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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Use of Proverbs and Idioms in the Written Expressions of Those Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

In this study, which aims to determine the use of proverbs and idioms in the written expressions of those learning Turkish as a foreign language, a case study from qualitative research designs was used. In the study, document analysis was applied, and content analysis was used to analyze the data. The data of the study are the answers of 53 students studying at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University to the C1 writing exam. When the rates of proverbs and idiom usage in the written expressions of the students were examined, it was found that none of the students included proverbs and 40% did not include idioms. It is seen that 42 different idioms were used 81 times; 10 different idioms are included more than once, while the other 32 idioms are included only once by students. When it was examined whether the idioms were used in accordance with the context by the students in writing skills, only one idiom not suitable for the context was found. When the idioms used by the students are compared with the idioms in the textbooks they use in the teaching process, it is seen that 43% of the idioms they include in the written expressions of the students are not found in the textbooks they use in the teaching process. When the relationship between the use of idioms and the average of the success scores of the students from the writing exam is examined, it is seen that the average of the success scores increases as the number of idioms increases.

Keywords: Idiom, proverb, teaching Turkish as a foreign language, vocabulary teaching, writing skill

Introduction

In teaching Turkish as a foreign language, gaining the vocabulary to the target audience is of great importance to achieve the desired goal in terms of language competencies. Vocabulary, according to Aksan (2004, p. 26–39), consists of basic vocabulary (core words), foreign words, idioms, proverbs, relationship words (patterns), stereotypes, terms, and translated words. Aksan intends to say vocabulary with the concept of basic core vocabulary (core words), and according to him, vocabulary emerges as a basic element of core vocabulary (Baş, 2010, p. 141). “Vocabulary and basic vocabulary are separate concepts. Basic vocabulary, also called core words, is the most basic language units that people use frequently in their daily life in line with their needs and have not changed much for centuries” (Çelik, 2019, p. 148).

“Every language express nature, objects, and actions with its own view, with its own interpretation. Therefore, a sign in one language cannot be equivalent to that in another; often not able to fully meet it; For example, the different uses of the word ‘home’ in English can be met with the words *ev, yuva, yurt, vatan...* in Turkish.” (Aksan, 2006, p. 97). Because the lifestyles and thought codes of a nation differ from each other and these can be reflected in the language in various ways. This difference between languages in vocabulary manifests itself clearly, especially in foreign language learning and teaching processes. For this reason, it should be carefully considered that the indicators may not be equivalent among languages in the processes of acquiring vocabulary in foreign language teaching.

The meanings of language indicate the culture of a particular social group (Byram, 1989, p. 41). Foreign language learning is an acculturation process, and cultural transfer in foreign language teaching should not be considered as a spontaneous process or phenomenon (İşcan & Yassıtış, 2018, p. 63). Foreign language teaching can also be learned in environments where the target language is not used as the mother tongue, and in this case, language learners can only encounter the target culture through teaching materials. Since language is the most basic element of culture, foreign language teaching refers to the acquisition of cultural elements to which the target language belongs. Because language is the most basic element of culture and culture can be transferred to people through language. The reflections of the lifestyles and thought codes of a nation in the language show themselves in the most comprehensive way in the proverbs and idioms, which are the elements of vocabulary. According to the Turkish Language Association, the proverb is “an admonishment word, saying, parable, argument, proverb, which was said based on long trials and observations and became popular with the public.” The idiom is defined as “a stereotyped phrase, a phrase that usually has a specific meaning, different from its real meaning.” Transferring the correct usage of these words to the students in teaching Turkish as a foreign language ensures both foreign language learning and comfortable communication and makes it easier to understand what is being said (Tüm, 2010, p. 667). Proverbs and idioms are important indicators of the mentality of societies; they are formally stereotyped, and their structures cannot be changed (Bulut, 2013, p. 572). It is very difficult, sometimes even impossible, to translate proverbs and idioms into another language. Trying to make sense of idioms and proverbs

by translating them word for word can lead to a completely different meaning. For this reason, proverbs and idioms should be evaluated in foreign language teaching processes and given to students.

