



(445) (463)

العدد السادس  
والعشرون

تحليل نصي للتعبيرات الاصطلاحية في السيناريو ((The Banshees of Inisherin))

حكمت حسيب قادر

Hikmathaseeb7@gmail.com

أ.د. سهيلة حميد مجيد

suhayla.majeed01@gmail.com

جامعة صلاح الدين / كلية اللغات / قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

المستخلص :

هدف هذه الدراسة هو تحليل التعبيرات الاصطلاحية المختارة في نص فيلم " The Banshees of Inisherin" من حيث وظائفها التداولية ومساهمتها في توحيد النص، وذلك باستعمال البحث الوصفي. قامت الدراسة بتحليل ١١ تعبيراً اصطلاحياً باستعمال تصنيف سيرل لأعمال الكلام ونظرية الاتساق المعجمي لهاليداي وحسن. تؤدي هذه التعبيرات ١٠ وظائف تداولية ضمن ٤ فئات من أفعال الكلام لسيرل: الإخبارية (الإتهام، الاعتراف، التفاخر، الإبلاغ)، والتعبيرية (الشكوى، الرثاء)، والتوجيهية (الطلب، الأمر، الحث)، و الالتزاميات (الرفض). وتساهم التعبيرات الاصطلاحية في توحيد النص خلال نوعين من الاتساق المعجمي: التكرير (١ شبه مرادف ٤ تكرارات)، و ٨ روابط معجمية، من هذه التعابير الاصطلاحية التي ذكرتها ، يوجد تعبيران اصطلاحيان متكرران، اذ يعمل احدهما كرابط شبه مترادف ورابط توافقي في الوقت نفسه، في حين أن الآخر يعمل بمثابة تكرار ورابطة توافقية. تقترح الدراسة اتجاهين للبحث المستقبلي: أولاً: تحليل التعبيرات الاصطلاحية في نص الفيلم باستعمال ادوات تداولية بديلة. ثانياً: استكشاف دور الذكاء الاصطناعي في تحديد وتحليل التعبيرات الاصطلاحية ووظائفها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعبيرات الاصطلاحية، أعمال الكلام، الاتساق

## A Textual Analysis of Idiomatic Expressions in the Script of (The Banshees of Inisherin)

Hekmat Haseeb Qader

Hikmathaseeb7@gmail.com

Prof. Dr. Suhayla Hameed Majeed



suhayla.majeed01@gmail.com

Salahaddin University / College of Languages / English Department

**Abstract:**

The aim of this study is to investigate the selected idiomatic expressions used in the film script of *The Banshees of Inisherin*. Using a qualitative method of research, the study examines their pragmatic functions and contributions to the cohesion of the discourse. The study analyzed 11 idiomatic expressions using Searle's taxonomy of speech acts (1969) and Halliday and Hasan's lexical cohesion theory (1976). The expressions fulfill 10 pragmatic functions within four of Searle's speech act taxonomies: assertives (accusing, confessing, boasting, and reporting), expressives (complaining and lamenting), directives (asking, commanding, and urging), and commissives (refusing). The expressions contribute to textual cohesion through two types of lexical cohesion: reiteration (one near-synonym and four repetitions) and eight collocational ties. Remarkably, an idiom functions as both a near-synonymous and collocational tie at the same time, while another one serves as both a repetition and a collocational tie. The study suggests two directions for future research: first, analyzing the idiomatic expressions in the film script using alternative pragmatic tools. Second, exploring the role of artificial intelligence in identifying and analyzing such expressions and their functions.

**Keywords:** Idiomatic expressions, Speech acts, Cohesion**1. Introduction**

This study is a textual examination of idiomatic expressions. Textual analysis studies how language is used in different types of texts. Within textual analysis, using discourse and pragmatics together provides a comprehensive framework to analyze texts. They both help the researchers in finding how the selected idiomatic expressions are used as tools to enhance the cohesion of the dialogues as well as their pragmatic roles to convey the characters' meaningful messages.

