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Investigating the Use of English Idiomatic Expressions for University Students

(A case Study of the Students of the Faculty of Education-
University of Holy Quran- Omdurman 2017- 2018)

تقصي إستخدام التعابير الإصطلاحية الإنجليزية لدى طلاب الجامعات
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Requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Education English Language (Applied linguistics)*

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Dedication

To the soul of my late father.

To the rest of my beloved family

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to my supervisors Dr. Abdulqadir Mohammed Ali for his guidance, encouragement and patience. Thanks and gratitude are also extended to Dr. Muntasir Hassan Mubarak Al Hafian and Dr. Mohammed Bakari Al Hadeedi for their support. Warmest thanks are due to her, who strived so hard that, I have achieved my PhD; my beloved mother Suad. I am grateful and deeply indebted to those who taught me optimism and determination to make headway; my dear brothers and sisters; Abu Obieda, Mohammed, Al Haj, Salwa, Fatima and Hind. To the fruit of my heart; my only child who bear the meaning of her name “Baraa”. Thanks to all my friends and colleagues. Special thanks are also due to the libraries of Khartoum University, Sudan University, British council and Cambridge College for being useful sources of reference.

Abstract

The study explored the area of idiomatic expressions as being important linguistic units for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Idiomatic expressions are phrases that consist of two or more words and hence; acquire an idiomatic sense which differ from the literal meaning of the individual words. These expressions are peculiar to a language and therefore understanding them at first hand causes a dilemma for students majoring in English; let alone being able to use them in writing. The study aimed at investigating the role of idiomatic expressions in improving writing and communicative competence and whether these expressions have effective role in improving the students' performance in language. The study highlighted the important part that idiomatic expressions play in English as a foreign language. The study followed the descriptive and analytical methods. The tools used for collecting the data were an interview and a test. The interviews were conducted with English Language lecturers from different universities in Sudan. They were five lecturers. A Pre-Test and a post-test were conducted for the students majoring in English who were - eighty students from the department of English, Faculty of Education, University of Noble Quran 'origination of Sciences' department, Omdurman. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme was used for data analysis. The study reached many results. The main results revolve around the following: the importance of idiomatic expressions as being important linguistic units for the students of English. There was a significant difference between the students' performance in the Pre-Test and their performance in the post-test. There was an improvement of the students' performance in the post test after studying the syllabus that included idiomatic expressions that was designed for them. This means the students' comprehension of idiomatic expressions has a significant role in improving their performance in language. The study reached the result that culture is considered a 'cornerstone' with regard to enjoyable and effective factors of learning a language. There is a broad consensus on the necessity of the inclusion of idiomatic expressions in university syllabuses. The results also show that effective teaching of idiomatic expressions will result in improving the students' writing and communicative skills. Another result shows that idiomatic expressions exist within some syllabuses of universities, but they are not taught effectively. The study recommends that idiomatic expressions should be focused on and included within the syllabuses of universities in Sudan, besides adopting effective methods and techniques in teaching such linguistic elements.

مستخلص الدراسة

تناولت هذه الدراسة العبارات الاصطلاحية في اللغة الانجليزية من حيث اهميتها البالغة لدارس اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية، وهي عبارات تتكون من كلمتين او اكثر مكتسبة معاني جديدة عندما تقرأ معا، هذه المعاني الاصطلاحية المكتسبة تكون مختلفة تماما عن معنى الكلمات المكونة لها عندما تقرأ كل على حده. تعتبر العبارات الاصطلاحية سمة غريبة في اللغات، ذلك انها مخالفة للسياق المعتاد لمعنى الكلمة ودلالاتها وهي بهذه الصفة تشكل معضلة على دارسي اللغة الانجليزية يصعب عليهم فهمها ابتداء، ناهيك ان يستخدموها في الكتابة والتعبير. لهذا السبب هدفت هذه الدراسة الى البحث في دور التعبيرات الاصطلاحية في تحسين قدرة الدارسين في الكتابة والتعبير، وايضا دراسة امكانية ان يكون هناك اثر ايجابي على اداء الدارسين. وفي هذه الدراسة ايضا تم تسليط الضوء على اهمية الدور التي تلعبه التعبيرات الاصطلاحية في اللغة باعتبارها لغة اجنبية. طرق البحث التي استخدمت كانت: الطرق الوصفية والتحليلية، الأدوات التي استخدمت في جمع البيانات كانت: اجراء مقابلات و اختبار، المقابلات اجريت مع اساتذة من جامعات مختلفة من السودان، وقد كانوا خمسة اساتذة، كما تم اجراء اختبارين - قبلي وبعدي- لطلاب اللغة الانجليزية وقد كان عددهم ثمانون طالبا من قسم اللغة الانجليزية ، كلية التربية، جامعة القرآن الكريم وتأسيس العلوم، امدرمان. طبق برنامج الحزم الاحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية (SPSS) لتحليل البيانات. توصلت الدراسة لعدة نتائج تدور حول الآتي: اهمية العبارات الاصطلاحية باعتبارها وحدات لغوية ضرورية لطلاب اللغة الانجليزية حيث كان هناك فرق واضح بين اداء الطلاب في الأختبار القبلي وادائهم في الأختبار البعدي، كان هناك تحسن واضح في اداء الطلاب للأختبار البعدي بعد دراستهم للمقرر الذي اشتمل على عبارات اصطلاحية والذي كان قد تم اعداده لنفس الغرض . هذا يعني ان فهم الطلاب للعبارات الاصطلاحية له دور كبير في تحسن ادائهم في اللغة، كما توصلت الدراسة الى ان الأمام بخلفية ثقافية للغة المستهدفة يعد "حجر زاوية" في السعي الى تعلم اللغة بطريقة فعالة وممتعة في آن واحد. كان هناك اجماع بين اساتذة الجامعة على ضرورة تضمين تدريس التعبيرات الاصطلاحية في المقررات الجامعية، كما اظهرت الدراسة ايضا انه من المؤكد ان تدريس العبارات الاصطلاحية بطريقة فعالة سوف يحسن من قدرة الطلاب في الكتابة والتعبير، توصلت الدراسة الى حقيقة اخرى وهي ان بعض الجامعات تتضمن مقرراتها تدريس العبارات الاصطلاحية ولكن لسوء الحظ لا تدرس بطريقة فعالة، توصي الدراسة بأن يتم تضمين العبارات الاصطلاحية في المقررات الجامعية في السودان وان يتم الأهتمام باساليب وتقنيات تدريس تلك الوحدات اللغوية مدار هذا البحث.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

Learning a new language requires the study of the three major levels of linguistic analysis. That is, Vocabulary (lexical), Grammar and Phonology. Upon learning a new word; one needs to know a number of aspects of the word such as its meaning, pronunciation, orthography (spelling), word class, collocation, degree of formality ...etc. As the study of idiomatic expressions falls within the scope of meaning which is one of the three major levels of linguistic analysis; the researcher decided that it was appropriate to conduct the thesis on the above mentioned topic. It goes without saying, that, English without idiomatic expressions becomes a language empty of content. One cannot imagine English void of idiomatic expressions, studying and mastering the use of idiomatic expressions is of vital importance for writing as well as communication. Learners of English as a foreign language usually find it difficult to comprehend and consequently use idioms, and this is not surprising and can be attributed to the tendency of learners to avoid and omit linguistic features that do not exist or commonly used in their mother tongue language. For example, if someone is writing an essay and wants to convey a certain message to the reader but doesn't want it to be explicit; but rather implicit; in such a case using an idiomatic expression seems to be the most relevant option.

What are Idioms?

Idioms may be defined as expressions peculiar to a language, they play an important part in all languages, it is difficult or sometimes impossible to guess the meaning by looking at the individual words it contains, for

example, the phrase “be in the same boat” has a literal meaning that is easy to understand, but it also has a common idiomatic meaning: “I found the job difficult at first, but we were all in the same boat i.e. we were all learning, here be in the same boat means to be in the same difficult or unfortunate situation”.

Idioms includes the phrasal verbs that consist of two, and sometimes three words, the first word is a verb and it is followed by an adverb (turn down) or a preposition (eat into), both adverbs and prepositions are called (particles), they acquire an idiomatical meaning when they are combined. Idiomatic competence has recently been discussed in accordance with discourse writing competence which inspired by Chomsky (1965), Hymes (1972) Celce – Murcia (1995 – 2008) and other scholars. In the revised model of discourse writing competence by Celce - Murcia (2008) the ability, to use idioms is regarded as a competent of formulaic competence, which refers to the selection and use of fixed chunks of stretches of language in discourse writing. As part of formulaic competence, idiomatic competence is the ability to appropriately write discourse with idioms in the roles of both; an addressor and addressee (Buckingham, 2006; Burke, 1988). It helps the reader to fully encode and decode the meaning of a context. But, it is a fact that is reported by nearly the majority of scholars that it is difficult for the native English native speakers to master English idioms, let alone EFL learners although they grow up hearing, speaking and writing idioms every day Sidil and McMordie (1988) state that, the general tendencies of present day English are towards more idiomatic usage, it is important to show the learner that idioms are not a separate part of the language which one chooses either to use or omit, but they form an essential part of the English language. Idiomatic expressions have always been a challenge when learning a foreign

language. They are problematic and misleading; with idioms if there is a small mistake in the structure of them, it can sound strange, funny or completely wrong.

Take the Examples

- a) Get the move on (get a ~~m~~ove on)
- b) Off hands (off ~~h~~and)

A non – native speaker pays little attention to such small difference between the two phrases; (get the move on) which is in fact (get a move on), whereas the second idiom (off hand) should be used instead off hands, which may be used by non-native speaker due to their ignorance.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Sudanese students being non – native speakers of English who study English as a foreign language (EFL) do not use English idioms in their writing or speech, or rather, they rarely use them. This is due to their negligence of idiomatic expressions. The knowledge of idioms gives invaluable assistance to the students to improve their performance in language. Practicing and using idioms make them feel confident that they are able to possess such vocabulary. Given the fact that idioms are now in such wide spread use, the problem of ignoring or not using them, makes non- native speakers of English write unnatural and inappropriate discourse. This led the researcher to highlight such area in case some suggestions and recommendations for practical solution may arise.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To familiarize Sudanese students of English with English idioms.
2. To know to what extent idioms are effective in improving students' competence on discourse writing.

3. To examine the essential role of knowledge of English idioms in teaching and learning English.
4. To investigate the area of idioms in the syllabuses of universities; in order to know their significance in English language.

1.3 Questions of the Study

1. To what extent are Sudanese university students of English familiarized with English idiomatic expressions?
2. How can we find out the knowledge of non- native teachers of English and their ability of teaching idiomatic expressions?
3. How does specific; cultural expression elements affect teaching EFL learners?
4. What are the idiomatic expressions taught as a part of the process of teaching and learning EFL?

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

- 1- Sudanese university students of English are, unfamiliar with English idiom expressions.
- 2- Non-native teachers of English lack appropriate knowledge and ability of teaching idiomatic expressions.
- 3- Culturally based expressions are very important elements for teaching EFL learners English language.
- 4- Idiomatic expressions are not taught explicitly in Sudanese classes .

1.5 Significance of the Study

In pedagogy, there is unanimity amongst linguists and language specialists that written and oral communication is crucial to teaching and learning a language. Idiomatic expressions exist in the written and spoken English language abundantly. Due to this fact and the fact that the students of EFL

have gaps of the knowledge of idioms, the teacher sees the area of English idioms as significant to concentrate on and explore. The study is expected to help EFL students to develop both written and spoken communicative competence which is compatible with achieving the goal of the language. The study may also provide Information for syllabus designers and the development of language teaching programs with focus on effectiveness of the assimilation of idioms within the syllabus of EFL.

1.6 Methodology of the Study

The researcher chooses the experimental analytic method for the study. The tools used for collection data are three in number: a pre-test, post – test and an interview. The experiment is to be carried out on a sample of university students in order to obtain information regarding the students’ performance before and after teaching them a course which has been designed for them that includes idioms. The interview involves university teachers in order to obtain information regarding idioms at the level of university. University teachers are to be selected according to their experience and competence in English, in addition to their direct contact with the sample of the study (university students).

1.7 Analysis of Study

The statistical program for social sciences (SPSS) will be used by the researcher for analyzing the data of obtained. The results will be exhaustively discussed, tabulated, and displayed in chapter four.

1.8 Limits of the Study

The study will be conducted within the confines of different universities in Sudan. The sample of the students will be chosen from the University of Holy (Noble) Quran and re-origination of Sciences, beside university

teachers who will be chosen from different parts of the country: The University of Gezira, University of Khartoum, University of Al Nilaen, University of Nile valley, Al Ahlia College (Khartoum) and British institute (Khartoum).

Other subjects will be chosen from the University of Gezira. The sample will be intended for administering pre – test and post – test.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW and PREVIOUS
STUDIES

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

2.0 Introduction

The following chapter includes: An introduction, general views about the topic, problems with pinning down word meaning, the birth of idioms, the history of idiomaticity, different views on defining idioms, categories of idioms which consist of (transparent idioms, opaque idioms, semantic opacity, compositional fixity, semantic function, partial idioms, Katz and Postal's classification of idioms, lexical idioms, phrase idioms), collocations, idiom lexicons, lexical semantics, importance of idiomatic expressions, idioms and arbitrariness, key characteristics of idioms, sociolinguistic, pragmatic and psycholinguistic views on idioms, Swan's point of view on idioms, functional differences between idioms and single words, idioms facilitate communications, idioms contain more meaning, idioms convey speakers and writers commitment and evaluation, grammatical restrictions, the structure of idioms, fixedness of idioms and internal structure, synonymy and idioms, idioms and passivization, passivization in idiomatic structure, idioms in people's life and previous studies.

2.1 General Views on the Topic

One of the purposes of language teaching is to prepare the learner in such a way that, he/she would be able to perform a specific set of rules of a new language and culture. The above view was stated by Wilkins (1978: 80), and (DoughrlyetaL, 2003) who think that mechanism of learning a language might be simple, but the product is a rich and diverse population of hundreds of thousands of lexical items and phrases. The store of familiar collocation

of the native language speaker is varied indeed. words and their patterns; variously explains why language learning takes so long, why does it require exposure to authentic sources, and -why there is so much current interest in corpus linguistics in second language acquisition, native like competence and fluency demand such idiomaticity. Cook (2003: 42) claims that, despite the fact that many learners know the rules of a language, but in fact they don't have the ability to communicate and write successfully in that language. Some learners do not respond appropriately to what is said or written in the target language, or they may comprehend what is being said or written and what to say or write, but still somehow fail to express oneself, or one may understand the literal meaning of what has been said or written, i.e. the knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary, though they are necessary, but being able to put them into use involves other types of knowledge and abilities as well. The study of cross-cultural communication has often been related to ELT. It is highly commended for learners to study the culture of the people who speak and write it. Gebhard (2006: 63-64), considers the primary goal of communicative class is student's development of communicative competence in; either written or spoken English. Socio-cultural competency is essential, that is, the ability to use English in social contexts in culturally appropriate ways. Had language been designed by a logician, idioms would have not existed. They are a feature of discourse that frustrates any simple logical account of how the meaningful utterances depend on the meanings of their parts and on the syntactic relations among those parts. According to Cacciari (1993) idioms are comprehensible to native speakers or writers, but they are mysterious to those who are acquiring a second language. If someone says Mrs. Thatcher has become the queen of Scotland, a response may be 'that's a tall story!'. Pull the other

one!'. As anyone Struggling to learn English will assert that stories cannot be tall. They have no height, and so the expressions violate a restriction on the normal sense of the word. Similarly, to pull something is a physical event. Certainly, 'tall' has an idiomatic Sense that relates to another idiom, 'to pull someone's leg' which means to joke or tease someone. Foulsham (2007:5) states that English is a flexible language and it is developing all the time. Our communication with others is greatly enriched by the expressions we use, making what we say or write more concise, amusing and interesting. English idioms come from different sources, including the Quran, the Bible, folk tales, town and Country life, other languages, warfare, politics and sport. Being an island, Britain has generated expressions related to a seafaring life abundantly. Vocabulary has been traditionally considered as individual words. But, according to Schmitt and Carter (2000: 1) this view is inadequate because vocabulary includes many units which are larger than individual orthographic words. Examples: a single meaning is attached for such expressions like: 'give up', 'fish shop', 'freeze dry' and 'burn the midnight oil' the two scholars assure that these multi-word lexical units are common in language use as shown in Corpora. Schmitt and Carter (2000: 1) consider such lexical phrases as 'strings'. They describe these strings of language as sequences of words that are learned and stored as individual wholes, arguing that lexical phrases are necessary for achieving fluency in a language. Schmitt and Carter refer to Pawley and Syder's (2002:2) point of view about native speakers of the language and the lexical phrases. They agree with them that lexical phrases are a key element of fluent language production which plays a vital part in vocabulary learning.

2.2 Problems with Pinning Down Word Meaning.

Coope, (2004) claims that, idioms are the Colorful side of language, they are integral part of the symbols used while People communicate their thoughts and feelings. They are used to give life and richness to the language by combining the existing words in order to generate a new sense and creating new meaning. Unlike original phrases idioms are recalled as integral units. Most native speakers and writers frequently use these units in their daily life as they are very important part of any natural language.

Cooper ascertains that the figurative meaning of idioms is easier to comprehend than their literal meaning. Natives may understand only to figurative meanings of Words or of particular word combination that make up an idiom. For example, the native speaker recognizes the meaning of the idiom 'hold your tongue' as figurative expressions that should not be interpreted literally even though such expressions may have literal meaning.