New trends in foreign language teaching place more emphasis on the role of vocabulary, as it is a fundamental component of communication and understanding (Ababneh, 2015, p. 190). It is expected that the idioms and proverbs that are included in the vocabulary elements can be comprehended and used in appropriate ways in the context so that the target audience can increase their language level in comprehension and expression skills and establish effective communication. "Teaching idioms that increase the power of expression and provide cultural partnership is one of the features that enrich the language" (Metek, 2014, p. 126). Idioms and proverbs have a very important place in spoken and written language. For this reason, it is necessary to teach proverbs and idioms together with vocabulary teaching and almost at the same rate in the education and teaching processes of Turkish (Demir Atalay, 2015, p. 192).

In teaching idioms and proverbs, the most common idioms and proverbs used in daily life should be taken into consideration (Akpınar & Açıık, 2010). There are high-frequency words that can be considered small in the language. These words are very important because they cover a very large part of the words in oral and written texts and appear in all kinds of uses (Nation, 2001, p. 13). However, it is an issue that should be questioned whether word frequency is the only criterion in word selection. Because the learnability of the word is a very important factor in foreign language learning. An infrequent word can also be found in the student's native language. This facilitates the learning of the word (Laufer, 2014, p. 45). For this reason, although it is important to consider the frequency levels in the teaching of idioms and proverbs, the target audience should also be taken into consideration.

Proverbs and idioms have emerged because of the knowledge, accumulation, and experience of societies using the same language throughout history. In the languages of societies that use different languages but live in the same or nearby cultural basins, there are also similarities in terms of proverbs and idioms (Boylu, 2014, p. 21). In foreign language teaching, students should be able to compare the idioms in the target language with the idioms in their mother tongue and notice similar and different usage features (Yavuz, 2010, p. 7). Because there is evidence that the first language has positive and negative effects on the second language in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse levels (Nation, 2009, p. 18).

Communication among people from different cultural backgrounds is complex and can sometimes be confusing (Brosh, 2013, p. 19). For this reason, it is of great importance that the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language is considered in the context of intercultural communicative competence. During the teaching of proverbs and idioms, elements of other cultures should be included in the teaching process, and these should be handled more within the expression skills. In the teaching of proverbs and idioms to foreigners, the proverbs and idioms of the Turkish language are transferred to the students in their reading and listening skills, and then the students are asked whether there are any proverbs and idioms in their native language that contain meanings close to these proverbs and idioms. In this way, the similarities and differences between the two cultures are revealed and the intercultural communicative approach is utilized. While students are enabled to learn the proverbs and idioms of the Turkish language through their comprehension skills, they are also supported to compare the proverbs and idioms of their native language through their narrative skills and to develop their intercultural communicative competencies in this way. In addition, the development of speaking and writing skills is ensured by transferring the proverbs and idioms in their own languages with their expression skills.

Input is a necessary and vital factor in foreign language teaching (Benati, 2020, p. 69). Effective input always precedes effective output (Min, 2013, p. 67). Considering the fact that in order to produce output, input must be faced first, students should first encounter proverbs and idioms in their comprehension skills in order to learn and use proverbs and idioms effectively. It would be wrong to expect students to learn proverbs and idioms on their own and to think that they can infer the meanings of proverbs and idioms from the context in the text. Because proverbs and idioms are not elements of the vocabulary that can be understood by knowing the meanings of the words separately. "Idioms and proverbs need to be conveyed in an effective educational environment. One of the educational environments in which this transfer will take place is textbooks" (Tekin & Baş, 2019, p. 158). For this reason, in the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language, it is a very effective way to use reading texts in the process of introducing proverbs and idioms to students. In reading texts, it is more useful to enable students to see these elements of vocabulary in a concrete way in terms of creating understandable input.

When the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is examined, it can be seen that there are some competencies at the B2 level and above in relation to proverbs and idioms in writing skills. The competencies in which idioms are included in the writing skill in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages are as follows:

Idioms at levels C1 and C2 are included in the creative writing scale (Council of Europe, 2021, p. 71).

A1: "Can combine idiom and humor, but the use of humor is not always appropriate."

C2: "Can use idiom and humor appropriately to increase the impact of the text."

B2 level idioms are included in the correspondence scale (Council of Europe, 2021, p. 87).

B2: "Can understand idiomatic expressions and everyday expressions in correspondence and other communications in most situations and use the most common as appropriate to the situation."

B2 and C1 level idioms are included in the written evaluation table (Council of Europe, 2021, p. 191–192).

