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Title

The Significance of Formulaic Sequences as a Literary Stylistic Stamp:

An Analytical Study of *Beyond the Blue Hills* by Katie Flynn



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Title

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Stylistic Stamp:**

*An Analytical Study of *Beyond the Blue Hills* by Katie Flynn*

Submitted by

Raihana FOURAR

Statement of Authorship

I, **Raihana FOURAR**, do hereby declare that the content of this thesis is entirely my original work and has not been previously submitted to any other academic institution or university for the purpose of obtaining a degree.

I confirm that all the information contained in this thesis has been collected and presented in strict adherence to academic rules and ethical principles. I further confirm that I have cited and referenced all non-original materials in this work.

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Dedication

*To all the well-wishers
who made me dream, believe and make it happen*

-Raihana-

Abstract

Formulaic sequences can have a significant effect in literary texts, primarily by conveying meanings that are necessary for enhancing readers' comprehension of an overall literary work. The primary aim of this study was to demonstrate that formulaic sequences can be functional under a stylistic framework, and to establish their stylistic significance among syntactic structures in literary works. It also sought to take into consideration the attitudes and beliefs of EFL students towards the subject matter. To address the research aims, a mixed-methods approach and a case study design were adopted. The methodology involved the use of a semi-structured questionnaire as a preliminary data collection method, administered to a small sample size (n=47) of Master Students at the department of English and Literature in Biskra University. The principal method was document analysis wherein the novel *Beyond the Blue Hills* written by the British author Katie Flynn was selected. Samples of formulaic sequences, phrasal verbs and idioms, were identified to serve as the corpus for subsequent content analysis and stylistic analysis. The results indicated that formulaic sequences can be considered a stylistic stamp in literary texts because they have the ability to contribute to the semantic level of language in addition to the aesthetic one. The study emphasised the importance of formulaic sequences for EFL learners in affecting their comprehension and enjoyment of literary works since their attitudes were positive towards these sequences. This study suggests the need for further research involving a larger and more diverse population, exploring various analytical perspectives to establish the role of formulaic sequences within a stylistic framework.

Keywords: Formulaic sequences, idioms, literary works, phrasal verbs, stylistic stamp

Summary in French

Les expressions figées peuvent avoir un effet significatif dans les textes littéraires, principalement en transmettant des significations nécessaires pour améliorer la compréhension des lecteurs d'une œuvre littéraire globale. L'objectif principal de cette étude était de démontrer que Les expressions figées peuvent être fonctionnelles dans un cadre stylistique et d'établir leur signification stylistique parmi les structures syntaxiques des œuvres littéraires. Il a également cherché à prendre en considération les attitudes et les croyances des étudiants EFL envers le sujet. Pour répondre aux objectifs de la recherche, une approche à méthodes mixtes et une conception d'étude de cas ont été adoptées. La méthodologie impliquait l'utilisation d'un questionnaire semi-structuré comme méthode préliminaire, administré à un petit échantillon d'étudiants (n=47) en master au département d'anglais et de littérature de l'Université de Biskra. La méthode principale était l'analyse de documents dans laquelle le roman *Beyond the Blue Hills* écrit par l'auteur britannique Katie Flynn a été sélectionné. Des échantillons de séquences de formules ont été identifiés et soumis à une combinaison d'analyse de contenu et d'analyse stylistique. Les résultats ont indiqué que Les expressions figées peuvent être considérées comme un cachet stylistique dans les textes littéraires car elles ont la capacité de contribuer au niveau sémantique du langage en plus du niveau esthétique. L'étude a souligné l'importance des expressions figées pour les apprenants EFL en affectant leur compréhension et leur plaisir des œuvres littéraires puisque leurs attitudes étaient positives envers ces séquences. Cette étude appelle à de nouvelles recherches impliquant une population plus large et différentes perspectives analytiques pour établir le statut des séquences de formules dans un cadre stylistique.

Mots-clés : Empreinte stylistique, expressions figées, idiomes, œuvres littéraires, verbes à particules.

Summary in Arabic

يمكن أن يكون للصيغ النمطية التسلسلية تأثير كبير في النصوص الأدبية، وذلك من خلال نقل المعاني الضرورية لتعزيز فهم القراء للعمل الأدبي. كان الهدف الأساسي من هذه الدراسة هو إثبات أن هذه الصيغ النمطية التسلسلية يمكن أن تكون وظيفية في إطار أسلوبية، بالإضافة إلى إثبات أهميتها الأسلوبية بين الهياكل النحوية في الأعمال الأدبية. كما سعت الدراسة إلى مراعاة معتقدات طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية اتجاه موضوع الدراسة. لتحقيق أهداف البحث، تم اعتماد منهج مختلط وتصميم دراسة الحالة. تضمنت المنهجية استخدام استبيان شبه منظم مع عينة صغيرة من طلاب الماجستير في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية والأدب في جامعة بسكرة. أما بالنسبة إلى الطريقة الرئيسية فكانت تحليل الوثائق حيث تم اختيار رواية "Beyond the Blue Hills" للكاتبة البريطانية Katie Flynn. تم استخراج عينات من الصيغ النمطية التسلسلية حيث خضعت لمزيج من تحليل المحتوى والتحليل الأسلوبية. أشارت النتائج إلى أن الصيغ النمطية التسلسلية يمكن اعتبارها طابعاً أسلوبياً في النصوص الأدبية لأنها تمتلك القدرة على المساهمة في المستوى الدلالي للغة بالإضافة إلى المستوى الجمالي. كما أكدت الدراسة على أهمية الصيغ النمطية التسلسلية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في التأثير على استيعابهم وتمتعهم بالأعمال الأدبية حيث كانت مواقفهم إيجابية تجاه هذه الصيغ. في الأخير، تدعو هذه الدراسة إلى إجراء دراسات أخرى مع مجتمع بحث أوسع واستخدام وجهات نظر تحليلية مختلفة لتحديد دور الصيغ النمطية التسلسلية في إطار أسلوبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصيغ النمطية التسلسلية، أعمال أدبية، أفعال مركبة، أمثال، طابع أسلوبية

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

COCA: Corpus of Contemporary American English

EAT: Electronic Text Analysis

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

Et al.,: Et alia (and others)

e.g.,: Example

i.e.,: Id est (it means)

p.: Page

RH: Research Hypothesis

RQ: Research Question

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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General Introduction

The appreciation of readers to literary works does not emerge out from a void of nothingness, but it is indebted to stylisticians who are engaging enthusiastically in bridging the gap between literature and linguistics under the field of stylistics. As a matter of fact, the idea of understanding literature is closely linked to the ability of the different cohorts of stylisticians in studying language since it is still considered as a complex linguistic phenomenon. This claim can be referred back to the creative potential of language that is undeniable, and this by its turn may harden the researcher's task that she takes upon her shoulder. This token can bring a researcher to take some inspirations from Sinclair's concepts (as cited in Erman & Warren, 2000) about language principles where he made a distinction between the open-choice principle and the idiom principle.

The idiom principle denotes the existence of pre-constructed multi-words combinations in language, known as formulaic sequences. The latter can be used by authors to convey their communicative messages and ideas. However, the efficacy of these sequences in making an author's writings enhanced and more comprehensible for the outsiders (i.e., readers) should be geared. Otherwise stated, the significance of formulaic sequences on literary works, and whether they play the role of a stylistically distinctive stamp is put under examination on a literary linguistic ground by the researcher of the current study.

1. Statement of the Problem

Attempting to transform abstract ideas into written productions, in general, and to literary works, in particular, the writer is undoubtedly representing his own unique literary style. The latter is made up, basically, from a variety of lexical and syntactical choices in accordance with the intended meaning to be conveyed by the writer who has the ability to exercise control over the interpretation of the reader to what has been written. Therefore,

any writer is required, at the outset, to make an appropriate selection of words and syntactical combinations in order to guarantee, to a certain degree, the full containment and explicitness of the meaning in the text. Not only that, but to make the reader's contact with the meaning seamless and enjoyable, in addition to reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings that may occur to the meaning decoder who is, in most cases, separate from the encoder of the text in terms of time and space, culture, or geography.

Language is not syntactically generated from scratch each time. That is to say, authors, intentionally or not, employs a variety of ready-made forms that are called "formulaic sequences". Additionally, they intend to make use of certain stylistic devices that open the door for an explicit and accurate interpretation of the negotiated meaning by both parties of the writing and reading processes (i.e., writer and reader). In terms of formulaic sequences, researchers, regardless of their orientation/perspectives, have intensively investigated their significance with regards to linguistic concerns. However, the tendency to link the notion of formulaicity to literature does not seem to be examined largely. In essence, as stylistics spans both the realms of literature and linguistics, the role of formulaic sequences, whether it is situated on the intersections with these fields, needs to be put under lens by stylisticians in order to reveal their probability of being considered as a stylistically distinctive stamp within literary works.

Having stated the above, it becomes apparent that the researcher is mainly interested in demonstrating that formulaic sequences hold a specific literary stylistic significance among syntactic structures in literary works. Moreover, ensuring this significance necessitates from the researcher, based on her perspective to the carried investigation, to study the implication of formulaic sequences on readers as they may easily understand and even enjoy a literary work with the presence of these formulae. In this sense, the question of specifying the role of formulaic sequences in literary texts has been problematized, and the

result may help in establishing the importance of these sequences in relation to literary works.

2. Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards the inclusion of formulaic sequences in literary texts?

RQ2: What sort of functionality do formulaic sequences add to a literary text within a stylistic framework?

RQ3: Do formulaic sequences hold a specific literary stylistic significance among syntactic structures in literary works?

3. Research Hypotheses

Based on the above research questions, the following research hypotheses can be proposed:

RH1: EFL students believe that formulaic sequences can affect their comprehension and enjoyment of literary texts.

RH2: The attained effect by formulaic sequences in literary texts can be reflected on the semantic level of language in addition to the aesthetic one.

RH3: Formulaic sequences can be considered as a stylistic stamp in literary texts and the overall literary work.

4. Research Aims

- General Aim:

This study aims to investigate the importance of formulaic sequences to literary works, uncovering how these sequences contribute to the overall meaning, comprehension, and enjoyment. It also aims to examine their effect on enhancing the reader's understanding of the embedded meanings and evoked emotions within literary texts. Overall, this study

intends to deepen the understanding of formulaic sequences in literary works and offer practical insights and insightful recommendations for readers and researchers, ultimately enriching the field of stylistic studies.

- Specific Aims:

In specific aims, the present study seeks to:

- Laying an emphasis on the link that ties the notion of formulaicity to literary works.
- Developing a sense of awareness about the functionality of formulaic sequences in making literary texts more comprehensive and enjoyable.
- Orienting readers' focus to a literary stylistic stamp that may work as a means for them to a clearer comprehension of the meanings embedded in literary written works.

5. Significance of the Study

This ongoing study might be significant as it attempts to demonstrate the importance of including formulaic sequences in literary texts by revealing the semantic contribution and stylistic significance that such formulae may create. Additionally, the significance of this study will be redound to the benefit of readers of literary products (e.g., short stories, novels, poems or novellas) as it may assist them to read more competently by providing them with a stylistic stamp that can facilitate their overall understanding in addition to maximising their enjoyment. The findings of this study may also encourage researchers to be more enthusiastic about undertaking other studies in associated areas to the current research.

6. Research Methodology for this Study

Framing a research methodologically stands a yardstick that has the ability to determine the value of any work conducted by a researcher. On this basis, specific methodological decisions should be made in relation to the aims and, most importantly, to the nature of the study. With regard to this study, it seeks to explore the importance of formulaic sequences, as prefabricated sequences of language, and if they can be considered

as a stylistically marked stamp in literature. For doing so, a focus will be directed to these sequences' contribution to the semantic level of literary texts while keeping an eye on their aesthetic value. However, this aim will be preceded by an exploration of the actual responses of EFL students towards the possible effect that formulaic sequences may have on their ability to understand and value a literary work. For doing so, a mixed-method approach is adopted wherein the qualitative aspect is prioritised.

As a research design, it is suitable to opt for a case study design because it seems the most appropriate one as it enables a researcher to closely explore and understand the importance of formulaic sequences in a literary work. Even if this design avoids the idea of generalising to other contexts, it offers valuable insights about general patterns when examining the particulars (i.e., samples of formulaic sequences and a sample of EFL students). Moreover, it enables the integration of both qualitative and quantitative data depending on the nature of the study as well as the researcher's objectives.

As far as this study is concerned with data collection, coherent methods with the aims of the study should be selected. First, a semi-structured questionnaire is employed as a preliminary data collection method in order to include the attitudes and beliefs of EFL students regarding the effect that formulaic sequences can have on a reader's comprehension of literary texts. With regard to the target population, the researcher is going beyond the bachelor's degree to include master students at the department of English and Literature in Biskra University, Algeria. The population of this study, consisting of 179 individuals, is selected because they are supposed to deal with the notion of formulaicity in their curriculum, giving them a fundamental merit to be selected among several universities. However, only a small sample size of EFL students is assigned to participate in this study based on a purposive sampling technique. Worthy to be stressed out, the questionnaire

intends to supplement the principal method of this study by including the opinions of individuals about the subject matter.

The principal data collection method that it is used in this study is document analysis, focusing on the novel *Beyond the Blue Hills* by Katie Flynn. However, the analysis of a lengthy literary written work by considering its various formulaic sequences is inherently challenging and cannot be fully exhaustive. Therefore, a process of identification and selection of a number of formulaic sequences, mainly phrasal verbs and idioms, is an essential step for a systematic study. This step allows constructing a corpus/a list of identified samples of formulaic sequences that can be further analysed. It is worth mentioning here that identifying formulaic sequences or considering a sequence as formulaic remains a difficult challenge for the researcher; so, there will be a reliance on intuitive-judgement followed by supplementary procedures to verify the status of each selected formulaic sequence.

7. Structure of the Thesis

The structure of this thesis can be divided into five chapters encompassed under two main parts: the theoretical part and the practical part. The former is devoted to the theoretical framework of the study whereas the latter deals with the methodological framework, data analysis and main results. The thesis is opened with a general introduction that sets the stage for the upcoming chapters by introducing the topic of the study, the main aims, the methodological plan to be followed and a brief explanation of the chapters' content.

The first chapter aims to establish the theoretical foundation and background knowledge related to stylistics in order to position formulaic sequences within this field, which is a mediation between linguistics and literature. It starts with introducing the concept of style, and shifts to the field of stylistics by shedding light on its definition, nature,

principles and types. It also discusses the mediation created by stylistics between linguistics and literature.

In building a comprehensive overview on formulaic sequences, the second chapter presents basic notions and aspects of these sequences by considering their historical background, definition and characteristics. After that, it lays a special focus on their methods of identification in texts in addition to their major types, especially that these information have a direct link to the practical part of the study.

The third chapter is concerned with presenting every methodological decision along its rationale to give credibility to the results of the study. It carefully considers the adopted research paradigm, approach and design. Moreover, it provides an in-depth explanation of the selected data collection methods accompanied by a clarification of the employed procedures for data collection in addition to data analysis.

With the aim of presenting, discussing and interpreting the results of the study, the fourth chapter is fully dedicated to do that systematically. This chapter delves into the data collected based on the two employed methods. It starts with describing and discussing the questionnaire results in order to explore EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards the research topic. Then, it presents the results of the document analysis, including the process of identification of each category (i.e., phrasal verbs and idioms). The obtained input is analysed using a combination of content analysis and stylistic analysis to each identified sample to shed light on the stylistic significance of these formulas.

The fifth chapter aims to synthesise the actual process of conducting the study in order to provide a holistic overview to the reader of this thesis. It includes the followed methodological plan, the inferred results and conclusions, the suitable pedagogical implications and recommendations as well as the acknowledged limitations of the study. At

the end, a general conclusion that serves as a summary of the entire study is added to make a closure for the thesis.

Chapter One

Chapter One: Stylistics as an Emerging Discipline of Enquiry

Introduction

1.1 Concept of Style

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Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an overview on the field of stylistics. At the outset, it defines the concept of style in addition to the approaches of style viewing. Then, it seeks to comprise a set of definitions about stylistics after displaying a brief historical account on this field. The interdisciplinary nature, purpose and scope of stylistics are also covered. To proceed with this overview, scientific principles of stylistics are provided in addition to some major types of this field. These includes linguistics stylistics, literary stylistics and reader-response stylistics. At the end, light will be shed on the role of stylistics as a mediation between linguistics and literature.

1.1 Concept of Style

On a broad view, the concept of “style”, as an abstract one, may be viewed in various ways, and referred to by several meanings due to its existence in many aspects of everyday life practices whether they were for pleasure, work, professional matters or scientific research. By way of example, style can appear in discussion in fashion, behaviours, architecture, linguistics and literature. One may say that the multiple interpretations of the term “style” indicates the multiplicity of the contexts where it can be found. However, it seems to be most often discussed when someone gets into the sphere of linguistics and literary studies.

Undeniably, it would be a hasty mistake not to step back, and look at the original blueprint of the appearance of this term. Etymologically speaking, “style” was originated from the Latin term “stylus” that means “a pen”, and, by its turn, refers to “an instrument of writing”, and which, by the course of time, turned to mean “a manner of writing” (Wales, 2014).

On a similar but a historical vein, the concept “style” can be traced back to the Greeks who found themselves concerned with the definition of “style” when carrying out studies on

speeches and spoken pieces of communication, about the fifth century BC. As a matter of fact, the classical school of rhetoric, which was curious about different means of persuasion and argumentation, made the first attempts to explore style. Anyhow, their traditional notion was characterised by prescriptiveness and subjectivity in nature and scope because they believed that a language flowered with several devices and figures would definitely impress and affect the audience emotionally whether in political or religious discourses. In this respect, Murry (1976, as cited in Galperin, 1977) wrote:

The notion that style is applied ornament had its origin, no doubt, in the tradition of the schools of rhetoric in Europe; and in its place in their teaching the conception was monstrous as it is today. For the old professors of rhetoric were exclusively engaged in instructing their pupils how to expound an argument or arrange a pleading (p.9).

Otherwise stated, classical rhetoricians centred their focus on impressionistic judgments in the process of teaching and learning. Unfavourably, this kind of literary effort and thinking laid out a remarkable weakness in their works. By consequence, a door was opened for further investigations to, objectively, examine the concept of style that led to the emergence of “stylistics”. The latter will be more clarified and illustrated in another section from this chapter later on.

On a newer examination to this concept (i.e., style), it can be noticed that it was given more in-depth linguistic orientation by Ferdinand de Saussure, the Swiss linguists, when he put forth his *Langue/Parole* binary in his Cours de Linguistique Générale at the beginning of the twentieth century. According to Chapman and Routledge (2009), *langue* “denotes a system of internalised, shared rules governing a national language’s vocabulary, grammar, and sound system” whereas *parole* “designates actual oral and written communication by a member or members of a particular speech community” (p.113). Simply put, “*Langue*” is an

internal system of rules shared by users of a specific language, and “Parole” refers to the external usages of this system based on different choices made by individual speakers or writers in any communicative event. Nonetheless, what concerns us the most is the sort of correspondence/relationship that coexist between Saussure’s dichotomy and style as an elusive concept. For instance, Leech and Short (2007) may have fulfilled the task when they stated in straightforward words that “style, then, pertains to parole: it is selection from a total linguistic repertoire that constitutes a style” (p.9). That is to say, there is a certain overlap between “parole”, as a linguistic phenomenon, and “style”, as a literary-linguistic phenomenon.

All things considered, the interest is mainly in providing a clear understanding to the concept of “style” which is designated as a point of departure for other oscillations by literary critics and linguists. Therefore, the most adapted way for realising that shall be followed by working with some of its existing definitions in the body of literature.

1.1.1 Multifaceted definition of style

Falling under one unified and comprehensive definition seems difficult by reason of the heterogeneity and ambiguity that stem from the concept of “style”. As a matter of fact, researchers occupied with philosophical, linguistic, literary criticism and sociolinguistic studies refused being slaves to ancient verbal definitions; so, they found themselves concerned with exploring this concept. Therefore, the idea of clarifying its defining borders by highlighting some of its common characteristics in a context that would suit the one of the current research appears as a sound one.

Being a linguist interested with English stylistics, Galperin (1977) considered the expressed definition by Seymour Chatman as the most frequent one on “style”, and which is, with the author’s original words, as follows: “Style is a product of individual choices and patterns of choices (emphasis added) among linguistic possibilities” (Chatman 1967, as

cited in Galperin, 1977). This statement shows that each writer has his own peculiar and idiosyncratic style that he develops based on a linguistic repertoire. From his part, Buffon (1971) best illustrated the individual aspect of style with his famous aphorism: “Le style, c’est l’homme” (as cited in Devito, 1967)

On the same line, Devito (1967) stated that “Style may be defined as the selection and arrangement of those linguistic features which are open to choice” (p.249). This suggests that not all linguistic features are open to free-choice. This means that some arranged features in a prescribed manner are not a matter of choice neither style. Devito (1967) argued that morphophonology prescribes the rules of arranging English word (ex, the pronunciation of the plural morpheme “-s” changes between [s], [z] and [ɪz] depending on the word to which it is attached) . That is to say, the speaker is not totally free in making a stylistic decision, particularly on the morphophonological level, unless there was a violation of the rules. In sum, there is a variety of optional and obligatory stylistic features.

Other ameliorated definitions were given to this portmanteau word (i.e., style); one of which goes back to Botha (1991):

“Style has to do with the choices available to users of language, and since these choices are determined by specific needs and circumstances, style is a contextually determined phenomenon. Because of this, style in effect deals with the successful communication of texts in context. Every aspect of language which facilitates this process of communication, therefore, has to do with the style of the text” (p.78-79)

In addition to the idiosyncrasies of style and degree of choice availability, Botha stressed its rhetorical and communicative function where context is considered as a main determiner. Not only that, but he pointed out to the stylistic characterisation of any language feature that has the ability to facilitate the communicative process.

In a recent view, Studer (2008) noted that: “Style makes linguistic expression meaningful and distinctive. In literary texts - the traditional domain of stylistic study - style is understood as a reflection of an author's personality and originality” (p.1). Style, thus, can be appropriately described by Mehiri's (2016) words when he indicated that it is “a go-between linguistics and literary texts” since it creates a meeting ground for both of them.

Aside from putting emphasis on the placement of the term “style” in the yard of linguistic and literary texts for the purpose of achieving communicative goals, Enkvist (1973) suggested a three dimensional linguistic way of classifying style: (1) style can be viewed as a “Departure” since it is taken from a repertoire of patterns and features; (2) style can be seen as an “Addition” of particular stylistic features to neutral or unmarked expressions; (3) style can be, lastly, viewed as a “Connotation” where the stylistic significance can be acquired from the context by the linguistic feature. With regard to the third dimension, Wales (2014) noted that style has an evaluative connotation since it can help in deciding about the quality of the style itself. As a remarkable addition, Enkvist (1973) proclaimed that these different views should be considered as complementary to one another.

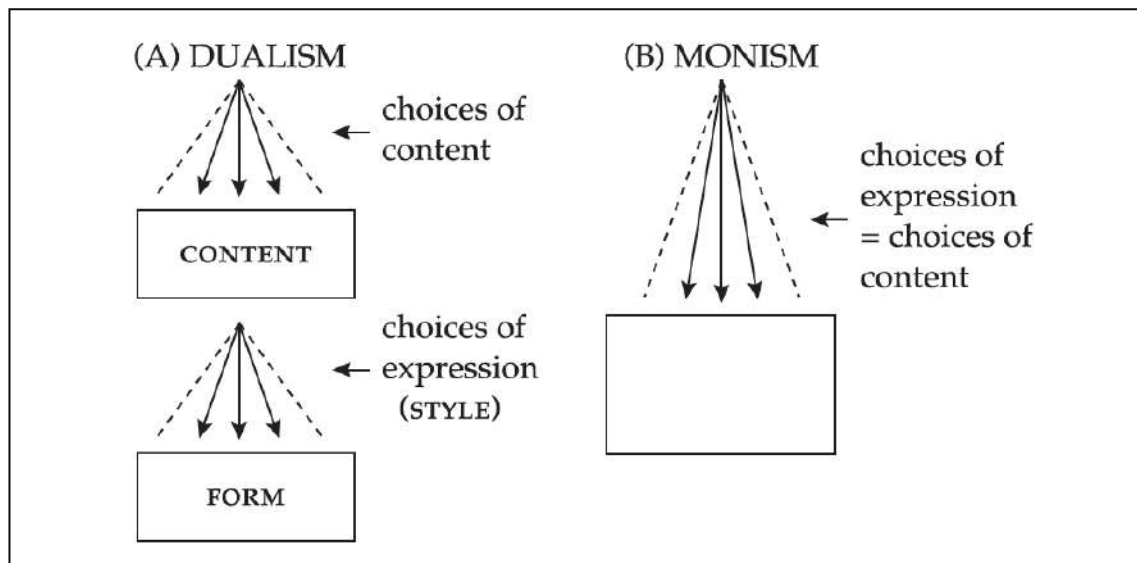
Altogether, getting one comprehensive and satisfactory definition seems far or nearly impossible. Therefore, it would be suitable to think of other approaches and perspectives that would help in reducing the fuzziness over the concept of style.

1.1.2 Approaches of viewing style

The ambiguity that stems for the notion style does not come to an end with the problem of defining it. Another maze also appears when attempting to have meaningful insights about the relationship between form and content with reference to stylistics. As a matter of fact, there are three approaches of viewing style, and which are: Monism, dualism and pluralism. A glimpse will be caught on these approaches in what follows.

At first, stylistic monists believe that style, precisely the form, in addition to the content cannot be separable because if a change is made up on the form/manner of expression, the content/matter will receive an automatic change (Leech & Short, 2007). In other words, they refused that one form can entail different meanings or one meaning can be expressed by different forms, and agreed on the equation “choice of expression = choice of content”. So, there was a total rejection of the dichotomy form/content, and a preference was laid on considering its components as one substance. Leech and Short (2007) claimed that poetry is the safest zone for monism since its proponents argued that a poetic metaphor holds only a literal sense while a poem does not transfer any message.

Secondly, Leech and Short (2007) continued explaining the dualistic approach. Putting their explanation in its simplest, dualism, as a controversial approach to monism, believed that the same content can be conveyed through different lexical words. By way of illustration, they took into account the possibility of keeping the original meaning when paraphrasing literary writings as well as translating literary works. Hence, prose was their solid ground for undertaking their works unlike monists. Moreover, an important tenet of this approach is that there is a restriction to choices of manner rather than matter and to expression rather than content. The writer has to choose what to say, and how to present the content in its nakedness. At the same time, they disconnected the appreciation of the style of a literary work from the appreciation of the work itself. This implies that they denied the significance rendered to the content by the different stylistic choices, especially that they dealt with style as an optional-additive to a piece of literary writings. The following figure clearly demonstrates the major difference between these two approaches (i.e., monism and dualism):

Figure 1.1*The Difference between Monism and Dualism*

Source: *Style in Fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose* (p.16), by G. Leech, and M. Short, 2007, Pearson Longman.

Lastly, the pluralistic approach took advantage from the tenets of both monists and dualists. Since language is characterised by functional variety, pluralists reckoned that any piece of text is a result of different choices made on the functional level and from the overall linguistic system. Yet, they disagreed on the functional classification of language in terms of their manifestation, type and number. Among other strands of the pluralism philosophy is that various meanings can be conveyed through one simple utterance, and this can be attributed to the multi-functionality of language. Notwithstanding that this brief explanation was derived from Leech and Short's (2007) book "Style in Fiction".

To conclude, no single approach could be adopted individually, but it is preferable to adapt what sounds logical and suitable from the tenets of the three approaches.

1.1.3 The concept of style as a variety

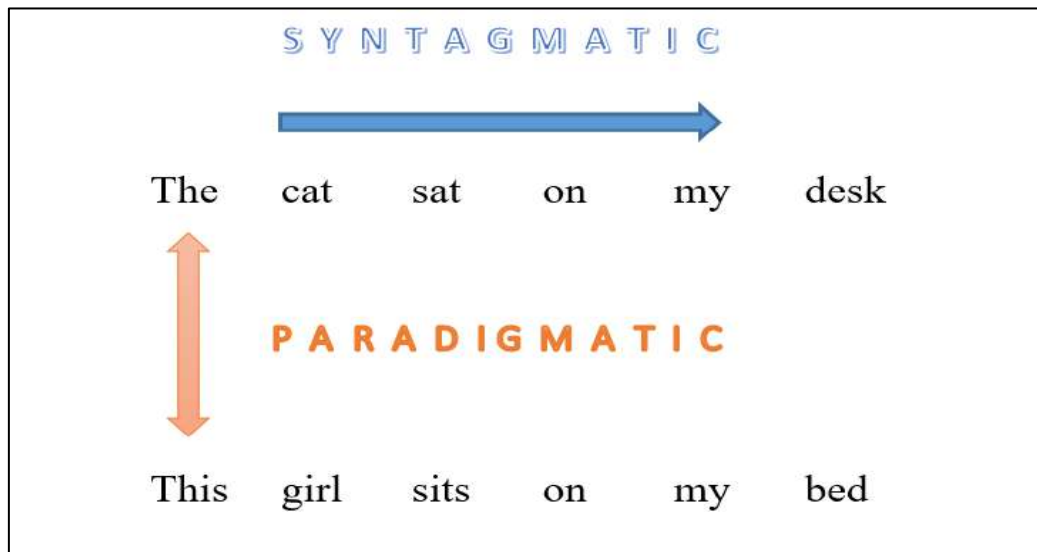
Once again, an objective description of style is notoriously difficult due to the fact that it is used in different disciplines far from stylistics. Nonetheless, that is what gave it the

trait of being considered as a variegated concept, and being looked at from different perspectives. It is worth mentioning here that “style as choice” and “style as deviation” were repeatedly mentioned in the body of literature because of their importance in generating a particular style for a writer. Therefore, these two notions will be put under lens.

1.1.3.2 Style as choice of alternatives

It would be mostly accurate to note that language is composed of a set of linguistic variations as well as their alternatives from which the user of this language can select what is suitable for him depending, mainly, on the situation of use. In this context, Devito (1967) referred to choice by selection, and noted: “Selection simply refers to the choice of a particular linguistic feature, say a word, from a number of possible alternatives provided by the language”(p.251). However, Devito went one step further when he clarified that selection can exceed the linguistic units (i.e., words and sentences) to include the paralinguistic and kinaesthetic features attributed, precisely, to speakers of a language.

Users of the language have different options to express the same meaning, and this contradicts the monists’ doctrine that strictly indicates that one meaning entails the existence of only one linguistic form. Worthy to mention, choices can be made, on the one hand, on the syntagmatic axe by choosing the desired linguistic elements with which a successive segmental stretch of writing is formed. On the other hand, the paradigmatic axe is where choices can be made about a linguistic element with other elements of the same linguistic class. Unquestionably, this linguistic insight is owed to the father of modern linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and which can be summarised in the following figure:

Figure 1.2*Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Relations*

The idea of expression and which is based on a free selection from a linguistic repertoire can be compared to Chomsky's (1965) dichotomy "competence/performance". Within the latter, he addressed the actual use of language based on an internalised linguistic competence by "performance", and which in the current case has been considered as a choice of alternatives. The attention given to choice has been clearly emphasised by Simpson (2004) when he stated that it has "a profound impact on the way texts are structured and interpreted"(p.22). Thus, making choices from a list of alternatives has an impact on the production and reception levels since it affects text structuring and generation, on the one hand, and facilitates or even hardens text interpretation, on the other hand.

1.1.3.2 Style as deviation from the norm

Language as a system of communication is basically governed by regulations, rules, norms on the phonological, morphological, semantic and most importantly on the lexical and syntactical level, and which need to be complied by any speaker or writer. However, if one of the norms of language use was violated, then, the zone of style deviation has been

entered by the user of that particular language. In particular, “norm” is regarded as a background for the identification of deviance spots and analysis of writers’ styles.

Leech and Short (2007) simply described deviation as “a breach of rule”, and any type of it can be directly recognised “when something is set or done in an unconventional way or against the traditionally accepted rules”(Tariq, 2018, p.48). This is accepted as a common claim among literary critics and linguists, but what Devito (1967) denied is the equation of “style = deviation”. Arguably speaking, to link the necessity of deviating from the norm with having a peculiar style is far from being logical. For instance, it cannot be said that a piece of writing has no stylistic significance if it does not include some sort of deviation whether it was internal or external. In fact, a writer may intentionally/unintentionally include other types of significant stylistic devices such as: alliteration, parallelism and so on. The concept of deviation has hopefully led to other outcomes, mainly “foregrounding”.

In addition to the foregoing perspectives of viewing style or as Enkvist (1964) counted them as criteria used to define style (as cited in Mugair, 2013), other perspectives can be concisely explained in what follows:

1- Style as the man himself: It is usually agreed that every man is known by his unique style in writing and speaking, and which means that he has a set of distinctive features and characteristics that make him distinguishable among other individuals. In other words, each author has a couple of favoured expressions and language habits that index him (Miššíková, 2003 as cited in Mehiri, 2016).

2- Style as situation: A situation can refer to the context that determines the style of a text. It means that a style of an author can be recognised via the situation where the text was brought to life (Ramtirthe, 2017).

3- Style as time/temporal phenomenon: Every period of time has its predominant features that affect language style. For example, literary writings of old English were not the same of those of modern English. So, time is an important factor to be taken into account while producing any piece of writing (Tariq, 2018).

On the whole, perceiving the concept of style is not an easy task as a novice stylistician may think. One way of narrowing the scope of its sense is by linking it to the central objective of undertaking her study, and which is, in the current case, demonstrating the literary stylistic effectiveness of some prefabricated chunks of language on a literary text itself as well as on readers' construction of meaning. Yet, the discussion of style would still be uncompleted unless it was pointed out that it is studied under the discipline of stylistics. The latter will be explained in the following section of this chapter.

1.2 Concept of Stylistics

A linguist's successfulness depends on his ability to change the hazy awareness towards language potentiality in establishing communication. He uses a set of replicable and objective methods for studying texts. However, a linguistic analysis is not allied to literary texts by linguists as much as it is contained within the field of stylistics. Actually, a stylistician has necessarily to be engaged in a double-thinking where linguistic and literary techniques are both employed. It would be reasonable to say that a novice researcher, who attempts to get into the field of stylistics, may very well be asking the question: "What is stylistics?" However, answering this question without having a glance to its history would not be appropriate.

1.2.1 A retrospective view on the history of stylistics

Acknowledging the emergence of stylistics is usually associated with tracing it back to the studies of rhetoric in ancient Greece and Rome where style was their primary point of scientific convergence. However, the roots of modern stylistics seem to be remarkably

embedded in the works of both Charles Bally (1865-1947) and Leo Spitzer (1887-1960). Admittedly, they should be credited with the placement of some important cornerstones in the field of stylistics.

During the first half of the 20th century, Bally a Geneva linguist who was one of Ferdinand de Saussure's students made a revolutionary echo among those who were interested in the field of stylistics with his publication "Traité de Stylistique Française". The latter was considered by the writer himself (i.e., Bally) as complementary to the Saussurean linguistics because Bally, relying on Saussure's dichotomy, claimed that "langue must consist in not one but two interwoven networks of relations between signs" (Taylor, 1992 ,p.91).

Taylor (1992) went for further specification when he said that according to Bally, a "système logique" that enables an individual to express her intersubjective concepts is not sufficient, and there is a need for another network that he called "système expressif". This kind of systems permits the subjective interpretation of a communicator's experience, emotions, values and social status to the outside world. In other words, Bally held that language should not prevent us from expressing the objective thought in addition to the emotional factor. Therefore, stylistics should go beyond the syntactical structures to focus on the affective and expressive elements of language. To restate it more simply, Bally attempted to establish the link between linguistics and stylistics, and he believed that, "Stylistics studies the elements of a language organized from the point of view of their affective content; that is, the expression of emotion by language as well as the effect of language on the emotions" (as cited in Al-sheikh, 2016, p.2) . Contrastingly to what has been noted, Damaso Alonso (1898-1990) did not accord the claim that stylistics is concerned with studying the affective element of language. So, he was a major opponent to Charles Bally's thoughts.

However, Leo Spitzer did not have the same opinion as he took inspiration from the publications of the initiator of stylistics (i.e., Bally). According to Hu and Liu (2004), Spitzer employed a three stages process of stylistic analysis in which he incorporated “hypothesis posing, linguistic analysis and critical explanation” (as cited in Liu, 2011). This implies that Bally made an emphasis on the use of interpretive methods in addition to linguistic analytical ones under a cooperative frame, and this frame, by its turn, is characterised by unifying the conceptual thinking of literary critics and linguists (Mehiri, 2016). Furthermore, Spitzer highlighted the notion of style as it is a spot where language and literature can meet (Mugair, 2013). In this way, Spitzer was obviously keen to bind the notion of style with stylistic studies.

Skipping the two approaches “*New Criticism*” and “*Practical Criticism*” that helped in the development of stylistics during the 20th century cannot be acceptable when reviewing its history. Their characteristics are briefly noted in the following table:

Table 1.1

The Differences between New Criticism and Practical Criticism

	New Criticism	Vs.	Practical Criticism
Time	20 th Century		20 th Century
Origin	United States		Britain
Nature	More descriptive		More psychological
Purpose	Describing literary texts		Focusing on readers’ interaction with texts

New criticism in the United states focused on describing only the literary text, and dropped the connection to its author after it was believed that authorial intentions need to be

considered during the 19th century. Aside from the author, historical circumstances of producing the text in addition to the political and cultural significance lost their position during the analysis phase of the literary text (Hickman & McIntyre, 2012). In the other part, practical criticism in Britain concentrated on readers' interaction with texts in terms of the different psychological aspects that accompany the reading process. In short, these two similar but not identical movements paved the way for stylistics to emerge.

1.2.2 Definition of stylistics

It is misleading if not at all impossible to squeeze all the aspects of the notion stylistics into one single definition especially that a smaller agreement can be found among researchers as their orientations and methods of study differ from one researcher to another. In this vein, Devito (1967) pointed out to the area of stylistics as being plagued by vagueness and ambiguity at once. Fortunately, taking a closer look to the concept of style can help to ascertain the borders of stylistics (Galperin, 1977). In fact, stylistics can be equated to the linguistic study of literary content wherein those who have a sound linguistic background regard style as a central focus while applying multiple linguistic models to literary texts. For instance, Leech and Short (2007) believes that the linguistic study of style refers to "stylistics".

On his part, Simpson (2004) added more clarification to this relatively new discipline (i.e., stylistics) when he described literature as its preferred object of study. Additionally, he presented his peculiar definition of stylistics in which he made an emphasis on the importance of formal features of literary texts in preparing a solid ground for the accurate interpretation of the author's meaning. He claimed that the following definition is precisely about what stylistics is:

Stylistics is a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language. The reason why language is so important to stylisticians is because the

various forms, patterns and levels that constitute linguistic structure are an important index of the function of the text. The text's functional significance as discourse acts in turn as a gateway to its interpretation. While linguistic features do not of themselves constitute a text's 'meaning', an account of linguistic features nonetheless serves to ground a stylistic interpretation and to help explain why, for the analyst, certain types of meaning are possible (p.2).

By the same token, Wales (2014) confirmed that there is a potential significance in relation to the interpretation of a text for each linguistic feature. In other words, any linguistic feature whether it was placed randomly or purposively by a writer serves in a way or another certain significance that can be evaluated by a linguist, literary critic or even an avid reader.

it seems that the previous words of Thornborrow and Wareing (1998) can still spread a sense of clarity and comprehension to their reader in the present days. As a matter of fact, they attempted to provide some key aspects of stylistics. Primarily, they asserted that analysing literary texts along with their writers' styles through the implementation of linguistic and literary rules/principles is placed at the centre of stylistic interest. In addition, Thornborrow and Wareing made an emphasis on the aesthetic properties of language (e.g., Parallelism and metaphor) that can make a text more attractive.

Though stylistics is still receiving complex and varied definitions, but it can be said that it revolves basically around the assumption of approaching literary texts both linguistically and objectively. With no doubt, this idea can be profitable to those who are willing to explore the zone of stylistic enquiries.

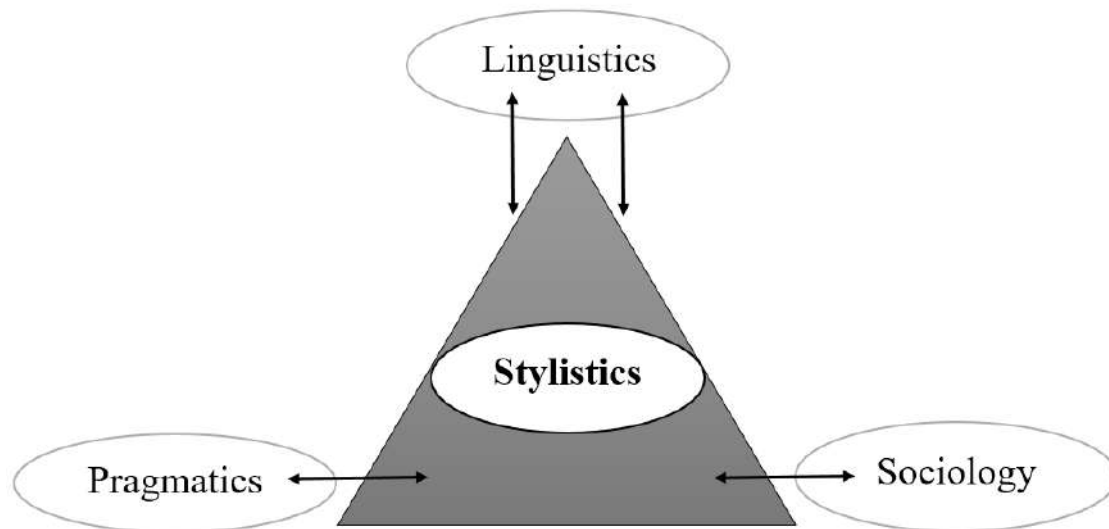
1.2.3 Interdisciplinary nature of stylistics

Looking to the nature of stylistics brings us to another paradox wherein any researcher finds himself puzzled on how to describe the very essence of this field and how to establish its theoretical territory in accordance with the aims of his study. In fact, stylistics

can be characterised by its “eclecticism” and “interdisciplinarity” since it incorporates selectively perspectives and methodologies of several other disciplines.

In the light of the latter point, Jeffries and McIntyre (2010) noted that “Stylistics draws upon theories and models from other fields more frequently than it develops its own unique theories” (p.3). What is more, “It is in virtue of its openness to the advancements and acquisitions of other disciplines that Stylistics continues to evolve” (Montini, 2017, p.1). To put it differently, stylistics tends to adopt and adapt from a wide range of disciplines (e.g., linguistics, literary criticism, pragmatics, cognitive sciences and others) that are related to language production so that it can generate its own methodological frameworks and tools to be used by stylisticians.

Along the same vein, Sorlin (2014) stated that stylistics is “a discipline practising indisciplinary, in the sense that stylistics has created a space of its own by borrowing both its objects and theoretical tools from many different field in the social sciences”(p.1). As a way of clarification, she preferred to describe this field as being undisciplined because it refuses neither having steady borders that can accept importing and exporting from other disciplines nor running the risk of serving only itself. Sorlin also considered this characteristic (i.e., indisciplinary) as a merit because it supports the fact that stylistics should be considered more than a “mere complement to linguistics” (p.1).

