



“YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW” IDIOMS IN MATERIALS DESIGNED BY EFL TEACHER-TRAINEES

Özlem KHAN¹ & Nilüfer CAN DAŞKIN²

Abstract: Idioms, because of their cultural and figurative aspects, cannot be readily comprehended and used appropriately; hence, they need to be taught explicitly by means of instructional materials in language classrooms. Knowledge of idioms constitutes an important component of learners’ communicative competence (Bachman, 1990) since idioms as part of cultural references, and figurative, functional and formulaic language can help to enhance not only organizational competence but also pragmatic competence. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate EFL teacher-trainees’ perceptions of their idiom knowledge, attitudes towards idiom instruction and their use of idioms in in-house instructional materials. In doing so, the materials designed by EFL teacher-trainees were examined by means of content analysis followed by the analysis of questionnaire and semi-structured interview data. The quantitative and qualitative data analyses show that the teacher-trainees hardly used idioms in their materials and those who used them usually did not incorporate them in a way to help enhance learners’ communicative competence. The data analysis also reveals that teacher-trainees’ insufficient idiom learning experience in the past could have been influential in their use of idioms in the materials, although they did show positive attitudes towards idiom instruction. The study has important implications for teacher education, which should emphasize the role of culture-specific expressions in developing future teachers’ language as well as pedagogic competence.

Keywords: Idioms, material development, teacher education, communicative competence

Özet: Deyimlerin kültürel ve mecazi yapılarından dolayı anlaşılmalrı ve uygun bir şekilde kullanılmaları oldukça zordur. Dolayısıyla deyimlerin dil sınıflarında öğretim materyalleri aracılığıyla açık bir şekilde öğretilmesi gerekmektedir. Deyim bilgisi öğrencilerin iletişimsel yetilerinin önemli bir parçasını oluşturmaktadır (Bachman, 1990). Çünkü deyimler kültürel referansların, mecazi, işlevsel ve kalıplaşmış dilin bir parçası olarak sadece organizasyonel yetinin değil pragmatik yetinin de gelişmesine yardımcı olabilir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı İngiliz Dili Eğitimi öğretmen adaylarının deyim bilgilerine yönelik algılarını, deyim öğretimine karşı tutumlarını ve kendilerinin hazırladıkları materyallerde deyim kullanımlarını araştırmaktır. Bu doğrultuda, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi öğretmen adayları tarafından hazırlanan materyaller içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Bunu takiben anket ve yarı yapıllı sözlü görüşmelerin analizi yapılmıştır. Nicel ve nitel veri incelemesi öğretmen adaylarının materyallerinde nadiren deyim kullandıklarını ve deyim kullananların ise öğrencilerin iletişimsel yetisini geliştirmeye yardımcı olacak şekilde deyimleri içermediklerini göstermiştir. Veri incelemesi, öğretmen adaylarının deyim öğretimine yönelik olumlu tavırlar sergilemelerine rağmen geçmişte deyim öğrenme tecrübelerinin yetersiz olmasının materyallerinde deyim kullanmada etkili olabileceğini ortaya koymuştur. Bu çalışma öğretmen eğitimi programlarının kültüre özgü ifadelerin gelecek öğretmenlerin hem pedagojik hem de dil yetilerinin geliştirilmesindeki rolünü öne çıkartması açısından önemli çıkarımlara sahiptir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Deyimler, materyal geliştirme, öğretmen yetiştirme, iletişimsel yeti

1. Introduction

Culture-specific expressions such as idioms are among the language items that require explicit instruction because factors such as “transparency in meaning, semantic analyzability, syntactic analyzability, and context of use” are all influential in the way idioms are processed (Liu, 2008, p. 89). Besides, the cultural, often figurative, indirect, multiple-word nature of idioms and their rigid structure also reveal a need for explicit instruction, which can provide background knowledge and familiarity. Based on this, the studies on the processing of idioms

¹ Lecturer, Department of English Language Teaching, Hacettepe University, Turkey, ozlem.khan@gmail.com

² Research Assistant, Department of English Language Teaching, Hacettepe University, Turkey, can_nilufer@yahoo.com

reveal negative transfer from the first language (L1) (e.g. Boers & Demecheleer, 2001; Elkılıç, 2008; Hussein, Khanji, & Makhzoomy, 2000; Irujo, 1986). For example, the French-speaking students in Boers and Demecheleer's study (2001) mistook the idioms *To hang up one's hat* and *To wear one's heart on one's sleeve* for equivalents of resembling French expressions (p. 258). However, because of the lack of emphasis on idioms, "many advanced successful English users still have problems with idioms even when they have mastered most other aspects of the language system" (O'Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007, p. 94). Furthermore, because of the difficulty to learn idioms, L2 learners tend to avoid using them although a good command of idioms is associated with a high level of language proficiency (Howarth, 1998; Liu, 2008; Yorio, 1989). In fact, avoiding the use of idioms might make learners sound unnatural and unimaginative (Cooper, 1999).

The necessity of idiom instruction can be justified with the high frequency of idiom use in everyday communication (Bortfeld, 1997). For instance, Erman and Warren (2000) revealed that idioms are used to explain as much as 50% of language. Similarly, Pollio, Barlow, Fine and Pollio (1998) discovered that almost four idioms are employed each minute in a conversation. Furthermore, Cooper (1998) estimates that speakers (and writers) use "about 1.08 novel figures of speech and 4.08 idioms per minute" (p. 255) suggesting that "[o]ver a lifetime of 60 years, a person would use about 20 million idioms" (p. 255). As well as everyday life, idioms are ubiquitous in the classroom discourse. According to Cooper (1998), they occupy the second place when the frequency of figurative expressions was examined in the teachers' speech. In Cooper's words, "by eighth grade 11.5 percent of a teacher's utterances, or about one out of ten, contained idioms" (1998, p. 257).

It is evident that idioms cannot be avoided or postponed for later stages in a learner's language development. Because idioms are a part of formulaic, figurative and functional language and cultural references, knowing and using them can help to enhance learners' Communicative Competence (CC). The term CC encompasses a wide range of competences whose types and compositions vary among researchers. In this study, Bachman's (1990) framework of CC is considered since it deems the ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech an essential part of one's communicative language ability. Although Bachman (1990) does not specifically mention idioms in his model, one cannot talk about idioms without referring to their cultural and figurative aspects.³

With reference to Bachman's (1990) framework of CC, it can be said that idioms are multifunctional in terms of the competences required for CC. For instance, as part of cultural references, idioms are traditional and a part of cultural literacy (Hirsch, Kett & Trefil, 2002). This suggests that cultural knowledge is needed to be able to comprehend many idioms (e.g. *white elephant*, *to carry coals to Newcastle*) (Liu, 2008). In addition, "many idioms are motivated by concepts and beliefs that may be prominent in one culture but not in others" (Liu, 2008, p. 41). To illustrate, the conventional association between the colour green and nature and innocence in British English may not be the same in other cultures (Lazar, 1996). Many idioms are also figurative - an important aspect of natural communication (Liu, 2008; Mieder, 2004; Norrick, 1985; Nunberg, Sag & Wasow, 1994; Souha, 2008) and hence, can be used in language classrooms to prompt figurative thinking and enhance metaphoric

³ It should be noted that other models of CC (e.g. Canale and Swain, 1980; Van Ek, 1986) include cultural competence as an entity but do not specify this competence clearly. For instance, in Canale and Swain's (1980) model of CC, a reference is made to sociocultural contexts within sociolinguistic competence but it is not specified as including cultural references and figures of speech.

competence (Littlemore & Low, 2006). As part of functional language, idioms are used to carry out many communicative functions that form the basis for pragmatic competence. For instance, they can be employed to perform (1) ideational functions - that is to convey ideas, information, views and to make evaluations; (2) interpersonal functions - that is to facilitate and maintain meaningful and effective communication and to establish sense of solidarity and (3) textual functions- that is to organize information and to provide textual cohesion (Carter & McCarthy, 1997; Liu, 2008; Nunberg, Sag & Wasow, 1994; O’Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007; Souha, 2008). Moreover, learning idioms can allow learners “to grapple with imaginative, colourful and expressive ways of communicating an idea or thought via the realm of idiomatic expressions” (Liontas, 1999, p. 446). Therefore, teaching the pragmatic aspects of idioms in context can contribute to the improvement of pragmatic competence (Charteris-Black, 1995).

