Investigating the Advanced Iraqi EFL Learners' Mastery of Using English Irreversible Binomials

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Introduction

For many linguists and applied linguists (e.g. Chomsky, 1975; Cook, 1996) the description of the principles and properties that are common to all or most languages is the ultimate pinnacle of linguistic enquiry. These properties have referred to as language universals. Two types of language universals are commonly identified: formal universals and substantive universals. Formal universals refer to general design features of language such as the movement and ordering of items according to certain principle and that all languages are 'category- based' i.e. every language has nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs although the items which count as such may vary from one language to another. Substantive universals are the particular structural features which languages have in common as part of their content such as the noun phrase and that the phrase usually the complement comes before or after the head, and in the way these phrases are combined to form a sentence (Finch, 2000: 127- 129).

Binomials formation, the process by which a language uses the ordering of certain conjoined items of two or more sometimes three words to form (ir)reversible units seem to be

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universal although they differ in the degree of reversibility, the category under which they occur and the syntactic and semantic constraints upon their formation process. They are available in English, German, Arabic and Kurdish

(Irreversible) freezes (Cooper and Ross, 1975 and Gill, 1988 in Gorgis and Al Tamimi, 2005), or binomials (Malkeil, 1959; Doblin, 1981; Lambrecht, 1984, Benor and Lavy, 2006), or lexical phrases (Polo, 1998) are fixed, mostly formulaic and idiomatic expressions linked by coordinating conjunctions 'and' 'or' or a preposition e.g. 'law and order', 'dead or alive', 'hand in hand'. Malkiel (1959 in Al Hamadani, 1997:1) defines them as "a sequence of two words pertaining to the same form class, placed on an identical level of syntactic hierarchy and ordinarily connected by the same kind of lexical link". Frozen binomials are those "that occur nearly exclusively in one order- including several semantic and phonological principles and reasons for their freezing" (Malkeil, 1959 in Benor and Lavy, 2006:3). Doblin (1981) notes that they are "a special group within idiomatic expressions." While for Gil (1988 in Al Hamdani, 1997:2) freezes are "conjoined expressions in which the order of the conjuncts is fixed".

Binomials have been classified differently by different linguists using different criteria. In term of reversibility, they are classified into reversible or non- frozen and irreversible or frozen (Bolinger, 1962). 'gold and silver' and 'knife and fork are reversible; while 'by and large' and 'up and down' are irreversible. They are also classified in term of idiomaticity into idiomatic freezes and non idiomatic ones. In idiomatic freezes the constituents cannot be substituted by their

synonyms because the two constituents from one semantic unit; non- idiomatic units can (Gramley and Patzold, 1992:70). For example, in 'aid and abert' 'aid' cannot be substituted by 'help' although the two are synonyms. In 'go and see' 'go' can be replaced by 'come' and 'see' can be replaced by 'look'.

A detailed classification based on syntactic features and their semantic implication has been provided by Biber et al (1999:1030-36). They divide the binomials into four groups.

1. Verb and/ or verb. This type is most common in fiction and relatively rare in news and academic prose. Binomials with 'go and' and 'come and' are most common especially 'go and see', 'go and get', 'come and sit', 'come and look'. Semantically the first verb serves primarily to mark the direction of the action, while the second verb expresses the consequent action to be accomplished. (ibid, p.1032)

2. Noun and / or noun. This type is by far the most common in academic prose but is generally rare in conversation. It falls into the following major semantic categories
   a) Relation expressions e.g. 'husband and wife', 'ladies and gentlemen'.
   b) Food and combinations e.g. 'bread and butter,' 'food and drink.'
   c) Time expression e.g. 'years and years,' 'day and night'.
   d) Others e.g. 'name and address', 'success or failure'.

   This type of binomials usually refers to physical entities that commonly go together in people's experience. (ibid., pp1033-1034).

