CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHERE DOES THE STUDY FIT IN?

This research is on the teaching / learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English (in the context of Sudan), but the teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verb is only part of teaching and learning of vocabulary and, again, the latter (i.e. T / L of vocabulary) is only part of a language development programme. It is, thus, important that teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English is placed in its proper perspective. In doing this, we use the principles, techniques, strategies etc. of teaching, learning and assessing vocabulary putting in consideration that these two vocabulary components are different (from other vocabulary items) in that they are multi-word lexical items - units larger than words. The present study has been conducted in the context of Sudan which offers a typical setting of an EFL programme, characterized by limited exposure to English as a commonly language and, hence, restricted scope of practice.

1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The vocabulary knowledge of FL is necessary in the sense that words are the basic building blocks of Language, the units of meaning from which larger structures such as sentences, paragraphs and whole texts are formed. For learners acquisition of vocabulary is typically conscious and demanding process. Even at an advanced level, learners are aware of limitations in their knowledge of FL words. They experience lexical gaps, that is words they read which they simply do not understand, or concepts that they cannot express as adequately as they could in their first language.

Generally speaking, very little has been written on the problems and strategies of teaching and learning of foreign language vocabulary. It is probably assumed that learning of another language vocabulary will be somehow mastered by those interested in the language on their own. There is also a popular perception that learning a foreign
language is basically mastering its vocabulary. Many learners see FL acquisition as essentially a matter of learning vocabulary. Therefore, they devote a great deal of time to memorizing lists of FL words and rely on their bilingual dictionary as a basic communicative resource. In popular writing, the expressions such as 'word power' is used in this sense. Thus, from various points of view, vocabulary can be seen as a priority area in language teaching / learning. However, LT strategies for teaching of vocabulary seems to be a neglected area which needs attention of the applied linguists and language teachers. Within this general field, two important but overlapping components in the context of ELT seem to be idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbal combinations that demand a lot of concern for the following reasons:

1. Subjectively and introspectively speaking, and also based on the experience of teachers and learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the context of the middle and east of Africa, it has been observed that these two areas cause a lot of problems and difficulties.

2. Objectively, there is a frequent demand from those possessing the knowledge of EFL that they must have a command of idiomatic expressions in real-life situations (advertisements for job vacancies will bear this out).

3. Even if one considers the problem from the angle of language economy and psycholinguistic processing, the possibility of using the same verb with different particles so as to produce several other multi-word verb forms, with new meanings, make the processes of information retrieval, recalling the lexical item at will, thus facilitating spelling and pronunciation, etc, much easier. Therefore, it makes perfect sense to form give in, give up and give away to from the same verb give - although it may present difficulties for some learners. In using the internet, sign up, sign in, sign on and sign out are also illustrative.

4. It is important to change the view which is based on the hypothesis that mastering of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs could be restricted only to the native speakers learning English formally or enhancing their knowledge of their first language (English) in order to approximate this competence. The non-native learners often show a tendency to avoid using vocabulary in an idiomatic way.
5. Idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs are some of the most interesting and yet challenging aspects of the English vocabulary. They are interesting because they are colourful and lively, and also because they are linguistic curiosities. At the same time, they are difficult because they have unpredictable meanings or collocations and grammar, and often have special connotations. They also demonstrate possibilities of semantic expansion.

6. Idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs are colourful and fascinating aspects of English. They are commonly used in all types of contexts, namely informal and formal, spoken and written.

7. Idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs are frequently neglected in general dictionaries and classroom teaching, because they are considered marginal items (especially idiomatic expressions) which are claimed to be quaint but not significant enough to merit special attention. Yet research and literature into idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs show that they have important roles in spoken language and in writing, particularly in conveying evaluations and in developing or maintaining interactions.