Saeed, (2009. 59) argues that, the meaning of a word is problematic, different native Speakers have different definitions, while they feel that they know the meaning of the word, native speakers might have only the vaguest feeling for other words to the extent that they have to check the meaning in a dictionary. Some of this difficulty arises from the influence of context on word meaning. Cowie (2009: 52) claims that Collocations, though Considered as a part of idiomatic expressions, differ from idioms. While collocations have a figurative meaning that takes in only part of the phrase as in 'deliver a speech' where 'deliver' is figurative and 'speech' is literal, in an idiom the figurative shift extends over the entire phrase Example: 'spill the beans'. it is clearly that the shift extends over the whole - parts of the idiom. Both 'spill' and 'beans' have figurative meaning. Halliday (1966; 21) compares between the Collocation patterns of two adjectives 'Strong and

powerful' which appear to have similar meanings both adjectives can be used for. Some items, for example: 'strong argument' and 'powerful argument', yet strong collocates with tea rather than powerful, while powerful collocates with Car, a powerful car rather than a strong car. These collocations as explained by Saeed, (2009: 60), can go through a fossilization process until they become fixed expressions such as 'hot and cold' running water rather than cold and hot running water, 'husband and wife', but not wife and husband. Such fixed expressions are common with food: fish and chips, salt and vinegar, curry and rice. A similar type of fossilization results in the existence of idioms, expressions where the individual words have lost their independent meanings. In expressions like 'kith and kin' or 'spick and span', a few English speakers or writers would know the meaning of kith or span. The American Heritage Dictionary of idioms highlights the idiom 'kith and kin' which means friend and family dates from the 1300s, and originally meant countrymen (kith meant 'one's native land') and 'family members. It gradually took on the present looser sense. Spick and span refers to the state of being neat and clean. The two terms "spick means a nail" and span (means a wooden chip) is now out-of-date. In the 1500s a sailing ship was considered 'spick and span' when every spike was brand-new, then, later the terms transferred to the current sense in the mid 1800s. Benda (1981: 31) says that the true nature of language is both stereotyped and creative. He, also, argues that there is a tendency towards stereotyping, because of man's desire for defining things, ideas and Concepts. As Benda argues, there aren't enough words to express the abundant ideas in man's mind and that is due to the complexity of life. So people combine words to express new ideas. Thus new collocations come to existence. These collocations, after a long time, are widely accepted and

used by the community. Some of these new found expressions die out either because they are replaced by new ones, or because human concepts have changed. Benda, (1981: 33) suggests that teaching idiomatic structures along with guided composition, will contribute to the students understanding of the process of acquiring these ready-made pieces of language.

2.3 The Birth of Idioms

Hockett (1968: 304) states that a speaker or a writer may say or write something that he/ she has never said or written and never heard before to listeners to whom the utterance is equally novel, and yet be understood. This is a daily occurrence, and the way in which it came about is basically simple: The new utterance is a nonce-form, built from familiar material by familiar patterns. However, as Hockett explains,, the mere occurrence of nonce-form for the first time does not in itself constitute the creation of a new idiom. An additional component is required: something more or less unusual either about the structure of the newly-produced nonce-form, or about the attendant circumstances or both, which makes the form memorable, exposed to such new circumstances, people may produce a phrase or an utterance which is understandable only because those who hear it are also confronted by the new circumstances. Otherwise, an individual may react to conventional circumstances with a bit of speech or writing which is somewhat unusual, only being understood, once again, because of context. Given any such novelty, either expression or circumstances or both, the event gives special meaning on the linguistic form which was used and the latter becomes idiomatic.

Here are two examples:

1. A little boy asked his parents ‘what’s a poy?’ This utterance is unusual in its form’ the members of the family who overhear him are to remember the

event and tell the story to others. They may even use the new form ‘poy’ in family jargon. Just what the form will mean, will depend on the circumstances in which the boy used it perhaps it will not denote anything but it will certainly have connotations. Even if the form is not destined to survive for long or to spread very widely, it is nonetheless a new idiom. Probably, this particular coinage has occurred many times, quite independently, in different family circle in the English-speaking world.

2. The second example is an image of a rather different circumstance: Mrs. X comes home with a new blouse, of one of those indeterminate blue-green shades for which many women have a special fancy name, but which they definitely class as a shade of green, not of blue. Mr. X compliments her by saying ‘that’s a nice shade of blue’. For days thereafter, Mrs. X teases her husband by pointing to any obviously green object and saying ‘that’s a nice shade of blue, isn’t it?’ Here, there is nothing usual about the form of the utterance, only about original attendant circumstance, yet the utterance has taken on, at least temporarily, idiomatic value. The total context, linguistic and nonlinguistic, in which a nonce-form takes on the status of an idiom, is thus the defining Context of the idiom. In the two examples given above, the defining contexts are informal. But formal contexts of various sorts may equally serve well. (Hockett: 1968: 305).

2.4 The History of Idiomaticity Issues

Kavka and Zybert (2003: 54) believes that, the focus on the study of idioms began in recent times only, and in his opinion the study of idioms is necessary, though sometimes ungrammatical and illogic as stated by Cacciari, 1993 vii. But in fact idioms as described by them as ‘mental monuments’ of history and source of language change. According to Kavka and Zyber, the history of investigation on the study of idioms had been

neglected in earlier studies of idiomatology. The problem that is presented by Kavka and Zybert is seemingly the different analogous terms. To explain: which history to be dealt with? Is it the history of idiomatology, idiomaticity, idiomatic or perhaps phraseology'?. All those terms, and may be some others; have been used to refer to the same discipline. Therefore Scholars are expected to define precisely and unambiguously what they mean by the terms they choose when referring to matters they discuss. The example given by Kavka and Zybert (2003: 55); deals with phraseology. They argue that teachers as practitioners may feel fairly satisfied with their pupils keeping by heart lists of phrases. Perhaps they are not aware of the fact that, idiomatic expressions are based on semantic rather than lexical grounds or that the very term phraseology is derived 'from the base-term 'Phrase' which, for modern linguists, has connotations of reference primarily to grammatical structures'. The term idiomaticity and idiomatology can be similar to some other expressions such as phonology, morphology, philology and so on. Therefore, the idiomatology makes it possible to regard the discipline as a truly linguistic one and accordingly to be treated as a field of science which has its objectives and its methods of investigations. As a result; Kavka and Zybert (2011), say that idiomaticity which is morphologically comparable to regularity or priority, refers to a quality derived from an attribution constituting or containing an idiom or idioms. But according to (Kavka, Sand Zybert J 2011: 55) this explanation does not encompass everything that should be included. Certainly idiomaticity refers to quality, but does not necessarily need to imply that the idiomaticity of an expression depends on its containing of an idiom.

2.5 Different Views in identifying Idioms

Many linguists view idioms, agreeing to some degrees with some scholars, and disagreeing with others, yet the matter remains debatable. Saeed (2009: 59) defines an ‘idiom’ as words collocated in a form that became affixed to each other until metamorphosing into a fossilized term. This collocation of words is commonly used in a group — Saeed re-defines each component word in the word-group and becomes an idiomatic expression: ‘the words develop a specialized meaning as an entity, as an idiom. McCarthy (1992: 494) defines idioms as follows: an idiom is an expression unique to a language, especially one of which sense is not predictable from the meanings and arrangements of its elements, such as ‘kick the bucket’ which means has nothing obviously to do with kicking or buckets. The meaning of the idiom kick the bucket is ‘to die’ in linguistics the term idiomaticity refers to nature of idioms and the degree to which a usage can be regarded as idiomatic. Some expressions are more holophrastic and unanalyzable than others, for example: ‘to take steps’ is literal and non-idiomatic in ‘the baby took her first step’ it also could be figurative grammatical open and semi-idiomatic in “They took some steps to put the matter right”, and the phrase is fully idiomatic and grammatically closed in “She took steps to see that was done”. These examples demonstrate a variety of meaning and use that is true for many usages. No such continuum exist; however, between ‘He kicked the bucket out of the way’, and ‘He kicked the bucket’ last night, died. Such idioms are particularly rigid, and not passivized. McCarthy (2008: 84) states that certain vocabulary such as idiomatic expressions is very important in organizing discourse. But he believes that learners of English find such vocabulary difficult, boring and demotivating. They are the texts that are hardest to unpack. Many researchers have complained that such vocabulary

produces a 'lexical bar', a serious obstacle, to progress in education, even for children learning their first language. So difficulties faced by second language learners should not be underestimated, particularly those who do not come from a Romance or Germanic language background. The New International Webster College Dictionary defines an idiom as 'an expression not readily analyzable from its grammatical construction or from the meaning of its component parts'. It is the part of the distinctive form or construction of a particular language that has a specific form or style available only in that language. Wilkins (1987: 79) defines idioms in terms of non-equivalence in other language; so that 'kick the bucket ', 'red herring' and the like are idioms because they cannot be directly transferred into French or German. Milchell,(1971 :57), defines an idiom as follows :. "The idiom belongs to a different order of abstraction. It is a particular cumulative association immutable in the sense that its parts are unproductive in relation to the whole terms of the normal operational processes of substitution, transposition, expansion, etc." Random House Webster's College Dictionary agrees with this definition, asserting that an idiom is an expression of which meaning is not comprehensible from the usual grammatical rules or from the usual meanings of its constituent element.

In the American Heritage Dictionary of idioms, Ammer (1992: iv) defines an idioms as 'a set of phrases' or a combination words of which meaning differs from the literal meaning of the individual words', she adds that idioms are the features of a language, which often oppose logical expressions, posing great difficulties for non-native speakers and writers . She claims that the origins of many idioms are unknown, giving examples as: 'by Hook or by crook', commenting on the use of familiar words in ambiguous ways. Fellabum et al, (2006: 349) define idioms as 'a type of

multi-word terms which pose a challenge to our understanding of grammar and lexis that has not yet been familiar'. Philip (2007: 1) thinks that, the quality of idioms is entirely different from normal language, but the precise nature of this difference is unclear. Moreover, Philip thinks that even amongst scholars, it is difficult to find a consensus as what precisely is or is not an idiom, because of the heterogeneity of the class of idiom. Longman Contemporary dictionary gives the following definition: 'an idiom is a group of words that has a special meaning that is different from the ordinary meaning of each isolated word'. Whereas Cambridge Dictionary defines an idiom as 'a group of words in a fixed order that has a specific meaning that is different from the meaning of each word taken separately. Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary's definition is close to the previous dictionaries in that an 'idiom consists of a group of words of which meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words'. The example for an idiom given in the dictionary is: 'let the cat out of the bag' which means to tell a secret by mistake.

2.6 Categories of Idioms

Many scholars have different views about the issue of the categories of idioms. Most of them have agreed on the two prominent types (transparent and opaque idioms), as stated by Cain et al (2005). But some other scholars do not agree with the above mentioned types; and in fact introduced other types. Elkilic, G (2008: 31) identifies four types of idioms:

- a. Non.-compositional (for example: by and large) which by definition are idioms which are not transparent.
- b. Compositional opaque (for example: kick the bucket).
- c. Compositional transparent (for example: spill the beans).
- d. Quasi-metaphorical (for example: skating on thin ice).

However, Cain et al (2005) mention two types of idioms; transparent idioms and opaque idioms. Elkilic (2008:3 1) maintains that transparent idioms are figurative expressions of which meaning can easily be understood. Kavka, S, Zybert, J (2011: 60) ef Katz, J and Postal, P (1963) claim that, idioms are dealt with, within transformational generative grammar. The most prominent two types of idioms are the lexical and phrase idioms; the first category is described as being syntactically dominated by one of the lowest syntactic (grammatical) categories, namely by noun, adjective, verb. On the contrary, the second category cannot be described like that. Example 1: ‘White lie’ indicates a lexical idiom while example 2 ‘how do you do’ shows a phrase idiom. According to Kavka, S and Zybert, J (2011]: 60) these two types include such lexemes as clichés, compounds or even phrasal verbs. Admittedly some linguists exclude compound altogether for example Balint, A (1968) who argues that compounds are not phrases, even though their meaning cannot be arrived at from the meanings of the constituent members, for example, ‘bookcase’ is not only ‘book and case’ put together. They are excluded because their number is so high that their addition would increase the titles of idioms to uncontrollable amounts. Furthermore, there is strong evidence that, neither solid nor hyphenated compounds, present problems in syntactic analysis. I fill (2002:13) presents an additional evidence of transparency; idioms can show variability from a frozen form through modification, which idioms can accept to various degrees. The following example shows a direct adverbial modification.

‘He certainly kicked the bucket’.

The idiom comprises a complete verb phrase, and the adverb ‘certainly’ simply modifies the whole idiom. The adverb works the same way on the verb phrase whether the sentence has an idiomatic reading or not. It is quite

simple and does not tell anything about the internal structure. Therefore idioms could accept modifications such as the above. Another way for modifying an idiom to serve transparency is through modifying individual words within the idiom. The following example illustrates this type of modification.

‘They shot huge holes in my argument’.

The modification is certainly not a standard part of these well-known fixed expressions, yet it is so easy to get a sense of what the modified constructions mean.

2.6.1 Transparent idioms

Elkilic, G (2008: 31) states that, transparent idioms are figurative expressions of which meaning can easily be understood in contrast with opaque ones. According to Cain et al, (2005: 67) transparency refers to the degree of agreement between the literal and the figurative meanings of an Idiom. Elkilic (2008: 31) agree with Boers and Demecheleer (2001) that when the degree of semantic transparency is low, the language learner needs to depend on context to understand it. I fill T (2002: 11) ascribes transparency to the underlying mobility of syntax. He claims that the syntax of non-idiomatic form of the phrase directly maps onto the syntax of the idiomatic phrase. Each phrase has the same component and the component has the thematic roles within the phrase in each form. Huddleston, (1984: 42-43) claims that literal interpretations allow for inserting materials, study the following examples: -

1. ‘Have a leg to stand on’.
2. ‘Tom kicked the bucket’.

In the first example, ‘have a leg to stand on’, material between have and the NP which is the object, can be inserted. Thus, it becomes. ‘I have a long leg

to stand on'. The same applies to sentence (2); modifiers can also freely be inserted between 'The' and the 'bucket' in the literal interpretation for example:

Tom kicked the bucket becomes:

Tom kicked the blue bucket.

Tom kicked the plastic bucket.

But the idiomatic meaning of such modification is virtually omitted. Philip, G (2007: 1) uses the term motivated for transparent idioms and introduces the transparency of idiom with respect to the ease with which it can be interpreted. This is based on its level of semantic transparency; a transparent idiom yields its meaning easily because there is a straightforward connection between the phrase and the intended meaning. For example, 'not see the wood for the trees', meaning not to see or understand the main point about something because one pays too much attention to small details and fail to understand larger plans or principles. Philip, G (2007) believes that semantic transparency is the criterion for transparency of idioms. Elkilic, G (2008: 3.1) argues that, if idioms are culture-bound, it's not easy to understand their meaning even if they are transparent. He stresses that the knowledge of idiomacity is not based on linguistic analysis, but it is a matter of cultural awareness. As the following examples:

- 'Carry coals to Newcastle': In British culture means to take something to a place where it is not needed because a large amount of it is already there.
- Bury the hatchet: means to agree to stop arguing or fighting to end a disagreement and become friendly.

2.6.2 Opaque Idioms

Cowie, A (2009: 25) defines opaque idioms as the ones of which their idiomatic meaning cannot be elicited from the meaning of their individual words, for Cain et al (2005: 67)

“The sense of opaque idioms, such as ‘wet behind the ears’; an informal expression that means young and not experienced, cannot be inferred from the individual words’ in the phrase or actions they describe”.

Ifill, T (2002: 12) classifies opaque idioms as those which cannot be put into the passive voice; the constituents of the idiom do not have equivalents with the components of the phrase’s actual literal meaning. The example that is given by Ifill is ‘kick the bucket’. He argues that the structure of ‘kick the bucket’ is syntactically opaque and the idiomatic version consists of a transitive verb ‘kick’ and its direct object ‘the bucket’, while the non-idiomatic, version as explained by him, is simply an intransitive verb ‘die’, ‘the bucket’ corresponds to nothing because ‘die’ does not, and indeed cannot, take any object. This is why it cannot be passivized. Philip, G. (2007: 1) presents another account for opacity, he uses the term idle idioms referring to, opaque idioms. Opaque or idle idioms according to him; are expressions that contain further arbitrary relationship in regard to their meaning, for example: ‘to go cold turkey’ which means to quit a habit or activity suddenly and completely. As Philip, G States that neither transparency nor opacity of an idiom can be measured by absolute terms, because understanding them involves an individual’s awareness of cultural norms, real-world knowledge and general familiarity with the phrase. Finally, there is an agreement among scholars that opaque idioms would not convey the same meaning in other language if they are literally translated.

2.6.2.1 Semantic Opacity

Ayto, J (2006: 518) stresses that there are some phrases which contradict literal understanding examples:

- I. Cut the mustard means to come up to the expected standard.
2. Eat crow, to admit humiliatingly that one was wrong.

Such idioms may contain fossilized words that have no independent existence in Modern English: For example; pig in a 'poke', purchase which turns out not to be what the vendor claimed, where poke: is an old word for a bag or sack. Some fixed phrases may contain elements used in their literal sense in 'get down to brass tacks', to start frankly discussing the essentials of a matter, for instance, 'get down to' is broadly speaking being used as it would be in a (small) range of other collocations, for example 'get down to business'. In some cases, all the key word elements keep their literal meaning, and it is only the particular combination in which they appear that gives a meaning other than the sum of the whole parts: bread and butter, for example is 'bread spread with butter' and as a fully metaphoricalized idiom, it can also mean a source of income. Many fixed phrases have a meaning that could not be described as literal, and that may be attributed to the fact that, either their origin was clearly metaphorical, or they still preserve a usage no longer exist in the language, nevertheless; they can be easily interpreted, for instance: 'behind the times' 'Old-fashioned, 'Daylight robbery', which mean a sale at an expensive price, 'the talk of the town' a subject widely or gossiped about respectively. At the other extreme of the meaning spectrum is traditional phrases that are completely semantically transparent: 'beneath contempt', 'from bad to worse', 'grow wrong'. Within this category scrutinize many clichés and also so-called 'freezes' in which pairs of words are fixed in a particular order, knives and forks, friends and

neighbors. Their compositional fixity associates them with idioms, but most linguists would exclude them from full membership of the category because of their semantic transparency. Combinations of this kind shade into collocations in which the choice of words to express another word's lexical or grammatical relationships firmly restricted, example, afraid of/ arrive at / Come to/ reach a decision. The closer to the opaque end of the spectrum a multiword construction is, the more likely it is to 'be regarded as a complete idiom, but assignment to a particular category may depend on the delicacy of judgment applied to the semantics of a particular Combination. .

