Rural ESL Teachers' Acumen in Teaching Idioms: Traditional and Modern Methodology

Suhashini SelvaRaj, Tan Kim Hua

Abstract: *Idioms pose countless barriers to natural language processing and linguistic theory. Investigating how teachers teach idioms in schools using various methodologies is important. The therapy of idioms is fundamentally distinct in traditional and modern methods. Thus, this article has outlined the placement of idioms in traditional and modern methodologies and determined the acumen of English as second language (ESL) teachers in teaching idioms. Additionally, this article has uncovered the problems concerning idiom teaching by comparing ways on how idioms are handled in traditional versus modern methods through illustrating teachers' cognition and views. Data were collected from four rural ESL teachers through qualitative study by using interview protocol. Findings showed that rural ESL teachers prefer to apply traditional method in teaching idioms as they are akin to explicit instructions. The use of traditional and modern methods to teach idioms generally varies depending on teachers and the method's unique implication on the learners. Thus, this research paper could be a guidance for the rural ESL teachers from all around the world to make instructional decisions in teaching of idioms by taking into account rural pupils' proficiency level, preferred learning style and their socioeconomic background.*

Keywords : Idioms, Teaching of idioms, Traditional method, Modern method, Teachers' belief

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Novelty of the paper

The novelty of my study is that I have explored the rural teachers' perspective especially teachers from aboriginal schools in Perak, Malaysia, regarding teaching and learning of idioms. Through the participants' opinions and previous studies, it seems that there are reasons to encourage learning idioms even among the aboriginal learners whom consider English as a foreign language. Moreover, this study has illustrated that although there is a call for modern methods in language teaching, certain areas such as the teaching of idioms are not seen by educators as helpful. It is therefore imperative to understand teacher cognition as their beliefs will influence their way of teaching. The adoption of modern methods do not necessarily lead to success in teaching.

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B. Problem statement

The characteristics of idioms as 'distinct' and the irregularities that they pose to the language relative to 'standard' strings are the focus of most idiom studies. These characteristics and irregularities of idioms can be regarded formulaic in the sense that idioms have a fixed or semi-fixed framework in terms of enabling alteration. Wray and Perkins (2002) defined a wide range of formulaic phrases and suggested that idioms are a series of prefabricated phrases, or they appear to be. Therefore, this article seeks to identify how traditional and modern methods of teaching idioms are established and handled. Exploring idiom behaviour through theoretical methods, especially conventional and traditional methods, has limitations.

Strategies used in language teaching are constantly altered and revived to follow on-going changes in our instructional scheme. This constant alteration also applies to idioms. Idioms are defined as definite phrases that should be remembered and learned by core and used in verbal and written expression (Cieslicka, 2006). Thus, traditional teaching techniques and idiom approaches remain the same, wherein learners must memorise the idioms provided and defined by teachers (Chen & Lai, 2013). Consequently, traditional method enables learners to remember and willingly used the memorised idioms in-depth.

However, several researchers claim that this technique is out-dated. They recommend a modern methodology to substitute the traditional method of teaching idioms. For example, cognitive linguistic manner can be used to teach idioms, signifying that certain idioms have features that could be analysed and have meanings that can actually be obtained from the contexts (Boers et al. 2008; Kövecses 2002; Cieslicka, 2015). In addition, cognitive linguistic strategy is often considered the most helpful technique in teaching idioms to ESL learners; because the goal is to educate learners on guidelines of using idioms and not just to discover idioms (Dancygier & Sweetser 2014; Chen & Lai 2013; Langlotz, 2006).

Furthermore, idioms are regarded in second-language classes as one of the key fields to be learned, particularly in learning English as second language (Boers et al. 2008). Consequently, scholars recognise the significance of teaching idioms because of the idioms' prominence in the native language; non-native speakers experience difficulty acquiring metaphorical language (Tran 2013; Schmitt 2000; Cieslicka, 2006).

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Specifically, the existence of idioms in a particular language makes the language colourful and dynamic. Moreover, understanding idioms is essential when interacting with native speakers who commonly use idiomatic expressions.