Figure 1.3*The Interdisciplinary Nature of Stylistics*

To sum up, stylistics has proven to share commonalities with some disciplines of social sciences as well as sub-disciplines of linguistics. It attempts to give a fruitful interpretation of texts, both literary and non-literary through the implementation and merging of different approaches and insights not only from general linguistics, but also from various disciplines.

1.2.4 Purpose and scope of stylistics

It has been agreed upon the claim that stylistics eclectically employs linguistic techniques in addition to those of other disciplines in view of its interdisciplinary nature; however, when it comes to the purpose of undertaking stylistic studies, it has not been explicitly reviewed in this chapter. As a point of departure, the purpose of doing stylistics is almost straightforward that it can be spelt out from its various definitions that referred to this field as being concerned with style, language and literary texts. In this light, Simpson (2004) noted: “To do stylistics is to explore language, and, more specifically, to explore creativity in language use” (p.3). Then, he continued saying: “Doing stylistics thereby

enriches our ways of thinking about language and, as observed, exploring language offers a substantial purchase on our understanding of (literary) text” (p.3). By saying so, Simpson believed that stylistics attempts to cultivate a sense of language appreciation in terms of creativity and comprehension factors.

In her dictionary of stylistics, Wales (2014) wrote down the following: “The goal of most stylistic studies is to show how a text works” (p.400). In addition to that, she suggested that a stylistician’s purpose extends beyond studying the linguistic triggers (i.e., formal features) to include exploring their literary effects and significance in relation to a text interpretation. Worthy to mention, carrying out any type of stylistic study with such a purpose requires burying in mind “the basic stylistic tenets of being rigorous, systematic, transparent and open to falsifiability”(Stockwell, 2008, P.755).

Basically speaking, the purpose of stylistics has to be, by and large, determined by its targeted concerns. In this regard, Y. M. Skrebnev (as cited in Znamenskaya, 2004, p.12-13) offered a list of issues that could constitute the overall scope of stylistics as he reckoned:

- 1- the aesthetic function of language;
- 2- expressive means in language;
- 3- synonymous ways of rendering one and the same idea;
- 4- emotional colouring in language;
- 5- a system of special devices called stylistic devices;
- 6- the splitting of the literary language into separate systems called style;
- 7- the interrelation between language and thought;
- 8- the individual manner of an author in making use of the language.

By having a quick glance to the previous issues, it would be clear that they revolve around one main concept, and which is language. This means, stylistics deals with language from different standpoints (e.g., functions and choices) in order to enable us to understand the

intent of the author and his way of rendering emotions and thoughts to his readers. In sum, stylistics relies mainly on its theoretical scope to achieve its practical purposes.

1.2.5 Principles of stylistics

Principles are fundamental bedrocks of any organised field so that the produced results can be regarded with a high level of reliability. On this basis, stylisticians collocated their efforts to ensure that stylistics have its own specified principles that have been scientifically postulated, and which some of them will be briefly discussed in what follows. Worthy to mention, the stated principles in this section goes back to Jeffries and McIntyre (2010).

1.2.5.1 Stylistics as text-based:

Arguably, textual data constitutes the basic foundation for any stylistic analysis carried out by a stylistician who aims at the right beginning to portray the achieved effects by particular texts when embarking in his analysis. Regardless to the central focus of texts in stylistics, this idea has been criticised by literary theorists claiming that “literary works have single meanings, and that these can be ‘teased out’ by a set of analytical procedures” (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010, p.22). This implies that less importance should be given to texts as their meanings is supposedly not complicated.

1.2.5.2 Objectivity and empiricism

Continuing with the ideas of the same reference (i.e., Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010), another set of important principles that turned stylistics into what it is nowadays were stressed out. Basically, attempting to pin out linguistics as a discipline that can be studied scientifically like other natural sciences, linguists have reacted against some “old fashioned” ideas that accused their field of interest. For that reason, stylistics is greatly indebted to linguistic work and enquiries since it became characterised by objectivity. To clarify this matter, the following words can be written down: “In trying to be objective, one tries to be (a) clear, detailed and open (so that one’s position is unambiguous), and (b) ready to change

one's mind if the evidence or a subsequent counter-argument demands it" (as cited in Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010, p.23). In fact, these straightforward words represent the main guidelines for an analyst who intends to be objective.

Yet, if an analyst has some misgivings about his rate of objectivity or he is afraid to fall in trap of subjectivity, there certain analytical techniques and tools to be applied when conducting or replicating a research. This may the analyst to reduce the effect of his personal subjectivity when making comments on a text, be it literal or non-literal. It should be noted that reaching objectivity can be attained in the analytical stage more than the interpretative one since each analyst may have his own understanding and vision towards the same text.

A researcher is not only supposed to be objective as possible as can, but he is required to use an empirical approach where an inductive method is used. Additionally, his research should be falsifiable in a way that it can be either replicated by further researchers or the results of his analysis can be applied to further data away from the same initial set of data.

1.2.5.1 Eclecticism and openness

As we have seen previously in this chapter, stylistics is an open-borders discipline in the sense that it took the merit of being characterised by interdisciplinarity. It allows borrowing ideas and insights from other fields in an eclectic manner, but it does that without forgetting its very essence. That is to say, stylistics did not abandon the use of basic and formal linguistic models in recent years as Jeffries and McIntyre (2010) stressed out.

All has been said, it is clear that stylistics does not surrender itself nor its practices to random methodologies and theories. On the contrary, it depends on certain scientific principles that sheltered stylistics from criticisms of other fields.

1.2.6 Major types of stylistics

To reach out its sought-after purposes, stylistics attempted to develop its own theories and models based on other disciplines without blurring its main scope and principles. According to this view, Jeffries and McIntyre (2010) wrote down:

Stylistics draws upon theories and models from other fields more frequently than it develops its own unique theories. This is because it is at a point of confluence of many sub-disciplines of linguistics, and other disciplines, such as literary studies and psychology, drawing upon these (sub-) disciplines but not seeking to duplicate or replace them (p.3).

This fact may lead us to think that stylistics as an interdisciplinary field encompasses many branches or varieties. However, only the major ones will be mentioned in accordance with the methodological boundaries of the current study.

1.2.6.1 Literary stylistics

Essentially, stylistics is known for its preoccupation with studying style. Its birth as contemporary and literary stylistics goes back to the Indiana style conference in 1958 where Roman Jakobson has left not only an ordinary paper but a landmark for the coming stylisticians. Within his paper “Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics”, Jakobson (1960) concluded with the following revolutionary words: “a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and a literary scholar indifferent to linguistic problems and unacquainted with linguistic methods are equally flagrant anachronisms” (p.377). By saying so, he insisted on the integrative approach between linguistic and literary knowledge in order to obtain a fruitful and meaningful interpretation of literature. So, one may say that there is a need for a discipline that combines linguistics and literary criticism and which is known as “literary stylistics” (Zhang, 2010).

Literature is composed of language and which, by its turn, is made up of a variety of linguistic choices that demand a thorough analysis for the explanation of their effect on readers. This task primarily belongs to the scope of literary stylistics as explained by Cook (2003). More than that, he conceived that a literary stylistic analysis tend to:

highlight three aspects of literary language: its frequent deviation from the norms of more everyday language use; its patterning of linguistic units to create rhythms, rhymes, and parallel construction, and the ways in which the form of the words chosen seems to augment or intensify the meaning (p.62).

To put it in simple terms, adopting a literary approach to analyse language should be accompanied with the intention of focusing on deviation, linguistic patterning of lexical items and meaning intensifying through the chosen words.

According to Jeffries and McIntyre (2010), literary stylistics targets the analysis of literary texts in particular through the employment of linguistic techniques. That is to say, it focuses on language as a means to manipulate readers' thoughts, and to deliver the intended meaning of the author. To reinforce this idea, Zhang (2010) affirmed that the object of literary stylistics is "to investigate thematic and aesthetic values generated by linguistic forms, values which convey the author's vision, tone and attitude, which increase the affective or emotive force of the message" (p.155).

1.2.6.2 Linguistic stylistics

By way of definition, linguists rely on linguistic theories as resilient templates to tailor-made their own models for the scientific study of language. However, it also lies on the shoulder of a stylistician to apply and improve those models under a stylolinguistic framework. In this sense, "stylolinguistic analyses may be directed towards goals beyond linguistics proper. They may, for instance, be a first step in a wider, structural, literary, and historical study of a text or a language" (Enkvist, 1973, p.16). Along this line, Wales (1989)

(as cited in Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010) upheld the idea of linguistic stylistics being concerned with testing and refining linguistic models.

While some researchers believed that the distinction between literary and linguistic stylistics is usually drawn based on the type of text (i.e., literary or non-literary), and that linguistic stylistics takes into account only non-literary texts (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010; Wales, 2014), Halliday, from his part, did not think in the same manner. This point of view has been clearly reflected in Halliday's (2002) words:

We can therefore define linguistic stylistics as the description of literary texts, by methods derived from general linguistic theory, using the categories of the description of the language as a whole; and the comparison of each text with others, by the same and by different authors, in the same and in different genres (p.6).

Here, Halliday linked linguistic stylistics to literary texts or more precisely to “highly-valued texts” (p.152). Thus, both literary and linguistic stylistics should be defined based on their central concern and not on the type of text. With this said, the following two tasks of linguistic stylistics can be mentioned:

- It is the task of linguistic stylistics, or stylolinguistics, to set up inventories and descriptions of stylistic stimuli with the aid of linguistic concepts (Enkvist, 1973, p.16).
- It studies “the linguistic nature of the expressive means of the language, their systematic character and their functions” (Znamenskaya, 2004, p.16).

Regardless to the salient differences that characterise these two branches of stylistics (i.e., literary stylistics and linguistic stylistics), Znamenskaya (2004, p.16) assumed that they have cross-reference areas since both of them are interested in studying:

- the literary language from the point of view of its variability;
- the idiolect (individual speech) of a writer;

- poetic speech that has its own specific laws.

Altogether, a literary critic does not focus on the linguistic interpretation of a text as much as the linguist does, and a linguist does not focus on the evaluation of a text as a literary critic does. So, their works are complementary to one another.

1.2.6.3 Reader-response stylistics

Stretching out the basic meaning of “reader-response stylistics” can be done based on the label itself. The latter refers to the concentration of readers’ response towards literary texts or as it is explained in Wales's (2014) words: it “focused on the activity of the reader in the interpretation of a work”(p.354). This type of stylistics attained greater heights in the 1970’s when critics intellectually reacted against the claim of the existence of a text without a reader.

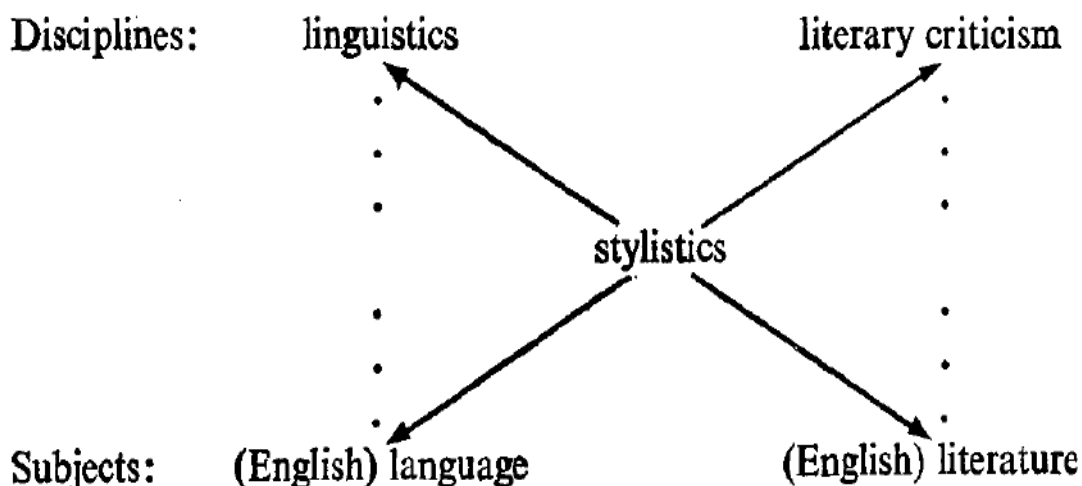
Previously, the roles of an author and a reader were completely neglected, and all efforts were directed to a text as an independent and fixed object where practitioners of the field regarded it “as self-contained icons, and readers’ interpretations as irrelevant in critical analyses” (Harding, 2014, p.68). However, the new critics (e.g., Jonathan Culler, Stanley Fish, Michael Riffaterre, Louise Rosenblatt and Jane Tompkins) maintained that a meaning of a text is associated with a reader’s engagement and interaction with it. Subsequently, any reader is supposed to have a sort of competence in the literary sphere. In this light, Culler (as cited Harding, 2014, p.71) suggested that a reader is not only in need to be acquainted with a considerable range of literature, but also to be provided with a set of interpretation techniques. Accordingly, notions of both literary stylistics and linguistic stylistics can be used in favour of the reader-response approach.

Have said the above, the tendency to characterise the reader as being passive in order to neglect his role in meaning creation was dropped out by reader-response theorists. Instead of that, Tyson (2006) clarified that they omitted the possibility of separating a text from its

readers' different responses. In fact, the response of the same reader who re-read the same text may vary in accordance with his mood, purpose of reading, personal experience development and new acquired knowledge between the first and second reading (Tyson, 2006). All things considered, reader-response stylistics motivates the reader to freely and actively engage in making meaning.

1.3 Stylistics as a Mediation between Linguistics and Literature

When looking for a foundation pillar of the linking area between linguistics and literature, the researcher finds herself, once again, facing the notion of “stylistics” that she sought to give it the desirable importance at the very beginning of this chapter. Her standpoint can be confirmed through Widdowson's (1975) words when he reckoned that the morphological make-up of the term “stylistics” entails the primary contributory disciplines in stylistics along their analytical techniques and methods. In particular words, it is suggested that “style” is linked to the literary stream whereas “istics” is related to the linguistic stream. That is to say, stylistics is an area of mediation between two disciplines (i.e, literature and linguistics) in addition to their subjects of study as the following figure explicitly clarifies:

Figure 1.4*Stylistics as a Mediation between Linguistics and Literary Criticism*

Source: *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature* (p.4), by H.G. Widdowson, 1975, Routledge.

If not mentioned previously in this chapter, Widdowson (1975) assumed that the ultimate purpose of stylistics is to link the linguistic observation to the literary intuition. Otherwise stated, the linguist is preoccupied with observing and analysing the linguistic codes, whereas the literary critic is concerned with the meaning conveyed by the linguistic codes (Widdowson, 1975). This idea has been recently acknowledged by Leech and Short (2007) as they stated the following: “One major concern of stylistics is to check or validate intuitions by detailed analysis, but stylistics is also a dialogue between literary reader and linguistic observer” (p.4). However, the linguist does not attempt to ignore the meaning while performing his role as Widdowson (1975) assumed, but he usually intends to look through the deep structure of the text when examining the surface structure.

According to Trask (2007), the name “Stylistics” is given to the discipline where scholars are applying “the analytical techniques of theoretical linguistics to the elucidation of literary works and to the examination of the aesthetic aspects of language generally”

(p.280). This has not been done until the past decades when the gap between linguistics and literary criticism has been bridged. In other terms, the cooperation between literature and linguistics played a major role in establishing stylistics as a mediator for the stylistician who concerns himself in stressing the stylistic significance and pinpointing the possible literary and stylistic devices and stamps that characterise a literary text.

1.4 Definition and Importance of a Stylistic Stamp

In the realm of literature, stylistic stamps/features play a crucial role in shaping the overall aesthetic and communicative aspects of a literary work. These stamps encompass various linguistic and literary techniques employed by authors to convey their ideas, evoke emotions, and engage readers on a deeper level. This section delves into the definition and highlights the importance of a stylistic stamp in literary works, highlighting how powerfully they may improve the reading experience.

According to Galperin (1977), there are various terms used to describe specific means through which utterances becomes more impactful, convey additional information, and affect the reader's aesthetic response. While these terms include stylistic devices, stylistic means, stylistic markers and many others, the current study employs the term "stylistic stamp". The latter refers to a purposeful choice made by an author, and which has the ability to leave an impression on the reader's journey. It manifests through various aspects of the text, including but not limited to vocabulary, sentence structure, figurative language and other techniques. In fact, these area includes many stylistic features which have been examined in the literature and included in dictionaries of stylisics, one of which is that of Katie Wales (2014).

The importance of a stylistic stamp cannot be dismissed. It serves as an artistic toolkit through which an author can "produce a desired stylistic effect" as believed by Galperin, (1977, p.201). In his book, Galperin highlighted the importance of a stylistic feature in

literary analysis, and argued that it can play an indispensable role in literary works due to the effect that it can create both on the text and on its reader. For instance, it can contribute to the semantic and aesthetic levels of language through the conveyed underlying messages in literary texts and the different emotional response evoked in readers. In other words, it can help reaching a deeper comprehension and enjoyment of the literary text as it provides valuable insights into the author's meaning.

“Stylistics takes as the object of its analysis the expressive means and stylistic devices of the language which are based on some significant structural point in an utterance, whether it consists of one sentence or a string of sentences” (Galperin, 1977, p.190). In the current study, formulaic sequences have been taken as a starting point, and which will be thoroughly reviewed in the next chapter. Overall, Stylistic stamps are essential components of literary works employed by authors to convey their messages and engage readers.

Conclusion

As a conclusion for this chapter, it has been sought to take advantage from the available literature on stylistics in order to construct a theoretical basis for this area. The latter covered some major concepts starting by the simplest definition of stylistics until reaching its main types. Directly speaking, it was attempted to emphasise the concern of stylistics in a simplified manner so that it can be better understood by readers regardless to their educational status. As a matter of fact, the intention was also to clarify the mediation created by stylistics between linguistics and literature. However, this mediation goes beyond a theoretical perspective to reach readers' interaction with literary texts through some stylistics devices and features.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two: Formulaic Sequences as a Stylistic Stamp in Literary Texts

Introduction

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2.1.7.2.1 Defining collocations

2.1.7.2.2 Categorising collocations

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Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter is intended to introduce formulaic sequences, and to highlight their importance by providing some of the related key concepts. First, the history of formulaic sequences will be briefly presented for this thesis readers. Then, it considers the problems of labelling formulaic sequences as well as having a working definition for this language phenomenon. On this basis, it provides some conceptual definitions and major characteristics that can help in drawing the boundaries between what is formulaic and what it is non-formulaic. Next, it takes into account the issue of noticing and identifying formulaic sequences by including some of methods and checklists to perform this process. It is also within this chapter that attention will be drawn to the functions and main types of formulaic sequences.

2.1 Formulaic Sequences

People of different ages were and are still using formulaic sequences, on the oral and written level, as fixed or semi-fixed multiword expressions that can be considered an essential part in the mental lexicon. Therein lies the prevalence that it is reflected in the astonishing approachability to these formulae from various perspectives and with differing purposes in mind. Clearly stated, the study of formulaic sequences in relation to multiple disciplines, mainly, linguistics and literature, has been flourishing and gaining interest in the last few decades (from the 1970s onwards).

The idea of understanding literature is the ability of researchers, mainly stylisticians and linguists, to make the links between linguistic phenomena, formulaic sequences in the current case, with literary productions (e.g., novels and short stories). In fact, the current research is occupying a mid-position based on a stylistic concern of the researcher who is willing to explore the stylistic significance of formulaic sequences in a literary work while keeping an eye on the beliefs of readers. The use of formulaic sequences that may make the

text more comprehensible and impressive to readers, notably with the presence of idioms and phrasal verbs definitely will be put under lens. Additionally, setting the pillars for this study requires providing a theoretical account on this linguistic phenomenon up to this stage.

2.1.1 A Brief historical account on formulaic sequences

Generating a brief historical account with regard to formulaic sequences cannot be easily doable in comparison to other study fields. In this respect, Wray (2013) noted that, “creating a timeline for formulaic language is far from simple” (p.316). This can be justified by the novelty of this language phenomenon in addition to the shortage of the undertaken studies on it. However, what should be stressed here is the fact that this historical account does not contain many studies conducted on a literary or a stylistic ground although “there were pockets of work being conducted in diverse fields outside of linguistics proper” (p.4). That is to say, scholars have been mainly investigating issues related to linguistics and applied linguistics such as first and second language acquisition, language learning, processing and use.

When it comes to the relevant literature on the designated phenomenon within the boundary of the current thesis, Wood (2015) believed that “the real source of information about formulaic language has been a range of books, both edited collections and monographs” (p.2). With this said, Wood attempted to provide a list of some of the cornerstones in the area of formulaic sequences. This list is ordered from the newest to the oldest work as follows:

- Wood (2010b): *Perspectives on Formulaic Language*;
- Granger and Meunier (2008): *Phraseology: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*;
- Schmitt (2004): *Formulaic Sequences: Acquisition, Processing and Use*;
- Allerton, Nesselhauf, and Skandera (2004): *Phraseological Units: Basic Concepts and Their Applications*;

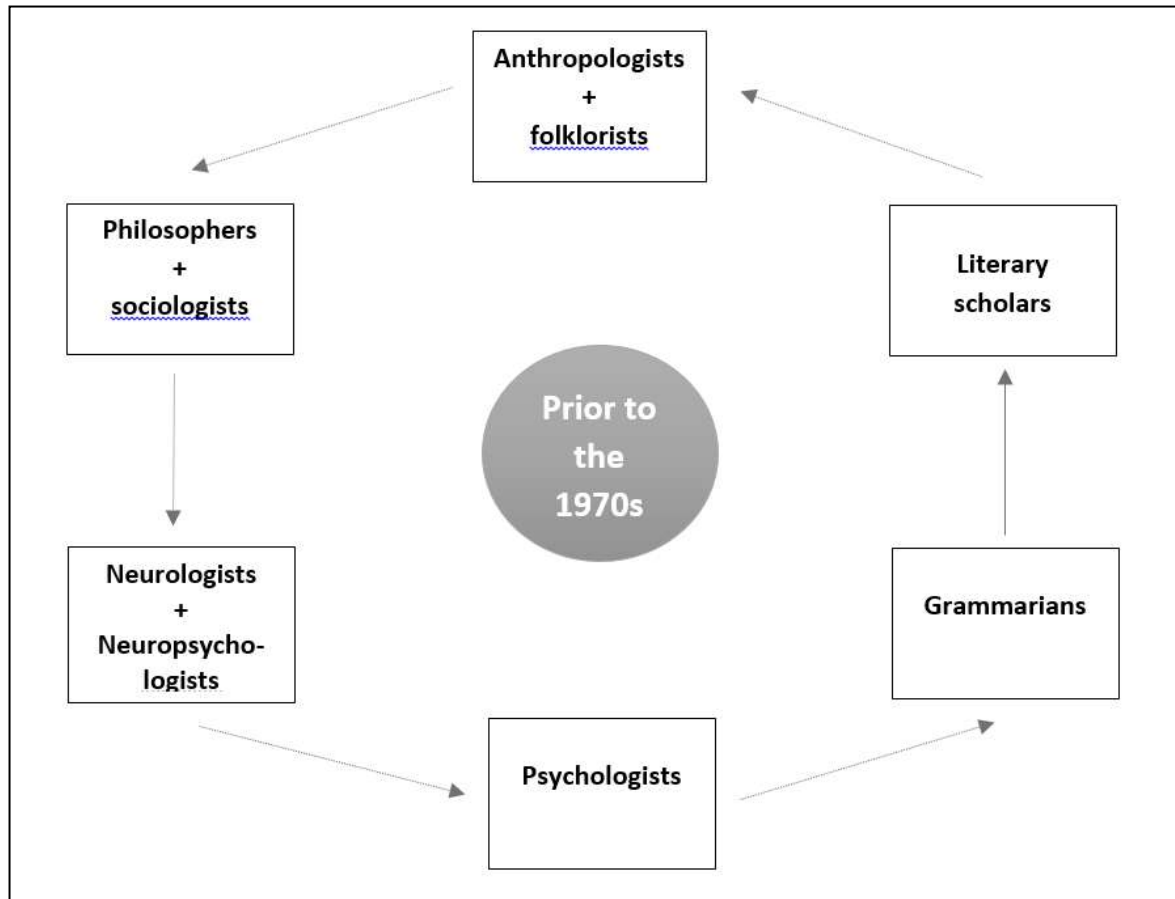
- Wray (2002): *Formulaic Language and the Lexicon* and *Formulaic Language: Pushing the Boundaries* (2008);
- Cowie (1998): *Phraseology: Theory, Analysis, and Applications*;
- Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992): *Lexical Phrases and Language Teaching*;
- Sinclair (1991): *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation* was a landmark.

Looking back to the 1950s, early research was conducted basically on collocations by Firth, an important British figure in linguistics, who defined them as “the co-occurrence of words in proximity, with several possible types of variation” (Wood, 2015, p.4). Not only this, Firth went for further elaboration when he distinguished two types of collocations: the *habitual collocation* and the *idiosyncratic collocation*. While the former refers to the words that collocate together repeatedly such as *make a decision*, the latter is the relative and unusual chunking of words such as *bitter cold* (Wood, 2015).

Halliday expanded the development of Firth’s approach. He refined this notion by claiming that the frequency of a collocation in a specific lexical context determines its function (Wood, 2015). It should be noted here that collocations represent one of the most important stylistic devices that an author can employ to develop his own style. Thus, novice stylisticians who are interested in this area can make advantage of Firth, Halliday and others’ ideas and perspectives.

2.1.1.1 Prior to the 1970s

Spotting light on the progressive state of research on formulaic sequences through history is not quite simple as one may think. Nonetheless, Pawley's (2007) eight traditions that were polished later by (Wood, 2015) may help drawing up a portrait. On this basis, the following account will be displayed briefly.

Figure 2.1*The Eight Traditions of Research on Formulaic Sequences*

- **Literary scholars**

As a point of departure to these traditions, literary scholars were interested in working on epic sung and poetry. For instance, Parry, during the 1920s and 1930s, attempted to examine Homer's poems, and he claimed that the existence of formulaic sequences in a poem could create a sort of productivity, fluency and rhythmic performance in comparison to other ordinary formulae.

- **Anthropologists and folklorists**

Focusing on the oral traditions and spoken languages of different cultures, anthropologists and folklorists made their thumbprint as well. Hymes (1962), a pioneer in

the field of anthropology, was well known with his work “The ethnography of speaking” in which he highlighted patterns that are used frequently by people in their everyday speech.

- **Philosophers and sociologists**

Another line of thinking among these traditions goes back to philosophers and sociologists. As an example, Austin (1962) and Searle (1968) brought attention to speech acts and discourse function that are accomplished by means of routine utterances. It is interesting to note that conversation analysis has appeared to be part of linguistic studies.

- **Neurologists and neuropsychologists**

Applied and experimental studies in neurology and neuropsychology proved that a person whose Broca’s area of the left hemisphere was damaged (i.e., he is suffering from some types of aphasia) does not lose the ability to use familiar and frequent expressions. Wray (2013) did not stop at this end, but she pointed out that “some of the first observations about formulaic language, back in the nineteenth century, were in the clinical domain of aphasia studies” (p.2). That is to say, the starting point of investigating formulaic sequences in the field of neurology was long way before the 1970s.

- **Psychologists**

The main concern under this tradition was speech fluency where some psychologists such as Goldman-Eisler (1968) gave it a psycholinguistic flavour. She insisted upon the idea of using automatized sequences of language while speaking spontaneously in order to save mental effort. In this way, she linked formulaic sequences to speaking proficiency.

- **Grammarians**

Early grammarians also gave importance to formulaic sequences when they examined the phenomenon of free and fixed expressions, specified the structure of idioms, worked on phrasal dictionaries and compiled lists of idioms and collocations by different scholars (e.g.,

Jespersen 1922, Chafe 1968, Fraser 1970, Wakefield 1942, Palmer 1938, Amosova 1963, Mel'cuk 1988 and Vinogradov 1947).

2.1.1.2 Post-1970s

The period of the 1970's was like a decisive moment for formulaic sequences where they gained more popularity within the field of linguistics, lexicography and pragmatics. While psychologists paved the way to the growth of speech fluency research as has been mentioned in the previous section, Pawley and Syder (1983) published a paper in which the phenomenon of formulaic sequences was emphasised to be a key factor to second language fluency (Wood, 2015). However, the latter topic exceeds the frame of this thesis. According to the two scholars (i.e., Pawley and Syder), people tend to retrieve frozen formulae in accordance with the suitable communicative meanings and functions. This does not mean that the productive nature of language has been ignored at all.

From their part, lexicographers were gathering information about chunks of language. Pawley (2007) noted that, "During that period small but valiant bands of lexicographers painstakingly assembled evidence regarding the lexical and grammatical variability of thousands of formulae" (p.12). This means that a number of lexicographers concerned themselves with studying the variability of formulaic sequences both on the lexical and grammatical levels. A few years later, Sinclair (1991) brought to the ground the *idiom* and the *open choice principle* starting from the idea that texts are commonly composed from multiword expressions as Wood (2015) clarified in his book *Fundamentals of Formulaic Language*.

It is agreed upon the fact that any researcher starts his investigation based on a confusing idea that needs to be scientifically addressed. It is against this claim that a couple of questions were generated in connection with those fixed formulae at the end of the 1970s.

1. *Identification*. How to identify well-formed conventional expressions in text?

2. *Classification*. How to classify conventional expressions? What structural and functional criteria are relevant?
3. *Transcription*. How to represent speech formulae in transcriptions of speech? What details are relevant to record?
4. *Description of variability*. What substantive concepts and notational devices are needed to describe the variability found within certain (more or less) productive formulae?
5. *The composition of pragmatic speech formulae*. What range of features sets apart discourse-strategic speech formulae (situation-bound expressions), such as How are you?, from word-like conventional phrases.
6. *Oral formulaic genres*. Which features of oral formulaic genres set them apart from “ordinary” language?
7. *Prevalence in “ordinary” language*. How formulaic are “ordinary” genres of speech and writing?

These questions and others opened the door for newer perspectives and inquiries on issues like oral formulaic genre, identification of formulaic sequences in texts in addition to their classification, and many others. This has led to the development of researches in this area after the 1970s.

2.1.2 Problems of labelling formulaic sequences

Based on the body of literature, there is a scepticism among researchers on which label to adopt while investigating the phenomenon formulaic sequences. This obviously refers to the existence of a terminological variation regarding formulaic sequences. Lin's (2018) words may help to clarify this issue when he stated that “researchers often follow different practices when naming and categorizing the subtypes of formulaic language to correspond to their specific linguistic sub-disciplines” (p.15). in effect, this means that a terminological difference on the level of the phenomenon label usually corresponds to the

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different methodological agendas (i.e., different perspectives and approaches) adapted by researchers (Myles & Cordier, 2016).

What should be stressed here is that this terminological problem, as Wray (2013) considers, emerges basically in the stage of practice because “there is no current consensus over the use and the meaning of terms referring to formulaic language” (Lin, 2018, p.15). For instance, a cohort of researchers employ the term formulaic sequences to refer to idioms and collocations use when undertaking their studies while another cohort may opt for a different term that goes in line with their aim. With this in mind, Wray and Perkins (2000) counted more than 40 terms contained in the following table.

Table 2.1*Terms Used in the Literature to Refer to Formulaic Sequences and Formulaicity*

Amalgams	Idiomatic
Automatic	Idioms
Chunks	Irregular
Clichés	Lexical(ized) phrases
Co-ordinate constructions	Lexicalized sentence stems
Collocations	Multiword units
Composites	Noncompositional
Conventionalized forms	Noncomputational
FEIs	Nonproductive
Fixed expressions	Petrification
Formulaic language	Praxons
Formulaic speech	Preassembled speech
Formulas/formulae	Ready-made expressions
Fossilized forms	Ready-made utterances
Frozen phrases	Rote
Gambits	Routine formulae
Gestalt	Schemata
Holistic	Sentence-builders
Holophrases	Synthetic
Prefabricated routines and patterns	Unanalyzed chunks of speech

Adapted from “The Functions of Formulaic Language : an integrated model” by A. Wray, and M.R. Perkins, 2000, *Language and Communication*, 20 (1), p.3.

In light of what has been mentioned, it lies on the researcher's shoulders of this inquiry to localise her position towards the adopted label though not many justifications can be given at this point of conceptualisation in this research. Nonetheless, the term "Formulaic Sequences" became an umbrella term since it has been broadly used not only by scholars but also by pioneers in the field (e.g., David Wood, Alison Wray and Norbert Schimtt). Wray (1999) noted that adopting a single "blanket term" is necessary to avoid the untended association of various sub-types that are labelled identically by different people or the unnecessary separation of the same sub-types that are classified under different labels. Likewise, the label "Formulaic Sequences" is adopted in the complete current research.

2.1.3 Towards a working definition of formulaic sequences

At the outset, it should be borne in mind that the lack of consensus extends beyond labelling variously the phenomenon of formulaic sequences. In this regard, Wray (2000) believed that adding another label is the last thing to be needed, especially that defining formulaic sequences still stand as an important issue to be discussed by every researcher in order to frame the wider defining picture of this phenomenon. Here, it can be insisted on the fact that defining formulaic sequences from a linguistic point of view permits the researcher to gather a large collection. Yet, the concern is a stylistic one, and this requires the researcher to stick to this orientation when looking for a working definition.

Back to 1999, Wray added to the ground of definitions her well known and most cited definition on formulaic sequences, and which is:

A sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other meaning elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar (p.214).

Reflecting on her definition, it could not be any clearer that Wray gave it a psycholinguistic flavour. She emphasised the idea that every person is not expected to build everything from the scratch in a language since it provides us with a large number of utterances (i.e., fixed expressions). The latter is made up from a number of parts that are glued and stored as they are in the mental lexicon, and this was affirmed by Ellis in 1996 (as cited in Wray, 2000, p.465). In addition, Wray believed that what is stored can be retrieved “at the time of use” without any further analysis by grammar of the language.

In another work of hers, Wray (2002) gave a simplified definition to the combinatory words of the label *Formulaic Sequences*:

- **Formulaic:** carries with it some associations of ‘unity’ and of ‘custom’ and ‘habit’.
- **Sequences:** indicates that there is more than one discernible internal unit, of whatever kind (p.9).

Simply put, a formulaic sequence is an internal unit that carries a sort of unified meaning across producers and receivers of a communicative message. Along the same line, Kecskes (2007) gave a similar definition to that of Wray when he described formulaic sequences as “multiword collocations which are stored and retrieved holistically rather than being generated de novo with each use” (p.193). Based on Kecskes’s definition, an attention should be given to the holistic nature of formulaic sequences.

Referring to the definition of formulaic sequences that indicates the combinatory nature of a sequence, Wood (2015) claimed that it is not a coincidental combination, but it has a specific meaning to be delivered and a specific function to be performed. In addition, he shed light on the three items that need to be included in any definition, and which are: (1) multiplicity of the sequence, (2) singularity of the meaning or function, (3) prefabrication or storage and retrieval. In a similar vein, Buerki (2016) believed that formulaic sequences have been defined according to the field of enquiry where they played a distinctive role.

However, Buerki pointed out in his paper “Formulaic sequences: a drop in the ocean of constructions or something more significant?” to triple criteria that are interrelated among different lines of thinking. The first criterion is *polylexicality* that refers to the containment of more than one item/word in a sequence. The second criterion is *idiomaticity* as many sequences imply a non-compositional meaning. The last criterion is about *conventionality*, and which means the fixedness and stability of the sequences. It is noteworthy that these criteria should not be applied rigidly as this area is still receiving new insights.

To sum up with, labels may differ and definitions may vary, but the aim stays the same for scholars. They opt to have rich inventories of formulaic sequences in order to be used whenever needed.

2.1.3 Characteristics of formulaic sequences

Providing a comprehensive definition to formulaic sequences is far from simple. As a matter of fact, renowned practitioners were censured for the variety of the defining notions that stemmed out from their different encompassing fields (e.g., psycholinguistics, applied linguistics, pragmatics, literature and others). Therefore, reviewing some key features is a possible way to be used in order to reinforce the comprehension of this phenomenon.

In the light of the foregoing, Sidtis (2021) reckoned that digging extensively in the area of formulaic sequences has resulted in a wide harvest. Her focus was directed towards characteristics that can help to distinguish familiar and fixed expressions from the novel and generated ones. She attempted to collect most of the possible features that one may need to know, and which are, in her own words, as follows:

- Cohesion, unitary structure, holistic, coherence of items; occurs in degrees;
- Familiarity, known to members of a language community;
- Stereotyped form, conventional meaning;
- Flexibility of form, leading to flexibility of meaning;

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- Incomplete parts sufficient to cue the entire expression;
- Portions of utterances serve to keep speech fluent;
- Literal or figurative meanings;
- Often context-bound regarding social and linguistic context;
- Commanding subtle social implications;
- Affective, attitudinal, and evaluative content usually present;
- Require inferencing, use indefinite reference;
- Impinge on pragmatic factors such as Gricean conversational postulates;
- Carry innuendo of group membership, social commitment revealed;
- Resonate strongly with register or “formality” indices;
- Contain archaic or rare lexical items and grammatical forms (p.105).

The meaning of these characteristics is almost spelt out from the sentences themselves. Thus, only the primary ones will be pinpointed. As a beginning, Sidtis (2021) believed that a well-known sequence among members of the speech community can be characterised as a familiar one after being frequently used and stored in the mental lexicon. This characteristic (i.e., *familiarity*) was not considered relevant to language until recent decades. In this line, Chomsky (1975) thought that “no one can recall which sentences he has heard...the notion of ‘familiarity’ does not apply in any relevant way to sentences of a language (as cited in Sidtis, 2021, p.109). The same author also insisted on *cohesion* as a characteristic that takes the lead of the list. It mainly refers to the coherent items that are organised within one sequence. However, the cohesion degree is not the same with all familiar sequences, but it varies from one sequence to another.

Lin (2018) claimed that the psycholinguistic concept of holistic processing lies at the centre of studying formulaicity in view of the fact that the characteristics of formulaic sequences originate from their syntactic fixedness, semantic non-compositionality and

phonological form. Firstly, and based on Wray's (2002) ideas, *fixedness* on the syntactic level refers to the fixed insertion of multiword units or elements into a sequence (e.g., spill the beans, kick the bucket). Yet, she attempted to draw attention to some sequences as not being entirely fixed. To put it differently, this criterion cannot be fully applied on semi-fixed sequences because they contain slots to be filled by optional material. Secondly, *semantic non-compositionality* means that no interpretation of the sequence can be made based on its lexical items. According to Wood (2015), “formulaic sequences tend to be uttered with particular prosodic features such as alignment with pauses and intonation units, resistance to internal dysfluency, no internal hesitations, fast speech rhythm, and stress placement restrictions” (p.23). That is to say, *phonological coherence* is basically restricted to the spoken form of language in terms of articulation, speed and intonation patterns.

These characteristics provide an overall sense of formulaicity to the sequences under lens over decades though they may differ from one category to another. Accordingly, they can work as a bridging gap towards of better understanding and identification of formulaic sequences in literary texts.

2.1.4 At the boundaries of formulaic sequences

What can be considered formulaic or novel stands as a major concern that researchers may think of when enquiring in the area of formulaic sequences. That is to say, locating boundaries that permit differentiating between a formulaic sequence and the surrounding language is an important process to be undertaken regardless to the difficulties that come alongside.

According to Schmitt (2004), “it has been claimed that formulaic sequences are less easily recognizable as holistic entities than words, because unlike words with spaces around them to indicate their boundaries, it is not clear where the boundaries of unknown formulaic sequences lie” (p.18). Although formulaic sequences have special syntactic structures,

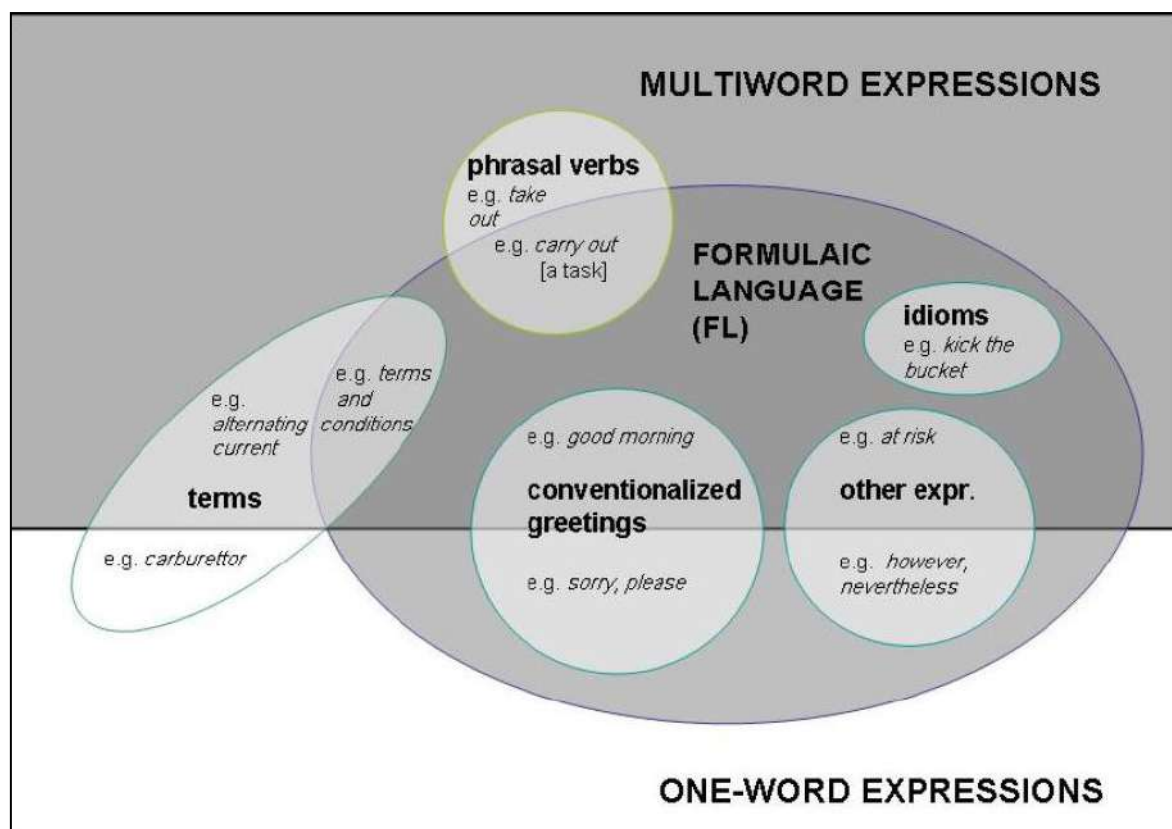
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irregular or even regular ones, framing their boundaries is no less easier than simple words, especially when it comes to formulaic sequences that are not familiar in comparison to other sequences. Schmitt (2010) kept insisting on this matter when he claimed that “... formulaic sequences vary in degree of compositionality, and have no clearly delineated boundaries” (p.227).

Likewise to Schmitt’s ideas, Fernández-Parra (2008) believed that formulaic sequences have *fuzzy boundaries* since the phenomenon of formulaicity intersects with some lexical forms. By way of illustration, she presented the following figure:

Figure 2.2

Formulaic Language and Other Lexical Forms



Source : “Translating Formulaic Expressions in Instruction Manuals: a corpus study” by M.A. Fernández-parra, 2008, *Newcastle Working Papers in Linguistics*, 14, p. 52.

