CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the study:

Idiomatic expressions are part of every language and they belong to the category of the figurative language that also includes metaphors, similes and proverbs. All languages have idioms and are full of them. Native speakers tend to use idiomatic expressions spontaneously without thinking of the figurative meaning. It is natural that non-native speakers find idioms difficult to understand because they don't know what the image of the idiomatic expression is based on. Idioms can be defined as fixed expressions whose figurative meaning is not clear from the literal meaning of their individual constituents. (Wood, 1986, p.96). From syntactic point of view, the fact that an expression is not interpretable in a literal way necessarily leads to the assumption that it is a fixed expression. More pragmatically oriented students use the term ''idiomatic-fixed'' and allow for other non-literal phrases be idiomatic but non- fixed at the same time.

Idioms make use of mental pictures in order to provide an image of what is being said. For example, one might say that I am so hungry I could eat a horse giving the listener a quite powerful idea about just how hungry one is.

The meaning of idioms is almost impossible to understand unless you make use of cultural knowledge or have heard them before. For example, instead of saying that some has died, stopped breathing or does not exist anymore, the expression (kick the bucket) could be used. Idioms are an important part of acquiring the language and often indicate a proficient learner. Burake (1998) claims that '' the knowledge of slang and idioms is fundamental to non-native speakers' understanding of the language that native speakers actually use''.   Another important part of idiom acquisition is that these figurative expressions make the language more vibrant. They are useful when decorating the language or when searching for new ways of expressing oneself. English is a language with vast idiomatic bases, which makes its learning very exciting. There are about 4000 idioms used in the American English and to explain what they mean needs about 2000 words of the vocabulary. Idioms derived from the culture of the nation and from day-to-day life. In real context idioms explain themselves. Nine times out

of ten idioms carry their own explanation. The main function of the idiom is to paraphrase what is going on and what is being said. Idioms are used in both written and spoken language, and often appear in newspaper articles.

They are frequently utilized by the native speakers who feel the language at inborn genetic level. It has been proven that only people who are very good at speaking English can adequately and to the point use idiomatic expressions in their speech.

Idiomatic expressions usually cause serious problems with non-native speakers of English, primarily because they do not know the cultural and history behind English idioms. This is why Arab learners of English use idiomatic expressions very carefully, being afraid of using them incorrectly and being misunderstood. They find idioms very problematic to both understanding and memorizing. There are language specific expressions in Arabic, which reflect the Arabic culture environment. The transference of such idioms in English may result in comprehension problems if the listener or the reader is not familiar with the Arabic language and culture, so, the learners have to go beyond a simple word by word comprehension strategy and integrate figurative meaning.

1.1 Statement of the problem:

After presenting the problem of English idioms, it is appropriate to state the purpose of the study. This study concerns itself with Smart International Schools' Students' comprehension for idioms. It has been noticed that the vast majority of Smart International Schools' learners get confused when using English idioms. It looks at three major points that make idioms such a complicated obstacle to the students:

A) Difficulty of idioms including comprehension and usage.

B) Language connection with the culture.

C) Methods of teaching idioms.

1.2 Questions of the study:

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. Does introducing idiomatic expressions to the learners of EFL improve the learners' receptive skills?
2. How does teaching English idiomatic expressions affect the learners' receptive skills?

1.3 Hypotheses of the study:

1) Teaching idioms with specific strategies will be helpful to EFL leaners to comprehend idioms and in turn they will use them adequately.
2) Knowledge of idioms improves the learners' language's receptive skills.

1.4 Objectives of the study:

The aim of this study is to show the importance of introducing some English idiomatic expressions to the students of English at Smart International Schools in order to avoid confusion while transferring such idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa. It also aims at finding out whether teaching idiomatic expressions improves the foreign language learners' comprehension (reading as well as listening), and how this will improve their fluency at speaking the foreign language.

1.5 Significance of the study:

This study investigates the problems that EFL learners encounter when they face the idiomatic expressions in reading and writing and It may aslo fill a gap in literature since it aims to investigate the problems talking into consideration the kind of cultural expressions.

1.6 Methodology of the study:

In this qualitative study, the researcher has used the descriptive analytical method to conduct the research. The target population of this study is the primary level's English teachers at Smart International Schools. The sample of the study has been selected from the target population. The researcher surveyed twenty native and non-native speakers (6 males and 14 females) whose ages ranged from 21 to 35 and older. The data of the study has been collected by using written interview (survey). The survey had eight open ended questions. The questions asked the participants to write about their own perspective of teaching English idiomatic expressions and the role of them in teaching ESL.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction:

In this chapter, the researcher is going to take general background about idioms and some information extracted from previous studies.

2.1 Definition of idioms:

Idioms are a type of a formulaic language. Formulaic language consists of fixed expressions which you learn and understand as units rather than individual words. The word idiom can be defined as a fixed combination of words whose meaning is often difficult to guess from the meaning of each individual word.

Idioms are used for emphasis, to comment on people, to make stories and Movies more interesting, to comment on a situation and most importantly to catch the readers' eyes.

2.2 The importance of idioms:

Idioms are always something special about any language; they build up some distinctive features which differ one language to another. Idioms are not separate part of the language which one can choose either to use or to omit, but they form an essential part of the general vocabulary of English. A description of how the vocabulary of the language is growing and changing will help to place idioms in perspective.

Idioms appear in every language, and English has thousands of them. They are often confusing because the meaning of the whole group of words taken together has little, often nothing, to do with the meanings of the words taken by one.

Idioms pervade English with a peculiar flavor and give it astounding variety, bright character and color. They help language learners to understand English

culture, penetrate into culture and lifestyle of the English people, and get deeper insight into the English history.

2.3 The change of idioms:

Idioms frequently change in English. Although many idioms last for a long time, some disappear very quickly. Therefore, idioms that were popular fifty years ago may sound very old-fashioned and odd today. It is therefore important to be careful if you learn an idioms form, say, an older novel, as it may sound unnatural if you use it in your own speech or writing.

2.4 Types of idioms:

Fernando (1996:3) states that, '' there are two types of idioms: idioms of encoding and those of decoding.

2.4.0 Idioms of Encoding (Identifiable):

They are those idiosyncratic lexical combinations that have transparent meaning. This type of idioms could be recognized through making comparison between different language by the use of proper prepositions.