As well as being a part of culture, figurative and functional language, idioms are also formulaic. Thereby, their use can enable fluent and natural language production (Liontas, 1999; Prodromou, 2003; Souha, 2008; Wray, 2000; Yorio, 1980) and hence, teaching of idioms can help to produce language more fluently and naturally which can in turn increase motivation (Porto, 1998). Most importantly, “avoiding the use of idioms gives language a bookish, stilted, unimaginative tone” (Cooper, 1999, p. 258), which underlines the importance of learning idioms to accomplish command of authentic language. Lastly, knowledge of idioms can increase comprehension of texts and using them can make learners’ verbal and written communication more effective (Irujo, 1986). In a similar vein, D’Angelo Bromley (1984) also remarks that “[i]dioms add confusion and difficulty to learning of language and so they occupy a special place in the teaching of language and *reading*” (p. 272, emphasis added). As a result, because of their versatile nature, idioms play an important role not only in the development of sociolinguistic competence but also in the development of grammatical, textual and illocutionary competence (Littlemore & Low, 2006). All these confirm the impossibility of communicating in English without meeting idioms (Wright, 2002).

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings such as Turkey, where English is taught as a foreign language with limited exposure to English outside the classroom, instruction is essential. As Burke (1998) suggests, teaching and explaining nonliteral language thoroughly in the classroom is desirable as opposed to students hearing and interpreting this type of language outside of the classroom (e.g., in the movies) as the risk of the student misinterpreting the meaning of an idiom outside of an educational context can be higher. This is precisely why instructional materials are one of the best means to teach idioms in a way to help learners improve their CC (Can, 2011).

Particularly, in Turkey, where the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR) are used as guidelines for locally published EFL materials, authors of these materials will have to necessarily focus on the idiom dimension at the higher proficiency levels. For instance, Level C2, which “is intended to characterize the degree of precision, appropriateness and ease with the language” (2001, p. 36) uses *a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms* as a general descriptor. When the language skills and domains are considered separately, the recognition and production of idioms can be found in the descriptors for overall listening comprehension, overall spoken interaction, the range of vocabulary knowledge, and sociolinguistic appropriateness for levels C1 and C2. Considering the fact that competent idiomatic language use is an indicator of language mastery, as CEFR descriptors suggest, it is essential for learners to be exposed to such language in the course of their development, especially when this exposure takes place in the confinement of a

classroom for many learners. However, it is observed that, due to their self-perceived lack of proficiency, non-native language teachers tend to over-rely on a single textbook (Medgyes, 2001) whose authors may or may not foreground idioms sufficiently. Therefore, teacher education programs should help teacher-trainees to gain the necessary CC and pedagogic competence to overcome the problem of over-reliance on textbooks. For this purpose, material evaluation and development courses in EFL teacher training programs carry the utmost importance for educating teachers to better acquire the skills required to evaluate, select and rewrite materials. As Masuhara (1998) states, “students come and go and so do materials but a large number of teachers tend to stay” (p. 240).

As a result, the aim of this study is to uncover EFL teacher-trainees’ perceptions of their idiom knowledge, attitudes towards idiom instruction and to what extent they use idioms in writing instructional materials. In this way, the study aims to draw a picture about the place of idioms in materials designed by future English teachers and hence, to offer suggestions regarding the needs of these teachers. The research questions are:

1. What are EFL teacher-trainees’ perceptions of their idiom knowledge and attitudes towards idiom instruction?
2. What is the frequency of idioms used in different types of materials designed by EFL teacher-trainees?
3. What is the frequency of idioms used in the materials in relation to their proficiency levels?
4. In what kinds of activities are idioms used in the materials?

2. Review of literature

2. 1. Definition and functions of idioms

There have been many attempts to define and classify idioms (Fraser, 1970; Fernando, 1996; Grant & Bauer, 2004; Makkai, 1972; Moon, 1998; Weinreich, 1969; Wood, 1981). Considering all these definitions, Liu (2008) identified the most noticeable agreements and summarized them as follows:

1. Idioms are often but not always non-literal or semi-literal in meaning- that is, their meaning is not completely derivable from the interpretation of their components;
2. They are generally rigid in structure, with some being completely invariant and some allowing restricted variance;
3. Idioms are multiword expressions consisting minimally of two words, including compound words. (p. 13)

For the purposes of this study, these three criteria are used and the classification by McCarthy and O’Dell (2002) as seen in Table 1 is used.

Table 1
Classification of Idioms

Types of idioms	Examples
Verb-plus-object	<i>ram something down someone’s throat; draw the line at something; have second thoughts</i>
Prepositional phrases (prep. + noun phrase)	<i>out of blue; in the dark; in cold blood</i>
Compounds	<i>a kick in the teeth; a stumbling block; open-ended; state-of-the-art</i>
Binomial (word + word)	<i>high and mighty</i>
Simile (as + adjective + as + noun)	<i>as blind as a bat</i>
Conversational phrases	<i>long time no see</i>
Proverbs/sayings/maxims	<i>Every little helps; don’t count your chickens before they are hatched</i>

2. 2. Studies

A great deal of research has been carried out on idiomatic language in the field of psycholinguistics. For instance, a growing body of research has been interested in L1 or L2 idiom or proverb comprehension and interpretation, and the effect of age, literal meaning, familiarity, concreteness, context, imagery, word knowledge and analogical reasoning on the comprehension and interpretation of idioms or proverbs (e.g. Boyce, 2009; Cooper, 1999; Hung, 2010; Kowbel, 2005; Nippold & Duthie, 2003; Nippold & Taylor, 2002). However, there are relatively few studies on teaching idioms in foreign language classrooms. Of these studies, some investigated the effect of various methodologies and techniques on teaching idioms (Andreou & Galantomos, 2008; Baum, 1996; Boers, Piquer Piriz, Stengers & Eyckmans, 2009; Bulut & Çelik-Yazıcı, 2004; Li, 2010; Lontas, 2002b). Others discovered learners' and/or teachers' attitudes towards idiomatic language (Can, 2011; Hanzen, 2007; Lontas, 2002a), showing that the subjects had positive attitudes. Nonetheless, to the best of the author's knowledge, there is little research considering idioms as used in instructional materials. In relation to the purposes of this study, it can be said that there are no studies that evaluate the materials designed by teacher-trainees or teachers in terms of idiomatic language. On the other hand, there are some studies that evaluated published materials rather than teacher-designed materials with respect to idiomatic expressions (Can, 2011; Çakır, 2010; Hanzen, 2007; Irujo, 1984; Vanyushkina-Holt, 2005) and the findings of these studies reveal that idiomatic expressions are a small part of language teaching materials.

3. Method

3. 1. Participants

Fourth-year students studying in the Department of English Language Teaching (ELT) at a state university in Turkey (participated in this study (N=68). They were all taking the course "Materials Evaluation and Development in ELT".