Idiomatic expressions are an important feature of language and convey cultural connotations and shape interpersonal relations. In film scripts, they not only contribute to language realism, but also have an important role in



character development, humor, and tension. These expressions, in fact, have a strong presence in the script of *The Banshees of Inisherin*, an Irish English film; thus, it's a suitable text for investigating idiom use in conversation.

Searle's speech act theory explains how utterances have an important role in relation to speaker and listener in a communicative act (Elshamy, 2016, p. 9).

Cohesion refers to how various parts of a text are connected to create a unified whole. Lexical cohesion, in Halliday's and Hasan's theory, ensures this connectivity through reiteration and collocation (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

### 1.1 The Research Objectives

1. Exploring the types of the speech acts and pragmatic functions of the selected idiomatic expressions, as well as showing whether they are direct or indirect speech acts.
2. Explaining the influence of the idiomatic expressions on the lexical cohesion of the dialogues.

### 1.2 The Scope of the Study

The study is limited to a textual analysis of eleven idiomatic expressions in the script of *The Banshees of Inisherin*, an Irish English film. The expressions are chosen randomly. The focus is on these expressions' functions in terms of both lexical cohesion and speech act theory.

### 1.3 The Significance of the study

This research is highly valuable to teachers and students who are interested in textual analysis, specifically in relation to idiomatic expressions, their cohesive and pragmatic roles. The study seeks to clarify how these expressions have crucial functions in film script dialogues, such as pragmatic functions or unifying a text. It is also essential for academics who want to investigate the use of such expressions in Irish English texts.

### 1.4 Methodology

#### 1.4.1 The Method and Sample

This study uses a qualitative method to explain and analyze the data and extract the results from the analysis of the selected data. According to Denny and Weckesser (2022, p. 1779), qualitative research allows for a thorough



examination of a topic of interest by concentrating on the distinctive features of the particular sample rather than a larger population. As a result, this approach places more emphasis on the quality and depth of the data than its quantity.

The data was sourced from the script of the film *The Banshees of Inisherin*, a 2022 black tragicomedy that Martin McDonagh directed (Farrell, 2023, p. 109).

#### 1.4.2 The Model and Procedure of Analysis

To achieve the research objectives, 11 idiomatic expressions are chosen in the script of *The Banshees of Inisherin*. These expressions are analyzed in terms of their pragmatic functions and contribution to textual cohesion. The analysis is carried out from a pragmatic point of view, based on the typology of speech acts proposed by Searle. As cited in Tanksley (2004, p. 10), this typology is most clearly outlined in his works: *Speech Acts* (1969), *Expression and Meaning* (1979), and *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic* (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985). Finally, the expressions are explained in terms of their contribution to the cohesion of the text using Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory of LC.

## 2. Theoretical Background and Literature Review

### 2.1 Definition of Idiomatic Expressions

According to Pratama and Damara (2018, p. 47), an idiomatic expression is a phrase or an expression in a language whose meaning cannot be understood or explained depending on the meaning of its individual words. These phrases have an idiomatic sense that is different from their referential sense. As far as the flow of speech is a natural occurrence in a human language interaction, idioms can be used in any text, ranging from a conversation going on the streets to scripts of films and TV series as well as literary works to saturate the reader's and viewer's experience with the unique and definite shades of lexical coloring. Idiomatic expressions are somewhat ambiguous and may lead to misunderstanding when used by language users especially those who are non-native (Cacciari & Tabossi, 1993, p. 37), but they become meaningful as people continue to use it in their daily communication. These expressions are very routinized and



contextual in a society and hence can be referred to as being grounded in language and culture (Yağiz & Izadpanah, 2013, p. 953). For example, instead of stating *to die* there is a memorable phraseology *kick the bucket* even though it is pretty unrelated to kicking a bucket. If the exact meaning were taken, it would be quite unclear. Nevertheless, being culturally understandable, it is more effective in delivering an idea of the given topic. Idioms are also culturally bound by their nature because they develop out of a given society's culture, experience, or language use. For example, in film scripts, when main characters from different cultures interact, these expressions help to mark out cultural differences and relationships.

