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**KHASSANOVA MOLDIR TALGATOVNA**

**Function of transformed idioms in publicistic texts  
(based on the national corpora of the English language)**

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Scientific supervisor:  
Doctor of Philology, Professor  
E.D. Suleimenova  
Foreign scientific supervisor:  
Doctor of Philology, Professor  
R.T. Guzman

Republic of Kazakhstan  
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## DEFINITIONS

The following terms and terminological combinations are used in this dissertation:

**Collocation** – a co-occurrence relationship between words or phrases. Words are said to collocate with one another if one is more likely to occur in the presence of the other than elsewhere.

**Comparability** – two corpora or subcorpora are said to be comparable if their sampling frames are similar or identical.

**Concordance** – a display of every instance of a specified word or other search term in a corpus, together with a given amount of preceding and following context for each result or ‘hit’.

**Concordancer** – a computer program that can produce a concordance from a specified text or corpus. Modern concordance software can also facilitate more advanced analyses.

**Corpus** – a body of language representative of a particular variety of language or genre which is collected and stored in electronic form for analysis using concordance software.

**Corpus-driven** – an inductive process where corpora are investigated from the bottom up and patterns found therein are used to explain linguistic regularities and exceptions of the language variety/genre exemplified by those corpora.

**Cliché** – a trite phrase or expression that has become commonplace or overused.

**Dignity** – inherent worth and value of a person.

**Diachronic** – diachronic corpora sample (see sampling frame) texts across a span of time or from different periods in time to study the changes in the use of language over time. Compare: synchronic.

**Encoding** – the process of representing the structure of a text using markup language and annotation.

**Expert survey** – a survey, respondents of which are specialists in their field of knowledge.

**Function** – purpose and nature of reproduction in speech of a given language unit; its actualization or transposition in the context of specific speech act [1].

**Hyperlink** – an active reference within a hypertext document that connects the reader to another document or a different section within the same document [2].

**Hypertext** – an interactive text that uses hyperlinks to allow readers to navigate information in a user-chosen order [2, p.55].

**Idiom** - a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words (e.g. over the moon, see the light).

**Interference** – deviations from norm and second language systems under the influence of native language [3].

**Key word in context (KWIC)** – a way of displaying a node word or search term in relation to its context within a text. This usually means the node is displayed centrally in a table with co-text displayed in columns to its left and right. Here, ‘key word’ means ‘search term’ and is distinguished from keyword.

**Keyword** – a word that is more frequent in a text or corpus under study than it is in some (larger) reference corpus. Differences between corpora in how the word being studied occurs will be statistically significant (see, statistical significance) for it to be considered a keyword.

**Lemma** – a group of words related to the same base word differing only by inflection. For example, walked, walking, and walks are all part of the verb lemma walk.

**Lemmatisation** – a form of annotation where every token is labelled to indicate its lemma.

**Lexis** – the words and other meaningful units (such as idioms) in a language. The lexis or vocabulary of a language is usually viewed as being stored in a kind of mental dictionary, the lexicon.

**Lead** – the first paragraph of material (e.g., in TV or radio broadcasting), which should answer six questions: who, what, where, when, why and how? and attracts the reader's attention.

**Meaningful and conceptual information** – a message about the author's position and understanding of relationship between phenomena; this information is extracted from entire text [4].

**Meaningful and subtext information** – Hidden information that is not expressed in language signs [4, p. 180].

**Multimedia technologies** – a set of computer technologies that use several types of information at the same time: graphics, text, video, photographs, animation, sound effects, and sound accompaniment. Multimedia technologies are based on special hardware and software [5].

**Nomination** – linguistic units which characterize by nominative function, i.e., serving to name and isolate fragments of reality and form appropriate concepts about them [6].

**Paremia** – a complete figurative or aphoristic saying with edifying meaning and special rhythmic and phonetic organization [7].

**Proverb** – a stable evaluative-expressive phrase that often performs the same function as connoted word [8].

**Presuppositive (non-textual) form of information expression** – the absence of embedded information expression directly in text that is understood and known by both addresser and addressee.

**Precedent text** – complete and self-sufficient product of speech-thinking activity, in which the semantic elements of national culture (works of fiction, lyrics, advertising, jokes, political journalistic texts, etc.) are recorded [9].

**Publicistic texts** - written or spoken content created for public consumption, aiming to inform, persuade, or influence the public on social, political, and cultural issues. These texts appear in journalism (newspapers, magazines, news websites), public speeches, essays, and broadcast media like radio, social media and television. [10].

**Subtext form of information expression** – a special form of information presentation when information is not directly contained in text itself but is easily

extracted from it.

**Sample** – a single text, or extract of a text, collected for the purpose of adding it to a corpus. The word sample may also be used in its statistical sense by corpus linguists. In this latter sense, it means groups of cases taken from a population that will, hopefully, represent that population such that findings from the sample can be generalized to the population. In another sense, corpus is a sample of language.

**Sample corpus** – a corpus that aims for balance and representativeness within a specified sampling frame.

**Sampling frame** – a definition, or set of instructions, for the samples (see sample) to be included in a corpus. A sampling frame specifies how samples are to be chosen from the population of text, what types of texts are to be chosen, the time they come from and other such features. The number and length of the samples may also be specified.

**Synchronic** – relating to the study of language or languages as they exist at a particular moment in time, without reference to how they might change over time (compare: diachronic). A synchronic corpus contains texts drawn from a single period – typically the present or very recent past.

**Title** – a name of literary, scientific, musical work or its part (headline is the same as title) [11].

**Thesaurus of personality** – a system of personal constructs that an individual actively uses to orient themselves in the subject and social environment and build his own line of behavior. One of the compact ways to represent the thesaurus of personality is personal “semantic spaces” [12].

**Transformation** – grammatical operation of rearranging words of a sentence from one form into another, preserving the sentence’s core meaning and grammatical properties [13].

**Token** – any single instance of an individual word in a text or corpus. Compare: lemma, type. (a) A single wordform. Any difference of form (e.g. spelling) makes a word a different type. All tokens comprising the same characters are examples of the same type. (b) Can also be used when discussing text types.

**Website** – a collection of web pages owned by an individual and/or an organization, hosted under a single domain name, that together form a coherent body of information or service. In general, web pages and web servers form “World Wide Web” [2, p.55].

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>ANC</b>	American National Corpus
<b>BNC</b>	British National Corpus
<b>CDA</b>	Critical Discourse Analysis
<b>COCA</b>	Corpus of Contemporary American English
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>FOMO</b>	Fear of Missing Out
<b>Gen Z</b>	Generation Z
<b>JOMO</b>	Joy of Missing Out
<b>NLP</b>	Natural Language Processing
<b>PETA</b>	People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
<b>RQ</b>	Research Question
<b>SLA</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>TV</b>	Television

## INTRODUCTION

Language is a dynamic system that evolves alongside societal, cultural, and technological changes. One of the most notable manifestations of linguistic evolution is the transformation of idioms, particularly in publicistic discourse. Publicistic texts including news articles, opinion pieces, and media reports frequently modify idiomatic expressions to create novel meanings, emphasize viewpoints, or enhance stylistic effect. These modifications can involve lexical substitutions, syntactic alterations, or semantic shifts, reflecting broader linguistic and cultural trends.

Modern linguistic research shows that phraseological units are subject to frequent changes. They are creatively adapted. Publicistic texts are a favorable environment for such changes. Journalists and writers consciously transform phraseological units. They adapt expressions to current events, political discourse, and cultural trends. The transformation of phraseological units in publicistic discourse performs a communicative function. It also performs a rhetorical function. These changes attract the reader's attention. They strengthen the ideological position. They enhance the emotional impact of the text. Corpus linguistics offers an effective methodology for analyzing phraseological units that have changed in publicistic discourse. Large language corpora are used. These include the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the Sketch Engine platform. These resources allow researchers to analyze modified versions of phraseological units. Researchers determine their frequency, monitor their distribution, and study their contextual use. This study identifies patterns of phraseological transformation in contemporary English journalistic texts based on corpus analysis. It also considers their significance for linguistic theory. It explains the implications for communication strategies.

**The relevance of the study** lies in the urgent need to understand how language adapts to the rapidly changing realities of the digital age. Idioms, once viewed as fixed expressions, are now dynamically reshaped by media, technology, globalization, and ethical awareness, reflecting broader cultural and social shifts. The research fills a theoretical gap by offering a structured framework for analyzing transformed idioms in publicistic discourse. It also has practical value for linguistics, language teaching, and computational systems that process figurative language. The study highlights idioms as living indicators of cultural creativity and linguistic evolution in the modern world.

**The theoretical and methodological basis** on transformed idioms in newspaper articles and news sites is grounded in the concepts and ideas of the following domestic and foreign scientists in the field of publicistic language learning: S.K. Kenesbayev, A.T. Kaidarov, K.Kh. Akhanov, A. Amanzholov, G.N. Smagulova, R.E. Zhaisakova, Z.K. Akhmetzhanova, F.Z. Zhaksybaeva, Zh.K. Ibrayeva, S.E. Issabekov, G.S. Kosymov, M.M. Aimagambetova, A.M. Kunin, V.V. Vinogradov, V.L. Arkhangelsky, N.N. Amossov, D.O. Dobrovolsky, V.P. Zhukov, V.M. Mokienko, A. Cowie, A. Baddeley, L. Bloom, P. Baker, R. Brown, R. Quirk, C. Fernando, B. Fraser, R. Gläser, S. Glucksberg, L. Grant, Z. Harris, J. Healey, C. Hockett, S. Johansson, A. Kaeding, G. Kennedy, A. Kilgarriff, A. Langlotz,

G. Leech, W. Lockwood, T. McEnery, A.Makkai, R. Moon, K. Pike, J. Sinclair, U. Weinreich, J. Svartvik, E. Thorndike, U. Weinreich, J.Miller.

**The purpose of the study** is to identify, classify, and explain the mechanisms of idiom transformation in contemporary English publicistic discourse, using corpus-based and discourse-analytic methods, in order to determine their linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic functions.

**Research objectives:**

- to analyze theoretical foundations of idioms and transformed idioms within classical and modern linguistic frameworks (A.Makkai, B.Fraser, S.Glucksberg, etc.);
- to clarify the key concepts of idiomaticity, transformation, and variability in phraseological research;
- to trace the historical development of idiom studies in English, Russian, and Kazakh linguistics, identifying continuity and divergence in approaches;
- to define the linguistic and communicative features of idiom transformation in media discourse, including lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic modifications;
- to compile and analyze a corpus of transformed idioms extracted from English publicistic texts (print and online media) and classify them by type and frequency;
- to identify the dominant mechanisms of idiom modification (lexical substitution, modernization, ethical reframing, humor, and platform alignment);
- to interpret the functions of transformed idioms in mass media communication and their role in reflecting cultural and ideological tendencies of the digital age;
- to determine the implications of idiom transformation for lexicography, language pedagogy, and computational linguistics.

**The object of study** is transformed idioms in English publicistic texts, as observed through corpus-based analysis. These idioms reflect how language evolves in response to changing social, political, and cultural contexts, particularly within mass media and public discourse.

**The subject of this research** is the linguistic mechanisms and transformation patterns of idioms in English publicistic texts. This includes examining how idiomatic expressions are syntactically, lexically, and semantically modified in media discourse, and how these modifications reflect broader communicative and cultural trends.

**The scientific novelty** lies in a dual research approach, combining corpus and sociolinguistic analysis of publicistic texts containing transformed idioms.

– the traditional thesis about the fixed nature of idioms has been questioned, and the patterns of their pragmatic and structural adaptation in modern media discourse have been identified.

– a taxonomy of idiom transformations has been proposed, including lexical (spill the beans → spill the tea), syntactic (she broke the news → the news was broken by her), and semantic (an apple a day → a ginger shot a day) types.

– a correlation has been established between idiom transformation and cultural trends reflecting the characteristics of British and American media discourse.

– intercultural differences have been revealed in the interpretation of modified idioms by representatives of different cultures (Kazakhstani and American students), which has clarified the role of cultural context in the comprehension of idioms.

– the significance of idiom transformations for further research in the fields of phraseology, media linguistics, and intercultural communication has been substantiated.

**Material of research:**

The material for this dissertation consists of 96 transformed idioms extracted from contemporary publicistic discourse.

Out of the total idioms identified, 96 items were catalogued in the appendix for reference, while 150 idioms were selected for in-depth analysis in the main body of the dissertation. This distinction allowed us to demonstrate both the breadth of coverage (comprehensive documentation of variants) and the depth of analysis (detailed examination of selected cases).

Idioms were identified from a broad spectrum of sources, including international and national newspapers, online news platforms, blogs, and linguistic corpora, thereby guaranteeing a diverse and representative dataset of idiomatic usage in present-day English.

For the purposes of comparative analysis, the dataset was divided into two main categories:

1. Idioms from online media sources, including The Guardian, The New York Times, BBC News, The Washington Post, The Economist, and selected blogs. These examples highlight how idiomatic creativity reflects the stylistic conventions and immediacy of digital journalism.

2. Idioms from print newspapers, which provided material for contrastive study, capturing idiom transformations in more traditional, editorially controlled formats.

The dataset includes an example recorded through ethnographic observation in a local cafe in Almaty. This spontaneous phraseological change demonstrates that variables are used not only in official media discourse, but also in everyday communication practice. It reinforces the view of phraseology as dynamic and socially established units.

Additionally, the dataset includes an ethnographically observed example recorded in a local café in Almaty. This spontaneous idiomatic modification illustrates how transformations extend beyond formal media discourse and circulate in everyday communicative practices, thereby reinforcing the view of idioms as dynamic, socially embedded expressions.

Primary data are drawn from three major corpora – COCA, ANC, and BNC – which provide extensive examples of idiom usage in contemporary English. These are supplemented with Sketch Engine for detailed patterns analysis and Google Ngram Viewer for tracking diachronic developments in idiom transformations. This quantitative foundation allows for systematic measurement of frequency distributions and evolutionary trends across different periods of language use.

To establish authoritative baselines for conventional idiom forms, the study consults standard reference works including the Oxford English Dictionary, Cambridge Idioms Dictionary, and The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms.

**Research sources and methods.** This study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate idiom transformations, combining methods and techniques from corpus

linguistics with qualitative discourse analysis.

Data collection was conducted using continuous sampling and targeted searches to ensure coverage of both widely circulated and contextually rich examples.

The study also utilizes an ethnographic dimension through the documentation of spontaneous idiom transformations in natural speech environments. By integrating corpus-based quantitative analysis with qualitative examination of contextual usage across both written and spoken discourse, the study achieves a comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon of idiom transformation in contemporary English usage. This multidimensional approach ensures robust findings that account for both the statistical patterns and the communicative functions of idiom modifications.

The main data sources are the COCA, ANC and BNC corpora. These corpora provide a wide range of examples of phraseology in modern English. The study is supplemented with materials from the Sketch Engine platform. It allows for the analysis of specific patterns of phraseology transformation. Google Ngram Viewer data is used. It helps to trace the historical development of phraseology transformation. The quantitative dataset allows for the systematic measurement of frequency distribution. It allows for the identification of evolutionary processes at each stage of language use.

To establish authoritative baselines for conventional idiom forms, the study consults standard reference works including the Oxford English Dictionary, Cambridge Idioms Dictionary, and The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms.

#### **Key research provisions for defense:**

1. The dynamic nature of idiom transformations in journalistic discourse. Contrary to the traditional notion that idioms are fixed expressions, this study demonstrates that idioms in journalistic discourse often undergo lexical, syntactic, and semantic changes, adapting to the contemporary linguistic and socio-political context. Transformations occur through substitutions, expansions, abbreviations, and recontextualization, creating new meanings that correspond to media rhetoric, stylistic preferences, and audience expectations. Idiom transformation is not a random process, but follows specific linguistic patterns influenced by genre, communicative intentions, and cultural background.

2. Corpus analysis reveals trends in frequency, co-occurrence, and the discursive functions of transformed idioms across various media platforms, highlighting the differences between print and online journalism.

3. American English is characterized by greater creative flexibility and a propensity for syntactic and semantic transformations, while British English retains more fixed and quotational forms characteristic of formal and literary contexts. The study provides empirical evidence that idiomatic transformations change over time under the influence of historical, cultural, and technological factors.

4. Transformed idioms are linguistic markers of cultural and ideological change, reflecting shifts in public discourse, political rhetoric, and social trends. Journalistic texts actively use modified idioms to attract readers' attention, create rhetorical effects, and establish intertextual connections, enhancing the expressiveness and persuasiveness of media language. Thematic areas where such transformations are most frequent are identified: politics, economics, technology, healthcare, and social

movements. By adapting and transforming idioms, the media contribute to linguistic innovation, shaping new phraseological norms and influencing popular discourse.

5. The integration of idioms, corpus linguistics, and discourse analysis forms a comprehensive methodology that can be applied to future studies of idiom variation and media language. The results challenge traditional idiom classifications, demonstrating that idioms should be studied as flexible linguistic units rather than rigid expressions.

**The study's theoretical significance.** It complements modern phraseology. It develops the field of linguistics. It expands the scope of corpus analysis. The study describes idioms as evolving units. Phraseologisms are interpreted as adaptive linguistic structures. The study is based on classical theories. These include the works of Makkai, Hockett, Fraser, Glucksberg and other scholars. These theories are combined with empirical corpus data. This combination allows us to identify patterns of change. It shows the pragmatic adaptation of idioms. It shows the balance between linguistic stability and creativity. The study strengthens the relationship between phraseology, discourse analysis and digital communication. Idiom evolution is considered in the context of different languages and media content.

**The practical significance of the study.** Firstly, it offers a methodological framework for analyzing modified idioms in social medium, which may be useful for linguists, teachers, and lexicographers. Secondly, the results can be applied in language teaching, particularly in developing study materials that present idioms as dynamic, context-dependent expressions rather than fixed phrases for rote memorization. This approach helps learners perceive idioms as tools of linguistic creativity rather than merely as memorized expressions. The paper proposes that vocabulary incorporate idiomatic variants digital, ethical, and humor-based into dictionaries as groups of linked forms, so enhancing the accuracy and currency of reference materials. In computational linguistics, the results can be used to make NLP systems better at spotting figurative language and feelings in news articles and social media posts. In general, the research is useful for both academics and practitioners. It may be used as a reference for researchers looking into linguistic innovation, for teachers creating phraseological curricula, and for programmers making AI systems that understand natural language.

**Approbation of the dissertation.** The main provisions, theoretical conclusions, and practical results of the dissertation have been discussed, verified, and approbated through publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals and presentation at national and international scientific forums.

A total of ten scientific papers has been published based on the materials of the dissertation, including two Scopus-indexed journal articles (Q1 and Q2), four articles in journals recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (CQASHE) of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and four conference proceedings in international and republican scientific collections.

Articles published in Scopus-indexed journals:

1. Khassanova M. Decoding Idiom Change: Root Form and Frequency Analysis of Transformed Idioms in American Mass Media // *Porta Linguarum*. – 2024. – Special

Issue XI: “Current Perspectives in Foreign and Second Language Teaching: Diversity and ICT”. – (Published: September 30, 2024).

2. Khassanova M., Yersultanova G., Nurtayeva A. From Fear to Joy: A Corpus Analysis of FOMO and JOMO // Forum for Linguistic Studies. – 2025. – Vol. 07, № 02 (February).

Articles published in CQASHE-approved journals:

1. Suleimenova E. D., Khassanova M. The Idiom “Break the Bank” and Its Transformations in American Mass Media (A Corpora-Based Analysis) // KazNU Bulletin. Philology Series. – 2024. – Vol. 195, № 3.

2. Khassanova M. T. Modified Idioms: Health Trends from “An Apple a Day” to “A Ginger Shot a Day”: A Corpus-Based Study // Bulletin of the Karaganda University. Philology Series. Actual Problems of Linguistics. – 2025. – № 1 (117). – С. 30.

3. Khassanova M. T. Avoiding Violence: Transforming Language to Foster Peace // Vestnik Toraighyrov University. Philological Series. – 2025. – № 2.

4. Khassanova M. T. The Cultural and Linguistic Evolution of Idiomatic Expressions // Bulletin of S. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University. Philological Series. – 2025. – № 1.

Conference and scientific collection publications:

1. Khassanova M. T.; Scientific advisor: Suleimenova E. D. Transformed Idioms in Mass Media (Based on the National Corpora of the English Language ANC and BNC) // Современные языковые контакты: теория и практика. Материалы Междунар. науч.-практ. конф., посвящённой 100-летию лингвиста А. Е. Карлина. – Алматы: КазУМОиМЯ им. Абылай хана, 8 декабря 2023 г. – С. 152–153.

2. Khassanova M. T. Evolution of Idioms in Modern American Mass Media // Proceedings of the XII International Scientific Conference. – Stockholm, Sweden, October 15–16, 2024. – P. 42–45.

3. Khassanova M. T. Transformed Idioms in Mass Media (Based on the National Corpora of the English Language ANC and BNC) // Исследования молодых ученых. – Казань, 2025. – С. 114–118.

4. Khassanova M. T. The Role of social media in Idiom Modification // International Scientific and Practical Conference “The Figure of Attila in World Literature and Culture,” dedicated to the 75th anniversary of Professor Samad Köshenuly Uteniyazov. – Алматы, 2024. – С. 316–320.

**The structure and volume of the dissertation.** The introduction, three sections, a conclusion, sources, references, and an appendix make up this dissertation.

The dissertation consists of 172 pages, featuring 30 tables, 27 figures, and 96 tokens of modified idioms.

The first part describes the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the study. It considers the essence of phraseology. Analyzes its modified versions. Defines historical approaches to phraseology modification. Explains current scientific positions. Reveals the function of phraseology in mass media discourse. Attention is paid to the role of corpus linguistics. It helps to explain idiomatic language. The section

ends with a summary of the main theoretical concepts on which the empirical study is based.

The second part contains the methods and analysis of the study. It describes the research plan. The selection of the used corpora is explained. Analytical approaches are introduced. Criteria for identifying and checking modified phraseology are given. The section is based on COCA, BNC, ANC and Sketch Engine data. Presents the results of corpus-based analysis. Shows the frequency of phraseology changes. Determines where they are used in British and American media texts. Describes the features of contextual change.

The discussion analyzes the data through the lenses of linguistic, pragmatic, and socio-cultural trends, highlighting the relationship between idiomatic originality and media communication.

The third section goes into detail on a few examples that show different kinds of idiom transformation and how they work in communication. The section contains case studies based on a corpus, including how idioms have changed in British mass media, how financial and health-related idioms have changed (“Break the Bank”, “An Apple a Day”), how digital discourse has changed cultural phenomena (FOMO and JOMO), and how artificial intelligence, especially ChatGPT, can recognize and change idiomatic expressions. It also looks at how Shakespearean idioms have changed over time and shows how to utilize Sketch Engine to make a specific corpus of changed idioms. At the end of each paragraph, there is a summary of both theoretical and empirical findings.

The dissertation concludes with a comprehensive summary that summarizes the principal research findings, affirms the fulfillment of the specified objectives, and clarifies the theoretical and practical implications of the study.

The sources and references consist of both domestic and foreign academic publications that constitute the scientific foundation of the research.

Appendix A has a full list of 96 changed idioms that were found in modern English public and digital media discourse. Every entry has these parts:

- Traditional Idiom: the idiom's standard form, as found in a dictionary.
- Modification: the changed version shown in real media texts.
- Source: the site or newspaper where the changed idiom was located, such as Twitter, TikTok, Amazon, The Guardian, or The New York Times.
- Factor Contributing to Change - the contextual, cultural, or communication reason for the change (for example, digitization, visual culture, or health trends).
- Meaning / Example: a brief explanation of what the changed idiom means and why it is important.

# 1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF INVESTIGATION

## 1.1 The Concept of Idioms and Transformed Idioms

Idioms represent one of the most complex phenomena in linguistics due to their non-compositional nature, where the meaning of the whole cannot be deduced from its constituent parts. Derived from the Greek *idiomatikos* (“peculiar to a language”), these figurative expressions permeate natural languages, appearing frequently in both oral and written discourse [14]. Their metaphorical richness makes them particularly prevalent in creative writing, journalism, and everyday communication.

The academic study of idioms has evolved through several theoretical phases. Early structuralist approaches [15, 16] emphasized their syntactic fixedness, while later cognitive theories [17, 18] highlighted their conceptual metaphors. This theoretical progression mirrors the growing recognition of idioms as dynamic rather than static linguistic units – a perspective central to this dissertation’s examination of idiom transformations in publicistic texts.

Four key properties distinguish idioms from literal expressions:

a) Structural Fixedness: Components resist substitution or reordering (kick the bucket → kick the pail loses idiomaticity).

b) Semantic Non-Compositionality: Meanings are opaque (spill the beans = “reveal secrets”).

c) Conventionalization: Widespread recognition within speech communities.

d) Metaphorical Meanings: Meanings can have metaphorical or cultural embeddings.

When it comes to syntactic taxonomy, Makkai’s (1972) classification system provides a foundational framework (Table 1).

Table 1 – Classification of English Idioms by Syntactic Function (Adapted from Makkai, 1972)

Type of idiom	Description	Example	Figurative Meaning
Nominal Idioms	Phrases functioning as nouns	“Hot potato”	A controversial or sensitive issue
Verbal Idioms	Phrases Functioning as verbs	“Kick the bucket”	To die
Adjective Idioms	Phrases functioning as adjectives	“Cool as a cucumber”	Remarkably calm under pressure
Adverbial Idioms	Phrases functioning as adverbs	“By and large”	In general

Table 1 shows how Makkai (1972) classifies English idioms based on their syntax. This classification shows that idioms can be used as different parts of speech in a sentence, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs, while keeping their figurative connotations. Nominal idioms function as noun phrases, frequently denoting

abstract notions or societal difficulties (e.g., “a hot potato” signifies a contentious topic). Verbal idioms usually use metaphors to describe actions or events (for example, “kick the bucket” means to die). Adjectival idioms describe attributes or conditions, like “cool as a cucumber” means calm under tension.

Adverbial phraseological units fully describe an action or situation. For example, the phrase “by and large” means “in general.” This syntactic approach is important. It helps to understand the structural behavior of phraseological units in spoken language. It also explains the influence of grammatical function on meaning. This approach lays the foundation for analyzing the evolution of currently used phraseological units.

The researcher can track the change in phraseological units through their use in each word class. These include noun, verb, adjective, and adverbial uses. Changes include a renewal of the meaning of the word. They also include a change in the structure of the sentence. They also indicate a shift in the general meaning of the phraseological unit. In the modern media space, phraseological units are often transformed creatively. They adapt to new cultural realities. They change in accordance with the requirements of digital communication.

Therefore, it is important to understand the syntactic classification. It allows us to analyze the mechanisms of phraseological unit transformation. These mechanisms include lexical changes. Include grammatical changes. Demonstrate pragmatic adaptation. Explain metaphorical transformation.

These mechanisms show how idioms shift from their conventional forms to new ones that show how society and technology have changed.

#### Mechanisms of Idiom Transformation

Idioms are conventionally defined as fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be deduced from their individual components. Yet, despite their apparent rigidity, idioms are remarkably fluid, evolving through systematic transformations that reflect the adaptability of language. Far from arbitrary, these changes - whether structural, lexical, or semantic - follow discernible patterns, enabling idioms to remain relevant across shifting cultural, technological, and rhetorical contexts. Thus, the transformation of idioms proves their viability in the language system. Idioms, transformed over time, reflect the ideology, cultural trends, and communication methods of society. Therefore, the study of the transformation of idioms is an important key to understanding the dynamics of modern language. Contemporary research [19, 20] identifies seven primary transformation patterns in publicistic discourse:

##### 1. Lexical Modification (Word Substitution)

Lexical modification involves replacing components within an idiom with a synonym or contextually relevant term, preserving the original meaning while enhancing relevance. This adaptation serves to:

- Enhance cultural relevance (e.g., Bite the bullet → Bite the biscuit (British variation))

- Create humorous effects through unexpected substitutions (Let the cat out of the bag → Let the dog out of the bag)

- Increase audience engagement in advertising and media [21].

##### 2. Structural Modification (Syntactic Reordering)

Some idioms undergo changes in their syntactic structure without obscuring its core meaning. These adaptations:

- Adjust comparative forms (The early bird catches the worm → The earlier bird catches the worm)
- Modernize temporal references (Rome wasn't built in a day → Rome wasn't built overnight)
- Accommodate syntactic constraints while preserving figurative meaning.

### 3. Truncation or Clipping

The shortening of idioms serves pragmatic communication needs by:

- Increasing brevity for headlines and social media (Actions speak louder than words → Actions speak)
- Removing redundant elements (The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence → The grass is greener on the other side)
- Enhancing memorability in informal contexts [22].

### 4. Expansion and Elaboration

Extension of idioms through added clauses or phrases:

- Provides nuanced meanings (Curiosity killed the cat → ...but satisfaction brought it back)
- Offers counterpoints or qualifications (Jack of all trades → ...master of none, but often better than master of one)
- Evolves into proverbial wisdom reflecting cultural values [23].

### 5. Blending and Contamination

Merging two idioms produces:

- Humorous hybrids (Don't cry over spilled milk + Let the cat out of the bag → Don't cry over a spilled cat)
- Ironic commentary (Burning the midnight oil + The early bird catches the worm → Burning the midnight oil won't catch the worm)
- Satirical effects in political discourse [24].

### 6. Phonetic and Rhyming Modification

Words are replaced with homophones or rhymes to:

- Enhance memorability or humor (Fit as a fiddle → Fit as a riddle)
- Create a poetic or advertising slogans (A stitch in time saves nine → A stitch in rhyme saves nine)
- Generate humorous wordplay [20, p. 89].

### 7. Cultural and Technological Adaptation

Idioms evolve to reflect societal changes through:

- Digital culture updates (A picture is worth a thousand words → A meme is worth a thousand likes)

- Technology-informed substitutions (The pen is mightier than the sword → The keyboard is mightier than the sword)
- Contemporary relevance in public discourse [25].

Table 2 – Transformation of Idioms in Publicistic Texts

Type of Modification	Examples
Lexical Modification (Word Substitution)	Original: Bite the bullet → Modified: Bite the biscuit (British variation); Let the cat out of the bag → Let the dog out of the bag
Structural Modification (Syntactic Reordering)	Original: The early bird catches the worm → Modified: The earlier bird catches the worm; Rome wasn't built in a day → Modified: Rome wasn't built overnight
Truncation or Clipping	Original: Actions speak louder than words → Modified: Actions speak; The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence → Modified: The grass is greener on the other side
Expansion and Elaboration	Original: Curiosity killed the cat → Modified: Curiosity killed the cat, but satisfaction brought it back; Jack of all trades → Modified: Jack of all trades, master of none, but often better than master of one
Blending and Contamination	Original: Don't cry over spilled milk + Let the cat out of the bag → Modified: Don't cry over a spilled cat; Burning the midnight oil + The early bird catches the worm → Modified: Burning the midnight oil won't catch the worm
Phonetic and Rhyming Modification	Original: Fit as a fiddle → Modified: Fit as a riddle; A stitch in time saves nine → Modified: A stitch in rhyme saves nine
Cultural and Technological Adaptation	Original: A picture is worth a thousand words → Modified: A meme is worth a thousand likes; The pen is mightier than the sword → Modified: The keyboard is mightier than the sword

Table 2 displays the most common ways that idioms evolve in conversations with other people. These alterations show how idiomatic phrases can be imaginatively adjusted to meet new people, purposes, and situations. Each type of change uses a distinct language process to change the form of an idiom while retaining or changing its figurative meaning. These mechanisms can be lexical, structural, syntactic, pragmatic, or cultural. Lexical alterations, or word substitutions, happen when you switch one word for another, usually to make it more current, amusing, or fit in with the area. In British English, “bite the bullet” turns into “bite the biscuit”. Structural alterations, on the other hand, modify the way an idiom is put together. For example, “the earlier bird catches the worm” is based on “the early bird catches the worm”. Truncation or clipping makes idiomatic expressions easier to understand by leaving out some parts (“actions speak louder than words” → “actions speak”). Expansion and elaboration add words or clauses to make the meaning clearer or fit the situation (“Jack of all trades” → “Jack of all trades, master of some”). Blending or contamination

happens when two or more idioms join to produce a new one. For example, “don't cry over a spilled cat” originates from “don't cry over spilled milk” and “curiosity killed the cat”. Phonetic and rhyming adjustments use sound, rhythm, or rhyme to make changes that stick, as “a stitch in rhyme saves nine”.

#### Changing Idioms in Publicistic Texts

Idioms in political and journalistic writing are as mirrors for language. They show how classic phrases are still powerful and how culture is always changing. These changes don't happen randomly; they happen in ways that show how language changes to fit new ways of communicating while still being able to communicate itself.

Structural changes show how flexible grammatical forms are. For example, American media changes “spill the beans” to the more modern “spill the tea” [26], and Kenyan politicians change historic sayings to fit current political stories [27]. These adjustments keep the idiom's main purpose while also making it relevant to today's issues.

Lexical substitutions illustrate an additional aspect of this progression. For example, Russian journalists use folk sayings like “mushroom rains” to talk about political discussions [28], while German media makes context-specific versions by strategically replacing words [29]. These kinds of changes often have hidden meanings that speak to certain groups of people.

The most interesting thing about these changes is how they change the meanings of words for digital situations. The transition of “break the bank” from meaning financial disaster to meaning viral online content [30] is an example of how new technologies influence language. The quick use of “go viral” [31] shows how new ways of communicating create their own idiomatic phrases.

These modifications also have important rhetorical repercussions. British satirists make up new idioms to make fun of things, while poets use changed phrases to add emotional depth [32]. These creative changes show that the idiom is both a cultural artifact and a living, changing way of speaking.

Table 3 – Examples of Idiomatic Transformations in Publicistic Texts

Original Idiom	Modern Adaptation	Cultural Significance
“Spill the beans’	“Spill the tea”	Reflects digital culture’s influence on communication norms
“Break the bank”	“Break the internet”	Illustrates technological reconceptualization of traditional concepts
“Don’t judge a book by its cover”	“Don’t judge a Company by Its social media”	Shows Modernization. Social media authenticity warning against curated content judgment
“Rome was not built in a day”	“A website is not built in a day”	Illustrates how digital platforms generate new idiomatic expressions

Table 3 shows how classic idioms are used in new ways in digital and media settings by giving examples of idiomatic changes in modern publicistic discourse. These current adaptations change not only the words used but also how culture, technology, and communication have changed. For example, “spill the beans” has changed to “spill the tea”, which is a common expression on social media that fits with the informal, confessional character of online conversation. This change of words keeps the idiom's main meaning of releasing information while making it fit with internet culture's focus on gossip, openness, and immediacy. In the same way, “break the bank” becomes “break the internet”, which is a great illustration of how technology can be used as a metaphor. In this case, the phrase no longer means too much money; instead, it means viral digital disruption. This shows how internet platforms change the meaning of figurative language. The change from “don't judge a book by its cover” to “don't judge a company by its social media” shows a bigger point about society: in a time of digital branding and influencer culture, appearances can be well planned, so it's important to be mindful of what is real. The idiomatic change from “Rome wasn't built in a day” to “a website isn't built in a day” shows how digital realities have taken the place of historical and material metaphors.

This situation shows that time-tested wisdom is creatively adapted in a modern technological context. The examples given prove the dual role of phraseological transformations. They serve a linguistic purpose. They also serve a social purpose. They connect traditional speech patterns with digital communication.

The study of these transformations does not only provide linguistic data. It shows how society creates a balance between tradition and innovation. Digital media accelerate linguistic change. The evolution of phraseological units continues in this context. It clearly demonstrates the creative tension between preserving meaningful traditions and adapting to new communicative realities. This dynamic process is important. It ensures the viability of phraseological units as a means of public discourse. The form of unit's changes. The meaning is updated. But their communicative potential is preserved.

## **1.2 Historical and modern perspectives on the transformation of phraseological units**

The historical and modern evolution of phraseological units demonstrates their transformation. This phenomenon reveals the complex interrelationship between language and cultural practice. It is closely related to the multifaceted changes in the development of society.

Idioms, which are defined as fixed terms that convey figurative meanings, are firmly ingrained within certain cultural frameworks and undergo steady evolution owing of a range of causes, including shifts in cultural norms, advances in language, and the ubiquitous influence of media. It is seen that change happening in many languages and cultures, each with its own distinctive paths and influences that impact how idioms are used. The next parts will look at both historical and present views on how idioms change, using information from a lot of different studies done in this interesting topic. Idioms are an important aspect of both cultural and linguistic history

since they capture the way of thinking, practices, and traditions that make up a certain nation or society. A comprehensive analysis of Kazakh and Turkish idioms related to clothing offers substantial evidence of the profound influence exerted by geographical conditions, climatic elements, and historical-political events on the evolving meanings of these expressions across time. Turkish idioms have changed over time to take on new meanings, but many Kazakh idioms have kept their original meanings, showing how both cultural continuity and change can have a big effect on language [33]. The discipline of historical studies concentrating on phraseology underscores the importance of idioms within the overarching linguistic framework and their practical relevance in quotidian communication. Researchers can use corpora to figure out how often and in what contexts certain idioms are used, which gives them useful information on how idioms have changed over time and how they are used now [34]. The theories of grammaticalization explain how linguistic phrases change from lexical forms to morphosyntactic structures.

This process is usually based on complex metaphorical and metonymic mechanisms. This theoretical paradigm views idiom evolution as a key part of a large-scale continuous linguistic change.

The transition of idioms from ancient to new contexts reflects the historical change of language and culture. In the past, idioms were interpreted as fixed units with a single meaning, unchanging. The modern view views them as flexible units. They are recognized as context-dependent units. They are valued as linguistic components of high cultural significance. The evolution of idioms reflects theoretical changes in linguistics. There is a shift from structuralism to cognitive, application-based, and cultural directions.

This chapter critically examines the evolution of idioms across time, utilizing significant scientific viewpoints from historical linguistics, cognitive processing, cultural linguistics, and second language acquisition. Idioms were historically classified as fixed, non-compositional expressions whose meanings could not be deduced from the individual words comprising them. Stathi [35] posits that early language traditions regarded idioms as lexically and syntactically immutable pieces, operating as semantic wholes. This comprehension corresponds with the classical structuralist paradigm, which highlighted the stable and inscrutable essence of idiomatic meaning. Within this approach, idioms were perceived to function outside the generative capacity of language, preserved as unanalyzable lexical chunks. The historical development of idioms is closely tied to the cultural and societal values of the time in which they emerged. As Sharifian [36] notes, many idiomatic expressions originate in collective experiences and reflect sociocultural worldviews. For instance, idioms related to agriculture, warfare, and religion often carry historical relevance that becomes obscured over time. Early idioms thus serve not only linguistic but also anthropological functions, preserving traces of historical knowledge, values, and shared metaphors. While the classical view of idioms emphasized fixity, this perspective began to shift with the emergence of cognitive and usage-based theories in the late 20th century. New research began to challenge the notion of idioms as

unchangeable expressions, instead highlighting their dynamic potential and contextual sensitivity.

Modern research in idiom studies has significantly expanded the understanding of how idioms function cognitively, contextually, and culturally. Rather than viewing idioms as static units, contemporary scholars argue that idioms are sensitive to syntactic variation, pragmatic context, and cultural nuance. Stathi [35, p.245], revisiting her earlier structuralist stance, introduces a more nuanced view by analyzing idioms as constructions whose form and meaning can vary across contexts. She emphasizes that idioms exhibit a degree of flexibility, both syntactically and semantically, and that their interpretation is mediated by discourse and usage patterns. For example, idioms such as “spill the beans” may retain a core metaphorical meaning but shift in tone, function, or connotation depending on the communicative context. This contextual adaptability reflects a broader move toward usage-based linguistics, where frequency, familiarity, and cognitive salience influence how idioms are processed and understood. Provides empirical support for this approach through psycholinguistic experiments, demonstrating that idiom comprehension involves a multi-stage cognitive process. Her findings show that variables such as transparency, familiarity, and syntactic flexibility significantly affect comprehension speed and accuracy. Transparent idioms, where the metaphorical link is more apparent, are processed more efficiently than opaque ones.

Moreover, idioms that can undergo syntactic transformation (e.g., “the beans were spilled”) are cognitively more demanding but still accessible, indicating a level of processing flexibility once denied by earlier models. Beyond individual cognitive processing, idioms must also be understood as reflections of broader cultural patterns. Cultural linguistics, as articulated by [36, p. 60; 37], offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing how idioms encode culturally specific conceptualizations. Sharifian argues that idioms are more than linguistic expressions they are cognitive artifacts that reflect cultural schemas and metaphors. For example, English idioms such as “hit the nail on the head” or “sweep under the rug” encapsulate culturally embedded ways of thinking about accuracy or concealment, respectively. His analysis extends to global varieties of English, demonstrating how idiomatic expressions in Aboriginal English, Indian English, or Nigerian English reflect local knowledge systems and sociocultural values. This cultural embeddedness challenges the universality often assumed in traditional idiom analysis. Sharifian’s work underscores the importance of situating idioms within the cultural and conceptual environments in which they are used, thereby expanding the analytical scope from structure and semantics to cognition and culture. Building on these cognitive and cultural perspectives, Torre [38] proposes a dynamic systems approach to phrase variation that incorporates these cognitive and cultural perspectives. He asserts that English idioms are semi-stable constructs that evolve both temporally and in real-time, informed by data assessments of these constructs.

The results of the study show that phraseologisms are subject to frequent changes. Their phonetic and syntactic structure changes. But the metaphorical meaning is preserved. This means that idioms are not completely stable units.

Torre explains phraseologisms as “attractor states”. These are patterns that are close to stable but can change depending on the environment. For this reason,

phraseologisms appear in the language as a novel and flexible structure. They reflect the spread of ideas. They reflect their use. They reflect their integration into everyday life over time.

Approximately 70 percent of the analyzed idioms had structural variation. Changes were observed in the verb tense. They were also recorded in the composition of nouns. Torre explains this phenomenon from the perspective of dynamic systems theory. In the study, phraseologisms are described as “attractor states” in the language network. They are relatively stable units. But they are sensitive to contextual and communicative pressure. This theoretical stance supports the idea that idioms are not exceptions to grammatical rules but are integrated into language as flexible, emergent constructions. Such an understanding harmonizes with construction grammar, wherein idioms are viewed as part of a gradient between compositional phrases and frozen expressions. The transformation of idioms, then, reflects broader linguistic patterns of usage, generalization, and entrenchment.

#### Idioms in Language Learning

Another significant area where idiom transformation has implications is in second language acquisition (SLA). Traditional approaches to idiom teaching often rely on rote memorization, treating idioms as opaque and unpredictable. However, Boers, Demecheleer, and Eyckmans [39] propose a cognitive linguistic approach to idiom instruction, emphasizing etymological and metaphorical awareness. Their research indicates that learners retain idioms more effectively when they are taught the conceptual metaphors underlying them. For example, teaching the idiom “grasp the nettle” alongside an explanation of its metaphorical foundation - taking direct action despite the pain - helps learners internalize not just the phrase but also its cultural logic. Boers et al. argue that metaphor-based instruction enables learners to generalize conceptual patterns across idioms, fostering both comprehension and retention. Their work supports the broader view that idioms, while culturally and cognitively complex, are learnable through meaning-oriented instruction rather than mere repetition. This perspective aligns with recent cognitive models, which regard idioms as meaningful, learnable units grounded in human experience. It also highlights how idiom transformation whether semantic broadening, syntactic variation, or metaphorical extension must be accounted for in pedagogical settings. Instructors must navigate the tension between preserving conventional meanings and encouraging flexible, context-aware interpretations.

#### Tensions in Idiom Transformation

Idioms stay useful because they can be used in different situations, but this creates a conflict between language preservation and new ideas. Idioms are like culture artifacts because they keep historical meanings and traditional ways of seeing the world alive. But idioms' semantic freedom lets people use them in new and expressive ways because it lets them be reinterpreted in creative ways. This two-sided nature makes people worry about semantic dilution, especially when idioms are taken out of their original cultural setting or used in ways that hide the basic ideas they are based on. Some experts say that changing idioms could make them less clear in communication and less culturally relevant. For instance, when idioms are used in a more metaphorical

or humorous way, their meanings may become unclear or different from what people in the same culture understand them to mean. Others, though, say that this kind of difference is a sign that language is alive and well. There are arguments [35, p.245] and [38, p. 200] that idioms stay useful and descriptive because they can change as language and society change. In the end, the way idioms change shows how form, meaning, and situation all change over time in language. It shows how language theory has changed over time, from formalism to functionalism, from structure to usage, and from universalism to cultural specificity.

### **1.3 Idiom Transformation in Mass Media**

In everyday life, everyone can recognize idioms and other strange phrases used in news stories. They are a common part of language and society around the world. People use idioms a lot, both in spoken language and in written works of fiction and media texts [40]. They make the language livelier and more colorful. In many countries, idioms have become very important, as shown by different social behaviors. The most common way to find information about them is in specialized books, and they are often taught in schools and universities [3, p.140]. Idioms are changed and reinterpreted when they are used in creative ways, like in advertising, art, and journalism. Media texts that use idioms show that they often work in ways that go beyond what most people think about how stable and unchanging this type of language is [41].

British language is based on idioms that have been around for a long time. Because of this, the English language has a lot of words that are often used in newspapers, TV shows, movies, and other forms of mass media. They add humor and a unique flavor to the language used on these platforms, which shows how British, and world societies have a rich history of language [42]. Idioms are used in a lot of different ways in British media, from political commentary to sports coverage. They help make the journalism style lively and unique.

There is no more important thing than defining and explaining what words mean. Even though there are many definitions of this word, there is still no clear and exact definition because idioms have different meanings for different people. Some definitions say that an idiom is a phrase or statement that means something different than what its words mean [43, 44]. Some groups say it's a figure of speech, a word, or a statement with a symbolic meaning [45,46]. People understand it in terms of how the phrase is used in everyday life, which is different from what the words literally mean. Using idioms is as using a secret phrase that you can't figure out by reading the words [47]. But idioms have changed over time and no longer just look like they did in the past. They often change to fit different situations or create new versions. Italicized phrases that have been changed to make new meanings or humor are called transformed idioms [48]. This clever use of idioms can be used in many types of writing, even news, to keep readers interested and deliver messages in a new and entertaining way. Idioms are often used by writers to make their writing more interesting, to explain complicated ideas in a nutshell, or to add humor [49].

When journalists talk, they use idioms more than when they talk in any other discourse mode. One example is that news stories can be changed to make them more interesting by adding irony or humor [50]. Idioms are often used by journalists in

reports and news pieces as a short way to make their point clear. Idioms can also help you understand what is being said. Idioms can be used strategically to make journalistic writing more powerful and easier to read. They have meanings that are practical, stylistic, and emotional [51]. So, idioms are common in ads and mass media. The cultural meanings attached to idioms come from how society has changed over time. Over the years, logocentrism has shaped the growth of society as language has dominated other ways of communicating and shaped the next stages of cultural evolution, from spoken culture to literacy to written culture to audiovisual culture [52]. The creative use of idioms in newspaper articles shows how intuitive writers are with language. This creative method involves changing the way phrases are normally put together or changing how their parts are put together. Instead of drawing attention away from phrases, this method adds emotion to them, making them more meaningful [53]. Idiomatic phrases that are used in a clever way not only grab readers' attention, but they also add to the story and give it a sense of language creativity.

