

Exploring the Interpretation of Idiomatic Verbal Phrases in Arabic: A Comparative Study of English and French-Speaking Advanced Learners

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Received: 30/01/2025,

Accepted: 24/05/2025,

Published: 01/06/2025

ABSTRACT: *This study explores how proficient Arabic learners, whose first language is English or French, understand idiomatic verbal expressions by moving beyond traditional grammatical rules. The research examines the use of figurative interpretation to comprehend these idiomatic expressions. It evaluates how learners' linguistic background impacts their ability to differentiate between literal and figurative meanings. An experimental approach was used to compare the performance of English and French-speaking learners, employing quantitative and qualitative data analysis tools like SPSS and NVivo.*

KEYWORDS: Idiomatic Expressions Acquisition; Figurative Interpretation in Language Learning; Arabic as a Second Language; Cross-Linguistic Influence; Native Language Impact on Comprehension; Comparative Language Education; Advanced Arabic Learners.

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1. Introduction:

There has been a significant increase in teaching Arabic as a second language in recent years due to its cultural and historical relevance worldwide. One of the challenges in this discipline is teaching students idiomatic Arabic expressions, as these terms often shift from literal to metaphorical meanings. Understanding these phrases requires students' more complex, contextual interpretation beyond basic grammatical understanding. Therefore, this component is crucial for researchers and educators (Versteegh, 2015; AMRAOUI, 2019).

Idiomatic expressions are crucial in language, connecting literal language use with metaphorical reasoning. They reflect not only the structural aspects of a language but also its cultural and social nuances. Several scholars have noted that understanding and using these idiomatic phrases is often a vital indicator of a learner's overall language proficiency and capacity to engage with native speakers more authentically and culturally sensitively (Coxhead, 2024; Samani, 2012). Idiomatic expressions present a significant challenge for advanced Arabic learners, especially those whose first languages are English or French. These learners must navigate between their linguistic frameworks and the specific idiomatic structures of Arabic (Aydn, 2019).

A previous study found that the linguistic and cultural differences between Arabic and the learners' original languages pose significant challenges in understanding colloquial idioms. This is particularly noticeable in Arabic idiomatic verbal phrases, which often use prepositions and adverbs in ways that differ significantly from their usage in other languages. This can lead to shifts in meaning that non-native speakers may struggle to grasp (Kövecses, 2015; Veliz & Smith, 2021). For instance, many Arabic idiomatic expressions rely on complex prepositional usage, where the intended meaning can differ significantly from the literal one. To overcome these challenges, learners must first understand the language's figurative dimensions (Al-Khawaldeh al., 2016).

This study explores how second-language Arabic learners engage with idiomatic verbal expressions in literary contexts, especially those with English and French backgrounds. Literary texts often diverge from conventional grammatical rules and instead utilise rhetorical techniques that require a more interpretive approach to uncover the idiomatic meanings within. This study assesses how proficient these students are in employing figurative interpretation strategies to interpret such expressions, going beyond basic grammatical knowledge (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Cieřlicka, 2015).

Understanding these patterns requires more than just a basic understanding of grammar; it also requires a thorough understanding of the cultural and symbolic environment in which such statements exist (Ganji, 2011). Recent research suggests that analysing implicit meanings and artistic references, known as figurative interpretation, can be a powerful method for helping learners move beyond literal interpretations and gain a deeper understanding of idiomatic phrases (Gibbs, 1994; Berendi & Kövecses, 2008).

This research proposes an experimental framework to test the effectiveness of an interpretive approach versus traditional grammar-focused training.

The study explored how learners' language and cultural backgrounds affect their ability to understand idiomatic expressions. Research has shown that learners often rely on strategies from their native languages when comprehending idioms in a new language. This leads to differences in understanding idioms among different linguistic groups (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Jarvis, 2008). For example, English-speaking learners may use direct associative thinking to interpret idiomatic language, while French-speaking learners may take a context-driven approach.

This study aims to explore effective methods for teaching idiomatic expressions in Arabic to non-native speakers. It focuses on how learners interact with literary texts and goes beyond direct grammatical rules using rhetorical analysis, addressing existing research gaps. The study used an experimental design to compare the ability of native English and French speakers to understand idiomatic verbal phrases. Data analysis was conducted using statistical tools such as SPSS and NVivo.

