

A Conceptual Metaphor-based Approach to Facilitate English Idiom Comprehension by Kurdish University Students of EFL

Hemn A. Karim¹, Azad H. Fatah²

¹Department of English, College of Education, University of Garmian, Kalar, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

²Department of English, College of Languages, University of Sulaimani, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

ABSTRACT

The study explores the pedagogical feasibility of Conceptual Metaphor-based Approach to teaching idioms to Kurdish university-level EFL students to find out to what extent the approach enhances idiom comprehension, and whether it is better than traditionally practiced approaches accordingly. Additionally, the aim of this study is to check the L1 transfer and interference role in comprehension of idioms by the participants, and how idiom grouping under corresponding Conceptual Metaphors helps students in figuring out L1 equivalents. The quantitative data were based on and collected from testing 73 participants who were divided into an experimental and a control group. Results showed that the experimental group participants outscored the control group participants, and the difference was statistically significant. Though, the traditional group had better posttest scores in comparison to their pretest. Findings also reveal that clustering idioms around corresponding Conceptual Metaphors was more helpful than randomly listed idioms; L1 transfer was observed in the idioms that have exact equivalents or closest equivalents, and sharing the same Conceptual Metaphors was helpful in understanding and finding Kurdish idioms, particularly for the experimental group. Besides, L1 interference was noticeable in all types of idioms being exact or closest equivalent or having no equivalent linguistically. Meanwhile, literal translation was also relied on by the participants as a strategy due to probably a lack of conceptual metaphor knowledge.

KEY WORDS: Conceptual Metaphor-Based Approach, Idiom, Kurdish Students Of EFL, L1 Interference. L1 Transfer

1. INTRODUCTION:

It is unanimously agreed upon that all languages possess idioms to various degrees, and idioms are of the essence for English-major students to demonstrate their language proficiency and competence. This shows how idiom learning, despite its challenges, necessitates being put forth in academic English programs. To Cornell (1999, p. 16) "Idioms are an aspect of the lexical mountain that should not be left to chance and the random exposure of advanced learners to the language.

Nor can these learners simply be urged to acquire works giving vast lists of idioms and learn them".

By and large, idioms are traditionally deemed as any grammatical form (Hockett, 1958), two free morphemes (Makkai, 1972), a constituent or series of constituents (Fraser, 1970; Fernando, 1978), a string of words (Swinney and Cutler, 1979), multi-word units (Seidl and McMordie, 1988; Trask, 1993; Grant and Bauer, 2004), whose meaning is arbitrary (i.e., not deducible from its parts) and non-compositional.

From a cognitive view which involves much contrariety of traditionalists' arbitrariness Kövecses and Szabo (1996, p. 330) state that "An idiom is not just an expression that has meaning that is somehow special in relation to the meanings of its constituent parts, but it arises from our more general knowledge of the world (embodied in our conceptual system)". Lakoff (1987) contends that idioms carry a systematic structure and inferences inside themselves, for instance, when a *person who is foaming at the mouth has lost his cool* shows that the idioms *foam at the mouth* and *lose one's cool* are not

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Corresponding author's e-mail: hemn.adil@garmian.edu.krd

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randomly structured to which the emotion of anger is attributed, however, there is a conceptually coherent arrangement underpinning them and other idioms which are metaphorical or metonymical in nature (p. 381). Further, Lakoff (1987, p. 448) argues that many cases may manifest the fact that idioms are semantically not arbitrary such as the existence of metaphor as a conceptual form in the conceptual system of human beings engenders a link between an idiom and the meaning it conveys; that is, *to keep someone at arm's length* is largely motivated by INTIMACY IS PHYSICAL CLOSENESS and SOCIAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM IS PHYSICAL HARM conceptual metaphors. Hence, the cognitivists' view on idioms is that "the meanings of a great number of idioms can be motivated by people's conceptual knowledge of the referents to which idioms refer" (Gibbs, 1990, p. 418). In addition, Kövecses (2002) confirms that conceptual domains generate, if not all, most idioms and individual components that uncover their conceptualization process. For instance, *fan the flames in the speaker fanned the flames of the crowd's enthusiasm*, is motivated by the human conceptual system rather than simply the matter of lexicon (p. 201). The term motivation, to Cserép (2014, p. 262) is "related to the discrepancy between the compositional meaning of an expression and its actual semantic content". Lakoff (1987) connects motivation of expressions either in accordance with bodily or social experience, and such an embodiment uncovers the non-arbitrariness of the linguistic expressions.

Cognitive semanticists held the view that idiom meaning is motivated by cognitive mechanisms, chief among them is Conceptual Metaphor (hereinafter, CM). It is deemed a linguistic tool rather than being restricted to literary genres. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 5) in their seminal work account for the pervasiveness of metaphor in everyday language "the concept is metaphorically structured, and the activity is metaphorically structured, and, consequently, the language is metaphorically structured".

Investigating the hypothesis that semantic motivation for idioms engenders more learning outcomes than its absence, Kövecses (2000) found that a cognitivist perspective of idioms can be conceivably essential for EFL learners to boost their idiom comprehension. On the teachability of motivated idioms implementing CMs, Beréndi, Csábi, and Kövecses (2008, pp. 72-73) contend that "the systematic relationships that connect the literal and figurative meanings of an idiom, on the one hand, and the figurative meanings of several idioms, on the other hand, have considerable didactic potential".

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The present section subsumes three subsections. The first subsection throws light on the theoretical underpinnings of applying Cognitive Linguistic insights. The second subsection introduces CMs and then reviews the previous studies that have been carried out empirically concerning promoting student comprehension of English idioms by deploying the CM-based Approach as a medium of instruction. The last subsection expounds on L1 transfer and reviews the findings in the literature regarding its role in L2 idiom comprehension.

2.1 Applied Cognitive Linguistics

Cognitive Linguistics (henceforth, CL) emerged in the 1980s as "a relatively new school of linguistics, and one of the most innovative and exciting approaches to the study of language and thought that has emerged within the modern field of interdisciplinary study known as cognitive science" (Evans and Green, 2006, p. 5). Within CL, cognitive semantics has burgeoned which "concerned with investigating the relationship between experience, the conceptual system and the semantic structure encoded by language" (Evans and Green, 2006, p. 48). Appraising CL as an innovative initiative after the pioneering works of the cognitive linguists, Taylor (1993, p. 201) claims that "Any major innovation in linguistic theory is bound, sooner or later, to have an impact on the foreign language teaching profession". To Pütz, Niemeier, and Dirven (2001, p. xiii), the framework within which the CL theories are dealt with practically in relation to the fields of language acquisition, learning, and instruction is called "Applied Cognitive Linguistics" (henceforth, ACL). Later on, ACL was introduced in the first collective work by Pütz, et al. (2001) and the work of Achard and Niemeier (2004) with the aim of transcending traditionally-held beliefs of the arbitrariness of language. That is, contrary to the traditional approach which treats language expressions as "arbitrary or unteachable, and perhaps even unlearnable", the CL-oriented approach deems language elements rather manageable to instruction (Tyler, 2012, p. 62). Hence, the focus was shifted to the pedagogical issues concerning the applicability of CL insights including CMs since they are considered the heart of human thought, behavior, and communication that can be applied in L2 teaching and learning prosperously (Littlemore, 2009, pp. 4-8). Therefore, to Boers (2000, p. 553) "enhancing language learners' metaphor awareness" is needed by instigating the recognition of omnipresent nature of metaphors, which underlie a wide range of linguistic expressions including idioms.

