Translating Idiomatic Expressions from English into Arabic

ترجمة التعابير الاصطلاحية من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى العربية

By
Othman SajidJuma'a

Supervisor
Professor Bader Dweik

This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the M.A Degree in English Language and Literature

Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department of English Language and Literature
Middle East University
Amman
May 31, 2014

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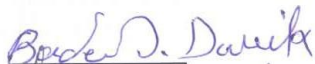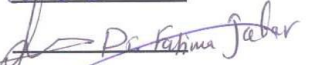
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Prof. Bader. S. Dweik	Chairman & Supervisor	
Dr. Fatima Ja'afar	Member	
Dr. Ibrahim. M. Abu Shhab	External Examiner	

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, all praise and thanks are due to Allah, Lord of the worlds, who endowed me persistence and patience to finish this thesis. My parents deserve the most appreciation for their boundless love and encouragement, who never stop praying for my best. Without their support, the completion of my research would have been impossible. Special thanks are to my beloved wife and my sons, who are my life's sun.

My earnest thanks go to my supervisor, Professor Bader S. Dweik whose guidance and back-up were the assets upon which this thesis was developed to reach its current status. I owe him a depth of gratitude for his encouragement and invaluable contribution to the research whether by his time, his pieces of advice or the documents he provided me with.

I will remain very grateful to all the teaching staff who supported me with the necessary knowledge during the M.A courses: Professor Riyad Hussein, Professor Sabar Sultan, and Dr. Fatema Ja'afar.

I am greatly indebted to all my friends and colleagues in the Department of English at Middle East, especially my dear friend Hussam Abdi Al-hadi for his invaluable discussions and comments and for his limitless generosity. My gratitude and sincere thanks are also extended

Dedication

I dedicate this work to the wonderful, the patient, and the ones, who

are always with me,

My Parents

&

My Beloved Wife

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Othman Sajid Juma'a

Supervisor

Professor Bader Said Dweik

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the challenges that M.A students encounter when translating idiomatic expressions. Particularly, it aimed at answering the following questions:

1- What are the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions?

2- What factors cause such challenges?

3- What recommendations can be suggested to handle these challenges?

To achieve the goal of this study, the researcher selected a purposive sample that comprised 40 M.A students who were enrolled in the M.A program in two Jordanian Universities (i.e. Middle East University and Petra University)

during the second semester 2013/2014. The researcher designed a translation test that consisted of 20 statements which M.A students were asked to translate from English to Arabic. Each statement contained an idiomatic expression based on O'Dell and McCarthy's (2010) categorization of idioms namely: proverbs, metaphors, similes, and binomials. These statements represented different fields i.e. social, sports, scientific, media, educational, economic, political, and business. The researcher also conducted semi-structured interviews with students and experts in the field of translation to compile more information.

The results revealed that M.A students encounter different kinds of challenges when translating idiomatic expressions. These challenges are mostly related to inability to find a target language equivalent and unawareness of pragmatic, formal and semantic characteristics of idiomatic expressions, unawareness of the cultural differences between English and Arabic and unawareness of idioms' categorization namely (proverbs, metaphor, similes and binomials).

Students and experts elaborated on the factors behind these challenges and through their answers it is clear that lack of awareness in the source language cultural patterns (traditions, habits, customs, ceremonies,

entertainments and social patterns and religious background), unawareness of the cultural differences, misusing the appropriate technique and the tendency to use literal translation that is in most cases not successful, using the paraphrasing technique rather than giving the target language equivalent and the use of idiomatic expressions in colloquial rather than standard language are the main reasons behind the failure in translating idiomatic expressions .

ترجمة التعابير الاصطلاحية من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى العربية

إعداد

عثمان ساجد جمعة

إشراف

الأستاذ الدكتور بدر سعيد الدويك

ملخص الدراسة

هدفت الدراسة الى معرفة التحديات التي يواجهها طلاب الماجستير تخصص اللغة الانجليزية عند ترجمة التعابير الاصطلاحية وركزت تحديدا على الاجابة عن الأسئلة التالية:

1 – ما هي التحديات الأساسية التي يواجهها طلبة الماجستير عند ترجمة التعابير الاصطلاحية؟

2- ما هي العوامل التي تقف وراء هذه التحديات؟

3-ما هي التوصيات التي يمكن اقتراحها للتغلب على مثل هكذا تحديات؟

وللإجابة عن هذه الأسئلة, قام الباحث باختيار عينة مقصودة من طلبة الماجستير تخصص لغة الإنجليزية, تكونت من 40 طالبا و طالبة تم اختيارهم من جامعتين أردنييتين خاصتين (جامعة الشرق الأوسط وجامعة البتراء). وقام الباحث بتصميم اختبار ترجمة تكون من 20 جملة احتوت كل جملة على تعبير اصطلاحي حسب تصنيف "اوديل ومكوارثي" لسنة 2010 للتعابير الاصطلاحية ومن هذه التصنيفات الأمثال والمجازات والتشبيهات والثنائيات حيث قام الطلاب بترجمتها من اللغة الإنجليزية الى العربية. حيث شملت هذه التعابير مجالات مختلفة مثل النصوص الاجتماعية والرياضية والعلمية والإعلامية والتعليمية والاقتصادية والسياسية والتجارية. كما قام الباحث بإجراء مقابلات شبه رسمية مع طلبة وخبراء في مجال الترجمة للحصول على كم أكبر من المعلومات.

وقد كشفت نتائج الدراسة أن طلبة الماجستير تخصص لغة الإنجليزية يواجهون العديد من التحديات لدى ترجمة التعابير الاصطلاحية والتي تمحورت في الغالب حول: عدم قدرتهم على إيجاد تعبير اصطلاحي مطابق للمصطلح في اللغة المترجم إليها وعدم درايتهم بخصائص التعابير الاصطلاحية البراغماتية والأسلوبية والدلالية. وكذلك عدم معرفة الطلاب الاختلافات الثقافية بين المصطلحات (الإنجليزية والعربية) وجهلهم بتصنيفات التعابير الاصطلاحية كالأمثال والمجازات والتشبيهات والثنائيات).

وقد ركز الطلاب والخبراء على العوامل وراء هذه التحديات وانه واضح ضمن أجوبتهم بان عدم درايتهم الانماط الثقافية في اللغة المترجم منها (التقاليد والعادات والأعراف والطقوس والاهتمامات والخلفية الاجتماعية والدينية) و عدم درايتهم بالاختلافات الثقافية والاستخدام الخاطئ للاساليب المناسبة في الترجمة والميل لاستخدام الترجمة الحرفية والتي تكون في اغلب الاحيان غير ناجحة واستخدام اسلوب اعادة الصياغة بدلا من اعطاء تعبير مطابق في اللغة المترجم اليها وكذلك استخدام التعابير الاصطلاحية في اللغة العامية بدلا من استخدامها في الفصحى, هي الاسباب الرئيسية وراء الفشل في ترجمة التعابير الاصطلاحية.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Translation is a means of communication. It is through translation that people can communicate, exchange knowledge, benefit from research written in foreign languages….etc. The development of science and technology in this modern age becomes an integral part of translation activity because most of provenance information is written in English such as, science, medicine, opinion and reality. Therefore, if there is no translation, people do not understand the content. For that reason, translation is very important in order to convey to the readers or trainees the real meaning and same information written in the source language.

There are some challenges when someone tries to translate a stretch of information, which contains cultural, scientific, literary, or idiomatic expressions. The fundamental existing problem is in conveying the real meaning of the source language into the target language. This problem may happen because of some factors such as culture, environment, and finding the most equivalent words in the target language.

Nida (1964) asserted that "in order to achieve an equivalent response, the translation should make sense; convey the spirit and the manner of the original; have natural and easy form of expressions" (p.164). He suggested two main types of equivalence:

1- Formal equivalence: in which the translator focuses his attention on the similarity of form between the source language and the target language texts, as well as on the content in order to enable the target language reader to grasp and understand as much as possible of the original text.

2- Dynamic equivalence: In which the translator has to reproduce an equivalent effect on the receiver as that experienced by the source language receiver.

Nida (1964, p.13) also maintained that "the role of a translator is to facilitate the transfer of the message, meaning, and cultural elements from one language into another and create an equivalent response to the receivers".

Language, as a system of communication has literal and figurative meanings. The literal meaning is the direct meaning of words or sentences to objects which do not imply implicit meaning (what the individual word implies is the actual meaning), while the figurative sense is used for giving an imaginative description or a special effect which means it implies a hidden

meaning which cannot be predicted from the meaning of individual words. Such a meaning includes notions like metaphors, similes, proverbs, and binomials.

Idiomatic expressions are a natural part of language use; people cannot even imagine how vastly they use them in their daily life whether in speeches or in writings. An idiomatic expression is a colloquial metaphor that requires fundamental knowledge and experience in both the target and source languages, and the translator must have cultural background of both the source and target texts. According to Langlotz (2006, p. 2) "idioms have been described as conventional multi-word units that are semantically opaque and structurally fixed". Healey (1968, p.71) defined an idiom as "any group of words whose meaning cannot be deduced from the meaning of the individual words". This contradicts the principle of compositionality, which states that the meaning of a complex expression can be determined by the meaning of its constituents. The main existing problem in this regard is that translating the meaning of idiom's constituents instead of translating it as a single unit. For example, the sentence "This work is *a piece of cake*" will be translated into Arabic as " هذا العمل عبارة عن قطعة من الكعكة" instead of هذا عمل سهل جدا. Here the idiom is translated literally, considering the literal meaning of constituent words in the idiom instead of conveying the meaning (easy) by considering it

as a single unit. An idiom is composed of two or more words and these words are not included in the overall meaning of the phrase. The overall meaning of these words expresses a completely different idea. The reasons for this semantic abnormality is due to the fact that an idiom is not built word by word, but it is a non-compositional phrase which is learned, stored and recycled as a single item.

Idioms are totally different from all forms of language, because their meanings cannot be predicted from their individual words. Idiomatic expressions are different from collocations and all patterns of language in which idiomatic expressions are not flexible, which do not allow several movements and changes in form and meaning of the word or words in idioms.

According to Baker, (1992) idioms are frozen patterns of language. An idiom such as *the long and the short of it* ('the basic facts of the situation') allows no changing in the form of idiom under normal circumstances unless someone is consciously making a joke or attempting a play on words. There are some restrictions for idioms such as:

1- Change the order of the words within idioms;
2- Delete a word from the phrase containing this idiom;

3- Add a word to the idiom;

4- Replace a word by another;

5- Change its grammatical structure.

According to Langlotz (2006, p. 2) "idiomatic constructions can be described as complex symbols with specific formal, semantic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic characteristics." This means that an idiom is a very complicated notion of language, which overlaps mostly with culture. Language is closely related to culture, and it can be regarded as a part of culture. Language and culture shape and interact with each other. Idiom is a very important form of language, which exists in both language and culture. It carries a huge amount of information such as nationality, customs, traditions, ceremonies, religion, geography etc. Much knowledge about culture can be exposed through the study of idiomatic expressions and in turn better understand of idiomatic expressions by learning their cultural background and cultural patterns. Since each language has its own way and devices of expressing certain ideas and issues in exposing culture, idiomatic expressions are considered language and culture specific.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Translating idiomatic expressions represents a real challenge to MA students, especially when translation occurs between two distinct languages like English and Arabic which are linguistically and culturally different. Because translating idiomatic expressions may show a significant misunderstanding and mistranslation of the source text and because it is not easy to translate an idiomatic expression or to find an equivalent one to that of the source language, the researcher decided to investigate the challenges that MA English majoring students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

- Outline the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idioms.

