

# IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS USED IN WESTLIFE'S SONGS

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**Abstract:** This study discusses idiomatic Expressions used in Westlife's Songs. In this study, the writers were interested to find out idiomatic expressions in Westlife songs. The writers analyzed 35 songs of Westlife's songs. In this study, the writers used a qualitative method and descriptive approach. The result of the analysis showed that there were one hundred and ninety-four idiomatic expressions found in those thirty-five songs. After the writers classified the idioms based on Seidl and McMordie theory, the writer found out one hundred and twenty-five idioms in the form of sentence, sixty-two idioms in the form of phrasal verb, three verbal idioms, three idioms with adjective + noun, two identical pairs, and one idiom with key words from special category.

**Keywords:** Idiom, Song, and Westlife's songs.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini membahas ungkapan-ungkapan idiomatik yang ada di lagu Westlife. Pada penelitian ini, penulis tertarik untuk mengetahui apa saja Idiomatic Expressions yang muncul dan arti dari setiap Idiom tersebut. Penulis meneliti 35 lagu dari lagu-lagu Westlife. Pada penelitian ini, penulis menggunakan metodologi kualitatif dan pendekatan deskriptif. Hasil dari penelitian ini memperlihatkan bahwa terdapat 194 idiom yang di temukan dari 35 lagu tersebut. Setelah peneliti mengklasifikasi idiom berdasarkan teori Seidl dan McMordie, peneliti menemukan 125 idiom dalam bentuk kalimat, 62 idiom dalam bentuk phrasal verb, 3 dalam bentuk verbal idiom, 3 dalam bentuk ejektif+ kata benda, 2 identical pairs, dan 1 idiom dalam bentuk kategori spesial.

**Kata Kunci:** Idiom, Lagu, dan Lagu-lagu Westlife.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is as a tool of communicating and expressing people's ideas, feelings and expectations when they interact to each other. According to Guralnik (1996:15), language is used to express or Guralnik communicate thoughts and feelings, and it is a system of combination of vocal sounds to convey meaning as language has some units and structure. Finegan (2004: 185) describes words and sentences as the two units of language that carry meaning. When we use the language, we need to know the meaning of words or sentences we utter. Semantics is the study of the meaning of words and sentences. Some definitions of semantics are stated by some linguists. Saeed (2005:3) states

that semantics is the study of meaning communicated through language, while Yule (2006:112), states that semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. In Yule semantic analysis, there are phrases or expressions consisting of more than one word or sentence, whose meaning cannot be inferred from the meanings of the individual words. For these expressions, the usual semantic rules for combining meanings do not apply. Such expressions are called idioms. Idiom is a phrase or a sentence whose meaning can not be literally translated. Idiom is one aspect of semantics that is sometimes difficult for people, especially students to understand. According to Fromkin and Rodman (2007:185), idiom is often difficult to translate because the meanings of idiom can not be inferred

from the meanings of the individual words in it. For examples, (1) “rain cats and dogs”, means “rain heavily”, (2) “live from hand to mouth”, means “spend money as soon as it is earned”, (3) “kick the bucket”, means “die”. Idioms are usually used in novels, poems, plays and songs. A song means a lyric from the poem or a history of poetry (Roberts and Jacobs, 1989:901). The characteristics of the songs are short poems, formal in meter and rhyme, and concerned with personal feelings rather than stories or ideas. There are many songs which are well known to listeners and some of the song lyrics which contain idioms and are popular are sung by Westlife boy band. Westlife is an Irish pop group formed on 3 July 1998. The personnels of the group are Nicky Byrne, Kian Egan, Mark Feehily, Shane Filan and Brian McFadden (who left in 2004). Their first seven singles went straight to Number 1, and they have been sold for over 45 million records worldwide. Their greatest songs are My Love, I Lay My Love on You, Up Town Girl, Queen of My Heart, I Have a Dream, Fool Again, Seasons in The Sun, If I Let You Go, Flying Without Wings, Swear it Again, I Need You, More Than Words, I Left My Heart in California, and Heart Without a Home. To understand what the singers try to express in their songs, one needs to understand the lyrics which include the idioms. However, it is not usually easy to understand the idioms. It needs processes to make sure what the meanings of them are. Based on the explanation above, the writer were interested in analyzing the idiomatic expressions used in Westlife’s songs, through semantic approach.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the writers applied descriptive method. The writers referred to Seidl and McMordhie’s theory on Idiom. The data analyzed in this research were taken from thirty- five out of fifty- eight songs in the greatest album of Westlife’s songs. There were one hundred and ninety- four idiomatic expressions found in those thirty- five songs. They were classified into six categories of idioms. They are sentence idioms, phrasal verb, adjective+noun idiom, idiom with words/special category, verbal idiom, and identical pairs.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The followings are ten sample analyzed songs.