3. 2. Materials Evaluation and Development Courses in ELT

The "Materials Evaluation and Development in ELT" course is offered to senior students at the university. In a nutshell, the course entails studying the theory and principles of ELT materials design (e.g.: selecting, adapting, developing and evaluating materials) as well as the basic arguments for and against the use of coursebooks in the classroom. The teacher-trainees are asked to investigate the relation between methodology, ideology and the coursebook content in terms of learnability, ease of use, cultural content, and availability of communicative interaction, which allows learners to interact in meaningful ways. If they perceive a lack of correspondence between the students' needs and the coursebook content, they are expected to adapt or develop their own materials to supplement the existing ones. In doing so, to ensure a realistic perspective on material development and evaluation, the teacher-trainees are encouraged to observe real EFL classes in high schools and middle schools. Therefore, the course, though partly theoretical, is a practical one that offers hands-on experience of materials development and evaluation.

Although there are various assignments required for the course, in this study, the researchers only focused on the creative assignments such as unit development and supplementary worksheet preparation. As unit development goes, the basic requirement was to compose a unit for an EFL coursebook based on high school students' needs. Depending on the proficiency level of the students observed, the participants developed a skill-based unit only using authentic materials. Supplementary worksheet development assignment, on the other hand, required an analysis of a unit in the coursebook EFL students use in the classroom. Based on the class observations and the quality of the unit in the coursebook, the participants

were asked to identify weaknesses and supplement them with their own original materials. In this course, there were no special instructions given on designing materials to teach idioms but there were instructions given on general principles to guide material evaluation and development.

3. 3. Data Collection and Analysis

To decipher prospective EFL teachers' perceptions of their own idiom knowledge and their attitudes towards idiom instruction, a questionnaire designed by Can (2011) was adapted and administered to some of the teacher-trainees (N=34) from among those whose materials were analyzed. The questionnaire results were thought to shed light on the findings of material analysis. Males constituted 23% of the participants while females constituted 77% of the participants. Their age ranged from 21 to 24 years. They had been learning English for approximately 13 years and they all perceived their proficiency level to be good or excellent. Besides, most of them (58.8%) were planning to work as an English teacher after graduation from university while some (29.4%) were not sure about whether to work as an English teacher or not. In addition, from among the participants, some were selected (N=7) on a voluntary basis and were interviewed about the reasons why they did or did not use idioms in the materials that they had developed.

In order to find out the answers to the research questions regarding material analysis, the materials (i.e. worksheet and units) prepared by teacher-trainees were examined in terms of the idioms incorporated by means of a content analysis.

In identifying the idioms, the classification made by McCarthy & O'Dell (2002) (See Table 1) was taken as the criteria. If the same idiom was used in more than one activity, the idiom was entered as two entities to reveal the different ways of teaching idioms. Moreover, the idiomaticity of the expressions identified was verified using several idiom and proverb dictionaries (Hands, 1996; Oxford Advanced, 2011; Spears, 2007; Swick, 1999; Wright, 2002). In addition, the two authors tried to reach consensus on the idiomaticity of the expressions and idiom type by discussing the disagreements and using reference idiom sources. Besides, the total number of activities and the number of activities where idioms were used in each material were also calculated to find out the ratio of using idioms in relation to the number of activities.

The results were then analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In other words, not only the number of idioms but also why and how they were employed in the materials were examined. In analyzing the types of activities where the idioms were used, the activity types were classified into mechanic, meaningful and communicative activities. This was done only for the activities in which idioms were taught explicitly. The idioms that were presented incidentally were considered as a different group. In categorizing the activities, Richards' (2005, p. 16) classification of the types of practice activities is used as the springboard. This classification is originally made to differentiate grammar practice activities and it is adopted for the purposes of this study. The activity types can be explained as in the following:

1. Mechanical practice refers to controlled activities that usually involve repetition, matching and sentence completion with the aim of practicing the use of particular language items. These activities involve a high chance factor with predictable responses and a lack of authentic language negotiation.
2. Meaningful practice refers to activities in which language is still controlled but students are required to make meaningful choices. These activities involve a relatively a lower chance factor with less predictable responses and require more mental

processing on the part of the students. However, they do not generate spontaneous, authentic and meaningful language.

3. Communicative practice involves those activities in which the resulting language is more spontaneous, authentic and not totally predictable. They involve more meaningful production of the language items in question (See Table 2).

Table 2

Activity Types

Activity Type	Examples
Mechanical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - completing the idioms - matching idioms with their definitions, parts and pictures - filling in the blanks in the sentences with idioms - finding the idioms in the crossword
Meaningful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - asking for negative or positive connotations of the idiom - selecting the idiom that illustrates the cartoon - relating the idiom to the literal meaning of the concept of the unit - guessing the meaning of the idiom from the context - paraphrasing the idiom
Communicative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - writing a short story using the idiom - making sentences using the idioms - doing research on the idiom and discussing its meaning

4. Results and Discussion

4. 1. What are EFL teacher-trainees' perceptions of their idiom knowledge and attitudes towards idiom instruction?

With regard to EFL teacher-trainees' attitudes towards idiom instruction and perceptions of their idiom knowledge, the majority (strongly) agreed (88%) that learning idioms is an important part of their English language learning experience and that it is needed for effective communication in the target language.

As for the reasons why teacher-trainees considered learning English idioms as an important part of their language learning, the ones with the highest percentage of agreement can be given as follows: (1) understanding the target culture better (97.1%), (2) getting familiar with the English figurative expressions (97.1%) and using figurative language in English (91.2%), (3) making sense of the humor generated in English (93.9%), (4) making one's speech more effective when giving oral presentations (91.2%), and (5) perceiving the cultural similarities and differences better (91.2%). While most of them found 'learning how to use idioms' important for developing their speaking skills (79.4%), for making their speech more effective in oral presentations (91.2%) and for understanding the everyday language better (79.4%), a relatively lower percentage of the participants (64.7%,) found it important for developing their writing skills, which showed that the teacher-trainees mostly associated idioms with everyday oral communication (See Appendix 1).

Regarding the necessity of learning idioms for communication outside the classroom, more than half of the teacher-trainees believed that they might need to understand and use English idioms when they have to communicate in English outside the classroom. However, looking at the responses to all of the items in the scale, it can be seen that items related to the importance of knowing and using English idioms outside the classroom were among the ones with the lowest percentage of agreement. This could be due to the limited opportunities to use

English outside the classroom and thus, the items might not have sounded realistic to the teacher-trainees.

As well as the importance of learning idioms, when it comes to the teaching of English idioms, most of the participants (88.2%) thought that it is important to teach English idioms in English classrooms and to incorporate them in English coursebooks.

A second scale was used to unearth EFL teacher-trainees' thoughts about their knowledge and use of English idioms (See Appendix 1). In general, there were some teacher-trainees who were neutral about their knowledge of idioms but, surprisingly, many agreed that they had knowledge of idioms. More than half of the teacher-trainees claimed that they had knowledge of the typical structures (64.7%) and the literary aspects (52.9%) of English idioms, knew in what situations (70.6%) and for what purposes (76.5%) to use them, recognized and understood English idioms in listening (76.5%) and reading (87.9%) texts, and that they did not have difficulty comprehending the idioms that they came across in English movies (52.9%). Their knowledge of idioms could be influenced by their knowledge and use of Turkish (L1) idioms.

Overall findings of the questionnaire indicate that the participants had positive attitudes towards idiom instruction and that they were aware of the various aspects of idioms. This is also parallel with the findings of another study (Liontas, 2002a) in which the subjects had a desire and interest in learning idioms and wanted idioms to be an integral part of their language and culture learning.