However, one common notion among scholars focusing on ESL learners is that idioms are one of the most challenging expressions for ESL learners to understand (Tărcăoanu, 2012). Samani and Hashemian (2012) debated that traditional teaching approaches stresses on memorising idioms; thus, students fail to gain insight into using idioms in different contexts during classes. No connection or choice is provided to learners to link with prior understanding because teachers merely introduce the primary significance of idioms. However, Li (2010) stated that the traditional method should not be abandoned because certain idioms have literal meaning. As a result, the traditional and modern methods should be considered because they have their own distinct characteristics and impacts on the teaching and learning process.

C. Research Gap

As for the cognition of teachers, ESL research in Malaysia appears to fall far behind which creates a huge research gap that requires special attention from Malaysian ESL researchers. Teachers in Malaysia are not influential enough towards curriculum assessments and action plans. Little attention is given to the teachers' voices. As a result, little is unveiled regarding belief system of teachers in English and the actual practice of language teaching in classroom. In accordance to this, studies regarding beliefs of English teachers in rural schools especially in aboriginal schools has to be prioritised since they face significant language barriers and varied language ability among pupils. It is a major gap that needs to be addressed in the literature. There is hardly anything known about how English teachers in the aboriginal schools decide on the content and how to effectively select and present text and materials to students of such backgrounds.

Understandably, the exposure among students to English at such locations is very low and restricted only to the hours of English contact in schools. The learning environment of English is not encouraging because the only contact students have with English is in their language classroom. Most students tend to consider English as one of the difficult subject to be acquired and also less important as they could still pass the national exams even if they have failed their English paper and therefore there is no greater force to take it seriously. Just as the students' own negative confrontations towards English which consequently contributed to their poor language comprehension, these perceptions have also seriously affected the commitment and encouragement of teachers to teach English.

Besides, there have been few and far between researches on ESL educators' beliefs in Malaysia particularly on teaching idioms in ESL classrooms. There are numerous research studies that investigate the belief of educators in learning grammar and vocabulary but lack in studying the belief and practice of teachers in teaching idioms. This isn't astounding as stated by Borg (2006) that clear discussion among instructors in the writing about examining beliefs in teaching is still lacking. He believes such research to be "distinct from the research of associated psychological constructs such as knowledge, conceptions and attitudes." As Richards (1998) perceives, the frameworks of instructors beliefs are "steady casings of reference that are bit by bit built throughout the years they educate and are connected to the parts of showing, for example, language theory of teachers, the nature of language, educator's job, proficient teaching strategies and connections among educator and students.

In brief, it is probably the beliefs of the educators that will be the determining factor on how enthusiastically they perform in the classroom and how efficient they can be in educating their learners. Therefore, the absence of research in the Malaysian education system in this specific region stops both teachers and scientists from being a helpful reference source.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to explore the beliefs and preferences of rural ESL teachers on teaching idioms on the basis of traditional and modern methodologies. Therefore, the researchers have two major research questions they seek to highlight.

i. How do teachers perceive the methods used in teaching idioms considering the difficulties faced by the rural pupils in learning idioms?

ii. Which method of teaching idioms in second language learning do rural teachers prefer (traditional vs. modern method)?

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Idioms

Figurative language provides aesthetic significance to a message (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014). However, Dancygier and Sweetser (2014) claim that idioms are not meant to be merely ornamental, but they are significant portions of a language that relates to all natural forms. Figurative language can be closely related to metaphors (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014), which are classified as literal contrast (Macmillan Dictionary). Idioms, for example, are mentioned in the Macmillan Dictionary as containing metaphorical thoughts. Idioms are also described as a set of phrases that plays a role in a set sequence and possesses significance distinct from the connotations of each distinct element (Oxford English Dictionary). Therefore, idioms can be referred as arbitrary-significant in a fixed phrase. For instance, the idiom of 'apple of my eye' is impossible to be understood by the significance of each of the individual words. Thus, one has to memorise the meaning of the idioms as a whole. Gibbs (1991) claimed that idioms are expressions that cannot be extracted from their respective phrases according to the traditional perspective. He also stated that 'idioms have been described as' deceased metaphors 'lexicalized that are deposited in a particular portion of the psychic lexicon' (Gibbs, 1991).