2.4.1 Idioms of Decoding (non-identifiable):

Idioms of decoding refer to those non-identifiable and misleading lexical expressions whose interpretation could not be figured out by using only independently learnt linguistic conventions. This type of idioms could be classified into lexemic and Semitic.

2.4.1.0 Lexemic idioms:

The lexemic idioms include:

1. Phrasal verbs.   E.g. turn on / turn off.
2. Phrasal compounds. E.g. black board.
3. Incorporating verbs. E.g. man-handle.
4. Pseudo-idioms.   E.g. spick and span.

2.4.1.1 Sematic idioms:

They convey pragmatic meaning related to a particular culture. They include:

1. Proverbs. E.g. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
2. Familiar quotations. E.g. Not a mouse stirring.

2.5 Previous study one:

Title: Teaching idioms to L2 Learners: ESL Perspective

Author: Weam Mansoor Rizq

University: St. Cloud State

Year: 2015

Objectives:

The aim of this study is prove that the methods of teaching idiomatic expressions and the language connection with culture have big role in the learners' understanding for idioms.

It is essential at the beginning of the study to define idioms and understand what they are. There are ongoing debates on what constitutes an idiom. Different viewpoints about the definition of idioms are displayed in this section of the study. The Webster Dictionary defines idioms as, "an expression whose meaning cannot be predicted from the usual meanings of its constituent elements." An idiom is described as a group of words that have a specific meaning; one cannot figure its meaning through literal translation (Bateni, 2010). According to Cain, Oakhill, and Lemmon (2005), an idiom is a "figurative expression that usually can be interpreted literally but that takes a nonliteral meaning when used in a specific context" (p. 66). Grant and Bauer (2004) have a more technical definition, that is, the term idiom is used to include a wide variety of different types of multi-word units (MWUs). They believe the term MWU comprises idioms and "open and restricted collocations" (p. 38); however, MWUs does not include the category of phrasal verbs. Also, they defined MWU as a "fixed and recurrent pattern of lexical material sanctioned by usage" (p. 38).

7

Idioms, metaphors, similes, and proverbs belong to the category of "nonliteral" or figurative language which is difficult to interpret and to learn because they do not mean what they literally state.

According to Irujo (1986b) idioms are "conventionalized expressions" whose meaning cannot be determined from the meaning of their parts and they differ from other figurative expressions such as similes and metaphors (p. 288). According to Van der Merwe and Adendorff (2012), similes have more explicit meaning than idioms. They even have simpler grammatical structure than idioms. Similes are more easily understood than other figurative language because simile is explicit comparison while metaphor is implicit comparison (Roberts & Kreuz, 1994).

Idioms are particular expressions consisting of at least two words occur more frequently than proverbs and the other nonliteral expressions in written and spoken language.In other words, L2 learners cannot infer the meaning of the figurative language neither from the context nor from the translation of individual words in a string because the literal meaning does not lead to the actual intended meaning.

After defining idioms, it is time to review the research regarding them. Earlier studies on English idioms only involved native speakers such as (Kainulainen, 2006, p. 30; Titone & Connine, 1994). Other researchers focused on the frequency of English idioms such as (Grant, 2007; Liu, 2003). Asl (2013) adds few studies focused on finding a suitable method in teaching idiomatic expressions.

Recently, much of the attention has been on teaching idioms to L2 learners after the recognition of the significant role that idioms play in learning English (Cooper, 2012; Irujo, 1986a; Liontas, 2003). Other studies were devoted to explain the processing of L2 idioms and the role of LI in the process such as Kellerman study (1983). Samani and Hashemian (2012) stated that learning idioms not only assists language learners in better communication, but also helps them learning the culture and society of the target language. Also, Elkilic (2008) stated that English is rich with idioms and learning them constitutes the soul of the language. With

regard to idiom usage, Stight (1979) stated that the proper use of idioms is an important part of learning a second language.

Before addressing the three major points of this study, it is important to look at the classification of idioms. Irujo (1986a) divided idioms into three types; identical, similar and different. These classifications were according to the similarity between the first language, LI, and second language, L2. Her study was to investigate whether or not L2 learners rely on their native language to comprehend and produce L2 idioms. The results of her study portrayed that identical and similar idioms between the two languages were easy to comprehend and produce, whereas different idioms between the two languages were hard to comprehend and produce. A similar study was done by Caldr (2011). In his study, 62 students in the English department in a Turkish university had to write the equivalents of English idioms in their LI, Turkish. The results revealed that identical and similar idioms were easily interpreted because the participants were able to supply the Turkish equivalent correctly. However, with regard to the different idioms, students were unable to perceive

their meanings simply because such idioms do not exist in the students' mother tongue language.

2.6 Previous study Two:
Title: The impact of teaching idiomatic expressions on the Foreign Language Learners' Comprehension
Author: Fatima S. Alshiraida
University: Al- Turath University
Year: 2014

Objective: The aim of this study is to Show how idioms are instrumental in enhancing the Arab learners' comprehension.

- **Difficulty of Idioms; Comprehension and Usage:**

No doubt, L2 learners encounter difficulties during the acquisition of the English language. Understanding idioms is one of these difficulties. According to Cooper (2012), L2 learners would encounter idioms in all kind of discourse; news, lectures, movies, books and daily conversations. Furthermore, Chuang (2013) denoted jn her research study that mastering these multiword units or language chunks is not easy for language learners since the meanings of these texts cannot be determined through the analysis of their individual word meanings. Therefore, idioms represent a hindrance in the linguistic development of L2 learners. Because of the difficulty of understanding idioms, this section looks into reading processes to see how idioms are comprehended. Generally, language receptive organs transmit data to the brain to be processed and the brain performs what is known as comprehension. Data, in this context, refers to language in either form written or heard. Therefore, comprehension is defined as the process of understanding that requires mental operations. These operations are divided into two levels; the low-level and high-level and they take place simultaneously. Two well-known models depict reading processes: the text model and the situational model. For details about reading comprehension processing, check Grabe (2009).

With regard to idiom comprehension, Holsinger and Kaiser (2013) stated that it is less clear how comprchenders arrive at the idiomatic interpretation. They wondered whether literal processing is necessary to reach the idiomatic interpretation. They found that context clues have an essential role to play during reading processes. The results of their research study revealed that when readers expect a literal interpretation in a situation where the sentence turns out to be idiomatic, real-time processing is disrupted more than if comprehenders are expecting an idiomatic interpretation and the sentence turns out to be literal. Their study revealed that idiomatic texts consume more time be comprehended than literal ones.

