Drawing a Demarcation Line between Two Overlapping Colloquial Elements: The Case of Idioms and Clichés

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ABSTRACT

The overlap between idioms and clichés is one of the problematic meaning issues. This overlap can simply be detected in online as well as academic sources. The existence of the overlap between idioms and clichés springs from the absence of a model that can work out some demarcation boundary between them. The present study aims at drawing a demarcation line between these two essential colloquial elements by resorting to linguistic features, contextual functions, nature of community of practice based on interlocutors' relationship, and the degree of informality to fulfill this purpose. This study makes use of a qualitative approach to carry out the process of analysis based on a model designed to assist the procedures of determining the features of each element. With reference to data, the analysed idioms and clichés have been extracted from 20 discourses (10 written texts and 10 recorded interactions) of 10 different topics. The most significant concluding points come in three angles: structure (an idiom is mostly a part of a meaningful statement, whereas a cliché is mostly a full meaningful statement by itself); function (idioms are usually used for three different purposes: emphasis, creativity, and persuasiveness, whereas clichés are used either to simplify the idea or to state an idea without exerting any effort by making use of overused statements and common ritualized expressions); and informality (Idioms are detected in less informal discourses compared to clichés).

KEY WORDS: Colloquial Language, Idiom, Cliché, Speech Community, Informality

1. INTRODUCTION:

The overlap between idioms and clichés can be easily detected if someone surveys online sources for the most common English idioms, and for the most common English clichés. The overlap between these two essential colloquial elements is observed in terms of recognition, use, linguistic features and contextual functions. This overlap is not only observed in online sources, but can be also detected in many academic studies and sources. For instance, 'take the tiger by the tail', 'in the nick of time', 'the wrong side of the bed' and many more other similar examples are categorized as idioms and clichés at a time. The existence of the overlap between idioms and clichés springs from the absence of accurate and exquisite studies that can address this problem, and from the absence of a model to figure out some demarcation points to draw a strict boundary between them.

Although there are considerable number of studies (such as, Monroe, 1990; Partridge, 2003; and Hargraves, 2014) that gained insight into idioms or clichés separately, or they have gathered them in one study to examine them in terms of their linguistic structure, meaning, types and use, none of them have investigated these two colloquial elements in an attempt to determine the exclusive features that can assist the process of drawing a demarcation line between idioms from clichés.

Monroe (1990) conducted a study titled 'Idiom and Cliché in T. S. Eliot and John Ashbery' to underline idioms and clichés used by these two authors in their works; to determine the purpose of employing idioms and clichés; and to identify the influence of these colloquial element on the nature of the authors works.

The only criterion that is adopted by the author is the 'overuse' and 'ineffectiveness' as two main traits to recognize clichés by, without mentioning any sort of support to ratify a certain aphorism as an overused and ineffective statement.

Partridge (2003) in the introduction section of his work 'A Dictionary of Clichés' illustrates the relationship between idioms and clichés. Partridge (2003, p. xii) very obviously states that there is a sort of overlap between idioms and clichés; nevertheless, in order to recognize clichés from idioms he stated that he resorted to a "very roughly, and (I fear) unsatisfactorily" classification of clichés in this work based on the fact that many of the idioms that are similar to clichés are non-metaphoric aphorisms. Moreover, Partridge adds that many idioms "have become clichés' overtime due to their popularity in use. Thus, in order to avoid this problematic issue, Partridge uses the concept 'idiom-clichés' (Ibid) without exerting any effort to draw a boundary among them.

Another source that addresses the problematic issues connected with the overlap between idioms and clichés is a book published in 2014 titled 'It's Been Said Before: A Guide to the Use and Abuse of Clichés' by Hargraves. In this book although the writer regards 'overuse' and 'ineffectiveness' as two essential features to make a distinction between idioms and clichés, he clearly admits that "overuse and ineffectiveness… are not objectively measurable" and cannot be precisely achieved with the use of qualitative approach drawing on the participants' subjective views (Hargraves, 2014, p. 4). However, concerning the 'overuse', Hargraves states that corpus-based studies can be helpful to identify the overused statements, but regarding the 'ineffectiveness' of any statement is exclusively something subjective (2014, p. 4). Thus, although Hargraves was fully aware of the overlap between idioms and clichés and knowledgeable about many essential aspects of idioms and clichés, just like the other authors, he concentrated on the 'overuse' trait obtained from corpus-based studies to draw a demarcation line between these two colloquial elements.

