The Idiomatic Competence of Jordanian EFL Undergraduate Students: a Contrastive Pedagogical Study

Main Researcher

Mr. Fuad A. Shajrawi

Prof. Oqlah M. Smadi

Second Researcher:

1 University Name & City (Main)
2 University Name & City (second)

Department of Curriculum and Instruction (TEFL), Faculty of Education, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan

* Corresponding author:

E-mail address: fuad.shajrawi@yahoo.com

Abstract

The present study aimed at investigating the idiomatic competence in English and Arabic that the Jordanian EFL undergraduate students possess. To achieve this, the researcher conducted a Completion-Discourse Test (DCT) on 125 students majoring Applied English in the Department of English in the University of Jordan during the academic year (2017-2018). The findings revealed that the Jordanian EFL undergraduate students have a low-intermediate competence in understanding the idioms in both languages and in using the Arabic idioms. They, however, showed low level in the use of English idioms. Moreover, the factors of transparency, equivalence, high exposure to English, the common use of some expressions and contextualization were found to have a role in facilitating the students' idiom understanding. Nevertheless, studying the idioms included in the textbooks did not show a better idiomatic competence than those who did not, The negative transfer had a great impact on distracting students and The students had insufficient knowledge of the English pragmatics and semantics.

Keywords: Idiomatic Competence, EFL Undergraduate Students, Jordan, Contrastive Pedagogical Study.

القدرة التعبيرية الاصطلاحية لطلبة اللغة الإنجليزية الجامعيين الأردنيين: دراسة تقابلية تربوية

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى بحث قدرة طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية الجامعيين على فهم واستخدام التعبيرات الاصطلاحية في اللغتين العربية والإنجليزية (القدرة التعبيرية الاصطلاحية)، ولتحقيق ذلك الهدف قام الباحث بإجراء اختبار إكمال الخطاب على 125 طالباً في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية –تخصص لغة إنجليزية تطبيقية في الجامعة الأردنية خلال العام الدراسي (2017–2018) . لقد أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية الجامعيين لديهم مستوى متوسط منخفض في فهم التعبيرات الاصطلاحية للغتين وفي استخدام التعبيرات الاصطلاحية العربية. ومستوى منخفض في استخدام التعبيرات الاصطلاحية الإنجليزية . وكشفت الدراسة أن عوامل وضوح التعبيرات الاصطلاحية الإنجليزية ووجود مكافئ لها في اللغة العربية والتعرض المرتفع للغة الإنجليزية وكثرة شيوعها ووجودها ضمن سياق كان لها دور في تسهيل فهم طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية لها، وفي المقابل لم تكن قدرة الطلبة الذين تعلموا التعبيرات الاصطلاحية الإنجليزية في الكتب المقررة التي تحتوي على تلك التعبيرات أفضل من غيرهم، وقد كان لعملية النقل السلبي من اللغة الأم دور في الاختيار الخاطئ للتعبير الاصطلاحي الإنجليزي الصحيح، كما وجد أن الطلبة لديهم قصور في معرفة علمي الدلالة والمعاني للغة الإنجليزية .

كلمات مفتاحية: القدرة التعبيرية الاصطلاحية، طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية الجامعيون، الأردن، دراسة تقابلية تربوية.

Introduction

Mastering the idiomatic competence is one of the characteristics of the advanced EFL learners. However, it is a desired goal of those who lack direct exposure to English and their figurative language has not matured yet. Due to the cultural specificity of idioms, it is expected to be an area of complexity for EFL learners, especially for Arab learners of English since Arabic and English have not much in common at the cultural level. Wallace (1981) asserts that the stumbling stone which may hinder the foreign learners of English to master the language understands idiomatic expressions.

The concept of an idiom has been defined by many linguists and specialists in different ways in English. Bolinger (cited in Lattey, 1986, p. 219) defined idioms as "groups of words with set meanings that cannot be calculated by adding the separate meanings of the parts". Fraser (1976, p.7) defined it as "a single constituent or series of constituents whose semantic interpretation is independent of the formatives which compose it. It is "a phrase that you cannot understand by putting together the meanings of words in it" (McCaig and Manser, 1986, p. iii). Clark (1988) argues that being unable to deduce the intended meaning of the words that make up a particular phrase and the literal meaning comes on mind first is the nature of an idiom.

In *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*, the definition of an idiom has been proposed by Richards, Platt and Weber (1985, p. 134) as being "a function-single unit whose parts constitute an independent meaning which cannot be worked out from grasping the meanings of each part of that unit". . Moreover, (Baker, 1992, P. 63) asserts that idioms "are frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and (...) often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components). Barkema (1996, p. 127) points out that idioms referred to as "lexicalized expressions having idiosyncratic meanings" have been the most common over one century. However, Barkema emphasizes that idioms have first, at least two lexical parts, and second, their meanings are not combinatorial and independent of the meanings of their separate parts. Trask (2000, p. 67) defined an idiom "as a fixed expression whose meaning is unable to be guessed by knowing the meanings of its separate parts". Carter (2000, p.66) points out that idioms have a comparable set of characteristics. According to him, idioms are "(1) non-substitutable or fixed collocations,(2) usually more than single word units,(3) semantically opaque.". Further, Carter (2000, p.66) argues "but the different degrees of possible fixity or "frozenness", both syntactic and semantic, should be noted".

The overall definition of the English idiomaticity includes first, that the English idioms are indispensible chunks of language, and second, they are language and culture-specific resulting in complicating the linguistic situation and minimizing the EFL learners' chances of having a proper competence in English (Aldahesh, 2013).

In comparison with other aspects of language, a variety of characteristics grant the English idioms a flavor of uniqueness. Palmer (1976, p. 80) argues that there is a set of restrictions governing the changes in idioms. For example, the word "beans" in the English idiom "to spill the beans" cannot be singularized to become "to spill the bean". Nevertheless, the word "handle" in the idiomatic expression "to fly off the handle" is not permissive to pluralize it to say "to fly off the handles". The adjective in the English idiom "red herring" has no comparative form like "redder herring". In other words, Palmer stresses the characteristic of fixedness of an idiom, and argues that the degree of flexibility has a wide variation among the English idioms. For instance, some verbs in

English idioms are able to be passivized such as the verbs in these idioms "the law was laid down", "the beans were spilled". Cruse (1986, p. 37) highlights the semantic nature of idioms. He argues that an idiom is characterized as being "a lexical complex which is semantically simplex". He also maintains that an idiom is congruent with the internal cohesion of a word and shows a sort of resistance of interruption since it is not subject to any addition of words nor is it considered as being singled out from the whole unit. Fernando (1996) stresses the fact that idioms in English encompass many aspects of language. They are likely to come in many different forms including slang, proverbs, dead metaphors, similes, social formulate, allusions and collocations.

