Bilingual Corpus Lexicography: New English-Russian Dictionary of Idioms

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Abstract

The paper deals with the principles of constructing the first printed and on-line English-Russian dictionary of idioms based on corpus data. The need for a new dictionary of idioms is motivated by the fact that there is presently no corpus-based dictionary of English-Russian idioms built on authentic examples. Existing traditional bilingual dictionaries do not meet modern requirements of the present-day lexicography with respect to vocabulary and illustrative examples, which are often out of date. This is definitely connected with the fact that traditional English-Russian idiomatic dictionaries were constructed in the 'pre-corpus era'.

The purpose of the present research is thus to introduce a methodology for generating a comprehensive idiom list of the dictionary, to consider linguistic issues presenting difficulties in bilingual lexicography related to the concept of equivalence in idioms, and analyze the semantic asymmetry between English and Russian idioms.

Keywords: idioms, corpora, bilingual lexicography

1   Introduction

Bilingual lexicography encounters certain problems in connection with the treatment of idioms in dictionaries. In many cases, the generally accepted equivalent of an idiom cannot be used to translate authentic texts, which is why our research strategy is to analyze cross-linguistic correlations between English and Russian idioms that have strong semantic resemblance, as well as to study semantic asymmetry in idioms.

Using relevant lexicographic information, text corpora, and parallel corpora, we shall study the frequency and semantic qualities of idioms by empirical methods in order to identify additional specific features that need to be included in the lexicographic description of an idiom.

The need for a new English-Russian Dictionary of Idioms is indicated by the fact that there is presently no corpus-based bilingual dictionary of these languages. Due to corpus data, the dictionary presents a range of syntactic patterns, polysemous idioms, and unexpected variants, which cannot be retrieved from the existing bilingual and monolingual dictionaries of the English and Russian languages. Many dictionaries fail to register all meanings of idioms. The corpora help to reveal the specific character of their functional correlations and non-trivial semantic preferences of English idioms that do not have standard Russian equivalences.

The primary goal of the research is to conduct a thorough contrastive analysis with the purpose of discovering the unique properties of each idiom and thus enhance the lexicographical description of phraseological studies. The author analyzes one of the most curious cases of semantic asymmetry – phraseological 'false friends' (Piirainen 1997). Compare an English idiom (1) and its Russian pseudo-equivalent (2).

(1) English *to twist (turn, wrap) somebody (a)round one's finger*
    'to have the ability to persuade (a person) to do exactly as one wants (usually used to describe wives and daughters who persuade their husbands and fathers)' (Longman 1979: 113).
(2) Russian *обвести вокруг пальца*
    "to twist somebody (a)round one's finger"
    'to deceive somebody skillfully' (Lubensky 2004: 446).

These two idioms are basically equivalent, since they are identical with respect to both their lexicalized meaning and image component. However, it is actually wrong to translate the English idiom *to twist (turn, wrap) somebody (a)round one's finger* by the Russian idiom *обвести вокруг пальца.* Analysis of authentic texts in corpora with the idiom *to twist (turn, wrap) somebody (a)round one's finger* shows that this idiom is translated into Russian by the idiom *вить веревки* (3).

(3) Russian *вить веревки (из кого-либо)*
    "to twist the ropes (from someone)"
    'compel someone to your will and force him to act your way' (Birikh 2005: 89).

The usage of idioms in authentic texts from the corpus query system Sketch Engine is illustrated in the following examples.

He has worked there for 38 years and is planning to retire soon. His family includes his wife Linda, a son Jeff and a granddaughter 'who absolutely has me *twisted around her little finger*'. (enTenTen13).

Он работает там уже 38 лет и скоро планирует выйти на пенсию. У него есть жена Линда, сын Джефф и внучка, которая 'беспощадно *вьет из меня веревки*' (enTenTen13).

