

THE SEMANTICS REVIEW ON THE ANALYSIS OF IDIOMS IN ZOOTOPIA FILM

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Abstract

This study employs semantic analysis to investigate idiomatic expressions within the Disney animated film Zootopia. Directed by Byron Howard and Rich Moore, Zootopia conveys significant messages about understanding differences and fostering friendships despite societal stereotypes. The film blends humor and social commentary, featuring complex idioms that reflect broader social issues and character interactions. Through qualitative research, the study identifies 53 idiomatic phrases, analyzing their literal and idiomatic sense. The findings reveal a distinct semantic divergence; the literal interpretations often appear nonsensical or exaggerated, while the idiomatic meanings derive from cultural context and character relationships. This illustrates how language can convey emotional resonance and thematic depth. Moreover, idiomatic expressions, such as "time is money" and "pawpsicle hustler," provide both entertainment and educational value, making the film accessible, particularly for younger audiences. The analysis underscores the importance of idiomatic language in storytelling, highlighting its role in communication, humor, and character identification, thereby enriching viewers' linguistic awareness. The study suggests further exploration of idiomatic expressions in various media, proposing that film can serve as a valuable educational tool for enhancing understanding of idioms among language learners. Future research could incorporate quantitative methodologies to reveal patterns in idiomatic usage across different genres, enhancing comprehension and retention for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students.

Keywords : Semantics, Analysis, Idioms, Zootopia

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INTRODUCTION

Film is an audiovisual communication medium that uses sound and moving pictures to tell tales. In a nutshell, a film is a moving picture or cinema that tells an audience a story or a message. A film is an artistic creation that is the product of the collaboration of numerous individuals, such as directors, screenwriters, actors, and other crew members. One of the famous films from Disney Studio, Zootopia (or Zootropolis in the European version) is a 2016 American 3D animated film directed by Byron Howard and Rich Moore and produced by Clark Spencer.

Zootopia emphasizes the importance of understanding differences and building friendships between groups. The film conveys an inspiring message that every individual has the potential to achieve their dreams, regardless of background or body type. According to Hart (2016) "The film successfully packages complex social issues in a form that is accessible to children. Zootopia teaches the importance of empathy and understanding in dealing with differences." Zootopia provides a powerful picture of how stereotypes can affect the way we

see others. The film encourages viewers to question their own prejudices (Karen E. Dill-Shackleford 2016).

The social lessons that the Zootopia movie effectively conveys include camaraderie, anti-discrimination, and the value of putting in a lot of effort to accomplish goals. There are numerous idioms in this movie that serve to inform viewers and listeners. Zootopia is a great example of how media can be used to educate the public about important issues. Its moral message is very relevant to the challenges we face in the real world (David A. Kessler 2016).

Idioms are common phrases that cannot be explained logically or grammatically but bring beauty, elegance, and appeal to a language. Idiomatic expressions (idioms) are multi-word phrases whose overall meanings are idiosyncratic and largely unpredictable, reflecting speaker meanings that are not derivable by combining the literal sense of the individual words in each phrase according to the regular semantics rules of the language (Nunberg, Sag, & Wasow, 1994, p. 492). Idioms are derived from the Greek word *idios*, which meaning typical, autonomous, distinctive, or personal. Idioms can take the shape of phrases or sentences with particular meanings or new meanings derived from the core words that comprise them. Idioms are expressions whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of the individual words that make them up (Cowie, A. P 1998).

Although there are not many popular comments or analyses regarding the detailed meaning analysis of the idiom Zootopia, Semantics will help to convey the meaning of the idiom contained in one of the films with animal characters or figures. This study uses Semantics to look at the meaning of Idioms in the film Zootopia, focusing on how words and sentences convey meaning and how this meaning is interpreted by speakers and listeners (Hurford, J. R., & Heasley, B.1983).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach, specifically utilizing the framework of Semantics to analyze the idiom of Zootopia Film. The methodology is designed to focus on Idioms in the literal sense and idiomatic sense of Semantics.

Data Collection

The primary data for this study consists of the scripts of the conversation in Zootopia Film. The data were collected through observation and the procedure is watched Zootopia Film and found the idioms contained in the script, analyzed the meaning of English idiom that founded in Zootopia Film, and analyze the idioms meaning use Semantics.

Instruments of Data Collection

In this study, the researcher served as the primary data gathering tool. As a qualitative study based on semantic analysis, the researcher actively engaged with the source material—the film Zootopia—to locate, choose, and evaluate idiomatic idioms. The researcher used a data sheet to meticulously document each phrase, including its context, literal meaning, and idiomatic meaning. Furthermore, a checklist structure was employed to assure consistency and accuracy in the identification and classification processes.

Data Collection Method

The data were gathered using observation and documenting methods. The researcher viewed Zootopia several times and used the conversation script to identify idiomatic terms in character interactions. The approach consisted of four stages: (1) watching the film to find spoken idioms, (2) cross-referencing with the official or verified screenplay, (3) picking 53 idioms with figurative or non-literal meaning, and (4) recording each idiom together with its literal and idiomatic meanings. Throughout the gathering procedure, the researcher relied on semantic theory as an analytical framework.