Idiomaticity in Arabic has been largely investigated by many ancient and modern Arabic linguists under the general science of علم البيان "Rhetoric. This science علم البيان has been defined as "a science which is concerned with stating a single meaning in various ways with an apparent indication to that meaning (the meaning is known)" (Shakkour, 1992, p.64). Many books were composed tackling this science such as Al-JaaHith's (died 255 A.H.) البيان و التبيين "*Rhetoric and Clarification*" Al-Jurjaani's (471 A.H.) أسرار البيان "*Secrets of Rhetoric*" and Al-Zamakhshari's (died 538 A.H.) أسس البيان "*Foundations of Rhetoric*".

One of the four rhetorical styles in Arabic is المجاز (figurative expressions). This style of rhetoric is usually used to convey a particular meaning which is not originally intended taking into account that the original meaning and the figurative one have a relationship other than similarity (Sayyd Ahmad, 1993). For example, the word "القرية" in the Quaranic Verse "وَاسْأَل الْقَرْيَةَ الَّتِي كُنَّا فِيهَا" (Ask the region (the people) in which we have been) signifies for the people living in that region rather than the region itself (Youssuf: 82). The second rhetorical style is التشبيه (Simile), which is "a semantic relation indicating two things, persons ... sharing the same characteristic" (Shakkour, 1992, p. 65). For example, the Arabic popular simile "فلان كالأسد" indicates that that person shares the lion with the characteristic of bravery. On the other hand, الاستعارة (Metaphor) means using a specific linguistic item to convey a specific meaning which is apart from the original one presuming that the two meanings are linked to gather with a similarity relationship and the original meaning is not intended (Sayyd Ahmad, 1993). For instance, the word "المصباح" in "ضحك المصباح منيرا" (The light smiled in bright way) refers to a handsome person (Sayyd Ahmad, 1993, p. 125). The fourth style الكناية (Antonomasia) is using a word to convey a certain meaning that is perceivable originally or allegorically at a time (Shakkour, 1992) such as the Quranic Verse "وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبَا" referring to the torments of life (Mariam: 4). As a result, idiomaticity is the common feature among the four abovementioned styles sharing none-transparency in the meaning they express (Aldahesh, 2013).

Kharma and Hajjaj (1989) classify the Arabic idioms into three categories according to their difficulty as follows:

1- Arabic idioms which are easy to understand because their meanings are close to the meaning of the sum of their components (i.e. "من صميم القلب" from the bottom of the heart, "ماثل للعيان" visible, "ينسج على منواله" to imitate someone) (Kharma and Hajjaj, 1989. p. 74).

2- Arabic idioms which are difficult to understand since their meanings are far from the sum total of their constituents (i.e. (i.e. "قلباً وقالباً" with heart and soul, "عن ظهر قلب" by heart) (Kharma and Hajjaj, 1989, p. 74-75).

3- Arabic idioms which are very difficult to grasp, especially for the none-native speakers of Arabic due to their culture specificity (i.e. "على نفسها جنت براقش" it was her own fault, "وافق شنٌّ طبقة" the married couple are very suited to each) (Kharma and Hajjaj, 1989, p. 75).

In *the Contextual Dictionary of Idiomatic Expressions* المعجم السياقي للتعبيرات" الاصطلاحية", Sini, Hussein and Al-Doush (1996) gathered about two thousand idioms in Arabic from both classical and modern literature covering all the dimensions of Arabic idiomaticity.

Unlike the English idioms, the Arabic verbal lexemic idioms do not occur with particle (Awwad, 1990, p. 58). Further, most Arabic idioms are language and culture-bound since each idiom has a special story. Therefore, Learners, teachers and translators confront many problems when dealing with such type of Arabic idioms (Mahmoud, 2002).

Contrastive analysis was first introduced to the literature by Fries (1945) when he stated that "the most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner " (Fries, 1945, p.9). It was further developed by Lado (1957) when he assumed that the problems that the L2 learner faces when trying to acquire the L2 system can be uncovered by comparing between the language to be learned with the mother tongue of the L2 learner. This predictive power of contrastive analysis was argued by Wardhaugh (1970).

Contrastive analysis has knocked the door of language pedagogy. It is defined as stated in (Fisiak, 1981, p. 195):

"A systematic comparison of selected linguistic features of two or more languages, the intent of which is...to provide teachers and textbook writers with a body of information which can be of service in the preparation of instructional materials, the planning of courses, and the development of classroom techniques".

The researcher adopted this definition in the present study since it is serves the pedagogical purpose of the study.

James (1980) argues that CA has a psychological basis manifested by language transfer. He maintains that transfer has three types: the Negative transfer which is the interference from the mother tongue. It occurs when there are differences between L 1 and L 2. On the other hand, the positive type of transfer takes place when there is a similarity between the two languages. The avoidance transfer occurs when the L 2 learner is unable to transfer the form of the target due to its difficulty. Odlin (1989, p. 27) defined language transfer as "the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other knowledge that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired". Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) argue that language transfer is "the influence of a person's knowledge of one language on that person's knowledge or use of another language".

For the clarity purposes, the following terms are operationally defined in this study:

Idiomatic Expressions: In this study, they are those English idioms included in the tertiary EFL Textbooks of *English Vocabulary in Use* and *English Idioms in Use* by O'Dell and Mccarthy (2010) and their Arabic counterparts.

Idiomatic Competence: In this study, it is the EFL learner's ability to understand and use the English idioms communicatively in everyday life situations.

Jordanian EFL undergraduate students: students who specialize in English in one of the Jordanian Universities, and have not graduated yet.

Contrastive Pedagogical Study: In the current study, it is an attempt to compare the English idioms that are embedded in the tertiary EFL textbooks that Jordanian EFL undergraduates studied to their Arabic functional translations.

Discourse-Completion Test (DCT): It is one of the tools commonly used in the fields of linguistics and pragmatics in order to elicit particular speech acts. This type of tests consists of a series of scripted dialogues representing a variety of scenarios introduced by a short prompt describing the situation and setting. In the present study, it is four-domain bilingual English-Arabic test measuring the students' idiomatic competence.

Empirical Research

In this section, the researcher presented a variety of empirical research studies which are relevant to the present study.

Empirical Research on Transferability of Idioms

Abu-Afeefeh (1987) investigated the B.A Jordanian University EFL students' use of their Arabic knowledge to comprehend and produce the English idioms. To achieve this, the researcher conducted two tests (idiom comprehension and production tests) on 128 B.A students specializing in English at the third and fourth year level in Yarmouk University. The findings indicated that the students were more able to comprehend the identical English idioms than those of the other two types. There was also interference from the mother tongue in producing the similar English idioms. However, the subjects were less able to grasp and produce different English idioms than those of the other two types. Moreover, the students showed negative transfer regarding the different idioms.