Thus, despite the formal similarity of the idioms *to twist (turn, wrap) somebody (a)round one's finger* and *обвести вокруг пальца*, this similarity cannot be considered complete. For the lexicographer interested in the maximally precise description of the material, such instances are problematic. The problem is that some dictionaries present these phraseological 'false friends' as full equivalents (cf. Kveselyevich 2002: 350), not taking into consideration that between basically similar idioms in a source language and in a target language, there are practically always certain semantic, pragmatic, and syntactic differences. Our goal is to discover and describe these linguistic-specific differences in English and Russian idioms.

Apart from its theoretic relevance as an instrument for describing idioms of the English and Russian languages, a new dictionary could be used for the purposes of translation and language acquisition.

The paper is structured as follows: after an introduction, the author presents the methodology, theoretical framework and data used in the research. Next, the article gives an overview of results of the study, followed by a discussion. The paper is then summed up in the conclusion section.

2   Methodology, Theoretical Framework and Data

The purpose of this project is to explore English and Russian idioms along two lines of inquiry. The first introduces a methodology of generating a comprehensive idiom list for a new dictionary. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the following steps were undertaken:

- analyzing and retrieving idioms from bilingual and monolingual dictionaries of idioms;
- determining the degree of frequency of selected idioms;
- registering varied forms of the same or similar idioms; and
- determining the keywords for the dictionary entries.

The second line of inquiry considers linguistic issues presenting difficulties in bilingual lexicography related to the concept of equivalence in idioms, and the author analyzes semantic asymmetry between English and Russian idioms. To deal with the second line, the author applies the theoretical concept introduced by D. Dobrovol'skij in his *Studien zur Deutschen Lexik* with respect to cross-linguistic correspondence of idioms: "What is important for cross-linguistic correspondence… is not "phraseologicalness', but functional equivalence. It is this type of equivalence that is most interesting from the perspective of bilingual lexicography" (2013: 212). The author cannot but agree with this approach, since functional equivalents are parallels which can be used in similar situations "without any information loss" (2013: 212).

The idiom list contains units from *English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary* (Kunin 1984), *Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms* (1998), *Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Idioms* (Sinclair 1995), *A Dictionary of American Idioms* (Makkai 2004), *NTC's American Idioms Dictionary* (Spears 2000), *Thesaurus of Present-day Russian Idioms* (Baranov & Dobrovol'skij 2007) and the English-language Internet. Presently the idiom list contains about 1,400 idioms and their variants, with the prospect of expanding up to 3,500 idioms. This list forms the baseline for the current study. The present work involves combining variant forms and determining the keywords for the dictionary entries.

The authentic data were collected from the corpus query system Sketch Engine, using the subcorpus enTenTen13 (19.7 billion tokens), the ruTenTen11 subcorpus (14.5 billion tokens), the English-Russian parallel subcorpus OPUS-2, the Russian National Corpus (RNC) and its parallel subcorpora. This made it possible to find instances of English idioms and their Russian equivalents and obtain statistically representative data.

During the first stage of work on organizing the idiom list, 2,500 idioms were picked out from the abovementioned dictionaries, and their frequency was checked in enTenTen13 and the RNC. About 50% of them were excluded because they are seldom, if ever, used today, according to empirical material retrieved from corpora. For instance, there is not a single example of the idioms *to wear a brick in one's hat, as fat as an alderman, to wear the queen's coat, to run like a lamp-lighter, stiffen the lizards!* and many other archaic idioms in Sketch Engine.

These examples mainly come from the *English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary* (Kunin 1984). It has been the only comprehensive English-Russian phraseological dictionary since its first publication in 1955 in the Soviet Union to the present day. There are no dictionaries equal to it in the field of English-Russian phraseography. It contains 20,000 idioms, and many generations of students and scholars were 'brought up' on it. Many smaller English-Russian phraseological dictionaries have been published in recent years (Karpova 2004; Shitova & Bruskina 2012; Solodushkina 2016; Vinokurov 2016). However, they have the following drawbacks: either they do not have illustrative examples at all, or if they have them, their examples are self-made, often arbitrary and unpersuasive. Besides, in many cases their vocabulary is out of date; they do not consider polysemous idioms and variants of idioms in dictionary entries; and, as a rule, there is no information about the pragmatic and/or syntactic properties of idioms. Our goal is thus to eliminate the drawbacks of the existing dictionaries, to expand the idiom list with new present-day idioms and illustrate them with authentic data from corpora.

