

FORMAL ENGLISH	INFORMAL ENGLISH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is used in academic writing (e.g., essays, reports, resumes, theses, and the like), and formal social events such as public speeches, graduation ceremonies, and assemblies depending upon the topic.</li> <li>- It is more commonly used in writing than in speech.</li> <li>- It follows the conventions of “standard” language; i.e., it uses language forms that often grammatically and lexically considered “correct” or agreed upon by most educated users of the language. For example,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sentences are often long and complex;</li> <li>- Subject-verb agreement is observed;</li> <li>- Contractions are avoided;</li> <li>- The passive voice is often used (making it more impersonal);</li> </ul> </li> <li>- It is better organized and thought out;</li> <li>- The past tense of modal auxiliaries is common, and so on.</li> <li>- Clear and precise vocabulary is used; hence, clichés, colloquialisms, idioms, phrasal verbs, proverbs and slang are avoided. Likewise, a lot of synonyms are used in order to avoid the repetition of the same words. Also, much vocabulary derived from French and Latin is used.</li> <li>- Polite words and formulas like <i>Please, Thank you, Madam, Sir, Mr. /Mrs. /Miss/Ms, Would you mind...?, May I...?, Could you please...?</i>, etc. are often used in speech.</li> <li>- When spoken, words are more carefully and more slowly pronounced than in informal English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is suitable for ordinary conversations or letters to friends.</li> <li>- It is more used in everyday speech (esp., conversations) than in writing.</li> <li>- It often violates the conventions of “standard” language. For example:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sentences are often short (or choppy) and simple;</li> <li>- Subject-verb agreement is not necessarily observed;</li> <li>- Contractions and acronyms are very common;</li> <li>- The active voice is often used;</li> <li>- The present tense of modal auxiliaries is common, and so on.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- It is less organized and thought out;</li> <li>- Vocabulary use is somewhat liberal; hence, lots of clichés, colloquialisms, idioms, phrasal verbs, proverbs and slang are often used. Also, vocabulary derived from French and Latin is not common.</li> <li>- Words that express rapport and familiarity are often used in speech, such as <i>brother, buddy, man, you know</i>, and the like.</li> <li>- When spoken, words are less carefully and more quickly pronounced (often chopped) than in formal English (Lesson Plan, n.d.).</li> </ul>

IDIOMS	SLANG
<p>1. Most idioms have only a nonliteral or metaphorical meaning; i.e., one cannot often discover their meanings by looking up the individual words in an ordinary dictionary. E.g., <i>The thieves took everything, so I was left really <b>up a gum tree</b></i> (= in a difficult situation). However, some idioms have both a literal and a nonliteral meaning; e.g., <i>He <b>spilled the beans</b></i> can mean (a) literally: 'He allowed the beans to get out of a container and fall on the floor or other surface; (b) nonliterally: 'He revealed a secret'.</p> <p>2. Most idioms are more or less invariable or fixed, both in wording and in certain grammatical ways. That is to say, they function like lexical units or wholes. Because of this:</p> <p>a. We cannot often make substitutions of synonymous words into idioms without loss of their idiomaticity or metaphorical meaning. E.g., in the idiom <i>John <b>gave up the ghost</b></i> (= 'John died'), we cannot replace <i>ghost</i> by <i>apparition</i> and say <i>John gave up the apparition</i>; it would no longer mean 'to die'.</p> <p>b. We cannot often introduce modifiers (e.g., adjectives and adverbs) into idioms. E.g., in the idiom <i>He <b>let the cat out of the sack</b></i> (= 'he revealed a secret'), we cannot say <i>He let the black cat out of the sack</i>; it is no longer considered an idiom.</p> <p>c. They cannot often be used in the passive. E.g., <i>Mrs. Jones <b>gave up the ghost</b></i> cannot be transformed into <i>The ghost was given up by Mrs. Jones</i>; it is no longer an idiom.</p> <p>d. Some idioms have slightly variant forms. E.g., We can say <i>until kingdom come</i> or <i>till kingdom come</i> (= 'for a very long time in vain') as in <i>You can protest <b>till kingdom come</b></i>; however, <i>no one will pay attention to you</i>. Similarly, you can say <i>up to the/one's ears/eyes/neck/eyeballs</i> (=</p>	<p>1. It is non-standard vocabulary characterized by extreme informality;</p> <p>2. Its currency is not limited to a region;</p> <p>3. It is composed of coinages or arbitrarily changed words, clipped forms, extravagant forced, or facetious (= amusing) figures of speech, verbal novelties;</p> <p>4. It is short-lived and therefore subject to decline into use;</p> <p>5. Generally, slang is only intelligible to those people associated with the group or groups who use it.</p>

‘wholly concerned with something, esp. something troubling, work, business, or debt’) as in *The secretary is up to her ears (in) addressing and stamping letters.* Another example is *to be in someone’s good/bad books* (= ‘to be in favor/disfavor with someone’).

e. Most idioms are entered in dictionaries or the lexicon as single items of vocabulary.

3. Most idioms belong to informal spoken or written language; therefore, they are generally avoided in formal speech or writing.

4. Most idioms are language- and culture-specific; i.e., they make sense or meaning mainly to the speakers of a given language or members of a given culture. Therefore, most idioms cannot be translated word for word into other languages.

**Table 1: Some euphemisms and their meanings**

<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
privates (or private parts)	male or female genitals
to make love	to engage in sexual intercourse
to perspire	to sweat
to pass away (or to pass on)	to die
collateral losses	civilian casualties
to take a leak	to urinate
funeral director	mortician or undertaker
sales representative	salesperson
to have the telephone out of order	to have the telephone service cut off

**Table 2: Some metaphors and their meanings**

<i>Metaphor</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
the big drink	the ocean or the sea
He's in the prime of life.	He's very young.
She is the apple of my eyes.	I love her more than anything else.
That car is a lemon.	That car often breaks down and requires constant repairs.
The stork is visiting Mary again	Mary is (pregnant and) expecting a child/baby again.
Walls have ears.	Others might listen to what you're saying, even if they're not in the same room.

**Table 3: Some examples of American English slang.**

<b>Slang Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Slang Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
buzz	feeling of pleasure or excitement (e.g., after drinking some alcohol)	bummed	depressed
bent	angry	booze	alcohol
fake-bake	tanning salon	pot	marijuana
gork	nerd	sucky	awful
chicken	coward	can	bathroom
homeboy	very close male friend	to have missile lock	to concentrate