In addition, the Macmillan Dictionary describe idioms as phrases whose significance varies from the significance of their phrases.

Likewise, McCarthy and O'Dell (2002) described idioms as phrases with a significance that is not evident from individual phrases. Specifically, seeing idioms in-depth is the best way to comprehend idioms; thus, the significance of a particular idiom may be extracted from the context of the conversation or text. Kövecses and Szabo (1996) highlighted that idiomatic linguistic expressions are considered as idioms wherein the meanings cannot be fully anticipated from the individual components. By contrast, most idioms have a deliberate social motive because they are based on conceptual metaphors. Furthermore, idioms are the vocabulary substances of native speakers. Hence, an individual cannot draw up an idiom but can always use the right one. Likewise, according to Wright (1999), utilising language in a metaphorical way within an expression is also considered an idiom.

Numerous definitions of idiom exist. However, the popular hypothesis seems to be that idioms are random and should be learned by core. For research reasons, the current thesis follows the definition of Wright (1999) and McCarthy and O'Dell (2002).

B. Significance and difficulty of idioms in second language

After the widespread awareness of idioms' significant role in learning English (Cooper, 2012; Irujo, 1986a; Liontas, 2003), much attention is paid to teaching idioms to second language learners (L2). Other researchers such as Kellerman (1983) were dedicated to explaining the handling of L2 idioms and the function of L1 in the system.

Acquiring knowledge about idioms not only enables language learners to communicate well, but it also enables them to learn the culture and community of the target language (Samani & Hashemian, 2012). Elkilic (2008) also indicated that the English language is abundant in idioms. Thus, one has to learn idioms to embrace the core of the English language. Similarly, Stight (1979) indicated that the appropriate use of idioms is a significant component of studying a second language when it comes to idiom usage. Furthermore, parallel to Samani and Hashemian's statement, Agar and Gluckberg (as cited in Ling, 2016) pointed out that acquiring idioms enable learners to explore about one's culture and participate in the actual context since the use of idioms in English deemed to be normal and conversational.

Irujo (as cited in Vasiljevic, 2012) highlighted that majority of L2 resources either disregard the idioms completely or did honour the idioms by just listing them out as 'additional expressions' that do not offer any opportunities for practice. L2 students encounter certain problems, such as comprehension issues, when learning the English language. According to Cooper (2012), L2 learners would find different kinds of idioms in speeches, news, presentations, films, books and regular discussions. In addition, Chuang (2013) stated that mastering these multiword units or language chunks is difficult for language learners because the meanings of these phrasal verbs cannot be deduced by merely analysing their respective term meanings. Thus, idioms are a major obstacle to the language growth of L2 students.

As far as idiom understanding is concerned, Holsinger and Kaiser (2013) indicated that the manner in which learners attain idiomatic understanding lacks empirical backup. In addition, they doubted if the idiomatic description needed literal handling and found that context clues play an important role in the reading process (Holsinger & Kaiser, 2013). The significance of processing time is more disrupted when learners expect literal analysis despite the presence of idiomatic sentences than when learners anticipate an idiomatic interpretation and the sentence turns out to be literal (Holsinger & Kaiser, 2013). Thus, understanding idiomatic writings takes more time than comprehending literal sentences.

C. Traditional Method of Teaching Idioms

Teaching idioms is undeniably important because idioms continue to be a part of the various conversations of native speakers. Thus, learning and understanding a certain language without understanding idioms first is difficult. Idioms should be taught in an ESL classroom for many reasons, and several methods of teaching idioms are available. These techniques can be widely split into two wide approaches, namely, traditional and cognitive linguistic approaches (Rizq, 2015). Idioms are instructed through memorisation and rote learning on the basis of traditional teaching methodology; hence, learners are provided with a list of sentences they have to memorise through continual repetition (Chen & Lai, 2013). Chen and Lai (2013) find such a technique ineffective because it is time and effort consuming, and learners need to pick up languages prior to adequate exposure and understanding.