Interestingly, models of processing idioms are two types in terms of accessing the idiomatic meaning first or the literal meaning. The first type proposes that literal computation has priority over access to idiomatic meaning whereas the other type proposes that idiomatic and literal processes occur independently of each other.

Investigating the first type, I found two hypotheses: Configuration Hypothesis and Hybrid Representation Hypothesis. According to Cacciari and Tabossi (1988), the Configuration Hypothesis proposed that literal processing precedes access to idiomatic meaning. That is to say, readers proceed with literal interpretation until they are faced with sufficient cues to recognize words as being an idiomatic, then the idiomatic meaning is retrieved and enters into the comprehension processes. Further, literal processing has priority over idiomatic processing and it proceeds automatically. Cacciari and Tabossi claimed that literal processing is the default and logical mode we follow to interpret texts. Similarly, the Hybrid Representation Hypothesis favored the primacy of literal processing over the idiomatic processing (Cutting & Bock, 1997). That is, when we read, we always think of the literal meaning. Then we think of the idiomatic meaning when we see sufficient clues in the text.

Contrary to the models that support the dominance of literal processing, Bobrow and Bell (1973) suggested the Lexical model. This model viewed idioms as big words and they are linked directly with semantic information so computational interpretation needed for these connection. The Lexical model believes idiomatic and literal processes occur in parallel. In similar fashion, Gibbs (1980) proposed the Direct Access model which accesses the idiomatic interpretation of text.

2.7 Previous study Three:
Title: Language and culture
Author: Dr. Tengku Sepora Tengku Mahadi
University: Sains Malaysia Malaysia
Year: 2012

Objective: This study seeks to investigate whether there is any relation between language and culture, and if so, what is the connection between language and culture. In other words, if there is a relation between language and culture, how can they have this association?

No doubt, there is an intimate relationship between language and culture. They are inseparable. Words and expressions people produce convey their cultures. According to Jiang (2000), language is a part of culture and plays an important role in it. Jiang stated that the "referents of language" are the events, states, entities, processes, characteristics, and relations that exist in the culture, whether these are referred to by single words or by phrases (p. 332).

Jiang's study concluded that there is always an interactive influence between language and culture and they cannot exist without each other because they "combine to form a living organism" (p. 328).

Nida (1998) considered culture to be "more extensive than language," that is, a single word can refer to different concepts in different cultures. Language forms we use carry meanings that are not interpreted alike because they are associated with culture. The opposite is also true, people from different cultures point to different things by using the same language forms. The word lunch for example, refers to pizza and hamburger in American culture while it refers to steamed bread or rice in the Chinese culture (p. 29).

In the same vein, Brown (1994) portrayed the relationship between language and culture as an intricately interwoven relationship. Separating the two is infeasible and if it happened the significance of either language or culture would be lost (p. 165). Jiang (2000) listed few metaphors about language and culture in her study that deserve mentioning, i.e., language is the mirror of culture and people can see a culture through its language.

Since language and culture are densely intertwined (Pulvemess, 2003) and the relationship between L2 teaching and L2 culture is "seamless" (Kramsch, 2001), many research studies have emphasized that without the study of culture teaching L2 is "inaccurate and incomplete" (Gene & Bada, 2005, p. 73). Acquiring a new language is more than learning its grammar and vocabulary. According to Bada (2000) there is a need for cultural literacy in language teaching because learners come across "significant hardship" in communicating meaning to native speakers as a result of being unexposed to cultural elements of the L2 society (p. 101).

2.8 previous study four:

Title: Idioms and Importance of Teaching Idioms to ESL Students
Author: Sridhar Maisa / Dr. T.Karunakaran
University: Hyderabad, India / Jaffna, Sri Lanka
Year: 2013

Objective: This study seeks to prove that the knowledge of idioms improves the learners' language and also seeks to prove that teaching idioms with specific strategies will help ESL learners to understand and produce idioms.

Since native speakers use a numerous of idioms during the course of every day and since it is important to teach idioms to L2 learners, teaching idioms received much more attention recently and it becomes a topic in teaching ESL and EFL after it was a neglected topic (Tarcaoanu, 2012). It is important to have a clear view on how to implement a methodology to teach idioms. However, the argument between the traditional method and the conceptual metaphors instruction on how to teach idioms is not over.

ESL and EFL teachers have a variety of methods to apply in their classes in order to teach idioms. These teaching methods can be organized under two broad methods. The traditional method encourages teaching idioms explicitly in context. Or the conceptual metaphor method that teaches English idioms after obtaining some knowledge of the terms. The traditional method teaches idioms in context, Liontas (2003) stated that the context can effectively facilitate understanding as well as learning and teaching of idioms and idiomatic expressions. Liontas's study concluded that "the absence of context" creates obstacles "on learning and comprehending idioms" (p. 288). Within the method of teaching idioms explicitly in context, there are two competing views; teaching idioms with an extended context and with a limited context. Kainulainen (2006) emphasized the role of extended context over limited context to assist L2 learners comprehend idioms correctly. Kainulainen concluded her study by stating that the more contexts surround an idiom, the more likely the L2 learner participants will come to the correct meaning.

13

Another study conducted by Asl (2013) aimed at finding a suitable method for teaching idiomatic expressions and idioms. The study also contended that extended context such as stories, have a significant effect on learning idioms and idiomatic expressions than directly teaching the meaning of the expressions. It is a similar case of teaching vocabulary; teaching vocabulary in context is better than teaching laundry lists of vocabulary alone. Asl interpreted the results in the light of the schema theory. That is to say, long contexts such as stories activate large number of schemata and short contexts activate small number of schemata. Engaging large number of schemata in processing the context is "helpful" for learning and retaining the meaning of idioms (p. 8).

The other method suggests teaching English idioms through the conceptual metaphor. According to Lakoff (1987), conceptual metaphor refers to the connection between two sematic areas at the level of thought. And according to Richards (1967), language is virtually metaphorical (p. 80). The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of <u>thing</u> in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). Lakoff and Johnson claimed that
metaphor is not a "matter of language", words. It is our conceptual system that is metaphorically structured and defined (p. 6) and the meaning of many idioms depends on the metaphorical conceptual system (Samani & Hashemian, 2012). Conceptual metaphor can facilitate the comprehension of idioms. Being unaware of metaphorical concepts or unfamiliar with them, L2 learners often do not understand and do not use metaphors in "natural communication" (p. 250). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) recommended teachers and learners of L2 to be aware of the conceptual metaphor of the target language to be able to understand idioms.

