
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Strategies used by EFL Saudi University Students in Translating English Idioms into Arabic

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ABSTRACT

The present paper investigates the strategies used for the translation of idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic. This research is based on Baker's strategies for translating idioms. It focuses on three strategies which include: using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but different form, and translation by paraphrase. A translation test was used for data collection. The sample consists of a chosen sample subjects of (251) EFL students at King Khalid University. The study adopted the descriptive-analytical method. The data were analyzed with the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Program. The findings provided that "translation by paraphrase" is the most common used strategy by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic. Then comes the strategy of "using an idiom of similar meaning and form". Furthermore, the results showed that the least used strategy is "using an idiom of similar meaning but different form". In addition to the students' test, the researchers distributed a questionnaire to 16 instructors of translation to identify the strategies and difficulties faced by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic. Based on the findings of this research, it is recommended that, in addition to having enough knowledge in terms of the theoretical translation issues and the translation strategies suggested by different linguists, a translator should have a good command of the Source Language (SL) idiomatic expressions.

KEYWORDS

Translation, Idioms, Strategies, EFL Students, English Language (Source Language), Arabic Language (Target Language)

ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 01 January 2023

PUBLISHED: 30 January 2023

DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2023.6.1.21

1. Introduction

Idioms are crucial components of all languages and can be used to measure a speaker's level of language proficiency (McDevitt, 1993). The Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms' general introduction by Cowie, Mackin, and McCaig (1983) describes the correct and appropriate use of idioms as a distinguishing characteristic of native language proficiency and foreign language learning, as well as a reliable indicator of a person's competence. They are essential for learning any foreign language. In addition to learning the vocabulary and grammatical rules of the target language, foreign language learners also pick up idioms that help them fit into the local culture. According to Dixon (1994), idioms are crucial for effective communication in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Thus, there are many arguments in favor of idiom instruction for L2 students. There are numerous reasons why teaching idioms to L2 learners is a good idea, according to linguists and psycholinguists over the past few decades. Many theories have been developed in recent years to explain how idioms are processed and understood. There doesn't seem to be a model or theory that everyone agrees on right now. However, idioms can be taught to L2 learners in more efficient ways if we have a better understanding of how they interpret and process them. (cited in Saberian and Fotovatnia, 2011).

A lot of attention has been paid to idioms in formal linguistic research because of their unique characteristics. Regarding the fact that the source and target languages have different cultures, translating idioms is extremely difficult. However, translation is more complicated than simply changing a word's meaning based on its literal context. Idioms are difficult to translate because of the unpredictability of their meaning and grammar. In this regard, this research aimed to identify the translation strategies adopted

by EFL Saudi students at King Khalid University in the translation of idioms from English into Arabic. A descriptive-analytical analysis was conducted to identify such translation strategies. Baker's translation strategies were used as a theoretical framework for the research.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

Baker (2018) postulated that some strategies could be followed in translating idioms. These strategies are:

1. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form: This involves using an idiom in the Target Language (TL), which has roughly the same meaning as the Source Language (SL) and consists of equivalent lexical items. For example, the Arabic idiom "raasan ala aqeb" has an equivalent in English, viz., "head over heels". So, the Arabic idiom, when translated, consists of the same (except for the preposition) and an exact number of words and has the same meaning.

2. Using an idiom of similar meaning but different form: This involves using an idiom in the TL which has roughly the same meaning as the SL. However, it does not have similar lexical items. For instance, the English idiom "One good turn deserves another" is equivalent in meaning to the French idiom "À beau jeu, beau retour" (a handsome action deserves a handsome return), though the lexical items in the SL and TL are different.

3. Borrowing the source language idiom: Sometimes, borrowing the source language idiom would be a way to translate culture-specific items. For example, the idiomatic word "feedback" is sometimes translated literally into Arabic as "التغذية الاسترجاعية" "altagzeia Alistrjaia"

4. Translation by paraphrase: Another common strategy of translation is a translation by paraphrase, whereby a translator paraphrases the SL idiom. An example of this is the English idiom "take in one's stride", which was translated, according to Baker, as (overcome). The dictionary gives two definitions: 1) clear (an obstacle) without changing one's gait to jump, and 2) manage without difficulty. For example, translating "Scratch my back, I scratch yours" as (help me and I will, in return, help you).

5. Translation by the omission of a play on the "idiom": This strategy involves rendering only the literal meaning of an idiom in a context that allows for a concrete reading of otherwise playful use of language.

6. Translation by the omission of the entire idiom: This strategy of omitting a whole Source Text (ST) idiom in the Target Text (TT) is followed when there is no equivalent for the ST idiom, and it cannot be paraphrased, or because of stylistic reasons.

7. Compensation: A translator sometimes seeks to omit or play down some features of the idiom in the ST, which occurs at a specific point in the text, and present it somewhere else in the TT.

This study will focus on three strategies, as hypothesized by the researchers as the most common strategies used by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic. These strategies include: using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but different form, and translation by paraphrase.

1.1.1 The Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to identify the strategies used by Saudi EFL students in translating idioms from English into Arabic.

1.2 The Research Question

This study aims at answering the following question:

1. What are the strategies the Saudi EFL university students utilize in translating English idioms into Arabic?

1.3. The Hypothesis of the Study

1. Translation by paraphrase is the most common strategy used by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic.

2. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form is the second most commonly used strategy by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic.

3. Using an idiom of similar meaning but a different form is the least used strategy by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to be of great benefit to teachers of translation, and translation students, regarding the strategies that students use when translating idioms from English into Arabic. In the teaching-learning process, they might pay more attention to both these strategies and the challenging idioms. It is hoped that the writers of the course syllabus will pay more attention to the idioms that students find challenging, such as strange and unfamiliar idioms.

1.5. The Limitations of the Study

1. This study addresses the strategies used by Saudi EFL university students in translating idiomatic expressions.
2. The participants of this study are selected from King Khalid University. The findings can be generalized to other universities in different countries.

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

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Idioms

According to the *Collins English Dictionary* (Black et al. 2009:820), an idiom is defined as "a group of words whose meaning cannot be predicted from the meanings of the constituent words". It also defines an idiom as "linguistic usage that is grammatical and natural to native speakers of a language". Similarly, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Linguistics* (Brown & Miller 2013:173) says that "Many fixed expressions, both phrases and clauses, are idioms, that is fixed expressions whose meaning cannot be guessed from their individual words". Ghazala (2014:128) defines idioms as: "an idiom is a fixed phrase whose form is usually unchangeable, and whose meaning is always the same, inflexible, metaphorical and indirect." According to Baker "Idioms 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." (1992:63). According to Seidl & McMordie (1988:13), as mentioned in *English Idioms*, an idiom can be defined as "a number of words which, when taken together have a different meaning from the individual meanings of each word." Idiom can be found in every language. "It is the other kind of figurative meanings contained in a language, such as in English" (Simatupang, 2000: 49). Richards et al. (2002) define an idiom, as "An expression which functions as a single unit and whose meaning cannot be worked out from its separate parts." (p.246). For example, the idiom "a bird told me that", which means that "I have known this piece of information in my way, and since nothing further is said, implies an unwillingness to reveal the source if there is one or that the source is to remain a mystery, cannot be perceived literally as if the bird was the agent. Hence, the meaning of the idiom has nothing to do with the separate lexemes of "bird, or tell".

2.2. Arabic and English: Linguistic Overview

Arabic and English languages differ from one another linguistically and culturally. Linguistically, Arabic is a Semitic language that uses verbs with three consonants as the fundamental root from which all other vocabularies can be generated (DeYoung, 1999). In Arabic, case, gender, and number are all determined by inflections. Diglossia is another noteworthy characteristic of Arabic. When two extremely different dialects of a language co-occur within a community of speakers, each having a different range of social functions, this is known as diglossia (Dickins et al., 2002). To elaborate, Arab kids learn many regional dialects of Arabic, such as Syrian, Egyptian, and Hijazi. When they start school, they start learning standard Arabic (Mohammed, 2000). Standard Arabic, which does not allow colloquial expression, is most preferable in writing.