3. Adjective and/ or adjective. This type is the most common in fiction and to a lesser extent in academic prose. Binomials of this type usually indicate:

   a) Demographic/ institutional attributes e.g. 'economic and social.' 'social and cultural'

   b) Opposite or complementary attributes e.g. 'formal and informal', 'male and female', 'old and new'.

   c) Other attributes e.g. national and international, 'rich and famous'. Semantically, most of the objects in these formulas refer to complementary, demographic or institutional attributes.

4. Adverbs and/ or adverbs. Binomials of this type are considerably less common. They are rare in news and academic prose but frequent in conversation. Examples on this type are: so and so, here and there, up and down.

   Adverbs in this formula primary convey:

   a) Directional meaning e.g. in and out, back and forth.

   b) Temporal meaning e.g. there and then, now and then (pp 1035-36).

   A number of syntactic and semantic properties that distinguish binomials from regular conjoined structures have been identified. Binomial formation is a lexical rather than a syntactic process which is subject to complex semantic and pragmatic constraints. Following Kiparsky, Lambrecht (1984: 756, 762, 775) identifies four properties of binomials

a. They have arbitrarily limited distribution: they can co-occur with certain words or classes.

b. They have frozen syntax: they cannot be affected by transformational rules i.e. they must appear in one particular surface form.

c. They are semantically non-compositional: their total meaning is not derivable from their parts.

d. They are morphologically frozen in one basic from. They cannot be inflected for number, gender or case.

A number of experimental studies focused on phonological semantic and pragmatic constraints. Lambrecht (1984: 781) notes that irreversible freezes have striking phonetic properties: phonetic reduction of the first member, alliteration and rhyming. Cooper and Ross (1975 in Benor and Lavy, 2006) identify the semantic constraints upon the ordering of irreversible binomials. They observe that first parts of the freezes usually refer to "here, Now, Adult, Male, Positive, Singular, Living, Friendly, Solid, Agentive, Powerful, At home, Patriotic, General and Count noun"(p.6).

As for the pragmatic constrains upon irreversible binomials Cooper and Ross (1975 in Al Hamadani, 1997:68-78) mentioned a number of pragmatic constraints upon the ordering of irreversible freezes among which are:divine precedes non divine concepts e.g. 'church and state' 'lord and devil'; what happened first comes first e.g. 'rise and set' 'life and death'; essential concepts precede marginal ones e.g. 'sun and moon' 'wheat and barley'; constant concepts precede variable ones e.g. 'ordinary and coloured', 'rice and broth'.

Binomials across Languages

Binomials have been found in almost all languages. This section provides evidence on this linguistic phenomenon in German, Kurdish, and Arabic with reference to English.

Binomials in German

In German, Malkiel (1959 in Benor and Lavy, 2006: 3) wrote an overview of these frozen expressions identifying the semantic and phonological principles of their ordering and the reasons for their freezing. For him a binomial is " a sequence of two words pertaining to the same from- class, placed on an identical level of syntactic hierarchy, and ordinarily connected by some kind of lexical link" (ibid.:4). For Doblin (1981) binomials are a specific group within idiomatic expressions in which words are linked either by coordinating conjunction or a preposition. Although the two terms of the pair can be used separately, or in a reverse order, they invariably become bound to a prescribed sequence once they form part of a formula (p.78) e.g. 'angst und bange' (anxious and afraid), 'mit list und tucke' (by cunning or deceit), 'im groben und ganzen' (by and large). Unlike Malkiel and Doblin who apply the term to paired items of any lexical category, Lambrecht (1984) restricts his attention to sequences of two conjoined nouns where no determiner precedes the nouns. He calls this bare binomials, for example 'Mann und frau' (man and wife), "weder Baum noch struch" (neither tree nor bush) (p.75).

A detailed classification of German binomial are provided by Doblin (1980) who classified them in terms their

semantic character and their structural make-up into: synonymous pair where both terms are synonymous e.g. 'sanft und selig' (gently and blessedly);antonymous where the conjoined items are antonymous e.g. "Weal und Woe" (better or worse); the second items is an expansion of the meaning of the first e.g. 'feuer und flamme' (five and flame); the second is an intensification of the first e.g. 'Gift und Galle' (poison and gall);

Binomials Kurdish

In Kurdish various types of fixed expressions are also available and have been investigated by Kurd linguists. The only detailed discussion of this linguistic phenomenon to date, however, is provided by Hamasoor (2007:120-123). For her four types of binomials can be identified in Kurdish: Verb + w/u -/yan + verb, noun+ w/u/be+ noun, adjective + w/yan+ adjective, and adverb+w/yan +adverb.