4.2. What is the frequency of idioms used in different types of materials designed by EFL teacher-trainees?

The total number of idioms used in all the materials designed by EFL teacher-trainees was found to be 324. Omitting the repeated idioms in all the materials, the number was reduced to 182 for the total number of different idioms. Of the 106 materials, 44 contained no idioms at all. As can be seen in Table 3 and 4, in average, three idioms were used by one participant in a material ($M=3.06$), which revealed the insufficiency of idiom use in the materials examined. The lack of idioms in teacher-trainees' materials was further evident when the idiom use was analyzed in relation to number of activities. It was seen that of the 816 activities in all the materials, only 134 of them (16.42%) included idioms (See Table 3).

Table 3

Frequency of Idioms in the Analyzed Materials

Total number of materials (Units + Worksheet)	Total number of idioms	Total number of different idioms	Total number of activities in the material	Number of activities where idioms are used	Mean of Idiom Use in all materials
106	324	182	816	134	3.06

Although idioms are frequent in everyday language as it was found that almost four idioms were employed each minute in a conversation (Pollio et al., 1998), the frequency of idioms used in materials designed by EFL teacher-trainees was found to be rather low.

The questionnaire and interview results might account for the low number of idioms in the materials as they revealed that this was not because the teacher-trainees had negative attitudes towards idioms. The participants reported the importance of learning and teaching of idioms. Neither was the fact that the teacher-trainees' lack of awareness of what idioms are the

reason. This was confirmed by the idiom definitions provided by 29 of these teacher-trainees. They mentioned most of the features of idioms indicated in many of the definitions in the literature (Liu, 2008). For example, eleven stated that idioms are figurative, metaphorical, indirect and multiword expressions. On the other hand, when they were asked to give examples of idioms, most of them could give only one or two examples and the most common examples were *it's raining cats and dogs* (N=13), *to eat a horse* (N=5), *first come, first served* (N=3) and *to have butterflies in your stomach* (N=3). Although the teacher-trainees perceived themselves as knowing and using English idioms, in practice they could not produce them, which might have resulted in the avoidance of using idioms (O'Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007).

As one of the reasons for the lack of idiom knowledge and production, many participants (N=6) during the interviews stated that they had insufficient opportunities to practice and/or produce idioms in the past, particularly at high school when they were in the process of developing their language competence. Because of this experience, teacher-trainees seemed to follow the footsteps of their English teachers and did not go beyond the coursebooks they had used at high school for idiom teaching. This can well be explained by Freeman and Richards's (1993) assertion that "the foundations of an individual's ideas about teaching are well established through the experience of being a student" (p. 210). Regarding this, some of the interviewees stated;

1. *"If we look at the English materials used in Turkey, they fail to integrate culture and we grew up using these materials. Therefore, we don't have enough input. Our teachers did not try to use idioms or proverbs and integrate culture. They did not have such an attitude. Because they were far away from integrating culture and such, we ended up speaking like a book"* (N).
2. *"Neither at high school nor at university, have idioms been taught. I can feel the deficiency in my knowledge. Idiom knowledge is limited in teachers; because no place was given to them, it is limited in our knowledge and will be limited in our students"* (D).

As a result of insufficient idiom learning experience, teachers might either create an unnatural and unimaginative tone in the materials they develop or become more dependent on the available ones with a disregard to their students' needs.

4. 3. What is the frequency of idioms used in the materials in relation to their proficiency levels?

The idiom use in the materials for four levels of proficiency was analyzed and it was seen that idiom usage changed depending on the level of proficiency. EFL teacher-trainees in this study prefer not to use idioms for elementary level. For example, idiom use was high for intermediate and pre-intermediate levels (See Table 4).

Table 4
Frequency of Idioms in Materials of Different Proficiency Level

	Idiom No.	Percent	Mean	SD
Elementary	7	2,2	,32	,646
Pre-intermediate	99	30,6	2,28	3,235
Intermediate	151	46,6	3,13	3,338
Upper-intermediate	67	20,7	2,95	3,517
Total	324	100,0	2,25	3,132

A One-Way ANOVA analysis showed that there was a significant effect of the proficiency level of the materials on the frequency of idioms incorporated ($F_{3, 102}=4.33$, $p<.05$). The LSD post-hoc test (See Table 5) revealed that the frequency of idioms used in elementary level materials ($M=.32$, $SD=.65$) was significantly lower than that of idioms incorporated in materials of other proficiency levels ($M=2.79$, $SD=3.36$). This result is consistent with the CERF descriptors, which harbor the competent use of idiomatic language at the higher proficiency levels.

Table 5
LSD Post-Hoc Test Result

	(I) LEVEL	(J) LEVEL	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
LSD	elementary	pre-int.	-1,963*	,829	,020	-3,61	-,32
		intermediate	-2,807*	,829	,001	-4,45	-1,16
		upper	-2,632*	,925	,005	-4,47	-,80

The teacher-trainees did not use idioms in materials for elementary levels but in materials for upper levels. They might have considered idioms as complicated and sophisticated language items and hence, may have avoided overwhelming students at lower levels with such expressions. Some of the teacher-trainees seemed to undervalue the place of idioms either by not giving any place to them or by confining their use to the upper levels as evidenced by the statements of one of the interviewees:

1. *"While basic things are more important for someone who is newly exposed to English, idioms are more appropriate for upper levels. Idioms are necessary for advanced level for the students to feel more sophisticated" (H).*

A parallel pattern was observed in published textbooks which were examined in terms of teaching different aspects of vocabulary items in another study (Brown, 2010) and with respect to the limited practice of collocations in the lower level textbooks, it is stated that "...[a]s learners progress they need a better understanding of how items fit together and the textbooks seem to be in accordance with this" (p. 90). The participants in this study might have had a similar conceptualization and hence, underestimated the elementary learners' need for idioms. In addition, the teacher-trainees' practice of using idioms with regard to the proficiency levels is in contrast with Nation's (2011) recommendation that elementary level students can learn complex vocabulary items better as wholes. Therefore, idioms which are fixed expressions can also be learned in chunks at lower levels. In fact, as Wright (2002) aptly puts, "it is impossible to speak, read or listen to English without meeting idiomatic language. This is not something you can leave until you reach an advanced level" (p. 9).

4. 4. In what kinds of activities are idioms used in the materials?

As seen in Table 6, while 41% of all the idioms incidentally took place in the materials; that is, they did not receive any explicit treatment, more than half of the idioms (59 %) in the materials were meant to be taught explicitly (See Appendix 3). In the former case, the idioms were usually presented in grammar activities and sections in which the main aim was to teach grammar points or they were simply given as part of the statements or texts without any focus on them. These idioms mostly took place in units where the teacher-trainees used authentic texts for their reading sections and inadvertently confined idioms to implicit treatment. In fact,

if asked, the teacher-trainees may not even know that those idioms exist in the selected texts. Paying explicit attention to them would depend on the student's interest and teacher's discretion. With regard to such use of proverb-type idioms in the textbooks, Vanyushkina-Holt (2005) argues that students will either not identify them or skip them as unimportant details since such a use of proverbs would be suitable for native speakers who can recognize and understand them automatically. Besides, since idioms are conventionalized, unpredictable in meaning, figurative and cultural (Liu, 2008), they "pose a special kind of challenge for second language (L2) learners" (Zyzik, 2011, p. 414). Consequently, they are not easy to learn without explicit instruction and explicit reference to the language community from which they emerged. On the other hand, in the latter case, where idioms were taught explicitly, the main aim was to teach the idioms and hence, they were included in the materials purposefully.