- Find out the factors that cause such challenges.

- Suggest some solutions and recommendations that ease such challenges.

1.4 Questions of the Study

4- What are the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions?

5- What factors cause such challenges?

6- What recommendations can be suggested by students and experts to handle these challenges?

1.5 Significance of the Study

To the best knowledge of the researcher, there are some studies that have dealt with the translation of idiomatic expressions in the Arab world especially in Iraq and Jordan. This study may fill a gap in the literature. Moreover, this study is not only of concern to translators, but also of concern to readers, writers, researchers, critics and other individuals interested in this field. This study may benefit students in translation departments and may give them additional information when they come across such idiomatic expressions.

What distinguishes this study is its topic, its sample, its design and its method. Translating idiomatic expressions in this paper dealt with four types of idioms, namely proverbs, metaphors, similes and binomials and their fields while other previous studies have dealt with one type only.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The study has three limitations:

1- Limitation of time: the study was conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2013-2014.

2- Limitation of place: this study was applied on Middle East University and Petra University English majoring MA students.

3- Limitation of subject: this study is conducted to investigate challenges that students in Middle East University and Petra University encounter while translating idiomatic expressions.

Results may not be generalized beyond the sample and the instruments used in this study.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Idiomatic expressions: Theoretically, they are "frozen patterns of language, which allow little or no variation in form and often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components." (Baker 1992, p.63). Operationally, idiomatic expressions refer to proverbs, metaphors, similes and binomials which can be a word, a phrase or a sentence that are not taken <u>literally</u>, like "bought the farm" has nothing to do with purchasing real estate, but refers to dying.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher reviews two kinds of literature. The first one is theoretical which aims at providing a theoretical background to the current study, which is the base on which this research is built. The second is the empirical studies, which deal with issues related to translating idiomatic expressions. The empirical studies are reviewed under three headings: local, regional and international ones. They are discussed in chronological order.

2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature

2.1.1 Translation, Culture and Types of Idiomatic Expressions:

Linguists and theorists like Nida (1964), McGuire (1980), Ivir (1987), Newmark (1988), Baker (1992), Davies (2004), and Langlotz (2006), have given a great importance to language, culture, and idiomatic expressions. They viewed language in correlation with culture and showed how they overlapped with each other.

Translation is defined as a process of substituting the source language text by equivalent target language text, as well as preserving the meaning and content of the source language text as accurately as possible. McGuire (1980, p.2) argued that the meaning of the source language text is similar to the meaning of the target language text and that "the structures of the source language will be preserved as closely as possible, but not so closely that the target language structures will be seriously distorted".

Newmark (1981, p.7) defined translation as "a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language". According to Nida and Taber (1982, p.12), "Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalence of the source language (SL) message firstly, in terms of meaning and secondly, in terms of style". In their definition, Nida and Taber concentrated on the fundamentals of translation. Translation involves two languages, the source language (SL) and the target one (TL). Translation is highly dependent on meaning and equivalence should be transferred according to the target language norms. But according to Bell (1991, p.xv), the goal of translation is "the transformation of a text originally in one language into an equivalent text in a different language retaining, as far

as possible, the content of the message and the formal features and functional roles of the original text."

Ivir (1987) stated that "language is a part of culture and, therefore, translation from one language to another cannot be done adequately without knowledge of the two cultures as well as the two languages structures" (p.208). In this regard, Newmark (1988) believed that the untranslatability of a certain text is more likely to exist when the level of cultural overlap between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) is high, which means that it is more likely that the translator will be unable to bridge the gap between both languages. In supporting this theory Nida (1994, p.157) defines culture as: "the total beliefs and practices of a society". Words only have meaning in terms of the culture in which they are used, and although languages do not determine culture, they certainly tend to reflect a society's beliefs and practice".

Dweik (2000) asserted that differences between two cultures certainly cause difficulties not only in translation but also in learning foreign languages. He elaborated on the causes of interference problems that result from either lack of knowledge in language two or from language one. He also discussed the role of non-linguistic factors that either impede or enhance bilingualism.

According to Culler (1976), languages express concepts which are different from those of another, since each language forms the world differently. When comparing languages, one can find that cultures share similar social features and based on their knowledge form their own utterances. Baker (1992) mentioned that "the source language word may express a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture. The concept in question may be abstract or concrete; it may relate to a religious belief, a social custom or even a type of food". She discussed the most common non-equivalents which a translator can come across in the process of translation. Cultural differences can cause some serious difficulties for translators that are not familiar with them. Translating idiomatic expressions can cause serious challenges to the non-expert translator.

Langlotz (2006, p.3) mentioned that "idiomatic constructions can be described as complex symbols with specific formal, semantic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic characteristics." He also explained that a phrase can only be defined as idiomatic by exploring its "degree of idiomaticity, i.e. its degree of belonging to the class of idiomatic constructions." (Langlotz, 2006, p.5). Since idioms change appearance from one instance to another, they must be analyzed accordingly.

Newmark (1988, p. 104) who considered idioms as extended metaphors, claimed that "an idiom has two main functions: *pragmatic and referential*. The pragmatic function is to appeal to the senses, to interest, to surprise, to delight". He mentioned that "the first function is called cognitive, while the other is aesthetic". The referential function is "to describe a mental process or state, a concept, a person, an object, a quality or an action more comprehensively and concisely than is possible in literal or physical language" (Cited in Strakšiene, 2009, p. 14).

It appears that idioms may have some culture-specific or culturally-bound items which cause some difficulties in the process of translating. Teilanyo (2007) stressed that "The difficulty arises from the problem of finding adequate target language equivalents for terms conveying culture-sensitive notions in the source language as a result of the fact that the two languages have different meaning subsystems and cultures" (p.16).

Makkai (1972, p.117) classified idioms into lexemic and sememic idioms.

1- Lexemic idioms include:

a. Phrasal verbs: e.g., to come up with, to turn off, to take part in.

b. Phrasal compounds: e.g. black ice, black board.

c. Incorporating Verbs: e.g. man-handle.

d. Pseudo-Idioms: e.g. spick and span, kit and kin

2- Sememic Idioms, on the other hand, usually, convey pragmatic meanings related to a particular culture. They include:

a. Proverbs: e.g. Chew of something over, A bird in hand is worth two in the bush.

b. Familiar Quotations: e.g. Not a mouse stirring

The main feature that differentiates between the different kinds of idioms as easily understandable or totally opaque is the degree of idiomacity that an idiom carries. Moon (1998, p.4) classifies idioms as follows:

1- Transparent idioms

This type of idioms is close in meaning to the literal one. The meaning of an idiom of this type can be inferred from the meaning of its constituents. So, it is not very difficult to understand or translate such an idiom, for example to see the light (to understand)

2- Semi-transparent idioms

It is that type of idioms that has metaphorical meaning and the meaning of its constituents has a little role in grasping and comprehending

the overall meaning of the expression for example break the ice (to reveal the tension)

3- Semi opaque idioms

They are idioms whose figurative meaning is not related to the meaning of its constituents. Thus, the idiomatic expression is separated into two parts; a part with a literal meaning, and another with a figurative sense, for example to know the ropes (to know how a particular job should be done)

4- Opaque idioms

Opaque idioms are the most difficult type of idioms, because the meaning of the idiom is not that the sum of the literal meaning of its constituents. Therefore, it would be impossible to guess the meaning of an idiom from its constituents, because the items within that idiom have cultural references, for example to burn one's boat (to make retreat impossible)

O'Dell and McCarthy (2010, p 1), categorized idioms into proverbs, idioms with metaphors, similes and binomials. He defined them as the following:

Proverbs are short sentences which refer to something most people have experienced and which give advice or warning. Their form is fixed also. Such as where there's a will there's a way (p. 26). While metaphors describe a person, object or a situation by comparing it to something else with similar characteristics, for example Romeo says Juliet is my sun, suggesting that she is the most important force in his life, bringing him light and warmth. Similes are expressions which compare two things; they always include the words as or like. Such as "the baby's skin is as smooth as silk" (extremely smooth) (p. 22). Whereas binomials are a type of idiom in which two words are joined by a conjunction (linking word), usually and. The order of the two words is fixed. Such as, we always say black and white, not white and black (p. 24). This categorization of idioms will be taken into consideration while conducting the test of this study.

2.1.2. Difficulties Encountered in Translating Idiomatic Expressions

Translating idioms is one of the most difficult tasks for translators. It is not a matter of replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages only; it may involve rejecting the basic linguistic elements of source language text. Bassnett-McGuire (1980, p.24), stated that "idioms should be translated

on the basis of the function of the phrase: the source language idiom should be replaced by a target language idiom that has the same meaning".

Awwad (1990) identified two major difficulties when translating idioms. The first one is misinterpreting the intention of the writer or speaker, and the second is recognizing the cultural differences among languages with regard to both traditional and innovative idioms.

Baker (1992, p.68-71) summarized the main difficulties that a translator encounters in translating idiomatic expressions as follows:

1- An idiom or fixed expression may have no equivalent in the target language. The way a language chooses to express, or not express, various meanings cannot be predicted and only occasionally matches the way another language chooses to express the same meanings. One language may express a given meaning by means of a fixed expression, by means of an idiom, or by means of a single word. Idioms may be culture specific such as "yours faithfully" and "yours sincerely" in English. These terms have no equivalents in Arabic. The expression "watafadalu biquul fa'iq al-ihtiraam" may be used instead, but it has no direct relationship to yours sincerely or yours faithfully.

2-   An idiom or fixed expression may have a similar counterpart in the target language, but its context of use may be different; the two expressions may have different connotations. For example *To go to the dogs* ('to lose one's good qualities') has a similar counterpart in German, but whereas the English idiom can be used in connection with a person or a place, its German counterpart can only be used in connection with a person and often means to die or perish. Though similar in meaning, the contexts in which the two idioms can be used are obviously different.

3-   An idiom may be used in the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time. Unless the target-language idiom corresponds to the source-language idiom both in form and in meaning, the play on idiom cannot be successfully reproduced in the target text.

4-   The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, the contexts in which they can be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages.

From a practical point of view, Baker (1992, p.65) mentioned that "the main problems that idiomatic and fixed expressions pose in translation relate to two main areas: the ability to recognize and interpret the idiom

correctly; and the difficulties involved in rendering the various aspects of meaning that an idiom or affixed expression conveys into the target language". It is not always so obvious that the translator recognizes an idiom. There are some types of idioms which are easy to recognize, such idioms violate truth conditions such as: *"It's raining cats and dogs*إنها تمطر كأفواه القرب *"* They also include expressions which seem ill formed because they do not follow the grammatical rules of the language, for example *"by and large* بغض النظر عن ذلك*"*. Expressions, which start with like also tend not to be translated literally.

Yowelly and Lataiwish (2000, p.107), believed that "the greater the gap between the source and target culture, the more serious difficulty would be". Translation between English and Arabic which belongs to two different cultures (the Western and the Middle Eastern cultures), and which have different backgrounds is a best example of such problems. Thus, idioms are considered part of culture in which they demand cultural background similar to that of native speakers.