Based on the figure above in addition to Fernández-Parra's (2008) explanation, it is clear that the scholar made an attempt to uncover the boundaries between formulaic sequences and other lexical forms. For instance, she indicated that formulaic sequences include many subclasses such as conventionalised greetings (e.g., good morning), phrasal verbs (e.g., carry out) and idioms (e.g., kick the bucket). However, she insisted on the claim that not all multiword sequences are formulaic in nature and not all formulaic sequences are multiword in form (e.g., sorry and thanks). Nonetheless, Fernández-Parra (2008) believed that that establishing dividing lines between what is formulaic and what is not stays a difficult task to be accomplished.

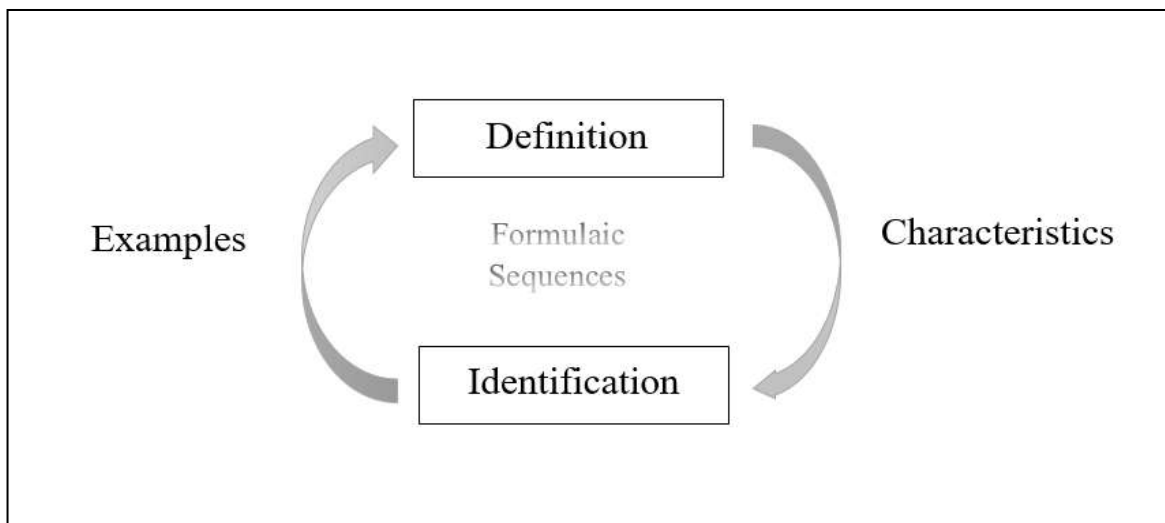
To conclude with, the overlapping between formulaic sequences and other lexical forms is what makes the boundaries very blurry. This presented a conundrum that baffles not only users of these formulas but even researchers and scholars. Therefore, studies are gradually increasing in relation to this issue in order to bring more precision.

2.1.5 Noticing and identifying formulaic sequences

The main pioneers in the area of formulaicity in addition to many researchers, if not all of them, agree on the fact that identifying formulaic sequences in corpora is no less difficult than defining them. This means that the identification protocol is complicated and challenging regardless to the purpose behind it whether it was for preparing the input to conduct a study or analysing it to obtain results. Wray (2008) attempted to put this issue in simple terms when she compared noticing and identifying a formulaic sequence in normal language with picking out black cats in a dark room. To do so, one needs, right at the beginning, to have a set of characteristics that enable him to make the distinction between the desired cats and the undesired ones.

Figure 2.3

The Relationship between Defining and Identifying Formulaic Sequences



With regard to the previous figure and according to Wray 's (2008) claims, a person can notice that there is a circular relationship between the two mentioned processes (i.e., definition and identification). This means that creating a working space for the identification of formulaic sequences in a set of data prerequisites, notably, a reliable definition that clarify some characteristics on which the researcher can rely. Conversely, it is not possible to define formulaic sequences without having a variety of examples that have been already identified, and which the researcher may employ to extract certain characteristics and specifications of formulaic sequences. Once again, the relationship is *circular* and no process can be skipped.

After successive years of work in this area, a variety of methods has been developed starting with different criteria and ending up with specific checklists. When it comes to the criteria of formulaic sequences that gained popularity among researchers (e.g., Wray, 2008 and Wood, 2015), the following list can be made:

2.1.5.1 Frequency

Frequency can be used as the principal criterion for considering a multiword sequence that it is frequently used as formulaic (Wood, 2015). This implies that frequency is a robust

determiner of formulaicity, and arguing the opposite necessitates a strong claim as Wray (2008) conceded. Nonetheless, this does not deny the limitations of the frequency-based approach where some formulaic sequences that are not frequent in corpora can be neglected.

2.1.5.2 Form

According to Wray (2008), this criteria mainly refers to the formal features of a formulaic sequence. For instance, some researchers consider only multiword sequences to be formulaic. This means that some monoallelic expressions like greetings (e.g., *bye* instead of *good bye* and *thanks* instead of *thank you very much*) are excluded, especially from the oral level of language, though they are formulaic in nature. When it comes to the written level, the same author (i.e., Alison Wray) believed that some writers tend to use hyphenated pre nominal or one word adjective instead of using two-words noun (e.g., *so-called* instead of *so called*).

2.1.5.3 Spelling

This criterion has a direct link with mapping phonemes into letters, and it, occasionally, helps to demonstrate a multiword sequence as a single unit in the mental lexicon of an individual as Wray (2008) argued. She also kept arguing that this under-specification of form is done mainly with shared formulaic sequences across people. For instance, speakers need to know the full form, and the exact spelling of the two following expression “the time is right” and “the time is ripe”, which Wray (2008) gave as exemplars, in order to make the accurate distinction and comprehension.

2.1.5.4 Intuition

A person can rely on his own intuitive judgement to figure out which sequence is formulaic and which one is novel in a corpus. As a way of illustration, the members of the same speech community can easily recognise shared proverbs or idioms among them. Yet, many researchers, notably those who are not L1 speakers, are not competent enough to rely

solo on this criteria. Henceforth, a combination of personal intuition in addition to others' intuition can be used in order to add more credibility as there is no replicability with intuitive identification.

The list of criteria does not come to an end. It also includes the psycholinguistic measures and the phonological characteristics that have been set forth by Wood (2015).

2.1.5.5 Using computer software packages to detect formulaic sequences

Since there is an advancement in the area of electronic text analysis (ETA), devotees to formulaic sequences enquiries have been attempting to integrate electronic tools and computer software packages (e.g., AntConc, WordSmith and Sketch-engine) for the sake of detecting lexical items that are characterised by formulaicity in digitized texts.

Spotting light on ETA separately, some advantages of this method when relying on it can flourish. Initially, EAT depends on replicable procedures that enables researchers to verify any kind of analysis within this area. It also permits the extraction of information on specific words co-occurrence and word-frequency. However, it does that by using software tools that can lead to obtaining reliable results. Last but not least, EAT can be used quantitatively (e.g., frequency lists) to explore data qualitatively (e.g., literary texts). It is indispensable to note that these advantages were derived based on Adolphs's (2006) book *“Introducing Electronic Text Analysis”*.

Adolphs (2006) continues to confirm that novice researchers who does not even have programming proficiency can make use of some software packages that are free of charge when used online. In precise terms, these software packages follow standard procedures, and they rely, mostly, on “frequency” as a fundamental criterion for identifying and detecting the desired items (e.g., phrasal verbs, collocations and others). However, Wray (2002) took issue with the frequency-based analysis when she marked that it “does not fully meet our needs when it comes to identifying formulaic sequences” (p.31). Otherwise stated,

“frequency” is not very suitable to make a description for a single occurrence of formulaic sequence among a large corpus (Adolphs, 2006). What is more is that some formulaic sequences are not completely fixed (i.e., they can have fillable slots). For instance, the phrasal verb “take out” can be electronically detected. However, if it was modelled according to the following pattern: “Take + a noun clause + out”, it would become undetectable.

In short, corpus analysis software represents a possible method for identifying formulaic sequences. However, it has a clear shortcoming that obstructs the researcher’s way, and this urges him to look for another alternative. Therefore, checklists may be an effective method to identify formulaic sequences in a data set.

2.1.5.6 Using checklists to detect formulaic sequences

With regard to the well-recognised limitations that appear notably on the analysis level, and which can be referred to corpus analysis computer software, in addition to the different criteria (e.g., frequency, form and others) that have been reviewed previously, checklists came to light as a reliable alternative method for identification. Against this background, Wood (2015) argued that it is difficult to isolate formulaic sequences from both written and spoken corpora. Accordingly, specific criteria contained within checklists can be beneficial to judge the formulaicity of lexical chunks. Under the frame of this section, four checklists that have been mentioned in Wood's (2015) work “Fundamentals of Formulaic Language” will be directly stated in the form of tables and briefly discussed.

2.1.5.6.1 Checklist of Coulmas (1979)

What characterises this checklist is its use for formulaicity identification in child language acquisition. However, this does not prevent taking advantage from its different criteria in other eras and fields. Coulmas (1979) focused on the following nine criteria to be matched so that a sequence can be considered formulaic:

Table 2.2*Coulmas' Checklist for Identifying Formulaic Sequences (1979)*

Checklist Items
1. At least two morphemes long (i.e., two words)
2. Coheres phonologically
3. Individual elements are not used concurrently in the same form separately or in other environments
4. Grammatically advanced compared to other language
5. Community-wide formula
6. Idiosyncratic chunk
7. Repeatedly used in the same form
8. Situationally dependent
9. May be used inappropriately

Adapted from *Fundamentals of Formulaic Language* (p.25), by D. Wood, 2015, Bloomsbury Academic.

According to Coulmas (1979), a formulaic sequence should be phonologically coherent (i.e., internal pausing is not allowed) as it must include more than two words in its external surface. This means, users of formulaic sequences may gain more linguistic competence since these sequences are supposed to be grammatically advanced in comparison to the surrounding language. Besides those criteria, Coulmas insisted on the repeated use of the same syntactical structure of sequences that are widely shared among members of the same speech community.

2.1.5.6.2 Checklist of Peters (1983)

Continuing on the same path of checklists, Peters (1983) put forward another set of criteria that were lately used in several studies to identify formulaic sequences under the context of second language acquisition. These criteria include:

Table 2.3

Peter's Checklist for Identifying Formulaic Sequences (1983)

Checklist Items
1. Phonological coherence
2. Greater length and complexity than other output
3. Non-productive use of rules underlying a sequence
4. Situational dependence
5. Frequency and invariance in form

Adapted from *Fundamentals of Formulaic Language* (p.26), by D. Wood, 2015, Bloomsbury Academic.

It is clear that these criteria are similar to those of Coulmas (1979). However, the difference lies in Peter's focus on using formulaic sequences non-productively since they are characterised by their holistic nature that allows their direct retrieval and integration of without the need to apply any grammatical rule on them.

2.1.5.6.3 Checklist of Wray and Namba (2003)

This third checklist can be robustly considered as the most sophisticated one, and which was and still used nowadays. It can be also applicable in many study areas and not only in child language acquisition. This checklist contains 11 criteria that can be adopted and adapted in accordance with the researcher's objectives and perception towards his investigation. For more preciseness, the researcher should also use a Likert scale from 1 to

5 for the sake of assigning the degree of formulaicity to a sequence. The 11 diagnostic criteria are as follows:

Table 2.4

Wray and Namba's Checklist for Identifying Formulaic Sequences (2003)

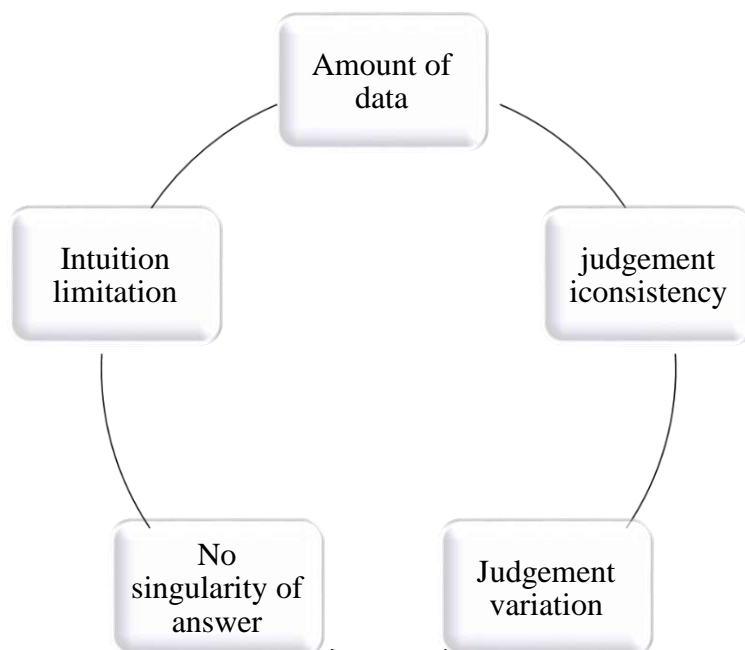
Checklist Items
1. By my judgment, there is something grammatically unusual about this word string.
2. By my judgment, part or all of the word string lacks semantic transparency.
3. By my judgment, this word string is associated with a specific situation and/or register.
4. By my judgment, the word string as a whole performs a function in communication or discourse other than, or in addition to, conveying the meaning of the words themselves.
5. By my judgment, this precise formulation is the one most commonly used by this speaker/writer when conveying this idea.
6. By my judgment, the speaker/writer has accompanied this word string with an action, use of punctuation, or phonological pattern that gives it special status as a unit, and/or is repeating something he has just heard or read.
7. By my judgment, the speaker/writer, or someone else, has marked this word string grammatically or lexically in a way that gives it special status as a unit.
8. By my judgment, based on direct evidence or my intuition, there is a greater than chance-level probability that the speaker/writer will have encountered this precise formulation before, from other people.
9. By my judgment, although this word string is novel, it is a clear derivation, deliberate or otherwise, of something that can be demonstrated to be formulaic in its own right.
10. By my judgment, this word string is formulaic, but it has been unintentionally applied inappropriately.
11. By my judgment, this word string contains linguistic material that is too sophisticated, or not sophisticated enough, to match the speaker's general grammatical and lexical competence

Adapted from *Fundamentals of Formulaic Language* (p.26), by D. Wood, 2015, Bloomsbury Academic.

These criteria guide the researcher during his path to justify his judgements about what it is and what it is not formulaic. It should be noted here that a sequence that matches many criteria from this list is not forcibly more formulaic in nature than other formulaic sequences. In this regard, Wray (2008) claimed that “different data may reveal different features” (p.114), and this demands the necessity of including additive criteria by other judges. She also emphasised the idea that not all criteria can be applicable to all sort of written and spoken corpora.

2.1.5.6.4 Checklist of Wood (2010a)

Instead of relying on computer software packages to detect formulaic sequences, Wood (2010a) went with native speaker intuitive judgement as a technique to do so. However, he attempted to give attention to Wray’s (2002) worries about the limitations caused by native speakers’ judgement at the outset of working on his checklist. The following figure briefly presents Wray’s (2002) concerns on the pre-mentioned matter (as cited in Wood, 2015).

Figure 2.4*Wray's Concerns about Native Speaker Judgement*

To explain the above figure, it may be initiated with data amount that should be small and limited in order to avoid inaccurate and inconsistent judgements that may occur because of alteration or fatigue of judges. In addition to judgement inconsistency, variation is predictable since there are different judges with different opinions. In this vein, Wood (2015) sought to organise some pre-sessions for benchmark identification. When it comes to the multiple answers to what is looked for by judges, reading the relevant literature and applying the same criteria for formulaic sequences detection was regarded as a suitable solution (Wood, 2015). One last concern of Wray is that of intuition, and which does not exceed the surface level of awareness. With regard to this matter, Wood (2015) thought of reading the salient literature in relation to the criteria as a guide and as a source of justification, at the same time, for detecting formulaic sequences from other sequences. All of this has led Wood to suggest the following main guidelines for his checklist, and which he re-cited them in his 2015's work :

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- 1- Phonological coherence and reduction: this criterion mainly refers to oral speech production.
- 2- The taxonomy used by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992): it refers basically to the syntactic units modelled in the following order “NP+ Aux+VP”, in addition to well-known lexical phrases and collocations. It should be noted here that this taxonomy was used to detect possible formulaicity, and it cannot be applicable in all cases.
- 3- Greater length/complexity than other output.
- 4- Semantic irregularity, as in idioms and metaphors.
- 5- Syntactic irregularity.

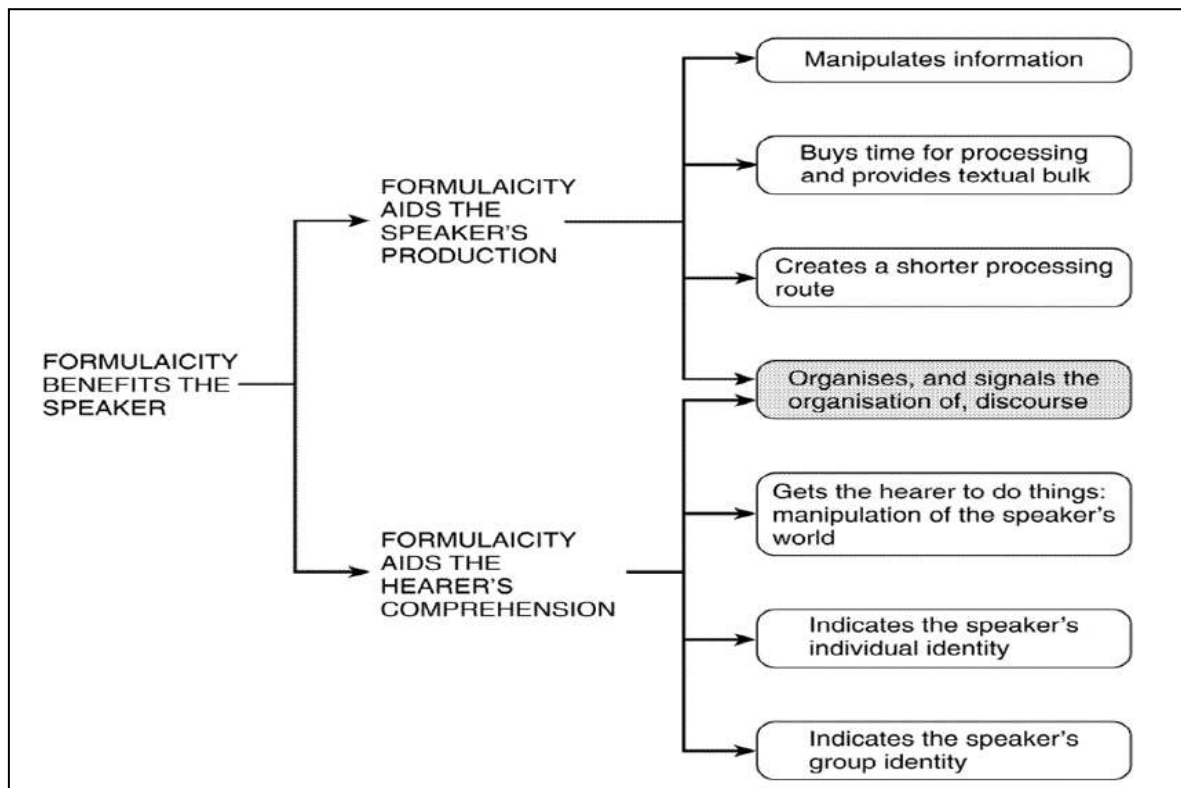
It is widely agreed that any researcher who is required, right at the beginning, to set forth his identification process is facing a challenging task as there is no absolute nor universal set of criteria. Nonetheless, the four checklists can serve as a source of guidance to researchers who can adapt and adopt the most convenient criteria to their enquiries' objectives. From one hand, one can deduce based on the different available checklists in the body of literature that the most commonly used method of extraction is intuition of experts though it can be considered as the least scientific one. On the other hand, frequency-based approach and computer software packages have proven to eliminate some formulaic sequences that may occur only once in written transcripts and oral productions though these sequences match the measures of formulaicity.

Overall, it seems appropriate to rely on judges of experts and to back up with internet search engines for more objectivity on decisions about identifying formulaic sequences. Needless to say that judges on formulaicity should come along with an adjusted checklist that suits the researcher's objectives, and that helps him to spot formulaic sequences effectively. Yet, other attempts should be made on the level of identification methods in the coming years.

2.2.2 Functions of formulaic sequences

Misunderstanding an output can be potentially referred to the novelty of its lexical structures. Accordingly, it seems better for the producer of a language to use expressions that are familiar and close to his receivers' linguistic repertoires. Here, it is clear that the high demand for integrating formulaic sequences in a discourse, both written and spoken, entails the several functions performed by these multiword strings. In fact, this appeal has received an actual response since there are statistical evidence for the large percentage of formulaic sequences contained within corpora. For instance, Erman and Warren (2000), in their landmark paper, calculated that 58.6% of the spoken discourse was formulaic while a percentage of 52.3% of the written discourse was formulaic. This opens the door for us as researchers in stylistics or in other fields to question the type of functions accomplished by formulaic sequences.

In light of the preceding issue, Wray (2000) proposed a model that encompasses different functions in relation to the speaker and hearer. These functions can be categorised into manipulative, cognitive and discourse-organisational ones as the following figure clarifies.

Figure 2.5*The Benefits of Formulaic Sequences for Speakers*

Source: “Formulaic Sequences in Second Language Teaching : Principle and Practice” by A. Wray, 2000, *Applied Linguistics*, 21(4), p.478.

Needless to say that that the interest of this ongoing study is directed towards the writer’s production and the reader’s comprehension. Thus, there should be a vertical drop of formulaic sequences benefits shown above on the current study interest. In simple terms, light will be shed on what seems to serve the theoretical framework of this research.

As a point of departure, the upper part of the diagram depicts formulaic sequences as a device to reduce the processing effort of the language producer, be it a speaker or a writer. In fact, the producer of a communicative message, regardless to the channel, attempts to ignore the overloading processing effort provoked when generating sentences from the scratch at the time of use. He does that by integrating ready-made sequences that were previously stored in the mental lexicon. In other terms, formulaic sequences help to

minimise the processing route in comparison to other lexical structures. The following table is provided to give further clarification on this matter wherein the included ideas have been carefully summarised.

Table 2.5

The Role of Formulaic Sequences in Saving Processing Effort (Adapted from Wray and Perkins, 2000, p.16)

Formulaic sequences as a device of reducing processing effort		
Processing short-cuts	Time-buyers	Manipulation of information
(a) Increased production speed and/or fluency.	(a) Vehicles for fluency, rhythm and emphasis. (b) Planning time without losing the turn.	(a) Gaining and retaining access to information otherwise unlikely to be remembered.

Adapted from “The Functions of Formulaic Language : an integrated model” by A. Wray, and M.R. Perkins, 2000, *Language and Communication*, 20 (1), p.16.

The bottom part of the diagram is tied to the socio-interactional functions that are achieved by producers of the language through inserting formulaic sequences. The latter helps not only to assert the individual identity but also the membership of a group. For instance, certain idioms or collocations may be used more frequently or exclusively in a certain speech community. Formulaic sequences also allow satisfying the needs of the message producer whether they were physical, emotional or cognitive by manipulating his surrounding world. He tends to engage others through commands and requests. However, this does not mean that novel sequences and expressions do not fulfil the same functions, but formulaic sequences seem to achieve them rather more conveniently. Thus, the basic purpose behind focusing on this kind of functions is to augment the comprehension of the message receiver. The following table clarifies what has been mentioned in this section in a precise manner.

Table 2.6*The Role of Formulaic Sequences in Social Interactions*

Formulaic sequences as a device of social interaction		
Manipulation of others	Asserting separate identity	Asserting group identity
(a) Satisfying physical, emotional and cognitive needs.	(a) Being taken seriously. (b) Separating from the crowd.	(a) Overall membership. (b) Place in hierarchy (affirming and adjusting).

Adapted from “The Functions of Formulaic Language : an integrated model” by A. Wray, and M.R. Perkins, 2000, *Language and Communication*, 20 (1), p.14.

The intersectional benefit between the producer and receiver of the message is that formulaic sequences, mainly discourse devices, contribute to the organisation of a discourse in terms of its structure and meaning at once. For instance, the speaker/writer uses formulaic sequences to sustain the systematic flow and organisation of a discourse. Meanwhile, the hearer/reader exploits the presence of these formulas to track the connection of ideas in order to understand them well.

It should be emphasised that the non-reachability to these benefits could be justified by the non-alignment of speaker to hearer or writer to reader. According to Wray (2002), “this conflict comes about when the speaker and hearer possess non identical inventories of formulaic sequences. This could be because they belong to different speech communities (...) or because one is a native speaker of the language and the other is not” (p.99). Therefore, it lies on the speaker/writer to pick up formulaic sequences that can be easily decoded by the receiver of the message. In this way, he can mainly assure the successfulness of the socio-interactive purpose.

Formulaic sequences have advantages in relation to the short cutting process wherein efforts are saved. They also play a role in the act of communication since they assert the

indication of the speaker's or writer's identity and social membership. These can play a major role in organising both the spoken and written discourse. Therefore, they can be a solution to different matters whether linguistic or non-linguistic.

2.1.7 Main types of formulaic sequences

It has been revealed previously in this chapter that the phenomenon of formulaic sequences has been labelled differently and distinctively (see section 2.1.2). This can be referred to the multiple standpoints, be it linguistics or non-linguistics, and to the various agendas of researchers who were investigating sub-areas of formulaic sequences or even not the same phenomenon as claimed by Wood (2015). In fact, providing a comprehensive conceptual framework is not possible without giving importance to the main types of formulaic sequences so that the investigators of the current study can execute their study practically on the common land of stylistics. Stated differently, several types of formulaic sequences such as idioms, collocations and phrasal verbs emerged and received interest from a range of disciplines. In the following section, these main types will be concisely reviewed in order to end up with an accurate sense on what formulaic sequences are about.

2.1.7.1 Idioms

The difficulty of defining and identifying formulaic sequences resides basically in its sub-categories that are included within it. In fact, the notion of idioms seems a bit elusive at first glance because its definitional aspects have received not contradictory but different views in terms of the scope. In this sense, some researchers use the term idioms to widely encompass "proverbs, slang expressions, and even individual words of certain types"(Wood, 2015, p.40) whereas others use it only for word strings that have a fixed form and an opaque meaning. This explains the created challenges by this category even to native speakers. Therefore, researchers have been working to set forth comprehensive definitions on idioms

in addition to some distinguishing criteria that can enable not only researchers but also producers and receivers of communicative messages to spot out idioms.

2.1.7.1 Defining idioms

Even though her definition was written back in the 1980's, but it is still workable till nowadays since it functions as a basis for recent definitions. Irujo (1986) noted that “an idiom is a conventionalized expression whose meaning cannot be determined from the meaning of its part” (p.288). She added more clarity to her words when she exemplified saying that the idiomatic meaning of *I was pulling your leg* cannot be derived nor from the meaning of the verb *pull* neither the term *leg*. Along the same strand of thinking, Richards and Schmidt (2010) simply defined an idiom as “an expression which functions as a single unit and whose meaning cannot be worked out from its separate parts” (p.270). Thus, idioms are basically built from more than one single lexical item, and their meaning (i.e., of lexical items) cannot constitute the global meaning of the sequence (i.e., the idiom).

It is fair to say that reaching a comprehensive definition of idioms can be better done through reviewing its characteristics. Correspondingly, Maienborn, Heusinger and Portner (2011) claimed that idioms are “ill-formed” because of their violation to the rules of selectional restrictions. Additionally, their lexical make-up is characterised by the non-predictability, idiosyncrasy, frozenness and most importantly the non-compositionality of meaning. Along its importance, the latter characteristic has particularly received a global agreement from many researchers (e.g., Irujo, 1986; Richards and Schmidt, 2010; Wood, 2015 and Bruening, 2020). In point of fact, the non-compositionality of an idiom indicates that it carries a non-literal meaning/interpretation that cannot be deduced from its multiple words.

While many researchers focused on what characterises an idiom, Baker (2018) paid attention to what should not be normally done with an idiom by a writer or a speaker in

ordinary circumstances. She suggested that the following are not permitted to be applied on an idiom: (a) word order changing, (b) grammatical structure changing, (c) word deletion, (d) word addition and (e) word replacement. Baker's suggestion was simply based on the idea that idioms are fixed expressions that "allow little or no variation in form" (p.70).

The central idea to be noted here is that the criteria that can indicate the idiomacy of an expression is their fixedness on the level of form and their non-compositionality on the level of meaning.

2.1.7.2 Categorising idioms

After revealing the main indicators of idiomatic sequences, Wood (2015) maintained that they (i.e., idioms) can further contain other sub-categories. For instance, Moon's (1998) taxonomy includes three categories (as cited in Wood, 2015, p.43), and which are as follows:

1. **Anomalous collocations**—uniquely formed collocations, which may:

- a. violate grammatical rules, for example, *day in and day out*.
- b. contain items specific only to the collocation and with no meaning outside of it, for example, *to and fro*.
- c. be somehow defective, for example, *foot the bill*, in which the word *foot* carries a meaning unique to this collocation.
- d. be phraseological, or allow variation in structure, for example, *with regard to or in regard to*.

2. **Formulae**—grammatical in structure and compositional in meaning, yet pragmatically specialized in function.

- a. Sayings, for example, *an eye for an eye*.
- b. Proverbs, for example, *every cloud has a silver lining*.
- c. Similes, for example, *as right as rain*.

3. Metaphors—expressions which link the concrete and the imaginary or abstract, with three degrees of transparency.

d. Transparent—for example, *stepping stone*.

e. Semi-transparent—for example, *throw in the towel*.

f. Opaque—for example, *pull one's leg*.

In a previous simplified version where types of idioms have been arranged according to their lexical structures or forms, McCarthy and O'Dell (2002) proposed the following table :

Table 2.7

Types of Idioms (McCarthy and O'Dell, 2002, p.6)

Form	Example	Meaning
Verb + object/complement (and/or adverbial)	kill two birds with one stone	produce two useful results by doing just one action
Prepositional phrase	in the blink of an eye	in an extremely short time
Compound	a bone of contention	something which people agree and disagree over
Simile (as + adjective +as, or like + noun)	as dry as a bone	very dry indeed
Binomial (word + and + word)	rough and ready	crude and lacking sophistication
Trinomial (word + word + and + word)	cool, calm and collected	relaxed, in control, not nervous
Whole clause or sentence	to cut a long story short	To tell the main points, but not all the fine details

Source: *English Idioms in Use* (p.6), by M. McCarthy, and F. O'Dell, 2002, Cambridge University Press.

Although other taxonomies have been elaborated by scholars, but it is still obligatory to refer to the main indicators of form fixedness and meaning figurativeness to spot out an idiom in a written text.

2.1.7.2 Collocations

Having a good command of language by a reader or a writer is not limited only to the understanding of single words and employing them competently but it requires knowing what these words usually collocate with, and which meaning they hold. That is to say, certain words have the tendency to occur and collocate more frequently with other words. It is widely acknowledged that Firth was the initiator of works on collocations in the 1950s; yet, this does not decline the existence of this area earlier than this period of time. In fact, collocations belong to the area of formulaic sequences since there is no restriction to idioms as a monotype. With regard to the fact that collocations are no less puzzling than idioms, many studies have been carried out to depict this linguistic and stylistic phenomenon (i.e., collocations).

2.1.7.2.1 Defining collocations

History has witnessed the emergence of two perspectives on collocations that helped to operationalize and establish a well-elaborated definition of this phenomenon. According to Wood (2015), *the frequency-based approach* is concerned with “the statistical likelihood of words appearing together”, whereas *the phraseological approach* focuses more on “restrictive descriptions of multiword units” (p.39). Otherwise stated, the former approach relies on statistical measures like the t-score and MI (Mutual Information) as a fundamental criterion to define and identify collocations, while the latter takes into consideration the fixedness of these combinations in addition to their transparent meaning.

In the 1950s, Firth intended to use the term collocation for the descriptions of the usual occurrence of a word with another (as cited in Cortes, 2004). Indeed, some words collocate together more frequently than others do. Sinclair (1966) simply clarified this matter by stating that “There are virtually no impossible collocations, but some are much more likely than others” (as cited in Baker, 2018). Likewise, Schmitt (2015) believed that a

collocation rises from the co-occurrence of some words together in discourse. Additionally, he built on Siyanova-Chanturia's (2013) words to reckon that the area of collocations is mostly investigated in applied linguistics unlike idioms that are vaguely investigated in psycholinguistics.

In close proximity to the previous definitions, O'Dell and McCarthy (2017) defined each collocation as "a combination of two or more words which frequently occur together" (p.6). Once again, it is affirmed that a word string is determined as a collocation based on its constant frequency of use by speakers or writers in a discourse. It should be mentioned here that no logic exists between the constituent words of a collocation, but it is a matter of convention. O'Dell and McCarthy (2017) denied the idea that collocations are only the combinations of adjectives and nouns. Subsequently, this entails the existence of a list of typical word combinations that may work as collocations. This list is presented in the following table:

Table 2.8

Typical Word Combinations of Collocations

Word Combinations	Examples
Verb + Noun	Pass up the chance
Noun + Verb	An opportunity arose
Noun + Noun	A stroke of luck
Adjective + Noun	Vain hope
Adverb + Adjective	Stunningly attractive
Verb + Adverb or prepositional phrase	Failed miserably/Foam at the mouth
More complex collocations	Taking it easy for a while

Source: *English Idioms in Use* (p.10), by M. McCarthy, and F. O'Dell, 2002, Cambridge University Press.

This table may facilitate for EFL readers and learners the process of identifying collocations in a discourse.

2.1.7.2.2 Categorising collocations

The bulk of accumulating knowledge on collocations does not stop at the level of definition, but it reaches the level of categorisation. In fact, many studies have been put forth in endeavours to categorise them, and one of which is indebted to O'Dell and McCarthy (2017) wherein three categories have been identified.

- **Strong collocations:** This type of collocations is consisted of words that are highly tight together, and connected to each other in a close manner. That is to say, their frequency occurrence is high when being compared to other collocations. For instance, the adjective *mitigating* collocates in most of the cases with *circumstances* or *factors*.
- **Fixed collocations:** As their name implies, this type of collocations is fixed in form, and it rejects all sorts of modifications and changes. In addition, their meaning cannot be understood from its constituent parts. As a way of illustration, the collocation *to and fro* may be taken (meaning to walk in a direction then in the opposite one for a couple of times) that does not accept any substitution to its constituents.
- **Weak collocations:** Unlike the previous type of collocations that it is characterised by the unbreakable relationship between the constituent words, weak collocations are basically made up of words that have the tendency to collocate with a wide range of words. For example, the adjective *broad* can collocate with *smile*, *shoulders*, *avenue* and many others.

To sum up, having a certain collocational knowledge and competence is mandatory for EFL readers so that they can easily read and make sense of literary texts.

2.1.7.3 Idioms versus collocations

As touched earlier in this section, each type of formulaic sequences, idioms and collocations in precise terms, can be defined and categorised based on its lexical and semantic features. On the top of that, having idiomatic and collocational knowledge is a prerequisite for every EFL reader in order to read literary texts more competently. Nonetheless, attention should be brought to the issue of the overlapping between the two categories. In fact, this issue turned out to a conundrum that puzzled some scholars (e.g., Baker, 2018; Bruening, 2019) especially that it is a little bit puzzler to distinguish between an idiom and a collocation in some cases. Against this claim, Macis and Schmitt (2016) viewed that considering a collocation as an idiom or vice-verse can exercise academic minds. Then, they ended up saying that this matter of terminology can be referred to the researcher's perspective.

Baker (2018) made a sort of simplified distinction between the two categories in which she made an emphasis on flexibility of patterning and transparency of meaning as central judgemental criteria. In terms of the first criterion, she claimed that collocations can be flexible in a way that they allow for some variations in form (e.g., delivery of a letter and deliver a letter) unlike idioms that are inflexible in form. When it comes to the second criterion, she argued that collocations can hold a transparent meaning while idioms carry meanings that cannot be understood from their constituent parts.

In his paper "Idioms, collocations, and structure", Bruening (2019) discussed thoroughly the criteria that can help a person to distinguish between idioms and collocations. It is worth mentioning that his point of view is not too far from that of Baker (2018). As a starting point to his discussion, the following table may be provided:

Table 2.9*The Distinguishing Criteria between Idioms and Collocations*

Idioms (e.g., Kick the bucket)	Collocations (e.g., Cost a fortune)
Non-literal interpretation	Literal interpretation
Substitutability of components	Non-substitutability of components

Adapted from “Idioms, collocations, and structure: Syntactic constraints on conventionalized expressions” by B. Bruening, 2019, *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory*, 38(2), p.3.

Based on this table, it can be noticed that Bruening (2019) focused on the meaning of the sequence in addition to the substitutability of its components. He exemplified using the idiom “kick the bucket” (meaning “to die”), and whose meaning cannot be interpreted literally since it is free from any kicking motion, and it does not contain any physical bucket. Moreover, an idiom allows no replacement on its lexical form. However, a collocation may accept the substitutability of its components, and can carry a literal meaning that can be easily deduced. For instance, “cost a fortune” literally means to cost a large amount of money. Bruening asserted that these criteria are not totally fixed, and can fail in some cases.

Drawing a dividing line between idioms and collocations is not an easy task to be undertaken as one may think. However, providing some insights and distinguishing criteria for the two categories on the theoretical grounding can be instrumental.

2.1.7.4 Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs constitute a fertile area that continuously receives new items let alone the thousands existing ones. This area did not previously lie at the core of formulaicity like idioms and collocations in view of the fact that they were considered as a subcategory under

idioms because of their non-literal meaning. Nowadays, they have become well recognised in both spoken and written levels of English.

In a corpus-informed study, Schmitt and Redwood (2011) endeavoured to provide an elaborated definition by stating that:

Phrasal verbs are multi-word units are no exception and many are opaque, making them difficult to decipher and understand. They often consist of a high frequency, monosyllabic, delexicalised verb (e.g. get, give, go, make, take) and one of a fixed number of particles (e.g. down, in, off, on, out, over, up) (p.174).

Through their words, it can be deduced that some phrasal verbs can be interpreted literally (i.e., based on their components) while others cannot be interpreted in the same manner because of their opaqueness. When it comes to the lexical form, Schmitt and Redwood (2011) noted that a phrasal verb is composed of a verb with a little independent meaning when it stands alone; thus, a particle is joined to it in order to create a meaningful interpretation. By reviewing the words of the two scholars in their same previous work, it cannot be any clearer that they pointed out to the following characteristics of phrasal verbs: (a) the semantic complexity of some phrasal verbs, (b) the high frequency of use, (c) the separation of some particles from their verbs (e.g., she tried to *calm* her sister *down*). With regard to the third characteristic, they referred this kind of separation not only to “grammatical consideration and transitivity of the verb” but most frequently to “stylistic and syntactic conventions, context, prosody and intended meaning” (p.174).

Wood (2015) indicated that phrasal verbs belong to the phenomenon of formulaic language. Then, he simply defined them as verbs combined with a preposition or particle, or both, with often nonliteral meanings, or both literal and figurative interpretations” (p.48). This definition is not far away in meaning from the previous one of Schmitt and Redwood

(2011), and which have been already clarified. Regarding the structural categories of phrasal verbs, three categories have been proposed (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003; Wood, 2015):

- **Verb + preposition (prepositional phrasal verbs):**

refer to, look into (a room), look at, depend on, abstain from, think of.

- **Verb + particle (particle phrasal verbs) :**

slow down, bring up, put off, give away, look into (a murder), think over.

- **Verb + particle + preposition (particle-prepositional phrasal verbs):**

face up to, get down to, come up with, be in for.

At each step of explanation, it is referred to Wood's (2015) work "Fundamentals of Formulaic Language", and this is accredited to the bulk of accumulated knowledge contained within the lines of his book and corresponded with the aims on the theoretical level of the current study.

According to McCarthy and O'Dell (2017), the importance of phrasal verbs is in virtue of their existence in several contexts (e.g., speeches, literary texts, songs and many others). This means to learn a phrasal verb is to learn its attached meaning and in which context it is used. In this way, readers of literary texts, EFL readers in particular, can find themselves acquainted with what they learnt from a variety of phrasal verbs when they come across them. On this point, Schmitt and Redwood (2011) mentioned that Gardner and Davies (2008) conducted a study in which they estimated that "phrasal verbs occur, on average, every 192 words, that is almost 2 phrasal verbs per page of written text" (p.173). For this reason of occurrence in addition to frequency, much attention is been given to this category of formulaic sequences.

On the whole, the tendency to look inwards phrasal verbs as an independent category of formulaic sequences is growing with time because of their importance on the speaking and writing levels of the English language. In point of fact, studying the significance of

formulaic sequences as a literary stylistic feature can be only treatable when a bird's eye view is put on each category individually as it was done in the previous section.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, it was purposively attempted to show the importance of formulaic sequences especially that this area of interest proved its progressiveness during the last few decades until the present day. It has been endeavoured to build a picture on the notion of formulaic sequences starting by their history and ending up with their major functions and types. Moreover, it was aimed to emphasise the need of exploring the notion of formulaic sequences in relation to stylistic concerns as the significance of formulaic sequences can extend beyond linguistic concerns.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three: Field Work

Introduction

3.1 Research Methodology: Choices and Rationale

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3.1.6 Data analysis procedures

3.1.6.1 Data analysis procedures for questionnaire

3.1.6.2 Data analysis procedures for document analysis

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the fieldwork and research methodology of the present study along the necessary justifications for the different choices. It mainly deals with every single methodological decision in terms of its convenience and suitability for the overall research purpose by backing it up with evidence from the literature. Initially, the adopted research paradigm, approach, design are carefully considered. Moreover, it sheds light on the selected data collection methods accompanied by an explanation of the used procedures for data collection in addition to data analysis. Therefore, this third chapter aims to give more credibility for the obtained results of the study as it contains methodological decisions juxtaposed to their rationale.

3.1 Research Methodology: Choices and Rationale

Having developed a theoretical framework wherein necessary information were reviewed and provided about the variables of this ongoing study, the researcher finds herself stepping towards the next stage of the research process. Although this stage is evidently more practical in nature, it should be also anchored in theoretical knowledge and justifications on the adopted research methodology.

Before proceeding any further, it preferable to consider the words of Kothari (2004) who considerably simplified the notion of research as “a voyage of discovery”. This voyage is initially fuelled by human beings’ “vital instinct of inquisitiveness”, and that “makes us probe and attain full and fuller understanding of the unknown” (p.01). However, a researcher cannot set out on his journey unless he was guided by a specific research methodology. Concerning the latter, Kumar (2011) noted in plain words that “Just as there are posts along the way as you travel to your destination, so there are practical steps through which you must pass in your research journey in order to find the answers to your research questions”

(p,18). In other words, a research methodology is an overall framework that comprises a set of methods and techniques that have been cogently decided based on the nature of the study.

As a matter of fact, research methodology allows stepping away from any potential subjectivity and bias from the researcher's part since it considers the logic behind the adopted research approach, design and data collection methods. On top of that, it enables evaluating the research results and ensuring their validity (Kothari, 2004). Keeping all of the previous words this in view, a great deal of attention should be paid to all the dimensions related to research methodology. Worthy to mention, this section of methodological decisions seeks to set the stage for the actual execution of our study.

3.1.1 Research paradigm

Each researcher views the world through different lenses, and this indicates the he has a set of abstract ideas, beliefs and assumptions that comprise his philosophical underpinning towards a research. Roughly speaking, it is referred to the paradigmatic position that should be identified and uncovered right at the outset of any undertaken research.