3   Results and Discussion

The main important difference between the present dictionary and the traditional dictionaries is in the present one's orientation towards authentic modern data, illustrating the idiom usage drawn from the text corpora and, in some cases, from the English-language Internet. Only those idioms which were found in academic works, spoken usage, fiction, newspaper and magazine texts from the 1950s up to

the present were included in the dictionary. The paper discusses idioms in a variety of contexts, using large text corpora with the aim of clarifying the semantic properties of idioms, providing a new vision of contextual behaviour of idioms and restrictions of their usage.

3.1   Cross-linguistic Equivalence of Idioms in the Dictionary

This article analyzes the non-equivalence of English and Russian idioms that are characterized by relative similarity of outer structure, but with significant differences in their actual meaning. The author presents the English idiom *to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth* (4) and its Russian pseudo-equivalents *родиться в сорочке* (5) and *родиться под счастливой звездой* (6) in the dictionary. This article argues that these idioms are semantically asymmetrical and illustrates their actual functioning in authentic texts in corpora.

In the majority of English-Russian dictionaries (Apresyan 1994; Kunin 1984; Vinokurov 2016; Solodushkina 2016; Shitova & Bruskina 2015) and Russian-English phraseological dictionaries (Kuzmin 2001; Kveselyevich 2002) the idioms (4) and (5), (6) are presented as full equivalents. However, empirical data obtained from corpora suggests that these idioms are semantically asymmetrical. The imprecise treatment of idiomatic meaning in dictionaries happens often, due to their associative similarity in the source and target languages. For this reason, it is important to keep in mind that some figurative language units can have different meanings in spite of their formal similarity. Let us take these examples:

(4)   *to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth*
      'to have wealthy parents; be born into a rich family <referring to a child of rich parents who is fed with a silver spoon> (Longman 1979: 310)

(4)   *родиться в рубашке (сорочке)*
      "to be born with a caul" 'about a person who is blessed with good luck'

(6)   *родиться под счастливой звездой*
      "to be born under a lucky star" 'extraordinary lucky and successful' (Makkai 2004: 38); 'it is understood that a person succeeds in life easily, he is distinguished by the ability to avoid and get out of serious dangerous and difficult situations' (Teliya 2006: 586).

The analysis of dictionary definitions shows that like the English idiom (4), the Russian idioms (5) and (6) relate to the same idea of being lucky. However, this is the *only* similarity between them. The inner form of each of these idioms contains a culture-specific component, definite knowledge that motivates the actual meaning of the idiom. This knowledge places combinatorial and contextual restrictions on idiom usage and specifies the concept 'luck' differently in relation to English and Russian idioms. The idiom *to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth* refers to material wealth; that can be proved by empirical data retrieved from the search system Sketch Engine enTenTen13.

(7)   A rich, affluent family's only son, Rahul *was born with a silver spoon in mouth*. Growing up with tremendous amount of disposable money, busy parents and no goal in life, Rahul had no major complaints in life.

(8)   Of course, by "millionaire" we do not refer to those who *are born with a silver spoon* in a royal family or who have grown wealthy overnight by virtue of some propitious inheritance. A good number of millionaires are usually those who have risen by virtue of hard work, following one's dreams and determination.

The hit rate for the idiom (4) amounts to 761 texts in Sketch Engine, they express one and the same idea: 'to be born in a rich family'. The origin of the idiom is treated in the following way: 'In Europe

during the "Dark Ages", silver utensils, cups and bowls were utilized to aid in protecting the wealthy from the full brunt of pandemics. The expression *born with a silver spoon in their mouth* comes from these "Dark Ages", when the wealthy gave their children silver spoons to suck on to ward off diseases' (enTenTen2013).

However, the Russian idioms (5) and (6) do not often express the idea of material wealth. They express either an idea of a lucky escape from imminent danger (5) or an idea of extraordinary luck or quick success in life (6).

