

The meaning of idioms

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Idioms (in the narrow sense of the term) tend to have non-literal meanings.

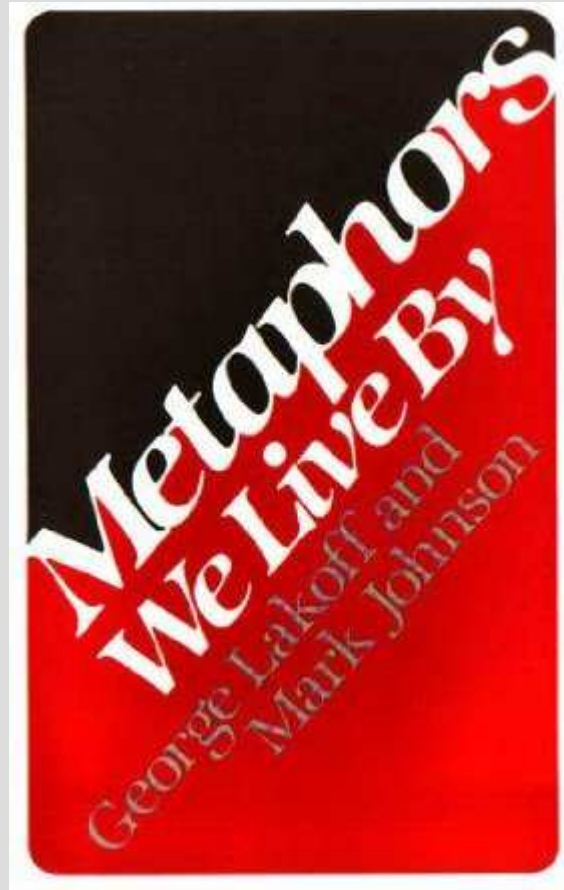
- Encoding idioms: spill the beans
- Decoding idioms: answer the door

The meaning of decoding idioms is at least in part predictable.

- (1) You're wasting my time.

Time is money

- (1) You are wasting my time.
- (2) This will save you time.
- (3) I don't have the time to ...
- (4) The flat tire cost him an hour.
- (5) We are running out of time.
- (6) I lost too much time with this.
- (7) Is that worth your while?
- (8) Do you have much time left?



Conceptual metaphor

Life is a gambling of card games

- (1) All bets are off.
- (2) Mary hold all the aces.
- (3) I am still in the running.
- (4) That's nonsense, you bet.
- (5) Come on, lay your cards on the table.
- (6) What's the betting?
- (7) She still has an ace up her sleeve.

Argument is war

- (1) Your claims are *indefensible*.
- (2) He *attacked every weak point* in his argument.
- (3) His criticisms were *right on target*.
- (4) I *demolished* his arguments.
- (5) I've never *won* an argument with him.
- (6) You disagree? Okay, *shoot*.
- (7) If you use that *strategy*, he'll *wipe you out*.
- (8) He *shot down* all of my arguments.

The conduit metaphor

- (1) It's hard to get that idea *across* to him.
- (2) I *gave* you that idea.
- (3) Your reasons *came through* to us.
- (4) It's difficult to put my ideas *into* words.
- (5) When you *have* a good idea, try to *capture* it immediately *in* words.
- (6) Try to *pack* more thought *into* fewer words.
- (7) You can't simply *stuff* ideas *into* a sentence any old way.
- (8) His words *carry* little meaning.
- (9) Your words seem *hollow*.
- (10) The sentence is *without* meaning.
- (11) The idea is *buried* in terribly dense paragraphs.

The conduit metaphor

- IDEAS (or MEANINGS) are OBJECTS
- LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS are CONTAINERS
- COMMUNICATION is SENDING

Metonymy

- (1) lend somebody a hand
- (2) have an eye on sth
- (3) under the thumb of sb
- (4) by foot
- (5) two heads are better than one
- (6) to have a nose for sth

Anger

George Lakoff

Women,
Fire, and
Dangerous
Things

*What Categories Reveal
about the Mind*

Anger

ANGER IS HEAT

- (1) Don't get *hot* under the collar.
- (2) Billy's a *hothead*.
- (3) They were having a *heated* argument.
- (4) When the cop gave her a ticket, she got all *hot*.

Anger

The BODY is a CONTAINER for EMOTIONS

- (1) He was *filled* with anger.
- (2) She couldn't *contain* her joy.
- (3) She was *brimming* with rage.
- (4) Try to get your anger *out of your system*.

Anger

ANGER is the HEAT of a FLUID in a CONTAINER

- (1) You make my *blood boil*.
- (2) *Simmer* down.
- (3) I had reached the *boiling point*.
- (4) Let him *stew*.

Anger

Cool and calmness correspond to lack of anger:

- (1) Keep *cool*.
- (2) Stay *calm*.

When the intensity of anger increases, the fluid rises:

- (3) She could feel her *gorge rise*.
- (4) My anger kept on *building up* inside of me.

Intense anger produces steam:

- (5) She got all *steamed up*.
- (6) Billy's just *blowing off steam*.
- (7) I was *fuming*.

Anger

Intense anger produces pressure on the container:

- (1) He was *bursting with anger*.
- (2) I could barely *contain* my rage.
- (3) I could barely *keep it* in anymore.

A variant of this involves keeping the pressure back:

- (4) I *suppressed* my anger.
- (5) He *turned his anger inward*.
- (6) He managed to keep his anger *bottled up* inside him.
- (7) He was *blue in the face*.

Anger

When anger becomes too intense, the container/person explodes:

- (1) When I told him, he just *exploded*.
- (2) She *blew up* at me.
- (3) We won't tolerate any more of your *outbursts*.
- (4) That really *set me off*.
- (5) She *erupted*.

When the container/person explodes, parts of it go up in the air:

- (6) I *blew my stack*.
- (7) I *blew my top*.
- (8) He *hit the ceiling*.
- (9) I *went through the roof*.

Anger

ANGER IS FIRE:

- (1) Those are *inflammatory* remarks.
- (2) He was *breathing fire*.
- (3) Your insincere apology just *added fuel to the fire*.
- (4) After the argument, Dave was *smoldering* for days.
- (5) That *kindled my fire*.
- (6) Boy, am I *burned up*!