

Difficulties Faced by Master's Students Doing the English Admission Test in the Area of "Everyday English" "A Case Study of the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University"

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□ ABSTRACT □

The Master's stage has its importance in development and intellectual building. However, in the process of applying for Master's studies, applicants must pass the English Admission Test. When doing this test, master's students encounter difficulties in the area of everyday English.

This research deals with the difficulties that master's students may face in the area of everyday or spoken English. It is from the perspective of a sample of students doing a language course that can help them do the final English admission test at the Higher Institute of languages, Tishreen University. In order to achieve this goal, a questionnaire has been designed to investigate into difficulties faced by those students in the area of everyday English. After conducting the study and analysis, the research arrived at the following results:

1- Master's students doing the English admission test suffer from difficulties in idioms, the way they are written, and their use. In addition to that, there are anxieties when dealing with phrasal verbs and sayings that reflect the cultural aspects of the English society. Furthermore, there are problems with understanding English conversations.

2- There are no varieties with statistical significance in the area of everyday English according to the sample of students in regard to the variables of *gender* and *age*.

3- Among the views of the sample of students, there exists no relation at a significance in everyday English that can be attributed to the variable of the *stage of English acquisition*.

Keywords: Difficulties, Research, Master's stage. Idioms

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الصعوبات التي يعانيها طلاب الماجستير المتقدمين لاختبار اللغة الانكليزية في مجال "الانكليزية اليومية او المحكية" (language in use) "المعهد العالي للغات في جامعة تشرين نموذجاً"

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□ ملخص □

تعد مرحلة الماجستير ذات أهمية في التقدم والتنمية، وفي البناء الفكري والتموي وانعكاسها على المجتمع من خلال البحوث والدراسات التي يقدمها طلاب تلك المرحلة إلا أن هناك صعوبات يمر بها الطالب قبل القبول في مجال اللغة الانكليزية وبخاصة في مجال "الانكليزية اليومية او المحكية" يتناول البحث الحالي الصعوبات التي يعانيها طلاب الماجستير المتقدمين لاختبار اللغة الانكليزية في مجال الانكليزية اليومية او المحكية، وذلك من وجهة نظر عينة من الطلاب المتقدمين في الدورة التحضيرية لاختبار اللغة الانكليزية في المعهد العالي للغات في جامعة تشرين، ولتحقيق أهداف البحث تم تصميم استبيان تناول مشكلات طلاب الماجستير في مجال الانكليزية اليومية، و صعوبة استفادة الطلاب من الانكليزية اليومية او المحكية في دراستهم، وبعد الدراسة والتحليل توصل البحث إلى النتائج الآتية:

- 1 يعاني طلاب الماجستير المتقدمين لاختبار اللغة الانكليزية في مجال الانكليزية اليومية او المحكية من صعوبة في التعبيرات وطريقة كتابتها واستعمالها ، بالإضافة الى وجود قلق من الافعال المركبة والاقوال المأثورة التي تعكس الحالة الثقافية للمجتمع الانكليزي ، وهناك صعوبة في فهم المحادثات اليومية الانكليزية.
- 2- عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين آراء أفراد العينة حول الصعوبات التي يعانونها في مجال الانكليزية اليومية والاستفادة منها في دراستهم تعزى لمتغير الجنس والعمر.
- 3 - عدم وجود علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين آراء أفراد العينة حول الصعوبات التي يعانونها في مجال الانكليزية اليومية والاستفادة منها في دراستهم تعزى لمتغير مرحلة تعلم اللغة الانكليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الصعوبات ، البحث، مرحلة الماجستير. التعبيرات.

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Introduction:

English is an international language and essential tool for academic research. In their educational policy, most Arab countries including Syria tend to teach English from kindergarten to higher education. It is the language of communication between Arabs and western countries, as well as the tool for the latest research and updates. However, there are a number of difficulties that may face master's students since English is taken as a module to be remembered in order to do exams and to achieve certain language goals or even to pretend the acquisition of a language that provides a social prestige. It is important however to refer to the necessity of English language certificate that a student must get in order to apply for a Master's degree at the Syrian public universities. Hence the English test might cause anxiety or difficulty to the students.

Statement of Problem:

The Syrian educational system teaches English at all stages. On the other hand, it incorporated French as a second language along with English. This procedure has increased the number of students being accepted in the departments of English and French at the Syrian universities and institutes of languages. Furthermore, the centers for teaching languages have developed to take into consideration other living languages such as German, Spanish, Russian and Japanese.

