

# Investigating Steps and Usage of Idioms in Linguistics and Sociology Research Articles

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**Abstract.** In academic writing, as a background, a vast number of lexico grammatical patterns and idioms may be used. An issue for learners of academic writing, particularly beginners, is identification and usage. There might also be some differences between patterns and idioms used in one domain and another. Thus, we aim to identify and compare lexicogrammatical patterns and idioms used in English research articles in the MICUSP corpus, focusing on two fields: linguistics and sociology. As for the methods, we adopt Morley's (2014) academic phrasebank to identify lexicogrammatical patterns as it categorises patterns following their academic writing functions, which we refer to as 'steps' such as establishing context, presenting an issue, stating the purpose, etc. In addition to several idioms databases, we use our introspection to recognize idioms used in the corresponding steps. As for the results, we discover that linguistics is superior in the frequency of step C3 (methods), which may be due to the need to explain several new techniques in more detail. However, sociology excels in using idioms whose reasons might need further investigation. This study has at least two implications, 1) new lexicogrammatical patterns and idioms can be incorporated into Morley's phrasebank, and 2) students can instantly replicate them.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background of study

To maintain pace with and improve the quality of education, education must likewise evolve with the passage of time. The creation of instructional materials can provide information that encourages the growth of linguistic knowledge and comprehension, supports contextual learning, and improves a person's writing and research skills. Additionally, the creation of instructional materials may acquaint students with vocabulary use and idiomatic phrases, allowing them to strengthen their expressive talents as non-native English speakers and get closer to native speaker ability. This can help students increase their vocabulary's specificity and increase their understanding of colloquial terms used in academic contexts. Idioms are one of the characteristics shared by all languages [1], and are seen to be an essential component of human communication. Additionally, they greatly perplex early learners. Non-native speakers may experience language, cultural, and technological issues as a result, which might severely impact communication. Idioms are necessary for effective communication in all forms, including speaking, reading, writing, and listening [11]. The correct and proper use of idioms is a distinguishing characteristic of native-level command of the language, and it is a reliable indicator of the ability of foreign learners [10]. Idioms are frequently seen by language instructors and students as being too casual to be used in academic English [7]. Idioms should thus be avoided in academic English by researchers and students who speak English as a second language. However, idioms serve a variety of purposes in academic communication, including subject switching, emphasis, paraphrasing, building a feeling of group identification, and characterising and assessing. Therefore, the deliberate omission of idioms from writing may indicate a lack of phraseological competency, which might reveal a writer as being unfamiliar with the discourse community's customs [9].

This study aims to look up steps and usage of idioms used in English research articles. However, this paper will collect the data especially from The Michigan Corpus of Upper-level Student Papers (MICUSP), which was developed at the English Language Institute. Advanced student articles are included in MICUSP, and they are largely

categorised by text types and disciplines [3,4]. This study is going to focus on two fields: linguistics and sociology. This study is going to use Academic Phrasebank as a tool to analyse that is a useful resource for writers reporting research work. The academic phrasebank offers generic and content-neutral terms for non-native English speakers, encouraging innovation and adaptation. It has six categories, a conclusion, and words that serve as examples [5].

## 2 Methodology

There are five stages in doing this research. First, researchers began to collect data, namely 15 articles from the MICUSP corpus. This step is to gain an initial understanding of the data and the framework needed to analyse it. In the second stage, after finding out about the steps used in linguistic and sociology research articles in MICUSP, the researcher looks for idioms used in the 15 MICUSP research articles. It aims to analyse what idioms are used in the linguistic and in the sociology domain. In the third stage, the researcher began to examine the idioms used in each paper using the idiomatic phrases listed [7] in their paper. In the fourth stage, the researcher looks for the function of each idiom used, then examines at which step the idioms are found.

## 3 Result and Discussion

Fifteen articles from MICUSP are being data for this research which includes seven articles in the linguistics domain and eight articles in the sociology domain . The steps in the paper are denoted by the C1–C6 notation. The 'steps' are introducing work, referencing sources, explaining methodology, reporting results, discussing findings, and writing conclusions in that order from C1 to C6. These actions were done in accordance with Academic Phrasebank and use the idiomatic expressions mentioned in his article[7], analysing the idioms employed in each paper.

### 3.1 The Steps Used in Research Articles

The results of the analysis of the steps used in each paper are as follows:

**Table 1.** the distribution of each step from sociology articles

	<i>SOC</i>	<i>SOC</i>	<i>SOC</i>	<i>SOC</i>	<i>SOC</i>	<i>SOC</i>	<i>SOC</i>	<i>SOC</i>	TOT AL
	<i>G00</i>	<i>G00</i>	<i>G01</i>	<i>G11</i>	<i>G30</i>	<i>G30</i>	<i>G30</i>	<i>G30</i>	
	22	31	11	05	41	52	71	81	
C1	3	6	8	2	6	11	8	12	56

<b>C2</b>	8	6	0	0	8	6	4	19	<b>51</b>
<b>C3</b>	2	0	0	16	2	10	9	5	<b>44</b>
<b>C4</b>	15	7	7	9	8	18	5	19	<b>88</b>
<b>C5</b>	32	32	11	2	12	15	1	32	<b>137</b>
<b>C6</b>	6	3	8	3	7	26	8	2	<b>63</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>439</b>