In order to apply the conceptual metaphor method, English learners need to obtain some knowledge of literature terms such as metaphor, metonymy, simile and personification.
This knowledge of literature is gained through special classes and courses. For example, Lexical Competence and The Application of Metaphoric Expressions in Translation were two similar courses in two different studies. The former was conducted by Cakir (2011) on Turkish learners of English and the later by Samani

14

and Hashemian (2012) on Iranian learners of English. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson in 1980 was behind the idea in both courses where understating one idea in terms of another, similar to simile. Students were taught that metaphor is an important means of expression in human languages, the written and spoken form. The courses delivered ideas like figure of speech to students to assist them to comprehend idioms. According to Adkins (1968), predicting the meaning from context exercises and dealing with figurative expressions allows learners to widen their horizons to understand and learn new unknown idioms. Participants who were enrolled in the suggested classes to obtain some knowledge of literature in the study of Cakir (2011) and Samani and Hashemian (2012) outperformed those who did not take the classes. Samani and Hashemian (2012) argued against the traditional method of teaching idioms favoring the conceptual metaphors instruction because it allow L2 learners to express inner thoughts, views, ideas, and emotions the way native speaker do, Cakir (2011) emphasized teaching idioms and utilize all possible means to develop students "pragmatic competence."

Cakir stated that teaching idioms only is not enough; they should be practiced and produced by learners (p. 378). However, the traditional method should not be abandoned because some idioms have literal meaning (Li, 2010). Conceptual metaphor teaching method is an "effective complement" in idiom teaching and learning (p. 207).

In order to apply conceptual metaphors in idioms teaching, Li (2010) suggested three aspects to consider. The metaphorical competence of the ESL teachers should be developed because they are the implementers of the conceptual metaphor theory, first. Second, students' metaphorical awareness should be raised by informing them that metaphors are not only regarded as "poetical or rhetorical embellishments." Third, cultural background should be underestimated word missing because having different religion beliefs and world views as well as living in different environment and geographical affect our "metaphorical mode of thinking" (p. 209). The study of Samani and Hashemian (2012) showed that it would be beneficial for L2 learners to interpret English idioms by implementing

the conceptual metaphor instruction. Teaching learners that metaphor is "a way of explaining, describing, and evaluating ideas to understand and communicate abstract ideas in our everyday activities" (p. 250).

Along the same vein, Feng (2007) carried out an experiment on Taiwanese learners of English and considered the usefulness of conceptual metaphors and metonymies in improving idiom comprehension. Comparing the results of the posttest and the pretest of the same group, Feng noticed that the test scores showed improvement because few types of metaphors were taught to the learners during the period of the study. The "underlying knowledge" of idioms seemed to facilitate and increase learners' comprehension of unfamiliar idioms. Feng claimed that the proficiency level of the learners is a salient factor to understand idioms beside the cultural background of the target language (as cited in Chuang, 2013, p. 64). Chuang, also, added the comprehension of idioms is impacted by several factors; conceptual metaphor theory knowledge, the size of vocabulary, and the proficiency level of the learners. He stated that few researchers such as (Gibbs, 1992; Hamblin & Gibbs, 1999) have claimed that conceptual metaphor facilitate the comprehension of idioms which was based on the theory of the Conceptual Metaphor suggested by Lakoff and Johnson in the early 1980s.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction:

The goal of the qualitative research is to gather evidence from teachers to see that to what extend idiomatic expressions are instrumental in developing the pupils' linguistic competence. This chapter focuses on the methods which the researcher has adapted in order to get the final results, the population of the study, tools of data collection and tools for data analysis.

3.1 Population of the study:

The target population of this study is the basic level English teachers at Smart International Schools.

3.2 Sample of the study:

The sample of the study has been selected from the target population. The researcher surveyed twenty native and non-native speakers (6 males and 14 females) whose ages ranged from 21 to 35 and older. Most of the participants hold a master's degree   in the English language. The majority of the participants taught English at the university level for around two or three years beside their previous experiences in the school's level. In this study, all names are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants.

3.3 Tools of data collection:

The data of the study has been collected by using written interview (survey). The survey had eight open ended questions. The questions asked the participants to write about their own perspective of teaching English idiomatic expressions and the role of them in teaching ESL. Participants were asked and encouraged to elaborate on their answers with the help of examples and situations from their experiences. The goal was to recruit participants from both genders with variety of teaching experiences. The survey asked the participants about their perspectives regarding idioms and their methods of teaching idioms; the traditional or the conceptual metaphor method.

3.4 Tools of data analysis:

The researcher has followed the statistical package for social science (SPSS) to analyse the data and show the results that the researcher has obtained from the written interview.

3.5 Validity of the interview:

The interview included a variety of questions on the knowledge of the teachers about the role of idioms in consolidating the EFL learners' linguistic competence. The questions of the written interview were based on information gathered during the literature. All the written interviews were distributed by the researcher personally. The questions were formulated in a simple language for clarity and ease understanding. For the validation of the written interview, the interview has been refereed by three PhD holders (Dr Alsadig Othman, Dr Abbas Mukhtar and Dr Areej) at Sudan University of Science and Technology.

3.6 Statistical reliability and validity:

Reliability Statistics	
Cornbrash's Alpha	N of Items
.788	7

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cornbrash's Alpha if Item Deleted
q1	8.7000	4.642	.000	.811
q2	8.7000	4.642	.000	.811
q3	8.2000	2.905	.843	.687
q4	8.4000	3.200	.726	.718
q5	8.6000	4.042	.408	.781
q7	8.3000	2.958	.828	.692
q6	7.3000	2.326	.656	.771

The above tables show the reliability of the questions of this study, and it revealed that there is statistical reliability which indicated by Cornbrash's Alpha value (0.788), and it will increase if deleting q1, it will be (0.811).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

4.0 The Results:

The results in this section are presented in tables according to the survey questions order. Table 1 below illustrates the responses of the participants about the importance of idioms, the relationship between idioms and the culture, and the inclusion of separate classes to teach idioms to ESL. Since there were only 20 participants in the study, each 20% presents an individual. In general, the replies to the yes\no questions were positive. All teachers without exceptions approved that idioms play an important role in ELT which is a significant finding. Both native and non-native teachers justified their opinions that the frequency of idioms magnifies their importance.