It is noticed that learners of English in the Syrian context do not use idioms or phrasal verbs in the leaning process, and if they do that, it is probably once or twice in an entire essay! This issue, later on, may cause problems or difficulties to many students doing English tests. It is a fact that makes us wonder for the reason, which makes students, do not use idioms, phrasal verbs or other idiomatic expressions in the learning process. One of the reasons is that students do not give much interest to use them either in their speech or in the different stages of learning English; they replace them by one word verbs that are considered for them more accurate and valid.

Students have not realized the importance of idioms and phrasal verbs. Therefore, teachers should take this as the starting point and try to influence students' thoughts towards the status of these essential components in mastering English language.

Idioms and phrasal verbs are used in everyday language. However, English idioms, phrasal verbs and other figurative forms are areas of difficulties for master's students or language learners in general. Therefore, the problem of study can be summarized in the following question:

What are the difficulties in the area of everyday English that Master's students face when doing the English admission test?

Research Objectives and Significance:

- This study tries to cast light on the difficulties of the English Admission Test faced by Master's students, and to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the requirements for admission to Master's programs in Syria. Also, to draw the attention of the decision makers in the Higher Education field to consider the causes of those difficulties faced by Master's students and to benefit from the proposed solutions to overcome them.

The study also aims at:

-Finding the difficulties of idioms and phrasal verbs --as main components of everyday English-- and how master's students deal with these items when doing the English Admission Test.

- Identifying the differences in respondents' assessment of the difficulties in the area of everyday English that Master's students face when doing the English Admission Test in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University, due to *gender*, *age*, and the *stage of English acquisition*.

- Conceptualizing ways to overcome the difficulties in the area of everyday English that Master's students face when doing the English Admission Test in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University.

Research Questions:

1. What are the difficulties in the area of everyday English that Master's students face when doing the English admission test in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University?

2. Are there any statistically significant differences between the average responses of the respondents to the difficulties they face when doing the English Admission Test in the area of "Everyday English" that can be attributed to the variables of *gender*, *age*, and the *stage of English acquisition*?

3. What is the proposed scenario to overcome the difficulties that Master's students face when doing the English test in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University?

Research Hypotheses:

1. There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average responses of Master's students to the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and to the benefits they get from it in their studies that can be attributed to the variable of gender.

2. There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average responses of Master's students to the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and to the benefits they get from it in their studies that can be attributed to the variable of age.

3. There is a statistically significant relationship at a significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average responses of Master's students to the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and to the benefits they get from it in their studies that can be attributed to the variable of the stage of English acquisition.

Research Methodology:

To achieve the research objectives, the researcher adopted the descriptive analytical research method which is "an in-depth exploration of a phenomenon as well as revealing its aspects and identifying the relationship between its elements or between that phenomenon and other phenomena." (Al-Azawi, 2008: 97).

The research is divided into two main parts: the first part provides a review of related literature, and the second one includes related data.

Research Instruments:

A questionnaire was designed so as to contain the main aspects of the research. It comprises two sections that are divided into /18/ items. Those sections, however, cover the following:

1- Problems that Master's students face in the area of everyday English, and it includes items /1/ to /8/.

2- The difficulty for students to benefit from everyday or spoken English in their future studies, and it includes items /1/ to /10/.

The reliability of this questionnaire was scientifically and statistically assessed to make sure of its validity. To this end, the questionnaire was submitted to a number of academics to obtain feedback from them, and all necessary changes were made, as a result.

Research Population and Sample Selection:

The research population comprises all students of different majors, who enrolled in an English preparatory course in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University. The research sample, selected by simple random sampling, included /33/ Master's students. After ensuring the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to /33/ male and female students. /30/ of which were returned and could be used for statistical analysis. They were, then, entered to a computer software, and the resulting data were used for analysis.

Research Procedures and Data Processing:

SPSS was adopted as a statistical data analysis technique using descriptive statistics and one-way analysis of variance test. The significance level was set at 0.05 to determine whether the hypotheses are rejected or accepted, knowing that this significance level is one of the conventional cutoff points.

The questionnaire was distributed to /30/ respondents and responses in the survey research were scaled using a five-point Likert scale as follows: does not apply

(1 point), somewhat applies (2 points), generally applies (3 points), applies (4 points), strongly applies (5 points).