1.3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

1.3.1 Objective(s) of the research

This research to which this chapter forms an introduction arises out of a deep and prolonged dissatisfaction which the researcher has felt with both the past and present status of teaching / learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in the context of Sudan. Our main objective, in this research, is, therefore, to provide those engaged in English Language Teaching and Learning in Sudan with the suitable means for pre-empting and solving the problems and difficulties of teaching and learning idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English.

Other related objectives are:

- This study is set up/conducted to examine the problems / difficulties faced by Sudanese university students learning English while dealing with idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs and develop recommendations for the
improvement of the processes of teaching / learning these two important vocabulary components.

- To train the learners in the strategies of guessing (vocabulary) from context (with esp. reference to idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs as multi-word lexical items) which lead to the mastery of the general skill of reading.

In sum, the principal goal in this study is to seek suitable alternatives and different approaches for better teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs in the context of Sudan.

1.3.2 The Limitation(s) of the study

This research does not include comparative figures and strategies of EFL which could have been brought out from other nations. The study does not include the other countries or speech areas where EFL has been in operation. Moreover, it is a small-scale study. The data was collected from the written production / reception of the subjects who are small in number (100 students + 50 teachers as informants). However, these constraints are built in when one looks at the time available for completing a doctoral dissertation in a country far away from Sudan.

1.3.3 Hypotheses and research questions

Approach:

Discussing the specific and concrete problems / difficulties of teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in Sudan cannot be done in isolation from the educational and academic setting and the general context: the students' background, L2 etc and the teachers among other variables / factors. In other words, there are other relevant obstacles and causes which affect the teaching / learning of these multi-word lexical items in Sudan, apart from the inherent and potential problems / difficulties in the system of the target language.

Therefore, the following categorization of these variables / factors can be made:
1. **Extrinsic:** related to the general academic environment, the status of the English Language and the ELT situation in Sudan as well as syllabuses, materials, methodology etc.

2. **Intrinsic:** relevant to the inherent and potential problems / difficulties of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs and the general / whole system of the target language: i.e. intralingual.

3. **Intervening:** These could be, for instance, the learners' mother tongue (Li) system etc: i.e. interlingual.

   However, in this study, a greater emphasis was given to the intralingual / intrinsic factors / variables, i.e., on the category 2 as above.

1.3.3.1 Hypotheses

1. Teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in Sudan face problems and difficulties. Some specific and concrete problems / difficulties are as follows:

   a. The use of the wrong particle and / or preposition with verb.

   b. Not being able to understand the multi-word verbs, which are also idiomatic expressions.

   c. Generally, problems arise from the special nature of the multi-word verbs (their difficult structural patterns, eg. with pronouns, their special stress patterns and so on).

   d. Unless one knows what a given idiomatic expression means, they cannot, as a rule, guess its meaning from the words being combined. Every word in the following phrase, for example, *He's burnt his boats* is familiar enough, but the meaning of the phrase cannot be pieced together from the meanings of its parts.

   e. One understands every word in a text and still fails to grasp what the text is all about.

   f. One does not know whether for example, the words *fall out* form a unit of meaning (an idiom) or not.
These problems and difficulties are due to different reasons including the following:

a. The absence of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs from syllabuses.
b. Lack and dearth of relevant / suitable materials.
c. Lack of attention and awareness of their importance.
d. Unfamiliarity of learners with those two components.
e. Unfamiliarity of some of the lecturers themselves with the literature dealing with their teaching / learning.
f. Others: causes which could be related to the general situation of English Language and ELT in Sudan.

The solutions of those problems and the elimination of difficulties might reside in the following:

a. The introduction of a separate course on these two multi-word lexical items in the tertiary level syllabus in Sudan. This course could have the title 'idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs' or any similar suitable one.
b. The provision, selection of necessary and relevant materials especially those which could be used as teaching and learning aids (dictionaries, textbooks, supplementary materials, workbooks etc.).
c. To direct the attention to their importance and raise the awareness of their position and status in language.
d. To familiarize the learners with those two complex and crucial but overlapping components of vocabulary.
e. To equip the lecturers with the recent literature dealing with the teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English.
f. To train the learners in the strategy of guessing the meaning not from the words being combined alone, but from the context.