On the other hand, English is poor in inflection, heavily word-order dependent Indo-European language. It distinguishes between spoken and written language while remaining non-diglossic. Depending on the genre and register, the English written language may have certain spoken-like chunks. In contrast to Arabic, English has a limited inflectional system. (Balfaqeeh, 2009).

As a result, translating idioms presents numerous difficulties for a translator whose work extends beyond merely converting words from one language to another. It is the process of transferring the linguistic and cultural characteristics of a source language into a target language. As a result, it is fundamentally ideal and necessary for a translator to be aware of the differences in culture and the varied discourse techniques used in the source and target languages. The translator should employ a variety of discursive techniques to assess the source text's hidden structure (Razmjou: 2004). According to Aldahesh (2013), translating ST idioms might be difficult due to their complexity in terms of semantics, syntax, and pragmatics.

2.3 Previous Studies

Wicaksono and Wahyuni (2018) investigated the idiomatic expressions which are found in Indonesian Legends, the meaning of these idiomatic expressions, and the various strategies which are used in translating idioms found in Indonesian Legends into

English. The descriptive qualitative research design was used in this study. Documents and expert opinions were used as the instruments for data collection. Furthermore, the documents consisted of the Bahasa Indonesia (Source Text) and English (Target Text) translation versions of five Indonesian Legends, namely; *Batu Kuwung*, *Batu Menangis*, *Gunung Merapi*, *Tangkuban Perahu* and *Candi Prambanan*. The results showed that translation by paraphrasing was the major strategy used by the translator in translating the idiomatic expressions found in five Indonesian Legends (eleven out of eighteen cases). Then the second strategy was translating by omission (six out of eighteen cases). The last was the strategy of using an idiom of similar meaning and form (one out of eighteen cases). They concluded that out of the main five strategies of translating idiomatic expressions suggested by Baker, the translator used only three.

Also, Smadi and Alrishan (2015) looked at the strategies used by graduate students at the Jordanian EFL University while translating idioms into Arabic. The participants were M.A. translation students from the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University. They were 90 students who took part in the translation test, which included 16 idioms from various categories. The study's quantitative results showed that EFL Jordanian university students use specific translation procedures even when they are not conscious that they are doing so.

The challenges that Jordanian EFL university students face while attempting to translate English idioms into Arabic were examined by Alrishan and Smadi (2015). The M.A. translation students from Yarmouk University and the University of Jordan took part in the study. They were 90 students who took part in the translation test, which consists of 16 idioms from various categories. The study's quantitative results showed that Jordanian university students who were learning English as a second language had trouble translating English idioms into Arabic.

Adiel (2016) conducted a study to find out what difficulties Sudanese EFL students can encounter while trying to translate English idiomatic idioms. The study, after providing a full overview of these errors' prevalence, also aims to offer solutions as part of the examination into them. At Sudan University of Science and Technology, up to 40 undergraduate students were given a pre-test that consisted of 20 idiomatic terms that they had to translate into Arabic. Then, they were split into the control and experiment groups. A post-test was given to both groups after two months of actively working with the experiment group. Due to their extensive training, the experiment group performed much better than the control group. As a result, teaching idiomatic expression translation to students is possible.

Abdul Hsadi (2014) focused on the challenges given by nonequivalence when translating English idioms into Arabic and vice versa, as well as the strategies employed by fourth-year English students to identify the appropriate equivalent in the target language. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the types of challenges that students at this level encounter while translating idioms make recommendations for solutions, and identify potential preventative measures. In this regard, fourth-level students were given a test to translate, consisting of ten Arabic and twelve English idioms. The study's findings suggested that idiom translation from English into Arabic and vice versa may provide challenges. Additionally, the results demonstrated that many English language learners could infer the proper meaning of idioms from the context in which they are used. They also supported the theory and showed that students rarely employ any other translation techniques besides word-for-word translation.

Mabrook (2021) examined the problems EFL students face in translating English idioms into Arabic and vice versa and provided some solutions. The study assumes that college students cannot translate idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa. Descriptive analysis methods are used and followed in carrying out this study. A questionnaire was used as a research tool. The study sample consisted of (20) students from the third and fourth years at Onaizah Colleges, Qassim, Saudi Arabia. The study found that differences in mean consensus support the variable that idiom translation was a problematic area for EFL students in Saudi Arabia. Similarly, EFL students get confused when translating idioms from English into Arabic. The study recommends that EFL students face a variety of vocabulary, and fixed idioms in translation tasks. The researcher, furthermore, focuses on the importance of awareness of cultural differences in translation. The study also suggests that the use of fixed, idiomatic expressions in school and university corridors may benefit students learning to translate.

Additionally, Balfaqqeh (2009) examined which translation strategies are more acceptable to readers: domesticated or alien strategy. Based on Basil Hatim's (2001) action schematic of his research, this paper includes qualitative methods conducted with detailed pair interviews and quantitative research. A survey questionnaire was developed based on observations of data collected from various books. The results show that conventionalized translation strategies are accepted by Arabic readers. Furthermore, Arabic readers place more emphasis on the core message and on translating idioms and cultural expressions into their Arabic equivalents but are less favored by literal translations and deletions.

Moreover, Meryem (2010) discussed the difficulty of non-equivalence in translating English idioms into Arabic and vice versa, how first-year master's (M1) students find appropriate equivalents in the target language, and how they use them. The purpose of this

study is to examine the types of difficulties that students in the M1 Applied Languages program at the University of Menturi Constantine face in translating idioms and to propose strategies to limit or avoid these difficulties. To this end, a test consisting of 12 English idioms and 10 Arabic idioms is presented to M1 students for translation. The results of this study indicate potential problems in translating idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa. Furthermore, the results show that the context of use helps many English learners infer the proper meaning of an idiom. They also confirm the research hypothesis and show that with the exception of word-by-word translation, students' use of other translation strategies is limited.

Bahumaid (2010) showed the strategies for translating English idioms into Arabic in the three most widely used general English-Arabic dictionaries. A total of 50 English idioms were selected by a panel of three professors of linguistics and translation out of 100 idioms selected from various English-Arabic translation studies of idioms in light of the operational definitions of idioms attempted by the researchers. The results found out that of the five commonly used idiom translation strategies, paraphrasing was the most prevalent, counting for (73–87%) of idiom expressions found in these dictionaries. The second most common strategy was to use "equivalent idioms that differ in word and structure from their English counterparts", followed by "calquing". The researcher recommends that English-Arabic dictionaries would handle English idioms better and that translators would use such dictionaries more efficiently in rendering English idioms that occur in different text types.

Murdoch (2017), over a 10-week period, identified idioms and other types of fixed expressions from Afrikaans (source language) to South African English (target language) from selected texts in the journals *Huisgeoot* and *You* magazines. The article begins by examining the difficulties in defining idioms and other kinds of fixed expressions, and for this, draws on the work of Rosamund Moon. Then, it uses the strategies of translating idioms (and other kinds of fixed expressions) found in Mona Baker's 'In Other Words', of 70 such expressions according to the strategy used to translate them and concludes by looking at whether equivalence is obtained. The results showed that the three most popular strategies were translation using idioms of similar meaning and form, translation using idioms with similar meaning but different forms and translation by paraphrasing. Furthermore, the results concluded that the strategies of translation by borrowing the source language idiom; translation by the omission of a play on the idiom, and translation by compensation are not used at all.