## 2.2 Pragmatic Considerations

Pragmatics has a great role in understanding idiomatic expression, as Alghazo et al. (2022, pp. 425–426) say that "Idiomatic expressions are essentially used as pragmatic messages," especially in conversational contexts, such as in film scripts. Pragmatics focuses on how and to what extent meaning is made in a specific or social context and how meaning is used by the writers and understood by readers in ways that are not semantically controlled. For idiomatic expressions, as being an important part of language, the goal is achieved concerning pragmatic components like the speaker's intention, the relationship between the interlocutors, culture, and the general setting of the conversation (Sinha, 2021, pp. 31-32). So, idiomatic expressions have several pragmatic purposes. Many things can stem from them, and they can help to create or solidify character relationships, build up or relieve tension, define cultural beliefs and values, or change the mood of a scene.

### 2.2.1 Context and Idiomatic Expressions

The use of idiomatic expressions may only be understood in specific contexts. In a manageable sense, context is the sum of linguistic, situational, and social factors that shape the reception of the utterance. Context includes the current and forthcoming utterances in a given conversation, the physical environment and location, and the social environment, which consists of the speakers, their ages, and gender. In the case of idiomatic expressions, all





these contextual features conspire to give meaning and a pragmatic role to the expressions in use (Cacciari and Tabossi, 1993, p. 38)

### 2.2.2 Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory by Searle is essential for grasping how language operates in performing functions other than informing. In pragmatic function analysis, this theory provides the foundational means for considering how an utterance operates in particular contexts of social use and for studying, as Oishi (2006, p. 2) states that John Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* gave a new picture of meaning. According to him, meaning is defined as the relationship between linguistic conventions and the words or sentences to which they are connected, the context in which the speaker says something, and the associated intentions of the speaker. John Searle extended Austin's ideas in 1969, developing the theory in his own way. The core of Searle's theory is that performing an illocutionary act involves expressing an illocutionary intention (Searle, 1979, pp. 4, 65).

According to Searle (1975, pp. 354-360), there are five types of speech acts:

1. Assertives: This type is to commit the speaker (in different degrees) to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition. All of the members of the representative class are assessable on the dimension of assessment which includes true and false such as (swear, conclude, boast, suggest, complain, etc.)
2. Directives: The speaker's attempts to get the addressee to do something (ask, order, command, invite, advise, etc.)
3. Commissives: This class commits the speaker to some future course of action (promise, plan, vow, bet, etc.)
4. Expressives: Acts which express a psychological state (condole, apologize, deplore, welcome, thank, etc.)
5. Declaratives: Acts which bring about the immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and tend to rely on extra-linguistic institutions, such as christening, declaring war, excommunicating, sentencing (a convict to capital punishment), pronouncing (a couple husband and wife)

Another major concept in Searle's theory is that of indirect speech acts, that occurs when a speaker implies an intention not explicitly stated in their



utterance (Brown, 1980, pp. 150-151). Indirect speech acts are performances that do not depend on what the words literally say but on the shared conventions and the context of utterance. Thus, the question ‘Can you pass the salt?’ is directly asking whether the hearer can pass the salt but indirectly functioning as indirect speech

act, taken as a polite request (Searle et al., 1980, p. viii), as Morgan (1977, pp. 1, 23) indicates that such acts depend on conventions about language which enable speakers to use literal meanings for indirect purposes.

The researchers believe that since idiomatic expressions are a part of any language and usually phrased figuratively more often than literally, they can be a cause (though not the only) of indirect speech acts. For example, when a story character utters the statement *I smell a rat*, it may not only mean he realizes that something is wrong which is a direct assertive, but the pragmatic function of this idiom may be to request another character to take an action. Thus, the idiom is not merely a set of words but an instrument for controlling people’s behavior and sharing other meanings clearly for people involved in communication in certain contexts.