The class interval in accordance with Likert scale is as follows:

The class interval = (the highest point on the scale - the lowest point on the scale) / the number of responses on the scale.

The class interval = $(5-1) / 5 = 0.8$.

Thus, classes will be as follows:

Class	The level of agreement
1-1.8	Does not apply
2.60 1.81 –	Somewhat applies
2.61 – 3.40	Generally applies
3.41 – 4.20	Applies
4.21 5 –	Strongly applies

Context of the Study:

-**Spatial context:** The Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University.

-**Temporal context:** The research was conducted between 08/02/2017 and 01/05/2017.

-**Human context :** Master's students who enrolled in the English preparatory course in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University.

Research Terms and Definitions:

Difficulties are operationally defined as any hurdle that hinders the understanding and comprehension of skills taught in the English preparatory course.

Master's Stage is operationally defined as a post-graduate stage eligible for graduates with GPA's high enough to apply for a Master's degree program. At this stage,

students move from less specialized studies to training in examination, analysis and inference, as well as dealing with information sources.

Literature Review:

This section deals with two components of language, idioms and phrasal verbs, with reference to the importance and difficulties of these crucial components.

Idioms

There are various definitions of idioms; however, all of them share common features. According to Cooper, 'idioms are non-literal phrases whose figurative interpretations cannot be derived from their literal meanings' (Cooper, 1998: 188). 'An idiom is an expression whose overall figurative meaning cannot be derived from the meaning of its parts' (Marlies, 1995: 283).

Importance of Idioms

In our daily life, in order to express ourselves more effectively and clearly, we frequently need to call upon idioms. According to Sridhar and Karunakaran, it is difficult to speak 'spontaneously without lapsing into idiomatic usage' (Sridhar, M., & Karunakaran, T, 2013: 85) . Try with a foreigner, and you will see that you are often aware of using an idiom only after the event. Hence, the first reason for the importance of idioms is that they are pervasive. Idioms are an important part of any language and may be said to be an 'indicator of one's fluency in that language' (McDevitt, 1993: 4). Idioms, therefore, have a considerable role in a FL as in the mother tongue (MT). Foreign language learners learn not only the grammatical structures and vocabulary of the target language but the idioms as well to integrate into the culture of the foreign language.

Broadly speaking, there is a worldwide demand for learning English due to that language's 'supremacy in international business, technology, and science' (Ababneh & Al-Momani, 2011: 67). In this regard, learning English as an international language is not separated from learning its idioms as an important part of the language.

However, according to Cooper, a language is full of 'idiomatic expressions, which include similes, metaphors, phrasal verbs, and figurative speech' (Cooper, 1998: 93).

Such expressions may create difficulties for learners or users of a language. This paper tries to illustrate the difficulties that master's students find when dealing with idioms and phrasal verbs.

Difficulties of L2 Idioms

For the student who seldom hears idioms being used, they can be 'frustrating barrier, to better understanding of English' (McDevitt, 1993: 7). In referring to the Syrian context, this is the case for master's students dealing with idioms included in English tests. The students have difficulty in understanding and using the idioms in the target situation (TS), and this difficulty becomes more obvious if the idiom is 'opaque' and uncommon.

Although it is generally accepted that L2 learners of English need to gain a good grasp of idioms, the teaching and learning of idioms in L2 is considered a hard task. Cooper refers to the difficulties of understanding idioms. One of the reasons is that a 'considerable number of idioms are figurative in nature--that is their overall meaning cannot be obtained by simply adding up the literal meanings of the item' (Cooper, 1999: 46). Added and related to these factors is the fact that the traditional vocabulary listing methods adopted in most ESL / EFL textbooks present each idiom entry and its meaning in such a way that the choice of each single word in the idiom seems random, and the overall figurative meaning cannot be explained. Taken together, these factors make idioms one of the most difficult aspects of L2 teaching and learning.

In all languages there are a great number of idioms and language-fixed expressions whose meaning cannot be deduced from the individual words of the phrase. Idiomatic expressions are always language – and culture – specific. In this respect, and in accordance with the above mentioned, English idioms do not mean what they literally mean. Therefore, they are problematic even for native speakers of the language.