To find out how students translate idiomatic expressions and what difficulties they have during the translation process, Ayuningtyas, Ifadah, and Aimah (2018) conducted a study in which 18 English students were selected as a sample for the study. The students took a translation test that included idiomatic expressions. Then, the student's translation results were analyzed to determine their level of accuracy. Accuracy level results lead to an analysis of students' difficulties in translating idiomatic expressions. Then, to collect further data, a questionnaire and short interview were used. The results showed that 15% of students' translations were totally inadequate, 23% were inadequate, 10% were adequate, 14% were almost successful, and 38% were successful. The fact that the inaccurate translation results were greater than the correct translation results indicates that the students encountered difficulties during the translation process. On the other hand, the translation problems faced by the students were 73% vocabulary problems, 67.5% stylistic problems, 66% cultural problems and 64% grammatical problems. Based on the results, students are encouraged to improve their English knowledge and translation skills. In addition, students should optimize their use of dictionaries to achieve good translations. For teachers, the results of the survey can be used to reflect students' translation difficulties, and are expected to consider students' translation skills and backgrounds to overcome difficulties.

Ali and Al-Rushaidi (2016) looked at the difficulties English language and literature students in Omani universities face in translating idiomatic and cultural expressions from English into Arabic. Also, it attempts to identify and demonstrate some of the strategies that they used to translate and overcome such challenges and suggest what could be done to overcome such problems and improve their translation skills and competencies. A translation test and a short questionnaire were administered to 60 Omani University students majoring in English and Literature at a Public University in Oman. The reliability and validity of both the translation test and questionnaire were established. The main challenges, difficulties, and most common coping strategies used by students were presented as strategies for translating and processing idiomatic and culture-specific idioms. Research recommendations and some of the important educational implications were also highlighted and discussed.

SajidJuma'a (2014) showed the challenges master's students face when translating idiomatic expressions. To achieve the purpose of this study, the researcher took a sample of 40 students enrolled in master's programs at two universities in Jordan (i.e. Middle East University and Petra University) in the second semester of 2013/2014. The researcher designed a translation test consisting of 20 statements for master's students to translate from English into Arabic. Each statement contained an idiom expression based on the O'Dell and McCarthy (2010) taxonomy of idioms, namely: Proverb, metaphor, simile, and binomial. These statements represented different fields, i.e., social, sports, scientific, media, educational, economic, political, and business. Further, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with students and experts in the field of translation to gather more information. As a result, it was found that master's students face different challenges when translating idioms. Mostly, these challenges are

related to the 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).

Aguado-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes (2005) investigated English-to-Spanish translations produced by undergraduate students (n=160) in terms of strategic use. As a result, Mona Baker's taxonomy is revised and expanded. They reached the fact that translation strategies teaching favors both the quality and the accuracy of the translations. Similarly, a discussion on strategy choice is presented.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The sample of this study consists of (251) students who are studying Translation (2) and Translation (3) courses at the English Department, College of Languages and Translation at King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia. They are chosen as a sample for this study mainly because it assumes that these learners possess adequate linguistic competence in both English and Arabic, together with some knowledge of the English culture. These students are majoring in English language and have studied translation for two-three years also; they are supposed to have some knowledge about idioms.

3.2. Tools

The descriptive-analytical method was used in this study. The test is used in this study as the tool of research because it is the appropriate technique for better answering the research question and justifying the hypothesis. The validity of the test was established by a panel of a jury of six staff-members who are experts in translation, and all ambiguous items were modified, and some examples were reworded. It includes twenty-five (25) English idioms to be translated into the Arabic Language. All the selected English idioms are taken from the dictionaries of "Exercises on Idioms" and "Essential Idioms in Use". The test includes three main parts. The first part is made up of eight (8) idioms to test students' knowledge of the strategy of "using an idiom of similar meaning and form". The second part is made up of eleven (11) idioms to test students' knowledge of the strategy of "using an idiom of similar meaning but different form". The third part is made up of six (6) idioms to test students' knowledge of the strategy of "translation by paraphrase". To collect quantitative data, an online test was designed using Google Forms.

3.3 Instructors' Interview

In addition to the students' test, the researchers distributed a questionnaire to (16) instructors of translation. They have experienced between (3-17) years of teaching translation in universities.

The following is a summary of their experience in translating English idioms into Arabic:

*Regarding the reasons that make the translation of English idioms into Arabic difficult for university students, they explained a number of reasons. For example, the weakness of students' language, the cultural differences between the two languages, the lack of knowledge and familiarity with English idioms and their meanings, and the fact that English idioms always contain implied connotations, which could be obscured for Arabic speakers.

*As for the common errors that the students make in translating English idioms into Arabic, the main reason mentioned by the instructors is the literal translation of the English idioms without considering their connotations.

*Regarding their responses of the level of difficulty of translation of English idioms into Arabic, (53.3%) indicated that it is very difficult, (40%) believed that it is neutral, while only (6.7%) said that it is easy.

*The majority of the instructors (62.5%) struggled to achieve pragmatic equivalence. (43.8%) of the instructors believe that it is possible to preserve and convey the same meaning when translating English idioms into Arabic, and the same percentage (43.8%) mention that it maybe, and (12.4%) believe that it is impossible.

*Regarding which type of meaning should be focused on when translating English idioms into Arabic, the majority of the instructors (68.8%) believe that both semantic and pragmatic meanings are essential.

*As for whether their students are able to translate English idioms into Arabic, (31.2%) agreed, (66.8%) were neutral, while (0%) strongly agreed.

*Regarding the main reason for the difficulty of translating English idioms into Arabic for the students, (75%) of the instructors were due to culture-specific reasons.

As for how good their students are at translating English culture-specific idioms into Arabic, (37.5%) mentioned above average, (62.5%) were below average, while (0%) said excellent.

(50%) of the instructors believe that pragmatic errors are major when translating English idiomatic expressions into Arabic (37.5%) referred to lexical errors.

*All the instructors (100%) emphasized the importance that students should be aware of both source and target cultures' idioms to succeed in translating them.

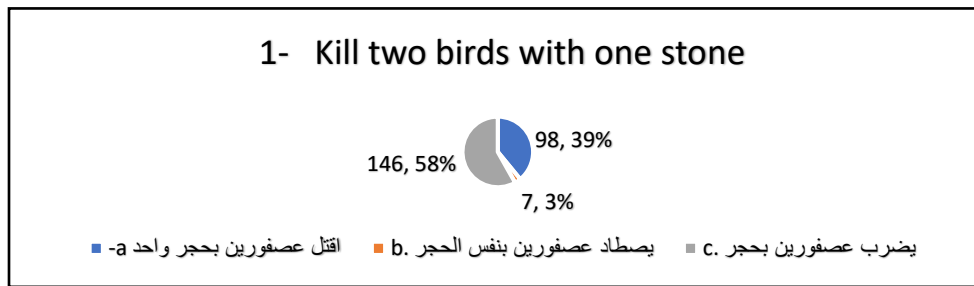
*As for the most common strategy the students use in translating English idioms into Arabic, (50%) mentioned translation by paraphrase, (31.2%) mentioned using idioms of similar meaning but different form, while(18.8)mentioned using idioms of similar meaning and similar form.

