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Investigating Difficulties in Translating Culture Specific Idioms

Encountered by EFL Learners

The Case of Third Year License Students at Mila University

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Dedication

Above all, I thank Allah, the Almighty for having given me the strength and patience to undertake and complete this work

My work is dedicated:

To my gift and grace from God, to the one through whom I saw the light of life, my beloved mother and dearest father; with love and loyalty, I thank you for your constant giving, you are the stars of the sky that shine brightly in my life.

To my dear brother “Mouman”, my beautiful sisters “Khawla” and “Nouha” for their support, encouragement and love

To my adorable aunt, her wonderful husband and sweet daughters; “Chadia”, “Aya”, “Rouia” thank you for everything

To my lovely cousin “Ahlem”, I truly thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support and kindness.

To my cousins Antonella and Romeissa and all my family without exception

To my best friends “ Zina, Ranya, Yasmin.

Insaf

Dedication

All Glory and Praise be to Allah first, and then I would like to dedicate this work,

To my family first, and a specific dedication for my lovely father, for his wonderful care, love, confidence and everything beautiful on this life that he has always given me, I love you! God blessed you are my best thing on this life.

To my deceased mother, my Allah has mercy on her soul, and makes her dwell in heaven.

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Abstract

This study investigates the perspectives of EFL learners on the difficulties encountered while translating culture-specific idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa. It investigates three fundamental factors that make cultural idiomatic expressions such a challenge for undergraduate students at the University Center Abdelhafid Boussouf Mila: lack of equivalence in the target language, lack of cultural context, and insufficient understanding of translation techniques. The study also aims to figure out whether students have difficulty implementing the appropriate procedures when translating culture-specific idioms into Arabic. To achieve this aim, the descriptive-prescriptive analytic method is used and should be followed. A questionnaire is used as a data collection instrument and administered to five (5) teachers of translation and 64 students from the third year at Mila-University. The results obtained clearly show that students find it difficult to translate such culture-specific idioms due to cultural differences since each language has its own expressions and meanings that are hard for non-native speakers to understand unless they delve deeper into the target language. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that students generally employ different strategies and fall into the problem of choosing the appropriate strategy when translating culture-specific idioms as well as the way to apply it successfully; using similar meanings in a form is the most commonly used strategy, followed by paraphrasing and omission. As part of the solution, students are recommended to read more about cultures in order to give the right meaning to each expression or phrase they learn. Accordingly, teachers have to provide students with common cultural idiomatic expressions to improve their understanding of the language and culture.

Key words: Investigating, Difficulties, Translating, Culture-Specific Idioms, EFL learners

List of Abbreviations

SL: Source language

TL: Target language

SLT: Source language text

TLT: Target language text

ST: Source text

TT: Target text

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General introduction

1. Statement of the problem

Translation has a significant impact on individuals and communities as a means of communication that enables the exchange of information from one language (SL) to another (TL) based on the selection of the proper equivalence meaning shared in both languages. It involves both language and culture. However, translators encounter some challenges when they try to translate texts that contain culture-specific idiomatic expressions, which are defined as words or phrases that have a metaphorical and cultural meaning; they are an obstacle for non-native speakers since the literal meaning does not lead to the intended meaning. According to some researchers, translating idioms is difficult due to a lack of equivalents in the language being translated. Idioms exist in all languages, but finding analogues in both meaning and form that match the idiom in the source language in the target language is problematic. As a result, in order to generate an efficient and meaningful translation, it is necessary to have a deeper understanding and knowledge of other cultures.

2. Research Questions

To better study the problem under investigation, the following three research questions are raised:

- a. To what extent are EFL prospective learners able to translate culture-specific idioms?
- b. To what extent are English learners aware of the use of effective strategies in order to master the translation of cultural idiomatic expressions?

- c. How can the learner's knowledge affect the understanding of cultural idiomatic expressions and their translation?

3. Significance of the study

The primary goal of this research is to identify the difficulties that EFL students at the Center University of Mila encounter when translating cultural idiomatic expressions by recognizing their weaknesses in the translation process and suggesting solutions to overcome such challenges. It also seeks to shed light on the main strategies that students use to translate such idiomatic expressions in order to establish an effective and meaningful learning environment, and it deals with second language acquisition in order to transmit the intended meaning of idioms in language learning.

4. Hypotheses of the Study

This research tries to prove the following:

- a. Students will be able to translate culture-specific idioms.
- b. English students will be aware of the need to employ successful strategies in order to grasp the translation of cultural idiomatic expressions.
- c. The learner's knowledge can influence his or her comprehension of cultural idiomatic expressions and their translations, which have an equivalent in Arabic.

5. Research Methodology

The present research employs a quantitative method, with a questionnaire used to collect data and delivered to both EFL third-year students and translation teachers who have dealt with culture-specific idioms in their classes and daily life communication at Mila University. This method enables us to study the most prevalent challenges encountered by learners when translating cultural idiomatic expressions in order to be aware of the cultural differences in translating such idioms and propose strategies to prevent these sorts of difficulties.

6. Structure of the Study

In order to tackle the aforementioned questions, it is mandatory to divide the dissertation into two chapters.

The first chapter is theoretical in nature, and the second is practical. Thus, the first chapter divides into two sections: the first one is devoted to defining translation from a general overview with its history, types, challenges, methods, and techniques, as well as dealing with translation from a cultural perspective. The second section focuses on culture-specific idioms and their relation to the cultures of the two languages, including definitions, categorization, characteristics, obstacles, and solutions when translating.

The second chapter, 'Field Work,' is devoted to the practical work and presents the analyses of the questionnaire administered to students as well as for teachers and the interpretation of the results in connection to the research questions and hypotheses.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Translation is an indispensable communication tool that contributes to the development of language and the promotion of culture between communities, as it helps in exchanging ideas, cultures, and knowledge between people. It can also be considered a difficult issue that requires awareness of different cultures, especially in what is known as translating "cultural idiomatic expressions" that give insight into what a society deems important.

This chapter consists of two main sections: the first gives an account of the different concepts of translation with their definition, history, and main types. Other concerns relate to culture and its influence on translation. It also highlights the general problems encountered by EFL learners and the strategies employed in the translation process. The second section is devoted to introducing readers to the notion of culture and how it is associated with idiomatic expressions in general, then delving into culture-specific idioms, including definitions, categorization, characteristics, obstacles, and solutions when translating.

Section one: Basic Concepts on translation

1.1. Definition of Translation

Translation is a topic that has been discussed by many linguists, scholars, and historians around the world who specialize in studying language, translation, and its branches. Especially since translation has become one of the necessary purposes in the lives of individuals in particular and of society in general.

According to Catford (1995), translation is when we replace textual material in the source language by another one with the same meaning in the target language. It means that it is the process of the senses.

Translation is the process of transmitting a message or an element of one language to its equivalent in another language; it is considered a mental activity in which the content of text is transferred from one language to another (Foster, 1958).

According to Ghalaza (1995), translation is the use of all methods, techniques, and strategies to convey meaning from the source language to the target language.

Translation is defined as the communication of the meaning of a source-language text to the target-language text by a distinction between translating and interpreting, which does not exist in every language; it is also defined as the process of rendering the meaning, the idea, or the message from one language to another. When we look at the history of translation, we find that it is universally agreed that the emergence of translation dates back to the beginning of human interactions, or the communication of people between each other.

1.2. History of Translation

The word 'translation' derives from the Latin word *translatio*, which means "to bring or carry through". Another significant term is derived from the Ancient Greek word 'metaphases,' which means "to speak across," and from this the term 'metaphases,' which means "word of the word," was formed. These concepts have been at the center of translation ideas throughout history, providing insight into when and where translation has been applied over the years. According to one of the most widely recognized ideas, the earliest known translation was a poem called The Epic of Gilgamesh, which was first composed in Sumerian and translated into a number of Asian languages.

Another commonly acknowledged theory holds that the earliest piece of translation was the Rosetta stone, an ancient Egyptian stone engraved in Memphis. The Rosetta stone provides yet another crucial insight into the history of translation. The stone, discovered by Napoleon's French soldiers in 1799, dates back to 196 BC. It was most likely first placed in a temple and was issued by King Ptolemy V Epiphanes. The edict is written in Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs at the top, Demotic writing in the center, and Greek at the bottom. This amazing discovery has been beneficial in interpreting Ancient Egyptian and demonstrates the necessity of translation in everyday life well over 2,000 years ago. Buddhist monks who translated Indian manuscripts into Chinese were among the other ancient translators. Later, Roman poets translated ancient Greek writings and altered them to construct sophisticated literary works for amusement. It is known that Cicero and Horace used translation services in Rome. Despite the fact that these ideas contradict each other, we may say that the earliest thoughts on the translation discipline date back more than 2,000 years. After then, it changed over time, eventually becoming translation as we know it today.

1.3. Types of Translation

1.3.1. Literal translation: Literary translation, as the name implies, is the act of translating literary works such as plays, novels, and poetry. The fundamental difficulty with these works is that you must translate the meaning while taking into consideration the author's own literary style. One of the most significant aspects of literary writing is the use of stylistic devices. They may be found in everything from rhythm and meter to word choice, imagery, and sentence balance. There are also puns, comedy, and poetry to consider. And there is sometimes no direct equivalent between the source and target languages. This indicates that translators must often be creative in order to reproduce the same impression that the original text produced on its readers.

1.3.2. Technical translation: Companies must have technical documentation in order to comply with local and international requirements. Technical translation, in this day and age, refers to a wide range of text types, including patents, manuals, user guides, tender papers, catalogs, technical drawings, and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).

1.3.3. Administrative translation: Administrative translation is essential in management. Contracts, newsletters, invoices, and letters are examples of papers related to company procedures and everyday activities. This form of translation is typically required by organizations seeking to create or maintain a worldwide presence. It helps them break through language barriers within the global economy, improving their prospects of flourishing and embracing a multi-cultural workforce.

1.3.4. Financial translation: As financial institutions expand into emerging areas, this field contains a variety of papers that require diverse language specialists with industry-specific abilities. Translators must be conversant with local laws and regulations. They will be able to comprehend the variations between the source and target documents. The

financial business is also closely associated with technology and innovation, which implies that translators must keep up with industry trends and regularly acquire new words in both their native and secondary languages.

1.3.5. Legal translation: Legal translation, which refers to the translation of any legal documents, is one of the more difficult forms of professional translation. Contracts, commercial or government proposals, court transcripts, service-level agreements (SLAs), legislation, witness testimonies, notarized papers, and many more documents are examples.

