**Introduction**

A well-educated person should speak a foreign language. English language is widely studied in our country. Since school children learn to express their thoughts using means of English language immersing themselves into another culture. But is it possible to study a foreign language without studying idioms of this language? To answer this question ask yourself: how frequently do you use idioms in your native language? Some may say that they can do without them, but the truth is that most expressions are so entrenched into the language then we don't even recognize them as idiomatic. Such expressions as: без понятия, без задних ног, вешать нос and many others make our speech more emotional and interesting for people we talk with. Same with English.

Knowledge of idioms promotes better understanding of image and character of the nation, helps fully enjoy reading original English texts, clearly shows the speaker's speaking skill level. Sometimes a person uses lots of time to express a situation which can be explained with just one proverb or saying. In many causes knowledge of English idioms helps to avoid russicisms.

It seems that the purpose of learning and using idioms of English language is quite clear, so why students who study a foreign language don't use it's idioms? My suggestion is that this happens because translation of idioms from English into Russian is difficult because of their diverse meaning and that they can not be translated literally most of the time, even though their grammatical structure is clear as day. This difficulty of translation scares those who study English language and the students specially try to avoid idioms in their speech so they don't make any mistakes. But no language can do without idioms, proverbs and saying and if you try to learn English you need to improve in the field of idioms of the language. It should also be mentioned that usage of idioms makes your speech similar to that of a native speaker.

**The object of study**: English and Russian idioms.

**The subject of research**: the use of English idioms in our daily speech.

**The main objective of research:** to explore English idioms and the difficulties of their translation into Russian.

**Objectives of the study**:

* define the concept of «idiom» and study different classifications of idioms;
* find common traits in English and Russian idioms;
* explore the difficulties in translation of English idioms;
* create an illustrated dictionary of English idioms with examples for students of our school.

**Hypotheses**:

1. Students of our school very rarely use English idioms in their speech.
2. There are problems in translation of many English idioms into Russian.
3. Some idioms of English and Russian languages have the same origin and therefore don’t pose difficulties in translation and understanding.
4. Illustrated dictionary of English idioms that I made shall help our students to get acquainted with some set expressions, to better remember them and to use them in their speech.

**Methods of investigation**: analysis of English and Russian idioms, work with various sources of information, comparison, survey, search.

**The novelty of the work:** nobody of students of our school created an illustrated dictionary of English idioms before.

**Practical value of the work:**

* the present work may be a guide for English language teachers who are concerned about their students' knowledge of phraseologisms;
* the results of the investigation are aimed at raising the quality of translations and preventing mistakes in comprehension of English idioms;
* this work can be used at the English language lessons as a means of raising students' interest in phraseologisms and developing investigation skills;
* my illustrated dictionary of English idioms helps our students to better understand English idioms and to use them in their speech.

**Chapter 1. The concept of Idiomatic expressions.**

* 1. **The definition of idiom**

An idiom (also called idiomatic expression) is a [phrase](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phrase) or a [fixed expression](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fixed_expression) that has a [figurative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Figurative_language), or sometimes literal, [meaning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meaning_(linguistic)). Categorized as [formulaic language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formulaic_speech), an idiom's figurative meaning is different from the [literal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literal_and_figurative_language) meaning. There are thousands of idioms, occurring frequently in all languages. It is estimated that there are at least twenty-five thousand idiomatic expressions in the [English language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_language). [12]

If the expression is idiomatical, then we must consider its components in the aggregate, not separately.

There are some simple rules how to deal with idioms. At first it’s important to think of idioms as being just like single words, then we must record a whole phrase in the notebook, along with the information on grammar and collocation.

Idioms are usually rather informal and you must be careful using them. It’s important to know that their grammar is flexible and some idioms are more fixed than others. [4]

**1.2 Classifications of idioms**

«Phraseology» - is a section of linguistic, which studies word collocations and a set of all steady combinations of words of the language. The stock of words of the language consists not only of separate words, but also of set expressions, which alongside with separate words serve as means of expressing conceptions. [3]

The Academician A.A. Vinogradov divided phraseological units into three groups: phraseological fusions, phraseological unities and phraseological collocations.

Phraseological fusions are completely non-motivated word-groups. The meaning of the components has no connection whatsoever, at least synchronically, with the meaning of the whole group.

Phraseological unities are partially non-motivated as their meaning can usually be perceived through the metaphoric meaning of the whole phraseological unit. Phraseological unities are as a rule marked by a high degree of stability of the lexical components.

Phraseological collocations are motivated but they are made up of words possessing specific lexical valence which accounts for a certain degree of stability in such word-group. In phraseological collocations variability of member-words is strictly limited. [2]

Researchers interested in idioms have tried to classify them according to different criteria. The main feature that differentiates between the different kinds of idioms is the degree of the idiomacity that an idiom carries. Idioms are categorized in a continuum from transparent to opaque called the spectrum of idiomacity. So, idioms can be divided into transparent- opaque idioms which include:

* transparent idioms;

These idioms have a very close meaning to that of the literal one. They are usually not difficult to understand and to translate because their meanings can be easily inversed from the meanings of their components.