Table 1

Results of Research Question One through three under the first hypothesis

- Hypothesis one: Does introducing idiomatic expressions to the learners of EFL improve the learners' receptive skills?

Q	Survey Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you believe that idioms play an important role in teaching and learning English? What do you think makes idioms important?	100%	0%
2	Do you think there is a relationship between idioms and culture? What kind of the relationship do they have?	100%	0%
3	From your teaching experience, do you support the concept of having classes that teach English idioms to second language learners and why?	50%	50%
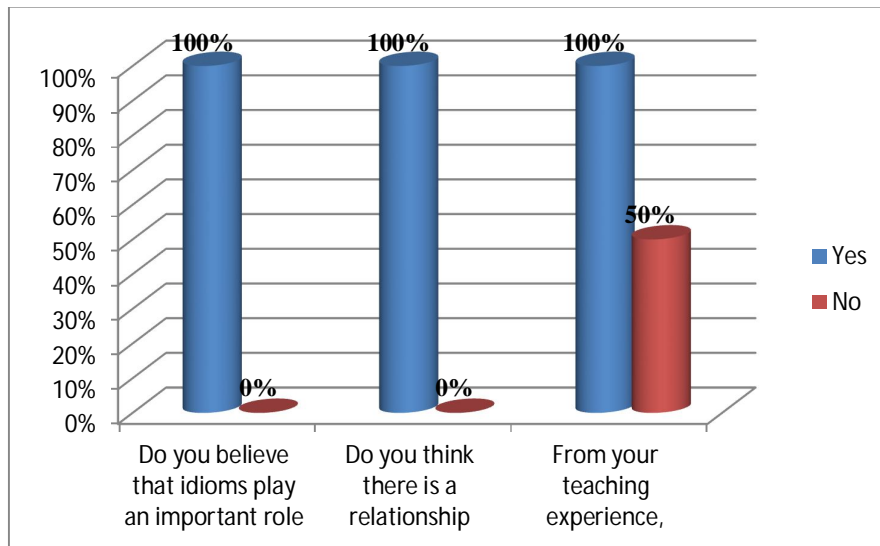
Participants agreed unanimously that there is a strong connection between idioms and culture. Participants understand the influence of culture on the profession. However, only a few participants were able to define this relationship. Some described this relationship by two words; for example, idioms are "cultural products" and idioms are "reflections of culture". Others elaborated their answers with examples.

Question three divided the participants into two equal groups. Half of the teachers advised to implication courses to teach idioms in ESL programs. Whereas, the other half of the participants found the idea of separate classes were unnecessary.

Table 2

Results of Research Question 4 under the first hypothesis

4	How often do you use idioms in your class?	always	Rare

The responses of question six ranged from always to rarely, but none of them wrote never because idioms are inevitable.

Table 3

Results of Research Question five through Six under the second hypothesis

- How does teaching idiomatic expressions affect the learners' receptive skills?

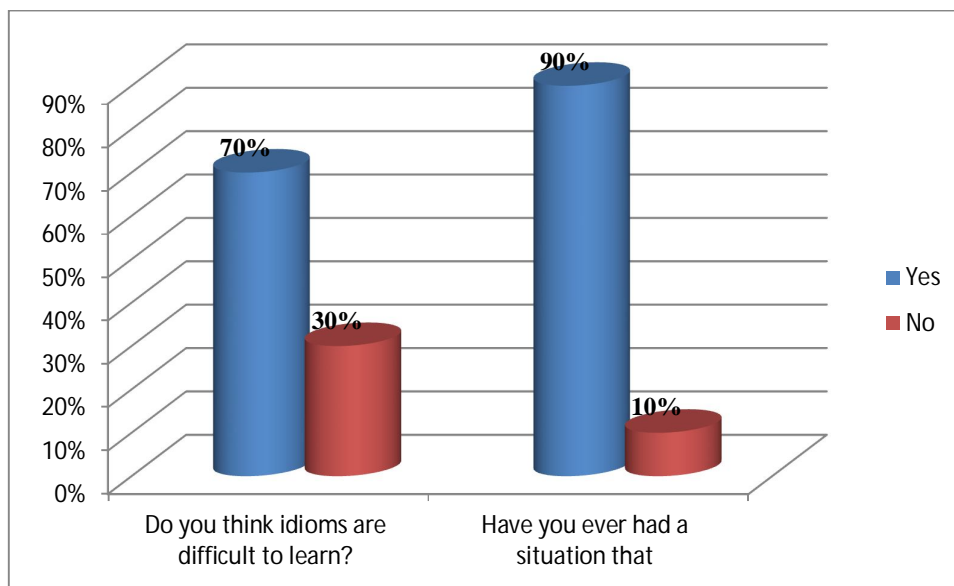| QN	Survey Questions	Yes	No
5	Do you think idioms are difficult to learn? What do you think the reasons are for the difficulties in learning idioms?	70%	30%
6	Have you ever had a situation that your students were confused because you mentioned an idiom?	90%	10%

Table 3 illustrates the responses of the participants about the difficulties of idioms and the confusion that might take place to the students when they encounter idioms.

With regard to the difficulty of idioms, 70% of the participants agreed that idioms are difficult for ESL learners. However, four native teachers had contrasting opinions that the difficulty lies in using idioms correctly. Non-native English Students rarely use English idioms as if they avoid using idioms intentionally because of the difficulty of usage. Idioms are not simple phrases that can be easily memorized, but it is an application issue.

Question six was used as tool to confirm the viewpoints of the participants; it evoked memories of stories that happened with the participants. For example, a student took umbrage at an idiom (sick as a dog) one of the participants used in her class to describe the attendance policy. The student did not like the simile in the idiom and felt offended by being compared with a dog. In question six almost all the participants had situations when their students misunderstood the meaning of idioms. On the other hand, one nonnative teacher, who followed her teachers' footsteps, excluded idioms from her teaching instructions because she did not want to confuse her students. She knew that idioms could be difficult for them because the literal meaning of idioms does not tell the intended meaning.