1.4. Challenges and problems in translation

1.4.1. Linguistic challenges: Every translator should know that being a translator involves much more than just being bilingual. Being a translator includes the ability to translate and transcribe a message that adapts the most to a specific target audience while also dealing with the linguistic challenges in the field.

1.4.2. Historical linguistics: The most common language obstacle that an excellent translator should solve is the requirement to avoid literal translation, sometimes known as word-for-word translation. Literally translating expressions does not always work. Its meaning may radically shift, resulting in unpleasant circumstances such as fake friends. Another exceptional linguistic challenge faced by translators is the constant change and shift in the number of languages and dialects. There are currently over 7000 existing languages in the world, and each one of them has its own unique origin, roots, and structure, so translators must also consider the close to infinite regional dialects that may exist.

1.4.3. Cultural Issues: Every region has its own unique culture and communication style. Consider language, symbols, shorthand, and so forth. When people

from various cultural backgrounds communicate, these signals may take on a different meaning. This is vital for translators since their work is not efficient if it can't be understood correctly. As a consequence, translators must not only be fluent in the languages they deal with but also comprehend the social background in order to translate a document correctly and efficiently. Because the translated term must be considered in both a written and spoken context, this sometimes requires a mix of two disciplines: translation and interpretation.

1.4.4. Lexical and semantic challenges: Lexical-semantic problems can be solved by consulting dictionaries, glossaries, and experts. Vocabulary variations, idioms, semantic gaps, and lexical networks are examples of these issues. Contextual polysomic unit synonyms and antonyms include: Synonyms and antonyms are also examples.

1.4.5. Specialized Translation or Specific Content Translation: Many translators have difficulties when they must translate specialized or unspecialized information. Consider movies. When a translator translates a film, he must utilize the proper phrases and expressions in order to modify the scene and keep the story logical. Another case in point is when translators translate material from novels or poems. These materials must be translated carefully and precisely in order to preserve the author's original content and writing style.

1.4.6. Syntactic problems: Can arise from syntactic parallels, the use of the passive voice, the focus, the point of view from which a story is told, or rhetorical figures of speech such as the inversion of the natural organization of words or an anaphora, the repetition of a word or part at the start of a line or a phrase.

1.5. Methods and techniques of translation

1.5.1. Translation methods: One popular translation approach is free translation. This is known as creative translation, and it is, in some ways, translation by any means necessary. This does not imply that it is incorrect; rather, it indicates that the translator did not pay attention to the grammar and style of the source language. Instead, the reproduced text will be an accurate translation of the original, but it may not perfectly match the structure, syntax, and register of the original. Idiomatic translation is a comparative approach that reproduces the message of the original text by precisely exploiting the target language's idioms and colloquialisms. These results in portions that seem different and cannot be translated properly yet have very similar meanings.

Similarly, semantic translation is related to faithful translation, but it is more concerned with how the target language text appears and its aesthetic faithfulness when contrasted to the original. For example, although free translation may be ideal for creative marketing messages, faithful translation may be preferable for legal writings, where every aspect counts.

1.5.2. Translation techniques: Each of the methods described above has a somewhat different effect. This ultimate result, however, may be obtained by combining multiple translation processes. We distinguish two sorts of translation approaches in general: direct translation techniques and oblique translation techniques. When the parts of the text being translated are comparable in both the source and destination languages, direct translation procedures can be utilized. Grammar and sentence structure, as well as specific thoughts about them, can be transferred from one language to another.

Oblique translation approaches are used when the former is not feasible, when the meaning must be somewhat changed, or when the syntax and style of the text must be altered

to translate it. These primary strategies already correspond to several of the overarching methods we examined previously, but let's go through them again.

Literal translation is another translation technique; it attempts a word-for-word translation that is as similar to the original as feasible, particularly in terms of the text's structure and syntax. While this can result in fairly precise translations, there is a significant limitation because there is no global magic wand for utilizing literal translation on everything; it can only be used for particular structures between certain languages.

1.6. What is a cultural perspective? Cultural perspective refers to how individuals are influenced by their environment as well as social and cultural elements; nationality, ethnicity, and gender are examples of such criteria.

Everyone has a unique environment that defines him and through which he perceives the world. The global perspective is influenced by upbringing, family size and composition, nationality, social level, and educational background, for example: Two people who grew up next door to each other may have very distinct cultural experiences and perspectives. Because they have various gender identities and are engaged in different things, biological siblings reared together have diverse cultural points of view.

1.7. The relation between culture and translation: Culture and translation are considered two important and complementary elements. There is no communication without language, or language without communication, as they are considered among the human characteristics that distinguish man from others and have been necessary since the emergence of humankind on the face of the earth. When we shed light on the language in its deep sense, we will find that vocabulary has a very crucial and substantial function in language creation. Your vocabulary and the changes that occur over time are a reflection of your culture and the

changes that have occurred over time. Translation began in order to eliminate communication gaps between nation-states and facilitate economic and cultural interaction. The goal was to foster understanding between these nation-states. Translation, in terms of meaning first, then in terms of style second, Cultural variations heavily impact translation and the correctness of every piece of translated material is directly proportionate to the translator's understanding.

1.8. Translation from a cultural perspective: It is the practice of translating while respecting and displaying cultural differences; this type of translation includes some cultural elements, such as dialects, food, and architecture. The main issues in cultural translation consist of translating a text while showing the cultural differences of that text and respecting the source culture. Culture is defined in many articles as a community's way of life when viewed synchronically and diachronically in all of its material and non-material aspects. This encompasses the relationship between language and experience as well as its influence on the differentiation of unique mindsets, behavioral patterns, and intellectual achievements.

Section 2: Overview about culture and idioms

Introduction

Language and culture are inextricably linked and cannot be separated when translating. "Language conveys culture, whereas culture carries language."

Knowing and mastering a certain language requires knowledge of the native language speaker's culture. People's cultures aid in the development and enrichment of their language since each language has unique phrases that are employed without conscious thought and reflect the environment, life, history, and culture of the native speakers. Culture-specific idioms may be like a thorn or a challenge when translating, difficult to grasp unless you have prior knowledge about native speakers' cultures.

2.1. General definition of culture

Culture (Latin: *cultura*, lit. "Cultivation") is a contemporary idea based on a phrase used by the Roman orator Cicero in classical antiquity: "*cultura animi*." The term "culture" was used in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe to refer to a process of cultivation or development, such as in agriculture or refinement of the person, particularly via education, and subsequently to the realization of national hopes or objectives. Some scientists used the term "culture" to allude to a universal human potential in the mid-nineteenth century.

Culture is a multifaceted and complicated notion. It is sometimes associated with and manifests itself in conceptions of personal space, body language, eye contact, time, and numerous rituals and traditions. (Patricia M. Huddleston, 2004)

According to some linguists, awareness of a society's culture involves a grasp of linguistic and cultural differences since culture is the sum total of norms, customs, beliefs, attitudes, and a code of manner, and it is the way of life that distinguishes a group of people in

a given nation without prejudice or infringement. Knowing a country entails learning about its culture, which is a reflection of all peoples. Knowing them through the study of their cultural aspects

2.1.2. Anthropologists' definition of culture

Most anthropologists consider culture to be the common collection of implicit and explicit values, ideas, concepts, and behavioral conventions that enable a social group to operate and persist. Culture is defined as the dynamic and growing socially created reality that exists in the minds of social participants, rather than just the existence or absence of a particular feature. It is the "normative glue" that allows group members to interact and collaborate efficiently.

Lustig & Koester (1999) define culture as the capacity and competence to enter other cultures and interact effectively and responsibly, develop and sustain relationships, and carry out tasks with individuals from those cultures. With the current surge in foreign language learning and teaching, the idea of "intercultural competency" has taken on more relevance in regard to "the ability of a person to behave effectively in a flexible manner when confronted with the behaviors, attitudes, and expectations of representatives of other cultures" This term, in reality, extends the concept of communication competence to include intercultural competence.

(Hinkle 1999) The English anthropologist Tyler presented his famous concept: "Culture is that complex system that encompasses knowledge, beliefs, arts, morality, laws, traditions, and any other skills and habits acquired by a man as a member of a society.

Lyon (1990) defines culture as "socially acquired knowledge," that is, what someone has as a result of his membership in a given community. P. 302, as Lyons points out, culture" cannot be considered apart from its social significance. Durante's (1997) definition, in her view, highlights the significance of language, the individual and communal culture: "Culture is something taught, transferred, and handed down from one generation to another through human activity, frequently in the form of face-to-face interaction, and of necessity, through linguistic competence."

2.2. Language and culture

Language and culture are interconnected so that they complement each other. Sun (2013) describes language as a primary vehicle by which a culture emanates its beliefs, values, and norms. Similarly, language is influenced by culture; "if there is no culture, language will be like water without a source or a tree without roots." Thus, the connection between language and culture must be considered in foreign language teaching because the main purpose of learning a foreign language is to learn the customs and traditions of the speech community and to become competent for communication with speakers of the foreign language (Sun, 2013, p. 371). Linguists and anthropologists have long recognized that the forms and uses of a given language reflect the cultural values of the society in which it is spoken. Linguistic competence alone is not enough for learners of a language to be competent in that language (Krasner, 1999). Language learners need to be aware, for example, of the culturally appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone. They should know that behaviors and intonation patterns that are appropriate in their own speech community may be perceived differently by members of the target language speech community.

2.3. Definition of idioms

According to Richards and Schmidt (2002: 246), idioms can be a single word, a phrase, a clause, a full sentence, or an expression. A unified unit where the meaning does not deduct from its individual elements. For example, "to have a bee in one's bonnet", means to be constantly preoccupied with, or obsessed with, one concept or object. Its meaning has nothing to do with the meanings of the individual words that comprise the phrase. It should be emphasized, however, that an idiom generally begins as a term with a literal meaning and later begins to be used figuratively. Similarly, an idiom is "a group of words that, when taken together, have a different meaning than the individual meaning of each word (Seidl & McMordie 1988: 12–13).

Idioms are defined as frozen patterns of language that enable little or no variation in form and frequently carry meanings that cannot be understood from their individual components (Baker 1992: 63).

Idiomatic phrases are curious in their function within language because they mean more than the words they represent. Idioms, even if metaphorical and figurative, function as a tactile and distinguishing characteristic of any language once grasped. Furthermore, they provide cultural insights into social standards, ideals, and beliefs. Idioms provide us insight into the speaker's ideas, feelings, and points of view.