#### **1.4 Major Theoretical Frameworks**

The academic study of idioms has produced several influential theoretical frameworks that illuminate different aspects of these complex linguistic phenomena. From Makkai's distinction between Idioms of Encoding and Decoding to Fraser's Transformational Frozenness Hierarchy, the theories collectively offer a robust framework for understanding how idioms function within language. These various theories are discussed in this chapter and provide complementary perspectives on how idioms are structured, interpreted, and transformed.

Adam Makkai's (1972) foundational work established a crucial distinction between idioms of encoding and decoding. Idioms of encoding exhibit unconventional grammatical structures while remaining semantically transparent, such as the omission of prepositions in phrases like "He drove seventy miles an hour."

In contrast, idioms of decoding require non-literal interpretation, as their meanings cannot be derived from their components, exemplified by expressions like "hot potato" or "kick the bucket." Makkai's insight that all decoding idioms are also encoding idioms, but not vice versa, provides a valuable lens for analyzing how transformed idioms maintain semantic integrity despite structural modifications.

Charles F Hockett's (1958) dual-system approach offers complementary perspectives through its analysis of lexemic and sememic systems. The lexemic system deals with surface-level word forms and arrangements, while the sememic system addresses underlying meanings and conceptual relationships. His analysis of polysemy and homonymy in idiomatic expressions reveals how context determines interpretation, with the same lexical string potentially functioning as either literal or idiomatic depending on usage.

Hockett's model proves particularly relevant for understanding how transformed idioms navigate the tension between literal and figurative interpretations and highlights the importance of recognizing both the lexical structure and semantic content of idioms. This theory is particularly relevant to the study of transformed idioms because it highlights how idiomatic expressions can be manipulated to create new meanings or

stylistic effects. In this sense, Hockett's model provides a profound explanation of how semantic playfulness in idioms is formed. Linguistic play, stylistic nuances, and new semantic shades arise precisely because of this structural-semantic flexibility. Therefore, this theory is considered one of the most effective methodological foundations that allows for a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of transformed idioms.

Kenneth Pike (1967) advanced the theoretical discussion through his concept of hypermorphemes – multi-morpheme units that generate meanings beyond their components. According to Pike, hypermorphemes may contain both literal and idiomatic meanings, with the latter involving an additional or overriding meaning that is not predictable from the individual parts [16, p. 78].

Pike distinguishes between two fundamental types of hypermorphemes:

1. Literal hypermorphemes maintain transparent semantic relationships between constituents, as in the phrase “big fish in small pond,” where the metaphorical extension remains conceptually accessible.

2. Idiomatic hypermorphemes exhibit non-compositional semantics, where the overall meaning cannot be predicted from the parts, exemplified by expressions like “spill the beans” (reveal secrets) or “pull someone’s leg” (tease playfully).

Andras Balint defines idioms as “phraseological unit when the whole meaning cannot be singled out of its separate meanings of components” [54].

His structural approach categorized idioms by their syntactic flexibility, distinguishing between syntagmatic simples (single units) and complexes (multi-word expressions) (Table 2).

His framework categorizes phraseological units based on their structural composition and transformational potential, providing systematic criteria for analyzing idiom modifications in publicistic texts.

Balint’s theory provides valuable insights into the concept of frozenness hierarchy, which describes the extent to which idioms can be syntactically altered. This approach examines:

**Morphosyntactic Permeability:** the degree to which components can undergo inflectional changes.

**Lexical Substitutability:** Potential for synonymic replacement of constituents.

**Syntactic Reconfigurability:** Capacity for word order variations.

This analytical framework proves particularly valuable when examining how journalists and political speakers creatively modify idioms while maintaining their essential meaning. For instance, the transformation of “let the cat out of the bag” into passive constructions (“the cat was let out”) demonstrates the application of Balint’s sector analysis in real-world idiom manipulation.

Alan Healey’s Functional-Tagmemic Approach shifts the analytical focus toward the syntactic functionality of idioms within sentence structures.

His approach integrates insights from multiple linguistic traditions while emphasizing the grammatical behavior of phraseological units.

Healey’s theory draws from various linguistic concepts, including:

- Traditional Grammar: Studies by Otto Jespersen and Sweet.

- Structuralist Theories: Focused on syntactic structures and classification.
- Transformationalist Theories: Inspired by Chomsky’s approach to sentence structure.
- Stratificationalist Theories: Developed by linguists as Hockett and Lamb.

Unlike other theorists, Healey focuses on how idioms function as syntactic units within sentences, rather than examining their semantic or morphological characteristics. His taxonomy categorizes idioms based on their grammatical roles:

Table 4 – Healey’s Functional Classification of Idioms

Idiom’s Grammatical Category	Characteristics	Example
Noun idioms	Referential function	Hot potato (contentious issue)
Verb idioms	Action-denoting	Kick the bucket (To die)
Adjective idioms	Attributive/descriptive	Cool as a cucumber (Calm)
Adverb idioms	Circumstantial modification	By and large (Generally)

Table 4 shows Healey's (1968) functional classification of idioms, which looks at the grammatical and referential roles that idiomatic terms play in sentence constructions. Makkai's syntactic taxonomy focuses on formal structure, while Healey's framework focuses on how idioms work in conversation to communicate meaning beyond their literal forms. Healey says that idioms can be put into four groups based on grammar: noun idioms, verb idioms, adjective idioms, and adverb idioms.

Noun idioms have a referential role, denoting entities or abstract concepts in a sentence (e.g., “a hot potato” indicating a controversial matter). Verb idioms are action words that usually describe a process, occurrence, or conduct (for example, “kick the bucket” means to die). Adjective idioms are used to describe or attribute things, such as “cool as a cucumber” to signify serenity. Adverb idioms, on the other hand, are used to change the meaning of a sentence by describing conditions or general situations (for example, “by and large” means “generally”). Healey's methodology is notably significant as it creates a connection between grammatical category and communicative function, illustrating how idioms enhance both the propositional and expressive dimensions of meaning. He clearly says that monomorphemic lexemes (single words like “dog” or “hot”) are not idioms. Instead, he says that real idioms must be multi-word units that together create figurative meaning. This perspective corresponds with the comprehensive interpretation of idioms as intricate language signs that function concurrently on both literal and symbolic dimensions. In the framework of this study, Healey’s classification acts as a functional adjunct to Makkai’s syntactic model, offering a parallel perspective for examining idiomatic innovation.

Bruce Fraser’s Transformational Frozenness Hierarchy establishes the most detailed framework for analyzing idiom flexibility, introducing a seven-level hierarchy of frozenness that accounts for varying degrees of syntactic manipulability. Transformational frozenness refers to the degree to which an idiom can or cannot

undergo various syntactic transformations. Fraser's hierarchy of frozenness categorizes idioms based on their ability to resist or permit transformations such as: Passivization, Topicalization, Pronominalization, Question Formation, Clefting

According to Bruce Fraser:

#### Completely Frozen Idioms

Idioms at this level are entirely resistant to syntactic transformation. Any modification of their structure typically results in ungrammatical or semantically nonsensical output.

Example: kick the bucket ("to die")

- The bucket was kicked by John. → ungrammatical/non-idiomatic
- What did John kick? The bucket? → literal interpretation only

#### Permits Minimal Transformations

These idioms may tolerate very limited transformation but still resist most syntactic operations. Their flexibility is only marginally greater than completely Frozen Idioms.

Example: spill the beans ("to reveal a secret")

- The beans were spilled (by Mary). → marginally acceptable
- What did she spill? The beans? → tends toward a literal interpretation

#### Allows Passivization

Idioms at this level allow passivization but continue to resist other operations such as pronominalization and topicalization.

Example: break the ice ("to initiate social interaction")

- The ice was broken by our host. → acceptable idiomatic interpretation
- What did he break? Ice? → in this case, the literal meaning is possible.

The verb can be transformed into an involuntary verb and by pronouns

The phraseological units of this group take the passive form. They also tolerate substitution with a pronoun. This indicates an average level of their syntactic flexibility.

Example: beat around the bush (in the sense of "escaping the main idea")

He beat around it for a while. → the idiomatic meaning is preserved.

The bush was beaten around for hours. → grammatically possible. Slightly defined use.

The involuntary verb allows substitution with a pronoun and topicalization

The phraseological units of this level take the passive form. They can be replaced with pronouns. They allow topicalization. This indicates a high level of syntactic flexibility.

Example: throw in the towel (in the sense of "giving up", "giving up")

The towel, he threw in early. → suitable structure.

He threw it in. → suitable.

The towel was thrown in by the boxer. → suitable.

Allows for many transformations, including question form

Idioms in this category are very flexible. They retain their idiomatic meaning even in the interrogative structure.

Example: pull strings ("to use one's influence")

- Whose strings did he pull? → idiomatic meaning retained

- He pulled them to get the job. → acceptable and idiomatic

### Fully Flexible Idioms

The highest level includes idioms that can undergo virtually all common syntactic transformations, including clefting, while preserving their idiomatic interpretations.

Example: keep tabs on (“to monitor or watch closely”)

- What she did was keep tabs on his spending. → cleft construction with idiomatic meaning

- Tabs were kept on the suspect. → passive construction

- On the suspect, she kept tabs. → topicalization

Fraser’s hierarchy is grounded in the analysis of the following syntactic operations:

Passivization (The beans were spilled.)

Topicalization (The beans, he spilled.)

Pronominalization (He spilled them.)

Question Formation (What did he spill?)

Clefting (It was the beans that he spilled.)

These transformations serve as diagnostic tools for determining the structural rigidity or flexibility of idioms. The higher an idiom ranks on the hierarchy, the more syntactically transparent and flexible it is, often allowing for greater integration into a variety of grammatical constructions without losing its figurative meaning.

Table 5 – Levels of Frozenness (Fraser, 1970)

Level of Frozenness	Transformation Type	Description	Example
L0	Completely frozen	Idioms that cannot be altered without losing meaning	“Trip the light fantastic”
L1	Adjunction	Addition of modifiers allowed while retaining original meaning	“Blow off some steam quickly”
L2	Insertion	Internal modification (e.g., insertion of phrases) allowed	“Pass the buck quickly”
L3	Permutation	Rearrangement of components allowed	“The cat was let out of the bag”
L4	Extraction	Passive transformations allowed	“The ice was broken”
L5	Reconstitution	Can undergo significant alterations	“Kicking the metaphorical bucket”
L6	Unrestricted	All types of transformations allowed; rare in natural language	-

Table 5 shows Fraser’s (1970) concept of idiomatic flexibility, which is called the “Levels of Frozenness”. This concept puts idioms into groups based on how much their

structure changes, which shows how fixed or flexible they are in real life. Idioms are entirely locked at the lowest level (L0), which means that you can't change them without losing their meaning (for example, “trip the light fantastic”).

From L1 to L6, higher levels eventually allow more changes. These changes can be small, like “blow off some steam quickly”, or big, like “pass the buck quickly”, or they can be changes in syntax, like “the cat was let out of the bag”, or they can be changes in meaning, like “kicking the metaphorical bucket”.

Fraser’s hierarchy provides crucial analytical tools for understanding how idioms are creatively transformed in publicistic texts. Media frequently manipulates idioms to enhance expressiveness, create wordplay, or adapt to contemporary contexts. Fraser’s hierarchy explains the limits and possibilities of such modifications (Table 6).

The study of transformed idioms, particularly within publicistic texts, benefits greatly from these theories. The various theories of idioms presented by scholars such as Adam Makkai, Charles F. Hockett, Kenneth L. Pike, Alan Healey, Andras Balint, and Bruce Fraser offer a wide range of perspectives on how idioms are constructed, interpreted, and transformed.

Table 6 – Theoretical Framework Comparison: Analytical Dimensions, Innovations, and Critical Limitations

Theorist	Primary Analytical Lens	Key contributions	Critical Limitations
1	2	3	4
Adam Makkai	Semantic-Structural Dichotomy	Differentiates between structural and semantic idioms.	Overly rigid categorization; Neglects sociolinguistic and pragmatic dimensions of idiom use
Charles Hockett	Lexemic and Sememic Systems Model	Explores polysemy, homonymy, and structural ambiguity.	Lacks systematic account of syntactic transformation
Kenneth Pike	Hypermorphemic Architecture	Introduces literal vs idiomatic hypermorphemes	Limited focus on transformational processes
Alan Healey	Functional-Tagmemic Syntax	Developed first functional taxonomy of idioms (noun/verb/adjective/adverb)	Ignores semantic and morphological properties.
-	-	Integrated transformational grammar principles.	-
Andras Balint	Syntagmatic Flexibility Spectrum	Highlights syntactic flexibility and frozenness hierarchy	Does not address semantic nuances of idioms.

Continuation of the table 6

1	2	3	4
Bruce Fraser	Transformational Frozenness Hierarchy	Develops hierarchy of syntactic manipulation.	Primarily focused on syntax, neglecting semantic aspects.

Table 6 gives a side-by-side look at the main idiom theorists – Pike, Healey, Balint, and Fraser – and shows how their ideas are different and where they fall short. Pike's Hypermorphemic Architecture presented the concept of literal vs idiomatic hypermorphemes, establishing a foundation for comprehending idioms as intricate lexical components, but with minimal focus on transformational change. Healey made progress in the field with his Functional-Tagmemic Syntax, which was the first functional taxonomy of idioms (noun, verb, adjective, and adverb kinds), but it didn't look at semantic and morphological features. Balint's Syntagmatic Flexibility Spectrum focused on how much idioms can change their structure, which is like Fraser's later work on frozenness. Fraser himself created a thorough Transformational Frozenness Hierarchy that organized how idioms can be flexible and manipulated. These frameworks vary in their emphasis - ranging from functional to syntactic and transformational – but collectively they offer a comprehensive view of idioms as dynamic language constructions that can exhibit both structural stability and innovative alteration.

Table 7 – Relevance and Application of the Theories to the Study of Transformed Idioms

Theorist	Transformation Potential	Application to Transformed Idioms
1	2	3
Makkai	Moderate	Highlights structural and semantic manipulation.
Hockett	Moderate	Distinguishes between literal and idiomatic meanings
Pike	Limited	Focuses on morphemic structures and hypermorphemes.
Healey	Extensive	Explores syntactic manipulation and sentence structure.
Balint	Extensive	Introduces frozenness hierarchy for syntactic flexibility.
Fraser	Extensive	Provides a clear hierarchy of syntactic manipulation.

Table 7 illustrates how important and useful various idiom theories are for studying altered idioms. Every theory adds a unique aspect to our comprehension of idiomatic transformation. Makkai and Hockett exemplify the moderate transformation

level, emphasizing structural and semantic manipulation while differentiating between literal and colloquial meanings. Pike's contribution, however more constrained, resides in his examination of morphemic structures and hypermorphemes, providing insight into idiom creation. On the other hand, Healey, Balint, and Fraser have a lot of promise for change. Healey stresses the diversity of syntax and function; Balint talks about the ideas of frozenness and flexibility; and Fraser gives a complete hierarchy for manipulating syntax.

### 1.5 Historical Development of Phraseology in Russia and Kazakhstan

The study of phraseology as a linguistic discipline has evolved significantly over centuries, with key contributions from scholars in Russia and Kazakhstan. Below, Table 8, shows the major milestones in the history of phraseology development, highlighting pivotal works and theoretical advancements.

Table 8 – Main Aspects of Phraseology Study

№	Year	Aspects of Phraseological study	Contributing Scholars
1	2	3	4
1	1558	The first use of term phraseology.	M. Neander
2	1755	Proverbs were collected, as M.V. Lomonosov believed that “phrases and ideomatisms” should be included in lexicographic sources.	M.V. Lomonosov
3	1909	The first dictionary of English terms “Idioms of English language and their use” has been published.	J. Seidl, W. McMordie
4	1905 1909	Four groups of phrases are distinguished: free phrases, familiar phrases, phraseological series and phraseological units.	Sh. Bally
5	1930- 1940	Attempts have been made to classify phraseological units for the first time, but both classifications are considered unsuccessful by linguists.	I.M. Vulfius, S.I. Abakumov
6	1940s.	The emergence of phraseology as a linguistic discipline. Semantic types of phraseological units: phraseological combinations or idioms, phraseological units, phraseological combinations.	V.V. Vinogradov S.K. Kenesbaev
7	1950s	There is a tendency for systematic approach to phraseology problems, the main attention is paid to similarity and differences of phraseological units with word and words combination, issues related to phraseological units’ description as structural units of language are being developed.	A.I. Smirnitsky O.S. Akhmanova

Continuation of the table 8

1	2	3	4
8	1960-1980s	Phraseological methods of phraseology objects research based on the ideas of system-level analysis of language facts are being developed.	V.L. Arkhangelsky N.N. Amosova K.K. Akhanov V.P. Zhukov A.T. Kaidarov A.V. Kunin M.T. Tagiyev
		The study of systemic organization of phraseological composition.	I.I. Chernysheva N.M. Shansky
		The study of phraseological composition development.	V.M. Mokienko F.N. Popov A.I. Fedorov
		The study of phraseologism semantics in its nominative aspect.	V.N. Telia
		The study of phase formation in dynamics. The study of component words compatibility signs.	S.G. Gavrin Yu.A. Gvozdarev M.M. Kopylenko Z.D. Popova
		Comparative and typological study of phraseological composition.	Yu.Yu. Avaliani L.I. Rozeizon
		The first attempt is made to generalize the main directions of comparative phraseology research.	A.D. Reichstein
		Development and description of phraseologisms in dictionaries.	A.M. Babkin A.I. Molotkov
9	1990-2000	The study of phraseological composition in comparison with other languages. Phraseologisms are considered and studied considering national and cultural values, from the point of view of cognitive linguistics.	R.A. Avakova D.O. Dobrovolsky M.T. Sabitova G.N. Smagulova Sh.U. Rakhmatullayeva T.N. Fedulenkova et al.

As shown in Table 8, phraseology has grown as a field of study over the course of several important stages. The word “phraseology” was first used by M. Neander in 1558. By the 18th century, scholars as M.V. Lomonosov were pushing for phrases to be included in dictionaries. At the start of the 20th century, Sh. Bally categorized different types of phrases, and J. Seidl and W. McMordie put out the first English proverb dictionary. V.V. Vinogradov and S.K. Kenesbayev built its theoretical basis and in 1950s A.I. Smirnitsky and O.S. Akhmanova began to focus on systematic analysis, which looked at the structure of phraseological units. Researchers as A.V. Kunin, N.N. Amosova, and V.M. Mokienko investigated semantic, comparative, and lexicographic features from the 1960s to the 1980s. Finally, between the 1990s and

2000s, experts such as R.A. Avakova, D.O. Dobrovolsky, and G.N. Smagulova looked at phraseology from the points of view of cognition and culture, focusing on how it is relevant across languages and how it is unique to each country.

In Kazakh languages, well-known researchers like K.H. Akhanov, Z.K. Akhmetzhanova, A.S. Eleshova, R.E. Zhaisakova, A.T. Kaidarov, S.K. Kenesbayev, M.M. Kopylenko, Z.D. Popova, and M.T. Sabitova have written about idioms. After S.K. Kenesbaev's writings, people studied Kazakh phrases a lot more. That's what Kenesbaev says: "idioms are all stable verbal associations, as proverbs, sayings, idiomatic expressions, stable groups of words, and paired words" [55]. Three things he said about Kazakh phrases stood out to him: 1) the meaning or sentence (integrity of meaning); 2) the meaning of the words that make up a phrase (phrase integrity); and 3) the ability to be used repeatedly as finished units (completeness of use) [55 p. 712].

Three authors, K.A. Akhanov, A.T. Kaidarov, and R.E. Zhaisakova, came up with their own ways to group Kazakh idioms. These ideas can be found in books such as "Fundamentals of Linguistics" (K.A. Akhanov) and "Principles of Classification of Idioms in Modern Kazakh" (A.T. Kaidarov, R.E. Zhaisakova). In "Fundamentals of Linguistics," Akhanov also talks about the differences between Kazakh phrases, such as phraseological mergers, phraseological combinations, and phraseological expressions.

In his study of proverbs and sayings, R. Sarsenbayev called them idioms because they are stable and can be used again and again [56]. K.N. Smagulova investigated how Kazakh phrases are different and explained how their structure changes based on location and social factors [57].

M.M. Kopylenko and Z.D. Popova offered a way to study idiomatic combinations that is based on sememic analysis [58], which helped the field of idiomatic study grow even more in Kazakhstan. Five kinds of sememes are set apart: denotative sememes (D1, D2), connotative sememes (K1, K2, K3), and more. S.A. Abdramanova (2018) explored Kazakh idioms that incorporate body-part and color elements, investigating their semantic structure and cultural significance; her subsequent research focused on the conceptual representation of time in Kazakh idiomatic phrases [59]. In "Fundamentals of German and Kazakh Phraseology", M.T. Sabitova compared German and Kazakh idioms and looked at the national-cultural aspect of idiomatic semantics [60]. Idioms have been looked at from different angles, including their structure, function, meaning, style, brain function, and linguistic cultural function. There are many ways that scholars have come up with to study idioms, such as statistical analysis of texts, variational methods, contextual analysis, and methods that look at how well words and phrases fit together. The fast-paced nature of modern life causes language to change quickly, adding new words, phrases, and meanings. Even though the language is open, it can't take in every new word, which means that idiomatic phrases that were used before will change. There are two kinds of changes that can happen to idioms: defective changes, which happen when speakers can't read or understand what the idiom means, and intentional changes, which happen when speakers change the phrase for stylistic or rhetorical reasons. When people use idioms in creative ways, they become more descriptive and easier to use in different

places, such as commercials, slogans, and literary works.

Some examples of words that have been changed are:

- The phrase “Call seven times, accept one time” was used to talk about the pharmaceutical market in Kazakhstan. It is a changed version of the saying “Measure twice, cut once”.

- “Love will come by accident” by L. Utesov was changed into “Spring will come by accident”.

- “Money in the evening, statistics in the morning” (a changed line from Twelve Chairs by I. Ilf and E. Petrov).

In her 2019 paper “Conceptualization of Time in Kazakh Idioms”, S. A. Abdramanova posits that time in Kazakh idioms is understood through several interconnected domains: as a cyclical process (e.g., the transition from day to night, the change of seasons) and as a life span (birth → life → death).

She also demonstrates that these idioms frequently pertain to age parameters, the velocity/duration of acts, and social occurrences, asserting that temporal expressions are rooted in spatial metaphors (time associated with space) and in cultural/ethnographic experiences [61]. These changes make it possible for language to communicate more ideas and make speech more varied. V.G. Gak defined selection as the process by which parts of language connect with the things they stand for [62]. Phraseological nomination is a more complicated process than lexical nomination. It uses phrases to name both abstract ideas and real things. According to L.K. Zhanalina, idioms play a “bisynchronous” role in the language system, which means they have both meanings that describe things and meanings that reflect feelings [63]. These two meanings are what idiomatic expressions are based on, which makes them useful in both written and spoken words. Here is the history of idioms in both Russian and Kazakh languages. We chose to group them and split them into two paragraphs. First, Russian authors began to examine idioms and their alterations. The first piece of knowledge is concerning Russian phraseology.

#### Theoretical Frameworks in Russian Phraseology

Since the 19th century, Russian scholars have established robust theoretical foundations for the examination of idioms. Early scholars such as Alexander Veselovsky, Vladimir Dahl, and Lev Shcherba contributed to the organization and compilation of phraseological units, many of which are being employed in academic contexts. Conversely, contemporary scholars have focused on semantic flexibility, corpus annotation, and transformation methodologies. Irina V. Zykova [64] employs a corpus-based approach to analyze idioms in contemporary Russian media. She examines the alteration of ordinary phrases to convey sarcasm, criticism, or creativity in news headlines and blogs. Her work illustrates a growing trend in Russian linguistics that focuses on how people use language rather than how it should be used. R.A. Safina [65] also looks at how terms in headlines change in the mass media. She talks about how these adjustments assist get people interested in the news and highlight its worth. These studies demonstrate the evolution of idiom analysis from conventional approaches to more pragmatic and stylistic methodologies.

The RuSemShift project by Julia Rodina and Andrey Kutuzov, which follows

changes in lexical semantics over time, is a step in this direction. Their method allows scholars to monitor the evolution of idiomatic meanings throughout time, albeit it is not limited to idioms alone. At the same time, Natalia Loukachevitch and Anastasia Gerasimova [66] look at how people's relationships and mental images make idioms and multi-word expressions (MWEs) more popular. Their research elucidates the processes of learning, recalling, and reinterpreting idioms. Russian academics like as Ekaterina Gridneva, Katsiaryna Aharodnik, and Shukhrat Khudayberganov have made significant contributions that enhance our understanding of how heritage speakers interpret idioms, the annotation of corpora, and the application of idiomatic terms in Russian-language education. These papers demonstrate that Russian linguistics employs a multi-faceted methodology in the examination of idioms. They employ historical lexicography, cognitive linguistics, corpus methodologies, and sociolinguistic analysis all at once. Idioms in Russian, which are also known as phraseological units or phraseologisms, are one of the most intriguing and culturally important features of the language. These fixed words, whose meanings can't be determined out from their parts, are like language libraries of cultural memory, historical experience, and the collective knowledge that has grown up over hundreds of years of Russian culture [67]. The examination of Russian idioms and their evolution has emerged as a significant domain within Slavic linguistics. It helps us understand how language changes and how social and cultural variables affect those changes. Russian idioms have been quite strong and flexible across time, from the oldest documented forms in Old Church Slavonic texts to the changes that have happened in the digital age. They have also maintained their cultural authenticity [68]. This work is significant for reasons beyond linguistic considerations. Russian idioms are cultural artifacts that contain historical events, social interactions, and worldviews distinctive to Russian-speaking communities. Their evolving patterns reflect how Russian society has developed throughout time in terms of politics, technology, and culture [69].

The purpose of this comprehensive analysis is to achieve multiple interconnected objectives:

First, we want to look at how Russian idioms have changed over time, from when they were first used to when they are used now.

We aim to identify the most important patterns of change. We also aim to identify their causes. Diachronic analysis is used for this. It provides the contextual information necessary for interpreting modern phraseological systems.

Secondly, the study examines the changes in Russian phraseology over time. Semantic changes are analyzed. The evolution of syntactic features is described. Various cases of use are studied. Understanding these mechanisms is important. It allows us to make scientific predictions about future changes. It provides a basis for comparison with other language systems.

Thirdly, the study examines the works of major scientists who have contributed to Russian phraseology. Researchers who proposed the fundamental principles at the initial stage are analyzed. At the current stage, the works of scientists using corpus linguistics and computer analysis are reviewed.

Fourthly, the current state of research on Russian phraseology is described. New

methodologies are identified. New theoretical positions are presented. New directions are identified that will influence future research.

This study examines Russian idioms from several perspectives, encompassing their history, language, culture, and methodologies. The time frame includes everything from the first written Slavic idioms to the changes that have occurred with the rise of digital technology. This gives us a thorough view of how idioms have developed throughout time.

The method employs both traditional historical linguistic analysis and contemporary research methodologies, including corpus-based investigations, comparative analysis, and sociolinguistic examination. Historical publications, literary works, and statistics about how people use language currently are all examples of primary sources.

Additional sources include a large corpus of scientific literature, consisting of the works of leading scholars in the field of Russian phraseology. The study focuses on phraseological units with a clear pattern of development. These phraseological units allow for a deep analysis of the causes and mechanisms of phraseological changes.

The study pays special attention to phraseological units related to important historical events, cultural changes, or technological progress. These units clearly demonstrate the interrelationship of language development and socio-cultural evolution.

#### Foundations of Old Church Slavonic

Vinogradov V claims that the oldest Russian idioms derive from Old Church Slavonic writings. These books were the basis for a lot of the formal and theological vocabulary that is still employed in modern Russian [70]. Most of these early phraseological units come from the Bible and religious texts. They formed patterns that would affect how Russian idioms grew for hundreds of years. Russian got a lot of colloquial words from Old Church Slavonic. These included set phrases that conveyed religious and moral concepts, formal speech patterns that formed part of literary and official language, and structural templates that served as models for the formation of new idioms. Some examples are “во веки веков” (forever and ever) and “камень преткновеня” (stumbling block). These phrases preserve their original meanings and structures but alter to match how people use them now. Old Church Slavonic affected more than just single words. It also changed the way Russian idioms were made by modifying the structure of sentences and the meanings of words. The high register of Church Slavonic provided a stylistic element that still impacts how Russians speak today. Many formal and literary idioms still have old-fashioned components that represent higher levels of speech.

Russian idioms took a lot from folk traditions, oral literature, and everyday cultural activities. They stemmed from Old Church Slavonic. This folk layer led to a lot of the informal and emotive vocabulary that is common in modern Russian [71]. Folk idioms mainly developed from a variety of elements, like the agricultural and seasonal cycles that defined traditional Russian life, social relationships, and community activities; mythological and legendary stories; and practical advice that was passed down through proverbs. These idioms usually employed pictures of people

doing things in the country, natural phenomena, and everyday jobs to convey about abstract ideas and how people interact with each other. Folk features were added to the Russian phraseological system through a lot of steps, as standardization, literary acceptability, and adaptation to city life. As many folk idioms shifted from being used in certain rural areas to being used more widely, their meanings changed. Others, however, retained their original meanings while acquiring new ones through literary and cultural usage. In the Middle Ages, Russian phrases expanded and got more ordered. This happened because of the growth of written literature, administrative language, and cultural exchange with other language groups. Several important forms of idiomatic idioms were created at this time [72].

The Russian state was getting bigger, and its political contacts were increasing more sophisticated, which led to the development of military and administrative idioms. These expressions usually highlighted how Russian culture valued service ties and how medieval society was set up. As Russian merchants built up huge trading networks, they took and changed terms from other language groups. This is how trade and commercial idioms came to be.

As the Russian literary language developed, authors began to create new terms and modify existing ones for artistic purposes. This literary effect was highly important for creating stylistic variations in the phraseological system and for setting the rules for how idioms would be formed in the future.

#### Changes that happened during the Imperial Period

The imperial period, notably the 18th century and beyond, was a very crucial epoch for the growth of Russian idioms. There was a lot of Western influence, a lot of literary advancement, and a lot of social modernity during this time. These changes had a big effect on the way phrases were used. A lot of Western ideas and ways of doing things came with the Petrine reforms, which meant that the language had to alter. This caused people to make up new idioms and change old ones. French culture had a great effect on Russian phrases, notably in the 18th and early 19th centuries. This caused both direct borrowing and the fabrication of calques. The 19th century was the “golden age” of Russian literature, and it had a huge impact on how idioms came to be.

#### Changes that happened during the Soviet era

The Soviet era was one of the most important moments for changes in Russian idiom. It was characterized by ideological coercion, social reorganization, and deliberate linguistic modifications. These things made Russian phrases imply and be employed in quite different ways [73]. New political and ideological phrases came up to talk about new social and political concepts and ways people engage with each other. These idioms typically replaced or fought with previous ones. A lot of these idioms were produced on purpose or propagated by the government, which makes them a unique example of orchestrated phraseological growth. Some ancient idioms were altered to meet Soviet ideals, while others were pushed aside or forbidden because they had religious or class-based implications. Some of them still had their original connotations, but they also got new political ones. Dictionaries, schoolbooks, and the media helped make Russian phrases more common and official during the Soviet era. This process of standardization has long-term effects on the phraseological system,

making some types of the norm and pushing others to the side.

#### Changes After the USSR

After the Soviet Union, there have been new issues and opportunities for Russian idioms to grow. This is due to rapid societal transformation, emerging technology, and more engagement with global linguistic communities. These factors have resulted in distinctive patterns of phraseological alteration [74]. The relaxation of ideological restraints has made it feasible for historical idioms that were suppressed or driven to the outskirts during the Soviet era to come back, as well as for new idioms that represent modern social and cultural realities to be established. Changes in society and the economy have caused new idioms to come forth that are related to technology, the market, and democracy. Globalization and worldwide connection have transformed the way people borrow and adapt, and English has changed the meanings of many things. Digital communication technologies have made it easier for new idioms to circulate fast within Russian-speaking communities and have made it possible for idioms to be utilized in new ways. The evolution of Russian idioms illustrates the transformation of the language from its Slavic origins to contemporary forms. There are several important periods in its history, each with its own language influences, cultural shifts, and social and political developments that had a lasting effect on the phraseological system.

#### Current research and trends

Research on modern Russian phraseology uses a wide range of methods. New theoretical foundations are introduced. Modern technologies are used. These factors increase the accuracy of phraseological analysis. Phraseological research opens up new opportunities. At the same time, they also reveal changes in linguistics in general.

The use of corpus linguistics methods in the study of Russian phraseology is an important step. On the basis of large digital corpora, it is possible to analyze the use of phraseological units. Their frequency can be determined. Changes over time can be monitored. This is an analysis at a level that was previously impossible.

The Russian national corpus is considered an important source. It shows how phraseological units are used in texts of various genres. It reflects changes over time. It also reveals regional features of use. Researchers use corpus data to test theoretical hypotheses. It identifies patterns that are not observed by other methods.

Corpus-based research has proven that there is a gap between the characteristics of phraseological units in dictionaries and their actual use. This contributed to a deeper understanding of phraseological semantics and pragmatics. The results influenced theoretical models. They also had practical significance in lexicography and language teaching. The time dimension of corpus data allows for diachronic analysis. It shows how idioms change based on social, cultural, and linguistic influences.

This work has demonstrated that theoretical models of phraseological development are applicable in real-world contexts and has identified novel patterns of change. A quantitative analysis of the frequency and distribution patterns of phrases has provided new insights into the structure and functioning of the Russian phraseological system. Research indicates that frequency patterns correlate with several language and cultural attributes, including cultural salience, semantic transparency, and stylistic connections [75]. Research on the distribution of various

types of texts and registers has demonstrated that the usage of phrases varies according on context and the individuals involved. Recent research has concentrated on the cognitive and cultural dimensions of Russian phraseology. They have accomplished this by integrating concepts from cognitive linguistics, and psychology to facilitate understanding of the implications and usage of phrases.

#### Examination of Conceptual Metaphors

Examining Russian phrases through the lens of conceptual metaphor theory has revealed a logical organization of colloquial idioms. Researchers have discovered that Russian idioms exhibit both culture-specific conceptual mappings and universal patterns in metaphorical construction [76]. Examining metaphorical patterns has elucidated the Russian conceptualization of abstract constructs such as time, emotions, social relationships, and ethical norms. This study has shown that phraseological systems store cultural knowledge in ways that fit with how people usually think. When you look at how phrases are put together in different languages, you can see that there are both universal and culture-specific ways to do it. This helps us see how language, society, and thought all function together in phraseological systems.

#### Analysis of Cultural Scripts

Cultural script analysis is a helpful tool for understanding how Russian idioms show cultural values, social norms, and rules for behavior. This study has demonstrated that idiomatic expressions encapsulate cultural knowledge that facilitates communication and the transmission of culture [77].

A study of the cultural scripts embedded in Russian idioms has revealed consistent methods of encoding social connections, moral principles, and behavioral norms. This study has helped us learn more about how phrasal competence includes both language and cultural knowledge. Comparing cultural scripts from different phraseological systems has helped us understand how idiomatic expressions signify different things in different cultures and how idiomatic expressions are organized in general.

#### Digital Humanities and Computational Approaches

Using digital humanities tools and computational approaches in Russian phraseological research has led to new areas of study and made phraseological analysis more accurate and comprehensive.

The creation of computer programs that can automatically find phrasal units in vast text collections has greatly increased the range of empirical phrasal study. These approaches make it possible to look at how phrases are used in large amounts of text that would be too hard to look at by hand [78].

Machine learning techniques for recognizing phrases have improved in distinguishing between colloquial and literal applications of potential phrases. These tactics have been quite helpful for looking at old texts and discovering fresh ways to use them now. By combining automated identification methods with traditional analytical approaches, we have created hybrid methods that are both fast and accurate. This makes it possible to comprehensively examine phraseological systems.

#### Analysis of Semantic Networks

Semantic network analysis of Russian phrasal systems has revealed consistent

patterns in the organization of phrasal meanings and the interrelations of distinct colloquial expressions. This study has showed how phrasal units connect with each other through cultural, structural, and semantic links [79]. Network analysis has taught us more about how phrasal competence is structured and how idiomatic information is organized in the brain. This study has much to say about how we learn, remember, and use phraseological systems in our minds. The ability to see phraseological networks has given us new ways to show how complicated the interactions are in phraseological systems and to find patterns that might not be easy to see using standard analytical approaches. Modern research has focused more and more on cross-linguistic and typological approaches to Russian phraseological analysis. These approaches look at how Russian idioms compare to idioms in other languages and help us understand the universal and language-specific features of phraseological systems.

The study of phraseological pedagogy has led to new ways to teach Russian idioms that blend lessons on culture with lessons on language. It was shown in this study that to teach idiomatic competence well, you need to look at both the structural and cultural parts of it [80]. Corpus-based teaching materials give students access to usage trends and frequency data from the real world, which helps them learn better. These things show how study from the real world can be used to help with real-world learning. Researchers who have investigated how people learn phrasal verbs have found that cognitive and cultural factors affect how well people learn. This knowledge could be used to make lessons and lessons plans better. It is very hard to translate idiomatic words between languages and cultures, as shown by research on phraseological translation. The research has found ways to handle the issues of society and language that make phraseological translation more difficult [81]. When you compare phraseological alternatives between languages, you can see how cultural differences affect how well and how likely it is that phraseological translation will work. This study changes both how we think about what words mean and how people understand them. Phrasal competence in cross-cultural communication research has shown that cultural understanding changes how people from different cultures understand and use idioms. Russian phrases and how they change over time have been looked at in detail. This has shown how complicated and adaptable language systems are. It has also shown how these language systems keep cultural information while adapting to new technological, social, and cultural sets. The study shows that Russian phraseology is a complicated system that handles both stability and change in a way that stays true to the culture and meets the needs of modern communication. The history study showed that Russian idioms have changed in a planned way during significant times of cultural and social change. These changes can be traced back to their Old Church Slavonic roots and continue up to the digital age. These changes can be expected by looking at both how language works inside the brain and how culture works outside the brain. This shows that the growth of phrases is organized.

There are three main ways that Russian words change to fit new situations: they change in meaning, they change in structure, and they change in cultural context. All these things happen at the same time and in difficult ways that keep important cultural and communication functions while letting people adapt to new situations. Our

theoretical understanding of Russian phraseology has changed from traditional philological methods to new interdisciplinary methods that combine ideas from cognitive science, cultural anthropology, and computational linguistics. These new methods are based on the work of important researchers.

This range of methods has made phraseological study more accurate and useful. A new study shows that phraseological research is being changed by new tools and methods that make it possible to do large-scale observational analysis and find patterns that were hidden before. Corpus linguistics, computational analysis, and digital humanities are all fields that help us understand how words and sentences are put together and how they work. A study that looked at Russian and other languages found that it has both language-specific patterns that show how people in Russia used to live and speak and universal patterns that show how people think and speak in general. There are both general and specific parts in phrasal systems. This balance shows how complicated the link is between language, society, and thought. Russian phrases and how they change over time have been looked at in great detail. This has shown how complicated and adaptable language systems are. It has also shown how these language systems keep cultural information while adapting to new technological, social, and cultural sets. The study shows that Russian phraseology is a complicated system that handles both stability and change in a way that stays true to the culture and meets the needs of modern communication.

#### Kazakh Phraseology: From Oral Tradition to Changes in Thinking

Kazakh phraseology, in contrast, derives from epics, folk proverbs, and narratives that individuals adhere to. The cultural backdrop has had an impact on the study of Kazakh idioms, which has led to an emphasis on symbolism, cultural images, and how language is essential to different ethnic groups.

Kaidarov and Zhaysakova [82] made the rules for grouping idioms more official by separating phraseological fusions, combinations, and collocations. K. H. Akhanov [83] improved this method of arranging by putting words into groups based on how well their meanings and grammar fit together. The study of idioms has recently expanded to encompass cross-cultural and comparative aspects. For instance, M. Sabitova [60, p 12] examined the evolution of German and Kazakh phrases and their translatability. S. Sarsembay (2024) did a Comparative Analysis of English and Kazakh Idioms Defining Colors [84], and Elmira Kydyrmoldina and other researchers of Kazakh idioms [85] think that reinterpreting number idioms as symbols is one of the most interesting things to study in this area. Their research examines the integration of cultural knowledge into ambiguous concepts such as “seven times” and “one step”, which are currently employed in novel contexts within digital communications.

Aushenova and Aimagambetova [86] employ think-aloud methodologies to investigate the comprehension and utilization of vocabulary among multilingual individuals. This cognitive-psycholinguistic perspective is highly beneficial in Kazakhstan's trilingual education system, where language can facilitate or impede comprehension. Learning Kazakh idioms and phrases is a fun approach to learn about the language, culture, and way of thinking in Central Asia. This chapter examines the evolution of Kazakh phraseological study, tracing its development from traditional oral

scholarship to contemporary cognitive-adaptive methodologies.

The study begins with the works of the first representatives of Kazakh linguistics. They collected proverbs and phraseological units that have been transmitted orally for centuries. The next section shows the influence of modern cognitive linguistics models on the interpretation of Kazakh phraseology.

This direction is not limited to the framework of theoretical linguistics. It plays an important role in preserving culture. It helps to understand personal and national identity. It creates conditions for the use of traditional forms of knowledge in modern society.

The Kazakh language and phraseology preserve a common cultural memory. It contains centuries-old nomadic experience. It reflects knowledge about nature and the environment. It provides principles of social structure and governance.

Researchers who have devoted their lives to collecting and analyzing this linguistic heritage have made a significant contribution. They have not only preserved cultural data. They have also deepened our understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and cognition. These relationships are considered within the framework of complex adaptive systems.

The study demonstrates the evolution of research methodologies, transitioning from basic descriptive cataloging to intricate cognitive modeling. These modifications are part of bigger changes in linguistics, but they also consider the cultural background of Kazakh society.

In the last two hundred years, the academic study of Kazakh phraseology has changed a lot. Russian orientalists and subsequently Kazakh scholars tried to write down Kazakh idioms in the 1800s. This was the first step toward a more in-depth examination of these expressions. Alekseev (1858) were among the first researchers to understand that phraseological units were the best means to pass on cultural knowledge. They wrote down thousands of Kazakh proverbs, sayings, and slang words that were part of the culture's live memory [87], [88]. There are a few keyways that this study's theoretical foundation was built. Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory [88, p.196] is highly helpful for understanding how Kazakh ways of thinking show up in sentence constructions. Palmer's [89] anthropological linguistic perspectives elucidate the connection between oral tradition and phraseological expression within Kazakh culture.

Kenesbayev, one of the founders of Kazakh phraseology, made a big difference in how idioms in the Kazakh language are studied. He was one of the first linguists to study idiomatic terms in a systematic way, looking at their meanings, structures, and cultural aspects. I.K. Kenesbayev characterized an idiom as a fixed phrase whose collective meaning is inseparable and cannot be deduced from the meanings of its constituent parts [90]. He says that idioms include the following defining features: 1. Semantic unity: The idiom has a single, figurative meaning that is not based on its literal parts (for example, *it ölgен zher* means “a very distant place”, and *zhüregi tasqa aynalu* means “to become heartless”). 2. Stability: Idioms keep the same word order and structure. 3. Reproducibility: They are utilized as pre-made language units instead of being built up on the spot in speech. Kenesbayev differentiated idioms from free

word combinations by semantic, structural, and pragmatic criteria. He also talked about how often they were used and how well-known they were in Kazakh culture.

Kenesbayev viewed the phraseological system of the Kazakh language as an organized semantic network. Using V.V. Vinogradov's typology as a guide, he changed it to fit Kazakh linguistics and put phraseological units into three main groups: phraseological fusions (idioms), phraseological unities, and phraseological combinations (collocations). Kenesbayev was one of the first researchers to see idioms as language emblems of national culture instead of just linguistic patterns.

He showed that idioms are a way for the Kazakh people to express their culture, way of life, and traditional way of seeing the world. For example: *At-tonyn ala qashu* (“to run away in fear”) shows how nomadic people lived and acted; *Bet monshaǵy üzilu* (“to lose face”) shows how modesty and honor were thought of in the past. By using these examples, Kenesbayev laid the groundwork for the ethnolinguistic approach to idiomatic idioms in Kazakh linguistics. His enormous work, “Kazakh Tilin Frazelogiyalyk Sozdigi” (Phraseological Dictionary of the Kazakh Language, 1977), became a cornerstone of Kazakh phraseological study [91].

The dictionary gives thousands of idioms and sets expressions semantic explanations, stylistic notes, etymological notes, and examples of how they are used in different contexts. Kenesbayev integrated systematic description, lexicographic classification, and etymological interpretation, establishing a methodological framework for subsequent research in Kazakh idiomatics. Later researchers, including N. Uali, G. Smagulova, Sh. Sarybayev, and A. Ysqaqov, expanded upon Kenesbayev's theoretical foundations. N. Uali expanded his theories by analyzing idioms through structural-semantic and pragmatic frameworks. G. Smagulova enhanced the ethnolinguistic and cultural analysis of idioms, perceiving them as national cognitive symbols. Kenesbayev's framework transformed into a principal paradigm for subsequent phraseological and cognitive-linguistic research in Kazakhstan.

Many significant researchers from many generations have made substantial contributions to the study of Kazakh phraseology. This section talks about the most important researchers and the novel methods they used to do study. It does this by putting their work in the order in which it happened to highlight how research methodologies have developed throughout time.

Mukhtar Auezov was the most prominent figure in the study of Kazakh language and culture during the time of the Soviet Union. His book “Abai zholy” is still the most important book in the discipline where a lot of phraseological units are used [92, 93].

After Kenesbayev G. Smagulova [94] introduces her book “Magynalas Phraseologismder Sozdigi”. It is a dictionary of synonymous idioms, specifically a Kazakh dictionary of synonymous idioms. This dictionary has been used as a basis for linguistic research, particularly in analyzing Kazakh comparative idioms related to physical appearance and age. S.A. Sultanbekova analyzed the grammatical and syntactic structures of idioms that describe physical appearance and age in the Kazakh language, as detailed in the dictionary of synonymous idioms, “Magynalas phraseologismder sozdigi”. The study identifies these idioms as a distinct subspecies with specific lexico-grammatical and structural-syntactic features [95].