C1: "Provides a consistently high degree of grammatical accuracy; maintains occasional errors in grammar, collocations, and idioms."

B2: "Has sufficient language presence to make clear descriptions and express perspectives on most general topics using some complex sentence structures. However, language lacks expressiveness and idiosyncrasy, and the use of more complex forms is still stereotyped."

In foreign language teaching processes, writing skill is the most difficult skill to develop among the other four basic language skills. Even in mother tongue education processes, writing is a more difficult skill to develop compared to the other four basic language skills. For this reason, although the teaching of idioms and proverbs through comprehension skills is started from the basic level, it is expected that the target audience will use idioms and proverbs in writing skills at later levels. Because the fact that what is learned can be used by the learner in new ways corresponds to higher steps according to Bloom's Taxonomy. In addition, it is very difficult for proverbs and idioms to be learned and used in narrative skills compared to other vocabulary elements due to the meaning structures they contain.

When the literature on the use of proverbs and idioms in writing skills in teaching Turkish as a foreign language is examined, it is seen that the studies are mostly included in the vocabulary elements and consist of book reviews. When the studies on the idioms and proverbs used by the students in their writing skills are examined, it is seen that the idioms and proverbs used by the students who have studied with the Yedi İklim Turkish Teaching Set by Serin (2017) at the A1, A2, and B1 levels are examined. It is seen that the idioms and proverbs used by the students who were educated with Gazi, Istanbul, and Hitit Turkish textbooks at A1, A2, B1, B2, and C1 levels were examined by Göçen (2016). When we look at these two studies, it is seen that the study conducted by Serin (2017) was not applied to the C1 level and the study conducted by Göçen (2016) was not applied to students who studied with Yedi İklim textbooks.

This study, which aims to determine the use of proverbs and idioms in the writing skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language, has, unlike the previous studies, handled the writing skills of C1 level students who have been educated with Yedi İklim Turkish textbooks as an object of examination. Again, it is seen that different ways are followed in determining idioms in studies that examined idioms and proverbs in writing skills before. In this study, in the determination of idioms and proverbs, only the "Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms" at the address "sozluk.gov.tr" belonging to the Turkish Language Association was taken into consideration. In addition, it is seen that the sub-problem sentences within the scope of this study are not included in previous studies. In this context, the main problem statement of the study is the question "What is the level of use of proverbs and idioms in the ability of writing C1 exams of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language?" Within the scope of the study, answers were sought for the following sub-questions:

1. How many different proverbs and idioms have those who have learned Turkish as a foreign language used in their writing skills?
2. What is the frequency of proverbs and idioms used by those who learn Turkish as a foreign language in their writing skills?
3. What is the rate at which the proverbs and idioms used by those who learn Turkish as a foreign language in their writing skills are used in accordance with the context?
4. How are the proverbs and idioms used by those who learn Turkish as a foreign language in their writing skills compatible with the textbook used in the teaching process?
5. Is there a relationship between the use of idioms and proverbs in the writing skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language and the success scores they receive from the writing exam?

Methods

Model of the Study

In this study, which aims to determine the use of proverbs and idioms in the writing skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language, a case study (case study), one of the qualitative research designs, was used. In the study, document analysis was applied, and content analysis was used to analyze the data. The case study involves organizing data by specific circumstances to conduct an in-depth study and comparison (Patton, 2018, p. 447). In case studies, the data collected through documents, observations, interviews, and focus group interviews can be analyzed through content analysis or descriptive analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, p. 297). The study focused on the students' use of proverbs and idioms by referring to the C1 writing exam papers. Within the scope of the study, research questions were determined, the situation that would be the subject of the study was defined, a conceptual framework was created, the written answers of the students who took the C1 exam were read in detail and the data subject to the situation was determined, and the related data were presented in tables and graphics using numerical values.

Data Collection and Analysis

In the study conducted by Gün and İkizçınar (2019), the proverbs and idioms in the Yedi İklim Turkish Teaching Set textbooks were determined. According to the study, 57 idioms at A1 level, 125 idioms and 1 proverb at level A2, 174 idioms and 1 proverb at level B1, 333 idioms and 7 proverbs at level B2, and 340 idioms and 8 proverbs at level C1 have been identified. According to the findings obtained from the study, it is seen that idioms and proverbs are at most at the C1 level. For this reason, the C1 level was determined as the object of study, considering that those who learn Turkish as a foreign language will use idioms and proverbs at the C1 level the most in their writing skills.