2.3.1. Classifications of idioms

According to Kövecses, idioms are a "mixed bag" of linguistic expressions that involve: *metaphors* (e.g., "spill the beans), *metonymies* (e.g., "throw up one's hands), *pairs*

of words (e.g., "cats and dogs), *idioms with it* (e.g., "live it up), *smiles* (e.g., "as easy as pie), *sayings* (a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush), *phrasal verbs* (come up, as in "Christmas is coming up"), *idioms* (let alone), and others (Kövecses, 2010:231).

According to Fernando, idioms are classified into three types:

- a. **Pure idioms:** are non-literal, multi-word phrases that have been conventionalized. They are never literal; they might be invariable or have minimal fluctuation. Furthermore, these idioms are thought to be ambiguous, e.g., "spill the beans," which has nothing to do with the beans.
- b. **Semi-idioms** can have one or more literal components as well as one having a non-literal sub-sense. As a result, this sort of expression is regarded as somewhat ambiguous, for example, "2 feet the bill," which implies pay.
- c. **Literal idioms** are either fixed or allow for limited modification. They are called transparent since their components may be comprehended. (Fernando in Strakšiene 2009:14).

According to Seidl and McMordie, idioms can have various (regular, irregular, or even grammatically inaccurate) structures and forms. The structure, however, has little bearing on the clarity of the meaning. They determined that the majority of idioms fall into the second category; however, even within this category, there may be disparities in the intelligibility of the idioms.

- a) **Idioms with irregular form and clear meaning** e.g. (give someone to understand, do the dirty on someone).
- b) **Idioms with regular form but unclear meaning** e.g. (cut no ice, bring the house down)

c) **Idioms with irregular form and unclear meaning** e.g. (be at large, be at daggers drawn)

2.3.2. Features of idioms

2.3.2.1. Metaphor city

Idioms are often classified into three groups based on how easily the origins of figurativeness may be identified. This separation appears adequate: it is vital to recognize and identify distinct levels of figurativeness, but because the categories overlap to some extent and the borders between them might be unclear, it is not appropriate to attempt to create more than three categories. (Cronk et al. 1993; Gibbs 1980, 1985; McGlone et al. 1994; Nippold et al. 1989; Strässler 1982)

- a. **Transparent idioms** are expressions in which the image created by the literal meaning is clearly related to the metaphorical meaning, for example, give the green light.
- b. **Semi-transparent idioms**, on the other hand, are phrases in which the literal meaning hints at the metaphorical meaning but the relationship is not as evident as in completely transparent idioms, for example, quake in your shoes.
- c. **Opaque idioms**, in which the motive behind the metaphorical meaning is hard to discern without knowledge of the origin, such as be home and dry.

2.3.2.2. Analyzability

Analyzability is linked to metaphor city and is dependent on language users' intuitions. It is critical to the comprehension and learning of idioms. If a language user or

student can discern some meaning behind the shape of a phrase, it will be simpler to understand and memorize than a random statement. (Gibbs 1993:63)

Arnaud and Savignon (1997) agree that analyzability and the resulting transparency reduce a language learner's load when confronted with new idioms. While it is true that certain idioms, such as "kick *the bucket*," may only accept a certain degree of grammatical change, such as tense, certain opaque idioms, for example, can be passives (bring home, pull strings, cook the books, to name a few).

2.3.2.3. Fixedness of form

Another basic characteristic of an idiom is frozenness, or invariance in appearance. Fraser (1970, 39), for instance, created a six-point frozenness hierarchy for idioms, ranging from totally frozen forms that allow no grammatical or lexical changes to idioms that tolerate unrestricted variation. Before Fraser, Weinreich (1969) went so far as to set out mathematical formulae to express idiom structures. For Fernando (1996), to take another example, a certain fixedness of form is a basic attribute of an idiom, more fundamental than any other characteristic, including figurativeness.

2.3.2.4. Level of formality

Idioms are sometimes asserted to refer to informal, spoken language rather than written or more formal language. To some extent, this is correct; however, limited studies show that this assertion is oversimplified, as idioms are a component of written language, even in relatively formal writings; they do not appear in very formal texts. Newspapers, in particular, have piqued the interest of phraseologists, e.g., Fernando 1996, Moon 1998a, 69–

71, because they include numerous examples of idioms and their various forms, particularly in headlines.

2.3.2.5. Multi-word expressions

An idiom is made up of more than one word. This trait is fundamental to an idiom, yet it is not without its own issues. Can we recognize a prepositional phrase, such as "bloom (Moon 1998a, 146), as an idiom since it consists of two words, even if it may alternatively be interpreted as an extension of the metaphorical meaning of "bloom" is on sale (ibid, 147) and idiom, despite the fact that it is not metaphorical! Are short list and fat chance (Fernando 1996, 71) synonymous and equivalent to the well-known example of an idiom, kick the bucket? What is the link between multi-wordiness and metaphor city, that is, is it permissible for one or more components in an expression to carry their literal meaning while just one element in an expression is metaphorical, e.g., foot the bill (Fernando 1998, 71)

2.3.3. Challenges in translating culture-specific idioms: Despite the fact that idioms are an important aspect of language and are used in everyday communication, they are perceived to have unusual linguistic properties and a high degree of linguistic and cultural specificity.

2.3.3.1. Semantic translation (literal translation)

Word-for-word translation is a nonsensical way into which translators may fall due to an overall lack of comprehension in both languages as well as the significance of functional equivalence in particular. As a result, the translator may distort the message rather than deliver the intended meaning accurately. Mollanazar (2004) pointed out clearly that the

great pitfall is to translate idioms literally because they are often nonsense or even amusing.

To prove this notion, let us analyze the following:

"To get cold feet," when translated literally into Arabic, gives " *للحصول على أقدام باردة* " which is nonsensical. The idiom's intended meaning is to feel frightened or fearful of doing a specific activity that should normally be done on impulse. The closest Arabic translation is " *يتوتر* " The Arabic equivalent, unlike the English idiom, focuses on the result of the action of doing something on impulse without providing any specific image of the activity, whereas the English phrase describes the feeling of having cold feet, which is exceedingly uncomfortable and irritating. As a result, this phrase clearly shows antagonism between literal and idiomatic meanings, which justifies the difficulties of translating idioms.

2.3.3.2.Lack of cultural context

Cultural idioms are notoriously difficult to translate; even skilled translators struggle with them. Because the cultural environment is too ambiguous, it symbolizes a society's world view, beliefs, emotions, and values. Consequently, it has several crucial characteristics that aid in the gathering of information required to comprehend the message, allowing the translator to translate quickly and efficiently (Chahrour, nd.).

"To eat one's words" indicates having to retract one's statements or admit that one's expectations were incorrect. In some Arabic languages, however, eating some letters or words might result from a handicap that produces a linguistic disorder, making the individual speak rapidly or stutter. As a result, the idiom in the source language has a very close equivalent in the target language that appears identical on the surface but is completely different in practice.

2.3.3.3. Absence of an equivalent idiom in the target language

According to Lopez Rodriguez (2009), one major issue that a translator encounters while translating idioms is the lack of idiom-level equivalency. Idioms exist in all languages. Yet, it is difficult to find an equivalent in the intended language that fits the idiom in the source language in both form and meaning. This is because idioms may contain a culturally bound feature that creates a barrier for a translator.

The term *"to put one's cards on the table"* has no Arabic counterpart because of its cultural significance; it is not popular or widely known in our Muslim country since this is something forbidden and not a good act. In English, the idiom's metaphorical meaning is to be upfront and honest about one's objectives.

2.3.4. Strategies in Translating Culture-Specific Idioms

Idioms must be translated from the source language into the target language using the most suitable technique. Baker (1992: 72) believes that finding an idiom with a comparable meaning in the target language would be the most fortunate and perfect case. But if they do not, the following variables must be considered: for example, the relevance of the idiomatic lexical elements. She emphasizes the most important strategies in translation as the following:

2.3.4.1. Using a parallel idiom in the target language

This strategy entails using an idiom in the target language that has essentially the same meaning as the source language idiom and also contains an analogous lexical item. In most cases, such a strategy would be ineffective, especially when the two languages involved in the translation are culturally disparate and have different linguistic and historical roots.

Moreover, there are just a few analogous idioms that are structurally and lexically identical in languages like English and Arabic, which have quite different cultures and linguistic affinities. Examples:

Save somebody's skin ينجو بجلده

Wash his hands of something يغسل يديه من شيء

I am all ears كلي أذان صاغية

2.3.4.2. Using similar meaning but dissimilar form

It is common to find an idiom in the target language that has a similar meaning to the source phrase but is made up of distinct lexical elements. Although this strategy is less acceptable than the first, it may be viewed as more practicable due to the availability of many idioms with the same semantic content but distinct forms and lexical elements across languages. Examples:

Have somebody in the palm of your hand خاتم في إصبعك

A thorn in your side شوكة في الحلق

Sit on one's hands يقف مكتوف اليدين

2.3.4.3. Paraphrasing

This is by far the most popular method of translating idioms when a match cannot be identified in the target language or when using idiomatic language in the target text appears improper due to stylistic differences between the source and destination languages. Examples:

Raise eyebrows بيدي الدهشة

Hammer and tong بعنف

Spill the beans يفضي السر

2.3.4.4.Omission

An idiom, like a single word, may be eliminated entirely in the target text. This might be because there is no near counterpart in the target language; its meaning is difficult to paraphrase; or for stylistic reasons. Here is an example from A Hero from Zero (p.vi):

Source text: (ST)

It was bitter, but funny, to see that professor Smith had doubled his own salary before recommending the offer from Fayed, and added a pre-dated bonus for good measure.

Target text: (TT)

و كان من المؤسف بل و من المضحك أن يتمكن البروفسور سميث من مضاعفة راتبه مرتين قبل أن يتقدم بتوصيته لقبول عرض فايد و أن يضيف إلى ذلك مكافأة يتحدد سلفا موعد حصوله عليها.

Conclusion

Translation is a wide sea that opens horizons for the learner in particular, society and the world in general. It is an artistic work as well, which requires knowledge and accuracy mixed with a creative spirit, particularly in what is known as culture-specific idioms, which is an issue that needs more focus and awareness on the part of the translator in order to provide his readers with the intended and proper meaning whenever possible while also adding the flavor of cultural specificity that differs from one society to another. This chapter

dealt with various definitions of idioms, their classification and features, as well as the challenges and problems encountered by translators. To overcome such challenges, the translator employs a variety of strategies that help throughout the translation process.