The literal translation of the Russian idiom *родиться в рубашке (сорочке)* is "to be born with a caul". One of the meanings of *рубашка (сорочка)* – '*caul*' in the Russian language is 'the inner fetal membrane of higher vertebrates esp. when covering the head at birth' (NMWD: 129). According to superstition, the appearance of a caul on a newborn baby was seen as a sign of good luck and in medieval times it was viewed as a magical symbol of protection.

The idiom *родиться под счастливой звездой* "to be born under a lucky star" goes back to an ancient mythological form of understanding of the world around us. 'There is a metaphor underlying the phraseological image component. The metaphor correlates luck and success that accompany a person all his life with his birth *under a lucky star –* under a *star* that is in the middle of the sky at the moment of his birth' (Teliya 2006: 586-587). It is an ancient idea that this star influences the person's life and predetermines his destiny.

The hit rate for *родиться в рубашке* amounts to 1185 texts, *родиться в сорочке* – to 156, *родиться под счастливой звездой* to 590 texts. Some examples of Russian idioms (5) and (6) in authentic texts are given below.

(9)   Американец Ламар Лакейз точно *родился в рубашке*. Остаться живым после укусов 1200 пчел – это просто чудо. Даже врачи удивляются, ведь мужчина уже не молодой! Слава Богу, сердце оказалось крепким… (enTenTen11)
An American Lamar Luckeys *was born lucky* for sure. It is a real miracle to be alive after 1,200 bee stings. Even doctors are surprised, for he is not a young man. Thank God, his heart is strong…[1]

(10)   Монахи отправили делегатов в Рим, непосредственно к папе Анастасию четвертому, с жалобой на аббата, обвинив его в чудовищных преступлениях. Туда же явился и сам аббат; вероятно он и впрямь *родился в сорочке*, потому что сразу покорил папу, и тот не только прогнал монахов, но даже оставил аббата при себе. (enTenTen11)
The monks sent delegates to Rome, to the Pope Anastasisus IV directly with a complaint on an abbot, accusing him in monstrous crimes. The abbot himself also was also invited there; he might *have really been born lucky,* because he immediately charmed the Pope who not only sent the monks back, but kept the abbot.

(11)   Александр называет себя счастливым человеком. И это поистине правда, он *родился под счастливой звездой*, потому что у него хорошая работа, есть внуки, отличный коллектив. (enTenTen11)
Alexander calls himself a happy man. And it's really the truth, he was *born under a lucky star*, because he has a good job, grandchildren, excellent colleagues.

(12)   Дело в том, что я, наверное, *родился под счастливой звездой*; мне очень везет в жизни. У меня были прекрасные родители – добрые, веселые, талантливые. Я был на войне и остался жив. Я с детства хотел стать писателем – стал им… Женщины, которых я любил, любили меня: и о каждой я думаю с нежностью и благодарностью. (enTenTen11)
The fact is that I must have probably *been born under a lucky star*: I am a lucky person. I had

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1   The English translation is provided for the sake of understanding.

wonderful parents – kind cheerful, talented. I was in the war and survived. From childhood I wanted to be a writer, and I have become it become it… The women, whom I loved, loved me too: I think with tenderness and gratitude about each of them.

These texts from corpora clarify that the idioms (5) and (6) have roughly one and the same meaning 'to be lucky', but there are still some semantic and pragmatic differences between them. The idioms cannot be substituted for each other in all contexts, because they differ in respect of their individual characteristics. There are pragmatic differences: the idiom (5) *родиться в рубашке (сорочке)* 'to be born with a caul' belongs to a colloquial style, whereas the idiom (6) *родиться под счастливой звездой* 'to be born under a lucky star' corresponds to a literary style. There are also semantic differences: the idiom (5) is focused on the sense of security, feeling of being protected from strokes of bad destiny and misfortune; the idiom (6) is focused on destiny and on its being successful. All differences of pragmatic, semantic or syntactic differences are reflected in the dictionary entry of the new dictionary.