*e.g. to see the light = to understand*

* semi-transparent idioms;

They usually carry a metaphorical sense that could not be known only through common use, i.e. the meaning of their parts has a little role to play in understanding the entire meaning.

*e.g. break the ice = relieve the tension*

* semi-opaque idioms;

The figurate meaning of semi-opaque idiom isn’t joined to that of the constituent word of the idiom. Thus, the expression is separated into two parts: a part with a literal meaning, and another part with a figurate sense.

*e.g. to know the ropes = to know how a particular job should be done*

* opaque idioms. They are most difficult type of idioms, because the meaning of the idiom is never that of the sum of the literal meanings of its parts. So, it would be impossible to infer the actual meaning of the idiom from the meaning of its components.

*e.g. to burn one’s boat = to make retreat impossible.* [11]

Some linguists classificate idioms according to the parts of speech and allocate four groups: 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 (*vise versa = conversely*). [1]

According to Jennifer Seidl and W. McMordre, idioms may be classified into:

1. Informal idioms such as: *a mug’s game; alive and kicking; by the book*.
2. Formal idioms such as: *as regards; on production of; cook someone’s goose*.
3. Verbal idioms such as: *burn the midnight oil; do a bunk; fetch and carry.*
4. Idiomatic pairs:
   * pairs of adjectives: *born and bred / safe and sound;*
   * pairs of nouns: *body and soul / hustle and bustle;*
   * pairs of adverbs: *far and wide;*
   * pairs of verbs: *do and die / pick and choose;*
   * identical pairs: *again and again / all in all.*
5. Idioms used in special fields:
   * banking: *take out a loan / pay in cash;*
   * business: *a business runs at a profit or runs at a loss;*
   * buying and selling: *shop around / go window-shopping / buy in bulk;*
   * politics and law*: be in power / loose a seat;*
   * telephoning: *give someone a rink / hold the line;*
   * travel: *set off on a journey / travel first class;*
   * health, illness, death: *catch a cold / to feel under the weather.*
6. Idioms related to special themes:
   * anger: *go through the roof;*
   * deterioration: *go from bad to worse;*
   * success: *go places*;
   * speed: *like a shot;*
   * happiness: *on cloud nine;*
   * surprise: *raise eyebrows;*
   * wealth: *in the lap of luxury.*
7. Idioms containing special keywords:
   * animals: *a dog’s life / crocodile tears / let the cat out of the bag;*
   * parts of the body: *with open arms / keep a straight face;*
   * colours: *in black and white / as red as beetroot / a white lie;*
   * clothes: *fit someone like a glove;*
   * time: *day by day / kill time.*
8. Idioms with comparisons:
   * comparisons with as…as: *as blind as a bat / as cold as ice;*
   * comparison with like: *drink like a fish / go like the wind*. [9]

The other English linguist Michael Halliday groups idioms into **ideational**, **interpersonal** and **relational** idioms.

**Ideational** idioms include the sensory, the affective and the evaluative or they characterize the nature of the message. These expressions can describe:

* actions: *tear down*;
* events: *turning a point*;
* situations: *be in a pickle*;
* people and things: *a red* *herring*;
* attributes: *cut-and-dried*;
* emotions: *green with envy*.

**Interpersonal** idioms include:

* greetings and farewells: *good morning*;
* directives: *let’s face it*;
* agreements: *say no* *more*;
* “feelers” which elicit opinions: *what do you think*?;
* refections: *come of* *it*. [10]

McCarthy and O’Dell give another classification of the English idioms types focusing on their possible combinations:

1. Verb+ object/complement (and/or adverbial): *kill two birds with one stone*.
2. Prepositional phrase: *in the blink of an eye*.
3. Compound: *a bone of contention*.
4. Simile (as + adjective + as or like + a noun): *as dry as a bone*.
5. Binominal (word + and + word): *rough and ready*.
6. Trinomial (word + word +and + word): *cool, calm and collected*.
7. Whole clause or sentence: *to cut a long story short*. [7]

So, you can see that there are a lot of different ways to group idioms and that they are an important part of language in the opinion of linguists.

**1.3 Difficulties in translation**

Translation of phraseological units particularly figurative is difficult. This is due to the fact that many of idioms are bright, emotionally saturated turnovers belonging to a particular style of speech and often wearing a distinct national character. Also many English are characterized by ambiguity and stylistic diversity that complicates their interpretation.

So, analyzing English idioms and their translation into Russian I have found out that there are two groups of idioms: phraseological units which have equivalents and phraseological units which don’t have equivalents in Russian.

Equivalents are divided into full and partial.