In verb + w/u-/yan + verb, the most common verbs that constitute binomials are 'were' (come), 'bro' (go), hatin (to come) 'hestan' (stand) e.g. 'were dainse '(come and sit)

'Yan danise yan biro '(Either sit down or go).

The construction noun+w/u/yan/be+ noun (noun + and /or /by +noun) is very frequent in Kurdish reference to places e.g. mal be mal (house by house) 'gund be gund,'(village by village) 'sar be sar',(city by city) 'roj be roj'(day by day) 'sal be sal'(year by year). This type is also see in relational expressions mostly female and male e.g. 'daye w babe' (mum and dad), 'jinu u midal' (woman and children); food combination e.g. 'nan u ca' (bread and tea) 'xwardin u

xwardinewe'; time expressions e.g. 'sew u roj' (night and day), 'mangew mang' (month by month)). As for adjective + w/yan +adjective, the adjectives combined are synonyms, near synonyms or opposites e.g. 'cwan u nasik' (pretty and delicate), 'resu sipi' (black and white) 'germ u nerim' (warm and soft). Finally, adverb + u adverb or adverb adverb are also available in kurdish for example 'ser u xwar' (up and down) 'ser u jur' (up and down)' esta na esta '(now and then), 'hergizaw hergiz' (never, never).

Binomials in Arabic

(Irreversible) binomials are very common in Arabic but they come under various entries depending on whether the constituents of these freezes are combined with a conjunction or not, and the semantic relation that unite the two constituent into one meaning. Thus those freezes have been studied under 'Al Itbaa (Assayuuti-nd) Al Muwakhat (Matluub, 1987) At Taqabul (Al Halabi, 1972), Al Muqabala (Alqeirawani, 1972 and Al Halabi, 1972), Aj Jinaas and At Tibaq (Abbas, 1987, Al Hashimi, 1994)'.

To begin with irreversible binomials were seen as a form of 'Al Itbaa' where 'a word is followed by another word similar to the first in rhyme or rhythm to complete or emphasize the meaning of the meaning of the first word" (Innu Faris, ND: 414). For example ' خراب يباب' (completely destroyed) 'حسن بسن' 'fairly good'. Formally, the two words can have the same or different rhymes, and the second word can have a meaning or meaningless but severs as an emphasis to the first e.g. ' حار يار' (very hot) and 'عطشان نطشان',(extremely

thirsty). 'عفريتنفريت', (devilish) 'خفيف ذفيف', (very light) The first words. The same applies to 'شيطان نيطان' ,'عفريت نفريت', ' خفيف' 'ذفيف'. Or the second word in the pair many have same meaning. for example in ' حياك الله وبياك' (God bless and cheer you),'بياك' may have the meaning of 'cheering'; and in ' فقير وقير' (poor and skinny) 'وقير' have the meaning of skinny. (As Sayuuti, nd:414-419). Al Asammai in As Sayuuti (nd:420) points out the constituents in Al Itbaa may have an idiomatic meaning. For example 'حيص بيص' means 'in a mess'. ASSabki in ibid: 416, 425) suggests that the second item in the 'Itbaa' functions as an intensifier rather than an emphasizer because the emphasizer is formally different from the item it emphasizes and separated from it by a conjunction.

characteristic feature of 'Al itbaa' is that that the two items follow one another without a conjunction in between. Yet it can be regarded as a special type of binomials because it consists of two words (usually nouns) where the second rhymes with and emphasizes the second.

