



The Inside Word

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From the President

The year 1994 probably has little significance to many. It was an average year in terms of controversy as it lacked the sub-human qualities that have characterized other years, such as 2001 for instance. In 1994, the Serbs heavy weapons pounded Sarajevo relentlessly; Olympic figure skater Nancy Kerrigan was attacked; Los Angeles was jolted by a major earthquake; the U.S. ended the trade embargo on Vietnam; Aldrich Ames was charged with spying for the Soviets; four terrorists were convicted in the World Trade Center bombing; South Africa held its first interracial national election; President Clinton was accused of sexual harassment; Congress voted for the protection of women's health clinics; O.J. Simpson was arrested in the

killing of his wife; a small plane crashed into White House; the U.S. sends forces to the Persian Gulf; President Reagan—then 83 years of age—revealed he had Alzheimer's disease; President Clinton ordered to end the Bosnian arms embargo; and Newt Gingrich was named House Speaker. Ah, yes... AllWorld Language Consultants was incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia... hoping to make a name for itself in a then localized industry.

Starting a new business at 40 is—to say the least—risky. Survival instinct alone rejects this concept and forces a person to think and re-think such decision. Drive alone is not enough, particularly because one must abandon security and common-sense in lieu of the unknown. Children only compound our fears as their future is very much at stake. At times like these, the old adage that “behind the success of many men there lies the iron will of a woman” is very much the case at ALC. My wife—although she will deny it—shares responsibility for the vision, the mission, and the success of our company. Three thousand, six hundred and sixty five days after our incorporation, we are ready to take this company to the next level and celebrate yet another decade of success. Tired? A bit. Bruised? Considerably. Hardened? Probably. Seasoned? Absolutely. But our drive and dedication to our trade remain intact, and the dream will live on forever.

Many employees have come through our doors over the past decade. Some transitioned into key management positions, while others simply were passing through. Fortunately, we have learned from difficult times, and these have served a purpose as well: to make us stronger, more aware, and certainly more successful than ever before. Looking back, there is not a single decision that we did not take that we would not be ready to take again today, particularly considering the outcome. Today, ALC is responsible for the livelihood of more than 100 families, including children of High-School and College age. The company continues to foster and support education and social programs designed to improve our quality of life in our community. And over the years, its impeccable past-performance with the Federal Government has earned it the trust of every branch of the Armed Forces, as well as law enforcement and education.

ALC today is a far cry from the three-person, family-owned operation of 1994. The company has grown ten-fold since then. And as we look beyond the establishment of our new satellite office in Florida and we focus on the West Coast, I would be remiss if I did not thank each and every person that has ever been associated with our company for their contribution. I am a firm believer that every experience is good because it teaches us something valuable. We have learned to take all of our experiences of the past decade, and we have started to map out our next decade. I am certain that it will be as unprecedented as our growth has been to-date.



From Maryland to the World

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ALC Supports Troops in Iraq

By Nicol Christie

On July 10, 2004, a joint effort between Miami-Dade County, the City of Miami, and several corporate sponsors, honored returning Florida National Guardsmen at Miami's Bayfront Park. The celebration began with a luncheon aboard the magnificent *Navigator of the Seas* at the Port of Miami, and continued throughout the day in Bayfront

Park, where Governor Jeb Bush praised the sacrifice, dedication, and patriotism of our troops overseas, and welcomed those who had served their country in such difficult times.

"Our organization is sponsoring a fundraising luncheon to raise money to assist military families facing hardship and difficulties as a result of ongoing troop deployments," said program organizers. The celebration was created to allow Miami's corporate community to show their tangible support for the many servicemen and women and their families dedicated to protecting human rights and dignities we often take for granted. ALC understands the sacrifice of our troops and their families and commends their ongoing efforts.