2.6.2.2 Compositional Fixity

Ayto, J (2006: 5 18) says that, most idioms that function as verbs or nouns take part in the inflectional variations of their normal word class, for example they can be marked by a particular person or tense (she has let the cat out of the bag) the pronoun she which refers to a person and the verb has refers to a perfect tense, have been added to the idiom (let the bag of the bag). And nouns can be put into plural (bears with sore heads). However many idioms are subject to a range of grammatical restrictions and are capable to a greater or less degree of being altered or added to, or having their word-order changed. The most firmly fixed verbal idioms resist passivation and other standard transformations (Fred kicked the bucket; died) is well-formed But 'the bucket was kicked by Fred', and it was the bucket that Fred kicked are not. Fixed idioms do not allow insertions or alternations Example 'Call it a day' which means to finish what one is doing, would not be acceptable variation if (another) is inserted: call it another day. Transitive verbal idioms may allow for either a direct or an indirect object, for example: Sweep (some) off their feet; = to overwhelm someone suddenly inspiring a strong feeling of love towards the doer. An

indirect object example which is acceptable; give (someone) a piece of one's mind; = scold angrily. Established types of fixity are always likely to be set aside by creative language users, once the basic models are in existence it is perfectly feasible that such utterance or writings could be produced as: 'There will be no 'bucket kicking' = dying, which violates syntactic fixity, or 'never darken my patio again'), perhaps said to an unwelcome barbecue guest; replacing door with patio, and thus violating compositional fixity, knowing that, the fixed idiom is 'never darken my door again'. A related, but intuitive phenomenon, is the joining of two or more idioms together, as in 'count your luck stars' combining count one's blessings' and thank one's lucky stars, both refer to thanks for good luck. And, 'don't burn your bridges 'until you've come to them, combining burn one's bridges, with cross one's bridges before one has come to them 'to act prematurely',

2.6.2.3 Semantic Function

Ayto, J (2006: 519) claims that, Idioms occupy a wide range of syntactic roles, from association in individual word classes to predicates and entire sentences verbs. Idiomatic verb phrases function syntactically as verbs in a sentence. Their internal structure is commonly v + o with or without further elements 'clap eyes on'= to see or look at, 'stick one's neck out'= to take a great risk. Idiomatic combinations of verb + particle (phrasal verbs) are usually categorized as idioms too: 'shut up'= stop speaking, 'take in'= to deceive, 'root for'= to support enthusiastically, 'putt up with'= to tolerate.

Verbal idioms can frequently function as the entire predicate of a sentence:

(He) threw in the towel: which means gave up,

(The bridge) blew up: which mean was destroyed by explosion.

a) Nouns

Nominal idioms may be formed by either pre or post modifications of a noun: examples of pre modification: ‘the hot seat’= a position of uncomfortable difficulties, ‘salad days’= time of youthful inexperience, ‘monkey business’= dishonest or suspicious activities. Examples of post modification: ‘fish out of water’= someone in an uncomfortably, unfamiliar or inappropriate situation, ‘salt of the earth’= someone very honest and dependable, ‘man from heaven’= an unexpected source of relief, ‘any Tom, Dick, or Harry’= any unspecified ordinary person’. A high portion of nominal idioms are evaluative, quasi-adjectival and as such generally look like predicates:

Tome was a real tower of strength = was very supportive.

That exam was a piece of cake = as very easy.

b) Adjectives

Adjective idioms may be formed by pre modification of an adjective: ‘Brand new’ means (completely new). ‘Dirt poor’ which means extremely poor or they may be formed by Post modification:

Examples:

- Dyed— in— the — wool (inveterate)
- Wet behind the ears (inexperienced)

Also they may be formed by Conjunctions examples:

- Hot and bothered (excited and annoyed).
- Tired and emotional (drunk).
- Spick and span (very clean and tidy).

Adjectival idioms based on prepositional phrases are by their nature usually found in predicates. Examples:

- I'm feeling rather under the weather (unwell).
- They 're in cahoots (collaborating)
- You're out of your mind (insane).

c) Adverbs

Many adverbial idioms are compositionally similar to adjectival idioms:

Examples:

- By and large (generally speaking).
- On and off(irregularly)
- Once or twice (a few times).
- From A to Z (completely, from beginning to end).
- On paper (theoretically) Ayto, J (2006: 520)

2.6.3 Partial Idioms•

As expressed by Wilkins (1978:79), in a sequence where one word has its usual meaning, and the other word has a meaning that is peculiar to the particular sequence, the sequence is called a partial idiom. Thus, 'red head' refers to hair, but not that is red in strict color term. As Wilkins (1978:79) states, comedians have fun with partial idioms of this kind, for example, when instructed to "make the bed" which means to neatly arrange the sheets, blankets and bedspread on the bed so that, the mattress is covered, instead of that they bring out a set of carpenter's tools. He also adds that the adjective 'white' is used with coffee, people and wine, so, 'white coffee' 'white people' and 'white wine'. The adjective 'black' is used only for 'black coffee' and 'black people' but not black wine, though, in color terms, neither coffee nor people are black. Thus, it can be seen that even partial idiomaticity can be a matter of degree, and in some cases, it may be little more than a matter of collocation restriction. On a level which is more

comic, as expressed by Wilkins, (1978: 80) there is partial idiomaticity in ‘raining cats and dogs’ which means to rain very hard; comparing it with how it is used in another region for example: Wales where the equivalent idiom is ‘it rains old women and sticks’. Idiom often involves humor, as stated by Fromkin et al (1976: 186) in the following example:

What did the doctor tell the vegetarian about his surgically implanted valve from a pig?

That it was okay as long as he didn’t eat his heart out’.

2.6.4 Katz and Postal’s Classification of Idioms:

According to Katz and Postal (1963:275-279) idioms are classified into two types: lexical idioms and phrase idioms. It is the first effort to deal with idioms within transformational grammar.

2.6.4.1 Lexical Idioms:

The classification of an idiom as any gathered morphemes of which compound meaning is not compositionally derived from the meanings of the gathered morphemes; does not differentiate those idioms that are syntactically dominated by one of the lowest syntactic categories such as noun, verb or adjective.

2.6.4.2 Phrase Idioms:

Phrase idioms are defined by Katz and Postal as morphemes of which syntactic structure cannot be dominated by a single level syntactic category.

2.7 Collocations:

Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English (2010: vii) defines collocations as “the way words combine in a language to produce natural sounding speech and writing”, for example: strong wind but heavy rain’.

Collin Cobuild. English Dictionary defines collocations as ‘the way that some words occur regularly whenever another word is used’. Saeed (2006:

60 agrees with both dictionaries; Oxford Collocation Dictionary and Collins Co build English Dictionary in the same point of view about collocations.

2.7.1 The Importance of Collocations:

As defined by Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English language, collocation abundantly exists in the whole of the language, that is to say collocation is an integral part of naturally spoken or written English. A student who says ‘strong rain’ may convey the meaning, but might receive in return a sarcastic comment or a correction, that may not be a problem in such a situation, but surely in a written exam it does. Moreover, as the dictionary shows, language that is rich in collocation is also more precise; that is because most single words in the English language, especially the more common words, embrace a whole range of meanings, some of which are quite distinct and some shade into each other by degrees. The accurate meaning in any context is determined by that context, by the words that surround and combine with the main word — by collocation. A student who is able to choose the appropriate collocation will be able to express himself or herself much more clearly, and be able to convey something quite precise, not just a general meaning. For example:

1. This is a good book and contains a lot of interesting details.
2. This is a fascinating book and contains a wealth of historical details.

As the dictionary comments, both sentences are perfectly correct in terms of grammar and vocabulary, but certainly sentence (2) communicates more about the book in question.

2.8 Idiom Lexicons

Dobrovol’skj (2006: 251.) states that there are many dictionaries of idioms for all languages covering long literary tradition. The main enquiry that must be explained by idiom dictionaries is regarding the concept of idiom.

Lexicographers have to know exactly; when working on such a dictionary, what they understand by the word idiom, or else; they would face a lot of complications when deciding which expressions they should exclude. Though idiom research has quite a long tradition and has become an internationally developed linguistic discipline today, still it is difficult to give a definite and generally accepted answer to the question, what is an idiom?'

2.9 Lexical Semantics

Fromkin et al, (2007: 181) argues that the meaning of an expression is not always obvious, even to a native speaker of the language. Meaning may be ambiguous in many ways, but Cascara's (1993: viii) opinion opposes Fromkin saying that idiomatic expressions are clear to native speakers. Fromkin et al,(2007: 181) claims that the meaning of a phrase or a sentence is partially a function of the meanings of the words it contains, similarly the meaning of many words is a function of the morphemes that compose it. However, there is a major difference between word meaning and sentence meaning. Fromkin et al (2007: 18) considers that the meaning of most words and all morphemes is conventional, that is, speakers of a language implicitly agree on their meaning, and the children acquiring the language must simply learn those meanings directly. Otherwise, the meaning of most sentences must be constructed by the application of semantic rules. Fromkin et al, (2007: 181) continues that knowing a language includes knowing the metaphors, simple words, compound words and their meanings. In addition, it means having the knowledge of fixed phrases consisting of more than one word, with meanings that cannot be inferred from the meanings of the individual words.

2.10 The Importance of Idiomatic Expressions

Elkilic (2008: 28) says that, idioms are an important part of any language and may be considered as an indicator of a person's fluency in that language. Therefore, idioms play a significant role in languages, the mother tongue and the foreign language. The foreign learner does not only learn the grammar and the vocabulary of the language, but she/he also learns the idioms to help him/her fit in into the culture of the foreign language.

Elkilic (2008: 29) states that:

“As English language is rich in idioms, learning the idioms in English language constitutes the soul of the language. Yet the plethora of human situation makes it imperative to reduce them to manageable proportion “.

Students learning English are destined to face difficulties in understanding idioms; bearing in mind that, in order to be accepted as proficient; one must acquire sufficient knowledge of idiomatic expressions.

2.11 Idioms and Arbitrariness

Many linguists embraced the concept that idioms are arbitrary, that is, their meaning could not be guessed from the words they consist of. Consequently, in the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) when teachers deal with idiomatic expressions, they typically inform their students that learning idioms by heart is the only way to master them. Fortunately, Swan, (1980:244) comments that, many idioms can be explained; and therefore can be learned systematically. According to Knowles (2004) the learning process of idioms ought to be fixed and systematic: the first step is to make the students acquainted with idioms, then comes the second step which is to distinguish them and the final phase is the comprehension of idioms which

would consequently lead to mastery and automaticity. But learners used to struggle with the first two phases: acquaintance and distinction, which may result in neglecting or avoiding them. Nippold and Taylor (1995) state that, the number of times an idiom is frequently occurs in a language is often defined as familiarity, which is restricted by culture. Familiarity of idioms demands less conceptual analysis; more frequently used idioms may be more significant. Cain et al, (2005 67) demonstrates that there are three elements that can make idioms easily understandable: familiarity, transparency and context. They State that idioms that are presented in context are easier to understand than presenting them in isolation, conforming that context might facilitate the interpretation 'of figurative language by providing the necessary semantic information from which the 'reader/listener can extract or infer the appropriate sense of expression. Context is more important for peculiar idioms of which meanings are not fully derivable through semantic analysis of phrases. Research show, as Swan (1988) states, that when idioms are presented as non-arbitrary features of-language, students find them much easier to understand and remember.

2.12 Key Characteristics of Idioms

According to Cowie (2009: 51) idioms originate in Phrase with a literal meaning which have settled firmly into the lexicon through repeated use. Many literal phrases remain in constant usage over a certain period, unchanged in form and meaning, for example, (spread the butter, and peel the potatoes). It is arguable that many of these sets, rather than being made up a fresh on each occasion of use, are simply stored and recalled as wholes. Cowie maintains that these phrases pass on into the next stage of development. They are figuratively extended, in terms of the whole expression, but may or may not also preserve their original literal sense.

Phrases that originated in the development of railway network, for example, which are not now idiomatic, are among those which will still be understood in both a literal and figurative sense by native speakers. The following examples show such phrases from that period.

- Go off the rails.
- Run off the rails.
- Reach the end of the line.
- Run into the buffers/ hit the buffers.

In my point of view many idioms came to existence as a result of some special occasions; then due to constant circulation they acquired idiomatic meaning. Example: in our community in Sudan; people have coined new expressions such as [cut your face] ‘iqtaawashak’= ‘get lost’; which has become an ordinary expression of everyday language.

2.13 Sociolinguistic Pragmatic and Psycholinguists views on idioms:

Grace, G (1981) mentions that sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspect of language use need to be considered. He is the first to use the term idiomatology. It shows principal features of a science. Kavka, S and Zybert, J (2011) describe Grace’s idiomatology as synonymous, to a certain extent with the generally accepted Sense of idiomaticity Kavka, S and Zybert, J, believe that Grace’s idiomatology is scientific in the sense that he preferred to avoid unnecessary confusion of social factors, taking care of pure linguistic description. They introduce Pawley and Syder’s (1983), point of view as making a relation between fluency and idiomatic control of idioms. They believe that fluent and idiomatic control of performance in a language, results to a great extent from the knowledge of a set of ‘sentence stems’

which are institutionalized or lexicalized. ‘The ‘set’ is considered as a unit like a clause of which form and lexical content are fixed. Later, they introduced the notion of speech and writing formula which meant a conventional link of a particular formal construction and a particular conventional idea. Linguists use the term formula in various subtle meanings and specification a sort of cover term embracing what might simply be called an idiomatic expression. So, according to Pawely and Syder (1983), all genuine idioms are speech or writing formulas, but not all speech and writing formulas are idioms. The two scholars, as Kavka, S and Zybert, J comment, view true idioms as speech writing formulas that are semantically non-compositional and, to make their view complete, idioms are syntactically non-conforming; they refer to what methodologists say about language and fluency. Methodologists speak of the use of prefabricated language in written and conversational routines which makes written and spoken discourse spontaneous fluent, and really idiomatic. Crystal (2001: 352) refers to the common problem in linguistic theory due to the unclear boundary between semantics and grammar. Many sentences that are used in habitual manner illustrate this. These Sentences are semi-idiomatic in type, falling midway between clear cases of Sentences which follow the normal rules of grammar, for example the girl -washed the dishes; and sentences such as ‘raining cats and dogs’. Consider the following examples which revolve round the lexeme ‘think’.

Come to think of it	I thought you knew.
What do you think	I thought better of it
Think it over	it doesn’t bear thinking about.
Think nothing of it	who do you think you are?

The above linguists agree on the point that such expressions have been memorized by people as part of the process of producing speech and writing, such expressions help them build up fluent connected speech and writing. They are called lexicalized sentence stems. Wray and Perkins (2000: 18) accept the above opinion that idiomatic expressions build fluent speech and writing and convey the meaning; they claim that a hearer and a reader tend to understand a message if it is in a form she /he has heard or read before; and that he can process without looking for interpretation. The contemporary history of idioms shows that, there had been no true interest in idioms before the 20th century, structuralism ruling in its various forms over the linguistic world, could hardly handle phenomena which appeared odd, exceptional and not fitting the patterns of grammar.

2.14 Swan's Point of View on Idioms

Swan, (1980) (1997 3d: 244) States that idiomatic expressions are common in English whether Formal or informal, spoken or written. Havrila (2009: 3-8) mentions that idiomatic expressions forms a significant part of everyday English. Even today people use expressions of which original sense is far apart from their present communicative function, such as 'spill the beans' which is used to express the idea of revealing a secret ; and 'kicked the bucket' when they mean die. Miko (1 989) assumes that idiomatic expressions can help learners to grasp the gist of what is said or written in a more refined communicative manner.

2.15 Functional Differences between Idioms and Single Words

The functions of idioms differ from single words semantically and structurally.

2.15.1 Idioms Facilitate Communication

Idiomatic expressions or any other type of prefabricated speech or writing structures enable the speakers or writers to fix their attention to larger content units of the spoken or written discourse. If speakers or writers were supposed to focus on individual words as they are pronounced or written one by one, then the desired idiomatic fluency of a native-like speech or writing would die out. According to Havrila (2009) idioms facilitate communication. One of the principle goals of using formulaic and idiomatic language is to ‘facilitate communication in the sense that idiomatic and formulaic language the based on holistic processing of phenomena came to be the preferred strategy for coping with a wide range of troubles that could arise in the course of language communication. Where interaction fluency of processing complex utterances might be in danger, formulaic language is drawn upon to meet the communicational shortfall. It is simply in natural human tendency to economize the effort of communication about recurred human affairs through generation of stereotyped formulae and so avoid processing overload.

2.15.2 Idioms Contain More Meaning:

Carter (1998) claims that, idioms in addition to facilitating communication of stereotyped phenomena and playing a maintaining stabilizing role in communication, also allow for both, larger grammatical units to be built from their base, and modifications resulting in generation of a more creative and cognitively vivid language. He also sees that, idioms appear to be containing more meaning than their equivalent literal paraphrases. They convey more complex meaning entailments and implicates at once than single word paraphrases could express in several sentences. To explain, Gibbs maintains that idioms have complex meanings that seem to be

motivated by independently existing lively and creative conceptual metaphors that are able to reflect the complexity of human thoughts better than single words can. Therefore, Gibbs refuses the assumption that idioms are dead metaphors as viewed by some linguists.

2.15.3 Idioms Convey Speakers and Writer's Commitment and Evaluation.

Idiomatic expressions do not only convey meaning, but can also express certain evaluative aspect of a specific event. Expressing ideas through idioms communicates an assessment of the situation that the writer and speaker refer to, Mike, (1989) mentions that the writer or the speaker puts himself/herself into position of a judge of the situation. Idiomatic expression conveys a sort aphoristic truth about the referred issue. When a writer or speaker conveys communicative commitment of the discussed matter through a figurative approximation or an emotional evaluative aspect of the phenomenon he/she does more than just stating about the matter of fact. Gibbs (2007) agrees with the same ideas; saying that, writing and speaking idiomatically conveys an interpretation and evaluation of the situation the writer or speaker refers to. Consider the idiom 'skate on thin ice' which conveys in itself the experiential image of movement on thin ice implying a dangerous situation. The perception of danger is strengthened through specifying the movements as intensive movement of skating, which increases the danger of breaking the ice and drowning. Everybody knows that walking on thin ice is dangerous, and performing any more intensive movements on such a thin surface would be qualified (evaluated) as audacious boldness of the person about which the speaker would express his/her attitude.

2.16 Grammatical Restrictions

Although an idiom is semantically like a single word as expressed by Wilkins (1978: 80), yet it does not function like one. Thus, a past tense ‘kicked the bucket’ will not exist. Instead, it functions to some degree as normal sequence of grammatical words. So the past tense form is, kicked the bucket. But there are some grammatical restrictions, to explain this; a large number of idioms contain a noun and a verb. Although the verb may be placed in the past tense, the number of the noun can never be changed. Example, the idiom spilled the beans could be used given that (the original idiom is spill the beans) but the form to spill the bean does not exist. Another example to explain the restriction is (kick the bucket), which could be ‘kicked the bucket’; changing the verb into the past tense, but not kick the buckets. Similarly. As Wilkins continues, (1978: 82) with ‘red herring’, the restriction here is not to use the comparative with the adjective; while the noun may be plural; red herring may be red herrings but not redder’ herring. Syntactic restrictions exist as well. Some idioms have passive, but others do not. The idiom ‘lay down the law’ could be ‘the law was laid down’, and ‘spill the beans’ could be ‘the beans have been spilled’. ‘Kicked the bucket’ should not be used in the passive; the bucket was kicked is not right.