Davies (2004, p.193), mentioned a number of problems students may encounter in translating idioms:

1- Recognition

2- No equivalent in the target language

3- A similar counterpart in the target language with a different context of use

4- An idiom used in the source text both in its literal and idiomatic sense at the same time

5- Difference between the convention, context and frequency of use in the source and target languages.

2.1.3 Techniques and Strategies Used in Translating Idiomatic Expressions

Newmark (1981, p.125) pointed out that idiom should never be translated word for word. He (1991, p.61) stated that "literal translation of L2 idioms may also be useful as a pathway to comprehension and memorization. The distinction between word- for- word and global meanings of idioms and standard collocations has to be made clear". That is to say, we cannot translate an idiom literally, since the result will usually be unintelligible in the receptor language. The best translation strategy for idioms is translating them with a natural target language idiom, which has the same meaning and effect as the original source language idiom. Translation can be produced by studying the

text carefully and then deciding the proper method as the way to express naturally the same message of the source text in the receptor.

The meaning of idioms should never be understood literally. That is to say the translator must first analyze what the writer has intended to say before s/he can even think of translating the expression. Larson (1984) pointed out that the first crucial step in the translation of idioms is to be absolutely certain of the meaning of the source language idiom. Therefore, the most important issue in translating idioms is the ability to distinguish the difference between the literal meaning and the real meaning of the expression. This is why recognizing and being able to use idioms appropriately requires excellent command over the source language. Larson (1984) believed that the real danger comes from translating an idiom literally, since the translated idiom will be nonsense in the receptor language.

Baker (1992, p.26-43) gave a valuable explanation and examples of the strategies used in translating idioms:

1- **Using an idiom of similar meaning and form.**

By using this strategy, the translator tries to find an idiom in the target language, which is equivalent to that of the source language both in

terms of meaning and lexical items. Such a strategy is very difficult to be achieved, because each language has its own way and devices to express certain concepts, which differ radically from another. However, it is regarded as the ideal strategy for translating idioms.

English ST idiom	Arabic TT equivalent
To play with fire	يلعب بالنــار
To shed crocodile tears	يذرف دموع التماسيح
As proud as a peacock	أزهــى من طــاووس

In such a strategy, both the meaning and the form of the source language idiom have an exact equivalent for it. Both the lexical items and sense are remained the same in the target language.

2- **Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form.**

According to this strategy, the meaning of the target language idiom is the same as that of the source language one but the lexical items are different.

English ST idiom	Arabic TT equivalent
When in Rome do as Romans do	دارهم ما دمت في دارهم
Never too old to learn	اطلب العلم من المهد إلى اللحد
Forbidden fruit is sweetest	كل ممنوع مرغوب

3- Translation by paraphrasing.

This strategy is most commonly used in the process of translating idioms in the cases when the translator cannot find any equivalent for the source idiom. When no equivalents exist, it is better to add more clarification to it. It is not always that correspondence can be found because the lexical and stylistic items of the two languages are different. The translator should focus on the source idiom to transfer its meaning as much as possible to the target language idiom.

English ST idiom	Arabic Paraphrased equivalent
First things first	اهم الأمور اولها
You mark my word	انت تقرأ افكاري

By using such a strategy, translation may imply loss of the intended effect that the source language wanted to have on its audience as well as loss of the cultural significance. Thus, the target language readers would not have known adequately the culture of the source language. Baker defines paraphrasing as "translating a source language idiom by giving its meaning in the target language. By using this strategy the impact of the idiom and its cultural significance will be lost (Baker, 1992, p.74).

4- Translation by omission.

This strategy may sound rather drastic, but in fact it does not harm to omit translating a word or an expression in some contexts. If the meaning conveyed by a particular item or expression sound not important or superficial to the development of the text to make no confusion for the reader with lengthy explanation, it is allowed to omit a word or an expression.

English ST idiom	Arabic equivalent
As a matter of fact (redundant)	NA
Damned fool (informal exclamation)	NA
Bullshit (taboo)	NA

Mollanazar (2004, p.52) also suggested two ways to translate an idiom: a) an appropriate idiom is found in the target language as its equivalent. b) When there is no proper idiom in the TL, meaning should be used". For Mollanazar, "the first step in translating idioms is to recognize them. The pitfall for the translators is to translate idioms literally. A word-for-word translation of idioms is often nonsense or even sometimes amusing" (2004, p.52).

2.2 Empirical Studies

Many researchers have discussed the issue of idiomaticity. This section views some of the studies that are conducted in different parts of the world including Iraq, Jordan, and the Middle East. Some of these studies discussed the difficulties involved in translating idiomatic expressions and other forms of language, strategies and techniques used in translating such expressions. These studies are listed in chronological order.

2.2.1 Studies Related to Cultural and Idiomatic Expressions, and Other Difficulties in Translation:

Littlemore (2003) conducted a study about the effect of cultural differences on translating metaphor interpretation. This study aimed to investigate the ways in which Bangladeshi students interpreted metaphors used by their lecturers during a short course at a British university. Students were asked to interpret a number of metaphors presented in context and to identify the value judgments that were being expressed through these metaphors in these particular contexts. The results showed that the kinds of misinterpretations that the students made of (the evaluative content of) the metaphors appeared in accordance with the cultural differences between both.

Aldahesh (2008) conducted a study on translating idiomatic English phrasal verbs into Arabic. The study aimed to explore difficulties posed to Arab professional translators and Arab translation students when translating idiomatic English phrasal verbs into Arabic, and to propose a number of recommendations for professional translators, lexicographers and pedagogues. Translation tests were conducted to identify types of errors and translational pitfalls made by Arab professional translators and Arabic translation students when handling the most problematic and challenging idiomatic English

phrasal verbs. The study revealed that there are in fact lots of difficulties encountered by Arab professional translators and Arabic translation students when dealing with the phenomenon of idiomatic English phrasal verbs. The most important aspect of such difficulties is the failure to achieve functional-pragmatic equivalents of such verbs. Literal translation, mistranslating, reducing idioms to sense and breaching of the Arabic language system, along with covertly erroneous errors, such as wrong Arabic collocation, shift of register, incorrect delivery of speech acts, usage of paraphrasing and usage of Arabic colloquial and regional dialects, were the major reasons behind the failure of delivering the appropriate functional pragmatic equivalents of the idiomatic English phrasal verbs listed in the translation tests.

Abu-shaqra (2009) investigated the problems and the strategies adopted by students in translating specific lexical and semantic collocations from three religious texts namely, the Holy Quran, the Hadith, and the Bible. The sample consisted of 35 MA translation students enrolled in three different public and private Jordanian universities. The researcher used a translation test that comprised 45 short sentences of contextual collocations selected from the three mentioned religious texts. The students were required to translate these collocations from English into Arabic. The findings of her study showed that students adopted various strategies to overcome the problems in rendering

certain expressions. The study also showed that literal translation is the most adopted strategy in translating the semantic collocations in the Holy Quran and the Bible.

Bekkai (2009) attempted to investigate the problems encountered by 3rd year Licence Master Doctorat (LMD) students in the English Department, at University of Mentouri (Constantine) in Arabic/English/Arabic translation of idioms and proverbs with a view to improve the students' outcomes. The researcher designed a test that comprised 20 Arab and English idioms and proverbs for 3rd year LMD students to be translated in both directions: Arabic and English. The results obtained have shown that the students' translation performance is totally inadequate and that the cultural knowledge they have didn't enable them to infer the fixed expressions' intended meanings successfully and/or to translate them appropriately. As a result, most of the students resort to pure literal translation or leaving them out without translation. Some of them resort to interpretation, which was erroneous in approximately 73% of the whole percentage of these cases.

Meryem (2009) examined the type of difficulty students of Master 1 (M1), faced while translating idioms and tried to suggest solutions and identify strategies that may help to limit or avoid these difficulties. In this

respect, a test made up of twelve English idioms and ten Arabic ones is given to M1 students to be translated. The results of the study showed that there were potential problems in the process of translating idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa. Hence, one way to understand and interpret an idiom is to see it in context. Furthermore, the findings showed that students did not use the accurate strategies that may help to achieve appropriate guesses. In both English and Arabic translations, they were stuck to word for word translation. Paraphrasing and cultural substitution strategies are sometimes used, but not in an appropriate way. They also confirmed their hypotheses and revealed that, except word for word translation, students" use of other translation strategies was limited. As a result, students usually succeed in translating transparent and semi-transparent idioms, but when it comes to opaque and semi-opaque categories, they were totally confused, because this type of idioms has to be taken as a single unit in order to provide acceptable translations.

Wełnowska (2010) aimed to investigate the main problems and difficulties that Polish learners of English encountered and the extent to which idiomaticity is retained, distorted or lost, and why. Moreover, it suggested solutions and procedures that keep losses to a minimum, and become creative in translation. This study illustrated with examples of translations (from SL,

being English, to TL, being Polish), the outcomes of a survey conducted on four groups of the Adam Mickiewicz University students. The results showed that the majority of the subjects who took part in the study understood English idioms, but tended to translate their meaning rather than use their idiomatic Polish equivalents. Moreover, machine translators should not be trusted when translating idioms, as in most cases the-se translate idiomatic phrases literally. Finally, it concluded that the best method of translation was the one made by the human translator who has been informed to use Polish idioms. Otherwise, the human translator with the access to aids, such as dictionaries, is most successful.

Dweik & Suleiman (2013) conducted a study that aimed at investigating the problems   that Jordanian graduate students majoring in the English language faced when   translating culture–bound expressions. The researchers selected a random sample that comprised 60 graduate students who were enrolled in the M.A program in three Jordanian universities during the second semester 2009/2010. The researchers designed a translation test that consists of 20 statements which M.A students were asked to translate from Arabic into English. The researchers also conducted informal open-ended interviews with experts in the field of translation to yield additional information from the experts' point of view regarding these problems, their

causes and solutions. The results of the study revealed that graduate students encountered different kinds of problems when translating cultural expressions. These problems were mostly related to: 1) unfamiliarity with cultural expressions 2) failure to achieve the equivalence in the second language, 3) ambiguity of some cultural expressions, 4) lack of knowledge of translation techniques and translation strategies.

Skorupa & Baranovskaja (2012) conducted a study that aimed to review the idiomatic terms in the traditional media and choose the best and the most appropriate equivalents for these terms in Lithuanian. In addition, the paper sought to clarify the meaning of idiom and idiomaticity. The paper presented the survey of English media idiomatic terms and their Lithuanian equivalents. The analyzed terms were classified into four groups according to their meaning. The key problem encountered was that certain English idiomatic media terms lacked Lithuanian translation equivalents, thus, whenever possible, translation recommendations were given. To correctly understand and interpret the incoming data, certain linguistic knowledge, i.e. knowledge of lexical elements, and recognition of grammatical structures were required to avoid possible difficulties. As a result, in the absence of adequate dictionary translation of an English term, possible Lithuanian translation/equivalent (translation recommendation) was suggested.

Howwar (2013) investigated the translation of some Arabic and English idioms and focused on the difficulties faced by learners and translators., some Arabic and English idioms were selected with their translations. Then he explained the differences between literal translation and translating the SL idiom with the equivalent TL idiom. The overall results showed that idioms can never be translated literally; context, equivalence and semantic relativism should be considered when dealing with idioms. As a result, it is strongly recommended that translators as well as learners should be fully aware of some translation techniques and the context of the discourse s/he is dealing with.