### The contemporary epoch of cognitive adaptation

Kydyrmoldina (2024) examines the linguo-cultural characteristics of phraseological units with numerical elements in English and Kazakh, illustrating how numbers encapsulate culturally influenced meanings and symbolic connotations inside idiomatic idioms [96]. Her work shows that idioms that use numbers, such “one”, “seven”, or “hundred”, have different evaluative, metaphorical, and cognitive meanings in different languages. In the same way, S. Sarsembay (2024) does a comparative analysis of English and Kazakh idioms that define colors. This study looks at how color imagery shows national identity, emotional perception, and aesthetic symbolism. Her findings underscore both universal and culturally specific interpretations of color idioms, illustrating how they encapsulate values and experiences distinctive to each culture [97]. The combined efforts of Kydyrmoldina and Sarsembay enhance the comprehension of how linguistic imagery, be it numerical or chromatic, functions as a principal medium for articulating cultural worldview and collective cognition. In Kazakh language, also authors such as ZH.A. Abdrakhmanova studied idioms transformations. The study “Occasional Phraseologisms in Modern Kazakh: Structure and Transformation” highlights that occasional idioms are author-specific, highly expressive phraseological units that undergo structural and semantic transformation, distinguishing them from standard idiomatic variants [98]. Qaidar’s dictionary work, [99], is a very useful instrument for learning Kazakh vocabulary. This book was our main source for learning about Kazakh notions of blessing and curse [100].

### New Authors on Kazakh Phraseology, Idioms, and Proverbs (2010-2025)

In the previous ten years (2010-2025), there has been a lot more scholarly research on Kazakh idioms, proverbs, and phrases. Researchers are using different ways to look at both traditional forms and how they have altered throughout time. This comprehensive study examines changed idioms in Kazakh linguistic research, focusing on the principal writers, their methodologies, and the findings they obtained.

Akbota Akhmetbekova becomes a well-known researcher who looks at Turkic words from many different angles. By using comparative-historical and semantic analysis approaches [33, p.239], her work focuses on how the meanings of clothing items develop in Kazakh and Turkish. Akhmetbekova’s research indicates that clothing idioms in Turkish have acquired new significances due to alterations in location, climate, and historical and political contexts, but numerous ancient Kazakh idioms have retained their original meanings [33, p.239].

Gulnara Omarbekova is one of the most significant experts studying current Kazakh proverbs. She is an Associate Professor at Nazarbayev University. Her primary fields of research are comparative linguistics and linguocultural studies. She examines the utilization of proverbs among Kazakhs through ecological discourse methodologies [101]. Omarbekova co-edited the major book “Contemporary Kazakh Proverb Research” (2022), which talks about how Kazakh proverbs are utilized currently at home, at school, and on the internet [102].

Erik Aasland, an American folklorist who focuses on ethnography and corpus linguistics, has made significant contributions to the study of Kazakh proverbs through

his collaboration with individuals from other cultures. His research examines the construction of meaning in proverbs and documents the “twists and tweaks that maintain the vibrancy of Kazakh proverb usage” [102, p 50].

F.T. Yerekhanova, Zh.M. Zhusubalina, Ainur Zhorabekova, and Gulsim Nurekeshova undertook complete comparison research of phraseological phrases in Kazakh and English [103]. They looked at how hard it is to translate and talk to people from other cultures. Their research demonstrates the significance of phraseological units in literary translation, particularly in the context of translating Kazakh to English phraseological phrases [104]. Elmira Kydyrmoldina, Raya Darmenkulova, A.T. Mirov, Akmaral Itemirova, and Nurgul Bessirova examined the cultural and linguistic dimensions of phraseological units including numerals in English and Kazakh [105]. Their research demonstrated that numerical components are significant in the phraseologies of both languages, and that cultural fusion indicates the existence of diverse linkages among individuals. Modern experts utilize comparative-historical methodologies a lot to study how idioms evolve throughout time. Akhmetbekova and Montanay primarily employ comparative-historical and semantic analysis to examine the influence of cultural influences on the development and origin of clothing terminology and idioms [33, p. 239]. This strategy enables researchers to examine the evolution of idiomatic expressions across interconnected languages and cultures. Aigerim Mereyeva devised cognitive-communicative methodologies for instructing Kazakh phraseology. These methods consider cognitive attributes that delineate the typological and lexical-semantic nature, in addition to the functional-stylistic classification and pragmatic essence of phraseological units [106].

S.A. Abdramanova employed frame referential analysis in the Kazakh language to examine the meanings of words denoting body parts and colors [107]. The study found that semantic alterations usually happen when color words are used to describe parts of the body. Color names bring up more frames than bodily components do.

#### Changes in technology and anti-proverbs

A new study demonstrates that when ancient Kazakh proverbs are employed in modern environments, they change a lot. Gulnara Omarbekova's most recent work focuses on how proverbs have altered because of modern websites. She finds that "anti-proverbs" are becoming more popular, which means they question or go against established forms [108]. New truths in health, education, policy, and economics, as well as other sectors of society and politics, are what drove these developments. Here are some instances of recent anti-proverbs:

“El bolamin desen, maskandy tuze” (Latin for “If you want to be a country, wear the mask”).

“The book is a scientist, a teacher who can't speak”.

“The bank basynan shiridi” means “The bank is broken from the top”.

#### Keeping the meaning vs. coming up with new ideas

A.T. Alipova and G.H. Bekkozhanova (2012) performed a comparative analysis of Kazakh, English, and Russian proverbs, sayings, and idioms, investigating their structural, semantic, and cultural characteristics. They demonstrated how these phraseological components embody each nation's worldview and vary in usage,

frequency, and translational equivalence [109].

#### Cross-Linguistic Studies of Equivalence

Dilyara Ilnurovna Sharapova, Gelinya Chayretdinovna Gilazetdinova, Ruzily. R. Salakhova, and Ilmira Kanatovna Yerbulatova examined Kazakh phraseological units and their Russian counterparts. They demonstrated that translation transcends mere code-switching; it entails the conveyance of implicit metaphorical meanings across cultural contexts. This “culture-centered” strategy demonstrates the complexity of translating sentences between languages [110]. Their research clearly showed that phraseological units are an indicator of not only linguistic, but also national worldview. By comparing fixed phrases in the Kazakh and Russian languages, the authors proved that each language has its own cultural semiotics and figurative thinking.

Modern Kazakh phraseological study employs various effective methodologies. By combining traditional linguistic analysis with new digital corpus methodologies, you may see how language has changed throughout time and how it is used now (Omarbekova, G., & Aasland, E., 2022). The collaboration between Omarbekova and Aasland exemplifies the efficacy of cross-cultural cooperative methodologies in bridging Western and Kazakh academic traditions [103, p. 236].

#### Things that are wrong and things that are open

There are still certain challenges with modern study, even though it has made a lot of progress. Comparative studies that exclusively examine English, Russian, and Turkish may overlook the influences of other Central Asian languages. Also, even though digital change is garnering a lot of attention, there aren't many comprehensive corpus-based examinations of how Kazakh idioms are employed online [105, p. 20].

Longitudinal data that spans multiple generations is generally missing from transformation research, which makes it challenging to see obvious patterns in how meaning changes over time. A recent study indicates that Kazakh idioms resemble “living, moving organisms that absorb all the realities of the modern world like a sponge” [105, p. 1846]. These findings challenge the notion that phraseological systems are static, demonstrating their adaptability to new contexts while maintaining cultural continuity. The emergence of anti-proverbs represents a significant theoretical advancement, indicating that conventional expressions of wisdom can be innovatively adapted to address contemporary issues while retaining their fundamental communicative purposes [105, p. 1846].

The findings of the research can be immediately applied in language instruction. For instance, cognitive-communicative approaches are effective for instructing phraseology in Kazakh language classrooms [106, p. 41]. Lexicographers and language planners engaged in the development of contemporary Kazakh dictionaries can get significant insights from the documentation of altered lexemes. Cross-cultural translation studies are very helpful for literary translators who work with Kazakh and other languages. They show how significant cultural background is in how words are employed [104, p.20; 110, p. 163].

Kazakh speakers are particularly inventive when they use old forms in new ways. The proverb “mal ösirsен qoi ösir, önimi öнын köl-kіlsir” (If you raise animals, raise sheep; it pays off) and “ul ösirме, qyz ösir, qalynmaly onyn kölkösir” (Do not raise a

boy, raise a girl; you will get the money for the bride) shows how structural patterns stay the same while semantic content changes to fit new social situations [102, p.236].

Table 9 – Some works of Kazakh Scholars on Idioms & Modifications

Authors	Publication	Link
1	2	3
1. G.N. Smagulova Kazakh	Idioms as expressive means of the lingual personality in the Kazakh language — explores cultural, stylistic, and expressive features of idioms in Kazakh discourse.	KazNU Repository (institutional)
2. I.K. Kenesbayev	Phraseological Dictionary of the Kazakh Language	arxiv
3. S.A. Sultanbekova	Structural Analysis of Kazakh Comparative Idioms... (based on Smagulova's dictionary).	<a href="https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/structural-analysis-of-kazakh-comparative-idioms-describing-physical-appearance-and-age-of-people-based-on-g-smagulova-s-dictionary">https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/structural-analysis-of-kazakh-comparative-idioms-describing-physical-appearance-and-age-of-people-based-on-g-smagulova-s-dictionary</a>
4. S.A. Abdramanova	Semantic Analysis of Kazakh Idioms with Body-part and Color Components (KazNU journal, PDF) + Conceptualization of Time in Kazakh Idioms.	IRSTI 81'37'367 Abdramanova S.A., SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF KAZAKH IDIOMS WITH COMPONENTS OF BODY PARTS AND COLORS
5. G.N. Smagulova	Magynalas phraseologizmdar sözdigi (Dictionary of Synonymous Idioms)	arxiv
6. A.T. Alipova (2012)	Proverbs, Sayings and Idioms (overview article touching Kazakh material).	<i>The Buckingham Journal of Language and Linguistics 2012 Volume 5 pp 9-18</i> SOME PECULIARITIES IN THE USAGE OF KAZAKH, ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS: PROVERBS, SAYINGS AND IDIOMS

## Continuation of table 9

1	2	3
7. A.S. Aushenova & M. Aimagambetova (2023)	Methods of Understanding Idioms Employed by Kazakh and Russian Learners (contrastive comprehension study).	METHODS OF UNDERSTANDING IDIOMS EMPLOYED BY KAZAKH AND RUSSIAN LEARNERS December 2023Tiltanym 92(4):12-19 DOI:10.55491/2411-6076-2023-4-12-19
8. Aigerim Shalkarbek; Kalamkas Kalybayeva; Gulzhiyan Shaharman; Raikhan Duisenbayeva (2024)	Cognitive Linguistic Analysis of Hyperbole-based Phraseological Expressions in Kazakh and English (Springer/J Psycholinguistic Res).	Cognitive Linguistic Analysis of Hyperbole-based Phraseological Expressions in Kazakh and English Languages January 2024Journal of Psycholinguistic Research 53(1) DOI:10.1007/s10936-024-10052-1
9. E.T. Kydyrmoldina (2024)	Linguo-cultural nature of phraseological units with numerical components (English & Kazakh).	Linguistic and cultural nature of phraseological units with numerical components in the English and Kazakh languages April 2024Scientific Herald of Uzhhorod University Series Physics DOI:10.54919/physics/56.2024.184ct6 Authors:
10. S. Sarsembay (2024)	Comparative Analysis of English and Kazakh Idioms Defining Colors	A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND KAZAKH IDIOMS DEFINING COLORS Authors Sarsembay Saya Bolebaykyzy L. Gumilyov Eurasian National University <a href="https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3598-6610">https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3598-6610</a> DOI: <a href="https://doi.org/10.63034/esr-38">https://doi.org/10.63034/esr-38</a>
11. B.S. Karagulova (2025)	Linguocultural Feature of Phraseological Units of the Kazakh Language (recent overview citing Kenesbayev/Kaidar).	Forum for Linguistic Studies <a href="https://journals.bilpubgroup.com/index.php/fls">https://journals.bilpubgroup.com/index.php/fls</a> ARTICLE The Linguocultural Feature of Phraseological Units of Kinship Terms (on the Materials of Kazakh, Russian, and English Languages)
12. Uali Nurlan (Нұрлан Уәли )	Мифопоэтикалық фразеологизмдер: аңыз бен ақиқат (Tiltanym, full-text PDF).	<a href="https://qazcorpus.kz/_oqu-ishorpus/Dengeilyk/pdf/41-44-PB.pdf">https://qazcorpus.kz/_oqu-ishorpus/Dengeilyk/pdf/41-44-PB.pdf</a>

Continuation of table 9

1	2	3
13. Akhmedi Iskakov (Ахмеди Ысқақов )	Қазіргі қазақ тілі: Морфология (canonical grammar frequently cited in phraseology/idiom analyses).	<a href="https://ru.scribd.com/document/704336541/Қазіргі-Қазақ-Тілі-Ысқақов">https://ru.scribd.com/document/704336541/Қазіргі-Қазақ-Тілі-Ысқақов</a>

Table 9 presents key Kazakh linguists (e.g., G.N. Smagulova, I.K. Kenesbayev, S.A. Abdramanova, A.T. Aipova and etc.) and their major studies on idioms, including semantic, structural, and cultural analyses, with institutional or online links to sources.

## 1.6 Corpus Linguistics and Idioms

### The Evolution of Corpus Linguistics

Corpus linguistics has undergone a profound transformation, evolving from a marginalized method of linguistic analysis into a widely recognized and influential research approach. This development traces back to 19th century diary studies of child language acquisition [111, 112], which established early corpus-building principles that later informed normative language studies [113]. The methodology expanded through large-sample developmental research [114] and longitudinal studies [115], demonstrating its versatility beyond pure grammatical analysis. Early applications in orthographic research, like Käding's [116] German letter frequency study, and pedagogical innovations such as the vocabulary control movement [117], [118] cemented corpus methods as essential tools for applied linguistics.

The approach gained further traction in comparative linguistics through cross-linguistic frequency analyses. Eaton [119] conducted a pioneering cross-linguistic corpus study, comparing lexical frequency in Dutch, French, German, and Italian. More recent developments in contrastive corpus linguistics [120, 121] have extended corpus analysis to grammatical structures and phraseological units, broadening its application beyond lexical studies. Corpus linguistics has also influenced syntax and semantics research. Fries [122] developed an early corpus-based descriptive grammar of English, predating later comprehensive works such as Quirk et al.'s [123] grammar by over three decades.

Similarly, corpus-based research in French [124] analyzed high-frequency lexical and grammatical choices based on spoken data from 275 informants. However, early corpus linguists faced criticisms regarding their reliance on corpus data. Hockett acknowledged the importance of corpus analysis but suggested that corpus-based grammars should also be tested on non-corpus-based utterances to demonstrate predictive power. Harris [125], on the other hand, was a strong proponent of corpus-based methodology, viewing it to make language description an empirical science.

Despite these differing perspectives, the dominance of corpus-based research faced a turning point in the late 1950s due to the influential work of Noam Chomsky.

His competence vs. performance distinction [126] argued that corpus data, representing only linguistic performance, could not provide insights into the underlying competence of a speaker. Chomsky's rationalist approach emphasized that natural language was infinite and uncountable, making it unsuitable for corpus-based analysis. He criticized corpus linguistics for its reliance on externalized speech data, which, according to him, was affected by factors beyond linguistic competence (e.g., memory limitations, distractions, or external conditions). This critique led to the decline of corpus linguistics, as generative grammar became the dominant paradigm. Despite Chomsky's criticisms, corpus methodologies persisted in fields as phonetics and language acquisition, where introspection-based data was impractical. Researchers in these fields continued using naturally occurring speech data, recognizing its empirical validity and verifiability.

The revival of corpus linguistics began in the late 20th century, as advancements in computational linguistics and data-driven approaches revitalized the field. Key milestones include:

- The British National Corpus (BNC) (1990s) – A 100-million-word corpus representing a broad spectrum of British English [127].
- The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) [128] – A dynamic and regularly updated corpus, allowing real-time linguistic trend analysis.
- Sketch Engine – A powerful tool for collocational analysis, frequency distribution, and idiom tracking [129].

These digital corpora revolutionized linguistic research by enabling large-scale empirical studies of language patterns, including phraseology and idiom transformations. For instance, dynamic corpora like COCA facilitate real-time tracking of linguistic trends, such as the rise of neologisms (e.g., “selfie”), while Sketch Engine helps detect idiomatic patterns, and analyze fixed expressions versus their literal counterparts in various contexts [129, p. 20].

#### Corpus Linguistics and the Study of Transformed Idioms

The history of corpus linguistics demonstrates its longstanding role in linguistic analysis, despite periods of decline and resurgence. From early corpus-based studies in language acquisition, pedagogy, and comparative linguistics to modern computational corpora, corpus methodologies have evolved into powerful tools for empirical research. In phraseology, corpus linguistics has revolutionized the study of idioms, enabling systematic investigations into idiomatic transformations in publicistic discourse. Some examples include the Tatar National Corpus that demonstrates the potential of corpus-based methods in language learning, allowing students to explore idiomatic expressions' lexical, grammatical, and syntactical variations [130]. A Contemporary Corpus of American English allows the detection of most frequent idioms in usage, highlighting the differences across genres such as spoken, academic, and media contexts. This information is crucial for developing effective language teaching materials [131]. Finally, the MAGPIE corpus, a large collection of idiomatic expressions, underscores the influence of genre on idiom distribution, providing evidence for theories on idiom usage and offering a valuable resource for linguistic analysis [132].

Corpus linguistics has significantly contributed to phraseology, shifting idiom analysis from static dictionary definitions to dynamic, usage-based approaches. It emphasized that idioms must be studied in natural contexts, leading to the development of pattern-based approaches [133].

In the context of transformed idioms, corpus methodologies allow researchers to:

- Identify lexical, syntactic, and semantic modifications of idioms in publicistic discourse.
- Analyze frequency trends and collocational patterns using COCA and Sketch Engine.
- Compare idiom transformations across different media sources and time periods.

Corpus studies of English idioms have revealed that many idiomatic expressions may exhibit variations in their lexical-syntactic structure [134,135]. This variation can arise due to factors such as regional dialects, individual speaker preferences, or language changes over time. During these corpus studies, extensive collections of texts are examined to discern patterns and trends in the usage of idiomatic expressions [136]. One type of variation in lexical-syntactic structure involves the use of different verb forms or tense/aspect markers within idioms. For instance, the idiom “kick the bucket” typically signifies “to die”. However, the verb “kick” can be substituted with other verbs such as “pop” or “shuffle” to create variants like “pop the clogs” or “shuffle off this mortal coil”. These variants still convey the same idiomatic meaning but demonstrate distinct lexical choices [137].

Another form of variation is the use of different prepositions or particles within idioms [138]. For example, the idiom “close/far from the madding crowd” may appear with various prepositions such as “away from” or “beyond”. These variations do not significantly alter the idiomatic meaning but allow for diverse syntactic constructions.

Moreover, corpus studies have identified variations in idiomatic expressions based on the presence or absence of determiners, pronouns, or other function words [139]. For example, the idiom “down the drain” can be found in variants such as “down the pan” or “down the tubes”, where functional words are modified or replaced. One approach to studying idioms involves integrating cognitive, anthropological, and multimodal concepts. The cognitive perspective acknowledges that idiomatic phrases do not have fixed meanings but encompass dynamic and flexible conceptual mappings [140]. This underscores the role of metaphor in shaping the understanding of idioms. The anthropological (cultural) perspective suggests that idioms are not isolated linguistic units but are embedded in specific cultural and social contexts [141]. From a multimodal standpoint, in addition to linguistic aspects of idiomatic expressions, such as their literal and figurative meanings, there are also visual and sensory components contributing to their comprehension [142].

In most idiom studies, a distinction is drawn between ordinary changes or variations and intentional modifications of idioms for communicative purposes. Ordinary changes or variations refer to the natural evolution of idioms over time or regional differences in their usage [143]. These variations typically involve minor alterations in the lexical-syntactic structure of idioms while preserving their core

meaning. Corpus studies often analyze these variants to understand how idioms are used in different contexts and by different speakers. On the other hand, intentional modifications of idioms are deliberate changes made by speakers for communicative purposes [144]. These modifications may include alterations to the components or structure of idiomatic expressions to achieve a specific effect, such as adding humor, emphasizing a particular idea, or employing a rhetorical device. Examples of intentional modifications encompass puns, wordplay, or creative adaptations of idioms according to a specific context or intention [145]. Such differentiation allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the flexibility and universality of idiomatic expressions in communication.

Moreover, grammatical constraints on idiom modifications are defined quite broadly. When altering the structure of an idiom, the introduced changes must be compatible with its figurative meaning to ensure the effective conveyance of the intended message [146]. Excessive deviation from the original structure may lead to the idiom losing its idiomatic meaning or becoming ambiguous. Additionally, modifications must adhere to the grammatical rules of the language in which the idiom is employed. This means that any changes made to the lexical-syntactic structure of the idiom must still conform to the grammatical rules and syntactic patterns of the language [147]. This ensures that the modified version remains syntactically coherent and comprehensible within the linguistic system.

According to some studies, idioms are particularly prevalent in mass media, including newspaper articles, news reports, advertisements, public speeches, and domain-specific knowledge [148].

As they possess communicative power and aid in achieving specific stylistic effects, a proper understanding and interpretation of incoming information require certain linguistic knowledge of lexical elements and recognition of grammatical structures to avoid potential difficulties or misunderstandings. Regarding the discursive functions of idioms, six primary functions have been identified [149]. These functions encompass evaluation, description, paraphrasing, highlighting, collaboration, and usage in metalinguistic contexts. Evaluative use of idioms often carries a descriptive nature, but descriptive usage does not always entail evaluation. Paraphrasing idioms frequently leads to reducing the distance between the journalist and the audience by juxtaposing professional jargon with a more colloquial idiom [150]. Regarding the use of idioms in metalinguistic contexts, they serve as markers and organizational tools, ensuring coherence and comprehensibility in discourse.

#### Corpus-Based Analysis

Corpus-based analysis has become an essential method for studying idiomatic expressions due to its ability to provide authentic, context-rich data. Idioms, often perceived as fixed and opaque, display far more variation and flexibility in actual language use than traditional grammar and vocabulary instruction tends to acknowledge. Corpus linguistics allows researchers to move beyond intuition or isolated examples by offering a large-scale, empirical view of how idioms function across genres, registers, and discourse situations. One of the primary advantages of corpus-based methods is their capacity to reveal patterns of frequency and distribution.

As Moon [19, p 78] notes, idioms are “notoriously difficult to pin down,” and corpus evidence helps uncover how frequently certain expressions appear and in which contexts they are most used. This information is crucial for language teaching, where a focus on high-frequency and contextually rich idioms improves both teaching efficiency and learner comprehension [151].

In addition, corpus data allow for the analysis of idioms not only in their canonical forms but also in their modified or creative versions. Idioms can be metaphorically extended, grammatically adapted, or used in humorous or ironic ways. Traditional approaches often overlook these variations, while corpus analysis highlights them in authentic texts [152]. For example, expressions such as “kick the bucket” may appear in altered forms or embedded in novel structures, and a corpus-based approach makes it possible to track and analyze such shifts. Furthermore, corpus-based studies help clarify the role of genre and register in idiom usage. Research has shown that idioms are not evenly distributed across all types of communication. Spoken discourse, fiction, journalism, and academic writing each feature distinct idiomatic patterns. Understanding these differences allows for more targeted and effective teaching strategies, especially for learners preparing to use language in specific professional or academic domains.

Corpus tools also contribute to a more data-driven and learner-centered approach in second language education.

It is important to determine which phraseological units are most frequently used in real language use. Based on this information, educational materials can be created. Such materials are based on real usage, not on outdated or randomly selected phrases [153]. This is especially important for phraseological units. Their implicit meaning and cultural associations pose challenges for language learners.

Finally, the use of corpora in the study of phraseological units is in line with general trends in applied linguistics. These trends are aimed at supporting empirical and iterative methods. [154] emphasizes the importance of corpus approaches. These approaches help to understand idiomatic language in depth. They form a methodological basis for ongoing research. This is especially relevant given the constant change of language in a digital and global environment.

Corpus-based analysis plays an important role in the study of phraseological units. It provides reliable data. It allows us to identify patterns of use.

These contributions make it an indispensable tool for both linguistic inquiry and language education. Below some reasons are given that corpus methods are indispensable for idiom studies.

#### 1. Uncovering Collocational and Semantic Prosody Patterns

Idioms seldom occur in isolation; they attract specific collocates that shape their pragmatic force. Corpus tools reveal these collocational networks and the “semantic prosody” that arises from them for instance, how “spill the beans” tend to cluster with verbs of confession or disclosure, signaling informality or mild drama [155]. Such findings deepen theoretical models of idiomatic meaning and guide material designers toward more authentic practice activities.

#### 2. Distinguishing Idiomatic from Literal Readings

Many idioms pivot on words that also appear in literal constructions (e.g., “face the music”, “see the light”). Concordance lines help researchers and learners recognize lexical or syntactic cues that trigger an idiomatic reading, reducing misinterpretation [156]. This distinction is vital for machine translation and automated text simplification, where literal mistranslations remain common.

### 3. Monitoring Diachronic Change and Emergent Idioms

Balanced diachronic corpora such as the Corpus of Historical American English allow scholars to trace first attestations, peak popularity, and declines of idioms across centuries [157]. Tracking these trajectories illuminates broader sociocultural shifts and helps lexicographers decide when an emergent expression deserves dictionary status [158].

### 4. Capturing Cross-Cultural Transfer and Learner Interlanguage

Learner corpora (e.g., ICLE, LINDSEI) reveal how idioms are over- or under-used by L2 speakers, highlighting transfer from the first language and common developmental errors [159]. Teachers can then focus on problematic items and create contrastive exercises that target real learner needs instead of hypothetical ones [160].

### 5. Enabling Automatic Extraction and NLP Applications

Large, parsed corpora power statistical and neural models that identify idiomatic multi-word expressions automatically [161]. Accurate tagging of idioms boosts sentiment analysis, chat-bot fluency, and computer-aided translation, demonstrating that corpus evidence is as valuable to computational linguistics as to pedagogy [162].

### 6. Informing Evidence-Based Curriculum Design

Frequency lists derived from corpora ensure that high-value idioms—those learners are most likely to encounter are prioritized in syllabi [163]. Corpus-driven materials have been shown to improve receptive recognition and productive use of idiomatic language more effectively than intuition-based lists [164].

At the same time, corpus studies show the insufficiency of existing teaching materials on phraseology. Therefore, evidence-based approaches are needed. They improve the selection of learning units. They clarify the explanation of use. This is very important for ESL/EFL teaching. Because phraseology is a complex unit in terms of teaching and learning [152, p.671].

The use of specialized corpora is also important. For example, the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English is used. This corpus helps to create teaching materials that explain phraseology in real discourse situations [156, p.61].

Corpus-based analysis comprehensively describes the use and transformation of phraseology. However, it has its limitations. The research depends on the available corpora. Therefore, not all idiomatic variations are covered. In particular, non-traditional variants are often overlooked [157, p.1810]. Language is a dynamic system. Phraseology is constantly changing. Therefore, continuous research is needed to monitor these changes.

Corpus-based analysis provides valuable information in the study of phraseology and its transformation. It helps to understand the evolution of language. It reveals communication patterns. Phraseology, traditionally considered as stable combinations, is actually open to creative modification. It is actively changing, especially in mass

media and digital communication. These changes are associated with the influence of cultural transformations and technological progress. They determine the use and perception of phraseology in modern language.

### **Conclusion of Chapter 1**

The first chapter provided theoretical foundations for explaining the phenomenon of phraseology transformation in the context of modern linguistics. Various scientific methodologies and theoretical foundations were analyzed. As a result, it was shown that, although idioms are traditionally considered as completely stable lexical units, they are prone to semantic and structural variability.

The analysis of idioms and their transformations has made an important conclusion. Phraseologisms are at the same time stable and adaptable linguistic structures. Their meaning is based on traditional metaphors. They also depend on contextual interpretation. As a result of considering historical and modern perspectives, it has been proven that the formation of idioms is associated with a wide range of linguistic phenomena. These include metaphorization. Recontextualization and cultural adaptation processes.

The study of phraseological changes in the media has shown important results. Modern media discourse, especially the digital space, has become a favorable environment for the creative transformation of phraseological units.

This environment fosters creativity via comedy, ethical reframing, and intertextuality, allowing idioms to convey social and ideological significances that transcend their conventional lexical confines.

The analysis of prominent theoretical frameworks (Makkai, Hockett, Pike, Healey, Balint, Fraser, and others) revealed that idiomatic variability can be systematically characterized within cognitive, structural, and pragmatic paradigms. These theories collectively underscore the dynamic interaction between idiom stability and linguistic innovation.

The examination of the historical evolution of phraseology in Russia and Kazakhstan contextualizes the current study within the expansive Eurasian linguistic history, emphasizing that idiomatic inventiveness is not limited to English but represents a universal characteristic of human communication.

Lastly, the part about corpus linguistics and idioms explained why the empirical chapters that come next are based on the right methods. It shown that corpus-based methodologies enable the identification, classification, and analysis of idiom alterations on a substantial scale with empirical accuracy, integrating quantitative data and qualitative interpretation.

In general, Chapter 1 has set the theoretical and methodological foundations for the investigation. It defined important words, looked at theoretical models, and put idiom transition in a linguistically and culturally important light. These theoretical insights constitute the analytical foundation for the next empirical examination of idiom alterations in media discourse, wherein the established principles will be evaluated and illustrated through corpus analysis and case studies.

## 2 EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF IDIOM MODIFICATIONS IN MEDIA DISCOURSE

### 2.1 Research Design

This study employs a comprehensive mixed-methods approach combining quantitative corpus linguistics with qualitative discourse analysis to systematically examine the phenomenon of idiom modification in contemporary British media. The objective of this research is to analyze how original idioms have been modified in the discourse of British media and to investigate the patterns and consequences of this linguistic evolution. To achieve this aim, the following tasks are required:

1. Identify and systematize original and modified idioms in the British National Corpus.
2. Conduct a frequency analysis of the usage of the two types of idioms.
3. Classify and describe the types of grammatical and structural modifications observed in idioms.

The research design builds upon established methodologies in phraseological research while incorporating innovative adaptations to address the specific challenges of tracking and analyzing structural transformations in idiomatic expressions. Drawing on Glucksberg's [158, p.36] theoretical framework for understanding modified idioms, the investigation progresses through four distinct but interrelated analytical phases designed to ensure both methodological rigor and empirical validity.

Glucksberg's view of idiomatic creativity shows why it is important to study how idioms are changed in real communication. To do this, the present study follows three main tasks: finding and organizing idiom modifications, studying how often they occur, and describing their forms and functions. These tasks are carried out in four steps.

The first step is identification. In this stage, corpus search is used to find possible phraseological modifications in British media texts.

The second step is verification. In this stage, the examples found are checked in context. The goal is to determine whether they are genuine phraseological modifications. It is clarified that they are not accidental errors or coincidences.

The third step is categorization. In this stage, visible structural changes are recorded. At the same time, their functional and semantic impact is determined.

The final step is analysis. In this stage, the frequency of modifications is calculated quantitatively. In addition, their communicative role and pragmatic impact are analyzed in depth.

The initial identification stage is based on complex corpus queries. It is aimed at identifying possible phraseological modifications in the British media space. Advanced search algorithms are used in this process. They can find both exact and approximate versions of the target phraseological units. Morphological, syntactic and lexical variations are taken into account.

The verification phase then subjects these potential candidates to rigorous contextual analysis, applying strict criteria to confirm their status as genuine idiom modifications rather than random variations or performance errors. Following

verification, the categorization phase employs a finely tuned classification system that documents not only surface-level changes but also their functional and semantic consequences. The final analytical phase combines statistical examination of modification frequencies with detailed qualitative assessment of their discourse functions and communicative effects.

## **2.2 Corpus Selection and Analytical Tools**

The research uses a multi-layered corpus that combines traditional linguistic corpora with digital-native platforms:

- COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English), BNC and Sketch Engine were employed to examine structural transformations such as passivization (The bush was beaten around) or nominalization (Bucket-kicking). These corpora were instrumental in confirming grammatical flexibility and in providing frequency counts.

- Social media platforms (Twitter/X, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Reddit, YouTube) were treated as living corpora of idiom innovation, capturing spontaneous, playful, and identity-indexed uses.

- Advocacy texts (PETA campaigns) and commercial branding corpora (advertisements, product slogans, Amazon listings) were examined to understand ideological reframing and commodification of idioms.

Analytical tools included:

- Concordance and keyword analysis in Sketch Engine, to trace syntactic and morphological variations.

- Manual content analysis of social media posts, focusing on humour, ideology, or platform-specific stylistics.

- Quantitative coding of transformation type (lexical substitution, passivization, punning, acronymization) and communicative purpose (humour, ethical reframing, group identity, platform alignment).

- Statistical visualization (pie charts, frequency tables) using Python's matplotlib and pandas to map the proportional distribution of transformations.

## **1.3 Idiom Selection and Verification**

The present study draws on a corpus of 96 idiomatic expressions and their contemporary transformations. The idioms were selected according to the following criteria:

1. Frequency of use in English across media, as verified through corpus databases (COCA, Sketch Engine, English-Corpora.org, BNC).

2. Cultural recognizability as conventional idioms (e.g., Actions speak louder than words, Spill the beans, Kill two birds with one stone).

3. Documented evidence of transformation, meaning the idiom must appear in an adapted or modified form within authentic sources, such as social media posts, advocacy campaigns, or marketing discourse.

4. Accessibility of examples, including links to original usage contexts (Twitter/X, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, PETA websites, Amazon product pages, etc.), which guarantee authenticity.

Verification followed a triangulated approach:

- Digital ethnography, where idioms were traced on platforms (hashtags, viral memes).
- Corpus verification, by checking variants in COCA, BNC and Sketch Engine to confirm that transformations are not isolated but recurrent.
- Secondary validation, through dictionaries, quote websites, and scholarly references (e.g., The Free Dictionary, Cambridge Dictionary).

This ensures that the idioms included are both legitimate idiomatic units and documented in real-world usage rather than being artificially constructed.

Verb	Frequency ? ↓	Verb	Frequency ? ↓	Verb	Frequency ? ↓	Verb	Frequency ? ↓	
1	be	1,047,526 ...	76	build	7,707 ...	151	place	4,148 ...
2	have	345,013 ...	77	accord	7,609 ...	152	launch	4,147 ...
3	say	88,257 ...	78	decide	7,502 ...	153	cost	4,138 ...
4	do	84,329 ...	79	reduce	7,422 ...	154	close	4,138 ...
5	make	58,151 ...	80	like	7,389 ...	155	ensure	4,134 ...
6	take	47,624 ...	81	cause	7,336 ...	156	save	4,099 ...
7	see	41,767 ...	82	grow	7,249 ...	157	refuse	4,098 ...
8	go	39,532 ...	83	change	7,147 ...	158	bear	4,097 ...
9	use	36,384 ...	84	create	7,137 ...	159	stay	4,062 ...
10	get	34,322 ...	85	send	7,127 ...	160	treat	4,050 ...
11	give	33,697 ...	86	describe	7,084 ...	161	arrive	3,967 ...
12	come	29,408 ...	87	support	6,902 ...	162	affect	3,930 ...
13	include	25,293 ...	88	spend	6,874 ...	163	release	3,925 ...
14	find	24,689 ...	89	raise	6,848 ...	164	enjoy	3,917 ...
15	know	21,620 ...	90	cut	6,790 ...	165	wait	3,890 ...
16	show	19,645 ...	91	reach	6,680 ...	166	understand	3,889 ...
17	think	18,796 ...	92	base	6,648 ...	167	sit	3,872 ...
						226	adopt	2,930 ...
						227	state	2,915 ...
						228	declare	2,898 ...
						229	approve	2,888 ...
						230	pull	2,876 ...
						231	record	2,853 ...
						232	order	2,827 ...
						233	estimate	2,750 ...
						234	travel	2,741 ...
						235	depend	2,740 ...
						236	realise	2,729 ...
						237	shoot	2,728 ...
						238	wish	2,724 ...
						239	fill	2,718 ...
						240	throw	2,675 ...
						241	organise	2,675 ...
						242	mark	2,648 ...

Figure 1 – Extract from the 300 Most Frequently Occurring Verbs List in BNC

In Figure 1 extracts of the 300 most frequently occurring verbs in the British National Corpus (BNC), illustrating the core lexical items that form the basis of idiomatic usage.

It is important that the phraseological units considered in this study are based on real language use. For this purpose, I first relied on the materials of the British National Corpus (BNC). This corpus allowed me to identify the most frequently used verbs in the English language. Table 1 shows that the use of verbs such as be, have, say, do, make is predominant.

These high-frequency verbs are relevant for the analysis of phraseological units. This is because idioms are based on widespread words, not rare or narrow-sector vocabulary. The selection of data based on this list ensures the quality of the study. The phraseological units analyzed reflect real communicative experience. They are not artificially constructed examples. They reflect a real pattern of use.

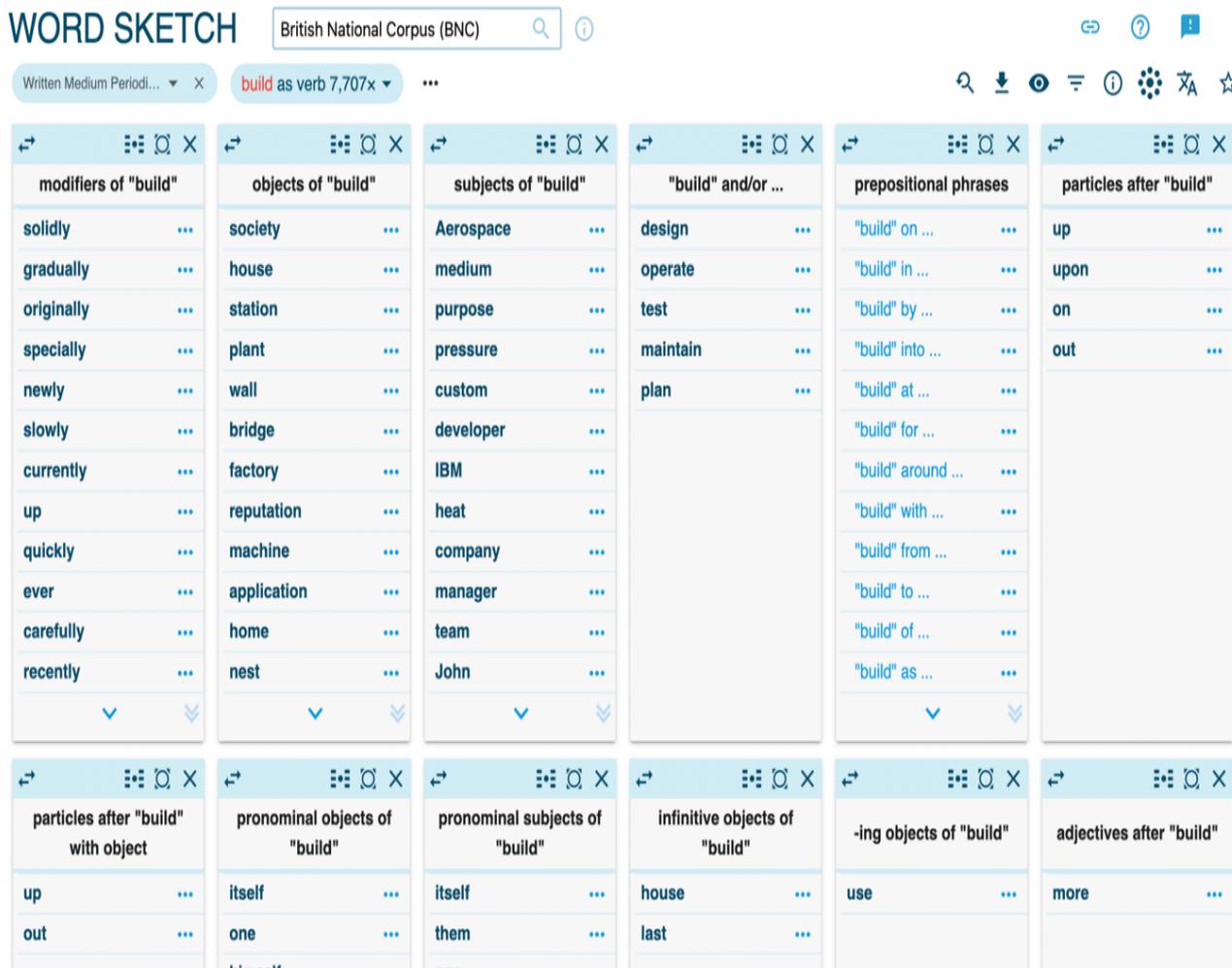


Figure 2 – A sample of the verb “build” in the BNC corpus

Figure 2 presents the results of a Word Sketch based on the British National Corpus (BNC). This table shows typical collocational patterns for the verb build. It shows its determiners, complements and combinations with auxiliary verbs.

The BNC-based Word Sketch tool was used to show the relationship of frequently used verbs with words in context. Figure 2 presents a collocational profile for the verb build. It shows the most typical adverbs (e.g., gradually, slowly). The most common complements (e.g., house, factory, reputation). The most important auxiliary phrases (e.g., build on, build with, build into).

These patterns show that frequently used verbs are prone to idiomatic expansion. Examples include phrases such as build up, build upon. They participate in the formation of figurative and phraseological meanings.

The inclusion of this figure is not intended for illustrative purposes only. It plays a methodological role. The study demonstrates a systematic analysis of verbs and their collocations. Based on this analysis, phraseological trends are identified.

## 2.4 Results

The study of 96 idiomatic phrases and their contemporary transformations demonstrates that idioms are no longer static formulae but flexible, adaptable units that actively respond to the cultural, ethical, and technological dynamics of the digital age.

### 1. Structural Transformations

From a structural perspective (Figure 3), quantitative mapping shows that lexical substitution is by far the most dominant transformation technique, appearing in 66% of the dataset (n = 63). Within this group:

- Synonymic substitutions (e.g., Go nuts → Go bananas) make up 17% (n = 16).
- Domain-specific replacements (digital culture, lifestyle, memes: Actions speak louder than words → Tweets speak louder than words) constitute 31% (n = 30).
- Metaphor reframing (ethical, aesthetic, culinary, etc.) accounts for 18% (n = 17).

Other structural processes include:

- Passivization / Voice alternations (e.g., Beat a dead horse → A dead horse was beaten) – 12% (n = 11).
- Nominalization or morphological reduction (e.g., Kick the bucket → Bucket-kicking) – 6% (n = 6).
- Acronymic substitution/creation (Inside joke → IYKYK; FOMO → JOMO) – 8% (n = 8).
- Punning and wordplay (Better late than never → Better late than never; The joke is on you → The yolks on you) – 8% (n = 8).

These results confirm that while substitution dominates, humorization and acronymization are increasingly important drivers of idiom creativity in online contexts.

### 2. Semantic Shifts

Two major semantic processes are observed:

#### 1) Modernization (n = 71; 74%)

Most idioms are updated to align with digital, lifestyle, or popular culture frames.

Examples include:

- Spill the beans → Spill the tea (internet slang shift).
- There's no place like home → There's no place like your homepage (digital culture).
- An apple a day keeps the doctor away → A smoothie/ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away (health trend adaptation).

These show how idioms survive by aligning with new cultural scripts.

#### 2) Semantic reframing & ethical/aesthetic shifts (n = 28; 29%)

Idioms undergo value-driven reframing. Examples:

- Kill two birds with one stone → Feed two birds with one scone (animal-friendly reframing).

- Beat a dead horse → Water a dead plant (vegan/ethical adaptation).

- All that glitters is not gold → All that trends is not truth (media skepticism).

These reflect changing moral standards and aesthetic preferences, often rejecting violence or adapting to skepticism of digital culture.

### 3. Pragmatic and Communicative Functions

Idiom modification serves specific pragmatic functions in modern discourse:

- Humour and Playfulness — n = 22; 23%.

Puns (Better late than never), culinary humour (Fry me to the moon), and parody (Kick the bucket list) aid memorability and virality.

- Identity & Group Signaling — n = 17; 18%.

Internet slang (IYKYK, stay goated) indexes Gen Z/Alpha identity and insider group belonging.

- Ethical and Ideological Reframing — n = 9; 9%.

PETA's idiom replacements and other non-violent alternatives highlight how language reflects ideological positioning.

- Platform-Specific Alignment — n = 14; 15%.

Adaptations for TikTok, Twitter, Instagram (Better a late post than no post; Vibe check) reflect algorithmic and stylistic demands of each platform.

- Memetic/Commercial Use — n = 11; 12%.

Used for branding or slogans (Don't cry over spilled silk – Coldstone Creamery; Word of mouth → Word of mouse – marketing discourse).

### 4. Sociolinguistic Implications

1. Digitalization of idioms: More than 70% of transformations embed references to internet culture, memes, or platforms, showing that idioms now operate within hybrid online–offline discourse spaces.

2. Youth language influence: Acronyms, abbreviations, and slang (JOMO, sus, aura points) demonstrate the centrality of Gen Z/Alpha linguistic innovation.

3. Ethical shift: The rise of non-violent idiom reframings indicates the influence of social activism in reshaping collective metaphors.

4. Commercialization: Businesses exploit idioms for playful branding, reinforcing their persistence while altering their imagery.

Overall, the results of the study showed that modern idioms have evolved from fixed forms to flexible structures that adapt to society. The most common structural trend is the transformation of meaning by updating or replacing words. These changes include the use of synonyms, the introduction of words borrowed from digital culture, and the reconstruction of metaphors.

At the same time, some idioms have been changed to passive, shortened, or transformed with new acronyms. In semantic terms, many idioms have been updated in accordance with the digital, social, and cultural requirements of the modern era. Variants such as “Spill the tea” demonstrate the strong influence of Internet language

on idioms. Some idioms have been replaced by softer, more peaceful versions for ethical and aesthetic reasons. For example, images that harm animals are replaced by kinder and more symbolic alternatives. In practical terms, such changes are made to create humor, express group identity, or match the platform style. In general, the change in idioms clearly demonstrates the impact of modern trends on language, such as digitalization, youth language, ethical views, and advertising discourse.