2.2 Introducing CMT to English Language Classes

To most people metaphor is a literary and ornamental device that is counted on to consider their language

elegant and their speech eloquent. In contrast to this view, Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 1) state that “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature”. For instance, in ARGUMENT IS WAR to understand the concept of argument, which is abstract, language users presumably depend on the concept of war, which is concrete or less abstract. Both concrete and abstract concepts are the two conceptual domains that comprise CMs (Kövecses, 2002, p. 4). An important term to digest CMs is metaphor set (Li, 2003, p. 64), which is “a cluster of linguistic metaphors organized under and relatable to a certain conceptual metaphor”. To illustrate, the CM, OPTIMISM IS LIGHT, can be embodied in the idioms *look on the bright side*, *light at the end of the tunnel*, etc. (Gibbs, et al., 1997, p. 153).

Pedagogically CMT has been introduced in the last three decades, especially, to teach the linguistic expressions including idioms. Since then, a handful of publications have been published to support such initiative in ACL field, particularly in relation to idiom comprehension and retention. The researchers (Kövecses and Szabó, 1996; Boers, 2000; Li, 2003; Beréndi et al., 2008; Kömür and Çimen, 2009; Vasiljevic, 2011; Samani and Hashemian, 2012; Chen and Lai, 2013; Doiz and Elizari, 2013; Hung, 2019; Guo, 2019; Pan, 2019; Pham and To, 2019) are of the opinion that implementing CMs as a medium of teaching idioms with appraising the students how different sets of idioms are motivated by specific CMs aid comprehension and retention of a wide range of idioms.

In an informal study with Hungarian students of English, Kövecses and Szabó (1996) concluded that teaching idioms through CM arrangement was better than the traditional way of explanation and memorization. Boers (2000), with learners whose L1 is either Dutch or French, explored how organizing idioms deploying CMs assists in retaining words and idioms. Likewise, with Chinese students, Li (2003) found that the CM-based Approach, though less effective than image schemas to facilitate idiom comprehension, was better than instructing students with idioms listed under semantic topics. With Hungarian college students majoring in English, Beréndi et al. (2008) found that the use of CM-based Approach to teaching idioms facilitated English idioms comprehension and retention. Kömür and Çimen (2009) also found that employing CMs facilitated better idiom comprehension by the Turkish students of EFL. Further, Vasiljevic’s (2011) findings with Japanese non-English major students were in line with the hypothesis that grouping idioms according to their underlying CMs is easier to understand. To check how Iranian L2 learners

understand and produce idioms with the implementation of CMs compared to the traditional approach, Samani and Hashemian (2012) reported that the development of metaphorical awareness helped the CM participants to decipher idiom meaning successfully. Conversely, the traditional participants could learn idioms, however, were unsuccessful in drawing idiom senses as they had not developed metaphor awareness. Conducting a case study with non-English major Chinese, Chen and Lai (2013) found that the participants’ understanding and use of idioms improved due to their exposure to CMs. Testing the understanding and remembering of anger-related expressions by Spanish students, Doiz and Elizari (2013) concluded that in the short term the CM group students outperformed the group, who followed the traditional approach of idiom translation. However, no such difference was recorded in the delayed post-test between the groups. In addition, Hung’s (2019) results are also in favor of CL-inspired teaching of idioms compared to the rote-learning method. Guo (2019), with Chinese students, also found positive impact of CM-oriented instruction on idioms motivated by structural metaphors rather than orientational and ontological ones. Contrary to most previous findings, Pham and To (2019) concluded that exposition of CMs facilitated Vietnamese students of EFL in reception over an extended period, thus, the approach can be considered more effective than the traditional approach in the long term. Likewise, Pan (2019), exploring idiom instruction by clustering them around the underlying CMs against rote-learning and L1 translation of idioms being presented via functional usage themes, found that in the immediate posttest CM participants were better though not statistically significant, and interestingly acquired better results in the one-week delayed posttest.

To bridge the literature and local gaps, such as the inconsistencies observed in the previous findings, the implementation of intermittent instructional treatment and the lack of enough time between the pre-and post-tests in the previous studies, and being an un-tackled topic in the Kurdish EFL context, the present study, in part one of the experiment, follows these procedures. It tends to consistently expose students to teaching idioms for an extended period of time between the pretest and posttest in order to explore the extent of the effectiveness of the CM-based Approach to teaching idioms in enhancing idiom comprehension among Kurdish-speaking university students of EFL as CMs and idioms are pedagogically marginalized in many EFL university programs in Kurdistan Region. It also explores whether understanding the underlying CMs, which structure seemingly different idioms, can facilitate idiom comprehension in comparison to the traditional (i.e., non-cognitive) approach to teaching idioms.

2.3 Idioms and Language Transfer

There is a consensus that foreign language learners, when interacting with the target language world, unintentionally their L1 has impact on L2. Therefore, L1 linguistic features transfer and interfere with L2 (Gass, 1979). Irujo (1986, p. 288) states that “transfer concept is based on the idea that previous learning affects subsequent learning”. That is, when a stimulus is comprehended, it eases the comprehension of the succeeding stimuli.

Several experiments (Irujo, 1986; Abdullah and Jackson, 1998; Charteris-Black, 2002; Hu and Fong, 2010; Taki and Soghady, 2013; Türker, 2016) that explored L2 idiom comprehension have observed the issue of L1 transfer. Their findings show learners’ reliance on L1 varied based on similarities and differences between L1 and L2 linguistically and conceptually. Furthermore, Boers (2000) hypothesizes that L1 transfer often does exist due to the closeness of learners’ L1 and L2 which accelerates learning when the learners’ attention is grabbed toward metaphoric themes that underpin the linguistic expressions. However, such closeness can cause L1 interference. In the same vein, Beréndi et al. (2008) experimented the grouping of idioms around associated CMs, despite the difference between the participants’ L1 and L2, the results showed L1 transfer with regard to comprehension, meanwhile, L1 interference was discernible in connection with recalling.