2.2.2 Studies Related to Strategies and Techniques for Translating Idiomatic Expressions:

Balfaqeeh (2009) investigated which translation strategies were more acceptable to the readers: domesticated or foreign strategies. This thesis included qualitative methods implemented in pair-in-depth interviews and a quantitative survey. The survey's questionnaire was developed based on an observation of data collected from different books. The results showed that domesticated translation strategies were more acceptable to Arab readers. Moreover, Arab readers cared more about the core message and appreciate

translated idioms and cultural expressions using Arabic equivalents, though literal translation and deletion gained minor preferences.

Ahmadi & Ketabi (2011) examined the extent of translatability of color idiomatic expressions in English- Persian and Persian- English texts and to explore the applied translation strategies in translation of color idiomatic expressions. They also aimed to find cultural similarities and differences between color idiomatic expressions in English and Persian. A number of 190 English and 90 Persian color idiomatic expressions along with their equivalents were gathered from monolingual dictionaries and as the next step; their equivalents were detected from bilingual dictionaries. The analysis of data revealed that the following strategies were used in translating color idiomatic expressions: 1) using a non- idiomatic expression; 2) using an idiom of similar meaning and form; 3) using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form; 4) literal translation; 5) paraphrasing and finally 6) loan translation. Moreover, the results of the study concluded that an ideal translation strategy of translating an idiom by using another idiom in target language is not always possible. On the other hand, literal translation without considering its restrictions may lead to an awkward and unnatural translation. Then, the strategy of translating an idiom with a normal, non- idiomatic expression can be appropriated when there is no corresponding target

language. Further results also revealed that there were many interesting cultural similarities and differences between color idiomatic expressions in English and Persian.

By reviewing the previous empirical studies, it is noticed that most of these works dealt with problems and strategies of translating idiomatic expressions that translators, students or learners encounter when translating such texts. Likewise, the majority of these works used translation tests as instrument of collecting and analyzing data. In this current study, the researcher has benefited from these instruments and added other instruments to achieve more reliable results such as interviews.

Chapter Three

Methods and Procedures

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the methodology and procedures that are used in this study. It describes the population, sample, and the instruments and their validity and reliability. In addition, it explains how the test is scored and how the data are analyzed. The methodology and procedures are conducted for the sake of achieving the objectives of this study.

3.1. Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consisted of M.A students majoring in English language in Jordan. A sample of forty M.A students (male and female) were selected purposively from Middle East University and Petra University to take the translation test and respond to the interview questions. Another sample of five professors was selected from this population to participate in the interviews.

The demographic data and the general background of the respondents include social data such as gender, age, and nationality; and linguistic background. The sample included 24 males and 16 females whose age ranged

between 22 and above. Twelve students were Iraqi while 28 were Jordanian.

Twelve students had translation experience while 28 did not have any. Table

(1) below shows the demographic characteristics of the participants:

Table (1): Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

1	Age		
Options	20-24	25-29	30 and above
No.	6	12	22
2	**Gender**		
Options	Male		Female
No.	24		16
3	**Nationality**		
Options	Iraqi	Jordanian	Other
No.	**12**	**28**	
4	**Employment status**		
Options	Not yet	Employed	Student
No.		**30**	**10**
5	**Your proficiency level in English**		
Options	Good	Very good	Excellent
No.	6	22	12
6	**Your interest**		
Options	Literature	Linguistics	Translation
No.	18	12	10
7	**Number of years you have spent in learning English?**		
Options	0-5	6-10	11 and above
No.	8	14	18
8	**Number of years you have spent in English- speaking countries?**		
Options	None	0-5	More than 5
No.	32	6	2
9	**Have you worked as a translator? If yes, where?**		
Options	None	0-5	More than 5
No.	28	8	4
Where	Ministry of education or of financial affairs, IOM,		
10	**Have you practiced English outside university? If yes, where?**		
Options	Yes		No
No.	32		8
Where	Centers, friends, offices, British council, organizations, as a translator or schools		

3.2. Instruments of the Study

This study used a multiple interactional design in collecting and analyzing the required data. The study combined qualitative and quantitative approaches in presenting the outcomes of the research. The researcher used two instruments for the purpose of collecting data:

3.2.1. Translation Test

The researcher designed a test for M.A students to investigate the major challenges that they encounter in translating idiomatic expressions. The test consisted of twenty idiomatic expressions (See Appendix F, p.81), which were chosen specifically to meet the requirements of the current study. The test was pretested before it was administrated. Each item in the test represented a specific field such as social, religious, political, sport, and economic as suggested by O'Dell and McCarthy (2010) who classified them as proverbs, metaphors, binomials, and similes.

Baker's classification of adopted strategies in translating idioms were taken into consideration when analyzing the test's items namely using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, translation by paraphrasing, and translation by omission.

To determine the test items, the researcher resorted to Oxford Dictionary of Idioms and Cambridge Book (English Idioms in Use). Similes and binomials were selected from the Oxford Book (English Idioms), whereas proverbs were selected from Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, Oxford Concise Dictionary of Proverbs and English- Arabic Dictionary of Common English Proverbs.

Three options were used in scoring the test:

▪ Correct answer if the idiomatic expression translated by using an idiom of similar meaning and form or by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form.

▪ Acceptable answer if the idiomatic expression is translated by paraphrasing or giving an explanation describing the idiomatic expression.

▪ Wrong answer if the idiomatic expression is translated by using literal translation that has no TL equivalent, by giving wrong translation or by committing some absolute linguistic errors that changed the meaning of statements..

Participants' answers were presented in tables, percentages and frequencies.

3.2.2. Interviews

The interviews included informal open-ended questions. The researcher interviewed M.A students and five professors who were asked three questions: the first dealt with problems that M.A students encountered while translating the test; the second dealt with the reasons behind these difficulties; and the third dealt with solutions that might help solving these difficulties. Students and experts' answers were described and discussed in details (See Appendix G, p.86 and H, p.87).

3.3.   Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

3.3.1. Validity of the Instruments

After the twenty items of the test and interview questions were prepared, they were introduced to a panel of experts (See Appendix C, p.78) who were requested to comment on them and to suggest modifications needed for achieving the objectives of the study. The expert and professors were responsive and provided the researcher with valuable suggestions and recommendations. Accordingly, some modifications were made to the test. For example, one of them suggested that you have to eliminate test's sentences to be twenty, another suggested that there is an ambiguity with two sentences and should be changed.

3.3.2. Reliability of the Instruments

The reliability of the instrument was checked by doing the test-retest technique. The researcher handed the test to four M.A students who have the same characteristics of the population. However those four participants were not included in the sample. They were asked to take it as homework in order for them to be able to use external resources to:

1- Point out how much time needed to translate the twenty test items

2- See if the items are clear enough.

The students brought the test back after two days. A week later, the test was administered again to the same participants. Later, the test was distributed to the selected respondents and the results were compared and the test obtained stability.

3.4. Data Collection and Statistical Analysis

Data which were collected by means of a test and interviews were presented in tables followed by percentages and frequencies of correct, acceptable, wrong and no answers and by the texts that described the content of the tables. The results of the interviews were narrated and described.

Students and experts of linguistics and translation were asked to provide answers for the following questions:

7- What are the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions?

8- What factors cause such challenges?

9- What recommendations can be suggested to handle these challenges?

3.5. Procedures

The researcher followed the following procedures:

1. Reviewed the theoretical and empirical studies related to the topic.

2. Read a number of articles and theses that have a close relation to the problems of translating idiomatic expressions such as metaphors and culturally bound expressions, and strategies and techniques used in translating idiomatic expressions.

3. Based on the objectives and questions of the study, the researcher used two instruments: a translation test that included a variety of idiomatic expressions and semi-structured interviews. These instruments were based on other previous studies conducted on similar issues.

4. The test and the interviews were submitted to a panel of experts who are specialized in linguistics and translation to comment on its validity and to check the test items and their relation to the questions and objectives of the study.

5. The validity and reliability of the test were established.

6. A permission letter was obtained from the university to facilitate the researcher's task.

7. The test was performed and the interviews were conducted with the M.A students and experts.

8. The data were analyzed after collecting the test and the interviews.

9. Results were presented and discussed in the light of the literature reviewed.

10. The conclusions and suggestions were presented.

11. References were written according to APA style sheet.

12. Appendices were added at the end.

Chapter Four

Results of the Study

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the questions of this study that aimed at investigating the difficulties that M.A students encounter when translating idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic. The following are the questions of the study which were mentioned earlier in chapter one:

10-   What are the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions?

11-   What factors cause such challenges?

12-   What recommendations can be suggested to handle these challenges?

4.1. Results Related to the First Question:

The first question of this study was: What are the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions?

 Findings of students' performance in the English translation test are presented in Table (2) below. Each statement is discussed separately to show the kind of difficulties they encountered. It is clear that statements 17, 10, 12,

7, 8, 14, 13, 19, 2 and 3 have the highest scores in rendering wrong answers.

Table 2 also shows that statements 5, 6, 15, 9, 4 and 18 score the highest

correct rendered answers. Detailed analysis of the results shown in Table (2)

will be presented in the next section.

Table (2): Participants' Translation Performance in the English-Arabic Test

English Statements	Correct Answer		Acceptable Answer		Wrong Answer		No Answer	
	Freq	**Percent**	**Freq**	**Percent**	**Freq**	**Percent**	**Freq**	**Percent**
Statement 1	14	35%	18	45%	8	20%	0	0%
Statement 2	2	5%	14	35%	20	50%	4	10%
Statement 3	8	20%	10	25%	20	50%	2	5%
Statement 4	22	55%	4	10%	14	35%	0	0%
Statement 5	40	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Statement 6	31	77.5%	2	5%	7	17.5%	0	0%
Statement 7	2	5%	6	15%	28	70%	4	10%
Statement 8	7	17.5%	6	15%	27	67.5%	0	0%
Statement 9	24	60%	0	0%	12	30%	4	10%
Statement 10	4	10%	6	15%	30	75%	0	0%
Statement 11	28	70%	4	10%	8	20%	0	0%
Statement 12	6	15%	4	10%	30	75%	0	0%
Statement 13	12	30%	4	10%	24	60%	0	0%
Statement 14	6	15%	4	10%	26	65%	4	10%
Statement 15	30	75%	4	10%	6	15%	0	0%
Statement 16	6	15%	18	45%	16	40%	0	0%
Statement 17	2	5%	0	0%	36	90%	2	5%
Statement 18	20	50%	0	0%	20	50%	0	0%
Statement 19	18	45%	0	0%	22	55%	0	0%
Statement 20	14	35%	8	20%	8	20%	10	25%

Statement (1) But you made a very big claim yesterday. You said <u>two heads are better than one.</u>

In translating this proverb, Table (2) indicated that (35%) of the respondents provided correct translations by using its equivalent in Arabic such as

اليد الواحدة لا تصفق, "المستشير معان, ماخاب من استشار, يد الله مع الجماعة, وامركم شورى بينكم, المرء قليل بنفسه كثير باخوانه.

Whereas (45%) of them provided acceptable answers by using the paraphrasing technique such as

اخذ رأي الجماعة افضل من الانفراد بالرأي, في الجماعة قوة وفي التفرق ضعف.

However, (20%) of the respondents provided wrong answers by translating it literally such as

رأسين افضل من رأس واحد, عقلين افضل من عقل واحد, يد واحدة لاتحمل بطيختين.