CHAPTER TWO

PRACTICAL PART

Introduction

This chapter represents the practical part of our dissertation; it aims to analyze how third-year LMD students in the English Department at Mila University deal with cultural idiomatic expressions, their knowledge, perspectives, and examination of the various obstacles and issues they encounter during the translation process, as well as their awareness of the main strategies and techniques chosen in order to properly translate and apply such expressions. The study is both descriptive and prescriptive in nature and is based on the analysis of questionnaires. The first one is about students' perspectives on translation in general and translating culture-specific idioms in particular; it investigates their knowledge about cultural idiomatic expressions and how to translate them properly through successful strategies. The second questionnaire is about teachers' experiences on how to teach these cultural idioms to their students.

1. Data Collection and Sampling

In order to gather data and check our hypotheses, two questionnaires have been designed for both teachers and learners. This study's sample consists of 64 third-year English Department students, based on the following elements: The students have already spent two years studying and practicing translation from English into Arabic and vice versa, and they are still dealing with it. They are expected to have general background knowledge, basic theoretical and practical information, and feedback as well about the translation process.

Furthermore, five (5) translation teachers with expertise in teaching from Abdelhafid Boussouf Mila University have been selected for our study's sample.

2. Data collection procedure

The nature of this study is both descriptive and prescriptive, using a quantitative method for analyzing data. The adoption of this research instrument is primarily created by the study's goal of studying challenges in translating culturally distinct idioms from English to Arabic or vice versa. It includes twenty (20) questions that have been carefully selected to serve the topic, properly represent the students' replies, and make the information as clear as possible for students. In addition, with regard to teachers, another questionnaire was handed out to five (5) teachers from the same university, requesting them to answer twelve (12) questions divided into two major sections: the first one deals with their experiences in the field of translation, mainly about teaching idioms, and then questions about their students' abilities, their understanding, and their capacity to translate, especially in what is known as the translation of cultural expressions or idioms.

3. Students' Questionnaire

3.1 Description and administration of students' questionnaire

The student's questionnaire consists of twenty (20) questions organized in two sections as follows: The first section is "Basic Concept on Translation," which consists of seven questions (question 1 to question 7). Students in question one (1) were asked to tick the most appropriate definition of the word translation. In question two (2), students were asked to tick the field in which they face a large percentage of problems when they translate idioms; however, in question three (3), students were asked to select the most useful technique when they translate in order to obtain the right meaning. In question four (4), they were asked if

they agree, disagree, or are neutral about whether translation can be considered a tool for acquiring a language and knowing about a new culture since culture and translation are two faces of the same coin. In addition, in question number five (5), students were asked to tick the most important element for translating idiomatic expressions. In question six (6), students were asked to mention the main factor that can contribute to mastery and creativity in this domain. In question seven (7), students were asked if they need to use some extra tools sometimes when they translate in the form of a "yes" or "no" question.

The second section titled "culture-specific idioms" consists of 13 questions, which starts with question number eight (8), in which students were asked if understanding the culture of a language could help them translate idioms or not. In question nine (9) students are requested to determine the extent to which they are familiar with cultural expressions by ticking the appropriate answer. In question 10, ten (10) students were asked about the extent to which they encounter cultural phrases during translation practices. The question eleven (11) includes asking students to tick the definition of translation according to their background knowledge. In the next question, twelve (12) students were requested to choose the right example that represents an idiomatic expression. In question 13, thirteen (13) students were asked about their ability to translate cultural expressions by ticking the appropriate answer. In Question 14, fourteen (14) students were requested to select difficulties they encounter when translating idiomatic expressions from Arabic to English or vice versa. In addition, in question number fifteen (15), students were asked about the type of meaning that they focus on when translating idiomatic expressions. The next questions (16) and (17) include whether students have ever misunderstood or mistranslated some culture-specific idiomatic expressions when translating or not, and the resources they used in order to translate such types of expressions. The next question is eighteen (18), in which we asked students their opinions about the

importance of translating culture-specific idiomatic expressions accurately when working with texts in Arabic, with a justifying answer of why or why not. In question number nineteen (19), students were requested to tick all strategies they used when translating idioms; other ways they will specify. In the last question, twenty (20) students were requested to give a piece of advice to the other learners who are struggling to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic.

3.1. Analysis of students Questionnaire Results

Question 01: According to you, what is the most appropriate definition to the term translation?

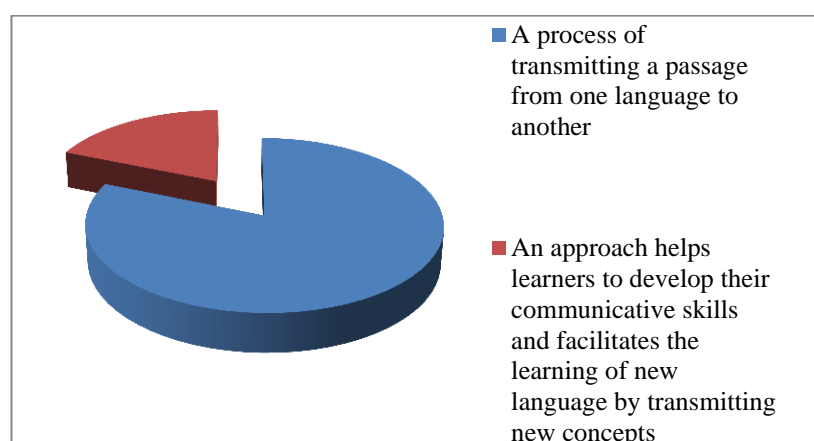


Figure 01: The most appropriate definition of translation

In this figure, it should be noticed that fifty-two students (81.3 %) choose to define translation as "a process of transmitting a passage from the source language to the target language" and the remaining of them, i.e., twelve students (18.8 %), select the second option, which defines translation as "an approach that helps learners to develop their communicative skills and facilitates the learning of a new language by transmitting new concepts".

Question 02: Among the fields suggested below, which one do you encounter a large percentage of problems with when you translate?

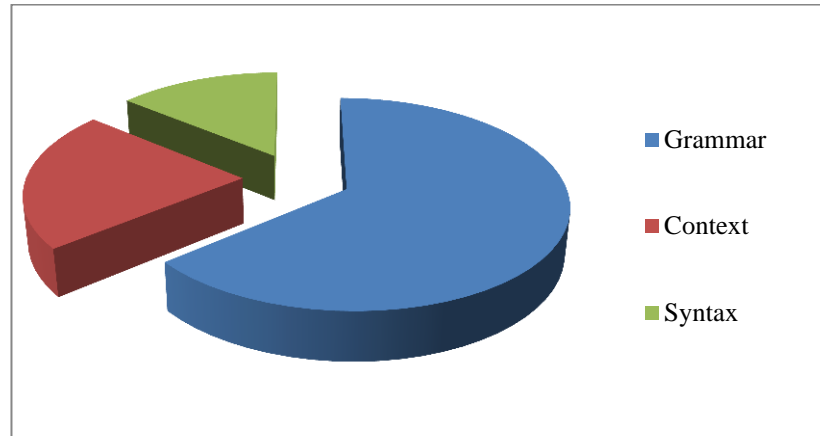


Figure 02: Fields where students facing problems in translation

It was found that the majority of students, i.e., forty-one of them (64.1 %), face problems in context, whereas fourteen students (21.9 %) face problems in grammar, and the remaining nine students (14.1 %) face some obstacles in syntax.

Question 03: During the translation process, which one of these you use in order to obtain the correct meaning?

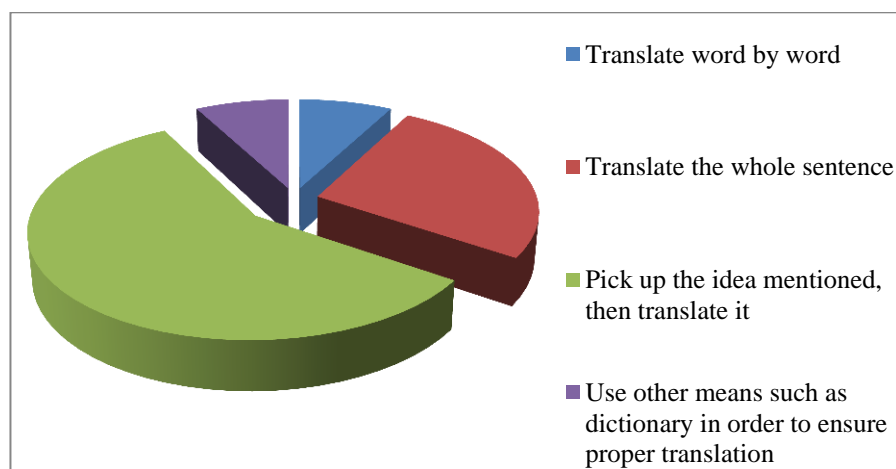


Figure 03: The main technique of translation used by students

As shown in the above figure, thirty-seven students (57.8 %) are translating by "picking up the idea mentioned and translating it", seventeen students (26.6 %) choose the second option, which is "translate the whole sentence", and the two last options are of equal percentage, in which five students (7.8 %) choose the first option, which is translating "word by word", and the last five students select the last option "Use other means such as a dictionary in order to ensure proper translation".

Question 04: Translation is the main effective engine for acquiring new language and bringing cultures closer, where translation and culture are two parts that are indivisible from each other.

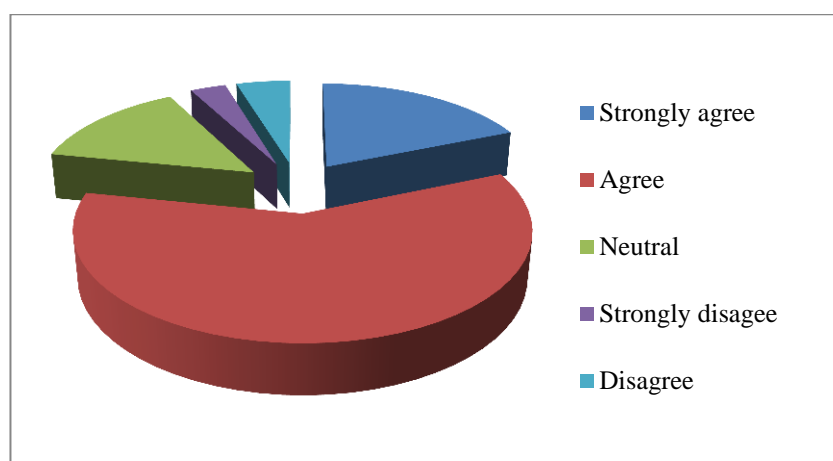


Figure 04: Students agreements if translation helps for the acquisition of a language

The figure illustrates that thirty-eight students (59.4 %) agree with the statement above, and twelve students (18.8 %) emphasize that the statement is true. However, three other students (4.6 %) disagree with it, and two students (3.1 %) totally disagree. In addition to that, nine of them (14.1 %) are neutral.

