A NEW TAXONOMY OF ENGLISH IDIOMATICITY

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ABSTRACT

There have been many different opinions, definitions, and classifications among different scholars as to what constitutes an idiom or idiomatic expression and what it does not. Scholars disagree on definitions, characterizations and classifications of idioms and have their own views about them. Thus, it has been rather thorny to define the term in a straightforward and systematic way. Hence the notion of idiomaticity should be given special and due attention.

Numerous classifications of idioms have been proposed, namely semantic, syntactic, lexical, functional, and lexicographical; and a range of forms have been introduced in an attempt to attain a comprehensive description of idioms. Nevertheless there seems to be residual ambiguity that still exists, making it intricate to reach a consensus on the notion idiom.

This study proposes a comprehensive model of idioms in English that takes all the features and types presented in previous studies refines and collapses them into one unified table. The rationale is to provide a better classification and a view on what idioms are. The proposed model consists of ten major categories: Meaning, Form/meaning, Transparency, Compositionality, Lexemicity, Frozenness (Syntactic Flexibility), Structure, Function, Lexical Fixity, and Formality, with each category having its own sub-categories.

KEYWORDS: Idioms, Idiomaticity, Lexemity, Frozenness, Compositionality, Transparency, Meaning, Function