Based on the previous findings, the second part of the present study investigates the amount of aid L1 transfer grants Kurdish-speaking students in English idiom comprehension despite the differences between English and Kurdish languages. Additionally, it investigates how L1 transfer assists idiom comprehension when grouping idioms around CMs compared to presenting idioms in lists randomly, as participants are informed of idioms by CM-based vs. Traditional Approaches.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The current study was based on the data obtained from the participants’ pretest and posttest scores, which aimed to compare the participants’ performance in comprehending the idioms after being exposed to two distinct instructional treatments (i.e., the Traditional Approach and the CM-based Approach) which extended over a full-semester period (i.e., 12 weeks for teaching and 2 weeks for testing the studied materials) in order to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does each approach (i.e., the CM-based or the Traditional) boost idiom comprehension among Kurdish students of EFL?

2. To what extent is teaching idioms using the CM-based Approach more effective than the Traditional Approach in facilitating idiom comprehension among Kurdish students of EFL?

3. To what extent does L1 transfer (i.e., L1 linguistic and CM knowledge) influence idiom comprehension by Kurdish students of EFL?

4. To what extent does informing Kurdish students of shared CMs between Kurdish and English assist idiom comprehension?

3.2 Participants

Based on the method of Convenience Sampling (Creswell, 2012, p. 145) the participants of the present study were selected. The participants were 73 junior Kurdish students of EFL at the Department of English, College of Education, University of Garmian, in Kurdistan Region, Iraq. The participating students were recruited in two groups, experimental and control. The experimental group consisted of 40 students, while the control group members were 33. The unequal sample size was mainly due to the simple random assignment of the participants as they were the regular students of the two junior groups in the Department of English in 2021-2022 academic year.

3.3 Instruments

To get the quantitative data, the study implemented an instructional instrument and a pre-and post-test instrument whose items were piloted. The instrument used in the instructional treatment phase consisted of two handouts. The first handout contained 143 idioms as stimuli for the process of pretest, treatment, and posttest; they were listed randomly. The idioms were mainly presented in short texts and sentences, which were mainly examples of their usage in day-to-day language. They were mainly adopted from dictionaries (Collins Cobuild, 1995; Cambridge, 1998) and books (McCarthy and O’Dell, 2002; Wright, 2002). Some of the contexts were contrived for the experiment purpose. The second handout, which was prepared for the experimental group, contained the same idioms grouped under 19 corresponding CM mappings based on (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff and Kövecses, 1987; Gibbs, 1990; Gibbs et al., 1997), and presented accordingly.

3.4 Procedures

1. Test Validity

The test instrument (pre-and post-test) was developed, validated, and checked to assure its reliability. To establish test validity as deemed determinant of instrument selection and application (Lynn, 1986), a draft test, comprising 50 items was submitted to a jury of ten experts. Six of them accepted to contribute to the development of the instrument. They

are university teachers, one is a native English emeritus professor in Applied Linguistics, the others are assistant professors of ELT. Based on what Lynn (1986, p. 384) devised, the quantitative content validity method is to obtain viewpoints regarding a 4-option rating scale for all content validity assessments as follows (1 = not relevant; 2 = unable to assess relevance without item revision or the item is in need of such revision that it would no longer be relevant; 3 = relevant but needs minor alternation; 4 = very relevant and succinct).

The items that had 0.83 and above were considered acceptable as Polit and Beck (2006) posit that at least six experts' ratings can be acceptable when the score of CVI is 0.83.; others remained with some revisions that were advised by the experts, meanwhile the rest were eliminated. This reduced the number of items to 45. To illustrate, the I-CVI of 45 items equals 1.00 or 0.83, and the remainder which was eliminated equals 0.5 or less. The S-CVI/Ave equals 0.90. In addition, 34 out of 50 items received relevance ratings of 3 or 4 by the total number of the experts, which evince moderate content validity of the instrument. As much as the time of the test concerned there was a general consensus among most of the validators to allot (80 minutes) for the test.

2. Pilot Testing

Prior to the pretest, the test questions and items were piloted with 14 randomly selected 3rd-year students of English, who were the classmates of the study group participants. The aim of pilot testing, as proposed by Kiss and Nikolov (2005, p.112) is to "check the appropriacy of the test tasks for the target population, . . . gauge the difficulty of the tasks, [and] to compare achievement on the different tasks within the test". To Mackey and Gass (2016), a pilot study "is an important, if not essential, means of assessing the feasibility and usefulness of the data collection methods and making any necessary revisions before they are used with the research participants" (p. 52). After obtaining the results, some questions and items were revised totally or partially, while the other questions and items were accepted without any change. However, some of the items were replaced with other items.

After the pilot test, the data were collected from the participants. Then, the quality of each particular item was analyzed in terms of Item Difficulty and Discrimination using Microsoft Office Excel. On this point, Sabri (2013) states that "Item difficulty is basically the proportion of students who responded correctly to an item. Meanwhile, item discrimination is a measure to differentiate between the performance of students in the high score group and those in the low score group" (p. 2). Item difficulty index ranges from 0.0 to 1.00; the higher *p*-value the easier the item is (Ebel and Frisbie, 1979). Based on this, 13 of the items were very difficult. Hence, they were revised.

Regarding analyzing item discrimination index, its normal value extends between -1.0 to 1.00; the higher the value, the more discriminating the item (Ebel and Frisbie, 1979). Because of a limited number of items for the experiment, no items were discarded, however, 6 of them were thoroughly checked and revised.

3. Test Reliability

In addition to the item analysis, a reliability test (KR20) was also conducted. According to Bretz and McClary (2015), in order for an obtained score to be reliable, the KR20 reliability coefficient needs to be 0.70 or above. The results (*N* 45, *M* 20.86, *Std.* 7.89) showed that approximately half of the items were answered correctly on average. The reliability of the test result was high enough and indicated a reliable KR20 value of 0.86.

4. Pretest and Posttest

The participants of the present study were equally provided with the same question items investigating their idiom comprehension ability. Prior to responding, the participants were provided with test instructions.

The pretest was used to compare the participants' background knowledge. According to the obtained results (details are presented in the data analysis of part one), the participants were very unlikely to already know the idioms targeted in the experiment. It is noteworthy that, the participants were not informed that they would have to work with the learned materials again. After the instructional treatment, which is explained in the coming section, the participants underwent the process of posttest similar to the pretest with some differences in the items.

In the posttest, the focus was on two main points. The first point was part one of the experiment to observe which approach, CM-based or Traditional, facilitated the participants to have better performance in an idiom comprehension test. The second point was part two of the experiment which was to elicit information as the participants were required to provide equivalent Kurdish idioms in the equivalent task which consisted of twenty items within the entire test. This was to obtain data regarding the potential effectiveness of L1 transfer and the shared CMs between the participants' L1 and L2 in comprehending idioms, particularly presenting the control group with randomly listed idioms within sentences, however, while for the experimental group the idioms were grouped under corresponding CMs, based on Boers (2000) and Beréndi et al. (2008). The idioms in the equivalent items in the posttest were new since an idiom in the pretest could be remembered by the participants in the posttest. Different answers like correct, incorrect, and missing were expected from the participants. Any correct answer could be exact equivalent, nearest equivalent, or a Kurdish idiom within the same CM, though not having equivalent wording. However, any incorrect response entails

idioms from different CMs or no CM, or their literal translation, meanwhile, no answer was treated similarly.