Table 6

The Way the Idioms are Given in the Analyzed Materials

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Incidental	133	41,0	41,0
Explicit	191	59,0	59,0
Total	324	100,0	100,0

Although it might seem that teacher-trainees aimed to teach many idioms explicitly, the way they aimed to achieve this needs to be further examined. For example, of those idioms presented explicitly, the majority (47.8%) were found in mechanical activities such as matching the parts of the idioms, and filling in the blanks in the sentences with the idioms (See Table 7). Nonetheless, very few of these idioms were part of meaningful (e.g. guessing the meaning of the idiom from the context) and communicative practice (e.g. writing a short story using the idiom). Furthermore, most of these activities took place in the vocabulary sections followed by reading sections. While the idioms in the worksheet were mostly included in the vocabulary sections (80.82%), the ones in the units were clustered in the reading (34.29%) and grammar sections (23.81%).

Table 7

Frequency of Idioms in Different Activity Types

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Mechanical	155	47,8	47,8
Meaningful	29	9,0	56,8
Communicative	7	2,2	59,0

Therefore, even though the results showed that many teacher-trainees included some idioms for the purpose of teaching them, the nature of explicit instruction in those cases is subject to discussion. It was found that although teacher-trainees incorporated few idioms in their materials, the way they presented them was mechanical (i.e. fill-in-the-blanks, matching) rather than meaningful and communicative. Therefore, they did not explicitly draw attention to the use and functions of idioms as served by their metaphorical and cultural features and did not dwell on them in a way to help learners develop their communicative competence. On the other hand, "[a]lerting the students to the figurative meaning implicit in the idiom is a helpful way of making idioms more meaningful and more memorable" (Lazar, 1996, p. 45). This is not to say that mechanical activities are not useful especially when teaching the syntactic properties of idioms such as tense change, passivization, pluralisation of the constituents, adverbial and adjectival modification and verb substitution (Glucksberg, 2001). However, teacher-trainees failed to make use of mechanical activities to exploit such syntactic

properties. In any case, these activities need to be accompanied with more meaningful and communicative tasks.

In short, almost in all materials, idioms were used partly for linguistic development rather than for the improvement of pragmatic competence. Yet idioms are often “prompted discursively as stereotyped responses” (Moon, 1998, p. 29) and using them appropriately constitutes idiomaticity which is a language use maxim stated by Searle (1979): “Speak idiomatically unless there is some special reason not to” (p. 50). More specifically, a language user needs to know that *kick the bucket* is not an appropriate selection when referring to the death of a friend or a colleague (Liu, 2008). This highlights the importance of knowing the degree of appropriateness of social situations for idiom use, which is a challenge for language learners. As Liu (2008) aptly puts, “on the one hand, they [L2 learners] need opportunities to learn and use idioms, yet on the other hand they are not supposed to use idioms inappropriately, because inappropriate idiom use may have serious consequences” (p. 35). Therefore, the instructional materials should deal with the social situations that allow or do not allow the use of an idiom. In addition, the culture-specific features of idioms were not exploited in the materials analyzed to provide language learners with an opportunity to appreciate the target culture in comparison with their native culture. As a result, most of the idioms took place in mechanical activities in vocabulary sections and their role in other language skills and components and most importantly, their importance for CC was not realized and fulfilled by the teacher-trainees.

The finding that the idioms were mostly used in mechanical activities can be attributed to teacher-trainees negative and insufficient idiom learning experience as some of the interviewees stated;

1. *“Because we learned idioms in matching and fill-in-the-blanks activities, we also use them in such activities”* (H).
2. *“In a book that we used at high school, there was a small section for idioms at the corner of the book. The definitions of the idioms were given sometimes followed by matching or fill-in-the-blanks activities. We used to spend only 3 to 5 minutes on this section and then our knowledge would disappear”* (S).

Furthermore, some of the interviewees (N=3) thought that it is not easy to teach idioms, which could be another reason why they did not attempt to use them in their materials or why they preferred to employ them in more simple and easy-to-prepare activities. These teacher-trainees knew that it is better to teach them in context by means of meaningful and communicative activities but did not exactly know how to achieve this. For this reason, rather than not teaching them at all, they incorporated them in mechanical activities, which are easier to design. Some said that they needed pedagogical training to teach them effectively:

3. *“I don’t feel equipped in designing materials in terms of idiom instruction. I need to know how to teach them without imposing the culture on the learners. For example, we can have a separate course called “culture and language teaching” and in this course we can learn about this better”* (N).
4. *“Training (in idiom teaching) is a must. We don’t learn about idiom teaching in our courses”* (H).

Overall, the findings are consistent with the findings of other studies in which idiomatic expressions were found to be a small part of language teaching materials (published) and were found not to be taught effectively in a way to develop learners’ CC (Can, 2011; Çakır, 2010; Hanzen, 2007; Irujo, 1984; Vanyushkina-Holt, 2005).

5. Conclusion and Implications

The findings revealed two distinct behaviors in the materials developed by EFL teacher-trainees in relation to idioms: (1) low frequency of idiom use in general, and (2) the idioms used not exploited in a way to develop learners' communicative competence. Considering the results of material analysis, it can be concluded that there is a discrepancy between what the students are asked to do in the materials and what happens in real-life language use, which confirms the wide mismatch between research findings and actual practice in many materials (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 72).

The reason for the lack of idiom use was found to be not because the teacher-trainees had negative attitudes, but because of their negative idiom learning experience and lack of pedagogic competence with regard to idiom instruction. It can be said that teachers reap what they sow since the teacher-trainees seem to follow the footsteps of their teachers. Therefore, the results of this study highlight the need for idiom teaching in English classrooms at high schools, usually at Anatolian Teacher Training High Schools in the case of Turkey, where teacher-trainees are expected to gain language competence and awareness. To meet this need, when designing materials and planning lessons, it should be kept in mind that knowledge of English idioms constitutes an important component of learners' communicative competence because as part of cultural references, figurative, functional, formulaic language, idioms can help to enhance not only organizational competence but also pragmatic competence when Bachman's model (1990) is considered (Littlemore & Law, 2006).

The findings also confirm the significance of language competence for the development of pedagogic competence. That is, prospective teachers need to be aware of idiom use so that they can use their knowledge in improving their pedagogic competence. Therefore, teachers "should themselves have *language competence* to a greater degree than that expected of their learners" as well as *language awareness* and *pedagogic competence* (Thomas, 1987, p. 34) so that they are not sidetracked by their language weaknesses (Cross, 1995). In fact, lack of language competence and awareness is found to be one of the major reasons for the deficiencies in student-teachers' pedagogic competence and methodological practice (Gürbüz, 2006). As the target group of this study, prospective English teachers in Turkey are expected to develop communicative competence before pedagogic competence at high school and in their first year in the teacher-training program at university. This suggests that the degree of emphasis placed on idioms in language development courses (e.g. Lexical Competence course) can be influential in the development of teacher-trainees' pedagogic competence.

In a country such as Turkey where English is taught as a foreign language with limited exposure to English outside the classroom, English language teachers and coursebooks are the main sources of teaching English idioms and their various aspects. Therefore, in educating teacher-trainees, idioms should be incorporated in such a way as to contribute to the development of their language competence and pedagogic competence. In this way, these teacher-trainees can first of all enhance their own communicative competence and then transfer their knowledge of idioms to language learners by, for instance, designing instructional materials and adapting materials that are insufficient in terms of idiom instruction. Based on this, "teachers should remember the features 'creativity and flexibility' usually listed among the features associated with 'good teachers' and should try to find ways to presenting students with the cultural information" (Hatipoğlu, 2009, p. 356).

