

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2020.24.4.18>**СОЦИОКУЛЬТУРНЫЙ АСПЕКТ ТЕМЫ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ ВО ФРАЗЕОЛОГИИ (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА)**

Научная статья

**Юсупова С.М. \***

ORCID: 0000-0002-4924-1476,

Чеченский государственный университет, Грозный, Россия

\* Корреспондирующий автор (seda\_linguist[at]mail.ru)

**Аннотация**

В статье рассматривается восприятие безопасности, отражаемое во фразеологии английского языка. Проводится семантический, корпусный анализ идиом, описывающих различные виды безопасностей, таких, как личная, общественная, государственная, а также выявляются особенности их значения в контекстах употребления и специфика концептуализации понятия «безопасность» в английском языке. Анализ семантики идиом, внутренней формы и актуального значения показал, что безопасность описывается как отсутствие опасности, осторожность, уверенность, свобода и забота. Корпусный анализ отразил валентность семантики, сочетаемостные особенности идиом, специфику контекстов употребления, бытового или политического характера.

**Ключевые слова:** английские идиомы, безопасность, семантика, корпусный анализ, концептуализация, контексты.

**SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECT OF SAFETY THEME IN PHRASEOLOGY (BY THE MATERIAL OF ENGLISH)**

Research article

**Yusupova S.M. \***

ORCID: 0000-0002-4924-1476,

Chechen State University, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Grozny, Russia

\* Corresponding author (seda\_linguist[at]mail.ru)

**Abstract**

The article examines the perception of safety theme reflected in the phraseology of English. Cognitive, semantic, corpus analyses of idioms is carried out, describing various types of safety – personal, public, state. Peculiarities of their meaning in contexts, specifics of conceptualization of “safety” in English are revealed. The analysis of idioms’ semantics, inner form, and actual meaning showed that safety is described as lack of danger, caution, confidence, freedom, and care. The corpus analyses reflected the valence of semantics, the combinatory features of idioms, the specifics of the contexts, everyday or political character.

**Keywords:** English idioms, safety, semantics, corpus analysis, conceptualization, contexts.

**1. Introduction**

Security is defined as the condition of protection of interests of the individual, society and the State against external and internal threats. The concepts of safety and security encompass subjects and objects of the surrounding environment. The subject is the state in the face of the highest officials and public authorities (legislative, executive and judicial), and objects are the personality, society and the state. Thus, State security covers all other types, penetrates all spheres of social relations of the individual, society, the State, international activities, and security measures are implemented at all the listed levels [1, P.130-131]. The relevance of the topic is related to the fact that in a dynamically developing world, knowledge of the values of safety and security is necessary to create measures to build peace, tranquility, prosperity of societies and cultures.

*Hypothesis.* In different cultures, there are concepts of security and safety but in different languages the cultural peculiarities of conceptualization of security and safety caused by historical and social experience are revealed, and in the contexts the specific semantic properties of idioms, not reflected in dictionaries are discovered.

The scientific novelty of the work is that it considers the semantics of English idioms that describe the notion of “safety” in the framework of a corpus approach.

The purpose of this article is to study the semantics of idioms that represent safety, to identify the specifics of safety conceptualization in English.

According to the cognitive approach, the meaning reflects the whole spectrum of features for identifying the designated, as well as common knowledge realized in metaphors, metonymies [2, P.10]. Conceptual connections can be implicative and iconic (conventional, semiotic). Implication connections are the causal, spatial, temporal connections of the entities of the objective world, their interactions and dependencies, between things, part and the whole [3, P.67]. Thematically related fields of signifying descriptors form metaphorical models. Cognitive-semantic combinability is realized when semantic relationships at the consequence level are established between the two metaphorical models behind the frames [4, P.18].