These problematic issues associated with the distinction between idioms and clichés on the one hand and the existence of no studies to draw a boundary between these two colloquial elements on the other hand all have inspired the researchers to conduct this study to draw a boundary between these two colloquial elements and enable those who are interested in the use and the study of idioms and clichés to easily recognize them.

This study tries to answer the question of whether or not a demarcation line can be drawn between idioms and clichés with the hypothesis that idioms and clichés can be distinguished from each other with the determination of their linguistic structure, function(s) in the context, the nature of communities that they are utilized in (based on interlocutors' relations) and their degree of informality.

2. COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE

Colloquial language is regarded as a very inclusive concept that covers almost all the diverse informal linguistic elements including slang, vernacular, idioms, clichés, vulgar, jargon, and many others (Leech and Svartivik, 2013, p. 24). These colloquial elements share some features in common that sometimes result in a sort of overlap among them (Fattah and Salih, 2022, p.77), especially between idioms and clichés. Therefore, this study is conducted to examine two overlapped colloquial elements (idioms and clichés) to gain a deep insight into their features to draw a boundary between them accordingly.

2.1. Idioms:

Idiom as one of the forms of colloquial language highly contributes in the process of establishing human communication. Weinreich (1966, p. 70) defines idiom as a "phraseological unit that involves at least two polysemous constituents, and in, which there is a reciprocal contextual selection of sub-senses". For Weinreich a phraseological unit is regarded as an idiom when it provides an idiomatic meaning rather than literal one. On the same trend, Fraser (1970, p.22) identifies idiom as a "constituent or a serious of constituents for, which the semantic interpretation is not a compositional function of the formative of, which it is composed". Fraser, in his definition, regards idiom as a complex linguistic unit that is recognized by its complex syntactic and semantic features.

The concept of idiom is borrowed from Latin idioma (peculiarity of language) which is also borrowed in sequence from the Greek word 'idios' which stands for ('one's own' or 'private') (Roberts,1944, p.300). Although idioms are regarded as marginal linguistic elements and they are not well considered in general dictionaries, they play essential role in the construction of both spoken and written discourse. According to Casas and Campoy (1995, p. 55), idioms are frequently used by English in both daily interactions and written texts of different registers. The third edition of 'Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms' by Ayto includes 7000 idioms, and this great number of idioms gives prestige to the use of idiom by English.

Idioms either exist in forms of words or sentences that their meaning is not derived from the literal meaning of their particles, and this feature makes the process of using and interpreting idioms difficult; for example, the meaning of 'piece of cake' as an idiom

stands for 'easy' which is completely different from the literal meaning of its components. However, the use of idioms by English is very frequent as Lattey (1986, p.218) asserts that idioms are helpful to interlocutors to express their own views, feelings and perspectives in a precise way in cases when the literal words and expressions fail to convey the message.

Approaches to the Interpretation of Idioms:

There are two essential perspectives recommended by linguists regarding the interpretation of idiom in English. The first perspective is non-compositional theory which eliminates the engagement of the literal meaning of the constituents of idiom in determining the overall meaning of the idiom. The second one is compositional theory which asserts on the role of the literal meaning of the constituents of idiom in coining the meaning of idiom.

Non-compositional Approach:

The meaning of idiom from the perspective of non-compositional approach has no relationship with the meaning of its component elements i.e. According to this approach the meaning of idiom is different from the meaning of the words that constitute idiom. This approach is adopted by many linguists such as Fraser, 1970; Chomsky, 1980; Van der Linden, 1992 that the figurative meaning of idioms is not connected with the literal meaning of its constituents, instead they believe that the precise interpretation of idiom requires memory retrieval of specific idiomatic meaning.

Compositional Approach:

According to the compositional approach, the semantic meaning of the constituent words of idioms plays an essential role in determining the precise meaning of idioms. Titone and Connine's consideration to the meaning of idiomatic expressions elaborates on the contribution and the failure of lexical meaning of the components of idiom in grasping the overall meaning of idioms as they state:

The same way that literal and other figurative aspects of language (e.g. metaphor) are comprehended, the compositional approach to idiom representation and processing is based on the notion that idiomatic meanings are built simultaneously out of literal word meanings and the specific interpretation of these word meanings within a particular context. (Titone and Connine, 1999, p.1661*).*

For Titone and Connine, the interpretation of idiomatic expressions is similar to the way that literal and figurative meaning of other linguistic element is achieved, because they assume that the overall meaning

of any idiom is taken from the literal meaning and/or the interpretation of its component words.