Table 4

Results of Research Question Seven under the second hypothesis

	Survey Questions	Percentage of Each Method		
7	Which method do you prefer to use if youteach English idioms to L2 learners?	Explicit 20%	Implicit 20%	Both 60%

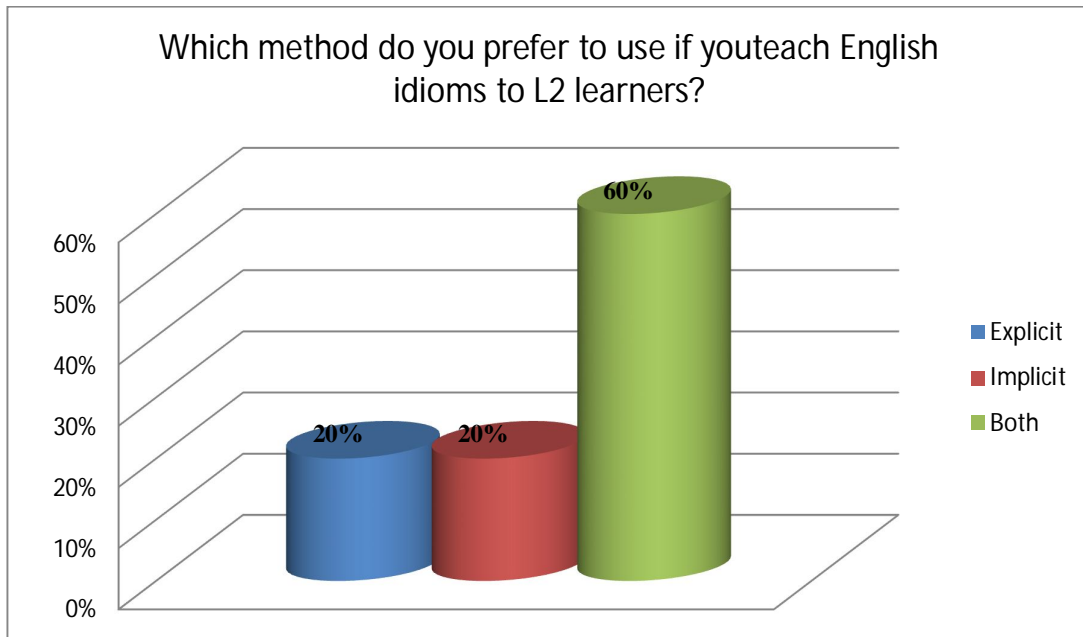Which method do you prefer to use if you teach English idioms to L2 learners?

Table 4 shows the preference of idiom teaching methods that the participants use in their classes. For this question, 20% of the participants stated that idioms are already vague and the implicit approach complicated the meaning of idioms and the teaching process. Offering the direct meaning is fast and easy for learners and teachers. However, 20% of the participants found the implicit method is more useful and helpful. Rich context, in stories, helps idioms interpretation and retention. Believing in the efficiency of the both methods, 60% of the teachers chose a mixed approach of the two. Of course, choosing a method depends on the context and the idiom encountered.

Table 5

Results of Research Question Eight

QN	Survey Questions	Yes	No
8	From your teaching experience, is it useful to teach literary terms to assist L2 learners interprets idioms?	60%	40%

From your teaching experience, is it useful to teach literary terms to assist L2 learners interprets idioms?

60% — Yes

40% — No
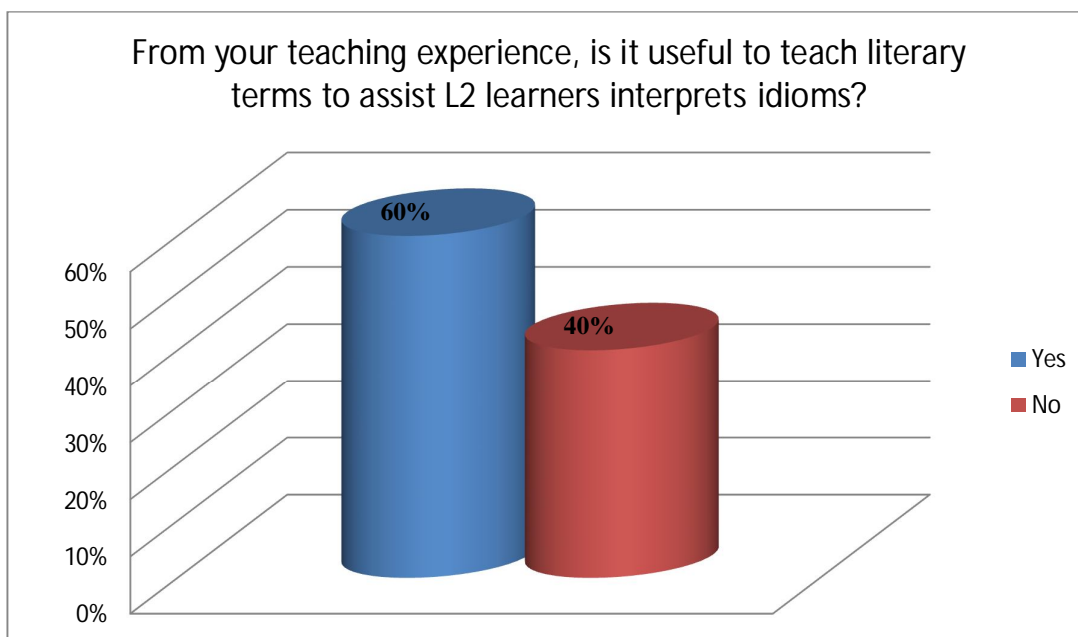
According to Table 5 above, 60% of the teachers in the study found that teaching literary terms to ESL learners is beneficial because understanding one aspect of language, figurative language, helped them understand other aspects. Some of these participants specified that the conceptual metaphor method works better for advanced level. However, 40% of the participants found this method to contradict some of the student's goal. For example, an engineer is less likely to encounter this kind of language.

4.1 Discussion:

Despite the diversity of the cultural backgrounds, different teaching experiences, and varied age ranges of the participants, there is a general consensus of opinions among the participants about how they perceived idioms in ELT and the relationship between culture and idioms. However, they had different positions regarding idioms pedagogy. In many occasions, the participants' responses and elaborations intertwined with other ideas within the study. However, the discussion follows the chronological order of the survey questions to

answer the research questions which organized the topics mentioned in the analysis;

1. The importance of idioms.
2. The difficulty of idioms.
3. The relationship between idioms and culture.
4. The teaching methods of idioms.