### 2.3 Idiomatic Expressions and Text Cohesion

In Halliday and Hasan’s theory (1976), cohesion refers to how text parts are bonded together to achieve a unified whole, as they state that “the concept of cohesion is a semantic one; it refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text” (p. 4). They systematize the concept and classify it into: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion (p. 13). Reference includes elements such as pronouns and demonstratives that refer to something from within or outside of a text. Substitution and ellipsis replace or omit some elements of the text, keeping the meaning the same. Conjunctions connect elements grammatically and semantically through their meanings. Lexical cohesion, which is explained deeply later, is about creating a cohesive text through choices of words and their relationships in the text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp. 5–7).

#### 2.3.1 Lexical Cohesion

Lexical cohesion is the way words in a text are connected through meaning. Halliday and Hassan (1976) argued that lexical cohesion is one of the most



common textual cohesion that occurs through word choice binding the discourse. According to them, lexical cohesion is formed through the structure of vocabulary, representing a lexicogrammatical connection (p. 318). It is the sharing of meanings between two or more elements in a text. Reiteration and collocation are the two basic classifications, which were established by Halliday and Hasan (1976, pp. 282, 284).

### 1. Reiteration:

Reiteration is about repeating a lexical item in the same or a different form. It includes the repetition of same items, synonyms or near-synonyms, superordinate, and general word. In this context, idiomatic expressions have been identified to have the function of a cohesive device in texts. Therefore, it will be seen that idiomatic connotations are positioned in close relationship with cultural and linguistic repetition and associative meaning, thus making them organizational binding elements of the discourse (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p. 278).

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 278), repetition means using the same word or phrase in different co-texts. It is a case that repeating idiomatic expressions in a text is useful in preserving meaning continuity in the text to ensure cohesion. For example, if the idiom like *easy does it* is repeated to tell someone to do something slowly and carefully, it gives continuity to the relationship between moments in the text, thus functioning as a lexical cohesive device. A synonym or near-synonym lexical cohesion is when an expression has the same or a very similar meaning to another one, and a superordinate is a general concept for specific varieties (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pp. 572-573). Another class of lexical cohesion is achieved through using a general word to refer to a more specific term. Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 281) state that "not all general words are used cohesively; in fact, only the nouns are." So, an idiomatic expression that figuratively represents a general noun can function as a lexical cohesion. These types of reiteration, through the use of idiomatic expressions, can play an essential role in the cohesion of a text.

### 2. Collocation:





Idiomatic expressions play a similar role in lexical cohesion's associative meanings and collocation. Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 286) define co-referral as a tendency of some specific words to appear with other words of similar meaning. There are always phrases that are part and parcel of an idiom. For example, the phrase *burning the midnight oil* is tightly connected with such notions as work, devoting effort or striving, and night work. Idioms in a text can activate associated samples, for example, 'exhausting' in connection with the current idiom, 'commitment,' or 'burnout.' These are among the patterns used within the collocations to define the lexical structure of the discourse.

The fact that idiomatic expressions function as cohesive devices becomes essential in film scripts because the dialogues must convey plot details and emotional components succinctly. Idioms can establish co-text and vocabulary, helping to create lexical ties when a direct connection of the topic referent is not possible. For example, a male character may propose a specific idiom to the female partner during an angry exchange then the same idiom may be recalled during a happy scene, creating a lexical and thematic connection between the two moments. Such type of lexical cohesion helps to strengthen the thematic framework of the motion picture and contributes to the creation of its cohesive structures.

## 2.4 Literature Review

Chang (2006) stated that idioms constitute an important part of our linguistic knowledge and are a pervasive characteristic of language that cannot be easily regarded as marginal. This work tried to examine the meanings of English idioms from a textual perspective, and found out that idioms do not just serve as decoration but function to create cohesion by their contribution to the textual metafunction as described by Halliday. The idiomatic expressions connect clauses and ideas together. It therefore makes the text more coherent and structured.

Another study conducted by Sporleder et al. (2010) showed that lexical cohesion is a key tool for showing how text is organized and idioms establish cohesive ties within texts, although they tend to display weaker cohesion than their literal counterparts. Their computational and empirical



study shows idiomatic expressions contribute to lexical cohesion that organizes text semantically. Lexical cohesion derived from idioms forms part of the lexical chains guiding the overall structure and coherence of a discourse, thereby allowing information to be given in a better way.