According to Oxford Dictionary of Idioms, this idiom means "two people who are trying to solve a problem together achieve more than one person who works alone" (p. 426). Many corresponding expressions in Arabic are available such as

الجماعة مع الله يد or تصفق لا الواحدة اليد but some of the respondents did not make any attempt to use a dictionary to know the idiom's meaning nor guessing its meaning through context. It is also noticed that the respondents who are good readers care about the beauty of language. The beauty of a language is represented by its aesthetic forms (idiomatic expressions, metaphorical expressions, collocations, etc.)

Using literal translation in translating idiomatic expressions is not a successful strategy, because it will not give the intended meaning of the expression nor the aesthetic aspect. It is not recommended to translate idioms literally, because a word-for-word translation of an idiom is said to "ruin the beauty of the expression", result in "nonsense", and is therefore "rarely successful". As shown in the examples of wrong answers, participants tend to translate literally without taking into considerations the context and form of the expression in which the participants do not give the intended meaning of the idiomatic expression.

Statement (2) <u>He who sows the wind, shall reap the whirlwind</u> he told the newspaper La Segunda

As shown in Table (2), while this proverb is translated correctly by only (5%) by giving its equivalent proverb in the target language such as لا من يزرع الشوك, العنب به يجني (35%) of the participants provided acceptable translations by paraphrasing it such as مثلما تزرع تحصد – يزرع شراً يحصد شرا or by giving an explanation for this statement such as

من يقدم على امر مهول يجب ان يتحمل تبعاته

However, (50%) of the participants gave wrong answers by translating the proverb literally such as من يزرع الريح يحصد الزوبعة or by ignoring the intended meaning of this item such as الاقدام لا يحتاج سوى المثابرة. Whereas (10%) of the participants provided no answer.

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms defines this proverb as "Suffer as a result of your actions" (p. 318). Most participants failed to transfer its equivalent proverb into Arabic because the target language culture does not use such words (wind and whirlwind) to incorporate people's suffering as a result of their mistakes, but it uses the words (الشوك) which represents evil and (العنب) which represents good.

Statement (3) I've got everything that I possibly can to keep me alive, safe and warm and <u>nothing ventured, nothing gained.</u>

While (20%) of the respondents provided correct translations, such as

من لم يركب الاهوال لم ينل المطالب, ومن يتهيب صعود الجبال يعش ابد الدهر بين الحفر, فاز باللذات only (25%) of the participants provided acceptable translations by paraphrasing the proverb such as من كان جسورا من لم يغامر لن يكسب شيئا, لا مكسب or by giving an explanation for the idiomatic expression such as بلا عناء لن تكسب شيئا الا اذا تغلبت على المصاعب. Whereas, (50%) of the participants provided wrong answers by resorting to Google translation that results in poor translation such as بدون فائدة ودون نتيجة or دون ربح او خسارة, only (5%) provided no answer. The reason could be misunderstanding the original text or because they are not exposed to the expression دون ربح او خسارة or بدون فائدة ودون نتيجة.

According to Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, this proverb means "he who never undertook anything never achieved anything" (p. 225). Wrong translation of this statement reveals the participants' ignorance of the source language culture and its fixed expressions. The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, the contexts in which they can be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages.

Statement (4) Speaking after receiving his own vaccine, Mr Salmond said <u>it was better to be safe than sorry.</u>

This proverb is translated correctly by (55%) of the respondents who provided an equivalent Arabic proverb such as

الوقاية خير من العلاج, من نظر في العواقب سلم من النوائب, درهم وقاية خير من قنطار علاج.

Actually the participants should be familiar with such an expression, because Arabic has a similar direct equivalent. However, only (10%) of the respondents provided acceptable translations by paraphrasing the meaning like الحذر افضل من الندم. Furthermore, (35%) of them misunderstood the SL idiomatic expression and provided wrong translation i.e.

الحرص افضل من الاعتذار or الاحتراز خير وسيلة

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms indicates that "it is better to be too careful than to do something careless that you may later regret" (p.26). Although Arabic has a familiar equivalent proverb, some wrong answers (35%) are found there due to their inability to write well or because they lack knowledge in their own culture.

Statement (5) He took me aside and revealed, almost conspiratorially, that <u>birds of a feather flock together.</u>

Table (2) shows that (100%) of the respondents translated this expression correctly by supplying a similar idiom in meaning and form i.e. الطيور على أشكالها تقع.

The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs explains this proverb as "people of the same (usually, unscrupulous) character associate with one another, as do birds of the same species" (p. 27). The researcher has an intention to put some expressions that most of the students are familiar with (transparent idiom) to make comparison between the expressions that are familiar with and others that are not. It is obvious from the participants' answers that all of them provided correct translations since they had a prior knowledge of such expressions that exists in their own language.

Statement (6) A senior minister has said any cuts to the top rate of income tax before next year's general election will only happen <u>over my dead body.</u>

This transparent metaphorical expression is translated correctly by (77.5%) of the respondents by using a target language idiom of similar meaning and form or dissimilar form for instance

على جثتي, حتى لو كلفني ذلك حياتي, مادامت عيني تطرف وفي صدري نفس يتردد

While only (5%) of the respondents provided acceptable translations by paraphrasing the source language idiom i.e.

سأبذل ما بوسعي لمنع حدوث ذلك only (17.5%) of the respondents provided linguistically or semantically wrong translations such as رغما عني, جسدي يتعب

Based on the Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms, this metaphorical expression means "if you say that something will happen over my dead body, you mean that you will do everything you can to prevent it" (p. 92). The reasons behind such poor translations are perhaps due to the linguistic and semantic mistakes of the respondents.

Statement (7) Some people take on an allotment and <u>bite off more than they can chew.</u>

Table (2) indicates that only (5%) of the respondents provided correct translations of this metaphorical expression by supplying idiom of similar meaning and form or of similar meaning but dissimilar form for instance

ما جعل الله لرجل من قلبين في جوفه or طموحاته تفوق امكاناته, لايكلف الله نفسا الا وسعها, (15%) of the respondents provided acceptable answers by paraphrasing i.e. يحمل نفسه مسؤوليات أكبر من قدراته or explaining this metaphorical expression i.e. بعض الناس يضعون انفسهم بمواقف او أماكن ليسوا اهلا لها, (70%) of the respondents

provided wrong answers by guessing its meaning through context or translating this expression literally such as

or misunderstanding the ان تأكل اكثر مما تستطيع بلعه or يعض اكثر مما يستطيع مضغه

source text such as يحلل الفكرة قبل ان يتخذ القرار or حتى الرمق الاخير, whereas (10%) of the respondents provided no answer.

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms explains this metaphorical expression as "an attempt to do something that is too difficult for you or that you do not have enough time to do" (p. 30). Lack of knowledge of source language and target language culture may be one of the reasons behind these mistakes in addition to literal translation.

Statement (8) All we want to do is to see his movie. I know it's <u>a shot in the dark</u> but I don't care.

In translating this metaphorical expression, (17.5%) of the respondents provided correct translations by giving its equivalent in Arabic for instance

of the respondents (15%) Only. بريق أمل في الظلام, ضربة حظ, سأرمي قرشا في البحر

provided acceptable translations for instance مجازفة whereas (67.5%) of the participants translated it literally and provided wrong translations for instance

رجما بالغيب or محاولة واعدة ومبشرة, مجرد تخمين, ضرب من ضروب الخيال

According to Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms this metaphorical expression means "an attempt to guess something when you have no information or knowledge about it" (p. 348). The reason behind wrong translations is using literal translation in translating idiomatic expression, which is not a successful technique in most cases or misunderstanding source language idiom.

Statement (9) They both think outside the box and share a determination to <u>go against the grain.</u>

It has been shown in Table (2) that (60%) of the respondents translated this metaphorical expression correctly by using an idiom of similar meaning and form such as يسبح عكس التيار, (30%) of the respondents translated this expression wrongly by using google translate such as

يذهب عكس الحبة or يذهب عكس الاتجاه. However, (10%) of the respondents provided no answer.

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms defines this idiomatic expression as "be or do something different from what is normal or natural" (p. 153). The differences between the two cultures (English and Arabic) are obvious in this metaphorical expression; English makes use of the word "grain" to refer to

someone who does something different from what is normal or natural, whereas Arabic makes use of the word "tayar" "تيار" (current).

Statement (10) Oh, I'm not very good yet, I'm <u>still finding my feet</u>.

This statement is translated correctly by only (10%) of the respondents by giving its equivalent in Arabic i.e

Only (15%) of them provided مازلت اشق طريقي or لاازال احاول الوقوف على قدمي acceptable translations i.e. مازلت مبتدأ . while (75%) of them provided semantically wrong answers i.e. لا زلت أحاول ان اتعود عليه, مازلت احتفظ بقواي or يحاول اكتشاف نفسه

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms defines this metaphorical expression as "become used to a new job, place, etc. and start functioning well" (p. 126). Most of the students were not successful in conveying the actual meaning of this expression. It reveals some of the participants are only aware of the expressions being exposed to, but expressions that have no direct equivalents in Arabic are difficult for them to translate.

Statement (11) <u>As quick as a flash</u>, faster than a speeding bullet (almost), the prime minister is back in Downing Street.

According to "English Idioms Book" this transparent simile means "very quick in physical actions or in one's thinking" (p. 238). This statement was translated correctly by (70%) of the respondents by using an idiom of similar meaning and form such as بسرعة البرق, بلمح البصر, only (10%) of the respondents provided acceptable answers by paraphrasing such كان سريع جدا and (20%) provided wrong translations such as سريع كالوميض, سريع مثل الفلاش. Although this idiomatic expression is used usually in daily life, some wrong answers are found because of the students' weakness in their own language and culture.

Although this idiomatic expression is translated literally by most of the respondents, they gave the intended meaning. Moreover, it should be mentioned here that literal translation is not always wrong and according to some scholars it sometimes can be correct. In spite of the fact that literal translation is not successful in most cases.

Statement (12) I was surprised by the penalty try because I felt we'd been <u>as steady as a rock</u> all match.

Table (2) indicates that while (15%) of the respondents translated this similes correctly by supplying an idiom of similar meaning and form i.e. ثابتا كالجبال,

only (10%) of them provided acceptable translations by paraphrasing it, i.e.

(يتسم بالحزم والثبات) ثابتا كاصخر or واثقين من انفسنا . However, (75%) of the

respondents provided wrong translations by translating source language idiom

literally such as ثابت مثل الصخرة, ثابتا كالصخر or صامدا كالحجر.

According to "English Idioms Book" this semi tranparent simile means
"reliable, firm and standing safely on the ground" (p. 238). Arabic makes use
of the word "mountains" or "Jibal" due to the fact that Arabic countries are
surrounded with mountains that made them use such a word, but English
makes use of the word "rock" also due to their environmental factors.

**Statement (13) Craig went out in the sun and got <u>as red as a
beetroot</u>.**

As shown in Table (2), (30%) of the respondents provided correct translations
by giving an idiom of similar meaning and form or similar meaning but
dissimilar form for instance

احمر كالدم, احمر كأنما فقئ في وجهه حب الرمان. While only (10%) of the respondents

provided acceptable answers by paraphrasing such as شديد الحمرة, (60%) of

them translated this simile wrongly by translating it literally such as احمر

كالشمندر, أحمر كجذور الشمندر,

Oxford Dictionary of Idioms defines this idiomatic expression as "With red cheeks, because you feel angry, embarrassed or hot" (p. 320). English and Arabic cultural use of some types of similes is different. However, where there is cultural focus, there is a translation problem due to the cultural gap between the source and the target languages. Some idioms are 'misleading'; they seem transparent because they offer a reasonable literal interpretation and their idiomatic meanings are not necessarily signaled in the surrounding text.