Structure Of English Idioms:

Cowie states that idioms are categorized as clause idioms and phrase idioms. Thus, if we go over English idioms, we can observe that they are found in the structure of dependent clause, independent clause or in form of phrases: nominal phrase (a perfect storm), prepositional phrase (on thin ice) and adjectival phrase (safe and sound) (1983, p. xi). This perspective is supported by Seidle and McMordie (1988, p. 13) as they state that the majority of English idioms have well-formed syntactic structure as they are usually recognized by the following regular syntactic forms.

1. a. It is not a rocket science. (Independent Clause)

   b. When pigs fly.   (Dependent Clause)

   c. speak of the devil   (Predicate)

   d. safe and sound   (Adjective Phrase)

The above examples confirm that English idioms are syntactically well formed. For instance, the idiom (1.a) is in the form of simple sentence which consists of an independent clause, the idiom (1.b) is in the form of dependent clause, the idiom (1.c) is in the form of predicate, and the idiom (1.d) is a nominal phrase. From the nature of English idioms' structure, we can deduce that English idioms occur in different positions in sentence; and can have different functions as a subject (brain trusts will attend the meeting), object (I predicted a perfect storm after the virus outbreak), complement (He is under the weather), adverb (we will work tooth and nail), predicate (he missed the boat) or a full meaningful sentence (Give someone a cold shoulder).

2.2. Cliché:

Cliché is regarded as an element of language that highly contributes in the process of colloquial language construction. Traditionally, clichés were considerably used by interlocutors with different social, economic and political status to facilitate the process of communication and to have impact on the recipients, but due to their overuse by interlocutors step by step lose their influence and become normal and ineffective expressions. The concept 'cliché 'is originally French that dates back to the early 19th century used for a printing plate cast that is designed to produce a bunch of the same paper, but at the end of 19th century the term clichés is adapted to stand for the phrases and statements that are repetitively used by interlocutors (Stark, 1999, p.454).

Definition of Cliché:

Cliché is defined as "an overused, worn-out phrase that has lost its capacity to communicate effectively: soft as a kitten, lived to a ripe old age" (Troyka and Hesse, 2010, p.51). This definition regards cliché as an effortless statement that is recognized by excessiveness in its use as a consequence it functions like an ordinary word that does not have any noticeable rhetorical effect on the recipients. And this means that clichés were originally created to influence the recipients, but its overuse results in losing its influence. Suhor (1975, p.159) adds that clichés act as the linguistic elements that organize ideas in concise and well-grounded unit. For Suhor, clichés' uses and comprehensions are not complicated as they act like normal words. Therefore, clichés are found in different texts, contexts and registers. For instance, Suhor (1975, p.160) introduced a considerable number of clichés used in academic and professional register such as student text books, famous newspapers, TV debates, academic studies, formal statements, etc. such as:

2. a. time flies.

   b. Read between the lines

   c. All that glitters is not gold

   d. with reference to

   e. in desperate need of

Olson (1982, p.190) defines cliché as "an expression that is so overworked that it no longer contains much meaning". This definition clarifies that a cliché is not like other word or expressions that can have different meanings in different context, but its meaning is very restricted and it has the same meaning in different contexts. For instance 'Do not judge a book by its cover' is one of the common English clichés that is widely used and easily understood by English speakers; its meaning is very specific and does not require effort from the interlocutors to understand.

Zijderveld (1979) considers clichés from a different perspective from almost other linguists. For Zijderveld clichés are not only associated with some overused expressions, but also with the repetitive state of beliefs, feelings and behaviours as it has been quoted below.

> *A cliché is a traditional form of human expression (in words, thoughts, emotions, gestures, acts) which-due to repetitive use in social life has lost its original, often ingenious heuristic power. Although it thus fails positively to contribute meaning to social interactions and communication, it does function socially, since it manages to stimulate behaviour (cognition, emotion, volition, action), while it avoids reflection on meanings.* (Zijderveld, 1979, p.10).

Syntactic Forms of Clichés:

Clichés in English are found in different syntactic forms. It can be found in the form of independent clauses, dependent clause, predicates and phrases; and they are mostly syntactically well-formed (Pickrel, 1985). The following examples demonstrate clichés of different syntactic forms.