Importance of Idioms:

With regard to, the role of idioms in ELT all the participants asserted that idioms play an important role in language teaming and teaching. Idioms are an important aspect of language that should not be skipped from language curricula. Different reasons were given to justify their stances that are consistent with previous studies. Some of the participants stated that idioms obtained their significance from their frequent usage, especially in oral communication. This viewpoint agrees with Cooper's. (2012) that ESL learners find idioms in all kind of discourses including: TV, movies, books, and lectures.

Other participants, mostly the native speakers, described idioms with adjectives such as inevitable, necessary, and unavoidable. Learners should be aware of idioms for two reasons. First, idioms sometimes communicate context that cannot be expressed literally.Second, idioms allow learners to follow casual conservation.

Participants were agreed in their answers that idioms play an important role in teaching and learning English and their frequent usage magnifies their importance.

One of the nonnative ESL teachers highlighted a few points that require attention beside the importance of idioms in her response. The participant mentioned that misinterpretation of idioms might lead to communication failure.

- Excerpt 1 shows the response of one of the participants and her thoughts in survey question one:

Well, I do think that idioms play an important role in any language and so in teaching or learning that language. Language is all about culture and idioms are an important part for representing the culture of the language. You are what you speak. In addition, understanding idioms is really important for second language

learners to communicate successfully using their second language because if they treat idioms as individual words they may fail to

communicate correctly. For example, In English when we say "blood is thicker than water" students may understand it literally as a fact that blood is thicker than water, while the correct meaning is far away from what they think.

Difficulty of Idioms

Participants offered several rational reasons that make idioms difficult for English language learners. Starting from the English idiom example from the excerpt above, the participant presented the definitions of idioms showing that the meaning of an idiom is not always literal.

If ESL learners tend to think that way, which they usually do, they misinterpret the message or miss a moment of using an idiom correctly.

From another nonnative ESL teacher's point of view, there are more explanations about idioms difficulties. Another participant completed the picture that the first participant drew about the difficulty of idioms. This participant mentioned that the vocabulary and grammar of everyday English are different from what one learns at school. She emphasized that teachers should take the time to explain idioms whenever they occur to avoid confusions and misuses.

From another perspective, one of the participants proposed that outdated and infrequent idioms are hard to learn and remember (e.g. fit as a fiddle). Another participant mentioned the issue of finding the equivalent idiom in the native language. It seems that the equivalent idiom in L1 is crucial for understanding and using English idioms.

Excerpt 2 illustrates thought of the equivalent idiom in LI eloquently,

What makes it harder to learn idioms is the difficulty to find an equivalent idiom that presents the same meaning in students' native language to understand and use it correctly in L2. This is why there are idioms that are easier to learn than others; sometimes their meanings can be guessed and understood by the meanings of the individual words, such as "actions speak louder than words."

In the same vein, the same participant attributed the understanding difficulty of English idioms to the lack of the religious, cultural, and historical information of L2. There are stories and beliefs underlie some idioms that language learners are not aware of or never had a chance to learn them.

The relationship between idioms and culture:

All the 20 participants approved that there is a strong relationship between idioms and culture. They realize the impact of culture on the profession and understand it. However, only few of them defined this bond. Some described this relationship by two words and some elaborated with examples.

According to the participants, idioms assist ESL learners to better understand the culture of the TL. Moreover, idioms illustrate aspects of the culture in the TL which provide a deeper understanding of the language and its culture.

"You are what you speak" was a description in Excerpt 1, given by one of the participants about the relationship between culture and idioms, because speech tells who you are.

The Teaching methods of idioms:

Two methods of teaching idioms were discussed in topic four: the traditional method and the conceptual metaphor. The traditional method includes the explicit and implicit approaches of teaching idioms and they were addressed in question seven. It asked which approach the participants prefer when teaching idioms. It also asked about the reasons behind their preference. Question eight asked about the participants' opinions about the conceptual metaphor method to teach idioms and its feasibility in ELT. The discussion started with the traditional method and followed by the conceptual metaphor.

Responding to survey question seven, participants were divided into three groups.] Table 6 illustrates the preferred teaching method(s) to each participant in the study. Two participants preferred the explicit method of teaching idioms. They believe that the explicit method is short and straightforward to understand not only vocabulary but also idiom and because idioms are already vague. They think that

28

the implicit method might make it worse for students; guessing the meaning does not always lead to the right interpretation and word-by-word or literal translation does not work with idioms.

Table 6

Participants' preference of idioms teaching method:

Explicit method	four
Both	eight
Implicit method	Four

In the same, four participants preferred the implicit method over the explicit method. They agreed that the vocabulary laundry list is not efficient because it is hard to remember large amount of idioms just providing their meanings. Context, story or movie helps remembering the meaning and the usage of vocabulary, in general, which easily applies on idioms.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY IF THE RESULTS

5.0 Introduction:

In this chapter the conclusion is derived from the findings of this study. The conclusion will be based on the purpose, research questions and results of the study. The recommendations will also be explained in this chapter. The recommendations were based on the conclusions and the purpose of the study.

5.1 Summary of the results:

- Idioms are very important and they play an important role in language teaming and teaching. Idioms are an important aspect of language that should not be skipped from language curricula.

- Idioms are difficult to learn, because sometimes the literal meaning of the word doesn't tell the intended meaning.

- There is a strong relationship between the idioms and culture and the culture plays a big role in understanding idioms.

- The way of teaching idioms affects the learners' understanding for idioms.

5.2 Recommendations:

After acknowledging the importance of idioms through the participants' perceptions; the researcher recommends that:

- ESL teachers should encourage their students to learn idioms. Through the participants' opinions and previous studies, it seems that there are reasons to encourage learning idioms.

- Idioms are important, common, and confusing. Idioms are an important aspect of any language, and L2 learners should be aware of them. Native speakers use them frequently especially in oral communication. If learners are not familiar with them, communication failure may occur.

- Idioms do not say what they mean. The difference between the surface meaning and the intended meaning of an idiom can be confusing for language learners. So, teachers should explain what idioms are and how to use them. Idioms should be addressed in class in one way or another because they are inevitable and students will encounter them in and out of the class.