**Full equivalents** – English idioms which are identical with Russian idioms by value, by lexical composition, imagery, stylistic direction and grammatical structure. The number of such matches is small; this group includes idioms of international character based on mythological tales, biblical legends and historical facts:

*e.g. on the seventh heaven – на седьмом небе; burn one’s boats – сжечь свои корабли; Augean stables – Авгиевы конюшни.*

Some other types of idioms have also full equivalents:

* comparison: *as cold as ice – холодный как лед; as sharp as a razor – острый как бритва; as brave as a lion – храбрый как лев; as cunning as a fox – хитрый как лиса;*
* proverbs: *better late than never – лучше поздно чем никогда; habit is a second nature; there is no smoke without fire – нет дыма без огня; poverty is no sin – бедность не порок; look not a gift horse in the mouth – дареному коню в зубы не смотрят;*
* verb phrases: *gild a pill – позолотить пилюлю; read between the lines – читать между строк; play with fire – играть с огнем.*[8]

A lot of very bright idioms come into English and Russian from talented writers. These idioms are usually identical in both languages, for example many idioms come from Shakespeare’s works: *«to be or not to be» – «быть или не быть»; «vanity fair» - «ярмарка тщеславия*». [2]

**Partial equivalent** does not mean any incompleteness in the translation, but only contains the lexical or grammatical differences in the presence of the same value of the same stylistic direction.

Partial lexical equivalents are: *kill* ***the goose*** *that lays the golden eggs – убить* ***курицу****, несущую золотые яйца; put by for a* ***rainy*** *day – отложить про* ***черный*** *день; a wolf in a sheep’s* ***clothing*** *– волк в овечьей* ***шкуре****; one swallow does not make* ***a summer*** *– одна ласточка* ***весны*** *не сделает; be born with a silver spoon in one’s mouth – родиться в сорочке; birds of a feather flock together – рыбак рыбака видит издалека; and others.*

Partial grammatical equivalents are: *fish in Doubled* ***waters*** *– ловить рыбу в мутной* ***воде****; the game is not worth* ***the candle*** *– игра не стоит* ***свеч****; play into somebody’s* ***hands*** *– играть на* ***руку*** *кому-либо; there is no rose without a thorn – нет розы без* ***шипов****; all is not gold that glitters – не все то золото, что блестит; all’s well that ends well – все хорошо, что хорошо кончается.* [8]

And a lot of English idioms don’t have equivalents in Russian language. First of all they are idioms which denote realities which don’t exist in our culture. To translate this row of idioms we need to use tracing or descriptive translation. Tracing allows us to convey to the Russian reader a living image of the English idiom. The descriptive translation is suitable for the transmission of terminology speech not allowing the literal translation.

Idioms which don’t have Russian equivalents are: *the old lady of Threadneedle Street – старая леди с Треднидл-стрит (шутливо); better a witty fool than foolish wit – лучше умный дурак, чем глупый мудрец (Шекспировское выражение); He knocks boldly at the door who brings good news – громко стучит в дверь тот, кто приносит хорошие новости; cross the floor of the House – перейти из одной партии в другую.* [5]

**Chapter 2. Analysis of the survey.**

A survey has been conducted among students from 5th to 10th classes. In the survey the students were asked to do three tasks: first, they had to write about what a phraseologism actually is. Second, they were asked about how frequently do they use phraseologisms and idioms in their speech. And lastly, students had to translate three given idioms correctly. Results of the survey can be seen on the diagrams below.



By analyzing information from the survey's results, I can say that the overall knowledge of phraseologisms, idioms and proverbs is very poor. Only 16 students out of 45 actually know what phraseologisms are. The usage of phraseological constructions is in a dire state, too. 21 students avoid using them in their speech while 24 students use them, but rarely. There is not a single student who uses idioms in their speech on a regular basis. The results of the questionnaire also show poor knowledge of the idioms' translations. 3 students have successfully translated an idiom “Heads or tails”, 17 - “Play with fire” and only one student has translated an idiom “Cool as a cucumber” correctly.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, I can say that my hypotheses were confirmed. I suggested that the students of our school rarely use English idioms in their speech. To confirm or debunk this hypothesis, I have conducted a research via a survey among the students of our school and my suggestion was confirmed with the results of the survey.

By studying science literature in the field of phraseology of Russian and English languages I have found out that some idioms don’t pose any difficulty in translation at all, because they have same roots in both languages. That way, my other hypothesis has been confirmed.

But even though both languages have idioms with the same roots, there also exists a huge amount of phraseologisms, translation of which is rather hard. When translating some of them you have to find a correct equivalent, but in some cases you can translate those idioms only by translating their meaning. As such, my third hypothesis has been confirmed.

The main objective of my research was to explore English idioms and difficulties of their translation to Russian language. I have paid attention to theoretical questions: studied the meaning of “idiom”, considered the most common classifications of phraseologisms in both languages, analyzed the difficulties of translation, conducted a survey among students of our school, pointed out an existing problem and suggested a hypothesis that the study of English phraseologisms would be easier for students of our school if they used a dictionary of phraseologisms made by me. This hypothesis is yet to be confirmed or debunked because this dictionary still needs to be worked on and has not been tried yet.

I think I can rightfully say that the main goal of my research work has been reached along with its secondary goals.