### 3.1 Flying Without Wings

There were eight idiomatic expressions found in **Flying Without Wings** song. There are three idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs, one idiomatic expression in the form of adjective + noun, and four idiomatic expressions in the form of sentences. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 1. Expressions of Flying Without Wings**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	"Everybody's <b>looking for that something</b> " in line 1	Phrasal verb	Everybody tries to find something lost. "something" means
2	"You'll <b>find it in the strangest places</b> " in line 3	Phrasal verb	Get it
3	"You're <b>flying without wings</b> " in line 9	Phrasal verb	You will be safe even you do not have anything with you because you have found what you makes you feel you do not need anymore thing.
4	"A simple line can make you laugh or cry" in line 13	Sentence	Simple things that can make us feel happy and sad.
5	"You'll find it in the <b>deepest friendship</b> " in line 14	Idiom with adjective + noun	When you have a real relationship with your friend that often give you happiness.
6	"And when you know how much that means" in line 16	Sentence	The time we can know the meaning of the things or someone. It means you have found the most special you think for your life, so you can do everything bravely.

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
7	"Cos who's to know which one you let go, Would have made you complete" in line 21 and 22	Sentence	We do not know, something that we hope to get out from our life and it is something or someone that
8	"To watch the sunrise on your face" in line 24	Sentence	When you find the value of a close relationship you find happiness.

### 3.2 My Love

There were seven idiomatic expressions found in **My Love** song. There are three idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs and five idiomatic expressions in the form of sentences. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 2. Expressions of My Love**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meanings
1	"An empty street, and empty house, a hole inside my heart, I'm all alone the rooms are getting smaller" in line 1 until 5	Sentence	He feels alone in the world and the place seems to be smaller or feel no one in the place, feel no one beside him.
2	"I'm <b>holding on forever</b> " in line 12	Phrasal verb	He always keeps his love eventhough he does not know where the girl is.

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meanings
3	<i>“Reaching for a love that seems so far”</i> in line 13	Phrasal verb	He wants to bring his love back to where he is.
4	<i>“And hope my dreams will take me there”</i> in line 15	Sentence	He really wants to get the place to meet the girl that he loves.
5	<i>“I try to read, I go to work, I’m laughing with my friends, but I can’t stop to keep myself from thinking”</i> in line 24 until 27	Sentence	He had tried to forget the girl but he can not. He tried to be busy with many things to let the girl out from his mind but it is useless.
6	<i>“To hold you in my arms, to promise you my love, to tell you from my heart, You’re all I’m thinking of”</i> in line 45 until 48	Sentence	The boy really wants to keep the girl beside him and to tell everything from his heart that he always thinks about the girl for every single day.
7	<i>“Where the skies are blue, to see you once again my love”</i> in line 52	Sentence	When he meets the girl he feels a good time or he misses a beautiful time when he was with the girl.

### 3.3 I Lay My Love On You

There were ten idiomatic expressions found in *I Lay My Love on You* song. There are three idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs, one idiomatic expression in the form of noun + adjective, five idiomatic expressions in the form sentences, and one idiomatic expression in the

form of identical pairs. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 3. Expressions of I Lay My Love On You**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	<i>“There’s an angel standing next to me”</i> in line 3	Sentence	There is a very beautiful girl standing next to him.
2	<i>“Reaching for my heart”</i> in line 4	Phrasal verb	There is a girl that makes him to be in love.
3	<i>“Just a smile and there’s no way back”</i> in line 5	Sentence	When she smiles he thought that she is so beautiful. He never wants to leave her.
4	<i>“I lay my love on you”</i> in line 11	Sentence	She gives all his love just for the girl because the girl is so beautiful and fascinating.
5	<i>“You open my heart”</i> in line 14	Phrasal verb	The girl makes him feel like he can talk freely about everything.
6	<i>“I was lost in a lonely place”</i> in line 14	Sentence	Before he met her, he did not feel like he had place in the world.
7	<i>“holding on to yesterday”</i> in line 16	Phrasal verb	Before he met her, he felt like he did not had any purpose for his life.
8	<i>“Far, far too long”</i> in line 17	Identical pairs	It takes a long time.
9	<i>“I never knew that love could’ve felt so good”</i> in line 25	Sentence	Before he met her, he does not know that love makes him happy.
10	<i>“You make me feel brand new”</i> in line 29	Idiom with Noun + Adjective	He feels really new feeling or different situation.

