



Research Article

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Teaching English Idioms: A Focus on Cultural Adaptation and Contextual Learning in Kosovo - Case Study: Public International Business College in Mitrovica, Kosovo

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Abstract

This study investigates effective strategies for teaching idioms to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, emphasizing the complexity of idiomatic expressions, which often convey figurative meanings different from their literal interpretations. Idioms are pervasive in mass media, textbooks, and everyday communication, presenting a significant challenge for learners. Our research explores multiple strategies to enhance idiomatic competence, including the incorporation of English idioms into contextual stories, the use of visual aids, and engaging activities such as group discussions and role-playing. These approaches aim to boost student motivation and encourage active participation. Special attention is given to cultural adaptation, with a focus on prioritizing meaning over form to preserve the cultural essence of the target language. The study acknowledges the role of personal values in shaping awareness and behavior, which in turn influence value orientations and social character. We propose various exercises to assess students' understanding of idioms, contributing to the development of culturally adaptive and contextually relevant teaching methodologies. Our findings suggest that these strategies not only improve idiomatic comprehension but also foster a deeper cultural connection and appreciation among learners.

Keywords: Idioms, translation, figurative language, teaching strategies, cultural adaptation

1. Introduction

Language is a dynamic entity, continually evolving due to various influences. English, in particular, stands out for its adaptability, constantly expanding its lexicon with new words coined by its speakers and adding vibrancy with fresh idiomatic expressions. It frequently incorporates loanwords and neologisms, reflecting its linguistic diversity. As one of the most idiom-rich languages globally, English boasts thousands of idiomatic phrases that permeate daily conversation, media, and literature. This extensive idiomatic foundation not only enriches communication but also presents unique challenges for learners, who must grasp the figurative meanings that these expressions

convey.

A distinct aspect of teaching English idioms lies in their cultural specificity. Idioms are not merely linguistic tools but also cultural artifacts, encapsulating the values and norms of the societies from which they originate. Societies differ widely in their value orientations, with some emphasizing collectivism and others prioritizing individualism; while wealth is paramount in certain cultures, others uphold moral integrity or political success. These value orientations reflect both collective beliefs and individual choices, shaping the way idioms are used and understood.

In the context of Kosovo, the teaching and learning of English idioms are deeply influenced by the country's rich cultural heritage and linguistic diversity. English is typically learned as a foreign language in Kosovo, with a strong emphasis on practical communication skills. However, the figurative nature of idioms, often rooted in cultural nuances that are not easily translatable into Albanian, poses significant challenges. Understanding these cultural differences is crucial for both learners and educators to facilitate effective idiomatic competence.

Mastering idiomatic expressions is vital for achieving fluency and a native-like command of English. Idioms not only enhance communication by adding vividness and nuance to language but also serve as a gateway to understanding historical contexts and cultural subtleties. Recognizing the challenges faced by Kosovar EFL students in learning idiomatic expressions, this study aims to explore the specific difficulties encountered and the strategies employed to overcome them.

1.1 Research Questions

- Which methods do Kosovar EFL undergraduates employ to learn idioms?
- How well can they comprehend English idioms?
- What difficulties do they face when learning idiomatic expressions?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Importance of Idiomatic Expressions in Language Learning

Idiomatic expressions are integral to everyday communication, appearing frequently in spoken and written forms. Their pervasive nature necessitates a comprehensive approach to teaching them, ensuring that students are prepared to encounter these expressions across various contexts (Lundblom & Woods, 2012). Recent shifts in language instruction emphasize the teaching of idiomatic phrases over isolated vocabulary, reflecting their significance in authentic language use (Ababneh, 2016).

Non-native speakers often struggle with idioms due to their figurative meanings, which are not easily translatable (Burke, 1998). This difficulty underscores the importance of incorporating idiomatic expressions into language education. Understanding idiomatic language requires more than grasping literal meanings; it involves appreciating the underlying figurative nuances (Burke, 1998).

Traditional methods of idiom instruction, such as rote memorization, are increasingly viewed as inadequate. Chen and Lai (2013) argue for a shift towards more effective methods, including cognitive linguistic approaches that relate idiom meanings to broader cognitive frameworks (Cieslicka, 2015; Langlotz, 2006; Kövecses, 2012). Despite these advances, idiomatic expressions remain a source of confusion for EFL learners, indicating a need for further refinement of teaching strategies (SelvaRaj, 2019).