The dissertation by Alqahtni (2014) is basically designed to focus on examining the structure and grammatical relationships of Modern Standard Arabic idiomatic expressions as found in Saudi press. Investigating the contribution of co-text, situational, and cultural contexts to the understanding of idioms. The results showed that almost half of the idioms studied manifested verbal patterns. The idioms demonstrated cohesion through the use of lexical and grammatical devices, which integrated their co-text and cultural contexts.

Concerning the speech act functions of idiomatic expressions, Elshamy's thesis (2016) is considered as one of the newest and most recent. It talked about the pragmatic uses of idiomatic expressions in Egyptian novel entitled *Taxi*. The researcher classified these expressions according to what Searle's 1979 speech act theory has pre-defined as the four basic categories of speech acts: representatives, expressives, commissives, and directives. According to Elshamy's study, qualitative linguistic analysis shows that idioms are used for many pragmatic purposes, such as describing, complaining, making statements, and giving advice. The most common negative functions are those that are negative, usually complaining or expressing regret, this is because of some cultural aspects in Egyptian society.

In her study, Mardani (2022) stated that cohesion is one of the most significant features in discourse analysis, which is generally comprised of various devices to connect different parts of a text. These are grammatical and lexical. The study was an attempt to compare the English and Persian literary texts based on the frequency and usage of different types of lexical cohesion markers, namely conjunctions, references, and collocations of proverbs and idioms. The results have shown that the cohesive relationships analysis in a bilingual collection of English-Persian dialogues does not indicate much similarity or relationship between the two languages.



To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no study has analyzed the pragmatic functions of idiomatic expressions alongside their contribution to discourse cohesion in the scripts of Irish English films, particularly *The Banshees of Inisherin*. Therefore, this study aims to help readers understand how the idiomatic expressions used in film scripts can have pragmatic and discourse functions.

### 3. Data Analysis and Results

#### Extract 1

DOMINIC

What's the matter with ya?

PADRAIC

Nothing's the matter with me (quietly) for God's sake.

**Table 1** The Pragmatic Functions of Idiomatic Expressions: Samples 1 and 2

No.	The English Idiomatic Expressions	The Explanation of the Figurative Meaning	Types of Speech Acts	Their Pragmatic Functions
1	What's the matter	It is used for asking someone if there is a problem	Directive	Asking
2	For God's sake	It is used when you are angry about something	Expressive	Complainin g

1. What's the matter with ya?

2. For God's sake.

It is daytime, and Padraic is walking in a laneway. Dominic, trying to engage him in conversation, uses the first idiomatic expression to ask about his unusual behavior, then Padraic responds by using the second expression. The first one can be regarded as a directive speech act. The pragmatic function is to inquire about what is troubling Padraic. The second one is an expressive speech act with the pragmatic function of complaining, as Padraic expresses his annoyance. Both functions are direct, serving as direct speech acts.



The first expression contributes to the cohesion of the text through repetition. Dominic first uses the expression to ask about the reason behind Padraic's annoyance, then Padraic responds by repeating the expression 'Nothing's the matter' [= Nothing is wrong], thus, a part of the expression is repeated making the text cohesive. Both expressions function as collocational ties because they typically occur within the same context of anger and annoyance.

### Extract 2

MRS MCCORMICK

Is it six years since yere Mammy and Daddy died, Siobhan, or is it seven years since they died?

SIOBHAN

It's seven years, Mrs McCormick, aye.

MRS MCCORMICK

Is it seven years? Doesn't time be flying? [...]

SIOBHAN

[...] Be off to the pub, now, Padraic, if you're going to be annoying us. [...]

SIOBHAN

[...] Now you go off to Jonjo's, Padraic, and don't be getting under our feet [...]

PADRAIC

[...] You hide behind walls [...]

SIOBHAN

[...] 'Hide behind walls'.