The fundraising luncheon was of particular interest because it served to raise money to assist military families facing hardship and difficulties as a result of ongoing troop deployments. AllWorld Language Consultants was honored to be a part of this worthy cause as many of its civilian employees—as many as 120—share the same hardship and uncertainty as their military counterparts. It was ALC's way to show its tangible support for our servicemen and women, their families, and all the civilian population contributing to the many operations that are currently underway in Southwest Asia, and throughout the globe on behalf of freedom and democracy.

The luncheon turned out to be a dignified, patriotic event that brought together Miami's corporate leadership with government leaders, senior military officers and veterans who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq. The event also honored the families of several local servicemen who had lost loved ones during military operations.

The donations received from the luncheon were placed into a charitable fund at the Dade Community Foundation and they will be distributed to a variety of charitable institutions that directly assist military families and survivors. To date the event has raised a total of \$XXXX.

ALC could not pass this opportunity to do something meaningful for our men and women in uniform, and our CEO stated it best "it is the least we could do for the tremendous effort that our Armed Forces are carrying out on behalf of our freedom and security here at home. Let us hope that their sacrifice will serve as an example of what this country stands for, and their unselfishness will inspire many to support our mission of freedom and democracy. We, at ALC and its subsidiaries, will never forget their contribution so that others could enjoy safety and freedom."

ALC Miami, a subsidiary of ALC, Inc. is a relative newcomer to the Miami business community. ALC Miami opened its offices just late last year, on December 5, 2003 at 8405 N.W. 53 rd Street, Suite C-104. Primarily, this office provides translation, transcription,

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monitoring, and supervision for DEA Miami Field Division. Over the past six months, ALC's Miami performance has been exceptional and we anticipate a long, rewarding relationships with the government, business community, officials and residents of the area.

In fact, it is ALC's past performance with the Federal Government that currently stands as the company's strongest asset, and it has yielded numerous contracts that were awarded based on trustworthiness, flexibility, and understanding of sensitive requirements.

As a government contractor, ALC's many divisions often deal with issues of national security, intelligence and counterintelligence. In fact, some of our more delicate jobs involve deploying linguists to "hot spots" such as Afghanistan and Iraq. Because we too are in the business of national and international security we are particularly empathetic to the cause of our soldiers. When we deploy linguists, they too leave behind families and friends who often pray for their safe return.



Left to right: Carlos Scandiffio (CEO, ALC); Carol Williamson (Director of Business Development, ALC); Brigadier General Mike Lenhert (Chief of Staff, SOUTHCOM) and Mrs. Lenhert.



Left to right: Pedro Pablo Permuy (Greenberg, Traurig); Jack Toal (Project Manager, ALC); Carlos Scandiffio (CEO, ALC); Thomas Raffanello (Special Agent in Charge, DEA Miami Field Division)

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ALC Miami

On December 5 2003, ALC opened the doors to its Miami Field Office with the award of a substantial contract with DEA. ALC Miami located at 8405 N.W. 53 rd Street, Suite C-104, in the Doral section of Dade County, is primarily responsible for translation, transcription, monitoring, and supervision of Title III intercepts for DEA Miami Field Division and local offices (along with related IT Services).

Located on the ground floor a modern business complex which houses more than 30 office suites, ALC Miami is poised to service the translation needs of the local community. It is conveniently nestled between three major thoroughfares: I-95, the Florida Turnpike and Route 836 and quite accessible to the Miami airport.

ALC Miami is the long-lived vision of ALC President and CEO Carlos Scandiffio, who founded the parent company in 1994 in Washington, DC.

"Over the past ten years, ALC has diversified into a myriad of peripheral services specifically designed to support each other in the performance of any requirement. Unlike most companies in the industry, ALC does not rely on subcontracting any of its management and key personnel as this diminished control and ultimately affects the level of responsibility that is owed to our clients . Instead, ALC has opted to carefully develop an appropriate mix of products and specialized services aimed at supporting a comprehensive structure pivoting on languages and linguistics. ALC provides virtually all the services in-house."