Question 05: Translating cultural expressions and idiomatic ones that differ from one to another requires:

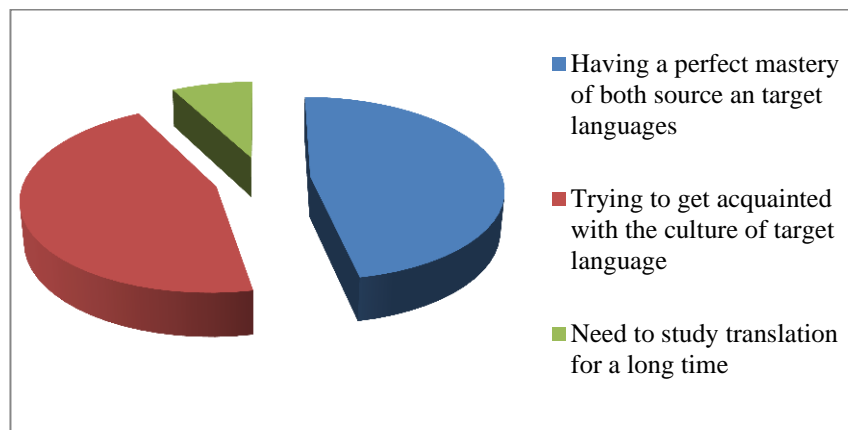


Figure 05: The basic element on translating culture-specific idioms

The figure displays that thirty students (46.9 %) choose the first option as an important element for translating a cultural expression; however, however twenty-nine (45.3 %) of them select the second option. In addition, the remaining five students (7.8 %) select the third one.

Question 06: According to you, what is the main factor that can contribute to mastering translation and creativity in it from Arabic to English or vice versa?

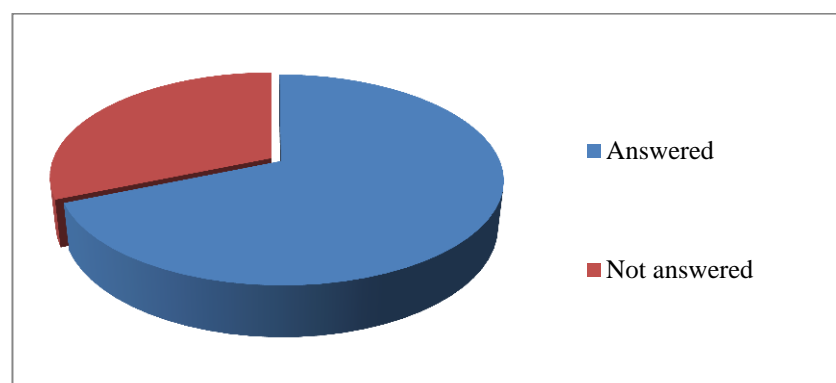


Figure 06: The main factor that can contribute to the right translation of an idiomatic expression

From the figure above, one might notice that an acceptable number of students, which is forty-four students (68.75 %), gave factors that contribute to mastering translation and creativity in it as the following:

- a. Mastering both languages and both cultures.
- b. Awareness of cultures and understanding the hidden meaning.
- c. Having enough background knowledge in both languages and knowing techniques and rules of translation.
- d. Reading skill contributes to master translation.
- e. Social cultural back ground knowledge.
- f. Having strong command of both the source and target languages that includes knowledge of grammar, vocabulary idioms, and structures of meaning.
- g. Vocabulary.
- h. Learning more idiomatic expressions.
- i. Learning more vocabulary and being familiar with both cultures of both languages.
- j. Knowing the grammar rules of the target language and how to maintain the same context.
- k. Grammatical information.
- l. Linguistic factors.
- m. The amount of knowledge that one holds, including both the source and target language.
- n. Focusing on culture and history of the language.
- o. Thinking in English.
- p. Understanding general meanings.

Twenty other students with a less percentage (31.25 %) did not give related answers.

Question 07: Do you think that sometimes you need to use some extra tools in order to translate and solve some translation problems that you may face?

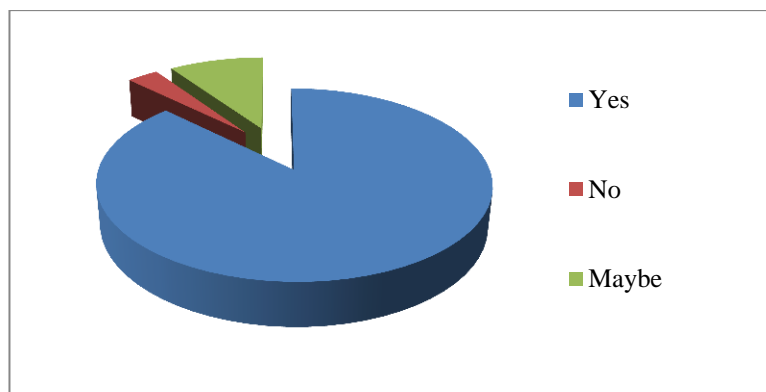


Figure 07: Students' view about the use of extra tools when translating

The perspective of the majority of students (85.9 %) is yes; they need to use extra tools that help them in the translation process. Certain students (9.4 %) are not sure about their view; they answered maybe, and just 3.1 % said no; they didn't need to use such tools. One student didn't answer.

Question 08: Do you think that understanding culture of a language may help you to translate culture-specific idiomatic expression properly?

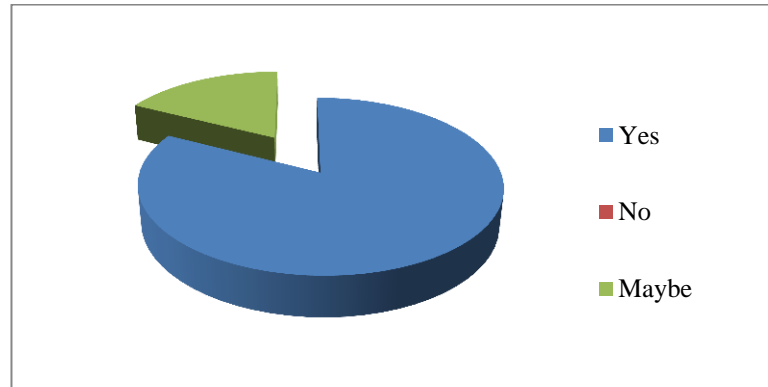


Figure 08: Students' view about the importance of understanding culture of a language

The figure there asserts clearly that 81.25 percent of students think that it is important to understand the culture of a language in order to translate cultural idiomatic expressions well; the remaining 17.2 percent of students think it might be important. One student didn't specify his or her answer.

Question 09: How much do you know about English culture-specific idioms?

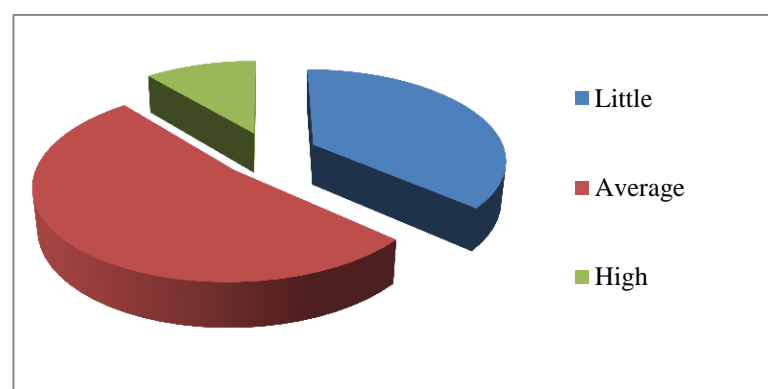


Figure 09: Students' level about the knowledge of culture-specific idioms

The figure shows that 33 students in the sample (51.6%) have considerable background knowledge about culture-specific idioms. Whereas, 23 of them (35.9 %) have little knowledge about these idioms, and only 7 students (10.9 %) have a high level of mastery of culture-specific idioms. One student didn't specify his or her level.

Question 10: How often do you encounter culture-specific idiomatic expressions in the languages you translate into Arabic?

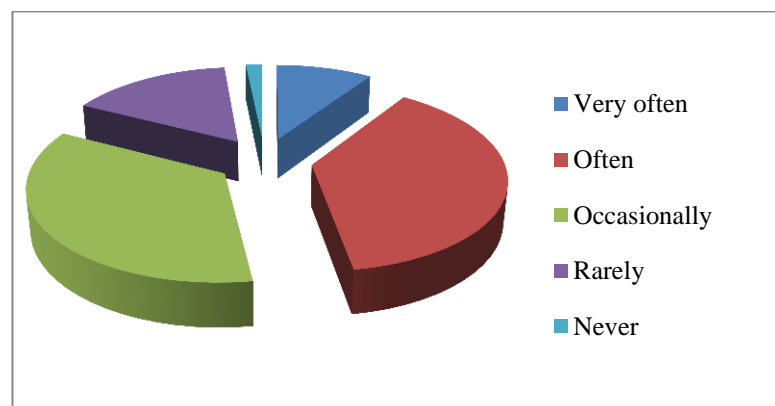


Figure 10: Students' frequency when translating culture-specific idioms

The figure demonstrates that 24 students (37.5 %) often encounter culture-specific idioms in the languages you translate into Arabic, and 22 of them (34.4 %) occasionally face these cultural idiomatic expressions. However, ten students (15.6 %) rarely face these expressions, six students (9.3 %) encounter them very often, and only one student has never encountered such cultural expressions. One student didn't answer at all.

Question 11: How would you define culture-specific idiomatic expressions?