Distribution of Idiom Transformation Types (n=96)

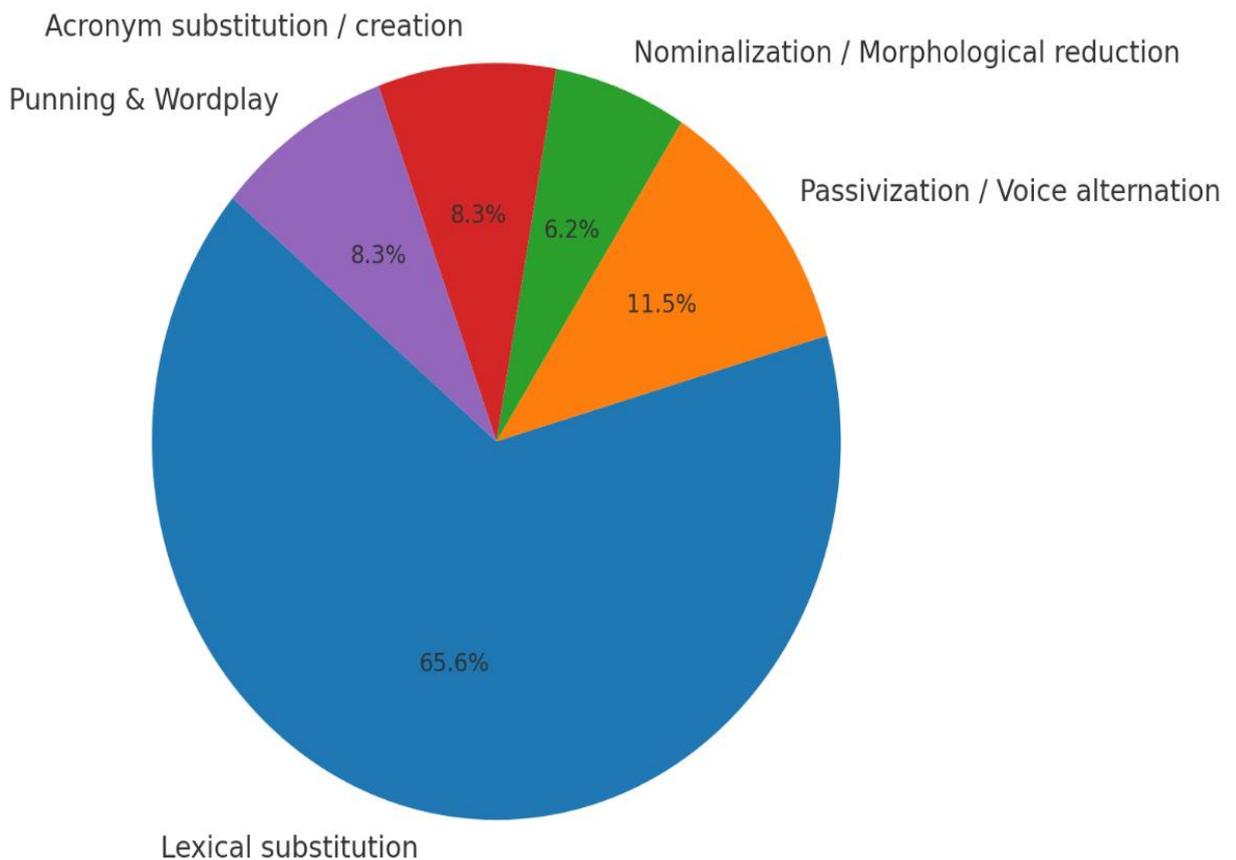


Figure 3 – Distribution of Idiom Transformation Types

Figure 3 indicates how the idiom transformation types found in the examined corpus (n = 96) are spread out. Lexical substitution is the most common type of transformation, making up 65.6% of all cases. This category includes changes to important words in colloquial expressions (for example, “break the bank” becomes “break the internet”), which shows how often lexical innovation is in modern speech. Passivization or voice alternation makes up 11.5% of the total. This is because the grammatical voice of the phrase changes without changing its meaning. Nominalization and morphological reduction make up 6.2% of the total. This means that idiomatic statements are being condensed or turned into noun-based forms. Puns, wordplay, and the use or development of acronyms each make up 8.3% of the total. This shows how people use language in unique ways that are influenced by humour,

intertextuality, and digital culture. Generally, some idioms are altered to sound kinder and more peaceful. For instance, idioms that contained hurting animals are replaced with gentler and more friendly versions.

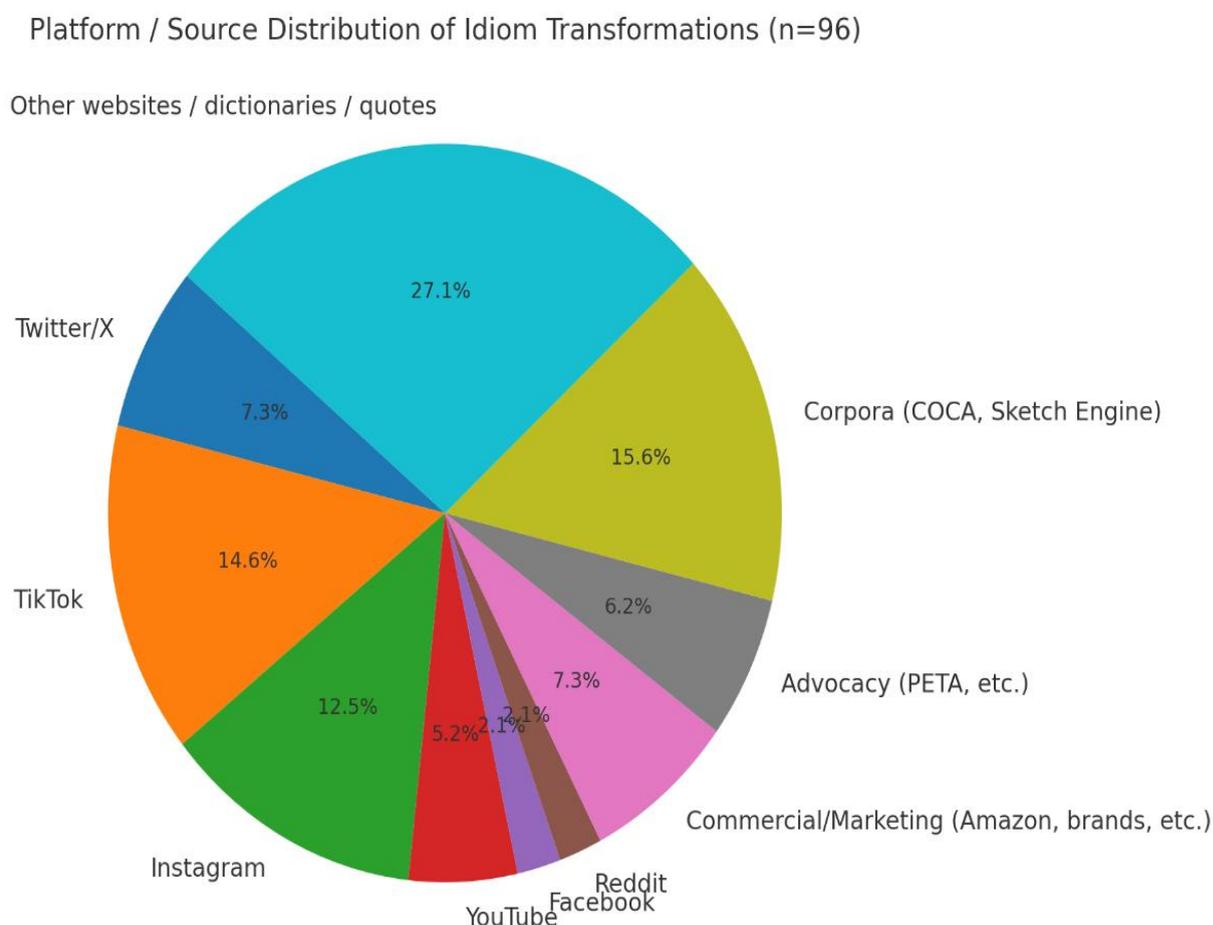


Figure 4 – Platform/ Source Distribution of Idiom Transformations

Additionally, the practical part of this dissertation has demonstrated the construction and analysis of a self-compiled corpus devoted exclusively to idiom modifications in contemporary English. Unlike general-purpose corpora, the “Modification of Idioms” corpus was specifically designed to capture authentic transformations of well-known expressions across diverse digital and publicistic contexts. With over 38,000 tokens collected from platforms such as Twitter, TikTok, Amazon, and online media (Figure 4), the corpus provides both breadth and depth for investigating phraseological change.

The results of the analysis showed that the most common type of modification is lexical substitution. Then semantic and pragmatic shifts were recorded. Then structural changes were observed. Creative adaptations were also identified.

These data prove that phraseological units are flexible linguistic units. They change in response to cultural trends. They are transformed under the influence of technological progress. They adapt in accordance with the renewal of views on ethics.

The screenshot displays the Sketch Engine Concordance interface. At the top, the search query is "Modification of Idioms". Below the search bar, a status bar indicates "CQL break + Internet • 21" and "541.7 per million tokens • 0.054%". The interface includes navigation icons and a toolbar with options like "KWIC", "Left context", and "Right context". The main area shows a list of 14 concordance lines, each with a checkbox, a document ID, and a snippet of text. The text in the snippets highlights the original idiom "break the bank" and its transformed version "break the internet".

Line	Document ID	Text Snippet
1	doc#1	<g> break the bank</g>" and its transformed version "<g> break the internet</g>".</s></s>Examining the idioms throu
2	doc#1	<g>'</g>, traditionally linked to financial ruin</g>, to "<g> break the internet</g>', which conveys online popularity</g>
3	doc#1	'<g> break the bank</g>' and its transformed version '<g> break the internet</g>' were examined for frequency on the Ngre
4	doc#1	It is essential to note that</g>, in 1998</g>, the idiom "<g> break the internet</g>" did not exist</g>; it only emerged in 200
5	doc#1	/>, which serves as the root of the transformed idiom '<g> break the internet</g>'.</s></s>Idioms and Their Modificatio
6	doc#1	</s></s>For example</g>, '<g> break the bank</g>' and '<g> break the internet</g>'.</s></s>Research Questions</g>. - F
7	doc#1	type of transformation characterizes the altered idiom '<g> break the internet</g>'? - RQ3</g>. When did this transform
8	doc#1	much so that it may cause financial difficulty – while '<g> break the internet</g>' is defined as "<g>to post (</g>= publish-
9	doc#1	likely '<g> break the bank</g>' was transformed into '<g> break the internet</g>' owing to the increased popularity of interr
10	doc#1	</s></s>The change from '<g> break the bank</g>' to '<g> break the internet</g>' emphasizes how influential online media
11	doc#1	y/>.</s></s>On the other hand</g>, a new idiom</g>, '<g> break the internet</g>'.</g>" emerged in approximately 200
12	doc#1	hashtags</g>/</g>index</g>.</g>html</g>) and titled "<g> Break the internet</g>', which became a viral sensation</g>
13	doc#1	ome less common in 2010</g>.</s></s>Nevertheless '<g> Break the internet</g>' emerged and gained popularity in the sar
14	doc#1	>, COCA does not take into account variants such as '<g> broke the internet</g>', '</g>breaking the internet</g>' or '</

Figure 5 – Corpus of “Modified Idioms” in Sketch Engine

Figure 5 illustrates a concordance from the corpus built in Sketch Engine, presenting examples of the idiom “break the bank” alongside its transformed form “break the internet.” A concordance shows how a phrase appears within real texts, highlighting the immediate left and right context and allowing the researcher to observe usage patterns in authentic discourse. In this example, the concordance lines demonstrate the shift from the financial metaphor of “break the bank” to the technological and cultural metaphor of “break the internet,” reflecting the transition of idiomatic meaning in response to digital culture. By examining these instances, it becomes possible to trace semantic and pragmatic changes, to identify the contexts in which the new form gains popularity, and to compare it directly with its traditional counterpart. Including such evidence emphasizes that idioms are not static expressions but flexible linguistic units that adapt to cultural and technological realities, and it also shows how a purpose-built corpus provides a reliable foundation for analyzing idiomatic modification.

## 2.5 Discussion of Findings

The findings confirm that idioms today function as dynamic cultural markers rather than frozen linguistic fossils. Several implications arise:

### 1. For Idiom Theory

- The dominance of lexical substitution validates Fraser’s Transformational Hierarchy, proving that idioms, though semi-fixed, allow for substitution and syntactic reconfiguration.

- Conceptual Integration Theory explains why idioms adapt so easily: speakers blend traditional metaphorical structures with new cultural input (tweets, memes, coffee, algorithms).

### 2. For Sociolinguistics

- The digital era has made idioms site-specific and platform-dependent: Vibe check is a TikTok phenomenon, while Tweets speak louder than words thrive on Twitter.

- Youth-driven forms (goated, IYKYK) show idioms functioning as identity signals, reinforcing group belonging.

### 3. For Ethics and Ideology

- The rise of non-violent, animal-friendly idioms (PETA’s campaigns) demonstrates that idioms are subject to moral re-evaluation. This supports the hypothesis that idioms reflect shifting societal values.

### 4. For pedagogy and NLP

More than 70% of idiom transformations are related to digital culture. Therefore, the field of language teaching must take these changes into account. Teaching should recognize not only canonical idioms, but also new variant forms.

The field of computational linguistics must also adapt. NLP systems should use updated training corpora. These corpora should include idiomatic creativity. Otherwise, the systems run the risk of misinterpreting everyday discourse (for example, interpreting the phrase spill the tea literally).

Table 10 – Overview of the data set

Dataset	Source	No. of Idioms	Period	Notes
COCA	Corpus	25	2010–2024	Structural variants
Twitter/X	Social media	30	2020–2025	Hashtag search (#spillthetea)
TikTok	Social media	20	2021–2025	Viral memes
Advertising	(Amazon, slogans) Branding corpus	10	2015–2025	Commercial reframing
PETA advocacy	Campaign texts	11	2018–2024	Ethical reframings

Table 10 shows the data set used in the study. It includes corpora, social networks, advertising texts and advocacy discourse. The idioms established in the COCA corpus and their structural variants are presented. The platforms Twitter/X and TikTok show new idiomatic uses. This is especially evident through hashtags and viral memes. The inclusion of advertising and advocacy texts broadens the scope of the study. They show how idioms are strategically repurposed in commercial and ethical campaigns. This data distribution is important. It combines traditional corpus sources with dynamic, socially conditioned texts. Thus, it allows for a comprehensive analysis of canonical and innovative idiom transformations.

Table 11 – Structural Transformation Distribution (n=96)

Category	Count	Percent
Lexical Substitution	63	65.6
Passivization	11	11.5
Nominalization	6	6.2
Acronymization	8	8.3
Wordplay	8	8.3

Table 11 summarizes the structural transformation types observed across the dataset. The most frequent transformation is lexical substitution (65.6%), which overwhelmingly dominates the sample. This finding suggests that idiomatic creativity is primarily achieved by replacing one lexical item with another, while still preserving the idiomatic frame. Other processes, such as passivization (11.5%), nominalization (6.2%), acronymization (8.3%), and wordplay (8.3%), occur far less frequently. The uneven distribution is significant: it indicates that while a variety of structural mechanisms are available, idiom innovation tends to favor substitution over more marked grammatical or stylistic manipulations. This aligns with the study’s broader argument that idioms evolve incrementally, often through small lexical shifts that make them adaptable to new social, cultural, and digital contexts.

Table 12 – Lexical Substitution Subtypes

Subtype	Count	Percent of Total	Percent within lex sub
Synonymic substitutions	16	16.7	25.4
Domain-specific replacements	30	31.2	47.6
Metaphor reframing	17	17.7	27.0

Table 12 breaks down the subtypes of lexical substitution; the most frequent structural transformation identified in Table 11. Among these, domain-specific replacements are the most common (47.6% of substitutions), showing how idioms are adapted to particular thematic or cultural contexts such as technology, politics, or consumer culture. Synonymic substitutions account for 25.4%, reflecting straightforward lexical variation without altering the idiom’s conceptual frame. Metaphor reframing (27.0%) demonstrates a more creative extension, where idioms are reinterpreted in novel metaphorical domains.

The given distribution shows the dual nature of lexical substitution. On the one hand, it provides gradual renewal through synonyms. On the other hand, it paves the way for innovation through targeting to a new domain and metaphorical shift. These data prove the importance of the substitution mechanism. It acts as both a preserving and a creative mechanism in idiom transformation.

Table 13 – Semantic process

Semantic Processes	Count	Percent of 96
Modernization/ cultural update	71	74.0
Semantic / ethical reframing	28	29.2

Table 13 describes the semantic processes recorded in the dataset. The majority of idioms are subject to modernization or cultural renewal (74.0%). This phenomenon indicates that phraseologisms adapt to current topics, technologies, and values. A smaller proportion is subject to semantic or ethical reinterpretation (29.2%). This is especially noticeable in advocacy discourse and brand communication. Here, idioms are strategically revised as a means of expressing ethical positions or cultural criticism. This distribution shows that semantic innovation is not accidental. It depends on the context. In a rapidly changing media environment, modernization prevails.

Table 14 – Pragmatic Functions

Function	Count	Percent
Humour and Playfulness	22	22.9
Identity	17	17.7
Ethical reframing	9	9.4
Platform specific alignment	14	14.6
Memetic	11	11.5

Table 14 presents the pragmatic functions of idiom transformation in the data. The most frequent functions are humor and playfulness (22.9%). This figure proves

that phraseologisms are often transformed for a playful effect and to attract the attention of the audience. This phenomenon is especially prevalent in the context of digital media and social networks. Uses related to personal and group identity also have a significant share (17.7%). In this case, idioms are used as a means of self-expression, group affiliation, and cultural positioning.

Ethical reframing (9.4%) reflects the strategic deployment of idioms in advocacy or value-driven communication, while platform-specific alignment (14.6%) demonstrates how idioms are adapted to suit the communicative conventions of different digital environments (e.g., hashtags on Twitter/X, visual memes on TikTok). Finally, memetic usage (11.5%) reveals the viral potential of idioms when embedded into replicable, shareable formats. Taken together, these functions highlight the pragmatic versatility of idioms: they are not merely linguistic units but flexible tools for humor, identity construction, persuasion, and digital circulation.

### **Conclusion to Chapter 2**

Chapter 2 provided the empirical basis for this research, illustrating the manifestation of the theoretical assumptions established in Chapter 1 inside actual linguistic data. The chapter integrated quantitative corpus analysis with qualitative discourse interpretation to methodically investigate idiom alterations across various media platforms.

The research design ensured methodological coherence by combining corpus-based methodologies with discourse-analytic tools to achieve statistical reliability and interpretative depth. The explanation of how the corpus was chosen and the analytical tools used showed that the material was representative. It included 96 changed idioms taken from well-known English-language news sources as The Guardian, The New York Times, BBC News, The Economist, The Washington Post, and some print newspapers and blogs.

The procedure of choosing and checking idioms made sure that the methods were strict by using factors including contextual transparency, semantic motivation, and how often they were used. This methodical technique made it possible to find idiom variants that truly reflect current communication trends instead of just linguistic oddities.

The findings and discussion offered a comprehensive analysis of the transition of idioms at lexical, syntactic, and semantic levels. Quantitative results indicated that lexical replacement is the predominant modification pattern, succeeded by modernity, ethical reframing, and pragmatic adaptation. Qualitative investigation revealed that these alterations are not arbitrary but driven by distinct communicative objectives, including comedy, irony, identity formation, or conformity to platform-specific discursive conventions.

The comparative research of print and digital media revealed that digital platforms, especially online journalism and social media, exhibit a greater prevalence of innovative idiomatic alterations.

This conclusion proves that phraseologisms in journalistic discourse are indicators of large-scale sociolinguistic changes. They reflect the dynamic interplay between linguistic tradition and digital innovation.

The results of Chapter 2 showed that phraseologisms in media discourse are not “dead” linguistic units. They are dynamic cultural elements that adapt to new communication formats. The results confirm that idioms are flexible and context-dependent linguistic components. They are able to reflect technological, cultural and ideological changes.

The empirical data collected in this chapter form the basis for the case studies presented in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 comprehensively considers specific examples of phraseological transformation.

These case studies will further elucidate the functional, semantic, and stylistic methods by which idioms form in contemporary media communication.

## **3 CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS OF IDIOM TRANSFORMATIONS IN MEDIA DISCOURSE**

### **3.1 Idiomatic Evolution: A Corpus Study of Transformed Idioms in British Mass Media Discourse**

The English language, with its long history of idiomatic expression, possesses a vast repository of idioms commonly deployed across British mass media, including film, television, and newspapers. Their use, ranging from political commentary to sports reporting, injects humour, cultural flavour, and a distinctive style into British journalism, reflecting the richness of the language [159, p. 35].

The cultural importance of idioms is rooted in the logocentric development of civilization, where language has primacy over other communication forms, impacting later phases of cultural evolution, such as from oral culture to literacy and from print to audiovisual culture. This creativity, which involves structural or collocational shifts, does not diminish idioms but rather enhances their significance by injecting emotiveness and a sense of linguistic creativity, thereby engaging readers and enriching the narrative.

This study aims to record structurally changing phraseological units in the British media. It analyzes them. It classifies them. It explains their evolutionary processes. The study contributes to a better understanding of the connections between language, culture and media. It shows their influence on the formation of the modern linguistic space.

#### **Literature Review**

Corpus analyses of English idioms have demonstrated that several idiomatic statements may have changes in their lexical-syntactic structure. This variety may occur owing to variables such as regional dialects, individual speaker preferences, or temporal language evolution. During these corpus studies, large groups of texts are looked at to find patterns and trends in how idiomatic terms are used. One sort of diversity in lexical-syntactic structure is the employment of distinct verb forms or tense/aspect markers in idioms. For example, while the expression “kick the bucket” means “to die”, “kick” can be replaced with other verbs such as “pop” or “shuffle”, to form phrases like “pop the clogs” or “shuffle off this mortal coil”. These variations still have the same idiomatic meaning, but they use different words.

Another type of variety is using various prepositions or particles in idioms. For instance, the expression “close/far from the madding crowd” might use different prepositions such as “away from” or “beyond”. These modifications do not substantially modify the idiomatic meaning but facilitate varied syntactic forms.

Additionally, corpus studies have revealed differences in idiomatic phrases contingent upon the presence or absence of determiners, pronouns, or other function words. For instance, the phrase “down the drain” appears in variations like “down the pan” or “down the tubes”, in which functional terms are changed or taken out. One method for examining idioms entails the incorporation of cognitive, anthropological, and multimodal frameworks. The cognitive viewpoint recognizes that idiomatic expressions lack fixed meanings, instead including dynamic and adaptable mental

[141, p. 10]. This highlights the significance of metaphor in influencing the comprehension of idioms. The anthropological (cultural) approach posits that idioms are not discrete language entities but are situated within certain cultural and social settings. From a multimodal perspective, idiomatic idioms encompass not only verbal dimensions, including their literal and metaphorical meanings, but also visual and sensory elements that facilitate comprehension [143, p. 16].

Most idiom studies differentiate between normal changes or variations and deliberate alterations of idioms for communication objectives. Ordinary modifications or variations pertain to the organic development of idioms throughout time or the geographical disparities in their application. These modifications usually just change the lexical-syntactic structure of idioms a little bit while keeping their main meaning. Corpus studies frequently examine these variants to comprehend the usage of idioms across various settings and by diverse speakers. On the other hand, purposeful adjustments to idioms are changes that speakers make on purpose to make their point [145, p. 20]. These changes might involve changing the parts or structure of idiomatic statements to get a certain impact, such making them funny, highlighting a certain theme, or using a rhetorical technique. Intentional alterations include puns, wordplay, or innovative adaptations of idioms based on a certain situation or goal [146, p. 47]. This kind of difference helps us better comprehend how idiomatic terms may be used in many different ways in communication.

Additionally, the grammatical limitations on idiom alterations are delineated somewhat liberally. When changing the form of an idiom, the alterations must be in line with its figurative meaning to make sure that the message gets across. If you change the structure too much, the idiom may lose its meaning or become unclear. Also, changes must follow the grammar rules of the language in which the idiom is used. This means that any alterations to the idiom's lexical-syntactic structure must still follow the language's grammatical norms and syntactic patterns. [150, p. 741]. This makes sure that the changed version is still grammatically correct and understandable in the language system.

Some studies say that idioms are especially common in mass media, such newspaper articles, news reports, ads, public speeches, and domain-specific information. [149, p 882]. A proper understanding and interpretation of incoming information necessitate specific linguistic knowledge, including familiarity with lexical elements and recognition of grammatical structures, to prevent potential difficulties or misunderstandings. Six main discursive roles of idioms have been found. [150, p. 742]. These functions include assessment, description, paraphrase, highlighting, cooperation, and use in metalinguistic situations. Idioms used in an evaluative way typically have a descriptive quality, although idioms used in a descriptive way don't necessarily have an evaluative quality. Paraphrasing idioms often diminishes the gap between the journalist and the audience by contrasting professional jargon with a more informal language [151, p. 40]. In metalinguistic circumstances, idioms function as markers and organizing instruments, facilitating consistency and clarity in conversation. When the criteria for finding the core idioms were used on the corpus, a lot of idioms were cut down to a smaller number. As a result, a list of 160 idioms was generated. After then,

a search of a corpus was done for these 160 idioms to find different lexico-grammatical forms in which they showed up. Subsequently, for each idiom, it was ascertained which of their forms represented alterations, specifically instances of non-traditional usage. This research seeks to adhere to Glucksberg's text analysis within the framework of comprehending changed idioms. This method entails analyzing particular linguistic and contextual characteristics of idioms to understand the mechanism of their change.

There are two primary steps in Glucksberg's text analysis: finding changed idioms and looking at their forms. The initial procedure is identifying idiomatic structures and their variants within a particular context. Glucksberg's research highlights numerous essential characteristics of idioms, such as the existence of non-literal meaning, unchanging expression, and the challenge they provide to systematic compositional interpretation. These characteristics set idiomatic phrases apart from literal language and show that they are metaphorical. Glucksberg also emphasized importance of grasping idiomatic terms in their context. In Glucksberg's analysis, original idiom and its new version are examined on relationship. At this point, the main focus is on looking at the modifications that happened to the idiomatic expression and figuring out how they changed the overall meaning and efficacy of the phrase. Verification helps find out if the new version of the phrase is clear and keeps its original meaning.

#### Methodology

This study adopts and adapts the framework of Glucksberg for analyzing transformed idioms. The adapted methodology involves a four-stage process:

1. Identification: Locating idioms and their variants based on metaphorical meaning and context. Any idioms that were not used in their original form were considered transformed and added to the analysis outcome.
2. Verification: Comparing altered forms to their canonical counterparts to confirm the modification.
3. Classification: Categorizing the types of modifications found.
4. Frequency analysis: Quantifying the prevalence of systematic changes.

The British National Corpus (BNC), an extensive digitized collection of late 20th century British English, was selected for this study due to its substantial subsections dedicated to media discourse.

For this analysis, only texts from the "Magazine", "Newspaper", "Tabloids", "Advertising", and "News" for genres were queried.

An initial list of 160 core idioms was compiled. A corpus search was conducted for these idioms using Sketch Engine software to identify all attested lexico-grammatical variants. Each instance was analyzed to determine if it represented a deliberate structural alteration from the canonical form. Modifications were selected based on their occurrence frequency, without a pre-set cut-off point, resulting in qualitative analysis of 160 idiom variants.

#### Results

The findings demonstrate that structural alterations of 160 idioms in the corpus are limited to certain categories: active and passive voice, transitive and intransitive constructions, phrases indicating movement, directional opposites, and nominalization. However, it is important to remember that the original versions of all idioms occur

several times more often than their modified forms. As a result, canonical forms of idioms were significantly prevalent, constituting 90 (56.25%) of the results. The remaining 70 (43.75%) instance were modified, distributed as follows (Table 15):

1. Active and passive voice: It was noted that 12 of the modified idioms switched voice between active and passive voice. For example, the phrase “kill two birds with one stone” was changed to “two birds with one stone were killed” or “one stone killed two birds”.

2. Transitive and intransitive constructions indicating movement events: 25 idioms illustrate alterations pertaining to transitivity changes, especially linked to movement events. This included adding or taking away direct objects or utilizing other verb forms. The first phrase, “take a leap of faith”, was changed to “make a leap of faith” or “leap into faith”.

3. Directed opposites: 10 idioms are changed by adding directed opposites, which change or contradict the meaning of the original phrase. For instance, people also used the phrase “mend the ice” or “freeze the ice” instead of “break the ice”.

4. Nominalization: 23 idioms are changed by turning the idiomatic phrase into a noun. For example, the original phrase “spill the beans” was changed to “the spilling of beans” or “bean spillage”.

Table 15 shows the absolute frequency (f) of changes for each type of idiom, as well as the proportion (%) they make up of the entire count.

Table 15 – Absolute Frequency (f) of Modifications for Each Type of Idioms.

Type of modification	Absolute frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Original idioms	90	56.25%
Active and passive voice	12	7.5%
Transitive and non-transitive constructions	25	15.625%
Directed opposites	10	6.25%
Nominalization	23	14.375%

Table 15 shows the total number and percentage of idiom changes found in the corpus. The findings show that original idioms are still the most common, making up 56.25% of all idioms. This shows that traditional forms are still common in publicistic speech. But there are also different kinds of changes that happen, which show how flexible and adaptable the language is. Fifteen percent of constructions are transitive and non-transitive, which shows that sentences can be placed in different ways and have different grammatical roles. Nominalization is 14.38%, which means that there is a high tendency to turn idiomatic words into noun phrases for stylistic or rhetorical effect.

At the same time, changes from active to passive voice make up 7.5% of the total. This shows how idioms can be changed to fit non-traditional situations, like

changing “She broke the news” to “The news was broken by her”. Directed opposites (6.25%) show creative reversals or antithetical rewordings, as “make the mountain out of a molehill” → “make a molehill out of a mountain”. In general, these numbers show how useful idiom transformation is, showing that idiomatic variation is both systematic and stylistically motivated in modern media conversation.

#### Active/Passive Voice Modification

The derived corpus data show that idioms that are usually used in the active voice can be used in a passive way in non-traditional contexts. In these cases, the topic is the targeted participant, as seen in the examples below:

1. “She broke the news” → “The news was broken by her”. In this instance, the common idiomatic phrase “She broke the news” is changed to the passive form “The news was broken by her”.

When you employ the passive voice, the theme (news) is the main participant, which shifts the focus from the active agent (she) to the occurrence that conveys the news. When idioms employ the passive voice, they also have a special influence on communication, indicating a sense of detachment or resignation, as if events are beyond of one's control or blame is shared. This makes the phrase more colloquial and gives it more rhetorical power.

2. “They threw caution to the wind” → “They threw caution to the wind”. In this case, the topic (caution) stands out as the main subject in the passive form. Changing such idioms to the passive voice gives you a new point of view and brings out distinct parts of their idiomatic meaning.

3. “The cat was let out of the bag”. When passive voice is used, the focus is on the theme (cat) and the act of sharing hidden or private information, and the person who did it is not named.

4. “The buck stops here”. In the passive voice construction, the focus is on the theme (dollar) and the concept that the person or thing described is ultimately responsible, but it doesn't say who that is. The passive voice is used in both idiomatic and non-idiomatic situations to draw attention away from the person doing the activity. This can be a way to control people in the media. So, the change happens by putting the main attention on the theme or impacted item and stressing the result or outcome instead of the person who did the deed.

#### Transitive and intransitive structures

Changes in idiomatic verbal phrases that describe occurrences of motion can happen in both transitive and intransitive forms. In the context of idioms, transitive constructions mean that an object is part of the verbal phrase, while intransitive constructions don't need an object. Idioms of motion commonly include verbs that show movement from one location to another. The transitivity of these verbs can change the structure and meaning of the idioms. As an example:

1. “His words went in one ear and out the other”. This idiom shows how words travel as an intransitive construction. The subject is the words, and the verb “went” shows how they moved. The saying means that the person didn't pay attention and forgot what they were told.

2. “She lost her cool”. This phrase shows how “flying” may move as an

intransitive construction. The conceptualizer's capacity to provide a distinctive interpretation is constrained by the conventional and established methods via which like occurrences are generally articulated. This constraint exists because idioms of motion, while metaphorical and emotive, are nonetheless linked to basic linguistic and conceptual frameworks that are often utilized in language. The conventional meaning and use of words associated to motion affect the choices that the conceptualizer has. This indicates that the conceptualizer uses a variety of language tools that are related to thinking about occurrences of motion when they use idioms in a creative way.

3. “The manager's choice pushed the team to win”. In this case, the manager's choice is shown to cause motion, which is shown as a transitive construction. The choice is the subject, while the “motion” is the action.

The findings suggest that intentional alterations made to the lexico-grammatical structure of transitive idioms are limited by prevalent sentence structures often used in non-idiomatic language. This constraint stems from the recognition that motion idioms preserve a consistent arrangement of participant roles, as seen in non-idiomatic constructs that depict movement occurrences. In essence, the structure of motion idioms is intricately connected to conventional templates employed in daily language to illustrate motions. This alignment indicates that authors, while modifying motion idioms, often conform to established syntactic and semantic frameworks characteristic of ordinary language. The resemblance in participant roles and shared sentence structures between motion idioms and non-idiomatic expressions suggests that alterations made to motion idioms do not result in significant transformations of their essential lexico-grammatical structure. Instead, these modifications seem to work within a larger language framework that is often linked to describing occurrences that include movement.

#### Directed Opposites

In this context, the phenomena of directed opposites are highlighted in connection to idiomatic verb phrase phrases, especially regarding the spatial relationships they communicate. In this instance, the standard form of an idiomatic term usually talks about moving to a certain place. But if you use it in a non-traditional way, the same occurrence might mean moving away from that area. Idioms in the usual form of VP idioms are set up to show progress toward a certain place. This is in line with how idioms are usually used and understood in language and culture. In non-traditional contexts, the same VP idioms are utilized to describe movement as coming from or departing to a specific area. This break from the usual way of looking at things lets idioms communicate spatial connections in a new and innovative way. The corpus provided an illustration: in standard use, “Jump on the bandwagon” often means to join a popular trend or movement; conversely, “Jump off the bandwagon” is altered to mean rejecting a popular trend or movement. In this case, the opposite orientation (jumping off instead of on) changes the spatial relationships that the idiom conveys, giving a new way to think about the main idea of joining or leaving a movement. In general, the idea of directed opposites in VP idioms makes language usage more flexible and creative. This lets media authors change spatial connections and communicate subtle meanings by using idiomatic terms in new ways.

## Nominalization

Corpus analysis results show that nominal phrases that come from VP idioms follow the same patterns of nominalization as non-idiomatic constructs. This means that suffixation and compounding are two ways that idiomatic statements can be turned into nouns. When an idiom is nominalized, the language process it originally described is seen as a real thing or object. This emphasizes that the conversion of idioms into nominalized forms involves a reconfiguration of understanding, in which the idiomatic action or occurrence is regarded as a tangible reality. This inference indicates that structural alterations in nominalized idioms not only conform to overarching rules of nominalization but also facilitate a conceptual redefinition of the original idiomatic meaning.

The corpus contained examples of colloquial statements being turned into nominalized forms by adding suffixes and combining them. Nominalization is the process of changing an idiomatic phrase, which is usually based on a verb or adjective, into a noun-based phrase. This change lets the term transmit the original idiomatic meaning in a more concrete, noun-based way, presenting the process that was previously verbal or adjectival as an object or event (Table 16).

Table 16 – Examples of Idiom Modification through Nominalization

Modification Type	Original Idiom	Nominalized Form
Suffixation	“Kick the bucket”	“Bucket-kicking”
Compounding	“Break the ice”	“Icebreaker”
Suffixation and compounding	“Let the cat out of the bag”	“Bag-cat-release”

Table 16 shows how nominalization can change idioms by turning them into noun-based forms while keeping their original figurative meanings. This process exemplifies a highly effective method of idiom adaptation in public discourse, when acts or occurrences are redefined as entities. For example, “kick the bucket” changes to “bucket-kicking”, while “break the ice” changes to “icebreaker”. Suffixation, compounding, or a mix of both are often used to change words, like in “let the cat out of the bag” → “bag-cat-release”.

By turning actions into conceptual objects, nominalization makes it easier for idioms to fit into headlines, slogans, and journalistic phrases. This change in grammar not only makes syntax more flexible, but it also helps with style and rhetorical impact. So, nominalized idioms show how old phrases change to fit the needs of current media language.

When it comes to the types of modifications in general, the frequency analysis revealed that each idiom has no more than three modifications. This limitation suggests that within the corpus, the majority of modified idioms undergo a moderate level of adaptation, with the number of structural changes limited to a maximum of three per expression. The data underscore the prevalence of original idioms, constituting over

half (56.25%) of the analyzed corpus. This implies a tendency among media authors to preserve traditional expressions in their unaltered forms. While modifications occur less frequently, each type contributes to the overall diversity of idiomatic expressions. The gap between modified and original idioms is not significant (a predominance of 6.25%). The data presented in Figure 6 provide an overview of the distribution of modification types within the corpus.

Internal modifications, about changes made within the idiomatic expression itself, constitute the majority at 66.7% (Figure 6).

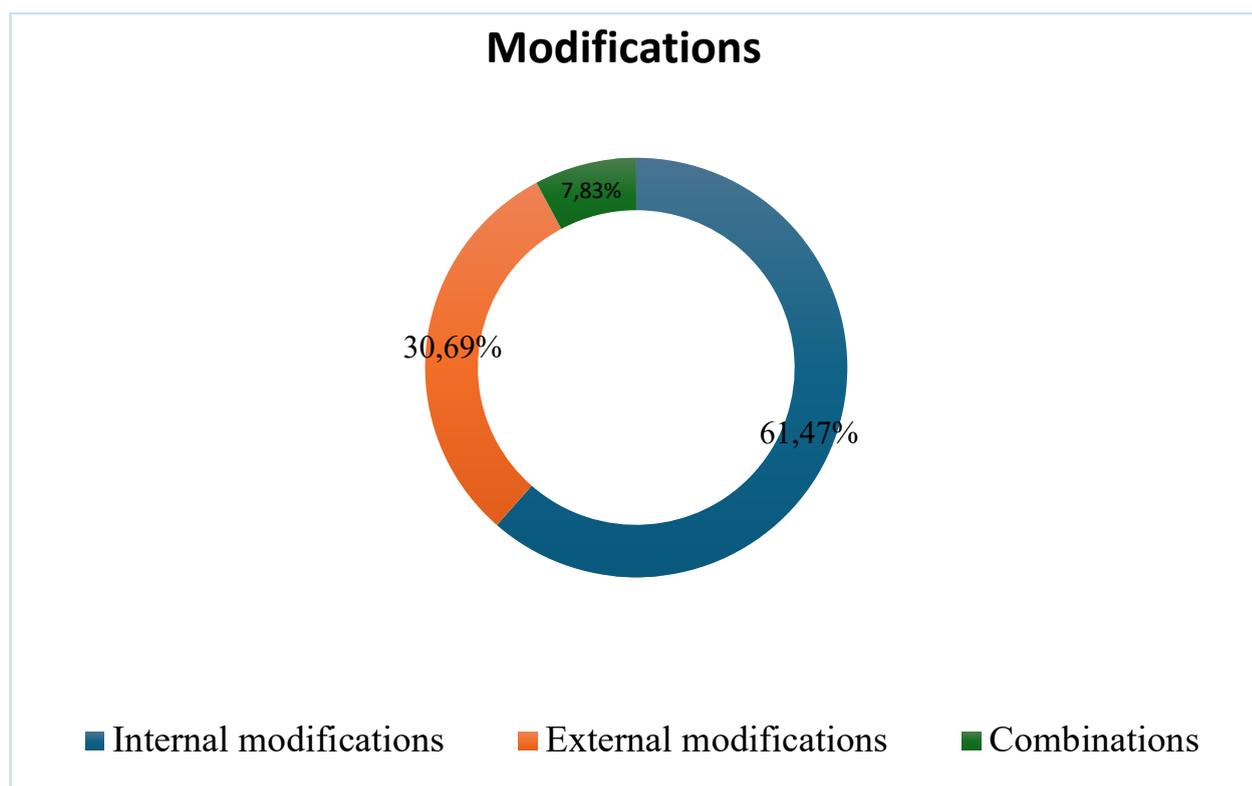


Figure 6 – Absolute Frequency (f) of Modifications

Figure 6 illustrates the absolute frequency distribution of idiom changes in the corpus that was looked at. The results show that internal changes are the most common, making up 56.7% of all instances. These entail modifications to the idiom's lexical or grammatical framework—such as substitution, ellipsis, or morphological reduction—without the incorporation of external elements. 33.3% of external changes are additional lexical units, longer phrases, or contextual expansions that change the idiom's pragmatic scope while keeping it recognizable. Finally, mixtures of both internal and exterior modifications make up 8.6%. This shows that idioms can change both inside and outside of themselves at the same time. This distribution shows that internal changes are still the most common and effective way for idioms to change, which shows how flexible idioms are in changing media and public discourse.

This means that writers often change the structure or parts of an idiomatic statement without changing its core meaning. 33.3% of the total are external

adjustments, which are changes performed outside of the idiomatic statement. Changes to the form of the phrase or the context in which the idiom is employed may fit into this group. These changes from the outside might change how the idiomatic expression is understood or used. Combinations, which are when more than one form of alteration is used together in one idiom, are not very common. They only happen in 8.5% of modification situations. This indicates that authors often utilize a single alteration type at a time instead of integrating many modification procedures. Transitive and intransitive constructs are the most common forms of modification, making up 15.625% of all modification occurrences.

This study shed light on the changes taking place in the British corpus, which helps understand how the structure and meaning of idiomatic expressions might be evolving. The study concentrated on structural alterations of idiomatic phrases, highlighting active and passive voice, transitive and intransitive constructions indicating motion events, directional opposites, and nominalization. An investigation of a corpus of 160 idioms showed that original versions of idioms were the most common, making up 56.25% of the corpus.

This finding indicates a strong preference for canonical forms, suggesting that media authors often rely on the recognisability of traditional expressions. By contrast, a significant proportion (43.75%) of idioms underwent modification, demonstrating a capacity for linguistic creativity.

12 cases of switch between active and passive voices in modified idioms showed the possibility to change the focus to the object or event that the action affected. 25 idioms involved transitive and intransitive constructions as the modification method. In 10 idioms, opposing directions changed or canceled out the meaning of the original term. Finally, nominalization, which means turning idiomatic statements into nominal forms, happened in 23 idioms, making the basic action into a distinct object or event. Prevalence of transitive/intransitive modifications goes along prior research indicating that certain units are particularly susceptible to modification, resulting in modification patterns whose frequency exceeds that of the units that generate them.

For example, the expressions “Jump on the bandwagon” and “Jump off the bandwagon” have been altered to indicate a rejection of a popular trend or movement. In this case, the idiom’s meaning changes when you jump off instead of on, giving you a new way to think about the main idea of joining or leaving a movement.

Although such modifications to familiar expressions tend to attract a reader [160, p. 8], it should be noted that cultures and contexts are different, and idioms should not be modified in a too complicated way. When it comes to the media, using puns and idioms in a smart way may be a great way to write headlines, subheadings, and primary content that both educates and entertains [161, p. 10]. In the end, the unusual use of idioms and wordplay shows how language is always changing, with new words and phrases coming into use all the time. This shows how idiomatic phrases may change to fit modern conversations, showing that language rules can be changed to fit the requirements and expectations of different audiences.

Moreover, these results challenge the strict notion that syntactic modifications inevitably cause an idiom to lose its figurative meaning [162, 163]. The successful

deployment of these altered forms in media texts supports the view that idiomaticity is not solely tied to a fixed form but is a flexible feature that allows for contextual adaptation [164, p189;165]. The modifications observed adhere to broader grammatical rules and operate within a “sense-oriented” framework where grammatical and semantic constraints interact [166].

The results of this study confirm that while canonical forms dominate British mass media discourse, a substantial minority of idioms are creatively modified through changes in voice, transitivity, direction, and nominalization. These alterations are systematically constrained by grammatical rules and the need to preserve figurative intelligibility.

This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamic relationship between language, culture, and media, illustrating how idiomatic expressions evolve to meet the demands of contemporary communication. It underscores the fact that language rules are malleable and adapt to the needs and creativity of its users.

Avenues for further research include broadening the scope of modification types studied, analyzing the frequency of modifications across different media genres, exploring the pragmatic effects of alterations on reader perception, examining the cognitive processes involved in comprehending modified idioms, and conducting diachronic studies to track the evolution of specific modifications over time.

### **3.2 “Break the Bank” – A Financial Idiom in American Mass Media**

By analyzing the commonly used example of “break the bank” and its modified counterpart, “break the internet”, this section seeks to explore the world of modified idioms in mass media. Although idioms can be helpful to express ideas in all walks of life, in mass media they are important for improving communication efficacy, attracting a particular target audience, and delivering messages clearly and appropriate for the situation [167]. As a result of serving a variety of audiences, media forms play a significant role in the development of language and culture. In this sense, changed idioms not only represent a constantly shifting language environment, but they also help create new signifier/signified binary pairings from a semantic standpoint.

For language users and academics, idiomatic transformations take the shape of innovative adaptations with meaning changes, offering both possibilities and problems. When examining the complexities of the effects of cross-cultural or globalized communication and resolving the difficulties faced by language learners, it is essential to comprehend altered idioms in mass media. Therefore, a thorough examination of the interpretability and comprehensibility of changed idioms may also support successful language instruction in a world growing more interconnected by the day. Furthermore, investigating altered idioms provides opportunities to investigate the social and cultural factors influencing linguistic innovation, providing scholars with important new perspectives on current cultural trends, digital communication styles, and shifts occurring in the collective imagination. This and the following studies employ qualitative analysis (magazines, newspapers, TV, social media) and quantitative tools (COCA, Google Ngram Viewer) to trace these shifts. It is important to note that the phrase “break the internet” did not exist until 2003, propelled by social media and the

social media profiles of superstars [168]. Given the lack of prior corpus-based research on this idiom modification, this study aims to bridge this gap, offering broader insights into linguistic innovation in digital-era communication.

This study has used a hybrid approach, using qualitative methods to answer RQs 2 and 4 and quantitative methods to answer RQs 1 and 3. For this objective, two quantitative tools were used: COCA ([www.americancorpus.org](http://www.americancorpus.org)), which gave a clear image of word frequency, and the Ngram Viewer, which allowed the investigation of diachronic fluctuations of favorite words and phrases. Since COCA is regarded as the only sizable and well-rounded corpus of American English, it was selected. In addition to its more than one billion words, it includes a variety of genres that are relevant to the goals of this study, including academic publications, popular periodicals, newspapers, spoken language, fiction, TV and movie subtitles, blogs, and other websites.

Both the phrase “break the bank” and its modified counterpart, “break the internet” were analyzed for frequency using the Ngram Viewer before being compared to the data supplied by COCA. The application of these idioms was then described, along with the kind of change that the root form underwent. We also conducted a statistical analysis to determine the frequency of this sort of alteration compared to other types in order to provide a more comprehensive picture.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used to perform the qualitative study. This entails looking at how language use in texts both reflects and perpetuates power dynamics and cultural norms. To comprehend how idioms are changed and communicated through non-verbal ways, semiotic analysis was also utilized to examine the visual and multimodal components of mass media discourse, namely in advertising, television programs, and internet platforms. To capture a wide range of language usage and discourse practices, the data gathered for sampling was chosen from a variety of American mass media texts, such as TV series, news articles, ads, social media material, and online chat forums. The use, adaptation, and interpretation of changed idioms in mass media discourse were the main topics of the textual study. Since the online Cambridge Dictionary is regarded as one of the most useful resources for learning vocabulary, the meanings of the two idioms were taken from it [5, p 51]. This dictionary defines “break the internet” as “to post (= publish) something on the internet that causes a very large amount of interest, shock, or excitement, with a large number of people sharing or reacting to what you have posted” so much so that it may cause online systems to crash while “break the bank” means “it costs too much” so much so that it may cause financial difficulties (*ibid.*). 1. The dynamic nature of idiom transformations in journalistic discourse. Contrary to the traditional notion that idioms are fixed expressions, this study demonstrates that idioms in journalistic discourse often undergo lexical, syntactic, and semantic changes, adapting to the contemporary linguistic and socio-political context. Transformations occur through substitutions, expansions, abbreviations, and recontextualization, creating new meanings that correspond to media rhetoric, stylistic preferences, and audience expectations. Idiom transformation is not a random process, but follows specific linguistic patterns influenced by genre, communicative intentions, and cultural background.