In light of the above mentioned, many master's students find idioms difficult due to a number of factors. One of which is related to their figurative nature. Difficulties can be attributed to the 'nondecomposable' idioms that their constituent parts are not related to the overall figurative meaning (Alexander, 1987: 75). Additionally, the low frequent vocabulary is one of the factors that affect students' understanding of the idioms. Other factors are related to the students' language proficiency, exposure to L2 environment, contact with native speakers and exposure to different types of written discourse.

Dealing with L2 Idioms

Cooper (1999) examined the most successful and common strategy to learn idioms by using a 'think aloud' protocol. His study shows that successful learners use an inferring strategy to learn idioms. The findings of his study can be interpreted as follows: using context can be a successful strategy in the teaching and learning of multiword expressions.

One of the most successful strategies to deal with idioms is guessing from the context as well as referring to L1 when the expression exists in both languages. 'No item of the language, let alone an idiom, has meaning in isolation' (Cooper, 1999: 102). To clarify the intended meaning of the idiom, it must be put into context. This is called linguistic context and refers to other words used in the same sentence.

Idioms are generally not taught in most L2 classrooms in the Syrian context whether at schools or universities. (Mola, 1993) identified that idioms are not treated in L2 classrooms as regularly as might be, because of time pressures. Taylor suggests that exercises of problem-solving nature can help learners to discover the metaphors in idiomatic expressions. Furthermore, They believe that students will become 'highly motivated to translate their language's metaphors into the target language so as to share with the class their own culture method of metaphor encoding'. (Taylor, 1996: 15).

In light of what is mentioned above, it is important for EFL teachers to design various activities for students to use with English idioms and subsequently acquire them efficiently. Moreover, students learn better when they are provided with collaborative activities. They can interact with peers and share fun in learning. Ultimately, when teachers integrate listening, speaking, reading and writing activities together in teaching English idioms, students, consequently, can be involved in the application of English idioms in the four skills. Thus, it is effective to teach EFL learners English idioms when they are provided with various activities to practice and utilize English idioms in different contexts. The following section deals with phrasal verbs.

Phrasal Verbs

It is generally admitted that phrasal verbs are thought to be one of the difficult items for learners of English as a second or foreign language. The reason is that some phrasal verbs have an idiomatic meaning, which is usually defined as the fact that "the meaning of the complex unit does not result from the simple combination of those of its constituents" (Arnaud & Savignon, 1997, p.161).

Definition of Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are combination of set of short verbs with a set of adverbs or prepositions, sometimes the two together to create new concepts and new word category.

Some grammarians believe that phrasal verb is an identical term that is used to describe the combination between the verb and the particle; either by keeping its logical entire and partial meaning, or changing it all up; they should be named phrasal verbs. However, only few linguists who claimed about literal verbs as phrasal verbs while many scholars focus on 'idiomaticity as the decisive criterion in separating phrasal verbs from other free syntactic combination' (Hampe, 2002: 37).

Difficulties of Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are 'important components of English' (McMillan, 2005: 55) because of their overuse by natives in every day usage and in different fields. However, language learners in general, and master's students in particular, find difficulties dealing with them, especially when it comes to language tests . Because of their multiplicity, idiomaticity, different styles and the collocation they keep, students merely avoid them. Avoidance of such items indicates the insufficient ways of teaching such items.

Sinclair, on the other hand, considers phrasal verbs as 'the scourge of learner' because they present inherent difficulties of their 'idiomaticity' and 'shades of meaning they keep' (Sinclair, 1996:78).

Phrasal verbs are usually found in grammar courses in the ESL/EFL curriculum, but they also appear in vocabulary textbooks. Since they are composed of the content word (verb) and the function word (particle), they can be dealt with either in vocabulary as multiword expressions, or in grammar, with regard to the transitivity and the separability. This duality in nature makes phrasal verbs a difficult area for many language learners.

Moreover, many phrasal verbs do not have transparent meanings, so it is hard to know the whole meaning by combining the meanings of the components, verbs, and particles. Such idiomatic meanings make EFL learners feel that Phrasal verbs are difficult to learn and to use, although learners of English recognize their importance.

Therefore, we can reason that the semantic properties of phrasal verbs, i.e. transparent (or literal) versus idiomatic (or figurative) meaning, should be considered in the learning conditions.

The Theoretical Framework:

Tishreen University aims to provide a distinguished academic environment based on academic research and encouraging Master's students. To this end, Tishreen University offers multi-purpose programs which aim to enrich human knowledge and meet the requirements of the Syrian society through presenting studies, expert advice, and research expertise as well as training and developing qualified human resources and ensuring quality when achieving objectives, whether in the academic programs, studies, or research. Also, Tishreen University's Higher Institute of Languages offers services to prepare Master's students to take the English test as stipulated by the relevant regulations and rules.