Hussein, Khanji and Makhzoumi (2000) investigated the extent to which The English major students have mastered the idiomatic expressions. The researchers developed a test consisting of 45 items. The items selected represent degrees of similarity and difference between English and Arabic idioms. Sixty students were selected to be the sample of the study. Students were asked to translate the idioms at hand from Arabic into English. Besides, the study investigated the extent to which the types of idioms affect the accuracy of translation. The findings of the study revealed that the correct translation of identical idioms between the two languages was high ranging from 36% to 84%. In contrast, the degree of correctness and accuracy in the translation of the category of different idioms were relatively low ranging from 6% to 26%. The findings also pointed out the students have poor competence in the category of different idioms. The high percentage of correct translation of identical idioms was attributed to the role of positive language transfer and to the fact that English and Arabic have semantic equivalence in terms of identical idioms. However, the negative transfer hindered the students to translate the different idioms effectively. Moreover, the students' pragmatic incompetence and the use of paraphrasing translation strategy were the main causes of their incapability of using different idioms properly.

Mahmoud (2002) investigated the interlingual transfer of idiomatic expressions from Arabic into English performed by students in an EFL learning class. To achieve this, he recorded the interlingual transfer of the Arabic language-idioms into English. These idioms included (رغم أنفه) (He paid in spite of his nose), (قميص عثمان) (It was Osman's shirt), (لا غبار عليه) (Clear and no dust on it), (كأن على رؤوسهم الطير) (As if the birds on the heads), (ذر الرماد في العيون) (To put the ash in the eyes), and (ترك الجمل بما حمل) (To leave the camel with the load). He came up with the conclusion that literal translation of the Arabic language-specific idioms does not convey the intended meaning and distorts the cultural specificity of Arabic.

Empirical Research on the Idiom Translation Difficulties

Alrishan and Smadi (2015) investigated the difficulties that the tertiary EFL students face while translating the English idioms into Arabic. To accomplish the purpose of the study, 90 MA

students were purposefully selected from the translation departments of two Jordanian Universities, namely, Yarmouk University and the University of Jordan. The participants were asked to answer a translation test. The major findings revealed that the students encounter several problems when translating the English idiomatic expressions into Arabic including unfamiliarity with such expressions and inability to find out the suitable Arabic equivalents to the English idioms. Further, the students' translation strategies varied according to their linguistic competence and the degree of familiarity with such culture-bound expressions.

Empirical Research on Idiom Comprehension and Learning

In order to find out the correlation between the English language proficiency and the idiomatic competence, Al Kadi (2015) investigated the Yemeni EFL undergraduates' recognition, understanding and use of English idioms. The study also examined the strategies the Yemeni EFL undergraduate students use to comprehend idioms, and the difficulties they encounter when learning these expressions. To achieve this, A sample of 63 sophomores from the English Department in the Faculty of Education in Taiz University was selected. A series of three idiom tests in conjunction with questionnaires were used as instruments of the study.

Results revealed that there is a positive correlation between the idiomatic competence of high scoring students and their language proficiency of English listening an speaking skills. Further, it is much easier for the EFL students to learn the English idioms which have functional equivalence in Arabic than those which do not have. The study also indicated that the EFL students utilize a wide range of strategies to learn this aspect of language.

One of the most recent studies regarding the idiom comprehension difficulties in Jordan, Al-Khawaldeh, Jaradat, Al-Momani and Bani-Khair (2016) explored the dilemmas in understanding and learning English idioms faced by the English language students in the Hashemite University in Jordan. It also aimed at investigating the students' perception of the significance of learning English idiomaticity and the most commonly used strategies to learn such aspect of language. In order to meet the aims of the study, a test was developed to examine the extent to which the students of English have knowledge of some idiomatic expressions, and to investigate whether there is a difference in the idiom perception among the students at different academic levels. Furthermore, a questionnaire was designed to investigate the difficulties those students encounter in grasping English idioms and the strategies they use to learn these idioms. The sample of study was selected purposefully consisting of 150 students specializing in English in the Hashemite University.

The results of study demonstrated that students have a poor competency of English idiomaticity and scored different proficiency levels in favor of the fourth and third-year leveled students. Further, it was shown that the most understandable English idioms are those which have Arabic equivalents in the Jordanian Spoken Arabic (JSA). The results also indicated that inferring from the context is the most frequently used strategy to comprehend English idioms which necessitates contextualizing idiom learning.

Concluding Remarks

In light of the theoretical and empirical literature on idiomaticity, the researcher drew several conclusions concerning the intersecting and overlapping points between those reviewed and the present study.

English and Arabic are relatively two distinct languages and their cultures are also different due to social, religious and other factors. Nevertheless, some degree of similarity exists between the

two languages. Further, the idioms in the two languages are mostly culture-bound and reflect the cultural uniqueness of each language.

Although there are many studies conducted on the English and Arabic idioms in the Jordanian context including Hussein, Khanji and Makhzoumi (2000), Alrishan and Smadi (2015) and Al-Khawaldeh, Jaradat, Al-Momani and Bani-Khair (2016). they all investigated either the difficulties that the Jordanian EFL undergraduates, graduates and translators face when translating the English idioms into Arabic or vice versa, or the translation strategies that those learners and translators use in translation. However, there is some degree of similarity between the previous empirical studies and the current study in terms of the research purpose (examining the idiomatic competence of EFL undergraduates) (e.g. Al Kadi, 2015) and in terms of the instrument of the study (DCT) (e.g. Abu Afeefeh, 1987).

The current study focuses mainly on the students' competence of understanding and using both English and Arabic idioms through describing a variety of real life situations in which such idioms are used. In other words, the present study investigates the idioms of each language separately without asking the students to translate. Further, this study may be different from the previous studies in terms of the instrument used. While most of these studies utilized translation tests and interviews, the current study employed the Discourse-Completion Test (DCT) which usually measures the students' pragmatic competence.

Statement of the problem

Since idiomatic expressions are of a figurative nature, mostly culturally-specific and cannot be easily worked out from the linguistic components that make up these expressions, it is likely that EFL learners would not master the idiomatic competence: [to comprehend the English idioms and use them communicatively]. English is full of multi-words that have figurative meanings, so this might be a stumbling stone facing the foreign language learners of English (Akbarian, 2010). In the Jordanian EFL context, Jordanian EFL learners have a poor idiomatic competence and encounter challenges in understanding and using the English idioms communicatively in everyday situations. For example, Alrishan and Smadi (2015) and Al-Khawaldeh, Jaradat, Al-Momani and Bani-Khair (2016) stress the problems that the Jordanian EFL learners of English encounter in understanding and translating the English idioms due to being unfamiliar with such expressions, non-existence of the Arabic equivalence, their arbitrary nature and cultural specificity. Further, since Arabic is extremely different from English in terms of culture, it is likely that most Jordanian EFL learners including those who learn English in universities face difficulties in learning such culture-bound expressions. Therefore, further research is needed to more recently cover the issue, especially those contrastive studies.