An essential component during the assigning of lexemes to semantic groups is considered to be an intuitive perception of the significance of a semantic element in the meaning of a word. The most significant elements determine the placement of a word into a taxon [5, P.365]. Taxon is a set of units of description, combined into a group on the single semantic grounds [6, P.78]. That is, lexical units are combined into a semantic field under a common non-trivial semantic feature. Too abstract “trivial” semantic signs generate the vast fields which do not have psychological reality for native speakers [7, P.51].

Since idioms are inherent in the presence of an inner form – an image recorded in the content, their semantics are of a particular interest in considering the perception of a concept in language and culture. The mental image behind semantics

creates a semantic bridge between two levels of conceptual structure – the meaning and literal interpretation of a lexical structure [8, P.23].

Corpus analysis reveals the peculiarities of idioms' usage in different types of contexts, detects the emergence of new meanings or new idioms. Phraseological abstraction is common in different languages to designate new phenomena and concepts [9, P.71]. Thus, new idioms in modern media may reflect both the need to update expressive means of language, as well as the need in the assessment of an event, phenomenon, any person [10, P.79]. In texts of various types, dominant components of idioms are also manifested. For example, nouns are found in newspapers and non-fiction texts, while fiction texts and spoken language contain idioms with a verbal component [11, P.227].

## 2. Material and Methods

The material of the study was idioms, which reflect the concept *SAFETY*, collected by the method of continuous sampling from the phraseological dictionary of English [12]. Each idiom was assigned semantic descriptors referring them to the semantic field «safety». Further, in the field itself, idioms were distributed to taxa on the basis of a common semantic feature. Methods of research are cognitive, semantic, corpus analyses. The cognitive method made it possible to identify the relationship between the image component and the actual meaning, the specificity of their combination in contexts, the influence of images on the conceptual space of idioms, the actual meaning and actualization of metaphors in contexts. Semantic analysis made it possible to describe the inner form and meaning of idioms. Within the corpus approach the contexts of idioms usage from the British National Corpus, the Corpus of Contemporary American English were studied [13].

## 3. Findings

This article will consider the semantics of idioms, reflecting personal, public, state security, as well as methods of ensuring security.

There are two words – *safety and security* in English, which name the concept *SAFETY*. The first word *safety* denotes a condition in which the activity is safe as it has no danger to people involved in it and a place where you are safe and free from danger. The second word *security* is defined as freedom from harm or danger, from the danger of being robbed, killed or subject to attack [14, P.1587]. The main components of the meaning in the first case are the state out of danger, calm, in the second – the state of security against various types of external threats is specified. We will analyze the first word *safety*, since it most clearly reflects the naive picture of the world, and therefore may turn out to be more culturally specific or universal.

The analysis of the semantics of English idioms showed that safety is captured as a lack of danger, success, home, state protection. Let us consider the examples of idioms in which there is a lexeme «safe» and contexts of its usage.

### SAFETY – HEALTH, STRENGTH

***Safe and sound*** – “safe; not hurt or harmed” [12]. Safe also suggests “healthy”. 744 contexts were found. In the contexts, the meaning “in health”, the association with the house, being indoors is combined with the copular verb *be* and the verbs *come, arrive, find*. The subject can also be an inanimate thing, such as wealth. E.g.:

a). *Eight months later, when Lesley mysteriously returns home safe and sound, Dan Brath's career is over, and his family is in tatters* [13]. The situation of returning home in good health is described in the context.

b). *We do not know if he is safe in a cloister somewhere, or if he is strung out in a crack house, or somewhere in between, but God knows where he is, so it is not necessary for us to know. Just pray* [13]. In this context, the main component of the meaning is “safety”, a situation where it is unknown whether the person is safe and where he is safe.

c). *For now, her fortune is safe and sound, as assets earned before marriage are considered separate property in divorce court. If she's smart, she'll keep it that way* [13]. The idiom is used in the meaning of “safe”, “secure and unharmed”.

### SAFETY – SPACE, HOUSE

***An Englishman's home is his castle*** (saying) – a person's home is a place where they can be private and safe and do as they like [12]. In English, the house is considered as a fortress, a place where a person is safe.