But forms such as:

It was the beans that were spilled.

It was the law that was laid down.

It was the bucket that was kicked

These restrictions vary, according to Wilkins, from idiom to idiom’ some idioms are more restricted or frozen than others. Ifill (2002: 2) argues that idioms seem to act very much like normal language, yet they are quite

different in many ways. He describes idioms as ‘odd ducks’ saying that ‘if natural language had been designed by a logician, idioms would not exist’. But idioms do exist, presenting a basic vein in language behavior. Thus, the need arises for theories of language to explain the behavior of idioms adequately, besides the potential for what analysis of idioms can tell about the language itself.

2.17 The Structure of Idioms:

Ifill (2002:3) argues that idioms are not fossilized structureless bits, but they have significant internal structure that is responsible for much of their performance. As he explained, the structure of idioms involves a relationship between the syntax of the idiomatic phrase and the literal meaning of the idioms. Idioms cannot be described simply as ‘rule-breaking anomalies of the significance’; it is believed that idioms are stored in the lexicon. Ifill (2002:3) cf Disciullo and Williams (1987), state, the criteria for being part of the lexicon is listedness; arguing that listedness is no more fundamentally characteristic of words than it is of phrase. Some words and some phrases are listed, but infinitely many of each is not listed. Thus, there is really nothing special about the lexicon as Disciullo and Williams (1987) claim, they add that some older views accepted idioms as being part of the lexicon, but they were odd exceptions anomalies that were not words, but were reluctantly included with them in the lexicon. They say that idioms are syntactic objects, and they are listed because of their failure to have a predictable property, mainly their meaning. Jackendoff (1997: 153-154) asserts that idioms and other fixed expressions are important in terms of the knowledge of the language. Disciullo and Williams agree with him with regard to the importance of idioms; pointing to the great wealth of such expressions. Disciullo and Williams (1987) and Jackendoff (1997) regard

idioms as part of the lexicon. Ifill (2002: 4) raises some questions: how do speakers recognize that a phrase needs to be guessed idiomatically and how exactly do idioms get processed, and is it different from how normal phrases are handled?.The term idiomaticity is used for semantic and structural irregularity of phrasal idioms. Understanding the term in its broader sense, it can be said that an expression is idiomatic if it is judged intuitively by native speakers as usual, natural and commonly acceptable. Will believes in the necessity of idioms, describing them as representing significant aspects of language behavior. He argues that placing idioms in the lexicon makes sense, because as far as phrases and usage go, idioms are nothing special. They cannot be detached as abnormalities, because it is evident that they are quite normal. Moreover, as Ifill continues, placing idioms within the lexicon allowed them to have internal linguistic structure, which they really do have.

2.18 Fixedness of Idioms and Internal Structure

Disciullo and Williams (1987) claim that accepting idioms listeme permits them to have internal structure of some kind, If an idiom is a phrasal listeme, represents a linguistic unit, it will have internal linguistic structure, syntax, semantics, morphology and phonology. As Jackendoff (1997: 154) express, a phrasal listeme is by definition a phrase; so it will have the same kind of linguistic structure that a phrase has. The shortest way of proving the inaccuracy of the notion-that idioms are atomic units which lack internal structure- is by examining how fixed they are and in what way. Fromkin et al (2007: 183) agrees with Jackendoff confirming that idioms are similar in structure to ordinary phrases; except that, they incline to be frozen or allow the word order to change. Thus:

1. She ‘put her foot in the mouth’ (meaning say something foolish).
2. She ‘put her bracelet in her drawer’

But: 'The drawer in which she put her bracelet was hers'. 'Her bracelet was put in her drawer', are sentences related to sentences (2). The mouth in which she put her foot was hers. Her foot was put in her mouth; do not have the idiomatic sense of sentence (1), except perhaps humorously'. Ifill (2002: 10), gives more examples proving that idioms have internal.

Structure:

1. *We will take them to task for their irresponsibility.*
2. *John and Sue have their ups and downs.*

Example (1) 'take NP to task'.

Example (2) 'have one's ups and downs'

It can be seen by looking at the verb forms of the idioms in both examples (1) and (2) that, these phrasal listemes are not completely frozen in form. These differences in the inflection of the verb may seem minor at first, but they are the first key piece of evidence which indicates that these idioms must have internal structure of some kind; in other words the idiom 'take to task' is not a completely frozen atomic unit of language or free of internal structure which then gets inserted entirely into a sentence. If this were so, 'take' would not even exist as an individual verb, not to mention be able to undergo such modifications.

2.19 Synonymy and Idioms

Ifill (2002: 8) states that, it is well known that individual words in an idiom cannot be replaced by synonyms and still keep the same meaning of the phrase. This is what qualifies idioms as fixed forms. In most non-idiomatic discourse, a speaker or writer can use Synonymy to produce a new sentence with the same semantic meaning. This is not the case of idioms. Thus, the sentences below indicate how the individual words of an idiom are part of the fixed form of such idioms

- a. John kicked the bucket. .
- b. John kicked the pail.
- c. They have had their ups and downs.

I fill shows that the words ‘kicked’ and ‘bucket’ are required to convey a particular sense, not only conveying the concept of dying when knocking over water vessels with one foot. Idioms can have interchangeable Synonyms. The following examples show some of these exceptions:

- a. hit the sack or (hay) (go to bed).
- b. Pack a punch / wallop / rear/. (Be capable of a forceful blow! have a powerful effect)
- c. Stretch / strain a point (extend / exaggerate)
- d. stop / Turn/ on a dime (stop suddenly! come to a standstill).
- e. Pick / punch / poke / shoot holes in an argument (find flaws in something by close examination! criticize sharply).

Though: these idioms, demonstrate a capacity for some of them to show individual lexical variability, yet they are still largely fixed. Still that lexical variability is limited to only a few options. All of the options for variability are semantically similar, but not all semantically similar words can fit.

2.20 Idioms and Passivation:

Wallace, (1982: 118-9) thinks that it is useful to explore some of the changes that idioms can undergo; such changes often involve the underlying meaning of the idiom. Consider the following example: ‘Let the cat out of the bag’ this Idiom can be put into the passive voice; as, the cat has been let out of the bag. In this case the passive voice is possible because the underlying meaning which means to (reveal a secret) can also be made passive (the secret has been revealed).But an idiom such as, ‘it was raining cats and dogs’ evidently, cannot be put into the passive voice because the underlying

meaning (it was raining heavily) cannot be made passive. Ygihashi (2011) Niemeyer (1974: 330) discussing idioms passivation; introducing the following examples as idioms that can be transferred into the passive construction:

- Break the ice. = ‘to say or to do something that help people to relax’.
- Lay down the law. = ‘to make a strong statement about what someone is or is not allowed to do’; as, a daughter comes home late, then parents say “if you ever come back late, you will never be allowed to go out alone”
- Pay the piper= to pay for what one has done.

Idioms such as ‘kick the bucket’, = (die), ‘let off steam’ = (let or blow off some steam) to calm down and get rid of energy or anger by doing something active. And ‘shoot the breeze’ = ‘to talk about something unimportant’; cannot undergo passivation without losing their idiomatic interpretation. From the semantic point of view it is proposed that idioms such as ‘kick the bucket’, ‘sit on pins and needles’ ‘shoot the bull’, and ‘blow one’s top’ cannot be passivized because their synonyms are intransitive: die, wait nervously, talk, fly into a rage respectively. I fill (2002: 10) claims that many idioms do not undergo transformation which similar non-idiomatic construction can readily undergo while retaining the same sense of the construction. For examples:

1. a. John kicked the bucket.
b. The bucket was kicked by John.
2. a. They have had their ups and down.
b. Ups and downs were had by them.

Sentence (1-a) is not idiomatic and sentence (b) is the passive for it. Sentence (1-a) describes an actual bucket - kicking even which is done by John. The passivation of the sentence would lead to a new sentence with the

same sense; with non-idiomatic reading. A passive version of the idiomatic verb phrase just does not make sense idiomatically. Ifill says that, it looks like a dispute about the frozenness of idioms, even though there are many idioms which are not frozen in that way, and can be passivized. For instance:

1. a. Roger kept tabs on them. = to carefully watch (someone or something) in order to learn what that person or thing is doing.

b. Tabs were kept on them by Roger.

2. a. I spilled the beans. = to reveal secret information

b. The beans were spilled by me.

3. a. He laid his cards on the table. = ‘To be honest with other people and to tell your plans openly’

b. His cards were laid on the table by him.

The passive versions of the verb phrases of the above sentences retain their idiomatic status. Such idioms which are capable of this syntactic mobility have something different about their structure; it is the issue of transparency. Some idioms have a more transparent structure than others, that is, certain idioms seem to resemble their non-idiomatic counterparts closely. But opaque idioms cannot.

Consider the following examples:

1. *Keep tabs on NP: maintain surveillance of NP,*

2. *Spill the beans: reveal a secret,*

3. *Lay one’s cards on the table: makes one’s feeling known.*

4. *Kick the bucket: die.*

Examples 1, 2 and 3 represent idioms which are syntactically transparent. The syntax of the non-idiomatic version of the phrase directly maps to the syntax of the idiomatic phrase. Each of these phrases is constituted of the same components, and the components have the same thematic roles within

the phrase in each form. In example 1: ‘keep tabs on x’ is a verb phrase consisting of a transitive verb, the verb’s direct object theme, and a prepositional transitive phrase which relates the idiom to the person or persons it is referring to. This is the same structure as its non-idiomatic (correspondent maintain surveillance of x) has. The phrases map on to each other syntactically. Thus, the idiom is considered transparent. Examples 2 and 3 hold the same transparency relationships. But example 4 ‘kick the bucket’ is different. Its structure is not transparent in this way. It is syntactically opaque and hence cannot undergo passivation. In other words the elements of the idiom do not have a one-to-one mapping with elements of the phrase’s actual non-idiomatic meaning. The idiomatic version as I fill explains, consists of a transitive verb and its direct object, while the non-idiomatic version is simply an intransitive verb, ‘the bucket’ corresponds to nothing because die does not and cannot take any object; this is why it cannot be put into the passive voice. It is vitally important in this regard, as I fill continues, to note that no synonyms for ‘die’ can take a direct object either, for example ‘perish’ or ‘expire’. So, it is not the case that just the choice of the word ‘die’ as a paraphrase is what holds this opacity up. Moreover, another idiom which simply means ‘die’, ‘John bit the dust’, as expressed by I fill, and which has the same syntactic structure as ‘kick the bucket’, the hypothesis that syntactic transparency is necessary for an idiom to be able to undergo passivation, predicts that they too would not have an idiomatic reading in the passive.

Consider the examples:

- a. .John bit the dust.
- b. The dust was bitten by John.

Syntactically opaque idioms lack the ability to retain their idiomatic reading when they are transferred into passive.

2.21 Passivation in Idiomatic Structure

Fromkin et al (2007: 184) claims that, some idioms can be put into the passive voice, and that the words of some idioms can be altered without affecting the idiomatic sense:

- *The FBI kept tabs on radicals.*
- *Tabs were kept on radicals by the FBI*
- *Radicals were kept tabs on by the FBI.*

Another scholar, Huddleston (1984:43), contributes to the issue of Passivation in idiomatic structure. He presents the following sentences:

a. Tom kicked the bucket. .

b. The bucket was kicked by Tom.

A sentence (b) allows only the literal meaning interpretation.

1. They finally buried the hatchet. = ‘to agree to stop fighting or argument and become friendly’

2. The hatchet was finally buried.

Sentence (1) which in the active form is ambiguous.

Sentence (2) has the same ambiguity of sentence (1),

Huddleston (1984: 43) argues that co-occurrence within an idiom deprives the component parts of some of the syntactic independence. For example, consider the changes in the order of the component parts. ‘He hasn’t a bed to sleep in’ is in paradigmatic variation with; he hasn’t a bed in which to sleep. There is no corresponding variation with idiomatic sense: ‘He hasn’t a leg to stand on’. = to have no support for what you think, say or do. Huddleston refers to the ambiguity between literal and idiomatic

interpretations by introducing the following examples: ‘Tom kicked the bucket’, which can be interpreted both as literal and idiomatic. But the bucket was kicked by Tom, and, ‘the bucket Tom kicked’ permits only literal interpretation. As ‘Huddleston (1984: 44) argues, lexical items are not always introduced into sentences as constituents, and with regard to idioms this point becomes clearer. In ‘Borg pulled the set out of the fire’, the, idiom involves the pull component of pulled and the past participle out of the fire ‘the set’ is not part of the idiom.

2.22 Idioms in People’s Life:

It goes without saying that idiomatic expressions are widely used in all aspects of English people’s life; they are in fact part and parcel of their heritage and culture. People generally use idiomatic expressions instinctively without giving a second thought as to what their origin is. As has been shown by current researches, when people are faced with a perplexing situation for instance, they automatically switch to idiomatic expressions to define the type of problem they face. A person may articulate such expression as ‘I’ve come against a brick’, referring to something that blocks him/ her from doing what he/she wants to do. A problem can also be described differently with much more degree of an informal idiom ‘I’ put my foot in it’ describes a situation in which a person has said something tactless and embarrassing. Someone is going to ‘face the music’ or ‘to be left holding the baby’ in reference to a situation where someone has to accept criticism or punishment for what he/she has done, or to deal alone with a problem respectively. Music is an important part of culture and traditions and there are many English idioms that relate to it. In such situation where it is impossible to succeed because of conflicting rules or conditions the idiomatic expression ‘catch-22’ is used. Example: catch-22 = a difficult

situation for which there is no possible solution. Getting your first job is ‘catch-22’ because companies want someone with experience, but how can I get experience unless someone gives me a job. Idioms including the word ‘time’ are the most common; as ‘the last second/minute/hour’ and ‘the eleventh hour’ are expressions used to refer to something happening at ‘the latest possible time it could; such as “the killer’s life was spared at the eleventh hour” which means done at the latest possible time, if a student finished a paper one or two minutes before it was due, this expressions would be appropriate. Finally, the famous expression ‘time is money’ which indicates that time is a valuable commodity; is versatile and frequently used in everyday situation. A wide range of idiomatic expressions are used to describe people’s qualities; whether positively or negatively. As; ‘She has a heart of gold’ which qualifies ‘she’ as being very kind and generous, and ‘he is as good as gold’ qualifies a person, usually a child as being generous, helpful, and well -behaved. The use of the word ‘gold’ indicates the value of the person referred to. Money is one of the issues that are largely used in idiomatic expressions in describing people’s living standards; whether poor or rich; as, ‘To be on the bread line’ means to be very poor. Referring to the fact that Bread is one of the minimum requirements for living, so the idiom is quite expressive of the situation.

2.23 Previous Studies:

The researcher has profoundly examined many relevant studies; and came across some studies which are closely connected to the topic of the research, they are:

1. A study by El Mikashfi, L. titled “Problems Facing Undergraduate English Students in Understanding Multiword Units” was the title of a study carried out in 2001 at the University of Gezira. The study was conducted for

the degree of PhD. The main objective of the study ‘was to investigate the problem of the lack of comprehension for such units of words with focus on ‘opaque phrasal verbs’, The sample was a multiple one: Secondary Schools’ students and teachers in Medani area, university students who were majoring in English at Hantoub Faculty of Education, University of Gezira, and a sample of students who were studying English language at Ahila College. The data was collected through a diagnostic test for the students and questionnaire ‘for Secondary schools’ teachers in Medani town. Secondary objectives:

- To find out the reasons that made idiomatic multi-words units a puzzle for non- native speakers.
- To investigate some of the cultural differences between the two cultures: English and Arabic culture which might cause the difficulty when dealing with idioms. The results of the study showed that the majority of the students majoring in English failed in recognizing multi-words units. Depending on the oral test results it could be said that most of the sample of Sudanese students majoring in English did not exploit multi-word units when speaking or writing English themselves, as the researcher described as (bookish English). The researcher observed six batches of the student of English at the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education (Hantoub), the University of Gazira during period 1995-2000. The results were as follows: Most of the students had a tendency to use complete sentences when speaking English, besides, the researcher noticed that the students did not use idiomatic expressions. Also, absence of filled pauses, (er, erm.) as well as the absence of fillers such as “well”, “you know”. Contracted forms and ellipses were absent in responses. The final observation was that students used to transfer Arabic syntax into English.

The results showed that the majority of secondary school English language learners face difficulties in understanding and using English opaque phrasal verbs in written or spoken English. The researcher attributed the reasons of those difficulties to the difference between the students' mother tongue (Arabic language) and the English language. Teachers acknowledged the importance of opaque phrasal verbs. The researcher recommended fifteen points in order to improve their performance in idiomatic English. .

2. Shammat, L. Study on the same field, idiomatic expressions, was titled "Idiomaticity and Language Learning and Teaching" which was done at the University of Khartoum in 2003 for the degree of PhD. in English language teaching. The objectives of the study were to investigate the relationship between the knowledge of institutionalized expressions (idiomatic expressions) and effective learning and communication of English as a foreign language, Besides, also to investigate the effect of lexicalized forms on students' performance, and whether the subjects are knowledgeable of idioms or not, and the influence of it their learning process. The researcher's final aim was to try to find out how such material could be integrated into university syllabuses. The data was obtained through a questionnaire intended for university lecturers. Results showed the unsatisfactory performance of the students in idioms, due to deficiencies inherent in methodology. Besides, the data obtained showed teachers admittance of the lack of the required familiarity with idioms, this is due to living and learning in a monolingual environment a final result was concerned with adequate exposures to English which would enhance the motivation of learners.

3. The third study by Mohammed, M. was Conducted on 'English Collocations as a Problematic Area for the Students at Secondary Level', at

the University of Gezira in 2007 for the degree of M.A in English language teaching (ELT). The objectives of the study were to measure secondary schools' students' ability in producing English most common patterns of collocations and see whether those students notice such vocabulary. In addition the researcher tried to find solutions for the problem.

The findings:

- The majority of the participants memorized words in isolation.
- The awareness of the importance of noticing collocations is important when learning them. .
- Some students' errors stem from L1 interference
- Exercises designed for the students were insufficient.

Recommendations suggested by the researcher were: The necessity of familiarizing the students with the noticing of collocations, and teaching them with their Arabic equivalents. There was also a suggestion concerning the syllabus which must include collocations and exercises to practice them,

4. Hassan, A. carried out a study titled "English Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs as a Problematic Domain for Students at Secondary School Level". It was conducted in 2009 at the University of Gezira for the degree of Master of Arts. The researcher's main objectives were to draw attention to the topic, trying to detect the problem which faces the students in using phrasal verbs. Detecting the problems, the researcher tried to find some solutions and suggested some techniques for teaching idiomatic phrasal verbs.