Purpose of the study

The present study aims at measuring the Jordanian EFL undergraduate students' idiomatic competence in English and Arabic [their ability to understand and use the English idioms communicatively] in describing everyday situations in comparison with and contrast to their Arabic counterparts.

Research Question

The present study is trying to answer the following question:

To what extent do the Jordanian EFL undergraduate students possess the English idiomatic competence in contrast to their Arabic's?

Significance of the study

The current study is significant in three main areas:

1-It emphasizes the difficulties that the Arab EFL learners encounter in understanding and using the English idioms in everyday life situations.

2-It predicts the language errors the Arab EFL learners make or may do by utilizing the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis.

3-It provides the EFL teachers and the English curriculum designers and textbook writers with practical findings that help them to delineate efficient curricula and textbooks that include English idioms, and to utilize the best methodologies and techniques to teach them inside the classroom.

Limitations of the Study

The generalizations of the results of the study were limited to the following factors:

1-The selected English idiomatic expressions and their Arabic equivalents were confined only to those included in the textbooks under analysis.

2-The participants of the study were only selected from the Department of English at the University of Jordan (undergraduate students specializing in Applied English).

Methodology

This section included a description of the data collection, participants of the study, its instrument and its reliability and validity.

Data Collection

English idioms were collected from tertiary EFL textbooks recommended as references of the Course of *English Vocabulary Development* which is taught in the department of Linguistics (major of Applied English) in the University of Jordan. However, the name of the Course has recently been changed to *English Word Formation and Collocations*. These textbooks included (*English Idioms in Use* Advanced) Odel and Mccarthy (2010) and (*English Vocabulary in Use* Upper-Intermediate **l**| & Advanced) Odel and Mccarthy (2010). These two textbooks are authored for the purposes of self-study and classroom use. The selection of the two textbooks was due to the availability of the idiomatic expressions all over these textbooks.. Moreover, the Arabic idioms were the functional translations of the English ones or the most commonly used Arabic idioms.

Participants of the Study

The current study targeted Jordanian undergraduate students specializing in Applied English in the department of Linguistics in University of Jordan. The students selected all took the Course of *English Vocabulary Development* in which it is most likely that they studied the English idioms included in the instrument of the study. Therefore, students were randomly selected during the academic year 2017-2018. The number of participants was 125 students. The rationale for the selection of undergraduate university students to be the participants of the study is because they have already studied the English idioms in the English Language textbooks and they were all Jordanian Arabic speaking students. Therefore, they demonstrate a good representation of this contrastive study.

The researcher collected personal information (the demographic background of the participants). It included the students' names, ages and gender (optional), the mother tongue of the participants, the students' degree of exposure to English and the textbooks they studied which may include English idioms. The students whose mother tongue is not Arabic joining the Applied English Major were excluded from the present study. The degree of exposure to English was

categorized into three degrees (high, mid or low) depending on what each participant filled out in the part of the demographic background of the DCT. The number of the participants with high degree of exposure to English was 15 ones. The number of those with low level of exposure to English was 20 participants whereas 90 participants were intermediately exposed to English. On the other hand, the number of the participants who studied none of the two textbook was 18 ones. Those who studied both of the textbooks were 16 participants. The number of the participants who studied only the textbook of *English Idioms in Use* was 20 ones while 71 participants studied only the textbook of *English Vocabulary in Use*.

Design of the Study

The present study adopted a descriptive-analytical research method.

Statistical Procedure

Descriptive statistics including calculating means, standard deviations, ranks and extents was used to quantitatively answer the research question.

Instrument of the Study

To achieve the aim of the study, the researcher used a Discourse-Completion Test (DCT). This instrument measured the students' ability to grasp and communicatively use the English idiomatic expressions in everyday life situations in comparison with their equivalents in Arabic. Thus, the researcher developed a DC Test consisting of two tasks: a Multiple-Choice DCT (MDCT) and a Reverse-DCT (RDCT). The MDCT provides the examinees with a written description of a situation in which a given English idiom is used, and asks them to choose the appropriate idiom expressing such a situation in both English E () and Arabic (A). The four choices which followed each item in the (MDCT) included the correct idiom, literal translation of the intended idiom, ones or two irrelevant idioms or a non-idiomatic expression which completes the discourse. On the other hand, The RDCT form provides the examinees with an idiom in both languages English (E) and Arabic (A), and asks them to describe a specific situation in which the idiom at hand is used. In this task, the Arabic idioms were the functional translations of the English idioms, but in scattered order. The test consisted of four domains: two for each language and two for each task. The (MDCT) consisted of 20 items, 10 for each language while the (RDCT) included 10 idioms, 5 for each (see the Appendix).

Content Validity of the DC Test

To establish the validity of the DCT, it was given to the validation jury(four professors of translation in the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University and the Open Arab University), and based on their feedback, the instrument was modified accordingly. The researcher modified the content of the test as follows:

1-The test consisted of 30 items instead of 50 items.

2-A number of structural mistakes were corrected.

3-In the part of demographic background, two variables were excluded from the study, namely, the type of school that the student joined in the secondary stage and the BA year level of him/her.

Construct Validity of the DCT

To ensure the construct validity of the DCT, the researcher piloted the same test on a group of 30 students from another section of the Applied English major in the same department of Linguistics in the same university. They were not participants of the study. Person correlations of the DC test

items and domains with the whole degree of the test were calculated. The results showed that the values of the correlation coefficients of the DCT and its domains ranged between 0.75-0.85 . This means that the quality of the test is statistically significant, high and acceptable to be included in the DCT, and reflects the construct validity of the instrument.

Reliability of the DCT

To establish the reliability of the DCT, the researcher gave it to the same pilot study two weeks after administering the pre-test according to the test-retest procedure. Pearson correlation coefficients between the two tests were calculated. Additionally, the Internal Consistency of the four domains of the test was calculated using Crombach's equation. The results revealed that the Cronbach's Alpha of the internal consistency of the four domains of the test was 0.81. Moreover, the overall stability index of the pre-/post-DCT was calculated, and it was 0. 95, which means that the quality of the test is acceptable.

Indices of Item Difficulty and Discrimination

To ensure the degree of difficulty of each item of the test, and to confirm the degree of discrimination of the test items among the participants of the pilot study, the indices of difficulty and discrimination were calculated using Al-Ani's (2005) equation after evaluating the students' responses to the pilot test. The statistical analysis showed that the values of index of the item difficulty of the test ranged between 0.80-0.23, which means that there is no item of difficulty index more than 0.85 and less than 0. 20. Further, the results shows that the values of the item discrimination index ranged between 0.75-0.25; this means that there is no item of discrimination index less than 0.20. This indicates that the quality of the DCT was acceptable (Al-Ani, 2005).