1.3.3.2 Research Questions

The following general and interrelated questions could be formulated on the basis of the hypotheses made / cited in this study:
a. What are exactly the problems / difficulties facing the teaching / learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs in the context of Sudan?
b. What are the possible causes of these problems / difficulties?
c. How to solve these problems and eliminate these difficulties?

To test the hypotheses and answer the questions of this study, the researcher uses the following elicitation techniques (besides the general survey of English Language syllabuses in Sudan universities depending on the syllabuses' documents. See app. 1)

a. Questionnaires for teachers / lecturers and learners.
b. Tests: pre-and post-tests for learners as well as an explicit course taught to the subjects in-between the tests.

The following section will deal with these devices in some detail.

1.3.4 Methodology of the research

The methodology used in this study, attempted to be as eclectic and comprehensive as possible. It includes descriptive, analytical and empirical data. The elicitation techniques used for collecting the data are questionnaires (for teachers and learners) as well as tests (pre and post-tests).

1.3.4.1 Research Instrument(s)

Since the purpose of the present study is to identify, describe and try to solve the problems and eliminate the difficulties facing the teaching / learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in the context of Sudan, we have to measure the subjects mastery or (lack thereof) of these two vocabulary components. However, when dealing with vocabulary area, one has to consider a large quantity of data which is time consuming but, here, for practical reasons, we describe, present and analyse small-scale data. We hoped it would be sufficient instances and fill the bill. That is using tightly controlled data might be inevitable to examine the phenomenon more precisely.

For the reasons cited above, among others, the following tools are used:
• a questionnaire for teachers;
• a questionnaire for students;
• a pre-test; and
• a post-test.

These written elicitation techniques seem to be practical instruments for a study on 'the teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English': They could elicit data about the problems / difficulties facing the teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs. They are easy and quick methods for collecting (a considerable) amount of data. They are highly effective means of gathering data.

The rationale behind the combination of methods (the variety and diversity of questions in questionnaires using concrete, verifying examples and the multiplicity of questions and questions' items in the tests) of data collection in this study was to ensure, as much as possible, that our data should truly reflect the claims being made here.

In general, the pre-test is meant for detecting the problems and difficulties encountering the students learning idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs while the post-test is intended to measure the impact / the effectiveness of the explicit taught course on the performance of the students on these two components. Meanwhile the questionnaires used to serve as validating techniques for the tests, addressed the following issues:

• general background information about the subjects: students' profile.
• eliciting the students and teachers views on the position of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs in curriculum, materials, methodology used, and actual classroom practice;
• familiarity or non-familiarity of the students with idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs;
• students and teachers conception / perception and awareness of the problems / difficulties of teaching / learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs.

Thus, the students' questionnaire consists of 27 questions while the teachers' questionnaire contains 17 questions. For the pre-test and post-test, they include five questions each.
However, of close relevance to the post-test used in this research is an explicit Ij taught course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs which will be considered below:

1.3.4.2 **The Explicit Course on Idiomatic Expressions and Multi-word Verbs**

Despite the paucity of research on the possibility of improving L2 vocabulary knowledge / mastery through the explicit instruction, we hypothesized that our learners could benefit from explicit teaching of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs. We believe that such instruction would give EFL learners an exposure to a good dose of knowledge to:

- understand the concepts of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs,
- familiarize themselves with these terms,
- raise their awareness,
- involve them in the teaching / learning processes: The input must be accomplished through interactional opportunities that the learners get in the acquisition / learning process itself.
- train the students on vocabulary learning strategies, especially guessing meaning from context.

In general, the success of such special instruction may depend on how well it raises the learner awareness about idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs, rules, properties, features, and consciousness raising etc. For more details about the course, see section 1.3.6.3 in this chapter.