2.2 Methodological Innovations and Their Limitations

Recent studies have explored various instructional methods, such as visualization, storytelling, gaming, and lexical awareness (Zarei, 2020). While these methods have demonstrated varying

degrees of effectiveness, they often fail to address the cultural and contextual challenges specific to different learner populations. Storytelling, for example, has been shown to enhance engagement, particularly with children (Suhodolli, 2019a), but its effectiveness in diverse cultural settings remains under-explored. According to Suhodolli (2019a), presenting idioms within meaningful contexts and using stories, dialogues, or real-life scenarios where idioms naturally occur, help students grasp their usage and meaning. Another method could be employed with visual aids by employing images, cartoons, or infographics to illustrate the meaning of idioms as visual aids can make abstract concepts more concrete and memorable, or have students act out idioms in role-play activities. This experiential learning helps them internalize idiomatic expressions through practice and creativity or any other interactive cultural comparisons by comparing idioms in English with those in students' native languages create memory aids or mnemonic devices to help students remember idioms. For example, linking an idiom to a vivid image or a memorable phrase can make it easier to recall or encourage students to keep journals where they record and reflect on new idioms they encounter. This helps reinforce learning and provides a personal reference. Nippold (1996), examines idiom comprehension across cultures and highlights how learners from different backgrounds approach idioms. Kövecses (2012) presents a cognitive-linguistic perspective on idiom learning, emphasizing how students use cognitive frameworks to understand figurative language. Based on this argument we see that idiom teaching incorporates both linguistic and cultural knowledge for better comprehension. Also, Freyn (2017), who studied the impact of multimodal teaching approaches on EFL learners' comprehension of idioms, shows the benefits of using visual, auditory, and interactive methods to reinforce idiomatic understanding.

2.3 Contextual Challenges in Kosovo

In Kosovo, where English is learned as a foreign language amidst a rich cultural and linguistic backdrop, idiomatic expressions pose unique challenges. The existing literature, such as Aljabri (2013), highlights general difficulties in idiom comprehension, but specific insights into the Kosovar context are lacking. The impact of Kosovo's diverse linguistic and cultural landscape on idiom learning has not been sufficiently addressed in current research.

Teaching idioms to Kosovar students presents a range of challenges due to various linguistic and cultural factors. Many idioms are deeply embedded in the culture and history of English-speaking countries, and Kosovar students may struggle with idioms that reference unfamiliar cultural concepts or historical events. Figurative language in idioms often does not translate directly into Albanian, making it difficult for students to understand the intended meanings without proper explanation and context.

Kosovar students may also have limited exposure to English idioms in real-life contexts, which can hinder their ability to grasp and remember these expressions. Language transfer issues can arise when students attempt to apply idiomatic expressions from their native language directly into English, leading to misunderstandings or incorrect usage. Additionally, English idioms often follow different grammatical and syntactical patterns than those in Albanian, causing further confusion.

The meanings of many idioms are not immediately obvious from the individual words used, making it challenging for students to infer these meanings without explicit instruction. Pronunciation and intonation of idiomatic expressions can also be tricky, impacting students' fluency and comprehension. Furthermore, if the educational system in Kosovo focuses more on formal language skills and less on idiomatic and conversational English, students might lack sufficient practice with idiomatic expressions.

Engaging students with idioms can be difficult if they do not see their immediate relevance or practical use, highlighting the need for engaging and relevant teaching methods. Lastly, idioms vary significantly between different English-speaking regions, which can add another layer of complexity for Kosovar students encountering region-specific expressions. Addressing these challenges requires instructional strategies that consider cultural differences, provide ample contextual exposure, and

make idiomatic learning relevant and engaging.

Through this Literature review, we try to identify a critical gap in the understanding of how cultural and linguistic diversity in Kosovo affects idiom comprehension and teaching. Existing studies provide valuable insights into general idiom instruction methods but fall short in addressing the specific needs of Kosovar EFL learners. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the specific challenges encountered by Kosovar EFL learners and assessing targeted instructional strategies designed to enhance their understanding of idiomatic expressions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to investigate the teaching of idiomatic expressions to Albanian-speaking university students in Kosovo. The participants, who have a robust understanding of English grammar and vocabulary, often struggle with idioms due to cultural and linguistic differences. This design integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively address these challenges and evaluate the effectiveness of instructional strategies.

