

LINGUACULTURAL ANALYSIS OF CLOTHES IDIOMS

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ИНФОРМАЦИЯ О  
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КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ  
СЛОВА:

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Idioms are considered as cultural treasure in any language. They are fixed expressions that carry figurative meanings, often reflecting traditions, history, and social values of the people who use them. Among idioms, those related to clothing are particularly interesting because clothes are universal yet culturally specific. They are signifiers of identity, social status, and human behavior. A linguacultural analysis of clothes idioms allows us to see how language and culture interact, revealing not only linguistic creativity but also cultural worldview[1:89].

The Cultural Symbolism of Clothes

Clothing is more than a necessity; it is a cultural code. In many societies, certain garments symbolize profession, gender roles, or moral values. For example, the white dress is associated with purity and innocence in Western weddings, while in some Asian cultures white is linked with mourning. Such cultural differences also appear in idioms.

In English, idioms with clothing items are often metaphorical:

1. "To wear the pants" — to be in control, usually in a relationship.
2. "To have something up one's sleeve" — to keep a secret plan.
3. "To fill someone's shoes" — to replace someone successfully.

These idioms use clothes as symbols of authority, secrecy, or responsibility.

Cross-Cultural Comparison

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A linguacultural approach emphasizes comparing how different languages use similar clothing imagery. For example:

In English, “keep it under your hat” means “keep a secret,” while in Russian the idiom “держат камень за пазухой” (literally: to keep a stone behind one’s shirt) conveys “to hide negative feelings.” Both use clothing to symbolize concealment, but the cultural metaphors differ.

In Karakalpak, the phrase “malaxayindi jerge taslama” (“don’t throw your hat to the ground”) symbolizes respect and honor. In English, however, “to throw one’s hat in the ring” means to enter a competition. Bir kóylek burın tozdırğan – to have a big experience , be experienced in solving a problem; *etek jeñdi túrip-* to be fully ready to do work.[2:7]

Such differences show how idioms reflect cultural priorities: in one culture, clothing is linked to dignity and respect; in another, it represents readiness to act[3:187].

#### Semantic Fields of Clothes Idioms

Clothing idioms often cluster around certain themes:

##### 1. Authority and Power

“To wear the crown”, “to wear the pants”.

##### 2. Deception and Secrets

“To pull something out of one’s hat”, “to have something up one’s sleeve”.

##### 3. Identity and Social Role

“To put oneself in someone else’s shoes”, “wolf in sheep’s clothing”.

##### 4. Appearances vs. Reality

“Clothes make the man” (appearance matters).

“Don’t judge a book by its cover” (appearance deceives).

Each group shows how clothing imagery is used metaphorically to express cultural attitudes toward society, roles, and behavior.[4:56]

#### Teaching Implications

For language learners, especially in multicultural contexts, clothes idioms should be taught not only as vocabulary but as cultural concepts. Teachers can:

- Compare clothing idioms across languages to highlight similarities and differences.
- Use role play and storytelling activities to contextualize idioms.
- Discuss cultural symbolism of clothes (e.g., colors, garments) in both target and native culture.

This makes idioms memorable and helps students develop intercultural competence.

#### Conclusion

Clothes idioms are a vivid example of the intersection between language and culture. They reflect values of identity, authority, secrecy, and social roles. A linguacultural analysis demonstrates that while clothing is a universal human experience, the idioms built around it differ across cultures, revealing unique worldviews. Teaching clothes idioms through a

linguacultural lens enriches students' vocabulary while deepening their cultural awareness, turning idiomatic expressions into bridges between languages and traditions.

### **References**

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