**Table 2** The Pragmatic Functions of Idiomatic Expressions: Samples 3 to 6

No .	The English Idiomatic Expressions	The Explanation of the Figurative Meaning	Types of Speech Acts	Their Pragmatic Functions
3	Time is flying	It is used to mean that time is passing very quickly	Expressive	Lamenting
4	Be off	To leave a place	Directive	Commanding



5	To get under someone's feet	If you say that someone is under your feet, you are annoyed because they are with you or near you, and are bothering you.	Directive	Urging
6	To hide behind a wall	To avoid someone or something	Assertive	Accusing

### 3. Doesn't time be flying?

It's dusk, and Padraic, Siobhan, and Mrs. McCormick are talking in Padraic's house. Mrs. McCormick uses this expression, in the form of a question, to express sorrow because seven years have passed since Siobhan's parents' death. This serves as an expressive speech act with the indirect function of lamenting, making it an indirect speech act.

Concerning the role of the expression in creating a unified text, it's related to the previous speech about the seven years since Siobhan's parents' death. It also functions as a collocational tie with the word 'years', as both occur in the same context.

### 4. Be off

### 5. Don't be getting under our feet

These two idiomatic expressions are used by Siobhan when she talks to Padraic at home. Both expressions serve as directive speech acts. The expression "be off" has the pragmatic function of commanding, and the other one functions as urging. Both functions are conveyed directly, so they are direct speech acts.

Both expressions play an essential role in creating a unified text. The expression "be off," in this context, can be regarded as near-synonym with "go off" because they both convey the idea of leaving or telling someone to go away. It also functions as a collocational tie with the expression "don't be getting under our feet" because they usually occur in the same context of leaving and annoyance.

### 6. You hide behind walls

This idiomatic expression is used by Padraic when talking to his sister inside their home. It is an assertive speech act, with the function of accusing.





The accusation, in a figurative language, is conveyed directly, so it is a direct speech act.

The expression is repeated by Siobhan, serving as a repetition type of lexical cohesion, thus creating a unified text.

### Extract 3

DOMINIC

Me Daddy says he's going to kill you Sunday, for spilling the beans [...]

PADRAIC

[...] I'm sorry for that spilling the beans on ya, Dominic. I was out of order that night.

**Table 3** The Pragmatic Functions of Idiomatic Expressions: Sample 7

No.	The English Idiomatic Expressions	The Explanation of the Figurative Meaning	Types of Speech Acts	Their Pragmatic Functions
7	To spill the beans	To tell people secret information	Assertive	Accusing Confessing

### 7. Spilling the beans

At dawn, Dominic and Padraic are sitting outside, drinking from a bottle of poteen (a type of drink). Dominic first uses the idiomatic expression to accuse Padraic for revealing a sensitive information about his father's inappropriate behavior toward him, making it an assertive speech act with the pragmatic function of accusing. The function is stated directly, so it is a direct speech act. Then, Padraic also uses the same expression as an assertive speech act with the direct pragmatic function of confessing to a regrettable action. It is a direct speech act.

The expression functions as lexical cohesion through repetition. First used by Dominic and then repeated by Padraic, so, it creates a unified text.

### Extract 4

PADRAIC

Just yesterday, hah! There's this musician fella Colm was getting along great with, and what did I do? I went and sent him packing from the island! [...]



PADRAIC

[...] I told him a bread van had crashed into his Daddy, and he'd have to be rushing home to him, lest he die!

**Table 4** The Pragmatic Functions of Idiomatic Expressions: Sample 8

No.	The English Idiomatic Expressions	The Explanation of the Figurative Meaning	Types of Speech Acts	Their Pragmatic Functions
8	To send someone packing	to ask someone to leave immediately	Assertive	Boasting

8. I ... sent him packing

It's dawn, and Padraic uses this idiomatic expression when speaking with Dominic about his deliberate action to deceive a musician into leaving the island while they are outside. It is an assertive speech act with the pragmatic function of boasting. Padraic directly expresses pride in his manipulation, therefore it is a direct speech act.

The expression contributes to the lexical cohesion of the dialogue through a collocational tie with "rushing home" because both expressions are related to each other and work together to make a single text about leaving the island.