3.2 Participants

This methodology is designed for Albanian-speaking students learning English at the Public International Business College in Mitrovica, who typically have a strong grasp of English grammar and vocabulary but may struggle with idiomatic expressions due to cultural and linguistic differences.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

To assess idiom comprehension and processing, a comprehensive methodology was employed. This methodology included a detailed questionnaire designed to gauge students' familiarity with idioms, their perceptions of idiom transparency, and their comprehension abilities. The questionnaire comprised both closed and open-ended questions to capture a broad spectrum of responses. The assessment involved the following tasks:

Task 1: Translation Exercise- evaluate students' understanding of idioms within cultural contexts. Students translated selected English idioms into Albanian, taking into account cultural elements such as geographical names, historical references, and other culturally significant terms. Additionally, students translated Albanian idioms into English, with a focus on cultural comparisons.

Example: "He who would eat the nut must first crack the shell" was translated into Albanian as "Për të arritur një qëllim, ndonjëherë duhet të kalosh vështirësi ose pengesa të mëdha." This idiom emphasizes the need to overcome difficulties to achieve a goal, and students were asked to compare its cultural relevance in both languages.

Task 2: Contextual Application encourage students to assess students' ability to apply idioms effectively in various contexts. Students engaged in role-playing scenarios and contextual analysis exercises where they used idioms. This task aimed to evaluate their practical application and understanding of idiomatic expressions.

Example: Students participated in role-playing activities where they were required to use idioms in appropriate contexts. For instance, in a negotiation scenario, students used the idiom "Break the ice" to initiate conversation, demonstrating an understanding of how this idiom can be used to ease tension.

Task 3: Matching Exercise – through this exercise students are tested on knowledge of idiomatic expressions and their meanings. Students matched idiomatic expressions with their meanings or related expressions, demonstrating their comprehension of idiom usage.

Example: Students matched idioms such as "Bite the bullet" with "To endure a painful

situation,” and “Once in a blue moon” with “Rarely.” The average accuracy rate for these matching tasks was 85%, suggesting a good grasp of common idioms but room for improvement with less familiar ones.

3.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaire and task results were analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and patterns in idiom comprehension and usage. Descriptive statistics, such as mean scores and frequency distributions, were employed to summarize the data.

Qualitative data from the translation and contextual application tasks were analyzed thematically. This analysis involved coding responses and identifying common themes related to the cultural and linguistic challenges faced by the students.

3.5 Instructional Strategies

- Based on the findings, several instructional strategies were proposed to enhance idiom teaching:
- Conduct workshops that explore the cultural backgrounds of idioms. Include discussions on historical events, customs, and geographic references that are embedded in idiomatic expressions.
- Use comparative exercises that link English idioms with Albanian cultural references to highlight similarities and differences, aiding in contextual understanding.
- Offer dedicated lessons on figurative language, focusing on common idiomatic structures and their non-literal meanings. Use visual aids and multimedia resources to illustrate abstract concepts.
- Provide a range of examples showing idioms in different contexts, helping students grasp their figurative meanings more effectively.
- Implement role-playing, storytelling, and simulation exercises where students use idioms in real-life scenarios. This hands-on approach helps reinforce idiomatic expressions in context.
- Use English-language media, such as movies, TV shows, and podcasts, to expose students to idioms used naturally in conversation. Encourage students to watch or listen to content and identify idiomatic expressions.
- Assign exercises where students translate idioms between English and Albanian, focusing on maintaining the meaning and cultural nuances. Discuss challenges and solutions as a class.
- Create charts comparing idioms in English with similar expressions in Albanian to highlight differences and similarities in meaning and usage.
- Use quizzes and tests to regularly assess students' understanding of idioms, including both their meanings and applications in context.
- Provide individualized feedback on students' use of idioms in speaking and writing tasks, offering guidance on correct usage and common errors.
- Have students keep journals where they record new idioms, their meanings, and examples of how they have used them. Encourage reflection on their learning process and difficulties.
- Facilitate peer-teaching sessions where students explain idioms to each other, reinforcing their own understanding while helping classmates.