1.3.5 **Sampling and research population**

As it has already been stated, the present study was conducted with the aim to identify, describe, analyze and try to solve the problems / eliminate the difficulties facing the teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English, in the context of Sudan, since they are likely to be problematic areas of language. The subjects of this survey, were, therefore, easy to identify. They are Sudanese learners of English, at the tertiary level. Before describing the sample of our study, it may be useful to briefly show the ELT scenario in Sudan.
A brief account of the ELT Scenario in Sudan

Teaching of English in Sudan starts from class five (basic education) and continues until the end of the secondary education. However, any student who wishes to join higher education has to study English as a compulsory subject as part of their certificate (Sudan Certificate) and degree (university) courses. But those who join the departments of English (either in education or arts faculties), to specialize in English language and/or literature course, are given extensive training in order to professionally fit, for instance, to teach English in schools or other jobs diplomacy, translation etc. after graduation. As for education faculty students, in addition to developing their language skills, these students receive sufficient knowledge in both linguistics as well as methodology: knowledge in educational and pedagogical theories while the arts students besides language and linguistics courses focus on literature (See Appendix 1.a-g). For more details about the ELT situation in Sudan, see chapter 3.

The population of the present study are the students of English at the English departments who are studying English as their major specialization at Sudan universities. The subjects are expected to be teachers of English, for those graduated from education faculties while those who completed arts programmes are to be translators, diplomats, etc. The majority of our population received their basic and secondary education (i.e. their general education) in government public schools and had studied English for six years before joining the departments of English.

More specifically, our sample consists of students of English from the Faculty of Education, University of Khartoum and the Faculty of Arts, El neelain University: both are in the capital Khartoum. The major reason for choosing our sample from the above-mentioned universities is that they are the main universities in the Republic of Sudan: Though the two universities are situated in the capital Khartoum, their students come from all over Sudan so they seem to represent the whole country with its geographic and social diversity. It should be noted that only 25% of the sample came from the capital while the rest of them (75%) came from different parts of the country: widely distributed over the 25 remaining states. Therefore, they could be taken as representative
of the total population. Thus it was expected that the results of our study could be
generalized for the rest of the students of other Sudan universities. However, the
informants are representative of learners as they typically appear to be in the English
department of any Sudan university.

Why Third Year Students?

Since our research consists of an experiment on the value (efficiency) of an
explicit instruction course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English, we
selected as our participants (subjects), the third year students of the English language
departments of the faculties of Education and Arts of Khartoum and El neelain
Universities respectively. This choice is attributed to the assumption that the students at
third year level having completed at least 4-5 semesters syllabus were supposed to be
advanced and proficient students in English. Moreover, after one year they would be
passing out as bachelor degree holders with English. So they were expected to cope
with a course of advanced nature on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs. In
other words, they have enough input 4-5 semesters exposure to language since this study
required the learners to have a considerable command of the basic grammatical rules of
the target language. The reasons for the exclusion of other students: first, second and
fourth year students are as follows:

1st Year Students: Students are freshers usually involved in courses of general nature,
different courses in different subjects. As they were absolutely freshers to the course,
they would not have adequate knowledge of these aspects.

2nd Year Students: They had only one year of specialization i.e. studied English as their
major area only for a year after the preliminary year. Again, this might not make them
better qualified to cope with a complex and advanced course on idiomatic expressions
and multi-word verbs or any other course of similar nature. In other words, we can say
that they do not have enough ‘input’ to deal these multi-word lexical items.
4\textsuperscript{th} Year Students: It is well known fact that the 4\textsuperscript{th} year is the graduation year (with the exception of the universities which award the degree after the completion of 3 years or honors students - a five year course) which required special effort and put heavy load on the students: Graduation project / research, (dissertation), teaching practice for faculties of education students etc., which make the then resistant to any additional responsibilities and new courses or methods.

Therefore, the 3\textsuperscript{rd} year students seem the best suitable audience for our study / experimentation under the circumstances.