The findings of the study:

- Eighty (80%) of the students who participated in the study did not know Idiomatic phrasal verb.

- The syllabuses of secondary schools (3rd year) do not include ample idiomatic Phrasal verbs.
- Eighty-six (86%) of the participants could not differentiate between idiomatic and non-idiomatic phrasal verbs.
- Poor knowledge of culture from the side of the students caused misunderstanding of idiomatic phrasal verbs. Fluency in English could not be attained without training the students to use idiomatic and non-idiomatic phrasal verbs. The study suggested some recommendations summed up in the following: Idiomatic phrasal verbs should be taught effectively within secondary schools' syllabuses, and teachers should encourage students to use them. Teachers should train their students to differentiate between idiomatic and non-idiomatic phrasal verbs. The study recommended the necessity of including English literature within secondary schools syllabuses .for the reason that literature is rich in idiomatic phrasal verbs, besides, it conveys the culture of the English community in which idiomatic expressions constitute a large portion of their language.

5. The Fifth study has been done by GasmElseed, A (1998). It was for doctorate degree titled “The impact of Attitudes towards an Understanding of Foreign Language Learning. The researcher attempted to find out whether foreign culture has positive or negative effect on learning; whether the foreign culture hinders or facilitate learning the foreign language. The researcher arrived at the results that culture plays a considerable role in grasping the full meaning of foreign language content, beside its role in facilitating foreign language learning through motivating the students towards it.

6. The sixth study: Eltayeb, S has conducted a research on English idioms which Constitutes a problem for Sudanese University students of English.

The study was titled: “Idiomatic Expressions: A Problematic Area for Sudanese University Students of English as a Foreign Language”. The study was conducted in 2006 at the University of Gezira. The research aimed at investigating the nature of the problems and difficulties that the learner of English as a foreign language encountered. Besides, the aim of the study was to direct teachers’ of English as a Foreign Language Learners to the vital role of idioms in the English language and their role in improving the learner’s perspective and productive skills. The findings were as follows:

- Idiomatic expressions are vital part of the language; they are in a common place in speech as well as they are used in writing.
- The nature of the problems imposed by the idiomatic expressions is attributed to their specific uses, meanings and specific structures, in contrast with irrelevant practice. .
- A final result was that studying English idioms will show the difference between the two cultures: Arabic and English culture, that is because idioms are culture — bound.
- Effective teaching of the idiomatic expressions is an invaluable technique for promoting university EFL learners’ performance

Recommendations:

- It is strongly recommended that idiomatic ‘expressions ‘should be given more emphasis. They should be included in university syllabus.
- Adequate exercises and practices are very interesting and should be tools for improving the students’ performance.

7. An investigation was carried out by Abaker, E. at the University of Gezira in 2002, titled “investigating Metaphor Awareness and Understanding among Sudanese EFL Students of the University of EL Fashir”. The

objectives of the research center on the following. To specify the level of metaphor awareness and understanding among EFL students and to ascertain the importance of the role of metaphor in language. The main findings of the study were:

- The majority of the participants had little awareness of metaphors.
- Most of the participants ascribed literal reading to metaphoric items in the test assigned to them. ,
- Most of the candidates achieved better scores on the conceptual metaphor known as “A is B” metaphor types (examples, life is journey, time is money, a project is a race). The final results showed that the achievement on the variable of understanding was relatively better than the achievement on the variable of awareness.

8. The eighth study: HamadAlneel, T, has conducted a research for Master of Arts) degree titled “Difficulties Facing Pupils in understanding Opaque Phrasal Verbs at Secondary Education”. The study was carried out at the University of Gezira in the year 2010. The objectives of the study were to show the importance of using phrasal verbs in everyday language, find out the difficulties that faced the pupils in understanding and using phrasal verbs, besides investigating the causes of difficulties and suggesting solutions. The findings of the study showed that the majority of the pupils face difficulty in using phrasal verbs ‘n speaking; and that the difference between the two languages; Arabic and English language caused some of the difficulty, due to the factor of interference. Also, negligence of English opaque phrasal verbs in the syllabus of secondary schools caused most of the difficulty, besides employing effective technologies in teaching opaque phrasal verbs to overcome some of the difficulties. The researcher recommended that teachers should make the students aware of the

importance of using phrasal verbs in their speech and writing, besides incorporation of them in the syllabus.

9. The ninth study: Ismail, E, conducted A Master of Arts Degree study at the University of Gezira in 2011. The title of the study was “EFL Learners’ Performance in English Phrasal Verbs: A case study of Ibood Secondary Schools. Gezira State” .The objectives of the study were to find out whether students at secondary schools are aware of English phrasal verbs, and to measure their ability of using English phrasal verbs. Another objective is to investigate the problems that affect students’ performance when using phrasal verbs and suggest solutions. The findings of the research showed that the majority of the students were unaware of the concept of English phrasal verbs. They are unable to use them due to the difficulty that surrounds such expressions. The study also explored the factor of difference in the two languages: Arabic and English as a factor that has a role in causing most of the difficulty. The absence of English literature from secondary schools syllabuses inevitably contributed to the problem. The researcher recommended that teachers should motivate the students to listen to dialogues and participate in conversations that include elements of phrasal verbs. Besides, elements of English literature should be taught at secondary schools.

10. A study by Balfaqeeh, N (2009). Titled “Strategies for Translating Idioms and culturally - bound Expressions; within the Human Development Genre”, It was submitted for the degree of Master of Art. The research was conducted at the School of Humanities of the University of Birmingham. The study aimed to investigate in the area of translation of idioms comparing between domesticated and foreignized translation.

Findings: Literal translation of idioms is not recommended, literal translation scored a minor percentage across the questionnaire, and paraphrasing would be sufficient and acceptable to the target audience (Saudi readers) if direct equivalents for idioms or culturebound expressions are not available.

Recommendations:

- Further research could be done to investigate how translators tend to translate idioms and culture-bound expressions and the reason behind choosing one strategy rather than the other,

11. The eleventh study was conducted at I—Hamline University, Saint Paul, Minnesota in December 2010, titled “The Role of Cultural Awareness on L2 Comprehension and Retention of Culture — Specific Idioms”. The researcher was Bjornson, K who submitted the study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English as a second language. The main objective of the research is to address and answer the question: Can providing cultural background of culture-specific sports idioms using both words and visual images, improve adults English language learners’ comprehension and retention of these idioms? The results showed that memorizing the figurative meaning and connecting it to the literal meaning and its culture context resulted in a higher rate of comprehension.

12. A study conducted by Puimom, S and Tapinta, P. at the University of Kasetsart titled, “A Study of Kasetsart University Students’ Comprehension of English Idioms Appearing in Editorial Columns in the Bangkok Post and the Nation”, Bangkok Post. The aims of the study were to investigate the common linguistic types of English idioms used in the editorial columns in the ‘Bangkok Post and the Nation and to examine Thai readers’ abilities and

perceptions in their comprehension of English idioms, besides investigating whether idiomatic expressions are hindering factors for comprehension of English editorial texts. The findings revealed that most of the idioms found in this study in any type of topic were literal idioms. Grammatical construction of idioms did not play an important role in the comprehension process of these expressions. Thus, the comprehension of idiomatic expressions would be mainly semantic framework. When idioms appeared in contexts, they are comprehensible.

13. The thirteenth study by Canji, M. Titled “The Best Way to Teach Phrasal Verb: Translation Sentential Contextualization or Metaphorical Conceptualization” was conducted at the University of Chabahr Maritime, in 2011. The aim of the study was to explain the distinctive role of conceptual metaphor in explaining the underlying link between the part of phrasal verbs and the meanings of’ idioms. The study also aims to make a comparison between contextualization, and metaphorical conceptualization, and to measure the degree of effectiveness with winch memorized, retained, and predicated through these methods of teaching. The results of the study showed that there were significant differences between the performances of the students taught through the technique of translation, sentential contextualization arid metaphorical conceptualization in the prediction of the meaning of untaught phrasal verbs. In other words different methods of teaching phrasal verbs influenced the ability of the students in predicting the meaning of untaught phrasal verbs.

14. A study by Meryem, M. Titled “Problems of Idioms in Translation — Case Study: First Year Master” was conducted in 2010 at the University of Mentouri - Constantine - Faculty of Letters and Languages. The main objective of the study was to examine the type of difficulty students of English face in translating idioms, and try to suggest solutions and identify strategies that might help to limit or avoid those difficulties,

The results: The results revealed that the degree of idiomaticity has a great influence on the percentage of the students' familiarity and unfamiliarity with English idioms. The highest score was recorded for transparent idioms. Semi-transparent idioms also recorded a high score and came in the second position. Semi-opaque and opaque got low scores and came in the last position.

15. The fifteenth study was conducted by Chunks, Z at the University of Kristianstad — Sweden titled “Measuring the Impact of Cultural Context on Chinese ESL University Learners’ Comprehension and Memorization of Figurative Idioms” carried out in the year 2001. The study was a paper which focused on the description of the results of a study conducted on ten Chinese University students ESL learners to investigate whether cultural context has a significant impact on university student’s ability to remember and understand English figurative idioms as part of English as a second language Instruction in China. The result showed that cultural context was an effective aid to help promote understanding of figurative language. Provision of cultural contexts clearly facilitated the comprehension of figurative idioms. Providing information about the origin of idioms also contributed significantly to the retention of the figurative idioms.

16. The sixteenth study: Samani E and Hashemian, M conducted a study at the Islamic Azad University Esfahan, Iran which was titled “The Effect of Conceptual Metaphors on Learning Idioms by L2 Learners” It Was Conducted in 2011 and published in February 1, 2012 on the International Journal of English Linguistics --- Volume 2 No, 1, February 2012. The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of conceptual metaphors on learning idioms by L2 learners. The main result was that the effect of conceptual metaphor on learning idioms was more than that of traditional instructional methods.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Chapter three has been assigned to shed light on the methodology of the study; the chapter gives an account of what tools and methods had been employed to obtain the required data for the study so as to answer the research questions on the part of idiomatic expressions which prove difficult and problematic.

3.1 Methodology of the Study.

This study uses qualitative and quantitative methods. The tools used were an interview and two tests: a Pre-Test and a post-test which were conducted before and after teaching a syllabus that was based on idiomatic expressions. The researcher designed a syllabus that exposes both the population and the sample to the material of the study “Idiomatic expressions” in order to enrich their language and at the same time to measure the extent to which their language has improved as a result of using idiomatic expressions. The syllabus (App. 4) was predetermined, photocopied, and distributed for the sample (the students). It included different types of idioms. The course material was composed of the main types of idioms, transparent and opaque idioms, collocations and phrasal verbs. Each lesson was followed by some exercises for the purpose of practice. The duration of the course was between the 11th of May (the starting date) and the 2nd of August 2017 during which two lectures per week were performed. A Pre-Test preceded the teaching of the course and a post-test was administered following the completion of the course teaching. The procedure included 30 minutes teaching sessions; preceded by a pretest and followed by a post-test. The

sessions started with a brief explanation of the concept of the word idiom, giving some equivalents in the students' mother tongue i.e. Arabic Language. The students seemed to be excited with such materials. The overall purpose of teaching the course was to familiarize the sample with idiomatic expressions so as to acknowledge them and to be aware of the significant role that, they play in promoting written and spoken competence.

3.2 The population of the Study

The population of the study is the students who study English language teaching at university level. As mentioned in chapter one, in stating the problem, these students lack enough knowledge of using idiomatic expressions.

3.3 The Sample of the Study

The sample of the study more or less; is a convenient sample. The researcher decided to take, as a sample for the study, the third year students at the department of education – university of Noble Quran and re-origination of science, in the academic year 2016-2017. The total number is eighty (80) students who all share the same mother tongue and are taught by the same teachers. On the other hand the researcher randomly chose a number of thirty (30) students from batch (36) department of English language faculty of education, University of Gazeera. They had been used as a reliability sample for the test. Also five teachers from different Sudanese universities (two teachers from Gazeera University, two from Noble Quran and one from Sudan University of science and technology) participated in this study via the interview. All subjects, teachers and students speak Arabic as their mother tongue. The students come from the same background, they

had all had the same culture and religion thus; they were a homogenous group of the study.

3.4 Tool one: Test

One of the tools used for collecting data was a test (App.2). The purpose of the test was to measure the students' performance before and after being subjected to the process of teaching. The test was basically about idiomatic expressions and it contained six main questions along with thirty sub-questions. The Pre-Test was carried out on 15th of May 2017. Eighty students from level three attended all the sessions of the syllabus taught. The sample were all females, the total number of the sample were 80 non – native undergraduate students. The post-test was one of the tools intended for collecting data; its main purpose was to evaluate the influence of the knowledge of idiomatic expressions on students' communicative competence after having been taught the material of the course. The post-test was administered on the sixth of August 2017.

3.4.1 The test Reliability

A randomly selected group of thirty students from Gazeera University who were studying English as a foreign language had undergone an experimental test, they were at semester six, batch 36, non-native speakers, majoring in English and demographically similar to the sample students of the study.

They performed the test on the 27th of October 2017 for only one time. Reliability of the differences between the rankings of the students' scores of the test that had been done twice was as shown below according to The Cranach's alpha method:-

Cranach's Alpha Method

Where reliability was calculated using Cranach's alpha equation shown below:

$$\text{Reliability coefficient} = \frac{n}{N-1} * \frac{1 - \text{Total variations questions}}{\text{variation college grades}}$$

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\frac{n}{N-1} * \frac{1 - \text{Total variations questions}}{\text{variation college grades}}}$$

Cranach alpha coefficient = (0.70) a reliability coefficient is high and it indicates the stability of the scale and the validity of the study

Validity coefficient is the square of the islands so reliability coefficient is (0.84), and this shows that there is a high sincerity of the scale and that the benefit of the study.

Table (3.1) The reliability of coefficients Cranach’s alpha method:

Question	Pre		post	
	Reliability	Validity	Reliability	Validity
Q1	0.72	0.85	0.73	0.85
Q2	0.71	0.84	0.71	0.84
Q3	0.72	0.85	0.71	0.84
Q4	0.73	0.85	0.73	0.85
Q5	0.72	0.85	0.72	0.85
Q6	0.73	0.85	0.73	0.85
Total	0.63	0.79	0.70	0.84

3.4.2 Validity of the Writing Test

After being checked by the supervisors, the final draft of the test version was evaluated by experts in the field. The test version was modified according to the opinions and suggestions of the experts (referees) they were: Dr. Awatif Satti Gezeera University – college of translation, Dr. Mohammed Al Basheer Nobel Quran University, Professor Abu Bakar Mohamed Al Hadeedy Nile valley University.

3.4.2.1 The Contents of the Test

The post- test (appendix II) was made up of six questions. Many types of questions which were used in the test covered most of the items taught throughout the experiment. Face validity of the post- test had been checked by the supervisors and other experts.

3.3.3. The Population of Test

The population of the study is the students who study English language teaching at university level. As mentioned in chapter one, in stating the problem, these students lack enough knowledge of using idiomatic expressions

3.3.4 The Sample of the Test

The samples of the test were homogenous group of undergraduate non-native students who were majoring in English at the University of Holy Quran. They were eighty (80) at the beginning of the sessions held inside, and also the total number of the students who attended all the classes were eighty (80) all of which were female students. They were nearly of the same age and have nearly the same linguistic background. Luckily, they all had a positive attitude towards the course because a part of one of their courses included a similar topic of the study. Ethical standards are important part of the research. So, the research was conducted in a practical and proper manner, the sample were not exposed to any risk or inconvenience of any kind.

3.3.4 Tool Two: The Interview

The interview (App.I) had been used as the second source for data collection. It was in depth an interview that permits interviewees to control it in such a way that allows them to distinguish their feelings about the issue being explored; i.e. idiomatic expressions.

3.3.3 Procedure of the Interview

The researcher avoided leading questions. Open - ended questions had been introduced for the sake of helping them to elicit a varied number of responses that might contribute to the enrichment of the study. The interview consisted of ten questions all of which were open-ended questions. Face validity of the interview was checked by three expert university lecturers, and then the final version of it has been issued. The questions introduced revolve around teachers' familiarity with idiomatic expressions and their existence within university syllabuses, and whether or not they are taught? Besides that, the researcher asked whether or not teachers of English consider idioms as important elements of language and also asked them about their idea if those elements promote the students' written and spoken competence.

3.3.3 The population of the Interview

The population of the interview is teachers who teach English language at university level in Sudan.

3.3.4.1 The Sample of the Interview

Five lecturers were chosen to participate in providing data. The researcher contacted all the lecturers, took permission, and was given consent from all of them. Time was fixed with the lecturers to conduct the interviews.

Interviews were conducted in the period between the 11th of April 2018 and the 15th of June of the same year (2018). Expert university lecturers from different Universities willingly participated and enriched the study with their points of view. Lecturers from University of Gezira, University of Noble Quran and re-origination of Sciences, University of Sudan for science and technology and University of Nile valley comprise the sample. While

conducting the interviews, the researcher took notes, and then later she transcribed them.

3.3.3 Validity and Reliability of the Interview

After being checked by the supervisors, the final draft of test version was evaluated by experts in the field. The interview was modified according to the opinions and suggestions of the experts (referees) mentioned above in (3.3.1.2).

3.4 Data Analysis

The data obtained by the means of the interview were analyzed manually and by the use of the computer program me (SPSS). In addition, the data obtained through the two tests were analyzed using the computer Programme – Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS). Chapter four shows the results obtained.

Summary

This chapter tackles the methodology, method, tools, population, sample and procedures, and materials used in this study; more specifically it provides a detailed description of the study design, subjects, instruments used for data collection and methods used for analyzing the collected data. It shows how these materials and instruments were validated. The chapter also describes the module designed by the researcher for this study.

CHATER FOUR
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE
RESULTS

CHATER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

4.0 Introduction;

This chapter discusses the results of the study. It gives analysis of the tests (pre and post – test) of the controlled and experimental groups by providing a comprehensive comparison between the two results before and after the material of the course. The chapter also tackled the interview which the researcher has performed with five university teachers of English. This chapter analyses this interview and the tests and shows their results compared to the hypothesis of the study.

4.1 Test Analysis

The course has been conducted before and after teaching the material of the course. The sample which was divided into two groups; controlled and experimental; all sat for the same test as a pretest before teaching the material of the course, and then the experimental sat for same test as a post test in order to measure and compare the change in writing and speaking performance of the students. Cranach's Alpha scale and method has been used for reliability and evaluation in this study. By using this method; each question in the test is marked and discussed.

Marks were given according to the type of the question, that is, multiple questions were given the highest marks, and short answer questions and the others were given equal marks. The researcher rechecked them by using SPSS program. The researcher aimed at getting answers.