4. Data Analysis

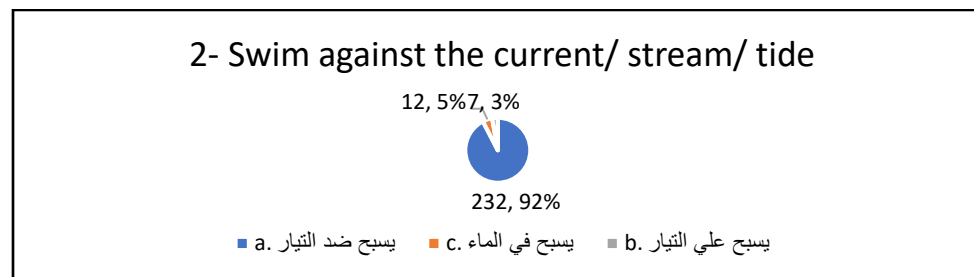
4.1. Data, Presentation, Analysis, Discussion

A total of 25 English idioms were analyzed for this study, and the strategies used to translate them are summarized in Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

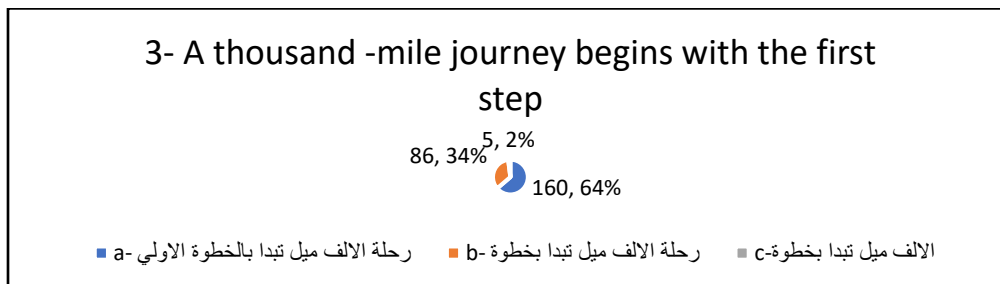
4.1.1. Translation of Idioms of Similar Meaning and Form:



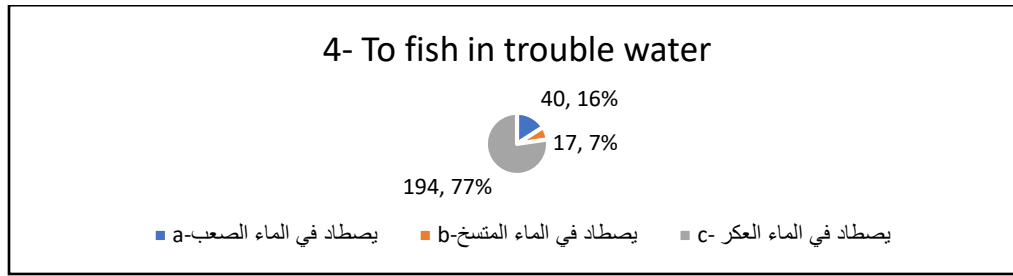
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 1, "Kill two birds with one stone", 146 students (58%) chose the correct translation, while 105 (42%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



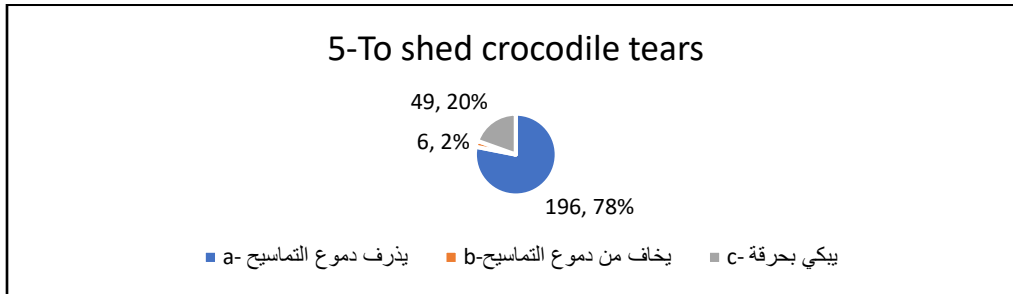
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 2, "Swim against the current/ stream/ tide", 232 students (92%) chose the correct translation, while 19 (8%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



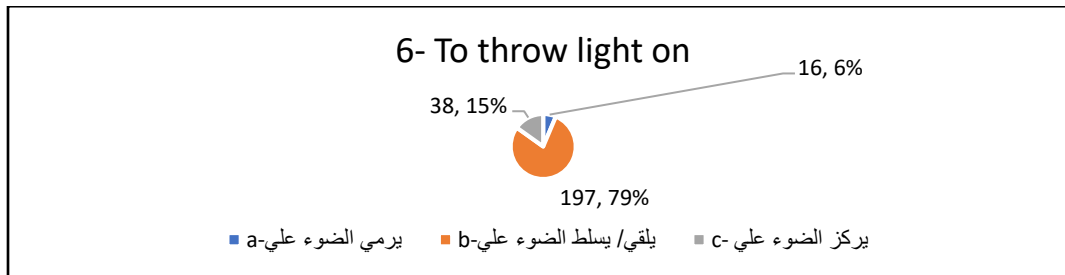
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 3, "A thousand-mile journey begins with the first step", 86 students (34%) chose the correct translation, while 165 (66%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students failed to translate this idiom correctly.



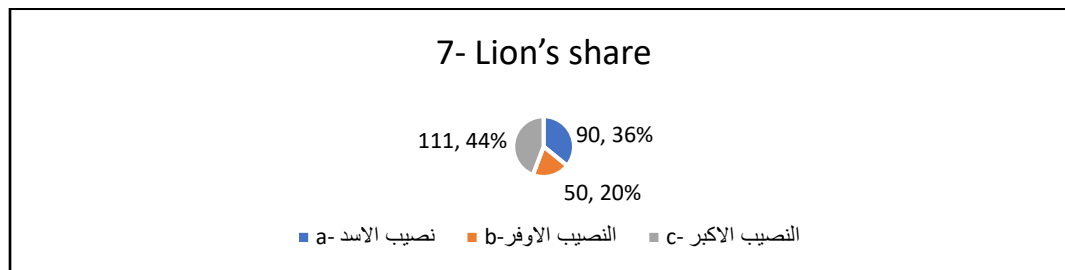
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 4, "To fish in troubled water", 194 students (77%) chose the correct translation, while 57 (23%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



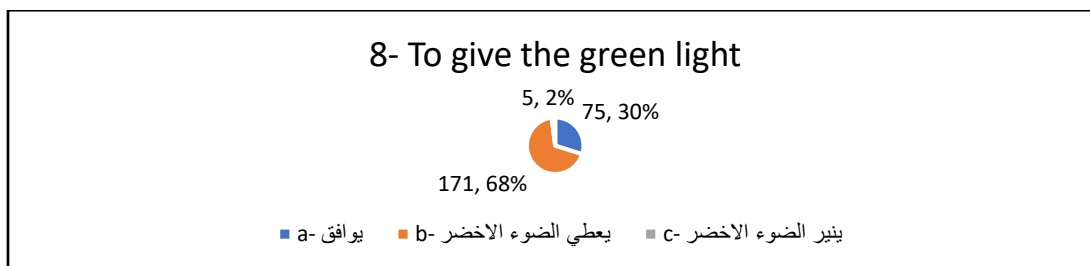
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 5, "To shed crocodile tears", 196 students (78%) chose the correct translation, while 55 (22%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 6, "To throw light on", 197 students (79%) chose the correct translation, while 54 (21%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 7, "Lion's share", 90 students (36%) chose the correct translation, while 161 (64%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students failed to translate this idiom correctly.



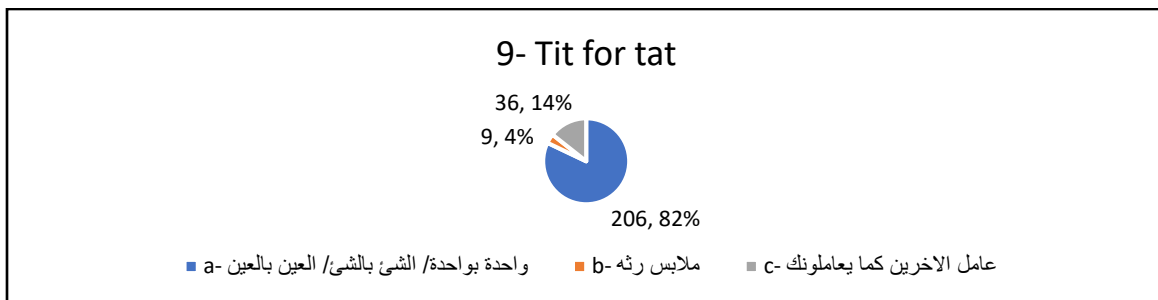
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 8, "To give the green light", 171 students (68%) chose the correct translation, while 80 (32%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.