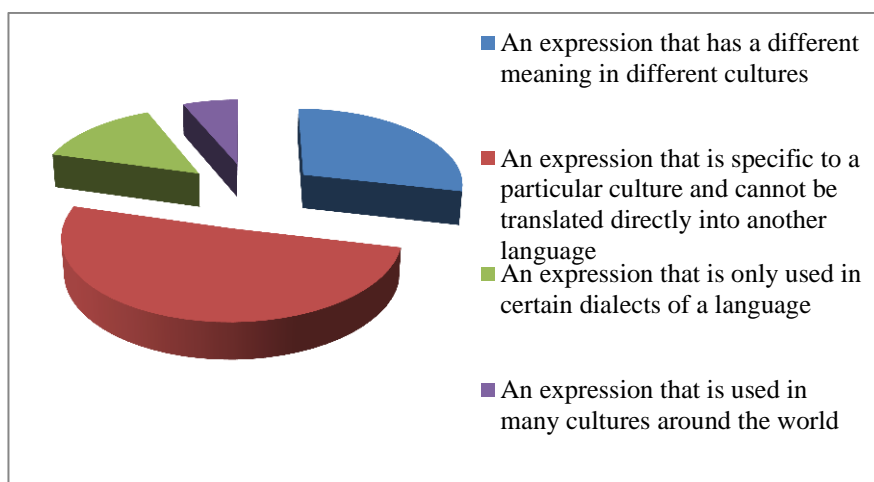


Figure 11: Definition of culture-specific idiomatic expressions

In this figure we noticed that most of the students; 32 (50 %) defined cultural idiomatic expressions as “An expression that is specific to a particular culture and cannot be translated directly into another language”, 18 of them (28.1 %) said that it is “an expression that has a different meaning in different cultures” and 9 from the sample (14.1 %) selected that it is “an expression that is only used in certain dialects of a language”, while the remaining 4 students (6.2 %) chose the last one “an expression that is used in many cultures around the world.” One student didn’t answer at all.

Question 12: Which of the following is an example of a culture-specific idiomatic expression?

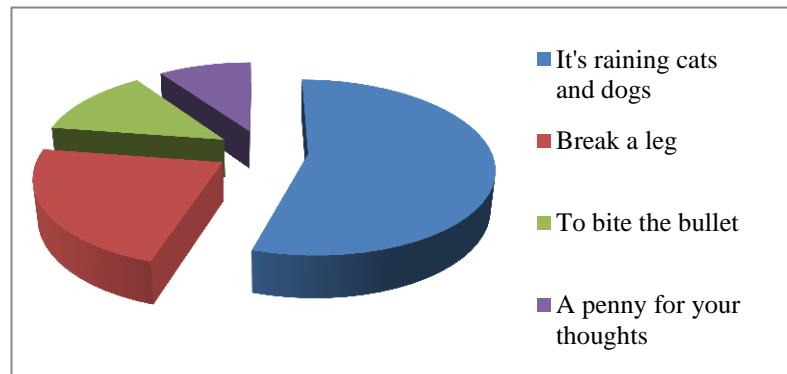


Figure 12: The appropriate example of culture-specific idioms

An acceptable number of students, 34 (53.1 %), think that the expression "It's raining cats and dogs" can be considered a cultural idiomatic expression; some of them think that "break a leg" is the appropriate example of culture-specific idioms; 8 students (12.5 %) said that the phrase "to bite the bullet" is a cultural idiomatic expression; and the remaining 6 of the sample (9.4 %) said that the example of such an expression is "penny for your thoughts", Two students didn't give the answer.

Question 13: How confident do you feel in your ability to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic?

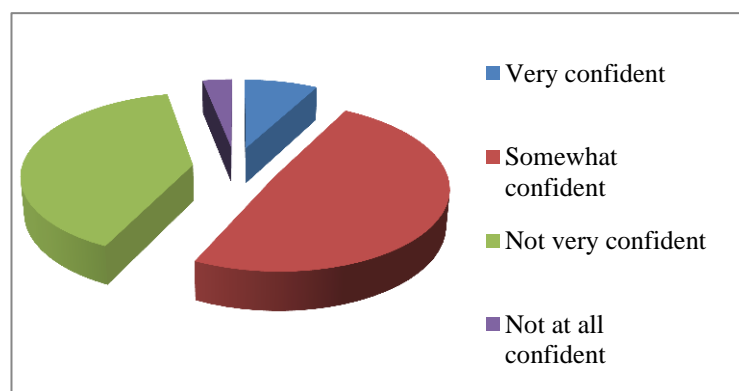


Figure 13: Students' self-confidence when translating culture-specific idioms

The figure mentioned that a certain number of students 31 (48.4 %) feel somewhat confident when translating cultural idiomatic expressions, 25 of them (39.1 %) are not very confident when they translate, but only 5 of them (7.8 %) feel very confident, 2 of them (3.1 %) are not confident at all, and one student didn't specify his or her answer.

Question 14: What difficulties do you face when trying to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic?

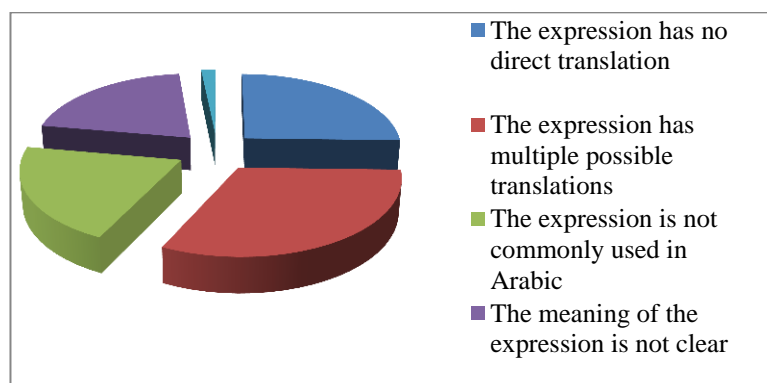


Figure 14: Students' difficulties when translating culture-specific idioms

It was found that a large percentage of students (31.2 %) said that the difficulty lies in which “The expression has multiple possible translations”, 16 of them (25 %) consider the problem that “the expression has no direct translation”. As well as, “The expression is not commonly used in Arabic”, “The meaning of the expression is not clear” were selected by the same percentage (20.3 %) and number (13) of students, one student didn't answer.

Question 15: Which type of meaning should be focused on when translating culture-specific idiomatic expression?

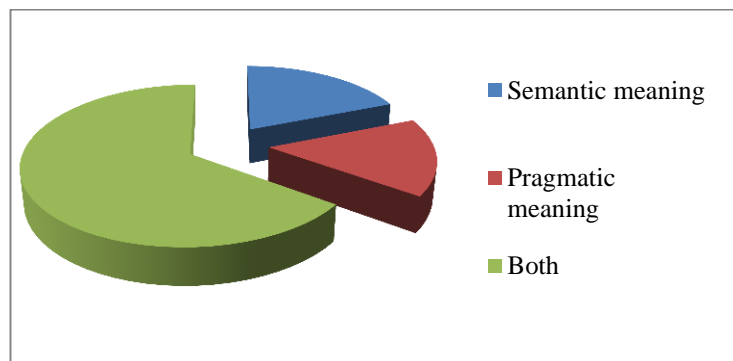


Figure 15: The type of meaning students' focused on when translating

The majority of students 41 (64.1 %) focused on both semantic and pragmatic meaning when translating cultural idiomatic expressions, twelve of them (18.7 %) focused on semantic, and ten students (15.6 %) focused on pragmatic meaning.

Question 16: Have you ever had a situation where you misunderstood or mistranslated a culture-specific idiomatic expression when translating it into Arabic?

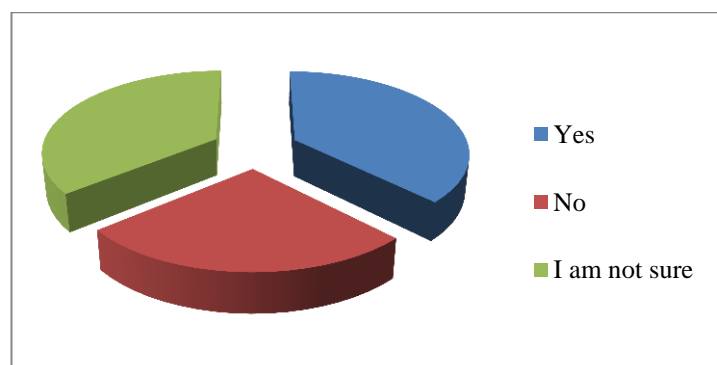


Figure 16: whether students misunderstand or mistranslate culture-specific idioms

The figure above clearly shows that 24 students (37.5 %) answered yes, they had, 17 students (26.6 %) answered No, they hadn't, and the remaining 23 of them (35.9 %) they aren't sure.

Question 17: Have you ever used a resource to help you translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? If so, which one(s) have you found helpful?

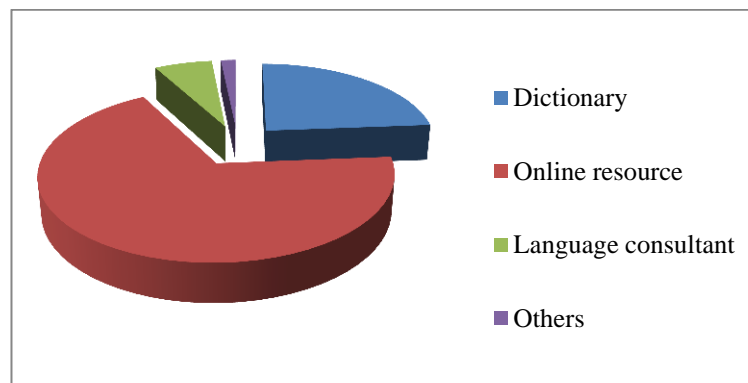


Figure 17: Resources students used when translating cultural idiomatic expressions

The online resource is the most overused tool in translating culture-specific idioms by 43 students (67.2 %), followed by the dictionary by 15 students (23.4 %), and the language consultant is the less used tool within those suggestions by just 4 students (6.25 %). The option of others was selected by one student, and the last student didn't answer.

Question 18: Do you think it's important to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions accurately when working with texts in Arabic? Why or why not?