Another expression which has been an affinity with irreversible binomials in Arabic is Al Tibaq. For Al Halabi (1972: 84-90)and Al Hashimi (1994: 368), Al Mutabaqa is to mention something and its opposite, its contrast, or its equivalent to achieve stylistic effects. For example in " نورد "الرايات بيضا ونصدرهن حمرا ندورينا" (we forward the banners white and bring them back red) 'forward' and 'bring back' are oppositions while 'white' and 'red' are contrasts. In ' مكروا ومكر الله' the item 'مكر' is followed by its equivalent though each implies a different meaning. Abbas (1987: 275f) mentions that the items combined can be nouns e.g. 'السماوات والارض' (heaven

and earth), 'الانس و الجن' "Human beings and Jinns; or verbs e.g. "وانه هو اضحك وابكى" (that it is he who Granth laughter and tears); or articles e.g. لها وعليها (for and upon it) or لا علي ولا لي (neither for nor upon me).

Alqeirawani (1972:17ff) draws a distinction between Al- Mutabaqa the contrast between two things or persons and Al- Muqabala (when the contrast is between more than two things or person for example: (النصح و الوفاء مقابل الغل و الغدر) and (جنة وثوابا او نارا وعقابا).

In colloquial Arabic, binomials have been identified. Al Hamdani (1997) approaches the binomial expressions in Iraqi Arabic phonopragmatically. He argues that the ordering of the irreversible binomial is governed by linguistic, cultural and pragmatic constraints as well as social beliefs, wishes, idea, values and norms. For example divine precedes non-divine concept as in الله ورسوله (God and his messenger), 'والله و العبد' (God and worshipper); what happens comes first as in قول وفعل (word and work) سؤال وجواب (question and answer); near comes first e.g. هوني و هنوك (here and there) etc.

Gorgis and Timimi (2005) study binomials in Iraqi and Jordanian Arabic where they compared binomial expressions in Iraqi Arabic with their counterparts in Jordanian Arabic. For example يجرح ويداوي in Iraqi Arabic and بيكسر ويجبر in Jordanian Arabic يزرع و يحصد in Iraqi Arabic and ازرع واقلع in Jordanian Arabic.

They conclude that "the most frequent pattern in the data studied is noun + noun" and that "the formal ordering does not override semantic/ pragmatic ones "(p.145).

Despite the abundance of previous research on the characteristic features of irreversible binomials and the various types of constraints upon their ordering and availability of these expressions in the languages already discussed, the questions concerning learning and teaching of these fixed phrases are left un answered. The present study tries to bridge this gap by discussing the pedagogical considerations pertaining to the teaching and learning of these freezes and to provide a research- based data in this concern.

Pedagogical Considerations

Learning the lexis of a language seems to be at the heart of language learning. Wilkins (1972:11) notes that "while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothings can be conveyed. Provided that one knows the appropriate vocabulary first then some form of language is possible; without vocabulary it is impossible".

In the same vein, Richards and Renandya (2002:255) point out that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency. Without an extensive vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and miss the chance to make use of the learning opportunities around them such as listing to the radio, reading, watching television and satellite, chatting through the net or playing electronic games.

Until recently, vocabulary instruction has been relegated to a secondary status. It has been viewed as "a means to a semantic, exemplification of syntactic structures" (Judd, 1978); or as "a cumulative by- product of the teaching of structures or the communicative functions of sentences" (Mc

McCarthy, 1984:12). This may be due to the structural approach and the audio-lingual method which views language learning as first and foremost learning its sound system and grammatical structures in addition to basic vocabulary items to manipulate them in a meaningful context. Learning the lexis can be left to look after itself on the part of the learner as a long- life learning process (Wilkins, 1972:109; Rivers, 1981:210).

Since the mid 1980s of the past century, interest in learning and teaching vocabulary at almost all levels of language learning has been revived with the advent of the communicative approach to language teaching. The emphasis has been shifted from developing grammatical competence to fostering and expanding communicative competence (Larsen-Freeman, 1987:8; Savignon, 1987:20). Advances in semantics-sociolinguistics and pragmatics have important contributions to fostering this trend in language teaching.

Two crucial issues are often related to the current approaches to vocabulary teaching and learning. The first one concerns the nature of lexis while the second concerns the way lexis is taught and learned.