The Results of Idioms 1-8 (Using an idiom of similar meaning and form) are summarized in Table 4.1 below:

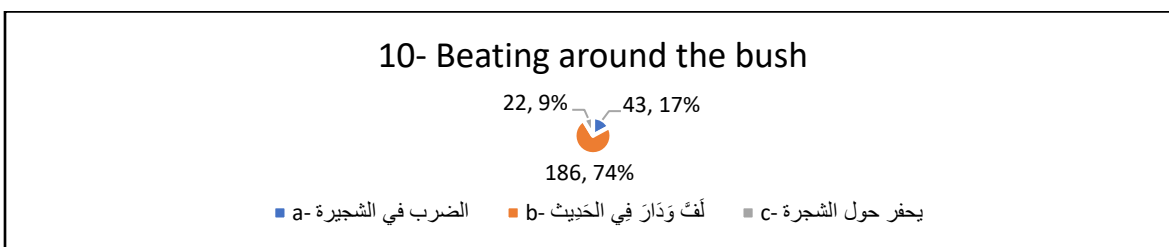
Table 4.1.

| Applied Strategy | N | Idioms | Appropriate Translation | | Inappropriate Translation | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | | Number of correct translations | percentage | Number of incorrect translations | percentage |
| Using an idiom of similar meaning and form | 1 | Kill two birds with one stone | 146 | 58% | 105 | 42% |
| | 2 | Swim against the current/ stream/ tide | 232 | 92% | 19 | 8% |
| | 3 | A thousand-mile journey begins with the first step | 86 | 34% | 165 | 66% |
| | 4 | To fish in troubled water | 194 | 77% | 57 | 23% |
| | 5 | To shed crocodile tears | 196 | 78% | 55 | 22 % |
| | 6 | To throw light on | 197 | 79 % | 54 | 21 % |
| | 7 | Lion's share | 90 | 36 % | 161 | 64 % |
| | 8 | To give the green light | 171 | 68 % | 80 | 32 % |

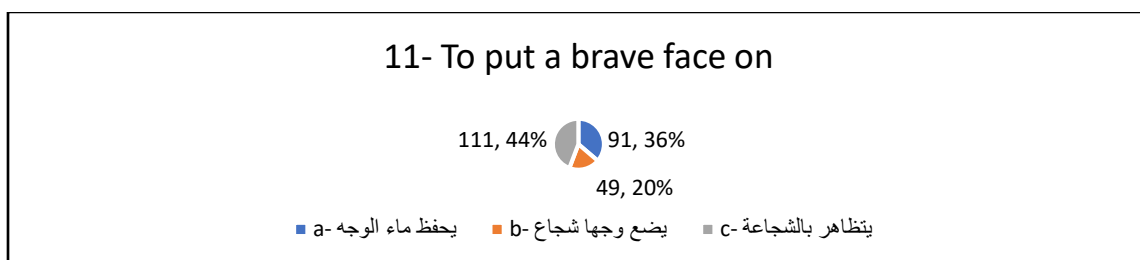
4.1.2. Translation of Idioms of Similar Meaning but Different Forms:



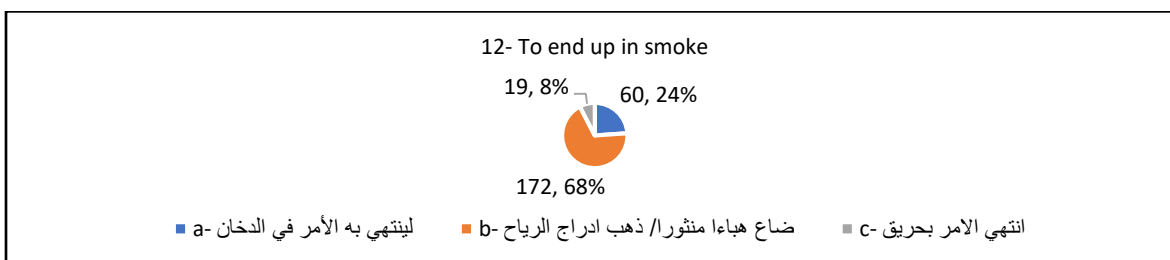
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 9, "Tit for tat", 206 students (82%) chose the correct translation, while 45 (18%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



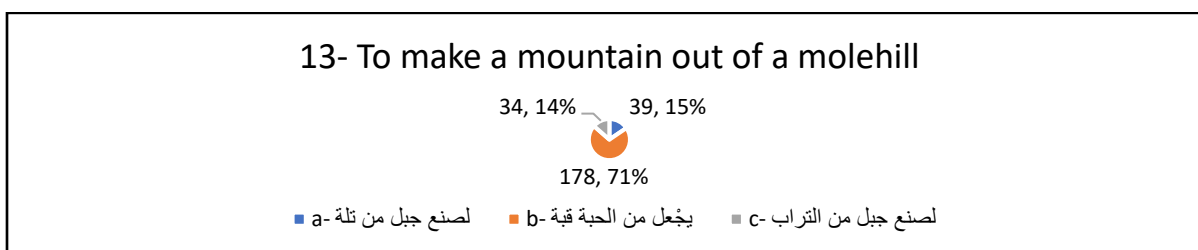
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 10, "Beating around the bush", 186 students (74%) chose the correct translation, while 65 (26%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



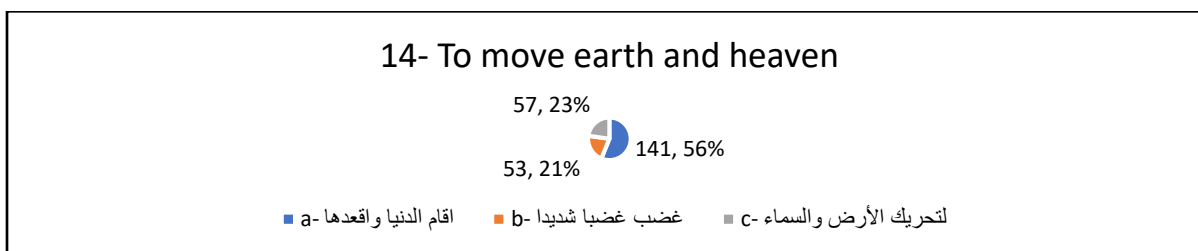
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 11, "To put a brave face on", 91 students (36%) chose the correct translation, while 160 (64%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students failed to translate this idiom correctly.



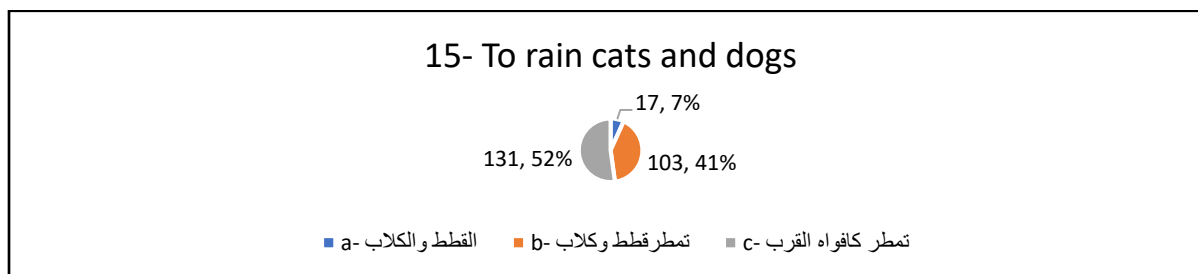
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 12, "To end up in smoke", 172 students (68%) chose the correct translation, while 79 (32%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 13, "To make a mountain out of a molehill", 178 students (71%) chose the correct translation, while 73 (29%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