3. a. Ignorance is bless.   (Independent clause)

   b. If only walls could talk.   (Dependent clause)

   c. A bad egg   (Noun Phrase)

   d. In a wink   (Prepositional Phrase)

The above examples demonstrate the clichés with different syntactic forms. Example (3.a) is a full meaningful sentence that consists of one independent clause, example (3.b) is in the form of a dependent clause, and examples (3.c and 3.d) are in forms of phrases.

Moreover, Bider (2013, p. 1169) states that some of the English clichés are syntactically fixed, and some others are not. For example 'when pigs fly' is a dependent clause that has a fixed structure and is not exposed to any syntactic change while using, but the cliché 'you make my day' can be syntactically reconsidered basing on the context, as in 'you made my day', 'you will make my day' and ' she makes my day' that they are structured according to past, present and future; and sometimes clichés can be passivized as in 'Two birds were killed with one stone' from 'Kill two birds with one stone'.

Overlap Between Clichés and Idioms:

Clichés are not easily distinguished from idioms because they are to a great extent similar in terms of structure and the process of their meaning interpretation. Both of them are found in forms of phrase, predicate, and independent clause (Peterson, 2017, p.51). However, one of the most essential characteristics that distinguish a cliché from an idiom is connected with their frequency of use. As it is stated in the definitions, clichés are overused, so this trait distinguishes them from idioms that their frequency of use in communication is not so repetitive.

Despite similarities between clichés and idioms, many of the clichés are also regarded as idioms. During searching for examples on idioms and clichés, I have observed that some of the linguistic elements that are labeled cliché in some sources are labeled as idiom in some other sources. For example, 'it is not a rocket

science' and 'plenty of fish in the sea' are found under the list of idioms in many sources on idioms, and as clichés in many sources on clichés; actually they are idioms, but due to their overuse in the communication, they are categorized as very good examples of cliché.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study examines the occurrence of idioms and clichés in some selected texts of different registers. This study makes use of a qualitative method to analyse the nature of idioms and clichés in terms of linguistic features, contextual functions, the nature of communities that they are used in, and the degree of informality. This analytical procedure will be helpful to determine the characteristics of each of the considered colloquial elements, and as a consequence it leads to draw a boundary among them and to comprehensively demonstrate how these colloquial elements are used in daily interactions.

3.1. Research Questions

The questions that this study tries to answer are stated below.
1. To which extent idioms overlap with clichés?
2. How are idioms distinguished from clichés?
3. How does the diversity in register and topics affect the characteristics of idioms and clichés?

3.2. Model of Analysis:

This study examines two different forms of colloquial language which are idioms and clichés. These colloquial forms are merged in one model of analysis based on their distinctive features in terms of their linguistic forms, their contextual functions, the scope of the community of practice (based on the interlocutors relationship) that they are conventionally used in, and their degree of informality.

In terms of linguistic features, English idioms (Cowie, 1983, p. xi) and clichés (Pickrel, 1985) are usually found in forms of independent clauses, dependent clauses or phrases. Concerning the contextual functions of idioms, Holt (1991) introduces three main purposes which are: associating emphatic purpose to describe something in an extreme way, such as 'He is bleeding like a stuck pig' (p.29), simplifying the idea and make it clear for understanding (p. 58), used as persuasive linguistic elements to attract the attention of the recipients or readers (p.63). Moreover, another purpose of using idioms is the creativity in constructing statements (Pawley and Syder, 1983, p. 208). In connection to the role of clichés, Stark (1999) and Olson (1982) present that

clichés are used to encode information effortlessly.

With reference to the interlocutors' relationship, the nature of community of practice, which takes into account the nature of interactants' relation, plays a great role in determining the use of all the language elements (Fattah, 2016). Therefore, the use of idioms and clichés as two essential elements of language are undoubtedly affected by nature of interlocutors' relationship. According to Casas and Campoy (1995, p. 55), idioms are frequently used by English in both daily interactions and written texts of different registers by all speech community members. However, clichés are overused expressions that are used by majority of speech community members due to their easiness and readiness in use and comprehending (Stark, 1999; and Troyka and Hesse, 2010).

Regarding idioms and clichés in connection to the degree of formality, all the studies that are concerned with the comparison between clichés and idioms state that clichés are more informal than idioms (May, 1979) and (Hargraves, 2014). Drawing on the abovementioned information on idioms and clichés in various studies, the following model is designed to undertake the process of analysis of idioms and clichés.

