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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

**A STUDY ON
COMPREHENSION OF ENGLISH IDIOMS
BY TURKISH LEARNERS**

(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)

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To my mom and dad
for always being there

I know you believe
you understand
what you think I said,
But I am not sure
you realize
that what you heard
is not
what I meant.

Anonymous

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ABSTRACT

Idioms, concatenations of two or more lexemes whose total meanings cannot be derived from its parts, are hurdles for foreign language learners. The problem does not only arise in the production but also in comprehension. Thus, the aim of this study is to explore the factors--such as types of idiom, level of English, level of education of the learner etc., which contribute to the difficulty in comprehension of idioms. In the Introduction, the problem and the purpose of the present study is stated. In Chapter I, different points of view on the definition of idiom and classification approaches are discussed. Chapter II focuses on the significance of idioms in communication and language teaching. In Chapter III, the research method is explained. Chapter IV consists of the results of analysis. The last chapter, Chapter V, includes discussion and suggestions.

ÖZET

Deyimler, yabancı dil eğitimi öğrencileri için o dilin en zor öğrenilen öğelerinden biridir. Bunun nedeni, deyimlerin bir kaç sözcüğün bir araya gelmesi ile oluşması ve bu sözcüklerin tek başlarına taşıdıkları anlamdan soyutlanıp anlamsal bir bütünlük kazanmalarındır. Bu etken, deyimlerin yalnız kullanımında değil, anlaşılmasında ve tanınmasında da güçlük çıkarır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma Türk öğrencilerinin İngilizce deyimleri ne denli anladıkları, algıladıkları ve tanıdıkları konusunda durum saptamayı amaçlamıştır. Giriş bölümünde problem ve bu çalışmanın amacı belirtilmektedir. Birinci bölümde deyimün değişik tanımları ve sınıflandırılması üzerinde durulmuştur. İkinci bölüm ise deyimlerin iletişimde ve yabancı dil öğrenimindeki önemini tartışmaktadır. Üçüncü bölümde, araştırma yöntemi, dördüncü bölümde ise bulgular yer almaktadır. Son bölüm ise bulguların yorumunu ve önerileri içermektedir.

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Today, the ultimate goal of language teaching is to enable students to communicate effectively in the target language. To achieve this goal, the notion 'communicative competence' (introduced by D.H Hymes), has been taken as the basis. Hymes defines 'communicative competence' as the "knowledge of sentences not only grammatical, but also appropriate"(1979:15). That is to say, communicative competence "includes knowledge of different communicative strategies or styles according to the situation, the task and the roles of the participants" (Richards, 1983:115-116). Thus, recent syllabuses have been designed accordingly-incorporating "the knowledge of forms and meanings and functions". (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:133). Now, along with form, situations and contexts in which a language item is used is also taught.

It is, however, still the case that students, even after several years of formal English teaching are not very efficient in using the target language in actual communication Widdowson asserts :

The problem is that students,... who have received several years of formal English teaching, frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language and to understand its use, in normal communication, whether in the spoken or the written mode.

(Widdowson,1976b:117)

One of the factors which contributes to this problem is that while achievement of communicative competence in the target language is the established goal, how this is to be

accomplished has not been considered extensively. In other words, students of foreign language are already communicatively competent in their native language. They are aware of appropriateness criteria and linguistic behaviour. What they need to know is how to perform these in the target language. That is, they need the necessary vocabulary in communicating effectively.

Vocabulary is one of the neglected areas in recent methods and approaches utilized in foreign language teaching. The significance of vocabulary should not be overlooked since it is through words or expressions, aside from nonverbal input, one is able to convey or understand information. Wilkins remarks on the importance of vocabulary over grammar:

... there is not much value either in being able to produce grammatical sentences if one has not got the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say. One is literary 'at a loss for words'.

(Wilkins,1977:110)

Thus, vocabulary constitutes a crucial part of a language. Therefore, vocabulary teaching needs to be included in syllabuses. That is not to suggest, however, that vocabulary alone as a list of words should be taught. Rather there should be a balance between grammar and vocabulary since "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (Wilkins, 1977:111).

Vocabulary teaching, however, should not be limited

to simple lexemes only but should also consider idioms which are "essentially a part of language of everyday life" (Brook, 1981:15).

Idioms constitute a significant part of the English lexicon (Curry, 1986:Preface) since they enrich the meaning of the message conveyed with vivacity, colorings and images. Idioms also "describe and comment upon something in a situational context" (Lattey, 1986:223), which can be an economical way of informing as well as a kind of euphemism. That is, the use of an idiom will not only enable the speaker or writer to merely report an event, for instance, but also express his own personal attitude indirectly. To illustrate this, let us take the following sentence as an example :

(1) A recommendation from him would be
the kiss of death.

(Chambers Idioms, 1982:188)

The idiom as used in this sentence means that a recommendation from that individual will not be helpful. Moreover, it suggests that that recommendation will have a negative effect on the person to whom it is given. This, in turn, implies that the person is unpopular and not very respected in that community.¹ All these meanings and implications, although not stated directly, are inclusive in the idiom. As a result, the speaker or writer has expressed a personal attitude as

¹ Sentence (1) can be considered ambiguous. A different interpretation will not, however, effect the point made here.

well as describing the situation. Furthermore, since he has done this indirectly, it is socially acceptable--the opinion expressed is not considered subjective. Therefore, idioms are used frequently in communication both in the spoken and the written mode.

Frequent use of idioms requires an awareness of them by the speakers to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation as well as to transmit a message skillfully in the process of communication. Thus, students of English need to be aware of idioms and to learn their meanings to be effective in communication both as a speaker and a hearer--the ultimate goal of language teaching.

0.1. THE PROBLEM

One student read in a social studies text or story about someone "getting the axe"
 "What does that mean?" he puzzled.
 "Where did you hear it?". I asked.
 "Oh, in Mr.H's room. This story was about automation and jobs, and all of a sudden we read that this man 'got the axe?' what did he want an axe for ?"

(Frey,1970:81-82)

An idiom, by definition, is an amalgamation of two or more words whose total meaning cannot be inferred from its parts. In other words, the meanings of individual words do not reflect the meaning of an idiom as a whole. To illustrate let us take the above idiom, 'to get the axe', as an example. When the dictionary meanings of individual words are consid-

ered, 'to get the axe' means the action of obtaining a tool with a long handle and bladed head, for chopping wood. But as an idiom, 'to get the axe' refers to 'being discharged from one's job; to be fired'. In the above situation, 'to get the axe' has an idiomatic meaning. The student not knowing that the expression is idiomatic, however, interpreted it literally which of course is inappropriate in the context. Thus, the student is puzzled realizing its irrelevance to the situation.

It can, then, be concluded that idioms are hurdles for language learners. The reason is that, the total meaning of an idiom is not the sum of its parts. And generally, idioms also have literal counterparts which makes comprehension more confusing. Native speakers are able to determine whether a phrase is to be interpreted literally or idiomatically according to the context in which it is used. However, native speakers are aware that a phrase has an idiomatic meaning as well as a literal meaning. If a language learner does not know the idiom, he is tempted to interpret it literally. Once he realizes that the literal meaning is irrelevant, then he is confused, consequently gets discouraged since no communication is taking place.

To avoid failure in communication, the language learner needs to be aware of idioms in the target language. Moreover, since the objective of language teaching is to develop

in students the ability to communicate effectively with native speakers in any situation, students have to be taught idioms so that they are able to understand the meaning when they encounter idioms and eventually are able to use these expressions when they speak or write.

0.2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Mastery of idioms is considered to be one of the determining factors of achieving fluency in the target language :

Familiarity with a wide range of idiomatic expressions, and the ability to use them appropriately in context, are among the distinguishing marks of a native-like command of English.

(Introduction to Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English,1975)

Mastery of idioms is not, however, an easy task for language learners (Irujo,1986 b:236). But, since they are used very frequently in communication, students do need to learn these expressions. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the difficulties involved in learning of idioms.

In this study, features of idioms in terms of their meaning and the English levels of students are considered which may give an insight to the difficulties in the comprehension of idioms. It is observed that not all idioms are equally difficult to comprehend. The association

between the meanings of its part and the total meaning may be more obvious in some idioms than others. Thus, based on the relationship between the meanings of individual words and the idiomatic meaning as a whole, idioms can be divided into three groups. One group of idioms are those idioms whose total meaning can easily be guessed because of the obvious association between the total meaning and individual words. The other group of idioms are those which require situational and/or contextual information since the relationship between the meanings of individual words and the meaning as a whole is not as obvious as in the former group of idioms. There is also another group of idioms whose meaning cannot be inferred from its parts because there is no association between the meanings of individual words and the total meaning of the idiom. These constitute the major problem for students. Students need to learn these expressions as a single item.

Within the scope of this study, whether there are other factors which contribute to the comprehension of idioms will also be considered. In other words, it is assumed that as students advance in their proficiency of English, their comprehension of idioms should also increase. In addition, level of education may be thought of as another factor which influences the comprehension of idioms. In other words, as a student gets educationally sophisticated, one may inclined to think, his understanding of idioms will increase since his repertorie of idioms in his native lan-

guage may also increase. Consequently, whether English levels of students and their level of education is significant in the comprehension of idioms will be tested.

In conclusion, the purpose of this study is to find answers to the following questions :

- Does the comprehension of idioms vary according to their degree of difficulty ?
- Can idioms be classified depending on their association between the meanings of individual words of an idiom and its total meaning ? i.e., are there three classes of idioms ?
- Are idioms comprehended better when there is more information about the situation ?
- Does the English level of a student influence his comprehension of idioms ?
- Does the level of education have a significance in the comprehension of idioms ?
- Can the subjects recognize idioms, and how is the recognition distributed according to the each idiom groups ?

It is hoped that the answer to these questions will enlighten language teachers on the difficulties of idiom comprehension which in turn, will enable them to prepare their syllabuses accordingly to achieve the ultimate goal train students who are effective in communication in the target language.

CHAPTER I

THE IDIOM AND ITS CLASSIFICATION

Idiomatichity¹, although claimed to be a language universal, is one of the areas which modern linguists have failed to explore in detail :

It is generally agreed that the study of idiomatichity in natural languages, at least in Western scholarship, is one of the most neglected and under-explored aspects of modern linguistics.

(Makkai,1972:23)

The field of idiomatichity has been avoided by many notable linguists such as Bloomfield, Harris, Chomsky, De Saussure, Lyons, to name a few (Makkai, 1972: 26, Strassler, 1982:21). There is a need, however, to consider idioms and to treat them theoretically since idiomatichity is a linguistic phenomenon :

¹ Idiomatichity and idiom are used interchangeably throughout this study.

Polylexemic expressions that are not deducible from their constituents are a widely accepted linguistic phenomenon which has always provided great problems although the need to treat them theoretically has always been accepted.

(Strassler,1982:20)

Though limited, the field of idiomaticity in English has not been completely ignored. Number of studies have appeared each dealing with idioms within a different framework. Consequently, different definitions of the idiom have been established. The definitions vary nearly as much as the number of studies concerning idioms resulting in a controversy over what an idiom is, its characteristics, and its classification.

1.1. THE DEFINITION OF THE IDIOM

One of the earlier studies on idioms is by Charles F. Hockett in 1958. He is considered one of the linguists who has dealt with idioms extensively (Makkai,1972:28). In his book, A Course in Modern Linguistics, Hockett defines the term idiom as follows:

Let us momentarily use the term Y for any grammatical form the meaning of which is not deducible from its structure. Any Y, in an occurrence in which it is not a constituent of a larger Y, is an idiom. A vast number of composite forms in any language are idioms. If we are to be consistent in our use of the definition, we are forced also to grant every morpheme idiomatic status, save when it is occurring as a constituent of a larger idiom, since a morpheme has no structure from which its meaning could be deduced.

(Hockett,1958:172)

According to Hockett's definition, even a monomorphemic lexeme², unless it is a part of a larger idiom, is an idiom. This definition includes pronouns and numerals as idioms since their denotation changes in different contexts.³ Makkai criticizes Hockett's definition of the idiom and asserts:

Hockett' definition and expanded treatment of the idiom is such that it includes monomorphemic lexemes, lexemes consisting of several words (phrasal compounds phrasal verbs, etc.) proverbial phrases, quotations. Literary allusions, private codes, unfinished allusions. Certain monomorphemic lexemes (substitues and numerals) are suggested to be additionally, different idioms in different occurrences due to a shifting of denotata.

(Makkai, 1972:28)

Makkai, himself, on the other hand, believes that the term idioms should only be used "for units realized by at least two morphemes." (1972:38)

Katz and Postal, in their article, "Semantic Interpretation of Idioms and Sentences Containing Them" (1963), treat idioms within transformational-generative theory. In the article, a distinction is made between two types of idioms; lexical and phrase idioms :

The characterization of an idiom as any concatenation of two or more morphemes whose compound meaning is not compositionally derived from the meanings of the concatenated morphemes does not differentiate those idioms that are syntactically dominated' by one of the

² Monomorphemic lexeme refers to a lexeme that has only one morpheme.

³ According to Hockett, the personal pronoun 'he', for example, is a different idiom each time it refers to a different person. This holds true for numerals also. In sentences such as, 'she is five years old', 'it's a five-story building', 'there are five boys in the classroom', the number five denotes to three different things. Therefore, the number five is considered as three different idioms.

lowest syntactic categories, i.e. noun, verb, adjective, etc., from those whose syntactic structure is such that no single level syntactic category dominates them. Let us call the former type 'lexical idioms', the latter 'phrase idioms'.

(Katz/Postal, 1963:275-6)

Thus, lexical idioms are polymorphemic lexemes⁴ whose total meaning cannot be derived from the meanings of individual morphemes. As far as syntactic categories are concerned, these could be nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. Phrase idioms, on the other hand, are not of any specific syntactic category since they are an amalgamation of two or more lexemes.

Later in the decade, following Katz and Postal's definition of an idiom, Uriel Weinreich dealing with idioms in a generative framework defines the idiom as follows :

A phraseological unit that involves at least two polysemous constituents, and in which there is a reciprocal contextual selection of subsenses, will be called an idiom, thus, some phraseological units are idioms; others are not.

(Weinreich, 1969:42)

He illustrates his definition of an idiom by 'red herring' as an example. He assigns the subsense 'phony' to red and 'issue' to herring, thus deducing 'phony issue' as the meaning of 'red herring'. In other words, Weinreich claims that it is possible to assign subsenses to simple lexemes. It is not, however, always possible, to assign subsenses to individual parts of an idiom. Moreover 'red

⁴ Polymorphemic lexeme refers to a lexeme that contains two or more morphemes.

'herring' also has the meaning of soldier. As in this case, it would be difficult or impossible to assign subsenses to 'red herring' to deduce the meaning of soldier. Furthermore, if subsenses were inherent to simple lexemes, then these could not be considered idioms since the total meaning would be the sum of its parts.

In 1968, Wallace L. Chafe, in "Idiomatity as an Anomaly in the Chomskian Paradigm", tries to demonstrate that transformational-generative grammar cannot handle meaning in general, and idiomatity in particular. Chafe by pointing out the properties of the idiom, exhibits the deficiency of structural analysis within transformational-generative grammar theory in handling idioms :

1. The meaning of an idiom is not an amalgamation of the meaning of its parts.
2. Most, if not all, idioms exhibit certain transformational deficiencies.
3. Some idioms are syntactically ill-formed.
4. Any well-formed idiom has a literal counterpart, but the text frequency of the idiom is usually much higher.

(Chafe, 1968:111-112)

Within generative semantics theory, Chafe defines the idiom as follows :

... idioms are semantic units like other semantic units, but ... they require conversion into arrangements of other semantic units before they are further encoded into sound.

(Chafe, 1968: 122)

According to Chafe, transformational-generative grammar is inefficient in generating idioms since the inflection of an idiom as a whole, i.e. for tense, is possible as it is possible for its literal counterpart. For example, in sentences such as, "Sam has kicked the bucket" and "Sam will kick the bucket", 'kick the bucket' still carries its idiomatic meaning 'to die', although the idiom in both sentences have been inflected for tense just as its literal counterpart can be inflected. It is, however, impossible to "inflect parts of the literalization of this idiom, for those parts are not present at the semantic stage where sentences are generated" (Chafe, 1968: 122). In other words, if for example, the word 'bucket' is pluralized or made indefinite as in "Sam kicked the buckets", or "Sam kicked buckets" respectively, then the idiom is altered, and not considered an idiom any longer since it gives the literal meaning only. Thus, it is concluded that individual parts of idioms alone do not allow alterations. When they do, as in "bury the hatchet", which allows passivization, Chafe considers them as semi-idioms :

...perhaps it is possible to distinguish a class of 'semi-idioms' whose literalizations are amenable to restricted kinds of semantic tampering, including passivization. 'Bury-the-hatchet' would be such a semi-idiom.

(Chafe, 1968: 125)

In 1970, a couple of years after Chafe, Bruce Fraser, claimed that idiomaticity can be handled adequately within

transformational grammar. To prove this assertion, he sets up a "Frozeness Hierarchy" of seven levels of which each is a level of transformation :

- L6 : Unrestricted (All transformations are possible)-there are no idioms belonging to this level
- L5 : Reconstitution (A change in the syntactic function)-keep one's word, let the cat out of the bag
- L4 : Extraction (One constituent of the idiom is shifted)-break the ice, hit the nail on the head
- L3 : Permutation (Two consecutive constituents of the idiom permuted)-put down one's foot, put on a good face
- L2 : Insertion (Insertion of a constituent not belonging to the idiom)-give the benefit of the doubt to, give hell to
- L1 : Adjunction (Adjunction of a constituent not belonging to the idiom)-give ear to, stir up trouble
- L0 : Completely Frozen (No transformation is possible)-Bleed one white, build castles in the air

(Fraser, 1970: 39-42)

These levels are based on the degree of possible transformation. When an idiom belongs to one level, it automatically belongs to all lower levels.

The most extensive work written on idioms, Idiom Structure in English (1972), is by Adam Makkai. (Strassler, 1982: 42). In his book, Makkai treats idioms within a stratificational framework⁵. He explains why :

⁵ Stratificational framework refers to a theory that "describes a language as consisting of a limited number of strata or, to speak unmetaphorically sub-systems. [...] ... the strata are a system or code for relating communicative content at the 'top' [semology] to vocal expression at the 'bottom' [phonology]" (Algeo, 1973: 5-6).

Language is not a machine. It is a system of systems relating experience to arbitrary or traditionally inherited codes, vocal, visual, or tactile, and such codes to experience. The set of relations that constitute this system of systems has been convincingly proven, to my mind, to be stratified.

(Makkai,1972:88)

Thus, Makkai utilizes stratificational theory to define and classsify idioms :

Stratificational theory is used as a framework for defining and classifying two major types of idioms, sememic and lexemic. Subtypes within each of the major types are described in terms of their internal structure.

(Makkai,1972:88) (p.94)

The major criterion for a lexeme to be considered as an idiom is that its meaning is not inferred from its parts :

Polymorphemic forms such as nonalignment,coexistence, unfortunately,walked,counterrevolutionary, and antidisestablishmentarianism, regardless of the fact that some of these may consist of only one lexeme, appear to have meanings predictable from the sum of their components. (By 'predictable meanings' basic monolingual dictionary paraphrases are meant....)

(Makkai,1972:117-118)

Makkai makes a distinction between two types of idioms, lexemic and sememic. He, then, defines each type, first the lexemic idiom :

Any polylexemic lexeme which is made up of more than one minimal free form or word (as defined by morphotactic criteria) each lexon of which can occur in other environments as the realization of a monolexemic lexeme is a LEXEMIC IDIOM.