5. Instructional Treatment

The setting, materials, and allocation of instructional time were identical for both study groups; however, the manner of presenting idioms was utterly different based on the comparison of the assigned approaches. Simply put, the control group was taught the English idioms using the Traditional Approach; whereas, the experimental group received the idioms in accordance with the CM-based Approach. The Traditional Group (henceforth, TG) members were presented with randomly listed idioms without referring to the motivation that matches them together. They were familiarized with idiom definition, description, synonyms, L1 equivalents, and illustrations. Rote-learning was encouraged to help them memorize through continual repetition or translation of idioms into L1. However, the Conceptual Metaphor Group (hereinafter, CMG) members were instructed about how metaphor is pervasive in everyday language, and how it motivates the meaning of idioms and clusters seemingly different sets of idioms around corresponding CMs. Besides, how idioms and metaphors exist in languages. A course of teaching idioms during a semester was prepared and taught within 12 weeks, and each week a session of (90 minutes) was given with taking exercises inside the classroom.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Part One

Before starting with data analysis, the data were added to the data pool in SPSS 26. Then normality test of the obtained data was checked by running *Shapiro-Wilk test*. After assurance of the distribution normality of scores, a Levene's statistic was run to see whether the groups' mean scores of the pretest were homogenous, then the study commenced by following the administration of the pretreatment-intervention-posttreatment style. Next, a within-subject design was used running a Paired-Samples t-test; a between-subject design was also used to conduct an Independent-Samples t-test.

1. Results

To answer the first and second research questions which investigate the difference within and between both study groups' mean scores after implementing the approaches, the following procedures were followed. The participants' descriptive statistics were computed. Besides, the Assumption of Normality of the pretest was checked by running *Shapiro-Wilk test*, to determine if the pretest was normally distributed, which is recommended for everyday practice as it has got more power to detect normality (Thode, 2002).

Table 1
Group Statistics and Test of Normality for Pretest Score

	Group	N	Shapiro-Wilk		
			Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest Score	TG	33	.965	33	.347
	CMG	40	.981	40	.709

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

As Table 1 indicates the significant score of normality in the pre-test was TG .347 and CMG .709. Based on the Assumption of Normality, the pretest scores for both groups were normally distributed as the data was greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$).

Secondly, an Independent-Samples t-test was conducted to see the difference between the means of both groups' pretest scores. The results in Table 2 reveal that there was a slight, but not statistically significant, difference between the TG ($N 33, M 13.24, SD 3.32$) and the CMG ($N 40, M 14.00, SD 4.11$).

Table 2
Independent-Samples t-test for the Groups Pretest Score

	Groups	N	Mean	Std.	Std.
				Deviation	Error Mean
Pretest Score	TG	33	13.24	3.32	.58
	CMG	44	14.00	4.11	.65

As scores were normally distributed, a Levene's statistic was run for pretest score homogeneity. Regarding Confidence Intervals, Pagano (2009, p. 131) articulates that 95% CI is "an interval such that the probability is 0.95 that the interval contains the population value". Based on Levene's Test value, $F (71) = 2.257, p = .396 > .05$, in Table 3, it can be concluded that the homogeneity of variances was not violated.

Table 3
Homogeneity Test of Groups Pretest Score

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
Equal variances assumed	2.257	.137	-.854	71	.396	-.757- .88699
Equal variances not assumed			-.872	70.976	.386	-.757- .86901

After maintaining the assumption of homogeneity of variances and assumption of normality, between-group and within-subject differences were taken into consideration. A Within-Subject Paired-Samples t-test for each group was run to determine how different the means of their test scores were after being exposed to idioms by applying two distinct approaches to check

how facilitative each one was in boosting comprehension.

Table 4
Paired-Samples Statistics for the TG

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest Score	33	13.2424	3.31691	.57740
	Posttest Score	33	21.0000	6.72216	1.17018

Table 5
Paired Samples t-test for the TG

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-Post-test Score	-7.75758-	5.68458	.98956	-9.77324-	-5.74191-	-7.839-	32	.000

Based on Tables 4 and 5, there was a significant difference in the TG scores for pretest (N 33, M 13.24, SD 3.32) and posttest (N 33, M 21.00, SD 6.72); $t(32) = 7.84$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in both test scores was 7.76. That is, the TG in the posttest obtained higher scores as a result of the possible traditional instruction effect.

Concerning the scores gained by the CMG (N 40), as shown in Tables 6 and 7, there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest (M 14.00, SD 4.11) and the posttest (M 27.82, SD 7.15); $t(39) = 15.46$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). The mean proliferation in both test scores was 13.82 (i.e., nearly doubled). Such a high score of the CMG members in the posttest is presumably a manifestation of the effectiveness of the instructional intervention which was oriented by CMs. The results unearthed that CM awareness-raising had a considerable effect on the experimental group participants, who were exposed to English idioms through CM-based Approach. In general, it can be concluded that the CMG mean score was twice as large as TG mean score.

Table 6
Paired-Samples Statistics for the CMG

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 2	Pretest Score	40	14.0000	4.10753	.64946
	Posttest Score	40	27.8250	7.14641	1.12995

Next, a between-subject design was used to conduct an Independent-Samples t-test to compute the post-test

score (see Table 8) to figure out if the instructional approaches, to which the two groups were exposed, were different since there was equality, to a great extent, in both groups' mean scores in the pretest.

Table 7
Paired-Samples t-test for the CMG

		Paired Differences				t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 2	Pre-Post-test Score	-13.8250-	5.65634	.89435	-15.63399-	-12.01601-	-15.458-	39	.000

Table 8
Independent-Samples t-test for the Groups Posttest Score

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
TG	21.00	6.72	1.17018	.000
CMG	27.83	7.15	1.12995	.000

The posttest results revealed that the mean scores between the TG (N 33, M 21.00, SD 6.72) and the CMG (N 40, M 27.83, SD 7.15) were statistically significantly different, $p < 0.001$. It is noteworthy that, the mean difference in the pretest was 0.76, while in the posttest became 6.83, where the result was in favor of the CMG, though, the TG's improvement was noticeable.

To sum up, the impact of the instructional treatment incorporating CMs could increasingly facilitate the CMG participants' comprehension of idioms and assisted them in outperforming their counterpart group in the posttest.

4.2 Part Two

The evaluation procedure categorized respondents' answers according to Correct, Incorrect, and No Answer. Since there were no missing answers, automatically the other two categories of responses were considered, which cover five possible answers each idiom might be provided with as follows (Different-CM, Literal Meaning, No-CM were considered incorrect), and (Exact/Closest Equivalent and Not-Equivalent but staying within the Same-CM were considered correct).