Rating Scale of the Subjects' Responses

The researcher adopted Likert-rating scale to describe the subjects' extent of idiomatic competence including low, intermediate and high extents as shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 presents a description of the subjects' extent of idiomatic competence at the domain level according to Likert-rating scale.

Table 1: Description of the Subjects' extent of Idiomatic Competence at the Domain Level according to Likert-Rating Scale of the DCT

Description	less than
Low	0- >3.33
Intermediate	3.33- >6.66
High	6.66−10.00

Table 2 presents a description of the subjects' extent of idiomatic competence at the entire DCT level according to Likert-rating scale.

Table 2: Description of the Subjects' extent of Idiomatic Competence at the Entire DCT Level according to Likert- Rating Scale

Description	from-to Less than
Low	0- >13.33
Intermediate	13.33- > 26.66
High	26.66-40.00

Data Analysis

In order to answer the research question, means, standard deviations, adjusted means and extents were used to find out the similarities/differences in the EFL undergraduate students' use of idiomatic expressions in both languages: English and Arabic.

Findings and Discussion

In this section, the researcher presented and discussed the findings of the study in light of the research question.

Table 3 presents the means and the standard deviations of the students' responses to the four domains of the DCT according to the degree of exposure to English.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations of the Students' Responses to the four Domains of the DCT according to the Degree of Exposure to English

	Domains	Degree of Exposure	N	Mean	Std. dev	Rank	Extent
1.	Domain 1	High	15	5.13	1.92		Intermediate
		Low	20	4.45	2.21		Intermediate
		Intermediate	90	4.19	2.06		Intermediate
		All	125	4.34	2.07	2	Intermediate
2.	Domain2	High	15	6.07	1.71		Intermediate
		Low	20	6.65	1.57		Intermediate
		Intermediate	90	6.07	1.80		Intermediate
		All	125	6.16	1.75	1	Intermediate
3.	Domain 3	High	15	3.60	3.22		Intermediate
		Low	20	1.90	1.74		Low
		Intermediate	90	1.77	2.35		Low
		All	125	2.01	2.36	4	Low
4.	Domain 4	High	15	3.33	2.69		Intermediate
		Low	20	3.55	2.78		Intermediate
		Intermediate	90	3.74	2.60		Intermediate
		All	125	3.66	2.64	3	Intermediate
5.	All	High	15	18.13	6.46		Intermediate
		Low	20	16.55	5.51		Intermediate
		Intermediate	90	15.77	5.41		Intermediate
		All	125	16.18	5.55		Intermediate

Table 3shows that domain 2 ranked the highest mean 6.16 and the standard deviation was 1.75. The overall mean and standard deviation of the four domains were 16.18, 5.55 respectively. The overall mean of the students' responses with high degree of exposure to English was 18.13 with a standard deviation of 6.46. At the low level of exposure to English, the overall mean and standard deviation were 16.55, 5.51 respectively. However, regarding the students' responses with intermediate degree of exposure to English, the overall mean was 15.77 with a standard deviation of 5.41.

Table 4 presents the means and the standard deviations of the students' responses to the four domains of the DCT according to the textbooks the participants studied.

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations of the Students' Responses to the four Domains of the DCT according to the Textbooks the Participants studied

	Domain	Textbook	N	Mean	Std. dev	Rank	Extent
	Domain 1	None	18	4.17	1.47		Intermediate
		Idioms in Use	20	4.70	2.30		Intermediate
		Vocabulary in Use	71	4.31	2.25		Intermediate
		Vocabulary + Idioms	16	4.25	1.61		Intermediate
		All	125	4.34	2.06	2	Intermediate
	Domain 2	None	18	6.22	1.22		Intermediate
		Idioms	20	6.10	1.97		Intermediate
		Vocabulary	71	6.06	1.78		Intermediate
		Vocabulary + Idioms	16	6.63	1.96		Intermediate
		All	125	6.16	1.75	1	Intermediate
	Domain 3	None	18	2.00	2.45		Low
		Idioms	20	1.75	1.89		Low
		Vocabulary	71	2.03	2.59		Low
		Vocabulary + Idioms	16	2.25	2.54		Low
		All	125	2.01	2.45	4	Low
	Domain 4	None	18	4.00	3.24		Intermediate
		Idioms	20	3.85	2.30		Intermediate
		Vocabulary	71	3.56	2.63		Intermediate
		Vocabulary + Idioms	16	3.50	2.42		Intermediate
		All	125	3.66	2.64	3	Intermediate
	All	None	18	16.39	5.83		Intermediate
		Idioms	20	16.40	4.87		Intermediate
		Vocabulary	71	15.96	5.70		Intermediate
		Vocabulary + Idioms	16	16.63	5.92		Intermediate
		All	125	16.18	5.61		Intermediate

Table 4 reveals that DOMAIN 2 ranked the highest mean 6.16 and the standard deviation was 1.75. The overall mean and standard deviation of the four domains were 16.18, 5.61 respectively. The overall mean of the students' responses studying none of the two textbooks was 16.39 with a standard deviation of 5.83. At the level of *English Idioms in Use*, the overall mean and standard deviation were 16.40, 4.87 respectively. Further, regarding the students' responses who only studied the Textbook of *English vocabulary in Use*, the overall mean was 15.96 with a standard deviation of

5.70. At the level of the two textbooks, the overall mean and standard deviation were 16.63, 5.92 respectively.

It could be noted from the results that a very few number of the students surveyed scored more than 26.66 at the entire level of the test. In other words, a very few number of them mastered a high level of understanding and using the English and the Arabic idiomatic expressions communicatively. Most of the students who participated in the test showed a low-intermediate idiomatic competence. They were not unable to understand the English idiomatic expressions and the Arabic ones as well, nor could they give appropriate situations matching the idioms at hand. However, most of the students performed better in the Arabic part than in the English one, especially in the Arabic multiple-choice domain. This may be due to the nature of the task which seems easier. The reason behind this may also be that the students utilized the context embedded in the situation described. It is also possibly that the situations are described in Arabic which is the mother tongue of the students surveyed. Conversely, most of the participants showed a low performance in the English part, especially in the reverse test. It is perhaps because the task was difficult and the English idioms in this part were mostly opaque except for the idiom "the tip of the iceberg".