The genesis of our Miami Office is just one of many developments in the expansion and diversification of ALC, Inc. While, our prime Miami project is currently with DEA, ALC intends to expand its clientele in the area. The 2,000 square-foot facility is full-operational with a capacity for housing dozens of in-house linguists. It is equipped with state-of-the-art technology for a vast array of technical services in multiple languages such as translation and interpretation, transcription, desktop publishing, video production, and general business consulting. The company has hundreds of local linguists on its roster

with dozens available to work on an as-needed basis.

ALC Miami is manned by a full-time staff including Officer Manager, Rosa Horton and Site Manager Gloria Panero. Ms. Horton has more than ten years of government contracting and security experience. She has also performed extensively as a Spanish translator and editor. Ms. Horton and Ms. Panero exemplify the high-level, quality language professionals ALC employs. Eventually, the Miami Office will be fully staffed with a full-time Marketing Manager, who currently works out of Headquarters in Washington, DC.

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ALC has already learned a great deal from its performance on the Miami Field Division Contract, which encompasses the area from Jacksonville, Florida through the Bahamas. This immediate past performance expertise has allowed ALC to develop innovative solutions to problems and concerns that had been present for a number of years prior to ALC's arrival in the area. In fact, it is ALC's past performance with the Federal Government that currently stands as the company's strongest asset, and it has yielded numerous contracts that were awarded based on trustworthiness, flexibility, and understanding of sensitive requirements.

ALC's capabilities go beyond the ordinary, and include a number of related services in multiple languages. Currently, ALC is providing translation and interpretation services in more than 120 languages and dialects. ALC plans to continue to expand our functionality and services provided by ALC Miami to best service all of our clients in the future.

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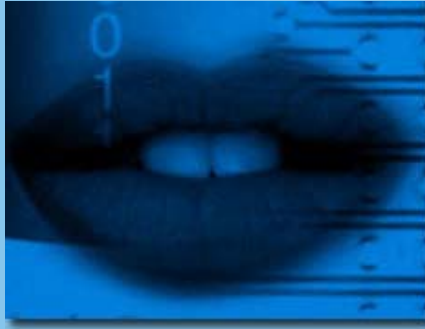
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The Science of Speaking

By Nicol Christie

What is Language?

Language. It's the genius of human invention. But who owns the patent? Language is kin to all humankind, but no one culture owns her because language is universal. With the current count of known languages, not including dialects, at 6,809 it's a marvel humans found ways to communicate at all.

Linguistics, loosely defined, is the science and or study of language. Linguists study all aspects of how people use language and what they must know in order to do so. The modern science has evolved to include how languages are structured, used and how they change. From the physical properties of the sound waves made by the "voice box" to the subtle intentions of the speaker and the numerous social contexts in which conversations take place, linguistics is a fascinating phenomenon.

The science of speaking can be studied at many different levels. First, the **sound** level. Scientists investigate the tiny particles of sound by looking at the physics of the speech stream and by studying the physiology of the vocal tract and auditory system. Then there's the word, phrase, and sentence structure level. The study of the different ways that these pieces can fit together to form words is called **morphology**. Next, **grammar** is the scientific study of word structure and sentence structure. (Note: This is not the schoolroom kind of grammar that teachers emphasize in grade school, which linguists call **prescriptivism**.) Linguists also study how words and sentences are used to convey meanings. **Semantics** is the study of words mean and how they combine into sentence meanings. **Pragmatics** studies how semantics combine with contextual information to convey a speaker's thoughts.

The science of linguistics is as multi-faceted as language itself. Can you imagine a world without language? It'd be a swirling vortex of communication chaos. True, much of human communication is non-verbal, but language is the glue that binds and certainly our world come undone without it.

Did you know that language is unique to the human species?