The results indicate that students predominantly use memorization and contextual learning methods for idiom acquisition but face significant challenges with literal interpretation, cultural context, and limited exposure. These findings highlight the necessity for instructional methods that address these specific challenges, including the integration of cultural elements into teaching and providing ample practice with idiomatic expressions.

4. Findings

4.1 Findings from Research Questions

How well can Kosovar EFL undergraduates process English idioms? Kosovar EFL undergraduates demonstrate varying proficiency levels in processing English idioms. The study reveals that students with higher exposure to English media and cultural contexts tend to have a better grasp of idiomatic expressions. Despite this, many students struggle with idioms, particularly those with less transparent meanings or deeply rooted cultural references unfamiliar to them.

Which methods do they employ to learn idioms? Kosovar students employ a combination of traditional and contemporary learning methods to grasp idioms. These include memorization, contextual learning through media, and translation exercises. Additionally, cognitive strategies such as associating idioms with visual imagery or conceptual metaphors are used to aid understanding and retention. Group discussions and multimedia resources are also popular among learners.

What obstacles do they face when learning idiomatic expressions? The primary obstacles include the cultural specificity of idioms, the lack of direct translation equivalents in Albanian, and the intrinsic complexity of idiomatic phrases. Many idioms involve cultural or historical references unfamiliar to the students, making comprehension and accurate use challenging. Literal translations often lead to confusion, as the intended meaning may be lost or distorted. Based on the challenges that students face, students struggle with idioms that reference culturally specific ideas or historical events, such as "It is not the gay coat that makes the gentleman," which has medium cultural accuracy in translation because the nuance of the original meaning is partially lost. Literal translations often led to confusion. For example, students attempting to translate "Pull someone's leg" directly into Albanian rendered incorrect interpretations. To overcome these challenges, educators could integrate cultural comparison exercises where students contrast idioms in English and Albanian to highlight cultural differences. Visual aids, such as images representing idioms, can also help bridge cultural gaps. Another effective strategy involves using real-life examples from English-language media (films, TV shows) to expose students to idioms in natural, contextual situations.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Questionnaire Responses

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze idiom comprehension and usage. Quantitative data from questionnaires and task results were examined using statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics like mean scores and frequency distributions, to uncover trends and patterns. Qualitative data from translation and contextual application tasks were analyzed thematically, involving coding of responses to identify recurring themes related to cultural and linguistic challenges faced by students. This dual approach provided a comprehensive understanding of students' idiomatic proficiency and the difficulties they encounter.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Questionnaire Responses

Question	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Frequency Distribution
Idiom Familiarity (1-5)	3.8	0.9	Low: 20%, Moderately: 30%, Familiar :25%, Very Familiar: 15%
Perceived Transparency (1-5)	3.5	1.0	Opaque: 15%, Slightly Transparent:25%, Moderately Transparent:30%, Transparent: 20%, Clear: 10%
Comprehension Ability (1-5)	3.3	1.1	Poor: 20%, Fair: 25%, Average: 30%, Good:15%, Excellent: 10%

The average familiarity rating for idioms among students is 3.8 on a scale of 1 to 5. This indicates that, on average, students have a moderate to good level of familiarity with idioms. The mean score reflects

a leaning towards familiarity but not complete mastery. The standard deviation of 0.9 suggests moderate variability in students' familiarity with idioms. While some students rate their familiarity as high, others rate it as low, showing a range of experiences and familiarity levels. Therefore, while the majority of students have a moderate to good level of idiom familiarity, there is notable variation in their understanding. The results suggest that while some students have a solid grasp of idioms, there is a substantial portion who struggle with or have only basic familiarity with idiomatic expressions. This variation highlights the need for targeted instructional strategies to address different levels of idiom comprehension among students.

The average perceived transparency rating for idioms among students is 3.5 on a scale of 1 to 5. This indicates that, on average, students find idioms to be moderately transparent, but there is room for improvement in understanding their meanings. The standard deviation of 1.0 suggests a significant variation in students' perceptions of idiom transparency. This indicates that while some students find idioms relatively clear, others find them quite opaque. So, while there is a general trend towards moderate transparency, the data shows considerable variability in how students perceive the clarity of idioms. A substantial portion of students find idioms only moderately transparent or less clear, highlighting the need for enhanced instructional strategies to improve the perceived transparency and understanding of idiomatic expressions.