The Significance of Master 's Stage and the Importance of In - depth Language Learning:

1- **The importance of learning English for Master's student:** English is the language of research. Master's stage qualifies graduates to teach in universities and makes them well-aware of the fundamentals and methods of scientific research. In addition, graduates become familiar with English and international achievements in terms of research. Also, graduates will attempt to investigate and develop certain ideas. Based on this, they will establish a complete structure using domestic expertise and foreign studies,

whether Arabic or international. Therefore, it is "necessary to offer them facilities, and it is imperative to increase their motivation towards research.

2- Conducting scientific research that can serve society: Scientific and developmental research done by Master's or Ph.D. students can be considered the essence of knowledge and science production as they are based on what is new in the students' area of specialization in English. In regard to development, Al-Kubaisi points out that the development sectors must have 'full confidence in the university's ability to help motivate research.' (Al-Kubaisi, 2011: 7)

Therefore, the Ministry of Higher Education has sought to encourage researchers, enhance the scientific method in thinking and motivate students to work in all fields of science and technology through having the universities encourage and open the floodgates for professors to solve society issues which require the use of laboratories and offering facilities to think as well as targeting different development sectors.

To this end, the ministry has incorporated different language programs at universities in order to develop research and thinking. In this regard, English, and other language courses, are available at universities. Students at all levels can benefit from these courses as effective way or tool to develop research and society.

Problems that Master's students encounter with Everyday English:

Syrian EFL university students encounter difficulties in everyday English, particularly in regard to the use of idioms and phrasal verbs. One of the reasons that can be stated is the students' low level of English proficiency since English is a foreign language and most students learn it as compulsory module at universities.

When asked about the difficulties of dealing with English tests, many students reflect on the use of idiomatic expressions. According to my experience of teaching English, idioms constitute a problematic area for both master's students and foreign learners of English.

Another problematic area is the use of phrasal verbs, which is different from the students' native language. In translating phrasal verbs into mother language, students usually meet some difficulties that are hard to overcome. Such difficulties can be attributed to the poor competence of English idioms and the figurative meanings that are different from the students' native language. In addition, phrasal verbs and proverbs and other language components constitute anxieties to many students when doing the English Admission Test. This is due to the big differences related to meaning and usage between Arabic and English. In many contexts, for instance, it's the contextual knowledge and cultural awareness of L2 that the students must employ to understand or deal with these expressions; a property that many students lack or neglect.

Several studies shed light on the difficulties students encounter in translating idioms and phrasal verbs into Arabic. Among these are the studies conducted by Hussein, Khanji, and Makhzoumi (2000), Abu-Afeefa (1987), Al-Hassan (2007) at Jordanian universities. These studies indicated that universities students encountered difficulties in translating idioms into Arabic.

Furthermore, in the Syrian context, it might be concluded that English idioms, phrasal verbs and other idiomatic expressions and their teaching do not receive much attention in the syllabus and English Language Programs.

Results and Discussions:

In this section, the results and discussions of the difficulties will be presented in five subsections.

1. What are the Difficulties Faced by Master's students doing the English Admission Test in the Area of "Everyday English" in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University? The researcher will answer this question depending on the results of analyzing the sample through calculating means and materiality of the respondents' responses concerning their views towards the difficulties they face in the area of "Everyday English" in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University:

To find out the reality of the difficulties faced by Master's students doing the English admission test in the area of "Everyday English" in the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University, the researcher calculated means and materiality for each question as the following table shows:

Table (1), Means, standard deviation, and materiality of respondents' responses about the problems faced by Master's students in the area of everyday English

Table (1), Means, standard deviation, and materiality of respondents' responses about the problems faced by Master's students in the area of everyday English

no.	Items	Means	Standard Deviation	Materiality %
1	I face difficulty with phrasal verbs in English and the way they are written and used.	3.27	1.12	98.00
2	I worry about memorizing the proverbs and sayings that reflect the culture within English society.	3.64	1.36	109.00
3	I find myself slow in understanding conversation and the speed of short constructions.	3.11	1.13	93.00
4	My acquisition of sociolinguistic skill in the area of everyday English is slow.	3.27	1.12	98.00
5	I am annoyed by the idioms which are heavily used in everyday English.	2.67	1.28	79.00
6	Cultural denotations in everyday English are more difficult to understand than formal English.	3.11	1.48	93.00
7	I am confused by how everyday English is used in communication among diverse social classes in many countries.	2.94	1.26	88.00
8	Acquainting myself with part of cultural heritage through everyday English is difficult.	3.46	1.53	76
	Total	3.25	5.54	77