Sampling

In order for the samples to be representative, we selected the students of English departments, faculties of Education and Arts of Khartoum and El neelain universities respectively. The following were the numbers of subjects.

\textbf{TABLE -1}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Total No. of students</th>
<th>Sample subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elneelain</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khartoum</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small Scale Sample

The sample size for the experiments / this study could not be expanded because of the availability of limited number of students during the period of the study: The academic year 1998-1999: (Sep. 1998-April 1999)

The 35 students of the Faculty of Education, University of Khartoum are the total number of students enrolled at third year at that time while for the Faculty of Arts, El neelain university, we get this number of students after the exclusion of what are called as the 'mature students' (those are part-time students, with different backgrounds, motivation, age etc., which might make the group heterogeneous). For a detailed description of the subjects of this study see appendix 4: students questionnaire especially the 1\textsuperscript{st} ten questions as well as Chapter 5 data collection, etc.
Teachers

So far, a description has been given about the subjects of this study: they are learners of English at Sudan universities but there also other participants contributing to this study; some are also teachers of English at Sudan universities. Then there are the informants about: the syllabus, methodology, class-room practice, teaching techniques, etc.

However, from a group of 75 teachers only 50 teachers responded to and returned the questionnaire distributed to them. These teachers are working in the two Universities selected for the experiment (University of Khartoum and El neelain University) as well as other universities in Sudan. Again, they seem representative of the population of the whole English teachers working at the tertiary level in Sudan. In fact, the questionnaire was distributed to all the English teachers in Sudan universities but those who responded and returned the forms numbered only 50.

In sum, the target audience is the Sudanese learners of English (in a number of English departments - undergraduate students). The subjects are Sudanese learners of English at tertiary level. The group taken had 100 students. The samples were taken from their production (writing besides their reception, reading and comprehension). The duration of the experiment(s) is one semester. However, the experiments had a twofold purpose: The first was to identify clearly the problems and difficulties that hinder the teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in the context of Sudan. The second purpose was to evaluate the learners' performance (and probably competence) after the introduction (inclusion) of the new means of handling the problems and difficulties of teaching and learning idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English. Besides these experiments, background profiles of the candidates were also determined through a questionnaire (for learners and teachers). For more details about the teachers (qualifications and teaching experience), as informants, see the teachers' questionnaire (appendix-3 esp. the last part of it). See also chapter 5, the section entitled: Data Description and Analysis: Teachers' Questionnaire.
1.3.6 Procedures

1.3.6.1 Description of the preparation of materials, administration, scoring etc.

In general, the devices used in collecting the data, in this study, are: questionnaires and tests. The teachers' questionnaire was distributed to all the English teachers working at the tertiary level but who responded and returned the questionnaire filled are 50. For the students' questionnaire it was administered only to the students in Khartoum and E) neelain Universities in the first meeting with the students (before the first session of the taught course) in the class and collected from them after the completion (after one hour). This administration of the questionnaire took place on 14.12.1998. The pre-test was also administered to the subjects of the study on 15.12.1998. Since the test is objective in nature, the correction was easy and made by the researcher himself on the basis of the answers key with the exception of the productive tasks (Q 1.b, Q 5) which are subjective and need personal judgement. For the post-test, which conducted after the introduction of the explicit taught course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs, it was given to the subjects on 15.4.1999. Since it is parallel / alternative to the pre-test (having the same format) the post-test was corrected using the same procedure above. Both tests have 100 marks. The subjects scores / marks were analysed in the following manner:

- Item-wise to have an idea about the students' performance in each item: numbers of correct / wrong answers in each item, types of errors etc.
- Question-wise to know the students' performance in each area / category (verbal, nominal, adjectival and adverbial) and in each elicitation technique / device (gap-filling, multiple-choice, sentence writing etc.)
- Test-wise: to have insight in the overall performance of the subjects and
- Pre-test / post-test wise: to compare the performance of the subjects before and after the introduction of the explicit taught course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs.
1.3.6.2 **Explanation of the Statistical Analyses used in the study**