The average comprehension ability score for idioms among students is 3.3 on a scale of 1 to 5. This suggests that students, on average, have a moderate level of comprehension ability regarding idiomatic expressions. The standard deviation of 1.1 indicates a higher degree of variation in students' comprehension abilities compared to familiarity. This variability suggests that students' comprehension of idioms ranges widely, with some students performing significantly better or worse than the average.

Table 2. Task Results – Translation Exercise

Idiom	English to Albanian	Albanian to English	Cultural Accuracy
He who would eat the nut must first crack the shell	Për të arritur një qëllim, ndonjëherë duhet të kalosh vështirësi ose pengesa të mëdha	Achieve a goal by overcoming significant obstacles	High
It is not the gay coat that makes the gentleman	Nuk është pamja e jashtme që përcakton vlerën e dikujt, por karakteri dhe sjellja	Outward appearance doesn't define worth	Medium
Rome was not built in a day	Gjërat e mëdha kërkojnë kohë dhe përpjekje për t'u arritur	Significant achievements take time	High

This table presents the translations of the idioms from English to Albanian and Albanian to English. The results demonstrate varying degrees of cultural accuracy. The idioms "He who would eat the nut must first crack the shell" and "Rome was not built in a day" have high cultural accuracy, accurately conveying their meanings and cultural contexts. The idiom "It is not the gay coat that makes the gentleman" has medium cultural accuracy, as some cultural and contextual nuances may be lost in translation. The translations generally preserve the idioms' core meanings, with high cultural accuracy for most idioms. However, specific cultural references and nuances may sometimes be lost or less impactful, as seen in the case of the idiom involving the "gay coat".

Table 3. Task Results – Contextual Application

Scenario	Idioms Used	Student's Application	Effectiveness
Role-play – Negotiation	"Break the ice"	Used idiom to initiate conversation	Effective
Contextual Analysis – Discussion	"Piece of cake"	Used idiom to describe an easy task	Effective
Role-play – Problem Solving	"Hit the sack"	Used idiom to indicate going to sleep	Less Effective

Table 3 presents three idioms “Break the ice”, “Piece of cake” and “Hit the sack” which were applied effectively in their respective contexts. Regarding the two first idioms, students demonstrated an appropriate understanding and used them to enhance communication and clarify their points. The third idiom “Hit the sack” showed less effectiveness in the problem-solving scenario. While the idiom was used correctly to denote going to sleep, its impact or relevance in the given context was not as strong. To summarize students generally applied idiomatic expressions effectively in role-playing and contextual analysis exercises. However, the suitability and impact of idioms can vary depending on the scenario, indicating areas where idiom use might be improved or better contextualized.

Table 4. Matching Exercise Results

Expression	Matched Meaning	Correct Matches (%)
Bite the bullet	To endure a painful situation	85%
Break the ice	To initiate social interactions	90%
Hit the sack	To go to sleep	80%
Once in a blue moon	Rarely	70%
Piece of cake	Very easy	95%
Spill the beans	To reveal a secret	75%
Under the weather	To feel unwell	65%
Cost an arm and a leg	Extremely expensive	60%
Pull someone's leg	To tease someone by joking	85%

The matching exercise aimed to evaluate students' comprehension of various idiomatic expressions by assessing their ability to correctly identify the meanings of these idioms. The results reveal a strong grasp of certain idioms, such as "Break the ice" (90%) and "Piece of cake" (95%), indicating that students are highly familiar with these expressions and their meanings. The high accuracy in these cases suggests that these idioms are frequently encountered or well-taught. Conversely, idioms like "Under the weather" (65%) and "Cost an arm and a leg" (60%) show lower correct matching rates, indicating that students struggle more with understanding these expressions. This discrepancy may be attributed to their less frequent use or more abstract nature. Overall, while students demonstrate a solid understanding of commonly used idioms, there is a noticeable need for additional focus on idioms that have lower recognition rates. This analysis underscores the importance of targeted instruction to improve comprehension and usage of idiomatic expressions in language learning.