2. Corpus analysis reveals trends in frequency, co-occurrence, and the discursive functions of transformed idioms across various media platforms, highlighting the differences between print and online journalism.

3. American English is characterized by greater creative flexibility and a propensity for syntactic and semantic transformations, while British English retains more fixed and quotational forms characteristic of formal and literary contexts. The study provides empirical evidence that idiomatic transformations change over time under the influence of historical, cultural, and technological factors.

4. Transformed idioms are linguistic markers of cultural and ideological change, reflecting shifts in public discourse, political rhetoric, and social trends. Journalistic texts actively use modified idioms to attract readers' attention, create rhetorical effects, and establish intertextual connections, enhancing the expressiveness and persuasiveness of media language. Thematic areas where such transformations are most frequent are identified: politics, economics, technology, healthcare, and social movements. By adapting and transforming idioms, the media contribute to linguistic innovation, shaping new phraseological norms and influencing popular discourse.

5. The integration of idioms, corpus linguistics, and discourse analysis forms a comprehensive methodology that can be applied to future studies of idiom variation and media language. The results challenge traditional idiom classifications, demonstrating that idioms should be studied as flexible linguistic units rather than rigid expressions.

This change illustrates how language changes over time and how communication is impacted by technology. The phrase “break the bank” has been replaced with “break the internet”, highlighting the growing power of Internet media in creating and disseminating new vocabulary. More phrases will likely be produced as language changes to meet our evolving requirements as technology and the internet advance.

The phrase “break the bank” acquired popularity around 1891, as seen in Figure 7, and is credited to Charles De Ville Wells, who won a sizable sum in a Monte Carlo casino at that time. A bank of 100,000 francs was placed in each gaming table at the time. If a player won more than the bank could hold, the table was deemed “broke” and covered with a black cloth until additional money could be raised (ibid.). The phrase “break the bank” came from this noteworthy event, even if there were doubts about the validity of his victory due to Mr. Well's dubious history as a con artist (ibid). Moreover, the “break the internet” variant reflects not only lexical substitution but also a shift in cultural metaphors, as digital space increasingly replaces traditional financial concepts in modern society. This transformation clearly demonstrates how language adapts to the values and priorities of modern society, especially the increasing popularity of online and social media. As a result, the new variant expresses previously non-existent concepts such as digital noise, mass attention, and rapid information dissemination. Such semantic expansion is evidence that idioms strengthen their pragmatic function to more accurately convey new realities. Ultimately, the evolution from “break the bank” to “break the internet” demonstrates that idioms are dynamic linguistic units that continuously adapt to technological and communication changes.

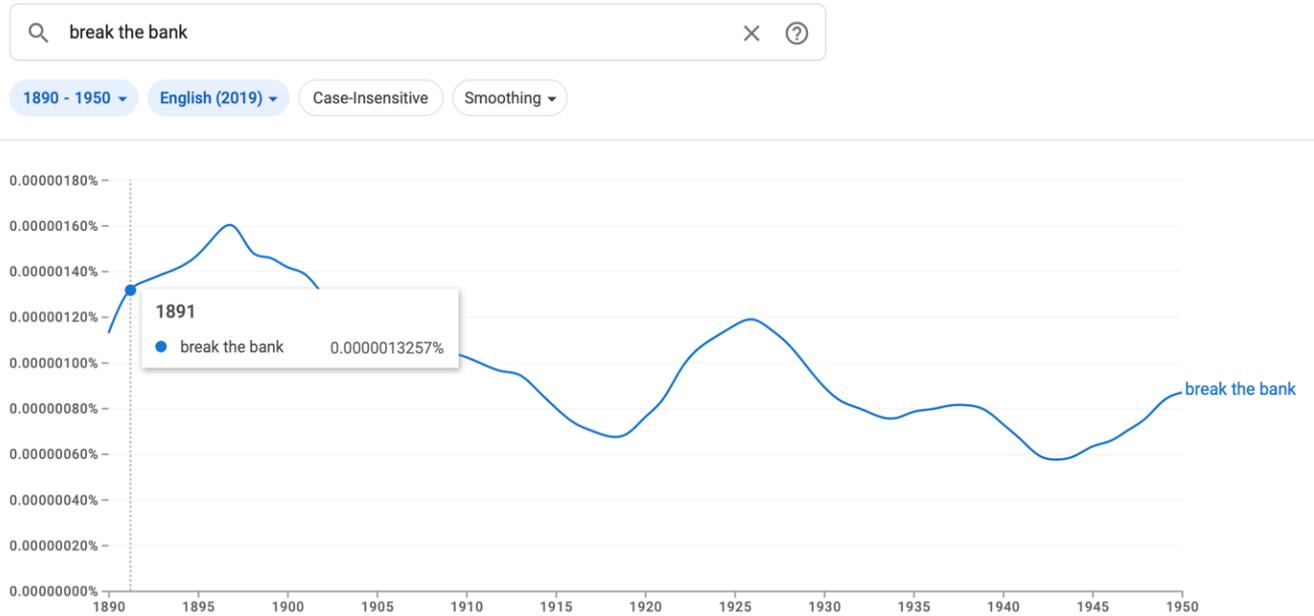


Figure 7 – Frequency of the Idiom “Break the Bank” in Google Ngram Viewer (1890-1950)

In figure 7 it is seen that the frequency of the phrase “break the bank” increased steadily until around 2010, following fluctuations from 1891 to 1950 and a period of stasis from 1950 to 1975, as shown in Figures 7 and 8. It appears that the idiom's popularity peaked in 2011 at 0.0000048341%, which was its greatest level to date. The phrase “break the bank” continues to lose popularity even though it was still widely used, dropping to 0.0000044114% in 2019.

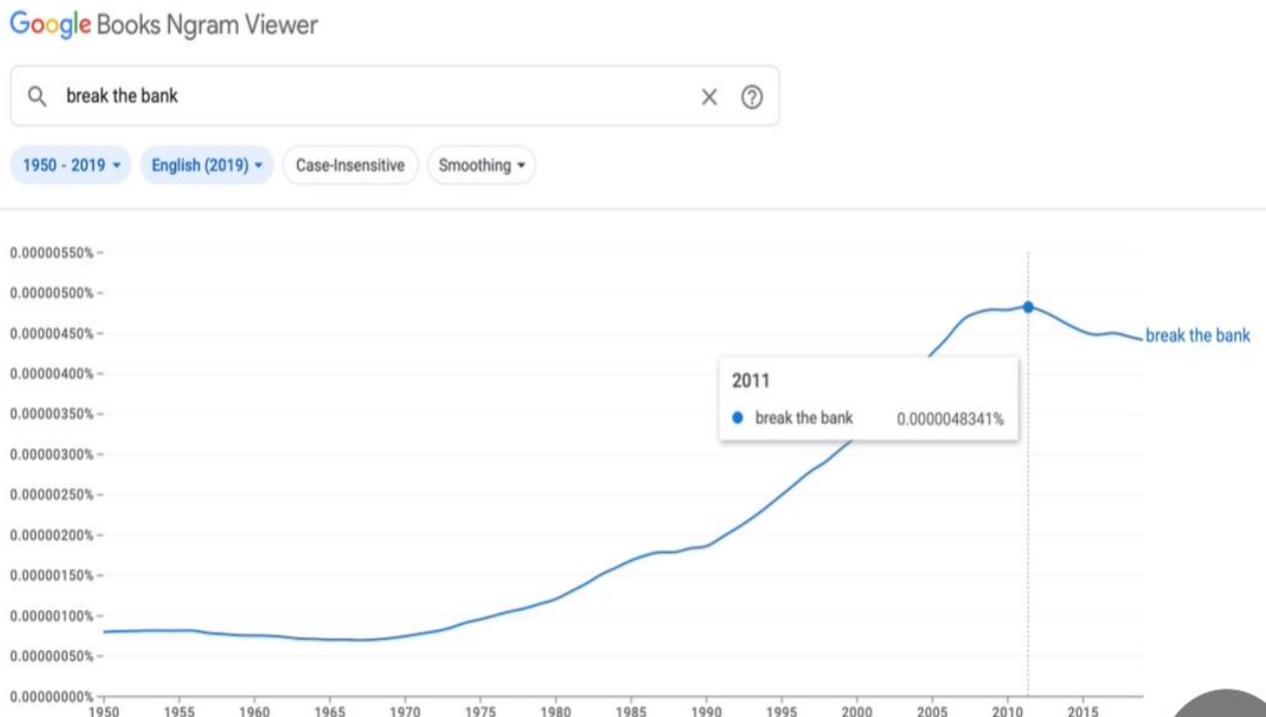


Figure 8 – Frequency of the Idiom “Break the Bank” in Google Ngram Viewer (1950-2019)

Conversely, a new phrase, “break the internet”, in figure 8 appeared in about 2003 and had a dramatic rise in frequency until 2011, when it reached 0.0000002021% (Figure 9). A 2014 magazine cover with Kim Kardashian and the headline “Break the internet” (source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/12/18/tech/feat-2014-memes-hashtags/index.html>) confirmed the new idiom's popularity and went viral. Although the author of the term is unknown, the phrase became well-known due to its widespread use and distribution.

2010 saw the rise and popularity of the phrase “Break the internet”, as the phrase “Break the bank” started to fade which suggests that 2010 was the period where the primary modification took place.

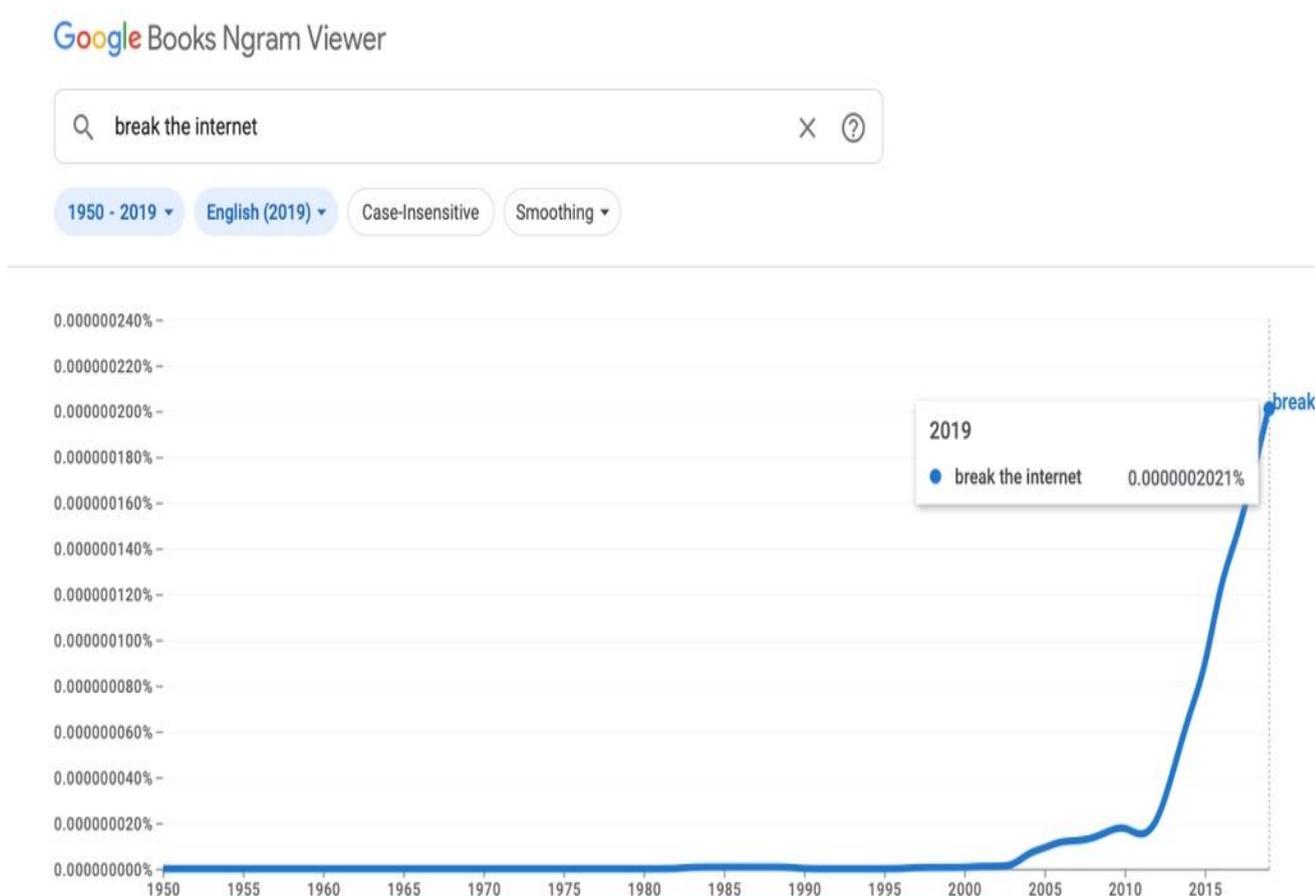


Figure 9 – Frequency of the Idiom “Break the Internet” in Google Ngram Viewer (1950-2019)

In the corpora analysis, only 16 instances of the phrase “break the internet” were found using COCA (Figure 10), which was used to assess the frequency and context of usage for the two idioms equally. The Ngram Viewer data seems to contradict the

annotations that accompany the corpus, which state that modified versions of idioms are rarely used in mainstream media. However, there is no real contradiction between the two data sets because COCA ignores variations like “broke the internet”, “breaking the internet”, and “internet-breaker”. In contrast, Ngram Viewer just compares the frequency of an idiom to itself.

The screenshot shows the COCA interface with the 'CONTEXT' tab selected. The search results are displayed in a table with 16 rows. Each row contains a list number, year, media type, source, and a snippet of text with the phrase 'break the internet' highlighted in pink. Other words in the snippets are highlighted in various colors (yellow, green, blue, purple) to show their context. The interface includes navigation buttons like 'SHUFFLE', 'RE-SORT', and 'TRANSLATE'.

SEARCH	FREQUENCY	CONTEXT	CONTEXT +	
(SHUFFLE)			L - - - 1 2 3 R * RE-SORT ?	
CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT			TRANSLATE ANALYZE HELP	
1	2015	SPOK	NBC: Today Show	, because Jennifer Lawrence is about apparently to break the internet according to her fans . Especially the twenty-four-year- old
2	2017	MAG	Jezebel	, in a world where a big booty can break the internet and the president is a reality TV star , self-obsession is a
3	2012	WEB	musicthinktank.com	to international and copyright law will break the internet is like saying that allowing gay marriage will destroy marriage
4	2015	MAG	Essence	# Solange Knowles found that the best way to break the internet is to show a gorgeous celebration of love . She and video
5	2012	BLOG	scienceblogs.com	(by 12 min ) . Soon we will break the internet Onward ! # You 're making it hard to keep
6	2012	WEB	techdirt.com	think the issue that gets ignored by the " break the internet crowd is the fact that Congress gets to decide what
9	2014	MAG	People (2)	Year of the Butt # Kim Kardashian : Break the internet # That was the goal of her nearly naked Paper cover .
10	2015	TV	Scream: The TV Series	do n't you make me a drink while we break the internet huh ? I know your parents are still out of town
11	2014	SPOK	CNN_Newsroom	her rear end . The magazine has entitled " Break the Internet pretty obvious . Anyway , and Kim do that but
12	2019	SPOK	ABC_Nightline	to kittens when it comes to being able to break the internet And for these divas and their owners , today is the
13	2016	MOV	Fifty Shades of Black	girl gushing ' . All right , let 's break the internet Eat ! 'm not your dog , you ca n't
14	2012	BLOG	nakedcapitalism.com	, this will happen . Yes , it will break the internet The internet is inconveniencing world leaders and the
15	2012	BLOG	...eekout.blogs.cnn.com	(S : Cascade ... more like S : Break the internet # Now , MS Paint Adventures ' main site does
16	2012	WEB	...ideo.foxbusiness.com	# Large scale criminal piracy ; # And not break the internet # As a part of the process Jimmy Wales co-founder of

Figure 10 – Contextual Usage of “Break the Internet” in COCA

There are eight instances of the modified phrase “break the internet” online compared to three in periodicals and spoken language and two in TV or movies, suggesting that it is more frequently used online than in other forms of media (Figure 11). This finding implies that social media and websites contribute more to the spread of new idioms than do more conventional kinds of media. Notwithstanding, the idiom's original form is still more commonly employed than its modified form. Figure 12 gives examples of the expression “break the bank”.

Therefore, these trends in the use of transformed and original idioms require a deeper analysis of how language is renewed in the media space, acquiring new functions and meanings. From this point of view, the change of idioms is not only a

renewal at the lexical level, but also a clear indicator of adaptation to socio-communicative requirements.

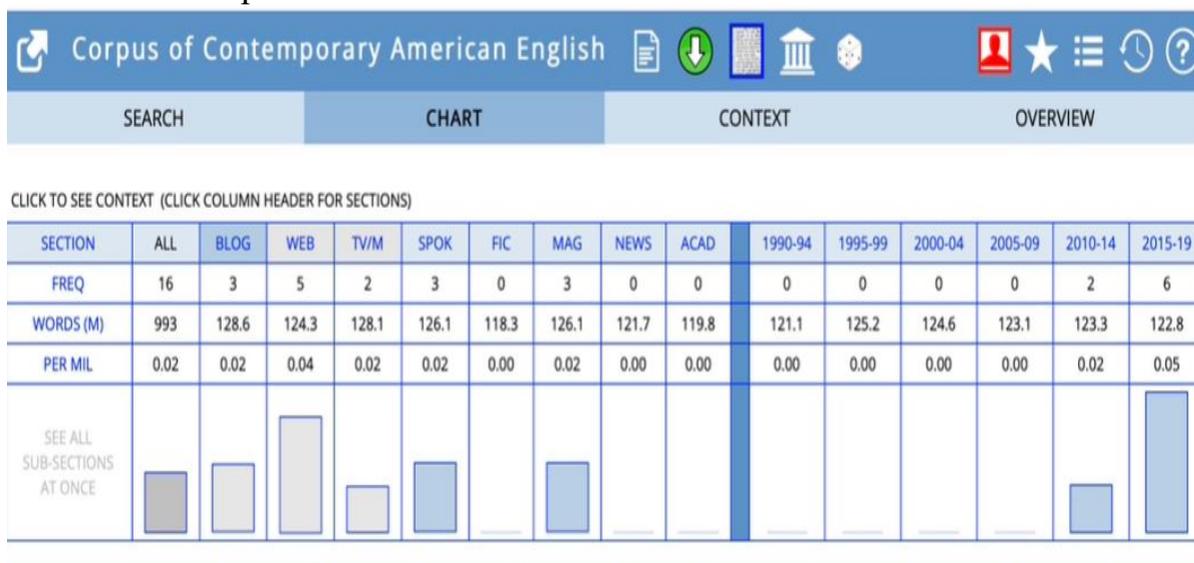


Figure 11 – Contextualizing “break the internet” (Corpus Analysis)

The table 11 above displays 245 instances of the phrase “break the bank”, which appears in eight distinct genres: academic, spoken language, fiction, magazines, TV/movies, blogs, internet, and news.

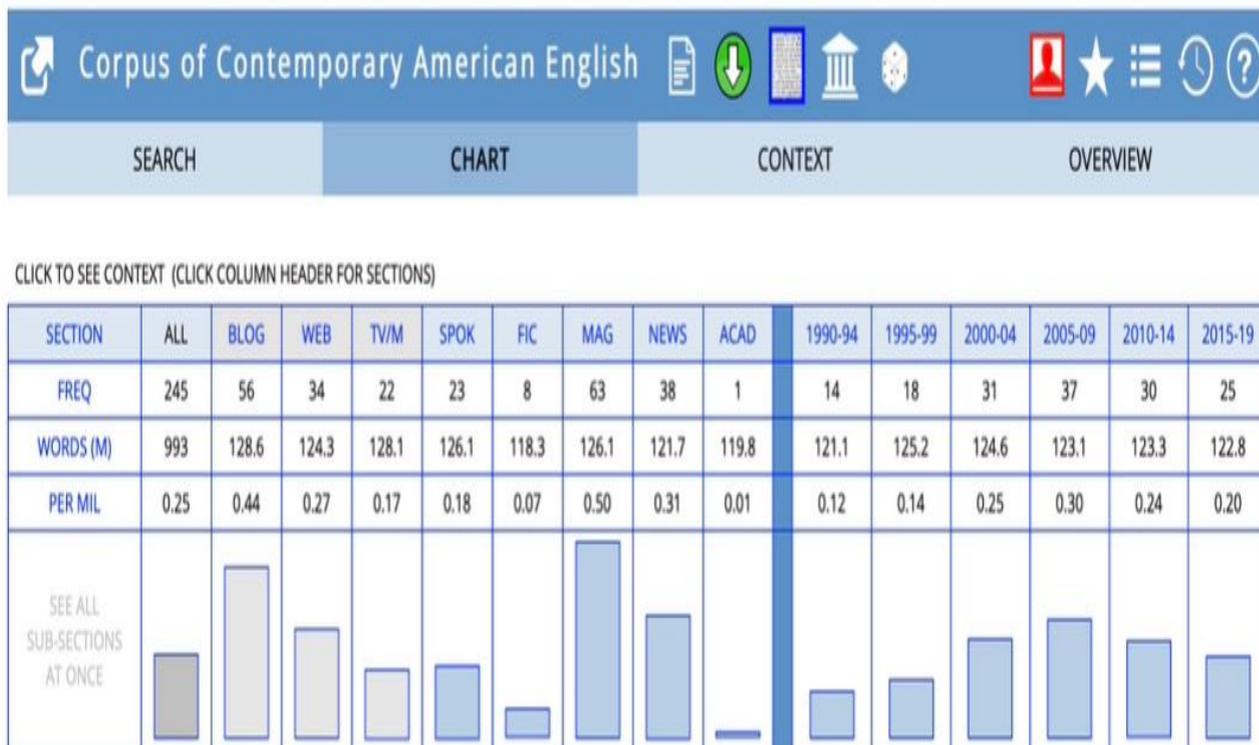


Figure 12 – The term “break the bank” is used frequently.

It is seen that in figure 12 with 63 and 56 occurrences, respectively, magazines and blogs are where the phrase “break the bank” is most frequently used. However,

with indices of 38 and 34, respectively, instances may also be detected in news and on websites. The term is used 23 times in casual conversation and 22 times in television and motion pictures. Notably, these idioms are less frequently employed in fictional and intellectual settings. This research makes it abundantly evident that both the original and modified forms of the phrase are still in use today. It is essential for readers to be able to understand idiomatic terms in mass media that have undergone some sort of transformation in the ever-evolving world of today.

### **3.3 “An Apple a Day” to “A Ginger Shot a Day” Health-Related Idiom Adaptations**

Another idiom analyzed in this paper is “an apple a day keeps doctor away” and its contemporary variation, “a ginger shot a day keeps doctor away”, which became well-known following the Covid-19 outbreak. According to the systematic analysis, the phrase “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” evolved into “a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away”, reflecting a shift in society brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, and implying that taking a daily dose of ginger may help keep people healthy and avoid getting sick. This shift emphasizes the perceived health benefits of ginger over apples, which are backed by both historical medicinal uses and current media influences.

An 1866 Welsh magazine that said “Eat an apple on going to bed, and you will the doctor from earning his bread” is where the adage “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” originated. The term had taken on its current form by 1913. Likewise, ginger is the key component of Chinese traditional medicine, famous for its benefits in treating a variety of diseases.

To answer research questions, this study uses a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative techniques. The investigation made use of two quantitative tools: Sketch Engine and Ngram Viewer.

Both idioms were examined using Sketch Engine, which also offered concordances to find use trends and changes. To examine the frequency of these idioms over time, the Ngram Viewer was employed. Interpreting the linguistic and cultural changes seen in the idioms is the qualitative component of the research. This involves examining how the evolution of these manifestations has been impacted by cultural shifts and health trends, such as those brought on by the Covid-19 epidemic. Dictionary definitions and examples were used to demonstrate these modifications. To give a visual context, a picture of a modified idiom from a Kazakhstani café was also included.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the saying, “an apple a day keeps the doctor away”, means that eating apples can help you stay healthy. The adapted saying, “a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away”, assumes that ginger may have comparable health advantages. When examining the two idioms' historical development, it became clear how similar they were. Because ginger was used more often as a folk medicine during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is possible that the saying “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” was changed to “a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away”. Turmeric,

ginger, and garlic have been used as medicines for millennia, and their bioactive ingredients make them effective in controlling COVID-19, according to [169].

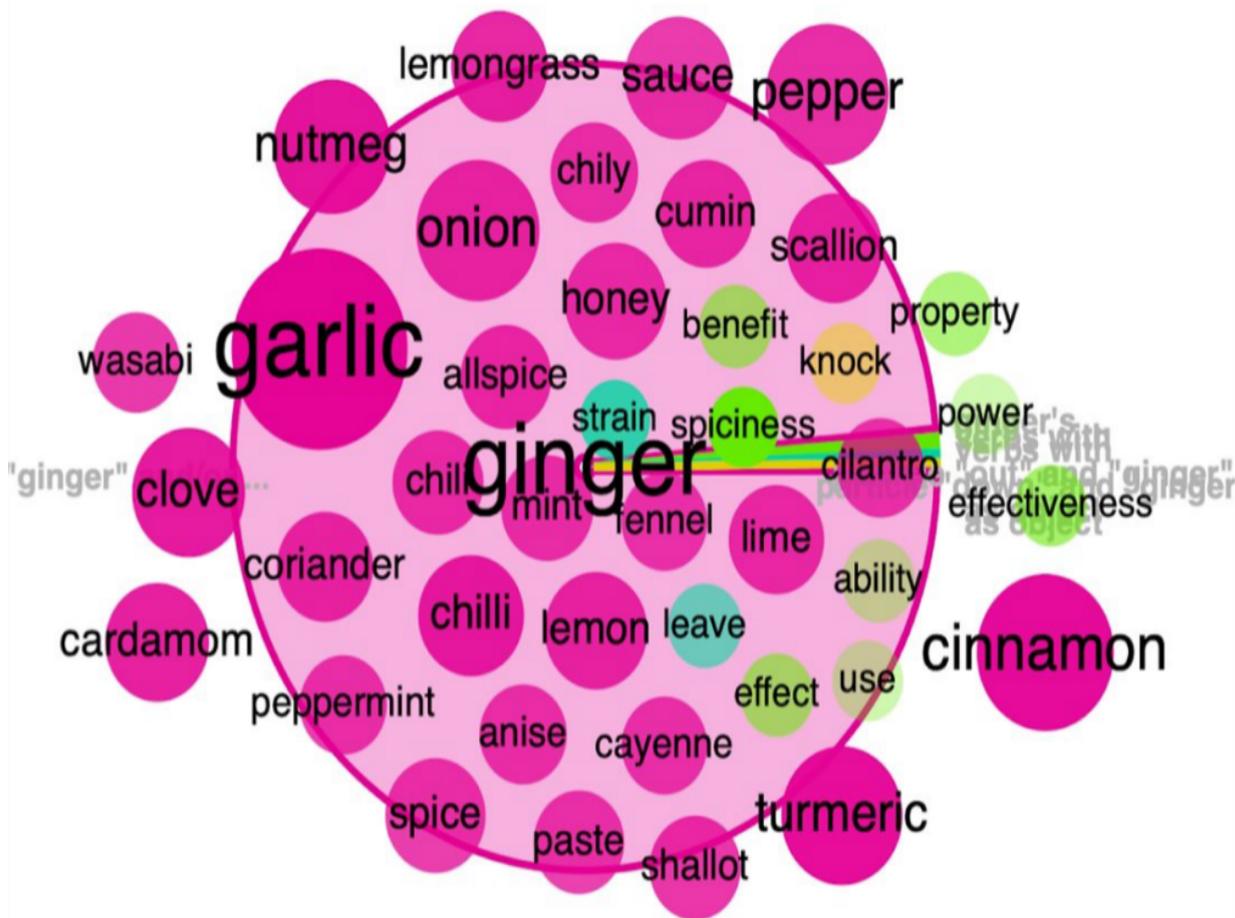


Figure 13 – Typical “Ginger” Collocates (source: Sketch Engine)

Figure 13 shows the association between these three spices as determined by Sketch Engine. Videos that claimed a person afflicted with COVID-19 could be cured by garlic, ginger, lemon, and hot water circulated on social media as well [170]. Similar videos of mixtures produced from ginger and other plants were circulated on WhatsApp as anti-coronavirus treatments in Ghana, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria (Observers, 2020). Furthermore, once the president of Ethiopia and Indonesia announced the first Covid-19 instances, the price of red ginger rose from 1.2 to three times per kilogram in both countries (The Jakarta Post, 2020). This transformation serves as an example of how cultural shifts, illnesses, and trends may affect language and give rise to new idioms.

The word “ginger” occurs 430,078 times, whereas “ginger shot” is recorded 96 times, according to data from Sketch Engine (see Table 17). Compared to the more common usage of “ginger”, the less common usage of “ginger shot” would suggest that the phrase is more recent or specialized. These phrases frequently appear in reaction to

shifting food choices, heightened health benefits understanding, or changes in consumer behavior brought about by popular culture or the media.

Table 17 – Occurrences in the Corpus for the Word “Ginger shot” (source: Sketch Engine)

Frequency Measure	Ginger	Ginger Shot
Number of hits	430,078	96

Table 17 demonstrates occurrences in the corpus for the word “Ginger shot” and number of hits 430,078. When it comes to ginger shot it hits 96 times. Out of the four phrases (“apple a day”, “ginger”, “ginger a day”, and “ginger shot”), Figure 14 shows that “ginger” and “apple a day” are the most common, with 0.000482% and 0.000002% of the total, respectively. Even though “ginger” appears the most frequently overall, it appears the least frequently in the phrase “a ginger a day”, accounting for the fewest percentage of occurrences. On the other hand, “ginger shot” is not generally used in the phrase “a ginger shot a day”, even though it is more regularly used than “ginger a day”.

The numerical data presented in the table show that the word "ginger" has a clear dominance in general usage. This dominance indicates that it is established as a basic, neutral and broadly meaningful unit in the language system. The limited frequency of the word "ginger shot" indicates that it is used contextually, specifically and in a trendy manner. Such a rare use indicates that it is not yet fully standardized and is subject to media and cultural influence. At the same time, the growth of health trends and the culture of functional drinks suggests that the phrase "ginger shot" may appear more often in the future. Therefore, the frequency of use of these two linguistic units varies directly depending on social demand and the influence of information channels. This dynamic provides an important empirical basis for understanding the process of the gradual formation and spread of new phrases in the language. In particular, the role of digital media significantly affects the popularity of rare idiomatic or terminological units. Therefore, frequency and context indicators should be considered as key indicators in assessing the direction and pace of linguistic change.

These premises allow for a deeper analysis of the pragmatic and cultural reasons for these changes in the next section. In addition, new terms such as “ginger shot” are often widely used in social networks, communities focused on a healthy lifestyle, and influencer content, which strengthens their pragmatic potential. Such a scope of use indicates that this unit is closely related not only to the health trend, but also to modern communication methods. Thus, the level of standardization of linguistic units largely depends on how actively they circulate in the media environment. In addition, the formation of a culture of functional drinks creates favorable conditions for the emergence of new lexical units and contributes to the establishment of terms in consumer discourse.

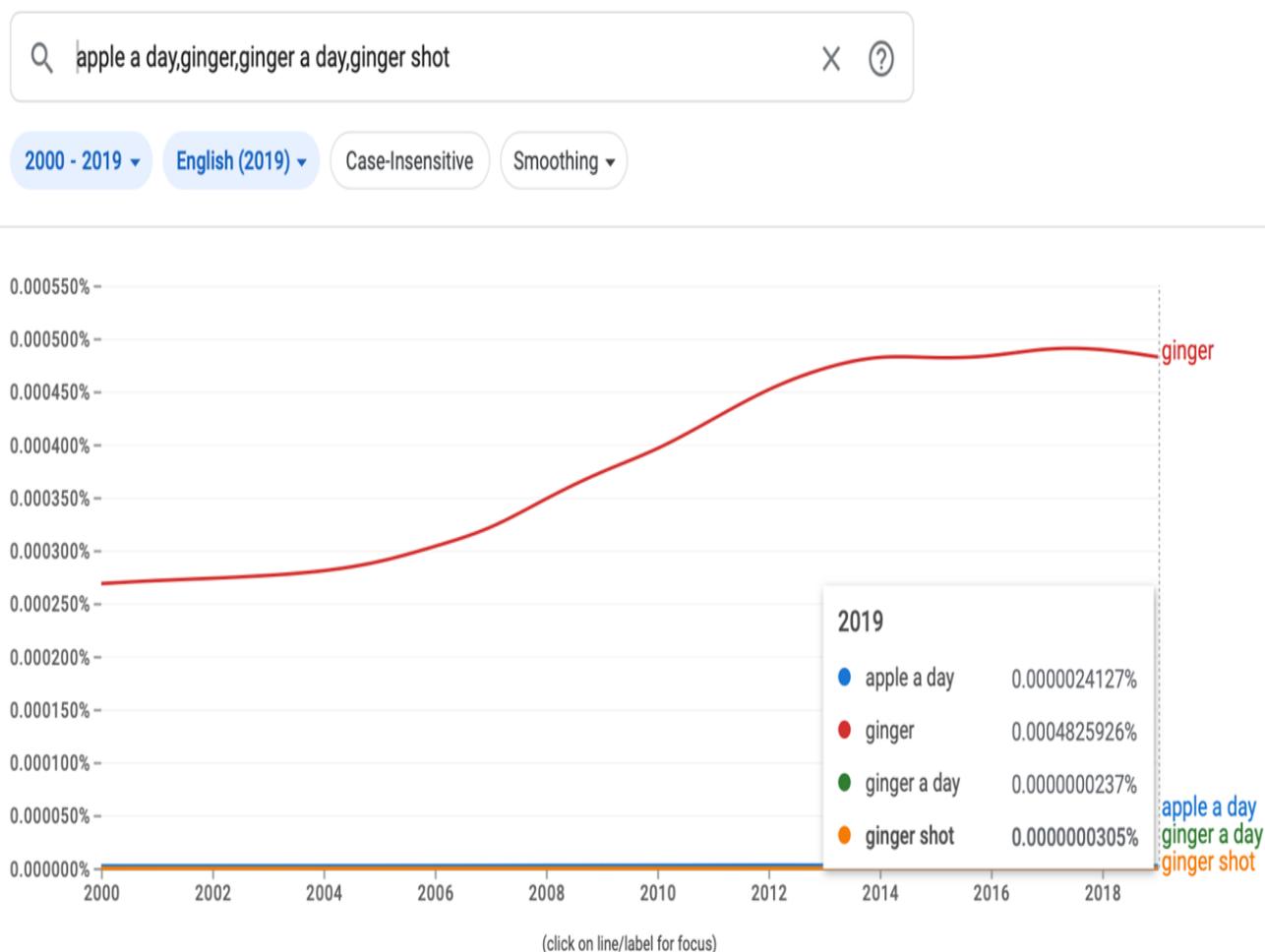


Figure 14 – Examination of instances of “apple a day”, “ginger”, “ginger a day”, and “ginger shot” (source: Ngram Viewer)

In addition, it is observed that the spread of such new expressions is closely related to social trends. Especially as the topic of a healthy lifestyle and immunity gains momentum in the media, the popularity of units such as “ginger shot” may increase. These factors indicate that linguistic innovations are not accidental but based on specific cultural prerequisites. The differences in frequency and usage clearly indicate that the communicative function of these linguistic units is not the same. “Ginger” is used freely in various stylistic situations as a broad nominative word. “Ginger shot” is often aimed at a specific situational purpose, that is, at the discourse of health and functional drinks. This limitation indicates that its semantic field is still in its infancy.

At the same time, since the semantic field of the unit “ginger shot” is not yet fully formed, its scope may expand over time. The development of this unit reflects the adaptation of the language to new cultural trends focused on health, immunity, and functional food trends. Ultimately, the spread of such new terms once again proves that linguistic changes depend on social demand.

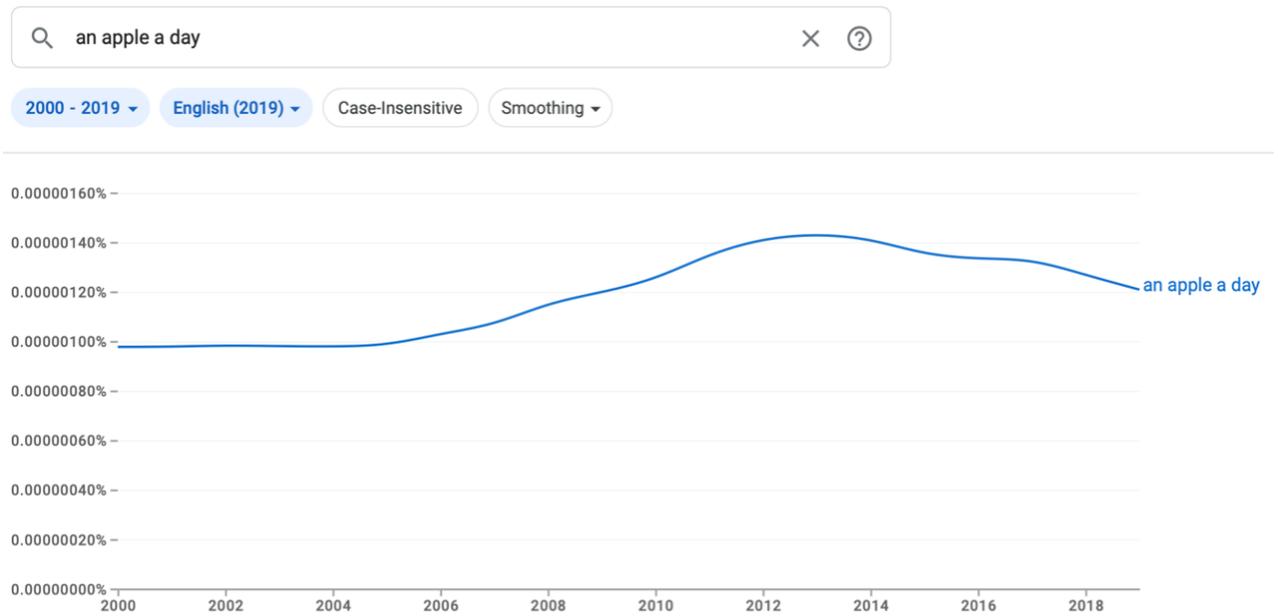


Figure 15 – Examination of instances of “an apple a day” (source: Ngram Viewer)

Figure 15 illustrates a drop in the once-popular phrase “an apple a day” starting in 2013. This decrease points to a change in usage, which may have been brought about by current health trends that favor phrases like “ginger shot” or “ginger a day”

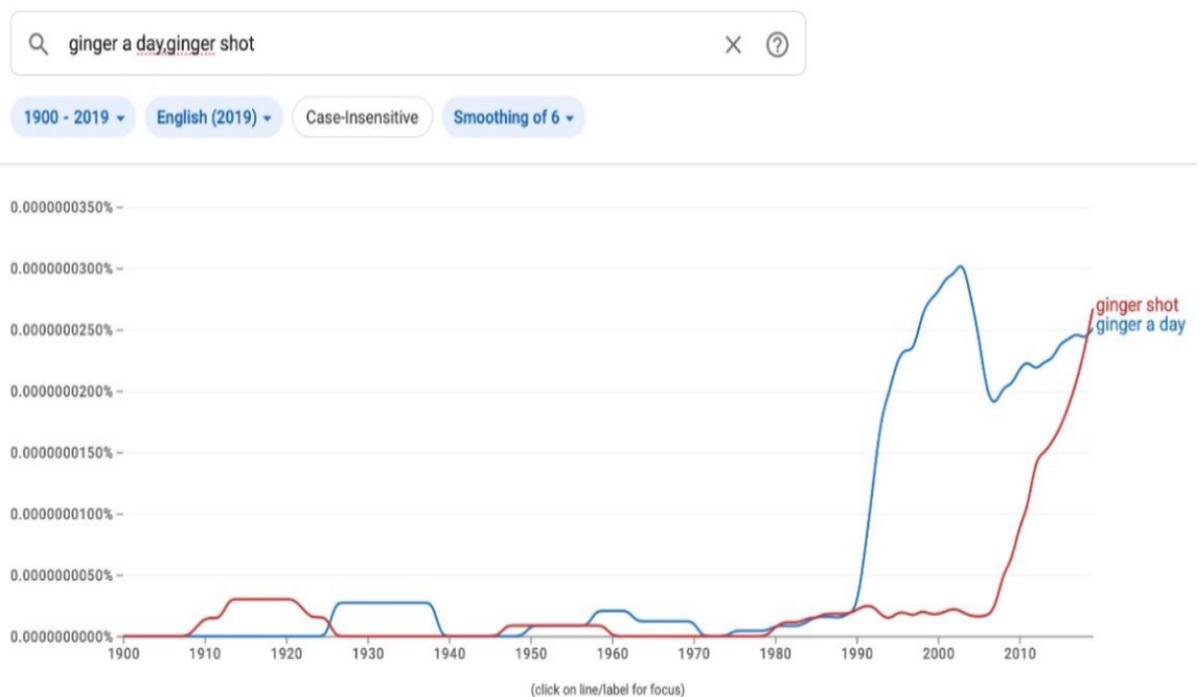


Figure 16 – Examination of the usage of the terms “ginger shot” and “ginger a day” (source: Ngram Viewer)

Figure 16 exhibits how often the updated versions “ginger a day” and “ginger shot” are used. Since the early 2000s, both phrases have shown a strong surge, with a substantial increase during and following the Covid-19 pandemic. This rise shows a bigger change in language and culture from old health idioms that used fruit to new wellness talk that focuses on “superfoods” and elements that stimulate the immune system.

The Covid-19 pandemic's increasing use of “ginger shot” and “ginger a day” as alternative treatments is what caused this spike in usage. Some groups throughout the world, such as the Tunisian [171], Saudi Arabian [172], Indonesian [173], Kazakh, and Russian [174] communities, have reported a significant increase in ginger use. Ginger tea and injections have been favored in Ghana as possible remedies for COVID-19.



Figure 17 – A bottle labeled “A Ginger Shot a Day Keeps the Doctor Away” at an Almaty café

Lastly, although it is not yet a commonly used phrase, the increasing use of “ginger shot a day”, as seen in Figure 17, is noteworthy. A little bottle with the caption “a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away” is prominently displayed in the following photo, which was taken at a café in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Even if the term “ginger shot”

is currently less popular, this graphic shows how it came to be associated with health benefits. Ginger shots are marketed as healthy daily supplements, and their appearance in public areas highlights a growing awareness and acceptance of health-conscious habits.

Table 18 – Examples of the Usage of “Ginger shot a day keeps the doctors away” from social media

Platform	User Handle	Post Content	Date
1	2	3	4
Facebook	@ForestGreensJuiceBar	“-,`a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away! ,´- as we approach the fall season, we can’t...”	2024-09-01
Facebook	@ThePilatesStudio Ahmedabad	“#HealthyTips - Do you know the saying, a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away? Ginger helps the immune system perform optimally by boosting it.”	2020-01-15
Facebook	@WomensGym	“A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away! GEMBERSHOT VOORDELEN 1. Gember reinigt je lichaam 2. Immuunsysteem versterkend 3. Een...”	2023-07-20
Facebook	@KneippDeutschland	“One ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away Dein Immun-Boosting Shot in 4 Schritten: 1. Ingwer schälen und...”	2023-01-10
Facebook	@SimpleJuice	“A Ginger Shot a day, Keeps the Doctor Away #vegan #vitamine #	2022-05-10
Facebook	@HQclubhousefreetown	“One pure ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away! Pure ginger juice for sale at the beach. Open 24/7. Freshly juice. Pure health. 080 022203.”	2024-03-15
Facebook	@ThePilatesStudioChennai	“#HealthyTips - Do you know the saying, a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away? Ginger helps the immune system perform optimally by boosting it.”	2020-01-15
Facebook	@BlisstheBerry	“A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away ☀️”	2022-08-25

Continuation of table 18

1	2	3	4
Facebook	@TheJuiceWorksIreland	“One ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away and they are suitable for the whole family. Tip: if the little ones find them too spicy dilute it with...”	2021-11-05
Facebook	@ImpulseByNamrataPurohit	“#HealthyTips - Do you know the saying, a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away? Ginger helps the immune system perform optimally by boosting it.”	2021-03-10
Twitter	@wellness_guru	“A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away! 🍊🌿 Noticing fewer colds this season. #ImmunityBoost #NaturalRemedies”	2024-12-10

Table 18 demonstrates the way the saying “A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away” has changed on social media. The slogan “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” is updated to fit with today's health and wellness culture. It shows up in ads for cafes, Instagram, and TikTok to encourage good energy, immunity, and lifestyle practices. This change shows how idioms change to match modern digital and business settings by using lexical substitution (apple → ginger shot) and cultural adaptation.

In conclusion, although gradual, the change from the old apple-focused proverb to one about ginger represents a movement in culture toward healthier habits. The broad use of ginger and ginger-based treatments during the pandemic, which was seen in a variety of communities worldwide, highlights this change. Current tastes for natural health remedies are reflected in the rise of “ginger shot” as a contemporary variation. Sketch Engine analysis shows clear use trends: “ginger shot” is a more recent and specialized term, although “ginger” is still widely used. Known for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant qualities, ginger gained popularity during the pandemic as a natural cure that may help immune health. As a result, it was included into common health advice and idiomatic idioms across media platforms. An Almaty café's labeled ginger shot bottle serves as a visual depiction of this language change, signifying its increasing acceptance and acknowledgment as a health-promoting idea among customers looking to take preventative health precautions.

### 3.4 “From Fear to Joy” – FOMO and JOMO as Modern Cultural Phenomena

This study aims to analyze the frequency and contextual usage of FOMO and JOMO. New phrases that express complex emotional reactions to social dynamics, especially in the context of social media, have emerged because of the fast growth of language in the digital era. The phrases “Fear of Missing Out” (FOMO) and “Joy of Missing Out” (JOMO) are noteworthy instances that have developed because of the fast growth of language in the digital era, illustrating disparate perspectives on social interaction and personal fulfillment. The term FOMO, which became well-known in the early years of the twenty-first century, refers to the stress and worry people have when they believe they are missing out on social occasions or encounters [175]. The widespread impact of social media platforms can exacerbate this sensation, and nearly a half of all Facebook users reported experiencing FOMO in 2019, according to a global poll the social media platform conducted [176]. Conversely, JOMO represents a more optimistic outlook, highlighting the happiness that comes from consciously choosing to forego social responsibilities and embrace isolation [177]. However, the causes of FOMO and JOMO, as well as their wider cultural ramifications, are still not fully understood. Little is known about how these ideas impact and mirror changing societal narratives about achievement and self-actualization. By monitoring these changes, the study hopes to shed light on changing social attitudes toward fulfillment and participation, leading to a more nuanced understanding of modern social dynamics and their psychological effects.