After scoring the 20 items within the entire test, based on the answers, the data were calculated for the Percent, Mean, and SD by running Descriptive Statistics in order to see whether the two groups were statistically significantly different based on the correct answers. Besides, Inferential Statistics was run for the p -value of the scores. Furthermore, the analysis of the correct and incorrect responses was thoroughly done to answer the research questions 3 and 4.

1. Results

The results revealed that the TG members' understanding was 45.2%, compared to the CMG subjects' understanding, which was 54.8%. After running an Independent Samples t-test, the results, as shown in Table 9, indicated that the CMG ($N = 40$, $M = 13.13$, $SD = 1.28$) were better than the TG ($N = 33$, $M = 9.33$, $SD = 1.14$). The difference between them was statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Table 9
Percentage and Mean Score of the Equivalent items for both groups

	Group	N	Percent	Mean	Std. Dev.	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equivalent Items	TG	33	45.2	9.33	1.14	.000
	CMG	40	54.8	13.13	1.28	.000

Concerning the effect of L1 transfer, the common CMs that underlying the idioms in both languages, and the assigned approaches of idiom instruction on the participants' responses in providing Kurdish equivalents to English idioms, the results on Tables 10, 11, and 12 are analyzed below.

Note: consider the abbreviations (Gr: Group, TG: Traditional Group, CMG: CM Group, M: Mean, E: Exact Equivalent, C: Closest Equivalent, S: Same CM, D: Different-CM, L: Literal Meaning, N: No-CM). Besides, regarding the participants' answers, hereinafter, all the Kurdish idioms and their English translation are enclosed by curly brackets.

Table 10
Exact Equivalent Items Responses Percentage and Mean

Idioms	Gr.	M	E	S	D	L	N
Be in seventh heaven	TG	3.51	12.1	63.6	3.0	6.1	15.2
	CMG	4.22	47.5	42.5	-	5.0	5.0
Add fuel to the fire	TG	4.57	78.8	12.1	3.0	-	6.1
	CMG	4.60	85.0	5.0	2.5	-	7.5
Gain the upper hand	TG	2.97	39.4	3.0	15.2	-	42.2
	CMG	3.82	52.5	17.5	5.0	10.0	15.0
Twist everyone around one's (little) finger	TG	4.30	75.8	6.1	-	9.1	9.1
	CMG	4.67	75.0	22.5	-	-	2.5
Growling at someone	TG	2.88	39.4	-	-	30.3	30.3
	CMG	3.77	62.5	-	5.0	17.5	15.0
Make one's blood boil	TG	3.39	39.4	6.1	24.2	15.2	15.2
	CMG	3.97	50.0	15.0	25.0	2.5	7.5
Keep a (very) tight rein on sb/sth	TG	3.15	45.5	-	-	33.3	21.2
	CMG	3.85	65.0	-	-	25.0	10.0

As indicated in Table 10, the idiom *be in seventh heaven* and the equivalent {*le hewtemîn tebeqeyî asmane, one is in seventh heaven*} are underlain by the CM, BEING HAPPY IS BEING IN HEAVEN. The CMG members

were better than their comparison group. The answers were not out of L1 interference as some CMG members used the Kurdish variation {*le xoşîda bifrite hewtemîn tebeqeyî asman, of happiness to fly to the seventh heaven*}, and a TG participant provided {*le xoşîda demrim, dying of happiness*}. Meanwhile, some participants provided the literal sense of *being happy*.

The idiom *add fuel to the fire* which has a relatively exact equivalent in Kurdish {*benzîn be agirîda dekat, one pours petrol on the fire*} has the same CM, ANGER IS HEAT IN A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER, and the metaphorical entailment MAINTAINING INTENSITY IS MAINTAINING HEAT in both languages. Hence, both group members were able to answer correctly in a similar way (CMG 90.0%, TG 90.9%). Their answers are the realization of L1 interference, as 'petrol' was used instead of 'fuel' and 'pour' instead of 'add'.

For the idiom *gain the upper hand*, the CMG (70%) surpassed the TG (42.4%). The participants chose the Kurdish equivalent {*destî le bane/ bala deste, gain the upper hand*}, which is motivated by CONTROL IS UP. It seems that the CMG members took benefit from their exposure to the target CMs, as they also relied on other common expressions inside Kurdish society such as {*bibête dem rasi, to be cock of the walk*} and {*şa be sepan nazanêt, one does not consider king as a reaper*}. Whereas, many TG members incorrectly had {*dest le naw dest bê, to be hand in hand*} as their response.

The idiom *twist everyone around one's (little) finger* and whose exact equivalent {*hemw kes be dewrî penceyîda desiwrênê*} are motivated by the same CM in both languages CONTROL IS TOUCHING, received considerably high correct answers by the CMG participants (97.5%) and the TG ones (81.9%). Among the correct answers, the participants (CMG 7.5%; TG 18.2%) used {*hemw kes dekate helqe w le penceyî dekat, he/she makes everyone a ring and wears them*}, which is a variant of the idiom. Further, a CMG member replaced the word 'finger' with 'hand' as in {*hemw kes le ser destî desiwrêne, one twists everyone on one's hand*}, and three of the TG participants provided the variant {*hemw dinîya be dewrî yek penceda desiwrênê, one twists the whole world around one's finger*}, which evinces L1 interference.

In translating the idiom *growling at someone* into Kurdish {*lêyî/le kesêk demirêtewe*}, which are identical in both languages and rooted within the CM, AN ANGRY BEHAVIOUR IS AGGRESSIVE ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, the CMG participants achieved higher (62.5%) than the TG members (39.4%). The idiom, to Lakoff and Kövecses (1987, p. 208) conveys the idea when someone shows his/her anger by verbal behavior or acts like an animal, particularly a dog due to being agitated by territoriality, possession aggression, or sometimes pain. Nevertheless, two CMG members incorrectly replied with '*burst upon me*' which is

motivated by ANGER IS HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER. Meanwhile, one-third of the CMG and nearly two-thirds of the TG members wrote down *'being extremely angry'* which was deemed a wrong answer.

The idiom *to make one's blood boil* which is {xwênim dekwênêt/dehênête coş, *makes my blood boil/seethe*} in Kurdish was answered correctly by 65.0% of the CMG, and 45.5% of the TG. In the answers, L1 interference was noticed, for instance, *'makes my nerve boil; makes my blood bubbling'*, which all are within the same mappings or entailments of ANGER IS HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER. However, some of the participants of both groups equally misunderstood the idiom with respect to expressions whose motivation is different CMs as follows; for instance, *out of one's mind* is motivated by ANGER IS INSANITY; *one is breathing fire* and *one smokes* are motivated by ANGER IS FIRE. Meanwhile, a small number of the participants, particularly the CMG translated the idiom literally into *to make someone angry*.