The data of the study consist of the answers given to the questions in the C1 writing exam of 53 students who have successfully completed the C1 level in Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Language Education Application and Research Center in the 2021–2022 academic year.

In the determination of idioms and proverbs, the "Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms" at the address "sozluk.gov.tr" belonging to the Turkish Language Association was taken into consideration.

The study conducted by Gün and İkizçınar (2019) was utilized in the harmony of the idioms and proverbs used by the students in their writing skills and the idioms and proverbs in the textbooks they use in the teaching process. In the related study, the proverbs, and idioms in the textbooks of the Yedi İklim Turkish Teaching Set were determined by taking into consideration the "Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms" at the address "sozluk.gov.tr" of the Turkish Language Association.

There are many factors in writing that can affect the richness of words, as well as the dimension of vocabulary. These may include familiarity with the subject, skill in writing and communication purpose (Laufer & Nation, 1995, p. 308). Giving students a single question in writing exams can negatively affect students writing skills. For this reason, it is thought that it would be more accurate to include more than one question in the writing exams. The questions within the scope of the study consist of questions aiming to determine the language proficiency of the relevant level in accordance with the teaching sets used in the teaching process by the examination commission of the relevant language center. In this context, students were given three open-ended questions in the exam and asked to choose one of these three questions and write an essay of at least 150 words. The questions requested to be answered by the students are as follows:

1. Before visiting Türkiye, a friend of yours e-mailed you and asked where he/she could visit. What cities do you tell him/her to go to and what to do in the e-mail?
2. What do you think about Turkish food? Which Turkish food do you know, and which one do you like the most?
3. What do you usually do when you go out with your friends?

When the answers of the students participating in the research to the questions are examined, it is seen that 20 of them answered the first question, 16 of them answered the second question, and 17 of them answered the third question.

Workgroup

An easily accessible sampling method was used in the study. The study group of the study consists of 53 students who studied at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Language Education Application and Research Center in the 2021–2022 academic year from A1 level to the end of C1 level. The personal information of the students participating in the research is as follows:

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the study group consists of 53 participants from 22 different countries. When the frequency values

Table 1.
Information on the Distribution of the Students Participating in the Research by Country

Country	F	%
Afghanistan	1	1.89
USA	1	1.89
Azerbaijan	3	5.66
Algeria	1	1.89
Djibouti	1	1.89
Indonesia	8	15.09
Ethiopia	1	1.89
Palestine	3	5.66
Georgia	1	1.89
Iraq	5	9.43
Iran	2	3.77
Congo	2	3.77
Egypt	1	1.89
Mauritania	1	1.89
Nigeria	1	1.89
Uzbekistan	1	1.89
Russia	1	1.89
Somalia	8	15.09
Sudan	1	1.89
Syria	4	7.55
Jordan	2	3.77
Yemen	4	7.55
Total	53	100

according to countries are examined, it is seen that the participants are mostly Indonesian (8), Somali (8), and Iraqi (5).

According to Table 2, 28 of the participants were girls and 25 were boys. In terms of gender, the ratios of male and female participants were very close to each other with 52.83% and 47.17%.

According to Table 3, 45 of the participants are studying at the bachelor's level, 5 at the master's level, and 3 at the doctoral level. Students studying at the undergraduate level constitute 84.91% of the participants, students studying at the master's level constitute 9.43%, and students studying at the doctoral level constitute 5.66%.

Ethic

An application was made to Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University Social Sciences and Humanities Ethics Committee for this research, and as a result of the meeting, ethics committee approval was obtained with the date and decision number of 06.10.2022-15.

Table 2.
Information on the Distribution of the Students Participating in the Research by Gender

Gender	F	%
Female	28	52.83
Male	25	47.17
Total	53	100

Table 3.
Information on the Level of Education of the Students Participating in the Study

Education Level	F	%
Bachelor's degree	45	84.91
Master	5	9.43
Doctorate	3	5.66
Total	53	100

Results

In this section, it has been tried to reach the findings based on the data obtained in accordance with the problem questions of the research. In this context, the data of the students who use proverbs and idioms in writing skills, the data on the frequency of proverbs and idioms used by the students, the data on the appropriate use of proverbs and idioms, the data on the compatibility of proverbs and idioms with Yedi İklim Turkish textbooks, and the data on the relationship between the use of proverbs and idioms and success scores are presented in titles.