(Makkai,1972:22)

In other words, a lexemic idiom is a concatenation of free morphemes which can occur in different contexts independently. For a concatenation to be considered an idiom, however, the most important criterion is that its meaning should not be predicted from the sum of its components. Phrasal verbs, for example, constitute one of the six classes of lexemic idioms since they meet the criterion stated above, i.e. 'work up', in the sentence 'I couldn't work up the courage' means 'muster'.

Sememic idiom, on the other hand, is,

A polylexonic construction whose aggregate literal meaning derived from its constituent lexemes functions additionally as the realization of an unpredictable sememic network is a SEMEMIC IDIOM.

(Makkai, 1972: 128)

That is, sememic idiom is an amalgamation of separate words which has both literal and idiomatic meaning on the semantic level. In other words, 'may I...X' as in 'may I ask who's calling' is considered a sememic idiom on the basis that it is a polite form of the imperative 'identify yourself'. The question form does not require an answer since it is a polite way of requesting rather than asking for permission. The question form, on the other hand, may be interpreted literally as a permission, consequently can be either granted or rejected.

Sememic idioms are those phrases which are institutionalized, that is, socially accepted ways of expressing

propositions, requests, and greetings just to name a few. Depending on the functions of these institutionalized expressions, Makkai has formed nine classes of sememic idioms.

Thus, within each of the two major types of idioms there are number of classes. Idioms are identified depending on their internal structure, and classified accordingly.

In most of the studies dealing with idioms, so far the structure of the idiom has been taken as the basis for defining and classifying idioms. Consequently, the definition of the idiom, depending on the different structural frameworks in which it is analyzed, has varied accordingly. These studies have not analyzed idioms from either semantic or pragmatic point of view. It is the case, however, that,

Idioms are seen as a special category of lexical items which are not only determined through their structure, but which also show a specific type of behaviour in language use.

(Strassler,1982:11)

Therefore, Jurg Strassler, in his book, Idioms in English: A Pragmatic Analysis, treats idioms within pragmatic theory. Within this theory, he defines the idiom as follows :

An idiom is a concatenation of more than one lexeme whose meaning is not derived from the meanings of its constituents and which does not consist of a verb plus an adverbial partical or preposition. The concatenation is as such then constitutes a lexemes in its own right and should be entered as such in the exicon.

(Strassler,1982:79)

The definition excludes monolexemic lexemes, phrasal verb and prepositional verbs as idioms. He feels that, since "nearly every element or group of elements has at one stage been considered an idiom" (1982:79), there is a need to restrict the term to a more specific property of language.

For the purpose of this study, Strassler's definition of the idiom, with some modification will be adopted. That is in this study, amalgamations which consist of a verb plus and adverbial particle or preposition will also be treated as idioms. The reason is that, the meanings of such phrases cannot be predicted from its parts either. 'Cook up', for example, when analyzed structurally, is a phrase consisting of a verb plus an adverb. But in a sentence 'he cooked up an excuse for being late to work', 'cook up' has an idiomatic meaning 'to plan or organize'. Thus, the total meaning is not sum of its parts. Therefore, such phrases will be treated as idioms in the present study.

1.2. CLASSIFICATION OF IDIOMS

Over the years, in an attempt to classify idioms, different approaches have been assumed. The most common categorizing schemes are,

1. according to 'grammatical type' (verb-adverb idioms such as 'take back', or irreversible binomials like 'hem and how', or idioms that function like a particular part of speech...)

Bekarrim.

Handan KOPKALLI

2. according to the 'concept or emotion portrayed' (so, for example, a category LIE would include 'tell someone a tall tale'), and
3. according to the 'image', the picture drawn by the idiom (so, for example, 'she lost her head' would be classified under BODY PARTS).

(Lattey, 1986:217-218)

Elsa Lattey, in "Pragmatic Classification of Idioms as an Aid for the Language Learner" (1986), rejects these types of categorization on the basis that such classifications are inappropriate, not only in "capturing the range of expression types", but also in "... limiting them to a workable-and learnable-number and of organizing them in a way useful to the language learner" (P.218). That is, although the above classifications may serve as a purpose, they are "not very useful to the students of (foreign) language (s)" (Lattey 1986:218). Furthermore, Lattey, argues that idioms "generally describe interpersonal actions and relationships or the relationship of an individual to the world around him her" (p.218). She, therefore, claims that the classification of idioms, especially in language teaching, should be from a pragmatic point of view. Such a classification should, moreover, cover all the existing idioms. Thus, according to the pragmatic functions of idioms, Lattey sets up four parameters :

1. Interaction/Interrelationship of Individuals
2. Interaction/Interrelationship of an Individual and the World
3. Focus on the Individual
4. Focus on the World

(p.222)

The category 'Interaction/Interrelationship of Individuals' include those idioms which describe interpersonal actions or relationships. Following idioms are given as an example for this category; 'lend [someone] a helping hand', '[someone] is not fit to hold a candle to [someone else]'. 'Interaction/Interrelationship of an Individual and the World' can be exemplified by idioms such as, 'take up arms for [something]', 'know [something] inside out'. These idioms describe "the relationship of an individual to the world around him/her" (Lattey, 1986:218). Idioms such as, 'keep a stiff upper lip', 'show [one's] true color', on the other hand "characterize the individual referred to by the idiomatic expression" (Lattey, 1986:222), thus, under the category 'Focus on the Individual'. The last category, 'Focus on the World', includes idioms, 'go down the drain', '[something] is touch and go', that describes the situation.

Such a classification may be useful in teaching idioms in an organized way which will enable the students of foreign languages to realize which idioms are used in which situations as well as their function. This will also have implications on the production of idioms since such a classification may help students to understand what idioms in each category describe. It will not, however, enlighten the language teacher regarding which idioms will be more problematic for students.

Seidl and McMordie, on the other hand, distinguish three types of idioms regarding comprehension of idioms. They claim that the meanings of "some idioms are clearer than others, that is some easier to guess than others" (1978:6). Such a distinction is possible since the association between the meanings of individual words and the idiomatic meaning is more obvious in some idioms than in others. Consequently, the degree of difficulty encountered in the comprehension of idioms is on a par with the relationship between the actual meanings of the individual words and the total meaning of the idiom.

Idioms whose total meanings are more evident by the meanings of their parts constitute the first category. Seidl and McMordie give the idiom, 'to give someone the green light' as an example for this group. They state:

We can guess the meaning even though we may never have heard of it before. If we associate 'the green light' with traffic lights where green means 'Go!', we can imagine that the idiom means to give permission to start something.

(Seidl and McMordie,1978:6)

The meanings of some idioms, on the other hand, can be guessed only when they are in context. That is, to deduce the meaning, more information about the situation is necessary. This is illustrated with the idiom, 'to be at the top of the tree'. 'John is at the top of the tree', for example, does not provide the hearer or the reader with a clue as to whether the sentence has a positive or a negative connota-

tion. The hearer or the reader hesitates in determining the meaning. Does the sentence mean, 'he is at the top of his profession', or 'he is successful', or 'he is in danger?'. When more information about the situation is supplied, the meaning becomes more clear: 'Ten years ago, John joined the company, and now he's the general manager ! Yes, he's really at the top of the tree !'

Idioms whose meanings are very difficult or almost impossible to guess even in a context constitute the third group of idioms. Idioms in this group do not have any association with the original meanings of the individual words. The example given for this group is 'to tell someone where to get off '. The argument is that even in such a context, 'Jane had had enough of Mary's stupid and critical remarks, so she finally told her where to get off', the idiomatic meaning , 'to tell someone rudely and openly what you think of him', is not clear unless the hearer or the reader has encountered the idiom before.

Thus, it can be concluded that idioms can be divided into three groups depending on the association made between the meanings of individual words and the idiomatic meaning. Such a classification is helpful to a foreign/second language teacher in determining which idioms are problems for students, which idioms to teach and on which idioms more time is needed to be spent.

Following Seidl and McMordie's grouping of idioms in terms of the degree of difficulty in the comprehension of idioms, a tripartite division of idioms can be set up :

1. Idioms whose meanings can easily be guessed even without a context,
2. Idioms whose meanings can only be guessed in a context, i.e. more information about the situation is needed to determine the meaning,
3. Idioms whose meanings are very difficult to guess even in a context.

Such a division will give the language teacher an insight on the idioms which are more difficult to comprehend which will in turn enable the teacher to prepare teaching material emphasizing those idioms. This type of classification, may also be helpful to non-native language teacher who is not familiar with a particular idiom.

CHAPTER II

THE IDIOM AND ITS IMPORTANCE

2.1. IDIOM AND COMMUNICATION

2.1.1. WHAT IS COMMUNICATION ?

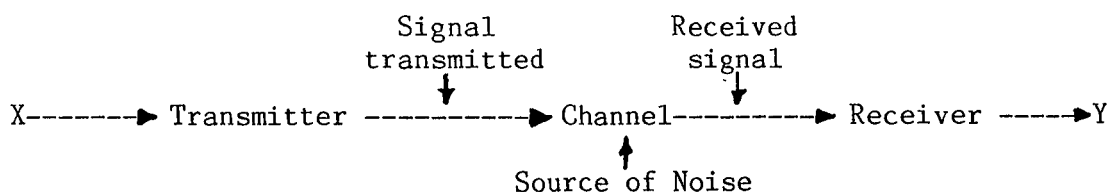
The communication model¹, also known as the Message Model, originally suggested by Shannon and Weaver (1949), is by no means restricted to communication via language (Lyons, 1977:36). In the model,

The sender's message is sequentially encoded and transmitted as a signal. The signal reaches a receiver, where it is sequentially decoded into a message.

(Akmajian et al, 1984:11)

If the relationship between the encoded message is close, then it can be concluded that communication is taking place as George Miller suggests :

¹ Communication model :



(Lyons, 1977:36)

In the most common and familiar case, what a speaker says is one set of events, and what his listener understands is the other set; if these are closely related, we say that communication is occurring.

(Miller, 1973:5)

Akmajian et al, argue that this is an oversimplification of communication by means of language. As the Message Model is applied to linguistic communication, number of problems arise since successful communication is not "simply producing, hearing and understanding meaningful expressions" (1984:396). The deficiency of the model relies with the assumption that "the message a speaker intends to communicate.... is the meaning of some expression in the language" (1984:44) That is to say, it is not always the speaker's intention that his/her utterance should be interpreted, let us say, literally. Furthermore, they assert,

... [it is a] fact that we often speak nonliterally; that is we do not mean what our words mean.... Nonliteral cases are especially difficult for the Message Model to accommodate, since in nonliteral communication the message conveyed by the speaker does not incorporate the literal meaning at all. Rather, the hearer is intended to use the literal meaning in figuring out what the speaker actually intends to communicate.

(Akmajian et al, 1984:396-397)

To illustrate the point, let us take the following sentence as an example :

- (1) "Do you want to try it?" Replied Lewis: "No thanks, I don't want to be in the hot seat yet."

(TIME August 13, 1984)

The phrase 'the hot seat', can be interpreted literally or in its idiomatic sense. The receiver, to establish communication, has to be able to choose the appropriate interpretation. Thus, to be able to determine the meaning of the sender's message. The receiver first, has to decide whether the sender's message is literal or nonliteral. Once he establishes that the sender cannot mean what he/she says as in this case, the receiver has to figure out what is actually meant. In other words, to interpret 'the hot seat' in this context, as 'a seat which is hot' rather than as 'taking great responsibility', will break down the process of communication.

Johnson et al, in Communication (1956), suggest that each communicative partner, sender or the receiver, whatever the channel is-auditory or visual—have the responsibility to rightly judge the value of meaning :

You are under obligation to say clearly or accurately whatever you have to say. You are also under obligation, as you listen, read and observe, to attribute to words (the carriers of thought) their full measure of meaning. To handle words loosely is to impede the proses of communication. The endowment of language carries with it a parallel responsibility, the responsibility to use (not to abuse) the gift. To say what you don't mean or to misinterpret another's thought through carelessness may be rightly described as a breach of integrity (a kind of rhetorical dishonesty) in the handling of ideas.

(Johnson et al,1956:111)

Thus as a sender, the speaker or the writer, has to be careful in his choice of words which will consequently enable him to convey the message he intends to send. The receiver,

hearer or reader, on the other hand, also has to be careful in interpreting the meanings of the words the sender has chosen. Otherwise, the process of communication will be impaired.

It can be concluded that in communication understanding or making one's self understood is crucial. As a matter of fact, this ability is the determining factor social acceptability as Johnson(1956:164) puts it, "... the person who is rejected by the group has usually failed to understand and to make himself understood."

2.1.2.. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The effectiveness of a person as a communicative partner depends on his ability to convey the intended meaning precisely and to interpret the meaning of the message accurately. Widdowson (1979:49) states:

The quality of the interaction will be judged by other criteria: ability to receive and express meaning, to understand and convey intentions,...

The sender, whether as a speaker or a writer, to be effective in communication, has to be careful in his choice of vocabulary. Hulon Willis (1969) suggest that "precise, vigorous, concrete and idiomatic diction,"(187) should be selected. The reason he states is, "a precise word is one that says exactly what you mean. A vigorous word is one that has strength of sound" (214). Idioms, on the other hand, are

"the natural, native expressions of a language" (193).

The receiver also has just as much responsibility in effective communication:

... successful communication depends... upon his receiver's recognition of the sender's communicative intention and upon his making an appropriate behavioral or cognitive response to it.

(Lyons,1977:34)

Moreover, many content words, phrases or sentences carry more meaning than what they denote (Wills, 1969:234). Often attitudes or comments are indirectly conveyed by the choice of particular word or phrase, i.e. irony, sarcasm, contempt, surprise, joy, request. Thus, as Johnson (1956:112) asserts, "... if you are an effective partner in communication, you are aware of the coloring, the particular connotations".

Effective communication can, then, be defined as being able to convey the intended meaning as well as being able to understand the sender's message. And as communicative partners, everyone has equal responsibility to be effective -- whichever role is assumed.

2.1.3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IDIOMS IN COMMUNICATION

When CBS's Diane Sawyer once pressed him hard about "the thing you're most sorry about",...

(TIME August 13, 1984 p.23)

... he sat behind Roone Arledge while the network chieftain called the shots for the evening's coverage...

"No thanks, I don't want to be in the hot seat yet".... This week he will be in the hot seat he knows how to handle. And as always, he will be cool.

TIME, August 13,1984 p.23

Ama bir başka hatayla, gereksiz bir penaltıyla kalesinde beraberlik golünü gördü...Ayağına gelen kismetini tepti...

Milliyet, 29 Kasım 1987

SAKARYA ÖLDÜ ÖLDÜ DİRİLDİ : 2-1

Milliyet, 29 Kasım 1987

TRABZONSPOR'UN GÖZÜ YUKARILARDA

Asbaşkan Nizamettin Algan, tırmanışa geçtiklerini ve şampiyon adayları ile aradaki puan farkının kendilerini düşündürdüğünü söyledi.

Cumhuriyet, 1 Aralık 1987

İsvet'ten bes parasız yola çıkan ve Hollywood'un kapısını çalan Dolph Dungen,... Şimdi,dünyanın her yanında televizyon ve sinemada boy göstererek cebini dolduruyor.

SÖZ, 4 Kasım 1987

The use of idioms in communication, whether in the spoken or the written mode, is very frequent. A research conducted by Strassler (1982) to find out the frequency of idiom use and the situations in which idioms are used, has shown that the ratio of one idiom is per 1,150 words or in speech per 4.5 minutes. The material taken as the

corpus consists of transcripts of trials, recordings of therapeutic sessions and excerpts from the White House transcripts. He argues that the frequency of idioms is low and this is due to the situations which he has chosen to survey. The reason he states is,

'Don't be more informative than required' nearly always results in objection. This accounts for the fact that in law trials or in interrogations we hardly ever encounter idioms.

(Strassler,1982:117)

This implies that idioms are used much more frequently in normal communication.

Idioms are not, as usually believed, colloquial or slang, "An idiomatic expression is by no means to be equated with slang " (Willis,1969:193). Moreover, their use is not restricted to informal speech or writing. Rather, they can be used in many different situations. Seidl and McMordie summarize the place of idioms in any kind of communication :

An important fact which must be stressed is that idioms are not only colloquial expressions, as many people believe. They can appear in formal style and in slang. They can appear in poetry or in the language of Shakespeare and the Bible.

(Seidl an McMordie 1978:4)

One reason why idioms are a significant part of the lexicon is that they conjure images which clarify or intensify on idea :

... idioms are used to give life and richness to the language by enabling it to absorb new concepts which need to be expressed linguistically in a new way.

(Curry,1986:Preface)

The choice of idioms instead of their semantic component enables the speaker or the writer, to convey more information as Strassler points out :

With idioms there is never a question of being less informative than required. In all those cases, in which the literal counterpart is informative enough the idiom equally fulfills this requirement. There are, however, cases in which the literal counterpart is not as informative as required.

(Strassler,1982:116)

Idioms are more informative than their literal counterparts in that through idioms, the speaker or writer cannot only describe or report an event or situation but also comment on the event or situation as well as express an attitude.

... by using an idiom rather than some non-idiomatic expression in the language, the speaker can communicate an attitude towards the event, which is not as readily communicable without the use of idioms. It may be that idioms function as a kind of euphemism, the use of which makes it more socially acceptable to make a personal-opinion comment about an event or relationship than the use of a non-idiomatic expression of the same message would be.

(Lattey,1986:224)

Thus, the use of idioms both in speech and writing is inevitable. It is the characteristic of linguistic communication not to relay a mere message but also enrich it with connota-

tions and colorings. And this is only possible, for the most part, with idioms since as Johnson suggests, no two expressions are synonymous :

... no two expressions are exactly the same in meaning. Even so-called synonyms have different shades and colorings. Especially in connection with our efforts to achieve variety in expression, it is important for us to be aware not only of basic meanings but of overtones and connotations as well.

(Johnson et al, 1956:157)

It can be concluded that idioms are unavoidable in language use for different reasons as stated above. Furthermore, Seidl and McMordie summarize the place of idioms in the English lexicon :

Idioms are not a separate part of the language which one can choose either to use or to omit, but they form an essential part of the general vocabulary of English.

(Seidl and McMordie, 1978:1)

2.2. LANGUAGE TEACHING and IDIOMS

Over the years, how foreign/second language should be taught and which skills should be developed in students has been a primary concern for many scholars. Number of different methods and approaches have emerged in quest for a better and more effective way of teaching. As this expectation is not fulfilled, a new method or approach has been put forward as a reaction to the preceding one.

The major shortcoming of language teaching is considered to be the inefficiency to provide language students with the ability to use the target language as a mean of communication. It is usually the case that in language classes, form, that is grammar and syntax, is emphasized as Long and Sato(1983) state, "ESL teachers continue to emphasize form over meaning, accuracy over communication" (Nunan, 1987:141). Thus, this results in a distinction between what Spolsky (1966) calls "language-like behaviour", and "knowing a language" (Leeson,1979:5-6).

2.2.1. 'KNOWING A LANGUAGE' vs 'LANGUAGE-LIKE BEHAVIOUR'

Widdowson, in two separate articles², asserts that students who have received several years of formal English teaching are still inefficient in actual use of the language. This deficiency is due to the assumption that once students master the forms, use will come naturally. Therefore, "there are comparatively few opportunities for genuine communicative language use in second language classrooms" (Nunan, 1987:141). Since "learning language is not the same as using language" (Swan,1985:82), in the use of the target language as a means of communication, Spolsky(1966) makes a distinction between two types of language behaviour; 'language-like behavior', and 'knowing a language'.