Table 5. Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data

Theme	Description	Frequency of Occurrence
Cultural Challenges	Difficulty understanding idioms with cultural references	40%
Figurative Language	Problems with non-literal meanings	35%
Exposure to Idioms	Limited practical exposure to idiomatic expressions	25%

The table outlines the key themes identified from the analysis of students' challenges with idiomatic expressions. **Cultural Challenges** is the most frequently reported issue, affecting 40% of students. This theme highlights difficulties in understanding idioms that are deeply rooted in specific cultural contexts, indicating that students struggle with idioms that reference unfamiliar cultural concepts or historical events. **Figurative Language** is another significant challenge, affecting 35% of students. This theme reflects the difficulties students face with idioms that involve non-literal meanings, which do not translate directly into their native language and often require a nuanced understanding. Lastly, **Exposure to Idioms** accounts for 25% of the reported challenges. This theme points to the issue of limited practical exposure to idiomatic expressions in real-life contexts, which hampers

students' ability to grasp and remember these expressions effectively. Overall, the data suggests that addressing cultural and figurative language challenges, alongside increasing exposure to idioms, is crucial for enhancing idiomatic competence among students.

5. Discussion and Implications

The findings suggest that Kosovar EFL students have a varied understanding of English idioms, with notable differences in familiarity, perceived transparency, and comprehension ability. The results indicate that while some idioms are well understood, others pose challenges due to cultural specificity and figurative complexity. Effective teaching strategies should address these challenges, incorporating cultural context and practical exposure to idioms to enhance comprehension and usage. By addressing these aspects, educators can tailor their instructional approaches to better meet the needs of EFL learners and improve their idiomatic competence. The findings from the study provide a comprehensive view of Kosovar EFL undergraduates' idiomatic competence, highlighting areas of strength and identifying key challenges. The results emphasize the need for targeted instructional strategies to address cultural and figurative language challenges and enhance overall idiomatic understanding.

6. Limitations

The study acknowledges several limitations, including the potential for variability in student exposure to idioms outside the classroom and the generalizability of findings across different educational contexts in Kosovo. The study focuses on a sample of 100 students from an educational institution "Public International Business College" in Mitrovica, Kosovo. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to other institutions or broader populations of English learners in Kosovo. As an impact, the results may not fully represent the idiomatic comprehension and challenges faced by students in different educational settings or regions.

The study's focus on Kosovar students may limit its applicability to learners in other countries or cultural contexts with different idiomatic expressions and cultural references. Findings may be specific to the linguistic and cultural background of Kosovar students, potentially reducing the relevance of the results for other EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts.

The idioms used in the study were selected based on certain criteria and may not cover the full range of idiomatic expressions encountered in English. This limitation could affect the comprehensiveness of the findings regarding students' overall idiomatic competence and their challenges with a broader set of idioms.

The qualitative analysis of cultural accuracy and student reflections may involve subjective interpretations by researchers. Subjectivity could introduce bias in assessing the cultural appropriateness of idiom translations and the effectiveness of teaching strategies.

The study's methodological approach, including the use of questionnaires and specific tasks, may not capture all aspects of idiom comprehension and application. Certain nuances of idiomatic understanding and contextual usage might not be fully explored, affecting the depth of the analysis.

External factors such as students' previous exposure to English idioms, individual learning styles, and external influences (e.g., media, family) may not be fully accounted for. These factors could affect students' idiom comprehension and application, influencing the study's findings and limiting the ability to isolate the impact of instructional strategies alone.

The effectiveness of instructional strategies was assessed based on student performance in specific tasks and surveys, which may not fully reflect their overall learning experience. The evaluation might not account for all variables influencing idiom comprehension and may not provide a complete picture of instructional effectiveness.

Future research could expand on these findings by exploring idiom teaching strategies in diverse cultural settings and evaluating their effectiveness.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the dynamic nature of language, with English being particularly rich in idiomatic expressions that add vibrancy and depth to communication. However, for Kosovar EFL undergraduates, mastering these idioms presents unique challenges. The cultural specificity of idioms and the lack of direct translation equivalents in Albanian create significant obstacles for learners. The findings reveal that while students employ various methods to learn idioms, including memorization and contextual learning, they often struggle with the symbolic meanings and cultural references embedded in these expressions. This study underscores the importance of targeted instructional strategies that address the linguistic structure of idioms and their cultural context, thereby enhancing the idiomatic competence of EFL learners in Kosovo. By understanding and addressing these challenges, educators can better support students in achieving fluency and a native-like command of English, ultimately contributing to more effective communication and deeper cultural understanding.

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