Generally speaking, the statistics used in this research is very simple and clear. The results obtained by data collection tools used in this study were calculated percentage-wise. In the pre-test / post-test, we counted the total number of the correct answers, produced by the 100 subjects in the 180 items of the test, then there followed a count of the total number of wrong answers. Afterwards, we calculated the percentage of the correct answers / wrong answers. For example, in the PRT, the total number of correct answers is 6942 and the total number of wrong answers is 11058. Since the total number of possible / expected answers is 18000 (= 100 (number of students) X 180 (total number of the items in the test), the percentage will be worked out as follows:

\[
\frac{6942}{18000} = 38.57\% \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{11058}{18000} = 61.43\% \text{ respectively}
\]

In the students' / teachers' questionnaire, the respondents' answers were also calculated percentage-wise. In sum, in analyzing the data I have used the percentage statistics. Hatch and Farhady (1982:43) state that to get the exact details of the data, relative frequency should be used. So the percentage statistics, otherwise known as relative frequency, were employed to analyze the data quantitively.

1.3.6.3 **The conditions during the study**

Materials were developed and administered during the regular term / semester of the academic year of the students. 15.12.1998 - 15.4.1999. Thus, the course materials were especially designed for the teaching / learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs with emphasis on the specific features that were found to be problematic for the Sudanese learners of English as a foreign language. The explicit course was given to the students of Arts and Education faculties of Elneelain and Khartoum Universities respectively (The total number of the subjects involved in this course is 100). In particular, the target group i.e. 3rd level students, was taught for 4 months at the rate of 4 hours per week (between December, 1998 to April, 1999).
It is important to mention here, that having realized the importance of the course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs for the students of English departments, the administration of the Faculty of Education, University of Khartoum and the Faculty of Arts, El neelain University, represented by the Heads of these departments, facilitated our mission by giving the permission to annex the course with the regular syllabus meant for the students of these departments. In the case of El neelain University the course was attached as a part of the regular course of 'Linguistics' as part of the semantic component: considering the fact that idiomaticity is a semantic matter, whereas in the case of the students of Khartoum University, it was taught as 'special topic' in language / linguistics.

For Elneelain University the introduced course was allotted a weight of 40 marks to be given by the researcher to the participating students in order to ensure their enthusiasm / motivation, attendance and cooperation throughout the course period. For Khartoum University the same conditions applied (i.e. the course attached to the regular semester) but the total course marks (special topic in language / linguistics) were devoted to the explicitly taught course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs.

For practical reasons, during the sessions of the course, the students of both universities were not grouped together in one class (the distance between the two campuses, the time table, the number of students etc.) However, the learners were exposed to the same teaching instructions and methods.

This special, explicitly taught course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs was personally administered / taught by the researcher himself. The classes were conducted in the form group work. It is a formal setting but friendly atmosphere.

Some of the methods, classroom practices and teaching techniques used in the course were:

• The student as a researcher, and as a problem - solving person;
• The student as a teacher;
• The main role of the teacher here is that of a facilitator and an advisor.
Then there the following practical steps:

- The learners were given materials about idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs: handouts.
- The learners were given the opportunity to try guessing the target multi-word lexical items (idiomatic expressions / multi-word verbs).
- The learners were made aware of a wider range of the strategies of learning vocabulary with special emphasis on the strategy of inferring / guessing the meaning from the context.
- The learners were trained to use effectively the guessing from context strategy in handling the meaning of idiomatic expressions / multi-word verbs.

1.4 ORGANIZATION

This thesis has mainly two parts: Theoretical and Practical / Empirical: (seven chapters: introduction + three under the 1st part and two + conclusion under the 2nd).

PART ONE (Theoretical)

Chapter one (the present chapter) serves as a general introduction to the whole thesis.

Chapter Two: Literature review

A summary of the previous publications and researches on the problems and difficulties of teaching and learning idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English.