² Widdowson's two articles are "Direction in the Teaching of Discourse" (1979 a) and "The teaching of English as Communication"(1979 b).

Spolsky explains 'language-like behavior' as follows:

In 'language-like behavior' there is a definable one-to-one correlation between stimulus and response and an inability to respond flexibly to stimuli other than those to which the speaker has been conditioned or accustomed.

(Leeson,1979:5-6)

In other words, in 'language-like behavior', students are unable to produce novel sentences without a stimulus, they are usually restricted by those language items learned in the classroom. They feel that they have to be bound to whatever is practiced in the classroom not allowing for any flexibility.

'Knowing a language' is different from 'language-like behavior' in that the former implies an ability to produce infinite number of sentences appropriately and flexibly. Thus,

'Knowing a language' on the other hand, signifies an ability to respond flexibly and appropriately (in accordance with the contextual situation) to any stimulus, whether experienced before or not that may call for a linguistic response.

(Leeson,1979:6)

Depending on this distinction, the goal of language teaching should be to train students who are communicatively competent in every aspect of language. Thus to, achieve this goal, the language teacher should set his/her objectives accordingly. Finocchioro suggests,

The teacher's objectives at any learning level should be to develop in the pupil (in consonance with his age, of course)

- a. the increasing ability to understand a native speaker of English in any situation,
- b. the progressive ability to sustain a conversation with native English speakers,
- c. the progressive ability to read any material in English with comprehension, ease and enjoyment,
- d. the progressive ability to write correctly, functionally, and creatively in English.

(Finonccchio,1968:8)

To fulfill these objectives, however, the students need to be more familiarized with the authentic use of language.

2.2.2. COMMUNICATIVE USE OF THE TARGET LANGUAGE

One of the main problems why students of languages do not develop an ability to use the target language effectively in communication is that in language classrooms there is little genuine communication as Leeson claims:

For a large part of his training, the learner hears perfectly recorded samples of language or is in an artificial, one-to-one relationship with a teacher whose speech pattern become familiar to him.

(Leeson,1979:1975)

On the contrary, the "classroom language should be as life-like as possible " (Swan,1985:82). The 'real use' of language will enlighten the students on how the target language is used in the outside world. The importance of exemplifying real use of language by means of authentic material is emphasized by Swan :

Authentic material... gives students a taste of 'real' language in use, and provides them with valid linguistic data for their unconscious acquisition process to work on. If students are exposed only to scripted material, they will learn an impoverished version of the language and will find it hard to come to terms with genuine discourse when they are exposed to it.

(Swan,1985:85)

Although the use of authentic materials for communicative purposes, and the use of the target language as a means of communications considered to be essential, empirical studies have shown that language teachers still continue to apply traditional structural syllabuses where there is not much emphasis on the use:

From data collected from classes of experienced, informed, and eclectic teachers, it was found that "contrary to the recommendations many writers on second language teaching methodology, communicative use of the target language makes up only a minor part of typical classroom activities."

(Raimes,1983:543-544)

This is not to suggest that form should not be taught in language classes. Rather all properties of the target language should be integrated so that students will be able to establish successful communication outside the classroom as well as in the classroom. That is to say, language is not all grammar as Hymes suggests, "There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless "(1979:15). This in mind, over the years each new method or approach to language teaching has emerged attempting to improve the principles by emphasizing function along with form. However, the students are still not very successful in using the target language as native speakers do.

2.2.3. INEFFICIENCY IN THE USE OF THE TARGET LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATION: LACK OF SUFFICIENT VOCABULARY

One of the major gaps in the 'function along with form' approach relies within its avoidance of vocabulary. Whatever vocabulary students learn, for the most part, is accidental. Swan in "A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (2)" explains the importance of vocabulary in language use :

Students can already convey information, define, apologize and so on-what they need to learn is how to do these things in English.
... they also have to learn the words and expressions which are used to refer to the things

in the world they want to talk about, ask about or request, However good a lesson on the function of warning may be, it will not in itself enable students to say 'Look out-the top half of the ladder isn't properly fixed on.' Functions without lexis are no better than structures without lexis. And referential lexis is a vast field-it certainly makes up the bulk of the learning load in any general-purpose language course.

(Swan,1985:81)

Teaching of vocabulary is crucial since information is conveyed and comprehended through words or expressions. Vocabulary constitutes an essential and inevitable part of a language. It is through words that a better understanding of grammar, syntax and semantics as well as function can be achieved. Raimes comments on the importance of vocabulary

Our students have been telling us for many years, "What we need is vocabulary." They are probably right. They certainly do need vocabulary to engage with content, to turn clusters of words into syntax, and to use those words and that syntax to make sense of what is around them.

(Raimes,1983:549)

Thus, vocabulary is just as important as other features of language. Therefore, vocabulary teaching should be integrated within the teaching material having equal emphasis: "The obvious fact is that to communicate at all seriously and adequately through the language a command of both grammar and vocabulary is necessary "(Wilkins,1977:110).

2.2.4. IDIOMS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

If "without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (Wilkins, 1977:111), then vocabulary teaching need to be included in the syllabus. Teaching of vocabulary should not be restricted to simple lexemes, but should also include idioms which constitute an important part of the English lexicon :

Idioms are not a separate part of the language which one can choose either to use or to omit, but they form an essential part of the general vocabulary in English.

(Seidl/McMordie, 1979:1)

Moreover, idioms are used frequently by English speakers both in the spoken and the written mode. Thus, if the ultimate goal of language teaching is to enable students to communicate effectively in the target language, then they have to be able to recognize, comprehend and produce idioms :

... every language learner needs to develop competence in them [idioms] since they are used by native speakers in both the spoken and the written mediums. Furthermore, since "real-life language" utilizes idioms, they must play an integral part in syllabus design.

(Greenberg, 1983:551)

It is agreed by many that idioms are hurdles for language learners (Frey 1970:80, Celce-Murcia and Rosenweig 1979:251, Irujo 1986a:287 and 1986b:236, Politzer and Politzer 1972:225, Lattey 1986:219, Wilkins, 1977:129). The

reason for this is that students are never taught idioms. If they know few idioms, it is probably incidental. The students do need to be taught idioms since mastery of language is determined by the effective use of idioms as well as understanding them. In other words, as many also agree, the native-like command of the target language is achieved by mastery of idioms (Celce-Murcia and Rosenweig 1929:251, Brook 1981:15, Lattey 1986:227, Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, 1975:IV) Thiel's (1979:23) following assertion summarizes the importance of idioms for language learners:

Sooner or later, lack of precise idiomatic usage will betray the foreign background even of a speaker with an excellent grammatical knowledge, vocabulary and pronunciation. And just as surely command of idiom will generate confidence and respect.

(Lattey, 1986:227)

Thus, in language teaching the importance of idioms in communication should not be overlooked. Students' success in effective communication will be judged by their competence not only in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation but also idioms.

CHAPTER III

THE RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, the comprehension of forty-eight idioms was tested to determine whether English idioms vary in their degree of difficulty as far as deducing the meanings are concerned. The forty-eight randomly chosen idioms used in the study were classified according to their degree of difficulty based on Seidl and McMordie's (1979) suggestion (discussed in detail in Chapter I), thus forming a tripartite division of idiom classification. In determining which class the idioms chosen for this study belong, non-native teachers of English were given a test (see 2.2).

The comprehension tests were applied to a total of 200 students from different English levels and age groups.

3.2. SELECTION OF IDIOMS AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION

The idioms used in the tests have been selected ran-

domly from various sources. Out of forty-eight idioms, thirty-one were taken from vocabulary building books in which the main goal is to teach idioms and idiomatic expressions. Twenty-two out of these thirty-one idioms were taken from Illustrated American Idioms, nine from Illustrated Idiomatic Expressions in Context. The remaining seventeen were again selected randomly from idiom dictionaries; Longman Dictionary of English Idioms, Chambers Idioms, and Collins Dictionary of English Idioms. All forty-eight idioms appear as entries in at least one of the idiom dictionaries named above.

3.2.1. CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

The classification of the forty-eight idioms have been based on their degree of difficulty. To determine the place of an idiom within the tripartite division of idiom classification, five non-native teachers of English have been tested. The procedure was as follows: First, each subject was asked to give the meaning of an idiom without any contextual information. In other words, the subject was given the idiom by itself in isolation and asked the meaning, if the answer was correct, then that idiom was classified as belonging to 'First Group Idioms'. If the answer was not correct, the same idiom was given again, but this time used in a sentence. If the accurate meaning of the idiom was supplied then that idiom was classified as a 'Second Group Idiom'. Otherwise, the idiom was placed with the 'Third Group Idioms'. This process of classification was done

individually and orally. If there were any discrepancies concerning the classification of idioms, then the classification according to majority was taken as the basis.

3.3. SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

These tests have been given to the undergraduate students of English in the Faculty of Education, Department of English, and to the participants of English Summer Courses sponsored by the Board of Higher Education (YÖK) at Anadolu University. The participants of the summer courses are older than the students in the Faculty of Education.

In the selection of subjects from both groups, stratified sampling theory is taken as a basis. That is, the population in each group was divided into four homogeneous groups as far as English levels are concerned, thus forming four strata for each group. Then a sample was taken from each strata randomly. The number of subjects in each strata and the total number in each group is illustrated in Table 3.1.

LEVEL	EĞİTİM (Undergraduate students at Faculty of Education)	P.GRAD (participants of the Summer Courses)	NUMBER in each level
Elementary	30	30	60
Lower Intermediate	25	25	50
Upper Intermediate	30	30	60
Advanced	15	15	30

Total number of subjects :200

Table 3.1. Distribution of the subjects

The students of the Faculty of Education are accepted to the Department according to the English scores received in the centralized university entrance exams. A separate standard placement was not given. The curriculum for each level is fixed, thus all students of one level take the same courses.

The participants of the summer courses were grouped according to the results of a standard placement test given at the beginning of the term. Each participant is employed in a university in Turkey as a teaching staff. The academic status and the field of study of each subject may be different.

The native language of all the subjects is Turkish.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION

In this study, two separate and different comprehension tests on two different occasions were given to all subjects. These two comprehension tests are discussed in detail below.

3.4.1. IDIOMS IN ISOLATION

The first test given consists of forty-eight idioms in a random order regardless of the classification. In this test, idioms were given as a list, without any contextual information (see Appendix C). The subjects were asked to write

the meanings of idioms either in Turkish or English. They were not, in any way, restricted to give the Turkish equivalent of the idiom.

3.4.2. IDIOMS USED IN A SENTENCE

The second test consists of the same forty-eight idioms in a different order. This time, however, each idiom was used in a sentence, and the idioms in each sentence were underlined. The sentences used in the test are taken from Illustrated American Idioms, Idiomatic Expressions in Context, Chambers Idioms, and Longman Dictionary of English Idioms. Out of forty-eight idioms, for only four idioms, a sample sentence was not found in any of the sources mentioned above although the meanings of the idioms were given. Therefore, a sample sentence was invented for the each remaining idioms.

The sentences used in this test were determined according to the results of a test given to native and non-native speakers of English who are also teachers of English (see following section).

In this test, as in the first test, the subjects were asked to write only the meanings of the underlined idioms. Again, the responses were not restricted to either language or to an idiomatic equivalent.

3.4.3. CONTEXT DETERMINING TEST

To determine which sample sentence gives a better

the meanings of idioms either in Turkish or English. They were not, in any way, restricted to give the Turkish equivalent of the idiom.

3.4.2. IDIOMS USED IN A SENTENCE

The second test consists of the same forty-eight idioms in a different order. This time, however, each idiom was used in a sentence, and the idioms in each sentence were underlined. The sentences used in the test are taken from Illustrated American Idioms, Idiomatic Expressions in Context, Chambers Idioms, and Longman Dictionary of English Idioms. Out of forty-eight idioms, for only four idioms, a sample sentence was not found in any of the sources mentioned above although the meanings of the idioms were given. Therefore, a sample sentence was invented for the each remaining idioms.

The sentences used in this test were determined according to the results of a test given to native and non-native speakers of English who are also teachers of English (see following section).

In this test, as in the first test, the subjects were asked to write only the meanings of the underlined idioms. Again, the responses were not restricted to either language or to an idiomatic equivalent.

3.4.3. CONTEXT DETERMINING TEST

To determine which sample sentence gives a better

insight to the meaning of an idiom a 'Context Determining Test' was conducted. The purpose of this test is to reduce the chance that the difficulty in comprehension is due to the unappropriateness of the sentence.

In this test, for each idiom, number of sample sentences containing the idiom from different sources were given. The subjects were given the test and asked to choose the sentence which best gives the meaning of the idiom. If none of the sample sentence was found to be sufficient, they were asked to write an alternative sample sentence.

The total number of subjects is ten, out of which seven of them are native speakers of English and three of them non-native speakers of English. All ten are teachers of English at Anadolu University.

3.4.4. RECOGNITION TEST

After comprehension tests were conducted, to determine whether the subjects were able to recognize English idioms, and whether this recognition is compatible with the classification of idioms, a 'Recognition Test' was given. In this test, a total of 75 sentences were given. Only 48 sentences contained the same idioms given in the comprehension tests. The sentences which contained idioms were, however, different from the sentences given in the comprehension test. Thus, 27 sentences did not contain an idiom. Sentences containing idioms were mixed with those which did not contain idioms.

In this test, the subjects were asked to underline the idioms in those sentences which contained an idiom.

This test was given only to the participants of the English summer courses. A total of 64 subjects, chosen randomly, from all four levels took part in the test. The distribution of subjects is even-16 from each level.

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

3.5.1.COMPREHENSION TESTS

Both of the comprehension tests-idioms in isolation and idioms used in a sentence, were analyzed in terms of correct responses. In each test, the number of correct responses were counted for each idiom.

To test the hypotheses a statistical technique has been applied. In the calculations, two-tailed 'Differences of Proportions' test, $z = \frac{P_1 - P_2}{\sqrt{p_1 - p_2}}$ was utilized.

3.5.2.CONTEXT DETERMINING TEST

In the 'Context Determining Test', the number for each choice in each idiom was counted. The choice preferred by the majority was taken as the sentence to be used in the comprehension test.

3.5.3.RECOGNITION TEST

In this test, as in comprehension tests, the number of correct responses were calculated for each idiom. The

response was accepted as correct if,

- the whole idiom is underlined,
the major part of the idiom is underlined, i.e., when either the verb 'to be' or the pronoun is omitted since the meaning of the idiom is not altered. For example:
I knew I was skating on thin ice
- more than the idiom is underlined as if two separate idioms. i.e., two different expressions in two separate sentences :
... by word of mouth. I hope it's true.

The response is regarded as incorrect if,

- more lexical items than what the idiom consists of is underlined. For example,
Sam says that he is on te target in his law creer.
- a part of the idiom is not underlined and if this omitted part is an essential part in the meaning :
... really got under my skin ...

The percentage of correct responses is calculated for each English level as well as for each idiom group.

3.6. METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

- The groups considered in this study can be matched according to their English levels and each pair of groups is assumed to share the same level of English proficiency.

- The idioms used in this study are assumed to be equally frequent.

3.7. LIMITATIONS

- The idioms used in this study do not, in any way, claim to represent the whole of English idioms.

- The frequency of the idioms used in this study has not been calculated. The decision made on the frequency of idioms was subjective.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

4.1. COMPREHENSION TESTS

To answer the questions raised in the Introduction, two separate comprehension tests were given to students of four different English levels of two separate groups.¹ The data collected from these tests have been analyzed statistically to test the four null hypotheses formulated. The z scores have been calculated by utilizing the 'Differences of Proportions' in normal populations method.

4.1.1. IDIOMS IN ISOLATION versus IDIOMS USED IN A SENTENCE

As a preliminary step, the level of comprehension of idioms in isolation and idioms used in a sentence have been tested. The relationship between the results of these tests have been analyzed for each group of idioms as well as for each English level of two different groups separately to test the following null hypothesis :

¹ Two groups, as discussed in 3.3, are Faculty of Education, Department of English (which will be referred to as 'Egitim' throughout) and English Summer Courses (which will be referred to as 'P.Grad' throughout).

H_0 : There is no significant difference between the comprehension of idioms in isolation and idioms used in a sentence regardless of English levels and idiom groups.

4.1.1.1. First Group Idioms

The findings suggest that the difference between the comprehension of first group idioms in isolation and idioms used in a context is highly significant since the z scores of each English level exceeds the critical value at 0.001p level of significance. In other words, the z scores of first group idioms suggest that this group of idioms are comprehended better when used in a sentence. This holds true for all English levels (see Table 4.1)

4.1.1.2. Second Group Idioms

Similar to the findings of the first group idioms, the difference between the comprehension of idioms in isolation and idioms used in a sentence is found to be highly significant for second group idioms also (see Table 4.2). That is, the z scores for each English level is greater than $z_t = 3.28$ at 0.001p level of significance which suggest that when idioms are used in a sentence, comprehension of idioms increases.

	n	n maxr	I.I.(P ₁)	I.S.(P ₂)	z	critical value	confidence limit
Eğitim I	30	510	0.355	0.492	4.47	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim II	25	425	0.355	0.586	6.93	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim III	30	510	0.345	0.514	5.53	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim IV	15	255	0.412	0.600	4.32	3.28	0.001p
Elementary	30	510	0.245	0.335	3.18	3.28	0.001p
Lower Int.	25	425	0.193	0.393	6.57	3.28	0.001p
Upper Int.	30	510	0.182	0.382	7.28	3.28	0.001p
Advanced	15	255	0.290	0.482	4.54	3.28	0.001p

Table 4.1. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference in the comprehension of first group idioms in isolation and in a sentence

n maxr : maximum number of possible correct responses i.e.,
sample number x number of idioms

P : proportion of correct responses given

i.e., $\frac{\text{total number of correct responses}}{\text{sample number x number of idioms}}$