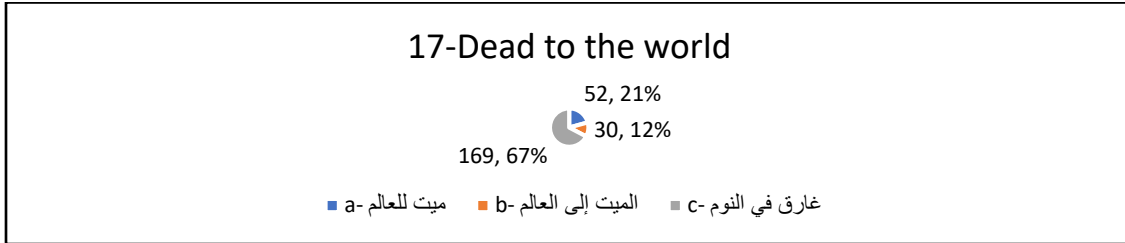
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 14, "To move earth and heaven", 141 students (56%) chose the correct translation, while 110 (44%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



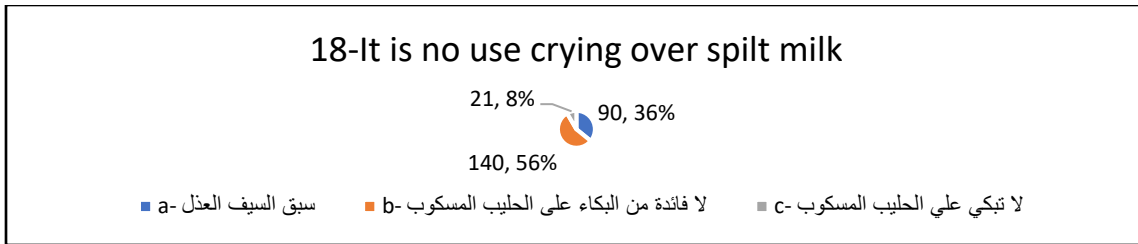
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 15, "To rain cats and dogs", 131 students (52%) chose the correct translation, while 120 (48%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



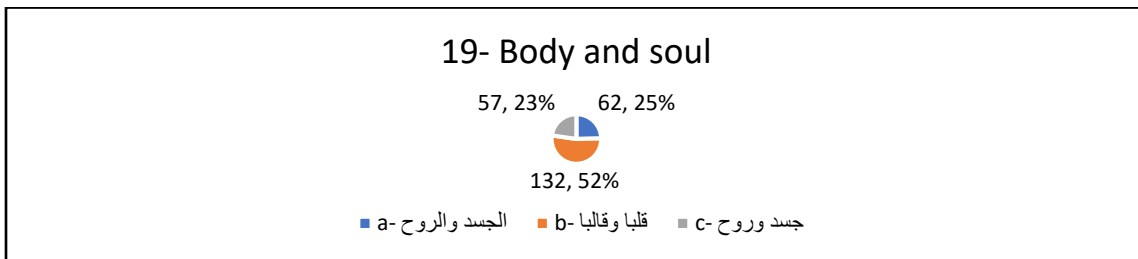
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 16, "A word in season", 45 students (18%) chose the correct translation, while 206 (82%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students failed to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 17, "Dead to the world", 169 students (67%) chose the correct translation, while 82 (33%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 18, "It is no use crying over spilt milk", 90 students (36%) chose the correct translation, while 161 (44%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students failed to translate this idiom correctly.



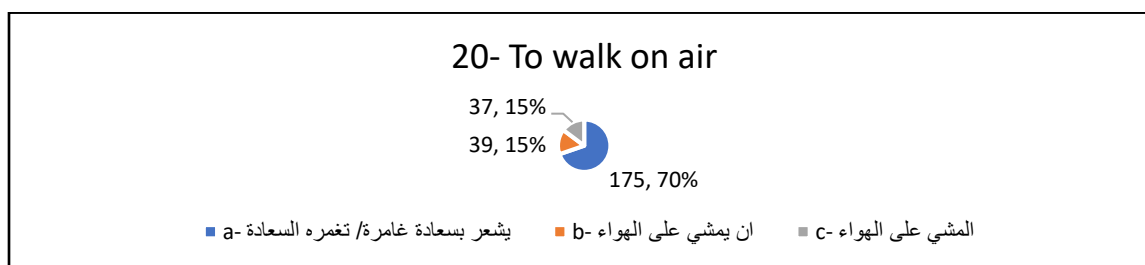
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 19, "Body and soul", 132 students (52%) chose the correct translation, while 119 (48%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.

The Results of Idioms 9-19 (Using an idiom of similar meaning but different form) are summarized in Table 4.2. below:

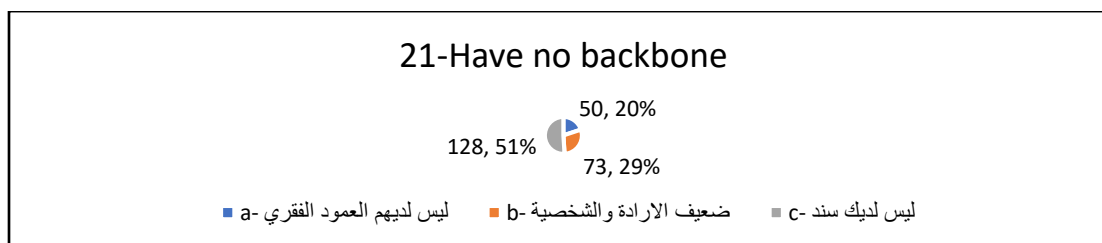
Table 4. 2.

| Applied Strategy | N | Idioms | Appropriate Translation | | Inappropriate Translation | |
|--|---------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | | Number of correct translations | percentage | Number of incorrect translations | percentage |
| Using an idiom of similar meaning but a different form | 9 | Tit for tat | 206 | 82 % | 45 | 18 % |
| | 10 | Beating around the bush | 186 | 74% | 65 | 26 % |
| | 11 | To put a brave face on | 91 | 36 % | 160 | 64 % |
| | 12 | To end up in smoke | 172 | 68 % | 79 | 32 % |
| | 13 | To make a mountain out of a molehill | 178 | 71 % | 73 | 29 % |
| | 14 | To move earth and heaven | 141 | 56 % | 110 | 44 % |
| | 15 | To rain cats and dogs | 131 | 52 % | 120 | 48 % |
| | 16 | A word in season | 45 | 18 % | 206 | 82 % |
| | 17 | Dead to the world | 169 | 67 % | 82 | 33 % |
| | 18 | It is no use crying over spilt milk | 90 | 36 % | 161 | 44 % |
| 19 | Body and soul | 132 | 52 % | 119 | 48 % | |

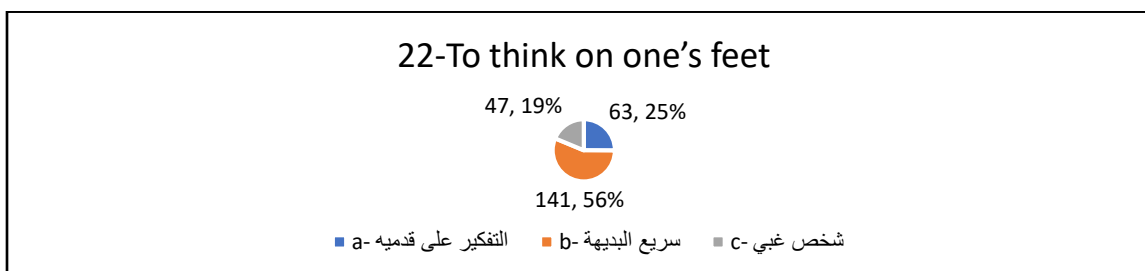
4.1.3. Translation of Idioms by Using Paraphrase:



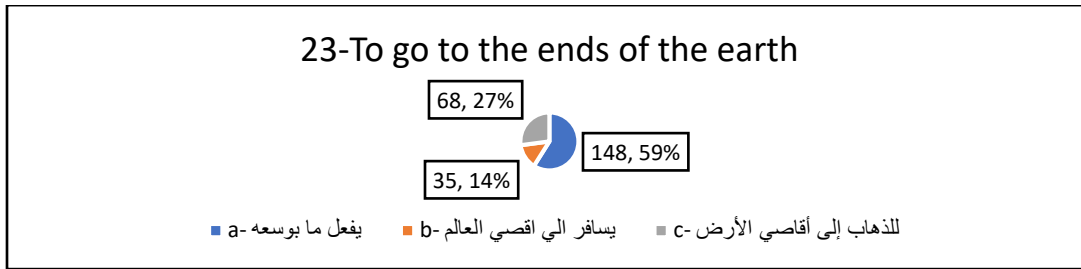
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 20, "To walk on air", 175 students (70%) chose the correct translation, while 76 (30%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



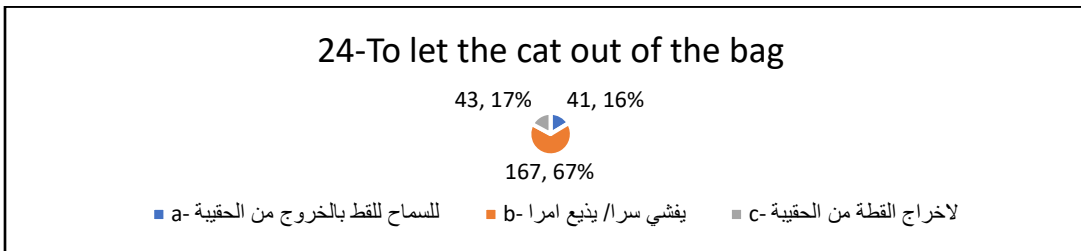
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 21, "Have no backbone", 73 students (29%) chose the correct translation, while 178 (71%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students failed to translate this idiom correctly.



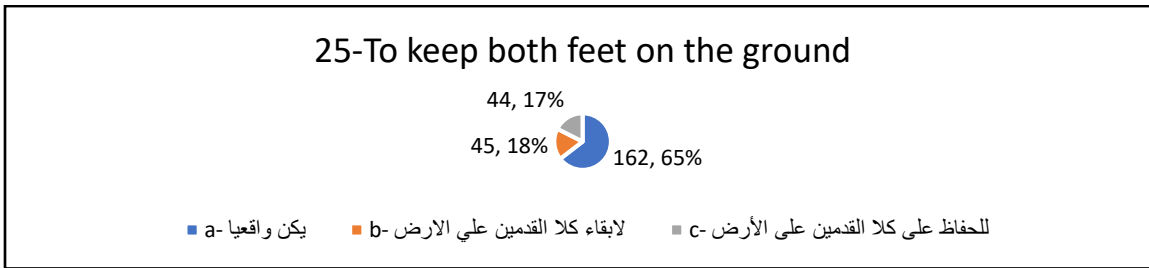
As shown in the above graph, for idiom 22, "To think on one's feet", 141 students (56%) chose the correct translation, while 110 (44%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 23, "To go to the ends of the earth", 148 students (59%) chose the correct translation, while 103 (41%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 24, "To let the cat out of the bag", 167 students (67%) chose the correct translation, while 84 (33%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.



As shown in the above graph, for idiom 25, "To keep both feet on the ground", 162 students (65%) chose the correct translation, while 89 (35%) chose the wrong translation. This indicates that the majority of the students were able to translate this idiom correctly.

The Results of Idioms 20-25 (Translation by paraphrase) are summarized in Table 4.3. below:

Table 4.3.

| Applied Strategy | N | Idioms | Appropriate Translation | | Inappropriate Translation | |
|---------------------------|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | | Number of correct translations | percentage | Number of incorrect translations | percentage |
| Translation by paraphrase | 20 | To walk on air | 175 | 70 % | 76 | 30 % |
| | 21 | Have no backbone | 73 | 29 % | 178 | 71 % |
| | 22 | To think on one's feet | 141 | 56 % | 110 | 44 % |
| | 23 | To go to the ends of the earth | 148 | 59 % | 103 | 41 % |
| | 24 | To let the cat out of the bag | 167 | 67 % | 84 | 33 % |
| | 25 | To keep both feet on the ground | 162 | 65 % | 89 | 35 % |

4.2. Testing Hypotheses

In this part, the study tests the hypotheses about the data analysis.

Hypothesis One: Translation by paraphrase is the most common strategy used by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic

Table (4.1) shows that translation by paraphrase is the most common strategy used by Saudi university students (5 out of 6 higher percentage of the correct translations of idioms) (83.33%). This indicates that the first hypothesis is strongly supported by the statistical results of the study.

Hypothesis Two: Using an idiom of similar meaning and form is the second most commonly used strategy by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic.

According to the statistical analysis of table (4.2), the second strategy used by the students is using idioms of similar meaning and similar form (6 out of 8 higher percentage of the correct translation of idioms) (75%). Therefore, this hypothesis is proved.

Hypothesis Three: Using an idiom of similar meaning but a different form is the least used strategy by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic.

According to the statistical analysis of table (4.3), the least used strategy is using idioms of similar meaning and different form (8 out of 11 higher percentage of the correct translation of idioms) (72.73%). Therefore, this hypothesis is proved.

The above results of translating English idioms into Arabic of 25 idioms (summarized in tables 1.4.,2.4., and 3.4. above) showed that translation by paraphrase is the most common strategy used by Saudi university students (5 out of 6 higher percentage of the correct translation of idioms) (83.33%). The second strategy used by the students is using idioms of similar meaning and similar form (6 out of 8 higher percentage of the correct translation of idioms) (75%), while the least used strategy is using idioms of similar meaning and different form (8 out of 11 higher percentage of the correct translation of idioms) (72.73%).

5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary

Translation is a challenging task necessary for transferring concepts and meanings from one language to another. However, some concepts in one language are problematic for the translator to convey in another language. Among these concepts, idioms have a great position. Little work has been done on this subject, and the researchers tried to do an all-inclusive study on the translation of English idioms into Arabic by EFL Saudi students.

The present research is an attempt to investigate the strategies used by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic. The research applied Baker's strategies for the translation of idioms, including 3 strategies which were mentioned before.

5.2. Results

The study came up with the following results:

1. Translation by paraphrase is the most common strategy used by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic. This result supports the results of Wicaksono and Wahyuni's study (2018) and Bahumaid's (2010).
2. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form is the second most commonly used strategy by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic. This result goes along with the results of Murdoch's study (2017).
3. Using an idiom of similar meaning but a different form is the least used strategy by EFL Saudi students in translating English idioms into Arabic.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the above findings, it is recommended that:

1. Saudi educators and syllabus designers should place a strong emphasis on translating English idioms into Arabic.
2. To help EFL students translate English idioms into Arabic or vice versa, idiom translation should be a part of the English curriculum from elementary school through the university level.
3. Teachers should train their students on the appropriate strategies for translating English idioms into Arabic and vice versa.
4. Saudi English teachers should encourage their students to translate idioms from English into Arabic or vice versa.
5. To translate idioms into Arabic correctly and readily, EFL students need to be exposed to English language culture.

6. Saudi EFL students must be exposed to English idioms to prevent confusion when idioms are translated from English into Arabic and vice versa.
7. Saudi EFL learners should avoid the literal translation of idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa.

Acknowledgement: The authors extend their appreciation to the Deanship of Scientific Research at King Khalid University for funding this work through Large Groups Project under grant number (project number: GP.2/177/43 / Academic year: 1443).

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Appendix

Appendix (A) (Students' Test)

Dear participants,

The researchers are conducting a research paper on "**Strategies used by EFL Saudi University Students in Translating English Idioms into Arabic**", So, you are kindly requested to respond to the items of the test.

According to Baker "Idioms 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." (1992:63).