As table (1) shows, all means are around the used means /3/ and fall into the range (2.61 - 3.40), and match "generally applies" on Likert scale. The materiality of these items exceeds 76%, which means there are difficulties with phrasal verbs in English and the way they are written and used, worry about memorizing the proverbs and sayings that reflect the culture within English society, and slowness in understanding conversation and the speed of short constructions. Also, this indicates that acquisition of sociolinguistic skill in the area of everyday English is slow, cultural denotations in everyday English are more difficult to understand than formal English, the heavy use of idioms in everyday English is annoying, the use of everyday English in communication among diverse social classes in many countries is confusing, and acquainting oneself with part of cultural heritage through

everyday English is difficult. In general, the value of the total means was /3.25/, falling into the range /2.61-3.40/ that matches "generally applies" on Likert scale. Also, the total materiality was 77%, which indicates that Master's students are facing problems in the area of everyday English in regard to idioms and phrasal verbs.

2- What is the impact of the difficulties faced by Master's students doing the English admission test in the area of everyday English on their study at the Higher Institute of Languages, Tishreen University and on the benefit they get from it?:

To find out the difficulty of getting benefit from everyday English in students' studies, the researcher calculated means and materiality for each question as the following table shows:

Table (2), Means, standard deviation, and materiality for respondents' responses to the difficulty of getting benefit from everyday or spoken English in their studies

no.	Items	Means	Standard Deviation	Materiality %
1	Everyday English as a communication skill is of little use in everyday life.	2.24	0.77	83.8
2	I find everyday English not enough to qualify me to work in another country.	2.83	0.77	91
3	Poor competence of different idioms affects cultural awareness of L2 and using it in foreign contexts.	1.93	0.99	43.8
4	Everyday English limits the speed of understanding and comprehension when dealing with the languages of other nations.	2.06	0.97	81.8
5	It provides me with few abbreviations that are in use.	2.73	0.94	55
6	Everyday English motivates me to engage in a minimal level of communication using informal language (art, music, daily interaction, ...etc).	5	0.94	74.4
7	It makes me focus less on grammar and more on content.	3.	0.87	73
8	It lightens the linguistic burden related to formal language.	3.27	0.71	83.2
9	It makes me somewhat closer to modern means of communication, especially the internet (Whatsapp, Facebook, ...etc).	3.64	0.91	57.8
10	Everyday English confuses me by the diversity of using the same meanings and structures in various ways.	3.44	1.01	51.4
	Total	3.40	0.77	68

Table (2) shows that the means of items (1, 3, 4) fall into the range (1.81 - 2.60) on Likert Scale, thus matching "somewhat applies". Also, materiality of these items exceeds 75%, which means that everyday English is somewhat of little use as a communication skill in everyday life. Also, the poor competence of English idioms somewhat limits the speed of understanding and comprehension when dealing with the language or culture of other nations.

In addition, the table shows that the means of items (2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 8, 10) fall into the range (2.61 - 3.40) on Likert scale matching "generally applies". This means that everyday

English is not enough to qualify to work abroad, provides few abbreviations that are in use, motivates to engage in a minimal level of communication using informal language (art, music, daily interaction, ...etc), reduces the focus on grammar and increases it on content, lightens the linguistic burden related to formal language, makes students somewhat closer to modern means of communication, especially the internet (WhatsApp, Facebook, ...etc), and is confusing because of the diversity of using the same meanings and structures in various ways. The materiality of respondents' responses to all the items concerning the difficulty getting benefit from everyday English in students' studies was 68%, which means that students having difficulties getting benefit from everyday English in their studies is a fact, overall.

3. There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average responses of Master's students to the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and to the benefits they get from it in their studies that can be attributed to the variable of gender.