### 3.4 Uptown Girl

There were eight idiomatic expressions found in **Uptown Girl** song. There are two idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs, five idiomatic expressions in the form sentences, and one idiomatic expression in the form of verbal idiom. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 4. Expression of Uptown Girl**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	“ <i>Uptown girl</i> ” in line 1	Sentence	The girl is rich and a part of high society.
2	“ <i>She’s been living in her up town world</i> ”	Sentence	She only knows about the rich life and she does not know anything out side of her own experience.
3	“ <i>I bet she never had a backstreet guy, I bet her mama never told her why</i> ” in line 2 until 4	Sentence	The man thinks that she never met or date with a poor man.
4	“ <i>I’m gonna try for an uptown girl</i> ” in line 5	Sentence	The man tries to be close with the girl
5	“ <i>And now she’s looking for a downtown man</i> ” in line 8	Sentence	The girl wants to find a man from down town area. So that she can live freely.
6	“ <i>And when she wakes up</i> ” in line 12	Phrasal verb	“Get up” means that when the girl realizes what she wants.

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
7	“ <i>And makes up her mind</i> ” in line 13	Phrasal verb	She decides to get what she wants.
8	“ <i>She’ll see I’m not so tough, I’m in love with an uptown girl</i> ” in line 14 and 16	Sentence	The girl will know that the man will not be confident with her.
9	“ <i>You know I can’t afford to buy her pearls</i> ” in line 24	Verbal idiom	The man is not rich and he can not give her everything that she wants.

### 3.5 The Queen of My Heart

There were eight idiomatic expressions found in **The Queen of My Heart** song. There are two idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs, one idiomatic expression in the form of adjective + adverb, and five idiomatic expressions in the form of sentences. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 5. Expressions of The Queen of My Heart**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	“ <i>So far away</i> ” in line 4	Idiom with Adjective + Adverb	They are surrounded by people but they so focus on each other the people seem along distance from them.

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
2	"We both have our dreams, we both wanna fly" in line 12 and 13	Sentence	Both of them have planning for their future.
3	"To carry us through" in line 15	Phrasal verb	The man is saying never forget tonight.
4	"So let's take to night, and never let go" in line 17 and 18	Sentence	The man does not allow the woman to go away from his life.
5	"While dancing we'll kiss, like there's no tomorrow" in line 19 and 20	Sentence	He wants to kiss his girl very passionately because it will be the last time.
6	"You're the queen of my heart" in line 34	Sentence	The man really assumes that the girl is so special in his heart, she is everything, she is in the whole of his heart.
7	"As I walk away" in line 39	Phrasal verb	Forget
8	"And all of our tears, will be lost in the rain, when I've found my way back, to your arms again" in line 42 until 45	Sentence	All their sadness will be finished when they meet again and the man will be happy when the girl comes back again.

### 3.6 Fool Again

There were four idiomatic expressions found in **Fool Again** song. All of the idiomatic expressions are in the form of sentences. The distribution of the expressions can be seen in the following table.

**Table 6. Expression of Fool Again**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	"I know the story, I've seen the picture, It's written all over your face" in line 2 until 4	Sentence	The man has known there is something wrong by how the woman looks.
2	"Can't believe that I'm a fool again, and I who thought you were my friend" in line 17 until 18	Sentence	The man feels disappointed with his friend because he has tricked him.
3	"If I could I would, turn back the time" in line 35 until 36	Sentence	He wants to go back to the way things were, but he could not.
4	"I should've seen it coming, should've read the signs" in line 38 until 39	Sentence	He should have known that something were wrong by the way by the girl is acting.

### 3.7 Seasons in The Sun

There were seven idiomatic expressions found in **Seasons in the Sun** song. There are three idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs, one idiomatic expression in the form of idiom

with key words from special category (colour), and three idiomatic expressions in the form of sentences. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 7. Expression of Seasons in The Sun**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	<i>“Goodbye to you my trusted friend, we’ve known each other since we were nine or ten”</i> in line 1 until 3	Sentence	Someone who says goodbye with his best friend. “ nine or ten” means they were still children.
2	<i>“Learn of love and ABCs”</i> in line 5	Phrasal verb	When he struggles with his friends since the first time.
3	<i>“Goodbye my friend it’s hard to die”</i> in line 8	Sentence	Saying goodbye and the person says that he is hard to leave and forget his previous memory.
4	<i>“Pretty girls are everywhere,</i> in line 11	Sentence	Now they are adults.
5	<i>“Think of me and I’ll be there”</i> in line 12	Phrasal verb	When his friend thinks of him, it will be like he is there with him.
6	<i>“I was the black sheep of the family”</i> in line 18	Idiom with key words from special category  ( colour)	He is considered bad or worthless by other people in the family.
7	<i>“Wonder how I got along”</i> in line 20	Phrasal verb	He wonders that he leaves this along.