Data of Students Using Proverbs and Idioms

When the data on the use of idioms in the writing skills of the students within the scope of the research were examined, it was found that 32 out of 53 students included idioms and 21 did not include idioms at all. When the data on the use of proverbs in the writing skills of the students were examined, it was found that the students did not include the proverb in their written expressions at all.

When the Figure 1 is examined, it is seen that 60% of the students within the scope of the research use idioms and 40% do not use idioms at all. In this sense, it is seen that the rate of students who do not include idioms in their writing skills is quite high.

Data on the Frequency of Proverbs and Idioms Used by Students

When the answers given by the students to the questions of writing skills are examined, it is seen that the students used 42 different idioms 81 times.

Frequencies of idioms used by students in writing skills are as follows:

To take pictures (10), to visit (9), to spend time (6), to come to mind (5), to decide (5), to have picnic (4), to realize (3), how much (3), to go for a walk (2), to invite (2), to emigrate (1), to make joke (1), to have argument (1), to flow (1), heavenly (1), to enjoy the world (1), to find opportunity (1), to be proud (1), to act (1), to live (1), to enjoy (1), to need (1), to attract attention (1), to take permission (1), to show off (1), to keep under control (1), to be depressed (1), to be able (1), to happen (1), to get ahead (1), to make an appointment (1), to consent (1), to serve (1), to order (1), to savor (1), to taste (1), to take a vacation (1), to get to know better (1), to eat and drink (1), to take a walk (1), and to harm (1).

When the idioms used by the students in writing skills are examined, it is seen that 10 different idioms are used more than once, while the other 32 idioms are used only once. According to Figure 2, high-frequency idioms are as follows:

To take pictures (10), to visit (9), to spend time (6), to come to mind (5), to decide (5), to have picnic (4), to realize (3), how much (3), to go for a walk (2), and to invite (2).

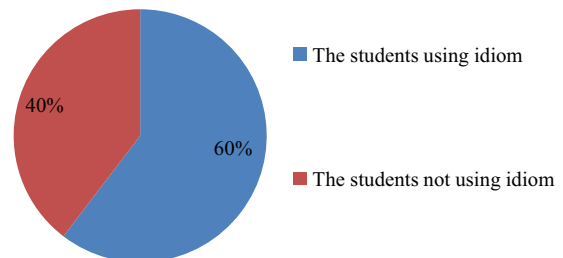


Figure 1.
Percentage Value of Students Using and Not Using Idioms.

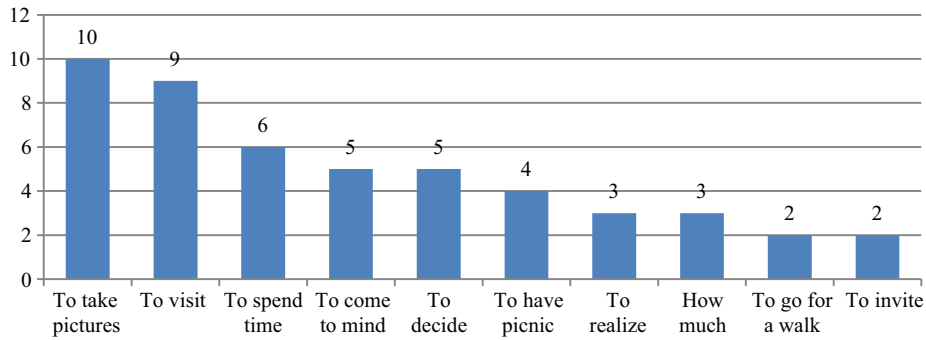


Figure 2. High-Frequency Idiom.

Data on the Contextual Use of Proverbs and Idioms

When examining whether the idioms are used in accordance with the context by the students, only one idiom that is not suitable for the context has been identified. This idiom, used by the student in the wrong context, is “to be proud.” The use of the idiom by the student is as follows:

S. 14: “The views of Eymir, mogan and other lakes are beyond wonderful. I missed seeing you so much that I am also proud to see you in Turkey. Turkey is one of the best education countries in the world,”

The phrase “to be proud” is defined as “to boast about” by the Turkish Language Association; “Proud” is “To be proud of oneself, to be arrogant, to put on airs.” is defined as. It is thought that the student wants to use the phrase “to be proud” in the sense of “to be happy.”