According to Merriam Webster dictionary, the word "Paradigm" has its roots to Greek where it means "example" or "pattern". However, this pattern is by no means an explicit one with regard to its exclusive context of use (i.e., research methodology). Thus, a paradigm can be simply defined as the "implicit view of the world that scientists hold, that communities of scientists share, and that influences the way science is done" (Slife and Williams, 1995, p.260). It follows from here that a paradigm has a direct link to how researchers inquire about things, their changes in addition to their connexion and influence on each other (Chakraborty, 2019).

Any methodological notion cannot be appreciated only by citing its definition, but straight hints to its importance should be also included. Likewise, research paradigm is

extremely important as it dictates and influences many choices along the research process. That is to say, a paradigm can lead the holders of researches to adopt different methodologies with respect to the approach, design, data collection and analysis procedures. Kumar (2011) seems to support the previous claim as he noted that “Differences in philosophical perspectives in each paradigm combined with the aims of a study, to a large extent, determine the focus, approach and mode of enquiry which, in turn, determine the structural aspects of a study design” (p.104). Thus, the research paradigm has valuable methodological implications.

With regard to the pre-mentioned importance, it can be reached through different paradigms in research and not only through one standardised type. Creswell and Creswell,(2018) provided us with a summative table on the most dominant paradigms along their characteristics that can almost speak for themselves.

Table 3.1

The Four Paradigms in Educational Research

Post-positivism	Constructivism	Pragmatism	Transformative
Determination	Understanding	Consequences of actions	Political
Reductionism	Multiple participant meanings	Pluralistic	Collaborative
Empirical observation and measurement	Social and historical construction	Problem-centred	Change-oriented
Theory verification	Theory generation	Real-world practice oriented	Power and justice oriented

Adapted from *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.), by J.W. Creswell, and J.D. Creswell, 2018, SAGE Publications, Inc.

Before the declaration of the paradigm war (Gage, 1989), the body of literature depicted the prominence of two paradigms, and which are: post-positivism and constructivism. The former lends itself to quantitative methodologies as it is basically grounded in the scientific method of research that focuses on observing empirically a small set of ideas and measuring numerically the collected data in order to determine the effects (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Otherwise stated, the quantitative bent of mind of the post-positivist paradigm goes side by side with the methodologies and aims of natural sciences. Yet, this paradigm can be also applicable in the domain of social sciences.

In contrast to the previous paradigm (i.e., post-positivism) that makes its depart from a theory verification, constructivism ends up with a theory generation. In fact, constructivists attempt to understand and interpret multiple individuals' views and opinions about the subject being studied to socially construct meaning (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). This explains the fact of knowing this paradigm as an interpretivist one. What is more, the methodologies of this paradigm's proponents boil down into qualitative ones, and their focus is primarily on non-numerical data. This data is affected, at the time of interpretation, by the researchers' experience. That is to say, a constructivist is directly attached to the studied subject unlike the post-positivist who centralises his concern on statistics and numerical data.

A paradigm war occurred between the two opposite philosophical parties (i.e., post-positivism vs. constructivism) resulting into a pluralistic-paradigmatic orientation. In particular words, the beginning of the 20st century witnessed the flourishing of a pragmatic paradigm where researchers sought to use both quantitative and qualitative methods simultaneously under what is known as "a mixed-methods methodology". Denscombe (2007) advocated the integration of the two paradigms' elements to create good effect, and considered pragmatism "as an advance in thinking" (p.117). This "advance of thinking"

mainly focuses on the research problem to find solutions to real-world practices as clarified by Creswell and Creswell (2018).

With the object of giving a clear picture on pragmatism, Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) relied basically on the works of Creswell (2003), Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), Patton (1990) and Mertens (2015) to provide us with the following list of straightforward characteristics:

- The use of ‘what works’ so as to allow the researcher to address the questions being investigated without worrying as to whether the questions are wholly quantitative or qualitative in nature.
- Adoption of a worldview that allows for a research design and methodologies that are best suited to the purpose of the study.
- Utilising lines of action that are best suited to studying the phenomenon being investigated.
- A rejection of the need to locate your study either in a Positivist (post-positivist) paradigm or in an interpretivist (constructivist) paradigm.
- Seeking to utilise the best approaches to gaining knowledge using every methodology that helps that knowledge discovery.
- Choice of research methods depending on the purpose of the research.
- A search for useful points of connection within the research project that facilitate understanding of the situation (p.36).

All things considered, it can be said that the key tenet of the pragmatic paradigm is its permission of the cross-over of ideas from post-positivism and constructivism into one encompassing paradigm.

Before moving to another level of this study methodological framework, it should be noted here that the researcher deems pragmatism to be the appropriate philosophical

underpinning of her study. It is chosen for the reason that it allows the researcher to opt freely for what can work best in accordance with the aims of her study without being restricted. Against this background, Kumar (2011) does not urge any researcher to lock himself with a paradigm that it is purely qualitative or quantitative in nature. Thus, it seems more suitable to expand the frontiers of the adopted philosophical ideas in order to gain the ability of selecting from a variety of methods in a manner that these methods complement each other.

Furthermore, pragmatism can suit the purpose of deducing the embedded meaning in the two types of the collected data (i.e., numerical and non-numerical). That can be done by incorporating the interpretation of EFL students' attitudes and opinions about the phenomenon under study in addition to the content analysis and stylistic analysis of the corpus in hand (i.e., the identified samples of formulaic sequences) to extract information, and construct final conclusions. Despite the type of paradigm that the researcher is working under it, he should focus on meeting the requirements of objectivity, reliability and validity as Kumar (2011) recommended, and that is what the researcher is trying to pay attention to in this ongoing study.

Overall, a paradigmatic framework is indispensable and cannot be ignored in a research process. It mainly forms the basis of any scientific study, and influences how research is undertaken.

3.1.2 Research approach

Once the philosophical assumptions contained within a specific paradigm and followed by the researcher have been revealed, it becomes possible to determine the kind of approach that he will be working under it. In line with these words, the mixed-methods approach is adopted to conduct the current study since it is associated with pragmatism. This means that the researcher is systematically navigating her path between qualitative and

quantitative approaches to decide about the research design, data collection methods and analysis procedures.

According to Dörnyei (2007), the quantitative and qualitative approaches have been combined together when social scientists became acquainted with the notion of triangulation in the 1970s. At that point, the pragmatist paradigm has been widely accepted, and the mixed-methods approach has been established as “a legitimate form of inquiry”. Consequently, mixing methodologies has been discussed explicitly in the second half of the 20th century leading to a clear-cut boundaries of the newly accepted research approach. The latter can be defined in its simplest form as “some sort of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods within a single research project” (Dörnyei, 2007, p.44). The following figure represents a simple illustration of how a mixed-methods approach has been constructed:

Figure 3.1

Mixed-methods Approach



In their recent work “Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research”, Creswell and Clark (2018) inserted a table where they attempted to highlight the focus of each author’s definition concerning mixed-methods approach. However, they believed that a well-elaborated definition should array several viewpoints within its content. In this spirit, they noted that in a mixed-methods research, the researcher is supposed to do the following:

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- collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data rigorously in response to research questions and hypotheses,
- integrates (or mixes or combines) the two forms of data and their results,
- organizes these procedures into specific research designs that provide the logic and procedures for conducting the study, and
- frames these procedures within theory and philosophy (p.41).

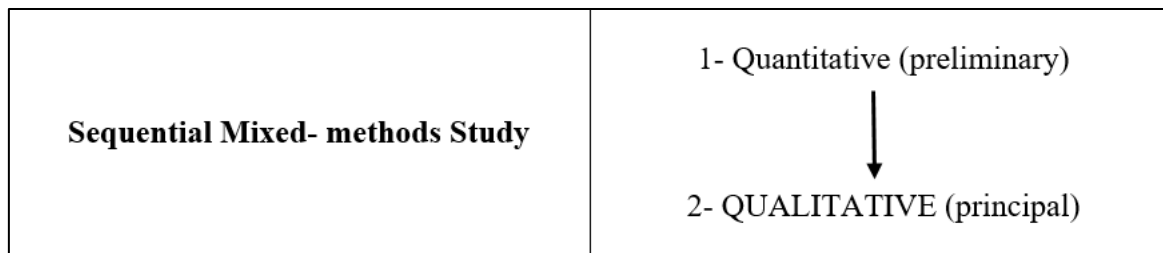
Unlike many authors, they came to encompass these different key characteristics of a mixed-methods research “after many years of reviewing mixed methods articles and determining how researchers use both quantitative and qualitative approaches in their studies” (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p.41). This means that Creswell and Clark spent an extensive period reviewing articles and studies to understand the characteristics of a mixed-methods research.

It is essential to comprehend the reason behind the integration of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in this study. In others terms, flesh on the bones should be put by referring to the ideas of Denscombe (2007; 2010) so that the readers of this thesis can be provided with an explicit and unambiguous rational for the methodological decision concerning methods-mixing.

To start with, it is unquestionable that methods cannot be mixed randomly. Thus, their mixing is based on a specific order and in line with the research purposes. Accordingly, the stages of this study are sequentially arranged as it is shown in the following table:

Table 3.2

Mixed-methods Typology of the Current Study (Adapted from Morgan, 1998, p.368)



Adapted from “Practical Strategies for Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Applications to Health Research” by D.L. Morgan, 1998, *Qualitative Health Research*, 8(3), 362–376.

Uppercase letters: used to designate the dominant approach

Lowercase letters: used to designate the less dominant approach

According to Denscombe (2007), it is not obligatory for the quantitative and qualitative aspects in a study to have equal weights. Consequently, the dominance of an aspect over another is credited to the researcher’s main deriving factors to undertake his research project. When it comes to the current study, it is obvious from the table above that a qualitative aspect (the dominant one) follows the quantitative one. That said, the researcher seeks to feed the principal method with the results of the preliminary data collection method. Otherwise stated, the study is mostly qualitative, but it has a quantitative side that will be used and inferred to so that the researcher can come up with final results and findings.

Instead of relying on a mono-method study, a mixed-methods approach is adopted for the current enquiry because it can initially help *compensating strengths and reducing weaknesses* when combining the principal method with a preliminary one. In this way, the principal method can be supplemented (i.e., document analysis) with the findings of the first exploratory phase for the sake of minimising, to the possible extent, the subjectivity and bias

of the researcher when carrying the content and stylistic analysis as well as avoiding the later criticism linked to the second method's weaknesses.

More than what has been mentioned earlier, a mixed-methods approach helps *developing the analysis and moving it forward*. Alternatively stated, the preliminary method along its findings (i.e., descriptive statistics in addition to complementary non-numerical data) can work as an aid as it informs the development of the content and stylistic analysis held in the second phase of the research. Therefore, the initial method confirms the orientation of the analysis conducted by the researcher since it can help highlighting the areas to be taken into consideration before embarking in the process of analysing the document (i.e., the samples identified in the document).

To use more than one method means *to obtain a more complete picture* regarding the findings/results of the study. This happens to be a reason and a benefit at the same time for equipping the methodological part with mixed methods. In fact, it is intended in this study to provide alternative perspectives on the studied subject by obtaining results induced by the first method (from the perspective of EFL students). Then, those results will be combined with data generated by the second method (from the researcher's perspective). Thereby, the researcher will be able to present an all-encompassing overview on the subject under investigation.

Based on the claims of both Dörnyei (2007) and Denscombe (2010), a mixed-methods approach is deemed useful since the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire and analysed statistically will help creating a feeling of confidence linked to the accuracy of the document analysis results at the end of study. Undoubtedly, this can be better reached when overcoming the idea of executing the procedures of a mono-method in a whole study. Moreover, combining the results of mixed-methods in an integrated way as

expressed by Leavy (2017), regardless to their priority and dominance, can pave the way for valid outcomes.

Although every researcher has his own preferences towards a certain paradigm, it is the purpose that should specify the choice of the approach, be it qualitative, quantitative or a mixed-methods approach (Kumar, 2011). As for the research methodology of this study, it is sought to work in line with this kind of methodological recommendations by focusing on the nature of the study that dictates almost everything in relation to the research process.

In brief, selecting a research approach is very important and cannot be bypassed. It does not only help to determine the rest of the detailed methodological decisions, but it also affects the overall quality and success of the study.

3.1.3 Research design/strategy

As soon as answers have been put forth in endeavouring to solve the methodological conundrum that baffles every researcher at the beginning of his research (i.e., research paradigm and approach), it comes the need to be clear about the research design. In fact, research design or strategy is one of the most debatable issues in research methodology because choosing it to best fit the research can have a straight link to the accomplishment of the research aims. A researcher can be affected by the choice of a research design, and the validity of his results is based upon this particular step. Correspondingly, the concept of research design should be clarified, and the rationale of the current study design should be logically provided among the lines of this section.

In accordance with Denscombe's (2010) words, research design has military origins. Similar to the generals who plan tactics for combats to gain victory, methodologists think that it is essential to have a plan held over these three components: (a) an overview of the adopted research paradigm, (b) a well-constructed research design, and (c) a well-specified goal included within a clear research problem. Accordingly, Denscombe (2010) defined it

as a plan of action used to achieve a specific goal. In a recent and more detailed definition of research design, Joshi (2019) noted that, “It is the overall plan that deals with the aspects of complete design from the study type, data collection approaches, experimental designs, and statistical approaches for data samples” (p.70). This means that choosing a research design is important because it has a direct impact on determining what comes next in a research process (e.g., data collection methods, analysis and sampling procedures).

In harmony with the previous idea of design importance, (Kumar, 2011) has previously shared the same vision with his readers when he believed that a researcher is able to do the following through a research design:

- Conceptualise an operational plan to undertake the various procedures and tasks required to complete your study;
- Ensure that these procedures are adequate to obtain valid, objective and accurate answers to the research questions (p.94).

That noted, the willingness of rendering a study into a fruitful one requires having a well-designed plan, and that is what the researcher of the current study is seeking to do.

Aside from the absolute necessity to a research design, the words of Creswell and Clark (2018) imply the existence of a variety of research designs. In this respect, they wrote down that research designs “represent different models for doing research, and these models have distinct names and procedures associated with them” (p.106). From here, it follows that the concept of research design is not characterised by singularity, and there are a range of choices and alternatives available in the body of literature. These choices are divided into three main categories: qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods designs as have been clarified by pioneers in the field of methodology (e.g., Dörnyei, 2007; Denscombe, 2010; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The task of selecting the most suitable choice among

alternatives lies with the researcher's responsibility who can primarily depends on his research problem and questions to end up with a decision.

Taking into consideration the fact that the current study is mostly qualitatively oriented despite the existence of the quantitative aspect (i.e., mixed-methods approach), the researcher finds herself compelled to choose among different designs associated to the qualitative approach. However, reviewing all the designs available in the literature is beyond the scope of this section, and the focus will be exclusively on the adopted design. That being the case, the inserted table provides only a glimpse on some of the qualitative research designs along their main purposes.

Table 3.3

Some Qualitative Research Design/Strategies

Design/Strategy	Purpose
Case study	- Understand the complex relationship between factors as they operate within a particular setting
Ethnography	- Describe cultural practices and traditions - Interpret social interaction within a culture
Phenomenology	- Describe the essence of specific types of personal experience - Understand things through the eyes of someone else
Grounded theory	- Clarify concepts or produce new theories - Explore a new topic and provide new insights

Adapted from *The Good Research Guide: for Small-Scale Social Research Projects* (4th ed., p.5-6) by M. Denscombe, 2010, Open University Press.

Based on the previous table and counting on the researcher's interest in going profoundly and reaching a deeper understanding of the issue under study (i.e., formulaic sequences in relation to literary texts), a *case study design* is adopted. In fact, "the idea of a case study is that a spotlight is focused on individual instances rather than a wide spectrum"

as noted by Denscombe (2010, p.53). This means that a case study allows focusing mainly on the particular, and this by its turn leads us to the next idea of non-generalizability. The latter presents one of the important characteristics of the pre-mentioned research design. In this regard, Kumar (2011) noted that a case study design “cannot claim to make any generalisations” (p.127). To be clear, the obtained research findings at the end of the study cannot be generalised to other settings unlike quantitative study designs (e.g., quasi-experiment). Although no generalisation can be made, Denscombe (2010) believed that a case study design can illuminate the general when looking into the individual items.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) provided one of the reasons that also urges opting for a case study design, and which is permitting to include quantitative data that the researcher sees to be pertinent to the study, and to the readers who can be more convinced with clear-cut statistical data. Unpacking meaning using both qualitative and quantitative data goes back to the case study advantage of using “multiple sources of information one of which is documents” (p.75) as expressed by Creswell (2007). On this matter of data collection methods, Joshi (2019) noted that for a case study design “one could go with detailed data collection with online forms or questionnaire and then go ahead with any method the researcher finds appropriate to get the analysis” (p.75). In addition to all the previous reasons, that is an additional merit offered by the case study design and considered by the researcher of the present study to pattern her plan according to such a design.

After taking into account Kumar's (2011) words, and which stress the imperativeness of supporting the chosen research design with a justification extracted from the reviewed literature, it is of no less importance to respect specific considerations suggested by Kothari (2004). Thoughtlessness in deciding upon the design, the researcher should focus on issues such as flexibility, appropriateness, efficiency and economy of the design to be chosen. On top of that, the research design should be a minimiser of bias and maximiser of data

reliability at once. The latter idea is directly linked to the selection of data collection methods that will be mentioned, defined and justified in the following section.

To conclude, the guidelines of the methodological map become clearer as soon as the researcher made his choice concerning what research design is likely to be appropriate. Most importantly, his decision should be attached to a context of justification.

3.1.4 Data collection methods

Generally, to disclose the methodology of any undertaken study is to also showcase the integrated data collections methods. The latter represents the main phase of research methodology wherein the researcher embarks technically in his study execution by collecting both primary and secondary data. Therefore, a great amount of emphasis should be put on the selection of the suitable methods as they have a direct influence on the answers of the posed research questions at the beginning of the research journey.

Before going any further, it is compulsory not to treat a research design and a research method as alike. In other words, the difference between these two methodological concepts should be considered especially that many scholars attempted to pinpoint this issue (e.g., Denscombe, 2010; Joshi, 2019; Rose et al., 2020). On one part, a research design refers to a plan of action as has been already explained in the previous section. On this line, Rose et al. (2020) claimed that its importance lies “in providing a methodological structure to data collection” (p.03). On the other part, the same authors made clear that research methods refer to “the actual methods used to gather data for analysis” (p.02). To restate it differently, the selection of the method(s) for data collection is dependent on the design, and the data can be either qualitative or quantitative. With regard to the type of data being collected, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) made a distinction when they noted that the quantitative data are presented in the form of numbers whereas qualitative data are conveyed through words. However, both words and numbers can be combined under a mixed-methods approach.

It is agreed among methodologists that designs can dictate the used data collection methods. For instance, a case study is frequently associated with methods like unstructured interviews in addition to observations wherein the researcher can be participant or non-participant. Regardless to this claim, sharing the same enemy does not impose on individuals to share the same crusade. It means that to share the same adopted design with another researcher in the field does not oblige both of the researchers to use the same data collection methods. Thus, the possibility of choosing freely among a set of data collection methods is not eliminated (Denscombe, 2010). What would give more freedom to the researcher is conducting a study under a mixed-methods approach (i.e., integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods) as it is the case of this ongoing study wherein the qualitative aspect is prioritised over the quantitative one.

Concerning the selection of data collection methods, Denscombe (2010) argued that “it is matter of horses for courses”, and that any researcher “should look for the most appropriate method in practice” (p.154). Referring to the same author explanation, the criterion of usefulness is more important in comparison to the criterion of superiority. Accordingly, the researcher should focus on what may best fit his study methodological framework in addition to serving his study purposes, and that is what the researcher is seeking to do with the task at hands. All of the afore-mentioned ideas have been written down because it seems inconvenient to state the adopted data collection methods for the current study quite boldly without reviewing some of the important ideas in relation to this research stage (i.e., data collection).

As far as the present study is concerned with data collection, two methods are selected: a semi-structured questionnaire that is considered as a preliminary data collection method, and a document analysis (a novel) that is regarded as the primary method. Firstly, this selection is made in response to the mixed-methods approach requirements, and which

involves piecing together a qualitative data collection method (document analysis) and a quantitative data collection method (semi-structured questionnaire). Secondly, this selection is also made to be in alignment with the criterion of usefulness and suitability to the study nature. Least but not last, the remainder of this chapter contains more details that will be given in a manner that it is both expected by the reader and desired by the researcher of this study.

Overall, research methods should be carefully selected in order to minimise the likelihood of methodological errors that can negatively affect the data collection phase. Most importantly, suitable research methods can help the researcher to obtain appropriate answers to the research questions at the end of the journey.

3.1.4.1 Questionnaire

After opening the discussion about the different methodological choices attached to this study, it becomes compulsory to concentrate solely on each employed data collection method. As the headline of this section suggests, a questionnaire was designed and used at the outset of the practical part.

Notwithstanding, Dörnyei (2007) assembled a list of the different labels that are used to refer to this method (see table 3.4). However, Kothari (2004) considered an opinionnaire to be a special form of questionnaire, and draw the difference between them. Though the researcher of this study believes that the used questionnaire is closer to be an opinionnaire since it sought to capture the attitudes and beliefs of a small sample size, she attempted to rely on the standardised label “questionnaire” that it is widely used in applied linguistics.

Table 3.4*Terms Used in the Literature to Refer to Questionnaire*

Opinionnaires	Forms
Inventories	Tests
Batteries	Checklists
Scales	Surveys
Schedules	Studies
Profiles	Indexed/Indicators

Adapted from *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methodologies* (p.102), by Z. Dörnyei, 2007, Oxford University Press.

According to Creswell (2007), some researchers prefer not to use questionnaires that were developed by other researchers because those validated questionnaires simply do not match the aims of the study. For that reason, the researcher of the present study undertook the task of designing an original questionnaire even if it is used only as a preliminary data collection method. The intent behind such an action was not “reinventing the wheel” as Rose et al. (2020) described, but it was to for working with an appropriate questionnaire that copes with the study aims. In simple terms, an effort was made for the sake of creating an original questionnaire. The following lines provide details to the readers about the process of structuring, piloting and validating the questionnaire.

3.1.4.1.1 Aim and structure

Although the questionnaire is not the principal data collection method in this ongoing study, but the researcher’s position for employing it is quite tenable for several aims. At the outset, it should be clarified once again that this method works as a complementary one; thus, it was constructed with the aim of supplementing the principal method (i.e., document

analysis) so that the researcher can end up with valuable implications on the pedagogical level. Additionally, the researcher's aim to obtain a more complete and corroborated picture of the findings urged her to construct a questionnaire in order to integrate EFL students' attitudes and beliefs on the matter under study. In this way, the researcher will not only rely on the analysis of the identified formulaic sequences (i.e., units of analysis) from the novel as it is the tradition in most stylistic studies. On the top of that, it was used for triangulation purposes as applying more than one method allows overcoming the element of weakness and bias of a single method or, in other words, the researcher's subjectivity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

With regard to the structure of the questionnaire, a tailor-made questionnaire was designed since there is no ready-made questionnaire, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, that suits the issue under study. Thus, sufficient time was devoted to the development phase where the following steps were carefully followed: (a) defining the constructs of interest, (b) writing down the items whether open-ended or closed-ended, and (c) formatting the questionnaire by arranging the items in a clear manner. In fact, the developed questionnaire is a semi-structured one since it contained both types of items (i.e., closed and open).

The questionnaire items were arranged under two sections. From one side, the first section included questions directed to reveal factual information on respondents as they were supposed to supply the adequate information on their reading habits and preferences. Here, it is attempted "to limit the background questions to those which are needed" (Olsen, 2012, p.120). On the other side, the second section was limited to closed-ended questions that were in the form of 5-Likert scale items included to measure the respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with no personal influence from the part of the researcher. Through this section, the researcher aimed to explore EFL students' beliefs and attitudes towards the

significance of using formulaic sequences by authors of literary works, in addition to the difficulties created by these formulas on the semantic level of the text. It is worth mentioning here that the used scale was a traditional 5-point scale as shown below:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

The last item (20) of this second section invited the respondents to express their satisfaction or non-satisfaction about the role that formulaic sequences can play on literary works as a literary stylistic feature.

An effective structure of the questionnaire is integrally linked to its overall layout. When it comes to the designed questionnaire for this study, the researcher carefully ordered the questions so that the layout can look simple, clear and attractive as has been stressed out by Cohen et al. (2007) when they noted that “the appearance of the questionnaire is vitally important”(p.338). Additionally, guiding the respondents through clear instructions is also a fundamental cornerstone to be placed for a productive participation from the part of the respondents. That is why it has been opted for “put a tick” instruction so that the task of the respondents can be easier. After specifying the aim of the questionnaire and structuring its first draft, the phase of piloting and validation came next.

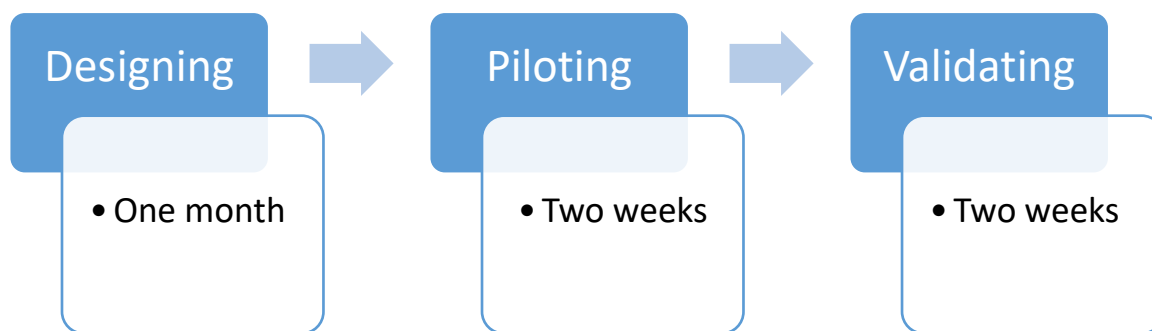
3.1.4.1.2 Piloting and validation

Piloting and validating a questionnaire is no less difficult than practically designing it. Each phase demands careful planning so that the study can end up with valuable results. In this regard, the researcher of the present study attempted to add the following figure in order to clarify the periods of time during which the activities of designing, piloting and

validating the questionnaire have occurred. It should be noted that one month has been devoted for the actual designing of the first draft of the questionnaire as undertaking this task demanded doing many readings of the literature in addition to respecting different considerations (e.g., research aims, timeframe, etc.). In its simplest form, much effort has been made earlier than March, 2022 for the sake of developing a questionnaire.

Figure 3.2

The Allotted Time for Designing, Piloting and Validating the Questionnaire of this Study



Piloting was and still considered very instrumental in refining the adapted or adopted data collection method. On this matter, Walliman (2011) stated the following: “It is common practice to pre-test the questionnaire on a small number of people before it is used in earnest” (p.98). This pre-test is mainly conducted to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire (Cohen et al., 2007, p.341). Cohen et al. (2007) continued stating the several functions that any questionnaire designer seeks to reach, including the researcher of this ongoing study:

- to check the clarity of the questionnaire items, instructions and layout;
- to eliminate ambiguities or difficulties in wording;
- to check readability levels for the target audience;

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

- to gain feedback on the type of question and its format (e.g. rating scale, multiple choice, open, closed etc.);
- to identify omissions, redundant and irrelevant items;
- to gain feedback on the layout, sectionalizing, numbering and itemization of the questionnaire (p.341).

Accordingly, the pilot study is carried out to make a better questionnaire by pinpointing and lessening the deficiencies and problems that may be encountered by respondents of the questionnaire when being administered to them.

Concerning the administration type in this phase (i.e., the phase of piloting), the questionnaire has not been administered using the traditional method of paper-and-pen format. It was designed using Google Forms, and delivered online to enable respondents to express their opinions freely without any external influence whether in answering the questionnaire items or filling the opinionnaire section (see appendix 3). The latter was added in the form of five direct questions to simply capture the opinions of the pilot sample with regard to the clarity and relevance of the questions in addition to the layout appropriateness. A space was given to the respondents to supply their suggestions. Precisely speaking, the link of the questionnaire first draft was posted on one of social media networks (Facebook) by focusing only on the official group of English Master Students of Oran University.

With regard to the pilot sample, Thabane et al. (2010) focused on the importance of the sample representativeness to the whole study population in addition to considering the same criteria for including participants whether in the pilot study or the main study. Since the researcher has believed that the most essential criteria for selecting a sample for her study is the educational level, she has limited the pilot sample to participants with an advanced academic degree (i.e., Master's degree). On this basis, precise instructions about who can

participate in the pilot study were written down above the link of the questionnaire so that only required respondents can submit their answers.

An appropriate pilot sample size remains an important aspect to be estimated by the researcher who can definitely find different and conflicting opinions about this issue. However, a wide range of the extant literature proclaimed that a sample of a pilot study should be 10% of the actual study sample. In the same spirit, others such as McKay (2006) asserted the following: "If the survey is going to be given to only one or two classes of students, then having three or four student pilot the survey is sufficient. If, on the other hand, the survey will be given to many students, then a larger pilot sample is needed in order to analyze the kinds of responses that are given" (p.41). Corresponding to the latter concept in addition to the actual sample of the present questionnaire, the researcher settled on a small sample size that was comprised of five respondents. As the researcher opted for Google Forms, she was able to control this issue. To put it directly, the option of accepting responses was turned-off as soon as the desired number was reached.

It is worthwhile mentioning that the piloting stage was conducted in the first half of April 2022 along two weeks where responses were received, and necessary modifications were made accordingly. The five EFL students who submitted responses were four females and only one male. All of them considered their level to be an intermediate one. Starting by the layout of the questionnaire, the five (100%) students had no disagreement on it, and they considered it to be appropriate in terms of itemisation, numbering and sectionalisation. However, one student (25%) suggested that the language should be made in plain English so that any EFL student, regardless to his overall level, can understand the questionnaire quickly and easily. This particular suggestion was given by the researcher's supervisor as well. He emphasised the avoidance of using special jargon related to the area of formulaic sequences as this may obstruct the EFL student and the researcher from answering

adequately and having credible results respectively. Consequently, the researcher focused on simplifying the used language and integrating the technique of exemplification in some items.

As far as the researcher is concerned with improving the questionnaire items, much focus was directed towards their comprehensibility to the respondents. This was done by considering their responses both to the questions and to the opinionnaire section. Apart from the issue of keeping language simple, the majority of the respondents (75%) considered the ideas of the questions to be comprehensible and relevant to the study topic. In the meanwhile, one respondent suggested that each Likert-scale question should hold no more than one idea so that the answer can be given exactly. Responding to this suggestion, all the Likert-scale questions were revised in detail by the researcher who attempted to remedy every existing problem so that she can end up with a better final questionnaire form. Those concerns were the most important ones that have been taken into consideration.

After piloting a questionnaire, a validation procedure should be undergone to ensure that the designed questionnaire will measure what the researcher is particularly seeking to measure. This To clarify the notion of validity, Riazi (2016, p.341) noted the following:

Like reliability, validity may refer to a component such as a test or questionnaire in research, evaluation, and educational assessment, or it may be used in regard to the entirety of research and evaluation. In both cases, whether it is used in regard to a component or to the entirety of research or evaluation, it refers to the best possible approximation of the truth stated in the form of an interpretation or inference put forth by evaluators or researchers.

For our own case, validation is straightly linked to the preliminary data collection method, and which is the questionnaire. So, validating this method involved “giving it to some

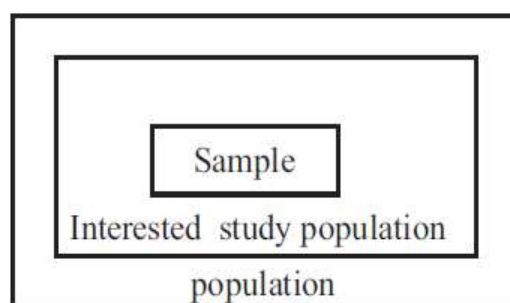
experts, including the advisor, to check whether it is holistic enough to measure the main question or questions it was built to measure” (Mehiri, 2016, p.192).

The validation process was held in the second half of April 2022. The revised questionnaire was sent via e-mail to two teachers after getting their verbal consent on questionnaire validation. On one side, the first teacher was a professor in charge of research methodology at the department of English and Literature in Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, Algeria. On the other side, the second teacher belonged to the same institution. He was an associate professor interested in the area of formulaic sequences. In such manner, the researcher was able to combine opinions and observations of teachers from two different fields of interests that have a direct relation to this study. Both of their notes in addition to the supervisor ones were taken into account to improve the questionnaire.

3.1.4.2 Population and Sampling technique

Making decisions about methods to be used for collecting data is not sufficient in any kind of study. The researcher is also required to make judgements about the population and sample before putting forth endeavours within the stage of data collection procedures or even piloting the selected data collection method at the very beginning. In this way, he would be able to reach adequate findings for his study aims.

Since it is neither practical nor possible to study the whole population, the concept of sampling has been introduced to the field of research methodology (Singh, 2006). Before proceeding further, a distinction should be made between population and sample for the sake of clarifying notions to every reader of this study.

Figure 3.3*Sample-Population Relationship*

Research Design. In V. Bairagi and M. V. Munot (Eds.), *Research Methodology: A Practical and Scientific Approach* (p.89) by P. Joshi, 2019, Chapman and Hall/CRC.

Based on the above figure and referring to the definitions of Riazi (2016), population is broader and more encompassing than a sample. This can be attributed to the fact that a population includes “all the members of any well-defined group of people (Riazi, 2016, p.241). In reverse, a sample takes into account only “a small proportion of a population which researchers consider for study when investigating a particular topic” (Riazi, 2016, p.283). In brief, a sample is encompassed within a population, and the researcher relies on it to collect data.

Directly speaking, sampling addresses the questions “Who or what is in your study? (Leavy, 2017). According to the researcher’s opinion, if one had a penny for trying to get an answer for this question, he would better invest it in acquainting himself with the basic two types of sampling techniques: probability (random) and non-probability (non-random) sampling. These two types can be further categorised into other sub-types as explained by different authors (e.g., Kothari, 2004; Marczyk et al., 2006; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). To cut it short, the sampling type that it is wide opted for in social sciences, to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, is non-probability sampling, and more particularly, purposive sampling. However, this does not eliminate the possibility of choosing other sampling

techniques especially that this kind of selection is a matter of study object and objectives at once.

Regarding the target population of the current study, the researcher went beyond the bachelor's degree to include master students at the department of English and Literature in Biskra University, Algeria. This population (N= 179) was selected for the simple reason that they were supposed to have an advanced level unlike undergraduate students. Additionally, they have dealt with the notion of formulaicity in one of their courses "Language Mastery", and this gave this population one fundamental merit to be selected among several universities.

Based on a purposive sampling technique, a small sample size of EFL students (n = 47) was assigned to participate in this study. On this sampling technique, Creswell and Clark (2018) believed "that researchers intentionally select (or recruit) participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored in the study" (p.694). Having noted that, the researcher's position towards selecting such a sample has been justified. It seems also relevant to note that the small size can be explained by the fact that the first data collection method (i.e., the questionnaire) was only a preliminary one and not the principal one. Thus, this sample can provide, according to the researcher's aims, the needed information for the overall flow of the study process.

3.1.4.2 Documents analysis

Moving to the next phase of data collection requires having thoughtfully decided about the method to be used. In fact, working under the umbrella of stylistics includes, but not limited to, document analysis. The latter usually comes in the form of written texts regardless to their type in most of the studies. In tandem with this general view, a document analysis has been opted for as the primary data collection method as has been already clarified earlier in this third chapter.

Document analysis can be simply defined as “a method for systematically investigating texts” (Leavy, 2017, p.146). However, this method has not been given much consideration in the literature as it is the case for the other methods (e.g., surveys and interviews). In harmony with these words, Rose et al. 2020 claimed the following:

The use of documents in applied linguistics research is pervasive and yet not clearly defined in the research methods literature. Most literature on the use of documents as a source of research jumps directly into analysis without due consideration of how documents should be collected and treated by the researcher (p.196).

A researcher usually initiates the analysis of any sort of written text that he has chosen without prior clarification and justification of his decision about the document. Undoubtedly, he is in need to explain every step starting by selection and sampling and ending up with analysis and interpretation. Against this background, the remaining of this section is devoted for this data collection method.

Dissimilar from the previous data collection method (i.e., questionnaire), Reinhartz (1992) claimed that document analysis relies on using naturalistic and non-living data that already exist in the literature regardless to a study conduction (as cited in Leavy, 2017). In consonance with these words, a novel has been selected for this study with the purpose of dealing with specific units of analysis (i.e., formulaic sequences). With regard to document selection, a historical romantic novel titled *Beyond the Blue Hills* was selected by the researcher to study the stylistic significance of formulaic sequences in literary texts. This novel belongs to fiction, and it has been written in modern times (2010) by the British author Katie Flynn.

Concerning the novel selection, the researcher had the opportunity to skim through it. During the skimming process, her attention was grabbed by the simplicity of the language that the author has used to deliver the ideas of the story both to native and non-native English

readers. The researcher juxtaposed this observation with the subject matter of her study that it is straightly linked to the stylistic effect that formulaic sequences may create on literary texts. On this basis, she initially believed that this novel might suit her study aims. After that, the researcher intended to read several comments and reviews on this particular novel by other readers from different speech communities. These comments were found on Amazon website (Amazon.com) in addition to Goodreads website (Goodreads.com). Here are some opinions expressed by readers of this novel:

Table 3.5

Some Readers' Comments on the Novel Beyond the Blue Hills

Reader	Comment
1	"I thoroughly enjoy Katie Flynn books. as they take place in war years and do not contain the foul language that so many authors feel they must use. Hopefully Katie will read this and clarify one small point. Danny and Phil were cousins so how could Christopher be Danny's nephew? Would he not be Danny's second cousin?"
2	"The story was well written capturing the lives of all ages throughout the war years. The hardships of war vividly described. Recommend read".
3	"Katie always pulls the reader in. Cannot fault her style, and love the era the stories are set in. Wonderful escapism".

These comments suggest that readers of the novel admire both the language and the style of the author. This has urged the research to further analyse the author's use of formulaic sequences to convey meanings to her readers.

Biography of Katie Flynn

While Katie Flynn or Judith Saxton are only pseudonyms that the British author decided to use for her writings, her real name is Judith Turner. She was born in 1930 in

Norwich, England then moved to Wrexham after her marriage. Her career actually started only with articles and short stories. After that, she became well-known as an author of historical and romantic fiction especially that some of her novels were categorised within the Sunday Times Bestseller list. She penned more than 90 books in her life, some of which are the Liverpool series. Sadly, she was diagnosed with ME (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis) that it is also known as chronic fatigue syndrome. However, she struggled to cope with it (i.e., ME), and continued to write with the assistance of her daughter Holly. Katie Flynn passed away on 1st January 2019 leaving a literary stamp among different generations with her compulsive writings. The author's daughter, Holly, carried the torch since she is still writing under the name of Katie Flynn.

It is worth mentioning that Holly advised the researcher of the current study to consult Wikipedia after contacting her via messenger and asking about her the biography of her mother on December, 2022. Her reply notified us with the credibility of the information found on Wikipedia about Katie Flynn. On this basis, the previous short biography was provided.

3.1.4.2.1 Aim and structure

After establishing a general linkage between literary texts and formulaic sequences from the perspective of EFL students who could express their attitudes and opinions using a tailor-made questionnaire (see appendix 4), document analysis was selected for specific aims. In fact, the primary aim was constructing a corpus that can be the identification and extraction of formulaic sequences samples that can be subjected to a combination of content analysis and stylistic analysis. This method also helped to bring an in-depth understanding to the main concern of the present research study (i.e., the effect of formulaic sequences on the semantic as well as the aesthetic level in literary texts). It is worth injecting here the idea

that document analysis is exclusively convenient for qualitative studies. This means that the qualitative aspect that dominates this study was covered via this particular method.

Payne and Payne (2004) claimed that documents are characterised by authenticity since their production has no relation to the study (as cited in Rose et al., 2020). This explains dealing with a literary work instead of collecting documents in live occurring settings. While literary works are characterised by variety and can be in different forms (e.g., short stories, novellas, poems and others), the selected sample for the current study was a novel of Flynn (2006). *Beyond the Blue Hills* is another saga of Katie Flynn who wrote a World War II with a love and romance flavour. This novel is comprised of 14 chapters that could be briefly summarised in the following lines.

Synopsis of the novel *Beyond the Blue Hills*

While Laura Collins is living as a widow in Liverpool with her two daughters, Tess and Tina, she is obliged to stay with her sister Millie for a period. As soon as she found a suitable job at the coffee shop of Mr. Mitchell with an accommodation offer, Laura is able to get back on her feet. Mr. Mitchell is taking care of his son Mike after his wife ran off with a sailor. Mike has hard feelings towards marriage and women; so, he is being mean to Tess before becoming her boyfriend. At the meanwhile, the Brewster Family is living with their son Danny in Herefordshire making their living by farming. Danny and his cousin, Phil, are regularly attending their classes until Phil's dad, Mathew, had an accident and he is no longer able to take care of the farm. For this reason, Phil is not going only to drop out school, but he is also dropping out his ambition of becoming a pilot.

Before the spring of 1938, inhabitants of Britain are practicing their daily lives peacefully among their surroundings. Suddenly, a war declaration between Britain and Germany (the Nazi party) is seriously expected. The British people believe that Hitler should be stopped before overrunning Europe by uniting their war efforts. So, kids like Tina are going to be

evacuated to Herefordshire for the sake of their protection. Females are becoming land farm girls or workers in factories whereas boys are applying to join the air force. Danny has been accepted in the aircrew training leaving his lover Sophie solely. Unfortunately, Sophie is going to get married after being a victim of a sexual violation committed by Phil who always felt jealous of his cousin Danny. After that, Phil has decided to sign for the Royal Air Force so that Sophie can be happier with his absence.

After marrying Mr. Mitchell and giving birth to a baby boy, Laura was killed in the Liverpool May Blitz (1941) when the city has been terribly bombarded. Attempting to overcome their mother's death, Tess is back to her work at the Grange farm in Norfolk, and Tina has applied for a factory job. In 1944, Danny and Phil's crew (The Flora-Dora) is having a mission far from the English coast to destroy bridges, roads and railway lines to prevent the Germans from moving their troops about the region. However, the Germans have already launched a counterattack that resulted in a damage in the electrical system of the Flora-Dora and serious injuries to some of the crewmembers. Even though Danny has been able to land safely, the plane has exploded and Phil could not be saved. In His last words, Phil has asked Danny to look after his wife Sophie as well as his son.

Marking the end of World War II, there is a celebration of the VE day (Victory in Europe) all over the country in May, 1945. Therefore, Mike will take over the coffee shop of his father with the help of his beloved one Tess in Liverpool. As things have settled down between Sophie and Danny, she determined not to tell him the truth about the outrageous act of his cousin Phil that forced her to marry him. Both of Danny and Sophie have decided to live in the farm in Herefordshire after getting married, and not to go beyond the blue hills.

3.1.5 Data collection procedures

It is agreed that a research journey should end up with valid and reliable results. These results basically arise from the interpretation of the data that need to be systematically

and logically collected. To put it another way, once the researcher has decided about which data collection method that can best fit his research in addition to the type of data, he finds himself compelled to use objective procedures for data collection.

If not clarified earlier in this chapter, the notion of data collection refers to “the accumulation of specific evidence that will enable the researcher to properly analyse the results of all activities by his research design and procedures” (Singh, 2006, p.221). In simple terms, Singh (2006) maintained that the analysis process is preceded by evidence accumulation for a number of purposes, some of which are the following:

- Quality of research is determined by the quality of the collected data;
- Research findings are substantiated by the collected data;
- The utility of a device effectiveness is asserted by the collected data (Singh, 2006).