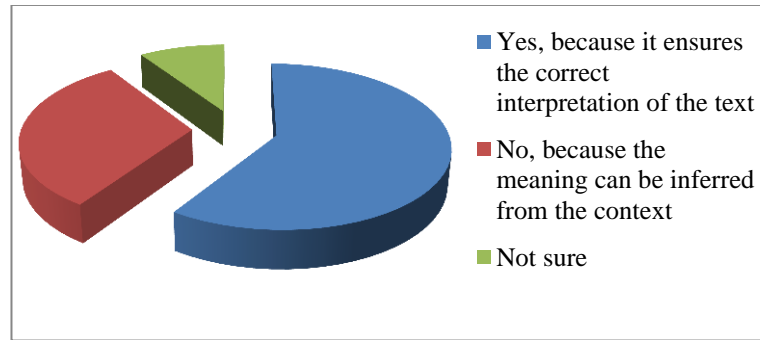


Figure 18: Students' view about the importance of translating culture-specific idioms when working with texts in Arabic

The figure shows that 38 students (39.4 %) think that it is important to translate culture-specific idioms accurately because it ensures the correct interpretation of the text, whereas 20 of them (31.3 %) didn't think so; they said No, because the meaning can be inferred from the context, and only 6 students are not sure if it is important or not.

Question 19: What strategies do you employ when learn and translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic?

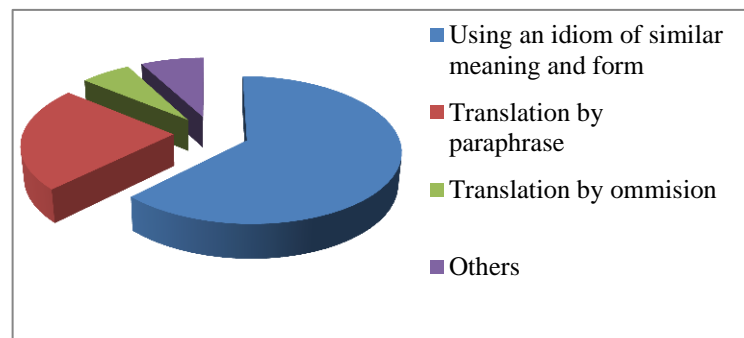


Figure 19: Students' strategies in translating cultural idiomatic expressions

Using an idiom of similar meaning and form got the largest percentage (62.5 %) by 40 students; 15 students (23.4 %) are using paraphrasing when they translate; the last strategy is omission, which is used by only 4 students; and 5 students select the option of others without specifying.

Question 20: What advice would you give to someone who is struggling to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions?

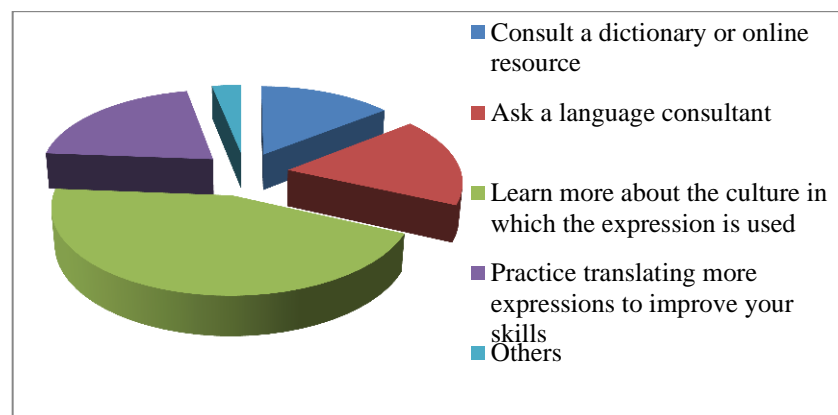


Figure 20: The advice students give to those who are struggling with culture-specific idioms

Most of the students (43.75 %) think that it is better to learn more about the culture in which the expression is used; some of them (20.3 %) think that it would be better to practice translating more expressions to improve your skills; 17.2 % give the advice of asking a language consultant; 14.1 % think that it should be a dictionary or online resource; and 3.1 % said others without giving further advice.

3.2. Discussion of the findings

As we already mentioned above, the aim of this research is to investigate and cover the difficulties that most EFL learners encounter when translating cultural expressions, or in other words, idiomatic expressions. The questionnaire is considered a tool that helps us discover more about student's problems. Responses show that the majority of our sample (64 EFL students) encounters a lot of obstacles when they translate, especially "idiomatic expressions". The difference between languages, especially in terms of culture, could have an impact on their understanding of idiomatic expressions because, when we look at both

English and Arabic cultures, we come across a huge percentage of differences in terms of meaning, content, and context, and this can be considered the first reason that leads students to misunderstand or mistranslate a cultural expression. Furthermore, misunderstanding of the meaning is another hurdle due to the lack of reading in both languages and the limited knowledge about the cultures. In order to avoid such types of difficulties, most students try some techniques and methods, such as translating word by word, which is less used by students because it sometimes makes them fall into fallacies, especially since idiomatic expressions have deep meanings that we should focus on more than the explicit meaning. However, most of them use translating by picking up the idea mentioned and then translating it, and this can be the most helpful way in order to preserve the intended meaning and avoid any translation error. In addition, some students depend on using an extra tool such as a dictionary or an online translator such as "Google Translate" because they do not feel confident when they transmit some meanings. This method can be considered a means of help sometimes that shortens the students' effort and time as well as guaranteeing them proper translation at times, but in many cases the students expect translation errors because of the literal translation, and sometimes it does not guarantee the correct meaning, especially in Arabic, where we know that the same word can carry different meanings and senses. Therefore, to reduce these problems that students encounter in the field of translating cultural expressions, which has become an obsession for many learners, we have to lay the foundations and pillars to work with, which are:

- Studying more of the culture of the language to which expressions are intended to be translated involves a wide study of and contact with it because it is known that translation and culture do not separate from each other. The study of culture facilitates

a broader translation of cultural expressions; understand their meanings as well to become clearer.

- Among the most important steps that must be followed during the process of translating cultural expressions is to think about the meaning first, then the form, and try to coordinate between the English and Arabic meanings at the same time.
- Attempting to preserve the sentence and its content when translating cultural phrases from Arabic into English or vice versa, for example, with regard to grammar (masculine and feminine, plural and singular, etc)
- Avoid translating English cultural expressions that do not have an intended meaning in the Arabic language or have no broadcast use in the Arabic language.

4. Teachers' Questionnaire

4.1. Description and administration of teachers' questionnaire:

In order to learn more about our teachers and their experience in the field of translation, as well as their students' experience in translating cultural expressions and idioms, we decided to provide them with twelve (12) questions as follows: We start with question one (1), which includes whether teachers have previously taught students what is known as cultural expressions or not. In the next question (2), we asked teachers about the method or content in which they present cultural expressions during the lesson by ticking the appropriate answer. In question three (3), we questioned teachers about how they evaluate students' understanding of cultural idioms. The next question (4) consists of the types of difficulties that most students face when they translate idiomatic expressions. In question 5, teachers were asked about the way they help their students overcome the problems they face in translating this type of expression by selecting the suitable answer. In the sixth question, teachers were asked about the manner in which they confirm that their students have understood the cultural

meaning presented by giving them some suggestions. In question seven (7), professors were questioned about their point of view on whether it is important to teach idioms and if it is necessary to include them in our lessons or not, justifying their answers. The next question (8) we asked them about their ways of evaluating the effectiveness of their methods of teaching cultural expressions by giving a tick to the suitable answer. In question nine (9) teachers were asked to select, according to their experience and their opinions, either the explicit or implicit method in order to present the idiomatic expressions in authentic materials such as a movie or a TV show. In question ten (10) teachers were asked about the means of help that they used for learners to understand idiomatic expressions, or idioms. Question number eleven (11) includes whether teachers have noticed before some differences in the way students translate idiomatic expressions or not. And finally, in the last question, teachers were asked to give some advice to the other teachers of translation who are teaching idiomatic expressions in order to help more of their students by giving them some suggestions, and they will select the right answer in other ways.

4.2. Analysis of teachers' questionnaire results

Question 1: Have you ever taught the translation of culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to your students?

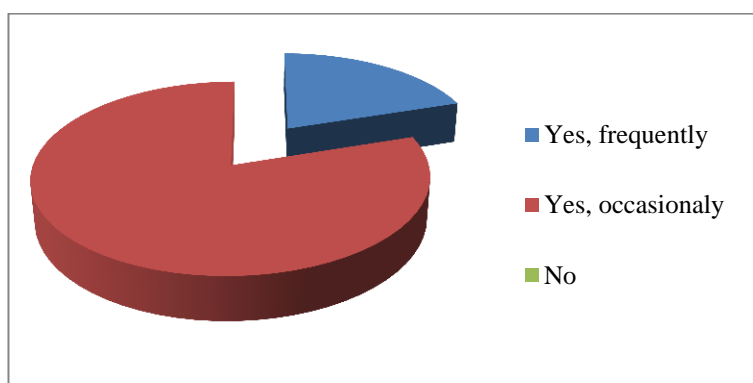


Figure 21: Whether teachers teach cultural idiomatic expressions in Arabic to their students

This figure shows that four teachers (80 %) answered by "yes occasionally", however one teacher (20 %) chose the first option, which is "yes, frequently", and no one of them selected the last option which is "no, never".

Question 2: How do you introduce culture-specific idiomatic expressions to your students?

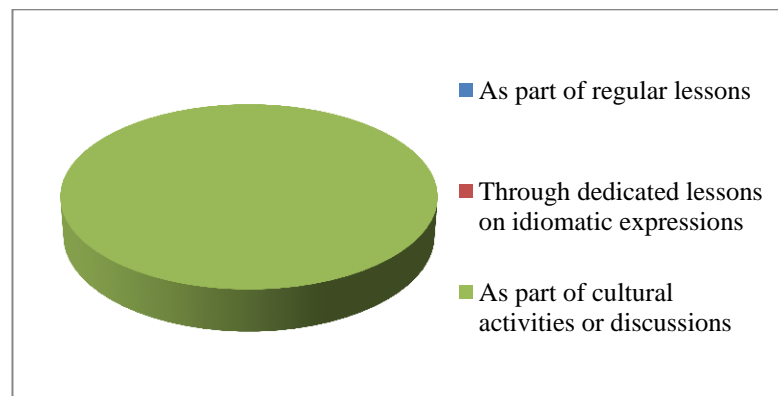


Figure 22: Teachers' method in presenting idiomatic expression

In this question all of teachers (100 %) selected the same answer which is, introducing culture-specific idiomatic expressions as a part of cultural activities.

Question 03: How do you assess your students' understanding of culture-specific idiomatic expressions?