Statement (14) Do you <u>sleep like a log</u> for 12 hours or prefer to get by on the bare minimum?

The idiomatic expression *sleep like a log* is translated correctly by only (15%) of the respondents by giving its Arabic equivalent تنام ملأ جفونك ,تنام كالجثة الهامدة or تنام كالقتيل , while (10%) of the respondents provided acceptable translations by paraphrasing it such as تنام لمدة طويلة, (65%) of the respondents provided wrong translations either by translating the idiomatic expression literally such as تنام كالخشبة or by giving unacceptable similes such as

ينام كالكلب or ينام كسبات الدب القطبي , and (10%) of the respondents provided no answer.

The "English Idioms Book" explains this simile as "sleep very deeply and soundly" (p. 240). The use of the word *log* made the respondents confused about the meaning of this idiomatic expression which is unknown in the target language and most of M.A. students are unfamiliar with such expression. Sometimes Arabic makes use of the word "corpse" instead of the word "log".

Statement (15) Although it is written on the door <u>as clear as day,</u> people still don't realize that this room is private.

Table (2) shows that (75%) of the respondents provided correct translations by supplying an idiom of similar meaning and form such as

Only واضح كوضوح الشمس, واضح كوضوح الشمس في كبد النهار   or واضح كوضح النهار (10%) of them provided acceptable translations by paraphrasing it i.e. بشكل واضح or كانت واضحة جدا , and (15%) of them provided wrong translations i.e. واضح كوضوح اليوم.

According to Oxford Book "English Idioms" this semi transparent simile means "obvious, easy to realize /understand" (p. 237). Literal translation is not successful when translating such idiomatic expressions, since it results in nonsense statement. So, the words كوضوح اليوم make no sense in Arabic.

Statement (16) The government has no respect for democratic values and wants to push through its agenda <u>by hook or crook.</u>

In translating this idiomatic expression, only (15%) of the participants provided correct translations by giving its exact target language equivalent of similar meaning and form such as

While (45%) of them provided acceptable طوعا أو كرها or بالاحتيال أو بالمراوغة.

translations by explaining the binomial such as بأي شكل من الأشكال, بأي وسيلة كانت, (40%) of them translated this binomial wrongly such as

بالاحتيال والسرقة or خطاف او طباخ, الغاية تبرر الوسيلة,

Based on "English Idioms Book" this binomial means "in spite of any difficulty, by any method whether fair or unfair" (p. 81). Most of the participants were unsuccessful in translating this idiomatic expression because they depended on guessing its meaning through context such as الغاية تبرر الوسيلة. The respondents failed completely in inferring the connotation of this pure cultural expression because they are not aware of the English socio-cultural patterns.

Statement (17) But I think the championship leader would have won the race because he was the faster of the two. However, <u>ifs and buts don't count!</u>

This idiomatic expression is translated correctly by only (5%) of the respondents out of 40 as الأشتراطات والاستدراكات. Actually, no one provided acceptable answer and (90%) of them provided wrong translations for instance شروط وتحفظات or لو أو لكن لاترجع شئ, لو ولو لا تحسب, whereas (5%) of the participants provided no answer.

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms explains this binomial as "used to stop somebody arguing, protesting or making excuses when you tell them to do something" (p. 191). Respondents' incorrect answers were horrible which reflected their ignorance of the source language idioms and their equivalents in Arabic, since they are unable to realize its meaning in English nor paraphrase or explain its meaning in English, and they could not guess its meaning from its constituents (words).

Statement (18) Jesse Malin is a New Yorker <u>through and through.</u>

Table (2) shows that (50%) of the respondents provided a correct translations by translating the source language idiom into the target language idiom of similar meaning and form for instance أبا عن جد, قلبا وقالبا or بكل ما للكلمة من معنى.

However, (50%) of the respondents translated this idiomatic expression wrongly for instance

من المهد الى الحد or بين حين وحين, عن ظهر قلب, من هنا وهناك.

Based on the "English Idioms", this binomial means "completely, thoroughly" (p. 85). It is easy to guess the meaning of such an idiomatic expression through context even if the participants are unfamiliar with it, but some of them failed to guess its meaning in spite of the fact that it is used very often in Arabic.

Statement (19) The prime minister warned that businesses can sink or swim.

The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms defines this binomial as "be in a situation where you will either succeed without help from other people, or fail completely" (p. 359). While (45%) of the respondents translated this binomial correctly i.e.

of them (55%) ,تزدهر او تنهار, تنجح أو تفشل, اما ان تتكلل بالنجاح او ان تذهب في مهب الريح

provided wrong translations such as

نغرق او نعوم, يغرق او يطفو, ضربة حظ, الغارق او السابح

Most of the participants who provided wrong translations tend to translate literally without taking into consideration the intended meaning of the idiomatic expression. When translating, one must bear in mind that they should convey the connotative meaning and not merely the denotative one.

Statement (20) Social differences in early European farming communities started to emerge between <u>the haves and the have-nots.</u>
Whereas the idiomatic expression *the haves and the have-nots* is translated correctly by (35%) of the respondents by giving its Arabic equivalent i.e. من يملكون ,الأغنياء والفقراء (20%) of them provided acceptable translations such المال ومن لايملكون. Another (20%) of them provided wrong translations i.e.

بين السلب والايجاب ,فيما بينهم, من يملكون ومن لديهم الملاحظات or (25%), of the respondents provided no translations.

Based on the "English Idioms" this binomial means "people with money, privilege, and influence and people without these" (p. 81). The form of this binomial is unusual and most of the participants are not familiar with it.

The results reviewed in Table (2) show that most of the participants encountered challenges when translating idiomatic expressions. The major challenges were related to using literal translations which more often result in

nonsense expressions and an inability to find a target language idiomatic expressions. It also results in transferring source language cultural elements into the target language without giving attention to Arabic culture and about the appropriate strategy that can be used to deal with such expressions.

4.2 Views of Students and Translation Experts about the Major Challenges that M.A Students Encountered in Translating Idiomatic Expressions

Students were interviewed and were asked about the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions. The participants' answers are summarized as follows:

1- Unfamiliarity with the source language idiomatic expressions is the major challenge for M.A students

2- Some of the participants are unaware of the strategies involved in the process of translating idiomatic expressions.

3- The big gap between the source language culture (English) and the target language culture (Arabic).

4- Inability to recognize the cultural differences with regard to traditions, habits, ceremonies, entertainments and environment.

5- Inability to write well in the target language (Arabic); using slang words rather than standard.

6- Idioms may have a similar counterpart in the target language but with different meaning.

7- Some of the translators do not know how to deal with idiomatic expressions; they translate each word within the expression rather than dealing with it as a whole unit

8- Some of the participants do not know idioms' categorizations and how to deal with each category.

9- Some of the participants understand the idiom's meaning but they are unable to bring out an equivalent Arabic idiom.

10- The context in which the idiomatic expression is used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and the target languages. Some of them believe that the main use of some of these idiomatic expressions is in spoken language rather than written.

11- An idiom may be used in the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time.

12- Some of the idiomatic expressions do not have a direct equivalent in the target language.

13- Poor linguistic and pragmatic levels in the source language.

14-   Some of the respondents deal with idiomatic texts as normal texts.

15-   Idiomatic expressions are metaphorical rather than literal. Because an idiom is metaphorical, its meaning is not predictable from the usual meanings of the separate words. For example, **bite off more than they can chew,** eating is not the intended meaning here; rather it means an attempt to do something that is too difficult for you or that you do not have enough time or capacity to do.

16-   The items used within an idiomatic expression are peculiar to English language culture. For example, English makes use of the word "beetroot" for contrasting the degree of "redness" "as red as a beetroot".

17-   The participants tend to give extra information (redundancy) that are not relevant to the idiomatic expression.

18-   Most of the Arabic idiomatic expressions are frequently used in the various Arabic dialects rather than standard that makes them unaware of the standard equivalent.

19-   A problem of form and content, should the translator keep the form and content of an expression as they appeared in the source language, or it can be translated into verses or Ayahs.

20- An idiomatic expression may have more than one translation, so translators do not know what the one to be used.

21- Some translators lack prior knowledge in idiomatic expressions either in the source language or in the target or both.

22- Arabic culture is different from western cultures. Arabic makes use of words similar to their environments, habits, traditions and religion as does English.

23- The grammatical structure of idiomatic expressions is different from what they get used to (in some cases illogical structure).

24- Some of the participants understand the meaning of the idiomatic expression but are unable to express its meaning in their own language.

25- The meaning of the idiomatic expression cannot be comprehended from the words within the text, alone.

The experts in the fields of translation and linguistics were also interviewed. They answered this question based on their experience. The first expert mentioned that the major challenge of translating idiomatic expressions lies in being culture specific terms that need deep knowledge of both cultures (English and Arabic) in addition to both languages. For example, the idiomatic

expression "I had a change of heart" means "I changed my mind". So, students may not know the exact implication of this idiom.

While the second expert believes that the challenge of recognizing an idiomatic expression is of major importance. Students will deal with such expressions as ordinary texts that result in nonsense expression. He also thinks that dealing with an idiomatic expressions should be as one unit rather than dealing with every single word within it. Moreover, he also mentions that translators should take into consideration, not only avoiding literalism which s/he must avoid with almost all idioms but also to present his/her readers, where possible, with idiomatic translations where s/he not only renders the intended meaning, but also the cultural form.

As for the third expert, he indicates that some idiomatic expressions are characterized by their unusual word grouping and/or their rigid and unjustifiable word order. Also, he states that one language may express an idiom by means of an idiom, another may expresses it by means of a transparent fixed expression, and a third may express it by means of a single word or word group. He adds that like single words, idiomatic expressions i.e. similes, metaphors and sayings, jargon, slang and colloquialisms, and verbal phrase (multi-word verbs) may be culture specific, which can make them

untranslatable or difficult to translate. Moreover, an idiom is difficult to decode correctly for someone who only knows the normal meanings of its constituent elements.

The fourth expert mentions that students are usually not aware of the meaning of idiomatic expressions and therefore they tend to omit them or render them literally, which is in both cases inaccurate. As for the fifth expert, he states that students are not familiar with the idiomatic expression(s); therefore, they translate the expression(s) incorrectly or revert to word-for-word translation. Students do not know whether an equivalent expression exists in the target language or not and Students cannot identify idiomatic expressions in context.

4.3. Results Related to the Second Question

The second question in the study is about the factors that stand behind the challenges that M.A students encounter while translating idiomatic expressions. The interviewed students provided the following factors:

1- Resorting to literal translation in some cases while translating idiomatic expressions, which is not a successful technique for most of theorists.

2- Insufficient knowledge of English socio cultural patterns may result in wrong translation.

3- Lack of general and cultural knowledge in the source language and the target language may affect the translation of idiomatic expressions.

4- Having no chance to travel abroad to English speaking countries.

5- Lack of skills needed in translating idiomatic expressions.