2. Literature Review and Previous Studies:

The study of idiomatic verbal phrases in second language learning has been a significant focus of applied linguistics. This is because comprehension of idiomatic expressions requires complex cognitive and cultural processes. Idiomatic expressions pose a substantial barrier for learners as they often deviate from direct grammatical norms and require a deep understanding of cultural and contextual components (Gibbs, 1994; Beréndi & Kövecses, 2008). This complexity is especially evident in Arabic idiomatic verbal phrases, where the interaction of prepositions, adverbs, and verbs can drastically modify a phrase's meaning, shifting from literal to figurative. Learners from languages with distinct idiomatic structures and syntactic norms, such as English and French, face additional obstacles (Veliz & Smith, 2021).

The Nature of Idiomaticity in Language Learning:

The concept of idiomaticity has been extensively studied in second language acquisition research. It refers to how specific phrases are used in ways that extend beyond their literal definitions, expressing metaphorical interpretations rooted in cultural contexts. Wray (2002) explained that idiomatic expressions often include cultural norms and cognitive schemas unique to native speakers, creating a linguistic environment that non-native learners must navigate. Becoming fluent in these phrases requires structural proficiency and cultural understanding (Samani, 2012).

According to Gibbs (1994), understanding idiomatic language requires activating both literal and figurative cognitive processes, which are inextricably linked to cultural experiences and metaphorical modes of thinking. In this context, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) has helped to clarify how metaphorical reasoning underpins the formation and interpretation of idiomatic idioms. According to this idea, while certain idiomatic statements correspond to universal cognitive metaphors (e.g., "up is good" or "time is money"), their exact manifestation varies significantly between languages due to cultural variances. Non-native learners may struggle to understand the meanings of Arabic idioms, which commonly include analogies from Islamic traditions, classical literature, and poetry (Al-Khawaldeh & all, 2016).

The Challenges of Teaching Idiomatic Expressions in Arabic:

Teaching colloquial expressions in Arabic as a second language has proven difficult, especially when it comes to idiomatic verbal phrases that contain prepositional and adverbial parts. When these words are used idiomatically, their meanings often change, leading to interpretations that differ from the literal meanings of the individual words. For example, the phrase "يُدَوِّرُ فِي فَلَكٍ" (meaning "to revolve in orbit") can be used metaphorically in Arabic to indicate "to remain within a specific scope of influence." Understanding these applications requires learners to go beyond literal meanings, which can be challenging for those who are used to direct interpretative approaches in their native language (AMRAOUI, 2019).

Versteegh (2015) highlights the significance of using a culturally immersive approach when teaching idiomatic phrases. The author argues that students must engage with authentic Arabic literary texts to fully grasp figurative language's nuances. This approach differs from traditional grammar-translation

systems, which often need help to convey the subtle usage of idiomatic language. According to Coxhead (2024), exposing learners to idiomatic situations in literature and media enhances their comprehension and use of these terms.

Comparative Perspectives on Idiomatic Interpretation:

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of a person's native language on their comprehension of idiomatic expressions in a second language. In 2000, Irujo conducted a comparative survey of Spanish learners who were native English speakers. The study revealed that learners often rely on strategies from their first language when encountering unfamiliar idioms in the second language. While this can be beneficial when there are structural similarities between the languages, it can also lead to errors when there are significant differences. Jarvis (2008) also discovered that transfer strategies could enhance or hinder comprehension, depending on the linguistic distance between the languages.

A study by Cieřlicka (2015) on Arabic found that native French speakers tend to interpret Arabic idiomatic terms more contextually, possibly due to their familiarity with Romance languages, which often prioritise semantic flexibility. On the other hand, English speakers usually struggle with the sophisticated idiomatic constructs of Arabic, likely because they prefer more straightforward syntactic correspondences. These findings emphasise how learners' linguistic background influences their interpretation of colloquial terms.

The Role of Figurative Interpretation in Comprehending Idiomatic Phrases:

Based on these comparative findings, the current study focuses on the unique challenges of idiomatic verbal phrases in Arabic. The emphasis is on using figurative interpretation to enhance comprehension. Figurative interpretation helps students understand idiomatic expressions by engaging with the rhetorical and metaphorical aspects of the language rather than relying solely on direct grammatical translation (Berendi & Kővecses, 2008). This approach is efficient when analysing literary texts, as idioms often arise from rhetorical richness rather than strict adherence to grammatical rules.