#### Extract 5

DOMINIC

I used to think you were the nicest of them. Turns out you're just the same as them.

**Table 5** The Pragmatic Functions of Idiomatic Expressions: Sample 9

No.	The English Idiomatic Expressions	The Explanation of the Figurative Meaning	Types of Speech Acts	Their Pragmatic Functions
9	To turn out	To prove	Assertive	Reporting

9. Turns out ....

This expression is used by Dominic when he realizes a new perception of Padraic's character. It is an assertive speech act with the pragmatic function



of reporting a realization. Dominic directly states how his belief about Padraic's behaviour is changed, making it a direct speech act.

The expression contributes to the lexical cohesion of the text through a collocational tie with the phrase "used to think" because both of them are about realization and changing perceptions. In this context, Dominic states his present realization which is different from his past belief about Padraic's character. The tie between them creates a cohesive dialogue centered on Dominic's view of Padraic.

### Extract 6

PADRAIC

Ar Dominic, now! (calling out)

Well maybe I'm not a happy lad, so! Maybe being a happy lad just doesn't cut the custard any more!

DOMINIC

(to himself quietly) Mustard.

(or just a wince)

**Table 6** The Pragmatic Functions of Idiomatic Expressions: Sample 10

No .	The English Idiomatic Expressions	The Explanation of the Figurative Meaning	Types of Speech Acts	Their Pragmatic Functions
10	To cut the mustard	To be successful, sufficient, or satisfying.	Expressive	Lamenting

### 10. Cut the custard

This expression is used by Padraic in a moment of frustration when addressing Dominic. It is an expressive speech act with the pragmatic function of lamenting. It is a direct speech act because the speaker conveys his feeling directly.

The expression functions as lexical cohesion through repetition. First used by Padraic in its distorted form, "cut the custard," and it is corrected by Dominic as "Mustard." This repetition creates a cohesive exchange that emphasizes the tension between their perspectives.

### Extract 7

PADRAIC

(V.O.)

[...] but I thank you for the offer of the free bed and the whatnot.



(pause)

But I won't be taking you up on it, I'm afraid.

**Table 7** The Pragmatic Functions of Idiomatic Expressions: Sample 11

No .	The English Idiomatic Expressions	The Explanation of the Figurative Meaning	Types of Speech Acts	Their Pragmatic Functions
11	To take someone up on something	To accept an offer or invitation from someone	Commissive	Refusing

11. I won't be taking you up on it

This idiomatic expression is used by Padraic at dusk, inside his house, when replying to Siobhan's letter after she offered him to go and live with her. It is a commissive speech act, with the pragmatic function of refusing. The function is conveyed directly, thus, it is a direct speech act.

The expression contributes to the cohesion of the text through a collocational tie with the word 'offer.' Siobhan first invited his brother, then, he used the expression to mean refusing, so usually the ideas of offering occurs in the same context of refusing.

#### 4. Conclusion

This research has achieved the objectives in relation to studying the functions of idiomatic expressions in the script of the Irish English film *The Banshees of Inisherin*, specifically, the pragmatic functions in the context of speech act theory and the lexical cohesion contribution. The analysis revealed that the idiomatic expressions serve a dual purpose: fostering meaningful and cohesive interactions while fulfilling significant pragmatic functions. The researchers selected and analyzed 11 idiomatic expressions. Using Searle's taxonomy of speech acts, the expressions have 10 pragmatic functions: assertives (accusing, confessing, boasting, and reporting), expressives (complaining and lamenting), directives (asking, commanding, and urging), and commissives (refusing). Moreover, their role serves two types of lexical cohesion: Reiteration (one near-synonym and four repetitions) and eight collocational ties, it has been observed that one idiomatic expression functions simultaneously as both a near-synonymous and collocational tie, and another one serves as repetition and a collocational



tie. The findings prove that the idiomatic expressions enrich the dialogue and enhance the relationships between characters. This study provides materials to scholars, educators, and students concerned with textual analysis and underlines the role of idiomatic language in creative and scholarly contexts.