***(As) safe as houses*** – “very safe; not dangerous” [12]. In the inner form of the idiom, the state of safety is compared to the feeling of being protected in the house, a refuge from external enemies. The idiom is met in 20 contexts. The expression can be used for inanimate objects. E.g.:

a). *Maggie Hope had thought that summer in Berlin was hell, but it was nothing compared to the inferno of darkness that now raged in her own head, even as she was "safe as houses" in Arisaig on the western coast of Scotland* [13].

b). *The crisis simply is the product of the widespread belief that residential real estate investment is "safe as houses", and it is unclear what policy could have disabused both policymakers and financial markets of a firmly held, but false, belief* [13]. In the context, the additional meaning of the idiom is “reliable”.

***Home and dry*** – “in a safe or good position because you have successfully completed or won sth”, “to succeed” [12]. House and land are presented as safety indicators. In the corpus the idiom is met in 22 contexts. In the contexts, the meaning is “calm”, “safe from justice”. E. g.:

a). *Forgetting the rings is the nightmare scenario for any best man. So when Matt Aubrey reached into his pocket at his brother's wedding and both were there, he thought he was home and dry* [12].

b). *However, he was fighting fit and would be home and dry if the cases against him timed out under Italy's notoriously slow legal system* [12].

***In the clear air*** (informal) – “no longer in danger or likely to be blamed, punished, etc.” Clean air is associated with safety, space and freedom. In the corpus 23 contexts were found. In the given context the idiom is used in the meaning of “in danger”.

*I felt as perhaps a bird may feel in the clear air, knowing the hawk wings above and will swoop. My fear grew to frenzy. I took a breathing space, set my teeth, and again grappled fiercely, wrist and knee, with the machine (BNC, 2008).*

Safety as space, house means being in a closed space, building, at home, also in an open space.

**SAFETY – ACTION, BEHAVIOUR**

**Play (it) safe** – “avoid danger; act safely, even if another course of action would be quicker, more successful, etc.” [12]. The idiom describes the situation of safe, careful choice of action, even though there are faster and more dangerous ways to achieve the goal. The cautious game is projected onto the action. The idiom is met in 556 contexts. In the contexts the meaning of the idiom is «being careful at work». E. g.:

a). *Llopis says the media generally would rather **play it safe** by not representing Hispanics whose advocacy positions would disrupt or fragment their own Hispanic viewership, thus putting advertising dollars, relationships, and credibility at risk* [13].

b). *Experts differ, but most agree that to have any hope of cultivating true entrepreneurship, leaders must take these four steps. Make risk-taking, and failure, acceptable. In many companies, employees **play it safe** because they know a single failure can end a career* [13].

**A safe bet** (informal) – “something that is likely to be right or successful”, safe, reliable opinion, dispute, betting as something right and ensuring success [13]. The idiom is used in 521 contexts. E.g.:

a). *But political history of public opinion polling would strongly suggest that Brown is **a safe bet** for re-election. And keep in mind that starting next month, early voting begins and over half of the ballots in the election will be cast early* [13].

b). *These days, if you hear people talking about any of the problems or predicaments that beset our society, it's normally **a safe bet** that the conversation will end up fixating on some group of people whose monstrous wickedness is allegedly the cause of it all. Democrats talk that way about Republicans, and Republicans about Democrats* [13].

**Safe in the knowledge that** – “confident because you know that sth is true or will happen” [13]. Safety is confidence in truthfulness, what is true is safe. In contexts it is combined with linking verbs – *be, feel*. 46 contexts of use of the idiom were found. E. g.:

a). *But they are here, **safe in the knowledge that** their lives, their identities and their destinies are their own* [13].

b). *We all seek to identify with something visual and aural that somehow defines our inner thoughts and values, to **feel safe in the knowledge** there actually are other people like us* [13]. In the context the value of self-identification as an achievement of safety is represented.