According to Ganji (2011), to understand idiomatic meanings, students must first grasp the cultural and symbolic connotations implicit in these idioms. This aligns with Samani's (2012) argument that guided interpretation can significantly enhance learners' ability to comprehend idiomatic expressions by prompting an exploration of the language's cultural origins. This course emphasises rhetorical analysis to assist learners in understanding idiomatic expressions and developing a more refined understanding of Arabic.

The Unique Contribution of This Study:

The current study is unique in its experimental approach, which directly compares how advanced Arabic learners from English and French-speaking backgrounds interpret idiomatic verbal phrases containing prepositions and adverbs. The study aims to understand how learners' language origins influence their ability to comprehend figurative language. The research incorporates quantitative analyses using SPSS and qualitative data using NVivo to thoroughly analyse learners' interpretative processes and associated challenges. This dual-method approach offers a fresh perspective on Arabic language pedagogy, which is not commonly found in the existing literature.

This study addresses a crucial gap in understanding how advanced Arabic learners engage with literary works and idiomatic expressions. It aims to offer educators practical ideas for teaching idiomatic phrases using figurative interpretation approaches. The study seeks to enhance our comprehension of idiomatic expressions in Arabic language learning by examining the connection between linguistic background,

cultural awareness, and interpretive skills. Additionally, it provided valuable insights into the field of second language acquisition

3. Research Objectives:

Primary Objective:

The main objective of this study is to explore how learners' native languages, especially English and French, affect their understanding of idiomatic expressions in Arabic. Due to the significant differences in idiomatic structures and cultural contexts between Arabic and these two European languages, this study aims to examine how these linguistic backgrounds impact learners' cognitive processes when interpreting idiomatic expressions. The study took a comparative approach to investigate whether a learner's native language influences their ability to comprehend and use idiomatic verbal phrases. This research aims to provide insights into the complexities of second language acquisition and the influence of the native language on learning a new language.

Secondary Objectives:

1. Evaluation of Instructional Impact:

The second objective of this study is to assess how well learners understand idiomatic expressions after being taught using figurative interpretation techniques, as opposed to more traditional pedagogical methods. Conventional methods often rely on rote memorisation and direct translations, which may lead to surface-level understanding and limited use of colloquial expressions. On the other hand, figurative interpretation encourages deeper cognitive engagement by prompting students to explore the underlying meanings and cultural nuances embedded in idiomatic expressions. To achieve this objective, pre- and post-instruction tests were administered to measure knowledge acquisition and retention quantitatively.

2. Examination of Interaction with Literary Texts:

The second secondary goal is to investigate how students interact with literary works containing idiomatic expressions, particularly emphasising their interpretative processes. Literary works provide valuable tools for understanding idiomatic language in context, allowing students to connect with actual usage. This goal involves examining students' responses to selected literary works, determining their capacity to comprehend idiomatic expressions within these texts, and identifying the tactics used in their interpretations. Understanding these exchanges provided vital insights into how learners manage the difficulties of idiomatic language in authentic settings, emphasising the importance of literary engagement in promoting idiomatic comprehension.

3. Methodological Recommendations:

The third secondary goal is to provide methodological suggestions for improving the teaching of idiomatic expressions in Arabic language curricula for non-native speakers. Combining the primary and secondary objectives data, this study offers educators practical, evidence-based techniques for enhancing idiomatic expression instruction and acquisition. These proposals focus on incorporating figurative interpretation strategies, using literary texts as teaching tools, and raising awareness of the impact of learners' native languages on their interpretative processes. The primary goal is to create a more effective and culturally relevant way to teach idiomatic expressions, thereby improving learners' linguistic competency and cultural knowledge of Arabic.

This research aims to contribute to Arabic language education, specifically in idiomatic language learning. It also seeks to establish a foundation for future studies that explore the connections between language, culture, and pedagogy. By examining idiomatic verbal phrases, this study aims to provide insight into the cognitive and pedagogical processes involved in comprehending these essential aspects of the Arabic language.

4. Study Design:

- Sample:

This study involved 40 students enrolled in an advanced diploma program for Arabic language proficiency, focusing on learners at levels three and four. This level of proficiency is crucial as it indicates that participants have already acquired a basic understanding of the language and are now progressing to advanced language use, including the recognition of idiomatic expressions. The participants were equally divided into two groups based on their native language: English speakers and French speakers

- Participants:

A total of 40 children took part. Native Language Groups: - English-speaking Students: 20 - 10 in the experimental group and 10 in the control group. French-speaking students: 20 (10 in the experimental group and 10 in the control group).