Kövecses and Szabo (1996) compared the traditional methods of seeing and learning idioms with cognitive linguistics, and set out the traditional perspective of idioms, that is, idioms are regarded as a unique collection of a wider range of autonomous and language-specific phrases. The traditional perception of idioms is arbitrary, and teaching methods come from that viewpoint should have no adverse connotation of the 'traditional technique' (Kövecses and Szabo, 1996).

Rizq (2015) showed that many teachers prefer the traditional teaching method because idioms cannot be taught implicitly; thus, explicit instruction is much practical. Educators involved in the research of Rizq (2015) even thought that the traditional method of learning could be perfected and completed by incorporating certain aspects of the behavioural language strategy to the system. Nation (2001) emphasised the significance of repetition in vocabulary learning. He even stated that, vocabulary products need to be understood as well as need to be well established so they can be accessed fluently. Repetition therefore contributes to the quality of information as well as the amount or power of that information (Nation, 2001). Memorisation and repetition in learning idioms are appropriate techniques which impose advantages to a student's language understanding.

D. Modern Method of Teaching Idioms

Modern methodology is much more student-centric than traditional methodology. According to Jim Scrivener (2005), a teachers primarily functions to 'assist learning to occur', which defines the involvement of learners as allowing them to function at their own pace, not providing lengthy lectures, encouraging them to engage, speak, communicate, do stuff etc. (Scrivener, 2005).

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The way to accomplish this objective has also altered because modern methodology proposes something distinct. As Jack C. Richards (2008) pointed out, focus is more to the understanding and abilities required for the appropriate use of grammar and other elements of language for various communicative purposes such as creating demands, providing guidance, creating suggestions, explaining desires and requires and so on (Richards, 2008). The techniques, courses and books of teachers must be adapted to the students' requirements to meet their demands.

Communicative skill shall be considered the priority rather than grammatical competence. White (1998) articulates three values of modern practice, namely, primacy of expression, centrality of linked text as the core of the teaching–learning system, and complete precedence of the classroom verbal approach (White, 1998). Modern methodology chooses to introduce contextualised language and acquire abilities rather than memorising grammatical laws and discrete words. Another important element to be debated is the learning abilities of modern methodology.

One of the prominent approaches under the modern methodology of teaching idioms is the cognitive linguistic approach. Cognitive linguistics argues that language understanding arises from language use, which calls for real-world accounting for language use because language does not occur in a vacuum. In embracing a usage-based cognitive linguistic view, Tomasello (2003) considers language use as a vital element of enculturation and criticises generative methods.

In generative grammar, Tomasello (2003) challenged the concept of 'inherent grammar', and he was particularly critical of the notion of 'grammatical phrases' being Chomsky's primary focus, at the cost of alleged 'non-grammatical phrases' such as idioms which can obviously be found in daily life. Therefore, Tomasello (2003) recommended an alternative cognitive hypothesis based on use, with accounting for language use as well as socio–pragmatic elements at the centre of his model.

The cognitive grammar and linguistics statements are consistent with Fillmore et al. (1998), who referred the nature of idiomatic expressions as their meaning and use cannot be simply deduced from the knowledge of the stated constituent parts.

E. Teachers' Beliefs

Pajares (1992) argued that belief is a complicated terminology. It is a chaotic structure and can be confusing under many terms, such as behaviours, beliefs, judgments, views, structures, private concepts, views, conceptions and inner mental process. In addition, the definition of belief by Pajares (1992) is not an objective fact but is based on assessment and judgement linked to the general element that takes the moment to build its significance.