**Table 2.** the distribution of each step from linguistics articles

	<i>LIN</i>	<i>LIN</i>	<i>LIN</i>	<i>LIN</i>	<i>LIN</i>	<i>LIN</i>	<i>LIN</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>
	<i>G101</i>	<i>G101</i>	<i>G101</i>	<i>G105</i>	<i>G106</i>	<i>G203</i>	<i>G302</i>	<b>L</b>
	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	
<b>C1</b>	5	2	8	4	4	8	3	<b>34</b>
<b>C2</b>	0	0	0	3	2	2	4	<b>11</b>
<b>C3</b>	8	9	8	6	3	2	3	<b>39</b>
<b>C4</b>	11	12	4	28	5	5	4	<b>69</b>
<b>C5</b>	10	13	11	14	13	8	5	<b>74</b>
<b>C6</b>	7	7	13	1	6	5	3	<b>42</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>269</b>

The table 1 and 2 shows that most of the articles from the sociology and linguistics domains carry out each step from C1 to C6. It can be seen also that both the sociology and linguistics domain performs more at stages C5, C4 and C6 based on the category on academic phrasebank. In total, the sociology domain has shown more steps than the linguistics domain.

**Table 3.** The comparison of the average use of steps from sociolinguistics and linguistics articles

<b>MICUSP</b>	<b>SOC</b>	<b>LIN</b>	<b>Range</b>
C1	7,0	4,9	2,1
C2	6,4	1,6	4,8
C3	5,5	5,6	-0,1
C4	11,0	9,9	1,1
C5	17,1	10,6	6,6

C6	7,9	6,0	1,9
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Table 3 shows that sociology performs more steps than linguistics, particularly at stages C5, C2, C1, C6, and C4. The linguistic field is marginally better in C3, though. It could be because paper linguistics often use procedures with more thorough justifications. They do, after all, include specific theories and methods for studying language and communication. Consequently, unknown to the broader public. Examples include explanations that make use of certain tools like corpora, language analysis techniques, and other specialised equipment. In contrast, sociologists frequently utilise procedures that are common in social contexts, including surveys, interviews, participant observation, document analysis, content analysis, statistics, and others.

### 3.2 Frequency and types of idioms used in research articles

Out of all sociology articles, six of eight sociology articles use idioms, whereas none in the linguistic domain and table 4 shows the frequency of each paper using the idioms.

**Table 4.** the idiom frequency distribution in the sociology articles

IDIOM	SOC G003	SOC G011	SOC G110	SOC G305	SOC G307	SOC G308	
	1	1	5	2	1	1	
Across	-	1	1	1	4	-	(7)
Beg the question	-	1	-	-	-	-	(1)
Driving force	2	-	-	-	-	-	(2)
On the one hand	-	-	-	-	-	1	(1)
On the other hand	-	-	-	-	-	8	(8)
Take for granted	-	-	-	-	-	2	(2)
The lines in the sand	-	-	-	1	-	-	(1)

The other side of the coin	1	-	-	-	-	-	(1)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>(23)</b>
<b>L</b>							<b>)</b>

From the table above, the sociology domain just uses the idioms once up to eight times that are found in the articles. It differs from the linguistics domain, the researchers don't find any idioms used in their papers so it cannot be explained more.

### 3.3 The functions of idioms in the context of academic writing

Table 4 displays idioms used in sociology articles. These idioms convey different meanings and locations in different contexts and usage. the table below will provide the usage of idiom in sociology articles:

**Table 5.** the usage of the idiom in the sociology articles

PAPER ID	SENTENCE	SECTION	ANALYSIS	USAGE
SOCG003 1	On <u>the other side of the coin</u> are sociologists who believe that individuals have considerable power in shaping their world and perceptions.	Literature Review	C1S06	argument presentations with contrasting points
	Later, in the discussion section, I will support my conclusions by citing and integrating the above	Method	C3S02	nouns

	scholarship to provide a complete picture of the <b><u>driving forces</u></b> behind tendency toward suicidal behavior.			
SOCG011 1	More than a medical option (though not a consistently legal medical option <b><u>across</u></b> the States), abortion is an issue involving widespread disagreement over its appropriate level of legislation.	Intro	C1S01	multiple transitions
SOCG110 5	Table 1 presents the summary statistics of key variables of interest in the study and Table 2 demonstrates the distributions	Results	C4S02	multiple transitions

	of attitudes toward unhappy marriages <b>across</b> different demographic and socioeconomic variables.			
SOCG3052	Greater racial/ethnic diversity was represented in this project than <b>across</b> the campus at large.	Data & Method	C3S10	multiple transitions
SOCG3071	Social (dis)advantage is thus a cumulative process of tracking experienced <b>across</b> many transitions (Breen and Goldthorpe 1997).	Intro	C2S06	multiple transitions
SOCG3081	<b>On the other hand,</b> the analyses of femininity are grounded in Butler's notion of	PF	C2S14	argument presentations with contrasting points



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Despite the potential for entertainment and intrigue, writers frequently refrain from employing colloquial terms in research articles due to poor English language skills or insufficient English knowledge.

#### 4 Conclusion

The data shows that linguistics and sociology articles use all steps from C1 to C6. The result shows that linguistics articles have more steps in C3 and sociology articles have more steps in C1, C2, C4, C5 and C6. This result shows that both of the articles have more steps in different C sections. Academic Phrasebank is one of the helpful methods for academic writing functions, which we refer to as ‘steps’ such as establishing context, presenting an issue, stating the purpose, etc which learners are able to apply in their academic writing articles instantly and easily. However, in the use of the idioms, only sociology articles are found.

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