I.I. : Idioms in isolation

I.S. : Idioms in a sentence

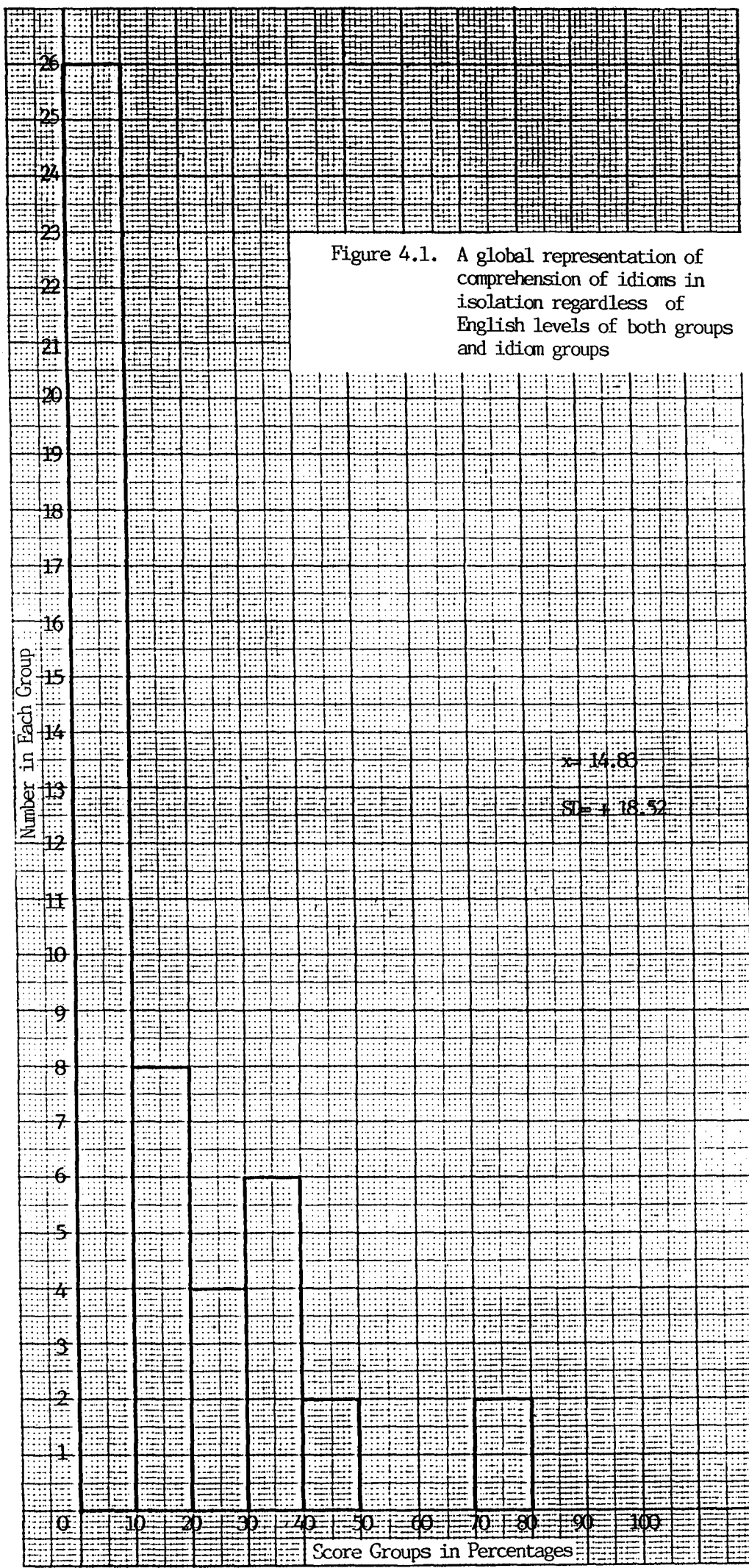
	n	n maxr	I.I. (P ₁)	I.S. (P ₂)	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
Egitim I	30	390	0.064	0.154	4.08	3.28	0.001p
Egitim II	25	325	0.108	0.209	3.56	3.28	0.001p
Egitim III	30	390	0.092	0.190	3.97	3.28	0.001p
Egitim IV	15	195	0.062	0.205	4.25	3.28	0.001p
Elementary	30	390	0.028	0.138	5.68	3.28	0.001p
Lower Int.	25	325	0.031	0.098	3.51	3.28	0.001p
Upper Int.	30	390	0.041	0.131	4.54	3.28	0.001p
Advanced	15	195	0.077	0.149	2.26	1.95	0.05p

Table 4.3. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference in the comprehension of third group idioms in isolation and in sentence

I.I. : Idioms in isolation
I.S. : Idioms in a sentence

The z scores of these three tests suggest that the comprehension of idioms increase when idioms are used in a sentence regardless of English levels. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

When the comprehension of idioms in isolation and idioms in a sentence is compared globally, i.e., comparison between idioms in isolation and idioms used in a sentence regardless of level of English and the idiom groups, the difference in the comprehension of idioms in isolation and idioms used in a sentence can be seen as Figures 4.1 and 4.2 illustrate.



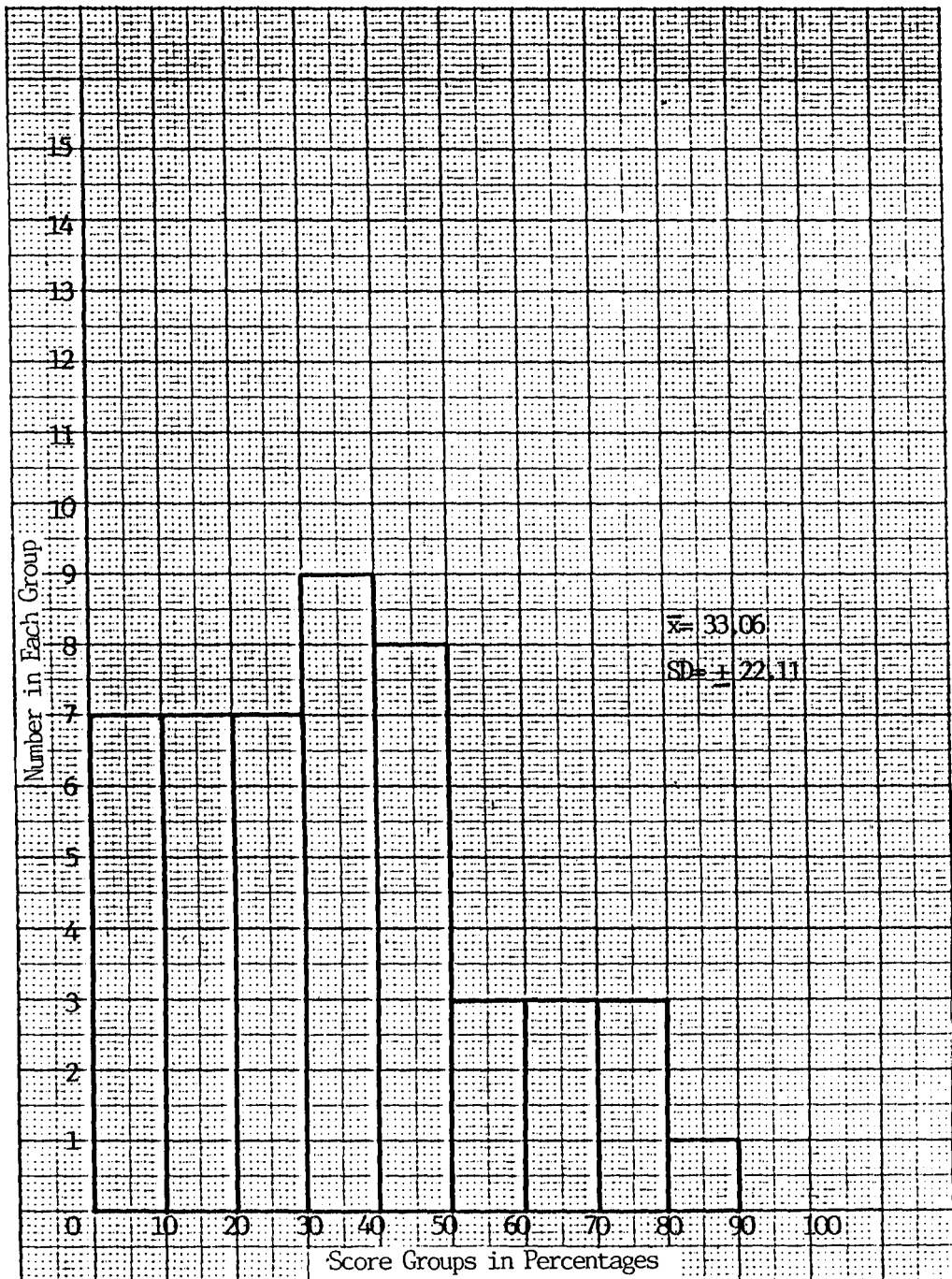


Figure 4.2. A global representation of comprehension of idioms in a sentence regardless of English levels of both groups and idiom groups.

Since the findings suggest that the comprehension of idioms is higher when used in a sentence, the remaining analysis will be based on the data collected for idioms used in a sentence.

4.1.2. COMPARISON OF THREE GROUP IDIOMS

To determine whether there are three groups of idioms in terms of difficulty in comprehension of pre-classified idioms are compared in relation with each other. This is investigated by testing the following null hypothesis :

H_0 : All idioms in English are equally difficult to comprehend. There are no significant differences among idioms, thus cannot be classified into three different groups. Consequently, there is no significant difference between the comprehension of idioms and pre-classification.

4.1.2.1. First Group Idioms versus Second Group Idioms

The z scores calculated show that there is a significant difference between the comprehension of first group idioms and second group idioms as can be seen in Table 4.4. The findings suggest that the first group idioms are easier in terms of comprehension than the second group idioms regardless of English level.

4.1.2.2. First Group Idioms versus Third Group Idioms

The difference between the comprehension of first group idioms and third group idioms is highly significant for all English levels (see Table 4.5 below). The z scores cal-

culated for all English levels illustrate that the comprehension level of first group idioms is much higher than the third group idioms.

	n	n maxr ₁	n maxr ₂	F.G.I. (P ₁)	S.G.I. (P ₂)	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
Eğitim I	30	510	540	0.492	0.291	6.81	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim II	25	425	450	0.586	0.456	3.88	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim III	30	510	540	0.514	0.393	3.96	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim IV	15	255	270	0.600	0.441	3.69	3.28	0.001p
Elementary	30	510	540	0.335	0.200	4.99	3.28	0.001p
Lower Int.	25	425	450	0.393	0.189	6.79	3.28	0.001p
Upper Int.	30	510	540	0.382	0.293	3.06	2.58	0.0 1p
Advanced	15	255	270	0.482	0.396	1.99	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.4 The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference in the comprehension of first group idioms and second group idioms.

	n	n maxr ₁	n maxr ₂	F.G.I. (P ₁)	T.G.I (P ₂)	z	Critical value	Confidence Limit
Eğitim I	30	510	390	0.492	0.154	11.77	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim II	25	425	325	0.586	0.209	11.47	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim III	30	510	390	0.514	0.190	10.89	3.28	0.001p
Eğitim IV	15	255	195	0.600	0.205	9.37	3.28	0.001p
Elementary	30	510	390	0.335	0.138	7.23	3.28	0.001p
Lower Int	25	425	325	0.393	0.098	10.22	3.28	0.001p
Upper Int.	30	510	390	0.382	0.131	9.14	3.28	0.001p
Advanced	15	255	195	0.482	0.149	8.25	3.28	0.001p

Table 4.5 The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference in the comprehension of first group idioms and third group idioms.

F.G.I. : First Group Idioms

T.G.I. : Third group Idioms

4.1.2.3. Second Groups Idioms versus Third Groups Idioms

In this comparison, the findings show a significant difference between the comprehension of second group idioms, and third group idioms(see Table 4.6). The z scores calculated illustrate that the second group idioms are easier to comprehend than third group idioms. This holds true for all four English levels of both groups.

	n	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	S.G.I. (P_1)	T.G.I (P_2)	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
Egitim I	30	540	390	0.291	0.154	5.12	3.28	0.001p
Egitim II	25	450	325	0.456	0.209	7.59	3.28	0.001p
Egitim III	30	540	390	0.393	0.190	7.02	3.28	0.001p
Egitim IV	15	270	195	0.441	0.205	5.64	3.28	0.001p
Elementary	30	540	390	0.200	0.138	2.53	1.96	0.05p
Lower Int.	25	450	325	0.189	0.098	3.68	3.28	0.001p
Upper Int.	30	540	390	0.293	0.131	6.23	3.28	0.001p
Advanced	15	270	195	0.396	0.149	6.30	3.28	0.001p

Table 4.6. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension of second group idioms and the comprehension of third group idioms for all levels.

Based on the comparisons and the calculations, it can be concluded that idioms can be classified into three groups according to their level of difficulty in terms of comprehension, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. The findings suggest that the students were more successful in determining the meanings of first group idioms than they were in second

group of idioms. Similarly, the subjects were able to deduce the meanings of the second group idioms more accurately than they were in third group idioms. Thus, this implies that idioms can be classified based on their difficulty of comprehension and the pre-classification suggested in this study is generally adequate.

4.1.2.4. Figurative Representation of Statistical Findings

The comparative scattergrams also support the above findings as well as the difference in the comprehension of idioms when in isolation and when used in a sentence.

The histogram (p.66-68), a global representation of the data for each group of idioms, are further evidences for the statistically calculated results. They are presented in their score groups using the left-hand inclusion rule.

When the scattergrams representing the central tendency distribution for idioms in isolation (Figures 4.4 a, 4.5a and 4.6a) are compared with the central distribution for idioms in a sentence (Figures 4.4b, 4.5b and 4.6b), it can be seen that idioms used in a sentence have higher median values.

The scattergrams, when compared for each group of idioms, illustrate that there are differences in the central tendency distribution among the idiom groups regardless of presentation style. Therefore, it can be concluded that it is possible to classify idioms into three groups.

In the scattergrams, median and Interquartile Range (IQR) are preferred over mean and Standard Deviation (SD) because the former is resistant to wild values whereas the latter is not. Thus, when mean and SD are used, the range of values is distorted in the direction of wild values which as in the scattergram below (Figure 4.3) will fail to reflect a more representative distribution (compare Figure 4.3 with Figure 4.4).

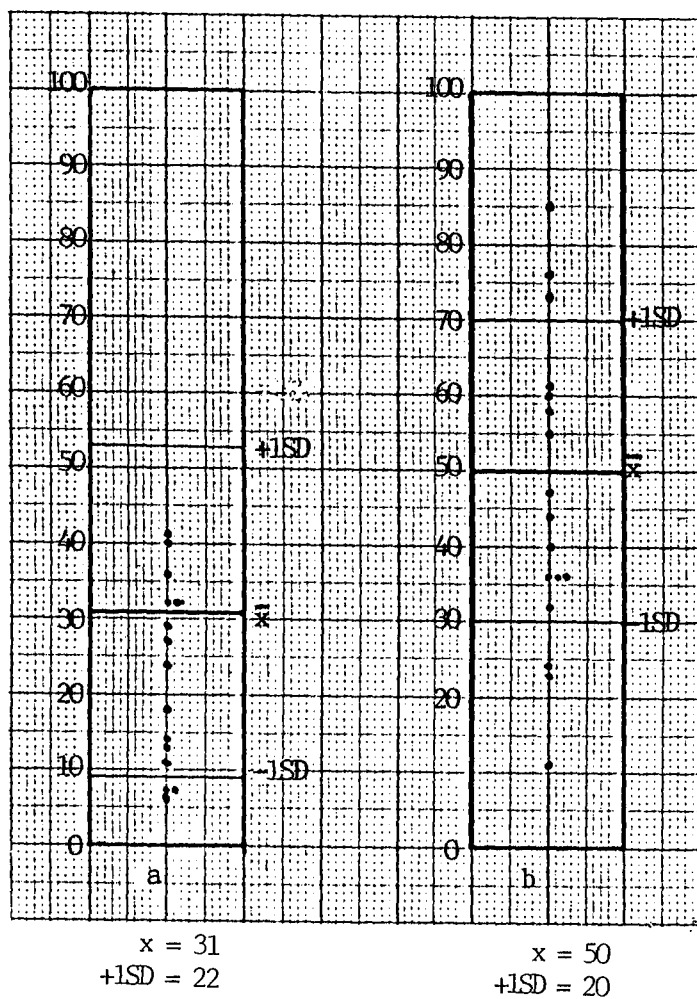
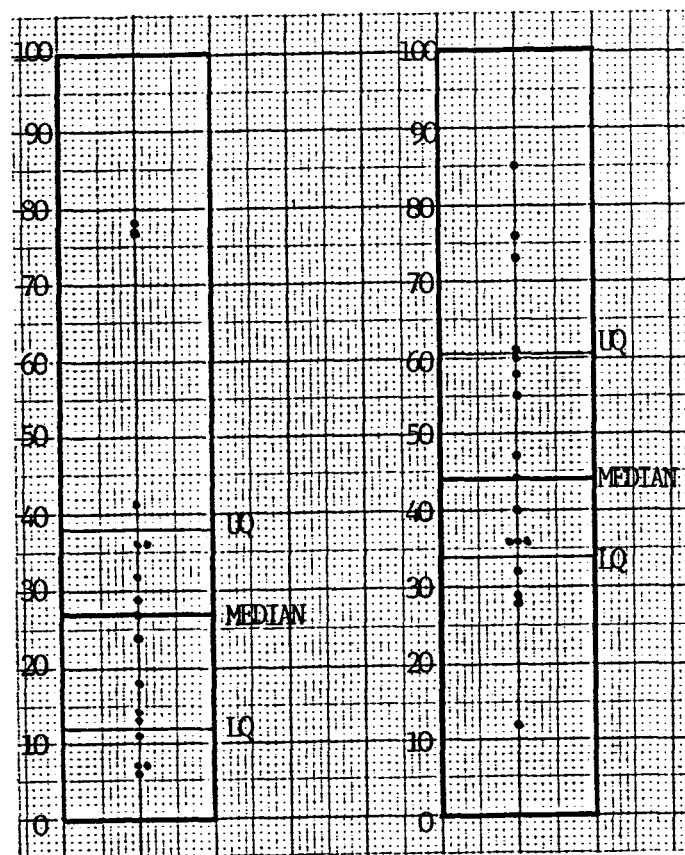


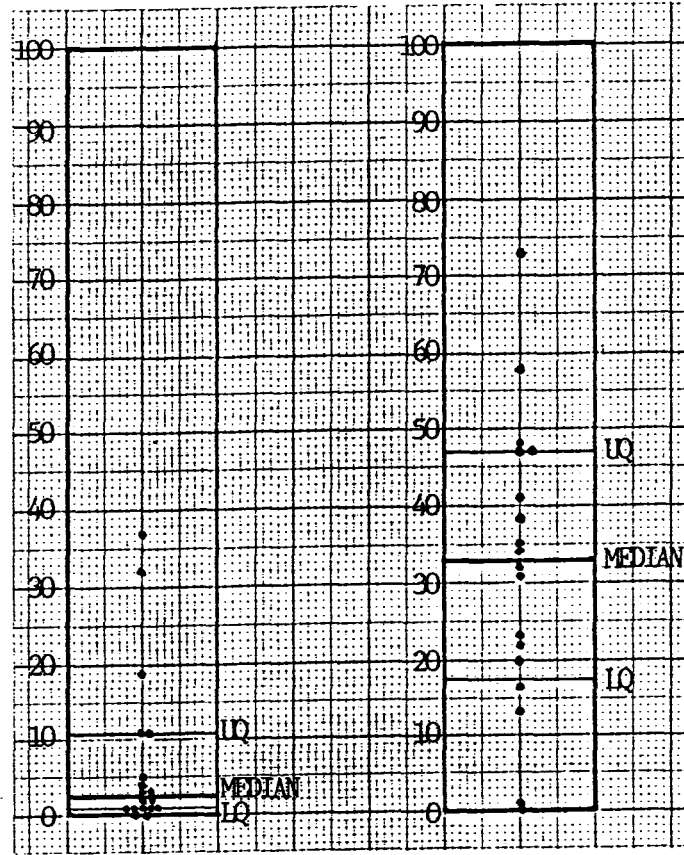
Figure 4.3. Central Tendency Distribution of
 a) First group idioms in isolation
 b) First group idioms in a sentence
 using Mean and SD



IQR = 26
 SIQR = 13
 UQR = 11
 LQR = 15

IQR = 26.5
 SIQR = 13.25
 UQR = 16.5
 LQR = 10

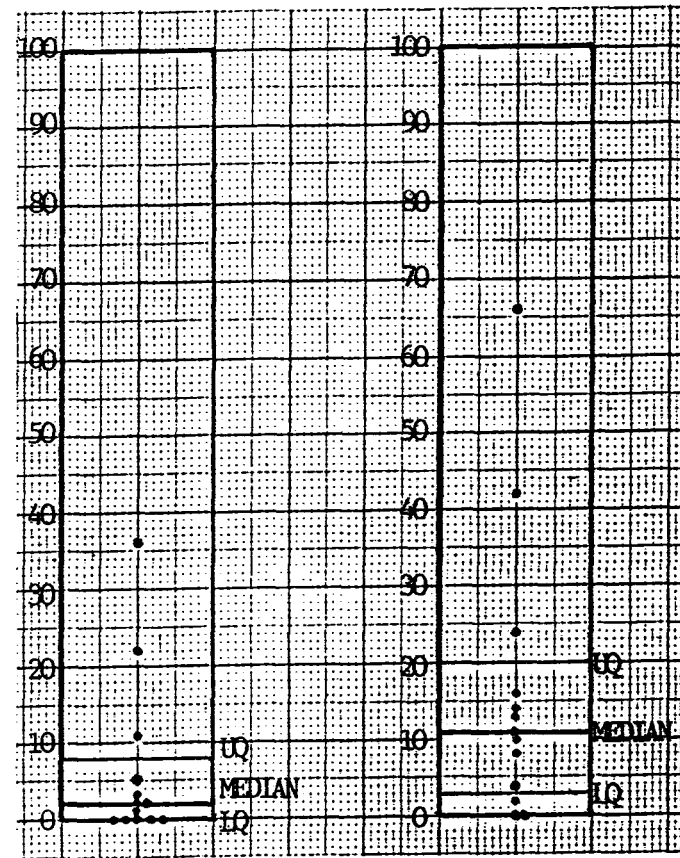
Figure 4.4. Central Tendency Distribution of
 a. First group idioms in isolation
 b. First group idioms in a sentence
 Using Median and IQR



IQR = 10
 SIQR = 5
 UQR = 8.5
 LQR = 1.5

IQR = 28.5
 SIQR = 14.25
 UQR = 14
 LQR = 14.5

Figure 4.5. Central Tendency Distribution for
 Second Group Idioms
 a. Second Group Idioms in Isolation
 b. Second Group Idioms in a Sentence
 Using Median and IQR



IQR = 8
 SIQR = 4
 UQR = 6
 LQR = 2

IQR = 17
 SIQR = 8.5
 UQR = 9
 LQR = 8

Figure 4.6. Central Tendency Distribution for
 Third Groups Idioms
 a. Third group Idioms in Isolation
 b. Third Group Idioms in a Sentence
 Using Median and IQR

Each of the histograms below illustrate the number of correct responses within the range of each 10-interval percentage. Each histogram for each idiom group represents the responses for idioms in isolation and idioms in a sentence as well as all four English levels of the two test-groups. When these histograms are compared, it can be seen that the distribution exhibits an approximately normal (or Gaussian)distribution for the comprehension of first group idioms (Figure 4.7). The distribution of second group idiom comprehension is negatively skewed (Figure 4.8). The negative skewness of third group idiom comprehension distribution, on the other hand, is marked (Figure 4.9). Thus, these differences in the distribution show that there are three classes of idioms even if the comparison is global.