Table (1): The Adopted Model for the analysis of Idioms and Clichés based on: (Casas and Campoy, 1995); (Cowie, 1983); (Holt, 1991); Olson (1982); (Pawley and Syder, 1983); (Pickrel, 1985); (Stark,1999); and (Troyka and Hesse, 2010).

Item	Colloquial Language Elements															Idiom or Cliché
	Linguistic Features				Function in Context				Community Nature based on interlocutors' Relationship				Degree of informality			
	Independent clause	Dependent Clause	Predicate	Phrase	Emphasis	Creativity	Simplification	Persuasiveness	Encoding inf. effortlessly	A naive intimate social group	Majority of Speech Community Members	Speech Community Members	Low level of informality	Medium level of informality	Quite Informal	

3.3. The Data:

The research data of this study is (20) randomly selected samples among the editorial articles for the written texts, and among TV, newspaper and magazine interviews for the authentic recorded interactions. The selected texts fall under 10 written texts and 10 recorded verbal interactions that were excerpted from different language registers available online. The data represents 10 different topics including healthcare discourse, social and cultural discourse, economic discourse, crime and justice discourse, sport discourse, political discourse, military and war discourse, literary discourse, media and press discourse, and life style discourse. Each of the preceded topic includes a written text and a recorded verbal interaction. This diversity is helpful to analyse a considerable number of idioms and clichés in a massive number of texts to arrive at precise characteristics of each of the examined colloquial elements.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

The study draws on a tabulation analysis in order to determine the use of Idioms and Clichés in twenty written and verbal texts of ten different topics. The determination of these colloquial elements is helpful to identify their characteristics to form a clear vision that leads to draw a boundary among them and to set certain exclusive characteristics for each one of them. In this section, each tabular form is followed by a detailed explanation and analysis of the included data**.**

		Linguistic Features					Function in Context					Community Nature based on interlocutors' Relationship			Degree of informality			
	Item	Complex sentence	Independent clause	Dependent Clause	Predicate	Phrase	Emphasis	Creativity	Simplification	Persuasiveness	Encoding inf. effortlessly	A naive intimate social group	Majority of Speech Community Members	Speech Community Members	Low level of informality	Medium level of informality	Quite Informal	Idiom or Cliché
1	Keep a close eye		*					*						*		*		Idiom
2	Cross our heart					*	*							*		*		Idiom
3	do your best		*								*		*				*	Cliché
4	pin hopes on				*			*						*		*		Idiom
5	You are welcome		*								*		*				*	Cliché
6	When his boat comes in			*				*						*		*		Idiom
7	need a shoulder to cry on				*			*						*		*		Idiom
8	absence makes the heart grow fond		*							*				*		*		Idiom
9	a friend in need is a friend indeed		*						*				*				*	Cliché
10	Do not throw the baby out with the bathwater		*					*				*			*			Idiom
11	it's not rocket science		*								*		*				*	Cliché
12	Haste makes waste		*						*				*				*	Cliché
13	God bless you		*								*		*				*	Cliché
14	do not judge a book by its cover		*								*		*				*	Cliché
15	cut to the chase				*		*							*		*		Idiom
16	can't make chicken soup out of Chicken poop.				*		*							*		*		Idiom
17	No good deed goes unpunished.		*							*				*		*		Idiom
18	Don't pull the wool over my eyes		*					*						*		*		idiom
19	If you can't beat them, join them.	*									*		*				*	Cliché
20	if life gives you lemons, make lemonade	*									*		*				*	Cliché
21	black swan event					*		*						*		*		Idiom
22	safe and sound					*		*						*		*		Idiom
23	Change his mind				*						*		*				*	Cliché
24	sailed close to the wind				*			*						*		*		Idiom
25	won fair and square				*		*							*		*		Idiom
26	a slap on the wrist.				*			*						*		*		Idiom
27	How are you?		*								*		*				*	Cliché