Through these paraphrased sentences, the author insisted on the fact that data collection is an important phase to be executed due to its indispensable benefits on the whole research process.

3.1.5.1 Data collection procedures for questionnaire

Giving sufficient time to designing and piloting the questionnaire is important, but the phase of data collection is of no less importance. This idea can be simply demonstrated in the following equation: Precise and Accurate Results = Design + Piloting + Data Collection procedures. This means that obtaining results of good quality using a questionnaire is dependent on the above-mentioned three factors that should be respectively added to one another.

In line with the previous words, Rose et al. (2020) claimed that not following convenient procedures in addition to appropriate precautions can lead to inadequate data that the researcher cannot take advantage of it. Correspondingly, the current study's researcher gave much attention to this method along its procedures. She prioritised the fact that the

research participants who constitute the study sample should be protected. In other words, ethical considerations were considered as emphasised by Singh (2006). Therefore, the phase of obtaining informed consent from the participants cannot be skipped as many researchers in the field have insisted upon this idea (e.g., Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this manner, participants were provided with an information letter wherein a short description of the study in addition to the purpose of the study were included. Then, the participants have voluntarily provided their consent to participate without any undue effect from the researcher's part. In fact their consent letter contained the following elements that were provided by Creswell (2007):

- The right of participants to voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time;
- The central purpose of the study and the procedures to be used in data collection;
- Comments about protecting the confidentiality of the respondents;
- The expected benefits to accrue to the participants in the study;
- The signature of the participant as well as the researcher (p.123).

At this stage, the questionnaire was administered to the participants without the presence of the researcher "to avoid the potential threat or pressure to participate caused by the researcher's presence" (Cohen et al., 2007, p.344). Participants reached a number of 47 participants from EFL Master Students at the department of English language and Literature in Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, Algeria. The students belonged to both "Science of the Language" and "Literature and Civilisation" specialties. This process of pencil-and-paper questionnaire administration was conducted carefully in the second half of May 2022.

Overall, a well-designed questionnaire can lead to obtain the most accurate results if the collection procedures were successfully executed. Therefore, they should be carefully planned before embarking in actual data collection.

3.1.5.2 Data collection procedures for document analysis

As regards the method of document analysis that it is commonly used in the area of stylistics, the initial step to be undertaken is selecting the document form and type to be used, a lengthy written novel in the current case. Then, the researcher is supposed to decide about the procedures of samples collection or corpus construction. These procedures are by no means chosen in a randomised manner, but each step should be on firm ground. It is worth noting that, in this study, the terms “corpus” and “samples” are used interchangeably to denote the selected material for the in-depth qualitative analysis.

Along the same line, Rose et al. (2020) pointed out to the cruciality of extracting the suitable materials from the document to be analysed in the stage of data collection. As far as this study is concerned with formulaic sequences, their identification is a difficult task to be performed. In an informal chat via Gmail with Professor Alison Wray (2020), a researcher at Cardiff University in the United Kingdom, she asserted that distinguishing what is formulaic from what is not stands as one of the most challenging parts when investigating the area of formulaic sequences. Worthy to mention, Professor Alison Wray can be regarded as a “Founding Mother” of formulaic language studies due to her consistent effort in this area. In fact, she advised to have some definitions for the sake of justifying what to include as formulaic and what to exclude. That explains the endeavour to give a working definition in Chapter two from this thesis (i.e., the devoted chapter to the independent variable of this study).

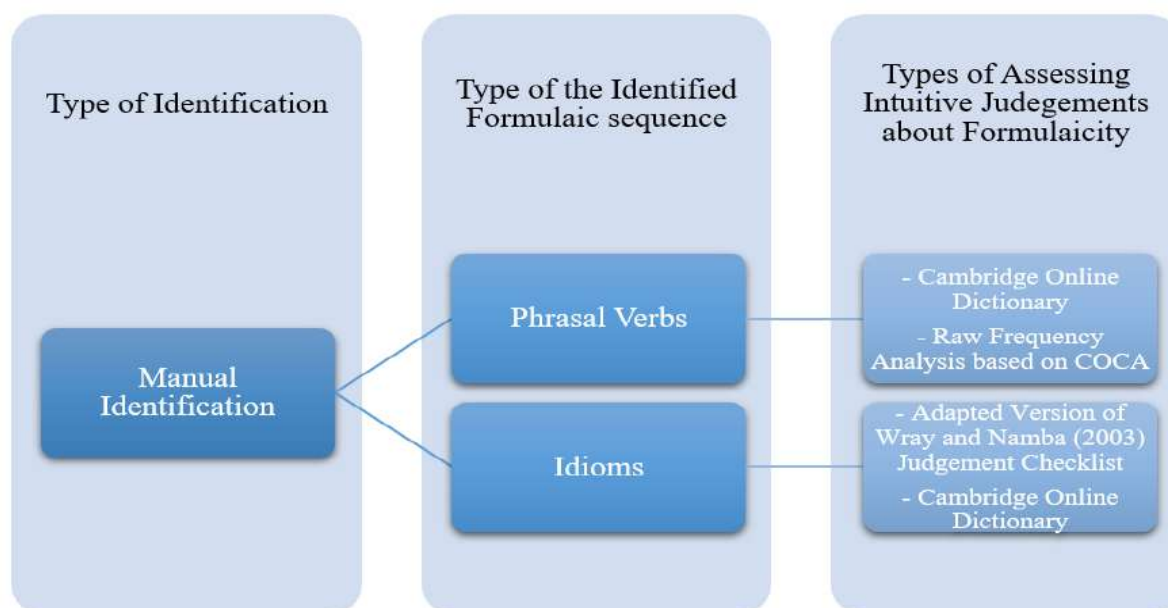
In light of the existence of different types of formulaic sequences, it can be said that trying to include all of them in one study is not logical because the study would definitely become unmanageable. Consequently, only phrasal verbs and idioms were included in the current study. Depending on the purposive sampling technique in this stage, two phrasal verbs and two idioms were identified from the beginning of the 14 chapters. Krippendorff

(2019) claimed that “in using this form of sampling, an analyst proceeds by following a conceptual hierarchy, systematically lowering the number of units that need to be considered for an analysis” (p.123). However, explanation of the adopted procedures cannot stop at this end. “After all, how can you present a study of formulaic language from any source without a good indication of how you isolate word strings which are formulaic? (Wood, 2015, p.19). This quotation refers to the importance of explaining the way of identifying each phrasal verb and each idiom in the literary texts of the novel *Beyond the Blue Hills*.

Similar to Wood's (2015) opinion who believed that frequent occurrence of a word combination does not necessarily entail the formulaicity of that combination, this study's researcher did not rely on frequency counts/frequency-based approach to identify examples for analysis. More precisely, the researcher went with the choice of manual identification that was intuitive-based. This intuitive judgement was initially based on the main features that can help distinguishing formulaic sequences from ordinary utterances, and which are the syntactical form (i.e., fixedness and compositionality) in addition to the semantic aspect (i.e., semantic transparency or opacity). However, this does not exclude the idea of using raw frequency analysis in conjunction to another principal method of intuitive-judgement assessment.

Figure 3.4

The Used Procedures for Identifying Formulaic Sequences in the Current Study



With the aim of ascertaining the formulaicity of the identified examples, both phrasal verbs and idioms had their own manner of ascertainment. Phrasal verbs were judged by consulting the Cambridge Online Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>). In Fact, Wood (2015) contended the feasibility of using Internet Search Engines. As a supplementary method, The English Corpora website was utilised to verify the accuracy of the identification process by obtaining the raw frequency of each phrasal verb to see how much it is common. With regard to this criterion, both (Wray, 2008) and Wood (2015) considered it as one of the main determiners of formulaicity. However, it should be accompanied with other methods for more reliability and credibility.

With regard to idioms that are often more complicated in structure and meaning, they were judged using the approach of Wray (2008). In the approach contained within her book, a set of 11 criteria for assessing intuitive judgements about formulaicity were stated, and that were already mentioned in Chapter two. The criteria of this checklist aims “to make the role of intuition more evident, and to help researchers understand the bases upon which they

are making judgements” (Wray, 2008, p.114). However, not all of the criteria could be noticed and applicable. Accordingly, the researcher has adapted and adopted as much as necessary the most convenient ones to guide her decisions about formulaicity in relation to the identified sequences. Then, the dictionary was also checked to make another verification about the status of idioms. These criteria are contained within the following table:

Table 3.6

Key Criteria for Assessing the Formulaicity of Sequences

Criteria	Judgement
A: The sequences is not grammatically regular	
B: The sequence lacks semantic transparency	
C: The sequence is associated with a specific situation/genre	
D: The sequence performs a pragmatic function	
E: The sequence determines the idiolect of the writer/speaker	
F: The sequence is accompanied with an action or repetition	
G: The sequence is grammatically/lexically signified	
H: The sequence is previously encountered by the writer/speaker	
I: The sequence is derived from another original formulaic form	
J: The sequence is applied inappropriately	
K: The sequence does not match the writer/speaker’s linguistic competence	

Adapted from *Formulaic Language: Pushing the Boundaries* (p.117-121) by A. Wray, 2008, Oxford University Press.

Once again, , the intention that laid behind using this procedure was “to reveal the basis of intuitions already made” (Wray, 2008, p.116). It should be also emphasised that not all of these criteria have been applied to the identified sequences as idioms to ascertain their

formulaicity. The permission of adopting and adapting specific criteria has been given by Professor Alison Wray when being contacted via Gmail in January, 2020. When it comes to the way of making judgements, a scale of five-point has been used:

Strongly Agree: SA

Agree: A

Not Applicable: NA

Disagree: D

Strongly Disagree: SD

According to Wray's words, a sequence with more "disagree"/"strongly disagree" does not indicate the non-formulaicity of an example. More than that, the presence of contradictory judgements about the same sequence (i.e., "agree" and "disagree") does not mean that the judgement is contradictory. "Rather, it provides rather clear indications about where the evidence of formulaicity lies" (p.116). In fact, the presence of both agreement and disagreement stances against the adapted and adopted criteria helps to reveal the precise indication of a sequence formulaicity. The application of these procedures in relation to the samples of the current study will be explained in the following chapter so that a clear context of understanding to the final results can be provided.

To sum up with, the procedures of collecting data in relation to document analysis vary from one researcher to another. This variation is based on the researcher's aims and his perspective towards the subject matter. In addition, there are no standardised procedures to be executed but it remains a matter of personal and objective efforts.

3.1.6 Data analysis procedures

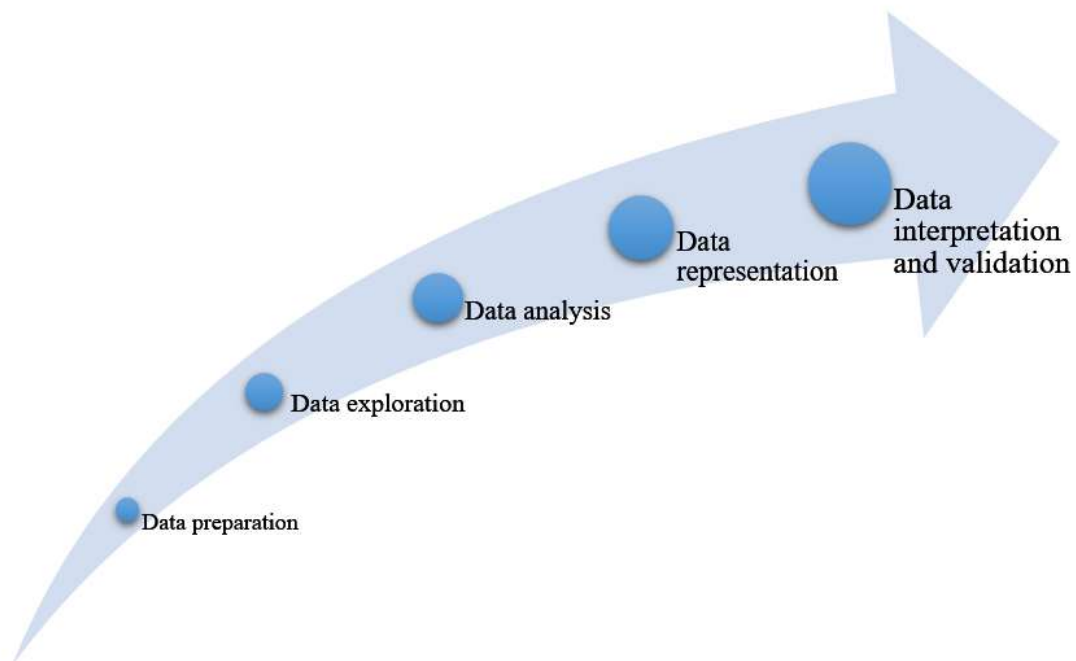
Analysing data is going from the surface level to the deep level. It contains extracting relevant information and findings based on the collected data. The latter should be passed by specific procedures that are carefully planned. In this manner, the researcher will gain

the ability to make sense of the data he has collected earlier in his research journey with reference to the research questions and hypotheses.

According to Brown (2011), while completing half of the battle is tightly linked to data collection, the other half is related to data analysis (as cited in Dörnyei, 2007). Although there is a difference between the analyses of qualitative and quantitative data in terms of statistics and words, but the main steps of analysis are usually constant among researchers despite their orientations. These steps are clearly condensed and comprised in the following figure:

Figure 3.5

The Main Stages of Data Analysis



Adapted from *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3rd ed.) by J.W. Creswell, and V.L.P Clark, 2018, SAGE Publications, Inc.

Since this study is framed under a mixed-methods approach, it consisted of “analyzing separately the quantitative data using quantitative methods and the qualitative

data using qualitative methods” (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p.308). Therefore, a quantitative analysis is directly followed up by a qualitative analysis where the difference lies in the procedures of analysis. Regarding this matter, Marczyk et al. (2006) noted the following words: “Without a well-established procedure, data can easily become disorganized, uninterpretable, and ultimately unusable (p.199). Corresponding to these words, the researcher of this study sought to carry out the task of explaining the how of her data analysis in the two coming sections.

3.1.6.1 Data analysis procedures for questionnaire

Administering the questionnaire is automatically followed by an analysis of the collected data. As the developed questionnaire for this study was semi-structured, it contained non-numerical and numerical data. While the former was analysed using content analysis, the latter was analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). SPSS represents the most commonly used software package in applied linguistics due to the practicality, facility and efficiency that it offers to its users. It helped the researcher with the issue of “how the data will be logged, entered, transformed (as necessary), and organized into a database that will facilitate accurate and efficient statistical analysis” (Marczyk et al., 2006, p.198).

As SPSS (version 25) has made all the statistical analysis, descriptive statistics were obtained and presented in the following chapter (i.e., the fourth chapter). As their name implies, descriptive statistics were included to describe and summarise the collected data logically so that they can be interpreted meaningfully.

3.1.6.2 Data analysis procedures for document analysis

Unlike the straightforwardness of the quantitative analysis that deals with numbers and statistics, qualitative analysis is more subjective as it deals with words and meaning (i.e., narrative data). Whether it should be considered as a challenge or an advantage for the

qualitative researcher, he has no well-defined procedures when analysing the collected data. Along this line, the following words of Dörnyei (2007) can be written down: "... this is exactly at the heart of qualitative data analysis: to develop and follow certain principled analytical sequences without being tied by the constraints of the procedures and sacrificing the researcher's creative liberty of interpretation" (p.242). Simply put, the qualitative researcher has the freedom to develop procedures that should be efficient for the analysis and interpretation of his dataset.

To analyse the identified formulaic sequences from the novel (i.e., the corpus), the researcher has opted for a combination of content analysis and stylistic analysis. The former, specifically qualitative content analysis, can be seen appropriate for gaining insights in addition to describing and identifying meanings. It allows engaging with data interpretation to extract meanings (Schreier, 2012). The latter appears suitable to explore and evaluate the aesthetic dimension of the area under study (i.e., formulaic sequences). Leech (1985) claimed that the aim of stylistic analysis is not to make a value judgement about the work's quality. Rather, it involves embracing a predisposition accepting a tendency to appreciate and investigate the linguistic and stylistic features or stamps used by the author (as cited in Wales, 2014)

Conclusion

This chapter was primarily devoted to the methodological decisions for the practical side of this study. These decisions were interwoven with justifications from the literature and based on the work of pioneers in the field of methodology. First, the light was casted on the philosophical underpinnings of the researcher's paradigmatic position. After that, the selected research approach, design and data collection methods were respectively mentioned and justified. With regard to the used data collection methods, this phase required the inclusion of the adapted procedures in terms of collection and analysis of the available

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

dataset. Paying attention to all of these steps, the analysis process should be a direct one towards valid and reliable results.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four: Results, Discussion and Interpretation

Introduction

4.1 Results and Discussion

4.1.1 Description and discussion of the questionnaire results

4.1.1.1 Section One: EFL students' background information

4.1.1.2 Section Two: EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards using formulaic sequences to mitigate/affect their reading comprehension of a literary work

4.1.2 Summary of the questionnaire results

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4.1.3.1 Description of the identification process of formulaic sequences

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4.1.3.4 Analysis of the identified phrasal verbs in the novel

4.1.3.5 Stylistic significance of the identified phrasal verbs in the novel

4.1.3.6 Analysis of the identified idioms in the novel

4.1.3.6 Stylistic significance of the identified idioms in the novel

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the presentation of the current study results, discussion and interpretation. Firstly, it concerns itself with the description, analysis and discussion of the data on EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards using formulaic sequences in literary works. The results of the document analysis that pinpoint the use of phrasal verbs and idioms are then presented, along with their stylistic importance. Finally, the chapter attempts to provide a synthesis of the results of the enquiry. Therefore, the chapter lends itself to be the practical part that targets a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

4.1 Results and Discussion

Once the effort to meet the requirements of data collection in a clear and proper manner both on the planning and execution phases were furnished, this researcher finds herself obliged to take further steps in relation to the analysis process. This process of data analysis should be straightforward in order to ensure the reliability of the final results not only to the readers of the thesis but also to the researcher whose ultimate goal is conducting a good and valid research.

In this section, the researcher attempts to report the relevant results systematically and objectively. Needless to state, this direct report should be accompanied with a discussion of the results in addition to a precise and concise interpretation. Vogt et al. (2014) believed that "the data do not speak for themselves. We have to speak for them" (as cited in Rose et al., 2020). Corresponding to these words, the researcher is compelled not only to insert the obtained results but also to describe and discuss them objectively. To restate it differently, data analysis aims to provide accurate description whereas data interpretation targets to meaningfully explain the formal representations of data, i.e., statistics. It is incumbent upon the researcher to seek meaning in the analysis of data so that an insightful interpretation can add to a better understanding of the results.

4.1.1 Description and discussion of the questionnaire results

As soon as the phases of designing, structuring, piloting and validating the questionnaire were accomplished, the questionnaire, in its final version, were handed to 47 EFL students in the academic year (2021/2022). These EFL master students were selected based on a purposive sampling technique, and they belonged to the Department of English and Literature at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. It should be mentioned that the questionnaire was delivered in a paper-and-pen format, and the response rate was 100% as all of the handed copies were returned and fully answered.

The questionnaire data have been statistically analysed using a Statistical Package for the social sciences (SPSS). The researcher focused on the adoption of descriptive statistics rather than inferential statistics. to define descriptive statistics, Bader (2021) noted that they “describe, characterize, and classify data by summarizing them into understandable terms without losing or distorting information” (p.19). In addition to Bader’s straightforward terms, it can be claimed that this adoption was cogent because there was no intention to generalise results to the entire population since it is a case study (see chapter 3). What is more, this type of statistics was used for the reason that they can help to summarise data through percentages and frequencies. In short, descriptive statistics were more suitable to the research aim, research design (i.e., case study) and to the sampling technique (i.e., purposive sampling).

After data entry and analysis, the obtained results were represented and visualised in the forms of pie charts, bar charts and tables to be described, and discussed. These two tasks of description and discussion should be done with reference to the corresponding research question and hypothesis. The obtained data from the two sections of the questionnaire will be displayed transparently in the following.

4.1.1.1 Section One: EFL students' background information

This section is primarily concerned with personal information/basic demographic information of the respondents as well as their reading habits and preferences.

Q1. Gender

Figure 4.1

Gender of the Questionnaire's Respondents

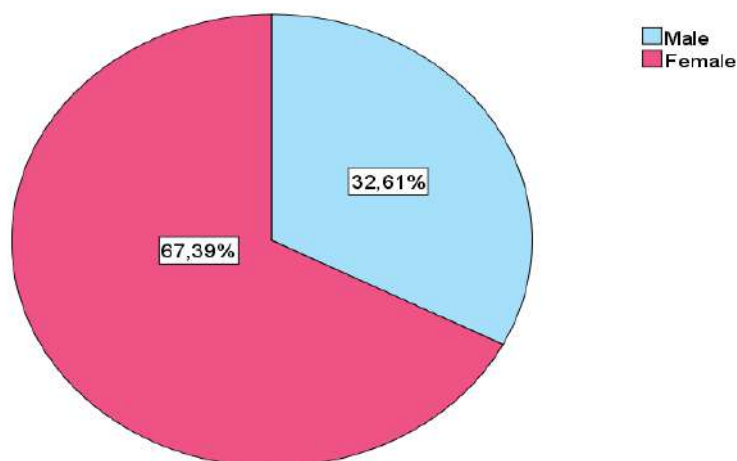
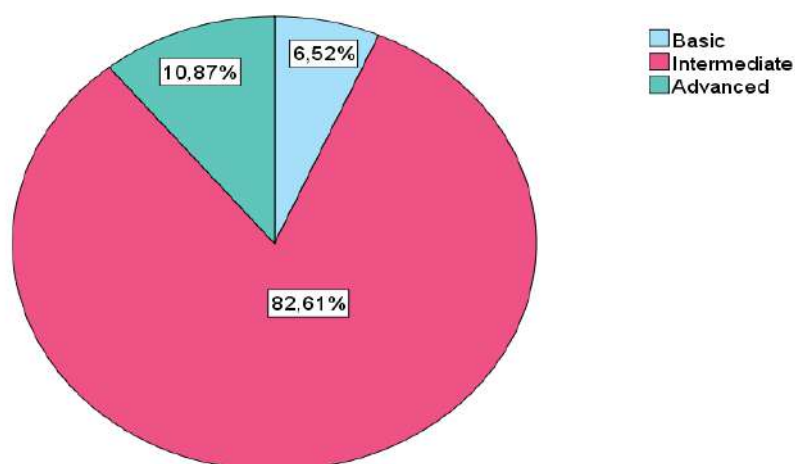


Figure 4.1 shows that the majority of the respondents who constituted the overall sample are female with 67.4%. This reveals that the low percentage is assigned to the male respondents with an estimated percentage of 32.6%.

Q2. How do you evaluate your overall competence in English?

Figure 4.2

EFL Students' Overall Competence in English



With regard to the respondents' overall competence in English, a considerable percentage of 82.6% indicated that most of the respondents evaluated themselves as having an intermediate level of competence. An estimated percentage of 10.9% of the respondents rated their competence level as an advanced one while a small proportion of 6.5% considered their level of competence to be basic.

Q3. How do you consider your competence in reading English literary texts?

Table 4.1

EFL Students' Competence in Reading English Literary Texts

	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	3	6,5
Good	25	54,3
Average	17	37,0
Poor	1	2,2
Total	46	100,0

From table 4.1, it is clear that most of the respondents' competence of reading English Literary texts is "good" as 25 responses (54.3%) out of the total number corresponded to this option. Then, 17 respondents (37%) and one respondent (2.2) evaluated their competence to be average and poor respectively. Only three respondents considered their competence to be very good. To restate it differently, the percentages of the respondents' competence in relation to reading English Literary texts in the given sample can be arranged, from the highest to the lowest, as follows: 1-Good, 2-Average, 3-Very good and 4-Poor.

Q4. How much time do you spend reading in English per day?**Table 4.2***The Amount of Time Spent by EFL Students in Reading per Day in English*

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10 minutes	12	26,1
From 10 minutes to 30 minutes	24	52,2
More than 30 minutes	10	21,7
Total	46	100,0

According to the table displayed above, the higher number of respondents (24) with a considerable percentage of 52.2% revealed that the amount of time allocated to reading in English is from 10 minutes to 30 minutes per day. While 26.1% of the respondents (12) reported spending less than 10 minutes to read in English daily, a comparable number of respondents spend more than 30 minutes per day to carry out this activity.

Q5. How often do you read in English?**Table 4.3***EFL Students' Frequency of Reading in English*

	Frequency	Percentage
Always	8	17,4
Occasionally	31	67,4
Rarely	7	15,2
Total	46	100,0

On a 3-point scale ranging from always to rarely, the previous table indicates the frequency and percentages of reading in English by the surveyed sample. Out of 46 respondents, 17.4% (8) disclosed that they always read in English whereas the majority of respondents 67.4% reported that their reading in English is done occasionally. The

remaining percentage that corresponds to seven respondents reported that they rarely read in English.

Q6. How many books written in English do you read for leisure in a year?

Table 4.4

Number of Books Read by EFL Students for Leisure in a Year

	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 Books	37	80,4
5-10 Books	9	19,6
Total	46	100,0

The provided numerical data in the previous table shows the number of books that the respondents read for leisure in a year. Books should be written in English and authentic as well. A fairly considerable number of 37 respondents with a percentage of 80.4% claimed that they read from 1 to 5 books in a year. The minority of responses 19.6% (9 respondents) indicated that they read from 5 to 10 books in a year.

Q7. What do you prefer to read?

Table 4.5

EFL Students' Reading Preferences of Literary Genres

	Frequency	Percentage
Fiction	25	54,3
Poetry	1	2,2
Drama	7	15,2
Non-fiction materials	13	28,3
Total	46	100,0

The previous table reveals the respondents' preferences related to literary genre. The majority (25) with a percentage of 54.3% claimed that they prefer to read fiction while the

minority 2.2% indicated their preference for reading poetry. A higher percentage of responses 15.2% showed the sample's interest in reading drama. Lastly, 28.3% of the respondents stated their preference for non-fiction materials. Although drama requires less effort by the audience as it can be experienced through visual and auditory means such as movies and series on different TV channels, respondents did not prefer this literary genre as much as they preferred fiction. The latter includes works of prose like novels, novellas and short stories.

Q8. What is your favourite genre? (You can choose more than one option)

Table 4.6

EFL Students' Reading Preferences of Books Genres

	Frequency	Percentage
Horror	16	13,1%
Romance	16	13,1%
Science fiction	20	16,4%
Detective fiction/Crimes/Thriller	24	19,7%
Fantasy	27	22,1%
Comics	15	12,3%
Other	4	3,3%
Total	122	100,0%

This eighth question aimed at revealing the most preferred genre of books among respondents (EFL students). According to the table, the respondents had distinct preferences as all the options have been opted for. From a statistical standpoint, the majority of responses were assigned to fantasy and detective fiction/crimes/thriller with an estimated percentage of 22.1% and 19.7% respectively. The option of science fiction was indicated by 16.4% of the respondents as their preferred genre. Romance and horror were equally selected by

13.1% of the respondents. When it comes to comics, 12.3% of the sample favoured this genre. Conversely, only 3.3% had preference towards other genres.

This question was followed by a sub-question wherein respondents were required to specify their favourite genre, and to justify their choices that were out of the given suggestions. In this respect, their answers can be simply categorised under non-fiction books. Differently stated, the respondents claimed that they prefer to read real stories rather than fictional stories that were written based only on imagination. Thus, their preferences leans towards books that are set under real historical contexts like documentary, autobiography and historical books. This suggests that they may be interested in their intellectual and academic development as this kind of books can improve their historical knowledge.

Q9. How much do you enjoy reading English literary works?

Table 4.7

Enjoyment Level Experienced by EFL Students while Reading English Literary Works

	Frequency	Percentage
Very much	19	41,3
A little	11	23,9
Not at all	5	10,9
Only when it is a personal choice	11	23,9
Total	46	100,0

Table 4.7 includes statistical data that indicates the level of enjoyment experienced by respondents while reading literary works in English, whether for leisure or for academic purposes. The highest level of enjoyment was experienced and reported by 41.3% of the sample, while 23.9% of the responses (11 respondents) thought that reading English literary works induces a small degree of enjoyment. A low rate of the remaining responses 10.9%

disapproved the existence of any correlation between their personal level of enjoyment and English literary works. Accordingly, they selected the option “Not at all”. The left 23.9% of the responses believed that reading English literary works could derive a significant level of enjoyment and pleasure to them, but only if their reading is based on a personal choice.

Aiming to uncover the reasons for the respondents’ selection, a follow-up question was needed and added. A fair proportion of the surveyed students 58.7% attempted to provide their justification from a personal perspective. On this basis, the following summative section of the respondents’ reasons can be provided:

- Promoting EFL student’s language development

According to the respondents’ views, reading an English literary work can be enjoyable as it goes beyond the aesthetic level to reach the vocabulary repertoire enrichment, linguistic skills improvement, enhancing critical thinking enhancement and overall competence improvement. In this vein, one of the surveyed student said, “I enjoy reading an English literary work very much because it enhances my level of English language as well as my critical thinking”. Another student stated that this activity can “increase and enrich the vocabulary repertoire”. All of the given justifications provide evidence of why the respondents truly enjoy reading English pieces of writing.

- Cultivating a sense of enjoyment

Engaging in the process of reading a literary work in English can develop a sense of pleasure. For instance, it enables the reader to escape from reality to imagination. In addition, it gives access to new worlds, cultures and experience that can be advantageous to the reader. It can also stimulate a person’s emotions and aesthetic feelings. One of the students argues that she loves reading English literary works “because it helps in learning new experiences”, while another one noted “I find English literary very interesting and thrilling. They enable

you to imagine a whole new world of yours”. Therefore, engaging with an English literary work can be an entertaining pastime.

The above mentioned justifications are exclusively reported by the respondents who claimed to enjoy a lot while participating in the process of reading literary products written in the English language. Concerning those who claimed to enjoy a little bit or do not enjoy at all, their reasons are briefly summarised in the following element:

- A source of boredom

in contrast to those who argued that engaging in reading a literary work written in English, regardless to the genre and type of work, can be an a joyful pastime, a very small number of respondents believed that this activity can be a source of boredom. This can be justified by their lack of interest towards English literature. In addition, English literature can be difficult and challenging for EFL students as they are non-native speakers. Some of their answers were as follows: “I just get bored; so, I don’t finish the whole book” and “I just find it boring”.

The last category reckoned that their enjoyment is tightly linked to their personal choice on the level of the selected material in addition to their intrinsic motivation. In this context, a surveyed student noted “I am not always motivated to read. That’s why I read only when I am ready”. Another students stated “ I spend more time reading English literary works when it is my own choice”. Thus, there answers revolved around the notion that reading literary works in English is a choice and not an obligation.

Q10. Why do you read in English? (You can choose more than one option)**Table 4.8***Reasons of EFL Students for Reading in English*

	Frequency	Percentage
To enrich the vocabulary repertoire	21	26,3%
To improve grammatical competence	6	7,5%
To increase my background knowledge	19	23,8%
To improve my spelling	10	12,5%
All	24	30,0%
Total	80	100,0%

As far as reading in English is important, respondents were asked to select the reasons and motives that urge them to engage in this activity. The divergence of their responses resulted in the provided numerical data in the previous table. The corresponding percentage 26.3% to the option “To enrich the vocabulary repertoire” emphasises the fact that this reason is the most common one among the surveyed sample (EFL students). The following reason had a percentage of 23.8%, and which is increasing background knowledge. Additionally, the data demonstrates that 12.5% of the respondents read to enhance their spelling whereas 7.5% of them read to improve their grammatical competence. All of these reasons were selected by 30% of the total sample size under the option “All”.

Q11. When you read a literary work in English, you are mostly concerned with (You can choose more than one option)

Table 4.9*EFL Students' Primary Concerns when Reading English Literary Works*

	Frequency	Percentage
Elements of the story (characters, plot, conflict, etc.)	31	44,3%
Typical and simple vocabulary	8	11,4%
Formulaic sequences (idioms, phrasal verbs, etc.)	10	14,3%
Creativity of the author in terms of lexis and structure of the literary text	14	20,0%
All of the above	7	10,0%
Total	70	100,0%

The rationale behind the pre-mentioned question is to reveal what respondents are mostly concerned about in an English literary works. The table shows that 44.3% of the responses pinpointed elements of the story such as characters, plot and conflict as their primary concern while reading literary works in English (e.g., novels and short stories). On a different note, 20% of the response found that creativity of the author in terms of lexis and structure of the literary text is more impactful than the other aspect. Another significant concern was formulaic sequences such as idioms and phrasal verbs with a percentage of 14.3%, while only 11.4% expressed their concern with typical and simple vocabulary. The remaining small percentage expressed their focus on all of the above concerns.

In order to uncover the reasons for the respondents' selection, including a supplementary question was deemed necessary. This question aims not only to capture EFL students' perceptions on the aspects of a literary text, but also to have a general idea on their perceptions and preferences towards formulaic sequences inclusion. Approximately 56.52%

of the sample sought to justify their preferences. Thus, their answers can be summarised in the following ideas:

- The respondents who prioritised elements of the story such as characters, plot, and conflict believed that their role is driving the story forward, keeping the reader engaged and amused till the end of the story. One of the students claimed that understanding a literary work requires knowing the elements of the story, and her words were as follows: “for me, they help you to understand the whole story and events”.
- Creativity of the author in terms of lexis and text structure is a crucial element that EFL readers seem to concentrate on it. They believe that they can understand and enjoy the literary work wherein an author uses an original and creative style. The latter includes distinctive choice of words, unique organisation of ideas and even stylistic and literary devices that can have an impact on the readers. Combining the importance of this aspect with the previous one, a surveyed student noted, “For me, elements of the story and creativity of the author are essential aspects to understand the whole literary work smoothly”. Thus, creativity of an author is of a no less importance than elements of a story.
- While simple vocabulary can create a bigger level of excitement as it was claimed by some respondents, others showed their interest in formulaic sequences due to some of their potential advantages. For instance, the familiarity of formulaic sequences may have an impact on the overall understanding of a literary text by making some of the ideas more accessible and easier. In addition, these ready-made formulas (e.g., idioms) may help readers to gain knowledge about cultures of others, and to develop their intercultural competence. Focusing on the comprehension of

formulaic sequences embedded in a literary text can help readers, EFL students in our case, to achieve gradually a higher level of language proficiency.

4.1.1.2 Section Two: EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards the effect of formulaic sequences on their comprehension of a literary work

Within this section, Likert scale items were used to measure the respondents' attitude and beliefs towards each statement related to using formulaic sequences to mitigate/affect their reading comprehension of a literary work. The Likert scale enable respondents to indicate their level of agreement, disagreement or neutrality with each statement, providing quantitative percentages of their attitudes and beliefs. The percentages are displayed in one summative table, while the description and discussion of the statements is done separately.

The response scale is as follows:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Table 4.10

Results of Likert-Questions on EFL Students' Attitudes and Beliefs towards the Effect of Formulaic Sequences on their Comprehension of a Literary Work

Statements	Percentages				
	1	2	3	4	5
1- In your opinion, EFL students in the Algerian context have a good command of formulaic sequences in terms of comprehension and use at once.	13,0	32,6	32,6	19,6	2,2
2- Literary works contain large percentages of formulaic sequences in comparison to novel expressions.	6,5	6,5	37,0	47,8	2,2
3- Fully-fixed or semi-fixed combinations of words known as formulaic sequences are better to be included when writing a literary work than novel combinations of words.	4,3	13,0	28,3	45,7	8,7
4- The author of a literary work should better opt for novel expressions created from scratch to reach creativity.	8,7	15,2	19,6	43,5	13,0
5- Certain formulaic sequences, mainly idioms, can help to indicate the author's identity or his membership to a specific speech community.	6,5	10,9	17,4	39,1	26,1
6- Since formulaic sequences are fixed combinations of words, they can be understood quickly and easily in comparison to new generated expressions.	4,3	21,7	34,8	21,7	17,4

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

7- The fixedness of formulaic sequences gives them the merit of being easily decoded at the time of reading.	2,2	8,7	37,0	41,3	10,9
8- Well-known formulaic sequences (e.g., break a leg and spill the beans) enables an EFL student to quickly process the message of the author without the need to face and decode the overloaded linguistic package used to transmit the message.	6,5	13,0	17,4	30,4	32,6
9- When most formulaic sequences are detected, an EFL student can reach a good level of comprehension to the literary texts, and by consequence, the overall literary work.	4,3	6,5	17,4	45,7	26,1
10- An EFL student tends to refer to the dictionary to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., non-literal) formulaic sequence (e.g., speak of the devil) while reading literary texts.	13,0	13,0	26,1	37,0	10,9
11- An EFL student tends to rely on his intuitive judgement to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., non-literal/opaque) formulaic sequence by combining the meaning of its constituent parts.	6,5	13,0	21,7	56,5	2,2
12- The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of detecting them in a literary text (i.e., on the lexical level).	10,9	13,0	28,3	41,3	6,5

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

13- The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of decoding and interpreting them (i.e., on the semantic level).	13,0	10,9	10,9	37,0	28,3
14- Difficult and semantically non-transparent formulaic sequences obstruct the pleasurable reading that an EFL student is looking for when dealing with a literary work.	2,2	23,9	23,9	34,8	15,2
15- Using the same typical formulaic sequences by an author creates a sort of boredom to his/her readers.	10,9	19,6	17,4	34,8	17,4
16- The non-alignment (i.e., the difference) between an EFL student's level in English and the level of the native author will probably reflect on the student's comprehension of formulaic sequences in particular.	6,5	2,2	13,0	56,5	21,7
17- Some formulaic sequences can manipulate EFL students' comprehension of a literary text by facilitating it.	8,7	15,2	37,0	32,6	6,5
18- Some formulaic sequences can manipulate students' comprehension of a literary text by distracting or hardening it.	2,2	21,7	41,3	30,4	4,3
19- Formulaic sequences can help satisfying cognitive, emotional and aesthetic needs of a literary works' readers.	4,3	6,5	13,0	56,5	19,6

Statement 1. In your opinion, EFL students in the Algerian context have a good command of formulaic sequences in terms of comprehension and use at once.

The current percentages indicate that 13% and 32.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, with the idea that EFL students in the Algerian context have a good command of formulaic sequences in terms of comprehension and use at once. This is probably due to the lack of emphasis on formulaic sequences in the curriculum, in addition to the limited exposure to this area. A similar percentage 32.6% goes back to those who neither agreed nor disagreed. Assumedly, this neutrality can be referred to the lack of statistics in relation to the area of formulaic sequences in the Algerian context unlike other topics that have been vaguely explored and investigated. Conversely, 19.6% showed positive attitude towards the previous statement as they agreed with it, while 2.2% strongly agreed. It can be suggested that this proportion of the sample can have a greater understanding to the notion of formulaicity, and they believe that most EFL students are also familiar with it.

Statement 2. Literary works contain large percentages of formulaic sequences in comparison to novel expressions.

A noteworthy proportion of 47.8% expressed their agreement with the idea that literary works contain large percentages of formulaic sequences in comparison to novel expressions. Only 2.2% of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Possibly, this agreement can be referred to the personal experience with literary works by the respondents or even their personal preference towards these sequences. While 37% of the respondents remained unbiased (i.e., neutral), an equivalent percentage of the respondents (6.5%) expressed their disagreement and strong disagreement with this statement. This negative attitude may be due to the lack of the necessary background for making an informed decision or to the lack of evidence on this matter (i.e., no detection of formulaic sequences).

Statement 3. Fully-fixed or semi-fixed combinations of words known as formulaic sequences are better to be included when writing a literary work than novel combinations of words.

With regard to this third statement, respondents demonstrated a positive attitude as 45.7% and 8.7% have agreed and strongly agreed with the idea that fully-fixed or semi-fixed combinations of words known as formulaic sequences are better to be included when writing a literary work than novel combinations of words. A fair percentage of 28.3% were neutral and did not take any side. On the contrary, 13% and 4.3% disagreed with this idea. Thus, they did not prioritise the inclusion of formulaic sequences over novel expressions.

Statement 4. The author of a literary work should better opt for novel expressions created from scratch to reach creativity.

The respondents provided their attitudes and beliefs towards the above-given statement. Those who strongly disagreed or disagreed with the idea of opting for novel expressions created from scratch by the author to reach creativity had the lowest percentages, and which are 8.7% and 15.2%. It can be confirmed here that ready-made forms are more preferred by some EFL readers of literary writings.

Contrarily, the highest percentage 43.5% corresponds to those who agreed on opting for novel expressions by the author to reach creativity. Another percentage (13%) was in favour for this idea as the respondents showed their strong agreement. This entails that EFL readers have opposite views, and can be categorised into two groups. The first group preferred having easy access to the meaning of the ideas through the use of ready-made forms as it was revealed in the previous statement. The second group preferred freshness and creativity of the language as it is indicated within the description of this fourth statement. The remaining percentage (19.6%) was for those respondents who had neutral position towards the idea of novel expressions and the author's creativity.

Statement 5. Certain formulaic sequences, mainly idioms, can help to indicate the author's identity or his membership to a specific speech community.

Based on the provided percentages in (table 4.10), it can be noticed that 39.1% of the respondents agreed that certain formulaic sequences like idioms can help to indicate the author's identity or his membership to a specific speech community. Strong agreement with this statement was expressed by another 26.1% of the respondents. Therefore, the respondents seem to be aware of the fact that providing insights on the author's linguistic and cultural background via formulaic sequences can help them to reach a better understanding of a literary text. Some of the respondents (17.4%) preferred to occupy the mid-position on the ranking-scale (i.e., to stay neutral). The rest of the responses indicated different low levels of disagreement. 10.9% out of the surveyed students disagreed with this statement, and 6.5% strongly disagreed with it. However, this disagreement does not necessarily reflect their non-awareness of formulaic sequences benefits, but it can stem from the difficulty and confusion created by some formulaic sequences on the respondents' comprehension.

Statement 6. Since formulaic sequences are fixed combinations of words, they can be understood quickly and easily in comparison to new generated expressions.

Due to the fixedness of formulaic sequences that allows their storage and retrieval as single units, they can be processed more quickly than new generated expressions. This means that processing efforts can be saved as has been clarified previously in the theoretical part of this thesis (see chapter 2). Looking for respondents' reflection on this idea, they were asked to reveal their agreement degree. Surprisingly, respondents who agreed and those who disagreed with this statement had equal percentages (21.7%). However, 17.4% of the respondents showed their strong agreement, while only 4.3% of the responses strongly disagree. This means that the agreement level was higher than the disagreement one. These

varying levels of both agreement and disagreement does not exclude the position of neutrality that was preferred by 34.8% of the respondents.

Statement 7. The fixedness of formulaic sequences gives them the merit of being easily decoded at the time of reading.

At this stage, more specification was added to the previous statement as the process of analysing and interpreting formulaic sequences was linked to the act of reading a literary text. Approximately, the previous percentage of respondents who were neutral remained relatively stable. That is to say, 37% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the idea that fixed formulaic sequences can be easily decoded at the time of reading. The percentage of the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed reached 41.3% and 10.9%, in order. This proportion of the sample probably believe that a reader can understand the implemented formulaic sequences within a literary text more quickly and with less cognitive effort. The rest of the answers indicated disagreement from the part of the respondents towards the concern of this seventh statement. While 8.7% have disagreed, only 2.2% have strongly disagreed.