5.3 Suggestions for further studies:

- Teaching idiomatic expressions in language classrooms (Google PDF)

- The necessity of idiomatic expressions to English language learners. (Google PDF)

- Strategies and difficulties of understanding idioms. (Google PDF)

References

Adkins, P. (1968). Teaching idioms and Figures of speech to non-native speakers of English. *The Modern Language Journal,* 52(3), 148-152.

Asl, F. M. (2013). The impact of context on learning idioms in EFL classes. *TESOL Journal,* 37(1), 2.

Bada, E. (2000). Culture inELT. *Cukurova University Journal of Social Sciences* (6), 100- **110.**

Bateni, M. (2010). Collocations and idioms and their translatabihty. *Iranian Studies, 43(5).*

Bloomfield, A., Wayland, S. C., Rhoades, E., Blodgett, A., Linck, J., & Ross, S. (2011). *What makes listening difficult?: Factors affecting second language listening comprehension.* University of Maryland Center for Advanced Study of Language.

Bobrow, S. A., & Bell, S. M. (1973). On catching on to idiomatic expressions. *Memory <£ Cognition,* 7(3), 343-346.

Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (3ʳᵈ ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.

Cacciari, C., & Tabossi, P. (1988). The comprehension of idioms. *Journal of Memory and Language,* 27(6), 668-683.

Cain, K., Oakhill, J., & Lemmon, K. (2005). The relation between children's reading

comprehension level and their comprehension of idioms. *Journal of Experimentally Child Psychology, 90,* 65- 87.

Cutting, J. C., & Bock, K. (1997). That's the way the cookie bounces: Syntactic and semantic components of experimentally elicited idiom blendsB. *Memoiy & Cognition,* 25(1),

57-71.

Chuang, Y. (2013). A study of the relationship between college EFL learners' vocabulary size and idiomatic reading comprehension. *NCUE Journal of*

Humanities, 7,59-76. Cooper, T. (2012). Processing of idioms by 12 learners of English. *TESOL Quarterly.*

Elkilic, G. (2008). Turkish students' understanding of transparent and opaque idioms in

English in reading as well as speaking. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 4,* 27-41.

Feng, Y. Y. (2007). *An experimental investigation to determine the utility of conceptual metaphors and metonymies in enhancing idiom comprehension for EFL undergraduate learners of English.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Tamkang University, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Gene, B., & Bada, E. (2005). Culture in language learning and teaching. *The Reading Matrix,* 5(1).

Gibbs, R. W. (1992). What do idioms really mean? *Journal of Memory and Language, 31,* 485-506.

Gibbs, R. (1980). Spilling the beans on understanding and memory for idioms in conversation. *Memory, and Cognition, 8,*449-456.

Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Grant, L.E. (2007). In a manner of speaking: Assessing frequent spoken figurative idioms to assist ESL/EFL teachers. *System,* 35(2), 169-181.

Grant, L., & Bauer, L. (2004). Criteria for re-defining idioms: Are we barking up the wrong tree? *Applied Linguistics, 25,* 83- 61.

Hamblin, J. L., & Gibbs, R. W. (1999). Why you can't kick the bucket as you slowly die:

Verbs in idiom comprehension. *Journal of Psycholinguists Research, 28,*25-39.

Holsinger, E., & Kaiser, E. (2013). Processing (non) compositional expressions: Mistakes and recovery. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition,* 39(3), 866.

Irujo, S. (1986a). A piece of cake: / learning and teaching idioms. *ELT Journal,* 40(3), 236- 242.

Irujo, S. (1986b). Don't put your leg in your mouth: Transfer in the acquisition of idioms in a second language. *TESOL Quarterly, 20(2),* 287-326.

Jiang, W. (2000). The relationship between culture and language. *ELT Journal, 54(4),* 328-334. Oxford University Press.

Kainulainen, T. (2006). *Understanding idioms: A comparison of Finnish third grade students of national senior secondary school and IB diploma programme.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Department of Language, University of Jyvaskyla.

Kellerman, E. (1983). Now you see it, now you don"t. In S. Gass, & L. Selinker (Eds.), *Language transfer in language learning.* Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Khan, t)., & Da$kin, N. C. (2014). "You reap what you sow" idioms in materials designed by EFL teacher-trainees. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language), 8(2),* 97- 118.

Kramsch, C. (2001). *Language and culture.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Li, X. (2010). Conceptual metaphor theory and teaching of English and Chinese idioms. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 1,* 206-210.

LakofT, G. (1987). *Women, fire, and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Liontas, J. I. (2003). Killing two birds with one stone: Understanding Spanish VP idioms in and out of context. *Hispania, 86(2),* 289-301.

Liu, D. (2003). The most frequently used spoken American English idioms: A corpus analysis and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly, 37(4),* 671-700.

Nida, E. (1998). Language, culture, and translation. *Foreign Languages Journal 115(3), 29-*

Background Information

Please circle your choice response below to best describe you:

Name: _____

1. Gender

   a. Male   b. Female

2. Age

   a. 21-30   b. 31-35

   c. 36-40   d. 41-45

3. How long have you been teaching English?

   a. 1 - 3   b. 4 - 6

   c. 7 - 9   d. other _____

4. How often do you use English idioms in the class room?

   a. Always   b. Sometime,

   c. rare   d. never

5. How many languages do you speak?

   a. One   b. Two

   c. Three   d. specify _____

6. What is your mother tongue language?

_____

7. What is your second language?

_____

Appendix B

Questions

Please answer the following questions and elaborate with examples from your teaching experience.

1. Do you believe that idioms play an important role in teaching and learning English? What do you think makes idioms important?

2. From your teaching experience, do you support the concept of having classes that teach English idioms to second language learners and why?

3. Do you think there is a relationship between idioms and culture? What kind of the relationship do they have? Give examples of idioms that depend on culture and those that do not.

4. How often do you use idioms in your classes?

5. Do you think idioms are difficult to learn? What do you think the reasons are for the difficulties in learning idioms? Give example for both easy to learn and difficult to learn.

6. Have you ever had a situation that your students were confused because you mentioned an idiom? How did you react?

7. Which method do you prefer to use if you teach English idioms to L2 learners? The explicit method giving the definition and usage or the implicit method that uses context such as a story. Why do you prefer your method?

8. From your teaching experience, is it useful to teach literary terms to assist L2 learners interprets idioms? Literary terms refer to Glossary of Literary terms such as figurative language, metaphor, personification, and simile.

APPENDICES