The strategic grouping allows for a focused evaluation of how a person's native language influences their understanding and memory of idiomatic expressions in Arabic. By separating participants into experimental and control groups, the study can assess the effectiveness of different teaching methods.

- Grouping:

To ensure a comprehensive comparison, participants were grouped based on their native languages and assigned instructional methods:

- English-speaking Students:

Experimental Group (10 students): This group received teaching centred on metaphorically interpreting idiomatic language using literary works. This technique aims to improve their comprehension by contextualising idiomatic terms within genuine language use.

Control Group (10 students): This group receives traditional education focusing on grammatical explanations of the same colloquial expressions while adhering to more conventional pedagogical approaches.

- French-speaking students:

- Experimental Group (10 students): This group studied literary texts to explore the figurative meanings of idiomatic expressions, gaining a deeper understanding through contextual learning.

- Control Group (10 students): This group receive traditional education that emphasises the grammatical structures and literal meanings of colloquial expressions, enabling a comparison of the two instructional approaches.

This deliberate grouping not only facilitates an examination of the impact of the native language on learning outcomes but also allows for an evaluation of the effectiveness of different teaching methodologies in promoting the understanding of idiomatic expressions in Arabic.

- Instructional Method:

The study utilised two teaching methods tailored to the experimental and control groups.

1. Experimental Group:

The experimental group received an education on interpreting idiomatic terms through literary text analysis. This strategy aims to involve students in the rich contextual and cultural aspects of the idiomatic words they are learning. Students are encouraged to explore idiomatic expressions' underlying meanings, emotional impact, and cultural significance by engaging with literary texts. This approach seeks to enhance students' critical thinking and interpretative skills, enabling them to comprehend and apply phrases in appropriate contexts. Instruction included guided discussions, interpretive exercises, and collaborative studies of literary texts demonstrating idiomatic language.

2. Control Group:

The control group received a more traditional instructional approach that focused on providing grammatical explanations of the same colloquial idioms. This method explicitly taught the idioms' structural components, including literal translations and grammatical norms. Although this strategy can provide a fundamental understanding, it may only partially engage learners in idiomatic language use's cultural and contextual complexities. Traditional training included lectures, clear explanations, and practice tasks designed to reinforce grammatical knowledge without the depth of contextual comprehension that literary analysis brings.

- *Duration of the Study:*

The study lasted eight weeks, and each group participated in a series of educational sessions designed to achieve the specified objectives.

Weeks 1-2: Introduction and Pre-assessment. Both groups took a pre-assessment to determine their basic understanding of idiomatic idioms. This exam provided a baseline for assessment progress. Weeks 3–6: Instructional Phase: The experimental groups participated in workshops on figuratively interpreting literary texts. This involved readings, debates, and activities highlighting idiomatic terms within their cultural contexts.

The control groups received traditional education that emphasised the grammatical components of the exact idiomatic phrases to support their structural comprehension.

Weeks 7-8 involved a post-assessment and reflection. After the teaching phase, both groups took a post-assessment to gauge their improvement in understanding idiomatic verbal phrases. Subsequently, participants had a reflection session to discuss their learning experiences and thoughts on the instructional approaches.

The study compared these two instructional strategies over eight weeks to determine which improves learners' comprehension and retention of idiomatic verbal expressions in Arabic. The results show the effectiveness of figurative interpretation in language learning and offer valuable insights for educators on enhancing the teaching of idiomatic expressions to non-native speakers.

This study design establishes the foundation for a comprehensive examination of the interactions between native language influence, instructional methods, and the acquisition of idiomatic expressions, contributing to the broader field of Arabic language pedagogy.

5. Data Collection and Analysis:

This section details the thorough methods used to gather and analyse the study's data. It focuses on preparing instructional content and assessments and the instructional procedures for both the experimental and control groups. The approach aims to thoroughly analyse how a person's native language affects their understanding of idiomatic verbal phrases in Arabic.

- **Quantitative Data:**

Preparation of Instructional Content and Assessments:

Instructional Content:

The teaching content included carefully chosen literary passages featuring idiomatic verbal phrases. The focus was on sentences whose meaning is substantially affected by adding prepositions or adverbs. The content was adjusted to reflect the participants' language backgrounds, ensuring relevance and appropriateness.