Again, consider the idiom (4) *to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth*. The author argues that the English idiom (4) and the Russian idioms (5) and (6) are different idioms and should be placed in separate entries of the dictionary, unlike the entries of the abovementioned dictionaries. The results of corpus analysis and a detailed study of authentic texts illustrate that idioms (4) (5) and (6) are semantically asymmetrical, and they are not interchangeable.

3.2. Idiom Variation in the Dictionary

Fixedness is definitely a vital feature of idioms, and many idioms do not vary at all, but as Moon observed when studying the fixed expressions and idioms included in her database, around 40% of these items have lexical variations or strongly institutionalized transformations, and around 14% have two or more variations on their canonical forms (Moon 1998: 120-121). Idioms can undergo different kinds of variations: lexical, morphological, syntactic and so on. Since the purpose of this study was generating a comprehensive idiom list of the dictionary, the next stage of research was determining the keywords and the lemmas of the dictionary entries. The idioms in the dictionary are organized alphabetically by the keyword. In selection of the keyword, we used the methodology suggested by Kunin: 'The headword is selected on a purely formal basis, taking into account only the principle of constancy without reference to any grammatical or semantic center the expression may have' (Kunin 1984: 15).

We will observe an idiomatic group with the meaning: 'an important person': *big shot, big cheese, big brass, big wheel, big wig* etc. The majority of idiomatic bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, referred to earlier (see 3.1.), usually treat these idioms as variants of one and the same idiom.

The article examines four English-Russian phraseological dictionaries in respect to organization of their entries, the determination of lemmas and the format of presenting variants in respect to an idiomatic group with the meaning: 'an important person':

1. *English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary* (Kunin 1984), 20,000 idioms. The lemma is *big pot*, followed by its variants, arranged in this sequence: *big bug, big gun, big shot, big wig*[sic]; American English: *big cheese, big dog, big fish, big number, big wheel*.
2. *Anglo-Russky Karmanny Slovar' Idiom* (Vinokurov 2016), 5,500 idioms. The lemma is *big bug*, followed by variants: *big cheese, big gun, big shot, big wheel*.
3. *Dictionary of American Idioms* (Karpova 2004), 1,000 idioms. The lemma is *big gun*, variants: *big shot, big wig, big cheese, big wheel*.
4. *Dictionary of Idioms and Set Phrases* (Solodushkina 2016). The lemma – *big cheese*, no variants.

We referred to the enTenTen13 English corpus to reveal the most frequently used variants of idioms presented in these dictionaries. The frequency graphs were processed manually to avoid information noise.

Table 1: The total amount in the corpus.

Idiom	Quantity	Frequency
big shot	14,448 (0.64)	33.1%
big gun	14,085 (0.62)	32.3%
big wheel	6,352 (0.28)	14.6%
big cheese	3,359 (0.15)	7.8%
big wig	3,244 (0.14)	7.4%
big bug	1,231 (0.05)	2.8%
big brass	859 (0.04)	2%
	43,578	100%

A comparison of the results of the dictionary and corpus analysis in the Table 1 indicates that the lemmas presented in the entries of the four dictionaries are not the most frequent ones. The exception is the idiom *big gun* in Karpova (2004).

The results of the statistical analysis in Table 1 show the total amount of seven most frequently used English idioms with the meaning 'an important person' in the enTenTen13 corpus. We need this data to determine the lemma in the dictionary entry. The graph indicates that the most frequently used idiom in this group in contemporary authentic texts is *big shot*, which amounts to 33.1% of idioms with the meaning 'an important person' presented in the graph.

Since the idiom *big shot* is the most frequently used idiom in this group, it is selected as the lemma of the dictionary entry. Its variants are *big cheese*, *big wig*, and *big bug*. We regard them as equivalents because semantic differences were not revealed and they all refer to 'a person of consequence'.