The kurtosis (peakedness of the mean) of the first group idioms (Figure 4.7) exhibits a mesokurtic distribution while those of second and third group idioms (Figures 4.8 and 4.9) exhibit leptokurtic distribution. This indicates an intermediate peakedness (i.e., normal distribution) in the comprehension of first group idioms. Marked peakedness as well as marked skewness indicates that it was more difficult to interpret the meanings of the second and third group idioms.

A higher degree of leptokurtosis for the third group idioms, in comparison with that of second group idioms (see Figures 4.8 and 4.9), indicates that the third group idioms

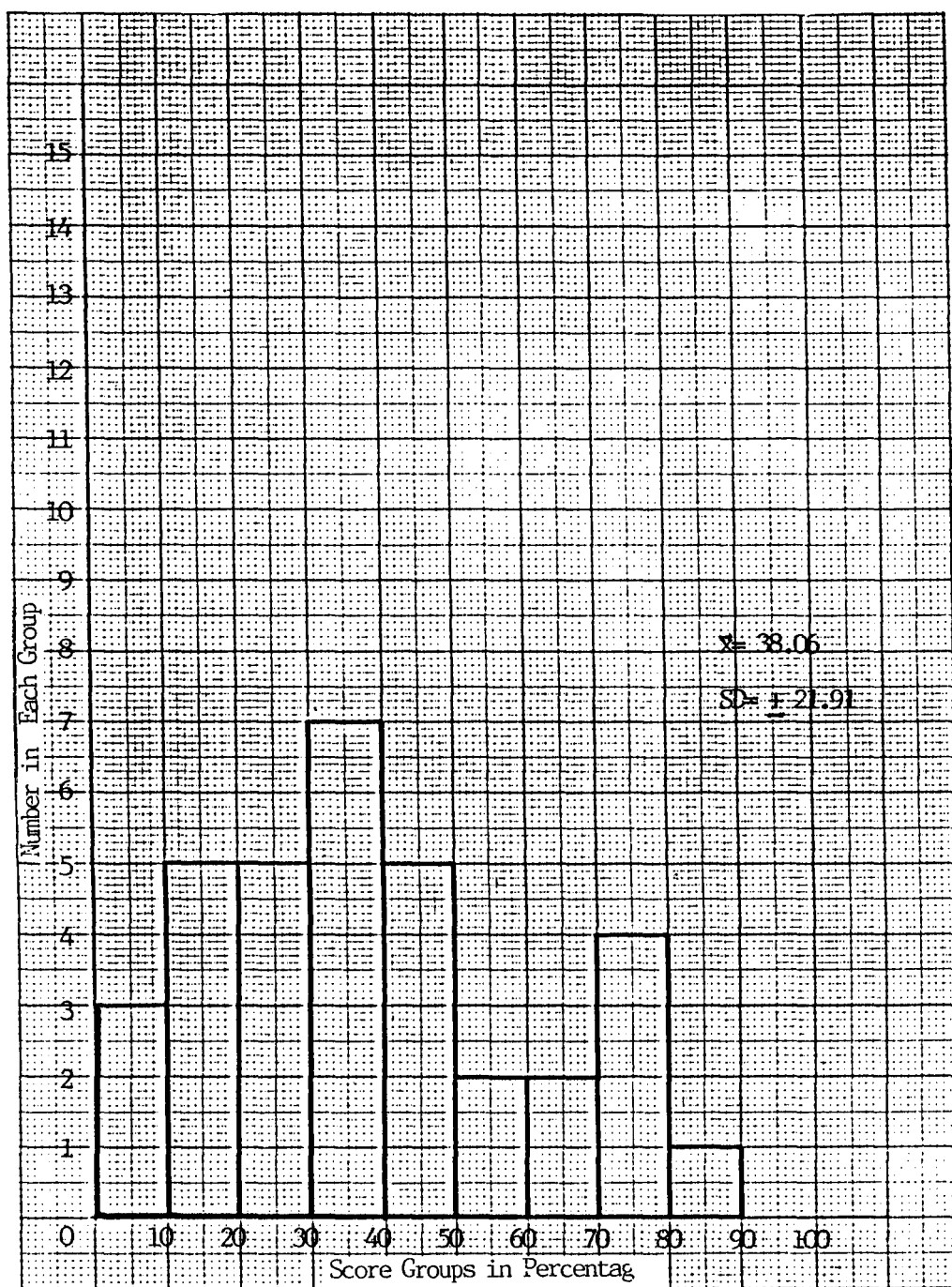


Figure 4.7. Comprehension of First Group Idioms-global
(Isolation + sentence)

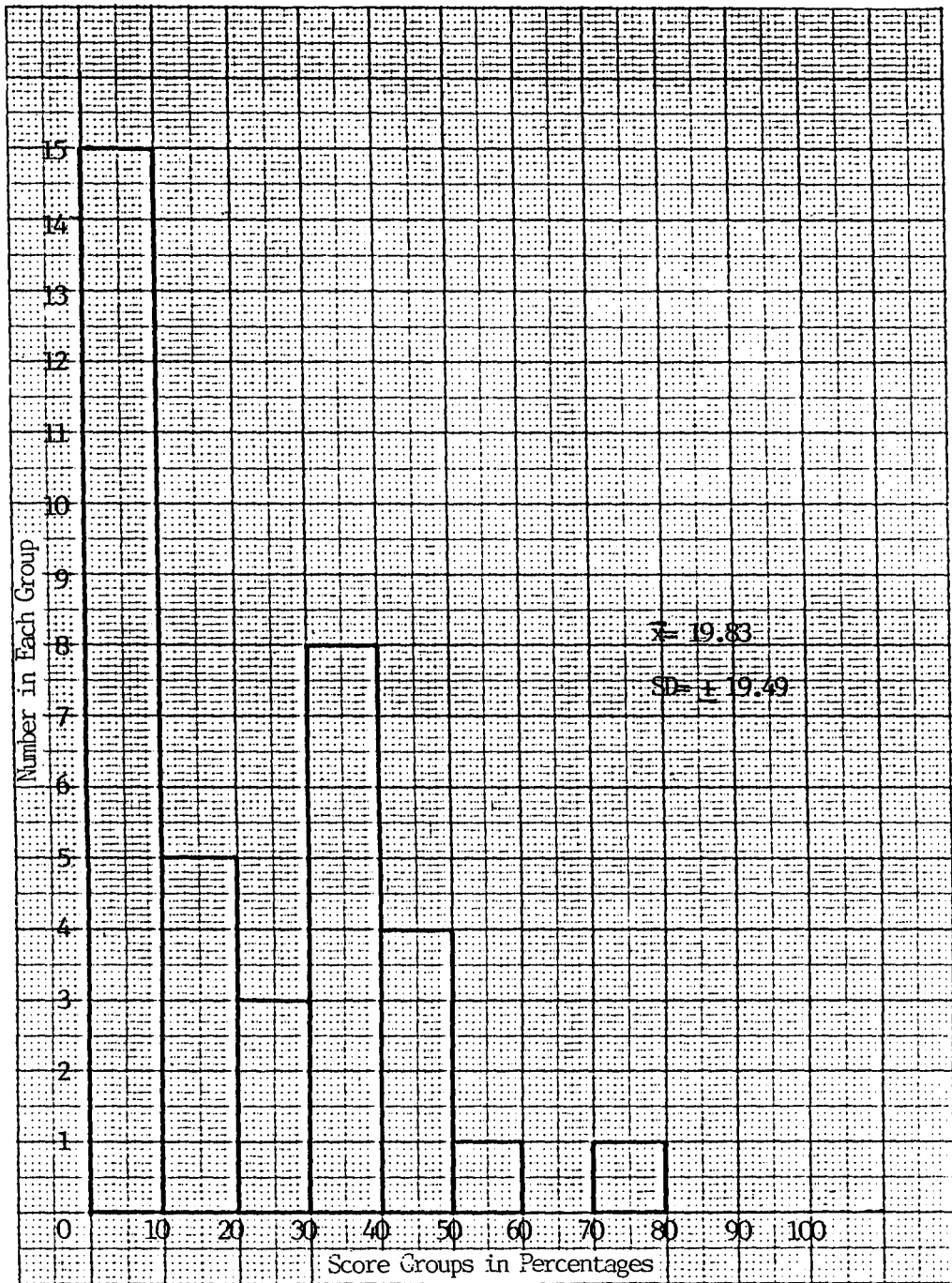


Figure 4.8. Comprehension of Second Group Idioms—global

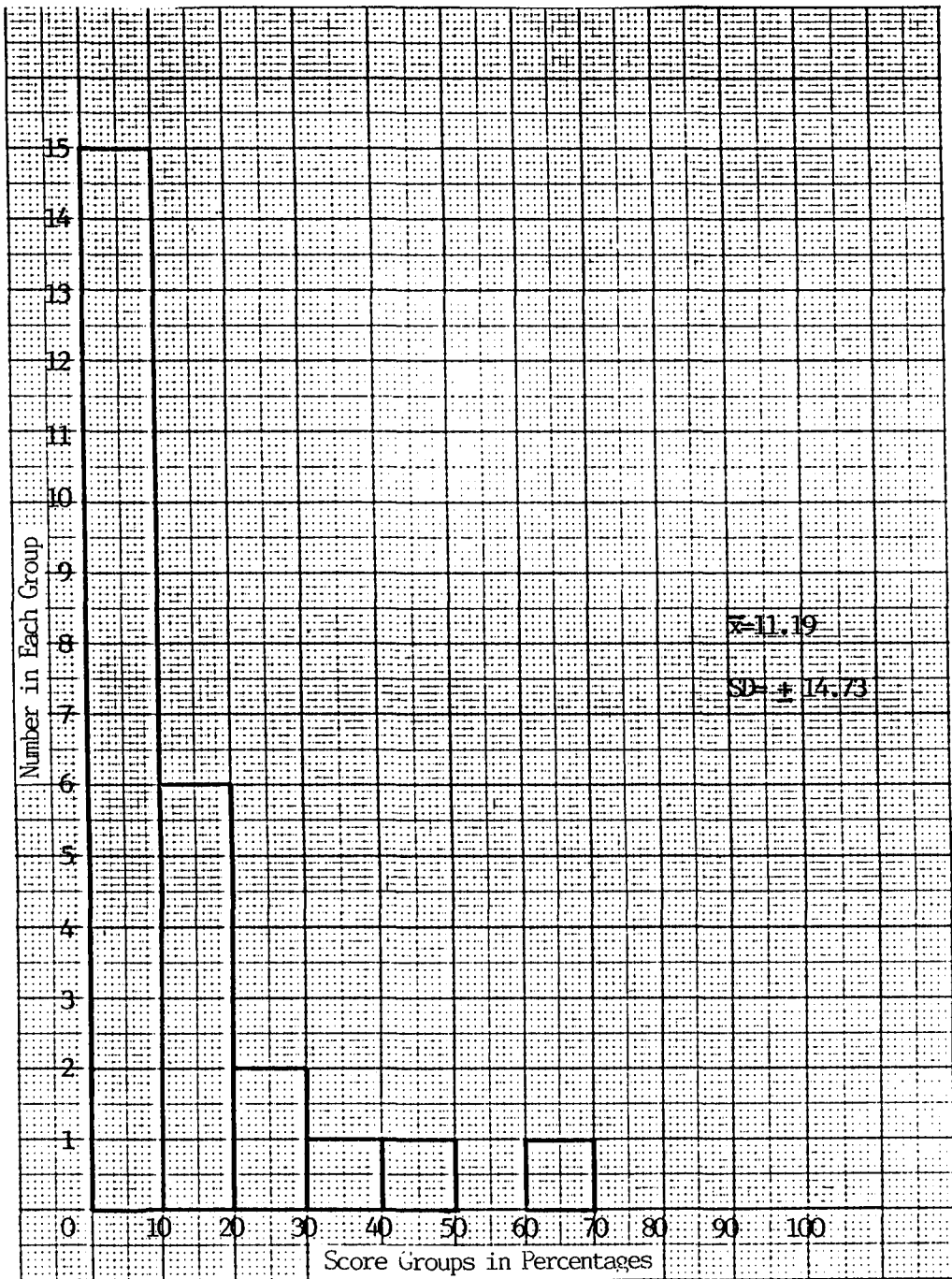


Figure 4.9. Comprehension of Third Group Idioms-Global

are the most difficult and most likely to elicit incorrect responses.

4.1.3. COMPARISON BETWEEN COMPREHENSION OF IDIOMS and ENGLISH LEVELS

To determine whether comprehension of idioms is dependent on the English levels, each group is compared within itself. In other words, within each group, the four English levels are compared in relation with other English levels for each idiom group separately to test the following null hypothesis :

H_0 : There is no difference between the degree of comprehension of idioms with the English levels of students. In other words, the comprehension of idioms does not increase as the level of English increases.

4.1.3.1. Comparison of Four Levels in Faculty of Education, Department of English (Eğitim)

First, each of the four levels within Eğitim is compared with one another to determine whether English levels influence the comprehension level of idioms.

4.1.3.1.1. Eğitim I versus Eğitim II

The difference between Eğitim I and Eğitim II in comprehension of idioms is significant for two idiom groups while not significant for one idiom group.

The findings suggest that the comprehension of first group idioms is better in Egitim II in comparison with Egitim I since $z = 2.89 > z_t = 2.58$ at 0.01 p level of significance. Similarly, Egitim II shows a higher comprehension level than Egitim I ($z = 5.40 > z_t = 3.28$ at 0.001p level of significance) in second group idioms. Unlike the first two group idioms, in the comprehension of third group idioms there is no significant difference between Egitim I and Egitim II as Table 4.7 illustrates.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	$n_{\max 1}$	$n_{\max 2}$	Egitim I P_1	EgitimII P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	25	510	425	0.492	0.586	2.89	2.58	0.01p
Second Group	30	25	540	450	0.291	0.456	5.40	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	30	25	390	325	0.154	0.209	1.89	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.7. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension level of Egitim I and that of Egitim II for each group of idioms.

4.1.3.1.2. Egitim I versus Egitim III

The comparison between Egitim I and Egitim III show a highly significant difference in the second group of idioms while the difference is not significant in two idiom groups in terms of comprehension.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Eğitim I P_1	Eğitim III P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	30	510	510	0.492	0.514	0.70	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	30	30	540	540	0.291	0.393	3.55	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	30	30	390	390	0.154	0.190	1.33	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.8 : The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Eğitim I and Eğitim III for each group of idioms.

As the above table suggests, the difference between Eğitim I and Eğitim III in the first group of idioms is not significant since $z = 0.70 > z_t = 1.96$ at 0.05p level of significance. Similarly, the difference is not significant in the third groups idioms ($z = 1.33 > z_t = 1.96$). The only significant difference is in the second group idioms which suggests that the comprehension level of Eğitim is higher than that of Eğitim I as far as comprehension of idioms is concerned.

4.1.3.1.3 Eğitim I versus Eğitim IV

The z scores, calculated to determine whether the difference of comprehension between Eğitim I and Eğitim IV is significant, imply that the difference is significant in two idiom groups and not significant in one idiom group (see Table 4.9).

The difference between Eğitim I and Eğitim IV in comprehension of first group idioms suggest that Eğitim IV is better. The z scores for second group idioms also illustrate

that Eđitim IV is more successful in comprehending second group idioms in comparison with Eđitim I. The comprehension of third group idioms, however, do not show a significant difference.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Eđitim I P_1	EđitimIV P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	15	510	255	0.492	0.600	2.85	2.58	0.01p
Second Group	30	15	540	270	0.291	0.441	4.17	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	30	15	390	195	0.154	0.205	1.49	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.9. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Eđitim I and Eđitim IV for each group of idioms.

4.1.3.1.4 Eđitim II versus Eđitim III

The comparison between Eđitim II and Eđitim III, in the comprehension of idioms, illustrate that there is a significant difference in first and second group idioms while not significant difference in the third group idioms.

The z scores calculated suggest that in the comprehension of first and second group idioms, Eđitim II is more successful than Eđitim III. In the comprehension of third group idioms, however, there is no significant difference (see Table 4.10 below).

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Eğitim II P_1	Eğitim III P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	25	30	425	510	0.586	0.514	2.21	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	25	30	450	540	0.456	0.393	2.00	1.96	0.05p
Third Group	25	30	325	390	0.209	0.190	0.63	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.10. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Eğitim II and Eğitim III for each group of idioms.

4.1.3.1.5. Eğitim II versus Eğitim IV

The difference between Eğitim II and Eğitim IV in the comprehension of idioms for all three groups is not significant. In other words, neither of the mentioned English levels is better than the other in comprehending idioms in any of the three groups as can be seen in Table 4.11.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Eğitim II P_1	Eğitim IV P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	25	15	425	255	0.586	0.600	0.36	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	25	15	450	270	0.456	0.441	0.39	1.96	0.05p
Third Group	25	15	325	195	0.209	0.205	0.11	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.11. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Eğitim II and Eğitim IV for each idiom group.

