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- An exception to the rule • For the most part
- To hold good • In general / in particular
- In principle • In theory / in practice
- Nine times out of ten • No exception
- On paper • On the whole

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Every English-speaking country has different kinds of language for different purposes and for different occasions, for example: written and spoken language; 'street' language and slang; informal, neutral and formal language; specialist technical language and so on. One problem facing speakers of English as a second or foreign language, is to avoid being either too formal or too informal and to avoid using an inappropriate form of language (for example, using the language of poetry to describe a scientific process or using street language during an important meeting). So, the first and main feature of this book is that it provides a range of idioms which, with a few exceptions (clearly marked *informal*), can safely be used on almost any occasion from discussions and meetings to presentations, negotiations, reports and letters.

2. The second feature of this book is that all the idioms can be used wherever English is spoken, whether as a first, second or foreign language. For this reason, the idioms are not linked to any limited or specific areas of life or