*"The formal system of language is embedded in human brains; it is passed on from one generation to the next; it is intimately bound up with the forms of human thought. Unlike a specialized system like arithmetic, it serves a vast range of communicative needs—from getting your neighbor to keep the weeds down, to reporting simple facts, telling jokes, making declarations of love, or praying to a deity. And of course it functions in the midst of complex societies, not just as a means of communication, but as a marker of social identity—a sign of membership in a social class, ethnic group, or nation. It isn't surprising, then, that linguistic research shares some concerns with just about every one of the human sciences, from psychology and neurology to literary study, anthropology, sociology, and political science."*¹

According to biologists, "human language differs from the communicative behavior of every other organism in a number of fundamental ways, all shared across languages." While all other non-human animal organisms functionally communicate, language is a system of infinite possibilities for combinations of sounds to create distinct, decipherable messages. And while words themselves are formed by a finite number of basic sounds and structures, the potential to form various phrases, sentences and thoughts is limitless.

But how exactly do we learn language?

Scientists have found a piece of the puzzle recently in a study of babies from different cultures.

A recent research study conducted by Vanderbilt University and Harvard University colleagues Susan J. Hespous and Elizabeth S. Spelke respectively, found that 5-month-old babies raised in English-speaking homes were able to grasp the concept of loose vs. tight fitting objects in an experiment with pencils and cups. Because the distinction between a loose fit and a tight fit is not emphasized in English language but rather Korean, researchers concluded that “some forms of thinking do precede language.”

According to commentary by Yale University professor Paul Bloom published in the *Nature* journal, these babies can comprehend concepts for which they have not yet learned words. Bloom also concluded that “babies in different cultures acquire meaning that is of most relevance to their contexts.”

It is also easier for babies to learn foreign languages than adults because as humans age we lose the ability to detect foreign sounds, while retaining the ability to detect concepts. “Unlike sounds, humans do not lose the ability to learn distinctions in concepts,” Bloom wrote.

Language Concepts

Concepts are the building blocks of human communication. Language begins with a thought which is transferred verbally from one person to another. Consider the age-old joke: “Why did the chicken cross the road?” Pat asks Chris. And the answer: “To get to the other side.” This brief exchange between two people is understood as a joke. That subtle distinction is based upon a culture that utilizes inflectional endings to indicate a question being asked, the idiomatic use of metaphor and resulting laughter demonstrating that something funny was conveyed. These vocal noises, nothing more than utterances from the larynx, are what we loosely call speaking. And it’s universally understood. Quite remarkable if you consider the infinite combinations and variations of sounds that we can make, that we’ve made sense of it all! And each culture makes language sense differently.

Language Universals

Most of us heard this joke when we were small children and find nothing remarkable in the ability to engage in such exchanges. But a bit of reflection reveals that even such a mundane use of language involves an amazing combination of abilities.

Language becomes more difficult to acquire with age, but grasping concepts does not and concepts are what each language form is based upon. So, it might be easier for an adult to understand the irony or the chicken and egg joke than a child because it is based on language *experience*, rather than just sounds. The key to understanding any language is heavily dependent upon understanding the appropriate context and structural

What does it take to make communication through language succeed? Here are just a few of the many things that are necessary for the chicken and the egg exchange:

Pat’s first two words ‘why did’ sound exactly the same as ‘wide id’. Breaking the stream of sounds into words requires that Chris pays attention to the wider context and knows what makes sense and what doesn’t.

Words like ‘chicken’ and ‘cross’ have lots of meanings (consider, for example, one gangster saying to another, ‘You won’t cross me because you’re chicken’). To conjure up the image of a bird and a highway, Chris must identify the right choices for these.

Pat has to know to say ‘cross’, not ‘crossed’ or ‘crossing’ in this context.

The order of words could not be ‘Why the chicken did cross the road?’ or any of lots of other conceivable orders.

Chris’s utterance (‘I give up’) is entirely conventional, signaling recognition that Pat is posing a riddle, and that Chris is ready to hear the punchline. The recognition that the first sentence was a riddle again depends on its relation to the wider context and cultural knowledge.