5. To what extent Sudanese university students of English are familiarized with English idiomatic expressions?

3. How does specific; cultural expression elements affect teaching EFL learners?
4. What are the idiomatic expressions taught as a part of the process of teaching and learning EFL?

4.1.1 Comparison of Control and Experimental Groups Pre – Test

This test has been applied to both groups; controlled and experimental before; separately subjecting the experimental group to the teaching of the course material. The researcher documented the performance of the students in order to compare it with their performance in the post test to see if there has been a significant progress.

Table (4.1) Question one of T - Test for the Pre Test

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	df.	Sig.	Scale
Control	10.87	4.265	-1.641	29	0.112	insignificant
Experimental	12.47	3.381				

Table (4.1) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-1.641) significantly value (0.112) which is more than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the no statistical significant difference between control group and Experimental group in the pre-test. The participants did not perform well and there were no differences between the control group and the experimental group in performance. Students in both groups have weaknesses in writing and speaking of idiomatic expressions, and that can be attributed to the fact that, most of the curriculums of English departments at university do not focus on idiomatic expression.

Table (4.2) Question two of T-Test for the Pre Test

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	df.	Sig.	Scale
Control	14.67	7.535	-0.076	29	0.940	insignificant
Experimental	14.83	7.484				

Table (4.2) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-0.076) significantly value (0.940) which is more than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the no statistical significant difference between control group and Experimental group in the Pre-Test. The participants did not perform well and there were no differences between the control group and the experiment group in performance. Students in both groups have weaknesses in writing and speaking of idiomatic expressions, and that can be attributed to the fact that, most of the curriculums of English departments at university do not focus on idiomatic expression.

Table (4.3) Question Three of T-Test for the Pre Test

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	df.	Sig.	Scale
Control	0.50	1.776	-1.306	29	0.202	insignificant
Experimental	1.00	1.438				

Table (4.3) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-1.306) significantly value (0.202) which is more than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the no statistical significant difference between control group and Experimental group in the pre-test. The participants did not perform well and there were no differences between the control group and the experimental group in performance. Students in both groups have

weaknesses in writing and speaking of idiomatic expressions, and that can be attributed to the fact that, most of the curriculums of English departments at university do not focus on idiomatic expression.

Table (4.4) Question Four of T-Test for the Pre Test

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	df.	Sig.	Scale
Control	0.40	1.037	-3.261	29	0.003	Significant
Experimental	1.70	2.037				

Table (4.4) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-3.261) significantly value (0.003) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the statistical significant difference between control group and Experimental group in the pre-test. The participants did not perform well and there were no differences between the control group and the experimental group in performance. Students in both groups have weaknesses in writing and speaking of idiomatic expressions, and that can be attributed to the fact that, most of the curriculums of English departments at university do not focus on idiomatic expression.

Table (4.5) Question Five of T-Test for the Pre Test

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	df.	Sig.	Scale
Control	1.80	2.683	-0.171	29	0.865	insignificant
Experimental	1.90	2.155				

Table (4.5) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-0.171) significantly value (0.865) which is more than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the no statistical significant difference between control group and Experimental group in the Pre-Test. The participants did not perform well

and there were no differences between the control group and the experimental group in performance. Students in both groups have weaknesses in writing and speaking of idiomatic expressions, and that can be attributed to the fact that, most of the curriculums of English departments at university do not focus on idiomatic expression.

Table (4.6) Question Six of T-Test for the Pre Test

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	df.	Sig.	Scale
Control	2.17	3.130	-0.119	29	0.906	insignificant
Experimental	2.23	2.269				

Table (4.6) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-0.119) significantly value (0.906) which is more than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the no statistical significant difference between control group and Experimental group in the pre-test. The participants did not perform well and there were no differences between the control group and the experiment group in performance. Students in both groups have weaknesses in writing and speaking of idiomatic expressions, and that can be attributed to the fact that, most of the curriculums of English departments at university do not focus on idiomatic expression.

Table (4.7) T Question of T-Test for the Pre Test

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	df.	Sig.	Scale
Control	30.40	9.065	-1.382	29	0.177	insignificant
Experimental	34.70	11.923				

Table (4.7) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-1.382) significantly value (0.177) which is more than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is no statistical significant difference between control group and Experimental group in the Pre-Test. The participants did not perform well and there were no differences between the control group and the experiment group in performance. Students in both groups have weaknesses in writing and speaking of idiomatic expressions, and that can be attributed to the fact that, most of the curriculums of English departments at university do not focus on idiomatic expression.

As for the control group the researcher designed a single test, because the group was to be tested once only in order to prove the reliability of the Pre-Test and that, has been achieved and proved via statistical analyses (Alpha method). There was no need for a post-test since, without teaching them a course the expected results would be the same. As for the experimental group the researcher used the same test for pre and post- tests for the purpose of proving the hypothesis of the study, as a result of that a significant improvement in the use of idiomatic expressions had been achieved by the experimental group after having being taught the course.

Note:

The researcher would like to draw attention to the fact that, the control group was chosen from a different university (Gazeera University), while the experimental group was chosen from The Holy Quran university, that is to say; the researcher made a variation between control and experimental groups to show that a difference in atmosphere proves the reliability of test.

Statistical analysis:

See pages (50-51)

Table (4.8) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question One

Valid	Pre Test		Post test	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Success	56	70.0%	68	94.4%
Failure	24	30.0%	4	5.6%
Total	80	100.0%	72	100.0%

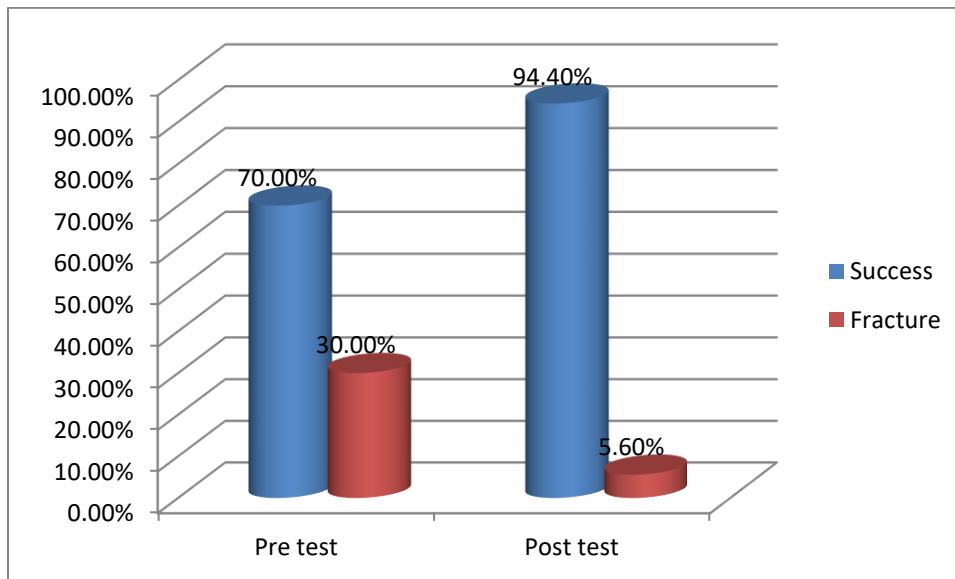


Figure (4.1) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question One

The above table (4.8) and figure (4.1) illustrate the views of the distribution of question one sample of the Pre-Test was Success by (%70.0) and Failure by (%30.0) and the Post – test was Success by (%94.4) and Failure by (%5.6). It is obvious from the above results that, students have a problem with idiomatic expressions in terms of using them in written and spoken English. Despite the weak success in idiomatic expressions in pre-test, however, they are still better as far as English is concerned. Most of the

Sudanese university students lack proper knowledge of idiomatic expressions due to the fact that, most universities do not include sufficient teaching of idiomatic expression in their curriculums. The students' performance in post-test was a remarkable success because they had been exposed to a course material that had specially been designed to improve their ability in using idiomatic expressions.

Table (4.9): illustrates the frequency and percentage for the Question one

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	10.79	4.101	-5.721	71	0.00	Significant
Post	13.32	3.071				

The above table (4.9) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-5.721) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the statistical significant difference between Pre-Test and post-test for the post test. It is very clear from the above results that, students in question one of the Pre-Test have achieved lesser results comparable with post-test. Being exposed to a relevant material is the reason for the difference.

Table (4.10) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question Two

Value	Pre Test		Post test	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Success	7	8.8%	60	83.3%
Failure	63	91.2%	12	16.7%
Total	80	100.0%	72	100.0%

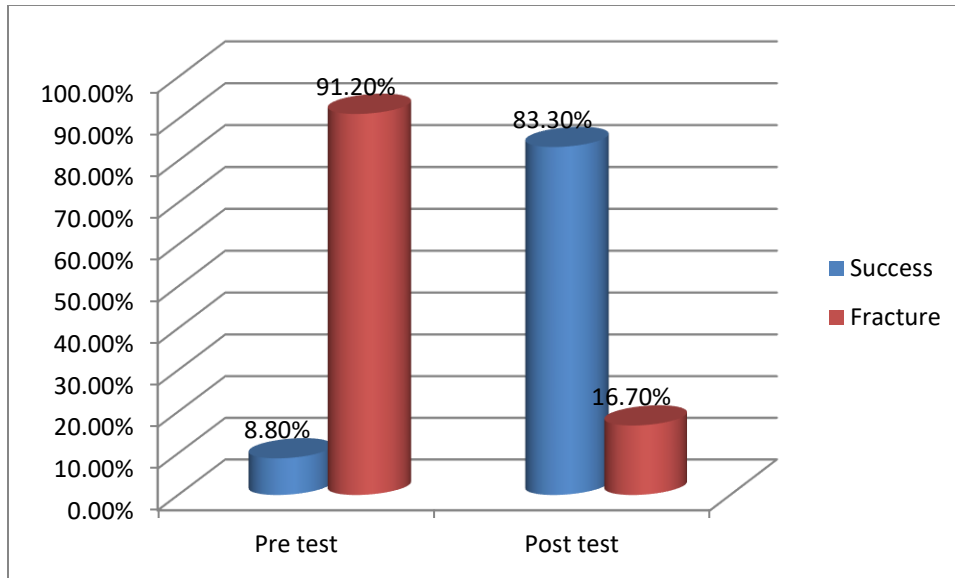


Figure (4.2) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage of Question Two

The above table (4.10) and figure (4.2) illustrate the views of the distribution of question number two sample Pre-Test was Success by (%8.8) and Failure by (%91.2) and Post- test was Success by (%83.3) and Failure by (%16.7). Question two includes opaque idioms that unless the students are thoroughly familiarized with, they would definitely fail, and that is clearly revealed in the marks of the Pre-Test in comparison with the marks of the post- test; that is to say, higher marks were obtained after having been taught the relevant material.

Table (4.11) Illustrate the Views of the Value of T- Test for Question two

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	14.65	7.087	-3.663	71	0.00	Significant
Post	17.92	5.087				

Table (4.11) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-3.663) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that

there is the statistical significant difference between pre- test and post- test for the t-test. Because question two includes opaque idioms that unless the students are thoroughly familiarized with, they would definitely fail, and that is clearly revealed in the marks of the Pre-Test in comparison with the marks of the post- test; that is to say, higher marks were obtained after having been taught the relevant material.

Table (4.12) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question Three

Value	Pre Test		Post test	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Success	2	2.5%	1	1.4%
Failure	78	97.5%	71	98.6%
Total	80	100.0%	72	100.0%

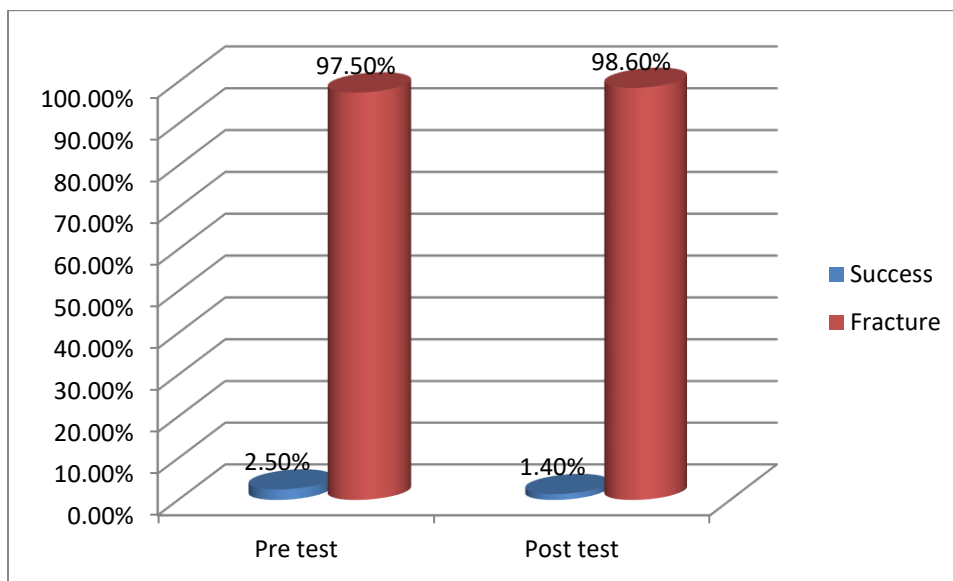


Figure (4.3) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage of Question Three Table (4.12) and figure (4.3) illustrate the views of the distribution of the question one sample Pre-Test by Success by (%2.5) and Failure by (%97.5)

and Post-Test by Success by (% 1.4) and Failure by (%98.6). The purpose of question three was to prove that, if students had no adequate knowledge of collocation they would not succeed in the Pre-Test and as can be seen; the obtained results proves one of the researcher's hypothesis .The improved results of the post-test shows that, the experimental sample had obtained higher results after having been exposed to a relevant material.

Table (4.13) illustrates the View of the Value of the T-Test of Question Three

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	0.58	1.563	-5.256	71	0.00	Significant
Post	1.50	1.950				

Table (4.13) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-5.256) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is a statistical significant difference between pre- test and post-test for T-test. The purpose of question three was to prove that, if students had no adequate knowledge of collocation they would not succeed in the Pre-Test and as can be seen; the obtained results proves one of the researcher's hypothesis .The improved results of the post-test shows that, the experimental sample had obtained higher results after having been exposed to a relevant material.

Table (4.14) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question Four

Value	Pre Test		Post test	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Success	0	0.0%	8	11.1%
Failure	80	100.0%	64	88.9%
Total	80	100.0%	72	100.0%

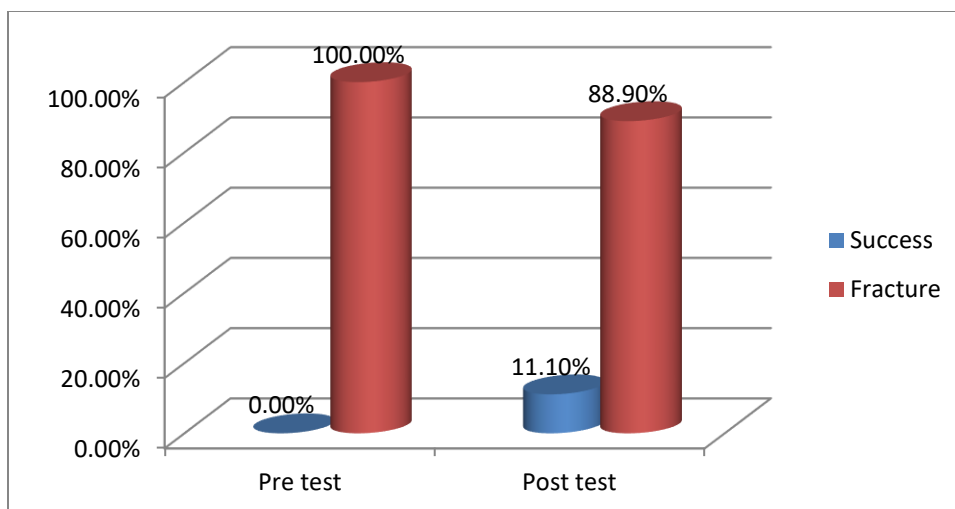


Figure (4.4) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question Four

Table (4.14) and the figure (4.4) illustrate the views of the distribution of the question four sample Pre-Test was Success by (%0.0) and Failure by (%100.0) and Post-test by Success by (%11.1) and Failure by (%88.9). Question four tested the sample's knowledge of phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs have either literal or idiomatic meanings; therefore students must have complete and practical knowledge of them in order use them properly, that is why the percentage of failure was high in Pre-Test as well post-test, though the students had studied a relevant material before the post-test, yet, they could not achieve better results because they had not had enough time to comprehend phrasal verbs; because understanding phrasal verbs requires a long time.

Table (4.15) Illustrates the Views of the Valued of T- Test for Question Four

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	0.54	1.266	-12.863	71	0.00	Significant
Post	4.38	2.564				

Table (4.15) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-12.863) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the statistical significant difference between pre- test and post-test for the t-test. Question four tested the sample’s knowledge of phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs have either literal or idiomatic meanings; therefore students must have complete and practical knowledge of them in order use them properly, that is why the percentage of failure was high in Pre-Testas well post-test, though the students had studied a relevant material before the post-test, yet, they could not achieve better results because they had not had enough time to comprehend phrasal verbs; because understanding phrasal verbs requires a long time.

Table (4.16) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question Five

Value	Pre Test		Post test	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Success	1	1.3%	16	22.2%
Failure	79	98.7%	56	77.8%
Total	80	100.0%	72	100.0%

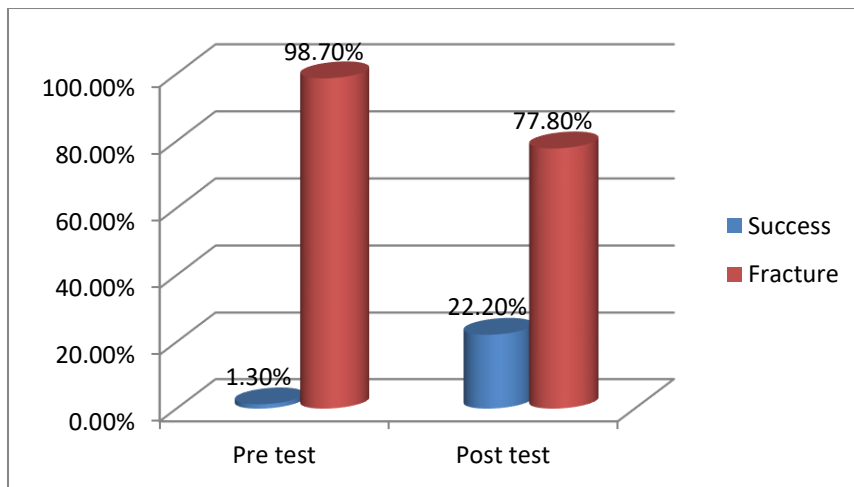


Figure (4.5) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage of Question Five

Table (4.15) and figure (4.5) illustrate the views of the distribution of the question five sample Pre-Test by Success was (%1.3) and Failure by (%98.7) and Post-test by Success by (%22.2) and Fracture by (%77.8). Question five was intended for making similarity contrast between students' mother tongue and English in terms of use of phrasal verbs. In the Pre-Test students failed to obtain higher marks due to their ignorance the idiomatic meanings of phrasal verbs, while in the post-test answers had been improved.