	Colloquial Language Elements																	
	Item	Linguistic Features					Function in Context					Community Nature based on interlocutors' Relationship			Degree of informality			Idiom or Cliché
		Complex Sentence	Independent clause	Dependent Clause	Predicate	Phrase	Emphasis	Creativity	Simplification	Persuasiveness	Encoding inf. effortlessly	A naive intimate social group	Majority of Speech Community Members	Speech Community Members	Low level of informality	Medium level of informality	Quite Informal	
28	Lion share					*					*						*	Cliché
29	Looking under the hood				*			*						*		*		Idiom
30	at any cost					*					*			*			*	Cliché
31	crystal clear					*		*						*		*		Idiom
32	cross fingers				*						*		*				*	Cliché
33	point the finger of blame				*			*						*		*		Idiom
34	Speak your mind				*			*						*		*		Idiom
35	never speak ill of the dead		*								*		*				*	Cliché
36	Take a French leave				*			*						*		*		Idiom
37	fight hammer and tongs				*		*							*		*		Idiom
38	a war of nerves					*		*						*		*		Idiom
39	stay on the safe side		*						*					*		*		Idiom
40	armed to the teeth				*		*							*		*		Idiom
41	First come, first served	*									*		*				*	Cliché
42	on cloud nine					*	*							*		*		Idiom
43	like a kid in a candy store				*						*		*				*	Cliché
44	time waits for no one		*								*		*				*	Cliché
45	sweep your secrets under the rug		*					*						*		*		Idiom
46	history repeating itself		*								*		*				*	Cliché
47	put a human face on		*					*						*		*		Idiom
48	Fish where the fish are	*									*		*				*	Cliché
49	dive into all the juicy details		*							*				*		*		Idiom
50	Thanks for having me	*									*		*				*	Cliché
51	When there is a will, there is a way	*							*				*				*	Cliché
52	Beat the clock				*			*						*		*		Idiom
53	Time flies		*								*		*				*	Cliché
54	Touch base with someone		*					*						*		*		Idiom
55	tied the knot		*					*						*		*		Idiom

	Item	Complex sentence	Independent clause	Dependent Clause	Predicate	Phrase	Emphasis	Creativity	Simplification	Persuasiveness	Encoding inf. effortlessly	A naive intimate social group	Majority of Speech Community Members	Speech Community Members	Low level of informality	Medium level of informality	Quite Informal	Idiom or Cliché
	Colloquial Language Elements — Linguistic Features / Function in Context / Community Nature based on interlocutors' Relationship / Degree of informality																	
56	under their thumbs					*	*							*		*		Idiom
57	over the moon					*		*						*		*		Idiom
58	they paint the town red		*				*							*		*		Idiom
59	It is time to take a breath	*									*		*				*	Cliché
60	plays around with my head				*			*						*		*		Idiom
61	put me at ease				*			*						*		*		Idiom
62	Just a matter of time					*					*		*				*	Cliché
63	Do not bite the hand that was feeding you	*									*		*				*	Cliché

Table (2) illustrates the process of identification of the characteristics of the concerned colloquial elements (Idioms and Clichés) extracted from 10 texts and 10 recorded interviews belonging to 10 different topics to demonstrate the features that each of the above mentioned colloquial elements are recognized by. This table includes the analysis of 63 idiomatic expressions to classify them into idioms and clichés on the one hand, and to assign the exclusive characteristics of idiom and clichés on the other hand to draw a boundary between them.

Based on the results that have achieved from the analysis of 37 idioms and 26 clichés detected in the employed texts, it can be deduced that linguistic features, contextual functions, nature of community of practice based on the interlocutors' relationship and the level of the degree of informality highly contribute in the process of distinguishing idioms from clichés, and in the process of drawing a demarcation line between them.

With reference to the analysis of 37 idioms, the results show that in terms of linguistic structure 16 idioms are in the form of predicates, 12 idioms are in the form of independent clause, 9 idioms are in the form of phrases, and only one idiom is found in the form of dependent clause. However, no idiom is detected in the form of complex sentence. With reference to the contextual functions, 24 of the idioms are used to show creativity, 9 idioms are utilized for the emphatic purpose, and 4 idioms are used for the purpose of persuasiveness. Concerning the nature of community that idioms are used in based on interlocutors' relationship; the result that has been achieved demonstrates that idioms are used by speech community members. As far as the degree of informality concerned, idioms are used in a context with a medium level of informality. The results of the idioms analysis are illustrated in table (3).