The punchline is not a complete sentence; Chris must recognize that it means that the chicken crossed the road in order to get to the other side.

usage that is inherent to each language and culture. Just as concepts are indigenous to culture so are various forms and properties of language structure.

gakusei ga hon o katta.
student subj. book obj. bought

The student bought the book

For example, subject-verb order can quite drastically shift the meaning in a sentence from one language to the next. In an English sentence, the usual order is for the subject to come first, then the verb, then the object. In Japanese, by contrast, the usual order is first subject, then object, then verb:

Yet languages are more alike than they are dissimilar. "The particular linguistic system that each individual controls goes far beyond the direct experience from which knowledge of it arose. And the principles governing these systems of sounds, words and meanings are largely common across languages, with only limited possibilities for difference. In all these ways, human language is so different from another known system in the natural world that the narrowly constrained ways in which one grammar can differ from another fade into insignificance.

All existing human speech is one in the essential characteristics which we have thus far noted or shall hereafter have to consider, even as humanity is one in its distinction from the lower animals..."

Quite obviously, there are different words for the same concept in each language and even different pronunciations of the same letters such as the rolling "r" in Spanish, vs. the flat English pronunciation. Many languages use differences in word order to carry different meanings. But are there any similarities in sentence construction from one language to the next? Of course.

"No language is known to relate sentences by inverting the order of sentences of indefinite length. Linguists believe that such a relation would violate constraints on humans' linguistic ability. In other words, while languages can be astonishingly different from one another – and this is why it is important for linguists to study languages of as many different types as possible – there are nonetheless features that unite all languages as different manifestations of the human language"

Most people understand little about the origins of linguistics. But we speak nonetheless. This is what linguists focus on. Often the study of language and the brain begins with understanding how children acquire language and integrates how adults produce and process language. Linguists are interested in finding out "what speakers must know in order to speak and understand language the way all normal humans do."

Infants and Language

Only after an infant learns the basics of identifying words and learning clauses do words start to acquire meanings -- definitions. According to Lila Gleitman, a professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, until about 15 to 18 months, children learn about one word every three days. Then, rather suddenly, they begin learning 10 words a day.

Gleitman says the biggest clue to the accelerated learning is the fact that it occurs when the child starts making sentences. "When the child begins talking at two words at a time, this is the first evidence that they understand something about grammar and language," she says. By 18 to 24 months, she adds, they "not only hear words, but use the grammar of English language to sort out what it means."

In interpreting words, she says what happens after a word helps reveal its meaning.

A word about thoughts or emotions usually has several words at the right: "I **hope** you will meet me for dinner." How often do you hear "I hope the truck"?

A noun phrase is often followed by one word: "I am taking **the number 7 bus** home."

An action verb related to the muscles often ends the sentence: "I'm going **swimming**." (You wouldn't normally say, "I'm going thinking.")

This wholesale learning of words continues until about age 30, Gleitman adds, so the average American has

a vocabulary of 80,000 to 100,000 English words.

Hands off for success

Although English is extremely complicated -- at least for computers -- learning languages comes as naturally to infants "as barking to a dog," Gleitman says.

This means most kids get enough stimulation to learn speech without any effort by the parents. Forget about advanced speaking classes for your two-year-old: "For the first three years, you can't go wrong, unless you lock them in a dark closet," Gleitman maintains, adding that even the children of strong silent types learn to talk just fine.

In contrast, she says written language is "another kind of knowledge," where reading to children and teaching them the alphabet can have an "enormous effect." Children who don't get much written language at home greatly benefit from programs like Head Start.

How do infants learn language?

Consider the newborn. Thrown abruptly into a blaze of bright lights and babble of novel noises, it faces the immediate job of understanding and controlling its world.

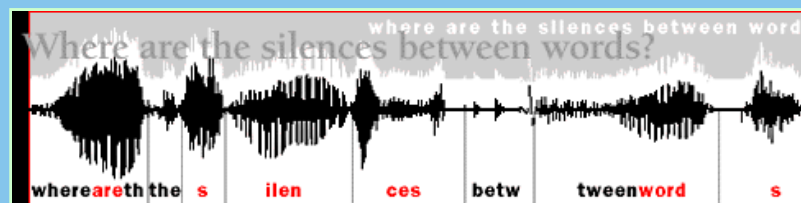
Understanding requires the newborn to interpret the strange noises that apparently occur when those giants open their mouths. And controlling means breaking that mysterious sound code that those giants use between themselves and with you.