Statement 8. Well-known formulaic sequences (e.g., break a leg and spill the beans) enables an EFL student to quickly process the message of the author without the need to face and decode the overloaded linguistic package used to transmit the message.

In addition to the previous characteristic (i.e., fixedness) of formulaic sequences, this statement focused on the familiarity of these sequences. Respondents were requested to indicate their attitudes and beliefs towards this statement. Accordingly, 32.6% of the respondents strongly agree with the fact that well-known formulaic sequences can be easily recognised and understood without being required to analyse and interpret every single word of the sequence. Another 30.4% of the sample also agree on this idea. Regardless to these high levels of agreement, 13% and 6.5% out of the respondents disagree and strongly

disagree on the correlation between the familiarity of formulaic sequences and their easy processing. The left percentage of the respondents showed neither agreement nor disagreement to the given statement.

Statement 9. When most formulaic sequences are detected, an EFL student can reach a good level of comprehension to the literary texts, and by consequence, the overall literary work.

Concerning this statement, the statistical obtained data revealed strong levels of agreement from the part of the respondents. In fact, 45.7% and 26.1% were reported on the table. The former percentage corresponds to the respondents who agreed with the idea that reaching a good level of comprehension to the literary texts is preceded by formulaic sequences detection. The latter percentage pertains to those who strongly agreed with the given statement. On the contrary, a lowest percentage of the respondents (6.5%) showed their disagreement with the idea that formulaic sequences along their detection can play a significant role in literary texts comprehension. Moreover, 4.3% of the respondents expressed their strong disagreement. Occupying the zone of uncertainty towards this statement, 17.4% of the respondents preferred to remain neutral.

Statement 10. An EFL student tends to refer to the dictionary to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., non-literal) formulaic sequence (e.g., speak of the devil) while reading literary texts.

Aiming to identify the strategies that EFL students use when they encounter a formulaic sequence that holds a non-literal meaning, this statement was included. In fact, the degree to which respondents disagree and strongly disagree is identical (13%). More precisely, they did not show agreement to the idea that EFL students use the dictionary for decoding semantically non-transparent formulaic sequences while being engaged in the reading process of a literary text. Agreeing and strongly agreeing with this idea, 37% and

10.9% have been recorded. This means that a considerable percentage of the sample believe in the utility of the dictionary while facing obstacles with decoding the meaning of some formulaic sequences, especially idioms. Out of the total sample, 26.1% opted to be neutral.

Statement 11. An EFL student tends to rely on his intuitive judgement to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., non-literal/opaque) formulaic sequence by combining the meaning of its constituent parts.

This statement received a high degree of agreement as 56.5% of the respondents went for it. Therefore, the majority believe that intuitive judgement can be a helpful method to interpret a formulaic sequence that does not have a literal meaning. This can be done by piecing the meaning of the constituent parts of the sequence to figure out the overall meaning. Although another percentage is small, it is still noteworthy. In particular, 2.2% of the respondents strongly agreed with the use of this method. Strongly disagreeing with this statement, 6.5% of the respondents indicated that they do not believe that EFL students use this strategy of intuitive-based judgement to understand formulaic sequences along their idiomatic and figurative meaning. While a larger percentage of respondents (13%) disagreed with this idea, a significant proportion of respondents (21.7%) remained neutral on the statement.

Statement 12. The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of detecting them in a literary text (i.e., on the lexical level).

This 12th statement suggests that not every formulaic sequence is apparent in a literary text. Thus, the process of recognising and identifying them, precisely at the lexical level can be a challenging one for EFL students. The results showed that a small percentage of the respondents (10.9%) strongly disagreed with this idea whereas a slightly larger percentage (13%) disagreed with it. This indicates that they do not believe that detecting formulaic sequences in a literary text stands as the primary challenge. In contrast, the

majority of the respondents, 41.3% and 6.5%, expressed their agreement and strong agreement with this statement. Yet, a substantial proportion of the respondents had no opinion either way and remained neutral.

Statement 13. The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of decoding and interpreting them (i.e., on the semantic level).

Based on the provided percentages in the above summative table 4.10, there is a variability in the attitudes and beliefs of respondents. The two highest percentages, 37% and 28.3%, of the respondents ticked “agree” and “strongly agree” in order. This unveils the fact that the respondents are aware of the fact that deriving the meaning of formulaic sequences cannot be done easily because most of these sequences are characterised by the non-compositional meaning. Thus, the meaning of the sequence, be it an idiom or a phrasal verb, cannot be always predicted based on the meanings of the constituent parts. The selection of the options “disagree” and “strongly disagree” with similar percentages, 19.9% and 13%, is a sign of the respondents’ disbelief. They do not see that dealing with formulaic sequences on the semantic level as the major difficulty. Some respondents (10.9%) had a neutral stance on the difficulty of interpreting formulaic sequences. Their neutral stance may arise from several factors.

Based on a quick comparison between the percentages of statement 12 and 13, it can be noted that respondents maintained formulaic sequences to be more challenging on the semantic level than on the syntactic level. This partially explains the reason why light has been shed on formulaic sequences in relation to this level in the current study.

Statement 14. Difficult and semantically non-transparent formulaic sequences obstruct the pleasurable reading that an EFL student is looking for when dealing with a literary work.

This statement along the obtained percentages aimed to know whether semantically non-transparent (opaque) formulaic sequences can interfere with the level of enjoyment and pleasure that a reader is looking to have. 34.8% of the total sample agreed with this statement leading to a sort of confirmation to the results of the previous statement (i.e., statement 13) as the percentages are approximate. That is to say, respondents believed that non-transparent formulaic sequences do not only stand as a primary challenge for EFL readers, but it also negatively impact the pleasurable journey of reading a literary work. Thus, the reader finds himself interrupted when making pauses and looking for the meaning of these formulas. This idea received a “strong agreement” with a percentage of 15.2%.

Responding negatively to this statement, 2.2% of the total sample strongly disagreed as they did not believe in the obstruction made by opaque formulaic sequences on a reading journey. Additionally, 23.9% opted for the option “disagree” while a similar percentage have been neutral.

Statement 15. Using the same typical formulaic sequences by an author creates a sort of boredom to his/her readers.

Throughout this statement, it was sought to explore whether EFL students agree on the idea that the author’s use of the same formulaic sequences consistently and repeatedly in his/her writing can create boredom and a lack of interest to his/her readers. The larger proportion of the sample 34.8% agreed with this idea, and this indicates that reading the same sequence over and over again, be it an idiom or a phrasal verb, can affect the creativity of the author’s writing. This by its turn can be negatively reflected in readers’ engagement with the reading journey. Another substantial percentage 17.4% strongly agreed on the link that exists between repeated formulaic sequences in the same literary work of a specific author and the readers’ loss of interest. A similar percentage to the previous one (i.e., 17.4%) selected the option “neutral”, and they did not revealed their position towards coming across

the same integrated formulaic sequences by an author. Standing against this idea, less than 20% selected the option “disagree” while only 10.9% were in a strong disagreement.

Statement 16. The non-alignment (i.e., the difference) between an EFL student’s level in English and the level of the native author will probably reflect on the student’s comprehension of formulaic sequences in particular.

This statement suggested to the respondents who were, once again, EFL students that the difference between their level of language proficiency and the level of a native English-speaking author can have an undesirable effect on their ability as readers to understand formulaic sequences. Unsurprisingly, the reported data indicated that more than half of the respondents (56.5%) agreed with this idea while a considerable percentage of 21.7% expressed their strong agreement to this statement. Unlike previous statement, this one received little disagreement with a percentage of 2.2%. A minor percentage of the respondents (6.5%) reported their strong disagreement with the idea that they struggle to decode the meaning of formulaic sequences because of the gap between their level as EFL students and a native author. When it comes to those who remained neutral, they constituted a percentage of 13%.

Statement 17. Some formulaic sequences can manipulate EFL students’ comprehension of a literary text by facilitating it.

Most of the respondents (37%) did not have a definitive judgement towards the role that formulaic sequences can play on their comprehension to literary texts in particular and to literary works in general. Thus, 37% of the sample neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. The rest of the respondents had differing opinions on the idea of facilitating the comprehension of a literary text through the role that formulaic sequences may play when being integrated. The percentage of those who agreed and strongly disagreed with this statement had the following percentages: 32.6% and 6.5%. It indicates that this category

believed that encountering formulaic sequences, especially the familiar ones, ease the task of the reader who finds himself easily recognising the sequence along its meaning and quickly processing the message of the author. Consequently, this category depends on formulaic sequences as an aid towards a fluent reading and a quicker understanding of the meaning.

The other category, who did not show approval to this statement, expressed its disagreement with a percentage of 15.2% and strong disagreement with a percentage of 8.7%. It can be suggested here that they do not consider formulaic sequences as a feature that can help them to understand the meaning of the text and the messages of the author. They might have other factors that help them in comprehending a literary text.

Statement 18. Some formulaic sequences can manipulate students' comprehension of a literary text by distracting or hardening it.

Regardless of the fixedness of formulaic sequences on the syntactic level, identifying them and decoding their non-literal meaning can be a difficult task that may harden a literary text comprehension and distract a text's overall message receiving. Attempting to reveal the respondents' opinions vis-à-vis this idea, this 18th statement was added. The minority of the sample disagreed with this idea as 2.2% strongly disagreed with it and 21.7% disagreed with it as well. This implies that these respondents do not believe in the negative effect of these sequences on the accessibility of a literary text in terms of meaning and comprehension.

Agreeing and strongly agreeing with this statement, 30.4% and 4.3% selected the options "agree" and "strongly agree" respectively. This proportion seemed to believe that, in some cases, a literary text comprehension can be distracted or hindered because of the created difficulty by some formulaic sequences whether on the semantic or syntactic levels. For instance, if a reader focuses on identifying and decoding the meaning of an unfamiliar

sequence, he will become distracted on the understanding the overall meaning. At last, the majority of the respondents 41.3% have been neutral with this statement.

Statement 19. Formulaic sequences can help satisfying cognitive, emotional and aesthetic needs of a literary works' readers.

According to the displayed results in table 4.10, the majority of the respondents 56.5% agree with this statement and 19.6% of them strongly agreed with it. Their agreement reflects their satisfaction with the impact that formulaic sequences may create on their needs in terms of three levels: cognitive emotional and aesthetic. More particularly, the familiar patterns of formulaic sequences can add more familiarity and predictability to the language structure of a literary text, and this by its turn may affect the cognitive processing and understanding of a literary work's reader. In addition, familiar formulaic sequences may help intensifying the evoked emotional responses (e.g., joy and sadness) during the reading process. Moreover, these sequences can also contribute to the beauty and harmony of the used language by the author.

Only a small percentage of the respondents (6.5%) disagreed with what has been mentioned above whereas 4.3% of them expressed their strong disagreement. This suggests that their cognitive, emotional and aesthetic needs are satisfied by these multi-words expressions. In the zone of neutrality, 13% of the whole sample preferred not to take either sides (i.e., agreement and disagreement).

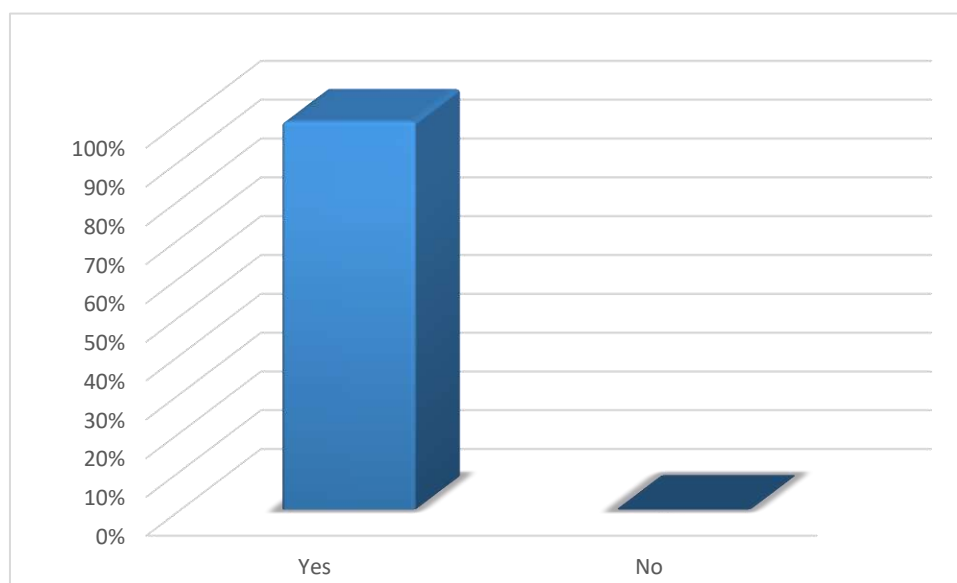
Q20. Are you satisfied with the role that formulaic sequences can play on literary works as a stylistic stamp as they can potentially affect your understanding and enjoyment?

This last question (Yes/No question) acknowledged that formulaic sequences have the potential to influence the readers' understanding of a literary text. Thus, it sought to

explore the respondents' attitudes and beliefs on the use of formulaic sequences as a literary stylistic stamp in literary works.

Figure 4.3

EFL Students' Satisfaction towards the Role of Formulaic Sequences as a Stylistic Stamp in Literary Works



The percentages shown above suggest that all of the respondents perceive formulaic sequences as a stylistic stamp in literary works. The level of satisfaction towards the potential role of these sequences was 100%, and none of the respondents had a differing view on this idea. The respondents' attitudes and beliefs are consistent with their responses to the last three Likert-scale questions.

4.1.2 Summary of the questionnaire results

Aiming to obtain valuable insights about the sample being dealt with in the current study, a number of questions constituted the first section of the questionnaire. The results implies that the respondents appear to have a good level of competence when it comes to reading English literary texts, according to their self-evaluation. Even if reading in English is not their frequent activity but most of them reckoned that they experienced a high level of

enjoyment when engaging in the journey of reading English literary works. Additionally, the results suggest that EFL students have different preferences and tendencies with regard to the preferred genre of books. However, most of them are more inclined towards fiction materials that have narrative aspects as well as structures such as short stories and novels. The latter represents the case study of the current enquiry.

All of aforementioned represent the most significant findings extracted from the first section of questionnaire. In fact, these findings that include reading habits and attitudes towards reading literary works in English can better help the researcher to interpret the data collected from the second section of the questionnaire.

Based on the results of the second section, it can be mainly suggested that despite receiving direct instructions in the area of formulaic sequences by the respondents, they expressed their dissatisfaction with EFL students' proficiency level in this area within the Algerian context. They also revealed that these ready-made expressions are as important as new generated expressions, and both of them should be incorporated into an author's writing style. However, the comprehension level of these formulas, for an EFL student, can be tightly linked to their characteristics, and which are fixedness and familiarity. In fact, the more a formulaic sequence is recognisable to the reader, the easier it is for him to decipher the meaning of the sequence in addition to the message of the author.

The results implies that EFL students are aware of the importance of detecting formulaic sequences in a literary text, but they believe that a greater challenge and complexity lies in deciphering and interpreting them. That is to say, EFL students have put much emphasis on the semantic level in comparison to the syntactic one. Similar to some scholars who have relied on intuitive judgement to identify formulaic sequences (Wray, 2008), the results indicated that EFL students are also dependent on this technique for the sake of identifying and, more importantly, deciphering the meaning of opaque sequences.

Correspondingly, the current study focuses on formulaic sequences in relation to the semantic level in one of Katie Flynn's novels to reveal whether these formulas have a stylistic effect on literary texts.

Referring to the sample responses, it can be demonstrated that the difficulty of extracting the meaning of non-transparent formulaic sequences does not stop at the level of comprehension, but it even obstructs having a pleasurable reading journey. Regardless of these pinpointed challenges, the results indicate that formulaic sequences can help satisfying cognitive, emotional and aesthetic needs of EFL students, as it is the case with the role of other literary stylistic features.

Taking into account the preceding ideas, EFL students expressed positive attitudes towards the effect that formulaic sequences may create on their understanding and enjoyment of a literary text as well as the overall literary work. They also reckoned that these sequences can be considered as a literary stylistic stamp as they can affect their understanding with regard to the semantic level of a literary text. In addition, EFL students' belief that formulaic sequences can have an effect on their emotional and aesthetic needs highlights the role these sequences can play in enhancing their level of enjoyment. By consequence, the first research hypothesis can be confirmed based on these results, and which states the following: "EFL students believe that formulaic sequences can affect their comprehension and enjoyment of literary texts".

3.2.2 Results of document analysis

As the identification process carried out on the novel *Beyond the Blue Hills* by Katie Flynn has yielded a number of representative samples of formulaic sequences (i.e., 28 samples for each category), notably phrasal verbs and idioms, this section is devoted to describe and justify the decisions that were made in the identification phase. Worthy to mention, the decisions were, at first, made based on intuitions; then, each category of

formulaic sequences had its own method of assessing the pre-made intuitive judgments, and which will be explicitly explained in this section. After that, both content analysis and stylistic analysis that were conducted on those sequences will be straightly included. This data collection method (i.e., document analysis) aimed primarily to provide insights about the stylistic effect of formulaic sequences in a literary work, with a particular focus on the semantic level of the language. The content analysis sought to develop a deeper understanding of how these sequences can contribute to the meaning of literary texts, and how messages can be effectively conveyed among language complexity. On the other part, stylistic analysis sought to go beyond the basic meaning, and to highlight their stylistic significance by considering their contribution to the tone and style of the literary text through the connotations and senses they create.

4.1.3.1 Description of the identification process of formulaic sequences

It seems that it is more convenient to describe the identification process that precedes the analysis phase within this section so that the results can be better described and analysed. This would provide a better understanding of how the designated samples of formulaic sequences (referred to as corpus) were selected for analysis and interpretation, how the results were obtained in addition to acknowledging the limitations of the analysis.

Within the boundaries of this study, it was aimed to explore the effect of formulaic sequences, with a particular focus on the semantic level of language in addition to the aesthetic level. Accordingly, the historical romantic novel *Beyond the Blue Hills*, written by Katie Flynn, is considered as a case study from which samples were selected for analysis. As the novel consists of 14 chapters, a total of 28 formulaic sequences were selected for analysis, two phrasal verbs and two idioms from each chapter. Seeking to manage the amount of data and ensure the accuracy of the results, the researcher stopped selecting samples from each category within a chapter once the desired number has been reached. The

selection was based primarily on intuition in addition to two other factors that can contribute to the formulaic nature of a sequence, and which are syntactic structure and meaning.

Overall, the identification process has resulted in the following table:

Table 4.11

Selected Formulaic Sequences from the Novel Beyond the Blue Hills by Katie Flynn

	Phrasal Verbs	Idioms
Chapter 1	- look at (p.1) - come on (p.1)	- What the devil (p.1) - to keep an eye on the younger girl (p.1)
Chapter 2	- come up (p.39) - to get down (p.39)	- afraid to say boo to a goose (p.40) - I'm that hungry, I could eat a horse (p.51)
Chapter 3	- walked across (p.86) - go up (p.86)	- his secret was still safe (p.103) - to put her oar in (p.108)
Chapter 4	- looked through (p.124) - to trickle in (p.124)	- honest to God (p.124) - burying your head in the sand (p.144)
Chapter 5	- to fill in (p.161) - to pop into (p.162)	- I can't pull the wool over your eyes (p.167) - take to farming like a duck to water (p.170)
Chapter 6	- standing on (p.184) - light up (p.184)	- was ... cut short (p.186) - to put a spoke in your wheel (p.189)

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Chapter 7	- get into (p.211) - run out (p.211)	- eaten up with jealousy (p.217) - you're talking through your hat (p.219)
Chapter 8	- had clawed back (p.239) - close down (p.239)	- the knot had been tied (p.244) - jumped the gun (p.259)
Chapter 9	- sat up (p.273) - lay down (p.273)	- gets a move on (p.279) - grinning from ear to ear (p.281)
Chapter 10	- pointed out (p.310) - to push through (p.311)	- to open his mouth and put his foot in it (p.313) - stealing a march on me! (p.315)
Chapter 11	- washing up (p.341) - goes off (p.341)	- set the seal on (p.353) - to keep in touch (p.354)
Chapter 12	- getting up (p.381) - went out (p.381)	- learns the hard way (p.382) - the cat's out of the bag (p.387)
Chapter 13	- sort ... out (p.416) - smoothed out (p.416)	- on the nose (p.425) - falling (more deeply) in love (p.431)
Chapter 14	-trying ... out (p.437) -going down (p.437)	-farming must have been in blood (p.447) -farming was like a millstone round Phil's neck (p.447)

One of the limitation of this selection process is the possibility that formulaic sequences that are less common could be have been missed or overlooked. Moreover, this process is limited to the researcher's knowledge of the English language, and this may have led to certain bias towards some formulaic sequences, especially the common ones. Therefore, other confirmation procedures were implemented for each category to verify that the selected samples met the criteria of formulaicity, and this will be explained in the following lines.

4.1.3.2 Identification process of phrasal verbs

In order to increase the reliability and transparency of the study, a clear and detailed description of the used process for identifying phrasal verbs is provided. In fact, ensuring accurate identification, and minimising potential errors and bias required combining different techniques rather than using one technique solely.

As a starting point, the syntactical structure of each multi-word sequence that appears to be a potential phrasal verb has been examined attentively against proposed and established categories in the body of literature (Wood, 2015):

- **Verb + preposition (prepositional phrasal verbs)**

Example: look (verb) + at (preposition)

- **Verb + particle (particle phrasal verbs)**

Example: go (verb) + down (particle)

After undertaking this initial step, there was an analysis of the context (i.e., words, phrases and sentences) surrounding each multi-word sequence to determine if it is a phrasal verb or not. This involved checking how the words of the examined sequence are used in a sentence, and whether these words are working together to convey a specific meaning or they are simply two separate words that collocated together.

To clarify how the researcher checked the context, a potential phrasal verb along its surrounding words has been selected from the novel to be analysed here as a sample:

"Oh, you're a wicked girl ... **look at** the state of you!".

In this sentence, "look at" is a potential phrasal verb that contains the verb "look" and the preposition "at", and determining if it is indeed a phrasal verb required analysing its use in the sentence. Within this context, "look at" is working together to convey a specific meaning to direct a person's attention to the appearance of the girl. The verb "look" on its own does not convey this meaning and requires the preposition "at" to convey this specific meaning. Therefore, "look at" can be considered a phrasal verb in this context. It should be stressed here that the meaning is non-idiomatic; thus, it was possible to infer it from the individual words of the sequence unlike the majority of phrasal verbs that have idiomatic or a non-literal meaning.

To verify the accurate identification of phrasal verbs, the Cambridge Online Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>) was also consulted. This dictionary was chosen due to the high reputability that it has among practitioners and experts in the field of English language studies. It has proved its widespread use as it contains reliable information and extensively covered English vocabulary. Since a number of sequences were already identified and considered as phrasal verbs based on two criteria "structure and context", this step was deemed necessary to check their status. Therefore, the Cambridge Dictionary was used for confirming the sequences status and providing information on meaning.

For instance, the sequence "come on" has been identified as a potential phrasal verb based on its structure (verb + preposition) and the surrounding context as shown in the following short passage:

“Oh, you’re a wicked girl ... look at the state of you! When our mam sees you she’ll go raving mad. **Come on**, get up. It’s back indoors for you, my lady, and a good scrub wi’ soap and water” (p.1).

To confirm the status of this phrasal verb, the Cambridge Online Dictionary was used to obtain its meaning. According to the context, the following definition of the dictionary seems to be the most suitable one: “said to encourage someone to do something, especially to hurry or try harder, or to tell you something”. Thus, “come on” in this context is used figuratively and has a more colloquial tone. This means, the speaker is urging the addressee to get up and follow the speaker indoors for a nice bath. Based on this analysis, “come one was considered as a phrasal verb.

An additional complementary method was also added to further confirm the status of the identified sequences as phrasal verbs. It was relied on the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to determine the commonality of the identified phrasal verbs through their raw frequencies. On 2008, the COCA was created and placed online by Mark Davies who is considered as its primary creator. Davies (2010) noted the following: “The COCA is the first reliable ‘monitor corpus’ of English, and it provides data for ongoing changes in English that are not available from any other source (p.462). Within the same work, Davies has further added that “COCA is the only corpus that continues to be updated” (p.462). Stating these words is not done unintentionally, but the aim is to justify selecting this large database over other ones to obtain raw frequencies of the identified phrasal verbs.

After compiling a list of phrasal verbs that were identified from the novel, the raw frequency of each phrasal verb was examined separately to check how much it is common. However, this step required having access to the COCA database through the English Corpora website (<https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>) that helps to generate a count to the total number of times (i.e., Raw frequency) that a specific phrasal verb occurs in corpora,

the COCA in this case. Worthy to mention, all of the identified phrasal verbs had high raw frequencies, and this suggests that they are frequently used in the English language. The following figure gives a sample of how the frequency appears in the website:

Figure 4.4

A Raw Frequency Sample from the English Corpora Website



The starting point was intuition-judgement to identify certain multi-word sequences that seem to be formulaic in nature. This intuitive-judgement was mainly based on an analysis of the structure/pattern of each sequence in addition to considering the surrounding context wherein the sequences is used to figure out the meaning. After that, the Cambridge Online Dictionary was consulted to confirm whether the sequence is a phrasal verb or not. Finally, the raw frequency of each phrasal verb was obtained using the English Corpora website to crosscheck the accuracy of identification process. Applying these steps on each phrasal verb has resulted in the following table that served as a foundation for a further content and stylistic analysis:

Table 4.12*Raw Frequencies of the Identified Phrasal Verbs in COCA*

Phrasal Verbs	Raw Frequency
look at	235785
come on	210495
come up	42594
get down	10875
walk across	1153
go up	15088
look through	2264
trickle in	180
to fill in	5064
to pop into	464
stand on	7525
light up	2741
get into	28590
run out	10178
claw back	94
close down	1078
sit up	2912
lay down	4996
point out	19127
push through	1218
wash up	708
go off	6336
get up	25906
went out	41588
sort out	2501
smooth out	563
try out	235785
go down	18428

4.1.3.3 Identification process of idioms

Identifying samples from this second category of formulaic sequences, and which is idioms also required having a systematic process so that the collected data can be accurate and reliable. Even though the used process for this category differed from that of phrasal verbs, but the main aim remained the same, and which was preparing the input that could be used for the upcoming content and stylistic analysis. To identify samples of idioms from the novel, different techniques have been combined.

Initially, a careful and thorough reading of each chapter was conducted to intuitively detect any multi-word sequence that seems to be unusual and has a meaning that cannot be deduced immediately from the sequence components. That is to say, both of the structure and meaning were considered as important factors for guiding intuitive-judgements when identifying idioms.

With regard to idioms, one of their salient feature is fixedness on the level of structure where words have a specific order so that their intended meanings can be conveyed. Accordingly, multi-word sequences with fixed syntactical structures were looked for during the process of the thorough reading. Whenever a sequence that appears to meet this criteria was found, the meaning was directly checked especially that idioms are characterised with semantic non-compositionality, and the meaning cannot be deduced based on the literal interpretation of the lexical items of the idiom.

To illustrate the application of this initial step, the following sequence has been identified in the second chapter from the novel:

“afraid to say boo to a goose”

Its constituent parts “afraid” + “to” + “say” + “boo”+ “to” + “a” + “goose” are arranged in a specific order, and cannot be changed without altering the meaning of the idiom.

Additionally, it is apparent that the meaning of the sequence cannot be figured out by a

simple combination of the meaning of its constituent parts. Thus, the context was also taken into consideration to conduct this task of meaning interpretation. The identified sequence as a potential idiom was contained within the following passage from the novel of Flynn (2006):

Sophie was the blacksmith's only child and Danny and Phil liked her well enough, though Danny soon came to realise that appearances were deceptive; he had thought her a quiet little girl, **afraid to say boo to a goose**, but he quickly learned that she was simply shy and was both good company and amusing once she got to know you (p.40).

In this context, the sequence emphasised the extent to which Sophie, one of the main characters of the story, was perceived at the beginning as a very timid and quiet person who cannot speak up at all. Consequently, the figurative meaning of the sequence “afraid to say boo to a goose” confirms its status as an idiom.

4.1.3.3.1 Assessing intuitive judgments about formulaicity: An analysis of idioms using diagnostic criteria

Since the identified sequences were judged formulaic, an external validation of the internal intuitions has been sought indispensable to ensure, to a certain extent, the reliability and accuracy of the prepared input (i.e., the list of idioms) for further analysis. To accomplish this, the diagnostic criteria from Wray and Namba's checklist (2003), as cited in Wray's (2008) book, were utilised to assess intuitive judgments about formulaicity. However, the criteria within their checklist have been adapted and adopted as much as necessary to suit the researcher's theoretical position.

Some individuals may consider repetition as a sign of formulaicity while others may perceive word strings that are commonly used across a community as formulaic. Thus, it depends on the researcher to adjust the checklist after acknowledging his theoretical

position. With regard to the researcher of the current study, her theoretical position is basically related to the meaning that cannot be easily derived from the constituent parts of the sequence. Wray's (2008) words may justify occupying this position and focusing on meaning, especially with the case of idioms, when she stated the following: "At the uncontentious end are what are often termed the 'true' idioms-a set of not all that frequent but particularly evocative multiword strings that express an idea metaphorically" (p.10). She continued saying that "it is rare for a theory of language not to give such expressions a special status that pairs the word string with a holistic meaning" (p.10). These words suggest that that idiomatic expressions are inherently formulaic due to their holistic meaning. This can justify focusing on meaning when adopting certain criteria over others to guide decisions about formulaicity, particularly in the case of idioms.

Out of the total number of criteria, the following five criteria have been chosen to justify the researcher's intuitions that a sequence is formulaic:

- A: The sequences is not grammatically regular
- B: The sequence lacks semantic transparency
- C: The sequence is associated with a specific situation/genre
- D: The sequence performs a pragmatic function
- E: The sequence is derived from another original formulaic form

Wray (2008) claimed that "the criteria do not all operate at the same level (some relate to form, some relate to usage, etc.)" (p.115). Accordingly, the selected criteria were adopted to operate at the level of form, meaning, context/genre and function. In fact, other criteria are not completely aligned with the researcher's theoretical position. For example, the criteria related to a writer's personal usage or repetition may be more closely tied to individual style or habit rather than formulaicity based on meaning. Similarly, the criteria related to linguistic competence may not necessarily indicate formulaicity based on meaning, but rather may

reflect the writer's level of language proficiency. By excluding these criteria and others, the study could be specifically focused on assessing formulaicity based on their meaning and contextual usage.

A five-point scale was utilised to make judgements: “strongly agree”, “agree”, “not applicable”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree”. While assigning both “disagree” and “agree” to the same sequence is not contradictory, it can actually indicate where formulaicity lies in (Wray, 2008). To clarify how these criteria were applied in practice to assess the formulaicity of the identified sequences, the following example, contained within the cited passage, can be included:

Danny caught his mother's eye and grinned. 'I'm nipping up to change, Ma, then I'll go straight to the orchard; but when I come down would it be all right if I snitched a sandwich? Only **I'm that hungry, I could eat a horse.**

Table 4.13

Assessing Formulaicity in “I'm that hungry, I could eat a horse”

Criteria	Judgement
A: The sequences is not grammatically regular	Disagree
B: The sequence lacks semantic transparency	Agree
C: The sequence is associated with a specific situation/genre	Strongly agree
D: The sequence performs a pragmatic function	Strongly agree
E: The sequence is derived from another original formulaic form	Not applicable

With regard to this sequence, the rules of syntax and grammar are followed and have not been violated. While the first independent clause (I'm that hungry) follows the subject-verb-subject complement (SVC) structure, the second independent clause (I could eat a horse) follows the subject-verb-object structure (SVO). Thus, the grammatical form of this sequence can be considered regular, and “disagree” is allotted to the first criterion. However,

it is not clear whether the sequence is derived from another form or not. This explains selecting “not applicable” to the criterion (E).

The literal meaning of its constituent parts does not reflect the intended meaning of the sequence. Thus, it lacks semantic transparency, and “agree” can be selected for criterion (B). “Strongly agree” was allotted to the criteria (C) and (D) because this sequence is commonly used as an informal expression among friends or family members in casual conversations. Its main pragmatic function is expressing extreme hunger in an exaggerated manner. Even though this sequence is grammatically regular, there are still evidence to be assessed as formulaic by the researcher. Overall, the sequence meets the criteria of a formulaic sequence, as it is syntactically fixed, associated with a specific situation, performs a pragmatic function, and most importantly, has an idiomatic meaning.

As the researcher is a non-native speaker of the English language, and even though she attempted to apply those criteria on all of the identified sequences, she believed that she should add one supplementary method to her process and which is dictionary verification. Thus, the Cambridge Online Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>) was also consulted to verify the status of idioms that were identified previously (i.e., based on intuitive-judgement). This method of verification helped to ensure whether a particular multi-word sequence is widely recognised as an idiom or not. By using the dictionary, time could be saved as the identified sequences as idioms could be quickly verified. Practically speaking, if the sequence is truly an idiom, the dictionary entry provides a figurative meaning for it in addition to an example of its use in context. This step cannot be better demonstrated than by adding a screenshot of one the entries:

Figure 4.5

Screenshot of the Entry “honest to God” in the Cambridge Online Dictionary



Applying those steps on each chapter has resulted in this final list of idioms:

- What the devil (p.1)
- to keep an eye on (p.1)
- afraid to say boo to a goose (p.40)
- I'm that hungry, I could eat a horse (p.51)
- his secret was still safe (p.103)
- to put her oar in (p.108)
- honest to God (p.124)
- burying your head in the sand (p.144)
- I can't pull the wool over your eyes (p.167)
- take to (farming) like a duck to water (p.170)
- cut short (p.186)
- to put a spoke in your wheel (p.189)
- eaten up with (jealousy) (p.217)
- you're talking through your hat (p.219)
- the knot had been tied (p.244)
- jumped the gun (p.259)

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- gets a move on (p.279)
- grinning from ear to ear (p.281)
- to open his mouth and put his foot in it (p.313)
- stealing a march on me (p.315)
- set the seal on (p.353)
- to keep in touch (p.354)
- learns the hard way (p.382)
- the cat's out of the bag (p.387)
- on the nose (p.425)
- falling (more deeply) in love (p.431)
- (farming) must have been in blood (p.447)
- (farming) was like a millstone round (Phil's) neck (p.447)

It can be noted here that the identification process was primarily based on the researcher's intuition. Thus, missing and overlooking a formulaic sequence is likely to happen. However, approaching the identification process in a systematic manner and relying on supplementary methods is the most important thing especially that there is no replicability with intuitive identification.

To sum up, the process of identifying and selecting phrasal verbs and idioms from the novel is regarded as an essential step in building a dataset for analysis. By defining the scope and criteria for selection, identifying samples of phrasal verbs and idioms, and creating an input by focusing on the criteria of accuracy and reliability, it becomes possible to have a clear idea on the use and significance of formulaic sequences in the novel.

4.1.3.4 Analysis of the identified phrasal verbs in the novel

As soon as an input was created for the analysis so that answers can be given to the research questions of the current study, the analysis was directly initiated. A content analysis

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and a stylistic analysis were both conducted on the set of the identified formulaic sequences (i.e., phrasal verbs and idioms) in order to examine their meanings, connotations and stylistic significance. While content analysis focused on examining formulaic sequences in terms of their meaning (i.e., literal and idiomatic), stylistics analysis concentrated on how these formulaic sequences can contribute to the tone and style of the work. Combining these two types of analysis allowed to clarify the role of formulaic sequences in literary texts on the semantic level, and to support the argument that they have a significant stylistic function.

This section presents an analysis of the use of a set of phrasal verbs in the selected novel. By doing so, it can be better understood how phrasal verbs are used to convey meaning, create tone, and evoke certain emotions in the reader. As a starting point, an analysis was undertaken on each phrasal verb to identify its literal meaning, idiomatic meaning, and its associated connotation. With regard to the literal meaning, the Cambridge Online Dictionary was consulted in order to provide unbiased definitions of phrasal verbs, and avoid the influence of personal emotions. While dictionary was a useful tool to derive the literal meaning of phrasal verbs, their idiomatic meaning in addition to their connotations required considering the context wherein they are used. All of these information are included within one summative table in a concise and precise manner.

Table 4.14*Phrasal Verbs in Beyond the Blue Hills: Literal and Non-literal Meanings and Connotations*

	Phrasal Verbs	Literal Meaning (Surface meaning)	Non-literal Meaning (Idiomatic meaning)	Associated Connotation
Ch1	Look at	To direct one's eyes to see	Exclamation of disbelief/anger towards a certain behaviour/appearance	Negative connotation as it conveys disapproval of an appearance
	Come on	To move towards someone/something	Expression of encouragement/urging to do something	It connotes urgency to take an immediate action
Ch2	Come up	To move towards someone/something	NLM	Positive connotation as it conveys a sense of nostalgia
	Get down	To physically move to a lower level/position	NLM	Positive connotation as it conveys a sense of assistance
Ch3	Walked across	To move on foot from one side to another	NLM	It simply describes the physical act of moving
	Go up	To move to a higher level/position	NLM	It simply describes the physical act of ascending
Ch4	Looked through	To direct your eyes to see through an object/space	NLM	It simply describes the physical act of looking through the window
	Trickle in	To arrive and enter a place slowly and gradually	NLM	It connotes a sense of calmness and tranquillity while entering the café
Ch5	Fill in	To complete and write information for a document in the provided spaces	NLM	It simply describes the physical act of writing necessary information on a document
	Pop into	To enter quickly into a place	It means making a quick and unplanned visit	It connotes a sense of ease, informality and casualness
Ch6	Standing on	To be/ be put in a vertical/upright position	NLM	It simply describes the physical state/position of the bowl of batter

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	Light up	To produce a light source for illumination	It means that ones' eyes became brighter and lit up with excitement	Positive connotation as it conveys a sense of happiness and excitement
Ch7	Get into	To go inside/enter a place	It refers to the ability of reaching a place	It connotes a sense of excitement and eagerness for having fun
	Run out	To use and exhaust something completely resulting in none remaining	NLM	Negative connotation as it conveys a sense of concern and urgency
Ch8	Had clawed back	To get possession of something that was taken away	NLM	Positive connotation as it implies a sense of determination to retrieve something that was at risk to be lost
	Close down	To stop/end the operation of something	NLM	It simply refers to the act of shutting down something (the airfields in France)
Ch9	Sat up	To move into an upright sitting position	NLM	It simply describes the physical act of lifting into a sitting position
	Lay down	To be/move something down in a horizontal position	NLM	It describes the physical act of moving into a lying position to seek for rest
Ch10	Pointed out	To bring attention to someone/something by holding a finger towards him/it	It means drawing attention to an important task that needs to be undertaken	It connotes a sense of urgency and importance for a task to be undertaken
	Push through	To force one's way through something	NLM	It connotes a sense of determination to overcome obstacles in order to accomplish an objective
Ch11	Washing up	To clean things like dishes, clothes and other objects	NLM	It connotes a sense of care and consideration towards the interlocutor
	Goes off	To depart and leave a place	NLM	It simply means the physical act of leaving a place
Ch12	Getting up	To rise/stand up. The wind grows stronger	NLM	It connotes a sense of warning about the possible problems caused by the wind

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	Went out	To leave/exit a place	NLM	It simply describes the physical act of leaving a place
Ch13	Sort ... out	To arrange/separate things depending on specific criteria	It means finding a solution to a problem	Positive connotation as it suggests a sense of optimism towards finding a solution
	Smoothed out	To reduce/remove changes/irregularities in something	It refers to the emotional effect of love on a person's feelings, specifically happiness and relaxation	Positive connotation as it suggests that love has a calming and relaxing effect on a person
Ch14	Trying... out	To test something in order to see its functioning and effectiveness	It refers to a mental testing of the suitability of an option	It connotes a sense of exploration and enjoyment while trying out different options
	Going down	To move to a lower level/position/place	NLM	It simply means heading towards a specific place

*NLM: Non-literal meaning

The table above includes a set of phrasal verbs that were identified from the novel as it has been explained earlier in this chapter, and it provides their literal meaning and idiomatic meaning (non-literal meaning) in relation to the context wherein they were integrated and used (i.e., the meaning was deduced based on their usage in context). Seeking for systematicity and organisation, the analysis is organised per chapter, and each phrasal verb is analysed separately to give it proper attention and consideration. It should be noted here that all the cited passages in the following section are taken from one source, and which is the novel *Beyond the Blue Hills* by Katie Flynn. This justifies our decision of mentioning only page numbers to indicate the location and context of each phrasal verb.

Chapter One

The two phrasal verbs that were identified from this chapter are included within the following passage:

Tina Collins, what the devil do you think you're doing? Oh, you're a wicked girl ...

look at the state of you! When our mam sees you she'll go raving mad. **Come on**, get up. It's back indoors for you, my lady, and a good scrub wi' soap and water.'

(p.1).

“Look at”

While the literal meaning of this phrasal verb is to direct one's eyes to see something, its idiomatic meaning is an exclamation of disbelief or anger towards a certain behaviour or appearance. This is evident in the phrase “What the devil do you think you're doing? Oh, you're a wicked girl ... look at the state of you!” where the speaker is using “look at” idiomatically to convey disapproval of Tina's appearance and behaviour. The use of “look at” in this way implies that the speaker is surprised by what they see. The connotation associated with the phrasal verb is negative as it conveys disapproval from the part of the speaker who is not impressed by what they see. This is reflected in the speaker's choice of words, such as “wicked girl” and “back indoors for you”. Therefore, the phrasal verb “look at” in this context has an idiomatic/non-literal meaning, as well as a connotation that is negative.

“Come on”

While the literal meaning of “come on” is to move towards someone or something, it usually takes an idiomatic meaning reflected in a sense of encouragement to do something, specifically to clean up with soap and water. The use of “come on” in the previous passage suggests a sense of urgency or insistence, indicating that the speaker wants Tina to take an immediate action by going back inside and cleaning herself up. Thus, the meaning of this

phrasal verb is idiomatic rather than a literal movement. In terms of the associated connotation of “come on”, it is neutral to slightly negative as it seems to imply a sense of impatience in addition to an urging tone directed towards Tina to be cleaned up.

In terms of the stylistic significance of “look at” and “come on”, both of these phrasal verbs are used in a way that is not meant to be taken literally. From one hand, the phrasal verb “look at” has the ability to convey the speaker's emotions and attitudes towards the subject, particularly when used idiomatically to express disapproval or anger. On the other hand, the use of “come on” has a stylistic significance as it can evoke a sense of encouragement when used idiomatically to encourage someone to do something. These two phrasal verbs can add clarity and depth to the conveyed message, and can make the language more interesting and engaging for the reader of a literary text. Overall, “look at” and “come on” seem to be interesting in their contexts from a stylistic perspective.

Chapter Two

Within the following passage are the two phrasal verbs that were identified in this chapter.

Danny had always been fond of her for he could still remember when she had **come up** to Manor Farm on a Tuesday to help his mother with the baking. She had often slipped him a little ball of raw pastry, or a few currants and sultanas, and now he and Sophie between them helped her to **get down** (p.39).

“Come up”

In the previous passage, “come up” is used literally to describe someone moving towards Manor Farm, and it does not appear to have an idiomatic meaning. However, it conveys a feeling of nostalgia or positive memories as Danny had always been fond of the woman who had “come up” to the farm to help his mother with baking. This use of “come up” suggests that the speaker has positive memories associated with the person's visit to the

farm and gives it a nostalgic connotation as if the speaker is looking back fondly on that time. Overall, the use of “come up” in this passage adds a sense of warmth and positivity to the description of the character's visit.