**There's safety in numbers** (saying) – “it is safer for a group of people to do something which could be dangerous for one person alone”. Safety means quantity. The quantity of people provides protection. In contexts, a cut form of *safety in numbers* is often found. 179 contexts of the idiom's use were found. E. g.:

a). *Caroline believed **there was safety in numbers**. A circle of friends, like a pride of lions, offered protection and relief from the torture that was high school* [13].

b). *In wartime, it was necessary for merchant ships to sail under convoy, seeking **safety in numbers** and avoiding enemy vessels — French or American — or, just as bad, the swarm of privateers infesting the seas* [13].

The image of safety as an action means “being careful, cautious, sure and not being alone”.

**SAFETY – THE STATE**

**The nanny state** – “a disappointing way of talking about the fact that government seems to get too involved in people's lives and to protect them too much, in a way that limits their freedom. In this phrase, the state or government is being compared to a nanny woman whose job is to take care of children, telling them what to do, how to behave, etc.” [13]. This idiom has captured the perception of the excessive guardianship of the people by the State, the application of precautions and the protection against threats that restrict the freedom of people. The State is compared to a nanny, a woman caring for and raising children. 141 contexts of use were found. E. g.:

*It couldn't exist today in **the nanny state** with all the helicopter parents. No way. I just had to accept reality. I didn't have enough money to pay off the lawyers, and, well, the talk with your mom got me to thinking* [13]. The inner form affects the actual meaning, which is expressed in comparing the situation with parents.

**4. Results**

Idioms indirectly reflect the social experience of people, the inner form of the idioms also captures cultural-specific images, such as: house, fortress, nanny. In modern contextual space, the inner form has an influence on the actual meaning, for example, in the case of spatial metaphors associated with home, e.g.: *clear air*.

**5. Conclusion**

The analysis of the concept *SAFETY* has shown that in idioms' semantics various types of safety, features that create semantic bridges and conceptual connections are realized. It therefore follows that safety is associated with caution, health, confidence and knowledge, quantity, freedom, and State security with care.

**Конфликт интересов**

Не указан.

**Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

**Список литературы / References**

1. Рогов А. Государственная безопасность: элемент или содержание национальной безопасности Российской Федерации / Рогов А., Федотова Ю. // *Власть*. – 12 – 2013. – С.128-132.
2. Карасик В.И. Антология концептов / Карасик В.И., Стернин И.А. – М.: Гнозис, 2007. – 512с.
3. Никитин М.В. Основы лингвистической теории значения / Никитин М.В. – М.: Книжный дом «ЛИБРОКОМ», 2009. – 168с.
4. Лакофф Д. Метафоры, которыми мы живем / Лакофф Д., Джонсон М. Под ред. А.Н. Баранова. – М.:

Издательство ЛКИ, 2008. – 256с.

5. Баранов А.Н. Аспекты теории фразеологии / Баранов А.Н., Добровольский Д.О. – М.: Знак, 2008. – 656с.
6. Баранов А.Н. Введение в прикладную лингвистику / Баранов А.Н. – М.: Издательство ЛКИ, 2007. – 360с.
7. Баранов А.Н. Семантические отношения во фразеологии. Semantic relations in phraseology / Баранов А.Н., Добровольский Д.О. // In: Papers from the Annual International Conference "Dialogue", Moscow: RGGU. – 2011. – С. 51-59.
8. Dobrovol'skij D. The notion of "inner form" and idiom semantics / Dobrovol'skij D. Etudes et travaux d'Eur'ORBEM, Paris: Euro'orbem, Proverbes et stereotypes: forme, formes et contextes (hal-01422811), 2016. – 1. – pp.21-36.
9. Оботнина Е. В. Фразеологическая семантика как полиструктура / Оботнина Е. В., Иванова Е. В. // Вестник ТГПУ (TSPU Bulletin). – 2017. – 6 (183). – С.71-75.
10. Соловьёва А.Д. Современные СМИ как источник пополнения фразеологизмов русского языка / Соловьёва А.Д. // Челябинский государственный университет. – 2010. – Т. 2, № 6. – С. 76-80.
11. Koprivova M. Contribution towards a corpus based phraseology minimum / Computational and Corpus-based Phraseology / Koprivova M. // Second International Conference, Europhras 2017 / Ed. Ruslan Mitkov. – London: Springer, 2017. – P. 220-231
12. Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English. Oxford University Press 2006. – 470 p.
13. British National Corpus [Электронный ресурс]. – URL: <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/> (дата обращения: 1.11.2020)
14. British National Corpus [Электронный ресурс]. – URL: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/> (дата обращения: 1.11.2020)
15. Longman Activator. Longman. 1997. – 1587p.
16. Юсупов М.М. Социокультурные аспекты модернизации / Юсупов М.М. // Философские науки. – 2012. – №7. – С.42-56.