Table (3): The Approved Characteristics of Idioms

Characteristics of idioms								
Linguistic Structure				Function in Context			Community Nature based on interlocutors' Relationship	Degree of informality
Independent clause	Dependent Clause	Predicate	Phrase	Emphasis	Creativity	Persuasiveness	Speech Community Members	Medium level of informality

Concerning clichés, table (2) beholds the analysis of 26 colloquial elements that are recognized as cliché. According to this table, in terms of linguistic structure 11 out of 26 clichés are identified as independent clauses, 12 idioms are in form of independent clause, 8 idioms are recognized as complex sentences, four of them are predicates and three of them are found in the form of phrases. In connection to the contextual functions, 23 of the analysed clichés are used to encode information effortlessly, and 3 of them are used for simplification.

Regarding the nature of community that clichés are used in based on interlocutors' relationship; the result that has been achieved demonstrates that clichés are used by majority speech community members. With respect to the degree of informality, the uses of clichés are observed in quite informal discourses. The results of the clichés'' analysis are illustrated in table (4).

Table (4): The Approved Characteristics of Clichés

Characteristics of Clichés							
Linguistic Structure				Function in Context		Community Nature based on interlocutors' Relationship	Degree of informality
Complex Sentences	Independent clause	Predicate	Phrase	Simplification	Encoding information Effortlessly	Majority of Speech Community Members	Quite informal level

Drawing on the results illustrated in tables (3 and 4), we can observe diversities between idioms and clichés in terms of their linguistic structure, contextual function, nature of communities based on interlocutors' relation and degree of informality. Accordingly we can draw demarcation line between these two colloquial elements as they are clearly demonstrated in table (5).

Table (5): The Approved Characteristics of Idioms and Clichés

	Colloquial Elements	Idiom	Cliché
Colloquial Language	Linguistic Features	Independent clause	Complex Sentences
		Dependent clause	Independent clause
		Predicate	Predicate
		Phrase	Phrase
	Functions in Context	Emphasis	Simplification
		Creativity	Encoding information effortlessly
		Persuasiveness	
	Community nature based on interlocutors' Relationship	Speech community members	Majority of speech community members
	Degree of informality	Medium level of informality	Quite informal

Table (5) precisely illustrates the similar and contrastive points between idioms and clichés with reference to four bases. Regarding the linguistic structure, both idioms and clichés are found in the forms of independent clause, predicate and phrase. However, two points of dissimilarities are determined: the first one is that a great number of idioms are recognized as dependent clauses, whereas no cliché is detected as dependent clause; and the second point of dissimilarity is that a considerable number of clichés are categorized as complex sentences, whereas no idiom is recognized as complex sentence. It can be derived from the analysis of their structure that clichés are mostly constrcted to convey a full message as they are mostly found in forms of complex sentences, independent clauses, or phrases (namely, ritualized expressions). However, idioms usually constitute a part of the message as they are mostly found in forms of phrases, predicates and dependent clauses.

With reference to functions, idioms are used to demonstrate emphasis, creativity and persuasiveness, whereas clichés are utilized for simplifications and encoding information effortlessly. Thus, ineffectiveness of the utility of clichés is regarded as one of the crucial characteristics that distinguish clichés from idioms. Regarding the nature of community based on the interlocutors' relationship, table (5) shows that idioms are used by speech community members, whereas clichés are used by the majority of speech community members. This result determines that the scope of using idioms is wider than the scope of using clichés (i.e.) idioms can be used in any setting and context, whereas the use of cliché is avoided in certain settings and discourses. Concerning the degree of informality, table (5) illustrates that idioms are used in the discourses with a medium level of informality, whereas clichés are used in a quite informal discourse. This approves that the use of clichés is more informal than the use of idioms.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The most significant concluding points that have been arrived at throughout conducting this study are:
• Linguistic structure, contextual function, nature of community that they are used in and the degree of informality can highly contribute in drawing a boundary between idioms and clichés.

• Both idioms and clichés are found in the form of phrase but what makes distinction between them is that idioms represent idiomatic phrases but clichés represent ritualized expressions.
• Idioms are usually used by interlocutors for three different purposes which are: emphasis, creativity or persuasiveness, whereas clichés are used either to simplify the idea that is intended to be stated or to state an idea without exerting any effort by making use of overused statements and common ritualized expressions.
• Idiom is mostly a part of a meaningful statement, whereas cliché is mostly a full meaningful statement by itself.
• Idioms are the carrier of normal meaning, whereas clichés are the carrier of moral and wisdom.
• The scope of speech community for the utility of idioms is wider than the scope of speech community for the utility of clichés.
• Idioms do not occur in the form of complex sentences, whereas clichés are widely found in the form of complex sentence.
• Idioms are used in less informal context compared to clichés.

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