Furthermore, Borg (2001) characterised belief as a proposition that can be kept deliberately or unconsciously is evaluative in that it is embraced by the person as real and is thus imbued with emotional engagement; further, it acts as a guide to thought and behaviour. The beliefs function as a fundamental monitor to individuals' behaviour that occurs in their lives either deliberately or unconsciously (Borg, 2001). Moreover, beliefs imbued the intervention of continuity in doing something. Both Borg (2001) and Pajares (1992) describe belief as the fundamental scaffolding that reflects the lives of the current educators. The beliefs of educators on pedagogical intervention occurred in the lives of teachers. The variables that can shape teachers' beliefs must be defined when attempting to comprehend the impact of teachers' opinions on teaching. As argued by Eisentein-Ebsworth and Schweers (1997), articulating their rationales, educators referred to different variables influencing their opinions, such as the student's desires and the expectations of the syllabus. According to Richards (1998), two distinct kinds of knowledge may affect the understanding and practice of teaching used by teachers. The first kind relates to curriculum objectives, lesson plans, learning events, equipment, assignments and learning methods. The other is about the private and subjective philosophies of educators and their understanding of what is the excellent method of teaching. According to Moini (2009), the social construct of educators, resulting from their personal experiences and impacts from their work environment, plays a part in their values growth.

Alongside his comprehensive analysis of beliefs, Borg (2003) argued that the studies on practicing teachers provide further assistance to the view that prior learning knowledge forms the cognitions and educational choices of educators. Similarly, other studies show that the previous knowledge of educators and learners in connection to their former teachers plays a significant part in influencing their present learning views about grammar teaching. In accordance to this statement, Nespor (1987) discovered that students could be affected by a vital experience or some especially important teacher generates a richly detailed episodic memory that subsequently acts as an impetus and model for the student's own teaching methods. Abdullah and Majid (2013) also recognised the experience of learners as one of the possible sources of beliefs in their research on Malaysian ESL educators, in addition to attitudes towards students, organisational climate and practice and personal opinions on present exercise. The findings of this research are reflected by the declaration of Ezzi (2012) on the nature of educators' belief that they are probable to derive from their previous experience of teaching English.

The significance of beliefs in the classroom practice of a teacher cannot be ignored. Shavelson and Stern (1981) show that their beliefs govern the behaviour of teachers in the classroom. Moreover, the belief system of educators comprises 'information, behaviours, principles, concepts and expectations on teaching, learning, learners and other teaching elements' (Moini 2009). The teachers' beliefs about grammar learning assist them to 'form part of the comprehension system of conceptualizing their job' (Richards, Gallo & Renandya 2001). Thus, the importance of the ESL educators' beliefs in creating choices is proven during their ESL grammar classes, which involve the content of the lesson, the scope of the class, the methodology used and other elements of language teaching.

F. Models of Processing Idioms

There are four theories of idioms comprehension that have been listed in an article written by Juhi Kim in 2013, 'Dealing with unknown idiomatic expressions in L2 classroom'; namely Idiomatic Processing Model, Literal Processing Model,

Direct Access Hypothesis and Simultaneous Processing Model. However, two types of idiom-processing models will be discussed in this section. These models are differentiated by assessing the idiomatic or the literal meaning first. Computing the idiomatic meaning above all suggests that literal analysis takes precedence over analysis to idiomatic significance, whereas the other sort implies that idiomatic and literal procedures take place separately of one another.

1) Literal processing

Configuration and hybrid representation hypotheses embrace the literal processing model. Cacciari and Tabossi (1988) stated that literal processing pave the way to idiomatic meaning under the configuration hypothesis. Specifically, readers continue with literal analysis until they have adequate indications to acknowledge phrases as idiomatic. Idiomatic significance is then recovered, and the understanding process begins. In addition, literal computation takes precedence over idiomatic processing, and it automatically continues. Moreover, Cacciari and Tabossi (1988) asserted that the usual and logical method of interpreting documents is literal processing. Correspondingly, hybrid representation hypothesis favours literal processing over idiomatic processing (Cutting & Bock 1997), that is, individuals always believe of the literal significance when they read it. Individuals will then start to believe the idiomatic significance when they see enough hints in the document.

