



СФЕРЫ ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИЯ ИДИМАТИЧЕСКИХ ВЫРАЖЕНИЙ В УСТНОЙ ДИАЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ РЕЧИ КОРЕЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

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Abstract: in modern Korean, idiomatic expressions function most actively in oral dialogic speech, where they serve as an important means of expression, evaluation, and pragmatic influence. Unlike written communication, spoken interaction is characterized by spontaneity, emotional involvement, and orientation toward a specific interlocutor, which contributes to the frequent use of fixed expressions with figurative meanings. This article examines the main spheres of functioning of idiomatic expressions in Korean oral dialogic speech, as well as the features of their usage in each of these spheres.

Keywords: idiomatic expressions, semantics, Korean language, teaching methodology, dialogic speech, text.

Аннотация: в современном корейском языке идиоматические выражения активно функционируют прежде всего в устной диалогической речи, где они выступают как важное средство экспрессии, оценки и прагматического воздействия. В отличие от письменной речи, устное общение предполагает спонтанность, эмоциональную вовлечённость и ориентацию на конкретного собеседника, что способствует частому использованию устойчивых выражений с переносным значением. В статье рассматриваются основные сферы функционирования идиоматических выражений в устной диалогической речи корейского языка, а также особенности их употребления в каждой из них.

Ключевые слова: идиоматические выражения, семантика, корейский язык, методика преподавания, диалогическая речь, текст.

One of the basic spheres of functioning of idiomatic expressions is everyday conversational speech. It is precisely in informal communication between friends, family members, and colleagues that idioms are used most actively. In everyday dialogues, they serve for the figurative transmission of an emotional state, an attitude toward a situation, or an evaluation of the interlocutor's behavior. Thus, the expression 귀가 얇다 "to be gullible," literally "thin ears," is used to characterize a person who easily yields to others' opinions. The idiom 손에 땀을 쥐다 "palms sweat" is used to convey strong excitement or tense anticipation.

In everyday speech, expressions such as 발등에 불이 떨어지다 "a fire fell on the instep" – referring to the urgency of a matter – and 눈앞이 캄캄하다 "it is dark before one's eyes" – referring to confusion or despair – are also frequently encountered. The use of such idioms allows the speaker to convey complex psycho-emotional states without extended explanations,

which makes communication more dynamic and expressive¹. In everyday dialogue, idioms are often accompanied by appropriate intonation, gestures, and facial expressions, which enhances their expressive effect. Furthermore, the choice of idiomatic expression largely depends on the age and social characteristics of the speakers, as well as the degree of closeness between the interlocutors. Thus, everyday speech is the primary environment for the natural functioning of idiomatic expressions.

An important sphere of dissemination and actualization of idiomatic expressions is dialogue in Korean dramas and films. The speech of characters in dramas is maximally close to real conversational language, which accounts for the active use of idioms. For example, expressions such as 속이 쓰리다 “one’s insides feel bitter” – referring to emotional pain or distress – 피가 거꾸로 솟다 “blood rushes backward” – describing intense anger – and 정신이 없다 “to have no 정신 (spirit/mind)” – indicating extreme busyness or confusion – frequently occur in dialogues. In addition, dramas widely employ idioms that reflect interpersonal conflicts and the emotional experiences of characters: 이를 악물다 “to clench one’s teeth” – expressing determination to endure; 발목을 잡다 “to hold someone by the ankle” – meaning to hinder someone’s progress; 선을 넘다 “to cross the line” – to violate acceptable boundaries. Due to their high frequency of use, such expressions are easily memorized by viewers and actively transferred into everyday spoken language².

Another significant sphere of functioning of idiomatic expressions is musical discourse, primarily the lyrics of Korean songs. In song texts, idioms are used to convey the inner state of the lyrical subject and to intensify emotional impact. For example, the expression 가슴이 찢어지다 “the chest is torn apart” denotes profound emotional pain, while 마음을 접다 “to fold one’s heart” – to give up or resign oneself frequently appears in songs about unrequited love. Idioms such as 눈을 감다 “to close one’s eyes” – to accept or come to terms with something, 발길이 떨어지지 않다 “one’s feet do not move” – to be unable to bring oneself to leave, and 혼자가 아니다 “not to be alone,” in a figurative emotional sense are also commonly used. Within the musical context, these idioms acquire additional emotional depth and become firmly embedded in the linguistic consciousness of listeners, particularly among young people.

The contemporary media space, including platforms such as YouTube, social networks, and online shows, constitutes one of the most dynamic spheres of idiomatic expression usage. In the speech of bloggers and interview participants, colloquial idioms are widely employed: 말이 나오다 “words come out by themselves”, 분위기를 타다 “to catch the atmosphere”, 김이 새다 “the steam has escaped” – to feel disappointed. Media discourse also frequently features expressions such as 손을 놓다 “to let go of one’s hands” – to give up, 판이 커지다 “the scale has

¹ 네이버 사전// <https://dic.naver.com>

² 조동주. 드라마를 활용한 한국어 어휘 교육 방향. 인하대학교 석사 학위논문, 2018.



grown” – the situation has expanded, and **말문이 막히다** “one’s speech is blocked” – to be at a loss for words. Owing to the high frequency of repetition and the breadth of audience reach, the media sphere plays a key role in the dissemination of idiomatic expressions and in shaping contemporary colloquial norms.³ The sphere of educational and semi-professional oral communication, for example, among students, deserves special attention. In informal dialogues between students and teachers, as well as in student discussions, idiomatic expressions are used to soften statements, express judgment, or establish a trusting atmosphere. In this sphere, idioms are often combined with neutral vocabulary, creating a mixed speech style. Thus, idiomatic expressions in Korean are actively used in various areas of spoken dialogue: in everyday conversation, in drama and film dialogues, in music and media discourse, and in educational settings. To clearly illustrate the use of idiomatic expressions in modern Korean speech, examples of dialogues and texts from popular communicative sources are provided below⁴.