1. **Literacy Text Selection:** Texts were chosen to demonstrate the wide range of idiomatic expressions within a cultural and contextual framework. Each book was evaluated for its ability to demonstrate how idiomatic expressions can dramatically alter, giving us a thorough awareness of the intricacies involved.
2. **Comparative elements:** The training materials drew implicit analogies to similar structures found in the participants' home languages (English or French). This comparison technique connects students' existing knowledge with the new subject, enhancing comprehension and retention.
3. **Emphasis on Figurative Interpretation:** The material provided to the experimental group prompted students to appreciate idiomatic language's rhetorical and symbolic beauty. Participants participated in exercises to enhance their comprehension of how these expressions are used in literary settings.

4. Pre- and Post-Tests:

Two assessments measured students' understanding of idiomatic verbal phrases before and after the educational intervention.

Before the educational intervention, a pre-test was designed to evaluate students' initial understanding of idiomatic verbal expressions. The test included various question types, such as:

- Multiple-choice questions to assess students' comprehension of the correct meanings of colloquial idioms.
- Written interpretation tasks where students explain their understanding of an idiomatic expression in a given context.

After the instructional sessions (four for each group), a post-test with a similar structure and question format to the pre-test was administered to compare progress and directly understand improvement.

- **Qualitative Data:**

Instructional Procedures for the Groups:

Experimental Group:

The experimental group received instruction in analysing figurative language and interpreting metaphorical meanings in literary texts:

1. **Analytical Reading:** Students were taught how to derive metaphorical meanings from texts, focusing on how idiomatic expressions' meanings change when prepositions or adverbs are introduced into figurative situations.
2. **Critical Thinking Skills:** The training enabled students to use critical thinking skills, such as comparing Arabic text terms to familiar language structures. This comparison study is intended to improve their interpretive skills and expand their grasp of the topic.
3. **Contextual Examples:** During instructional sessions, illustrative examples demonstrated how meanings change when idiomatic expressions are used in different settings. This included guided discussions and collaborative analysis of literary texts.

Control Group:

The control group got standard education on direct grammatical explanations of colloquial idioms. This strategy concentrates on grammatical structures without focusing on rhetorical or metaphorical aspects. The control group underwent the following procedures:

1. **Grammar-Based Direct Instruction:** Participants learned the fundamental rules of idiomatic expressions, focusing on literal meanings and regular sentence structure.
2. **Exclusion of Figurative Contexts.** The typical instructional style avoids discussing rhetorical or symbolic interpretations. Instead, students learn the fundamental grammatical principles for each expression and examples of using them without delving into their deeper meanings.

Finally, pre-and post-tests and different teaching approaches for the experimental and control groups are intended to gather thorough data on participants' grasp of idiomatic verbal expressions in Arabic. This study intends to produce valuable findings that contribute to educational practices in teaching idiomatic expressions to non-native speakers by developing content relevant to students' linguistic backgrounds and using quantitative and qualitative assessment methodologies.

6. Analysis and Interpretation of Results

This section analysed and interpreted the information gathered during the study. Our primary goal was to compare the performance of English- and French-speaking students in recognising idiomatic verbal phrases in Arabic. We utilised SPSS for quantitative analysis and NVivo for qualitative insights to provide a complete picture of how learners' native languages influence their comprehension of figurative language and the efficiency of the educational approaches used in the study.

Comparative Performance Analysis

The initial stage in data analysis was to use SPSS to run a t-test to compare comprehension scores between English- and French-speaking pupils. The pre-test and post-test scores were compared to see if there were any notable differences in performance.

Results Summary:

- **Sample Size:** 40 students (20 English-speaking and 20 French-speaking)
- **Pre-Test Mean Scores:**
 - English-speaking group: M = 12.3, SD = 3.5
 - French-speaking group: M = 11.8, SD = 3.7
- **Post-Test Mean Scores:**
 - English-speaking group: M = 18.5, SD = 2.9
 - French-speaking group: M = 16.2, SD = 3.1