The results indicated that the negative transfer affected the students' ability to guess the correct answer in the English multiple-choice domain. For instance, in items (2, 3, 6, 7), the participants went for the literal translations of the idioms "when your grandma turned into a new bride, I have no time to comb my hair, I feel black, you're the pupil of my eye" instead of choosing the following ones "when pigs fly, you've got fingers in too many pies, I feel blue, you're the apple of my eye". Besides, they showed a better understanding of the transparent idioms, the most commonly used idioms in Arabic and the English idioms which have equivalence in Arabic compared to the opaque and less frequently and non-equivalent ones. For example, in items (5, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15), most of the participants selected correct English idiom which have equivalence in Arabic and the transparent one respectively "don't put all your eggs in one basket, I'm over the moon", and the correct Arabic idioms " من شب على شيء شاب عليه، في العجلة الندامة وفي التأني السلامة، المغنم، المغرم، جميع ما ذكر". In contrast, opacity and the students' unfamiliarity with some English idioms were a stumbling block for the students to select the correct answer. In items (8, 10), the vast majority of the participants were unable to give the correct idioms "went spare, leaps and bounds". Nevertheless, the simile "as clear as mud" in item (4) was mostly confused with the incorrect one "as clear as the midnight". This is possibly because the word "midnight" stands for darkness and peculiarity which suits the described situation more than the word "mud".

Although Arabic is the native language of all the students, they have a relatively poor command of the Arabic idioms. For instance, in items (16, 19) many students were unable to distinguish the idiomatic expressions "بشق الأنفس، هذا جزاء سنمار" from non-idiomatic constructions. "بصعوبة، الجزاء من جنس العمل" Further, in item (18), they were confused by the other distracters "يرأب الصدع يصهر الجليد بينهما، يجسر الهوة بينهما"; this may be due to being unaware of formality and semantics since " يذيب الثلج بينهما " is often used to reconcile the informal relationships among friends rather than in the formal contexts as the others choices indicate. On the other hand, the students' failure to give the correct choice in Arabic may reflect their insufficient knowledge of the Arabic idiomaticity; in item (17), many students went for the incorrect choice which may be logically correct " بين المطرقة والمسمار",or the other two incorrect idioms which seem to be apart from

the intended meaning of the described situation "بين الثرى والثريا، بين القلب والأضلع " instead of circling the correct expression "بين المطرقة والسندان". This may reflect that they face difficulties in understanding and utilizing the Arabic idioms properly. This could be due to the high chasm between the Standard Arabic and the Jordanian Arabic. Further, the Standard Arabic is learned inside the classroom and throughout a limited number of Standard Arabic speaking media channels rather than acquired in everyday life. However, the participants were more able to give descriptions of situations matching the Arabic idioms than those in English bearing in mind that the Arabic idioms given were mostly functional translations of the same English idioms in the English reverse domain.

The results indicated no difference existed among the students' understanding the English and the Arabic idioms due to the degree of exposure to English. In contrast, the students with high exposure to English showed better use of the English idioms than those with low and intermediate levels. For instance, one of the subjects who is highly exposed to English completely used both the English and Arabic idioms in describing meaningful situations in spite of not studying any of the textbooks including the English idioms (e.g. item 21-The tip of the iceberg: "In one of the classes, the professor explained a concept, so one of the students started complaining. The professor repeated. This is only the tip of the iceberg", item 22-Every cloud has a silver lining: "my friend kept complaining to her relatives, and after a while he was the only one who helped out in her house, so I told her every cloud has a silver lining"). Similarly, the same subject gave five meaningful situations matching the Arabic idioms (e.g. item 26- ليس بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان : "كان صديقي سيئ الطباع والأخلاق، ولديه الكثير من المال، فتعجب من رفض البنات له، فنصحته ليس بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان" item 27-, "قابلت ابن صديق لي وكانت تصرفاته تشبه أباه، فعندما قابلت صديقي قلت: هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد" ,هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد : "حاول أن يتحاور الناس في أمر رمي الزبالة في القمامة، لكنهم لم يسعوه"-28 item ينفخ في الرماد :). This may enhance the notion that being highly exposed to the target language develops your figurative language since you are exposed to the cultural norms of that language. Nevertheless, in spite of not studying the two textbooks that include the English idioms, the subject was able to completely use all the idioms more properly than other subjects who studied both of the textbooks or either one. This might indicate that learning the English idiomatic expressions from textbooks does not necessarily improve your idiomatic competence.

At the intermediate level of exposure to English, some of the subjects were able to use the English idioms as well the Arabic ones meaningfully to describe situations fitting those expressions. For example, one of the subjects who studied the textbook of *English Idioms in Use* provided complete descriptions of certain situations (e.g. item 22-Every cloud has a silver lining: "I didn't reach the bus. I found out late that the bus had an accident", item 25-One swallow doesn't make a summer: "not because you improved at work, you will be the manager in the future", item 26- ليس item ,بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان: "أحمد لديه الكثير من المال، لكنه غير سعيد، فإنه لا يصلي، فليس بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان" هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد: "أحمد شاب أمين لا يسرق وملتزم بعمله كما هو أبوه"-27).

Some of the subjects, however, with an intermediate exposure were unable to give descriptions of the idioms. For instance, one of the subjects with an intermediate exposure to English did not provide any descriptions of situations concerning the English idioms indicating that the subject might employ the avoidance transfer (James, 1980) due to possibly not being able to understand these idioms. On the other hand, the same subject's idiomatic competence of Arabic was better than that of English; the subject gave a situation which did not match the Arabic idiom "ليس

"بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان"due to perhaps being unable to grasp the figurative meaning of this idiom. "أنه يستطيع الإنسان أن يعيش Such an explanation may be supported by the situation the subject provided قراراً حتى لو تخلى عنه أقرب الناس إليه"; it indicates that every human being can live alone even if all the closest people of him gave him up. This situation signified that the subject literally understood the Arabic idiom. Further, too general situations were provided by the same subject although they matched the intended meaning of the idiom at hand like in item 30 "مهما تعثرت معك الأمور فإن هناك فرجاً قريباً"; the reason behind this may be the poor command of the subject's Standard Arabic. In item (28), the subject did not give a described situation; the student might not understand this Arabic idiom properly.

Some of the subjects provided an identical situation in both languages. For example, the Arabic-described situation "عندما تحاول إقناع شخص عنيد''"is the exact Arabic translation of this English-described situation "When you try to convince a very stubborn person". This may support the notion that the English idioms which have equivalence in Arabic (being identical/similar to the Arabic idioms) is more understandable than those which do not. This finding agrees with the results of Abu-Afeefeh's (1987) and Hussein, Khanji and Makhzoumi's (2000) studies (the identical and similar English idioms to the Arabic ones are much easier for the EFL students to understand). Further, some of the Arabic idioms were misused. For example, in the Arabic idiom "ليس بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان " the described situations did not exactly match the idiom "صديقك يتذمر دائماً علماً إنه يعمل أكثر ممن عمل وإذا قدم استقالته من واحد منهم فإنه سيزداد وضعه سوء فنقول له ... ". This situation indicates that being always occupied with making money will not make you happy and if your income is reduced, this is not the end of your life; this may be due to lack of knowledge of the Arabic idioms and inferring the meaning from the separate words of the idiom.