When the Figure 3 is examined, a total of 32 of the 53 students in the study included idioms in writing skills. It was determined that 31 students who used idioms in their writing skills used idioms in accordance with the context, and the idiom used by 1 student in writing skill was not appropriate for the context. In this regard, it was determined that 97% of the 32 students who used idioms in this way used idioms in accordance with the context, and 3% used idioms without being appropriate for the context.

Data on the Compatibility of Proverbs and Idioms With Yedi İklim Turkish Textbooks

In the study conducted by Gün and İkizçınar (2019), the proverbs and idioms in the Yedi İklim Turkish Teaching Set textbooks were examined and the idioms and proverbs in the textbook for all levels were listed. The teaching set used by the working group in the Turkish teaching process is the Yedi İklim Turkish Set. In this sense, it is very important whether the idioms used by the students in the study group in their writing skills are included in the textbooks they use in the teaching process because this data reveals whether the idioms used by the students in their writing skills learn only from textbooks.

As a result of the examination, it is seen that 18 different idioms used by the students in their writing skills are not among the idioms

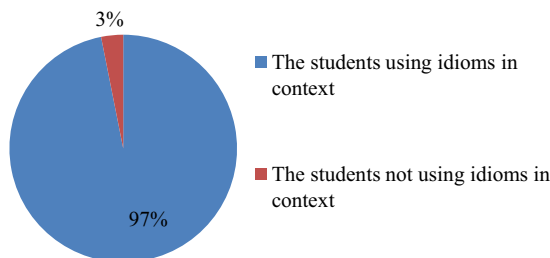


Figure 3. Percentage Value of Students Using and Not Using Idioms In Context.

determined by Gün and İkizçınar (2019, p. 231) in Yedi İklim Turkish textbooks. These idioms are “To migrate, to argue, to flow, heavenly, to enjoy the world, to attract attention, to show oneself, to keep oneself in check, to demoralize, goes on, to be ahead, to make appointments, to consent, to order, to taste, to take vacations, to eat and drink, and how much.”

When the Figure 4 is examined, it is seen that 57% of the idioms used by students in writing skills are compatible with the idioms determined by Gün and İkizçınar (2019) in Yedi İklim Turkish textbooks, while 43% of them are not.

Data on the Relationship Between Proverb and Idiom Use and Achievement Scores

The average of the achievement scores of 21 students who do not include idioms and proverbs in writing is 72, the average of the success scores of 13 students who use 1 different idiom is 74, the average of 7 students who use 2 different idioms is 78, and the average of 4 students who use 3 or more different idioms is 85.

When the Figure 5 is examined, it is seen that there is a positive relationship between the number of different idioms students use in writing skills and the average of their achievement scores. It can also be said that as the number of different idioms used by students in their writing skills increases, their success scores increase.

Discussion

Writing is the most observable skill as it enables a product to emerge through other basic language skills and grammar rules (Korkmaz, 2019, p. 175). The determination of whether the learning is fully realized or not can be easily achieved through the feedback on the writing skill. In the skill of writing, the “create” step, which is the highest step in the Bloom Taxonomy, also comes into play. The student can transfer what he/she has learned with the new sentences he/she has created within his/her writing skill. In this sense, writing skill has a very important place in teaching Turkish as a foreign language in terms of getting feedback and thus controlling the teaching process.

The extent to which students can use the elements of the vocabulary they have can be seen in the most obvious way in their writing

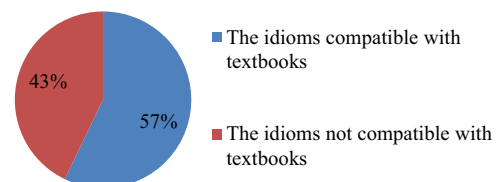


Figure 4. The Compatibility of the Idioms Used by Students in Writing Skills With the Textbooks Used in the Teaching Process.