Table (4.16) Illustrates the Views of the Value of T-Test Question Five

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	1.21	2.116	-12.022	71	0.00	Significant
Post	5.33	2.768				

Table (4.16) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-12.022) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the statistical significant difference between pre- test and post- test for the t-test. Question five was intended for making similarity contrast between students' mother tongue and English in terms of use of phrasal verbs. In the Pre-Test students failed to obtain higher marks due to their ignorance the idiomatic meanings of phrasal verbs, while in the post-test answers had been improved.

Table (4.17) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the Question Six

Value	Pre Test		Post test	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Success	32	40.0%	50	69.4%
Failure	48	60.0%	22	30.6%
Total	80	100.0%	72	100.0%

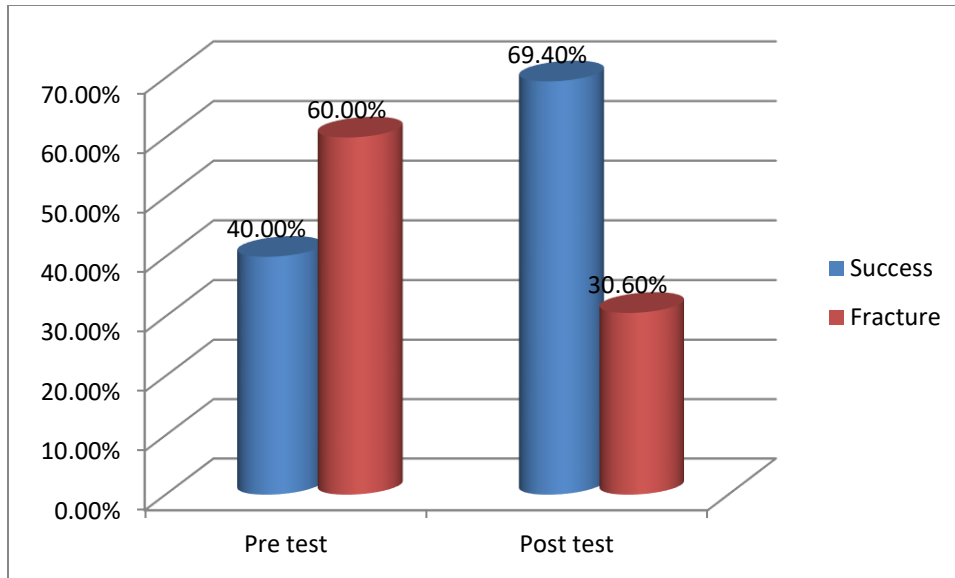


Figure (4.6) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage of Question Six

Table (4.17) and figure (4.6) illustrate the views of the distribution of the question six sample Pre-Test was Success by (%40.0) and Failure by (%60.0) and Post-test was Success by (%69.4) and Failure by (%30.6). In question six the researcher wanted to examine the students' ability to distinguish between particles in terms of whether they are adverbs or prepositions. In Pre-Test The percentage of failure was a bit better compared with other questions due to the fact that, the questions were only about particles which are commonly used and not full phrasal verbs. But the percentage of success in post-test was higher because they had been exposed to a relative material.

Table (4.18) Illustrates the Views of the Value of T-Test for Question Six

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	2.01	2.740	-4.949	71	0.00	Significant
Post	3.65	2.513				

Table (4.18) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-4.949) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the statistical significant difference between pre- test and post- test for the t-test. In question six the researcher wanted to examine the students' ability to distinguish between particles in terms of whether they are adverbs or prepositions. In Pre-Test The percentage of failure was a bit better compared with other questions due to the fact that, the questions were only about particles which are commonly used and not full phrasal verbs. But the percentage of success in post-test was higher because they had been exposed to a relative material.

Table (4.19) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage for the all Question

Value	Pre Test		Post test	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Success	2	2.5%	26	36.1%
Failure	78	97.5%	46	63.9%
Total	80	100.0%	72	100.0%

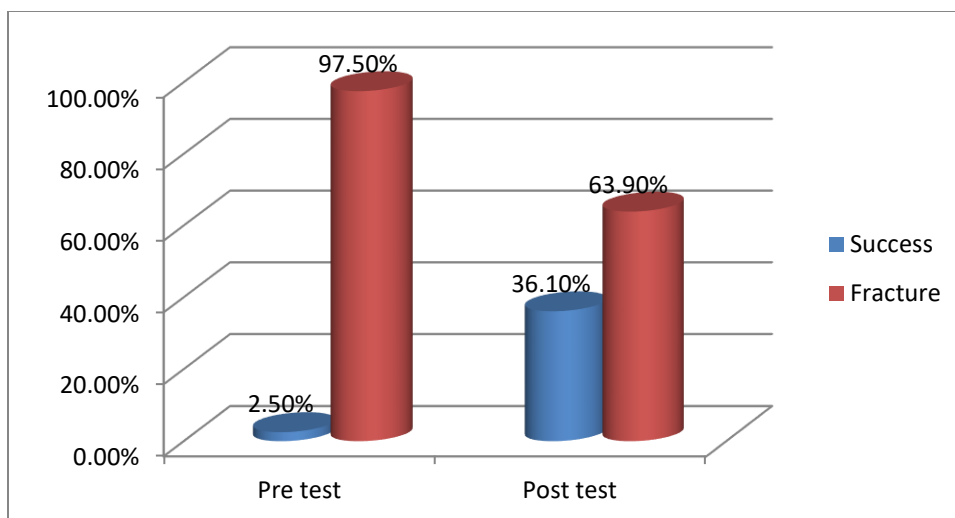


Figure (4.7) Illustrates the Frequency and Percentage of all Questions

Table (4.19) and figure (4.7) illustrate the views of the distribution of all questions sample Pre-Test was Success by (%2.5) and Failure by (%97.5) and Post-test was Success by (%36.1) and Failure by (%63.9). These results appear to indicate students' considerable improvement in performing the post-test; this is attributed to the experimental teaching of the experiment syllabus prepared for them.

Table (4.20) Illustrates the Views of the Value of T-Test for All Questions

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	29.79	9.266	-16.548	71	0.00	Significant
Post	46.08	7.847				

Table (4.20) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-16.548) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the statistical significant difference between pre- test and post- test for the t-test. These results appear to indicate students' considerable

improvement in performing the post-test; this is attributed to the experimental teaching of the experiment syllabus prepared for them.

4.1.2 The statistical analysis of the hypotheses of the study

Table (4.21) Sudanese University Students of English are to a Certain Extent Unfamiliar with English Idiomatic Expressions.

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	14.65	7.087	-3.663	71	0.00	Significant
Post	17.92	5.087				

Table (4.21) illustrates the views of the value of t-test(-3.663) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means that there is the statistical significant difference that means the Sudanese university students of English are to a certain extent unfamiliar with English idiomatic expressions. The weak results of the Pre-Test prove students' unfamiliarity with idiomatic expressions and the improved results of the post-tests confirms the hypothesis.

Table (4.22) Many of the non-Native Teachers Lack Knowledge and Ability of Teaching Idiomatic Expressions.

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	48.0	22.6	1.333	1	0.41	Insignificant
Post	36.0	9.8				

Table (4.22) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (1.333) significantly value (0.41) which is greater than the probability value (0.05) this means that many of the non-native teachers lack knowledge and ability of teaching

idiomatic expressions. One of the reasons of the weak results of the Pre-Test is that, teachers themselves lack the required knowledge to teach idiomatic expressions. Teachers ought to have familiarized students with the minimum knowledge of idiomatic expressions; because they are an integrated part of English language; it cannot be imagined that, one writes or speaks English without having the least knowledge of idiomatic expressions. Thus the hypothesis has been proved right according to the weak results of the pre-test.

Table (4.23) Specific-Culture Expressions are Important Elements for Teaching EFL Learners. English Language is Best Understood Through its Culture

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	0.58	1.563	-5.256	71	0.00	Significant
Post	1.50	1.950				

Table (4.23) illustrates the views of the value of t-test (-5.256) significantly value (0.000) which is less than the probability value (0.05) this means the Specific-culture expressions are to a great degree important elements for teaching EFL learners English language is best understood through its culture. Possessing background knowledge of the culture of the target language plays a significant role in mastering it; however, the results of the Pre-Test in respect of background knowledge showed that, students had not the least idea of culture background knowledge, and that proves the hypothesis.

Table (4.24) English Idiomatic Expressions are not Taught Explicitly in Sudanese Universities.

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T test	Df.	Sig.	Scale
Pre	1.21	2.116	-12.022	71	0.00	Significant
Post	5.33	2.768				

Table (4.24) illustrates that the value of T test (-12.022) with a significant value (0.00) is less than the probability value (0.05) this means within the process of teaching English; idiomatic expressions are not taught explicitly in Sudanese universities. Results of the Pre-Test reveal that, idiomatic expressions are not being taken care of at the level of Sudanese universities, and this proves the hypothesis.

4.4 Results of the Interview

The interview was the second tool used in this study. It was conducted with many experienced lecturers from different universities in Sudan. The lecturers who had been interviewed provided the study with invaluable data, their experience at universities through out the years has been shown in their responses to questions of the interview. According to the collected and manually processed data, the following results have been obtained:

4.4.1 Question 1: How Long Have you Been Teaching at the University?

The main purpose behind asking this question is to know whether there is true relationship between teachers' experience and their knowledge of idiomatic expressions. The following table shows the results.

Table (4.25): Experience:

According to the above table (4.25) five teachers had been interviewed. Their experiences range between eight - twenty five (8-25) years of teaching

at universities. Two lecturers have a great teaching experience which ranges between fifteen-twenty five (15-25) years. And as for the other three lecturers whose experience is less compared to the above mentioned ones, but still had a considerable experience. The interpretation of the table (4025) shows that, there seem to be low correlation between teachers' large experience and the knowledge of idiomatic expressions. This conclusion has been observed in the response to some of questions of the interview; mainly question three (3). This seems to be an opposing result which is not in favor of hypothesis Three (3); the researched hypothesized that some experienced teachers are familiar with culture bound expressions. Teachers themselves admitted lack of the required knowledge of idiomatic expressions which are important elements in language. They attributed that to many factors; such as syllabuses which lack such items, this is due to living and learning in a monolingual environment. That is to say; absence of exposure and interaction with native writers or speakers of the target language greatly deprive teachers from knowing idiomatic expressions abundantly exist in the language. This may explain, according to the data obtained, why there is no relation between experience and the knowledge of idiomatic expressions. It has been observed that teachers who had lived in an environment where English is the only language spoken; even for a short time have knowledge and the ability to use idiomatic expressions to some extent. But idiomatic expressions still considered far more elusive elements even for native speakers according to some scholars' points of view.

4.4.2 Do you think English Teachers who are non-Native Speakers are Familiar with Idiomatic Expressions?

Table (4.26) shows that most of the lecturers have agreed upon the fact that, teachers' knowledge of idiomatic expressions is limited. Out of the five

teachers, three have responded by ‘No’ to the above question; the rest of the teachers’ response was that, teachers are - to some extent -familiar with idiomatic expressions. Thus, it could be interpreted that teachers of English are not familiar with idiomatic expressions. According to the researcher the options ‘to some extent’ which was chosen by two lecturers may be attributed to some hesitations. While carrying out the interview the researcher noticed that, this option ‘to some extent’ was not used promptly for some of the lecturers. This result supports hypothesis two (2) that hypothesizes: many of the English teachers who were non-native writers or speakers are not familiar with idiomatic expressions. Familiarity with idiomatic expressions does not require experience; a native layman or an illiterate person could have rather considerable knowledge of idioms for the reason that idioms are culture bound expressions. This gives responsible interpretation of the question.

4.4.3 What are Some of the Key Principals which Promote Effective and Enjoyable Learning According to you?

The question was included in the interview with the intention to receive various opinions that teachers of English could participate with. The researcher expect ‘culture’, ‘authentic material’, and ‘literature’ as some of the key principals that help to promote the process of learning English. Factors such as culture, authentic material and literature are the source for idiomatic expressions. The following table, (4.27) displays the results.

Table (4.27), key Principal which Promote Effective and Enjoyable Learning (According to the Lecturers)

The Reponses of the teachers widely varied as seen in table (4.27) above. Surveying the table (4.28) it could be noticed that two lecturers mentioned culture, literature and authentic material as basic principles for effective

learning. Previous research has shown that culture plays considerable role in grasping the meaning of foreign language content, besides its role as a facilitating element in foreign language learning.

Table (4.28): Culture-Authentic Material – Literature

Table (4.28) explored that idioms are peculiar to the language; language could not be separated from its writers or speakers as it carries their internal interaction and conventions in every aspect of their lives. Pawley and Syder's (1983) confirm strongly that idioms are institutionalized sets, which refers to their establishment in the society till they become part of their culture. Literature reflects different notion culture; it is the rich and natural heritage, so it carries every aspect of language including idiomatic expressions. A considerable number of teachers who had been interviewed considered literature and culture as key principles for promoting learning; literature and culture are two sides of the same coin. Other basics for effective learning which were mentioned by some lecturers such as classroom atmosphere, one of the lecturers states that, the learning environment should be healthy in order to achieve effective learning. Table (4.29) shows that, two of the lecturers see that, techniques and teaching aids help promote effective learning. Another two lecturers attribute successful learning to the teaching method used. Many studies support those teachers' points of view; strongly advocate that, using traditional methods results in poor learning. Ganji, M (2011) reached the same conclusion that, method of teaching has an influence in the process of learning. Moreover, he adds that, the methods of teaching idiomatic expressions influence the student's ability of predicting their meaning. Benda (1981) considers that role of the teaching method used as being crucial in obtaining good results, suggesting that,

teaching idiomatic expressions will enhance the students' understanding and acquiring those units of language.

Table (4.29): Techniques-Teaching Aids

Thus varying techniques and teaching aids together with the method of teaching used result in effective learning of such expressions. One of the important principles of effective learning, according to some of the lecturers is motivation; two of the lecturers consider motivation as an effective aid to help promote learners' understanding of what is taught. McCarthy (2008) believes that, idiomatic expressions are difficult, boring and demotivating. Based upon this view point the researcher recognizes the vital role of motivation in improving learning. Personal experience shows that motivation plays an important role in enjoyable and good learning. The same point is highlighted by Gasm El seed, A (1998), who believes in the knowledge of foreign culture as a facilitating elements of learning the language through motivation. Shammat, (2003) is line with the previous researchers including the present researcher regarding motivation. A final result in the researcher's study was concerned with adequate exposure which would enhance the learners' motivation. Involving the learners in discussions and participation is thought to be one of key principles for effective and enjoyable learning. The result of question two (2) shows that two lecturers are in favor of involving the students in the lessons. According to the researcher, if the students are directly and actively involved in the lessons, they will achieve successful learning (especially if the students are called by their names!).

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMERY, FINDINGS,
RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

CHAPTER FIVE

INTRODUCTION, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.0 Introduction

This study investigated the use of idiomatic expressions to promote university students' writing and speaking skills which are needed at their level. The study of this research is intended to find out the factors that affect EFL University students' performance when dealing with English idiomatic expressions. The study was carried out at university of Holy Quran – third year level – faculty of education department of English. The test was distributed to eighty (80) students and an interview to EFL university teachers the results gained from the test and the interview were fed into computer, analyzed and discussed in relation to the hypotheses of the study.

5.1 Findings of the Study

When the researcher analyzed both the pre and post tests and the interview, their result realized the assumptions, objectives and questions of the study. The results of the experiment and the responses of the teachers in the interview ensure the following findings:-

- 1- The results of the Pre-Test and the post-test show that, there is considerable improvement with regard to the performance of the students.
- 2- The students marks in the Pre-Test were low, but after teaching them idiomatic expression, the students sat for the post-test and gained better scores.

- 3- Culture is an important factor in learning idiomatic expressions as viewed by the interviewees.
- 4- There is a consensus among lecturers on the issue of including idiomatic expressions within university syllabuses.
- 5- Idiomatic expressions actually comprise part of university syllabus i.e. as in literature, but it has always been ignored and not taught.
- 6- A considerable number of university teachers lack proper knowledge of idiomatic expressions, and that is obvious from the results of the interview.
- 7- Moreover, the results show that effective teaching of idiomatic expressions would certainly improve students' written and spoken capability. It is known among scholars that the absence of formulaic language may be what marks out competent language learners as non-native. Smith and Carter (2000:1) consider idioms as key-elements of fluent and articulate language production whose role in vocabulary learning is considerable.

5.2 Recommendations

Students liked idiomatic expressions and their associated task because it gives them a chance to decorate their style in written and spoken English, students can find much of the idiomatic expression in their syllabuses, the problem that students usually face; is their inability to recognize idiomatic expression by themselves. Therefore the researcher recommends the followings:-

- 1- Language instructors may be able to upgrade L2 learners' everyday language by introducing different idiomatic expressions that serve

various functions, and by raising L2 learners' awareness of the importance of this language phenomenon.

- 2- Syllabus designers and material developers could compile a basic list of idiomatic expressions to serve as a basis for teaching and learning these expressions as far as their important role for EFL learner is agreed upon by the majority of the linguists.
- 3- Teachers of English should be encouraged to include such items of language as a part of teaching and learning process.
- 4- Although teaching idioms is not an easy task, but students need to be familiarized with them.
- 5- Syllabus must contain a considerable portion of formulaic language.
- 6- It is also highly recommended to use effective methods while teaching idiomatic expressions as: using stories, teaching idioms in context using rich illustrations such as pictures and diagrams.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

This study is about using idiomatic expressions to enhance EFL written and spoken English. It focused on a particular area in the field of developing writing and speaking skills by the use of idiomatic expressions. This makes it possible to suggest other areas in the same field for other researchers to study or research about. These include areas like:

- 1- The effectiveness of using collocation to improve writing and speaking skills.
- 2- Using opaque idioms extracted from literature to enhance writing skills.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix I

Interview for Lecturers of English at University, college or institution Level

Dear Colleagues:

I am conducting aresearch in applied linguistic concerning idiomatic expressions and their role in communication. I need your participant I answering few questions and it is highly appreciated. Thanks so much.