Data Analysis Method

The data were evaluated using descriptive qualitative methods, especially semantic theory. Each idiomatic statement was investigated by distinguishing between its literal (word-for-word) and idiomatic (contextual or metaphorical) meaning. The researcher used semantic interpretation to discover patterns in how idioms were used in the film's dialogue—for example, to communicate emotions, produce comedy, represent cultural differences, or construct character identification. Following categorization, the idioms were described, interpreted, and studied in terms of their role in meaning-making within the story.

RESULTS

No	Scripts of Zootopia Film	Literal Sense	Idiomatic Sense
1	Before you hit the streets	Before you physically strike the road.	Before you go out to work or start patrolling.
2	Scorching sandstrom	A very hot sandstorm.	A chaotic or intense situation.
3	Bunny bumpkin	A rural or unsophisticated bunny.	A naive or simple country girl/rabbit.
4	One thousand foot fall	Falling from a height of 1,000 feet.	A dramatic failure or disaster.
5	Carrot baby	A baby that looks like a carrot.	A cute nickname for a bunny or child.
6	Frigid ice wall	A wall made of freezing ice.	Emotional coldness or a communication barrier.
7	Filthy toilet	A very dirty bathroom.	A horrible or disgusting place.
8	Fluffy butt	A soft, furry rear end.	A teasing nickname for someone cute or soft (usually a bunny).
9	Fuzzy bunny	A bunny with soft fur.	A harmless, naive, or overly sweet character.
10	Really is kind of proud scared combo	A mix of feeling proud and scared.	An emotional state combining pride and anxiety before facing something big.
11	You played cribbage with a weasel once	You played cards with a weasel.	You've dealt with shady or untrustworthy people before.
12	Yeah, he cheats like there's no tomorrow	He cheats as if the world is ending.	He cheats a lot, without shame or restraint.
13	Don't lose your key!	Don't misplace your key.	Don't lose access or control.
14	Greasy walls	Walls covered in grease.	Gross, unpleasant, or run-down conditions.
15	Rickety bed	A wobbly or unstable bed.	A situation or item that is unreliable or close to collapsing.
16	You little dickens!	A small person named Dickens.	playful insult for someone mischievous or troublesome.
17	And City Hall is right up my tail to find them	City officials are near my tail.	The authorities are pressuring or watching me closely.
18	You probably forgot, but i was top of my class at the academy	I ranked highest in my training class.	I'm highly competent and qualified.

19	So hit the road!	Start walking on the road.	Leave immediately!
20	This goofy little stinker	A small silly smelly creature.	A playful term for someone who's cute but mischievous.
21	So beat it	Hit something.	Go away! Leave now!
22	You're holding up the line	You are delaying people in a queue.	You're slowing things down or causing delays.
23	Meter maid	A female who checks parking meters.	A traffic enforcement officer.
24	I'd lose my head if it weren't attached to my neck	I'd misplace my head if it wasn't stuck on.	I'm extremely forgetful.
25	It burns me up	It sets me on fire.	It makes me extremely angry.
26	Just a real articulate fella	A guy who speaks well.	Someone eloquent or possibly sarcastically suggesting slickness or cunning.
27	I'll bite your face off!	I will physically bite your face.	A strong threat or expression of intense anger.
28	It's called a hustle, sweetheart	This is a hustle (trick), darling.	This is a scam or clever scheme – said with irony.
29	Whoopsie	An interjection for a mistake.	A playful way to acknowledge a small error, sometimes sarcastically.
30	Tail between her legs	Tail is tucked in shame.	To return defeated and humiliated.
31	Your dreams getting crushed	Dreams being physically destroyed.	Hopes or ambitions being ruined.
32	Pawpsicle hustler	Someone who sells frozen treats made of paws.	A person who scams or tricks others for small profit.
33	Glorious day!	A beautiful, grand day.	An exaggerated or sarcastic way of saying things are going great.
34	It's your word against yours	Confusing claim of one person against themselves.	Wordplay mocking someone's contradiction or lack of credible witness.
35	Catch me if you can, cottontail!	Try to catch me, bunny with fluffy tail!	A taunt meaning "You can't catch me!"
36	Coming through	Someone is physically moving past.	A shout used when pushing through a crowd or situation.
37	I got dibs!	I call first claim.	That's mine!
38	Bon voyage, flatfoot!	Goodbye, flat-footed person.	Mocking farewell to a cop (flatfoot = slang for police officer).
39	I popped the weasel!	I made the weasel burst.	I caught/got rid of the criminal (weasel = a thief/slippery person).
40	Shut your tiny mouth!	Close your small mouth.	Be quiet! (Used in a strong or humorous way).