To study the differences between the views of Master's students doing the English admission test about the difficulties in the area of everyday English according to the variable of gender, the researcher made T. test on the differences between means as the following table shows:

Table (3) The Results of T. test on the Differences between Means The responses of Master's students doing the English test about the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English according to the variable of gender

Independent Samples Test							
Gender	Number of Responses	Mean	Std. Deviation	T. Value T	Degree of Freedom (df)	Signification (sig)	Differences
Males	13	27.77	4.59	2.180	28	.378	Not significant
Females	17	25.59	12.67				

Table (3) shows that the means of the male respondents' responses amounted to /27.77/, and the means of female respondents' responses amounted to /25.59/. T. value was /2.180/ which was less than the T-critical value /3.34/ taken from Fisher Distribution tables with 28 degrees of freedom. Also, significance probability is ($P = 0.378 > \alpha = 0.05$), so we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. There is no statistically significant differences at significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of Maser's students' responses to what difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and how they benefit from it due to the variant of gender.

4- There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level of 0.05 between the means of Master's students' responses to the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and to the benefits they get from it in their studies that can be attributed to the variable of age.

To study the differences between the means of Master's students' responses to the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and to the benefits they get from it in their studies that can be attributed to the variable of age, the researcher used the one-way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) as the following table shows:

Table (4) The Results of ANOVA test on the Differences between Means The responses of Master's students doing the English test about the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English according to the variable of age

ANOVA					
Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.700	14	.050	.643	.792
Within Groups	1.167	15	.078		
Total	1.867	29			

Table (4) shows that F value = 0.643 with 14 & 15 degrees of freedom which is less than the T-critical value /4.60/. Also, significance probability (sig = 0.792) is greater than the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$), so we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. There is no statistically significant differences at significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of Maser's students' responses to what difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and how they benefit from it due to the variable of age.

5- There is a statistically significant relationship at a significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of responses of Master's students to the difficulties they face in the area of everyday English and to the benefits they get from it in their studies that can be attributed to the variable of the stage of English acquisition.

To study the relationship between the views of Master's students doing the English admission test about the difficulties in the area of everyday English and the stage of English acquisition, the researcher calculated Pearson correlation coefficient and tested its significance as the following table shows:

Table (5) The Results of the Test on the Relationship between the Difficulties in the Area of Everyday English and the Stage of English Acquisition

Correlations			
		X	Y
X	Pearson Correlation	1	-.247-
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.188
	N	30	30
Y	Pearson Correlation	-.247-	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.188	
	N	30	30

. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table (5) shows that the value of the linear correlation coefficient is (-0.247-), which means that the relationship between the difficulties faced by Master's students in the area of everyday English and how they benefit from it in their studies, on the one hand, and the stage of English acquisition, on the other hand, is weak, negative relationship. In other words, there is no relationship between the difficulties in the area of everyday English and English acquisition in primary and middle schools, and this relationship is not statistically significant where significance probability value Sig. (2-tailed) is greater than the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$); therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This means that there is no statistically significant relationship at significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the difficulties faced by Master's students in the area of everyday English and how they benefit from it in their studies, on the one hand, and the stage of English acquisition, on the other hand.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

It seems that students' proficiency in dealing with English idioms and phrasal verbs is limited. This may be attributed to the fact that students are not exposed to the culture of the target language, the lack of familiarity with the target language cultural expressions, and the gap existing between the two cultures.

One also might conclude that English idioms, proverbs, phrasal verbs and other idiomatic structures do not receive much attention in English Language Programs.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Having integrated programs and developmental plans to direct the higher education and pre-tertiary education towards the use of modern teaching strategies which help students acquire English language skills at all stages.

- Raising the teachers' and students' awareness towards the difficulties and importance of idioms and phrasal verbs as main components of everyday English and giving these items more attention in the teaching-learning process.

- More research should be conducted on the difficulties of different language skills. Strategies to deal with these difficulties should be addressed to improve the status of English as a foreign language taught at all levels. In this regard, the Ministry of Education, on the one hand, and EFL teachers, on the other hand, are invited to pay more attention to teaching skills that are problematic to many students, whether at schools or any stage.

- EFL textbooks should present more varieties of language to include idioms, proverbs, phrasal verbs and other neglected areas with a focus on exposing students to the target language culture. Students should study English/ Arabic specific course in idioms and culture as a prerequisite course to the language courses.

- EFL Instructors are invited to open communication channels with students to listen to their suggestions and feedback as well as including them in the assessment process. Moreover, EFL instructors are required to pay more attention and enhance *neglected* areas of English such as 'everyday English'.

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