A number of the subjects with low exposure to English, however, were able to use the English idioms and the Arabic ones as well properly. For instance, one of the low exposed students to English provided meaningful situations (e.g. item 21-"when I tell my friend a secret and she gave me deep solutions while she doesn't know the details of the story. I say you don't solve except of the tip of the iceberg", item 22-"When I got into a huge problem in study and feel that I gave up and couldn't continue any more, my mum said to me every cloud has a silver lining", item 26- "صديقتي عندما يفعل الابن عمل شجاع" item 27- تريد الزواج من شاب فقير ولكن أخلاقه جيدة، فقلت لها ليس باخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان" ويكون إبيه شجاع، فنقول هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد", item 30-none). The subject was able to utilize all the idioms efficiently except for idioms 26 and 30; the situation described in item 26 did not match the meaning of the idiom reflecting misunderstanding of the given idiom. In item 30, the subject avoided giving a situation. This may indicate either the subject did not know the meaning of the idiom, or the time assigned was not sufficient even though all the subjects handed the papers before the deadline. Occasionally, the subject gave proper descriptions of situations that match all the English idioms. This may reveal that having no sufficient opportunities to be exposed to English does not always entail that you are unable to grasp and use the idiomatic expressions of the target language. However, this could not be evidence that the degree of exposure to English has not a role in improving the students' idiomatic competence since this is only one sample and other factors may enhance the student's idiomatic competence than the exposure to English. Some of global errors were noted in the subject's writing. However, this did not negatively affect the entire meaning of the situations described.

The results revealed no difference existed among the students attributed to the textbooks they studied in the Course of *English Vocabulary Development*. For instance, one of the participants who studied the Textbook of *English Idioms in Use* was not able to describe any situation matching all the English idioms and the Arabic idiom "the tip of the iceberg". However, this subject described some of situations matching the Arabic idioms (e.g. item 27- "ابن صديقتي متفوق وذكي في المدرسة مثل أبيه", item 28- "صديق لا يقتنع إلا برأيه", item 29- "صديقتي بدأت براتب زهيد في الشركة", item 30- "شخص لديه مشاكل عديدة"). In spite of giving some descriptions of situations concerning some of the Arabic idioms, the subject was unable to use all the idiomatic expressions in meaningful situations. Besides, the participant showed low level in using the Arabic idioms; on one hand, the subject did not provide a situation such as in item 26. On the other hand, she gave general situations such as the description given in items 28 and 30.

One of the participants who also is intermediate-exposed to English studied the Textbook of *English Vocabulary in Use* provided some situations (e.g. item 21-"The problem in the beginning may carry other, so the tip of the iceberg", item 22-"I failed in my exam. in the next exam, I got full mark, so I said every cloud has a silver lining", item 25-"When I see a sign of good beginning doesn't necessary it will be good. One swallow doesn't make a summer", item 26- "يجب عليك العمل أكثر", item 27- "إنه قوي مثل والده بالتأكيد هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد", item 30- "اصبر على المصائب إن مع العسر يسرا وليس بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان"). All the situations matched the idioms except for item 26; the subject might literally understand it. However, in item 25, the subject provided the meaning of the English idiom at hand rather than using it in a meaningful situation.

At the level of both textbooks, one of the subjects who studied both of the textbooks and had an intermediate degree of exposure was able to use all the Arabic idioms in describing ever day situations (e.g. item 28- "موظف يريد زيادة الراتب ومديره يرفض", item 30- "ابنة عمي رسبت في امتحان السواقة ولكن ما زال لديها الفرصة لتعيد الكرة فقلت لها ذلك"). Nevertheless, the subject used the Arabic idiom "أول الغيث قطرة" in sarcastic way "أخي أسقط ثلاث مواد في أول فصل في الجامعة" denoting that failing three courses in the first university semester hides more problems in future. Regarding the English idioms, this student either avoided giving situations to the English idioms like in item 23, or misused them like in items 24 and 25 "My sister asked the teacher to redo the exam, but he is not interested at all", "The teacher of our class wasn't able to make the school better". However, the English idioms "every cloud has a silver lining" was the only English idiom which the subject used properly "My grandmother didn't attend, and she didn't join the bus that had an accident. It may be worth". The subject who studied the Textbook of *English Idioms in Use* was less able to use the English idioms in describing meaningful situations than the other two subjects who studied the Textbook of *English Vocabulary in Use* or both bearing in mind that the English idioms in the third domain were mostly selected from the Textbook of *English Idioms in Use*.

With regard to the participants who did not study any of the two textbooks, the means of their scores were not less than those who studied both of the textbook or either one of them. For instance, one of the subjects with an intermediate level of exposure to English who did not study any of the two textbooks used the English and Arabic idioms at hand to describe situations matching the idioms in both languages. The subject was able to use all the Arabic idioms in providing authentic situations(e.g. item 26-"الشخص الغني ولكن تراه حزيناً تخبره أن المال ليس كل شيء وليس بالخبز وحده يحيا الإنسان"). However, the subject's English idiomatic competence was inefficient; while the subject did not give a situation matching item 23, she provided irrelevant situations to items 21 and 24 "When you are

working at formal office, and a small minute can be leading losing your work", "Keep shooting at an animal, but it will response at your shooting" respectively. Further, the idea of the situation in item 25 was vague "When you spend four hours of day at studying hoping at score high that isn't enough and reacts to your work" since the subject could not convey the idea. This student was able to describe a situation matching the English idiom in item 22 "When you lose all your money, but you are thankful and you are at a great health". Some errors were noted affecting the logical sequence of ideas such as in item 25. The subject might literally understand the English idioms and might have insufficient knowledge of English pragmatics and semantics. Nevertheless, her idiomatic competence was not much lower than the other three subjects' discussed above.

It could be concluded that the textbooks students studied did not help them build their idiomatic competence efficiently. This may be due to one or more of several factors including the poor learning students did, neglecting the section of idioms in the course or the limited time of the semester in which the course was taught especially these expressions were learned in conjunction with other aspects of English vocabulary. Moreover, the teaching techniques might be inefficient bearing in mind the teaching process relies heavily on lecturing in university. This teaching strategy may not be an efficient methodology of teaching idioms. Besides, since these expressions are culturally bound, it may be useless to be learned or taught in out of context-classes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It may be concluded that the major findings revealed that the overall idiomatic competence of the Jordanian EFL undergraduate students is very limited in both languages. Students showed a relatively better competence of the Arabic idioms as compared to the English expressions. No differences among the students' understanding of the English and Arabic idioms were attributed to the degree of exposure to English and the textbooks learned. Nevertheless, the students with high exposure to English were found to be more able to use the English idioms in everyday life situations than those of low and intermediate degrees of exposure to English. Further, the transparent and most frequently used idioms were more understandable than the opaque and less familiar ones in both languages. The positive language transfer and idiom contextualization were found to be facilitating the idiom understanding, thus using them properly. However, the negative transfer (interference from the mother tongue) affected the students' responses in the English domain. It was also revealed that the students have a lack of knowledge of the Pragmatics and semantics of the English language.