Crying and fussing may be enough communication for a while, but soon the infant begins babbling by making a sound and rapidly opening and closing the mouth. By 11 to 12 months, the baby is making single words and then joining them into short phrases. By the age of 3 or so, many babies speak in complete sentences, and can express their needs with words (at least after shrieking fails).

How does the newborn learn language? Natural language, after all, is so sophisticated, yet almost all babies learn it faster and more thoroughly than the baddest computer around. Full of nuances, loaded with meaning and implication, language is a subtle but comprehensive mode of communicating.

To most people, it's a hallmark of being human.

Recent research, reported at the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Philadelphia, is putting speculation about how language originates on an experimental basis. Psychologist Richard Aslin of the University of Rochester studies the first step: how infants learn to distinguish individual words. As anyone who's heard a foreign language knows, the spaces between words are only obvious once you know the language. We do not "speak---like---this," but rather with a fluid stream of words.



***(A waveform of a sentence. The silences are not where you would expect them. To hear this sentence [click here](#).**

It seems to be a chicken-and-egg problem. You can't learn the language until you know the words. But you can't distinguish the words until you know the language.

Working with Jenny Saffran at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Elissa Newport at the University of Rochester, Aslin has found one way babies solve this dilemma: by using the pattern of sounds within words to distinguish the ends of words. Babies "pay attention to sounds that cohere within words, compared to the less predictive sounds that change as they span a word boundary," Aslin says. And when that pattern breaks, the baby understands that a new word is about to start.

In the phrase "pretty baby," after the first syllable of pretty ("prih") the next syllable is more likely to be something like "tee" than "gond" or "bay." Hearing the expected "tee" sound meant that the word was

probably not finished. But when "baby" begins, the unfamiliar pattern ("tee-bay") alerted the infant that a second word had begun.

Capitalizing on the fact that infants often listen longer to novel sounds rather than boring ones, Aslin measured how long they listened to known and unknown sounds. First he exposed 7- to 8-month-old infants to a [nonsense language](#) for two minutes. This musical masterpiece was actually a string of nonsense syllables with no pauses indicating word endings. The selection mixed a series of artificial "words" like "[pa bee koo](#)," mixed up in a mass of other syllables.

After hearing the two-minute sequence, the infant would then hear a series of words. Half were "words" taken from the selection, and half were a mishmash of syllables in sequences not heard previously.

From the fact that the infants listening more briefly to the "words," Aslin concluded that the infants could pick out the known words. And since the only way they could have identified the words from the original stream of syllables was by the order of sounds, Aslin asserts that they were identifying words by recognizing those patterns.

A baby step toward language

Distinguishing words is a necessary step to interpreting them, but it's not sufficient. As anybody who's learned a second language knows, words can be ambiguous. What, for example, does the sound "bare" mean? Only the context can tell whether it stands for something hairy, like a "bear cub," or to something bright, like a "bare light bulb."

Before a baby can make these interpretations, he or she must learn to segment words into clauses, groups of words that go together to make up a complete thought within a sentence. "To work out the rules of language, you have to keep stuff together in clauses," says psychologist Peter Juczyk of Johns Hopkins University.

Clauses seem to play a crucial role from the start. Juczyk says studies show that 2-month-olds remember words better when they're presented in a clause rather than as individual items in a list.

Juczyk thinks babies distinguish clauses by learning the melody of a language -- the rhythm of sounds and pauses, the varying pitch in the voice, the different pattern of loudness and softness. (Melody, called "prosody" in the linguistic trade, also helps infants distinguish one language from another. At six months, babies will listen just as long to a foreign language as to their own, but at nine months, they prefer their native tongue.)

Statistics according to the Ethnologue organization catalog (www.ethnologue.com)

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An Overview.

