



STYLISTIC CONNOTATIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract. Idioms are widely recognized as the essence or the crystallization of language. They are closely connected and cannot be separated from culture. English idioms are formed in a particular historical period and passed from generation to generation, embedded with unique cultural connotations, such as historical development, natural environments religious belief, custom & habits, sports & entertainment, fables & mythologies, literary works, etc.

Keywords: idiom; English idioms; culture; cultural connotations.

INTRODUCTION

The Relationship Between Idiom and Culture Language is an intrinsic part of culture. It carries culture and plays a very important role in it. Without language, culture would not be possible. On the other hand, language is influenced and shaped by culture; it reflects culture [3].

An idiom is a comparatively fixed language form in matters of meaning and structure, embedded with rich cultural connotations. Each of them, formed in a particular historical period and passed from generation to generation, reflects unique cultural elements such as natural environment, religion, custom and habits, etc. The relationship between idiom and culture is actually the one between language and culture.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Reflecting Historical Development Historical Development has great influence on language. During the long development, the traces of historical culture were left over in the idioms. Looking back historical development, national conquer and assimilation, war between different ethnicity influence culture greatly.

Roman Conquest Between the 8th and 5th centuries BC, the Celts moved to Britain and became the dominant group there. Roman king Claudius invaded Britain in 43 AD and three years later conquered the country. Britain became a province of the Roman Empire. With the occupation, Roman culture dominated the high society at that time. Latin became official language and even people could not assume the office of the government if they could not speak Latin. Romans occupied Britain for 400 years. Even now it is not difficult to see the traces of Roman culture in English. Such proverbs as "do in Rome as the Romans do, Rome was not built in a day, all roads lead to Rome" are known to every family in Britain.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Danish Invasion In the late 8th century, the Vikings from the Scandinavian countries in Northern Europe, Norway and Denmark, came in their long boats and raided the coast of England. Later they changed the plundering into the campaign of conquest. Alfred the Great led his army to resist the Vikings, but he was not able to drive them out of the country.

In 886, he had to reach the agreement with the Vikings, which allowed them to live in the northeast part of England. After that, the Danes settled down peacefully. They were assimilated to the English culture and converted to the Christian religion.

The Danes brought into the English language a large number of Danish words, many of which became part of the everyday English vocabulary. The British system of counting by the unit of 12 was also adopted from the Danes: a dozen means 12; 12 pennies made up one shilling of the old English money; one foot has 12 inches. English has the idiom six of one and half a dozen of the other.

The Norman Conquest The Normans were also from the Scandinavian countries. They invaded France in the 9th century. They were converted to Christianity and adopted the French language. In 1066, English king Edward died without an heir. William, Duke of Normandy and cousin of Edward, believed that he should be the king of England. William was very angry and invaded England when Harold was made king of England. On Christmas Day, 1066, William was crowned king of England in Westminster Abbey. Norman control was soon established throughout the country.

French culture became the dominant culture in England because the Norman nobles dominated the English society. As a result French replaced English as the official language. English has a large French vocabulary or idioms connected with French. For example, if a visitor leaves without saying good-bye to the host, English will say he takes French leave. It's said that the etiquette was popular in France in the 17th century. Idioms such as "take heart, stew in one's own juice, return to one's muttons" are literal translation from French.

Reflecting Religious Belief Religion has played an important role in all peoples' historical development. The Christian culture has ruled Europe for nearly two thousand years. Britain has been a Christian country ever since St. Augustine and his monks converted the English to Christianity in the 7th century. They believe in God and the Bible, though their forms of worship and interpretation of the Bible vary now. The Bible is a book of required reading for them, from which many famous sentences have already become their mottoes about the philosophy of life. English idioms are deeply influenced by the Bible.

This idiom "beard the lion" derives from the Bible: the Old Testament (1 Samuel, 17:34-35). Later, Scottish poet Walter Scott quoted the idiom and added 'in his den' in his poem. "And dar'st thou/Beard the lion in his den...?" Now this idiom means "defy somebody in his own stronghold".

Reflecting Geographical Background (Natural Environment) Natural environment is the essential condition for existence to man, so different living surroundings may exert different influences on the culture of a nation. Geographically, Britain is an island country surrounded by water on all sides. Sea transportation occupies a special position in Britain's transportation. Undoubtedly, there is no modern Britain without navigation. English people's life is closely linked with sea. People created a lot of idioms that connect with water, sea or navigation: go to sea, put out to sea, feel under the water, etc.

Reflecting Mythologies & Fables Mythology embodies striking national characteristics and provides soil for the development of national culture. Language's influence also permeates through mythologies and fables. Idioms are not exceptional.

CONCLUSION

English teems with idioms. Idiom is a mirror of culture and clearly reflects cultural characteristics of a nation. Sometimes it is rather hard for language learners who do not

belong to the source culture to understand idioms, let alone the appreciation of them. So it is significant to learn idiom's cultural connotation such as geography, history, religion, customs, sports & entertainments, fables & mythologies, literary works, etc. because they are parts of subcultures.

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