“Get down”

Integrating “get down” in the phrase “helped her to get down” means that it is used to describe the assistance of Danny and Sophie to the woman who used to come to the farm. This means that “get down” is used literally to simply describe the physical act of helping someone to get down from a higher position. When it comes to the associated connotation of this phrasal verb, it has a positive one since it conveys a sense of assistance and helpfulness.

With regard to the stylistic significance of “come up” and “get down”, they are used in their literal sense. While the use of “come up” suggests a sense of nostalgia and fondness towards the woman who had visited the farm, “get down”, in its context, conveys a sense of physical action and effort to help someone move to a lower position. Accordingly, the use of “come up” adds emotional depth and warmth to the description of the character's visit to the farm whereas the use of “get down” conveys a sense of helpfulness and empathy. In particular, both phrasal verbs add specificity and detail to the description, making it more vivid and engaging for the reader. The positive connotations associated with both phrasal verbs also contribute to the overall positive, warm and informal tone of the passages.

Chapter Three

By moving into chapter three, the analysis of the role of phrasal verbs in conveying meaning, adding depth to the literary text and enhancing the readers’ understanding is still carried out. In particular, the phrasal verbs “walked across” and “go up” are under lens.

“Walked across”

This phrasal verb is used in its literal sense as it describes the physical act of moving from one place to another on foot, and which is clear in the following sentence from the novel *Beyond the Blue Hills*: “...she **walked across** to the two elderly women seated at the window table” (p.86). This phrasal verb is used primarily to convey how she (Tess) approached the two elderly women at the window table in the café. In terms of the associated connotation, the use of “walked across” adds a sense of physical movement and action to the description, and which makes it more engaging for the reader.

“Go up”

This phrasal verb is also integrated in way that can be understood only in its literal sense, and which is the physical act of ascending as it is shown in the following sentence: “...before I can **go up** to the flat and relax” (p.86). Using “go up” in this context adds more specificity and detail to the description, making it more vivid for the reader of this literary work. Based on these words, “go up” connotes nothing more than a simple physical act of moving to a higher place. Thus, the associated connotation with it remains neutral.

Since “walked across” and “go up” are used in their literal sense to describe physical movement, their stylistic significance is mostly related to providing additional particularity to the description of the characters.

Chapter Four

The following passage incorporates the two identified phrasal verbs from this chapter, and which have been analysed in a similar manner to the previous ones:

“Tess **looked through** the window of the Restawhile Café and groaned, though not aloud, because customers were already beginning to **trickle in** and one did not show customers anything but a friendly and smiling face” (p.124).

“Looked through”

In the context of "Tess **looked through** the window of the Restawhile Café and groaned", the phrasal verb "look through" is used in its literal sense, describing the physical act of directing one's eyes to see. However, there is no idiomatic use of the phrasal verb in this context. The connotation or associated meaning of "look through" in this context is that of neutrality as it is used literally.

“Trickle in”

In the same previous context, "trickle in" does not hold a non-literal meaning as it is used literally to convey the simple idea of entering the café slowly and gradually. The use of this phrasal verb connotes a sense of calmness and tranquillity while entering the café. This suggests that the author attempted to depict this part of the story with greater vividness.

Overall, the stylistic significance of "looked through" and "trickle in" is similar to the one deduced in chapter three, except that using "trickle in" instead of a straightforward verb like "arrive" contributes to the peaceful tone of the passage. In short, these phrasal verbs adds a visual aspect to the description and allows the reader to imagine the scene more clearly.

Chapter Five**“Fill in”**

The use of the phrasal verb "fill in" in the context "he had had to **fill in**" is simple and straightforward. It describes the physical action of writing necessary information on a document in the provided spaces. This act was attributed to one of the story characters (Danny) who had to complete a document requiring information to be filled in. Accordingly, it does not convey any idiomatic meaning. Additionally, its connotation is neither positive nor negative but it is only used to describe a physical act.

“Pop into”

The meaning of this phrasal verb goes beyond the literal meaning of its constituent parts and its literal definition in the dictionary. In fact, it means making a quick, informal and unplanned visit to the blacksmith to share some of the news with Sophie “he would have loved to **pop into** the blacksmith’s and share his news with Sophie” (p.162). Thus, the use of “pop into” conveys a sense of spontaneity and informality in the speaker's actions. Concerning the connotation of “pop into”, it seems to connote a sense of ease, informality and casualness, reflecting on the tone of the passage as well as the overall tone and style of the story (i.e., informal relationship between the specified characters).

Through the analysis of the use of “fill in” and “pop into”, a better understanding of their stylistic significance can be gained. Since their meaning is literal, it allows the reader to focus on the content of the text, and to engage better with the literary text.

Chapter Six**“Standing on”**

The type of meaning conveyed by "standing on" can be inferred from the sentence in which it is used, “The bowl of batter was **standing on** the counter” (p.184). This phrasal verb refers to the physical state or position of the bowl of batter being in a vertical and upright position on the counter. It is used to describe the physical aspect of the scene, conveying a clear and precise image of the bowl's position. The connotation of the phrasal verb is neutral since it does not carry any additional emotional or idiomatic meaning beyond its literal definition.

“Light up”

To analyse the meaning of the phrasal verb “light up”, it is better to include the context wherein it is included: “I saw our Tina’s eyes **light up** with glee at the thought of no teachers to take classes” (p.184). “Light up” is used to describe the non-literal meaning of

the eyes becoming brighter and filled with excitement. Specifically, it describes Tina's eyes becoming brighter at the thought of having no teachers to take classes. Based on these words, this phrasal verb has a positive connotation in this context as it conveys a sense of happiness and excitement.

The stylistic significance of "standing on" is that it provides a clear and concise description of the physical position of an object, which can help create a dynamic mental image for the reader. On the other hand, "light up" has a more idiomatic meaning, connoting excitement and pleasure. This phrasal verb can contribute to the tone of the passage by creating a sense of positivity and enthusiasm. It can also add a visual element to the description, allowing the reader to imagine someone's eyes literally lighting up with joy or excitement.

Chapter Seven

“Get into”

The literal meaning of "get into" is to go inside or enter a place. However, it is used in a context, in a way that it expresses the girls' desire to leave the house, reach the village and have some fun. By consequence, this phrasal verb connotes a sense of excitement and eagerness to do something enjoyable.

“Run out”

Based on the table, the phrasal verb “run out” conveys only a literal meaning that was derived from the Cambridge Online Dictionary. It means to exhaust something completely resulting in none remaining, food in this case. This creates a negative connotation and reflects a sense of urgency and concern because of the seriousness of the situation.

Besides what has been deduced from the stylistic analysis of “get into” (i.e., adding a positive connotation), its stylistic significance is also apparent in affecting the visual aspect

of the description, allowing the reader to imagine the scene of the story more vividly. As for the use of “run out”, it emphasises the tone of worry and urgency in the passage to the readers.

Chapter Eight

“Had clawed back”

The infinitive form of this phrasal verb is “claw back” where the verb "claw" implies a physical action whereas “back” suggests a reversal of a previous loss. This phrasal verb is used in its literal sense in what follows: “So they had **clawed back** the squadrons and **closed down** the airfields in France very soon ...” (p.239). The air force were determined to retrieve their squadrons by clawing them back. Accordingly, “claw back” connotes a sense of determination in reclaiming something that was at risk of being lost.

“Closed down”

The dictionary meaning of “close down” is to stop or end the operation of something. Indeed, the usage of this phrasal verb conveys a straightforward meaning as one can notice in the same passage provided in the previous analysis of “claw back”. Thus, it simply refers to the airfields in France being shut down, and it does not convey any connotation.

These two analysed phrasal verbs seem to be stylistically significant as both of them are effective in conveying their intended meanings and enhancing the style and tone of the passage. While “claw back” creates a sense of determination that contributes to the overall tone of the passage, the directness of “close down” affects the clarity of the passage and makes it more understandable. Simply put, these phrasal verbs have the ability to accurately describe specific actions in a concise manner, without the need for lengthy explanations by the author.

Chapter Nine

“Sat up”

The phrasal verb “sat up” describes the physical action of moving into an upright sitting position, which is the literal meaning. In the passage, “Sophie felt the first uneasy stirrings of pain in her lower back some time in the early hours. She **sat up** on one elbow ... (p.273)”, the phrasal verb depicts Sophie's experience of feeling pain in her lower back and moving into a sitting position. The action is straightforward and serves the purpose of conveying the events of the scene. Moreover, it maintains a neutral connotation as it merely describes a physical action without any added emotional or idiomatic connotation.

“Lay down”

“The discomfort in her back – she could scarcely call it pain – gradually ebbed and Sophie **lay down** again” (p.273). In this given passage, the phrasal verb “lay down” is used to describe the physical act of moving into a horizontal, lying position as a response to the discomfort in Sophie' back. This suggests that Sophie was seeking for relief from her discomfort. The use of phrasal verb in this way does not imply having any associated connotation.

The phrasal verbs “sat up” and “lay down” are stylistically significant as they are concise and effective in conveying their intended meanings. “Sat up” accurately describes the physical action of moving into a vertical sitting position, while “lay down” similarly describes the physical act of moving into an horizontal lying position. In terms of tone, both phrasal verbs contribute to the overall tone of the passages in which they are used. In the case of “sat up”, the action contributes to a tone of alertness and urgency. On the other hand, “lay down” contributes to a more calm tone. Overall, the use of these phrasal verbs enhances the clarity and conciseness of the passages, allowing the reader to quickly and easily understand the physical actions of the characters.

Chapter 10

“Pointed out”

As clarified in table 4.14, “point out” typically means bringing attention to someone/something by gesturing with a finger. However, this phrasal verb’s meaning in the passage from which it was identified went beyond its literal meaning or its surface-level definition. In the passage “Tosher had **pointed out** that they must clear the orchard ...” (p.310), “pointed out” is used to draw attention to an important task that needed to be accomplished. In other words, the phrase carries a connotation that conveys a sense of immediacy and importance.

“Push through”

This phrasal verb was identified in these words: “... which was difficult because one had not only to **push through** leaves and twigs but also to beware of the wasps” (p.311). “Push through” seems to be used in its literal sense to describe the physical act of forcing one's way through something, such as leaves and twigs in the orchard. Consequently, it connotes a sense of determination from the part of the character to overcome obstacles in order to accomplish an objective

Stylistically speaking, both “pointed out” and “push through” contribute to the overall tone of the passages in which they are used. The connotation of urgency associated with “pointed out” enhances the tone and style of the passage by conveying a sense of importance that the reader can feel. Likewise, “push through” creates a determined tone in the passage. Thus, the use of these phrasal verbs seems to be effective in creating the desired tone and enhancing the style of the passage.

Chapter 11

“Washing up”

This phrasal verb means cleaning dishes, and it is used in a direct and literal sense. This becomes obvious as one can read the passage where it is included: “Now, don’t you bother wi’ **washing up** the breakfast things” (p.341). The speaker assures that the listener will be taken care of, and offers to take care of cleaning up after breakfast. This means that “washing up” within this passage connotes a sense of care and consideration towards the interlocutor.

“Goes off”

Literally, this phrasal verb means to physically leave a place, and the speaker is using it to indicate that she will come take care of the household chores before everyone else go off to work. This is directly indicated in the following words: “I’m coming up every morning to see you’re all fed and watered afore you goes off to work” (p.341). The phrasal verb has a neutral connotation in this context, as it simply means the physical act of leaving a place.

Even though these phrasal verbs were used in their literal sense but they have an effect on the stylistic level. The use of “washing up” instead of “cleaning the dishes” or other formal expressions contributes to the casual tone of the passage. Similarly, the use of “goes off” instead of another formal verb like “depart” gives an informal flavour to the tone of the passage. Overall, the use of these phrasal verbs helps to create an informal and friendly tone, which helps to establish a closer relationship between the interlocutors in the reader’s mind.

Chapter 12

Since the phrasal verbs identified in this chapter are contained within the same passage, it seems more appropriate to cite it right at the outset: “Nigel had pointed out that he thought the wind was **getting up** but she had ignored him. She and the land girls donned overalls and headscarves and **went out** into the orchard” (p.381).

“Getting up”

In the previous passage, the phrasal verb “getting up” is used in its non-literal meaning/idiomatic sense. The surface meaning of “getting up” is to rise or stand up, but in this context, it conveys a non-literal meaning of the wind growing stronger. This non-literal meaning of the phrasal verb is significant as it connotes a sense of warning about the possible problems caused by the wind.

“Went out”

The phrasal verb "went out" is used in its literal sense, meaning the physical act of leaving a place. It simply serves as a neutral description of the action of leaving the house to go to the orchard, and it does not carry any particular connotation or idiomatic meaning.

From a stylistic perspective, the phrasal verb “getting up” is used in its non-literal meaning, where a sense of warning and tension is created by the author and received by the readers of the literary work. This can lead to an effect on both of the tone and style of the passage. When it comes to the phrasal verb “went out”, it can be noticed that it is a straightforward verb, and using it in its literal sense helps to add more directness and clarity to the reader’s understanding. Most importantly, this phrasal verb contributes to the informal and casual tone of the passage.

Chapter 13**“Sort out”**

Referring to the dictionary’s meaning, the phrasal verb “sort out” means To arrange/separate things depending on specific criteria. This literal meaning does seem to be convenient for the following passage: “We can’t do anything about it until the war is over, of course, but then – oh, then we’ll **sort something out**” (p.417). Instead, this phrasal verb has an idiomatic meaning that is finding a solution to an existing problem. The use of “sort out” in this particular context highlights the characters' determination to find a solution.

Therefore, this phrasal verb has a positive connotation, and it connotes a sense of optimism and hope.

“Smoothed out”

The Cambridge Online Dictionary defines the phrasal verb “smooth out” as removing or reducing irregularities in something. This meaning cannot be applied in this given passage wherein Katie Flynn has used it: “... their weekend had done Mike more good than she would have supposed possible, for their loving had **smoothed out** the lines on his face ...” (p.416). Here, the phrasal verb “smoothed out” is used in its non-literal or idiomatic meaning to refer to the emotional effect of love on Mike's feelings. The use of this phrasal verb suggests that the weekend spent together by the two lovers had a positive effect on the emotional state of Mike. By consequence, “smooth out” has a positive associated connotation within this particular passage.

Looking to reveal the stylistic significance of these phrasal verbs “sort out” and “smooth out”, their effect on the tone of style were examined. Using “sort out” instead of a formal verb like “solve” turns the tone into a casual one. What it is more, its positive connotation creates an optimistic tone in the passage. The tone of the passage seems to be informal and optimistic at once. Likewise, the use of the phrasal verb “smoothed out” instead of a more formal expression such as “relieved” creates a more informal tone, which suits the intimate nature of the scene being described by the author. It also creates a positive connotation towards the effect of love on the emotions of people. This contributes to the overall tone of the passage. Overall, both of these phrasal verbs enhance the stylistic effect of the passage, and this can be positively reflected on the reader's experience.

Chapter 14

“Trying out”

While the phrasal verb “try out” is usually linked to testing the functioning and workability of something, it is used by one of the novel characters (Davy) to mentally testing the suitability of different names of a family member. This is well clarified in this passage: “He says I can call her Mam, or Auntie Mabel, whichever I likes best, so I’m **tryin’** them **out** in me head, whenever I remember” (p.437). This indicates that it connotes a sense of exploration and enjoyment while trying out something.

“Going down”

Within these words from the novel: “I said I’d see if I can help her, but as soon as that’s over I’m **going down** to the docks to see if I can meet Harry” (p.437), the phrasal verb “going down” is used to indicate a physical movement towards a specific place, in this case, the docks. In other words, this phrasal verb can be taken in its literal sense within this context, and no sort of connotation can be deduced.

The stylistic significance of “trying out” and “going down” is that both of them contribute to the informal tone of the passages where they have been integrated by the author. “Try out” connotes a sense of exploration and enjoyment. This makes an addition to the tonal element of the passage. The phrasal verb “going down” in its context is used to simply indicate the speaker's intention of heading to a specific place, making the passage direct and clear to the reader.

4.1.3.5 Stylistic significance of the identified phrasal verbs in the novel

Within the previous section of analysis, there was a focus on 28 phrasal verbs from the 14 chapters of the novel so that the researcher can perform a more targeted and in-depth analysis of their stylistic significance in literary passages and texts. It can be deduced that using phrasal verbs whether literally or non-literally helps to convey specific connotations,

depending on the author's purpose. While examining the associated connotations of phrasal verbs that were diverse (i.e., positive, negative and neutral), it became possible and easier to gain insights about the intended emotional effects to be received by readers, and to understand the conveyed meanings. In specific words, phrasal verbs can hold a literal or a non-literal meaning, and they have the power to contribute to the overall tone and style of literary texts, regardless to the different contexts where they have been included.

Most of the examined phrasal verbs (56.5%) turned to hold a literal meaning where they have been integrated. Using straightforward phrasal verbs may make the style more direct and accessible not only to a sophisticated audience but to a wide-range of readers. This may have a desirable effect on the semantic level of language by helping to clarify the conveyed meanings and messages, and not distracting the readers' comprehension. In addition, phrasal verbs seem to strengthen the experienced emotions by readers better than their single-word counterparts do. This may contribute to amplify the aesthetic experience by readers, leading the researcher to claim the influence of phrasal verbs on the aesthetic level of language.

By using phrasal verbs, the author is adding a layer of meaning to the literary text (emphasising an additional level of significance). Additionally, many phrasal verbs among the examined ones were informal, indicating that the author's style is also informal. This can help him to approach and connect with the readers in a better manner. Ultimately, phrasal verbs seem to be functional under s stylistic frame as the previous results have demonstrated. Fortunately, this does not contradict the second hypothesis of this study which indicated that "The attained effect by formulaic sequences in literary texts can be reflected on the semantic level of language in addition to the aesthetic one".

4.1.3.5 Analysis of the identified idioms in the novel

After analysing and discussing the stylistic function of phrasal verbs, this section is devoted only for idioms. To keep the reader of this thesis on track and avoid being overwhelmed by the qualitative analysis conducted, it is thought that a summative table is a good option. In fact, the table provides the reader with preconceived thoughts about idioms and their meanings before moving into an in-depth analysis.

Similar to the previous undertaken analysis of phrasal verbs, content analysis and stylistic analysis are combined to put a thumb on the stylistic significance of this category (i.e., idioms). Since idioms are non-transparent in their meaning, it is believed that it is more important to focus on the non-literal meaning of idioms to understand their stylistic significance and if they can be considered as a stylistic stamp in literary works. This was mainly figured out by concentrating on their connotations to reveal the kind of senses and emotions they convey to the reader, and if they contribute to shape the overall tone and style of the text.

Table 4.15*Idioms in Beyond the Blue Hills: Non-Literal Meanings and Connotations*

	Idioms	Non-literal Meaning (Figurative meaning)	Associated Connotation
Ch1	What the devil	Emphasising the expression of surprise/anger	Negative connotation as it conveys a sense of disapproval towards an action
	to keep an eye on	Watching someone carefully and attentively	It connotes holding the responsibility of taking care of someone
Ch2	afraid to say boo to a goose	It is used to describe someone who can be frightened and scared easily	It connotes that a person is shy to the extent that he cannot speak up at all
	I'm that hungry, I could eat a horse	Expression or exaggerated expression of hunger	It simply describes the state of being extremely hungry
Ch3	his secret was still safe	It means not divulging or revealing a shared secret	Positive connotation as it implies a sense of comfort and relief
	to put her oar in	It means offering/expressing an opinion without being asked	Negative connotations because it suggests a sense of undesired interference
Ch4	honest to God	It is usually used to emphasise the truthfulness of one's words	It connotes the speaker is emphasising what she is saying
	burying your head in the sand	It means ignoring or avoiding to face some facts or realities that are unpleasant for a person	Negative connotation as it suggests the irresponsibility and unawareness of the possible consequences of a danger
Ch5	I can't pull the wool over your eyes	It means not deceiving/misleading someone from knowing/revealing a truth	Positive connotation as it implies that a person is being transparent and honest while dealing with other people
	take to (farming) like a duck to water	It refers to doing something easily even in the first time due to the natural ability that one possesses	Negative connotation because it suggests that a person could not handle the task of farming

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Ch6	cut short	It refers to stopping someone from speaking/ending someone's talk through interruption	Negative connotation since the speaker was interrupted and could not finish what he was saying
	to put a spoke in your wheel	It means obstructing someone from achieving his plans and goals	It connotes the speaker's disapproval to someone's plans because of his caring and concern feelings (slightly negative connotation)
Ch7	eaten up with (jealousy)	It means being overwhelmed by a negative emotion, jealousy in this case	Negative connotation since it suggests that jealousy has already resulted in bad consequences
	you're talking through your hat	It means saying things that do not make sense at all	Negative connotation as it suggests that the speaker is not giving consideration to the words/viewpoint of another person who is talking non-sense
Ch8	the knot had been tied	It means getting married	It connotes a sense of a happiness and joy that marriage should bring to a couple
	jumped the gun	It means starting something too soon before the appropriate time	Negative connotations as it suggests a sense of disapproval and disappointment
Ch9	gets a move on	To move fast/ to hurry up	It simply implies a sense of frustration and impatience for something to be done
	grinning from ear to ear	To smile broadly due to an extreme level of happiness	Positive connotation as it indicates the extent of a person's happiness
Ch10	to open his mouth and put his foot in it	To say something embarrassing/foolish without the intention to do so	It connotes a sense of criticism towards someone who is used to say inappropriate things
	stealing a march on me	It means gaining an advantage over someone by acting before he does	It connotes a sense of competition and frustration among two friends
Ch11	set the seal on	To make a conclusion/finalise something in a definitive and sufficient way	Positive connotation because it indicates taking a final action to make something idealised
	to keep in touch	It means maintaining communication with another person	Positive connotation as it implies a sense of responsibility and the desire to keep contacting someone else

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Ch12	learns the hard way	To learn something/a lesson through an experience that it is both personal and unpleasant	It connotes that a lesson/wisdom is learnt, and an experience is gained by facing some difficulties
	the cat's out of the bag	To reveal a secret	It simply connotes that a secret has been revealed
Ch13	on the nose	It means that something is precisely accurate	Positive connotation since an operation was done successfully
	falling (more deeply) in love	It refers to the emotional attraction to another person or being overwhelmed with a romantic feeling towards someone else	Positive connotation as it implies experiencing a deep and romantic emotional state
Ch14	(farming) must have been in his blood	It refers to an innate ability/skill/characteristic that a person has inherited from his family tradition	It connotes an ability that is passed down from generation to another because of family traditions
	(farming) was like a millstone round (Phil's) neck	It refers to a heavy responsibility that a person finds it difficult to handle	Negative connotation as it suggests a sense of difficulty and struggle to bear a specific responsibility

The table above provides the non-literal meaning of each idiom in the set of the identified idioms because it would be of no significance to analyse the meaning of an idiom constituent parts since it does not reflect the actual meaning. For doing so, the Cambridge Online Dictionary was consulted to understand the basic definition of an idiom. Then, it became the researcher's task to explain the meaning according to the context wherein it was integrated in addition to its associated connotation. In an effort to be methodical and organised, the analysis of idioms is organised per chapter, and the analysis of each idiom is presented separately for the sake of ensuring full consideration.

Within the analysis process in each chapter, a content analysis was conducted first to explain the meaning of idioms (the focus on the semantic level). Then, the associated connotation of that meaning was derived and explicitly mentioned to the reader. After that,

a stylistic analysis for the two idioms of a chapter is presented in one section to clarify their stylistic significance. This method of presenting the results seemed appropriate in order not to distract the readers' understanding of this analysis. With regard to the context of each idiom, it is not workable to cite all the passages as they are lengthy unlike the case of phrasal verbs; thus, the page number is provided next to each idiom.

Chapter one

What the devil (p.1)

The idiom "what the devil" did not undergo any kind of change on the level of form (**what the devil** do you think you're doing?); thus, it is kept and used in its original form. It usually plays the role of an intensifier in a question to indicate extreme anger and disapproval. This is the case of this idiom within the lines of chapter one's beginning (p.1) where the speaker, the older sister, expresses her sentiment of anger towards the appearance of Tina, and orders her to clean up. Additionally, "what the devil" is particularly used in a dialogue in an informal manner. Based on this concise analysis, it can be inferred that the associated connotation of this idiom is negative since it is used to indicate disapproval towards the action/behaviour of Tess.

To keep an eye on (p.1)

Similar to the previous idiom, "**to keep an eye on** (someone) the younger girl" is used in its original form. It refers to watching someone in a careful and attentive manner. In the narrative context where it was integrated, it conveys the meaning that one of the story characters (Tess) was given the responsibility of monitoring the actions of her sister, impeding her from getting into troubles and assuring her safety. The associated connotation of "to keep an eye on" seems to be neutral since there is a sense of responsibility and care towards someone without a clear indication to a positive/negative judgement in the given context.

With regard to the stylistic significance of “what the devil” and “to keep an eye on”, both of them appears to be significant. In the case of “what the devil”, an informal tone is added to the language, and which by its turn creates a sense of familiarity between the characters in the piece of dialogue. What is more, the negative connotation conveys a sense of tension to the scene that the reader can feel during his ready journey. Unlike the previous idioms, “to keep an eye on” has a more formal tone and it is included in narration. It implies a sense of caution and seriousness since it is linked to the idea of responsibility towards someone, and this creates a serious tone. This idiom has the ability to transmit the message/meaning concisely and idiomatically. All encompassing, both idioms, in relation to the contexts, can convey certain attitudes or senses (i.e., disapproval and responsibility), and can establish specific tones that affect the overall style of language by making it more engaging.

Chapter Two

Afraid to say boo to a goose (p.40)

The idiom “afraid to say boo to a goose” refers to someone who is timid and easily scared. The character of Sophie is introduced in the context as a timid, reserved girl who seems to be frightened to speak up. However, as the narrative goes on, Danny comes to understand that Sophie is simply shy and not necessarily afraid. This implies that the idiom might be used to describe someone who appears afraid but is actually merely reserved/introverted. The associated connotation that can be deduced from this idiom is neutral since “afraid to say boo to goose” is used for descriptive purposes.

I’m that hungry, I could eat a horse (p.51)

The idiom “I’m that hungry, I could eat a horse” is used by Danny to describe his extreme hunger. In fact, he emphasised his hunger to demonstrate how much he needs food.

He asks his mother for permission to grab a sandwich in this instance since he is so hungry that he could eat an entire horse. The connotation here is neither positive nor negative since it is only used to emphasise the speaker's extreme hunger.

The analysis becomes more detailed as the phase of identifying the stylistic significance of each idiom is reached. In the case of "afraid to say boo to a goose", the idiom gives the description of Sophie's personality a figurative twist. It creates a clear picture of a timid person who would not even dare to say "boo" to a goose or other harmless animal. The idiom has a colloquial tone, and using it can help the language sound more casual not only to the narrator and characters but also to the readers. What is more, the term "boo" is used onomatopoeically to evoke a sense of sound and movement. That is to say, it enhances the writing's overall tone and style, making the narrative more captivating and descriptive. As for "I'm that hungry, I could eat a horse", it is used in an informal manner to exaggerate the sense of hunger while adding a humorous and playful tone to the language. Simply put, both idioms have the ability to establish the tone of literary text, precisely in their contexts. They can also convey specific feelings and make an impression on readers.

Chapter Three

His secret was still safe (p.103)

Even if idioms are typically fixed sequences, they can accept slight changes on the level of form (e.g., wording and verb tense). In this particular instance, the original form of the idiom "your secret is safe with me" was modified to "his secret was still safe" without altering its intended meaning. The idiom refers to Mike's thoughts on his own secrets, particularly his attraction to Tess and his complicated relationships with his mother and father. It has a positive connotation since it suggests sense of comfort and relief that some shared secrets have not been discovered or spilled.

To put her oar in (p.108)

This idiom can be found in literature using the verb put or stick (put/stick your oar in), but the meaning is the same in both cases. It is used in the context of Tess expressing her viewpoint on the subject of conversation without being invited to do so. When Tina begins to speak up and show her annoyance over the King's marriage, Tess interjects to clarify her misinterpretation and add her own commentary. In short, this idiom conveys the notion of undesirable interference in a conversation, and it carries a negative connotation.

Through a stylistic analysis to the previous two idioms selected from the second chapter, their stylistic significance can be figured out. Regarding "his secret was still safe", it is used instead of a straightforward sequence to provide a figurative description of a character in the story and his sense of relief and satisfaction because of his non-shared secrets. This also creates a sense of mystery and suspense to the reader about the kind of secrets that Mike is hiding, leading to an enhancement of the tone of the literary text in addition to the descriptive power of the story. The idiom "to put her oar in" has a more colloquial and informal tone that contributes to the dialogue. Additionally, it has a negative connotation as it refers to unwanted interference. In fact, not using a direct verb such as "to interfere", and conveying the idea figuratively gives the reader a mental image that is more expressive and vivid. Therefore, the idioms significance resides in their capacity to elicit a certain meaning and tone that may not be achievable through literal language.

Chapter Four**Honest to God (p.124)**

The idiom "honest to God" is usually used to put an emphasis on the truthfulness of someone's words. Here, Tina, one of the main characters of the story, has used it to emphasise the discomfort brought on by wearing the mask, and to persuade her mother that she is speaking the truth. The connotation of this idiom is that the speaker is attempting to

highlight the accuracy of what she is saying, and to prove that she is honest and reliable. Thus, the associated connotation here is neutral, and no additional indication of its positivity or negativity can be observed by the analyst.

Burying your head in the sand (p.144)

The idiom “bury/have your head in the sand” refers to the attempt of ignoring some unpleasant realities and facts because a person is being frightened from the consequences that will follow. In one of the scenes of the story (p.114), Mike employs the idiom “burying your head in the sand” to describe Tess’s actions and behaviours of ignoring the realities that raise the potential of war along its harmful consequences. Within the specified context, this selected idiom has a negative connotation as it suggests the irresponsibility and unawareness of the possible consequences of a danger.

Stylistically speaking, the idiom “honest to God” contributes to meaning conveying and tone creation as it is used colloquially and informally to add emphasis to the sincerity of Tina’s words. It also makes the dialogue sounds more natural and authentic for the reader who can easily engage with the literary work due to the use of this kind of figurative language. Concerning the idiom “burying your head in the sand”, it has a figurative meaning that strengthens the text’s descriptive power. It makes the conversation more engaging by evoking a sense of urgency and danger. The negative connotation associated with this idiom reinforces the seriousness of the situation being addressed, making it apparent to the reader that Tess’s behaviour is a sign of irresponsibility towards the existing realities. The idiom also adds a layer of metaphorical depth to the text, helping the reader to better comprehend and build a vivid image about the scene being narrated.

Chapter Five

I can't pull the wool over your eyes (p.167)

The original form of the idiom (i.e., pull the wool over someone's eyes) is used in its negative form to mean that the speaker is not able and does not even intend to deceive his listener from knowing the truth. In the intended context, the speaker (Danny) claims that he cannot mislead his addressee nor his addressee can fool him due to their deep knowledge of each other in addition to their intelligence. This idiom connotation seems to be a positive one since it reflects the transparency and perceptive aptitude of the person who is portrayed figuratively using this idiom.

Take to farming like a duck to water (p.170)

The idiom "take to something like a duck to water" refers to doing something easily in the first time due to the natural ability that one possesses. However, it is used in the context where the idiom was identified to convey the idea that the father of Phil was not successful in farming as it was expected. Accordingly, this idiom has a negative connotation because its contribution to the conveyed meaning implies that a person could not handle the task of farming, leading to disappointment from his surroundings.

With regard to the stylistic significance of "I can't pull the wool over your eyes", this idiom adds an informal and figurative tone to the conversation between the two characters, and highlights the existing relationship between them. In addition, it conveys a sense of honesty through its associated positive connotation. The literary text is also given a touch of humour, which makes it more interesting and enjoyable to read. Not only that, but this idiom enriches the text/dialogue with depth and complexity to better characterise the characters and their relationships.

Similar to the previous idiom, the second idiom "take to farming like a duck to water" adds an informal and figurative tone to the literary text. It is mainly used to convey the idea

that just as a duck can swim instinctively in water, people can possess an innate ability to do some tasks. However, the negative connotation of this idiom reflects the speaker's disappointment towards his father who could not meet others' expectations by handling farming. Overall the use of this idiom can help expressing complicated ideas and emotions in a concise manner, making the reading experience more memorable.

Chapter Six

Cut short (p.186)

The idiom "cut short" is used for describing how the speaker was interrupted and could not finish his words. In the context of the idiom, Tina stopped her stepfather from commenting when he was about to reply. The idiom suggests a negative connotation because the speaker's line of speech has been suddenly terminated, implying a lack of consideration to his opinion. This may be easily felt by the reader.

To put a spoke in your wheel (p.189)

In order to convey the idea of preventing someone from attaining his/ her objectives or goals, the idiom "to put a spoke in your wheel" is employed. Tess showed a wish to work at the factory and subsequently enlist in the military, but her stepfather urges her to drop this wish and to stay employed at the café. The connotation of this idiom is slightly negative because it implies that the speaker has concerns about the potential consequences of the listener's plans, and is therefore attempting to obstruct her. However, the speaker's intentions are raised because of his caring feelings.

Along the same lines, the stylistic significance of the two previous idioms is analysed in terms of their impact on the overall tone and style of the text. "Cut short" and "to put a spoke in your wheel" have the ability of adding a figurative and informal tone to the dialogue and literary text. Each of these idioms has a connotation that corresponds to the character's attitude in the narrated section of the story. In the case of "cut short", it implies a negative

connotation since the speaker was interrupted and unable to complete his thought. It can also create a sense of tension in the conversation, affecting the tone and the overall dramatic impact of the literary text. As for the idiom “put a spoke in your wheel”, it indicates a slightly negative connotation since the speaker is expressing disapproval towards someone’s plans because of his caring thought and protective nature towards his stepdaughter (Tess). On the whole, the created informal tone by idioms can make readers better interact with the literary text. In addition, idioms have the ability to make their reading journey more enjoyable by adding depth to the characters and their relationships as it was the case with the previous two idioms.

Chapter Seven

Eaten up with (jealousy) (p.217)

This idiom “eaten up with jealousy” conveys the figurative meaning that the accused character (Phil) is overwhelmed by jealousy because of Sophie’ relationship with someone else. This jealousy led to extremely bad consequences on his behaviour. By consequence, the connotation of this idiom is negative.

You’re talking through your hat (p.219)

This idiom is used to mean that the speaker’s words and ideas are not well-reasoned nor supported by facts or personal experience, and are hence not credible. This idiom implies that Phil Ryland is not paying enough attention to the other person’s goals and that his viewpoint is not worth hearing in their dialogue. The meaning of this idiom in its containing context suggests a negative associated connotation as the speaker is not giving consideration to the his interlocutor who is talking non-sense and expressing non-credible ideas.

The use of idioms like “eaten up with jealousy” and “talking through your hat” is helpful to convey figurative meanings that create vivid notions in the reader’s mind and can also add to the tone and style of the text. In other words, they can have a stylistic effect on

the literary text. The idiom “eaten up with jealousy” has a negative connotation especially that it was emphasised using the term “eaten”, and which means that jealousy is consuming and causing harmful consequences to the person who is feeling it. It gives the text a tone of emotional intensity and conflict between the characters, and it may be considered as an informal manner of expressing jealousy compared to a direct statement like “very jealous”.

In the case of the idiom “you’re talking through your hat”, it has a similar negative connotation, emphasising the speaker’s disregard for his interlocutor’s words that have no basis in truth or reality. This contributes to the informal tone, and creates a sense of doubt or disbelief towards another character. This is in contrast to a more formal or direct statement like “I don’t believe you”.

Chapter Eight

The knot had been tied (p.244)

The idiom “to tie the knot” refers to the act of getting married. Since this idiom has received a slight change on the tense of the verb to become in the past perfect passive “had been tied”, it conveys the idea that marriage has already occurred. Thus, this idiom is used figuratively to describe two persons who have gotten married; however, their wedding was a shotgun one (i.e., a sudden wedding because of the girl’s pregnancy). While this idiom usually has a positive connotation as it suggests a sense of a happiness and joy that marriage should bring to a couple, in this case it does not. This means that its connotation is likely negative, and this can be justified by the couple who unwanted their wedding.

Jumped the gun (p.259)

This idiom “jumped the gun” is integrated in a context where a couple decided to get married as quickly as possible because they are under pressure (i.e., expecting a baby). This indicates that the idiom is used to convey the meaning of starting something too early and before the permissible time. It becomes evident that the associated connotation with this

non-literal meaning is negative because the father's use of this idiom suggests his disapproval and disappointment towards the action of his daughter.

The idiom "to tie the knot" in its context has a negative connotation, and it is used to convey its meaning with a sense of irony since the wedding was undesirable to the bride and groom. Although this idiom is often used in other formal context (e.g., wedding ceremony) different from the current context, it contributes to a tone of informality, making the reader better relates to the author's style/text and receives the conveyed messages. On the other part, the idiom "jumped the gun" has an informal tone with a negative associated connotation. The idiom along its non-literal/figurative meaning generates a strong mental picture that effectively conveys the idiom's meaning in a memorable and striking way to the reader. In fact, the image of someone jumping the gun is a straightforward method to convey the notion of doing anything too soon before the proper time. Once more, the inclusion of idioms underlines the author's/characters' attitude towards a specific situation and adds a layer of figurative language to the text, making it more accessible to the reader.

Chapter Nine

Gets a move on (p.279)

The meaning of the idiom "get a move on" is to move rapidly or to speed up. It is used in a context where the character Sophie was conveying her frustration and impatience with the nurse to come quickly and assist her with her situation of giving birth. The connotation associated with this idiom is that of urgency and impatience to get something done, the nurse's arrival.

Grinning from ear to ear (p.281)

The idiom "grinning from ear to ear" is used to describe someone who is smiling broadly due to an extreme level of happiness. Likewise, it is used in a context to describe the speaker's father who was anticipating meeting his first grandson and is grinning from

ear to ear or smiling widely. This idiom has a positive connotation since it implies that the speaker is extremely happy and thrilled.

The expressions “gets a move on” and “grinning from ear to ear” have distinct connotations, and contribute in diverse ways to the tone and style of their respective contexts. In the case of “gets a move on”, its stylistic significance lies in its ability to create a sense of urgency and impatience while contributing to the informal tone of the text/dialogue in addition to the overall style. In fact, using such an idiom can help making the style more expressive for the reader. As for the idiom “grinning from ear to ear”, it has a positive connotation, and can contribute to the overall tone of the text by adding a sense of joy and positivity. Using this idiom enables the author to convey a character’s emotion more effectively compared to plain descriptive. Thus, the figurative meaning of this idiom provides depth and richness to the author’s style, making not the only the passage of the idiom interesting and entertaining to read but the whole literary work.

Chapter 10

To open his mouth and put his foot in it (p.313)

The idiom “to open his mouth and put his foot in it” refers to saying something embarrassing or foolish without intending to do that. This explains its inclusion in a context for describing Phil and cautioning Tess not to take offense at Phil's comments since he frequently says things without realising how offensive they are. The associated connotation with this idiom is that of criticism towards someone who is used to say inappropriate and insulting things without the full intention to do so.

Stealing a march on me (p.315)

The idiom “stealing a march on me” means gaining an advantage over someone by acting before he does. Thus, it was used by one of the characters, Phil, to express his frustration and annoyance from his friend, believing that Danny is attempting to take the

most attractive girl away. This idiom seems to have a neutral to slight negative connotation since it implies a sense of competition and frustration between two friends.

As far as the stylistic analysis in this section is concerned with revealing the stylistic significance of the idioms, “to open his mouth and put his foot in it” and “stealing a march on me” seem to be significant. Both of these idioms have negative connotations and contribute to the informal tone and style of their texts. “To open his mouth and put his foot in it” connotes a sense of criticism while describing Phil’s habit of making inappropriate comments. This idiom seems to add a touch of humour to the described situation between the two characters. In this way, the writer can create a humorous mental image in the reader’s mind, making his text more realistic and enjoyable. The idiom “stealing a march on me” contributes to the tone of the dialogue by adding a sense of competition and frustration not only on the level of characters but also to the reader’s comprehension. This sense can be felt through the slight negative connotation that it is evoked by the figurative meaning of the idiom.

Chapter 11

Set the seal on (p.353)

The meaning of the idiom “set the seal on” is finalising something in a sufficient way. In the novel, it is used in a context to highlight the importance of buying a new car as a Christmas gift in order to complete the collection of Tess’ brother. This action can set the seal on Davy’s Christmas and makes him satisfied. Hence, this idiom connotes positively because a sense of completing and attaining a desired goal is implied through the words of the text.

To keep in touch (p.354)

The meaning of this idiom “to keep in touch” is maintaining communication with someone else, and it is used for the description of Tina's desire to stay in touch with her

friend Harry, whom she had not seen or met in a while. This idiom has a positive connotation since it suggests a sense of responsibility and caring that Tina has it towards her friend.

The positive connotation of the idiom “set the seal on” helps to establish a sense of satisfaction/finalisation for reaching a desired goal. This contributes to the tone and style of the text by evoking positive emotions to the reader. Concerning the stylistic significance of the idiom “to keep in touch”, its positive connotation is associated with a sense of responsibility and warmth that is apparent on the characters of Tina. Creating this kind of sense contributes to the overall informal tone of the text, and makes the style more expressive and interesting for the reader.

Chapter 12

Learns the hard way (p.382)

The idiom “learns the hard way” is used to mean gaining experience through difficult and unpleasant situations. In its context, this sequence is linked to farming, indicating that to grow as a good farmer requires going through some challenging situations. This idiom has a neutral to slight positive connotation. This judgement has been made based on the idea that a learnt lesson via personal experience is more likely to be remembered and to have a long-lasting effect. It also connotes that the person who learns the hard way develops knowledge, maturity and wisdom.

The cat’s out of the bag (p.387)

The idiom "the cat's out of the bag" means revealing a secret/information. In fact, the use of this idiom is simple and straightforward in a context where a little boy reveals the secret of his father’s return. The associated connotation with this idiom is neutral as disclosing that kind of hidden information is not that important.

From a stylistic perspective, both of the idiom selected from this chapter seem to be significant. The idiom “learns the hard way” along its conveyed connotation, which

emphasises the importance of experience gained through challenges, add a sense of wisdom and experience, leading to an effect on the informal tone and style of the text. In terms of the idiom “the cat’s out of the bag”, it has a neutral connotation that simply denotes that a secret has been disclosed. As a common idiomatic sequence used in everyday discourse, it adds to the dialogue's informal tone, making it more familiar to the reader. It also adds a flavour of humour to the dialogue while conveying the intended meaning, making the style more captivating.

Chapter 13

On the nose (p.425)

The idiom “on the nose” is used in a context to refer to the operation that was carried out accurately, and the pilot was able to hit his target precisely. The connotation associated with this idiom is positive because the operation was successful, and the target was struck precisely as it is clarified in this sentence: “I reckon we just did it and smacked Hitler on the nose”.

Falling (more deeply) in love (p.431)

The idiom “falling more deeply in love” is used in a context to describe the emotional state of love between Mike and Tess. While the original form of this idiom is “to fall in love”, the expression/adverb “more deeply” can put much emphasis when being integrated. The associated connotation of this idiom is positive as it implies that two characters are being overwhelmed with a deep and emotional feeling/state of love.