On the basis of the findings of the study, the study recommends the following:

1-The Jordanian EFL undergraduate students should be provided with sufficient opportunities to be exposed to English in schools and universities.

2-At least one separate course on idioms in English and Arabic should be ascribed as part of the study plan of the Applied English Major.

3-Learning and teaching the English idioms should be contextualized so that it is more likely that students are more able to internalize this aspect of language.

4-More courses on the English culture should be ascribed in line with comparing and contrasting the English cultural norms to those in the Arabic culture.

5-The Jordanian EFL undergraduate students should be encouraged to think in the target language when using it in order to get rid of the negative transfer from Arabic, and this could be achieved by immersing those students in full-immersion programs.

6-Further research is needed to compare and contrast between the English idioms and the Jordanian Arabic ones, and the students' idiomatic competence in both codes.

References

Abu-Afeefeh, R. ((1987. *Transfer in the Acquisition of English Idioms by Jordanian University Students.* Unpublished MA Thesis. Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan.

Abu-Ssaydeh, A. (2004). Translation of English Idioms into Arabic. *Babel*, *50* (2), 114-131. Akbarian,I. (2010). A Spice of Classroom: Incorporating Proverbial Expressions in EFL Classes. *The Journal of Asia TEFL, 7*(1), 238-221.

Al-Ani,N. (2005). Tahlil Alfaqarat Alekhtibaryyah fi: Alqiyas wa Altaqwim wa Bina'a Alekhtibarat Almadrasiyyah, Al-Kuwait: The Open Arab University.

Aldahesh, A. (2013). Review on Idiomaticity in English and Arabic: A Cross- Linguistic Study. *Journal of Language and Culture*, *4*(2), 23-29. Retrieved 25 September 2016, from http://www.academicjournals.org/journal/JLC/article-full-text-pdf/A00D3181989

Al-Kadi, A. (2015). Towards Idiomatic Competence of Yemeni EFL Undergraduates. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *6* (3), 513-523.

Al-Khawaldeh, N. ; Jaradat, A. ; Al-Momani, H. & Bani-Khair, B. (2016). Figurative Idiomatic Language: Strategies and Difficulties of Understanding English Idioms. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *5*(6), 119-133.

Alrishan, A. & Smadi, O. (2015). Difficulties EFL Jordanian University Students Encounter in Translating English Idioms into Arabic. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *6* (10), 124-133.

Awwad, M. (1990). Equivalence and Translatability of English and Arabic Idioms. *Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics, 26,*57-67.

Baker, M. (1992). *In Other Words: A coursebook on translation*. London and New York: Routledge.

Barkema, H. (1996). Idiomaticity and Terminology: A Multi-Dimensional Descriptive Model. *Studia Linguistica,50*(2),125-160.

Carter, R. (2000). *Vocabulary: Applied Linguistic Perspectives.* London: Routledge.

Clark. J. O. E. (1988). *Word Wise: Dictionary of English Idioms (Word Series).* London: Chamber.

Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, T. (1999). Processing of idioms by L2 learners of English. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*(2), 233-262. Retrieved 30 October 2016, from http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3587719

Cruse, D. (1986). *Lexical Semantics. Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press.

Fernando, C. (1996). *Idioms and Idiomaticity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fraser, B. (1976). *The Verb-Particle Combination in English*. New York: Academic Press.

Fries, C.C. (1945). *Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Hellinger, M. & Ammon, U. (1996). *Contrastive Sociolinguistics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Hussein, R. ; Khanji, R. & Makhzoumi, K. (2000). Idioms: Transfer or What?. *Language and Translation Journal*, *12*, 23-34. Retrieved 20 May 2017, from ٢304773490/.accountid=27719http://search.proquest.com.ezlibrary.ju.edu.jo/docview Jarvis, S. & Pavlenko, A. (2008). *Cross-linguistic influence in language and cognition.* New York and London: Routledge.

James, C. (1980). *Contrastive Analysis*. London: Longman.

Kharma, N. & Hajjaj, A. (1989). *Errors in English Among Arabic Speakers: Analysis and Remedy*. London: Longman.

Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across Cultures*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lattey, E. (1986). Pragmatic Classification of Idioms as an Aid for the Language Learning. *IRAL*, *24*(3),217-233.

Mahmoud, A. (2002). Interlingual Transfer of Idioms by Arab Learners of English. *Internet TESL J, 8*(12). Retrieved 26 September 2016, from http://iteslj.org/Articles/Mahmoud-Idioms.htnl

McCaig, I. & Manser, M. (1986). *A learner's dictionary of English idioms. Oxford: Oxford University Press.*

O'Dell, F. & McCarthy, M. (2010). *English Idioms in Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O'Dell, F. & McCarthy, M. (2010). *English Vocabulary in Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Odlin, T. (1989). *Language Transfer.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Palmer, F. (1976). *Semantics: a New Outline*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. ; Platt, J. & Weber, H. (1985). *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*. Harlow, Essex, England: Longman.

Riley, P. (1981). Towards a Contrastive Pragmalinguistics. In Fisiak, J. (Ed.), *Contrastive Linguistics and the Language Teacher* (pp. 121-146). Oxford and New York: Pergamon Press.

Sayyd Ahmad, R. (1993). Fannu al-kitaabah. Beirut (in Arabic): Daar al-bayaan al-3arabii.

Shakkour, J. (1992). *Kitaab al-bayaan (in Arabic)*. Beirut: Daar al-fikr al-lubnanii.

Sini, M.; Hussein, M. & Al-doush, S.A. (1996). *Al-mu3jam al-syaaqii lilta3biiraat al-?iSTilaaHyyah (in Arabic)*. Beirut: Maktabat Lubnan Nashiroun.

Trask, R.L. (2000). *Dictionary of English Grammar*. London: Penguin Group.

Wallace, M. (1981). *Dictionary of English Idioms*. Glasgow and London: Collins.

Wardhaugh, R. (1970). The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. *TESOL Quarterly*, *4* (2), 123-130.

Wierzbicka, A. (1985). Different Cultures, Different Languages, Different Speech Acts. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *9* (2/3), 145-178.

Wierzbicka, A. (1992). *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: The Semantics of Human Interaction*. Berlin: de Gruyter.