The idiom *big gun* is the next most frequently used idiom in the list. Almost all the analyzed dictionaries rank the idiom *big gun* together with the idioms *big shot, big cheese*, *big wig*. But evidence suggests that the idiom *big gun* refers not only to people, but to a broad variety of notions, such as huge companies, corporations, online shopping services, internet providers and so on. This places combinatorial restrictions on the usage of the idiom *big shot* and its variants. Consequently, the idiom *big gun* does not fit in a single entry with the idiom *big shot* in our dictionary. *Big wheel*, as well as *big gun*, does not only refer to people, so it qualifies as a variant of the idiom *big gun*. Cf.:

(13) Plus of course you can examine at the *big guns* in shopping on the internet Amazon. (enTenTen13)

(14) Can a national *big gun* deliver highly specialized service that is finely tuned and focused on true art over the generalized consistency necessary to maintain its market share? (enTenTen13)

(15) Ever since Prada made black nylon chic in the early 1990s, Ugg boots, handbags have been fashion's *big wheel*, Ugg boots churning out profits and profit margins exceeding 40 percent. (enTenTen13)

The idiom *big brass* also belongs to a different entry, because it usually refers to people having important high level military ranks, for example:

(16) But there will be resistance: a coup such as the one Gore wants to pull off requires the unconditional and united support not only of the political establishment, but also of the military: and

I am not talking about the *big brass*, the boys in the Pentagon, or even the mid-level officers… (enTenTen13).

As a result, we divided the idiomatic group with the meaning 'an important person' into three groups, arranging them into three entries with the lemmas *big shot*, *big gun* and *big brass*. There are comments about semantic and combinatorial properties of the idioms in the entries. Such comments are very important for understanding of semantic, pragmatic, and other properties of idioms, and consequently their adequate translation into the Russian language.

Using the corpus query system Sketch Engine and its English-Russian and Russian-English parallel subcorpora OPUS-2, and the Russian National Corpus, we compared idioms from the idiomatic group 'an important person' in relation to the ways of their translation into the Russian language. The results of statistical analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of the parallel corpora analysis.

big shot Russian equivalents	Quantity	Frequency	большая шишка English equivalents	Quantity	Frequency
большая шишка "big cone"	23	31%	big shot	19	26%
большая рыба "big fish"	1	1.3%	big deal	3	4.1%
большой туз "big ace"	1	1.3%	big guy	2	2.7%
			big man	2	2.7%
zero equivalent	49	66.4%	zero equivalent	47	64.3%
	74	100%		73	100%

The results of statistical analysis in Table 2 show 74 Russian correlates of the idiom *big shot*: *большая шишка* (23), *большая рыба* (1), *большой туз* (1), "0" equivalent <49>. Table 2 also presents 73 English correlates of the Russian idiom *большая шишка*: big shot <19>, big deal <3>, big guy <2>, big man <2>, zero equivalent <49>.

The evidence in Table 2 suggests that the most frequently used English idiom with the meaning 'an important person' in the corpora is *big shot*. Its most frequent correlate is the Russian idiom *большая шишка*.

The idioms *big shot, big cheese, big brass, big wheel, big wig,* and so on are identical with regard to syntactic properties and partially with regard to lexical structure. In some cases, their meanings are identical as well. However, the purpose of the study is to discover the unique properties of each idiom, their semantic and pragmatic properties. And it is here that the corpora help a lexicographer to determine the form of the lemma and its variants, and to determine the proper equivalent of the lemma in the target language. The author interprets the idiomatic group as parallel idioms rather than variations of a single idiom, since most of them have their specific semantic features that differentiate them from the other idioms in the group.

Sample entries of an idiomatic group with the meaning 'an important person' in two recently published English-Russian phraseological dictionaries are given below. The empirical data of both dictionaries are not based on corpus data.

Table 3: The entry from the dictionary [Shitova & Bruskina (2012: 6)]

> a big cheese/shot *(Am inf)*
>
> важная шишка; большая птица
>
> *Today we're being visited by some big shots*
> *from the head office.*
>
> *She loved being the big cheese of her company.*

Table 4: The entry from the dictionary [Vinokurov (2016: 33)]

> (a) Big bug (cheese, gun, shot, wheel)
>
> разг. важная особа, 'шишка'
>
> Bill had been a big shot in high school.