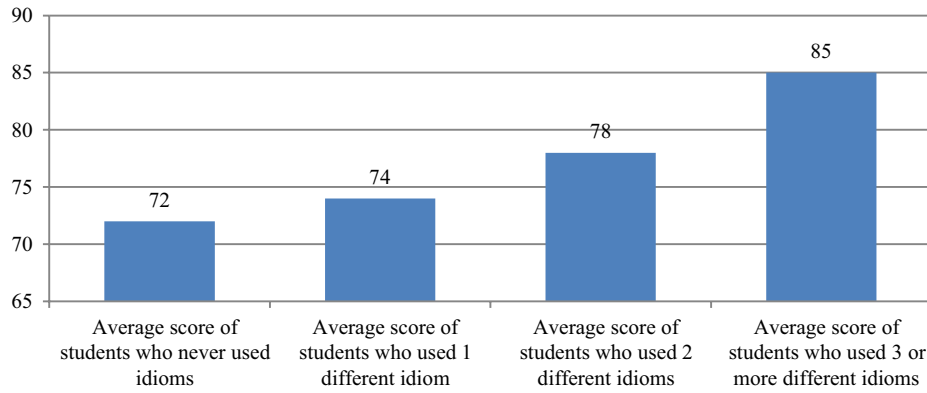


Figure 5.
The Relationship Between the Use of Idioms and Proverbs and Success Scores.

ability. However, the learning and correct use of idioms and proverbs within the elements of lexical existence in context is more difficult than other elements of vocabulary because “Proverbs and idioms are the secret formulas of cultural transmission” (Kalfa, 2013, p. 173). Proverbs and idioms, which are among the important expression options of the language, reflect the social and cultural values of the society and complement each other. The use of Turkish in a conscious, proper, simple, and understandable way and the development of comprehension and expression skills make it necessary to make intensive use of proverbs and idioms (Bulut, 2013, p. 564). In this sense, to determine the level of competence of the students in the use of proverbs and idioms, which is a language proficiency that is very difficult, the proverbs and idioms in the answers of 53 students to the C1 writing exam were examined.

It was determined that the students within the scope of the research did not include proverbs in their written expressions. The fact that 32 of the students included idioms and 21 did not include idioms at all was determined. In this sense, it is seen that 60% of the students use idioms in their written expressions and 40% do not use idioms at all.

The textbooks of the Yedi İklim Turkish Teaching Set used by the students within the scope of the research throughout the teaching process were examined by Gün and İkizçınar (2019, p. 231) in terms of proverbs and idioms. According to the study, 57 idioms at A1 level; 125 idioms and 1 proverb at level A2; 174 idioms and 1 proverb at level B1; 333 idioms and 7 proverbs at level B2; and 340 idioms and 8 proverbs at level C1 have been identified.

According to the study conducted by Gün and İkizçınar (2019), it was concluded that proverbs and idioms were included in the textbooks at the C1 level the most. It is seen that a total of 1029 idioms and 17 proverbs are used in Yedi İklim Turkish Teaching Set textbooks. In this sense, it can be stated that the use of proverbs in textbooks is quite low. The fact that the proverb teaching in the textbooks is quite low is also reflected in the writing skills of the students.

When the idioms used by the students in their writing skills are examined in terms of frequency, it is seen that 42 different idioms are used 81 times. It is seen that 10 different idioms are used more than once, while the other 32 idioms are used only once. Idioms with high frequency are as follows: to take picture (10), to visit (9), to spend time (6), to come to mind (5), to decide (5), to have a picnic (4), to realize (3), how much (3), to go for a walk (2), and to invite (2).

In the study conducted by Serin (2017), the idioms and proverbs used by the students who use the Yedi İklim Turkish Teaching Set in

their learning processes in their written expressions at A1, A2, and B1 levels were determined. In the study, it was found that the students did not use proverbs at the A1 level but used one different proverb at the A2 level and two different proverbs at the B1 level. In the same study, it was revealed that the students did not use idioms at the A1 level, they used 5 different idioms at the A2 level and 23 different idioms at the B1 level. In this study, it was determined that students used 42 different idioms in C1 level writing skills. In this sense, it can be stated that as the students’ levels progress, the use of idioms increases.

In the study conducted by Göçen (2016), the idioms and proverbs used by students studying in Gazi, İstanbul, and Yeni Hitit textbooks in their written expressions at A1, A2, B1, B2, and C1 levels were examined. When we look at the C1 level, 12 students studying with the Gazi textbook used 2 different idioms and did not use proverbs. It was determined that 11 students studying with the new Hitit textbook used only 1 proverb and did not use idioms, while 77 students studying with İstanbul textbooks used 6 different idioms and did not use proverbs.