4.1.3.1.6. Egitim III versus Egitim IV

Comprehension of idioms by Egitim III and Egitim IV show a significant difference only in first group idioms and while the difference both in second group idioms and in third group idioms is not significant. The z score calculated for the first group idiom is $z = 2.27 > z_t = 1.96$ which suggests that Egitim IV is better in comprehending these idioms. There is no significant difference however, in the comprehension of second and third group idioms.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	EgitimIII P_1	EgitimIV P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	15	510	255	0.514	0.600	2.27	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	30	15	540	270	0.393	0.441	1.31	1.96	0.05p
Third Group	30	15	390	195	0.190	0.205	0.43	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.12. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Egitim III and Egitim IV for each idiom group.

The results of the comparisons of each level with the other levels within Egitim show that although the differences in some cases are significant, it is difficult to say that the comprehension of idioms compatible with the English levels. When Egitim I and Egitim III are compared, the difference is significant only in second group idioms. But the comparison between Egitim II and III show that Egi-

tim II is better at comprehending first and second group idioms while the difference in the third group is not significant. When Eđitim II is compared with Eđitim IV, it can be seen that there is no significant difference in the comprehension of levels regardless of which class the idioms belong. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no clear evidence that the comprehension of idioms is on a par with English levels. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

4.1.3.2. Comparison of Four Levels of English Summer Courses (P.GRAD)

Similar to the comparisons of English levels in Department of English, all four English levels within this group are also compared for further evidence that comprehension of idioms does not increase when English levels increases.

4.1.3.2.1. Elementary versus Lower Intermediate

The difference between the comprehension of idioms by Elementary and Lower Intermediate students is not significant. In other words, one level does not show an advantage over the other, as Table 4.13 suggests as far as comprehension of idioms is concerned.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	El. P_1	LI P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	25	510	425	0.335	0.393	1.84	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	30	25	540	450	0.200	0.189	0.44	1.96	0.05p
Third Group	30	25	390	325	0.138	0.098	1.67	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.13. The results of the 'Differences of Proportion' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Elementary and Lower Intermediate for all groups of idioms.

El. : Elementary
L.I. : Lower Intermediate

4.1.3.2.2. Elementary versus Upper Intermediate

In the comprehension of second group idioms show a significant difference while first group and third group idioms do not when Elementary and Upper Intermediate levels are compared. The difference between these two levels in second group idioms ($z = 3.57 > z_t = 1.96$) suggest that Upper Intermediate was better in determining the meanings of idioms in this group more accurately.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	El. P_1	UI P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	30	510	510	0.335	0.382	1.57	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	30	30	540	540	0.200	0.293	3.57	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	30	30	390	390	0.138	0.131	0.29	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.14. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Elementary and Upper Intermediate for all three groups of idioms.

El. : Elementary
U.I. : Upper Intermediate

4.1.3.2.3. Elementary versus Advanced

The comparison between Elementary and Advanced levels show a significant difference in the comprehension of first and second group idioms and not significant difference in the third group idiom. The z scores for the difference illustrate that Advanced level students comprehended the meanings of idioms in the first and second group of idioms in comparison with the Elementary level students. The difference between the comprehension of third group idioms, however, is not significant.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	El. P_1	Adv. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	15	510	255	0.335	0.482	3.91	3.28	0.001p
Second Group	30	15	540	270	0.200	0.396	5.70	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	30	15	390	195	0.138	0.149	0.36	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.15. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Elementary and Advanced for all three groups of idioms.

El. : Elementary
Adv. : Advanced

4.1.3.2.4. Lower Intermediate versus Upper Intermediate

The difference between lower Intermediate and Upper Intermediate is significant in the comprehension of one group of idioms while not significant in two groups of idioms.

The z scores for the first group idioms ($z = 0.34 < z_t = 1.96$) and third group of idioms ($z = 1.39 < z_t = 1.96$) indicate that the difference is not significant in the comprehension of these idioms by the two levels of English under

discussion. The z scores for the second group idioms ($z=3.86 > z_t=3.28$) show that the students in Upper Intermediate level were better in comprehending these idioms in comparison with those of Lower Intermediate level.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	L.I. P_1	U.I. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	25	30	425	510	0.393	0.382	0.34	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	25	30	450	540	0.189	0.293	3.86	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	25	30	325	390	0.098	0.131	1.39	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.16. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of lower Intermediate and Upper Intermediate for all three groups of idioms.

L.I. : Lower Intermediate
U.I. : Upper Intermediate

4.1.3.2.5. Lower Intermediate versus Advanced

The calculations suggest that the difference between Lower Intermediate and Advanced levels is significant for the comprehension of first and second group idioms while not significant for the third group idioms.

The z scores indicate that Advanced students were more accurate in determining the meanings of idioms in first and second groups. The difference however, is not significant in the third group idioms.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	L.I. P_1	Adv. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	25	15	425	255	0.393	0.482	2.27	1.96	0.05p
Second Group	25	15	450	270	0.189	0.396	5.91	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	25	15	325	195	0.098	0.149	1.68	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.17. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Lower Intermediate and Advanced for all three idiom groups.

L.I. : Lower Intermediate
Adv. : Advanced

4.1.3.2.6. Upper Intermediate versus Advanced

Students of Advanced level of English performed better in deducing the meanings of idioms in first and second groups in comparison with those of Upper Intermediate level of English. Thus the difference in those idiom groups is significant in terms of comprehension. The difference in the comprehension of third group idioms, however is not significant.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	U.I. P_1	Adv. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	15	510	255	0.382	0.482	2.63	2.58	0.01p
Second Group	30	15	540	270	0.293	0.396	2.89	2.58	0.01p
Third Group	30	15	390	195	0.131	0.149	0.59	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.18. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Upper Intermediate and Advanced for all three groups of idiom.

U.I. : Upper Intermediate
Adv. : Advanced

The results of the comparisons of each level with the other in this test-group also suggest that the comprehension of idioms is not necessarily compatible with the English levels of students.

Furthermore, the results of these comparisons support the classification in that the comprehension of third group idioms have not shown a significant difference in any of the comparisons regardless of English levels. This suggests, then, idioms in this group requires the knowledge of idioms as a whole since the meanings of these idioms are not reflected by its parts.

4.1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN THE COMPREHENSION OF IDIOMS

Determine whether education level plays a significant role in the comprehension of idioms, each level of Eğitim is compared with the corresponding level in summer Courses to test the following null hypothesis :

H_0 : There is no significant difference between the post university graduate learners of EFL (i.e., university lecturers) and undergraduate university EFL learners in comprehending idioms used in the English language.

4.1.4.1. Eğitim I versus Elementary

The difference between Eğitim I and Elementary show a significant difference in the comprehension of first group

and second group idioms and not significant difference in the third group idioms.

The z scores for the first group and second group idioms ($z = 5.16 > z_t = 3.28$ and $z = 3.49 > z_t = 3.28$ respectively) indicate that Eđitim has determined the meanings of idioms in these groups more accurately. The difference in the comprehension of third group idioms, on the other hand, is not significant.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Eđitim I P_1	El. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	30	510	510	0.492	0.335	5.16	3.28	0.001p
Second Group	30	30	540	540	0.291	0.200	3.49	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	30	30	390	390	0.154	0.138	0.63	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.19. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Eđitim I and Elementary for all three groups of idioms.

El. : Elementary

4.1.4.2. Eđitim II versus Lower Intermediate

The comparison between Eđitim II and Lower Intermediate indicate a significant difference in the comprehension of idioms in all three groups. The z scores calculated suggest that Eđitim II has an advantage over Lower Intermediate in comprehending idioms.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Egitim II P_1	L.I. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	25	25	425	425	0.586	0.393	5.74	3.28	0.001p
Second Group	25	25	450	450	0.456	0.189	8.94	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	25	25	325	325	0.209	0.098	3.98	3.28	0.001p

Table 4.20. The results of the 'Differences in Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Egitim II and lower Intermediate for all three groups of idioms.

L.I. : Lower Intermediate.

4.1.4.3. Egitim III versus Upper Intermediate

Again, the comprehension of idioms belonging to all three groups is significantly different in favor of Egitim III in comparison with Upper Intermediate. The z scores calculated suggest that the students of Egitim III were more accurate in determining the meanings of idioms of all three groups than that of Upper Intermediate.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Egitim III P_1	U.I. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence limit
First Group	30	30	510	510	0.514	0.382	4.28	3.28	0.001p
Second Group	30	30	540	540	0.393	0.293	3.48	3.28	0.001p
Third Group	30	30	390	390	0.190	0.131	2.25	1.96	0.05p

Table 4.21. The results of the 'Differences in Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Egitim III and Upper Intermediate for all three idiom groups.

U.I. : Upper Intermediate

4.1.4.4. Egitim IV versus Advanced

The difference between Egitim IV and advanced in the comprehension of idioms is significant in first group idioms while not significant in second and third group idioms.

The z score for first group idioms ($z = 2.69 > z_t = 2.58$) indicates that the students of Egitim IV have deduced the meanings of idioms in this group more accurately than that of Advanced. For the two other remaining groups, the difference is not significant.

IDIOMS	n_1	n_2	n_{maxr_1}	n_{maxr_2}	Egitim IV P_1	Adv. P_2	z	Critical value	Confidence Limit
First Group	15	15	255	255	0.600	0.482	2.69	2.58	0.01p
Second Group	15	15	270	270	0.441	0.396	1.06	1.96	0.05p
Third Group	15	15	195	195	0.205	0.149	1.45	1.96	0,05p

Table 4.22. The results of the 'Differences of Proportions' test showing the difference between the comprehension levels of Egitim IV and Advanced for all three groups of idioms.

Adv. : Advanced

Based on the results of these comparisons, it may be concluded that level of education does not play a significant role in the comprehension of English idioms, thus the null hypothesis is not rejected.

4.2. RECOGNITION TEST

The recognition test was conducted to determine whether students were able to recognize idioms and if this recognition was compatible with the classification. This test was given after both of the comprehension tests were conducted. The percentage of correct responses for each idiom group as well as for each English level is calculated.

The overall results of the recognition test indicate that the subject were able to recognize only 34% of the idioms. The distribution of the recognized idioms according to the classification (see Table 4.23) illustrate that idioms in the third group have the highest recognition percentage (38%) followed by first group idioms (34%) and second group idioms (30%).

	First Group Idioms	Second Group Idioms	Third Group Idioms	Overall
Percentage of recognized idioms	34 %	30 %	38 %	34 %

Table 4.23. Results of the recognition test showing the percentage of correct responses for each idiom group

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1. DISCUSSION

5.1.1. COMPREHENSION TESTS

The analysis of the data, presented in Chapter IV, brings to the attention some interesting points in the comprehension of idioms by Turkish learners.

The results of the comparison between the comprehension of idioms in isolation and in sentences indicate that the comprehension of idioms increases when they are presented with situational information as opposed to in isolation.

When the increase in the comprehension of each group of idiom is taken into consideration, it is seen that the second group of idioms have the best improvement scores in comparison with the other two. For the first group of idioms since they are more semantically transparent, context does not seem to make that much of a difference in their comprehension. As for the third group, the most semantically

opaque group, there seems to be little increase in their comprehension. However, the second group seems to be semantically semi-transparent and/or semi-opaque. Therefore, the presence of a context in this group exhibits the most striking comprehension increase.

These findings, in accordance with the classification scheme suggested in Chapter I, suggest that English idioms can be classified into three groups based on the association between the meanings of individual parts and the idiomatic meaning.

The comparison of the z scores of the three groups of idioms in a sentence (Tables 4.4, 4.5, 4.6) is markedly different. That is to say, the performance of the subjects, even though at an advantage with contextualized idioms, varies--some idioms are very easy to comprehend while, some are still difficult to decipher. Thus, the above suggestion that English idioms, as far as comprehension is concerned, vary in their degree of difficulty forming three groups of idioms is confirmed.

Thus, it can be concluded that idioms can be classified into three groups, thus verifying the validity of a tripartite division of idiom classification as suggested in this study.

The English proficiency level of the subjects chosen for this study varies from elementary to advanced since one of the objectives of this study was to determine

whether the advancement in the target language influenced the comprehension of idioms. The comparisons made on this particular point (Tables 4.7- 4.18) illustrate that there is indeed no one-to-one correspondance between a learner's proficiency level and his/her comprehension of English idioms.

Two major types of subjects constituted the test groups in this study. The marked difference between these groups was their academic standing. As explained in Chapter III, university undergraduates constituted one group, while post university graduates the other.

When the performance of these two major groups is compared (Tables 4.19-4.22) it is noted that the educational sophistication of the subjects were not effective. In other words, comprehension of idioms was not dependent on the individual's level of education.

5.1.2. RECOGNITION TEST

The recognition test was given to determine whether the subject could identify the idioms perse, and if this recognition was in any way compatible with the classification.

The results of the recognition test indicate that the subjects were able to recognize only 34% of the idioms. Although a low figure, when the recognized idioms are classified according to the three postulated groups, the distribution shows an unexpected outcome.

It was found that the third group of idioms was the most recognized, followed by the first and second group idioms.

Higher recognition of third group idioms may be due to the fact that students had difficulty in understanding these expressions in the sentences in which they were used. In other words, they may not have had any difficulty in comprehending the sentence until they encountered an idiom. Recognizing the irrelevance of the meanings of individual words of the idiom to the context, they may have realized that the only possibility is that the expression is an idiom. The following sentence taken from the recognition test may illustrate the point better:

- (1) I don't know how she can afford to do it but every night she goes out dressed to kill.

In this sentence, the meanings of the individual parts of the idiom is irrelevant to going out every night and affording to buy something new to wear. Therefore, as the student reads the sentence he has no difficulty comprehending the sentence until he comes to 'dressed to kill'. Not understanding the relevance, he regards the expression as an idiom.

The low recognition percentage in the second group may be because idioms blend in the context thus seem to be superficially relevant. For example :

- (2) The committee is on the point of reaching a decision in the next hour.

As sentence (2) suggests, 'on the point of' does not seem irrelevant to the context due to the meanings of its parts in comparison with the idiomatic meaning. Therefore, it is one of the least recognized expression as a idiom.

The reason why the the percentage of first group idiom is higher than that of second group idioms may be because the number of proverbs, or expressions with morals attached, is more in first group idioms. Although they do not cause any comprehension problems, they are recognized more readily than idioms in the second group.

On the whole, however, the recognition scores are low even though recognition test was given after the comprehension tests. The students were familiar with the idioms since they were given the idioms previously and asked the meanings.

5.2. CONCLUSION

The findings of the analysis concerning comprehension tests can be summarized briefly as follows: Idioms can be classified into three groups depending on the association between the meanings of individual parts and the total meaning of an idiom. The classification of the forty-eight idioms taken as the corpus of this study is generally adequate and the students' ability to deduce the meanings of these idioms is on a par with the classification. Although increase in one's English level or level of education does

necessarily effect the comprehension of idioms, more situational information does, however, clarify meaning.

One of the main problems concerning idioms is that EFL learners fail to recognize idioms in a given context. They are unaware that the entire form is lexicalized (Makkai, 1973 :314).

Both problems in recognition and in comprehension of idioms in the target language may be due to one's unawareness of idioms in the native language. That is, they are acquired just like any feature of language without any special treatment as Willis suggests:

Idiomatic expressions... follow no clear linguistic principles. They just are what they are, and we learn them naturally as we learn our native language.

(Willis, 1969:215)

Thus, one, often has a vague idea of what an idiom is and the meaning of an idiom. Consequently, idioms constitute a problem for foreign language learners. Lattey asserts:

Acquiring idioms of a foreign language is one of the more difficult tasks in language learning—to a considerable extent this derives from the relatively vague manner in which native speakers tend to use the idiomatic expressions of their language. If even native speakers have difficulty in specifying exactly what an idiom they may use frequently means (this in contrast to the well defined skill of using it appropriately), we can imagine how difficult it is for learners to go from their native language (in which the definitions of the idioms are also often vague) to another language (in

which the speakers again have only a vague idea of what the idioms mean) and to capture the meaning and pattern of use of the foreign language idiom while learning its idiomatic form.

(Lattey,1986:228)

This is not to suggest, however, that idioms are impossible to learn or teach. Rather, this diagnostic study suggests that idioms are multi-word, single lexical items. That is to say, there is very little difference in teaching the student a lexical item like 'ambidextrous' or 'puppy love', since both require special emphasis, creativity, search for a proper context of presentation and relevance.

5.3. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is hoped that this study will lay the basis for further research that can be conducted in this particular field with beneficial practical implications such as:

- Within the scope of this study, forty-eight idioms were taken as the corpus and the conclusions reached were based on these idioms. To determine whether the conclusions reached here are valid for all idioms, a more extensive study with a larger corpus can be conducted.

- The classification of idioms in this study can be taken as a basis for developing a syllabus to teach idioms.

- A study can be conducted to determine the correlation between the students' comprehension of idioms and the idiom groups.

X - A further research can be conducted to determine whether students' repertoire of idioms in their native language effect their comprehension of idioms in the target language.

- In this study the idioms were presented in isolation and in sentences, providing a situation in the latter case. A further research can be conducted by providing idioms in texts-such as; a story, drama, discourse, thus providing more situational information.

- Determining the best text type which might provide the best context, i.e. dialogues, drama or songs, for the presentation of idioms can be an area for further research.

- The classification of idioms was done on the basis of non-native teachers' comprehension. However, whether idioms causing comprehension difficulty were culturally bias were not considered. This can be an area for further investigation.

X - No matter which group an idiom belongs, if there is a corresponding idiom in one's native language, then the students' ability to comprehend that idiom may increase. Whether this is an effecting factor in comprehension of idioms in a second or foreign language needs further research.

- Idioms and teaching idioms to foreign language students is one of the under-explored areas in second/foreign language teaching. Whether vocabulary teaching techniques can be applied to idiom teaching can also be an area for further research.

- Another area for further research can be to concentrate on the production of idioms. Whether a corresponding classification can be set up for production of idioms may be determined.

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APPENDIX A

CONTEXT DETERMINING TEST

Choose the sentence which best gives the meaning of the idiom. If none of the choices are appropriate, please write a more explanatory alternative sentence.

1. (to) give an ear to
 - a. If you would give an ear to their advice, you could avoid problems (Curry,1986:34)
 - b. The owner of the factory gave an ear to the complaints of the workers (Curry,1986:34).
 - c. Give an ear to what I have to say (Curry,1986:34)

2. (to) be on target
 - a. Your remark concerning the budgets was right on the target (Curry, 1986:3).
 - b. Sam says that he is on the target in his law career (Curry,1986:3).

3. (to) chicken out
 - a. Steve used to drive racing cars but he chickened out last year (Curry,1986:13).
 - b. My sister was going to begin sky-diving lessons this afternoon but she chickened out this morning.(Curry,1986:13).
 - c. "Don't chicken out, come and join the game," yelled out John.

4. a. My brother didn't get to bed until three in the morning and was still dead to the world at noon (Curry,1986:19).
- b. Harry was lying on the sofa dead to the word and missed seeing the game on television (Curry,1986:19).

- c. We kept knocking on his door but he was dead to the world after the party the night before (Longman)¹.
- d. I have just been up to the children's room and they are all dead to the world (Collins).

5. by word of mouth

- a. I didn't read about it but heard the news by word of mouth (Curry, 1986:11).
- b. I heard about Mary's marriage by word of mouth. I hope it's true (Curry,1986:11).
- c. He only got the message by word of mouth(Curry,1986:11).
- d. We heard the news by word of mouth long before it was reported in the newspapers (Longman).
- e. She gets a lot of information from the newspapers, and some by word of mouth (Chambers).

