Idiomatic Creativity

Appendix A: Subtypes of idiomatic activation-sets
On the basis of Geeraerts’ prismatic model of idiom semantics, this appendix provides illustrations for the different subtypes of idiom activation-sets that are portrayed in Chapter 4 of the book. The following conventions for depiction are employed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A, B: Idiomatic constituents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>α, β: correspondents of A and B in the idiomatic meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C: Literal scene/literal meaning; C = A ∩ B

γ: Idiomatic scene/idiomatic meaning; γ = α ∩ β

L: link = metaphorical grounds or metonymic contiguity relationship

- : Dimension of schematicity

- : categorisation by extension, bottom-up and top-down perspective

- : composition, bottom-up and top-down perspective
Idiomatic Creativity – Appendix A: Subtypes of idiomatic activation-sets

1. Core types: idioms with an inconspicuous, fully compositional literal meaning

a. Idioms with literal compositionality, (global) motivation and figurative-literal isomorphism, e.g.: *grasp the nettle*, *take the bull by the horns*, *spill the beans*, *burst/prick the bubble*, *upset the applecart*, etc.

\[
[C] \leftrightarrow [\gamma] \text{ is motivated by } L  \\
[C] = [A] \cap [B]  \\
[\gamma] = ([A] \leftrightarrow [\alpha]) \cap ([B] \leftrightarrow [\beta])  \\
\text{but } ([A] \leftrightarrow [\alpha]) \text{ and } ([B] \leftrightarrow [\beta]) \text{ only existing in } [C] \leftrightarrow [\gamma]
\]
b. Idioms with literal compositionality, global motivation, constituenal motivation, and figurative-literal isomorphism, e.g.: *swallow the bitter pill, jump on the bandwagon, make headway*, etc.

[C] <---> [γ] is motivated by L
[[A] <---> [α]] and/or [[B] <---> [β]], both lexicalized and potentially motivated by L
[C] = [A] ∩ [B]
[γ] = [[A] <---> [α]] ∩ [[B] <---> [β]]
c. Idioms with literal compositionality and global motivation, e.g.: grit's one teeth, spin one's wheels, turn the page, go round in circles, etc.

\[ [C] \leftrightarrow [\gamma] \text{ is motivated by } L \]
\[ [C] = [A] \cap [B] \]
d. Idioms with literal compositionality but with neither motivation nor isomorphism, e.g.:

kick the bucket, pop your clogs, bite the dust, buy the farm, carry the can, trail your coat,
etc.

\[
[C] \rightarrow [\gamma] \text{ is not motivated} \\
[C] = [A] \cap [B]
\]
2. **Marginal types: idioms with conspicuous or non-compositional literal meanings**

e. Idioms with a compositional but experientially unrealistic literal meaning: blended metaphorical idioms, e.g.: *cook the books, rack one’s brains, like greased lightening*, etc.

\[
[C] \xleftarrow{\gamma} [\gamma] \text{ is motivated by } L \\
[A] \cap [B] = [C!]
\]
f. Partially compositional idioms, e.g.: *know one’s onion, look daggers at sb.*, *rain cats and dogs*, etc.

\[ \gamma = [[A] \cap [[B] \rightarrow [\beta]]] \] or \[ [[A] \rightarrow [\alpha]] \cap [B] \]

[C] is often non-compositional or semantically idiosyncratic

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**Diagram:**

- **LOOK**
  - \( \gamma \)
  - look fiercely
- **C!**
  - look daggers at sb.
- **look**
- **daggers**
g. Literally non-compositional, constructionally idiosyncratic idioms, e.g.: *trip the light fantastic, come up roses, shoot the breeze, go places*

\[ [A] \cap [B] = [C?] \], form of integration (\( \cap \)) is not conventional
h. Literally non-compositional idioms with cranberry morphs, e.g.: *the whole kit and caboodle*, *put the kibosh on sth.*, *cock a snook*, *blow the gaff*, etc.

\[[A] \cap [X] = [C?]\], one constituent \([X]\) does not appear as a linguistic unit outside the context of \([I]\). Therefore, it is not possible to activate a meaningful literal scene \([C]\)
i. Idioms with absent literal compositionality due to the presence of highly specialised word-meanings and garden-path constituents, e.g.: *hide your light under a bushel, have had one’s chips, across the board, chomp at the bit, kick the bucket*, etc.

\[ A \cap [B_{\text{specialised}}] = [C?] \], one constituent is so specialised that it is known by few speakers only

\[ A \cap [B_{\text{polysemous}}] = [C?] \], one constituent is ambiguous, which makes it difficult to activate the right literal scene on the basis of which the idiom can be motivated.