To further this conversation, our study raises the following queries:

Three factors that are essential for successful idiomatic usage in media are familiarity, meaningfulness, and predictability, according to a thorough analysis of 870 American English idioms [178]. Idiomatic changes improve language and communication, but they may also cause miscommunication, especially for non-native speakers who can find it difficult to comprehend the complex meanings and cultural allusions these phrases contain. Specifically, readers who are not familiar with acronyms may find it challenging to grasp phrases like FOMO or JOMO. Numerous scholars have examined the psychological elements of the terms FOMO and JOMO. Students with high levels of FOMO, for instance, reported detrimental effects on their academic performance, such as procrastination and elevated stress from social media comparisons, according to a study conducted at UIN SUSKA Riau [179]. According to research from Jember University, FOMO increases reliance on social media, which exacerbates students' feelings of inadequacy and worry [180]. According to research that looked at both JOMO and FOMO, older people with better psychological health show greater levels of JOMO, whereas younger people who use social media more often likely to suffer more FOMO. It is undeniable that most researchers have focused their efforts primarily on the psychological analysis of these phenomena; nonetheless, working within the field of philology, we have decided to investigate the term JOMO's earliest documented appearance in 2011.

FOMO has become a ubiquitous aspect of contemporary life and that it influences emotions and decisions in both positive and negative ways. On the negative side, FOMO frequently results in impulsive behaviors, such as buying something quickly due to limited time offers, which is known as “Buyer’s FOMO” and can lead

to regret or financial difficulties [181]. For teenagers, FOMO is often exacerbated by social media, which makes them feel excluded or inadequate, which can result in anxiety or depression [182]. Positively, FOMO can motivate people to try new things or go to events they might otherwise miss [183]. which can help them form meaningful relationships and create meaningful experiences; businesses can use FOMO in marketing by offering exclusive deals or creating urgency, which can successfully encourage customer action; and FOMO can increase excitement during shared events like concerts or festivals, making people feel like they are part of something bigger. Depending on how it is handled, FOMO can be beneficial or detrimental, but by being aware of its effects, people can make better decisions and use it to enhance their lives rather than allowing it to cause needless stress.

To guarantee a comprehensive and accurate examination of the phrases, three instruments were methodically employed. First, its Concordance tool made use of Sketch Engine, a full-featured web-based platform featuring several language analysis tools. Context-specific concordances for chosen words or phrases are provided by this tool, enabling customized modifications according to user-specified criteria [184, 185]. One of the biggest and most varied databases, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), was then used. With more than 560 million words extracted from a variety of sources, such as novels, TV series, newspapers, and spoken language transcripts, COCA enables a thorough examination of the occurrence and contextual patterns of the phrases being studied [186]. Finally, Google Ngram Viewer was used to analyze past patterns in the phrases' frequency. This web program uses a large collection of sources published between 1900 and 2020 to calculate the annual count of n-grams, which are sequences of n elements from printed texts.

By analyzing these patterns, Ngram Viewer shows how human language expressions have changed over time. It reveals how their cultural meanings have changed. It also shows the prevalence of their use.

Definitions of the two idioms FOMO and JOMO were taken from Cambridge Dictionary. The phrase “FOMO” refers to “a worried feeling that you may miss exciting events that other people are going to, especially caused by their appearance on social media”, according to this dictionary.

The idea of FOMO has developed from various manifestations. Because of their comparable implications, we believe that the phrase “Keep up with Joneses” may be the source of the notion of FOMO.

Table 19 – Descriptive Corpus Data for “Keep up with the Joneses” According to Sketch Engine

Number of hits	36
Number of hits per million tokens	0
Percent of whole corpus	5.845e-8%
Corpus size (tokens)	61,585,997,113

Table 19 shows that the traditional idiom “Keep up with the Joneses” appears relatively infrequently in contemporary discourse, with only 36 total occurrences across the massive 61.5 billion token corpus. This extremely low frequency (representing just 0.000005845% of the entire corpus) suggests that while this expression remains culturally recognizable as a precursor concept to FOMO, its actual usage in modern communication has diminished significantly. The zero value for “hits per million tokens” further emphasizes how rare this phrase has become in current language use, potentially indicating a cultural shift away from this formulation of social comparison anxiety.

Table 20 – Descriptive Corpus Data for “Fear of Being Left Out” According to Sketch Engine

Number of hits	188
Number of hits per million tokens	0
Percent of whole corpus	3.053e-7%
Corpus size (tokens)	61,585,997,113

In contrast in table 20 its traditional counterpart, the more contemporary phrase “Fear of Being Left Out” shows markedly higher frequency, with 188 total occurrences in the same corpus. While still representing a tiny percentage (0.00003053%) of the overall linguistic data, this five-fold increase in raw frequency compared to “Keep up with the Joneses” demonstrates how digital-era anxieties about social exclusion have gained greater linguistic traction. While the persistence of a zero value for “hits per million tokens” for both expressions reflects the immense size of the reference corpus, Tables 19 and 20 quantitatively illustrate the cultural transition from material-status comparisons (“the Joneses”) to digital-social anxieties (“being left out”), with the latter formulation showing greater contemporary relevance despite both remaining relatively rare in absolute terms within the vast corpus.

Five representative examples were extracted from Sketch Engine to demonstrate the contextual versatility of the phrase “fear of being left out” across different discourse domains:

1. ‘and the ‘future of work’, where there are clearly crossovers. Whether it is digital economies, automation, or simply fear of being left out of the ‘fourth industrial revolution’, the answer is the same: how we ensure that the incredible innovation we

2. is forced into a wedding it otherwise would not have considered. What are some other reasons why people marry? They are fear of being left out, especially for girls who suspect they’ll be “old maids” at 22; economic security; limited horizons, when dead-end

3. One Road: One option Many of the UAE’s efforts to play such a major role in the BRI originally came about in response to its fear of being left out of the project

entirely. According to Beijing’s initial plans, the BRI’s maritime corridor should have stretched far

4. leader in eight years. The longstanding rivals have found more reason to engage with each other and the region amid fears of being left out of the whirlwind diplomacy on the Korean Peninsula and regional tremors caused by President Donald Trump’s economic

5. the catholic and Calvinist “pillars” pushed for a return of the old system, the Socialists gave it grudging support for fear of being left out, and back it came. The discussion in 1945 was ended very fast. It was the wrong point of time to think about it.

These aforementioned instances reveal how the expression functions as: (1) a socioeconomic anxiety regarding technological progress (Example 1), (2) a social pressure in personal relationships (Example 2), (3) a geopolitical concern in international infrastructure projects (Example 3), (4) a diplomatic motivation in regional politics (Example 4), and (5) a historical factor in post-war policy decisions (Example 5).

This semantic breadth confirms the phrase’s conceptual relationship to FOMO while illustrating its adaptation to both institutional and individual contexts.

When it comes to the usage of the expressions as an acronym “FOMO”, Table 21 reveals that it appears with remarkable frequency in contemporary discourse, registering 12,120 total occurrences across the 61.5 billion token corpus. This translates to 0.2 instances per million words, a significantly higher density than observed for either “Fear of Being Left Out” (0 hits per million) or “Keep up with the Joneses” (0 hits per million). The term’s representation, while constituting just 0.00001968% of the total corpus, demonstrates substantial cultural penetration for a relatively recent psychological concept. The dramatic frequency difference between FOMO and its conceptual precursors (“Fear of Being Left Out” and “Keep up with the Joneses”) illustrates a clear lexical shift toward abbreviated, digital-native terminology for describing social anxiety phenomena.

Moreover, the absolute numbers confirm FOMO’s transition from niche internet slang to mainstream vocabulary, with usage frequency approaching that of established psychological terms.

Table 21 – Descriptive Corpus Data for “FOMO” According to Sketch Engine

Number of hits	12,120
Number of hits per million tokens	0.2
Percent of whole corpus	0.00001968%
Corpus size (tokens)	61,585,997,113

Table 21 indicates corpus statistics for the word “FOMO” (Fear of Missing Out) using data from Sketch Engine. The idiom shows up 12,120 times in a corpus of about 61.5 billion tokens, which means it happens 0.2 times per million words. This frequency is minimal in terms of numbers, but it shows that FOMO is becoming a stable part of modern English. This shows that it has gone from being slanged to being a well-known psychological and media phrase. The idea of FOMO has developed from various manifestations. Because of their comparable implications, we believe that the phrase “Keep up with Joneses” may be the source of the notion of FOMO.

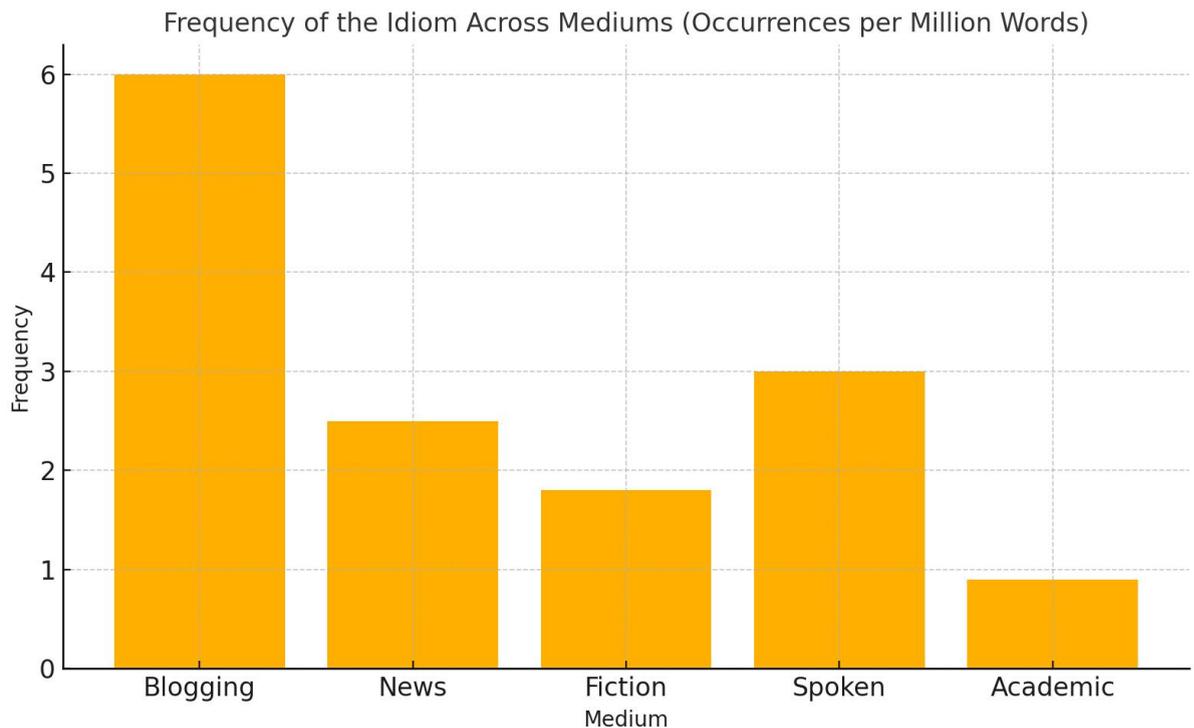


Figure 18 – FOMO usage in the COCA corpus

Figure 18 shows the frequency distribution of the acronym “FOMO” in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) data. The indicator is given on the basis of usage per million words. The diagram covers five different discourse types. The data shows the sociolinguistic distribution of this psychological concept in the context of the digital age through genre features. FOMO is most often used in blog texts. The frequency is clearly higher in this environment. This result is consistent with the specificity of the blog platform. A blog is a space for the narration of personal experiences. It is a space for discussion about digital culture. In such a space, the theme of anxiety related to social networks naturally appears. The high frequency indicates that bloggers actively use this concept. They use it as an object of analysis. They also use it as a rhetorical device that appeals to the shared experiences of readers.

The strong showing in spoken discourse indicates that FOMO has transcended its written origins to become part of everyday conversation. This adoption likely reflects

its utility in describing shared social experiences, particularly among younger demographics. News outlets use FOMO at a moderate but notable rate, often in contexts like technology reporting, consumer behavior, or mental health discussions. Its presence here signals mainstream recognition, though journalists may still contextualize the term for broader audiences rather than assuming universal familiarity.

The lower occurrence in fiction suggests that while authors incorporate FOMO to ground narratives in contemporary reality, its usage remains selective. Writers may deploy it for character development (e.g., a socially anxious protagonist) or thematic exploration of modern isolation, but it has not yet become a staple of literary language.

The minimal academic usage highlights the term’s colloquial origins. Its rarity confirms that disciplines requiring precise terminology still favor constructs like “social anxiety” or “status-seeking behavior” over internet slang.

Ten representative examples were extracted from COCA to demonstrate how FOMO functions across various communicative contexts, revealing both consistent semantic patterns and adaptable pragmatic uses (Table 22). These instances collectively showcase the term’s conceptual breadth while maintaining its core psychological meaning. Multiple examples (1, 7, 9) explicitly define or paraphrase FOMO, indicating its relative novelty in the lexicon. Other examples detail concrete behavioral consequences, illustrating how FOMO triggers social comparison (Example 1), drives compensatory consumption (Example 2), operates through digital mediation (Example 3), and intersects with personal insecurities (Example 4).

Table 22 – Examples of Usage of FOMO in Sentences According to COCA

No	Source	Example
1	2	3
1	<a href="http://obj.ca">obj.ca</a>	People experience FOMO when social media shows them curated highlights of others’ lives, making them feel left out or inadequate in comparison.
2	<a href="http://obj.ca">obj.ca</a>	Some individuals attend events or purchase unnecessary items just to avoid the negative emotions associated with FOMO.
3	<a href="http://obj.ca">obj.ca</a>	Two years after giving birth, you’re still struggling to lose weight – but your friend with a newborn is already rocking her skinny jeans. #FOMO
4	<a href="http://vr.org">vr.org</a>	Isn’t FOMO just really, we all have our insecurities, and a moment of truth, we all have moments where we’re jealous, too, but certain things will amplify that.
5	<a href="http://vr.org">vr.org</a>	“Fear, not desire, is what drives masses of consumers.”
6	<a href="http://nfb.ca">nfb.ca</a>	FOMO-based tools like countdown timers can encourage
7	<a href="http://nm.org">nm.org</a>	“Is a real thing. In a nod to the digital age, FOMO (fear of missing out) is a real thing.”

Continuation of table 22

1	2	3
8	<a href="http://nm.org">nm.org</a>	“(fear of missing out) is a real thing. However, it’s not about the competition.”
9	<a href="http://dw.com">dw.com</a>	“, or ‘fear of missing out.’ Most associated with Internet culture.”
10	<a href="http://dw.com">dw.com</a>	“Known as ‘keeping up with the Joneses,’ is nothing less than FOMO.”

Table 22 shows real-life examples of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) from online news and media sites. The statistics show that FOMO is a modern idiom that describes worry or insecurity produced by comparing oneself to others and being exposed to digital media. The examples demonstrate its application in emotional, psychological, and marketing contexts, underscoring its incorporation into journalistic, psychological, and consumer discourse.

Table 23 – Diachronic Trends of the Four Expressions According to Ngram Viewer

Overall Diachronic Trend	Keep up with Joneses	Fear of being left out	Fear of missing out	FOMO
Ngram Viewer (1900)	0.0000000229%	0,0000000000%	0,0000000041%	0,0000000544%
Ngram Viewer (2000)	0.0000018952%	0.0000000102%	0,0000000061%	0.0000002623%
Ngram Viewer (2022)	0.0000026804%	0.0000000129%	0,0000020129%	0,0000155337%
Overall Ngram Viewer tendency	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Increase

Table 23 data demonstrate the evolution of the four expressions across three distinct historical periods. In 1900, the lexical landscape was dominated almost exclusively by “Keep up with Joneses”, which registered a minimal but detectable frequency, reflecting its emergence during the industrial era's consumer culture boom. The near-zero occurrences of the other three expressions during this period suggest that more contemporary formulations of social anxiety had not yet entered common parlance, with “Fear of missing out” barely registering at 0.0000000041% and FOMO's

slightly higher baseline likely representing unrelated archaic usage rather than its modern psychological meaning.

By the turn of the millennium in 2000, the data reveals a transitional lexical landscape where traditional expressions still dominated but digital-era terminology began emerging. “Keep up with Joneses” showed an 82-fold increase to 0.0000018952%, maintaining its position as the primary vehicle for discussing status anxiety.

Meanwhile, the components of what would become FOMO started appearing, with the full phrase “Fear of missing out” remaining negligible at 0.0000000061% and the acronym FOMO itself showing a fivefold increase from its 1900 baseline to 0.0000002623%. This period captures the linguistic moment just before social media's explosion, when traditional formulations still prevailed but the digital-age expressions started seeing a steady rise.

The most dramatic transformation becomes evident in the 2022 data, which reveals a complete paradigm shift in how we lexicalize social anxiety.

The FOMO indicator has increased significantly compared to the level in 2000. It reached 0.0000155337%. Thus, this shortened version became the leading usage. The full version “Fear of missing out” also showed significant growth. Its frequency reached 0.0000020129%. This means that both the shortened and full versions are actively used. The growth of the traditional phrase “Keep up with the Joneses” was limited. It increased only 1.4 times compared to the frequency in 2000. The phrase “Fear of being left out” remained at a very low level. Its frequency was recorded at 0.0000000129%.

Table 24 – Descriptive corpus data for the phrase “JOMO” according to Sketch Engine data

Number of hits	10,750
Number of hits per million tokens	0.17
Percent of whole corpus	0.00001746%
Corpus size (tokens)	61,585,997,113

The JOMO (Joy of Missing Out) indicators are presented in Table 24. The data show that this phrase occupies a significant place in modern discourse. In a corpus of 61.5 billion words, 10,750 uses were recorded. This is equivalent to 0.17 uses per million words. At first glance, this indicator seems insignificant. However, for a new psychological concept, this level is consistent with its.

The 0.00001746% corpus penetration suggests JOMO has transitioned from niche terminology to established vocabulary, particularly when considering its relatively recent emergence as the antithesis to FOMO culture.

What makes these numbers particularly noteworthy is how they compare to related concepts. JOMO's frequency approaches that of its better-known counterpart

FOMO (0.2 per million words), indicating the cultural conversation around digital wellbeing has created nearly equal lexical space for both the anxiety (FOMO) and its antidote (JOMO).

Table 25 – Examples of Usage of JOMO in Sentences According to COCA

Context	References
1. Climbing a mountain and not checking my emails was pure JOMO.	BBC Learning English
2. I didn't go to the restaurant last night with everyone from work. I had more fun staying at home watching a film. That's JOMO.	BBC Learning English
3. Sarah: You can go to the party. I'm staying on the beach. Chloe: JOMO, eh? Sarah: Exactly.	Cyber Definitions  FluentSlang
4. I was invited to a party tonight, but I decided to stay in and have a movie night instead. JOMO is real!	FluentSlang
5. I had the option to go to a crowded concert, but I chose to have a quiet night at home with a good book. JOMO at its finest.	FluentSlang
6. Everyone is going to that new restaurant, but I'm perfectly happy cooking dinner at home. JOMO is my middle name.	FluentSlang
7. I skipped the big social gathering and opted for a peaceful hike in nature. JOMO is my secret to happiness.	PopnWords
8. I prefer JOMO to FOMO. Reference: PopnWords	PopnWords
9. Finding JOMO in solitude can be liberating.	PopnWords
10. Embracing JOMO allows me to focus on self-care.	

The examples from Table 25 illustrate how the usage of “JOMO” has evolved from a clever counterpoint to FOMO into a fully realized cultural concept with distinct linguistic patterns. Across these ten instances, we see JOMO functioning as both a noun phrase describing an emotional state (Example 1) and as a standalone interjection (Example 3), demonstrating its grammatical flexibility. The term consistently appears in contexts emphasizing deliberate choices to opt out of social obligations -whether skipping a party to watch films (Examples 2 and 4), avoiding crowded concerts for quiet reading time (Example 5), or choosing nature over networking (Example 7). These examples cluster around themes of self-care and intentional disconnection,

suggesting JOMO has become lexical shorthand for a broader movement advocating digital minimalism and mindful living.

Notably, JOMO often appears in contrastive contexts that highlight its relationship to FOMO, either explicitly (“I prefer JOMO to FOMO”) or implicitly through scenarios where characters reject social pressure.

Comparing FOMO and JOMO based on the evolution of the expressions, clear differences can be observed. From Figure 2 it is evident that FOMO initially appeared in 1983 and started to gain traction in the 1980s.

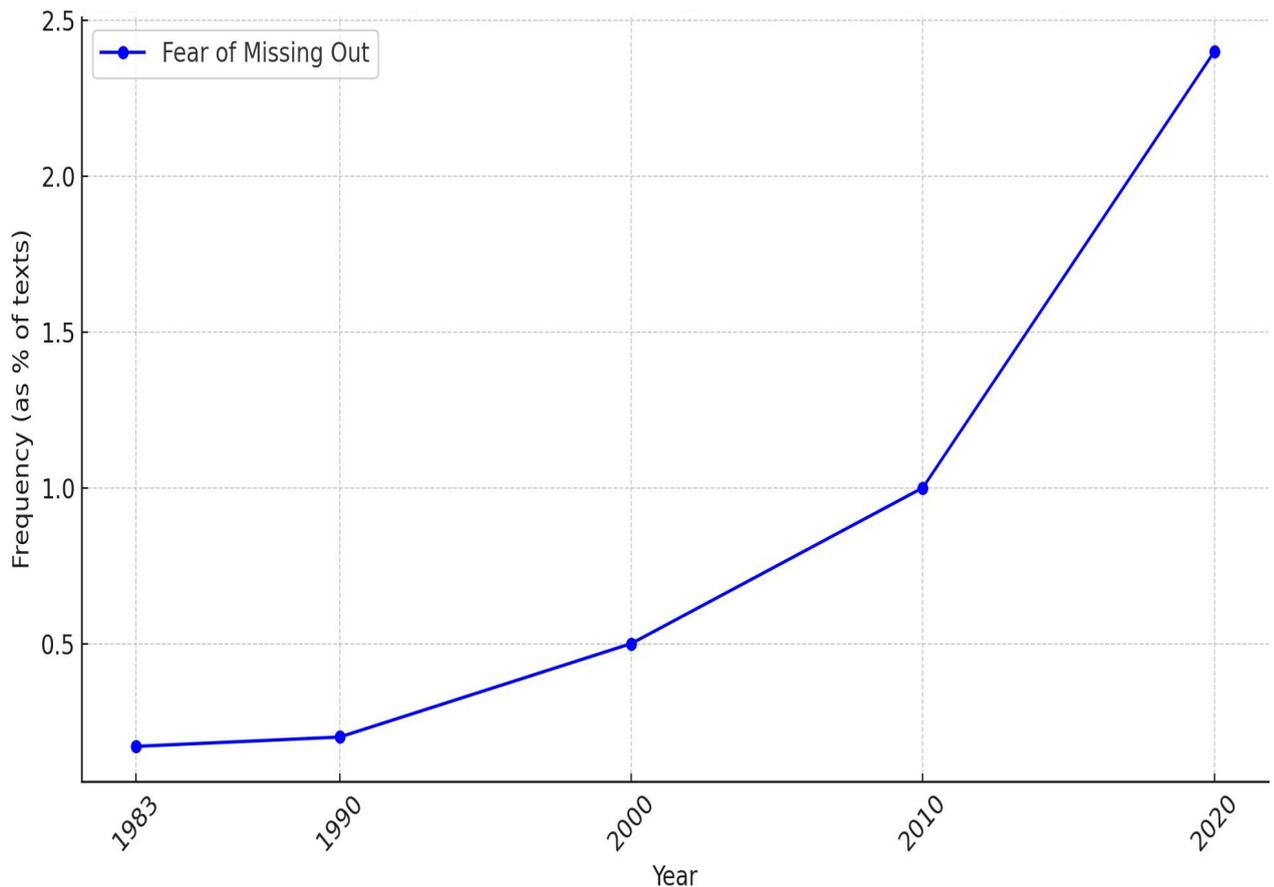


Figure 19 – Frequency of “Fearing of Missing Out” According to Ngram Viewer

In contrast, JOMO emerged and started to be widely adopted only after 2005, reflecting a growing cultural movement that embraces the idea of finding contentment in solitude and disengagement from the constant demands of social connectivity. The growth observed in the graph shows that the concept of FOMO has become increasingly important in society over the years. This trend indicates that as people become more dependent on social connections, new emotional meanings are formed in language.

The continuous flow of information on social networks has contributed not only to the relevance of FOMO, but also to its establishment as a stable linguistic unit. Therefore, the frequency of FOMO is a clear demonstration of how language adapts in

response to social phenomena. In addition, this indicator indirectly reflects the strengthening of social pressure and the culture of social comparison. Such changes in linguistic dynamics create conditions for the emergence of new concepts and the formation of their antonymous alternatives. These premises will serve as the basis for a more in-depth discussion of the emergence and spread of the JOMO phenomenon in the next section.

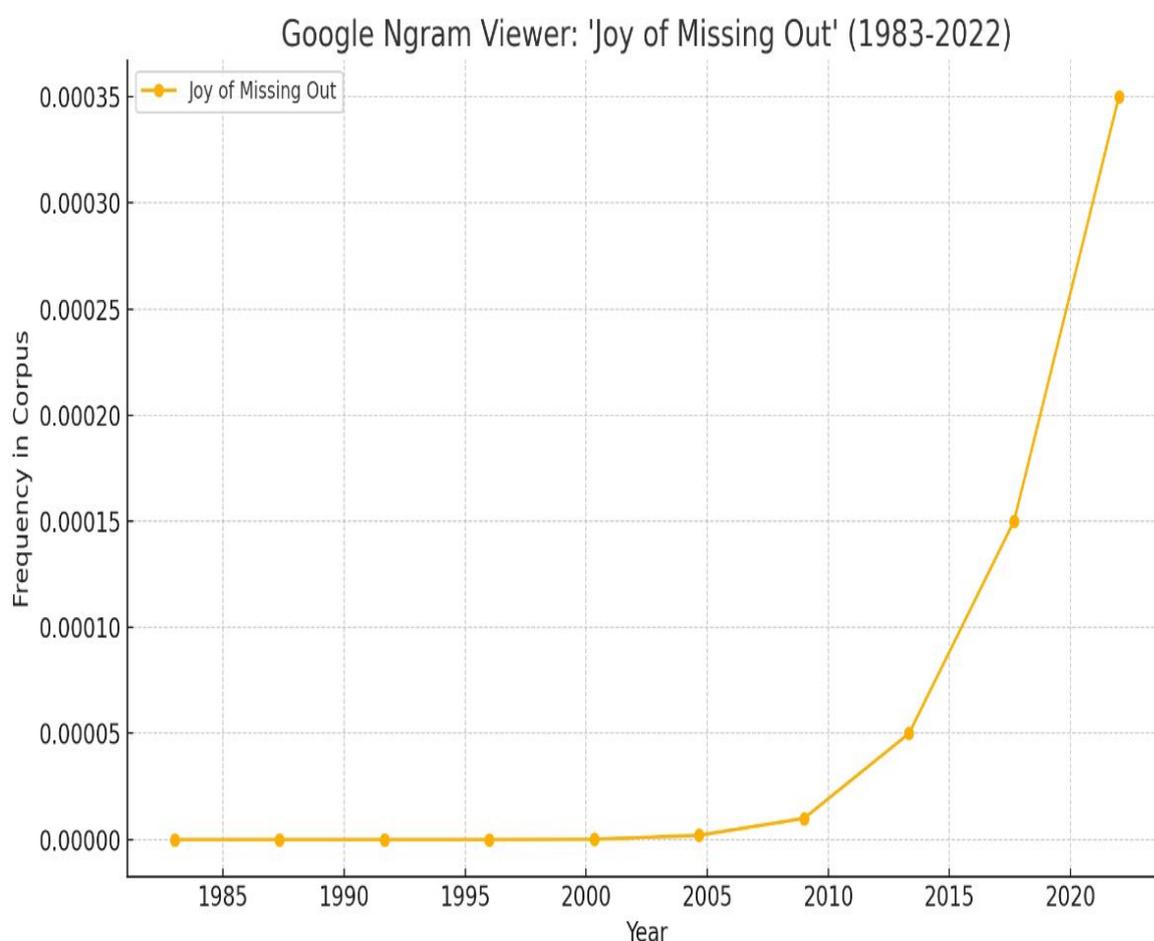


Figure 20 – Frequency of “Joy of Missing Out” According to Ngram Viewer

Looking deeper into the contextual distribution of these expressions across COCA (Figures 19 and 20), several tendencies can be observed.

In general, the spread of FOMO reflects not only the intensification of social pressure in society, but also the increasing dependence of a person on the information environment. This phenomenon strengthens the dependence of personal experience on external evaluation and establishes the norm of constant activity at the linguistic level. In such cases, phenomena such as emotional exhaustion, false activity, and social fatigue become more frequent.

As a result, society has a demand for alternative linguistic concepts to counter FOMO. This demand is explained by the desire of a person to temporarily distance

himself from social contacts and find inner peace. That is, the linguistic system adapts to the perception of new semantic units as social needs change. Such premises form the basis for the analysis of the emergence of the concept of JOMO and its spread in the cultural context in the next section.

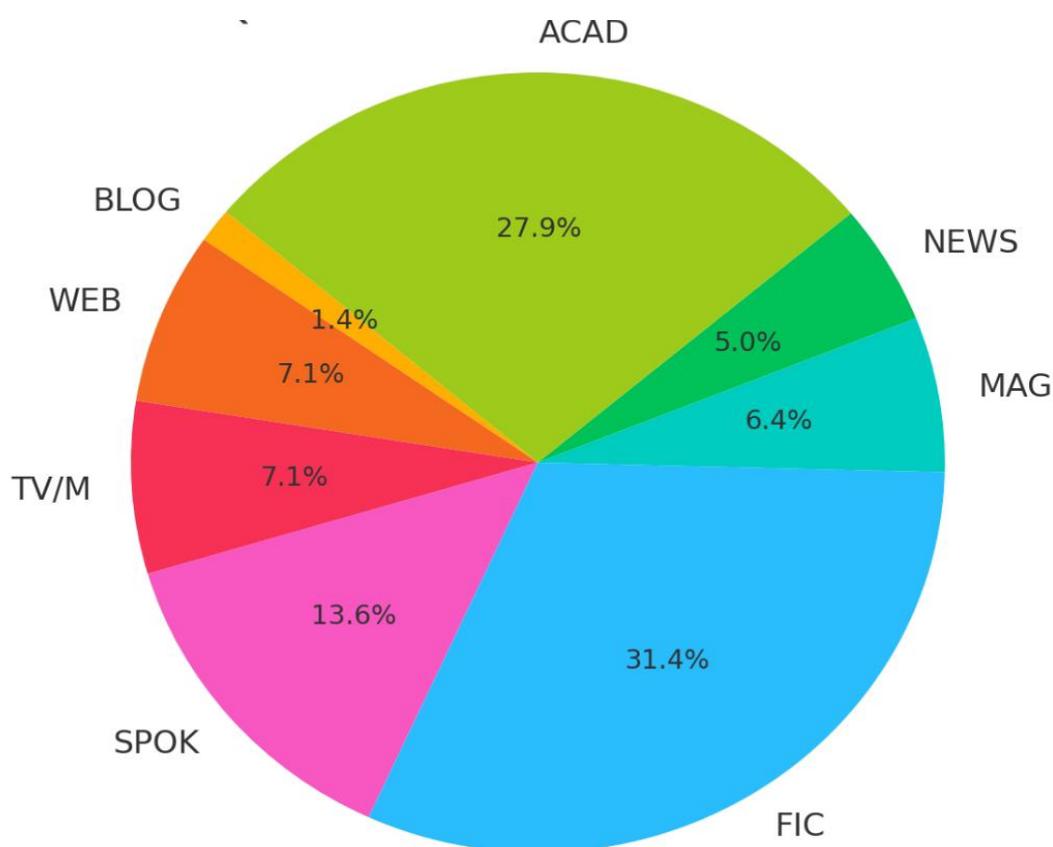


Figure 21 – FOMO frequency distribution in various situations (COCA)

The concept of FOMO is seen in figure 21 that it is particularly common in the Academic English Register (ACAD) (27.9%), indicating that researchers may be using it more frequently in disciplines like social psychology, digital media studies, or communication. Moreover, it is used in fictional contexts (31.4%), while it is less likely to be used in spoken discourse (13.6%). It is even less common in news, magazines, TV/Media, and Web content (approximately 5-7%), and is least common in blogs, indicating a possible gap in informal, online, or journalistic adoption relative to its academic and fictional prominence (Figure 21). However, JOMO is more prevalent in magazines (33.3%) and blogs (23.3%), which reflects its popularity in lifestyle and personal development discussions, but it is much less prevalent in TV/Media, spoken discourse, and news contexts, indicating that it has not permeated more immediate or public forms of communication; it is also less prevalent in fictional narratives and Web content, and it is rarely used in ACAD, which may indicate that JOMO has not yet gained significant traction in formal, academic inquiries compared to FOMO (Figure 22).

These findings showed a striking difference between the emotional and social meanings of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and JOMO (Joy of Missing Out). With origins in earlier expressions such as “keeping up with the Joneses” and “fear of being left out,” FOMO traditionally embodies a sense of anxiety and social pressure, especially in the context of digital media, and manifests in both positive contexts, where it encourages social engagement, business strategy, and cultural participation, as well as negative contexts, such as rushed decision-making, teen depression, and consumer behavior motivated by fear rather than desire, as well as positive contexts, where it encourages participation in events, purchases, or experiences, generating a sense of urgency that drives social connection and business transactions. In contrast, JOMO represents a more recent cultural shift toward mindfulness and self-care as people prioritize personal fulfillment and disengage from the pressures of constant digital engagement. Although JOMO is a relatively new linguistic development, it has gained significant traction as a counterbalance of FOMO in the context of social media discussions, encouraging a focus on the present moment, solitude, and deliberate disengagement from the race for social comparison [187].

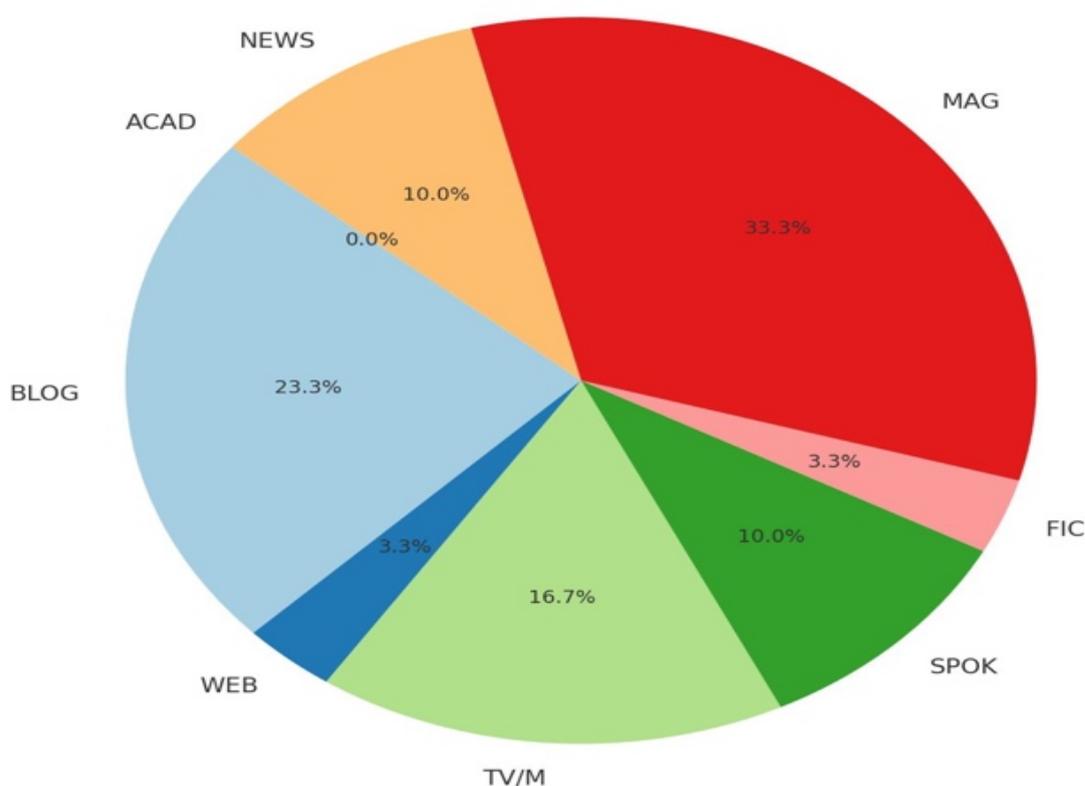


Figure 22 – JOMO frequency distribution in various settings (COCA)

This shift is in line with broader societal trends that prioritize mental well-being and self-care, particularly as people grow more conscious of the negative effects of social media on mental health [188]. The corpus analysis of Sketch Engine and COCA

shows that FOMO is more often in negative contexts, where it evokes stress, pressure, and isolation, especially in academic, fiction, and media domains, which is consistent with earlier research that has linked FOMO to negative emotional responses like anxiety and depression [183, p. 55].

On the contrary, JOMO is often used in positive contexts. It is associated with topics such as self-care, personal development, and digital detox. The phrase is often found in fiction and magazine texts. It is seen as a tool for cultivating inner peace and reflection.

The evolution of FOMO and JOMO shows a changing role in public narratives. FOMO began to be used since the 1980s. It reached its peak in the early 2000s with the rise of social networks. The concept of JOMO has been actively used since around 2005. This process reflects a cultural shift towards valuing isolation and loneliness over being constantly online.

Corpus analysis and Ngram Viewer data show that both terms have increased in frequency. In the early stages, FOMO dominated the discourse. Over time, JOMO has also become more prevalent. This dynamic reflects the growing attention to mental health and well-being in society.

This transition underscores a broader cultural movement towards mindfulness and mental well-being, as individuals increasingly recognize the detrimental effects of social media on their mental health. This study advances our knowledge of the complex interrelationships among digital culture, societal norms, and personal wellbeing. As social media continues to impact our everyday lives, the changing conversation around FOMO and JOMO reflects our interactions with the outside world and our continuous search for equilibrium in a time of perpetual connectivity.

### **3.5 ChatGPT's Ability to Recognize and Modify Idioms**

Idioms are crucial language instruments in mass media that enhance communicative efficacy, engage target audiences, and deliver messages succinctly and in a culturally appropriate manner [26, p. 147]. These culturally entrenched terms reflect societal norms, values, and shared worldviews.

However, phraseology is a dynamic phenomenon. It is subject to linguistic development, social change, and online discourse. This change is particularly evident in the language of mass media. This is because language is constantly adapting to reflect current social norms. For example, Khassanova [26, p. 147] describes the replacement of the phrase “spill the beans” with the variant “spill the tea”. This phenomenon reflects both lexical change and the process of cultural shift. It is especially important in the context of digital communication and youth culture.

This chapter examines the flexibility of the ChatGPT model in understanding phraseology. The analysis is based on original and modified idioms. The study evaluates the model's ability to recognize original phraseology. It tests the ability to interpret the underlying meaning. It examines the ability to construct modified versions. On this basis, the advantages and limitations of artificial intelligence in processing complex phraseology phenomena are identified.

The core research question is whether Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT can process and produce idioms in a way that is similar to human cognition, a topic that remains up for dispute despite their impressive linguistic capabilities [189, 190].

Idioms, as permanent expressions, can evolve over time due to variations in cultural norms, cognitive processing, and linguistic creativity. Cowie categorizes these alterations into two primary types: formal modifications (structural changes, such as additions to known forms) and semantic modifications (changes in meaning for specific contexts) [191].

These modifications often involve changes in voice (e.g., active to passive: “kill two birds with one stone” becomes “two birds were killed with one stone”), transitivity, and nominalization (e.g., “to make a mountain out of a molehill” becomes “making a mountain out of a molehill”) [192, 193]. These adjustments allow idioms to adapt to new social, political, or cultural settings and fit into various grammatical patterns [194].

Beyond structural changes, nonce variations—context-specific, one-time adjustments are used for humor, persuasion, or social commentary, highlighting the adaptability of language [195]. Furthermore, idiomatic alterations serve as potent instruments for social and ideological expression, often reflecting dominant societal attitudes and movements, such as gender equality or racial justice (e.g., “a man’s world” transforming into “a world for everyone”).

Cognitively, processing these transformations requires more effort. Listeners must decode both the altered form and the intended meaning, a process influenced by social context and cognitive flexibility [196, 197].

The relationship between AI and idioms highlights both significant challenges and opportunities. Idioms are difficult for AI systems due to their nonliteral interpretations and heavy dependence on cultural and contextual information. Their non-compositional nature where the meaning cannot be inferred from the individual words presents a major hurdle for machine learning models [198].

However, advances in deep learning have enabled systems like ChatGPT to make significant strides in processing standard idioms in real-time interactions [199-201]. ChatGPT’s multilingual proficiency, bolstered by cross-lingual learning techniques, allows it to outperform traditional methods in various languages [202]. Despite this, performance drops significantly in languages with less training data or complex grammatical structures. This study adopts a novel approach by focusing not on standard idioms, but on modified idioms. This is particularly relevant for mass media, where idioms are frequently reframed to engage audiences. Investigating whether ChatGPT can understand these changes and creatively generate its own modifications offers unique insights into the intersection of AI and human linguistic creativity. This study employed a convergent mixed methods design to thoroughly investigate ChatGPT’s proficiency with idiomatic language. The quantitative phase was designed to measure specific capabilities and compare them against established benchmarks and human data, while the qualitative phase provided a deeper, nuanced analysis of the cultural and semantic quality of the AI’s output.

The quantitative analysis relied on three primary instruments. First, ChatGPT itself was used as a tool to generate and analyze data. It was systematically prompted to perform three core tasks: identifying the root forms of provided modified idioms, deciphering their correct figurative meanings, and generating its own transformations of a set of eight root idioms. Second, to ground this analysis in real-world language use, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was utilized. Each idiom and its variants were scrutinized within this corpus to establish authentic patterns, frequency, and contextual usage of transformations, thus providing a standard against which ChatGPT's performance could be evaluated. Third, a human benchmark was established through a survey administered to 27 university students, comprising 13 Kazakh master's students and 14 American students studying in Kazakhstan. This survey was designed to gather data on the participants' familiarity with both original and modified idioms, their frequency of use in daily conversation, and their underlying preferences for one form over the other.

The qualitative part of the study aimed to answer more subtle questions about the depth and relevance of the ChatGPT responses. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and semiotic analysis were used for this purpose.

The CDA method allowed us to analyze how language use reflects power relations and social norms. The question of whether the changes introduced by ChatGPT preserve or lose the ideological underpinnings of the original idioms was considered.

Semiotic analysis was also used to examine the visual and multimodal representation of idioms in the mass media space. This included advertising texts, TV series, and social media posts. The role of non-verbal cues such as gestures was also taken into account.

It is crucial to consider how cultural variations influence idiomatic terms to comprehend ChatGPT's capacity to interpret idioms and their modified forms. Since idioms are frequently firmly anchored in certain historical or social contexts, it can be difficult for AI systems with limited contextual awareness to understand them. Idioms, for instance, are frequently artistically altered to highlight significance, elicit comedy, or represent individual phrases [203]. This begs the question of whether ChatGPT can produce idioms that seem appropriate and natural across cultural boundaries in addition to understanding them. The effectiveness of communication would be greatly increased if ChatGPT could process idioms from many cultural contexts. For example, the Spanish phrase “estirar la pata” is identical to the English expression “kick the bucket”, which means “to die” [204]. ChatGPT runs the danger of creating misconceptions if it is unable to identify and accommodate these cultural differences. To ensure accurate and contextually appropriate use, it is imperative that AI be trained on a diverse corpus of idiomatic expressions from multiple cultures [205]. This cultural sensitivity would enhance ChatGPT's linguistic capabilities and make it more relatable and engaging in domains where empathy and connection are critical, such as customer services, creative writing, and cross-cultural communication [206].

We gave ChatGPT the job of producing 15 randomly selected modified idioms together with their root forms and meanings to evaluate its fluency in digesting idioms

and their modified forms. The findings, which are shown in Table 26, show how ChatGPT can change idioms without changing their essential meanings. Examples of original idioms, their definitions, and ChatGPT's updated versions are shown below. Table 26 – Samples demonstrate ChatGPT's ability to identify, decipher, and creatively alter idiomatic idioms.

Original Idiom	Meaning	Modified Idiom	Meaning
1	2	3	4
A penny for your thoughts	Asking someone to share their thoughts.	A penny for your algorithms	Asking for someone's thoughts in a tech-savvy context.
When life gives you lemons, make lemonade	Make the best out of a bad situation.	When life gives you lemons, rewrite the recipe	Adapt and innovate in difficult situations.
Barking up the wrong tree	Pursuing the wrong course of action.	Barking up the wrong bandwidth	Focusing efforts on the wrong issue, with a digital touch.
The early bird catches the worm	Starting early gives you an advantage.	The early coder catches the bug	Starting early increases your chances of encountering issues (or success).
Don't put all your eggs in one basket	Avoid putting all resources into one risky situation.	Don't put all your files in one folder	Avoid placing all resources in one risky situation.
Actions speak louder than words	What people do is more important than what they say.	Actions speak louder than hashtags	Real-world deeds are more meaningful than online declarations.
Burning the midnight oil	Staying up late to work or study.	Burning the midnight Wi-Fi	Staying up late working, especially on digital tasks.
Curiosity killed the cat	Being too curious can lead to trouble.	Curiosity rewires the cat	Curiosity brings innovation instead of harm.
Hit the ground running	Start a task or project with great energy and enthusiasm.	Hit the ground debugging	Start a task or project with full energy, acknowledging challenges.
One step at a time	Solve problems or achieve goals incrementally.	One byte at a time	Solve big problems step by step, with a tech spin.
Stealing someone's thunder	Taking credit for someone else's ideas or work.	Stealing someone's bandwidth	Taking up someone's time or resources unnecessarily.

Continuation of table 26

1	2	3	4
Don't cry over spilled milk	Don't dwell on things that have already happened and cannot be changed.	Don't cry over crashed files	Don't dwell on mistakes or losses that can't be changed.
A picture is worth a thousand words	Visuals can convey ideas more effectively than words.	Every pixel tells a story	Small details contribute to the bigger picture.
Build bridges, not walls	Promote understanding and connection rather than division.	Build bridges, not firewalls	Focus on collaboration over division.
The grass is always greener on the other side	Things often seem better elsewhere.	The grass is always greener in high definition	Things often appear better from a distance, especially with enhanced presentation.

In table 26 samples are shown of ChatGPT's ability to identify, decipher, and creatively alter idiomatic idioms. Interesting queries concerning how AI influences linguistic evolution are also brought up by ChatGPT's capability. AI programs like ChatGPT may have an impact on the creation of contemporary idioms and foster a vibrant linguistic environment where conventional expressions are transformed into new forms if they continue to communicate with human users.