The idiom “on the nose” emphasises the successfulness and precision of an operation, and this entails the positivity of the associated connotation to this meaning. It evokes a sense of achievement and triumph, affecting the tone of the text and making the style seem more realistic. It can also contribute to the creation of a more compelling and vivid description, which can help the reader to be emotionally affected and cognitively

assisted on the level of comprehension. Similar to “on the nose”, the idiom “falling more deeply in love” has a positive connotation as it intensifies the emotional and romantic feelings towards another person. It creates an intimate and romantic sense, which, by consequence, can affect the overall colloquial tone and style of the literary text.

Chapter 14

(Farming) must have been in blood (p.447)

The idiom “something must have been in blood” is used to refer to an innate ability that a person has inherited from his family tradition, history or culture, farming in this case. It is used while trying to comfort Sophie with the loss of her husband Phil because of an airplane crash by saying that he liked the farm and that his choice to fly planes was only a passing phase. However, the wife Sophie has not been persuaded by these words. The connotation of this idiom is neutral as it only suggests an innate ability or skill that a person has inherited from their family tradition.

(Farming) was like a millstone round (Phil’s) neck (p.447)

Continuing with the same context of the previous idiom, this idiom was used by Sophie to reply her interlocutor who was trying to persuade her with Phil’s love to the farm. She used the idiom “farming was like a millstone round Phil’s neck” to convey the message that farming was only a heavy responsibility that Phil found it difficult to handle. This idiom has a negative connotation since it is associated with difficulty and struggle to bear the responsibility of farming.

The idiom “farming must have been in his blood” is used to add a sense of comforting for the addressee. Thus, it contributes to the casual tone and style of the dialogue by making it more realistic and convincing for the readers. As for the idiom “farming was like a millstone round Phil’s neck”, it has a negative connotation, suggesting a sense of struggle and difficulty to handle a specific responsibility. This figurative meaning that goes beyond

the literal meaning of the idiom contributes to the informal tone of the dialogue as well as the style. It also helps to create a clear and memorable image on the character of Phil and his feelings towards farming.

4.1.3.6 Stylistic significance of the identified idioms in the novel

A set of 28 idioms selected from the 14 chapters of the novel were the focus of the preceding section of study in order to conduct a more focused and in-depth analysis of their stylistic relevance in literary passages and texts. Based on the previous analysis, it suggests that some idioms can be modified and slightly changed but still be recognised and identified even if the meaning is not transparent. On the semantic level, it can be inferred that idioms are characterised by holding non-literal or figurative meanings that serve a basic semantic function depending on the context wherein they are used by the author. Their meaning cannot be deduced from the literal interpretation of the constituent parts of the sequence. That is to say, idioms are characterised by non-semantic transparency or figurative meaning that makes the delivered message of the author more memorable and engaging for the reader compared to direct statements and sequences. Thus, the inclusion of idioms in literary text reflects the ability of this category of formulaic sequences to transmit complex meanings/ideas in a precise, concise and figurative manner.

Throughout this study, it has been revealed that the stylistic significance of idioms can lay in their contribution to shape and enhance the tone and style of the literary text through the connotations they deliver, and the senses they evoke. Their informal nature do not only affect the author's style, but also makes the narrative more realistic and authentic. Moreover, the established tone through negative or positive connotations can help to create a specific emotional response to the reader who can find himself connecting with the author and interpreting his/her messages more clearly. The figurative and descriptive power of idioms that was evident for the researcher during the analysis process can potentially help

the reader to have vivid and mental images about the narrative, especially in terms of its characters as the majority of idiom, at least the analysed ones, were used in dialogues instead of narration. Ultimately, idioms can be functional under a stylistic frame as it has been suggested in the second hypothesis of this study.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, there was a presentation of the results, discussion and interpretation, which aimed primarily to study the functionality of formulaic sequences from the perspective of EFL students' attitudes, and under a stylistic frame by focusing on a novel. The chapter started by describing and discussing the questionnaire results that were basically analysed using SPSS for numerical data and content analysis for non-numerical data. After that, it presented the results of the document analysis, including the process of identification of each category. The results were followed by an in-depth content and stylistic analysis to each identified sample in order to shed light on the stylistic significance of these formulas. Thus, this chapter was concerned with providing a comprehensive analysis for the collected data so that meaningful conclusions can be drawn.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Introduction

5.1 Synthesis of the study

5.1.1 First phase

5.1.2 Second phase

5.2 Conclusions

5.3 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

5.4 Limitations of the Study

Conclusion

Introduction

This fifth chapter of the thesis serves as a concluding chapter, starting with an inclusion of a cohesive overview of the study process by exploring the first and second phases of the study. After that, it encapsulates the main results of the study in relation to the study questions and hypotheses, and it pinpoints the significance of those results. Furthermore, it offers valuable pedagogical implications and recommendations mainly for teachers, students and researchers. Finally, this chapter acknowledges the study's limitations so that future studies can be better comprehensive and exhaustive.

5.1 Synthesis of the study

Undertaking a research study is not supposed to be an easy task for any researcher even the most experienced ones. It requires being committed, having a scientific spirit and a well-defined plan of action. As Kumar (2011) claimed, a research study can be compared to a journey that requires practical steps to be passed in order to reach the desired destination (i.e., answering the research questions). One of these steps is research methodology, which is considered as the cornerstone of any research study. By providing a suitable methodological framework, researchers become able to avoid any potential subjectivity and bias, ensuring that their findings are based on a firm evidence and valid data. Thus, research methodology plays a vital role in evaluating research results and ensuring their validity as has been pointed out by Kothari (2004).

Research methodology is a complicated as well as an elaborated field of study. It encompasses a variety of research paradigms, approaches, designs and data collection methods that can be adapted according to the research study. Developing an appropriate methodological framework demands having a thorough comprehension of the research topic in addition to considering the strengths and limitations of its components (e.g., paradigm,

approach, etc.). However, the right implementation of every methodological decision may lead to the production of insightful results.

In this study, it was dealt with the stylistic significance of formulaic sequences (phrasal verbs and idioms) in literary texts. To undertake this study, a researcher paradigm, which is the philosophical underpinning, presented the starting point. According to Kumar (2011), researchers should not restrict themselves to a paradigm that is just qualitative or quantitative in nature. It seems more appropriate to broaden the scope of the philosophical concepts that have been adopted in order to reach the ability of choosing from several methods, whether qualitative or quantitative, and which complement one another. This explains the reason why the researcher have chosen pragmatism in the current study. Indeed, pragmatism enables researchers to approach their study with a flexible and open mind-set. Regardless to the flexibility offered by pragmatism Kumar (2011) insisted upon the idea that a researcher should consider the standards of objectivity, reliability and validity.

Corresponding to the nature of the study in addition to the selected paradigm, the researcher can make a decision about the research approach. This decision should be taken carefully and attentively as it has the power to affect the overall quality and success of the study. As far as this study was concerned with combining quantitative results (induced from the questionnaire) and qualitative results (induced from document analysis), a mixed-methods approach was adopted. Using more than one method and integrating different types of data means obtaining a more comprehensive picture of the study's results from different perspectives. As demonstrated by Dörnyei (2007) and Denscombe (2010), a mixed-methods approach is useful in creating a feeling of confidence about the accuracy and validity of the results. It should be stressed here that the dominating approach in this study is the qualitative approach. Overall, adopting a suitable research approach is necessary for ensuring the effectiveness of the whole methodology.

The choice of a research design is an important step in the course of a study since it orients the process of data collection and data analysis, and it can affect the validity of the obtained results. Among the variety of research designs, a case study design was adopted for this study. This design helps the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the study subject (i.e., formulaic sequences in relation to literary texts from a stylistic perspective). It allows concentrating on a specific phenomenon and particular instances or items, but refuses the idea of generalising the results to other contexts. However, it can shed light on the general when examining the particulars as it is the case with analysing some samples of formulaic sequences in a specific novel to get an idea about the stylistic significance of these sequences in a literary work. A case study design also permits integrating both qualitative and quantitative data depending on the nature of the study as well as the researcher's objectives. Ultimately, a case study design was considered appropriate for the progression of the current study.

After passing through the previous methodological steps, a heavy emphasis was put on data collection methods because of their effect on the direction of the research journey, whether reaching reliable and adequate results or not. Adopting a mixed-methods approach as has been already clarified in this section enabled the researcher to integrate methods for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data regardless to the fact that this study nature required prioritising the qualitative aspect. In this study, two data collection methods were selected: a semi-structured questionnaire and document analysis. Therefore, the current study was divided into two phases in terms of data collection:

5.1.1 First phase

At the outset, it should be pinpointed that incorporating a questionnaire in this study was done because the researcher did not attempt to rely only on the analysis of formulaic sequences in the selected novel to reveal whether they can be considered as a stylistic stamp

in literary texts. She also sought to approach the importance of formulaic sequences from another perspective, which is the attitudes and beliefs of EFL students. It was planned to juxtapose the actual responses of EFL students vis-à-vis the results of the sequences analysis.

The questionnaire of this study, which was more of an opinionnaire, was designed to capture the attitudes and beliefs of a small sample (n=47) who was chosen based on a purposive sampling technique. Although this questionnaire was not supposed to be the main data collection method, the researcher found it important for some reasons. It was meant to supplement the principal method so that valuable implications on the pedagogical level can be reached. Unlike most studies in the field of stylistics, a questionnaire was used to go beyond mere content and stylistic analysis of some identified formulaic sequences/ corpus to include the opinions of individuals. After designing, piloting and administering the questionnaire, numerical data and non-numerical data were collected. The former was analysed using SPSS to obtain descriptive statistics, whilst the latter was analysed using content analysis. This allowed going from collecting information to extracting information relevant to the subject matter.

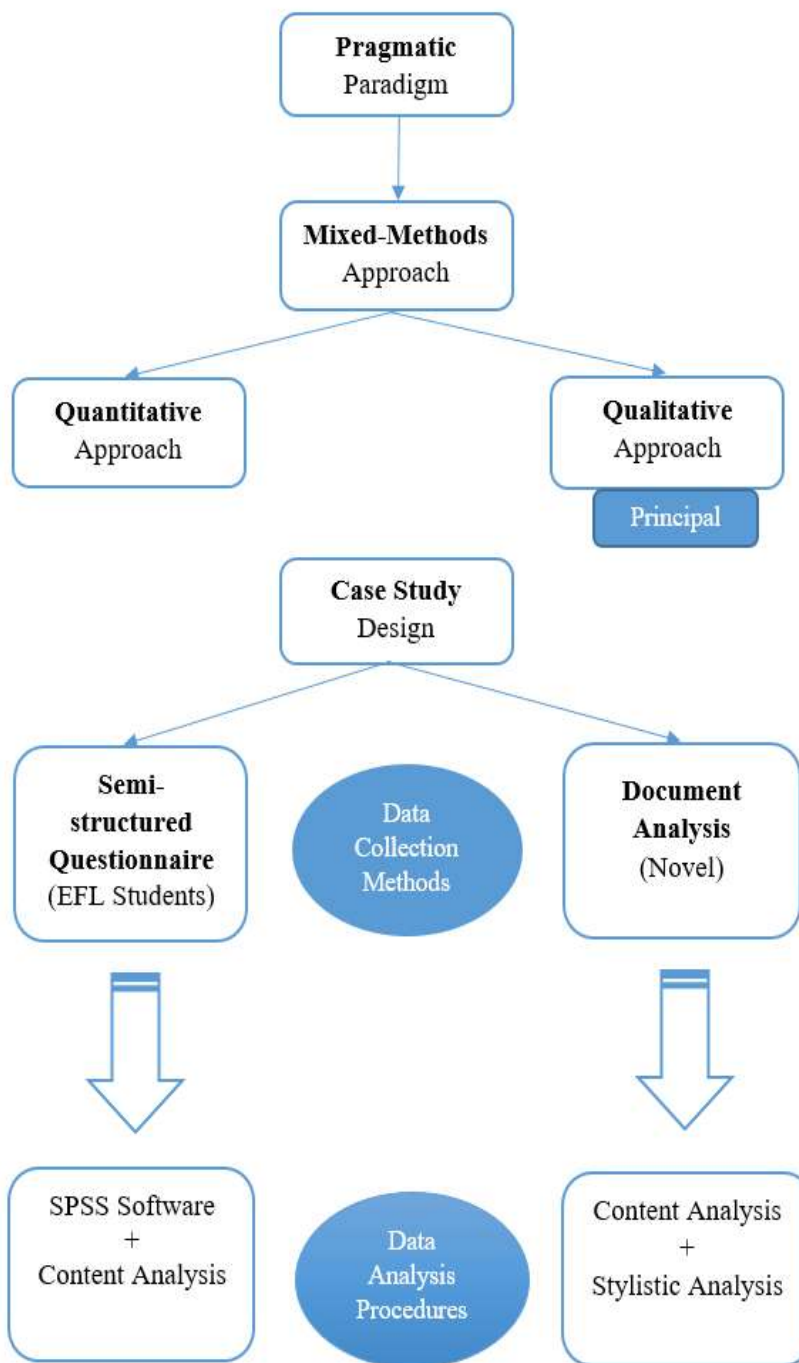
5.1.2 Second phase

Stylistic studies encompass, but are not limited to, document analysis as one of the main data collection methods. In fact, Document analysis, unlike other methods, usually depends on written data/materials that already exist in the literature. In this study, a historical romantic novel that falls within the genre of fiction was selected. The novel was written by the British author Katie Flynn under the title *Beyond the Blue Hills*. The purpose behind choosing this novel was identifying some samples of formulaic sequences, notably phrasal verbs and idioms as has been explained thoroughly in chapter three. These samples served as a corpus to examine their stylistic significance by focusing on their contribution to meaning in addition to the evoked emotions.

With regard to document analysis, the stage of data analysis is important to maintain insightful results. However, qualitative analysis is more subjective as it deals with words and meanings, and the researcher is not restricted with specific analytical procedures. In the current study, the identified formulaic sequences have been analysed by opting for a combination of content analysis and stylistic analysis. This dual approach of data analysis was deemed useful to analyse the functionality of formulaic sequences from a stylistic perspective. Taking all of the previous steps into consideration, the following graph was designed to enable the reader of this thesis to easily understand the adopted methodology for the current study.

Figure 5.1

The Research Methodology Used for the Current Study



5.2 Conclusions

Within this section, the researcher is mostly concerned with summarising and synthesising the main results obtained from the questionnaire and document analysis. Not only that, but to demonstrate their relevance to the questions of the present study, and to check out the status of the proposed research hypothesis (i.e., confirmed or rejected). This study aimed to investigate the importance of formulaic sequences in literary texts, and to indicate whether formulaic sequences can be considered as a stylistic distinctive stamp. For doing so, it has been thought to explore EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards the subject matter. After that, a set of identified samples from the selected novel have been analysed to uncover their meanings and highlight their stylistic significance in literary texts and the overall literary work.

In the first phase, the questionnaire results showed positive attitudes from the part of EFL students towards the effect of formulaic sequences on their comprehension of literary texts. They believed that integrating these ready-made sequences in literary texts is of no less importance than generating creative expressions from scratch. This means that incorporating formulaic sequences by an author in his writing style is supported by EFL students.

In addition, they reckoned that “fixedness” and “familiarity” of formulaic sequences can affect their comprehension of a literary text by facilitating it in many cases. In fact, a familiar and fixed sequence can lead to detecting them and deciphering their meanings. Concerning the latter idea of meaning, the respondents put much emphasis on the semantic level in comparison to the syntactic one. They reckoned that the process of decoding and interpreting formulaic sequences, mainly the non-transparent ones, presents the primary challenge that hinders them from having a pleasurable reading journey of a literary work. As

a technique to identify and comprehend formulaic sequences, they claimed to rely on intuitive-judgement more than using a dictionary.

The results of the questionnaire demonstrated that EFL students believed in the role that formulaic sequences can play in satisfying the cognitive, emotional and aesthetic needs of a literary work's reader. In addition, all of them indicated their perception of formulaic sequences as a literary stylistic feature regardless to the challenges and obstacles on the semantic and syntactic level, which they did not reject their existence. In other words, it is believed that formulaic sequence can enhance the reader's understanding and enjoyment of a literary work through the meanings they convey, the emotions they evoke and the pleasure they bring. These particular ideas were tackled through content and stylistic analysis in the second phase of data collection and analysis (i.e., analysis of formulaic sequences).

Overall, these main results derived from the questionnaire responses implied the positive attitudes and beliefs of EFL students towards the role of formulaic sequences on their comprehension and enjoyment with literary texts as well as the overall literary work. Thus, the first research question has been answered and its hypothesis has been confirmed.

In the second phase of this study, the primary aim of document analysis was to offer insights on the stylistic effect of formulaic sequences in a literary work, with an emphasis on the semantic and aesthetic levels of language. Content analysis sought to gain a greater understanding of how these sequences might affect the meaning of literary texts and how messages can be effectively delivered. With regard to the aim of stylistic analysis, it attempted to go beyond their basic meanings and to emphasise their stylistic significance by taking into account how they contributed to the tone and style of the literary work through the connotations and senses they evoked.

Worthy to mention, focus was not exclusively limited to analysing the selected formulaic sequences, but it included the identification process of these sequences. These is

because distinguishing what can be classified as formulaic is half of the challenge that a researcher must deal with it right at the beginning. For this study, the identification process relied mainly on intuitive-based judgement, which is one of the recognisable criteria among researchers. Then, other supplementary methods were implemented for each category to confirm the status of each selected sample. These methods included: consulting the Cambridge Online Dictionary, checking raw frequency in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and adopting some diagnostic criteria from Wray and Namba's checklist (2003).

The analysis of phrasal verbs revealed that they might have literal or non-literal meaning (figurative) depending on the context and the author's intention of use, and in both cases, they can convey specific connotations as well as certain emotions and senses to be received by the reader. These associated connotations proved to contribute to shaping the tone of the literary passage/text, and to affect creating the distinctive style of an author. Moreover, the use of direct and straightforward phrasal verbs (i.e., transparent phrasal verbs) may make the tone more accessible and the style more direct for the reader who is usually looking to have an easy and interrupted reading journey in order to reach the highest level of entertainment. All of these may have a positive effect on the semantic level of language by assisting in messages transmission and meanings clarification.

The analysis of idioms indicated that they can be distinguished by their non-semantic transparency or non-literal meanings that perform a basic semantic function according to the context in which they are used by the author. In fact, being semantically significant lay in their ability to precisely and concisely convey complicated ideas or meanings in a literary text. Their figurative nature on the semantic level makes the conveyed message of the author more memorable, engaging and interesting to the reader. This means that they have a descriptive power that leads the fictionalised scenes in the text seem more realistic and vivid

in the reader's mind. By switching to the stylistic significance of idioms, the results showed that idioms convey connotations beyond their meanings, evoking certain emotional responses that can be felt. This can have an effect on the tone and style of the literary text. However, the associated connotations and emotions are different from one idiom to another, and no specific pattern could be extracted except their positive stylistic effect in the literary passage and text in addition to the informality of the author's style.

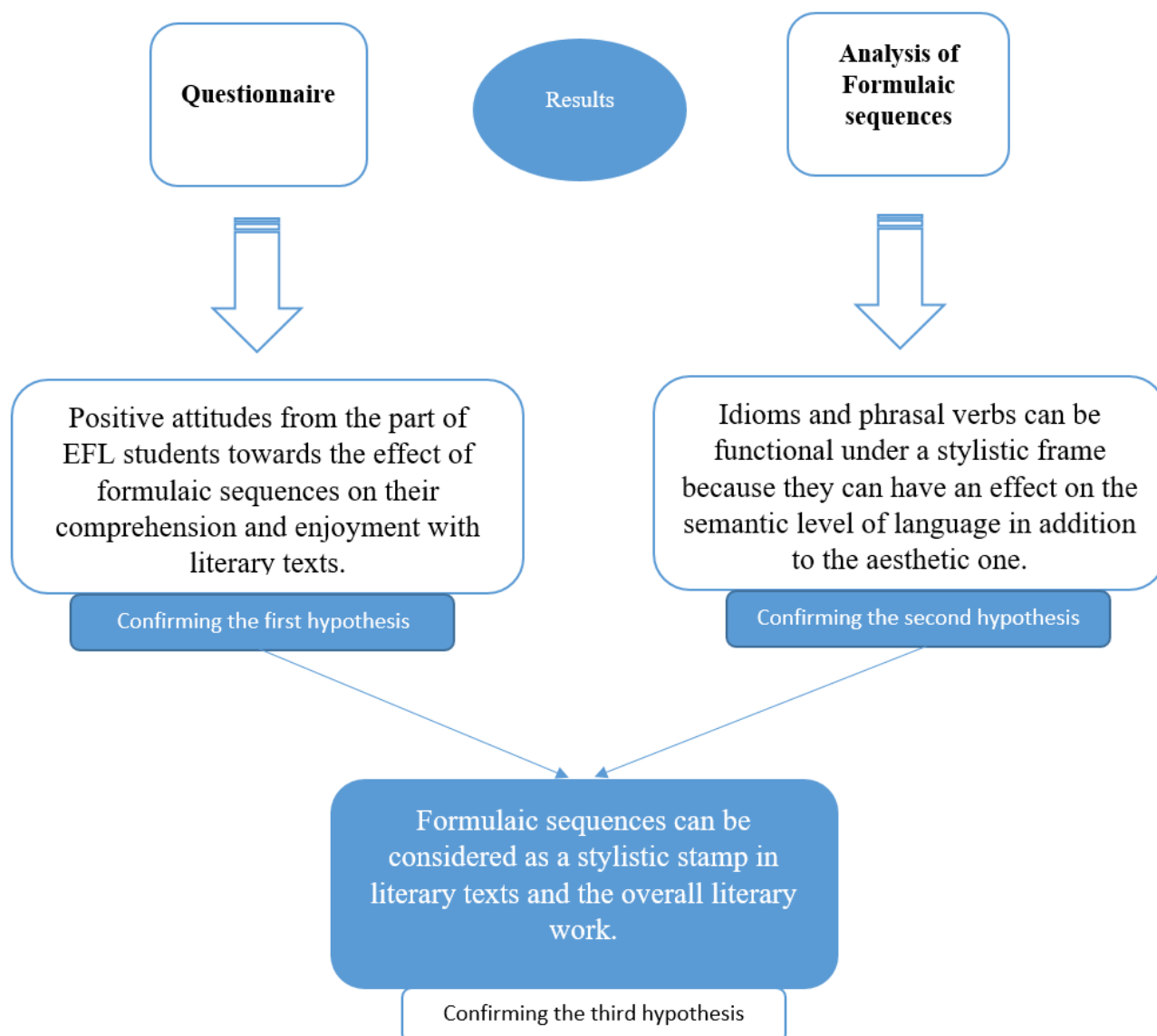
Based on the results of the two selected categories of formulaic sequences, both idioms and phrasal verbs have been demonstrated to be functional under a stylistic frame as they can affect the semantic level of language in addition to the aesthetic one. This conclusion was elicited due to the analysis that focused on some samples of formulaic sequences along their connotations, leading to an effect on the tone and style of the literary text. All of these provided an answer to the second question of the current study by supporting the suggested hypothesis.

The last conclusion that should be made in the current study, and which has not been mentioned earlier in this thesis is directly linked to the third question that focuses on the specific stylistic significance of formulaic sequences within the realm of syntactic structures in literary works. By juxtaposing the main results of the questionnaire to the results of formulaic sequences analysis, it may be asserted that formulaic sequences can be considered as a stylistic stamp in literary texts, and that their function exceeds the ordinary function of syntactic structures or linguistic constructions. The study has already provided compelling evidence highlighting the importance of formulaic sequences in literary texts, as perceived by both EFL students and the researcher herself. This evidence revolves around the ability of formulaic sequences to fulfil cognitive, emotional, and aesthetic needs of readers by contributing to the meaning in addition to the emotional and aesthetic impact that can be

experienced. To reinforce to the clarity of the main results and to allow the reader to grasp them quickly, a visual representation is included here.

Figure 5.2

The Main Results of the Current Study



5.3 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Aiming to bridge the gap between theory and practice, this section provides insights and practical suggestions that are tailored and elicited, at once, from the main study results. They are principally addressed to teachers, students and researchers in order to enhance English language learning and teaching /instruction by focusing on stylistic knowledge and awareness.

For teachers

- Teachers should raise EFL learners' awareness about the importance of Formulaic sequences in relation to the field of stylistics.
- Teachers are encouraged to highlight the stylistic significance of formulaic sequences by providing examples on their use in authentic literary texts such as novels and short stories.
- Teachers should explicitly instruct their EFL learners in the area of formulaic sequences, and help them to understand their meanings and adapt their use in different contexts.
- Teachers can integrate formulaic sequences in their teaching materials and practices to create opportunities for their EFL learners to engage actively with these formulas so that their understanding and enjoyment with literary works can be enhanced.
- Teachers are recommended to focus on the main encountered difficulties on the syntactic level (i.e., identification process) and semantic level (i.e., meaning interpretation) by incorporating suitable instructions that can minimise the potentiality of facing these obstacles during a reading journey.
- Teachers, for the sake of their own professional development, should focus on these sequences along their meaning and use so that they can be able to apply all of the pre-suggested recommendations.

For students

- Students should familiarise themselves with the area of formulaic sequences by going beyond direct instructional practices within academic contexts to rely on themselves for exploring their use in authentic literary texts and works.
- Students should independently engage with formulaic sequences in literary texts so that they can recognise how they convey meaning and contribute to the evoked senses and emotions. This may lead them to enhance their future literary experiences.
- Students are encouraged to take the initiative to develop their intuitive judgement through reading a wide range of literary works so that they can be adapted to the interpretation of formulaic sequences.

For researchers

- Researchers are incited to consider the importance of these sequences for having a pleasurable reading journey, and focus on incorporating them into EFL curriculum.
- Researchers should develop engaging activities and instructional practices that EFL teachers may use to improve their learners' ability not only to understand but also to use these sequences in their communications be it oral or written.
- Researchers are urged to undertake further studies to highlight the importance of formulaic sequences and increase their appreciation as a stylistic stamp by the community of EFL students and practitioners in the field (i.e., English language studies).

To sum up, these pedagogical implications and recommendations seek to reassert the importance of formulaic sequences in literary text by encouraging their effective teaching and integration in instructional practices. They also make an appeal to researchers to conduct more-in depth studies relating the notion of formulaicity to the field of stylistics.

5.4 Limitations

It is crucial to note that recognising limitations does not diminish the value of the undertaken study. Instead, they increase the results transparency, and contribute to improving the quality of future researches and studies. With regard to the current study, several limitations can be identified and briefly mentioned:

- Generalizability is limited since the adopted design is a case study, and the focus was on a small sample size and a set of formulaic sequences extracted from one specific novel. More particularly, sample representativeness may not be guaranteed since the results cannot be generalised to all EFL learners and readers of literary texts. In addition, formulaic sequences use may differ throughout literary genres, authors, and time periods, and the analysis of a limited number of formulaic sequences cannot reflect their overall use in literary works.
- Relying on intuitive judgement in the identification process of formulaic sequences eliminates the chance of replicability whereas using qualitative analysis methods introduce a level of subjectivity and bias to the main results of the study.

Acknowledging these limitations is crucial to clarify that the data were analysed and discussed within their contexts, and the researcher is not claiming any sort of generalizability to the results. Moreover, they can be helpful to direct future studies to be more comprehensive by overpassing this kind of limitations.

Conclusion

Overall, this chapter aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the entire research journey. It brought together the adopted methodological framework, the main results and conclusions, pedagogical implications and recommendations in addition to limitations of the study. By summarising and synthesising all of the information in the previous sections, light was shed on the importance of formulaic sequences in literary texts.

General Conclusion

To engage in a reading journey, regardless to the type of the literary work, the reader is usually driven by the aim to reach a satisfactory level of comprehension and pleasure. This can be linked to the authors' stylistic choices that enable them to exert control over the interpretation and enjoyment of their readers. While the importance of formulaic sequences has been proved in many areas such as communicative competence, language learning and others, studies in stylistics are still evolving.

As for the present study, the concern was mainly directed to the importance of formulaic sequences in relation to literary texts, and whether these sequences can be considered as a stylistic stamp in an overall literary work. To cover this topic, it sought to explore EFL students' attitudes and beliefs in relation to the potential effect that formulaic sequences may have on their ability to understand and appreciate a literary work. Furthermore, it placed a considerable emphasis on these sequences' contribution to the semantic level of literary texts without neglecting the aesthetic one.

This thesis can be structured into two main parts: the theoretical part and the practical part. The theoretical part encompassed two chapters that were devoted to the theoretical aspects of the current study. More precisely, the first chapter aimed to provide a theoretical framework on the field of stylistics to lay the ground for the thesis's succeeding chapters, both in theory and practice. With regard to the second chapter, it attempted to build a comprehensive overview on formulaic sequences starting by their historical background and ending up with their major types, notably phrasal verbs and idioms, which were practically included in the current study. It also aimed to highlight the importance of investigating the notion of formulaicity in relation to stylistic issues.

On the other hand, the practical part comprised the three remaining chapters, which went beyond theoretical assumptions to cover practical applications. The third chapter was devoted to the detailed methodological plan and decisions, which were not adopted blindly. Rather, each decision was supported with arguments from the literature in order to obtain reliable results that were presented, discussed and interpreted within the lines of the fourth chapter. With regard to the latter, it is concerned with presenting, discussing and interpreting the results of the study in a systematic manner. To encapsulate the actual process of study conduction, the fifth chapter was included to this thesis. It focused on the adopted methodological framework, the deduced results and conclusions, the arising pedagogical implications and recommendations in addition to the acknowledged limitations of the study.

To conduct this study, a mixed-methods approach was adopted wherein the qualitative aspect was the dominating one because of the study nature. Additionally, the adoption of a case study design allowed to deeply explore and understand the importance of formulaic sequences in literary texts by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Within this specific design, two data collection methods were employed: a semi-structured questionnaire and document analysis. The former served as a preliminary data collection method, which aimed to capture the attitudes and beliefs of EFL students towards the effect that formulaic sequences may bring to their comprehension of literary texts. The latter included the analysis (content and stylistic analysis) of a corpus. The latter included a set of 28 phrasal verbs and 28 idioms that were identified from the selected novel *Beyond the Blue Hills* by the British author “Katie Flynn”.

With regard to the results, they implied that EFL students are aware of the difficulties that formulaic sequences may bring to them on the level of identification and interpretation (i.e., syntactic and semantic levels). However, they have showed positive inclinations towards the potential role of formulaic sequences to affect and enhance their comprehension

of literary texts as well as their enjoyment. This means that the first hypothesis of the study was supported, and information were gathered to complement the results of the study by including the perspectives of EFL students on the subject matter that was under lens.

Furthermore, conducting a content and stylistic analysis on the identified samples of formulaic sequences (i.e., the corpus) demonstrated that both phrasal verbs and idioms played a significant role in conveying the embedded meanings and messages in the literary text, leading to an effect on the reader's comprehension. It has been also implied that phrasal verbs and idioms function beyond their basic meaning as they have the ability to shape the tone and style of the literary text wherein they are included. This was basically revealed by focusing on the connotations evoked by each sample of formulaic sequences in order to highlight the stylistic significance of these formulas. The results of the content and stylistic analysis helped to confirm the second hypothesis, which indicated that formulaic sequences can be functional under a stylistic frame due to their effect not only on the semantic level but the aesthetic one.

Based on the results of the two selected categories of formulaic sequences, both idioms and phrasal verbs have been demonstrated to be functional under a stylistic frame as they can affect the semantic level of language in addition to the aesthetic one. This conclusion was elicited due to the analysis that focused on specific identified samples of formulaic sequences, and indicating that their retained connotations have the potential to influence the tone and style of the literary text. All of these provided an answer to the second question of the current study by supporting the suggested hypothesis. By aligning the questionnaire results with the analysis results of formulaic sequences, it became possible to regard formulaic sequences as a stylistic stamp in literary texts.

The results of this study contributed with an evidence about the importance of formulaic sequences as a significant stamp that can help EFL learners to appreciate and

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derive enjoyment from literary works. Accordingly, researchers are incited to undertake further studies encompassing a broader population and from different analytical perspectives to establish the status of formulaic sequences under a stylistic framework. It is also recommended to develop instructional practices that can help EFL learners to become more competent with identifying and understanding these sequences. This means that there are potential avenues of study within this field of interest.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Consent Form for Participants



I, the undersigned, declare that I am willing to take part in a doctoral research questionnaire used in a thesis entitled “**The Significance of Formulaic Sequences as a Literary Stylistic Stamp: An Analytical Study of *Beyond the Blue Hills* by Katie Flynn**”.

- I declare that I have been informed about the nature of this study in addition to my role in it. Besides, I have been given the opportunity to ask questions before accepting to participate.
- I have full knowledge on how the collected data will be used.
- I am aware that the collected data may be later used in other academic presentations and publications in relation to this study.
- I completely understand that my participation is voluntary, and there is no obligation on me to take part in this study.
- I completely understand that I am free to withdraw my participation without providing any reason or justifying my decision, up to a period of one week after the completion of data collection.

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

If you have any question concerning this study, feel free to contact the investigator:

Raihana FOURAR
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla
Tel: 06 97 33 01 25
E-mail: fourar.raihana@gmail.com

Information letter



Dear participant,

My name is Raihana FOURAR, and I am currently studying for a PhD degree in the department of English Language and Literature at the University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla. As part of my studies, I am carrying out a research project entitled “**The Significance of Formulaic Sequences as a Literary Stylistic Stamp: An Analytical Study of *Beyond the Blue Hills* by Katie Flynn**”.

The current study aims to shed light on the importance of formulaic sequences in literary texts, and to indicate whether formulaic sequences can be considered as a stylistic distinctive stamp. Thus, it seeks to explore the attitudes and beliefs of EFL students towards the effect that formulaic sequences may bring to their comprehension and enjoyment of a literary work. Furthermore, it considers their contribution mainly to the semantic level as well as the aesthetic one to elicit their stylistic significance.

You are kindly invited to take part in this research study. Before deciding to sign on the consent form, you can ask questions if you need further clarification or if you would like to receive more information.

Yours sincerely,

Raihana FOURAR

University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla

Ahmed BACHER

University of Mohamed Kheider, Biskra

Appendix 3

Questionnaire for EFL Students: Piloting stage

This questionnaire is part of a PhD study conducted to explore the perceptions and beliefs of EFL Master Students towards the role that formulaic sequences (ex., idioms, phrasal verbs and collocations) may play on their comprehension of a literary work. You are kindly requested to put a tick (✓) in the corresponding box to indicate your chosen option. Be assured that all answers will be held in the strict confidentiality. Your collaboration is highly appreciated with great pleasure and sincere gratitude.

Questions

Section One: EFL students' background information

1- Gender:

Male

Female

2- How do you evaluate your overall level in English?

Basic

Intermediate

Advanced

3- How do you consider your level in reading literary texts?

Very good

Good

Average

Poor

4- How much time do you spend reading per day?

Less than 10 minutes

From 10 minutes to 30 minutes

More than 30 minutes

5- How many books in average do you read for leisure in a year?

1 - 5

5 - 10

10 +

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

6- What do you prefer to read?

Prose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poetry	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drama	<input type="checkbox"/>

7- What is your favourite genre? (You can choose more than one option)

Horror	<input type="checkbox"/>
Romance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science fiction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Detective fiction/Crimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fantasy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please specify

.....

.....

8- How much do you enjoy reading literary works?

Very much	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only when it is a personal choice	<input type="checkbox"/>

9- Why do you read? (You can choose more than one option)

For pleasure and entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>
For enriching the vocabulary repertoire	<input type="checkbox"/>
For increasing knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>

10- When you read a literary work, you are mostly concerned with (You can choose more than one option)

Elements of the story (characters, plot, conflict, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Typical and simple vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formulaic sequences (Idioms, phrasal verbs, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creativity of the author in terms of lexis and structures of the literary text	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section Two: EFL students' perceptions and beliefs towards using formulaic sequences to mitigate their reading comprehension of a literary work

The response scale is as follows:

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1- EFL students, in the Algerian context, have a good command of formulaic sequences in terms of comprehension or use at once.					
2- Literary works contain large percentages of formulaic sequences in comparison to novel expressions.					
3- Fully-fixed or semi-fixed formulaic sequences are better to be included when writing a literary work than novel constructions.					
4- The author of a literary work should better opt for novel expressions created from scratch to reach creativity.					
5- Certain formulaic sequences, mainly idioms, can help to indicate the author's identity or his membership to a specific speech community.					
6- Some formulaic sequences such as discourse devices can positively affect the organisation of the ideas of a literary text.					

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

<p>7- Formulaic sequences have the power to create a shorter processing period and a low level of effort when trying to understand the ideas of a literary text, and this is indebted to their fixedness. .</p>					
<p>8- The fixedness of formulaic sequences gives them the merit of being easily decoded at the time of reading.</p>					
<p>9- Well-known formulaic sequences enables an EFL student to quickly process the message of the author without the need to face and decode the overloaded linguistic package used to transmit the message.</p>					
<p>10- When most formulaic sequences are detected, an EFL student can reach a good level of comprehension to the literary texts, and by consequence, the overall literary work.</p>					
<p>11- An EFL student tends to refer to the dictionary to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., opaque) formulaic sequence.</p>					
<p>12- An EFL student tends to rely on his intuitive judgement to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., opaque) formulaic sequence by combining the meaning of its constituent parts.</p>					
<p>13- The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of detecting them (i.e., on the lexical level).</p>					

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

14- The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of decoding and interpreting them (i.e., on the semantic level)					
15- Difficult and semantically non-transparent formulaic sequences obstruct the pleasurable reading that an EFL student is looking for when dealing with a literary work.					
16- Using the same typical formulaic sequences by an author creates a sort of boredom to his/her readers.					
17- The non-alignment between an EFL student's level in English and the level of the native author will probably reflect on the student's comprehension of the literary work, in general, and formulaic sequences, in particular.					
18- Formulaic sequences manipulate EFL students' comprehension of literary works by facilitating it.					
19- Formulaic sequences manipulate students' comprehension of literary works by distracting or hardening it.					
20- Formulaic sequences helps satisfying cognitive, emotional and aesthetic needs of a literary works' readers.					

21- Are you satisfied with the role that FSs can play on literary works as a literary stylistic stamp?

Yes

No

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

If no, suggest other literary stylistic devices far from formulaic sequences to mitigate and maximise your understanding of a literary work.

.....
.....

Opinionnaire

1-Do you think that the questions are relevant to the topic of enquiry?

Yes No

If no, please explain:

.....
.....

2- Are there ambiguous questions?

Yes No

If yes, please specify them:

Section(s) n°..... Questions(s) n°.....

3- Are there unnecessary questions?

If yes, please specify them:

Section(s) n°..... Question(s) n°.....

4- Do you think that the layout is appropriate?

Yes No

5- Do you have any further suggestion?

.....
.....
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.....

Appendix 4

Questionnaire for EFL Students

The present questionnaire is part of “**a doctoral research study**” conducted to explore the attitudes and beliefs of EFL Master Students towards the effect that formulaic sequences (e.g., idioms and phrasal verbs) may have on their comprehension of literary works. You are kindly requested to put a tick (✓) in the corresponding box to indicate your chosen option. Rest assured that all answers will be held in the strict confidentiality.

Questions

Section One: EFL students’ background information

1- Gender:

Male

Female

2- How do you evaluate your overall competence in English?

Basic

Intermediate

Advanced

3- How do you consider your competence in reading English literary texts?

Very good

Good

Average

Poor

4- How much time do you spend reading in English per day?

Less than 10 minutes

From 10 minutes to 30 minutes

More than 30 minutes

5- How often do you read in English?

Always

Occasionally

Rarely

Never

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

6- How many books written in English do you read for leisure in a year?

1 - 5

5 - 10

10 +

7- What do you prefer to read?

Prose

Poetry

Drama

Non-fiction materials

8- What is your favourite genre? (You can choose more than one option)

Horror

Romance

Science fiction

Detective fiction/Crimes/Thriller

Fantasy

Comics

Other

If other, please specify and justify your choice

.....
.....

9- How much do you enjoy reading English literary works?

Very much

A little

Not at all

Only when it is a personal choice

Justify your choice

.....
.....

10- Why do you read in English? (You can choose more than one option)

To enrich the vocabulary repertoire

To improve grammatical competence

To increase my background knowledge

To improve my spelling

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

All

11- When you read a literary work in English, you are mostly concerned with (You can choose more than one option)

- Elements of the story (characters, plot, conflict, etc)
- Typical and simple vocabulary
- Formulaic sequences (Idioms, phrasal verbs, etc)
- Creativity of the author in terms of lexis and structures of the literary text
- None of the above
- All of the above

Justify your choice

.....

Section Two: EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards the effect of formulaic sequences on their comprehension of a literary work

The response scale is as follows:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1- In your opinion, EFL students in the Algerian context have a good command of formulaic sequences in terms of comprehension and use at once.					
2- Literary works contain large percentages of formulaic sequences in comparison to novel expressions.					

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

<p>3- Fully-fixed or semi-fixed combinations of words known as formulaic sequences are better to be included when writing a literary work than novel combinations of words.</p>					
<p>4- The author of a literary work should better opt for novel expressions created from scratch to reach creativity.</p>					
<p>5- Certain formulaic sequences, mainly idioms, can help to indicate the author's identity or his membership to a specific speech community.</p>					
<p>6- Since formulaic sequences are fixed combinations of words, they can be understood quickly and easily in comparison to new generated expressions.</p>					
<p>7- The fixedness of formulaic sequences gives them the merit of being easily decoded at the time of reading.</p>					
<p>8- Well-known formulaic sequences (e.g., break a leg and spill the beans) enables an EFL student to quickly process the message of the author without the need to face and decode the overloaded linguistic package used to transmit the message.</p>					
<p>9- When most formulaic sequences are detected, an EFL student can reach a good level of comprehension to the literary texts, and by consequence, the overall literary work.</p>					

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

<p>10- An EFL student tends to refer to the dictionary to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., non-literal) formulaic sequence (e.g., speak of the devil) while reading literary texts.</p>					
<p>11- An EFL student tends to rely on his intuitive judgement to decode a semantically non-transparent (i.e., non-literal/opaque) formulaic sequence by combining the meaning of its constituent parts.</p>					
<p>12- The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of detecting them in a literary text (i.e., on the lexical level).</p>					
<p>13- The major difficulty concerning formulaic sequences lies in the process of decoding and interpreting them (i.e., on the semantic level).</p>					
<p>14- Difficult and semantically non-transparent formulaic sequences obstruct the pleasurable reading that an EFL student is looking for when dealing with a literary work.</p>					
<p>15- Using the same typical formulaic sequences by an author creates a sort of boredom to his/her readers.</p>					
<p>16- The non-alignment (i.e., the difference) between an EFL student's level in English and the level of the native author will probably reflect on the student's comprehension of formulaic sequences in particular.</p>					

FORMULAIC SEQUENCES AS A LITERARY STYLISTIC STAMP

17- Some Formulaic sequences can manipulate EFL students' comprehension of a literary text by facilitating it.					
18- Some Formulaic sequences can manipulate students' comprehension of a literary text by distracting or hardening it.					
19- Formulaic sequences can help satisfying emotional and aesthetic needs of a literary works' readers.					

20- Are you satisfied with the role that formulaic sequences can play on literary works as a stylistic stamp as they can potentially affect your understanding and enjoyment?

Yes

No

If no, suggest other literary stylistic stamps far from formulaic sequences to affect and maximise your understanding and enjoyment of a literary work.

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Thank you