6- Dealing with idiomatic expressions separately rather than dealing with them as one unit cause the problem. For example, "the black sheep of the family" has no meaning when translating its constituents, only by treating it as one unit "a person who is different from his family".

7- Lack of courses that deal with idiomatic expressions and how to deal with them.

8- Using Google in translation which gives irrelevant conveyance. For example, when someone tries to translate this expression "nothing ventured, nothing gained" Google translates it as لا شئ غامر, لا شئ الكتسبة.

9- Because lack of exposure to the source culture, they do not know the connotations of the cultural words that are related to environment, food, folklore etc.

10- Misusing dictionaries made the participants unable to find a proper target language idiomatic expression.

11- Schools or universities do not pay attention to idiomatic expressions.

12- Lack of using idiomatic expressions in daily life.

The specialists in the field of translation and linguistics have their own point of view regarding the factors that may stand behind these challenges in translating some idiomatic expressions. The first interviewed expert who is specialized in translation and linguistics and teaches translation studies mentions that the factor is the insufficient knowledge that students have in English idiomatic expressions and their varieties. She adds that little contact with English- speaking people and lack of knowledge in the English culture and history cause such challenges.

The second expert who is specialized in the field of linguistics believes that lack of contact with the English speaking people's culture is one of the fundamental factors. He adds that limited linguistic knowledge in the source language and the target language is the reason. The third expert who is specialized in linguistics and teaches translation states that the most important factor is the weakness of the students in English, poor exposure to English and lack of reading.

The fourth expert who is specialized in translation and teaches translation theories mentions that idiomatic expressions are not being given due attention they deserve in translation and language courses (both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels). Students are not being introduced to the strategies used in rendering idiomatic expressions from source to target languages.

The fifth expert who is specialized in linguistics believes that dealing with idiomatic expressions as normal discourse without paying attention to hidden meanings and idioms' categories is one of the major factors.

4.4 Results Related to the Third Question

The third question of the study is about suggestions that can be inferred to handle these challenges. The interviewed students provided the following solutions:

1- Students must be exposed to source language culture including religion, habits and traditions.

2- Students should also be exposed to source language idiomatic expressions by introducing English culture in textbooks and through participating in extensive English culture courses.

3- Students should be familiar with the differences between source and target language cultures.

4- Students should avoid literal translation that results in most cases in wrong or poor   translation.

5- Schools, universities and institutions should introduce students to English culture.

6- Students should watch English movies and listen to songs.

7- Students should be in contact with English native speakers.

8- Students of translation should participate in cultural workshops at universities.

9- Students should try to use idiomatic expressions in everyday situations.

The specialists in the field of translation and linguistics have provided some suggestions and solutions that can help the students in overcoming these difficulties. The first expert who is an instructor of translation and linguistics states that reading more books, newspapers and magazines, watching English

series and films and taking six-month course in an English-speaking country may enhance their knowledge in the source language culture.

The second expert who is a teacher of linguistics and translation recommends reading about English culture including traditions, customs and ceremonies, religious and social backgrounds may enable students to be more

competence in translating such expressions. While the third expert who teaches translation suggests that idiomatic expressions should be included in dialogues, reading comprehension passages, etc. Also, he recommends investigating the categories which a particular idiom belongs to. Furthermore, he states that students should be exposed more and more to Arabic culture, especially idioms in standard Arabic not in colloquial, since they use them in everyday colloquial language. Additionally, they ought to be, to a certain extent, familiar with the idiomatic behavior of these expressions which are characterized by their lack of transparency mainly due to their language and culture-specific nature. Also, students better try their best to find equivalences which transfer both the form and the meaning and be thoughtful of not deleting the whole or eliminating part of the idiom.

The fourth expert who teaches translation theories, recommends that students should undergo an intensive course to enhance their English language. Courses such as technical terms, should be emphasized more and students should be exposed to hear more English.

The fifth expert recommends that strategies adopted in translating idiomatic expressions should be emphasized/taught. He adds that students have to practice translating these expressions during their course of study. She

also emphasizes the use of the specialized dictionaries when translating such idiomatic expressions, i.e. Cambridge International Dictionary of idioms.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This study aims at investigating the challenges that M.A students encountered while translating idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic. It also investigates the factors that caused such challenges and sought solutions that can be inferred to handle these challenges. This chapter presents a summary and a short discussion of the findings of the three questions. It also attempts to explain and interpret the results in light of the reviewed literature. The chapter concludes with recommendations and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Discussion Related to the Findings of the First Question

"What are the major challenges that M.A students encounter in translating idiomatic expressions?"

The challenges that M.A students encounter while translating idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic are divided into six major dimensions related to students' unawareness of cultural differences (English and

Arabic); the ideal use of the strategies of translating idiomatic expressions and the literal translation; unawareness of idioms' categorization namely (proverbs, metaphor, similes and binomials); inability to find a target language equivalent; unawareness of the pragmatic, formal and semantic characteristics of idiomatic expressions, and unawareness of the hidden meaning where an

idiom may have a similar equivalent in the target language but with different meaning.

As far as the first dimension is concerned, some students tend to apply source language cultural aspects to the target language ones that result in changing the target language cultural aspects where laymen or even educated learners will not understand the intended meaning of such an expression. Moreover, it is not enough for translators to be bilingual, but they should be bicultural as well. Translators should have deep rooted knowledge of both cultures (source and target) that enables them to know the sociocultural patterns of these cultures. This result agrees with Ivir (1987) who states that "language is a part of culture and, therefore, translation from one language to another cannot be done adequately without knowledge of the two cultures as well as the two languages structures" (p.208).

As for the second dimension, results of the translation test show that deciding which translation strategy is appropriate constitutes another challenge for M.A students. They tend to translate literally without giving any explanation or footnote which result in nonsense expressions as shown in the example "**bite off more than they can chew".** Others use Google translation or depend on guessing the meaning through the constituents

(words) of the expression. This result matches the results of the study conducted by Bekkai (2009) about the problems encountered by 3rd year Licence Master Doctorate (LMD) students in the English Department, at the University of Mentouri (Constantine) in Arabic/English/Arabic translation of idioms and proverbs with a view to improve the students' outcomes as he comes up with the result that most of the students resort to pure literal translation. This result also agrees with the result of the study conducted by Meryem (2009) about the type of difficulty students of Master 1 (M1), face while translating idioms and she tries to suggest solutions and identify strategies that may help to limit or avoid these difficulties. She states that students do not use the accurate strategies that may help to achieve appropriate guesses.

However, the third dimension deals with idioms' categorization. Some students do not know how to differentiate between the categorization

of idioms (proverbs, metaphors, similes and binomials) and even do not know how to deal with each one. For example, the expression "sleep like a log" was transferred from simile into an ordinary expression "نام طويلا". The simile loses its form when translated in such a way.

The fourth is finding a target language equivalent. It has been shown that inability to find a target language equivalent constitutes a major challenge for M.A students since they give an expression that lacks the aesthetic aspect. This result agrees with Nida and Taber (1982, p.12), who state that "Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalence of the source language (SL) message firstly, in terms of meaning and secondly, in terms of style", and with the study conducted by Aldahesh (2008) about translating idiomatic English phrasal verbs into Arabic, who comes up with the result that failure to achieve the equivalence is one of the most important difficulties.

The fifth dimension deals with the challenge of grasping the internal (hidden) meaning of idiomatic expressions that most of the respondents are not aware of. The meaning of idiomatic expressions is not the sum of its constituents but it must be treated as a whole unit (its meaning is different from the meaning if its words). Hence, the form of idiomatic expression is also different from ordinary expressions. This result agrees with Langlotz (2006, p.3) who mentions that "idiomatic constructions can be described as complex symbols with specific formal, semantic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic characteristics."

As far as the sixth dimension is concerned, an idiom may have a similar equivalent in the target language but with a different meaning in which the translator delivers a wrong translation. This result agrees with Baker (1992, p.68-71) who states that "An idiom or fixed expression may have a similar counterpart in the target language, but its context of use may be different". Finally, the occasion on which an idiomatic expression can be used together with its frequency of use is different from one language into another. This result agrees also with Baker (1992, p.68-71) who mentions that "The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, the contexts in which they can be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages"

5.2Discussion Related to the Findings of the Second Question

"What factors cause such challenges?"

The factors behind the abovementioned challenges are divided into six dimensions. The first dimension, idioms are considered part of culture in which they demand cultural knowledge of both source and target languages. So, lack of awareness of the source and target language cultures is one of the basic factors behind the challenges mentioned above. Moreover, translators are not exposed to source language traditions, habits, ceremonies, social

patterns and religious background. This result agrees with Yowelly and Lataiwish (2000, p.107), who believe that "the greater the gap between the source and target culture, the more serious difficulty would be". This result also agrees with Bekkai (2009) who finds that the students' translation performance is totally inadequate and that the cultural knowledge they have does not enable them to infer the intended meanings of the fixed expressions successfully and/or to translate them appropriately.

The second dimension, as the results indicate that the misuse of the appropriate techniques and the tendency to use literal translation is not successful, and may also stand behind these difficulties. This result agrees with Dweik and Suleiman (2013) who conclude that unfamiliarity with translation strategies can also stand behind these difficulties. Similarly, this result agrees with Abu-Shaqra (2009) who concludes that literal translation is the most adopted strategy in translating the semantic collocations in the Holy Quran and the Bible. It also agrees with Larson (1984) who states that the real danger comes from translating an idiom literally, since the translated idiom will be nonsense in the receptor language. The results also indicate that M.A students disregard the form of idiomatic expression when translating literally. They tend to paraphrase or explain the idiomatic expression. This result agrees with (Nida 1964 p. 16) who states that literal

translation of an idiom is said to "ruin the beauty of the expression", result in "nonsense" (Larson 1984 p. 116), and is therefore "rarely successful" (Ingo 1990, p. 246).

The third dimension is misunderstanding the idiomatic expressions. Dealing with idiomatic expressions as ordinary texts when translating a stretch of texts rather than dealing with them as one unit may result in most   cases in changing the intended meaning. This finding agrees with Bassnett-McGuire (1980, p.24), who states that "idioms should be translated on the basis of the function of the phrase: the source language idiom should be replaced by a target language idiom that has the same meaning".

The fourth dimension is related to Arabs who make use of idiomatic expressions in colloquial rather than standard language. So, Arab students tend to use them in colloquial which may not be understood by other Arabs. This result agrees with Aldahesh (2008) who concludes that literal translation, mistranslating, reducing idioms to sense and breaching of the Arabic language system, along with covertly erroneous errors, such as wrong Arabic collocation, shift of register, incorrect delivery of speech acts, usage of paraphrasing and usage of Arabic colloquial and regional dialects, are the major reasons behind the failure in delivering the appropriate functional

pragmatic equivalents of the idiomatic English phrasal verbs listed in the translation tests.

5.3 Discussion Related to the Findings of the Third Question

"What recommendations can be suggested to handle these challenges?"

The results of this question show that being exposed to S.L. idiomatic expressions by reading more books, newspapers and magazines, watching English series and films and taking six-month course in an English-speaking countries will enhance their knowledge about source language culture.