Table 1: Pre-Test and Post-Test Mean Scores by Language Group

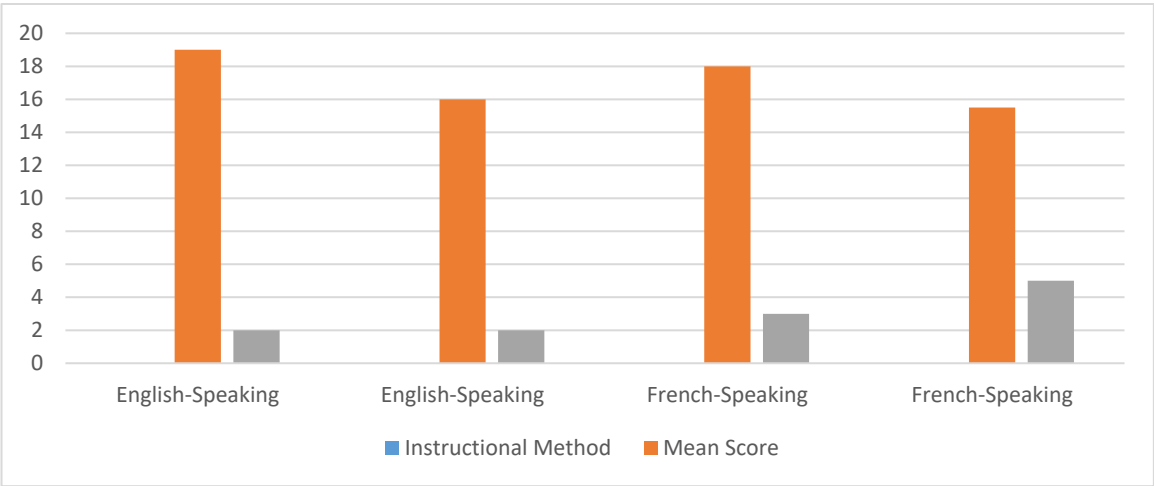
Group	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean
English-Speaking	12.3	18.5
French-Speaking	11.8	16.2

Our study found that English-speaking students performed better than French-speaking students in understanding idiomatic terms after an educational intervention. A t-test for independent samples showed a significant difference in post-test scores between the two groups ($t(38) = 2.54, p < 0.05$).

To further investigate the impact of learners' native languages on their comprehension of figurative language, we conducted a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) using SPSS. The study examined the influence of the student's native language and the instructional approach (figurative interpretation vs traditional) on their performance in comprehension exams.

The results of Certainly! Here, the MANOVA showed a significant interaction effect between the students' native language (English, French) and the instructional method (Figurative, Traditional) on their comprehension scores ($F(1, 36) = 4.23, p < 0.05$). This indicates that the effectiveness of the instructional approach varied depending on the student's native language, with English-speaking students benefiting more from the figurative interpretation approach than French-speaking students.

Figure 1: Interaction Effects of Native Language and Instructional Method



The effectiveness of the figurative interpretation-based educational strategy was evaluated by comparing the post-test results of the experimental group (who received figurative interpretation training) with those of the control group (who received traditional instruction).

Results Summary:

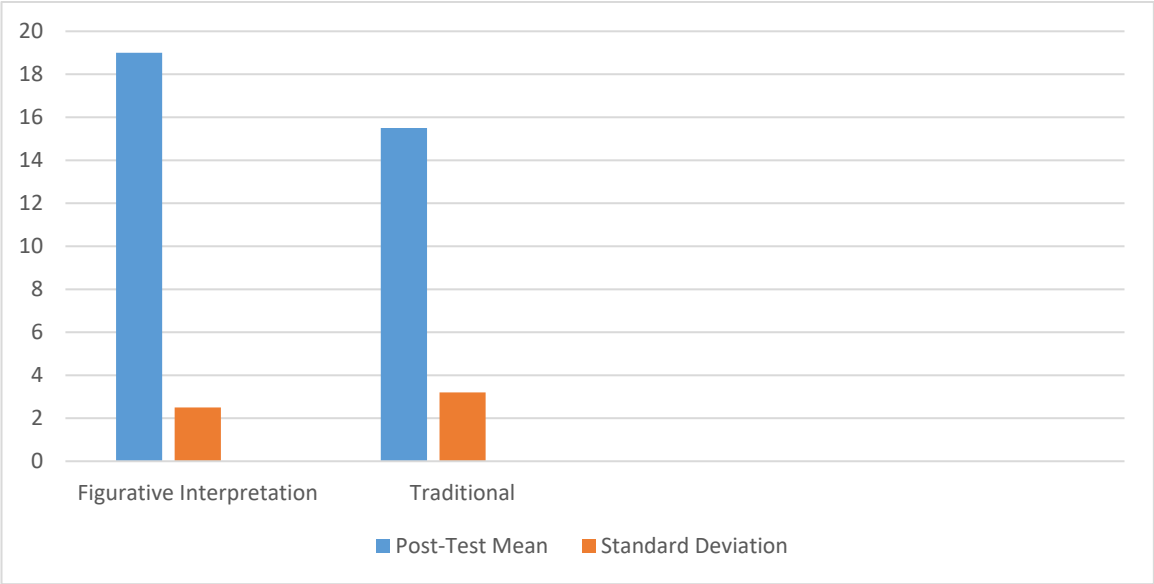
- **Experimental Group Post-Test Mean:** M = 19.0, SD = 2.5
- **Control Group Post-Test Mean:** M = 15.5, SD = 3.2