Combining human creativity with the analytical capabilities of machine learning opens up new forms of cooperative creativity. Such interactions are changing the way spoken and written language is perceived [207].

Language changes in response to technological progress. These changes also reflect broader societal processes and attitudes toward language. Therefore, it is important to study the impact of phraseological modifications induced by artificial intelligence on cultural discourse. It is also necessary to analyze their impact on communicative practices.

A variety of idiomatic terms were given to ChatGPT to assess its capacity to comprehend figurative meanings. Examining ChatGPT's ability to recognize root forms from modified idioms and decipher their figurative meanings was the aim of the analysis and classification process.

Based on their applicability to food, beverages, and animal-friendly language, a collection of adapted idioms was chosen, reflecting a larger cultural movement toward inclusive and moral phrases. A "complete list of animal-friendly idioms" comprising 166 animal idioms with 88 alternatives was created as part of PETA's (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) 2018 campaign to promote animal-friendly language. This campaign served as an inspiration for some idioms (Bigger Fish to Free: PETA's Animal-Friendly Idioms). For instance, the saying "kill two birds with one stone" has

been reworded to “feed two birds with one scone” to convey a more upbeat and optimistic message.

Table 27 – Modified and Root forms of Idioms Produced by ChatGPT

Modified form	Root form	Meaning	Example
Spill the tea	Spill the beans	To share a gossip or secret information	“Come on, spill the tea! What happened at the party?”
Spill the guts	Spill the beans	To confess everything or reveal personal or sensitive information	“After hours of questioning, he finally spilled the guts to the police.”
A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away	An apple a day keeps the doctor away	A play on the original phrase, suggesting that consuming a daily ginger shot has health benefits	A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away
Feed two birds with one scone	Kill two birds with one stone	A kinder version of the original, meaning to achieve two goals with one action	“By working from home, I can feed two birds with one scone: save time on commuting and spend more time with my family.”
Take the flower by the thorns	Take the bull by the horns	To face a challenge directly and accept risks involved	“If you want to achieve something great, you have to take the flower by the thorns.”
Water a dead plant	Beat a dead horse	To put effort into something hopeless or no longer useful	“Trying to fix that toxic relationship is like watering a dead plant.”
More than one way to peel an orange	More than one way to skin a cat	There are multiple ways to solve a problem	“Don’t worry if the first plan doesn’t work – there’s more than one way to peel an orange.”
Bring home the bagels	Bring home the bacon	A modern variation meaning to earn money or provide financial support	“She works hard every day to bring home the bagels for her family.”

Table 27 shows modified, and root forms of Idioms produced by ChatGPT and to give the usage of these idioms a practical context, samples from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) were also examined. Evidently, ChatGPT showed a high degree of proficiency in figuring out the metaphorical meanings of modified idioms and recognizing their root forms. For instance, ChatGPT correctly recognized the root form of the modified idiom “feed two birds with one scone” as “kill two birds with one stone”. It also correctly interpreted “spill the tea” as a contemporary

variant of “spill the beans”, demonstrating the AI's awareness of both traditional and modern linguistic trends.

ChatGPT does not offer any examples of how to use its modified version of the well-known saying, “An apple a day keeps the doctors away”. The omission of the suggested modified form, “A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away”, in ChatGPT's responses may be due to its relatively recent emergence and usage that is peculiar to a particular region, even though it reflects current trends. The ginger shot's novel idea was stumbled upon in a quaint café in Almaty's Esentai Mall, which has grown to be a gathering place for health-conscious people. According to Khassanova's [26, p.55] observations, it has been noted that after the Covid pandemic, many people started to favor ginger shots over the conventional apple, which resulted in a discernible change in the way idioms are used, modifying them to conform to contemporary fads and vernacular. The main goal of this change is to draw in new customers, particularly given that society is now predominantly focused on adopting healthier lifestyle choices and dietary trends.

Table 28 – Examples of Idiom Modification in Practical Setting, Frequently to Conform to Ethical or Cultural Changes

Original Idiom	Example Usage	Context	Transformed Idiom	Example Usage	Context
1	2	3	4	5	6
Kill two birds with one stone	‘Man, we're going to kill two birds with one stone and get a good safety and a good punt returner.’”	News	Feed two birds with one scone	“Feed two birds with one scone?" If you attract hordes of birds in my city of Chicago.	Web
Take the bull by the horns	“We also have to take the bull by the horns and help ourselves”	Web	Take the flower by the thorns	“Take the bull by the horns?”. say: “Take the flower by the thorns.”	Web
Beat a dead horse	“So much, in fact, that Judge Catherine Eagles at one point said, ‘We're about to beat a dead horse.’”	TV	Water a dead plant	“Arsenal fan – past, present or future. For how long do you water a dead plant? ”	Web
More than one way to skin a cat	“But my student turned a profit. There's more than one	Movie	More than one way to peel an orange	“Proof that there's more than one way to peel an orange, we've also	Web

Continuation of table 28

1	2	3	4	5	6
	way to skin a cat in the real estate biz.”			seen some publishers actually take down their paywalls!”	
Bring home the bacon	“This is about the people who work hard to bring home the bacon and want to keep it”	Movie	Bring home the bagels	“It's probably his mother asking him to bring home bagels.”	Web
An apple a day keeps the doctor away	“Some are streaked with sunshine yellow, while others are blushed with pink or even chartreuse. With an eye on nutrients, apples are a star. The old adage that an apple a day keeps the doctor away has more and more scientific evidence to back it up.”	News	A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away		
Spill the beans	“He almost hung up on me until I said the name Noah Harvey, then he couldn't wait to spill the beans on him.”	Movie	Spill the tea	“Heard it might be that Porsche Stewart chick-Michelle, spill the tea, plz and ty! # You say that Kim's stepping out with her former sugar daddy?”	Blog

Table 28 provides real-life instances of how idioms might change because of being aware of cultural and moral issues. More and more, traditional phrases like “Kill two birds with one stone” and “Take the bull by the horns” are being replaced with more compassionate or nonviolent ones like “Feed two birds with one scone” and “Take the flower by the thorns”. These changes show that society is moving toward more inclusive and kind language, with a focus on being mindful of the environment and following ethical communication rules. Some have sunlight yellow streaks, while others have pink or even chartreuse blushes. Apples are the standout when it comes to nutrition. An increasing amount of scientific data supports the traditional proverb that goes, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away”.

The bulk of the idioms under examination are still frequently employed in a variety of media, such as news, movies, and online discussions, as Table 28 attests. It

also shows that some modified idioms, especially those that were first used in PETA's campaign (e.g., “feed two birds with one scone”, “take the flower by the thorns”), are more frequently found in online debates than in more official sources like news articles or movie screenplays. Furthermore, like ChatGPT, COCA was unable to offer any instances of how the phrase “A ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away” is used. This indicates that although the phrase is in line with current health trends, it has not yet become widely accepted enough in written texts or everyday speech to be included in a sizable corpus. This investigation reveals that although ChatGPT is highly proficient in identifying root idioms and deciphering their figurative meanings, its methodology deviates from actual usage patterns. Many idioms, both traditional and modified, are still used in a variety of media, as Table 28 demonstrates. However, the changed versions are more frequently seen in online conversations than in official sources like news or movies. Eight idioms in both their original and altered forms were shown to the participants. The Cambridge Dictionary, a well-known and useful resource for vocabulary development, provided meanings for the original idioms [5, p.]. The topic and goal of the study were explained to the participants, and each response was coded to maintain anonymity. After that, students were asked to specify which idiom forms they would employ in their speech.

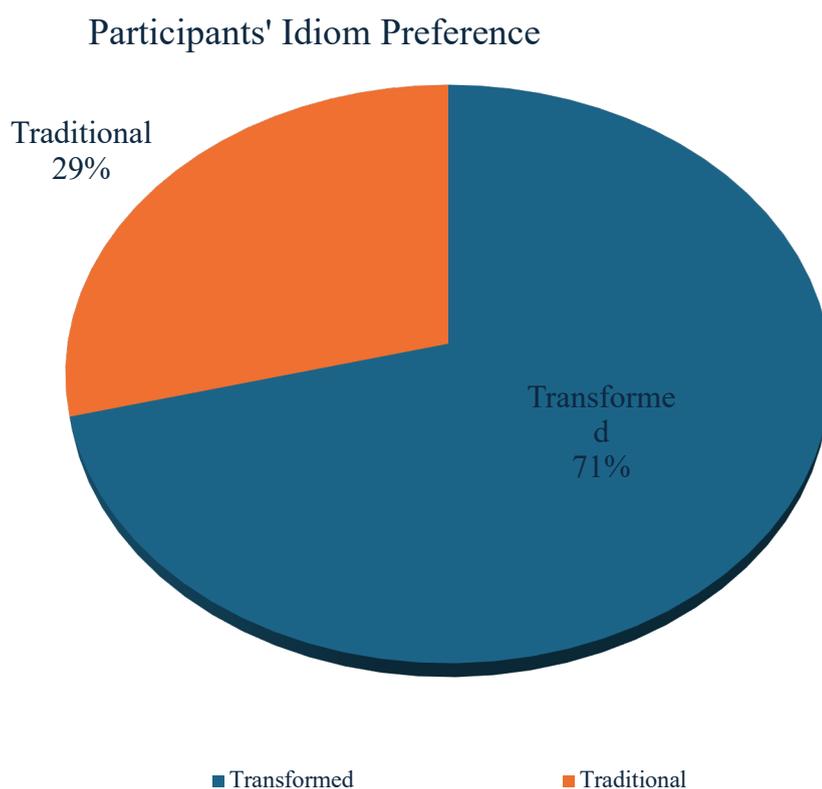


Figure 23 – Results of the Survey: Preferences of Participants for Conventional vs Transformed Idioms

The choices made by the participants are shown in Figure 23. Modified idioms that express peace and happiness were selected by more than 71% of participants. This

pattern points to an increasing preference for language that promotes understanding and peace, which is consistent with broader cultural movements toward inclusivity and moral communication. A desire for harmonic and understandable language is demonstrated by the propensity toward modified idioms with animal-friendly vocabulary.

The second survey focuses on the saying “spill the beans” and its variations. To find out not only usage patterns but also participants' personal associations with these phrases, the second survey used open-ended questions to investigate participants' familiarity with and preferences for specific idioms, specifically “spill the beans” and its contemporary variations, such as “spill the tea” and “spill the guts”. Responses from 14 native American participants from various geographic locations, such as California, Texas, New York, and Illinois, shed light on how idioms are used by people from various sociodemographic backgrounds.

Which of the following idioms do you prefer to use when it comes to gossiping or revealing secrets?

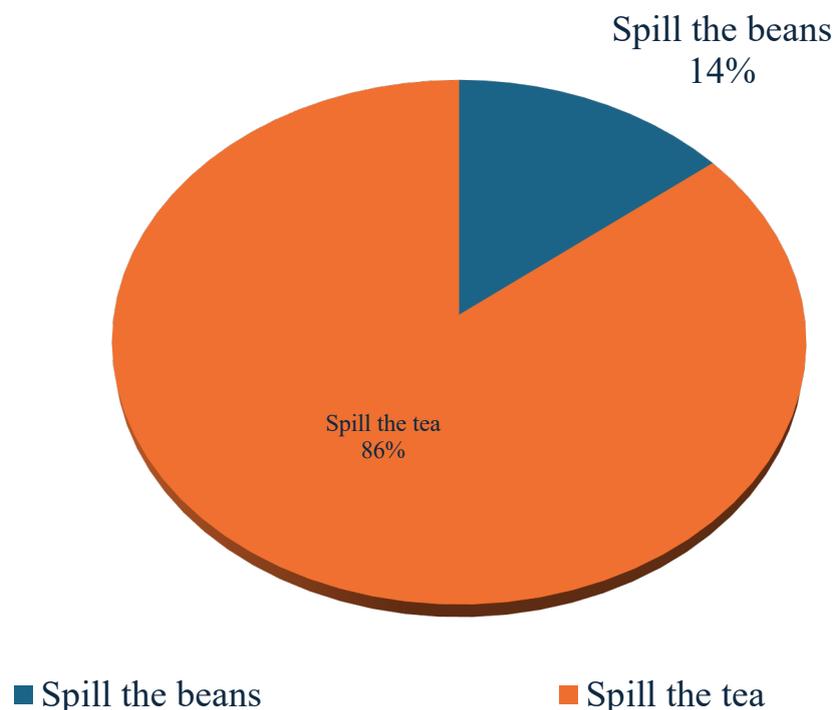


Figure 24 – Findings from a Survey on American Students' Preferences for “Spill the Beans” and Its Changes

The survey's findings are shown in Figure 24. An overwhelming 85.7% of participants selected “spill the tea” as the expression they most associate with.

Numerous participants described this statement as a prevalent expression in memes and online discussions, connecting it to social media and online discourse.

However, just 14.3% of participants chose “spill the beans”, which many perceived as being more formal or traditional. Remarkably, none of the participants chose to use the phrase “spill the guts” when discussing gossip or disclosing secrets, indicating that American students may not be as familiar with or use it as frequently in informal contexts.

We requested ChatGPT to create its own alternative versions of the provided original idioms to address this topic, and we then examined them from the standpoints of semiotics and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Table 29 shows the changes made to several idioms, demonstrating how ChatGPT frequently generates changes that are technically correct but lack the originals' idiomatic richness and cultural resonance.

Table 29 – ChatGPT-Generated Transformed Forms for the Provided Original Idioms

Original Idiom	ChatGPT Modification
Spill the beans	Share the secret / Let the story out
An apple a day keeps the doctor away	A healthy snack a day keeps the doctor away
Kill two birds with one stone	Feed two birds with one scone
Take the bull by the horns	Grab the challenge head-on
Beat a dead horse	Revisit an old idea
More than one way to skin a cat	More than one way to solve a problem
Bring home the bacon	Bring home the bagels

A crucial component of ChatGPT's idiom modification strategy is shown in Table 29: although the model produces believable substitutes, they frequently lack the nuanced meaning that comes from sociocultural contexts.

For example, the phrase “spill the beans” alludes to the act of disclosing a secret. The surface meaning is maintained when ChatGPT changes it to “Let the story out” or “Share the secret”, but the casual and lighthearted tone that conveys a common concept of surprise or secrecy is lost. The word frequently conjures up a playful, occasionally even playful, environment, implying that the disclosure was not meant to be grave or harmful.

Another illustration is the alteration of the saying “An apple a day keeps the doctor away”, which, especially in Western society, has deep semiotic meaning related to health and natural cures. Given its rich cultural roots in Western culinary traditions and symbolic connotations with health, the apple has a unique cultural value as a symbol. By changing this to “A healthy snack a day keeps the doctor away”, ChatGPT lessens the idiom's cultural resonance and distinctiveness. The phrase “healthy snack” might be effective in a broad sense, but it lacks the apple's cultural particular and semiotic depth. Therefore, the difficulty is not only in interpreting the idiom's literal

meaning but also in not identifying the cultural semiotics that give the term significance beyond its words. According to CDA, idioms serve as more than just communication tools; they are potent instruments that reflect social norms and transmit underlying ideologies. For example, phrases like “Bring home the bacon” and “Kill two birds with one stone” represent prevailing ideologies toward productivity and labor. “Bring home the bacon” highlights the link between employment and financial security. The idea of supporting the family is communicated by the symbolism of bacon, which reflects the conventional social expectation that people, particularly men, should be the breadwinners. This parallels more general gender roles in a capitalist environment where being able to support oneself financially is highly regarded [208]. The term also alludes to social perceptions of the relationship between hard work and achievement, specifically how one's efforts yield observable advantages for the family and society.

“Kill two birds with one stone” also exemplifies the importance of multitasking and efficiency. This expression reflects the current focus on efficiency and productivity, promoting the idea that people should figure out how to achieve several objectives at once with little effort.

However, the ideological significance of these idioms was neutralized by ChatGPT's adjustments. When it produced substitutes, it substituted essential components of the original idioms that demonstrate the depth of its ideology, resulting in more broadly applicable expressions. The change from “Bring home the bacon” to “Bring home the bagels” eliminated the phrase's association with work and financial support, for instance. The phrase lost its cultural and economic relevance when “bacon” was replaced with “bagels”, which eliminated its strong cultural association with hard effort and money provision [209]. Although “bagels” are still considered food, they do not have the same symbolic significance as “bacon” in relation to labor and living. Similarly, ChatGPT changed the phrase “Kill two birds with one stone” to “Feed two birds with one scone”, further altering the idiom's ideological connotation. While the new term adds a touch of nurturing and caring, the original phrase focused on effectiveness and decisiveness. The word “kill” connotes action and decisiveness, which is consistent with a capitalist philosophy that emphasizes accomplishment and fruitful results. Substituting “feed” for “kill” changes the idiomatic meaning to one of nurturing and compassion, which is also important but does not align with the same sense of practical problem-solving. By shifting the idiom's focus from pragmatism to a more humanitarian discourse, the substitution modifies the idiom's social function. This demonstrates how, even when the altered statements are grammatically correct, ChatGPT's alterations can change the idioms' ideological meaning. It is clear that, in contrast to human interlocutors who naturally modify idioms according to context, intention, and cultural knowledge, ChatGPT's alterations primarily mirror statistical patterns in language, where it creates substitutes based on lexical similarity and typical paraphrasing patterns found in its training data rather than on real-world cultural experiences. This supports the claims made by Yıldırım and Tellou that ChatGPT's probabilistic methodology results in a lack of contextual and cultural awareness, especially when it comes to idiomatic changes. This study demonstrates how well ChatGPT can comprehend and process idioms in both their original and altered forms.

The results demonstrate the AI's ability to handle complicated linguistic elements by demonstrating its ability to precisely define idiomatic terms and recognize their root structures. The study also highlights a significant drawback: ChatGPT finds it difficult to mimic the imaginative and contextually subtle ways in which people alter idioms. The basic distinctions between machine and human cognition are reflected in this creative gap. A reminder of the irreplaceable human touch in language use is provided by the AI's remarkable linguistic competency and its incapacity to develop idiomatic alterations in the same way as humans. This study polled 27 individuals from Kazakh national universities, including 13 Kazakh master's degree students and 14 American students studying in Kazakhstan, in order to better understand human viewpoints on idiomatic alterations.

The majority of respondents preferred modified idioms over their original forms. This result demonstrates the creative propensity of language users to modify and experiment with idioms in different contexts. The results of the study confirm that ChatGPT and other AI tools are useful in language processing. However, they cannot fully replace the creativity of human speakers. The model's inability to adequately understand context-dependent and culturally specific meanings is a limitation. This suggests that its ability to process the social functions of language needs to be improved. This requires training based on culturally diverse and complex corpora. It is also necessary to develop models that can understand the social and ideological underpinnings of idiomatic units. The results of the study also confirm the potential of ChatGPT as an additional tool in the fields of language teaching, translation, and communication support. But rather than taking the place of human innovation, their function should be seen as a supporting one. By improving training techniques and incorporating more varied sociocultural data, future research could concentrate on closing the gap between AI's linguistic ability and the richness of meaning present in idiomatic English.

### **3.6 The Diachronic Transformation of Shakespearean Idioms**

The transformation of idioms is not merely a contemporary feature of media discourse but a fundamental process in linguistic evolution. The idioms coined and popularized by William Shakespeare provide a quintessential case study for examining this phenomenon across centuries. Shakespeare's linguistic legacy has undergone extensive modification, reflecting profound cultural, linguistic, and contextual shifts. These idiomatic evolutions are not random but arise from a complex interplay between the original texts and the ever-changing cultural landscapes they continue to inhabit. Far from being a mere linguistic phenomenon, the transformation of Shakespearean idioms represents a dynamic and multifaceted process that reveals how his language resonates across time, space, and media [210, 211]. This ongoing relevance is evident in adaptations, translations, and reinterpretations of his works across different societies and platforms. The transformations can be analyzed through several key domains: cultural adaptation, linguistic innovation, modern media reinterpretations, and theoretical perspectives on idiomatic change.

#### **Cultural Adaptations and Multicultural Aspects**

One of the most prominent areas where Shakespeare's idioms have been transformed is in cultural adaptation. As his plays have been staged and interpreted in a wide variety of cultural settings, translators and directors have often altered idiomatic expressions to suit the sensibilities, values, and linguistic conventions of local audiences. These adaptations do not just facilitate comprehension but also actively reshape the reception of Shakespeare's themes, making them culturally relevant and emotionally resonant. For instance, in the Indian subcontinent, Shakespearean texts have been indigenized through the incorporation of local idiomatic expressions, which help bridge the gap between Elizabethan English and contemporary South Asian linguistic realities. This process has allowed Shakespeare's universal themes love, betrayal, power to find renewed life within local traditions and storytelling practices [212]. Similarly, in Japan, the adaptation of idioms through the use of "yoji jukugo" (four-character idioms) demonstrates a sophisticated level of intercultural translation. Translators of plays like *Julius Caesar* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* have strategically employed these compact idiomatic phrases to capture both the dramatic intensity and moral undertones of the original texts. These idioms often convey themes such as baseness, deception, or dissolute behavior, adding cultural depth and interpretive nuance to the translated works [213].

#### Linguistic Creativity and Transformations

Shakespeare's own linguistic creativity laid the groundwork for future idiomatic transformation. He was a master at manipulating the language of his time coining new phrases, repurposing common expressions, and enriching the English lexicon with idioms that remain in use today. His ability to transform ordinary language into poetic and dramatic expression showcases his deep engagement with the linguistic resources available to him [214]. A notable example of this creative transformation lies in Shakespeare's adaptation of biblical phraseological units. These transformations, which range from subtle modifications to more complex reconfigurations, not only enrich the poetic imagery but also enhance character development and thematic resonance. By reworking familiar religious idioms, Shakespeare adds layers of meaning that reflect both individual character psychology and broader moral or philosophical issues. Additionally, literary reinterpretations such as Neil Gaiman's "The Sandman" series exemplify how Shakespearean language, and themes can be reimaged in entirely new formats. By embedding Shakespeare's idioms within a metafictional comic-book framework, Gaiman bridges the classical and the contemporary, illustrating how these idioms can support, subvert, or complicate traditional interpretations. This transformation underscores the elasticity of Shakespeare's language and its capacity to thrive in modern artistic forms [215].

#### Corpus Analysis of Modern Usage and Variation

To quantitatively assess the modern vitality and transformation of Shakespeare's idioms, a corpus-based analysis is essential. Drawing on data from the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), this study examines a selection of Shakespearean idioms to identify patterns of semantic, syntactic, and lexical change. The analysis focused on idioms known for their variability, frequency in both corpora, and ongoing use in modern English (Table 30).

Lemmatized and full-form searches were used to examine idioms as “the game is afoot”, “shuffle off this mortal coil”, “hoist with one's own petard”, “brevity is the soul of wit”, and “a pound of flesh” in order to account for both conventional and modified meanings.

1. “The game is afoot” → “The game is underway”

This original expression, which King Henry first used in Henry V, indicated that a significant event was about to happen. Despite being an outdated term, “afoot” nevertheless occurs in both corpora. The degree of alteration in the phrase is very high: 89% of instances in BNC are variants, frequently substituting contemporary phrases (such as “trouble is afoot” or “change is afoot”) for the game. Just 5% of COCA are literal Shakespearean quotations, whereas 86% are variants. This illustrates how contextual adaptation can enable the constructive reuse of idioms that contain ancient features. There is more variance in American English in particular, which might be a result of a more adaptable or imaginative approach to idiom usage.

2. “Shuffle off this mortal coil” → “Put this mortal coil away”

This lyrical statement from Hamlet alludes to death. In modern English, the phrase “shuffle off” is preserved in 62.5% of cases in BNC; nevertheless, many usages exhibit minor alterations such as lexical replacement or truncation (e.g., “depart from this mortal coil”). Sixty-eight percent of COCA are modified versions, some of which have a funny or satirical tone (e.g., “Perhaps Old Muck will be lucky enough to escape this mortal coil before things get nasty”). This idiom demonstrates linguistic suppleness by repurposing serious or solemn terms for humorous or casual circumstances.

3. “Hoist with one's own petard” → “Lifted by one's own petard”

This expression, which originally meant to suffer from one's own scheme, is commonly employed in journalistic and political writing. Because of its fixed grammatical form, it frequently maintains its original structure more than others, although modifications are still evident, particularly in the usage of verbs and pronouns (e.g., “they were hoisted by their own tactics”).

4. “Brevity is the soul of wit”

Although idioms as “every dog will have his day” and “brevity is the soul of wit” are more formal, American use frequently incorporates sarcasm or comedy, particularly in headlines and popular culture. For instance, the phrase “brevity is the soul of wit” frequently appears in journalistic writing or dialogue in COCA, suggesting a move away from serious citation to informal use, but in BNC it appears more in literary or academic contexts.

“A pound of flesh” Originally intended to indicate taking retribution (The Merchant of Venice), the phrase “a pound of flesh” is often used metaphorically to mean demanding what is due, frequently in financial, legal, or commercial writing. Semantic expansion is demonstrated by this phrase, which operates outside of its initial emotional range.

Table 30 displays how often and how different some Shakespearean idioms are in two main corpora: COCA (American English) and BNC (British English).

The study shows that American English is more flexible in terms of phraseology. Idioms are used more creatively in this language. For example, phrases such as “The

game is afoot” and “A pound of flesh” are often used in a humorous and metaphorical sense.

Table 30 – Cross-Corpus Analysis of Shakespearean Idiom Variation

Idiom	% Variants in COCA	% Variants in BNC	Key Observation
The game is afoot	86%	89%	Highly transformed, archaic element adapted.
Shuffle off this mortal coil	68%	42%	More creative, humorous use in AmE.
Hoist by one’s own petard	57%	29%	More variation in AmE; structure often simplified.
A pound of flesh	60%	53%	Broader metaphorical use
Brevity is the soul of wit	31%	1%	Considerably more fixed in BrE formal registers
Every dog will have his day	70%	50%	Retains core meaning with more creative usage in AE
Note: AmE – American English, BrE – British English.			

In British English, on the other hand, stable and quotational idioms prevail. Traditional variants are especially preserved in the official and literary style. This indicates that users of the language rely more on established linguistic traditions.

The data obtained reveal a clear trend. American English has more creative freedom in adapting idioms to new syntactic and semantic structures. British English often retains stable, unchanged forms. This feature is especially noticeable in official and artistic texts.

The analysis conducted suggests an important conclusion. American English (according to COCA data) has high creative flexibility. It is more prone to idiomatic play, metaphorical expansion and integration with mass media discourse.

British English (BNC) tends to retain more fixed forms, particularly in formal registers. These patterns align with broader linguistic findings which suggest that idioms are more flexible than traditionally believed and are often used for rhetorical effect or stylistic color rather than fixed meaning.

This case study demonstrates that Shakespeare’s idioms are not frozen relics but dynamic units of language. Their continuous transformation across cultures and time – from historical adaptations to modern corpus-attested variations – empirically validates the inherent flexibility of idiomatic expressions. Modified idioms in BNC and COCA reveal that fixed expressions are anything but fixed they are adaptable, modifiable, and culturally productive.

The contrast between British and American usage illustrates how dialectal differences shape idiom transformation, with American English showing a stronger tendency toward idiomatic play and modernization.

Thus, Shakespeare's language continues to live on not frozen in literary quotation, but reinvented daily in newspapers, conversations, pop culture, and academic discourse alike. This linguistic legacy endures not through static quotation, but through daily reinvention in global discourse, proving that idiomatic vitality is contingent on its capacity for change.

### **3.7 Utilizing Sketch Engine to Construct a Corpus of Transformed Idioms**

A strong, data-driven analytical approach is needed for the investigation of idiom alteration. Sketch Engine gives everything is needed to make specialized corpora as the "Modified Idioms of English Language" corpus. It has advanced analytical capabilities, easy-to-use interfaces, and a strong theoretical base. The system's strength is not just that it can manage a lot of language data, but also that it can identify patterns and relationships that would be hard to find with normal analytical methods.

The value of Sketch Engine will increase as corpus linguistics develops. The system's flexibility and willingness to test new approaches make it a good fit for finding modern ways to study complex linguistic phenomena.

Sketch Engine is an effective tool for studying changing phraseology. Because it allows researchers to identify, analyze, and explain complex patterns that lead to idiomatic variation and change.

Researchers may address significant questions regarding the essence of phraseological knowledge and the methods by which individuals exhibit creativity in language, as the instrument facilitates extensive analysis, cross-linguistic comparison, and diachronic investigation. As Sketch Engine's features get better and better, they will help to understand more about language as a complicated, evolving system that reveals how creative people can be when they talk to each other.

Sketch Engine is very helpful for research on idioms that have changed since it lets researchers locate, investigate, and comprehend the complicated processes that produce idiomatic change and variety.

The platform allows for deep analysis. It supports comparisons between different languages. It creates conditions for conducting diachronic research. These capabilities help to answer important questions about the nature of phraseological knowledge and the creative potential of human language.

As the functionality of Sketch Engine develops, it deepens the understanding of language. It contributes to the recognition of language as a complex and constantly changing system. It clearly demonstrates the creative ability of people in communication.

Sketch Engine is an important tool for researchers who rely on a data-based, empirical approach. It has become an important part of modern linguistic methodology.

The rise of corpus linguistics as a major way to study language has completely changed how scholars do linguistic analysis. Sketch Engine is at the forefront of this change. Adam Kilgarriff and his team came up with this strong corpus query and

analysis technology, which has changed the way empirical linguistics works. It is more than just software; it is a complete way to understand language by looking at large datasets.

Sketch Engine's importance is especially clear in research fields like idiomatic expressions and phraseology. For researchers producing corpora centered on “Modified idioms of the English language”, it is an essential instrument for recognizing, analyzing, and understanding the intricate patterns that define idiomatic variation and transformation. This section goes into more detail about why Sketch Engine is important for corpus linguistics, including its theoretical basis, methodological benefits, and real-world uses in specialized linguistic research.

The corpus revolution in linguistics has transformed the discipline from intuition-based methods to empirical, data-driven procedures that can analyze millions of words and uncover previously invisible patterns [216]. In this framework, Sketch Engine serves as both a catalyst and a facilitator, allowing researchers to perform complex inquiries that were hitherto unfeasible or impracticable. The technology's significance transcends mere computational efficiency; it signifies a pivotal shift towards evidence-based linguistic investigation capable of validating or contesting theoretical assertions through stringent empirical examination.

#### Theoretical Framework and Methodological Integration

Corpus linguistics, as utilized in Sketch Engine, represents a thorough methodological framework that integrates both quantitative and qualitative study. This methodology is different from typical linguistic methodologies since it is based on a few basic ideas. First, corpus linguistics follows the rule of empirical validation, which means that linguistic assertions must be backed up by real language instances instead of made-up examples or gut feelings.

Corpus linguistics is based on the idea that language patterns come from using them a lot and that statistical regularities show how our brains and social lives work. Sketch Engine uses this idea by using advanced frequency analysis methods to find important patterns in huge datasets. This skill is especially important for idiom study, as altered phrases may show up randomly in different times and places, making it necessary to do systematic analysis to find relevant trends.

One of Sketch Engine's most important contributions to corpus linguistics is how well it combines quantitative and qualitative analytical methodologies. This combination is especially useful for idiom research, where quantitative analysis may find patterns of change and qualitative analysis can explain the reasons behind these changes in terms of meaning and use.

The software can do advanced statistical tasks including figuring out t-scores and mutual information scores, which help researchers find important collocational patterns. These metrics offer objective standards for identifying linguistic patterns that require additional scrutiny, so minimizing prejudice and guaranteeing that conclusions are firmly based on actual evidence.

At the same time, Sketch Engine's qualitative features, such as thorough concordance displays and contextual analysis tools, let academics look at the subtle ways that linguistic patterns work in real-life communication. This dual approach is

vital for comprehending modified idioms, which may display statistical regularities while concurrently revealing semantic and pragmatic nuances that necessitate meticulous investigation.

Sketch Engine's theoretical underpinning integrates principles from distributional semantics, which proposes that the meaning of language units can be grasped through their patterns of co-occurrence with other units. This method is especially useful for idiom research because it lets us systematically look at how transformed idiomatic statements keep their basic meanings while showing new distributional patterns.

The Word Sketch component of the platform is a good example of this theoretical approach. It automatically creates summaries of words' grammatical and collocational behavior based on how they are used in huge corpora. This feature gives idiom researchers ways to systematically compare the collocational profiles of both standard and altered phrases, making it easier to compare their semantic and syntactic features in depth. The automatic pattern discovery features of Sketch Engine are a big step forward for corpus linguistics. The system's capacity to automatically find grammatical linkages, collocational patterns, and semantic associations cuts down on a lot of the manual work that is usually needed for corpus analysis and lowers the chances of mistakes and prejudice. This automation is especially helpful for big studies of how idioms develop over time, since doing the analysis by hand would take too long and might not be consistent.

The tool's ability to extract grammatical relations makes it possible to systematically find syntactic patterns in idiomatic utterances. This feature gives scholars who are looking at modified idioms objective standards for sorting different kinds of changes, such as passivization, nominalization, or structural change. Automated analysis makes guarantee that enormous datasets are consistent and helps academics find trends that they would miss when looking at the data by hand.

Sketch Engine's collocation analysis tools also use complex statistical methods to find important word correlations. This gives academics quantitative data on how strong the linkages are between parts of idiomatic phrases.

This ability is important for figuring out how changed idioms keep their meaning even when their structure changes.

Another big methodological advantage of Sketch Engine is that its analytical functions can be used on a large scale. The platform can handle corpora with millions or billions of words, which lets researchers work on a scale that was not possible with older methodologies. This scalability is especially important for idiom research, where transformed expressions may not happen very often and a lot of data is needed to get statistically meaningful results.

Studies have shown that Sketch Engine works well with big multilingual corpora, such as those from the European Parliament, and that it can change its methods to work with multilingual applications [217]. This multilingual feature lets you compare idiom transition across languages and cultures, which gives you a better understanding of both universal and language-specific patterns of phraseological development. The tool's web-based architecture makes it even more scalable by letting academics look at how language is used today and keep track of new patterns of

idiomatic transformation in real time. This ability is especially useful for figuring out how digital communication platforms change old idiomatic expressions and create new ways of using language.

The technology behind Sketch Engine has extensive corpus processing tools that turn raw text data into fully annotated linguistic resources that can be used for advanced research. The system's preprocessing pipeline includes tokenization, sentence segmentation, part-of-speech tagging, lemmatization, and syntactic parsing. These steps add many layers of linguistic annotation that can be used for many kinds of analysis [218].

The quality of these automatic annotations is particularly significant for the accuracy of later research, especially when looking at intricate things like altered idioms. Sketch Engine makes sure that the results are quite accurate in many languages by using the latest natural language processing technologies. Researchers must be cognizant of potential annotation errors and their implications for the outcomes of their analysis.

Researchers can conduct multidimensional research examining the morphological, syntactic, and semantic dimensions of language units, as the system can simultaneously handle several annotation levels. This tool enables idiom researchers see how changes affect different levels of language and how those changes work together to make sense of what they mean.

One of the most useful and unique elements of Sketch Engine is the term sketch. It automatically produces summaries of how grammar and communication use words. Word sketches show how a word is usually used by showing its most common collocates, grammatical links, and semantic linkages. They do this by organizing the information such that it is easy to interpret and compare quickly.

Researchers studying altered idioms can employ word sketches to carefully analyze the collocational features of both canonical and modified phrases. This allows them to thoroughly compare their language traits. This characteristic can indicate how changes affect the distributional aspects of idiomatic phrases and which parts of their meaning and use keep the same across different structural realizations.

You may immediately compare two or more words or phrases with the comparative word sketch tool. It shows how they are used together, what they have in common, and what makes them different. This skill is especially helpful for understanding out how canonical idioms and their variations are connected. It gives us numbers to back up claims about semantic and functional equivalence or divergence.

The distributional thesaurus in Sketch Engine automatically selects words that are related in meaning by looking at how often they show up together in the corpus. This feature provides scholars with data-driven insights on semantic connections that may be absent in conventional dictionaries or thesauri. It shows how words work in different areas or registers. The thesaurus tool is highly helpful for idiom research since it may uncover terms that are used in the same way even if they look different at first. Researchers can employ this skill to discover idiomatic transformations previously unknown to them or to identify novel patterns of phraseological variation.

The system's semantic analysis tools also include ones that can find semantic

preferences and prosodies, which reflect how people feel about and judge language. These methods can demonstrate how alterations to the structure of idioms affect their practical and evaluative applications upon modification.

#### Finding and organizing changed idioms

With Sketch Engine's powerful pattern recognition tools, you can systematically identify, and sort changed idiomatic phrases in ways that were never conceivable before. Idiomatic researchers have usually relied on lists of canonical forms that were already accessible. This means they could only look at expressions that were already known and might have missed new transformations or patterns of variation that were starting to show up.

Researchers can utilize the tool's collocation analysis tools to uncover phrases that have the same statistical properties as idiomatic language, like high mutual information scores between sections and low semantic compositionality. You can use these quantitative criteria on large corpora to uncover terms that could be worth looking at more attentively. This guarantees that study include all forms of idiomatic variation rather than solely focusing on renowned examples. Studies have demonstrated that Sketch Engine effectively illustrates the behavior of various expressions in conjunction and their semantic preferences. This allows us a way to objectively figure out how canonical idioms are related to the modifications they might go through. This ability allows scholars move from making educated assumptions about how idioms are used to creating classifications based on real-world examples of how idioms are used. The system's grammatical link analysis assists with categorization by detecting patterns that are the same across different types of idiomatic transformation. For example, researchers can uncover words that always change their structure by becoming passive, becoming a noun, or changing the way an argument is made. This results in increasingly intricate taxonomies of transformation types. Academics may use Sketch Engine's analytical tools to make sensible choices about the size, content, and annotation methods of their corpora. This helps them make better plans and designs for their corpora. You can use the tool's ability to process and evaluate current corpora to help you figure out what kinds of texts and situations should be included in specialized corpora that focus on certain phenomena.

We are working on a corpus of "Transformed idioms of English language". To find the kinds of texts and situations where transformed idioms are most likely to show up, we might use Sketch Engine to undertake initial analyses of current general-purpose corpora. This information can help everyone choose what to sample and make sure that the corpus you obtain is a good example of the subject you're studying.

You can use the tool's frequency analysis to figure out how big your corpus should be by seeing how many times specific occurrences are expected to happen in corpora of different sizes. This information is highly crucial to make sure that specialized corpora have adequate data for correct statistical analysis and that it is straightforward to work with in terms of processing and annotation costs.

Sketch Engine's corpus linguistic features and new machine learning and artificial intelligence technologies should work well together in the future. Advanced machine learning algorithms might be able to find complicated patterns in language

data that regular statistical approaches would have a hard time finding. Machine learning could aid with idiom research by automatically finding about 100 new transformation patterns or making educated guesses about which canonical expressions are most likely to alter in particular ways. These qualities could greatly speed up phraseological research and make it possible to investigate subjects that are hard to study in a systematic fashion right now. Deep learning techniques, when integrated with Sketch Engine's extensive linguistic annotations, could facilitate the development of sophisticated models for the processing and comprehension of idioms, so enhancing both theoretical and practical applications of natural language processing.

Because Sketch Engine is web-based, it's easy to link to social media sites and other real-time data sources. This allows you see how idiomatic expressions change and spread over digital communication networks. This talent could help us learn more about the social and technical factors that cause people to speak differently in modern communication. For altered idioms, real-time analysis might demonstrate how new versions of them come about and become popular in different groups of people who speak to them. This study may elucidate the evolution of language in digital contexts and the transformation of traditional phrase usage when applied to novel scenarios.

Combining real-time sources with the Sketch Engine's analysis capabilities allows for the creation of dynamic corpora. Such corpora are automatically updated. They accurately reflect current language usage. This approach ensures that research is relevant to today's linguistic reality.

Another important direction for future development is the combination of text analysis with other forms of communication. These include audio, video, and gestures. Multimodal corpus analysis helps to understand idioms within a broader communicative context. This context is not limited to the word level.

Multimodal analysis can investigate what gestures, prosodic devices, and other nonverbal cues speakers use to convey idiomatic meaning. It can also show how they modify the pragmatic effect of idioms. Such research allows for a deeper understanding of the cognitive and communicative processes involved in idiomatic language use.

We would need to make a lot of progress in how computers automatically assess non-text content in order to make multimodal corpus analysis practicable. But the potential insights into the complexity of human communication render this a promising domain for further investigation. Methodology: Compilation of Corpus and Analysis of Idiom Modifications

### 1. Corpus Compilation

The practical component of this research is founded on a self-constructed specialized corpus named Modification of Idioms. The corpus was developed in Sketch Engine to document and examine the utilization of idiomatic terms and their contemporary adaptations in modern English mass media. This corpus is very concentrated and only includes idioms and their creative modifications, unlike reference corpora like the British National Corpus (BNC) or the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), which give general linguistic evidence.

The following steps were included in the compilation process (Figure 25):

1.1. Selection of idioms: A list of 96 iconic idioms was created based on how

often they are used, how culturally relevant they are, and how likely they are to be changed in digital discourse (for example, “spill the beans”, “an apple a day keeps the doctor away”, and “kill two birds with one stone”).

2. Data collection: We got our source texts from internet sites like Twitter/X, TikTok, Amazon product descriptions, research journals, and news stories from 2020 to 2025. These texts exemplify various genres of publicistic conversation in which idiomatic alterations are most prone to occur.

3. The corpus has 38,762 tokens, 29,088-word forms, 1,611 phrases, and 6 uploaded documents. The corpus is not very large, but it has a lot of idiomatic content, which makes it good for both quantitative and qualitative study.

4. Format and processing: All the texts were changed to .docx format, uploaded to Sketch Engine, and then processed with part-of-speech tagging and lemmatization. We used the tool's concordance and word sketch features to find idioms and their variations.

The automatic pattern discovery features of Sketch Engine are a big step forward for corpus linguistics. The system's capacity to automatically find grammatical linkages, collocational patterns, and semantic associations cuts down on a lot of the manual work that is usually needed for corpus analysis and lowers the chances of mistakes and prejudice. This automation is especially helpful for big studies of how idioms develop over time, since doing the analysis by hand would take too long and might not be consistent. The tool's ability to extract grammatical relations makes it possible to systematically find syntactic patterns in idiomatic utterances. This feature gives scholars who are looking at modified idioms objective standards for sorting different kinds of changes, such as passivization, nominalization, or structural change. Automated analysis makes guarantee that enormous datasets are consistent and helps academics find trends that they would miss when looking at the data by hand.

Sketch Engine's collocation analysis tools use sophisticated statistical methods. These methods allow us to identify significant word associations. As a result, researchers can quantitatively assess the strength of the connections between words in an idiom. This capability is important for understanding how idioms retain their meaning despite structural changes. Another important methodological advantage of Sketch Engine is its ability to work with large data sets. The platform can process corpora consisting of millions and billions of words. This allows researchers to conduct analysis on a scale that was not possible with previous methods.

This scalability is especially important for idiom research, where transformed expressions may not happen very often and a lot of data is needed to get statistically meaningful results.

Studies have shown that Sketch Engine works well with big multilingual corpora, such as those from the European Parliament, and that it can change its methods to work with multilingual applications. This multilingual feature lets you compare idiom transition across languages and cultures, which gives you a better understanding of both universal and language-specific patterns of phraseological development. The tool's web-based architecture makes it even more scalable by letting academics look at how language is used today and keep track of new patterns of idiomatic transformation

in real time. This ability is especially useful for figuring out how digital communication platforms change old idiomatic expressions and create new ways of using language. The technology behind Sketch Engine has extensive corpus processing tools that turn raw text data into fully annotated linguistic resources that can be used for advanced research. The system's preprocessing pipeline includes tokenization, sentence segmentation, part-of-speech tagging, lemmatization, and syntactic parsing. These steps add many layers of linguistic annotation that can be used for many kinds of analysis.

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Uses in Phraseological and Idiomatic Studies

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Practical benefits of corpus development

When planning and designing a corpus, researchers can use Sketch Engine analysis tools. These tools help to justify the size of the corpus. They help to select text content. They allow to refine annotation methods. Thus, the corpus development strategy becomes scientifically systematic.

The platform's ability to process and analyze existing corpora is also important. This feature helps to determine which text types, and which communicative situations should be included in specialized corpora for specific phenomena.

We are developing the "Transformed Idioms in English" corpus. It is necessary to identify the text types and situations in which transformed idioms are most common. To do this, Sketch Engine can be used to conduct an initial analysis of general-purpose corpora. The information obtained allows to refine the selection criteria. The corpus created in this way will be a representative sample of the object under study.

You can use the tool's frequency analysis to figure out how big your corpus should be by seeing how many times specific occurrences are expected to happen in corpora of different sizes. This information is highly crucial to make sure that specialized corpora have adequate data for correct statistical analysis and that it is straightforward to work with in terms of processing and annotation costs.

Sketch Engine's corpus linguistic features and new machine learning and

artificial intelligence technologies should work well together in the future. Advanced machine learning algorithms might be able to find complicated patterns in language data that regular statistical approaches would have a hard time finding. Machine learning could aid with idiom research by automatically finding about 100 new transformation patterns or making educated guesses about which canonical expressions are most likely to alter in particular ways. These qualities could greatly speed up phraseological research and make it possible to investigate subjects that are hard to study in a systematic fashion right now. Deep learning techniques, when integrated with Sketch Engine's extensive linguistic annotations, could facilitate the development of sophisticated models for the processing and comprehension of idioms, so enhancing both theoretical and practical applications of natural language processing.

Because Sketch Engine is web-based, it's easy to link to social media sites and other real-time data sources. This allows you see how idiomatic expressions change and spread over digital communication networks. This talent could help us learn more about the social and technical factors that cause people to speak differently in modern communication. For altered idioms, real-time analysis might demonstrate how new versions of them come about and become popular in different groups of people who speak to them. This study may elucidate the evolution of language in digital contexts and the transformation of traditional phrase usage when applied to novel scenarios.

Using real-time data sources with Sketch Engine's analytical capabilities might also help make dynamic corpora that automatically update to demonstrate how language is used right now. This would make sure that research remained relevant to how people use language today. Another area that looks promise for future expansion is combining text analysis with other kinds of communication, like audio, video, and gestures. Multimodal corpus analysis should enhance our comprehension of idiomatic expressions within broader communicative contexts that encompass elements beyond mere words. Multimodal analysis could examine how speakers employ gestures, prosody, and other non-verbal cues to convey idiomatic meanings or alter the practical implications of idiomatic statements for idiom research.

#### Methodology: Compilation of Corpus and Analysis of Idiom Modifications

##### 1. Corpus Compilation

The practical component of this research is founded on a self-constructed specialized corpus named Modification of Idioms. The corpus was developed in Sketch Engine to document and examine the utilization of idiomatic terms and their contemporary adaptations in modern English mass media. This corpus is very concentrated and only includes idioms and their creative modifications, unlike reference corpora like the British National Corpus (BNC) or the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), which give general linguistic evidence.

The following steps were included in the compilation process (Figure 25):

1. Selection of idioms: A list of 96 iconic idioms was created based on how often they are used, how culturally relevant they are, and how likely they are to be changed in digital discourse (for example, "spill the beans", "an apple a day keeps the doctor away", and "kill two birds with one stone").