2) Lexical Model

Bobrow and Bell (1973) puts forward the lexical model. The idioms are regarded as large phrases, and they are immediately connected to semantic data so that computational understanding is necessary for this association. The lexical model thinks that parallel idiomatic and literal procedures exist. Similarly, Gibbs (1980) suggested a model for direct access that accesses idiomatic text translation.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The figure below shows the theoretical framework of the study. It shows that the models of processing idioms namely literal processing and lexical model helps in idioms comprehension among learners. However, the method used by teachers to teach idioms further facilitates the idioms comprehension among the learners depending on their application of models.
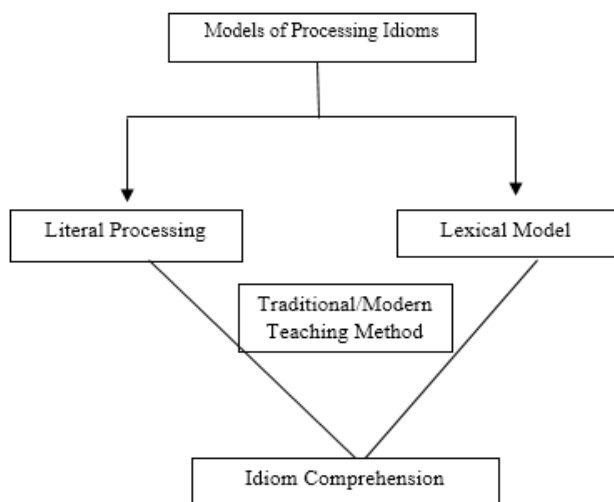

Fig. 1. Theoretical Framework

V. METHODOLOGY

Research approach, research type, tools and subjects are the components of research methodology. Qualitative approaches are used in the current research paper wherein the research type is exploratory research. Four English teachers are purposively selected to be the participants of this study. They are teaching at three different aboriginal schools in Sungai Siput (U), Perak, Malaysia. The minimum academic qualification of the selected participants is a master's degree in TESL. All four participants share a common feature wherein they speak a second language beside their mother tongue language. Moreover, most of the participants taught English for at least three years in an aboriginal school. In this study, all names are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants.

Interview protocol for teachers is used as the research tool in this present research to identify their beliefs about teaching idioms. The interview questions are adapted from a research paper by Rizq (2015), who investigated ESL teachers' perspectives of teaching idioms in a language classroom. The teachers answered four open-ended questions in the interview protocol. The survey questioned respondents about their idiom perspectives, and the preferable methods they used to teach idioms—traditional or modern method.

A. Analytical Framework

A qualitative research survey is performed. Patterns and important terms are searched (Nunan & Bailey 2009) to address my research questions and analyse information. The areas where the respondents' views were intersecting and challenging were sought. These views are linked with the sensible justifications of the respondents.

The information for meaningful comparable and dissimilar ideas is linked to the respondents' social contexts and experiences. Therefore, the associated thoughts are structured into groups. The analysis was comparable to Lincoln and Guba's process of card sorting technique described in (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). However, under the title of the respondents as a heading, the answers, primary thoughts and study issues are placed in lists. I then grouped comparable and identical responses.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results in this section are presented in tables according to the survey questions order. The first question of the survey asked how teachers perceive the method used in teaching idioms. Table 1 below illustrates the responses of the participants about the importance of idioms. It is followed by Table 2, which focuses on difficulty of learning idioms by the rural pupils. Table 3 tabulates the responses from the participants regarding their preferable idioms teaching method.

A. The importance of idioms in everyday English

Table-I: Participants' response regarding the importance of idioms in everyday English

Teacher	Teacher Response
T1	In my opinion, idioms are not a crucial element in English proficiency as the rural pupils tend to have hard time learning the simple English elements. Thus, communicating with simple and accurate English would be sufficient for them as English merely a third language for them.
T2	Yes, idioms are important as it will enhance their communication to an advanced level and would motivate them to progressively acquire the language.
T3	It is important to learn idioms but it is difficult for rural pupils to understand and use idioms casually in conversation as English exposure is not being attained by the pupils. More exposure and importance is given to their mother tongue (*Temiar* language) and Malay. It is evident that English is being neglected by majority of the community. However, learning idioms is important as the pupils tend to encounter most idioms in their reading material or media.
T4	Yes it is important. Idioms add beauty to the language and it will convey message in metaphorical way.