41	Case is in good hands	The case is physically held well.	It's being taken care of by someone competent.
42	You strike out, you resign	If you miss, you quit.	If you fail again, you give up the job/position.
43	Time is money	Time equals currency.	Time is valuable — don't waste it.
44	Any moron can run a plate?	Any idiot can check a license plate.	This is an easy task, even for a fool.
45	On the hook	Hanging on a hook.	Being responsible or in trouble (e.g., owing a debt or favor).
46	Fighting the clock	Battling a timepiece.	In a race against time; under deadline pressure.
47	It's a bummer	Something that causes a bump?	It's disappointing or unfortunate.
48	For old times sake	For the sake of past times.	As a favor remembering our shared past.
49	We broke bread together	We literally shared a meal.	We were close friends or shared meaningful time.
50	Scared my driver half to death	Made the driver nearly die from fear.	Frightened someone severely.
51	Down on all fours	On hands and knees.	In a primal or animalistic position; possibly submissive or searching.
52	Top pastry chefs in the tri-burrows	Best dessert cook in three neighborhoods.	A huge success, especially coming from humble beginnings.
53	Talking in tongues	Speaking in unintelligible sounds.	Speaking nonsense or incomprehensibly (can also have a religious meaning).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that idiom of Zootopia Film are related concentrating on their literal and idiomatic meanings in order to detect patterns of non-literal language use in context. The findings show that every idiom examined had a strong semantic divergence between the literal understanding of the phrase and its true, contextual meaning.

Literal Sense

The 53 idiomatic idioms identified in Zootopia are literal in the sense that they have direct, word-for-word meanings drawn from the separate components of each sentence. These meanings are often clear when taken out of context, yet they frequently look ludicrous, irrational, or unrelated to the scenario in which they are employed. For example, the phrase "fluffy butt" literally refers to a soft, fuzzy rear, but "popped the weasel" literally means to burst or harm a tiny creature. Such literal readings, taken at face value, can yield hilarious or confused visuals, especially for viewers unfamiliar with the colloquial usage.

Similarly, expressions like "bite your face off" and "I'd lose my head if it weren't attached" paint exaggerated literal imagery that do not correspond to their intended communication purpose. These literal senses are crucial to examine because they demonstrate the gap between surface language and intended meaning, which is a common aspect of idiomatic idioms. In most circumstances, literal interpretations function simply as a language shell, with

the underlying meaning hidden in cultural, emotional, or situational clues other than the words themselves.

Idiomatic Sense

The idiomatic sense refers to the metaphorical, contextualized meanings conveyed by each statement throughout Zootopia's story. Unlike the literal sense, the idiomatic sense is primarily reliant on pragmatics, cultural understanding, and the characters' relationships depicted in the film. For example, "tail between her legs" idiomatically conveys shame or defeat, regardless of the animal context, but "hit the road" serves as a direction meaning "leave immediately." These idioms have meanings that cannot be deduced from their component words, which agrees with Nunberg, Sag, and Wasow's (1994) assessment that idioms are semantically opaque and non-compositional.

Furthermore, some idioms in the film are based on real-world societal phrases, such as "time is money" (emphasizing urgency), "on the hook" (being responsible or in trouble), and "for old times' sake" (doing something for the purpose of nostalgia). Other idioms are ingeniously developed utilizing animal qualities to merge comedy and story significance, such as "fuzzy bunny," "pawpsicle hustler," and "goofy little stinker." These idiomatic senses contribute emotional tone, comedy, and character depth, making the discourse more rich and relatable. This demonstrates that idioms in Zootopia are utilized not only for stylistic flare, but also as important instruments for storytelling, cultural representation, and character interaction, providing viewers with both amusement and linguistic awareness.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

This study used a semantic system to examine 53 idiomatic idioms from the animated film Zootopia, with a particular emphasis on the distinction between literal and idiomatic meaning. The findings show that the film's idioms are rich in nonliteral language and cannot be comprehended only through the meanings of their individual words. Each idiom has a considerable difference between its literal interpretation (sometimes ludicrous or hilarious) and its idiomatic meaning, which is established by context, character interaction, and cultural understanding. The study's semantic analysis finds that idioms in Zootopia serve a variety of narrative and communication tasks, including conveying emotions, delivering comedy, improving character identification, and reinforcing societal or cultural issues.

Furthermore, the idiomatic terms found in the video have both real-world and fictional applications. Some idioms reflect normal English ("time is money," "on the hook"), while others are artistically altered to fit the film's anthropomorphic animal setting ("fluffy butt," "pawpsicle hustler"). These idioms not only entertain, but also introduce viewers, particularly young ones, to real and stylistically diverse uses of the English language. The study indicates that Zootopia effectively incorporates idiomatic English into its storyline, giving excellent linguistic input for both enjoyment and instruction.

Suggestion

Based on what was found of this study, future researchers should investigate idioms in other animated films or media genres in order to compare idiomatic usage across diverse narrative settings. This can help us understand how idioms operate in speech and cultural storytelling. Educators and language learners are also advised to use films like Zootopia as realistic learning resources to improve idiomatic competence, concrete awareness, and semantic interpretation in English. Because idioms are frequently difficult for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, studying them in enjoyable and relevant situations may significantly improve understanding and retention. Finally, future research may use

quantitative approaches or corpus-based analysis to detect frequent trends or differences in idiom usage in children's or adult-targeted media.

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