The idiom *to keep a (very) tight rein on somebody/something* has its exact equivalent {cilewî kesêk/şitêk/barudoxêk be twindî bigrît, *keep a tight rein on somebody/something/a situation*}, and the CM, CONTROL IS TOUCHING, is underlying them. The CMG had better performance (65.0%) than the TG (45.5%). It can be interpreted that due to its agropastoral culture, the Kurdish language has {lixaw, *bridle*} in its metaphorically motivated expressions, therefore, such L1 interference was discerned in four of the responses by the CMG and three of the TG members. The rest of the responses were *controlling somebody* or *having control over something* which were considered incorrect.

Table 11
Closest Equivalent Items Responses Percentage and Mean

Idioms	Gr.	M	C	S	D	L	N
Keep something under one's hat	TG	3.00	18.2	24.2	18.2	18.2	21.2
	CMG	4.07	42.5	40.0	-	17.5	-
Stir up a hornet's nest	TG	2.67	27.3	9.1	3.0	24.2	36.4
	CMG	3.57	47.5	15.0	-	22.5	15.0
A millstone around one's neck	TG	3.12	30.3	27.3	-	9.1	33.3
	CMG	3.72	40.0	37.5	-	-	22.5
Cold shivers run down one's spine	TG	3.57	54.5	-	-	39.4	6.1
	CMG	4.05	70.0	-	-	25.0	5.0
Jump down one's throat	TG	2.79	18.2	15.2	18.2	24.2	24.2
	CMG	3.47	37.5	15.0	15.0	22.5	10.0
Blow one's cover	TG	2.94	30.3	21.1	-	36.4	21.2
	CMG	3.65	50.0	12.5	-	27.5	10.0
One breathes fire	TG	3.27	33.3	-	27.3	39.4	-
	CMG	3.82	50.0	-	32.5	17.5	-

As shown in Table 11 the results varied. For instance, the idiom *to keep something under one's hat* received 82.5% of the right answers by the CMG, and 42.4% by the TG members. The idiom's closest equivalent is {bîxe jêr 'abaket, *keep it under your 'Aba*}. 'Aba is a looser outer garment, worn by women in most eastern-Islamic societies. Meanwhile, the variant {berdbêkî Leser danê, *put a stone on it*}, which is often used by some Kurdish people to ask for keeping something secret. Interestingly, the idiom in both languages is motivated by KNOWING IS SEEING, where the act of seeing provides humans with the chance of knowing (Kövecses, 2002, p. 158). Other answers were the idiom's literal sense, or {demit bigre w selamet be, *keep calm and stay safe*}, which TO BE SAFE IS TO BE SILENT is underlying it.

Moreover, like English, the Kurdish language has the same CM, PROBLEM IS AN ENTITY, which underpins *stir up a hornet's nest* {dest dekate şane zerdewaleda, *put hand into a hornet's hive*}. The right responses by the CMG doubled the TG. L1 interference was also discerned when the participants had the Kurdish variant *'put one's hand into'* rather than *'stir up'*. Further, a student chose *hornet's hole* instead of *hornet's nest*. The rest of the answers included the literal translation *'to stimulate a problem'*.

Regarding *a millstone around one's neck*, Kurdish speakers often use {bibîte tewîq be miliyewe, *to become cangue around one's neck*}, where these idioms in both languages are motivated by PROBLEM IS A PHYSICAL BURDEN. The results (CMG 77.5%; TG 57.6%) showed that the CMG members' apprehension of CMs reflects their better idiom comprehension as it does have the nearest equivalent. Four of the CMG participants deviated from the original form 'neck', and used 'head', and other four chose 'shoulder'. Similarly, three TG members chose 'head', and four others used 'shoulder', as they perceived burden on the shoulder, which affirms L1 interference.

The idiom *cold shivers run down one's spine* {tezw/mwçirik be leşî kesêkda bêt, *chill/shiver goes through one's body*} is motivated by a metonymy-based CM, FEAR IS COLD, in English (Kövecses, 2005, p. 289) and in Kurdish as well. The result (CMG 70.0%; TG 54.5%) showed that the L1 background knowledge could have helped the participants in understanding the expression. Additionally, with the realization of the shared CM, the CMG accomplished a higher score than the TG. Other answers included *being frightened* or *one's spine gets cold* which were incorrect.

The idiom *jump down one's throat* is {çw be qurgimda, *went into my throat*} in Kurdish, whose underlying CM is ANGRY BEHAVIOUR IS AGGRESSIVE ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR in both languages. The result showed that more than half (52.5%) of the CMG, and one-third

(33.4%) of the TG could understand the idiom, among which a CMG member wrote {helşaxa be rwmnda, *climbed up my face*} which also describes one's angry behavior resembles ferocious animal behavior. For the incorrect answers, six participants in each group wrote *one exploded* and *like boiled milk one spills over*, where ANGER IS HOT FLUID IN A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER underpins them. Others provided *becoming very angry* as a literal translation.

To make a name, personality, project, or intentions known, native English speakers often use *blow one's cover*, which is motivated by KNOWING IS SEEING. Similar to English, the CM is entrenched in Kurdish culture which underpins the idiom {perdeyî le ser helmali/labird, *blow one's/something's curtain/veil*}. Responding the idiom, nearly two-thirds (62.5%) of the CMG provided variants within the same CM {perdeyî le ser helmali/labird} or {demamikekeyî kewt, *one's mask fell*}, which implies *someone's mask slips* in English. Similarly, 42.4% of the TG members provided *blow one's curtain/veil* and *one's mask has fallen*. Additionally, a considerable number of both groups' participants wrote the literal translation *revealing secrets* which was unacceptable.

As usual, the CMG members had a better understanding (50.0%) compared with the TG members (33.3%) with *s/he breathes fire* {agirî lê debarêt, *s/he showers fire on*} which is motivated by ANGER IS FIRE, INTENSITY IS HEAT in both languages. Several participants from both groups (CMG 32.5%, TG 27.3%) responded with idioms in different-CMs including {agir xoş dekat, *fan the flame*} in ENTHUSIASM IS FIRE, {yarî be agir dekat, *plays with fire*} in DANGER IS FIRE, {aw bikeyî be agirda, *pour water on fire*} in DECREASE IN INTENSITY IS A DECREASE IN THE DEGREE OF FIRE. The remainder wrote the literal meaning of the idiom {fw kirdin le agir, *blowing at the fire*}.

Table 12
Not-Equivalent Items Responses Percentage and Mean

Idioms	Gr.	M	E/C	S	D	L	N
Blow one's stack	TG	2.88	-	30.3	36.4	24.2	9.1
	CMG	3.10	-	52.5	20.0	12.5	15.0
quake in one's shoes	TG	3.64	-	66.7	-	15.2	18.2
	CMG	4.25	-	82.5	7.5	5.0	5.0
Hit the brick wall	TG	2.57	-	45.5	-	21.2	33.3
	CMG	2.90	-	55.0	-	25.0	20.0
Doing a slow burn	TG	2.30	-	15.2	18.2	48.4	18.2
	CMG	2.67	-	30.0	22.5	32.5	15.0
Down in the mouth	TG	2.42	-	33.3	-	42.4	24.2
	CMG	3.05	-	55.0	10.0	20.0	15.0
Fall flat on one's face	TG	2.12	-	21.2	-	48.5	30.3
	CMG	2.62	-	40.0	-	42.5	17.5

Table 12 displays that the CMG had also better performance with the idioms that have no wording equivalent, but they are motivated by the same CMs. For instance, *to blow one's stack* was correctly replied by more than half (52%) of the CMG participants, however, less than one-third (30%) of the TG members, where according to Kövecses (2001), they conceivably counted on ontological mappings, i.e., the elements that the source and target domains are composed of. The correct responses included a wide range of variants, as delineated below.