Table 2: Post-Test Mean Scores by Instructional Method

Instructional Method	Post-Test Mean	Standard Deviation
Figurative Interpretation	19.0	2.5
Traditional	15.5	3.2

The results of a t-test revealed a significant difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control groups ($t(38) = 4.01, p < 0.001$). This discovery proves that the figurative interpretation educational strategy enhances students' comprehension of idiomatic language more effectively than traditional methods.

Figure 2: Comparison of Post-Test Scores by Instructional Method

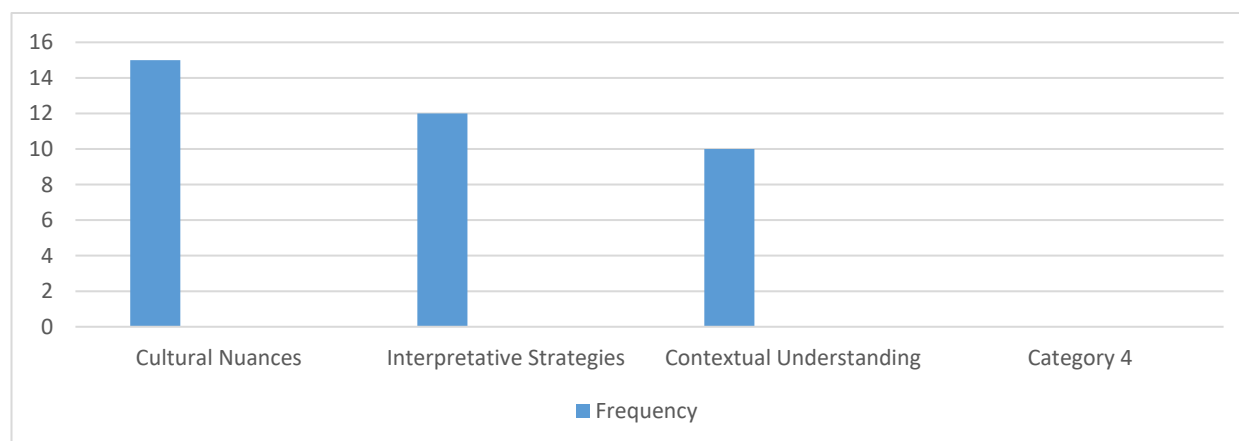


Qualitative insights were obtained from semi-structured interviews using NVivo analysis, along with quantitative data. The transcripts were analysed with NVivo to identify common themes and trends in students' comprehension of idiomatic idioms.

Emerging themes:

1. **Cultural Nuances:** English-speaking students often discussed the cultural context of idiomatic expressions, highlighting how it aids in understanding. Conversely, French-speaking students indicated that they relied more on language structures and frequently faced challenges with cultural aspects.
2. **Interpretive Strategies:** Many students in the experimental group utilised figurative reasoning to interpret idiomatic expressions, while those in the control group depended on memorising rules and definitions.

Figure 3: Themes Identified in Student Interviews



After analysing both quantitative and qualitative data, we discovered the significant role of a person's native language in understanding idiomatic verbal phrases in Arabic. We found that English- and French-speaking students have different levels of understanding, which suggests the need for specialised teaching methods. Additionally, students who received instruction on figurative interpretation performed better, indicating the effectiveness of teaching idiomatic idioms. This study emphasises the importance of considering learners' linguistic backgrounds and cultural nuances when teaching language, providing valuable insights for language instruction.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations:

Research Findings:

The study findings emphasise the critical role of linguistic background in how advanced Arabic learners understand idiomatic expressions. Students who speak English and French showed distinct patterns in understanding colloquial terms. The analysis showed that learners' native languages affect their initial understanding of figurative language and influence how they interpret literary texts.