To begin with lexical items does no longer refer to individual items but also to various type of lexical phrases in which words enter into various combinations with other words to form idioms like 'red herring' 'put up with', proverbs like 'father like son', 'Jack of all trades', collocation like 'commit a mistake', 'thin audience', common places like 'you only live once' 'to err in human', binomials like 'kith and kin', 'up and down'; formulaic frames or pre- fabricated patterns like 'how

do you do' 'so- so'; and reversible expressions like 'day and night; gold and silver or irreversible ones like 'odds and ends', 'pros and cons'.(Gramley and Patzold, 1992:53ff; Porto ,1998:22). Thus types of phases are highly frequent and recurrent features in almost all languages. And the discussion above of the (irreversible) binomials validates this assumption.

 These lexical phrases, on the other hand are said to be perceived as single, unanalyzed wholes (Lewis 2002:90). Porto (1998:23) believes that they are "stored in the lexicon as unanalysable chucks just like words. Being ready- made, they are easily retrieved. Consequently, they offer learners the possibility of expressing themselves in the absence of rich linguistic resources". This view is compatible with Newmark's (1973) view that "language is learned in whole chunks in real context" (p. 214). Stored as units, Porto (1998) add, that are "retrievable, highly accessible without the need for analysis by the rules of syntax". (P.24). Furthermore, occurring frequently and being context- dependent having situational meaning associated with a given context, learners are able to recall these phrases in similar situations. The frequency of occurrence and being easily memorized forms "may help make a learner conversationally competent" (ibid.: 25). This undoubtedly is the ultimate aim of most S/FL teaching.

　　　Irreversible binomials are but one type of lexical phrases mentioned above. These phrases are frequently used with specific meaning in various contexts. They are sometimes used to produce a stylistic effect; and because they have fixed sequence, the learner always find at their disposal already formulaic patterns which may help him avoid embarrassment

of slowly putting of words together that are syntactically correct and pragmatically appropriate. This is why these fixed phrases can learners to communicate confidently and competently.

The present research aims to investigate whether our advanced learners of English have already developed a sufficient asset of the frequently used irreversible binomials so that they can use them in a meaningful way in new contexts or make use of their equivalents in the native language.

The research problem to be investigated in the present paper is crystallized around whether our advanced students of English are able to:

1. Recognize the various types of irreversible binomials and uses them appropriately
2. Distinguish the various meanings of irreversible freezes
3. Provide equivalent phrases in Arabic to matches those of English

The Hypothesis

On the basis of the questions already raised the following hypotheses have been made:

1. Our advanced learners of English are able to
   a. Recognize the various types and meanings of irreversible freezes
   b. Use irreversible freezes appropriately
   c. Provide equivalent phrases in Arabic to match those of English

      This positive attitude has been adopted because our students have already studied English language and

literature for four years in addition to the twelve years spent in studying it at pre-university stage and is therefore supposed to master this aspect of English.

Purpose

The aim of the present paper is to test the hypotheses already posed so that experimentally- based answered can be provided to the questions already raised.

Methodology

The Sample Population and Subjects

The sample population of the present study was fourth year college students studying English language in the Department of English and those studying translation in the Department of translation, college of Arts, University of Mosul in the academic year 2006- 2007. The students have been exposed to various aspect language and literature, and to various registers such as legal, scientific, political as well as literary. Ten students were randomly selected from both departments to be subjects of the pilot study. The subjects were give an already designed test of irreversible binomials and interviewed after completing the test. They were asked about the degree of difficulty of the test and how fantastic and interesting to know binomial expressions which might come across and learned unconsciously. The subjects agreed that the test was not an easy task but they confirmed that such expressions were worth learning and essential for normal use language because they are frequently encountered in fiction, films and every day use of language. After excluding the

subjects in the pilot study as well as the repeaters, twenty five students from each department were selected randomly to be the subjects of the present study.