The idioms {helmî lê heldestê, *one gets steamed up*} and {dwkel le gwêyekaniyewe derdeçw, *smoke was coming out of one's ears*} were noticed in the participants' responses many times. The conceptualization of these idioms is depicted by Kövecses (2005) as follows; the target domain is the person who gets angry and the 'smoke' in his/her body (i.e., container) represents the source domain, where there is a container that has a vent to where the smoke passes out. The idiom {le pêstî xoyî hateder, *one got out of one's skin*} which expresses anger in Kurdish, unlike English which is used for fear, was also noticed in the answers, and it is another notable evidence of L1 interference. In addition, the idiom {teqîyewe le twreyîda, *one exploded with anger*} was found in the responses, which is a variant, according to Kövecses (2002), motivated by the metaphorical entailment WHEN ANGER BECOMES TOO INTENSE, THE PERSON EXPLODES.

Moreover, among Kurdish people, both *milk* and *lentil soup* are used in two Kurdish idioms, on regular basis, to describe someone getting angry suddenly. The conceptualization of anger is mapped on the milk/lentil soup when overheated and boiled, inside the container pressure builds up, and when the top layer grows larger and comes up, the milk/lentil soup suddenly spills over, as in {weku şîr/nîskêne heldeçêt, *one spills over as boiled milk/lentil soup*}. In addition, other idioms like {geyîştîwete kwne lwtim, *anger has reached up one's nostril*}, {fîywzî kird/ wayerekanî dawîyane le yek, *blow one's fuse*} were also observed among the answers which are commonly used by Kurdish speakers when they are about releasing anger or have released their anger. These examples are all evidence of L1 conceptual knowledge since they are all motivated by the same CM, ANGER IS HOT FLUID IN A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER, in Kurdish which can be considered helpful for the understanding of the participants, whence the CMG members received the lion's share.

The groups' responses (CMG 20.0%, TG 36.4%) also included idioms within different-CMs, as elaborated below;

{şêxî/eshabeyî/ îymanî/ asmanî nemawe, *one no longer has sheikh/ashabe/sky, or one is out of faith*} which are

religiously oriented and motivated by ANGER IS LOSS OF FAITH.

{*agri lê debarêt, one breathes fire*} is motivated by ANGER IS FIRE.

{*petî birî, one untethered oneself*}, {*cwteyî hawîşit, to kick out someone with hooves*}, which are motivated by ANGRY BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR in Kurdish. And {*şêt bwe, one became mad*} is motivated by ANGER IS INSANITY.

For the idiom *quake in one's shoes* {*wek bî naw aw delerzêt, shake like dropping willow*}, the shared metonymy-based CM, FEAR IS A PHYSICAL CHANGE, between English and Kurdish is probably facilitative in comprehending the idiom. Further, as the CMG (82.5%) surpassed the TG (66.7%) could be interpreted as the effectiveness of CM-based Approach implementation.

Regarding the English idiom *hit the brick wall*, and the Kurdish idiom {*twşî kosip/tegere bibît, to come upon a stumbling block/snag*} which have the shared CM, PROBLEM IS AN ENTITY, the percentage (CMG 55.0%; TG 45.5%) implies how L1 transfer due to the shared CMs could mainly help the study subjects digest the idiom. The 10% difference in their performance is likely the outcome of enlightening the CMG participants of the underlying CMs. A CMG participant wrote the variant {*rwberwî şaxêk bibîtewe, to come upon a mountain*}, while such distinct wording and linguistic structure are the manifestations of L1 interference. Others preferred literal translation.

Furthermore, lack of equivalent contributes to less comprehensibility of the idiom *doing a slow burn*, by both groups (CMG 30.0%; TG 15.2%), particularly the TG. This would reveal that by sharing the same CM culturally, Kurdish students could think of another idiom rooted within the same CM {*dwkel dekat, one smokes*}, {*dwkelî lê heldestê, smoke rises up from one*} which all instantiate ANGER IS FIRE. However, the participants (CMG 22.5%, TG 18.2%) chose *one is seething, one explodes, and make one's blood boil*, which are all rooted within ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER. Besides, one-third of the CMG and nearly half of the TG members answered literally.

Down in the mouth is an idiom that is motivated by the orientational metaphor SAD IS DOWN in both languages. No idiom is found in the Kurdish linguistic repertoire to be identical to the English one with respect to wording; however, a similar expression like {*liçî şorkird, one hung one's lip*} can be found which implies *one's lower lip is down*. The other variant is {*liçî şorewebwe, one's lip has been hanging out*} which renders *one's lower lip bend downwards*. The results (CMG 55.0%, TG 33.3%) were in favor of the usefulness of shared CM between Kurdish and English. Another variant within SAD IS DOWN was observed among the correct

responses {*paporekeyî/keştîyekeyî niqum bwe, one's vessel/ship sunk*}. Other answers were considered unacceptable, which included expressions with no-CM and literal translation.

Lastly, though the idiom *fall flat on one's face* is motivated by FAILURE IS DOWN in both English and Kurdish, lack of an exact equivalent made the study subjects (CMG 40.0%; TG 21.2%) count on the idiom {*textî eriz bw, fall flat to the ground*} which is commonly used to symbolize failure to fall down to the ground. Besides, a great number of the participants in each group literally translated the idiom.

All things considered, the results in this part of the experiment revealed that the participants depended on their L1 to comprehend the idioms. That is, idioms that simply have an exact equivalent in English and Kurdish were better understood, possibly due to L1 transfer and the shared CMs between both languages. In general, the CMG members had better performance except the idiom *to add fuel to the fire* which both groups had substantially similar performance (CMG, *M* 4.60; TG, *M* 4.57). This also revealed how effective teaching idioms using CM-based Approach was in understanding idioms, particularly informing students of how different sets of idioms can cluster around specific CMs. Further, for most of the idioms the CMG provided correct responses either relying on one-to-one equivalent, very close equivalent, or the same-CM, except in the idioms *be in seventh heaven* and *blow one's cover*. However, the TG members rather relied on the same-CM; while with *jump down one's throat* both groups equally used the same-CM variation. L1 interference was also observed with all types of the studied idioms to a different degree. Further, some participants relied on literal translations from both groups.