Source: Jenny Saffran, University of Wisconsin-Madison Psychology department.)

The sounds of Language. (www.whyfiles.org)



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Idioms

The expression American's use such "colorful language" is not only true, it's idiomatic in meaning.

The phrase is itself an idiom that refers to the very descriptive, creative, often metaphoric manner that Americans communicate.

Idioms are not, however, distinct to English or Americans. Each language has its own storehouse of cultural slang, clichés, and colloquialism that

primarily only natives will "get."

For second language learners, one of the most difficult challenges is mastering idioms. Often these expressions "are used to give life and richness to the language by enabling it to absorb new concepts which need to be expressed linguistically in a new way. Idioms take existing words, combine them in a new sense, and bring forth new expressions."

What exactly is an idiom? Webster's defines it as "the genius...of a language."

The US State Department of English Language Programs defines an idiom as "a phrase which means something different from the meaning of the separate words that are a part of it." Usually the phrase can not be understood literally, yet put together, they words convey a more creative meaning that is most often unrelated to the individual words in the idiom. Some idioms have developed into slang used to jar the listener by shock or exaggeration. Overused or commonplace expressions are coined clichés and not welcome as fondly as a well-placed idiom.

Idiom *Id'i*om* (?), n.

1. The syntactical or structural form peculiar to any language; the genius or cast of a language.
2. An expression conforming or appropriate to the peculiar structural form of a language; in extend use, an expression sanctioned by usage, having a sense peculiar to itself and not agreeing with the logical sense of its structural form; also, the phrase forms peculiar to a particular author.
3. Dialect; a variant form of a language. Syn. – Dialect. – [Idiom](#), [Dialect](#). The *idioms* of a language belong to its very structure; its *dialects* are varieties of expression ingrafted upon it in different localities or by different professions. Each county of England has some peculiarities of *dialect*, and so have most of the professions, while the great *idioms* of the language are everywhere the same.

You'll be surprised by the origins and meanings of some popular idioms. Check these out.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder

The lack of something increases the desire for it, that's

A little bird told me

what this term means. Its origin comes from Francis Davidson's Poetical Rhapsody, 1602. Also in Thomas Haynes Bayly's (1797-1839) Isle of Beauty. 'Absence makes the heart grow fonder, Isle of Beauty, Fare thee well!'

Third World

Originally a French term (Tiers Monde), it was coined by G. Balandier in 1956. The First World refers to the industrialized West (like the USA), the Second World refers to the Communist nations of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the Third World refers to all the other countries.

Catch-22

Originated from a 1961 novel by Joseph Heller, where one bureaucratic regulation is dependent on another, which in turn is dependent on the first.

Big Apple

Dating back to the early 1920's, this term refers to all horse racetracks around the city of New York. These tracks were the "big" money courses and the word "apple" refers to the prize. A few years later the term was used by musicians to describe the whole city. In the 1970's the term was used in a NYC tourism ad campaign and became famous.

Cold War

A conflict between nations that is just short of physical war. First used by George Orwell in October 1945. Bayard Swope, who was a speech writer for Bernard Baruch, then used the term in 1946.

Find more zany idioms at www.idiomsite.com

Test Your Knowledge of American Idioms

Choose the answer that correctly defines the idiom.

- To walk on eggs mean:
 - To be very cautious
 - To do something very unpleasant
 - To do something very costly

- To live and let live means:
 - To live forever
 - To save dying animals
 - To do what one wishes and let others do the same

- To Ace a test means:
 - To earn an "A" or "100%" on an exam or assignment
 - To skip the test
 - To play cards instead of taking the test
 - To fail the test even after studying