6. (to) come out of one's shell

- a. We finally got Frank to come out of his shell and talk to some people at the party (Curry,1986:15).
- b. She was very quiet and reserved when she first went to school, but she is coming out of her shell a bit now (Chambers).
- c. "No! I don't want to go to that party. There will be lots of people that I don't know," replied Cindy. Mark,with an angry tone, said: "Of course there are lots of people you don't know. It's about time you came out of your shell and meet some."

7. (to) cook up

- a. I have to cook up an excuse for being late to work (Curry,1986:16).
- b. All of the members of the staff were cooking up a scheme to get an extra holiday (Curry,1986:16).

¹Dictionaries used as references are abbreviated above as follows:
 Longman Dictionary of English Idioms: Longman
 Collins Dictionary of English Idioms: Collins
 Chambers Idioms: Chambers

- c. She had to cook up a plan so that they could meet each other as if accidentally.

8. (to) cry over spilled milk

- a. What's done is done! The window is broken and nothing can be done about it. As mother always says: "There is no use crying over spilled milk (Curry,1986:17).
- b. After he lost his wallet, Bill's father told him not to cry over spilled milk (Curry,1986:17).
- c. You wouldn't have torn your skirt if you opened the gate instead of trying to climb the fence, but there is no point in crying over spilled milk (Chambers).
- d. When his money was stolen he quickly realized there was no point in crying over spilled milk (Longman).
- e. There is no use crying over spilled milk: you have failed the test, so the best thing is to start working now for the next one (Collins).

9. flat broke

- a. She gambled all of her savings away and is now flat broke (Curry, 1986:22).
- b. Bill can't lend us any money. He is flat broke (Curry,1986:22).
- c. Since it's the end of the month, I'm flat broke.

10. to get the message

- a. We explained to him that we couldn't help him at all but he didn't get the message (Curry,1986:29).
- b. I hinted to Laura that I wanted to leave early but she didn't get the message (Curry,1986:29).
- c. I want this work finished before you go home--got the message? (Longman).

11. (to) give a hard time

- a. My boss gave me a hard time last week about some late deliveries but calmed down after I explained the problem (Curry,1986:32).
- b. The customer blamed the clerk for the error and really gave her a hard time (Curry,1986:32).
- c. The audience gave the speaker a hard time at the meeting (Chambers).

- d. When I first arrived in England as a child the other children gave me a hard time because I was a foreigner (Collins).

12. (to) have one's hands full

- a. My mother had her hands full raising six children and operating a farm at the same time (Curry,1986:41).
- b. Three emergency cases came into the hospital at the same time and the doctors really had their hands full (Curry,1986:41).
- c. "I've got my hands full," I said. "I'm much obliged but I couldn't take on any more work" (Longman).
- d. I don't think Jane will be able to help you; she has her hands full with her father being ill (Collins).

13. (to) keep one's cool

- a. When Randy heard the shots, he kept his cool and called the police (Curry,1986:57).
- b. In spite of all the excitement over the disaster, the men were able to keep their cool and continue the rescue work (Curry,1986:57).
- c. If you keep your cool, you won't fail (Chambers).

14. (to) lose one's temper

- a. I lost my temper when Sarah told me about the broken window (Curry, 1986:65).
- b. Because her boss criticized her so much, she finally lost her temper and quit her job (Curry,1986:65).
- c. He lost his temper and shouted at me (Chambers).
- d. When he realized how badly he had been treated, he lost his temper (Collins).

15. (to) miss the boat(bus)

- a. Laura really missed the boat by not marrying Ted when he first asked her (Curry,1986:67).
- b. He certainly missed the boat by not investing in that gold mine (Curry,1986:67).
- c. Paul arrived late at the party and found that he had missed the boat -- Judy was already dancing with someone else (Longman).

- d. I mean to send her a birthday card but I missed the boat -- her birthday was last week (Chambers).
- e. You should have applied for the job when it was advertised, now it's too late and you've missed the boat (Collins).

16. on the point of

- a. He is on the point of starting a new life in another country (Curry,1986:72).
- b. The committee is on the point of reaching a decision in the next hour (Curry,1986:72).
- c. On the point of collapsing into a big chair again he recovers himself (Longman).
- d. ...youngsters on the point of choosing a career... (Longman).
- e. I was on the point of going out when the telephone rang (Chambers).

17. (to) pop the question

- a. Steve went with Marcia only three months before he popped the question (Curry,1986:78).
- b. I'm really uptight because I plan to pop the question tonight (Curry,1986:78).
- c. Fran was upset because her boyfriend wouldn't pop the question (Longman).
- d. She said that her boyfriend had popped the question as they drove home from his sister's wedding (Chambers).

18. puppy love

- a. My first love was puppy love -- the girl next door, but she didn't not know that I existed (Curry,1986:79).
- b. When Fred and Alice began dating in high school, their parents thought it was just puppy love (Curry,1986:79).
- c. She wanted to get married at the age of 16, but her parents persuaded her that it was only puppy love (Longman).

19. save for a rainy day

- a. Each week my parents saved for a rainy day (Curry,1986:81).
- b. I don't spend my whole salary -- I put some in the bank for a rainy day (Chambers).

- c. When their house had burnt down, they used the money they saved for a rainy day to build a new one.

20. (to) skate on thin ice

- a. You're skating on thin ice if you keep on talking like that to your father (Curry,1986:84).
- b. I knew I was skating on thin ice to ask for a raise in salary, but I had to have more money (Curry,1986:84).
- c. When you try to give him advice you're skating on thin ice -- he is likely to resent it very much (Chambers).
- d. The audience will have strong feelings on this subject: if you mention it in your speech you will be skating on thin ice (Collins).

21. (to) take things easy

- a. When he retires, Jim will have enough money to take things easy (Curry,1986:93).
- b. On my vacation, I'm going to take things easy -- just eat and sleep (Curry,1986:93).
- c. Dad likes to take things easy on weekends (Curry,1986:93).

22. (to) get it all together

- a. The dancing couple slipped and fell, but quickly got it all together and continued the dance (Curry,1986:25).
- b. After the accident, Pete got it all together and began to joke about his bad luck (Curry,1986:25).
- c. She failed all her courses last year, but she seems to have gotten it all together this year -- her work is excellent.
- d. The producer of the play said to the actors, "Right, let's see if we get it all together this time" (Collins).

23. all kidding aside

- a. "All kidding aside," Maude said, "I think you ought to take that job" (Curry,1983:8).
- b. "What do you mean 'all kidding aside?'" Dick retorted. "I thought you were serious." (Curry,1983:8).
- c. "What I mean to say, and all kidding aside, is that you will have to pay the full amount," Jane said (Curry,1983:8).

24. busy as a bee

- a. Everyone was as busy as a bee preparing for the long vacation (Curry,1983:11).
- b. Mother was as busy as a bee cooking food for the big dinner (Curry, 1983:11).
- c. When we walked into the office, every clerk was as busy as a bee so we had a hard time getting someone to help us (Curry,1983:11).
- d. I've been as busy as a bee all morning doing the jobs I should have done yesterday (Longman).

25. boiling point

- a. Tempers had reached a boiling point. It seemed that a fight would break out any minute (Curry,1983:11).
- b. The tone of the meeting had reached a boiling point and shouts of anger were heard (Curry,1983:11).
- c. Be careful when you talk to Mr. Cassidy. He has a low boiling point and can get angry at the most insignificant thing (Curry,1983: 1983:11).
- d. As one thing after another went wrong, his temper reached boiling point(Collins).

26. look before you leap

- a. "Don't do something as dangerous as that without a little caution," his mother told him. "It's always a good idea to look before you leap in such situation." (Curry,1983:19).
- b. "Look before you leap" is a good motto. Too many people are hasty, rush into something before they think, and then are sorry later for their hasty action (Curry,1983:11).
- c. "'Look before you leap' not only applies to high places but is good advice before one undertakes any endeavor in which there is an element of danger or chance," the teacher explained (Curry,1983: 1983:19).
- d. In choosing a career, it's very important to look before you leap; you may regret it if you make the wrong decision (Collins).

27. (to) stand out in a crowd

- a. Helen is so pretty that she stands out in a crowd (Curry,1983:23).

- b. Because of his long, white beard my grandfather stands out in any crowd (Curry,1983:23).
- c. Notice how Peggy's red jacket makes her stand out in a crowd (Curry,1983:23).

28.(to) keep an open mind

- a. "Don't decide too soon," Walter said. "Keep an open mind about the whole idea (Curry,1983:40).
- b. If you keep an open mind about eating new kinds of food, you might discover some that you like (Curry,1983:40).
- c. I try to keep an open mind during election time. I wait until I hear all issues discussed by the candidates before I vote (Curry, 1983:40).
- d. It doesn't seem to be a very good plan, but I think we should keep an open mind about it for the time being (Chambers).

29.(to) make beautiful music together

- a. "I believe that we have a lot in common," Harvey said. "We read the the same kinds of books, enjoy the same plays, have the same opinions about politics. Why don't we get married? I'm sure we'll make beautiful music together." (Curry,1983:42).
- b. Why don't we become partners in this project. I'm sure we'll make beautiful music together?

30.over the hill

- a. Although thirty-four is old for a footballer, Smith is certainly not over the hill (Chambers)
- b. Roger said that Miss Barber was over the hill as far as marriage was concerned (Longman).
- c. Old Joe used to help me with my garden, but now he is over the hill as far as that's concerned (Collins).

31.the kiss of death

- a. A recommendation from him would be the kiss of death -- he is very unpopular (Chambers).
- b. The plans for the town's new shopping center were given the kiss of death by reductions in government spending (Longman).

- c. Everything went well until the unpopular Mr. Smith said he supported us; it was the kiss of death to all our efforts (Collins).

32. (to) pull one's leg

- a. You haven't really got a black mark on your face -- he is only pulling your leg (Chambers).
- b. Many people have phoned in to report seeing the kangaroo. "We thought people were pulling our legs when they first reported seeing him," a police spokesman said yesterday (Longman).
- c. They told him his car had fallen into the river, but they were only pulling his leg: it was still sitting in the car-park (Collins).

33. (to) get under someone's skin

- a. Don't let his nasty comments get under your skin (Chambers).
- b. The teachers at that school really got under my skin -- they seemed to think that tidiness and good spelling were the most important thing in the world (Longman).
- c. I finally had to stop working with Peter: he just got under my skin (Collins).

34. (to) get it out of your system

- a. Tell me all about your problem -- it'll help you get it out of your system.
- b. The doctor's remark had worried me greatly, so I went for a long walk by myself to try to get it out of my system (Longman).
- c. You shouldn't keep your anger to yourself -- you should get it out of your system (Longman).

35. (to) step out of line

- a. He is very pleasant as long as you do what you're told, but if you step out of line, you're in trouble (Chambers).
- b. If any of the dogs stepped out of line, they were punished (Longman).

36. dressed to kill

- a. Has was dressed to kill for the interview (Chambers).
- b. I don't know how she can afford to do it but every night she goes out dressed to kill (Collins).

- c. There will be many beautiful women at the party. I've got to dress to kill.
- d. John must be trying to impress someone: he is dressed to kill (Collins).

37. (to) cross swords

- a. I try not to cross swords with my boss but he is a most unreasonable man (Chambers).
- b. He argues so fiercely that few people are willing to cross swords with him (Longman).
- c. Whenever we cross swords I always have to admit that I'm wrong (Longman).
- d. Brown and I are not on friendly terms; we've crossed swords twice this week already (Collins).

38. (to) have a mind of one's own

- a. I don't know if I can persuade my daughter to wear this dress, she may be only seven but she has a mind of her own (Chambers).
- b. Your ruling planet, Mars, endows you with energy and a mind of your own (Longman)
- c. Don't try to teach him anything. He has a mind of her own.

39. (to) have two left feet

- a. I don't like to dance with Jim because he has two left feet and keeps stepping on my toes (Chambers)

40. (to) play one's cards right

- a. Play your cards right and you'll get that job. (Curry, 1983:45).
- b. Play your cards right and Laura will marry you (Curry, 1983:45).
- c. Play your cards right and someone will lend you the money (Curry, 1983:45).
- d. Play your cards right and I'll help you fix your car (Curry, 1983:45).
- e. If you play your cards right you may get an increase in pay (Longman).
- f. She feels that if she plays her cards right she may get the widower to marry her (Chambers).

41. "you can't teach an old dog new tricks"

- a. I'm too old to do that. Remember, you can't teach an old dog new tricks. Besides, I'm too set in my ways (Curry, 1983:50).
- b. Everytime my grandfather was encouraged to undertake some new kind of activity or to try a hobby, he would say that he was too old and would add: you can't teach an old dog new tricks (Curry, 1983:50).

42. (to) lose one's marbles

- a. If you keep on talking to yourself in public, people will think you've lost your marbles (Longman).
- b. That old chap is behaving very strangely: I think he's lost his marbles (Collins).

43. (to) touch with a ten-foot pole

- a. After my last nasty experience with him I wouldn't touch him with a ten-foot pole (Longman).
- b. I think you're very brave to take on that job--I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole (Chambers).
- c. I wouldn't touch the food in that restaurant with a ten-foot pole (Longman).
- d. That house you are buying is supposed to be unlucky; I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole (Collins).

44. a sight for sore eyes

- a. The men had been working hard in the fields all day, when they saw their wives bringing them their evening meal, it was a sight for sore eyes (Longman).
- b. "Well, you're a sight fore sore eyes, my boy", said John's aunt, welcoming him with a kiss (Longman).
- c. You're a sight for sore eyes (Chambers).
- d. You know how lazy John is: to see him working so hard in the garden was a sight for sore eyes (Collins).

45. half a loaf is better than no bread

- a. Be happy with what you have. Half a loaf is better than no bread
- b. The police managed to recover only E5 of the money that was stolen; still, half a loaf is better than no bread, I suppose (Collins).

46. (to) bite one's tongue

a. "It's going to rain this weekend".

"Bite your tongue ! We're going to go on a picnic".

47. out of sight, out of mind

a. "My best friend has gone to the U.S. She hasn't even sent me a postcard".

"Sure. You know what they say, it's out of sight, out of mind"

b. When she went away he immediately forgot about her: it was a case of "out of sight, out of mind". (Collins).

48. (to) have a short fuse

a. "That professor was so angry in the class, and there was no reason for it".

"Well, they say he has a short fuse".

APPENDIX B

RESULTS OF THE 'CONTEXT DETERMINING TEST'

1. (to) give an ear to	: b a a a c a a a a a
2. (to be) on target	: a a b a a a a a a a
3. (to) chicken out	: a a b a a a b b a b
4. dead to the world	: c b c b b a c b a b
5. by word of mouth	: a a b d a a c a d c
6. (to) come out of one's shell	: a a c c a b b a a b
7. (to) cook up	: c a c a b a c a a b
8. (to/ cry over spilled milk	: e a e a a c a e a c
9. flat broke	: c a c b a a b a c a
10. (to) get the message	: b b a a d a c d a b
11. (to) give a hard time	: a d d d a b a a a c
12. (to) have one's hands full	: a c a b a a d d b a
13. (to) keep one's cool	: a a a a a a a b a a
13. (to) lose one's temper	: c c b a c a a b a a
15. (to) miss the boat(bus)	: e c c a a e b a a e
16. on the point of	: d a e b b a d a e a
17. (to) pop the question	: b b a d a a a d d a
18. puppy love	: c c a a a b c b a a
19. (to) save for a rainy day	: a a a a a b a b b b
20. (to) skate on thin ice	: b b a c a a b a a c
21. (to) take things easy	: b b a b a a c a a c
22. (to) get it all together	: d c a a c b b a a c
23. all kidding aside	: a c a b a a a b a c
24. busy as as bee	: c b c a a a b a a d
25. boiling point	: b a a c a b a c b a
26. look before you leap	: a a a a b a a b b a

27.(to) stand out in a crowd : c a c a b a b a a a
 28.(to) keep an open mind : b c a a d c a a a d
 29.(to) make beautiful music together : b a a a a b a a b a
 30.over the hill : a b a a a a c a a a
 31.the kiss of death : c a c a a b a c a a
 32.(to) pull one's leg : a a a c c c a a b a
 33.(to) get under one's skin : a b b a a b b a a a
 34.(to) get it out of one's system : c b a a a c a a a a
 35.(to) step out of line : a a a a a a a a a a
 36.dressed to kill : c b d a a c a d c a
 37.(to) cross swords : a a b a d a a c b a
 38.(to) have a mind of one's own : a a a a a a a a a a
 39.(to) have two left teet : a a a a a a a a a a
 40.(to) play one's cards right : e a b f a a f a b f
 41.you can't teach an old dog new
 tricks : a a b a b a b a b a
 42.(to) lose one's marble : a a a a a a b a b a
 43.(to) touch with a ten-toot pole: : b a a a a c a c a a
 44.a sight for sore eyes : d b a a a a b a b a
 45.half a loaf is better than no bread: b a a a a a a b b a
 46.(to) bite one's tongue : a a a a a a a a a a
 47.out of sight, out of mind : a a a a a a a b b b
 48.(to) have a short fuse : a a a a a a a a a a

APPENDIX C

COMPREHENSION TEST I: IDIOMS IN ISOLATION

Translate the following idioms into Turkish; i.e. write what you understand from them.

1. (to) give an ear to (I)
2. (to) be on target (II)
3. (to) chicken out (III)
4. dead to the world (III)
5. by word of mouth (II)
6. save for a rainy day (I)
7. flat broke (II)
8. look before you leap (I) leap: atlamak
9. over the hill (III)
10. half a loaf is better than no bread (I)
11. (to) play one's cards right (II)
12. on the point of (II)
13. the kiss of death (III)
14. (to) lose one's marbles (II) marble: bilya, misket
15. (to) bite one's tongue (I)
16. (to) get the message (I)
17. (to) pull one's leg (III)
18. (to) make beautiful music together (I)
19. (to) come of one's shell (I)
20. ((to) keep an open mind (II)
21. (to) take things easy (II)
22. "out of sight, out of mind" (III)
23. (to) get under one's skin (III)
24. (to) get it out of one's system (II)
25. (to be) busy as a bee (I)
26. (to) skate on thin ice (I)
27. (to) cry over spilled milk (II)

28. (to) touch with a ten-foot pole (III)
29. (to) step out of line (III)
30. (to) get it all together (II)
31. puppy love (III)
32. (to) lose one's temper (I)
33. "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" (I)
34. (to) have one's hands full (II)
35. (to) pop the question (III)
36. a sight for sore eyes (II)
37. dressed to kill (III)
38. (to) cross swords (II)
39. (to) cook up (II)
40. (to) have a mind of one's own (I)
41. all kidding aside (I)
42. (to) keep one's cool (II)
43. (to) give a hard time (I)
44. boiling point (I)
45. (to) stand out in a crowd (II)
46. (to) miss the boat (bus) (I)
47. (to) have two left feet
48. (to) have a short fuse

COMPREHENSION TEST II: IDIOMS IN A SENTENCE

Read the following sentences. Write down the meanings of the underlined idioms.

1. If you would give an ear to their advice, you could avoid problems.
2. Your remark concerning the budget was right on the target.
3. Steve used to drive racing cars but he chickened out last year.
4. Harry was lying on the sofa dead to the world and missed seeing the game on T.V.
5. I didn't read about it but heard the news by word of mouth.
6. We finally got Frank to come out of his shell and talk to some people at the party.
7. I have to cook up an excuse for being late to work.
8. What's done is done! The window is broken and nothing can be done about it. As mother always says: 'There is no use crying over spilled milk.
9. She gambled all of her savings away and is now flat broke.
10. We explained to him that we couldn't help him at all but he didn't get the message.
11. My boss gave me a hard time last week about some late deliveries but calmed down after I explained the problem.
12. My mother had her hands full raising six children and operating a farm at the same time.
13. When Randy heard the shots, he kept his cool and called the police.
14. I lost my temper when Sarah told me about the broken window.
15. Laura really missed the boat by not marrying Ted when he first asked her.
16. He is on the point of starting a new life in another country.
17. Steve went out with Marcia only three months before he popped the question.

