



## Impact of Teaching the Etymology of Idioms on Iranian EFL Learners' Idiom Learning

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Many researchers (Cooper, 1998; Gibbs, 1994; Simpson & Mendi, 2003) have tried to explore more about the process of idiom learning and the effect of mother tongue in understanding idioms, because idioms are among the difficult areas of learning a foreign or second language. This study examined the effect of teaching the etymology of idioms on the quality of L2 idiom learning. To this end, 100 gifted high school students, aged between 16 and 18 were selected. Then, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to select 60 intermediate students. Using the matched-pair technique, they were divided into two equal experimental and control groups. In order to find out whether the students have any prior knowledge about the new idioms, a pretest including an idiom multiple choice test was used. The control group was taught 30 idioms conventionally using synonyms and antonyms. The experimental group received the treatment and they were taught the idioms through the presentation of idioms etymology. After 10 weeks, an idiom multiple-choice test based on the materials taught was administered to both groups. Then, 60 students and 10 high school English teachers completed a questionnaire reflecting their attitudes towards learning idioms through their etymologies. The results have shown that Iranian students and teachers had very high motivation and positive attitudes towards learning idioms through the suggested way. The statistical analyses of the collected data showed that there was a significant difference between the obtained means of the two groups, meaning that, the experimental group outperformed the control one.