### 3.8 Soledad

There were seven idiomatic expressions found in **Soledad** song. There are two idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs, and five idiomatic expressions in the form of sentences. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 8. Expression of Soledad**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	<i>“Even when I close my eyes, there’s an image of your face”</i> in line 5 and 6	Sentence	The man always thinks about the woman “Soledad” even when he’s sleeping.
2	<i>“And once again I come to realize, You’re a loss I can’t replace”</i> in line 7 and 8	Sentence	The man can not find any other girl.
3	<i>“It’s a keeping for the lonely, since the day that you were gone”</i> in line 10 and 11	Sentence	Because of Soledad’s leaving, he felt alone, he is very sad and felt something missed in his life.
4	<i>“Walking down the streets of Nothingville, where our love was young and free, I can’t believe just what an empty place”</i> in line 18 until 20	Sentence	He used to be with the girl but now he does not believe that he is alone and without his girl.

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
5	"I would <b>give my life away</b> " in line 22	Phrasal verb	Something that make you realize the truth about the person.
6	"Cos I can't still the voice inside of me, that is <b>calling out your name</b> " in line 24 and 25	Phrasal verb	The man always thinks about Soledad and always remember to her.
7	"And after all were meant to be, love will bring us back you and me, if only you could see" in line 28 until 30	Sentence	If the woman (Soledad) realizes that the man really loves her and she really meaningful in his life, she will come back to the man.

### 3.9 Bob Bob Baby

There were five idiomatic expressions found in **Bob Bob Baby** songs. There are three idiomatic expressions in the form of phrasal verbs, and two idiomatic expressions in the form of sentences. Each of the expressions is discussed in the table below.

**Table 9. Expression of Bob Bob Baby**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	"My mama said nothing would break me or <b>lead me astray</b> " in line 1	Phrasal verb	If some one or something leads you astray they will make you believe something which is not true,

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
			causing you to make wrong decision.
2	"You always said I was a dreamer now it's dead, I'm dreaming of things that's making my mind go crazy" in line 3 and 4	Sentence	Before he broke up, he had great plans for the future but now all of his plans are hopeless.
3	"When I lie in my bed with the thoughts in my head, when we danced and we sang and we laughed all night" in line 8 and 9	Sentence	Eventhough when he is sleeping he always remembers all of the memory when he was with his lovely girl.
4	"I got off to day" in line 16, "and put my mind at ease for sure" in line 27	Phrasal verb	You leave a place because it is the time to leave.
5	"This is when we must set things right, now that we've <b>gone our separateway s, I just can't live these desperate days, this is what I've been trying to say</b> " in line 30 until 33	Phrasal verb	Eventhough the girl has left him but he still need her help to keep living.



### 3.10 Don't Calm in The Storm

There were four idiomatic expressions found in **Don't Calm in the Storm** song. All of the expressions are in the form of sentences. The expressions are discussed in the table below.

**Table 10. Expression of Don't Calm in The Storm**

No	Idiomatic Expressions	Kinds of Idiomatic Expressions	Meaning
1	"You say you need some time on your own" in line 1	Sentence	The girl wants to be alone.
2	But baby don't leave me now all alone in the cold" in line 3	Sentence	The man does not want the woman to leave him alone when he needs someone beside him.
3	"And we'll make it right" in line 11	Sentence	If the girl stays with him they can make the situation better.
4	"Oh baby, just open your eyes, hear me now, it doesn't have to be this way" in line 18 until 20	Sentence	He says really sorry, he asks the girl to look and listen to the man that he really loves her and he does not want the relation to end.

phrasal verb, one verbal idioms, three idioms with Adjective + Noun, two identical pairs, and one idiom with key words from special categories. However, idioms in the form of sentence is the most used by the author. It's shown from *Unbreakable* song. In this song, the writer found seven idiomatic expressions and all of them were in the form of sentences. Furthermore, in *Love Can Build a Bridgesong*. The writer found six idiomatic expressions and they were in the form of sentences.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

From those six kinds of idioms based on McMordie theory (1988:6), the researcher found all the kinds of idioms used in the songs. They are one hundred and twenty-three idioms in the form of sentence, sixty-one idioms in the form of

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