The Testing Scheme

In order to investigate the subjects' mastery of this linguistic phenomenon a test of three parts was carefully designed. Part One tested the subjects' mastery of binomials at recognition level. It consisted of two questions each contained ten items. The first question is a multiple choice test. It aimed at testing the subjects' ability to identify the exact meaning of the binomials given. The second question is a matching question. The subjects were required to match words from column A with those in column B to form irreversible binomials. The aim here is to see the extent the subjects were able to recognize these phrases.

Part two was a production test. It consisted of two questions each contained ten items. The third question was a completion test. The subjects were required to complete the phrases given to form irreversible binomials The fourth question required them to put ten frequently used irreversible binomials in meaningful sentences. The aim was to see whether the subjects had already had the ability to manipulate the phrases given and use them properly in meaningful contexts.

The last part (the fifth question) required the subjects to provide equivalent phrases in English to those underlined in Arabic. The aim here was to see whether the subjects had at their repertoires a sufficient amount of English irreversible

binomials that can be equivalents to Arabic frequently used phrases.

The validity and reliability of the test were ensured. Both construct and content validity was accounted for. The test was presented to a panel of experts in language teaching and in teaching composition and conversation to assess the test and to pass judgment on the coverage of the test of the topic investigated, the degree of difficulty of the items and the items consistency with the material being tested and to suggest alternatives if possible or necessary. Very few changes were suggested most of which were accounted for.

A pilot study was then made. The test was presented to ten students selected randomly from the departments of English and of Translations.the result was fair. The mean score was 59%. The subjects were then interviewed about the topic, the degree of the difficulty and the suitability of the test to their level of proficiency. They mostly agree that the test was relatively easy but their problem was that they had not paid due attention to these frequently used phrases before. They also found that the expressions were frequently heard in films and natural conversation as well as literature and that learning them involve a great deal of fun and interesting.

The final version of the test was administered on April 18, 2007.The test was scored out of fifty so that each question was scored out of ten.this means that each correct answer was given one mark.

Findings

The subjects' raw scores (Appendix 2) were statistically computed. The mean (x), Standard Deviation (SD) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were first applied. Then a series of comparisons were made looking for significant differences, if any, between the two groups under investigation. Table 1 shows the means, SD, for each group.

Table 1

The overall statistical results of Translation Group and English group

Groups	No.	Question	Mean	Std
Translation Group	25	A	6.00	2.82
		B	6.72	1.90
		C	6.16	2.07
		D	4.80	1.91
		E	4.80	1.82
		f	27.64	8.15
English Group	25	G	6.80	2.08
		H	7.60	1.82
		I	6032	2.28
		J	5.04	1.42
		K	4.16	1.62
		L	28.04	7.90

A close look at the table above indicates that the mean scores of both groups in almost all aspects of recognition, use and translation of irreversible binomials are relatively low: the total mean score of the Translation Group (TG) was (27.64); while the total mean score of the English Group (EG) was

(28.04). This implies that both groups are not good at the area being tested.

Four types of comparison were then made between the two groups to see whether the difference between then was significant in the three aspects of learning irreversible binomials, viz- recognition, production and translation. To this end a t- test was applied to highlight the difference, if any.

To begin with a comparison was first made between the TG and the EG at the level of recognition. The aim was to see whether the difference at that level was significant or not. To this end A and B (Q1 and Q2 that test recognition) of the TG were compared with G and H of the EG using a t- test. Table 2 below summarizes the results.

Table 2

A comparison between TG and EG at Recognition level

Groups		No.	Mean	Std	T-Value	Df	Sig.level
TG	A	25	6.360	2.079	1.589	48	0.05
	B	25					
EG	G	25	7.200	1.632			
	H	25					

The table above indicates that the computed t- value under (48) degrees of freedom at 0.05level of significance was (1.589) while the tabulated t- value under (40) degrees of freedom at the same level of significance reads(1.68). this implies that the difference was not significant, That is, both the groups were the same as far as recognition was concerned.

The second comparison was made between c+d (the scores obtained for Q3 and Q4 that test production) of the TG and their counterpart I+J (Q3 and Q4) of EG. The aim was to find out whether the difference between the two groups at production level was significant or not. Table 3 below summarizes the result obtained.