Using specialized dictionaries when translating such idiomatic expressions enables them to know their actual meaning, such as Oxford Dictionary of Idioms, Oxford Concise Dictionary of Proverbs (when translating proverbs), Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms, etc. This result agrees with Wełnowska (2010) who finds that if the information is not given, then the most successful will be the human translator using aids in the form of dictionaries or corpora. Being exposed to English cultural patterns (traditions, habits, customs, ceremonies, environment, entertainment, etc.) in which idiomatic expressions are embedded, enables them to be exposed to the form and usage of idiomatic expressions.

Moreover, Arabic idiomatic expressions should be taught /emphasized by including them in textbooks, dialogues and conversations. Additionally, they ought to be, to a certain extent, familiar with the idiomatic behavior of these expressions where most of them are characterized by lack of transparency mainly due to their language and culture-specific nature. Also, they would better try their best to find equivalences to transfer both the form and the meaning and be thoughtful of not deleting the whole or eliminating the part of the idiom and avoiding paraphrasing as much as possible. This result agrees with Baker (1992) who defines paraphrasing as "translating a source language idiom by giving its meaning in the target language. By using this strategy the impact of the idiom and its cultural significance will be lost (p.74).

The results also indicate that being familiar with the adopted strategies in translating idiomatic expressions may help them to deal with idiomatic expression properly. Moreover, the findings also indicate that being aware of how to use translation strategies and techniques can ease the task of translators and students. In return, scholars such as Newmark (1981) and Larson (1984), Baker (1992), Mollanazar (2004), and others come up with techniques and strategies that can be used when dealing with idiomatic expressions. The results also indicate that literal translation when translating

such expressions results in most cases in wrong or poor translation. Thus, translators should provide T.L. equivalents and deal with idiomatic expressions as one unit. This result agrees with Howwar (2013) who finds that the overall results show that idioms can never be translated literally; context, equivalence and semantic relativism should be considered when dealing with idioms.

5.4 Conclusions

The data obtained by means of test and interviews indicate that M.A students encounter many challenges while translating idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic such as lack of awareness in cultural differences (English and Arabic), unawareness of idioms' categorization namely (proverbs, metaphor, similes and binomials), inability to find a target language equivalent and unawareness of pragmatic, formal and semantic characteristics of idiomatic expressions.

Students and experts elaborate on the factors behind these challenges and through their answers it is clear that lack of awareness of the source language cultural patterns (traditions, habits, customs, ceremonies, social patterns and religious background), unawareness of the cultural differences, misusing the appropriate technique and the tendency to use literal translation

that is in most cases not successful, using the paraphrasing technique rather than giving the target language equivalent and the use of idiomatic expressions in colloquial rather than standard language are the main reasons behind the failure in translating idiomatic expressions.

Almost all the participants in the interviews agree that familiarizing students with their own culture, foreign culture and English cultural patterns (traditions, habits, customs, ceremonies entertainments and social background), reading more books, newspapers and magazines; watching English series and films and taking six-month course in an English-speaking countries and including source language idiomatic expressions in textbooks, dialogues and conversations, are needed. It is also recommended that it is necessary to find a target language idiom rather than translating such an idiom by paraphrase. Moreover, being familiar with the adopted strategies may enhance students' abilities to translate more properly.

5.5 Recommendations

This study sheds light on some of the challenges that M.A students encounter while translating idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic. Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1- Translators who wish to be professional should be competent in both source and target cultures

2- Translators should know the differences between the two languages and cultures (English and Arabic) that enable them to become familiar with idiomatic expressions.

3- Students should be careful in bringing the target equivalent of the same meaning and keeping the cultural form as much as possible.

4- Students should read more books, newspapers and magazines, watching English series and films and taking six-month course in an English-speaking countries.

5- Idiomatic expressions should be included in dialogues, reading comprehension passages, etc.

6- Standard Arabic should be emphasized and taught, especially the idiomatic expressions.

7- Translators ought to be, to a certain extent, familiar with the idiomatic behavior of these expressions which are characterized by their lack of transparency.

8- Students should avoid paraphrasing technique as much as possible. It is recommended to use this technique when there is no equivalent in the target language.

9- Strategies adopted in translating idiomatic expressions should be emphasized/taught.

10- Students should avoid literal translation which results in most cases in nonsense.

11- Students should use specialized dictionaries when translating such idiomatic expressions i.e. Cambridge International Dictionary of idioms.

12- Students should also be exposed to source language idiomatic expressions through introducing English culture in texts books and through participating in extensive English culture courses.

13- Students should be in contact with English native speakers.

14- Students should deal with idiomatic expressions as one unit, not with every single word.

5.6 Suggestions for Future Research

The study recommends investigating the strategies of translating idiomatic expressions within different areas such as the Glorious Quran. It also recommends investigating to what extent idiomaticity can be kept when translating from English into Arabic. Moreover, it recommends making a comparative study between the formal structure of English and Arabic

languages. Further studies are also needed to investigate the challenges that interpreters encounter while translating from Arabic into English.

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Appendix A

MEU's Letter of Permission

MEU جامعـــة الشـــرق الأوسـط
MIDDLE EAST UNIVERSITY

كلية الآداب والعلوم
Faculty of Arts & Sciences

الرقم: ك أ ع/ د/ 65/1
التاريخ: 2014/04/14

إلى من يهمه الأمر

تحية طيبة وبعد،

يقوم الطالب عثمان ساجد جمعه ورقمه الجامعي (401210112) المسجل في برنامج الماجستير في تخصص اللغة الآنجليزية بدراسة بعنوان " ترجمة التعابير الاصطلاحية من اللغة الانجليزية إلى العربية" وذلك استكمالاً لمتطلبات رسالة الماجستير ، أرجو التكرم بتسهيل مهمة الطالب المذكورة .

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير

عميد كلية الآداب والعلوم

أ.د. وليد عوجان

نسخة:

- الصادر الخارجي .

Appendix B			
Interviewed Experts			
Name	**Position**	**Specialization**	**Place of Work**
Ibrahim Abu Shhab	Associate Professor	Applied linguistics	Al-Zaytoonah University
Muhammed Badea	Associate Professor	Linguistics	**Tikrit University**
Ula Al-Dabbagh	Assistant professor	Translation	**Petra University**
Rema Al-Aladwan	Assistant professor	Translation	Al-Zaytoonah University
Maisa Sulaiman	M.A	Translation	**MEU**
Rabah Izat	M.A	Linguistics	Al-Zaytoonah University

Appendix C
Validation Committee

Name	Position	Specialization	Place of Work
1- Abd Al-Baki As-Safi	Professor	Translation	Petra University
2- Tawfeeq Salameh	Professor	English Literature	Middle East University
3- Sabbar S. Al Saadoon	Professor	English Literature	Middle East University
4- Muhammed Badea	Associate professor	Linguistics	Tikrit University
5- Ula Al-Dabbagh	Assistant Professor	Translation	Petra University
6- Maisa Sulaiman	Professional translator	Translation	Middle East University

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Appendix D
The Validation Letter

Dear Professor,

I am, Othman Al-samarraie, an M.A. student in Middle East University, working on my thesis titled "Translating Idiomatic Expressions from English into Arabic".

Based on your experience and knowledge in the fields of linguistics and translation, I would like you to determine the suitability of these statements that include idiomatic expressions. These are used as a test to examine the translators' ability in translating idiomatic expressions. The test consists of 20 items which M.A students will be asked to translate from English into Arabic. Each statement contains an idiomatic expression based on O'Dell and McCarthy's (2010) categorization of idioms namely: proverbs, metaphors, similes, and binomials. These statements are taken from BBC news and other resources representing different fields i.e. social, sports, scientific, media, educational, economic, political, and business.

Your time, help, effort, and cooperation in commenting on the following are highly appreciated.

Appendix E

Demographic Data Questionnaire

Dear MA students,

For the sake of collecting information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents, you are kindly requested to fill in this form by putting an X next to your answer.

Thank you,

Othman Al-samarraie

M.A. Student, MEU

Age	☐ 20-24	☐ 25-29	☐ 30 and above
Gender	☐ Male		☐ Female
Nationality	☐ Iraqi	☐ Jordanian	☐ Other
Employment status	☐ Not yet	☐ Employed	☐ Student
Your proficiency level in English?	☐ Good	☐ Very good	☐ Excellent
Your interest	☐ Literature	☐ Linguistics	☐ Translation
Number of years you have spent in learning English?	☐ 0-5	☐ 6-10	☐ 11 and above
Number of years you have spent in English-speaking countries	☐ None	☐ 0-5	☐ More than 5
Have you worked as a translator? If yes, where?	☐ None	☐ 0-5	☐ More than 5
Where?			
Have you practiced English outside university? If yes, where?	☐ Yes		☐ No
Where?			

Appendix F

English-Arabic Translation Test

Dear MA students,

This test is designed only for the purpose of carrying out my thesis titled "Translating Idiomatic Expressions from English into Arabic".

Accordingly, you are kindly requested to translate the following bolded idiomatic expressions into Arabic. Using external resources such as internet and dictionaries is allowed.

Your participation, time and efforts are highly appreciated.

1- But you made a very big claim yesterday. You said **two heads are better than one**.

   ………………………………………………………………………………

   ………………………………………………………………………………

2- **He who sows the wind, shall reap the whirlwind**," he told the newspaper La Segunda.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

3- I've got everything that I possibly can to keep me alive, safe and warm

and **nothing ventured, nothing gained**.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

4- Speaking after receiving his own vaccine, Mr Salmond said it was

better to be safe than sorry.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

5- He took me aside and revealed, almost conspiratorially, that **birds of a**

feather flock together.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

6- A senior minister has said any cuts to the top rate of income tax before

next year's general election will only happen **over my dead body**.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

7- Some people take on an allotment and **bite off more than they can chew**.

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8- All we want to do is to see his movie. I know it's **a shot in the dark** but I don't care.

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………………………………………………………………………………

9- They both think outside the box and share a determination to **go against the grain**.

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………………………………………………………………………………

10-   Oh, I'm not very good yet, I'm **still finding my feet.**

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………………………………………………………………………………

11-   **Quick as a flash**, faster than a speeding bullet (almost), the prime minister is back in Downing Street.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

12-   I was surprised by the penalty try because I felt we'd been **as steady as a rock** all match.

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……………………………………………………………………………

13-   Craig went out in the sun and got **as red as a beetroot**.

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……………………………………………………………………………

14-   Do you **sleep like a log** for 12 hours or prefer to get by on the bare minimum?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

15-   Although it is written on the door **as clear as day**, people still don't realize that this room is private.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

16-   The government has no respect for democratic values and wants

to push through its agenda **by hook or crook**.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

17-   But I think the championship leader would have won the race

because he was the faster of the two. However, **ifs and buts** don't

count!

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…………………………………………………………………………………

18-   Jesse Malin is a New Yorker **through and through**.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

19-   The prime minister warned that businesses can **sink or swim.**

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…………………………………………………………………………………

20-   Social differences in early European farming communities started

to emerge between **the haves and the have-nots**.

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……………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix G

Semi- Structured Interview Questions / for Experts

Dear professor,

Please answer the following questions:

1- Based on your experience, what are some of the difficulties that M.A students of English Language encounter when translating idiomatic expressions?

2- In your opinion, what factors cause such problems?

3- What solutions do you suggest to overcome these challenges?

Appendix H

for M.A Students—Semi- Structured Interview Questions

Dear MA students,

Please answer the following questions:

1- What are the major challenges that M.A students of English language face in translating idiomatic expressions?

2- What factors cause such challenges?

3- What solutions can be suggested to overcome these challenges?