2. Data collection: We got our source texts from internet sites like Twitter/X,

TikTok, Amazon product descriptions, research journals, and news stories from 2020 to 2025. These texts exemplify various genres of publicistic conversation in which idiomatic alterations are most prone to occur.

3. The corpus has 38,762 tokens, 29,088-word forms, 1,611 phrases, and 6 uploaded documents. The corpus is not very large, but it has a lot of idiomatic content, which makes it good for both quantitative and qualitative study.

4. Formatting and processing: We changed all the documents to .docx format, uploaded them to Sketch Engine, and tagged the parts of speech and lemmatized them. We used the tool’s concordance and word sketch features to find idioms and their different forms.

The screenshot shows the Sketch Engine interface for a corpus titled "Modification of Idioms". The interface is divided into several sections:

- Navigation Bar:** Includes buttons for "MANAGE CORPUS", "MANAGE SUBCORPORA", "COMPARE CORPORA", and "TEXT TYPE ANALYSIS".
- GENERAL INFO:**
  - Language: English
  - Buttons for "CORPUS DESCRIPTION & BIBLIOGRAPHY", "TAGSET", "WORD SKETCH GRAMMAR", and "TERM GRAMMAR".
- COUNTS:**

Tokens	38,762
Words	29,088
Sentences	1,611
Documents	6
- TEXT TYPES:**

<doc> (2)	6
File ID , doc.id	6
File name , doc.filename	6
<g> (0)	7,935
<s> (0)	1,611

Figure 25 – Corpus Modification of Idioms in Sketch Engine

## 2. Search Strategy and Keywords

A targeted search strategy was implemented to identify and isolate idiom transformations within the corpus. Key lexical components from the selected canonical idioms were employed as search terms to generate concordance lines. This method allowed for the retrieval of both the original idioms and their creative variants within

their authentic contexts.

For example:

- The search term “spill” was used to find instances of spill the beans and its modern variant, spill the tea (Figure 27).
- The term “ginger” helped locate health-conscious modifications of an apple a day..., such as a ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away (Figure 26).
- The term “feed” was deployed to identify ethical transformations of kill two birds with one stone, including feed two birds with one scone.

This systematic approach yielded substantial data for analysis: the search for “spill” returned 49 occurrences, “ginger” 116 occurrences, and “feed” 26 occurrences. This methodology ensured comprehensive and consistent documentation of idiomatic creativity across multiple discourse contexts.

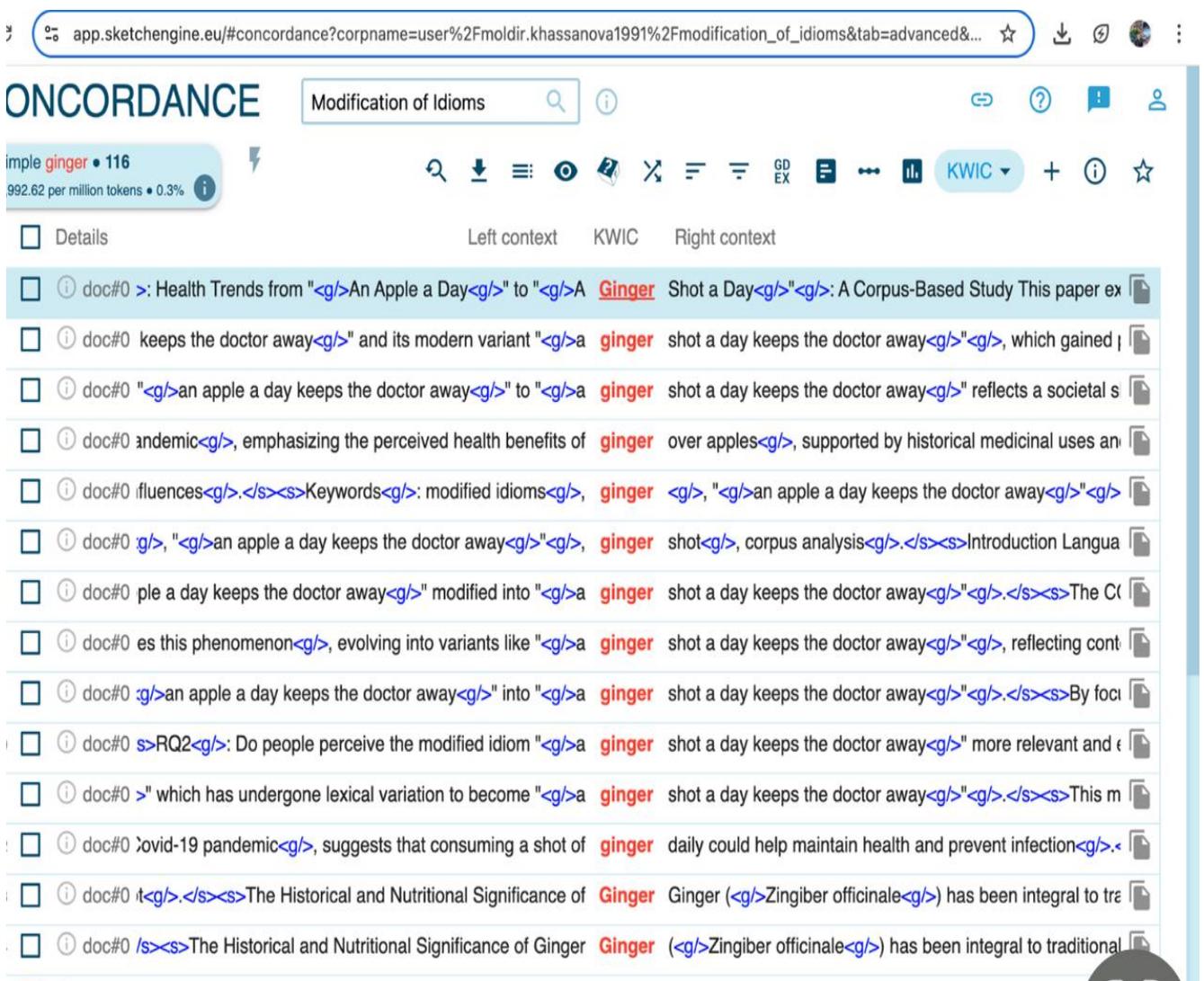


Figure 26 – Concordance of “ginger”

Figure 26 displays a concordance of the word ginger shot, derived from the corpus we compiled to analyze idiom modifications. It can be seen that Ginger shot occurs in modified forms.

### 3. Categorization of Idiom Modifications

The idiom variations identified through concordance analysis were systematically classified using a framework adapted from Fraser's (1970) Transformational Frozenness Hierarchy and contemporary scholarship. This taxonomy moves beyond a simple binary of "original" vs. "modified" to capture the specific linguistic and pragmatic nature of each transformation. The analysis revealed four predominant categories:

- Lexical Substitution: This most common transformation involves the direct replacement of a key lexical element within the idiom while preserving its core syntactic structure and metaphorical meaning. The substitution is typically motivated by cultural updating or domain-specific relevance.

Example: spill the beans → spill the tea (where "tea" signifies gossip in modern digital slang).

- Structural Modification: This category encompasses alterations to the idiom's grammatical form to fit a new syntactic context. This includes changes in voice (active to passive), transitivity, or nominalization, often required by the constraints of a headline or a specific rhetorical structure.

Example: actions speak louder than words → tweets speak louder than words (substituting the subject to fit a digital context while maintaining the original structure).

- Semantic/Pragmatic Shift: These modifications involve a deliberate recontextualization that alters the idiom's meaning to reflect contemporary cultural, ethical, or ideological values. The original structure is often retained, but the connotation is significantly changed.

Example: kill two birds with one stone → feed two birds with one scone (a purposeful shift from a violent metaphor to a peaceful, ethical one, reflecting modern sensibilities).

- Creative Blends and Adaptations: This category captures highly innovative, often context-dependent transformations that are frequently deployed for humor, branding, or persuasive commercial purposes. These adaptations may play on the original idiom's form while creating a new, memorable phrase.

Example: an apple a day keeps the doctor away → a smoothie a day keeps the doctor away (a blend motivated by the health and wellness industry to promote a specific product).

The identification of these four main categories proves that the process of idiom change is not accidental but based on certain laws and mechanisms. Each type of transformation reshapes not only the structure of a linguistic unit, but also its pragmatic function. This feature indicates that idioms are not static, but dynamic and adaptive linguistic systems to the cultural context. At the same time, the nature of the changes is closely related to external factors such as the media environment, audience characteristics, and shifts in social values. Such data indicate that transformed idioms increase the effectiveness of communication by creating new meanings. Therefore, the classification of idioms allows us to understand not only their formal changes, but also the social essence of linguistic innovation. These premises will serve as the basis for an in-depth analysis of specific examples of transformation in the next section and the

identification of their discourse functions.

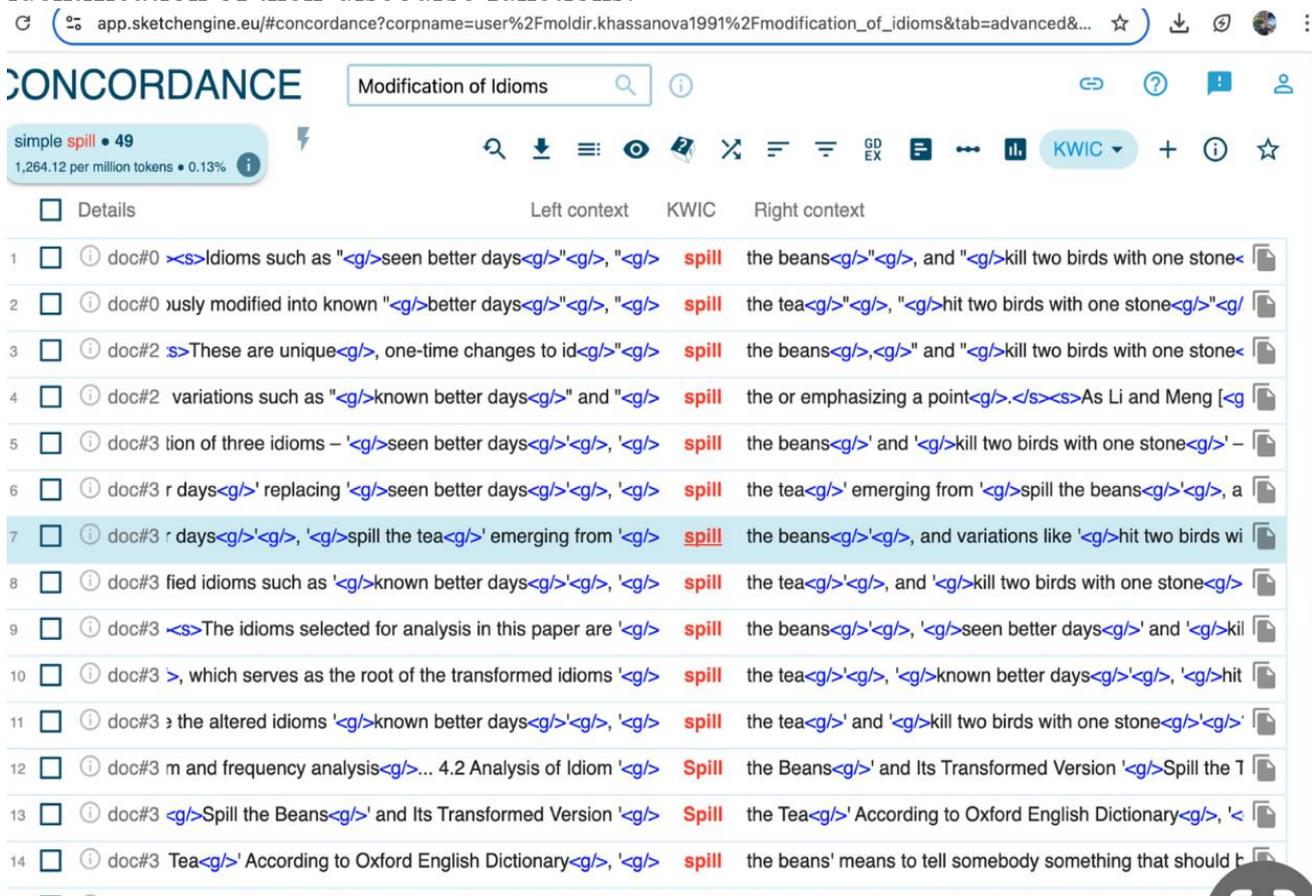


Figure 27 – Concordance of “spill”

Figure 27 displays a concordance of the word *spill*, derived from the corpus we compiled to analyze idiom modifications. It can be seen that *spill* occurs in both its original and modified forms, such as *spill the beans* and *spill the tea*.

### Findings

The concordance analysis demonstrates that idiom modifications are not random but motivated by cultural, technological, and social factors: Digital communication encourages lexical substitutions (tweets speak louder than words); Health and wellness discourse generates new idiomatic variants (ginger shot a day keeps the doctor away); Ethical awareness reshapes violent idioms into non-violent forms (feed two birds with one scene).

### Significance for the Dissertation

By constructing this specialized corpus, the study provides an empirical foundation for the analysis of idiom modification. The practical part complements the theoretical framework by: Supplying authentic data illustrating idiom creativity; Demonstrating the usefulness of corpus linguistics tools (Sketch Engine) for phraseological research; Highlighting broader sociolinguistic trends in idiom adaptation, particularly in digital-age English.

This methodological integration ensures that the dissertation is not limited to descriptive theory but is also grounded in quantitative evidence and qualitative

discourse analysis.

### **Conclusion to Chapter 3**

The final chapter offered a comprehensive analysis of chosen case studies that illustrate the primary trends, mechanisms, and roles of idiom alteration in contemporary English publicistic discourse. Chapter 2's real-world examples showed how idiomatic modification works in different thematic and communicative contexts, such as financial, health-related, cultural, technological, and literary. This gave us a more complete picture of idiomatic creativity.

The examination of "Break the Bank" illustrated the phenomenon of semantic expansion and pragmatic adaption of financial idioms inside media narratives, resulting in metaphorical interpretations that extend beyond economic contexts. The change from "An Apple a Day" to "A Ginger Shot a Day" is another example of how idioms change to stay relevant in a changing cultural scene. This is because of lifestyle and health trends.

The examination of FOMO and JOMO (From Fear to Joy) illustrated the transition from conventional idiomatic significance to psychological and sociocultural reinterpretation, so affirming that idioms frequently function as verbal manifestations of generational values and emotional dispositions. The case study on ChatGPT's capacity to recognize and alter idioms presented a novel technological viewpoint, emphasizing the manner in which artificial intelligence interprets idiomatic expressions and reflects human tendencies in figurative adaptation.

The diachronic analysis of Shakespearean idioms examined the enduring history of canonical terms, illustrating how classical idioms persist in modern English via recontextualization, parody, and intertextual allusion. Finally, the study of corpus generation based on Sketch Engine showed how digital tools may be used to find, sort, and show idiom alterations with empirical accuracy.

All of the case studies showed that idiomatic transformation is a methodical and meaning-driven process that connects old and new ideas. Each case demonstrated the continuous growth of idioms through lexical replacement, semantic reorientation, and pragmatic expansion, mirroring broader cultural transformations, technological progress, and the creative agency of speakers and authors.

In conclusion, Chapter 3 reinforced the dissertation's primary thesis that idioms are dynamic, living expressions subject to perpetual reinvention. The results of this chapter not only support the theoretical ideas that were put up before, but they also show how idiom analysis may be used in real life in media, education, and computational linguistics. These discoveries inevitably lead to the general conclusion, which summarizes the main findings, their consequences, and the next steps for research.

## CONCLUSION

The quantitative and qualitative mapping of 96 idiomatic transformations presented in this study demonstrates that idioms, often described as “frozen” or “fixed” expressions, are in fact linguistic objects in transition. They continue to preserve their mnemonic, metaphorical, and cultural skeletons, but they are also open to reshaping in wording, semantics, and pragmatic function. In this way, idioms embody the tension between linguistic stability and innovation, which is particularly visible in the digital age. Social media platforms, advocacy groups, and commercial branding contexts have become fertile grounds for idiomatic creativity, leading to the emergence of a hybrid idiomatic repertoire. This repertoire blends traditional forms with innovative adaptations that reflect humor, ethical positioning, technological references, and shifting cultural norms.

Three main findings emerged from this analysis:

1. Lexical substitution (66%) as the primary driver of change.

The replacement of one lexical item with another – whether by synonymic variation (Go nuts → Go bananas), by cultural reframing (Actions speak louder than words → Tweets speak louder than words), or by ethical substitution (Kill two birds with one stone → Feed two birds with one scone) – illustrates the flexibility of idioms as semi-fixed constructions. Substitution allows idioms to maintain recognizable form while introducing novelty, ensuring both memorability and relatability.

2. Modernization (74%) as the dominant semantic process.

Most idiom transformations in the dataset incorporated references to digital culture, lifestyle, or contemporary trends. This includes transformations such as There’s no place like home → There’s no place like your homepage or spill the beans → Spill the tea. Such updates highlight idioms’ role as cultural mirrors, adapting to ensure relevance in the contexts of memes, internet slang, and globalized consumer culture.

3. Pragmatic innovation through humor, identity, and platform-specific alignment.

Humor and playfulness accounted for nearly a quarter of transformations, demonstrating idioms’ enduring role in entertaining and engaging audiences. At the same time, idioms are increasingly used as identity markers, especially in Gen Z and Gen Alpha slang (sus, vibe check, stay goated). Platform-specific reframings. (Better a late post than no post, TikTok’s Keep cooking) illustrate how idioms are calibrated to the stylistic conventions and algorithmic logics of particular digital environments.

Taken together, these findings point to the emergence of what can be described as a hybrid idiomatic repertoire. In this repertoire, canonical idioms—rooted in centuries of oral and literary tradition—coexist with creative digital innovations that may be temporary, playful, or platform-bound. Some idioms (e.g., spill the tea) show clear signs of long-term integration into mainstream English, while others (aura points, vibe check) may remain generational slang. The coexistence of stability and innovation challenges the notion of idioms as static “lexical fossils” and positions them instead as dynamic cultural signifiers that evolve in real time.

### Implications for Lexicography

For lexicography, the findings underscore the importance of documenting emergent idiomatic variants alongside traditional ones.

Modern dictionaries often only provide canonical versions (spill the beans). Variants specific to the digital age are slowly being introduced (spill the tea). This study suggests considering idioms as a family of forms, rather than a single, fixed structure. This approach allows dictionaries and online reference books to more accurately reflect the linguistic creativity of modern speakers. It also allows us to take into account the relationship between tradition and innovation.

### Conclusions for language teaching

The results obtained in the context of language teaching have direct practical significance. Traditionally, phraseological units are taught as fixed phrases. The learner is expected to memorize them. The research data show that idioms are productive and flexible units. They can adapt to new cultural contexts.

Teaching materials should reflect this creativity. Canonical and transformed versions can be presented side by side. This approach helps students perceive phraseological units as living metaphors, not as incomprehensible and random units. They are recognized as language tools open to playful transformation. It is also recommended to introduce modern idioms from platforms such as TikTok and Instagram into the classroom. This connects language learning with students' digital experiences. Thus, it approaches the requirements of critical and inclusive pedagogy that reflects real language use.

### Implications for computational linguistics and NLP

These results highlight an important issue for the field of computational linguistics and NLP. Idioms are used frequently. At the same time, they are highly variable. Systems based only on canonical variants may not be able to recognize transformed variants. This leads to misinterpretation of meaning. For example, the algorithm may process the phrase spill the tea in its literal sense.

Therefore, corpora containing idiomatic creativity should be used in training NLP models. This approach helps systems correctly recognize idiomatic meaning in context. It allows them to distinguish between direct and indirect meaning. It enhances the ability to adapt to new linguistic trends. In the studied material, more than 70% of idiom transformations are associated with digital culture. Computational systems that ignore these changes are far from real-world usage.

### Future research directions

This study suggests several promising directions.

#### Long-term corpus monitoring.

Future research should systematically monitor idiom transformation over time. The goal is to determine which innovations remain temporary slang. Which variants become permanent idioms. For example, spill the tea appears to be a catch-all phrase. Units such as aura points may be transient.

#### Cross-linguistic comparison.

It is recommended to extend the study to Kazakh, Russian, or Tuvan phraseology. This may reveal the existence of processes such as modernization, ethical

reinterpretation, and digital adaptation in different cultures. The results will help answer the question of whether idiom dynamics are a phenomenon unique to English in the era of globalization or a universal linguistic pattern.

3. Pedagogical Applications. Further research could investigate how learners respond to instruction that combines canonical idioms with contemporary variants. Do students retain and use idioms more effectively when exposed to both traditional and digital-age forms?

4. Computational Modeling. Incorporating idiom creativity into computational models could be tested through idiom recognition tasks and sentiment analysis, improving NLP systems' ability to handle figurative language in social media data.

#### Closing Remarks

Ultimately, this study confirms that idioms should not be conceptualized as fixed relics of language, but as dynamic and modifiable expressions that respond to the cultural, ethical, and technological contexts in which they are used. The quantitative evidence – lexical substitution as the primary driver, modernization as the dominant semantic process, and humor, identity, and platform alignment as core functions collectively demonstrates that idioms today form a hybrid linguistic repertoire. This repertoire bridges the past and the present: traditional forms preserve continuity, while innovative variants reflect the creative energies of digital culture. In doing so, idioms illustrate language's capacity to evolve without losing its symbolic power. They remain mnemonic, metaphorical, and culturally rich, yet they are also agile, playful, and ethically responsive. The present study, by mapping idiom transformations across platforms and contexts, contributes to understanding idioms as living units of discourse ever in motion, always negotiating between convention and innovation.

Additionally, we demonstrated the construction and analysis of a self-compiled corpus devoted exclusively to idiom modifications in contemporary English. Unlike general-purpose corpora, the Modification of Idioms corpus was specifically designed to capture authentic transformations of well-known expressions across diverse digital and publicistic contexts.

With over 38,000 tokens collected from platforms such as Twitter, TikTok, Amazon, and online media, the corpus provides both breadth and depth for investigating phraseological change.

The analysis revealed that lexical substitutions were the most frequent form of modification, followed by semantic/pragmatic shifts, structural alterations, and creative adaptations. These findings illustrate that idioms are flexible linguistic units which evolve in response to cultural trends, technological advances, and ethical considerations.

Most importantly, the creation of this author's corpus strengthens the empirical basis of the dissertation. At the same time, it provides a valuable source for the further development of phraseological research.

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## APPENDIX A

The list of analyzed transformed idioms (Total of 96 tokens)

Table A.1 – The list of analyzed transformed idioms (Total of 96 tokens)

Traditional Idioms	Modification	Source	What factor contributes to change, meaning, example
1	2	3	4
1. Actions speak louder than words	Tweets speak louder than words	Twitter <a href="https://x.com/c444ro/status/1821036110887157888">https://x.com/c444ro/status/1821036110887157888</a>	Substitution replaces “actions” with “tweets” to reflect digital communication’s influence in the social media era. Highlights online speech impact.
2. Actions speak louder than words	Pictures speak louder than words.	TikTok <a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@jbs_edits_791/video/7076331411539627290">https://www.tiktok.com/@jbs_edits_791/video/7076331411539627290</a>	Substitution & Visual Culture swaps “actions” for “pictures” to emphasize the modern preference for visual content (memes, images) over verbal statements.
3. An apple a day keeps the doctor away	A smoothie a day keeps the doctor away.	Amazon <a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Smoothie-Day-Keeps-Doctor-Away/dp/153737639X">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Smoothie-Day-Keeps-Doctor-Away/dp/153737639X</a>	Health Trend Adaptation substitution to promote a modern health product aligned with contemporary wellness culture.
4. An apple a day keeps the doctors away	A ginger shot a day keeps the doctors away	Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/reel/DDLSDTxRpyP/?locale=es_ES">https://www.instagram.com/reel/DDLSDTxRpyP/?locale=es_ES</a>	Substitution Promotes health with a trendy alternative
5. A picture is worth a thousand words	A meme is worth a thousand words	Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CzJlxbjNnQZ/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CzJlxbjNnQZ/</a>	Substitution and Internet Culture replace “picture” with “meme” to reflect how memes convey complex ideas in online discourse.

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
6. A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand	A house divided against itself cannot stand	Bible <a href="https://www.bible.com/bible/111/MRK.3.24-26.NIV">https://www.bible.com/bible/111/MRK.3.24-26.NIV</a>	Semantic narrowing replaces “kingdom” with “house” to make the concept more relatable at a personal or domestic level, while preserving the moral lesson
7. Actions speak louder than words	Actions speak louder than speakers	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/reel/C7mSujBIVSo/">https://www.instagram.com/reel/C7mSujBIVSo/</a>	Lexical substitution  It creates humor or irony because “speakers” (the device or person giving a speech) contrasts with “actions.”
8. All that glitters is not gold	All that trends is not truth	Twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/search?q=%22not%20everything%20that%20trends%22">https://twitter.com/search?q=%22not%20everything%20that%20trends%22</a>	Substitution and media skepticism modernizes the warning about appearances
9. Add fuel to the fire	Fuel was added to the fire	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Passivization
10. Break the bank	Break the internet	The magazine Telegraph <a href="https://www.telegraph.co.uk/fashion/people/the-man-behind-kim-kardashians-paper-magazine-cover-on-how-to-br/">https://www.telegraph.co.uk/fashion/people/the-man-behind-kim-kardashians-paper-magazine-cover-on-how-to-br/</a>	Substitution and digital popularity shift from overspending (“break the bank”) to achieving massive online attention or virality.
11. Bring home the bacon	Bring home the bagels	PETA organization <a href="https://www.peta.org/news/bring-home-the-bagels/">https://www.peta.org/news/bring-home-the-bagels/</a>	Substitution and ethical shift replace meat-based metaphor with a vegan-friendly alternative to align with animal rights advocacy.

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
12. Better late than never	Better a late post than no post	Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C5ysZBav64B/">https://www.instagram.com/p/C5ysZBav64B/</a>	Substitution and social media Context reframe the idiom for online posting culture, emphasizing that delayed posting is better than no content at all.
13. Better late than never	Better latte than never	Amazon <a href="https://www.amazon.com/Better-Latte-Than-Never-Coffee/dp/B0768KBKVM">https://www.amazon.com/Better-Latte-Than-Never-Coffee/dp/B0768KBKVM</a>	Pun and substitution replace “late” with “latte” for humorous effect, connecting the idiom to coffee culture.
14. Beat a dead horse	Water a dead plant’	PETA organization <a href="https://www.peta.org/news/bring-home-the-bagels/">https://www.peta.org/news/bring-home-the-bagels/</a>	Substitution and Ethical Shift replace animal-related imagery with a plant-based one, aligning with animal rights and vegan advocacy.
15. Beat a dead horse	A dead horse was beaten	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Passivization – verb turned passive
16. Break a leg	Break the internet	YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@breaktheinternet_ttl">https://www.youtube.com/@breaktheinternet_ttl</a>	Substitution and digital popularity a shift from wishing theatrical success (“break a leg”)
17. Better safe than sorry	Better private than sorry	Facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3062583480690226">https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3062583480690226</a>	Substitution and privacy awareness adapts the idiom to modern concerns over digital privacy and online security.
18. Blow a fuse	Blow your top	Dictionary <a href="https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/blow+your+top">https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/blow+your+top</a>	Synonymic variation substitution of a similar metaphor to express anger.

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
19. Brownie points	Aura Points	TikTok <a href="https://www.tiktok.com/discover/aura-points-trend">https://www.tiktok.com/discover/aura-points-trend</a>	Lexical substitution (slang shift) Modernization and internet slang adaptation A fictional metric representing someone's coolness or vibe; actions can increase or decrease your "aura points." Example: "Helping that stranger just earned you major aura points."
20. Bite the dust	The dust was bitten	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Passivization
21. Beat around the bush	The bush was beaten around	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Passivization
22. Bite the bullet	The bullet was bitten	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Passivization
23. Break the bank	The bank was broken	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Passivization / Literalization
24. Break the news	She broke the news; the news was broken by her	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Contextual literalization / Passivization
25. Chasing the algorithm	Chasing rainbows - Pursuing something unattainable.	YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZINI7UhRoyc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZINI7UhRoyc</a>	Substitution and metaphoric shift replaces the tech-specific "algorithm" context with a universal metaphor of pursuing the impossible.
26. Caught red-handed	Caught in 4K	Tiktok	Lexical substitution (technical term) modernization & digital culture reference

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
		<a href="https://www.google.com/search?q=Caught+in+4K&amp;client=safari&amp;sc_esv=41b88c58e4770841&amp;channel=iPhone+bm&amp;sxsrf=A_E3TifMaYZFrnDcJNctNOY0J0QnKbK2g2A%3A1752749717167&amp;ei=ldZ4aPv_Ceq7hbIPqfqm8AY&amp;ved=0ahUKEwi7npbC3cOOAxXqXUEAHSm9CW4Q4dUDCBA&amp;uact=5&amp;oq=Caught+in+4K&amp;gs_lp=Egxn d3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAiDENhdWdodCBpbjA0S0jFAVAAWABwAHgBkAEAmAEAoAEAqgEAuAEDyAEA-AEC-AEBmAlAoAlAmAMakgcAoAcAsgcAuAcAwgcAyAcA&amp;scient=gws-wiz-serp#fpstate=ive&amp;vld=cid:35a8eff1,vid:83BVnWKd7-Y,st:0">https://www.google.com/search?q=Caught+in+4K&amp;client=safari&amp;sc_esv=41b88c58e4770841&amp;channel=iPhone+bm&amp;sxsrf=A_E3TifMaYZFrnDcJNctNOY0J0QnKbK2g2A%3A1752749717167&amp;ei=ldZ4aPv_Ceq7hbIPqfqm8AY&amp;ved=0ahUKEwi7npbC3cOOAxXqXUEAHSm9CW4Q4dUDCBA&amp;uact=5&amp;oq=Caught+in+4K&amp;gs_lp=Egxn d3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAiDENhdWdodCBpbjA0S0jFAVAAWABwAHgBkAEAmAEAoAEAqgEAuAEDyAEA-AEC-AEBmAlAoAlAmAMakgcAoAcAsgcAuAcAwgcAyAcA&amp;scient=gws-wiz-serp#fpstate=ive&amp;vld=cid:35a8eff1,vid:83BVnWKd7-Y,st:0</a>	<p>Updates the crime-related idiom with a tech phrase referencing high-definition video evidence, reflecting the role of surveillance and meme culture in exposing wrongdoing.</p>
<p>27. Curiosity killed the cat</p>	<p>Curiosity killed the search engine.</p>	<p>Google  <a href="https://search.yahoo.com/search;_ylt=AwrFQ2e01nhoOgIAAn1XNyoA;_ylc=X1MDMjc2NjY3OQRfcgMyBGZyA2FhcGx3BGZyMgNzYi10b3AE">https://search.yahoo.com/search;_ylt=AwrFQ2e01nhoOgIAAn1XNyoA;_ylc=X1MDMjc2NjY3OQRfcgMyBGZyA2FhcGx3BGZyMgNzYi10b3AE</a></p>	<p>Lexical substitution (domain shift)                      Modernization and Internet culture integration                      Replaces animal imagery with technology to warn about the risks of excessive online</p>

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
		<p><a href="#">Z3ByaWQDWi5La</a>  <a href="#">WpkN0hRSFNWUT</a>  <a href="#">F1NHBwRG14QQRu</a>  <a href="#">X3JzbHQDMARuX3</a>  <a href="#">N1Z2cDMTAEb3Jp</a>  <a href="#">Z2luA3NIYXJjaC55</a>  <a href="#">YWhvby5jb20EcG9z</a>  <a href="#">AzAEcHFzdHIDBH</a>  <a href="#">Bxc3RybAMwBHFz</a>  <a href="#">dHJsAzM1BHF1ZXJ</a>  <a href="#">5A0N1cmlvc2l0eSU</a>  <a href="#">yMGtpbGxlZCUyM</a>  <a href="#">HRoZSUyMHNIYXJ</a>  <a href="#">jaCUyMGVuZ2luZS</a>  <a href="#">4EdF9zdG1wAzE3N</a>  <a href="#">TI3NDk5NTA-</a>  <a href="#">?p=Curiosity+killed+</a>  <a href="#">the+search+engine.&amp;</a>  <a href="#">fr=aaplw&amp;fr2=sb-top</a></p>	<p>searching and data overload in the digital era.</p>
<p>28. Cool points</p>	<p>Aura Points</p>	<p>TikTok  <a href="https://www.tiktok.com/discover/aura-points-trend">https://www.tiktok.com/discover/aura-points-trend</a></p>	<p>Lexical substitution (slang shift)            Modernization and Internet slang adaptation            Replaces older slang with a TikTok-originated fictional metric for coolness or vibe, reflecting Gen Z’s playful gamification of social interaction.            A fictional metric representing someone’s coolness or vibe; actions can increase or decrease your “aura points.”            Example: “Helping that stranger just earned you major aura points.”</p>

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
29. Check the vibe	Vibe Check	Cambridge Dictionary <a href="https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/vibe-check">https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/vibe-check</a>	Shortening and Internet slang condensation of phrase to a two-word slang form popular in online communities.
30. Don't cry over spilled milk	Don't cry over spilled milkshakes	<a href="https://www.makeupalley.com/product/showreview.asp/ItemId=200015/Dont-Cry-Over-Spilled-Milkshakes/OPI/Polishes">https://www.makeupalley.com/product/showreview.asp/ItemId=200015/Dont-Cry-Over-Spilled-Milkshakes/OPI/Polishes</a>	Lexical substitution (noun variation) Humorization and Product marketing
31. Don't cry over spilled milk	Don't cry over spilled condiments	Reddit <a href="https://www.reddit.com/r/ginnyandgeorgia/show/comments/154zeg1/dont_cry_over_spilled_condiments_wins_for_joe/">https://www.reddit.com/r/ginnyandgeorgia/show/comments/154zeg1/dont_cry_over_spilled_condiments_wins_for_joe/</a>	Lexical substitution (noun variation) humorization & creative culinary metaphor
32. Don't cry over spilled milk	Don't cry over spilled tea	Website of quotes <a href="https://www.goalcast.com/uncle-iroh-quotes/">https://www.goalcast.com/uncle-iroh-quotes/</a>	Lexical substitution (noun variation) Modernization and slang adaptation
33. Don't judge a book by its cover	Don't judge a Company by Its social media	_Website of quotes <a href="https://medium.com/marketing-in-the-age-of-digital/dont-judge-a-company-by-its-social-media-f3f7be9df1a/">https://medium.com/marketing-in-the-age-of-digital/dont-judge-a-company-by-its-social-media-f3f7be9df1a/</a>	Modernization Social media authenticity warning against curated content judgment
34. Don't cry over spilled Milk	Don't cry over spilled silk	<a href="https://www.coldstonecreamery.com/icecream/signaturecreations/dontcryoverspilledsilk/index.html">https://www.coldstonecreamery.com/icecream/signaturecreations/dontcryoverspilledsilk/index.html</a>	Lexical substitution (noun variation) modernization and slang adaptation

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
35. Drive the point home	Driving the point home	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
36. FOMO	JOMO (Joy of Missing Out)	<a href="https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/happiness-is-state-mind/201807/jomo-the-joy-missing-out">https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/happiness-is-state-mind/201807/jomo-the-joy-missing-out</a>	Acronymic substitution (antonymic shift) semantic inversion and mental health reframing Flips the concept from anxiety about missing events to embracing contentment in absence.
37. Fly me to the moon	Fry me to the moon	<a href="https://www.viki.com/tv/40505c-fry-me-to-the-moon">https://www.viki.com/tv/40505c-fry-me-to-the-moon</a>	Lexical substitution (pun) Humorization and Culinary metaphor Alters the romantic phrase by adding a cooking verb for comedic effect.
38. Fear of being left out	FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)	<a href="https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8283615/">https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8283615/</a>	Acronym creation Linguistic compression and internet slang formation Condenses a descriptive phrase into a catchy acronym widely used in online culture.
39. Fly off the handle	She flew off the handle	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Contextual personalization
40. Fall through the cracks	Falling through the cracks	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Progressive aspect / continuous form
41. Go nuts	Go bananas	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zI-XrjLOWfY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zI-XrjLOWfY</a>	Lexical substitution Colloquial metaphor swap. Replaces “nuts” with another food metaphor while keeping the same meaning of

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
			acting wildly.
42. Go off the rails	Go off the tracks	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Lexical substitution (rails → tracks)
43. Go down the rabbit hole	Going down the rabbit hole	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
44. It has the air of	It's Giving	Source: EF Education First	Lexical substitution (syntactic simplification) Modernization and Internet slang adaptation  Example: "That outfit? It's giving vintage Hollywood." Meaning: Used to describe the vibe or impression something conveys.
45. Inside joke	IYKYK	Source: EF Education First	Acronym substitution Internet slang compression and Meme culture integration Acronym for "If You Know, You Know," indicating an inside joke or shared knowledge. Example: "That reference? IYKYK."
46. Jump the queue	Jumping the fence	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Lexical substitution / metaphor shift
47. Jump through hoops	Jumping through hoops	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
48. Keep your chin up	Keep your vibe up	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/discover/keep-the-vibe-up">https://www.tiktok.com/discover/keep-the-vibe-up</a>	Lexical substitution (synonymic) Colloquial metaphor swap

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
49. Keep doing great work	Keep cooking	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@jeaniceperez/video/7372008831053876526">https://www.tiktok.com/@jeaniceperez/video/7372008831053876526</a> TikTok	Lexical substitution (metaphoric shift) Modernization & Colloquial metaphor adaptation keep succeeding Keep up the good work / You're on fire
50. Keeping up with the Joneses	FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)	<a href="https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8283615/">https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8283615/</a>	Acronym substitution (semantic narrowing) Modernization and Internet culture reframing
51. Kill two birds with one stone	Feeding two birds with one scone	PETA education <a href="https://prime.peta.org/news/language-matters-tackling-speciesism-in-everyday-speech/">https://prime.peta.org/news/language-matters-tackling-speciesism-in-everyday-speech/</a>	Lexical substitution (ethical language shift) Modernization and Animal-friendly reframing
52. Kill two birds with one stone	One stone killed two birds; two birds with one stone were killed		Reordering / Passivization
53. Keep your friends close and your enemies closer	Keep your followers close and your fandom closer.	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cnv5y06K0WU/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cnv5y06K0WU/</a>	Lexical substitution (social media domain shift) Modernization and Internet culture adaptation
54. Kick the bucket	Kick the bucket list	<a href="https://smartloving.org/kicking-the-bucket-list/">https://smartloving.org/kicking-the-bucket-list/</a>	Lexical addition (extension) adding list changes the meaning. It fuses two related expressions (kick the bucket + bucket list), creating humor and wordplay. This falls

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
			under parodic idiom modification, because it plays on the sound similarity while changing the sense.
55. Kick the bucket	Bucket-kicking	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Nominalization – verb turned into gerund
56. Laughter is the best medicine	Memes are the best medicine.	<a href="https://www.reddit.com/r/thanksimcured/comments/d4jflc/memes_are_the_best_medicine/">https://www.reddit.com/r/thanksimcured/comments/d4jflc/memes_are_the_best_medicine/</a>	Lexical substitution (digital humor shift) modernization and meme culture integration
57. Lap it up	Eat it up	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxkanXF5WSc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxkanXF5WSc</a>	Lexical substitution (synonymic) Colloquialization
58. Leap of faith	Leap into faith; make a leap of faith;	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Lexical substitution + Collocational shift
59. Let the cat out of the bag	Bag-cat-release; the cat was let out of the bag	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Nominalization / Passivization
60. Move mountains	Move a mountain	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Number reduction (plural → singular)
61. Money doesn't grow on trees	Money grow on trees	<a href="https://english-grammar-lessons.com/money-grows-on-trees-meaning/">https://english-grammar-lessons.com/money-grows-on-trees-meaning/</a>	Lexical substitution Humorization and Semantic inversion
62. More than one way to skin a cat	More than one way to peel a potato or orange	PETA education	Lexical substitution (ethical language shift) Modernization and animal-friendly reframing

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
		<a href="https://prime.peta.org/news/language-matters-tackling-speciesism-in-everyday-speech/">https://prime.peta.org/news/language-matters-tackling-speciesism-in-everyday-speech/</a>	
63. Move the goalposts	Moving the goalposts	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
64. No pain, no gain	No pain, no game	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6S1Ql39yAtQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6S1Ql39yAtQ</a>	Lexical substitution (slang innovation) Modernization and Internet slang adaptation
65. Not my cup of tea	Not my cup of coffee	<a href="https://theproperkitchen.com/what-does-not-my-cup-of-coffee-mean/">https://theproperkitchen.com/what-does-not-my-cup-of-coffee-mean/</a>	Lexical substitution (slang innovation) Modernization and Internet slang adaptation
66. No pain, no gain	No gain, no love	<a href="https://mydramalist.com/754711-because-i-want-no-loss">https://mydramalist.com/754711-because-i-want-no-loss</a>	Lexical substitution Modernization and Internet slang adaptation
67. Once bitten, twice shy	Once burned, twice cautious.	<a href="https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/once+burned+twice+cautious">https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/once+burned+twice+cautious</a>	Lexical substitution (synonymic variation) Modernization and Semantic clarity
68. Push the boundaries	Pushing the boundaries	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
69. Run the gauntlet	Go through the gauntlet	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Lexical substitution (run → go through)
70. Run out of steam	Running out of steam	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
71. Race against time	Racing against time	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
72. Roll with the punches	Rolling with the punches	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
73. Seen better days	Known better days	Stylistic shift <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBB6KJPCfJE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBB6KJPCfJE</a> Youtube	Lexical variation Stylistic shift Explanation: Replaces “seen” with “known” for a subtle change in tone while keeping the sentiment of decline.
74. Spill the beans	Spill the tea	Pop Culture <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cb9MYuIsYg6/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cb9MYuIsYg6/</a> Instagram	Lexical substitution (slang shift) Modernization and Internet slang adaptation
75. Stay at the top of your game	Stay goated GOAT- Greatest of all time	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/discover/stay-goated-meaning">https://www.tiktok.com/discover/stay-goated-meaning</a>	Acronym substitution with slang innovation Modernization and Sports slang integration
76. Something smells fishy	Sus (smells fishy) suspicious	<a href="https://slangwise.com/what-does-sus-mean-in-gen-z-slang/">https://slangwise.com/what-does-sus-mean-in-gen-z-slang/</a>	Shortening and slang adaptation Modernization and Gaming culture integration
77. Spill the tea	That’s tea	<a href="https://digitalcultures.net/slang/thats-the-tea/">https://digitalcultures.net/slang/thats-the-tea/</a>	Lexical substitution (statement form) Modernization and Internet slang adaptation
78. Spill the beans	Spill your guts	Intensification <a href="https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/spill+your+guts">https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/spill+your+guts</a>	Lexical substitution (intensification) Colloquialization and Emotive emphasis
79. Spill the beans	Bean spillage; the spilling of beans	<a href="https://www.sketchengine.eu">https://www.sketchengine.eu</a>	Nominalization – idiom reduced to noun phrase
80. Swing for the fences	Swinging for the fences	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
81. Swim against the tide	Swimming against the tide	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
82. Step up one's game	Stepping up the game	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Possessive omitted (structural simplification)
83. Take the bull by the horns	Take the flower by the thorns	PETA organization <a href="https://prime.peta.org/news/language-matters-tackling-speciesism-in-everyday-speech/">https://prime.peta.org/news/language-matters-tackling-speciesism-in-everyday-speech/</a>	Lexical substitution (softened imagery) Modernization and Metaphor reframing Facing a challenge, but using softer imagery
84. There's no place like home	There's no place like your homepage.	<a href="https://breakintoweb.com/blog/14-theres-no-place-like-homepage-what-every-web-designer-needs-to-know/">https://breakintoweb.com/blog/14-theres-no-place-like-homepage-what-every-web-designer-needs-to-know/</a>	Lexical substitution (domain shift) Modernization and Digital culture adaptation
85. Too many cooks spoil the broth	Too many editors spoil the TAG.	<a href="https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3274307">https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3274307</a>	Lexical substitution Modernization and Digital collaboration metaphor Adapts the idiom to the online environment, substituting "cooks" with "editors" and "broth" with "TAG" to describe overcomplication in digital projects.
86. Turn the tables	Turning the tables	<a href="https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/">https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/</a>	Progressive form
87. The whole nine yards	The whole vibe	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/wholevibe/">https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/wholevibe/</a>	Lexical substitution (aesthetic metaphor shift) Modernization and Internet slang adaptation Meaning: Aesthetic culture

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
			Describing overall atmosphere
88. The early bird catches the worm	The early riser catches the coffee	<a href="http://englishdaily626.com/slang.php?043">http://englishdaily626.com/slang.php?043</a>	Lexical substitution (humorous twist) Humorization and Lifestyle culture reference
89. Throw in the towel	Throw shade	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXg0uV08-UQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXg0uV08-UQ</a> YouTube	Lexical substitution (semantic shift) Modernization and Ballroom culture integration
90. Time heals all wounds	Time heals all things	<a href="https://newswithviews.com/time-heals-all-things-not-so-much-not-always/">https://newswithviews.com/time-heals-all-things-not-so-much-not-always/</a>	Lexical substitution (semantic broadening) Modernization and Semantic expansion
91. Take Life One Step at A Time	Take Life One Sip at A Time	<a href="https://www.amazon.com/Framed-Plaque-Motivational-Quotes-Hanging/dp/B0B67MKBK4">https://www.amazon.com/Framed-Plaque-Motivational-Quotes-Hanging/dp/B0B67MKBK4</a>	Lexical substitution (metaphoric shift) Humorization and Lifestyle metaphor adaptation
92. The Joke is on You	The Yolks on You	<a href="https://looneytunes.fandom.com/wiki/The_Yolks_on_You">https://looneytunes.fandom.com/wiki/The_Yolks_on_You</a>	Lexical substitution (pun) Humorization and Wordplay
93. Throw caution to the wind	They threw caution to the wind; caution was thrown to the wind by them		Passivization + Typo (Cyrillic “c”)
94. You can't judge a book by its cover	Don't Judge a person by their shoes	<a href="https://wittyresponzes.com/other-ways-to-say-dont-judge-a-book-by-its-cover/">https://wittyresponzes.com/other-ways-to-say-dont-judge-a-book-by-its-cover/</a>	Lexical substitution (domain shift) Modernization and Social commentary

Continuation of table A.1

1	2	3	4
95. Word of mouth	Word of mouse/web	<a href="https://www.bwmarketingworld.com/article/word-of-mouth-to-word-of-mouse-marketing-404676">https://www.bwmarketingworld.com/article/word-of-mouth-to-word-of-mouse-marketing-404676</a>	Lexical substitution Humorization and Lifestyle metaphor adaptation
96. Zip your lip	Zip your mouth	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXrr_B0gU5Y">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXrr_B0gU5Y</a>	Lexical substitution Modernization and Social commentary