Table 3

A comparison between TG and EG at production level

Groups		No.	Mean	Std	T-Value	Df	Sig.level
TG	C	25	5.480	1.895	.393	48	0.05
	D	25					
EG	I	25	5.680	1.700			
	J	25					

The results indicate that the computed t- value under (48) degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance was (-.393) which is less that the tabulated t- value which reads (1.68) a case which implies that the difference between the two groups at production level was not significant. T his implies that both groups were roughly the same on production level

The third comparison was made between E (the mean obtained on Q5) of the TG and their counterpart K (Q5) of the EG. The aim was to see whether the difference between the two groups in the translation test was significant or not. Table 4 below summarizes the result obtained.

Table 4

A comparison between TG and EG in Translation Test

Groups	Question	No.	Mean	Std	T-Value	Df	Sig.level
TG	E	25	4.800	1.825	1.309	48	0.05
EG	K	25	4.160	1.624			

The result above clearly reveal that the computed t- value under (48) degree of freedom at level of significance was less than the tabulated t- value which reads (1.68) under the same degree of freedom and the level of significance. This means that the difference between the two groups in the translation test was not significant.

A final comparison was made between (F), the total mean scores obtained in the test by the TG and their counterpart (L) (the total mean score obtained in the test by the EG. Table five summarizes the results obtained.

Table 5

A comparison between TG and EG in the overall results

Groups	Question	No.	Mean	Std	T-Value	Df	Sig.level
TG	F	25	27.640	8.154	.176	48	0.05
EG	L	25	28.040	7.902			

The results show that the computed t- value under (48) degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significant was -.176 which is less than the tabulated t- value which reeds (1.68) under the same degree of freedom and the same level of significance. This

means that no statistically significant difference was found between the two groups in the translation test i.e. they were roughly the same in the areas tested.

Conclusion

From the findings above a number conclusions can be drawn

1. There is a general overall weakness in the recognition, production and translation of irreversible binomials. This is evident from the low means scores of the subjects of both groups in all the areas tested. This may be due to the fact that teachers of conversation and composition are preoccupied with accuracy rather than competency and fluency i.e., they frequently pay more attention to grammar and well- formedness of sentences than to the content and way of expressing ideas and the style used in spoken communication or in writing.

2. Both groups find difficulty in recognizing the relationship between one word and another and the meaning of irreversible binomials. This may be ascribed to the lack of attention to those frequently used phrases on the part of the teachers as well as students.

3. The low mean scores obtained by both groups in the production part clearly reveal the relative weakness of the students in this area. This again may be due to de-emphasis on this aspect of vocabulary learning, a case which need due attention.

4. The low mean scores obtained by both groups in the translation part clearly indicate that the students are

unaware of the equivalent of these phrases in Arabic. The lack of attention to Arabic irreversible binomials prevents the learner from a rich potential source for rapid and competent development in translation from or into English.

5. According to the results above, the hypothesis posed which reads" Our advanced learners of English are able to

   d. Recognize the various types and meanings of irreversible freezes

   e. Use irreversible freezes appropriately

   f. Provide equivalent phrases in Arabic to match those of English

   must be rejected and the alternative hypothesis must be accepted. That is, advanced learners of English and of the translation find real difficulty in comprehending, producing and translating from/ into English irreversible binomials.

   On the basis of this conclusion, it is recommended that teachers of composition, conversation and literature as well as translation should draw the students' attention to the meaning and use of this type of phrases because they are found in almost all language so that they provide a potential source for the expansion of vocabulary which in turn help in genuine participation in classroom practice and discussion.

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Appendix 1

Dear student:

I would greatly appreciate your answering of the following questions concerning binomials-two words coordinated by 'and' or 'or' having the same grammatical category.thank you for cooperation.