Regarding the position of idioms in ESL, all respondents claimed that idioms play a significant part in the learning and teaching of languages. Different justifications are provided to support their views in line with prior research. 'Teacher 4' states that he or she will somehow encounter idioms in most of English discourses, though the rural aboriginal pupils lack English exposure, which will act as a catalyst for the learners to learn idioms. This point of view agrees with the argument of Cooper (2012) that ESL learners discover idiomatic phrases in all kinds of speeches, including TV, films, books and conferences.

B. Difficulty of learning idioms

Table-II: Participants' response regarding the difficulty of learning idioms

Teacher	Teacher Response
T1	Most of the aboriginal pupils find it difficult to learn idiomatic expression as they having difficulties even in producing accurate sentences. Added to that, the aboriginal pupils find it difficult to infer the meaning of the idioms as they don't carry the literal meaning of the individual words.
T2	Pupils are often confused as they couldn't comprehend the meaning of the idioms as idioms don't have literal meaning. The aboriginal pupils here tend to find the literal meaning of the words in the figurative phrase and get confused and clueless of the idioms used.
T3	Pupils are having inferior to use idioms as they are afraid of making mistakes.
T4	Some of the pupils are well motivated to learn idioms however they are clueless of the usage when it comes to a writing or conversation context. They couldn't recall or guess the meaning of the idioms immediately.

The participants provided several rational justifications to support their argument that idioms are a difficult subject for rural English language learners. Three out of four participants indicated that the significance of the idiom is not the outcome of the individual words' meaning in the idiomatic phrase (Bateni 2010; Cain, Oakhill & Lemmon 2005; Irujo, 1986b). ESL learners generally believe that they do misinterpret the idioms information which causes them to fail in effectively using the idiom. Teachers 1, 2 and 4 elicited the notion that the definition of idioms is not easily conceivable for their meanings and that their forms are not specifically linked to literal meanings. Additionally, they stated that idiom understanding difficulties stem from the gap between the words' ground meaning and its significance in a contextual group of words.

Evidently, the majority of aboriginal pupils face difficulties to infer the figurative meaning of the idioms as they tend to deduce the individual words of the idioms. Therefore, the majority of the aboriginal pupils handle the idioms by using literal processing model of processing idioms which is in line with Cacciari and Tabossi (1988). These researchers stated that the learner will carry on with literal analysis until they have adequate indications to acknowledge phrases as idiomatic, then the idiomatic significance is recovered and the process of understanding starts (Cacciari and Tabossi, 1988). Consequently, the intervention plan that the teachers implement to assist the pupils is by teaching them using the traditional method. Knowing that the pupils involuntarily practicing literal processing model, the teachers support them by implementing traditional method in teaching idioms. The traditional method channel the model used by the pupils to be operative enough for them to understand idioms.

Furthermore, 'Teacher 4' perceived idioms through the pupils' perspectives. He or she stated that it is more challenging to use idioms correctly than studying idioms, and his or her assertion corresponded with the research of Irujo (1986b). Irujo (1986b) indicated that L2 learners are not only struggling with the significance of idioms but also with the appropriate use of idioms.

C. The preferred teaching method of idioms

Table-III: Participants' response regarding their preferred teaching method of idioms

Teacher	Teacher Response
T1	I prefer to teach idioms using traditional method since addressing idioms repetitively can raise awareness and provide opportunity to the rural pupils whom poor in English proficiency to easily understand and recall meaning of the idioms in a reading material.
T2	I would choose to teach idioms using modern method. I prefer the implicit introduction of idioms because I find it easier to explain the application of the idioms in specific context.
T3	I fond to use the traditional method in my class because my clients are aboriginal pupils. These aboriginal pupils are weak in English and it is very challenging for them to learn an element which they rarely expose to which is idioms. Teaching idioms using the traditional method give positive impact on the pupils' understanding and they could remember the idioms learnt efficiently. This is because repetition technique and learning in isolation could help the pupils to recall the list of idioms learnt as well as their respective meanings.
T4	I have mixed opinion regarding the methodologies used to teach idioms. I am teaching aboriginal pupils thus, teaching them using traditional method by memorisation and learning the items distinctively could help them to recall the idioms effortlessly. However, if I teach using the modern method or easy to say by letting the pupils to use the idioms in their conversation, I have observed that some of the good learners could deduce the meaning of the idioms taught easily but it is a challenge for intermediate and poor learners.