### 5. Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Applying other pragmatic tools to analyze the idiomatic expressions used in the film script such as conversational implicature, politeness strategies, and presupposition.
2. The role of artificial intelligence concerning idiomatic expression identification and functionality in the film script is also important to be further studied.

### Reference List

1. Alghazo, S., Alrashdan, I., Al Salem, M. N., & Salem, E. (2022). Idioms as pragmatic messages. *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, 49(4), 425–442. <https://doi.org/10.35516/hum.v49i4.2092>
2. Alqahtni, H. M. (2014). *The structure and context of idiomatic expressions in the Saudi press* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds). University of Leeds. [https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/id/oai\\_id/oai:etheses.whiterose.ac.uk:7678](https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/id/oai_id/oai:etheses.whiterose.ac.uk:7678)
3. Brown, G. P. (1980). Characterizing indirect speech acts. *Computational Linguistics*, 6(3–4), 150–166. <https://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=972539>
4. Cacciari, C. & Tabossi, P. (1993). *Idioms: Processing, structure, and interpretation*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
5. Chang, C. (2006). *Idiomatic expressions in English: A textual analysis*. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235889413>
6. Denny, E., & Weckesser, A. (2022). Quality not quantity: The value of qualitative research. *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, 129(12), 1799–1800. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0528.17149>
7. Elshamy, H. M. (2016). *An analysis of the pragmatic functions of idiomatic expressions in the Egyptian novel "Taxi"* (Master's thesis, American University in Cairo). American University in Cairo Digital Repository. <https://fount.aucegypt.edu/etds/601>
8. Farrell, J. (2023). *The Banshees of Inisherin*, Martin McDonagh (dir.) (2022). *Journal of Class & Culture*, 2(1), 109–113. [https://doi.org/10.1386/jclc\\_00026\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1386/jclc_00026_5)
9. Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. Routledge.
10. Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). Hodder Arnold.
11. Mardani, T. (2022). Study on variability of cohesive devices in idioms and proverbs. *Language Art*, 7(4), 45–52. <https://doi.org/10.22046/LA.2022.21>





12. Morgan, J. L. (1977). *Two types of convention in indirect speech acts* (Technical Report No. 52). University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Center for the Study of Reading.
13. Oishi, E. (2006). Austin's speech act theory and the speech situation. *Esercizi Filosofici*, 1, 1–14. <http://www.univ.trieste.it/~eserfilo/art106/oishi106.pdf>
14. Pratama, R. A., & Damara, G. (2018). An analysis of idiomatic expression translation in *School of Rock* film. *ELTR Journal*, 2(1), 46–55. <https://doi.org/10.37147/eltr.v2i1.95>
15. Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge University Press.
16. Searle, J. R. (1975). *A taxonomy of illocutionary acts*. University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy. <https://conservancy.umn.edu/items/2b9aa876-a427-4f47-8640-74c20f583c86>
17. Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts*. Cambridge University Press.
18. Searle, J. R., Kiefer, F., & Bierwisch, M. (Eds.). (1980). *Speech act theory and pragmatics* (Vol. 10). D. Reidel. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-009-8964-1>
19. Sinha, K. K. (2021). The role of pragmatics in literary analysis: Approaching literary meaning from a linguistic perspective. *International Journal of English and Comparative Literary Studies*, 2(2), 29–40. <https://dx.doi.org/10.47631/ijecls.v2i2.211>
20. Sporleder, C., Li, L., & Palmer, A. (2010). Cohesive links with literal and idiomatic expressions in discourse: An empirical and computational study. *Proceedings of the Workshop on Metaphor in NLP (MAD 2010)*, Moissac, France, 17–20 March 2010, 1–9.
21. Tanksley, C. W. (2004). *The failure of storytelling to ground a causal theory of reference* (Master's thesis). Texas A&M University.
22. Yağiz, O., & Izadpanah, S. (2013). Language, culture, idioms, and their relationship with the foreign language. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4(5), 953–957. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4304/jltr.4.5.953-957>