In helping teachers to present cultural information such as idioms, teacher-trainees' awareness of some techniques peculiar to idiom teaching can be raised. For example, of these

techniques; etymological elaboration, conceptual metaphors and cross-cultural analysis which are found to be effective techniques for teaching idioms (Andreou & Galantomos, 2008; Baleghizadeh & Bagheri, 2012; Baum, 1996; Boers, 2001; Boers & Demecheleer, 2001; Boers, Demecheleer, & Eyckmans, 2004; Boers, Eyckmans, & Stengers, 2007; Boers, Piquer Piriz, Stengers & Eyckmans, 2009; Bulut & Çelik-Yazıcı, 2004; Guo, 2008; Kömür & Çimen, 2009; Li, 2010) can be presented to teacher-trainees to develop the pedagogic competence needed to exploit their idiomatic competence. In addition, courses on material evaluation and development should be increased in teacher education programs and a section on designing materials to teach such cultural elements as idioms should be allocated. With the help of technology and rapid access to authentic materials and native speaker speech, teacher-trainees should be encouraged to investigate and identify idioms. In their training, they should be asked methodically to use such language. In other words, the vicious circle the previous learning experience creates for non-native speaking English teacher-trainees should be broken. Therefore, idioms should be given more emphasis at all levels of language education particularly in teacher education programs. In this way, using their knowledge of idioms, they can know “what” to transfer to their students as part of language, culture and design, and evaluate and adapt instructional materials in terms of idiom instruction in a way to help their students develop communicative competence.

References

- Andreou, G., & Galantomos, L. (2008). Designing a conceptual syllabus for teaching metaphors and idioms in a foreign language context. *Porta Linguarum*, 9, 69-77.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: OUP.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Bagheri, M. M. (2012). The effects of etymological elaboration on the EFL learners' comprehension and retention of idioms. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 18(1), 23–32.
- Baum, N. J. (1996). *A systematic approach for teaching idioms to the second language learner*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.
- Boers, F. (2001). Remembering figurative idioms by hypothesizing about their origins. *Prospect*, 16, 35-43.
- Boers, F., & Demecheleer, M. (2001). Measuring the impact of cross-cultural differences on learners' comprehension of imageable idioms. *ELT Journal*, 55(3), 255-262.
- Boers, F., Demecheleer, M., & Eyckmans, J. (2004). Etymological elaboration as a strategy for learning idioms. In P. Bogaardsand & B. Laufer (Eds.), *Vocabulary in a second language: Selection, acquisition and testing*, (pp. 53-78), Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Boers, F., Eyckmans, J., & Stengers, H. (2007). Presenting figurative idioms with a touch of etymology: More than mere mnemonics. *Language Teaching Research*, 11, 43-62.
- Boers, F., Piquer Piriz, A. M., Stengers, H., & Eyckmans, J. (2009). Does pictorial elucidation foster recollection of idioms?. *Language Teaching Research*, 13(4), 367-382.
- Bortfeld, H. (1997). *A cross-linguistic analysis of idiom comprehension by native and non-native speakers*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.
- Boyce, J. (2009). *Idioms: Further examination of familiarity, transparency and comprehension*. (Unpublished master thesis). William Paterson University of New Jersey, Wayne, NJ.
- Burke, D. (1998). Without Slang and Idioms, Students Are “In the Dark!”. *ESL Magazine*, 1(5), 20–23.
- Brown, D. (2010). What aspects of vocabulary knowledge do textbooks give attention to?. *Language Teaching Research*, 15(1), 83-97.

- Bulut, T., & Çelik-Yazıcı, İ. (2004). Idiom processing in L2: Through rose-colored glasses. *The Reading Matrix*, 4(2), 105-116.
- Can, N. (2011). *A proverb learned is a proverb earned: Future English teachers' experiences of learning English proverbs in Anatolian Teacher Training High Schools in Turkey*. (Unpublished master thesis). Middle East Technical University, Ankara.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-47.
- Carter, R., & McCarthy, M. (1997). *Exploring spoken English*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Charteris-Black, J. (1995). Proverbs in communication. *Journal of Multilingual Multicultural Development*, 16, 259-268.
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR). (2001). Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp
- Cooper, C. (1998). Teaching Idioms. *Foreign Language Annals*, 31(2), pp. 255 – 266.
- Cooper, T. C. (1999). Processing of idioms by L2 learners of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33(2), 233-262.
- Cross, D. (1995). Language teacher preparation in developing countries: Structuring preservice teacher training programs. *English Teaching Forum*, 6, 34-36.
- Çakır, İ. (2010). The frequency of culture-specific elements in the ELT coursebooks at elementary schools in Turkey. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, 4(2), 182-189.
- D'Angelo Bromley, K. (1984). Teaching idioms. *The Reading Teacher*, 38(3), 272–276.
- Elkılıç, G. (2008). Turkish students' understanding of transparent and opaque idioms in English in reading as well as in speaking. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 4(2), 27-41.
- Erman, B., & Warren, B. (2000). The idiom principle and the open choice principle. *Text & Talk* 20(1), 29–62.
- Fernando, C. (1996). *Idioms and idiomaticity*. Oxford: OUP.
- Fraser, B. (1970). Idioms within a transformational grammar. *Foundations of Language*, 6, 22-42.
- Freeman, D., & Richards, J. (1993). Conceptions of teaching and education of second language teachers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(2), 193-216.
- Glucksberg, S. (2001). *Understanding figurative language: From metaphors to idioms*. Oxford: OUP.
- Grant, L. E. & Bauer, L. (2004). Criteria for re-defining idioms: Are we barking up the wrong tree? *Applied Linguistics*, 25, 38-61.
- Guo, S. (2008). Differential effects of etymological elaboration and rote memorization on idiom acquisition in college EFL learners. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 10(3), 127-145.
- Gürbüz, N. (2006). Differing perceptions of pre-service English teachers' strengths and weaknesses in the practicum: A case study in Turkey. *English Language Teacher Education and Development*, 9, 39-46.
- Hands, P. (1996). *Chambers dictionary of idioms*. Edinburgh: Chambers English Best.
- Hanzen, M. (2007). "When in Rome, do as the Romans do": Proverbs as a part of EFL teaching. *Högskolan För Larande Och Kommunikation (HLK)*, 36, 1-24.
- Hatipoğlu, Ç. (2009). Do we speak the same culture?: Revelations from university students. *International Congress of Comparative Literature and the Teaching of Literature and Language*, 343-357.
- Hirsch, E. D., Kett, J. F., & Trefil, J. (2002). *The new dictionary of cultural literacy*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

- Howarth, P. (1998). Phraseology and second language proficiency. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 24-44.
- Hung, P. (2010). *Mental imagery and idiom understanding in adults: Examining dual coding theory*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Oregon, Oregon.
- Hussein, R. F., Khanji, R., & Makhzoomy, K. F. (2000). Acquisition of idioms: Transfer or what?. *Language & Translation*, 12, 23-34.
- Irujo, S. (1984). *The effects of transfer on the acquisition of idioms in a second language*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (AAT 8414677)
- Irujo, S. (1986). Don't put your leg in your mouth: Transfer in the acquisition of idioms in a second language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(2), 287-304.
- Kowbel, S. L. (2005). *Every thesis has a silver lining: How proverbs are processed and understood*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.
- Kömür, Ş. & Çimen, Ş. S. (2009). Using conceptual metaphors in teaching idioms in a foreign language context. *Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi (İLKE)*, 23, 205-221.
- Lazar, G. (1996). Using figurative language to expand students' vocabulary. *ELT Journal*, 50(1), 43-51.
- Li, X. (2010). Conceptual metaphor theory and the teaching of English and Chinese idioms. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(3), 206-210.
- Liontas, J. I. (1999). *Developing a pragmatic methodology of idiomaticity: The comprehension and interpretation of SL vivid phrasal idioms during reading*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.
- Liontas, J. I. (2002a). Exploring second language learners' notion of idiomaticity. *System*, 30, 289-313.
- Liontas, J. I. (2002b). Context and idiom understanding in second languages. *EUROSLA Yearbook*, 2, 155-185.
- Littlemore, J., & Low, G. (2006). *Figurative thinking and foreign language learning*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Liu, D. (2008). *Idioms: Description, comprehension, acquisition, and pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.
- Makkai, A. (1972). *Idiom structure in English*. The Hague, the Netherlands: Mouton.
- Masuhara, H. (1998). What do teachers really want from coursebooks?. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *Materials Development in Language Teaching*, (pp. 239-260). Cambridge: CUP.
- McCarthy, M., & O'Dell, F. (2002). *English vocabulary in use: Advanced*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Medges, P. (2001). When the teacher is a non-native speaker. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as Second or Foreign Language* (3rd ed.), (pp. 429-442). Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Mieder, W. (2004). *Proverbs - A Handbook*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Moon, R. (1998). *Fixed expressions and idioms in English*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Nippold, M. A., & Duthie, J. K. (2003). Mental imagery and idiom comprehension: A comparison of school-age children and adults. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, 46, 788-799.
- Nippold, M. A., & Taylor, C. L. (2002). Judgements of idiom familiarity and transparency: A comparison of children and adolescents. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, 45, 384-391.
- Norrick, N. R. (1985). *How proverbs mean: Semantic studies in English proverbs*. Berlin: Mouton.
- Nunberg, G., Sag, I. A., & Wasow, T. (1994). Idioms. *Language*, 70(3), 491-538.