Dear Students:

This study aims at identifying the strategies used by the EFL Students at King Khalid University in Translating **English Idioms into Arabic**. **Please choose the best translation in Arabic that matches the English idiom.**

| No. | English Idiom | Arabic Translation | Strategy of Translation |
|-----|--|---------------------------|---|
| 1. | Kill two birds with one stone a. اقتل عصفورين بحجر واحد b. يصطاد عصفورين بنفس الحجر c. يضرب عصفورين بحجر | يضرب عصفورين بحجر | Using an idiom of similar meaning and form. |
| 2. | Swim against the current/ stream/ tide a. يسبح عكس التيار b. يسبح علي التيار c. يسبح في الماء | يسبح عكس التيار | |
| 3. | A thousand -mile journey begins with the first step a. رحلة الالف ميل تبدأ بالخطوة الاولى. b. رحلة الالف ميل تبدأ بخطوة. c. الالف ميل تبدأ بخطوة. | رحلة الالف ميل تبدأ بخطوة | |
| 4. | To fish in troubled water a. يصطاد في الماء الصعب. b. يصطاد في الماء المتسخ. c. يصطاد في الماء العكر. | يصطاد في الماء العكر | |
| 5. | To shed crocodile tears a. يذرف دموع التماسيح b. يخاف من دموع التماسيح. c. يبكي بحرقه | يذرف دموع التماسيح | |
| 6. | To throw light on a. يرمي الضوء علي. b. يلقي/ يسلط الضوء علي. | يلقي/ يسلط الضوء علي | |

| | | | |
|------------|---|--|---|
| | يركز الضوء علي.c | | |
| 7. | Lion's share a. نصيب الاسد. b. النصيب الاوفر. c. النصيب الاكبر. | نصيب الاسد | |
| 8. | To give the green light a. يوافق. b. يعطي الضوء الاخضر. c. ينيير الضوء الاخضر. | يعطي الضوء الاخضر | |
| No. | English Idiom | Arabic Translation | Strategy of Translation |
| 9. | Tit for tat a. واحدة بواحدة/ الشئ بالشئ/ العين بالعين b. ملايس رثه c. عامل الاخرين كما يعاملونك. | واحدة بواحدة/ الشئ بالشئ/ العين بالعين | Using an idiom of similar meaning but a different form. |
| 10. | Beating around the bush a. الضرب في الشجيرة. b. لَفَّ وَدَارَ فِي الْحَدِيثِ c. يحفر حول الشجرة. | لَفَّ وَدَارَ فِي الْحَدِيثِ | |
| 11. | To put a brave face on a. يحفظ ماء الوجه. b. يضع وجهها شجاعا. c. يتظاهر بالشجاعة. | يحفظ ماء الوجه | |
| 12. | To end up in smoke a. لينتهي به الأمر في الدخان. b. ضاع هباءا منثورا/ ذهب ادراج الرياح. c. انتهى الامر بحريق. | ضاع هباءا منثورا/ ذهب ادراج الرياح | |
| 13. | To make a mountain out of a molehill a. لصنع جبل من تلة b. يُجْعَل من الحبة قبة. c. لصنع جبل من التراب | يُجْعَل من الحبة قبة | |
| 14. | To move earth and heaven a. اقام الدنيا واقعدها. b. غضب غضبا شديدا. c. لتحريك الأرض والسماء. | اقام الدنيا واقعدها | |
| 15. | To rain cats and dogs a. القطط والكلاب. b. تمطر قطط وكلاب. c. تمطر كافواه القرب. | تمطر كافواه القرب | |
| 16. | A word in season a. لكل مقام مقال. b. كلمة في الموسم. c. لكل مقال مقام. | لكل مقام مقال | |
| 17. | Dead to the world a. ميت للعالم. b. الميت إلى العالم. c. غارق في النوم. | غارق في النوم | |
| 18. | It is no use crying over spilt milk a. سبق السيف العذل. b. لا فائدة من البكاء على الحليب المسكوب. c. لا تبكي علي الحليب المسكوب. | سبق السيف العذل | |
| 19. | Body and soul a. الجسد والروح. b. قلبا وقالبا. c. جسد وروح. | قلبا وقالبا | |

| No. | English Idiom | Arabic Translation | Strategy of Translation |
|-----|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 20. | To walk on air a. يشعر بسعادة غامرة/ تغمره السعادة b. ان يمشي على الهواء. c. المشي على الهواء. | يشعر بسعادة غامرة/ تغمره السعادة | Translation by paraphrase. |
| 21. | Have no backbone a. ليس لديهم العمود الفقري. b. ضعيف الارادة والشخصية. c. ليس لديك سند. | ضعيف الارادة والشخصية | |
| 22. | To think on one's feet a. التفكير على قدميه. b. سريع البديهة. c. شخص غبي. | سريع البديهة | |
| 23. | To go to the ends of the earth a. يفعل ما بوسعه. b. يسافر الي اقصي العالم. c. للذهاب إلى أقاصي الأرض. | يفعل ما بوسعه | |
| 24. | To let the cat out of the bag a. للسماح للقط بالخروج من الحقيبة. b. يفشي سرا/ يذيع امرا. c. لاجراج القطة من الحقيبة. | يفشي سرا/ يذيع امرا | |
| 25. | To keep both feet on the ground a. يكن واقعيا. b. لابقاء كلا القدمين علي الارض. c. للحفاظ على كلا القدمين على الأرض. | يكن واقعيا | |

Appendix B

Instructors' Interview

Dear instructor,

The present questionnaire aims at gathering data concerning Students' Strategies for Translating Culture-Specific English idioms into Arabic. We would be grateful if you would spare some time to fill in this form with information about your experience in the field of translation.

Section One: General Information

1. How long have you been teaching translation?

..... years

Section Two: Teaching and Practicing Translation and Idiom Translation

2. How would you define translation?

a. It is the act of converting a source language text to a target language text in order to convey the intended message in the source language.

b. It is the act of transferring meaning from one language into another.

c. Others, please specify:

.....

3. How often do you practice translation?

a. Frequently

b. Sometimes

c. Occasionally

4. How do you find the translation of idioms from English into Arabic?

a. Very easy

- b. Easy
- c. Neutral
- d. Difficult
- e. Very difficult

5. When translating idioms from English into Arabic, which type of equivalence, if any, do you usually struggle to achieve?

- a. Lexical equivalence
- b. Grammatical equivalence
- c. Textual equivalence
- d. Pragmatic equivalence
- e. None of the above

5.1. Please, justify your choice:

.....
.....

5.2. Do you think that it is possible to preserve and convey the same meaning?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure

5.3. Please, explain why?

.....
.....

6. Which type of meaning should be focused on when translating idioms?

- a. Semantic meaning
- b. Pragmatic meaning
- c. Both

Section Three: Students' Strategies in Translating Idioms

7. Generally speaking, are your students able to translate idioms from English into Arabic?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neutral
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

8. What makes English idioms difficult for your students to translate into Arabic?

- a. Vague use
- b. Lack of equivalence
- c. Culture-laden
- d. Culture-specific
- e. Others, please specify:

.....

9. How good are your students at translating English culture-specific idioms into Arabic?

- a. Excellent
- b. Above average
- c. Average
- d. Below average
- e. Not good at all

10. What errors do your students commonly make when translating idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic?

- a. Grammatical errors
- b. Lexical errors
- c. Pragmatic errors
- d. Stylistic errors
- e. Others, please specify:

.....

11. In your opinion, do you think that students should be made aware of both source and target cultures idioms to succeed in translating them?

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neutral

- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

12. What is the most common strategy the students use in translating English idioms into Arabic?

- a. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form.
- b. Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form
- c. Translation by paraphrase
- d. Translation by omission
- e. Others, please specify:

.....

Section Four: Further Suggestions

13. What strategies or techniques would you suggest to remedy for students' errors and difficulties in translating culture-specific idiomatic expressions?

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Great thanks