Q1: Encricle the options that are closest in meaning to the underlined words or phrases

She has to **entertain** his important his clients

    a. dine and wine b. please out tease c. fine and wine d. enjoy and envoy

1. A number of cafes **scattered around**
   a. every where b. there and here c. here and their d. to and fro
2. They are walking **to and from some where** all day.
   a. To and forth b. front and back c. back and forth d. front and behind
3. You can **have a wide choice**. its up to you
   a. pick and choose b. choose and pick c. select and pick d. choose and move
4. He didn't know what to do. He ran **in both directions of** the street.
   a. to and back b. down and now c. down and up d. up and down
5. **Most importantly**, I have to thank my supervisor for encouraging me.
   a. first and then b. most and firstly c. first and foremost d. now and then.
6. She loves the **noise and activity** of the city life. she gets bored in the countryside
   a. noise and joy b. hustle and bustle c. fuss and chaos d. odds and sods
7. The workers have so many **objections** whenever we try to change the work routines.
   a. ifs and buts b. no and never c. buts and nevers d. never and ever.
8. **some day,** you will arrive to the same conclusion which I arrive to three months ago.
   a. today and tomorrow b. now and then c. soon or late d. sooner and later.
10. What are **the advantaged and disadvantages** of the project proposed?
   a. pros and cons b. odds and ends c. ups and downs d. ins and outs.

Q2: Match the words in column A with those in column B that best collocate with to form coordinated binomial phrases

Column A	Column B
1. fish	a. night
2. slowly	b. chips
3. mum	c. order
4. size	d. shape

5. wait   **and**   e. see
6. food   f. drink
7. law   g. off
8. social   h. cons
9. husband   i. dad
10. primary   j. cultural
                            k. wife
                            l. secondary

Q3: Fill in the blanks below with words that best complete the coordinated phases below:
1. flesh and_____
2. said or _____
3. success or _____
4. presence or _____
5. name and _____
6. theory and _____
7. bread and _____
8. national and _____
9. landings and _____
10. rise and_____

Q4: Use the following coordinated binomial phrases in meaningful sentences:
1. trial and error
2. theory and practice
3. all or nothing
4. here and there
5. part and parcel
6. on and off
7. ins and outs
8. go see
9. pros and cons
10. so and so

Q.5 Provide English equivalents for the underlined phrases below:

١. فرقتهم الدنيا شذر مذر.

٢. زادت الأمور ضغثاً على إبالة.

٣. عندما رآها معه أرغى وأزبد.

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4. قطع الحديقة <u>جيئة وذهوبا.</u>

5. وقع في <u>حيص بيص.</u>

6. سيندحر الغزاة <u>عاجلاً أم آجلاً.</u>

7. إنها مسألة <u>تجريبة وخطأ.</u>

8. عليك <u>أولاً وقبل كل شيء</u> أن تقول الحق.

9. انقلبت أحواله <u>رأساً على عقب.</u>

10. لقد شاركته <u>الأفراح والأتراح.</u>

تقصي إتقان الطلبة العراقيين للتعابير الثنائية في اللغة الإنكليزية في المستوى الجامعي

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اللخـــص

التعابير الثنائية الجامدة هي عبارات تلزم حالة واحدة لا تتغير بتغير العدد أو الجنس أو الحالة الإعرابية ولها توزيع عشوائي محدد ومعنى اصطلاحي ثابت مثل ليل ونهار، صعود وهبوط. ويعتقد أن هذه العبارات موجودة في جميع اللغات تقريباً.

للبحث الحالي هدفان: أولهما إثبات وجود هذه الظاهرة اللغوية في الانكليزية والألمانية والكردية فضلاَ عن العربية. وثانيهما التحقق من قدرة طلبة قسمي اللغة الانكليزية والترجمة في كلية الآداب جامعة الموصل على استخدام هذه التعابير ومعرفة معانيها الدقيقة في اللغة الانكليزية. بيّنت النتائج ان أفراد العينة المختارة لا يزالون يواجهون صعوبة في استخدام هذه التعابير ومعرفة معانيها وهو أمر يستوجب الاهتمام لسببين الأول كون هذه التعابير جزءاً أساسياً من المعجم اللغوي لكل اللغات والثاني هو كون تعلمها يساعد في التحدث باللغة الانكليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية بشكل أكثر سلاسة.

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