- O'Keeffe, A., McCarthy, M., & Carter, R. (2007). *From corpus to classroom: Language use and language teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Oxford advanced learners' dictionary*. (2011). Retrieved from <http://oald8.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>.
- Pollio, H. R., Barlow, J. M., Fine, H. J., Pollio, M. R. (1998). *Psychology and the poetics of growth*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Porto, M. (1998). Lexical phrases and language teaching. *Forum*, 36(3). Retrieved from <http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol36/no3/p22.htm>
- Prodromou, L. (2003). Idiomaticity and the non-native speaker. *English Today* 74, 19(2), 42-48.
- Richards, J. (2005). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Souha, A. (2008). *Avoidance of idioms: An ethnic group identity issue?* (Unpublished master's thesis). Concordia University, Canada.
- Spears, R. A. (2007). *American idioms dictionary*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Swick, E. (1999). *American idioms and some phrases just for fun*. New York: Barrons.
- Thomas, A. (1987). Language teacher competence and language teacher education. In R. Bowers (Ed.) *Language teacher education: An integrated programme for ELT teacher training*, (pp. 33-42). London: British Council, Modern English Publications.
- Tomlinson, B. (2003). *Developing materials for language teaching*. New York: Continuum.
- van Ek, J. A. (1986). *Objectives for foreign language learning*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Vanyushkina-Holt, N. (2005). *Proverbial language and its role in acquiring a second language and culture*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (AAT 3319175)
- Weinreich, U. (1969). Problems in the analysis of idioms. In J. Puhvel (Ed.), *Substance and structure of language*, (pp. 23-81). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wood, M. M. (1981). *A definition of idiom*. Bloomington: Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Wray, A. (2000). Formulaic sequences in second language teaching: Principle and practice. *Applied Linguistics*, 21(4), 463-489.
- Wright, J. (2002). *Idioms organizer: Organized by metaphor, topic and keyword*. Boston: Thomson & Heinle.
- Yorio, C. A. (1980). Conventionalized language forms and the development of communicative competence. *TESOL Quarterly*, 14(4), 433-442.
- Yorio, C. A. (1989). Idiomaticity as an indicator of second language proficiency. In K. Hyltenstam and L. K. Obler (Eds.), *Bilingualism across the lifespan: Aspects of acquisition, maturity and loss*, (pp. 55-72). Cambridge: CUP.
- Zyzik, E. (2011). Second language idiom learning: The effects of lexical knowledge and pedagogical sequencing. *Language Teaching Research*, 15(4), 413-433.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Questionnaire results

Scale 1 *Teacher-Trainees' Attitudes Towards Idiom Instruction*

Item	Strongly disagree & Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree & Agree	Mean
1. I believe learning English idioms is an important part of English language learning experience.	8.8%	0.0%	91.2%	4.29
2. Learning to use English idioms is necessary for achieving effective communication.	8.8%	5.9%	85.3%	4.12
3. Learning to use English idioms in oral communication is necessary for developing my speaking skills.	5.9%	14.7%	79.4%	4.09
4. Using idioms when I give oral presentations in English will make my speech more effective.	2.9%	5.9%	91.2%	4.44
5. Learning to use English idioms in written communication is necessary for developing my writing skills.	2.9%	32.4%	64.7%	3.94
6. Knowing English idioms is important for me to comprehend the reading texts better.	0.0%	14.7%	85.3%	4.15
7. Knowing English idioms is important for me to comprehend the listening texts better.	8.8%	8.8%	82.4%	4.12
8. Knowing English idioms is important for me to understand the target culture better.	2.9%	0.0%	97.1%	4.50
9. Knowing English idioms is important for me to perceive the cultural differences and similarities better.	0.0%	8.8%	91.2%	4.59
10. Knowing English idioms is necessary for me to make sense of the humours generated in English.	3.0%	3.0%	93.9%	4.45
11. Learning English idioms is important for me to get familiar with the English figurative expressions.	0.0%	2.9%	97.1%	4.53
12. Learning English idioms is important for me to develop my skill of expressing myself by using figurative language in English.	2.9%	5.9%	91.2%	4.35
13. Knowing English idioms is necessary for me to understand the everyday language better.	8.8%	11.8%	79.4%	4.09
14. We might need to use English idioms when we have to communicate in English outside the classroom.	14.7%	17.6%	67.6%	3.88
15. We might need to recognize and understand English idioms when we have to communicate in English outside the classroom.	2.9%	23.5%	73.5%	4.03
16. I think it is important to teach English idioms in English classrooms.	5.9%	0.0%	94.1%	4.32
17. I will definitely teach English idioms when I become an English teacher.	0.0%	17.6%	82.4%	4.15
18. I believe it is necessary to incorporate English idioms in English coursebooks.	8.8%	5.9%	85.3%	4.15
19. I think English idioms should be a part of the English language curriculum at schools.	5.9%	8.8%	85.3%	4.18
20. I think it is important to encourage English language learners to learn idioms for effective communication.	0.0%	5.9%	94.1%	4.44

Scale 2 *Teacher-Trainees Knowledge of Idioms*

Item	Strongly disagree & Disagree	neutral	Strongly agree & Agree	Mean
1. I have knowledge of the typical structures of English idioms.	8.8%	26.5%	64.7%	3.56
2. I have knowledge of the semantic features of English idioms (e.g. their themes, synonymous and antonymous idioms etc.).	20.6%	35.3%	44.1%	3.24
3. I have knowledge of the literary aspects of English idioms (e.g. use of metaphors, rhyme etc.)	20.6%	26.5%	52.9%	3.35
4. I have knowledge of the cultural aspects of English idioms.	14.7%	38.2%	47.1%	3.35
5. I know in what situations to use English idioms.	5.9%	23.5%	70.6%	3.76
6. I know for what purposes to use English idioms.	2.9%	20.6%	76.5%	3.97
7. I can recognize and understand English idioms in listening texts.	8.8%	14.7%	76.5%	3.76
8. I can recognize English idioms in listening texts even if I do	2.9%	26.5%	70.6%	3.91

not understand them.

