# THE ENGLISH PROVERBS AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS BASED ON THE WORD "MONEY"

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*Abstract: This article aims at focusing on the word **money** as it is reflected in two major linguistic domains, which represent an area of interest for learners who want to improve their knowledge of English: the linguistic domain of verbal collocations and the linguistic domain of phraseological expressions, maybe two of the most comprehensive of all linguistic areas. As this article will show, the word **money** is very well highlighted, as far as these two linguistic domains are concerned.*

***Keywords: etymology, meaning, money expressions, euphemisms, paremiology.***

*Money* is any item or verifiable record that is generally accepted as "payment" for "goods and services" and repayment of "debts" in a particular "country" or socio-economic context[1].

In this article we will reveal to what extent this word has made its mark not only in the British English but also in the other Anglophone countries – The American English, the English spoken in Jamaica or Africa, Australian English, etc., by the medium of different idiomatic constructions and proverbs.

As regards the use of the word *money* in paremiology, we can say that this term appears frequently, since *money* is characteristic of the human nature and proverbs are nothing more than some original profound expressions of man's worldview. For the majority of the English proverbs there are some Romanian equivalent sayings, since the Romance languages (French, Italian, Spanish) have gone a long way with the English literature, especially during the Renaissance. Here are some examples:

- *A fool and his money are soon parted* = people who aren't careful with their money, spend it quickly;
- *A gentleman without money is like a pudding without suet* = however worthy or handsome a man may be, he is in fact worthless if he has insufficient money;
- *Lend your money and lose your friend* = you shouldn't lend money to your friends, as it is possible for the friendship to end owing to non-payment;
- *Love lasts as long as money endures* = loving a poor man does not last long;
- *Money begets / breeds / draws / makes money* = the more money you make, the easier it becomes to make more;

[1] Frederic, S., Mishkin, *The Economics of Money, Banking and Financial Markets (Alternate Edition)*, Boston: Addison Wesley, p. 8



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- *Money burns a hole in somebody's pocket* (after Thomas Moore) = one who spends a lot of money has no money in his pockets; the expression refers to somebody who spends money as soon as it is earned;
- *Money can't buy happiness* = money can buy many material things, but not feelings, which come from inside;
- *Money doesn't grow on trees* = money cannot be obtained without some effort;
- *Money fixes everything* = if one has money, he/she can do practically anything he/she wants;
- *Money for jam* (Australian proverb) = an illegal deed, which brings about lots of money; money easily earned;
- *Money is a good servant, but a bad master* = if you have money, it will serve you and work for you well; but if you owe money to other people, that money will control you in an unpleasant way[2]
- *Money is a sword that can cut even the Gordian knot* = love of money is the root of all evil;
- *Money isn't everything* = there are other important things in life, besides money;
- *Money is one's god* = money is the ruler of one person's life;
- *Money is the root of all evil / The love of money is the root of all evil* = all bad things are caused by people loving money, not by money itself;
- *Money makes the mare to go* = money makes the world go round;
- *Money opens any door* = sufficient money can accomplish anything;
- *Money talks* (after Erasmus) = money is power;
- *Time is money* = time is valuable, so we shouldn't waste it;
- *Where there's muck there's money* = there are people who have made money by having dirty jobs.

The euphemistic language, "slang", as it is often called, has a significant place in our article. As Ştefan Balaban[3] put it, one could acknowledge two fundamental tendencies in the use of the English language, either we refer to the British English or to the other Anglophone countries who speak English as their first language: the American English, the English spoken in Jamaica or Africa, Australian English etc.:

1. *the literal language domain* / *the formal language domain*, in which one can distinguish a tendency to simplify not only the pronunciation and the orthography but also the grammar (for instance, the tendency to gradually eliminate the irregular forms), which makes the English language to be more internationally used than other traditional wide-spread languages;
2. in *the informal language domain*, one can notice the preference of a large number of speakers for using words or combinations of words which have a special metaphorical value and, thus, with a strong emotional impact.

[2]www.englishclub.com/ref/esl/Savings/Money/Money_is_a_good_servant_but_a_bad_master_897.htm
3 Balaban, Ştefan, *Dicţionar de argou, eufemisme şi expresii familiare englez-român*, Teora Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999



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This is how "slang" or euphemistic language appeared, from the necessity of certain categories of persons to impress and captivate their auditorium. We can include here different groups of people belonging to various domains: the underworld, sexuality, alcoholics or drug addicts, computer users, soldiering or student's life, sports domain, mass-media means, cinema world etc.

Here are some examples of idiomatic combinations of words based on the word *money*:

- *big / important / heavy / real money* = large sums of money;
- *color of someone's money* (American English) = a sum of money which somebody possesses ;
- *crazy money* (British English) / *mad money* (American English)= money put aside by a girl / woman for the situation in which her partner offends her or packs her in; money put aside by a woman for the situation in which she would like to go shopping in her own good time;
- *easy money* = easily earned money;
- *hard money* = hard currency;
- *folding money / cabbage / green / lettuce* = money in large quantities;
- *fork out the money* = to pay in cash;
- *front money* = advance money, advance payment (in cash, especially referring to a large sum of money);
- *funny money* = uncurrent money, foreign currency, "toy" money, dishonest earnings;
- *get one's money's worth* = get satisfaction from something on which one has spent money, effort;
- *hush money* (American English) = money paid in order to keep someone silent;
- *in the money* = having lots of money; among the winners, as in a contest, race;
- *(a) licence to print money* = a remunerative business;
- *loadsamoney* = a person who makes a display of his/her wealthiness; conspicuous opulence; conspicuous consumption;
- *mickey-mouse money* (British English) = money whose country of origin is unknown;
- *money* = vulva, vagina, twat;
- *moneybags* (American English) = a nob, a rich, wealthy person;
- *money-box / money maker / spinner* = hotbox (American English); ball (British English); vagina
- *money from home* = a very useful and welcome thing, especially when it is free and unexpected; "gift" money;
- *money grubber* (American English) = greedy, avaricious;
- *money shark* = extortioner, pawnbroker;
- *money tree / shake the money tree* = to scoop large profits, to yield big profits;
- *no money in his purse* (British English) = impotent;
- *on the money* = exact, precise, perfect;



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- *plank down with your money* = down with the cash;
- *pour money down the drain* = to give with a profuse hand;
- *pull down an amount of money* (Australian English) = to earn a large sum of money;
- *push money* (American English) = a bribe paid to a salesman in order to hype a second product;
- *put a knife through the money* (Australian English) = to share some illegal earnings;
- *put (one's) money where (one's) mouth is* = to second words with deeds;
- *shell out an amount of money* (American English) = to spend a sum of money;
- *(the) smart money* = predictions, prognostications of the ones who know what's what;
- *soft money / currency* = inland coin which tends to become less and less valuable (having a big rate of inflation); (in politics – the American English) donations for election campaigns which are not registered by the Federal Electoral Board;
- *spend money like water* = to spend money carelessly and wastefully;
- *tap / strike / touch somebody for money* = to live well by using someone else's money or possessions;
- *the man one, for somebody's money* = the most suitable person / thing according to somebody's opinion;
- *throw money at (something)* (American English) = to spend lots of money on something, hoping to solve that problem;
- *you pay your money and takes your choice* = one may trust to luck when making his choice.

The English language, just like other international languages, comprises tens, even hundreds of idiomatic expressions and proverbs. Therefore, the learning and correct usage of them is a requisite to the study of any language. This article aims at focusing on these two major aspects of the English language, in an attempt of representing a learning material for students or translators of English, which may facilitate their access to the English literature and culture.

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