When the idioms and proverbs in the written expressions of the students in this study are compared with the study conducted by Göçen (2016), it is seen that the findings are quite similar in terms of proverbs. When compared in terms of idiom usage, serious differences are seen. These differences are thought to be due to the difference in the method used to determine the idioms. In this study, while the proverbs and idioms dictionary of the Turkish Language Association were taken as the basis for determining the idioms, in the study conducted by Göçen (2016), after listing the idioms in the idioms dictionary of the Turkish Language Association, an expert opinion was taken as to which ones were qualified as idioms in the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language and the idioms in the results were taken into consideration. In the study conducted by Erdoğan (2019, p. 67), it was concluded that the most used idioms in Gazi, İstanbul, and Yedi İklim Turkish A1, A2, B1, B2, and C1 textbooks were “To appear” and “To take place.” It is seen that these idioms detected in the study are not included in the writing skills of the students at all.

When it was examined whether the idioms were used by the students in a way appropriate to the context in the writing skill, only one idiom that was not suitable for the context was identified. This idiom, used by the student in the wrong context, is “to be proud.” It was determined that 31 of the students who used idioms in writing skills used idioms in accordance with the context, while 1 student used 1 idiom without being appropriate to the context. It was revealed that 97% of the 32 students who used idioms in this way used idioms in accordance with the context, and 3% used idioms without being appropriate for the context.

When the idioms used by the students in the C1 writing skill are compared with the idioms in the textbooks they use in their learning processes, it is seen that 18 different idioms are not among the idioms identified by Gün and İkizçınar (2019) in the Yedi İklim Turkish textbooks. It was determined that 57% of the idioms used by the students in writing skills were compatible with the idioms determined by Gün and İkizçınar (2019, p. 231) in the Yedi İklim Turkish textbooks, while 43% were not compatible. Yılmaz Atagül (2015) tried to determine the most used 150 proverbs and 150 idioms in Turkish with 50 teachers with at least 2 years of experience in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language. It was concluded that the idioms determined in the study were not among the idioms used by the students in their writing skills.

When the relationship between the use of idioms and proverbs and the average of the success scores of the students from the writing skills is examined, the average of the success scores of 21 students who do not include idioms and proverbs is 72, the average of the success scores of 13 students who use 1 different idiom is 74, the average of the success scores of 7 students who use 2 different idioms is 78, and the average of the success scores of 4 students who use 3 and more different idioms is 85. In this sense, it is seen that there is a positive relationship between the number of different idioms students use in writing skills and the average of their achievement scores. It can be said that as the number of different idioms students use in writing skills increases, their success scores increase. This may indicate that in the process of assessing the writing ability of the instructors, they consider whether students are using idioms or not.

Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the results obtained from the study, it was determined that those who learned Turkish as a foreign language did not include proverbs in their writing skills at all, and 40% of the students did not include idioms at all. This shows that the teaching of proverbs and idioms is not carried out effectively in the teaching materials and teaching processes used. In addition, the fact that 43% of the idioms used by students are not found in the textbook used in the teaching process raises questions about the idioms in the textbooks. In this sense, in the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language, frequency studies in the teaching of proverbs and idioms should be taken into consideration. Proverbs and idioms should be taught to students by leveling them according to their frequency levels and learning controls should be provided through the writing skill of these vocabulary elements. When proverbs and idioms are transferred to students, the grammar structures and basic words they contain should be as appropriate for the level as much as possible because students may have difficulty in understanding proverbs and idioms that contain grammatical structures and basic words that have not been taught.

In the transfer of idioms and proverbs to the target audience, asking whether the proverbs and idioms of the Turkish language have close meanings in their native language can make the teaching process more effective. In this way, it is ensured that students make comparisons between their mother tongue and the target language and that the students' intercultural communicative competencies are developed. In this sense, in the study conducted by Mutlu (2016, p. 255), 60 proverbs and 140 idioms with similarities between Turkish and Polish were identified. Similarly, it will be very useful for those who learn Turkish as a foreign language to determine the idioms and proverbs with close meanings between their mother tongue and Turkish and to use them in their teaching processes and materials.

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