The research findings indicated that students taught using figurative interpretation methods had a significantly better understanding of idiomatic terms than those who received traditional instruction. This improvement in comprehension may be attributed to a greater focus on the aesthetic and symbolic aspects of language, which align more closely with the cognitive frameworks developed through learners' first languages. Consequently, the educational approach based on figurative interpretation appears more effective for enhancing the understanding of idiomatic expressions and improving the overall learning experience.

Practical Recommendations:

Given the findings, the following practical recommendations are provided to enhance the teaching of idiomatic expressions in Arabic language curricula for non-native speakers:

Comparing and contrasting English and Arabic idioms is essential to teaching English-speaking students effectively. Educators can use comparative analysis to help students understand expressions with direct equivalents in English and those with different meanings.

Emphasising the cultural subtleties inherent in idiomatic words is crucial for French-speaking students. Providing context through examples that resonate with the French language encourages students to establish parallels between idiomatic terms in both French and Arabic, promoting deeper cognitive connections.

2. Integrating Figurative Interpretation:

- Educators should incorporate figurative interpretation approaches into their teaching methods. This can include using literary books with colloquial language as primary teaching resources. Workshops and guided discussions can help students better understand the meanings and implications of these expressions in their cultural contexts.

- Create activities that inspire students to evaluate and interpret idiomatic terms uniquely, fostering a sense of ownership and personal involvement with the language.

Educators should prioritise cultural awareness in language instruction. By contextualising idiomatic expressions within the Arabic language's cultural and historical contexts, learners can better grasp how language functions beyond grammatical structures.

Implement cross-cultural discussions and comparative assessments of idiomatic expressions to help students consider how their linguistic backgrounds influence their interpretation of figurative language. By following these guidelines, educators can considerably improve the effectiveness of Arabic language training for non-native speakers, promoting higher comprehension and enjoyment of colloquial expressions. Finally, this technique increased students' linguistic talents while enriching their cultural awareness, paving the path for deeper engagement with the Arabic language.

Contribution to the Field:

This study contributes to understanding how a person's native language affects his or her ability to learn idiomatic expressions in Arabic as a Second Language. The study reveals the complexity of language learning by examining how a person's linguistic background influences their comprehension of idiomatic verbal expressions. The findings emphasise the importance of interpreting idiomatic expressions figuratively rather than relying solely on grammatical explanations. This approach enhances learners' comprehension of idiomatic expressions and fosters a deeper language understanding. By delving into the aesthetic and cultural aspects of idiomatic language, students can better navigate the intricacies of Arabic, developing an appreciation that extends beyond grammatical rules.

This study contributes to understanding how a person's native language affects the acquisition of idiomatic expressions in Arabic as a Second Language. It sheds light on the complexity of language learning by examining how a person's linguistic background impacts their comprehension of idiomatic verbal expressions.

The findings highlight the essential importance of figurative interpretation in overcoming typical grammatical explanations. This method improves learners' comprehension of idiomatic expressions and promotes a more sophisticated language understanding. By exploring the aesthetic and cultural components of idiomatic language, students are better prepared to handle the complexities of Arabic, developing an appreciation beyond grammatical principles.

The study contributes to second language acquisition and provides a foundation for future research on the interaction of language, culture, and instructional approaches. It opens up new avenues for research on effectively preparing learners to engage with idiomatic expressions, contributing to a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to language instruction.

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Author's biography

Prof. DJEMAI MAHMOUD BOULAARES, born in Tebessa, Algeria, is a distinguished professor specialising in Applied Linguistics. He earned his Doctorate in Arabic Education for non-native speakers from Annaba University in 2009, where he concentrated his research on teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. Before this, he obtained a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics from the same university in 2001. Since 2010, he has been a faculty member at King Saud University (KSU). Prof. Boulaares has published over 60 research papers in Arabic, English, and French in various peer-reviewed international scientific journals. He has also participated in numerous global and local conferences related to his field and has authored several works in his area of expertise. He has also translated books to and from Arabic, English, and French. In recognition of his contributions, he received the Scientific Excellence Prize from King Saud University in 2019.