#### Список литературы на английском / References in English

1. Rogov A. Gosudarstvennaya bezopasnost: element ili sodержanie nazionalnoy bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federazii [State security: elements or content of national security of Russian Federation] / Rogov A. & Fedotova, U. // Vlast. – 2013. – 12. – P.128-132. [in Russian]
2. Karasik V.I. Antologiya konceptov [Antology of concepts] / Karasik V.I. & Sternin, I.A. – М.: Gnozis, 2007. – 512p. [in Russian]
3. Nikitin M.V. Osnovi lingvisticheskoy teorii znacheniya [The bases of the linguistic theory of meaning] / Nikitin M.V. – М.: Knizniy dom «LIBROKOM», 2009. – 168p. [in Russian]
4. Lakoff D. Metafori, kotorimi mi zhivem [Metaphors we live by] / Lakoff D. & Jonson, D. Pod red. A.N. Baranova. – М.: Izdatelstvo LKI, 2008. – 256p. [in Russian]
5. Baranov A.N. Aspekti teorii frazeologii [Aspects of the theory of phraseology] / Baranov A.N. & Dobrovol'skij D.O. – М.: Знак, 2008. – 656p. [in Russian]
6. Baranov A.N. Vvedenie v prikladnuu lingvistiku [Introduction into applied linguistics] / Baranov A.N. – М.: Izdatelstvo LKI, 2007. – 360p. [in Russian]
7. Baranov A.N. Semanticheskie otnosheniya vo frazeologii [Semantic relations in phraseology] / Baranov A.N. & Dobrovol'skij D.O. // In: Papers from the Annual International Conference "Dialogue", Moscow: RGGU, 2011. – P.51-59. [in Russian]
8. Dobrovol'skij D.O. The notion of "inner form" and idiom semantics / Dobrovol'skij D.O. Etudes et travaux d'Eur'ORBEM, Paris: Euro'orbem, Proverbes et stereotypes: forme, formes et contextes (hal-01422811), 2016. – P. 21-36.
9. Obotnina E.V. Frazeologicheskaya semantika kak polistruktura / Obotnina E.V. & Ivanova, E.V. // Vestnik TGPU (TSPU Bulletin). 6 (183). 2017. – P.71-75.
10. Solov'eva A.D. Sovremennye SMI kak istochnik popolneniya frazeologizmov russkogo yazika / Solov'eva A.D. // Chelyabinskiy gosudarstvenniy universitet. – 2010. – Vol. 2, № 6. – 2010. – P. 76-80
11. Koprivova M. Contribution towards a corpus based phraseology minimum/ Computational and Corpus-based Phraseology / Koprivova M. // Second International Conference, Europhras 2017 / Ed. Ruslan Mitkov. London, Springer. 2017. – P. 220-231
12. Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English. Oxford University Press 2006. – 470 p.
13. British National Corpus [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/> (accessed: 1.11.2020)
14. British National Corpus [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/> (accessed: 1.11.2020)
15. Longman Activator. Longman. 1997. – 1587p.
16. Yusupov M.M. Sociokulturnie aspekti modernizatsii [Sociocultural aspects of modernization] / Yusupov M.M. // Filosofskie nauki. – 2012. – №7. – P.42-56.