- Someone who is a "snake in the grass" is
 - Tall

- Sneaky or deceitful
 - Likes to be outdoors
 - Eats mice
- "You are the bomb!" means:
 - You have a bad temper
 - You are an explosive
 - You are a wonderful human being
 - You dangerous
- Up the creek without a paddle implies:
 - You like to swim
 - You are in trouble
 - You are angry
 - You can not swim
- If a person is said to be "out to lunch" but not literally having lunch they:
 - Are eating
 - Like lunch and eat all day
 - Are uneducated
 - Are not focusing or acting weird
- Another expression for vomiting is:
 - Throw up
 - Toss out
 - Pass out
- To get an illness from someone is:
 - To pick it up
 - To truck it in
 - To take it away
- To become unconscious is to:
 - Go out
 - Black out
 - Knock over
- To eat food very quickly is known as:
 - Bolt it down
 - Pigging out
 - Whip it up
- To eat a lot of food is to:
 - pig out
 - roll out
 - wear out
- To make someone feel better is to:
 - Perk them up
 - Peep them in
 - Rack them up
- To start behaving in a violent or strange way is to:
 - Liven up
 - Freak out
 - Throw out

- To use your imagination to create or plan something is to:
 - Work out
 - Think over
 - Think up

Now try some fill in the blanks items.

- I missed a lot of classes so I have to work hard to__up.
 - Save
 - Catch
 - Lock
- He must be about 90. He is really ___.
 - Bringing up
 - Bringing forward
 - Getting on
- The boy gave ___ his set to the older lady.
 - Made
 - Gave
 - Came
- The police ___ up the political demonstration.
 - Got
 - Turned
 - Broke
- I am sorry that I am late. I got ___ in traffic.
 - Lifted off
 - Held down
 - Caught up
- In the end everything ___ Ok.
 - Turned out
 - Wore out
 - Climb out
- Even though he was tired, he ___ going.
 - Kept on
 - Brought out
 - Fell over
- To make someone unhappy is to ___.
 - Get over them
 - Get on with them
 - Get them down
- To be so excited that you lose control is to get ___.
 - Carried away
 - Carried off
 - Carried over
- If you speak for a long time, you___.
 - Get on
 - Go on

- o Edge on

Idioms with Body Parts

Choose the equivalent or near-equivalent sentences.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. You did it. You have to face the music . | a. You have to memorize it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Yes. You hit the nail on the head . | b. You're experienced. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. You two don't see eye to eye . | c. You have control of the situation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. You have to learn it by heart . | d. You don't want to take the risk. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. You are an old hand at teaching. | e. You have to accept the consequences of you actions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. That's great! You keep everything under your thumb . | f. You don't agree with each other. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. You don't want to stick your neck out , do you? | g. You're absolutely right |

Answers

Change Idioms to Plain English

Click the answer button to see the answer.

- He was **all ears** when his boss talked.
Answer
- 1. He is **a chip off the old block**.
Answer
- 2. He is **thick in the head**.
Answer
- 3. The bank robbers were **armed to the teeth**.
Answer
- 4. His comments **threw a wet blanket** on the discussion.
Answer
- 5. They were **beat** after three days of hard work.
Answer
- 6. Jack **was hard up** to pay his rent.
Answer
- 7. The storm left them **all in the same boat**.
Answer
- 8. The house fire meant we had to start from **scratch**.
Answer

Idioms - Matching Quiz

Click on the answer button to see if your answer is correct.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| As ___ as a bat. | Choose <input type="button" value=""/> |
| As ___ as a bee. | Choose <input type="button" value=""/> |
| As ___ as a bell. | Choose <input type="button" value=""/> |

- As ___ as a daisy. Choose
- As ___ as an eel. Choose
- As ___ as a feather. Choose
- As ___ as a fox. Choose
- As ___ as the hills. Choose
- As ___ as a mouse. Choose
- As ___ as a mule. Choose

Answers

English as a Foreign Language – Publication Catalog (www.exchanges.state.gov)

Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (www.humanities.uchicago.edu/orgs/ARTFL/forms_unrest/webster.form.html)

<http://a4esl.org/q/h/vm/m-body.html>

<http://a4esl.org/q/h/9801/lk-idiomsp.html>

<http://a4esl.org/q/h/vm/ma-adj.html>

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From Maryland to the World

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