18. My first love was puppy love-- the girl next door, but she didn't know I existed.
19. Each week my parents saved \$10 for a rainy day.
20. You're skating on thin ice if you keep on talking like that to your father.
21. When he retires, Jim will have enough money to take things easy until he dies.
22. The dancing couple slipped and fell, but quickly got it all together and continued the dance.
23. "All kidding aside" Maude said. "I think you ought to take the job."
24. Everyone was as busy as a bee preparing for the long vacation.
25. Tempers had reached a boiling point. It seemed that a fight would break out any minute.
26. "Don't do something as dangerous as that without a little caution", his mother told him. "It's always a good idea to look before you leap in such situations".
27. Helen is so pretty that she stands out in a crowd.
28. "Don't decide too soon", Walter said. "Keep an open mind about the whole idea".
29. "I believe that we have a lot in common", Harvey said. "We read the same kinds of books, enjoy the same plays, have the same opinions about politics. Why don't we get married? I'm sure we'll make beautiful music together."
30. Although thirty-four is old for a footballer, Smith is certainly not over the hill.
31. A recommendation from him would be the kiss of death--he is very unpopular.
32. You haven't really got a black mark on your face--he is only pulling your leg.
33. Don't let his nasty comments get under your skin.
34. Tell me all about your problem--it'll help you to get it out of your system.

35. He's very pleasant as long as you do what you're told, but if you step out of line you're in trouble.
36. He was dressed to kill for the interview.
37. I try not to cross swords with my boss but he is the most unreasonable man.
38. I don't know if I can persuade my daughter to wear this dress, she may be only seven but she has a mind of her own about clothes.
39. I don't like to dance with Jim, because he has two left feet and keeps stepping on my toes.
40. Play your cards right and you'll get that job.
41. I'm too old to do that. Remember, you can't teach an old dog new tricks. Besides, I'm too set in my ways.
42. If you keep on talking to yourself in public, people will think you've lost your marbles.
43. After my last nasty experience with him, I wouldn't touch him with a ten-foot pole.
44. The men had been working hard in the fields all day; when they saw their wives bringing them their evening meal, it was a sight for sore eyes.
45. Be happy with what you have. Half a loaf is better than no bread.
46. "It's going to rain this weekend".
"Bite your tongue! We're going to go on a picnic".
47. "My best friend has gone to the U.S. She hasn't even sent me a postcard".
"Sure. You know what they say: 'Out of sight, out of mind'"
48. "That professor was so angry in the class, and there was no reason for it".
"Well, they say he has a short fuse".

APPENDIX D

RESULTS OF THE COMPREHENSION TEST

Number of correct responses collected from comprehension tests

1st column : number of correct responses for idioms in isolation

2nd column : number of correct responses for idioms in a sentence

FIRST GROUP IDIOMS

	(to) give an ear to		(to) save for a rainy day		look before you leap		half a loaf is better than no bread		(to) bite one's tongue		(to) get the message		(to) make beautiful music together		(to) come out of one's shell		(to be) busy as a bee		(to) skate on thin ice		(to) lose one's temper		you can't teach an old dog new tricks		(to) have a mind of one's own		all kidding aside		(to) give a hard time		boiling point		(to) miss the boat (bus)	
EĞİTİM I	29	29	10	15	7	13	28	24	12	21	0	7	3	12	19	21	13	15	10	5	10	23	8	10	7	12	5	10	1	5	3	10	16	19
EĞİTİM II	17	19	14	19	7	15	21	22	5	19	3	9	4	10	5	12	7	10	9	11	14	23	14	11	5	16	3	2	4	13	2	15	17	23
EĞİTİM III	25	26	12	22	3	10	20	14	11	18	5	20	6	15	16	11	10	7	10	5	22	27	9	12	5	16	3	7	6	10	2	17	11	25
EĞİTİM IV	12	14	10	12	6	7	12	9	9	11	4	11	4	9	3	11	8	3	3	7	12	14	5	5	5	9	1	4	3	5	1	8	7	14
ELEMENTARY	21	21	12	17	4	9	18	11	12	11	0	2	0	11	17	22	3	1	5	0	8	18	8	19	2	5	0	0	0	1	4	8	11	15
LOWER INTERMEDIATE	16	20	9	15	3	9	18	11	4	11	0	6	0	11	7	16	7	6	3	4	3	19	3	3	0	7	0	0	2	4	1	7	6	18
UPPER INTERMEDIATE	21	27	1	12	3	4	26	22	6	10	0	11	3	15	6	13	6	15	3	7	3	19	2	4	3	5	0	0	3	5	0	7	7	19
ADVANCED	13	13	4	8	3	5	13	9	5	8	1	5	2	4	6	9	3	7	4	6	0	9	4	8	1	8	0	0	8	4	1	7	6	13

SECOND GROUP IDIOMS

	(to) be on target		by word of mouth		flat broke		(to) play one's cards right		on the point of		(to) lose one's marbles		(to) keep an open mind		(to) take things easy		(to) get it out one's system		(to) cry over spilled milk		(to) get it all together		(to) have one's hands full		a sight for sore eyes		(to) cross swords		(to) cook up		(to) keep one's cool		(to) stand out in a crowd		(to) have two left feet	
EĞİTİMİ	1	9	1	10	0	9	0	6	0	12	0	12	10	8	0	0	0	12	7	6	0	10	1	7	0	0	0	11	0	8	12	22	1	12	1	3
EĞİTİM II	2	2	8	21	1	11	3	7	0	12	1	20	5	4	0	0	0	9	8	9	1	20	1	11	0	0	4	18	0	14	13	24	0	16	0	7
EĞİTİM III	5	4	4	19	0	20	3	8	0	7	0	19	17	12	0	0	0	5	11	19	0	17	1	13	1	0	1	10	0	17	15	25	0	11	1	6
EĞİTİM IV	1	3	6	13	0	8	1	2	0	3	0	9	7	4	0	0	0	2	4	12	0	10	0	7	0	0	0	7	1	11	12	15	0	10	0	3
ELEMENTARY	4	7	1	10	0	5	1	1	0	9	0	6	3	6	0	0	0	6	3	8	0	7	2	4	0	0	0	3	0	11	15	16	0	9	0	0
LOWER INTERMEDIATE	4	3	0	11	0	1	0	2	0	12	0	5	5	3	2	0	0	2	0	2	0	5	2	7	0	0	0	4	0	2	3	13	1	10	0	3
UPPER INTERMEDIATE	2	3	0	23	1	4	2	5	0	13	0	12	11	6	3	0	0	4	1	6	0	14	1	9	0	2	0	9	0	12	2	19	0	16	0	1
ADVANCED	2	3	1	8	0	3	0	8	0	7	0	11	5	3	0	0	0	3	3	6	0	10	0	6	0	0	0	7	0	7	1	11	1	11	1	3

THIRD GROUP IDIOMS

	(to) chicken out		dead to the world		over the hill		the kiss of death		(to) pull one's leg		out of sight, out of mind		(to) get under one's skin		(to) touch with a ten-foot pole		(to) step out of line		puppy love		(to) pop the question		dressed to kill		(to) have a short fuse	
EĞİTİM I	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	1	6	17	0	0	2	5	9	8	5	12	0	4	0	0	3	6
EĞİTİM II	0	0	0	4	0	6	0	0	0	1	16	24	0	0	1	3	7	6	6	11	1	3	2	5	2	5
EĞİTİM III	0	2	0	6	0	9	0	0	1	0	20	23	0	0	0	3	6	7	6	12	2	5	0	5	1	2
EĞİTİM IV	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	7	14	0	0	1	3	4	5	0	7	0	2	0	2	0	2
ELEMENTARY	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	17	0	0	0	0	4	7	0	16	0	9	0	1	0	0
LOWER INTERMEDIATE	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	3	7	0	0	0	1	4	6	1	11	0	1	0	0	1	0
UPPER INTERMEDIATE	0	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	2	5	17	0	0	1	3	5	6	3	6	0	1	1	2	1	4
ADVANCED	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	7	12	0	0	1	1	5	2	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	2

APPENDIX E

RECOGNITION TEST

Read the following sentences. If there are any idioms, please underline the idioms.

1. We will be going deeply into a variety of topics.¹
2. The woods are lovely; dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep.
3. I heard about Mary's marriage by word of mouth.
4. I don't want to go to a law school. What I am really interested in is art.
5. The teachers at that school really got under my skin--they seemed to think that tidiness and good spelling were the most important things in the world.
6. If you laugh so loudly once again like that, those people ère going to think you've lost your marbles.
7. He really missed the boat by not investing in that gold mine.
8. Inflation has given birth to a money-minded generation.
9. Be careful when you tell dad about the accident. You know dad has a short fuse.
10. The plans for the town's new shopping center were given the kiss of death by reductions in government spending.
11. Jason knew from childhood that he was of high rank because his family was the most influential and powerful in all of the region.

¹ Sentences not containing idioms are taken from the following books:
Lakoff and Johnson, 1980 Curry, 1981
Malkoç, 1984 Curry, 1985

12. After the accident, Pete got it all together and began to joke about his bad luck.
13. Bill can't lend us any money. He is flat broke.
14. After several weeks of eating the special dish that Mara prepared, Alfred began to get a strong feeling of dislike for it.
15. Norman thought that he had written an excellent article, but when he got it back from the editor-in-chief, he could hardly believe his eyes.
16. By the way he spoke, acted, and walked with great dignity, many people thought he was of noble descent.
17. I knew I was skating on thin ice to ask for a raise in salary, but I had to have more money.
18. Because of his long, white beard, my grandfather stands out in any crowd.
19. The tone's of the meeting had reached a boiling point and shouts of anger were heard.
20. The customer blamed the clerk for the error and really gave her a hard time.
21. Little Andy has left dirty marks all over the well.
22. I don't spend my whole salary--I put some in the bank, to save for a rainy day.
23. He argues so fiercely that few people are willing to cross swords with him.
24. Sam says that he is on target in his law career.
25. All of the members of the staff were cooking up a scheme to get an extra holiday.
26. "Thank you for the diamond earrings," Martha told her husband. "I'm so pleased I can hardly talk."
27. Did you pass by the new store? It really is a big and rich store.
28. Every time my grandfather was encouraged to undertake some new kind of activity or to try a hobby, he would say that he was too old and would add; you can't teach an old dog new tricks.
29. One could tell that he was sad by the gloomy expression on his face and he began to speak about his depression for all to hear.
30. "Well, you're a sight for sore eyes, my boy," said John's aunt, welcoming him with a kiss.

31. Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
32. Mother was as busy as a bee cooking food for the big dinner.
33. Play your cards right and Laura will marry you.
34. This novel is based on a true story that took place in Poland.
35. The owner of the factory gave an ear to the complaints of the workers.
36. I hinted to Laura that I wanted to leave early, but she didn't get the message.
37. If you would keep an open mind about eating new kinds of food, you might discover some that you like.
38. My sister was going to begin sky-diving lessons this afternoon but she chickened out this morning.
39. We need to go into this future in order to see clearly what's involved.
40. The agent is primarily responsible for carrying out the plan.
41. Your ruling planet, Mars, endows you with the energy and a mind of your own.
42. National Bus Company is offering free trips to Yellowstone Park.
43. When Fred and Alice began dating in high school, their parents thought it was just puppy love.
44. In spite of all the excitement over the disaster, the men were able to keep their cool and continue the rescue work.
45. Out of the corner of his eye, the diver can see air bubbles rising to the surface.
46. The doctor's remark had worried me greatly, so I went for a long walk by myself to try to get it out of my system.
47. Usually, one must go around such a place, because it is so difficult to go through it.
48. Roger said that Miss Barber was over the hill as far as marriage was concerned.
49. I don't know how she can afford to do it but every night she goes out out, dressed to kill.
50. He hasn't even called me once since he changed jobs. I guess it's out of out of sight, out of mind.

51. Cancer finally caught up with him.
52. "I know I'm going to have to depend on my parents for the rest of my life. I'm such a failure."
"Bite your tongue. If you want, you can do something about it."
53. I don't want to go to the dance with Dave. He has two left feet.
54. Because her boss criticised her so much, she finally lost her temper and quit her job.
55. All the laborers who worked on the construction site went on strike.
56. Many people have phoned in to report seeing the kangaroo. "We thought people were pulling our legs when they first reported seeing him," a police spokesman said yesterday.
57. I'm really uptight because I plan to pop the question tonight.
58. If any of the dogs stepped out of line, they were punished.
59. Why don't we become partners and work on this project. I'm sure we'll make beautiful music together.
60. The committee is on the point of reaching a decision in the next hour.
61. Hal is young, energetic, intelligent and has a bright future ahead of him.
62. He has no reason to be sorry about the little fortune he has inherited.
Half a loaf is better than no bread. Old Jason could've left nothing.
63. This is very happy day for me. I received a check in the mail for my latest magazine article.
64. "What do you mean 'all kidding aside?'" Dick said. "I thought you were serious."
65. She was very quiet and reserved when she first went to school, but she is coming out of her shell.
66. By never speaking of his mistakes with the money he invested, Ted was able to mislead a lot of people into thinking that he was rich.
67. Three emergency cases came into the hospital at the same time and the doctors really had their hands full.
68. On my vacation, I'm going to take things easy--just eat and sleep.
69. 'Look before you leap' not only applies to high places but is good advice before one undertakes any endeavor in which there is an element of danger or chance.
70. It's too cold to get out of bed.

71. When I asked, they told me that formal evening wear was necessary.
72. After he lost his wallet, Bill's father told him not to cry over spilled milk.
73. My brother didn't get to bed until three in the morning and was still dead to the world.
74. I think you're very brave to take on that job. I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole.
75. As she was running out of the building she bumped into the wall.

RESULTS OF THE RECOGNITION TEST

Number of correct responses given to each idiom for each English level

	NO	I D I O M S	Elementary	Lower Int.	Upper Int.	Advanced
FIRST GROUP IDIOMS	1	(to) give an ear to	4	6	4	6
	2	(to) save for a rainy day	7	7	2	11
	3	look before you leap	4	10	7	8
	4	half a loaf is better than no bread	11	11	8	13
	5	(to) bite one's tongue	8	12	9	12
	6	(to) get the message	7	5	1	2
	7	(to) make beautiful music together	8	11	2	6
	8	(to) come out of one's shell	4	2	0	1
	9	(to be) busy as a bee	6	3	3	4
	10	(to) skate on thin ice	9	4	4	2
	11	(to) lose one's temper	7	7	6	2
	12	you can't teach an old dog new tricks	6	9	5	6
	13	(to) have a mind of one's own	8	2	3	3
	14	all ridding aside	4	1	4	3
	15	(to) give a hard time	2	3	2	5
	16	boiling point	7	9	4	3
	17	(to) miss the boat (bus)	7	7	2	2
SECOND GROUP IDIOMS	18	(to) be on target	4	3	3	5
	19	by word of mouth	8	10	9	11
	20	flat broke	13	13	11	13
	21	(to) play one's cards right	8	10	12	11
	22	on the point of	0	2	1	2
	23	(to) lose one's marbles	9	8	6	8
	24	(to) keep an open mind	4	6	3	5
	25	(to) take things easy	4	1	1	3
	26	(to) get it out of one's system	8	2	0	1
	27	(to) cry over spilled milk	11	6	4	7
	28	(to) get it all together	3	0	1	1
	29	(to) have one's hands full	3	5	1	1
	30	a sight for sore eyes	7	3	2	5
	31	(to) cross swords	4	3	2	1
	32	(to) cook up	5	8	2	4
	33	(to) keep one's cool	2	5	2	2
	34	(to) stand out in a crowd	4	1	1	3
	35	(to) have two left feet	6	5	0	7
THIRD GROUP IDIOMS	36	(to) chicken out	8	7	9	6
	37	dead to the world	7	4	7	1
	38	over the hill	6	6	3	5
	39	the kiss of death	14	10	7	6
	40	(to) pull one's leg	8	7	5	5
	41	out of sight, out of mind	8	7	10	9
	42	(to) get under one's skin	6	3	5	10
	43	(to) touch with a ten-foot pole	4	4	2	6
	44	(to) step out of line	5	4	2	2
	45	puppy love	5	6	4	4
	46	(to) pop the question	6	6	1	1
	47	dressed to kill	16	15	9	13
	48	(to) have a short fuse	3	2	1	2

APPENDIX G

GLOSSARY OF IDIOMS USED IN THE TESTS

1. (to) give an ear to : to listen to
2. (to) be on the target: to achieve a desired goal; to be correct in one's analysis
3. (to) chicken out: to stop doing something because of fear
4. dead to the world : fast asleep
5. by word of mouth : from one person to another by the spoken word; orally
6. save for a rainy day : to save for a time of need, especially a time when one may really need money
7. (to) come out of one's shell : to stop being shy
8. (to) cry over spilled milk : to cry or complain about something that has no remedy
9. (to) cook up : to plan or organize
10. flat broke : having no money
11. (to) get the message : to understand clearly what is meant
12. (to) give a hard time : to complain; give trouble by what one says or does
13. (to) have one's hands full : to be very busy; have as much work as one can do
14. (to) keep one's cool : to remain calm or in different
15. (to) lose one's temper : to get angry; lose control of oneself in anger
16. (to) miss the boat : to delay something until it is too late
17. on the point of : ready to begin; very near to
18. (to) pop the question : to ask someone to marry you
19. puppy love : the first love of very young people, not a lasting love

20. (to) skate on thin ice : to take a chance
21. (to) take things easy : to avoid hard work
22. (to) get it all together : to collect one's composure under pressure
23. all kidding aside : speak seriously
24. (to be) busy as a bee : fully occupied
25. look before you leap : think before doing something
26. (to) stand out in a crowd : to call attention to oneself
27. (to) keep an open mind : to have a willingness to listen to oneself or accept new ideas, other people's suggestions
28. (to) make beautiful music together : to be in totally harmonious relationship
29. over the hill : past one's best; too old
30. the kiss of death : something (especially if apparently helpful) which causes ruin, death etc.
31. (to) pull someone's leg : to try as a joke to make (someone) believe something which is not true
32. (to) get under (someone's) skin : to annoy and upset someone greatly
33. (to) get (something) out of one's system : to stop oneself permanently from thinking, etc. about (something), especially by expressing one's feelings
34. (to) step out of line : to behave in a way different from what is usual or accepted
35. dressed to kill : dressed in one's best clothes, especially in clothing designed to attract attention
36. (to) cross swords : to quarrel or disagree
37. (to) have a mind of one's own : to be able to think for oneself, not accepting other people's opinions without question
38. (to) have two left feet : to be clumsy or awkward, eg. in dancing
39. (to) play one's cards right : to take the fullest possible advantage of one's chances of success
40. (to) lose one's mables : to become mad
41. "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" : old people don't like change
42. wouldn't/won't touch with a ten foot pole : to avoid (something or someone) that one distrusts or strongly dislikes in every possible way

43. a sight for sore eyes : a most welcomed sight
44. "half a loaf is better than no bread": one should not be ungrateful for what one achieves, is given etc. even if it is not all that one wanted because it is better than nothing
45. "out of mind out of sight" : meaning that one ceases to think about someone who is absent or something that is no longer obvious
46. boiling point : to come to the end of one's patient
47. (to) bite one's tongue : to avoid bad luck
48. (to) have a short fuse : to get angry quickly