Kindly please ask the following question:

Q1: for how long have you been teaching at the university?

.....
.....

Q2: Do you think that teachers of English who are non-native speakers are familiar with idiomatic expressions?

.....
.....

Q3: What are some of the key principles which promote effective and enjoyable learning in students?

.....
.....

Q4: Do you think that idiomatic expressions exist within the syllabus of universities in Sudan?

.....
.....

Q5: Are idiomatic expressions taught at Sudan universities?

.....
.....

Q6: Expressions are important elements that they should be included in the syllabus?

.....
.....

Q7: Do you think Sudanese teachers of English as a foreign language have poor knowledge of idiomatic expressions?

.....
.....

Q8: Do you think that teaching idiomatic expressions will promote the students' communication skills?

.....
.....

Q9: With regard to idiomatic expressions what advice would you give to the teachers who teach EFL learners?

.....
.....

Appendix II

Test (pre and post)

Answer all the questions:

Question one:

- a. What is vocabulary?

Question two: complete sentences (A) by using words or phrases from list (B):

- A: 1. Hit the sack.....
2. Spill the beans.....
3. Kick the bucket.....
4. Odd and ends.....
5. Take a back seat.....

- B: a) Allow another to be in control b) reveal a secret c) go to bed
d) Die e) small pieces which have small value.

Question three: complete the following collocations by writing the missing word:

1. Ladies and.....
2. Fish and.....
3. Be as clear as.....
4. To bite the
5. Use dark colours, but don't use.....

Question four: Give ONE word to show the meaning of the following underlined words:

1. I always put off going to the dentist.
2. She has put aside a good amount of money.
3. Please keeps the ball rolling in order to achieve peace.

4. He is serious, he keeps a straight face.

Question five: Try to find equivalents in your own language for the following:

1. To make money.
2. She goes there now and then.
3. To talk turkey.
4. Stir things up.
5. He wants to buy an expensive car, so he has to pay through the nose.
6. I could eat a horse.

Question six: Choose one word or phrase to complete the sentence:

1. You've got to give it to him! He may be lying, but he can certainly.....a story.
a. Make out b. make up c. make over d. make through
2. I'm phoning to complain the delivery today.
a. About b. for c. from d. to
3. I expect every student to be punctual. I know I can count.....you.
a. In b. one. about c. over

Appendix III
Syllabus designed for the sample
IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION

IDIOMS

Idioms are fixed expressions with meanings that are usually not clear or obvious in their original sense. The individual words often give you no help in deciding the meaning. The expression “**to feel under the weather**”, which means “to feel unwell”, is a typical idiom. The words do not tell us what it means, but the context usually helps.

Everyday spoken language is full of fixed expressions that are not necessarily difficult to understand (their meaning may be quite transparent) but which have a fixed form which does not change. These have to be learned as being full expressions. These expressions are often hard to find in the dictionaries, so they are usually listened to.

Example for idioms

Examples	Meaning
Has seen better days	It's rather old and broken down
Get the wrong end of the stick	To misunderstand
Poke your nose into	To interfere
Be over the moon	Extremely happy
Fall down in the dump	Depressed
Kidd's stuffs	Easy and not challenging

Kick the bucket	Die
Spill the beans	Reveal a secret
Get to heart of	To go straight to the point
On the move	Very active

Exercise

Fill the following gaps with the suitable idiom. Pick from the following options:

(Red herring, spill the beans, on the move, kid’s stuffs, poke your nose into, has seen better days, get the wrong end of the stick, feel down in dumps, kick the bucket , be over the moon).

1. The whole of these are just.....(easy and not challenging).
2. Subsequently after the announcement of the re. Every person in the country was(extremely happy).
3. It is very disapproving to People business (to interfere).
4. She finally.....after a lots of pressure.
5. The old man.....after a long sickness (die).
6. This tin-opener(rather old and broken).
7. Please don’t waste time.....the!(go straight to the main point).
8. Nowadays women are..... (Very active).
9. After all strives to get a job without success.....(depressed).
- 10.The students could not understand the lectures so they only.....(misunderstand).

Idioms are rather informal and include an element of personal comment o the situation. They are sometimes humorous or ironic.

Examples: **how do you do** Mrs. Watson? Do **take the weight of feet**.(sit down).

Similes: As.....as /like

A. As.....as

Similes are easy to understand, if you see the phrase **as dead as a doornail**, you don't need to know a doornail is, simply that the whole phrase means totally dead; but, remember, fixed similes are not 'neutral'; they are usually informal/colloquial and of humorous. So, use them with care, and keep them generally as part of receptive vocabulary.

Creating a picture in your mind can often help you remember the simile such as:

(As blind as a bat - as thin as a rake - as strong as an ox - as quiet as a mouse). Some can be remembered as pairs of opposites. As heavy as lead = as light as feather.

As drunk as a lord = as sober as judge

As black as night = as white as snow

Some can be remembered by sound patterns:

As brown as berry

As good as gold

As cool as cucumber

Some other useful as.....as.....phrases are:

- The bed was as hard as iron and I couldn't sleep.
- I'll give this plant some water. The soil is as dry as a bone.
- He's as mad as a hatter. He crossed the Atlantic in a bathtub.
- She told her teacher, as bold as brass, that his lessons were boring.
- You'll have to speak up; he's as deaf as a post.

- Don't worry. Using the computer's as easy as falling off a log.
- She knew the answers as quick as a flash.
- When I told him, his face went as red as a beetroot.
- Sometimes the second part can change the remaining meaning of the first.
- The princess's skin was as white as snow (beautifully white).
- When he saw it, his face went as white as a sheet. (Pale with fear/horror).
- The fish was bad and I was as sick as a dog. (vomiting)

B) Like:

- My plan worked like a dream, and the problem was soon solved.
- Be careful! The boss doesn't see you; she has eyes like a hawk.
- No wonder he's fat, He eats like a horse and drink like a fish.
- Sorry, I forgot to ring him again. I've got a head like a sieve.
- The boss is like a bear with a sore head today. (In a very bad temper).
- She goes around like a bull in a china shop. (Behaving in a very clumsy, insensitive way).
- Criticizing the government in his presence is like a red rag to a bull.(certain to make him very angry).

Exercise 1

Complete the flowing using as..... as.....Simile:

1. Rose is as mad as; you wouldn't believe the crazy things she does.
2. You are eating enough, but you're as thin as a.....
3. He never says a thing; he is as quiet as a.....
4. You'll have to shout; she is as deaf as a.....
5. I'm afraid I can't read this small print; I am as blind as awithout glasses.

Different similes contain the same word. Fill in the gaps with the appropriate words:

1. I feel great now. Ilike a log.
2. No! It's as easy as..... of a log.
3. After eating that bad cheese, I was as sick as a
4. I knew she had swindled me. I felt as sick as a
5. The old man's hair was as white as.....
6. Her face suddenly went as whit as.....

Put the correct number on the right hand gaps to complete the similes, as in the example, there are two that are not on the left-hand page. Try and guess them.

- | | | |
|--------------|--------|------------|
| 1. Quick | | - daisy |
| 2. Red | | - ox |
| 3. (As) Flat | as (n) | - flash |
| 4. Fresh | | - beetroot |
| 5. Strong | | - pancake |

Binomials:

Binomials are expressions (often idiomatic) where two words are joined by a conjunction (usually 'and'). The order of the words is usually fixed. It is best to use them only in informal situations, with one or two exceptions.

- **Odds and end:** small unimportant things, e.g. let's get the main things packed; we can do the **odds and ends** later.
- **Give and take:** a spirit of compromise, e.g. every relationship needs a bit of **give and take** to be successful.
- You can often tell something is a binomial because of the sound pattern.

The boss was **ranting and raving** at us. (shouting/very angry)

The old cottage has gone to **rack and ruin**. (Ruined /decayed)

He's so **prim and proper** at work (rather formal and fussy)

The hotel was a bit **rough and ready** (poor standard)

Sometimes the words are near- synonyms.

- You can **pick and choose**; it's up to you. (Have a wide choice)
- My English is progressing in **leaps and bounds** (Big jumps)
- It's nice to have some **peace and quiet** (peace/calm)
- The doctor recommended some **rest and recreation** (relaxation)
- **First and foremost**, you must work hard (first/most important)

C. Many grammar words combine to form binomials.

- There are cafes **here and there**. (Scattered around)
- We've had meetings **on and off**. (Occasionally)
- I've been running **back and forth** all day (to and from somewhere)
- **To and fro** can be used just like **back and forth**.
- He is unemployed and **down and out**. (without a home or money)
- She ran **up and down** the street (in both directions)

D. your language probably has many binomials. Make sure those which look similar in English have the same word order as your language. These four are very neutral binomials and can be used in formal or informal situations.

Try translating them.

- A **black and white** film, please.
- She ran **back and forth**.
- There was **hot and cold** water in every room.

E. Binomials linked by words other than and.

- You've got your sweater on **fack to font** (the wrong way)
- He won't help her; she'll have to **sink or swim** (survive or fail)
- **Slowly but surely**, I realized the boat was sinking (gradually)

- **Sooner or later**, you'll learn your lesson (some time/day)
- Well I'm sorry that's all I can offer you; **take it or leave it**.
- It's about the same distance as from here to Dublin **give or takes** a few miles. (perhaps a mile or two more, or a mile or two less)

Exercise 2

Here are some binomials, join them with AND. Then check your dictionary to know the meanings.

Prim dine ruin rough dry rack
 Ready proper sound safe wine

Now use them to fill the gaps in the sentences.

1. I was left.....and.....with no one to help me.
2. The room's a bitand.....but you are welcome to stay as long as you like.
3. I'm glad you'reand.....after such a dangerous journey.
4. My host.....and.....me at the best restaurants.
5. Our old house in the country has just gone to.....and.....nobody looks after it now.
6. The secretary is always so terribleandthe whole atmosphere always seems so very formal.

Positive and negative qualities

Positive	Negative
She has a heart of gold (very kind, generous)	She's as hard as nails (no sympathy for others)
He's as good as gold (generous, helpful, well-behaved used generally for children)	He's rather a cold fish (distant, unfriendly)

Note also:

- He's such an awkward customer. (Difficult person to deal with)
- She's a pain in the neck. Nobody likes her.
- He gets on everyone's nerves. (irritates everybody)

Exercises

Try to complete these idioms from memory if possible:

1. She does a lot of voluntary work; she has a heart.....
2. Don't expect any sympathy from the boss; she's as hard as.....
3. I'm sure Gerry will help you; he's as good
4. I was too late to get on that course; I was a bit slow.....
5. You won't find him very friendly; he's rather a cold.....
6. Tell him to hurry up! he's such a

Learn these idioms and complete the blanks using them:

One's head screwed on [be sensible]

To have _____	-A head for heights [not suffer from vertigo] - A head like a sieve [bad memory] -A good head for figures [be good at math's] -One's head in the clouds [unaware of reality]
---------------	---

1. I'd better write in my notebook. I have.....
2. Ask Martha to check those sums. She has.....
3. Don't ask me to go up that tower, I'm afraid I don't.....
4. She's very sensible and knows what she's doing. She's.....
5. He's quite out of touch with reality. He really.....

Saying people are good at something:

Some expressions with idiomatic compound nouns, non-phrases and compound adjectives:

- She's a **dab-hand** at carpentry, just like her father.(usually for manual skills).
- She's a really **first-rate/to notch** administrator, the very best.
- When it comes to grammar, she's **really on the ball** (knows a lot).
- Bill **has a way with** foreign students. The other teachers envy him. (Good at establishing good relations/ motivating them, etc.)
- He really **has green fingers**; look at those flowers! (Good at gardening).
- Let him do the talking; he's **got the gift of the gab**.(good at talking)
- He was dressed up like **a dog's dinner** (over-dressed in a showy way).
- I'm sorry; this essay of yours is **a dog's breakfast**. (A mess/very badly done).
- Mary **wants to have her cake and eat it!** (Wants everything without any contribution from her side).
- I think he's just trying to **butter me up**.(give false praise in order to get something).

Express the opposite meaning to these sentences using the above idioms:

- She was **dressed beautifully**, just right for the occasion.
- He is **no good at talking to people** at all.
- Mick **doesn't get on with** the secretaries, just look at how they react when he wants something done.
- She said I was the best boos they'd ever had. It was obvious she was **praising me sincerely**. I wonder what she wants.

Good talk, bad talk:

- The boss always **talks down to us**. (Talks as if we were inferior).
- My work-mates are always **talking behind my back**. (Saying negative things about me when I'm not here).
- It was just a **small talk** nothing more, I promise. (Purely social talk, nothing serious).
- Let's sit somewhere else; they always **talk shop** over lunch, and it bores me rigid. (Talk about work).

Talk in discussion, meeting, etc.:

- Who's going to **start the ball rolling**?
- I want to **speak my mind** today.
- **To put it in a nutshell**, this is a waste of time.
- Derek's so **long-winded**.
- I hope we **wrap up the discussion** by 12.30.
- Iris always **talks rubbish**.
- I hope they **get to the point** soon.
- I hope he will speak he always **talks sense**.

Idioms based on names of the parts of the body:

- He's **made quite a bit of headway** with his math lately.
- We **had to pay through the nose** for those tickets. (Pay a huge amount).
- I hope you didn't mind me telling you. I just had to get it **off my chest**. (Tell something that's been bothering you a lot).
- Oh, he's **got a finger in every pie**. (Is involved in many different things).
- You've got to **hand it** to her; she's a great singer. (Acknowledge/admit).

Exercises:

Complete the sentences with the appropriate preposition:

1. The long journey brought.....labour and the baby was born on the bus.
2. She brought.....six children all on her own.
3. He always looked up to his father (respect).

This diagram illustrates some of the most useful phrasal verbs formed with {look}. The meaning of the phrasal verb is given in brackets:

	Up to	He always looked up to his elder brother.[respect]
	Into	The police are looking into the case.[investigate]
	For	Could you help me look for my keys, please? [try to find]
	Back on	I look back on my school days with great pleasure. [recall]
Look	Up	Look her town up in the atlas. [find information in a book]
	After	She is very good at looking after her sister. [take care of]
	Forward to	I'm looking forward to starting work. [expect with pleasure]
	Out	If you don't look out he will take your job from you. [take care]

Here are a few more useful phrasal verbs on **look** all of them are illustrated below in a business context but they can also, of course, be used in other situations.

Please **look through** the proposal and let me know what you think. [Examine].

I've **looked over** your over your proposal but I still need to read the fine print [Examined quickly].

Business is **looking up** at last [Starting to improve].

When you go to New York, be sure to **look up** our representative there [find and visit].

We are **looking to** the Far East for an increase in sales [depending on].

The company seems to be **looking ahead** to a bright future [planning for the future].

What words you need to complete the sentences below?

1. Ithat summer with some regrets.
2. He has a great respect for his colleagues but he doesn't really look..... his boss.
3. You're going to London? Do lookmy sister when you're there.
4. The government enquiry is looking the cause of the accident.
5. We are looking.....to bring the company successfully out of the recession.
6. I'm sorry to hear you lost your job. I do hope that things will look.....for you soon.
7. Six nurses lookpatients in the ward.

What is collocation?

Collocation is the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing. For example, in English you say *strong wind* but *heavy rain*. It would not be normal to say; *heavy wind* or *strong rain*. And whilst all four of these words would be recognized by a learner at pre-intermediate or even elementary level. It takes a greater degree of competence with the language to combine them correctly in productive use. To a native-speaker these combinations are highly predictable; but to a learner they are not. Combinations of words in a language can be ranged on a cline from the totally free – see a man – car – book- to the totally fixed and idiomatic such as: [*not see the wood for the trees*] Such an idiom is not only

fixed in form; but also has nothing whatsoever to do with wood or trees. Between these two extremities, lies a whole range of nouns that take the verb *see* in a way that is neither totally predictable nor totally opaque as to the meaning. These run from the fairly “weak” collocation *see a film* (which an elementary student learn as a ‘chunk’ without posing to reflect that this is not quite the literal meaning of *see*) through the ‘medium strength’ *see a doctor* to the ‘stronger’ collocations of *see – danger – reason – the point*. All of these combinations, apart from those at the very extremes of the cline, can be called collocation. And it is combinations such as these: particularly in the ‘medium-strength’ area – that are vital to communicative competence in English.

Examples of collocation:

Here are some words and some of their collocations:

Admit collocates with: freely, readily, frankly, honestly, openly, and reluctantly.

Agenda collocates with: heartily, strongly, fully, entirely, and completely.

Diet collocates with: balanced, healthy, good, adequate, strict, slimming.

Educated collocates with: highly, well, badly, poorly.

Education collocates with: decent, excellent, first-class, private, adult, further, higher, and pre-school.

Information collocates with: accurate, correct, precise, relevant, valuable, useful.

Question collocates with: awkward, difficult, embarrassing, simple.

Shortage collocates with: serious, severe, and acute.

Successful collocates with: astonishingly, highly, extremely, very, and outstandingly.

Website collocates with: internet, official, design, develop, make, set up, upload, and update.

Exercise:

Choose the correct option to complete the following sentences:

1. Their attempts have been..... successful [extremely – strictly].
2. People can fight infection more easily if they have.....diet [powerful – adequate].
3. A Agenda will win votes in the next election [clear-different]
4. I wasa website all yesterday [preparing-designing].
5. I noticed adifference in her attitude [real- marginal].
6. There isshortage of English teachers [obvious-acute].
7. The journalist asked the gust.....question about his finance. [embarrassing-endless].
8. Headmitted that the head had taken a bribe [highly-reluctantly].
9. Books giveinformation. [valuable-healthy].
10. I with what you said [generally-fully].
11. She seems intelligent and..... Educated. [dramatic-well].
- 12..... education is expensive [private – poor].

Illnesses:

You can **have** any illness or disease:

I'm warning you – I've got a bad god.

Have the kids had chickenpox yet?

'Get' can be used with disease or illnesses that you often have:

He gets really bad hay fever every summer.

Suffer from: is used in more formal context and with more serious diseases:

This medicine is often recommended for patients who suffer from arthritis.

On **attack of** flu, nerves, and shingles: an asthma **attack**.

A **bout** of bronchitis, coughing, flu, pneumonia, sickness a coughing, an epileptic fit.

Catch: a cold, a cough, flu, German measles.

Develop: aids, allergy (to something), high blood pressure, heart/liver trouble.

Suffer: a breakdown, a heart attack, a stroke.

Injury: bad, major, serious, minor, slight.