather sharply his strong desire to take action but not just promise to make people’s

lives better (Dobroklonsky, 2008). These idioms have analog meanings in Russian and stress the idea “not to take actions, but just pretend”.

Features of English idioms in the speech of modern US politicians and their Russian equivalents

Analyzing the political discourse of the United States, we studied the speeches of several American politicians and articles from the newspapers “The New York Times” and “The Washington Post”.

We analyzed Ronald Reagan's speech at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin on June 12, 1987. Speaking of the Germans living in Berlin, he uses the following expression: “*Berliner heart, Berliner humor, yes, and a Berliner arrowy tongue*” (Ronald Reagan Speech First inaugural address). The idiom “*arrowy tongue*” gives expressiveness and helps to create the effect of proximity to the people. In Russian, there is also an equivalent idiom – “sharp tongue”. Describing the problems between the West and the East, he uses the idiomatic construction “*the root of the matter*”: “*Perhaps this gets to the root of the matter, to the most fundamental distinction of all between East and West*”. This expression means the cause, the root cause of something. Its synonym in Russian is the idiom “the root of the problem”.

Furthermore, we examined Ronald Reagan's speech during his first inauguration. In this speech, one can notice many idioms that have a relatively bright expressive color. Their use is conditioned by the fact that the politician, speaking for the need for reforms, tries to attract the audience's attention to interest it.

In his speech, speaking about the economy, he uses the idiom “*go forward*”: “*The business of our nation goes forward*” (The Washington Post, 2018). This expression is used to refer to the development of a sphere or process. In Russian, its equivalents can be the phrases “do not stand still”, “move forward”.

Continuing his speech, Reagan utters the following phrase: “*All of us together, in and out of government, must bear the burden*” (Ronald Reagan Speech First inaugural address). The idiom “*bear the burden*” means *to perform their duties, not always pleasant, but necessary*. Its Russian equivalents are the expressions “pull the strap”, “bear the burden”.

The politician also uses the expression “*get a free ride*”, which means living at the expense of another: “*It is, rather, to make it work, work with us, not over us; to stand by our side, not get a free ride*”. Its equivalent is the Russian idiom “to sit one's year neck”.

At the end of his speech, Reagan utters the phrase “*We will again be the exemplar of freedom and a beacon of hope for those who do not now have freedom*”. The idiomatic construction “*beacon of hope*” means *something that brings hope and inspiration*. In Russian, there is also an equivalent to this expression – “ray of hope”.

We can notice a sufficient number of idioms in the speeches of Barack Obama, so we analyzed several of his speeches delivered on various occasions.

The first is his address to the newly elected mayors before the meeting on December 13, 2013.

In one sentence, you can find two idiomatic expressions at once: “*Who has had some bad luck can get back on their feet and get back into the workforce*” (Pavlina, 2017). The first of them is “*bad luck*”, which means *defeat*. In Russian, there is an equivalent idiom – “failure”. The second expression, “*get back on their feet*”, means *improving their condition, position: physical or material*. Its Russian equivalent is “get on one's feet”.

Also, twice in his speech, “*So I'm very much looking forward to the conversation*”, “*I'm looking forward to, over the next three years for me, working with them for the benefit of their constituencies*” – Barack Obama uses the relatively common expression “*looking forward to*”. This idiom makes speech more emotional

and easy to understand (Pavlina, 2017). There is no equivalent for this construction in Russian.

We also studied the inaugural speech of the 38th Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Since this was his first term in office, he had to win the citizens' trust to gain their support from the very first days. In his speech, he tries to show the responsibility for the future of the state by various means, the willingness to serve for the benefit of the people. One of the idioms that express a willingness to work sufficiently is the idiom “*work hard*” – “*And I will work hard to reform Government*”. Its Russian equivalent there is the expression “to work tirelessly” (Chinenova, 2007).

Speaking about the crisis in California, Schwarzenegger said the following phrase: “*The dream of a new nation was falling apart*”. In this context, the “*fall apart*” construction is idiomatic, and it means *a complete failure of plans*. There are also several idioms with a similar meaning in Russian: “to fly to hell”, “to crumble to dust”.

Literally, in the following sentence, we can notice another idiomatic turn – “*Our founding fathers knew that the fate of the union is in their hands*”. The expression “*founding father*” is of Native American origin, and its meaning is *the ancestor*. There is no equivalent to this expression in Russian.

In addition to the speeches of political figures, we analyzed articles from newspapers. For example, we examined the March 28, 2018, article in “The Washington Post” titled “Trump privately suggests military could pay for wall”. In this article, the sentence “*The negotiations fell apart before the spending bill was drafted and passed last week*” we find the idiomatic expression “*fall apart*”, which in this context is used *to express an unsuccessful attempt to negotiate* (Trump Thought to Fire Mueller in December). The idiom in the presented sentence helps to focus on the failure, to draw attention to it. In Russian, there is the equivalent idiomatic expression – “fail”.

Next, we may notice the expression “*strike a deal*”, which means “*make a deal*” – “*The urgency to strike a deal reflected this growing sense*” (Trump Thought to Fire Mueller in December). Unfortunately, the Russian language has no equivalent to this idiom.