A sample entry of the idiom *a big shot* from the New English-Russian Dictionary of Idioms is given below and contrasted with those in Table 3 and Table 4:

Big

big shot (*big cheese, big wig*)

важная особа, большая (важная) шишка, большой туз

📃 Should the law give special treatment to a VIP or *big shot* while denying that to everyone else? (enTenTen13)

Неужели правительство будут оказывать особые услуги в медицинском обслуживании VIP-персонам или *большим шишкам*, а простым людям будет отказывать?

Everyone in business knows the importance of a professional image. Of course, professionalism in itself is important; but the image of being a corporate *big shot* has the tendency to make people take you more seriously. (enTenTen13)

Все знают о важности профессионального имиджа в бизнесе. Конечно, профессионализм сам по себе очень важен; но в имидже корпоративного туза Вас гораздо быстрее воспримут более серьезно.

If there was only one dog in the home before, then the new dog will quickly learn that the older dog is the *big cheese* around here. (enTenTen13)

Если в доме раньше была только одна собака, тогда новая собака быстро поймет, 'кто в доме хозяин'.

He saw Mr. Pogue in the midst of a bunch of oil company *big wigs*. They were heads of Texaco, Shell, Esso, etc…(enTenTen13)

Он увидел мистера Пога среди группы воротил нефтяного бизнеса. Это были хозяева таких корпораций, как Texaco, Shell, Esso и др.

📖 Именной компонент в составе идиомы может употребляться во множественном числе.

📑 CAM is scientifically proven to be helpful, beneficial and curative. The 'traditional medicine' *big shots* just lie about it and say that there isn't any evidence supporting it. Big Lie! (enTenTen13)

Научно доказано, что нетрадиционная медицина целесообразна и целительна. Однако шарлатаны от 'традиционной медицины' просто лгут, утверждая, что нет доказательств о ее целебных свойствах. Это ужасная ложь!

📖 Возможна атрибутивная модификация.

📑 I sent emails to the cruise line but I never heard back. They are aware of what goes on there. However, because they have *big shot* lawyers they can afford to turn their heads and laugh it away. (enTenTen13)

Я послал уведомления в круизные компании, но ответа от них не получил. Они прерасно понимают, о чем идет речь. Но так на них них работают видные юристы, компании могут позволить себе отмахнуться от нас и просто посмеяться.

📖 Выступая в функции атрибута, идиома *big shot* может характеризовать не только людей, но и солидные фирмы, крупные корпорации.

📑 We hear about social media all the time. It seems like everyone uses it in some way, shape or form from teenagers, to coffee shops, to *big shot* companies. (enTenTen13)

Мы все время слышим о социальных сетях. Такое впечатление, что в какой-то мере все пользуются ими, начиная от подростков и кофеен до крупных компаний.

📖 Идиома часто может иметь оттенок презрения или недоверия, свидетельствующих о недостойных методах достижения занимаемого положения.

📑 They knew he was a liar the first time, but in the appeal they believed that rotten lie and now Joe is a *big shot* and your father is the patsy. (enTenTen13)

4   Conclusion

A thorough analysis of authentic texts made it possible to discover the unique semantic properties of each idiom and find proper Russian equivalents. The author argues that not all of these idioms should be placed in one dictionary entry. However, if they are placed in one entry then there should be detailed explanations of their semantic, pragmatic or syntactic differences.

The results of the study demonstrate obvious advantages of using corpora in bilingual lexicography. Applying corpora in constructing the English-Russian dictionary of idioms provides the following possibilities:

- to single out a more precise and accurate choice of idioms to be included in the dictionary;
- to determine the most significant variants of a particular idiom;
- to determine the degree of frequency of the selected idioms;
- to find the most suitable Russian equivalents of the English idioms; and
- to illustrate the idiom usage with modern authentic data and provide an appropriate translation of concrete examples.

Many idiomatic dictionaries fail to register all meanings of idioms, sometimes introducing their insufficient semantic description and usage, because in some cases reference materials on idioms are based on the intuition of their authors, and the intuition of even the most competent and experienced

authors is not always consistent. This is why lexicographers have to develop better ways of recording, describing and presenting idioms in dictionaries.

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