9. I can recognize and understand English idioms in reading texts.	3.0%	9.1%	87.9%	4.18
10. I can recognize English idioms in reading texts even if I do not understand them.	2.9%	14.7%	82.4%	4.03
11. I do not have difficulty comprehending the idioms I come across in English songs. (Reversed)	38.2%	23.5%	38.2%	3.00
12. I do not have difficulty comprehending the idioms I come across in English movies. (Reversed)	29.4%	17.6%	52.9%	2.65
13. When I use English, I think of a Turkish idiom but not knowing the English equivalent in terms of meaning, I give up using the idiom.	44.1%	32.4%	23.5%	2.71
14. I can use English idioms in writing in English.	26.5%	26.5%	47.1%	3.24
15. I can use English idioms in speaking in English.	35.3%	20.6%	44.1%	3.09
16. I think I know idioms enough to contribute to my teaching of English effectively.	29.4%	41.2%	29.4%	2.97

Appendix 2

List of different idioms identified in the materials

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. a bird in hand is worth two in the bush | 42. day and night |
| 2. a bit of somebody | 43. do good (3) |
| 3. a bite to eat | 44. do harm (3) |
| 4. a disappointment is a blessing | 45. do one's best (4) |
| 5. a friend in need is a friend indeed | 46. do one's own thing |
| 6. a light at the end of the tunnel (4)* | 47. do somebody a favour (5) |
| 7. a party animal | 48. do the job |
| 8. a shot across the bow (2) | 49. do well (2) |
| 9. a stitch in time saves nine (4) | 50. don't judge a book by its cover |
| 10. an apple a day keeps the doctor away (4) | 51. don't look a gift horse in the mouth |
| 11. as a token of something (2) | 52. don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today |
| 12. as black as coal | 53. down -to- earth |
| 13. as cold as ice | 54. dreams come true (2) |
| 14. as deaf as a post | 55. early bird catches the worm (5) |
| 15. as fresh as a daisy | 56. easy come easy go (4) |
| 16. as gaudy as butterfly | 57. easy-going (4) |
| 17. as good as gold | 58. eat a horse (3) |
| 18. as strong as horse | 59. eat like a bird (2) |
| 19. at a loose end | 60. eat like a pig (2) |
| 20. at close quarters | 61. eat off the floor (2) |
| 21. at death's door | 62. eat one's hat (2) |
| 22. at first sight | 63. eat your heart out (2) |
| 23. at loggerheads with somebody | 64. economical with the truth |
| 24. bad news travels fast (4) | 65. every cloud has a silver lining |
| 25. be crazy for somebody | 66. face to face |
| 26. beyond the pale | 67. fall asleep |
| 27. break a record (2) | 68. fall in love (8) |
| 28. break one's heart (2) | 69. fall short of something (be short of...) |
| 29. break sweat | 70. fish for a compliment (4) |
| 30. break the ice | 71. for kicks |
| 31. bring home the bacon | 72. from head to foot (2) |
| 32. bring somebody to heel | 73. full of oneself (2) |
| 33. buy time (4) | 74. get in touch with somebody (2) |
| 34. carry the weight of the world on one's shoulders | 75. get one's mind off something |
| 35. cat got your tongue? (4) | 76. get somebody under one's skin |
| 36. chalk and cheese | 77. get well (2) |
| 37. change one's mind | 78. give birth to a baby (4) |
| 38. clam up (4) | 79. go bananas (4) |
| 39. come along for the ride (2) | 80. go through fire and water (2) |
| 40. come rain, come shine | 81. good money (2) |
| 41. couch potato (4) | 82. half the battle |


83. hand in hand
84. hard times
85. have a blast
86. have a lump in one's throat
87. have one's eye on somebody
88. have something up one's sleeve (2)
89. in a nutshell
90. in a tight corner
91. in advance (3)
92. in full swing (3)
93. in no time
94. in the blink of an eye
95. in the flesh (2)
96. in trouble
97. in vain (2)
98. it is better to have loved and lost than
never to have loved at all
99. keep an eye on something (2)
100. larger than life (2)
101. leave a bad taste in one's mouth (4)
102. leave somebody alone
103. let one's hair down (2)
104. light-hearted
105. living proof
106. long time no see
107. lost for words (2)
108. make a difference (4)
109. make a mountain out of a molehill
110. make an impression
111. make an offer
112. make friends (7)
113. make fun of something
114. make love
115. make money (7)
116. make oneself at home
117. make peace
118. make sense
119. make somebody's hair stand on end
120. make sure
121. make the best of something (2)
122. more haste less speed
123. my pleasure
124. not be for the faint-hearted
125. off the mark
126. on the phone
127. open one's doors
128. out for the count
129. out of one's mind (2)
130. out on a limb
131. over and above (2)
132. pass the torch (2)
133. pie in the sky
134. pitch black (3)
135. play tricks on somebody
136. put somebody in trouble
137. reach one's goals
138. see something out of the corner of one's
eye
139. see you around
140. single-minded
141. skin and bone
142. stand -offish
143. strong-minded
144. take a look at something
145. take a shower
146. take advantage of one's knowledge
147. take care
148. take care of somebody/something (9)
149. take into consideration
150. take part in (4)
151. take place (4)
152. take something seriously (2)
153. take something/somebody for granted (5)
154. take the opinions into account
155. take time (2)
156. take your time
157. tell me
158. tell the time
159. tell the truth
160. the apple of one's eye
161. the icing on the cake
162. the man in the street (2)
163. the patient dog gets the bone
164. there's no use crying over spilt milk
165. thin on the ground
166. think aloud (2)
167. tie the knot
168. to death
169. to the core
170. too bad
171. trick or treat
172. try one's best
173. turn heads (2)
174. two sides of the coin
175. up to something
176. watch one's step (2)
177. what's the matter with you?
178. what's up?
179. when in Rome do as the Romans do
180. where there is a will there is always a
way
181. you are what you eat
182. zip one's lips (4)

* the numbers in parentheses indicate the number of usage in the materials.

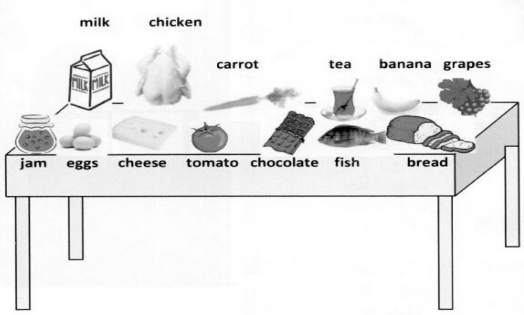
Appendix 3

Sample materials designed by EFL teacher-trainees

UNIT 11



FOOD AND DRINK



1. Copy and complete the diagram

Food				Drink
Meat	Vegetables	Fruit	Other	
.....
.....
.....

2. What has he got on the table?
What should be in the fridge?
Write a short paragraph.

He has got fish in the fridge.

.....

.....


.....


.....


.....


.....


3. Change the pictures into words.
Then practice the dialogue with a partner.


Child: I'm hungry. I want to eat  1

Mother: There isn't any. Would you like to eat  2?

Child: No. Is there any  3?

Mother: No there isn't. Would you like a  4?

Child: No. but is there any  5?

Mother: No there isn't. But there is an  6 in the fridge.

Child: No thanks. I'm not hungry now.

"I could eat a horse" -
 To say that *you* could eat
 a horse means that *you*
 are very hungry.

Figure 1. Sample material for teaching idioms incidentally

Activity II

➤ Chose the correct word from the ones below to fill in the blanks. And try to guess their meanings.

at	for	in	off
on	out	to	with

- a. the icing the cake
- b. full swing
- c. nutshell
- d. the count
- e. shocked the core
- f. a loose end
- g. a tight corner
- h. a limb
- i. economical the truth
- j. thin the ground
- k. loggerheads someone
- l. pie the sky
- m. quick the mark

➤ Select an idiom to illustrate the cartoon below. And write a short story with using this idiom.



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Figure 2. Sample material for teaching idioms explicitly in mechanical, meaningful and communicative activities