Two teaching methods of idioms are discussed in this paper, namely, traditional and modern methods. Chen and Lai (2013) stated that in traditional method of teaching idioms, the figurative phrases will be instructed through memorisation and rote learning, wherein learners are provided with a list of sentences they need to memorise through continual repetition. By contrast, the cognitive linguistic approach embraces a usage-based theory wherein language understanding arises from language use which promotes calls for real-world accounting for language use (Tomasello, 2003).

The fourth question from the interview protocol asked which approach the participants prefer when teaching idioms and the reasons behind their preferences. On the basis of the results above, 'Teachers 1, 3 and 4' claimed that they prefer to apply traditional method to teach idioms in their language class. The justifications given by the respondents are similar in nature, wherein they stressed on their aboriginal pupils' proficiency and exposure towards the English language which is relatively low. The teachers believe that using traditional method to teach low-proficiency pupils is effective as repetition is the core technique used in the methodology which is supported by Nation (2001). He emphasised the significance of repetition in language learning by stating that language elements need not only be understood instead they need to be well established so they can be accessed fluently. Therefore, repetition contributes to the quality of information as well as the amount or power of that information (Nation, 2001).

On the contrary, 'Teachers 2 and 4' expressed their choice of using modern method to teach idioms. They clarified that teaching idioms in context and adequate practice of idioms in the language discourse offer the best technique for the pupils to grasp the meaning of the idioms effortlessly. The participants' responses is in line with White (1988), who stated that communicative skill is given the utmost priority than grammatical competence in modern method of teaching idioms. Furthermore, modern methodology chooses to introduce contextualised language and acquire abilities rather than memorising grammatical laws and discrete words (White, 1988).

However, 'Teacher 4' further explained that the 'language-use' technique may be effective for good language learners but he or she finds it impractical for intermediate or poor learners. Good language learners can generate the meaning of idioms by using literal and idiomatic procedure at once, whereas poor learners can use either literal or idiomatic processing model one at a time. Hence, good language learners can be categorised under lexical model users as suggested by Bobrow and Bell (1973). Likewise, 'Teacher 4' believes that modern methodology able to fit the good learners as the technique provide the learners with adequate contextual or idiomatic clues as well as semantic information in which directly encourages them to apply the lexical processing model to comprehend idioms.

Overall, the majority of the participants believed that traditional method of teaching idioms is best suited for aboriginal pupils taking into consideration their language proficiency level and the model used to process idioms.

VII. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to gain a particular perspective of the beliefs of ESL educators on idioms in rural ESL school. Participants' views are useful to those who see ESL as their potential career. Four respondents communicated their views on the significance of idioms, idiom complexity and idiom teaching methods. Despite various ethnic origins, distinct learning experiences and respondents' diverse age groups, respondents generally agree on how they viewed idioms in rural ESL school.

Moreover, respondents argued that idioms are a significant element of language learning. Idioms are important because they are often used in verbal communication between learners as well as teachers to further maximise the art of language (Atieh Farashaiyan, 2012). Furthermore, the difficulty in understanding idioms is caused by the differences among the idioms' ground significance, real significance and right usage. Although the manner in which ESL students and educators look at idioms influence their teaching method, the majority of the participants agreed that traditional method is the best way to teach idioms for rural pupils.

As this paper has only highlighted the rural ESL teachers' perspective and beliefs regarding teaching of idioms, further studies can be done in different school contexts such as urban or sub-urban schools covering various language skills as reading, writing, speaking and listening. The main purpose of the recommendation is to understand the impact of contextual factors towards ESL teachers' cognition and actual classroom practices.

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