Chapter Three: The place (position) of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in language and syllabus.

In this chapter we examine and show the place (position) of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in:

- English Language in general (including the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing besides comprehension).
• The existing syllabi (syllabuses) of the English Language departments at the Universities in Sudan. Moreover, in this chapter, we will try to know how the students actually learn such complex expressions at these universities.

• Also, in this chapter, we try to state (show) the importance of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English for:
  - The native speaker.
  - The learner.

Chapter Four: A general linguistic survey and a detailed semantic study:

It includes the following under this chapter:

1. A general linguistic study (survey) of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English: encompassing the following levels:
   a) Phonological and orthographical (survey),
   b) Grammatical (syntactic and morphological (survey), and
   c) Stylistic.

2. A detailed semantic study:
   • Definition of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English.
   • What is the relationship between idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English?
   • Lexico-semantic study.
   • Also we shall contrast, compare and relate idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English to the native speech of our subjects in terms of:
     - Metaphors and proverbs
     - colloquial (informal) language
     - slang

PART TWO (Practical and Empirical)

Chapter Five: What are the Problems / Difficulties of Teaching / Learning of Idiomatic Expressions and Multi-Word Verbs of English in Sudan?
In this chapter, an attempt is made to state clearly (based on the experiments) the problems and difficulties of teaching and learning idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English. The data (corpuses) were taken from the Sudanese students' (production and reception) at the University level. Besides, the above, there are questionnaires for teachers and lecturers. In this chapter, we shall also try to account for learners' errors (through error analysis techniques).

Chapter Six: How to Solve / Eliminate the Problems / Difficulties of Teaching and Learning Idiomatic Expressions and Multi-Word Verbs of English in the Context of Sudan?

In this chapter, we present or introduce vocabulary teaching / learning models and theories (eg: contextualization) and knowledge on the processes of teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English, in the light of the mentalistic view of language, the cognitive theories of learning and teaching (explicitness and conceptualization). In other words, we applied, here, the principles, techniques, strategies etc., of teaching / learning vocabulary in dealing with these special vocabulary components: multi-word lexical items within the framework of the mentalistic / cognitive view of language teaching and learning.

Chapter Seven: Summary and Conclusion

After the six chapters the following segments will follow:

a) Summary and Conclusion(s)
b) Recommendations and suggestions.

In this chapter, we summarize the thesis as well as provide appropriate recommendations. The following suggestions are made:

• The introduction of an explicit course on idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs in the English Language syllabus at the tertiary level in Sudan.
• Training the students in the strategy of guessing idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs from context for it leads towards the macro-goal of developing vocabulary and reading skills.
• The necessity of devising / compiling a basic list for idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs to serve as a basis for teaching / learning these vocabulary components by drawing on it in devising materials etc.

1.5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Overall, the study revealed that the teaching / learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs of English in the context Sudan faced various and different problems and difficulties which are as result of several external and internal factors such as the inherent / potential difficulty and complexity of these multi-word lexical items in the system of the target language (English) as well as those related to the students' mother tongue (Arabic) and the general situation of English and ELT in Sudan. The possible means for solving these problems and eliminating these difficulties might reside in introducing an explicit taught course on IEX / MWV working within the framework of the mentalistic / cognitive view of language teaching / learning among other suggested ways to improve the situation. The evidence of the effectiveness of the course is the significant different between the subjects' performance in the pre-test and the post-test.

As in the PRT the total number and percentage(s) of correct / wrong answers are as follows: 6942 (38.57%) / 11058 (61.43%) respectively while for the POT they are: 17025 (94.58%) / 975 (5.42%).

It is hoped this study could fill a gap in the teaching and learning of idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs (and English language in general) in the context of Sudan. The researcher also hopes that his exploitation of this study in the context of Sudan can be extended to the many parallel cases in Central and East Africa and the Arab world since idiomatic expressions and multi-word verbs seem to be one of the promising areas for further study in different and various settings.