In addition, we analyzed the article “The New York Times”, which is called “Trump Thought to Fire Mueller in December”. This article was published on April 10, 2018, and is dedicated to the December incident when Donald Trump tried to oust Special Prosecutor Robert Mueller.

Twice in the article, the stable idiomatic expression “*red line*” is used: “*To Mr. Trump, the subpoenas suggested that Mr. Mueller had expanded the investigation in a way that crossed the ‘red line’*”, “*In that action, the Justice Department seems to have walked directly up to — if not crossed — Mr. Trump’s ‘red line’*”. The Russian equivalent of this idiom is also “red line”, which means a conditional border, a border that cannot be crossed.

In the analyzed article, the sentence “*What the reports were not accurate, leading the president to back down*” uses an idiom which meaning is “*to give up*”, but in this context, it means “*cancel plans*” (Trump Thought to Fire Mueller in December). In Russian, the equivalent of this expression is the idiom “turn back”.

The research work proves Donald Trump uses many idioms in his speech, paying particular attention to this device depicting emotional ideas, for example, “*We are going to start the engine rolling again, because... right now, our country is dying at 1 percent GDP*”. Donald Trump uses the idiom “*to start the engine rolling*” paying particular attention to the need of *restarting new step of economic development*. The analyzed idiom has the equivalent in Russian, which means “to make engine working” (Trump Thought to Fire Mueller in December).

One more example was taken from the speech of Donald Trump: “*Now, our jobs have been taken away, they’ve gone to Mexico, they’ve gone to so many other countries, it’s a one-lane highway where they get the jobs, they get the factories, they get the money, and we get the drugs, and we get the unemployment, and it’s going to change, believe me, and it’s going to change fast*”. The analyzed sentence contains the idiom “*to be a one-lane highway*” the meaning of which is explained with the historical ground when only one way of the road was of to be used. Thus, using the analyzed idiom in his speech, the President expressed the necessity to choose only one possible way out of the situation.

According to our research work, Donald Trump uses the most significant number of idioms in his speech, sometimes combining two idioms in one sentence creating newly modified ideas, for example, “*He violates the red line in the sand, and he made so many mistakes*”. Donald Trump combines two idioms in the given example: “*to violate the red line*” (meaning *no possibility to return*) and “*to draw a line in the sand*” (meaning *to forget the past*), thus creating a new modified idiomatic expression with the idea of *forgetting the problems of the past and find new solutions* (Trump Thought to Fire Mueller in December).

The famous American politician Hillary Clinton used idioms in her speech as well, expressing her ideas, for example, “*It’s wrong to take tax breaks with one hand and give pink slips with the other*”. The meaning of the idiom *to give pink slips* is connected with the cultural life of American people when people received pink envelopes, which meant *to stop employing because there is not enough work*. Hillary Clinton is rather emotional in her speech and expresses ideas using idioms, presenting her deep feelings, for example, “*I have met so many people who had their life savings wiped out, who lost their homes, who are barely back with their heads above water*”. The example has the idiom *to be back with heads above water*, stressing the difficult period in the American people’s life, but the politician stresses in her speech that it is necessary to deal with the problem. The analyzed idiom has the meaning in Russian as “*to overcome difficulties*”.

To sum it all, after analyzing the idiomatic expressions of the English and American political discourses, we found that these stable expressions occur equally often in the two discourses mentioned above. Their use is determined by the cultural peculiarities, situation, the degree of formality of the speech or publication, and even the character and manners of the politician himself (Altunyan, 2006).

We have seen from practical examples that idioms can perform various functions: attracting attention, representing expressiveness. However, according to the research work, not all idiomatic expressions have equivalents in foreign languages, which causes a challenge sometimes. Moreover, many idioms do not have analogs for equivalents, which can cause some difficulties in the communication process.

Conclusions

English has a long and rich history. During its development, a special layer of expressions was formed – idiomatic expressions. The study of idiomatic expressions is of great importance for the implementation of successful cross-cultural communication. Political discourse presents a special text type, the elements of which are turned out to be idioms.

According to the research work, an idiom is a set of linguistic units, the distinctive feature of which is the discrepancy between the meaning of the whole and the meaning of the constituent elements. This discrepancy is explained by the fact that the value of the components changes in the composition of the whole unit. Idioms are characterized by a wide variety of structures, usually immutable and often illogical. These constructions do not always meet the basic grammatical norms. There is a large number of classifications of idiomatic expressions based on various criteria. In the

course of the study, we identified the main functions of idioms in political discourse. They consist of influencing the audience, manipulating the population's consciousness, encouraging the population to act, and establishing a closer connection between the politician and the audience.

While analyzing political speeches, we came to a conclusion, speeches of various political figures of Great Britain and the United States of America, as well as political articles of such newspapers as "The Guardian", "The Mirror", "The New York Times" and "The Washington Post", use idioms as the part of oral or written communication type. The study revealed the peculiarities of the use of idiomatic expressions in political discourse. After analyzing the English idioms, we found out that not all of them have equivalents in foreign languages; this is due to the uniqueness of each culture and the differences in mentality. It greatly complicates the process of cross-cultural communication. We believe the research on this topic is currently relevant, causing the spread of international relations and the need for intercultural communication and intercultural exchange to flourish.

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