Below, examples of idiomatic expressions in the dialogues of Korean dramas are examined, specifically the drama **미생** “Incomplete Life”.

Example 1: – 요즘 회사 생활 어때? – 산 넘어 산이야;

The idiomatic expression **산 넘어 산이다** literally means “beyond one mountain lies another.” Figuratively, it denotes a situation in which one difficulty is immediately followed by another, that is, problems arise consecutively without respite. In dialogic speech, this idiom is used to express fatigue, frustration, or an assessment of a prolonged and challenging situation.

Example 2: – 그렇게 힘들어 보여. – 눈앞이 캄캄해;

The expression **눈앞이 캄캄하다** is translated as “it is dark before one’s eyes.” Figuratively, it denotes a state of intense despair, confusion, or hopelessness, when a person sees no way out of a difficult situation. In dialogue, the idiom conveys emotional shock, fear, or psychological pressure caused by unexpected or severe circumstances.

Example 3: – 포기할 생각 없어? – 이를 악물고 버텨야지;

The idiom **이를 악물다** literally means “to clench one’s teeth.” Figuratively, it denotes strong inner tension, determination, or endurance, when a person consciously overcomes difficulties while suppressing pain, emotions, or fatigue. In dialogic speech, this idiom expresses willpower and readiness to withstand hardship.

Example 4: – 상사 때문에 힘들지? – 속이 너무 쓰려;

The expression **속이 쓰리다** conveys inner distress or emotional pain.

The drama **이태원 클래스** “Itaewon Class”.

Example 1: – 지금 상황이 어때? – 발등에 불이 떨어졌어;

³ 장혜이메이. 한국 드라마를 활용한 감정표현 관용어 교육방안 연구. 경희대학교 석사학위논문, 2014.

⁴ 홍기용. TV예능프로그램을 활용한 한국어 관용표현 교육방안 연구. 한국외국어대학교 석사학위논문, 2020.

This idiom emphasizes extreme urgency, when a problem requires immediate resolution and postponement becomes impossible.

Example 2: - 그렇게 쉽게 포기할 거야? - 절대 손을 놓지 않을 거야.

The idiom 손을 놓다 is used in the meaning “to give up,” referring to the abandonment of further efforts, loss of initiative, or cessation of activity as a result of fatigue, disappointment, or recognition of the situation’s futility.

Example 3: - 저 사람이 문제야. - 발목을 잡고 있어;

In dialogic speech, this idiom is used to express obstruction caused by external circumstances or other individuals.

Example 4: - 이 싸움, 끝까지 가겠어? - 이를 악물고 가야지;

The idiom 이를 악물다 expresses perseverance and characterizes inner composure and determination manifested in the ability to overcome difficulties while restraining physical pain and emotional tension.

Example 5: - 일이 커졌어. - 판이 너무 커졌어.

This idiom is used to evaluate the unexpected expansion of a situation and the increase of its significance⁵.

The drama 사랑의 불시착 “Crash Landing on You”.

Example 1: - 아직도 그 사람이 생각나? - 가슴이 아파;

The idiom 가슴이 아프다 is used to denote intense emotional pain, sorrow, regret, or suffering caused by difficult events or by concern for another person’s condition.

Example 2: - 돌아갈 수 있을까? - 앞이 안 보여;

The expression 앞이 안 보이다 indicates uncertainty. It is used to describe a state of confusion or loss of direction in which a person sees no перспективе and is unable to make a well-considered decision.

Example 3: - 헤어져야 할까? - 마음이 너무 복잡해;

The idiom 마음이 복잡하다, in its figurative meaning, denotes a state of inner contradiction and emotional overload, in which a person experiences mixed feelings and has difficulty interpreting them.

Example 4: - 포기하는 게 맞을까? - 쉽게 마음을 접을 수 없어;

The idiom 마음을 접다 means to abandon one’s previous feelings, intentions, or plans, often associated with disappointment or the forced acceptance of a situation.

Example 5: - 왜 이렇게 슬퍼 보여? - 눈물이 앞을 가려;

The idiom 눈물이 앞을 가리다 conveys profound sadness. It is used to describe a state of strong emotional shock in which feelings obstruct an objective perception of reality.

⁵ 드라마 이태원 클라쓰 대본집, arte, 2020.

The drama 도깨비 “Goblin”.

Example 1: - 그렇게 오래 기다릴 수 있어?- 이를 악물고 기다릴게;

The idiom 이를 악물다 describes a state of inner concentration and self-control in which a person, despite difficulties, continues to act while suppressing pain, fatigue, and emotional tension.

Example 2: - 운명이란 게 있을까? - 마음이 쉽게 흔들려;

The idiom 마음이 흔들리다 denotes emotional instability and doubt, in which a person experiences hesitation in feelings, intentions, or decisions under the influence of external or internal factors.

Example 3: - 왜 이렇게 화가 났어? - 피가 거꾸로 솟아;

The idiom 피가 거꾸로 솟다 conveys intense anger. It is used to denote a state of extreme rage, indignation, or strong emotional arousal arising in response to injustice or insult.

The above examples from dramas, television shows, musical works, and media discourse confirm that idiomatic expressions actively function in contemporary spoken dialogic Korean. Their wide distribution in mass culture contributes to the consolidation of idioms in everyday communication and to the formation of linguistic competence among both native speakers and learners of the Korean language

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