5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Part One

The discussion of the first part of the experiment was specified to answer the first two research questions.

1. Discussion of Research Question One

The results obtained by the application of CMs in teaching English idioms facilitated the comprehension of idioms by Kurdish students of EFL confirm the earlier findings (Kövecses and Szabó, 1996, Boers, 2000; Li, 2003; Beréndi et al., 2008; Kömür and Çimen, 2009; Chen and Lai, 2013) which is putting idioms into groups under corresponding CMs and expose students to them can facilitate idiom retention and comprehension. Furthermore, the present study found that the CM-based Approach had its efficacy equally for the idioms motivated by all CMs, while Guo (2019) found the influence of CM-mediated instruction on the idioms motivated by structural rather than orientational and

ontological metaphors. Besides, the traditional approach helped the participants to develop, but not as much as the aid that the CM-based Approach offered the participants. What the control group participants' performance displayed was that they were disinclined to properly comprehend idioms and relate them together and to the right CMs that underlying the idioms.

2. Discussion of Research Question Two

The findings of the present study are in line with the previous findings (Boers, 2000; Beréndi et al., 2008; Vasiljevic, 2011) that teaching idioms using the CM-based Approach is more effective than the Traditional Approach in aiding English language students to comprehend idioms. For instance, the participants who were informed of idioms being clustered around the underlying CMs comprehended and retained the taught and new idioms better than the ones who were taught traditionally. It is also aligned with the findings that the CM-based Approach remains effective after an extended period of exposure and adequate time between the tests (Samani and Hashemian, 2012; Hung, 2019; Pan, 2019; Pham and To, 2019), however, the results oppose Beréndi et al. (2008) and, Doiz and Elizari (2013) as they reported no effect of CM-mediated instruction in the long-term.

5.2 Part Two

This part is devoted to discussing the second part of the experiment which tries to answer the last two research questions.

1. Discussion of Research Question Three

The tested idioms all sound to be comprehensible without posing a high level of difficulty as what has been found by (Irujo, 1986; Charteris-Black, 2002; Hu and Fong, 2010; Türker, 2016) who reported that an idiom that is prevalent in L1 and L2, leads to L1 transfer in its comprehension and learning.

The English idioms with the exact and closest equivalent to Kurdish wording and being within the same CM were comprehended, to a great extent, by the CMG participants, and to some extent by the TG participants. This can indicate how facilitative L1 transfer is which endorses the literature findings (Boers, 2000; Charteris-Black 2002; Beréndi et al., 2008; Türker, 2016).

Moreover, the existence of the same CM in Kurdish and English behind many of the idioms can be the most feasible delineation of the responses provided by both groups. Regarding the idioms that are not equivalent linguistically, while identical CMs underlying them in Kurdish and English, the findings revealed that the participants had difficulty comprehending all but one, '*doing a slow burn*', the result is not in full agreement with Charteris-Black (2002) as Malay students had a good performance with the expressions that are not

equivalent linguistically, but conceptually. In addition, the idioms *jump down one's throat* and *one breathes fire* were understood by half of the CMG members and one-third of the TG ones, which can be assumed that the participants' misunderstanding was due to their unconcern about the elements that comprise each of the source and the target domains (Kövecses, 2001, p. 101).

Despite the L1 transfer, L1 interference (i.e., negative transfer) was observed in the answers given by the CMG and TG members, though, the TG members were expected to rely on the L1 interference as they were not aware of the motivated CMs. In addition, L1 interference was observed in the responses to all non-equivalent idioms and almost all the exact and very close equivalent idioms. Further, the findings revealed that with the idioms that do not have exact equivalents, the participants from both groups seemingly searched to find out the exact equivalents, consequently, they relied on other Kurdish variants within or outside the CMs that underlying the stimuli, which is compatible with the claim that "the instantiations of shared metaphoric themes vary across languages" (Boers, 2000, p. 557). L1 interference, though, impeded the participants to comprehend idioms, it informed us that there are idioms and CMs that are bounded to Kurdish culture. Thus, Kurdish EFL students' awareness needs to be raised accordingly in order to help them perceive how seemingly different sets of idioms are clustered around corresponding CMs.

Moreover, the CMG participants were more liable to depend on the linguistic structure of Kurdish idioms rather than the TG ones, especially in the idioms *be in seventh heaven*, *add fuel to the fire*, *gain the upper hand*, *stir up a hornet's nest*, *cold shivers run down one's spine*, and, *keep it under one's hat*. This could be attributed to the cultural differences between the participants' L1 and L2, which endorses Hu and Fong's (2010) observation of L1 interference that occurred due to the English and Chinese cultural differences. It also validates the findings by Beréndi et al. (2008) where L1 interference was observed due to the perceived difference between L1 (Hungarian) and L2 (English). However, other findings confirm that L1 interference occurrence sources from semantic similarities (Abdullah and Jackson, 1998) or other shared features between L1 and L2 (Boers, 2000). In addition, the findings also endorse Irujo's (1993) finding as a number of group participants, particularly TG members, translated the idioms literally as a strategy.

2. Discussion of Research Question Four

The results corroborate the hypothesis that "an enhanced metaphor awareness through the categorization of idioms by CMs can enhance at least short term retention of the idioms" (Beréndi et al., 2008, p. 77). That is, grouping idioms under corresponding

CMs helps students in comprehending and finding out L1 equivalents better than listing idioms randomly as traditionally practiced in EFL classes in the Kurdish context. This also experimentally corroborates the hypothesis that a detailed explanation of the CMs that semantically motivate idioms and being aware of shared CMs enhance students' comprehension capacity (see Boers, 2000). This is also supported by the better performance of the CMG members in understanding all the idioms including no-equivalent idioms.

6. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings, it can be concluded that applying the CM-based Approach facilitated the Kurdish students of EFL to comprehend English idioms to a great extent. Meanwhile, the traditional approach could help idiom comprehension capacity to some degree. The CMG participants were remarkably better than the TG ones, which is evidence of the effectiveness of the implementation of the CM-based Approach rather than the Traditional approach to teaching idioms in EFL context with Kurdish university students. Wherefore, a complementary approach like the CM-based is needed to be consulted. The data also revealed that idiom comprehension by Kurdish university students was not merely a matter of the CM-based Approach implementation in idiom teaching, however, it could be the interplay between the idiom meaning comprehension and L1 transfer, the same underlying CMs of seemingly different idioms within and between English and Kurdish languages, and the cultivation of shared or different L1 and L2 CMs in the students' mind through raising their awareness. Lastly, some participants in both groups, particularly TG, resorted to the literal translation of idioms as a strategy, which is likely due to a lack of knowledge pertaining to the idiom wording and the CMs underlying each idiom.

It is also necessary to acknowledge the study limitations, namely, the participants' number, the unequal sample size assignment, the setting, the studied idioms and their underlying CMs, and the teaching and learning activities practiced. Hence, the results cannot be generalized to the all EFL population.

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