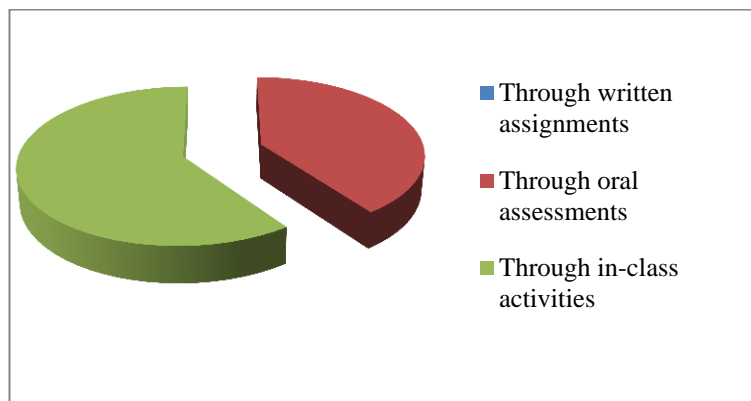


Figure 23: Teachers' assessment for students to understand more idiomatic expressions

The figure introduces for us that most teachers three (60 %) selected the last option; however, two other teachers (40%) chose the second option, which is "through oral assessments", and no one chose the first option, which is "through written assignments".

Question 04: What difficulties do your students face when trying to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? (Select all that apply)

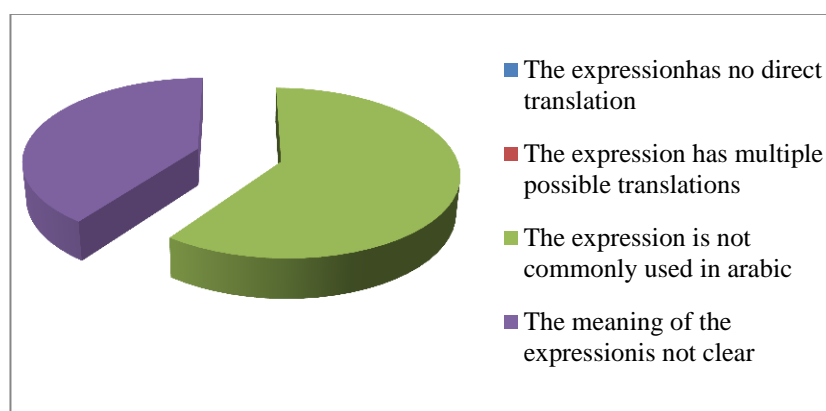


Figure 24: Difficulties students face when translating cultural idiomatic expressions

Three teachers (60 %) selected the third option, which is "the expression is not commonly used in Arabic", the other two teachers (40%) selected the last option, which is the meaning of the expression is not clear, but no one of them chose the first or second option.

Question 05: How do you help your students overcome the difficulties they face when translating culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? (Select all that apply)

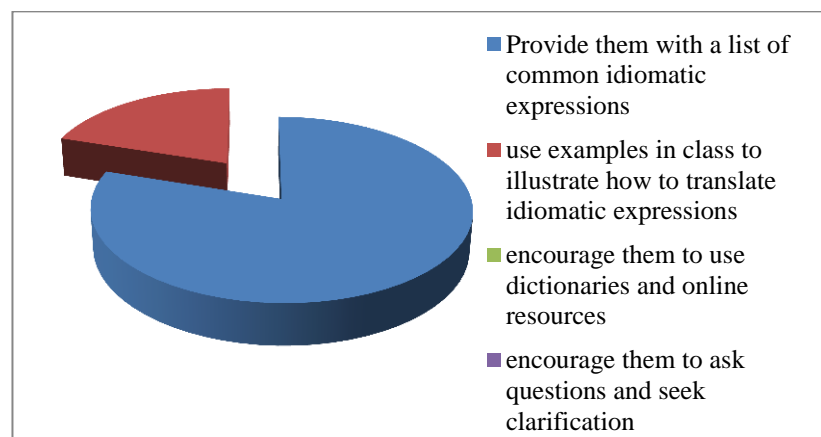


Figure 25: Teachers' way in help students to overcome the difficulties when translate idiomatic expressions

In order to help students translate idiomatic expressions well, four teachers (80 %) chose the first option, which is "provide them with a list of common idiomatic expressions", Another teacher (20 %) thought that "using examples in class to illustrate how to translate idiomatic expressions" is the right answer, and no one of them chose the third and last answer.

Question 06: How do you ensure that your students understand the cultural context in which idiomatic expressions are used?

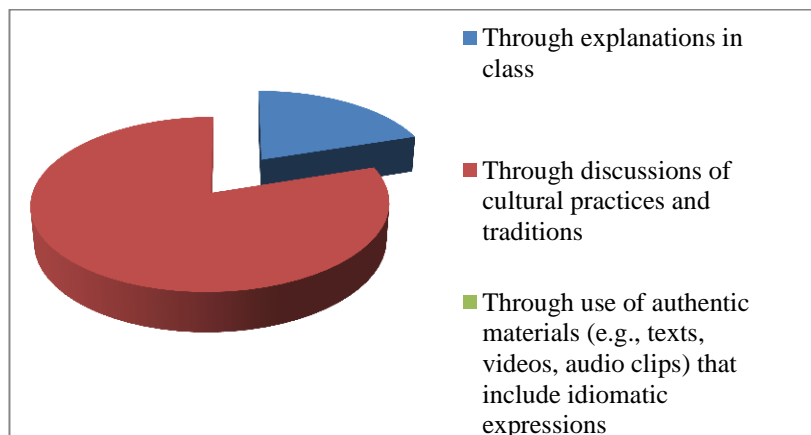


Figure 26: Students' understanding of the cultural context in which idiomatic expressions are used

As depicted from the data, four teachers from the sample (80 %) ensure their students to understand the cultural context in which idiomatic expressions are used through discussions of cultural practices and traditions, one teacher (20 %) helps them to understand the cultural context through explanations in class. However, the use of authentic materials (e.g. texts, videos, audio clips) that include idiomatic expressions; it is not applied by any teacher from the sample.

Question 07: Do you think it's important to teach culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to your students? Why or why not?

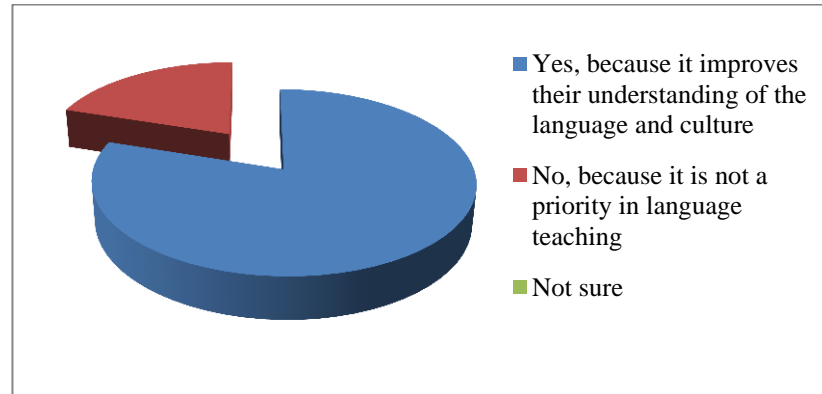


Figure 27: Teachers' view about the importance of teaching culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to their students

This question is designed to know teachers' perspective whether teaching culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to their students important or not; the results show that four teachers (80 %) said yes, because it improves students understanding of the language and culture, whereas one teacher (20 %) said no, it is not a priority in language teaching.

Question 08: How do you assess the effectiveness of your teaching methods for culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic?

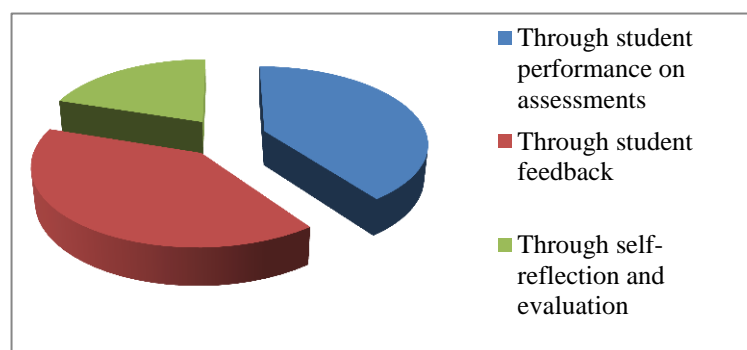


Figure 28: Teachers' assessment of the effectiveness of their teaching methods for culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic

As shown in the figure, two teachers (40 %) assess the effectiveness of their teaching methods for culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic through student performance and two teachers (40 %) as well evaluate the effectiveness through student feedback. Moreover, one remaining teacher sees that the effectiveness of his teaching methods is through self-reflection and evaluation. Therefore, we notice that student performance and feedback are the most used ones.

Question 09: Do you think it is more effective to teach culture-specific idioms through explicit instruction or through implicit exposure to students in authentic materials (e.g., movies, TV shows)?

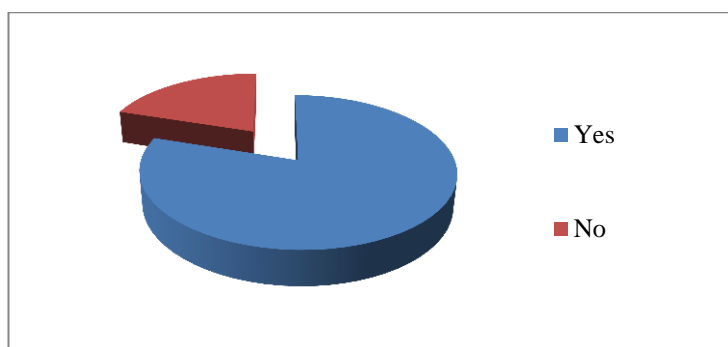


Figure 29: Teachers' view about the effectiveness of teaching culture-specific idioms through explicit instruction or through implicit exposure in authentic materials

In the figure above, the majority of teachers from the sample i.e, four teachers (80 %) believe that it is effective to teach culture-specific idioms through explicit instruction or through implicit exposure to students in authentic materials and only one teacher didn't think so.

Question 10: What resources do you use to help EFL learners understand the cultural context behind idiomatic expressions?

This question aims to provide some resources in which teachers employ them in order to aid their student's grasp the cultural context behind idiomatic expressions, the teachers was clearly answered as following:

- Using videos for fun , short stories
- Watching movies or listening to music
- Reading books and articles about different cultures and languages
- Introduce the idiom in a scene
- Use some books of literature and some cultural sources

Question 11: Have you ever noticed any cultural differences in the way EFL learners translate or use idiomatic expressions compared to native speakers?

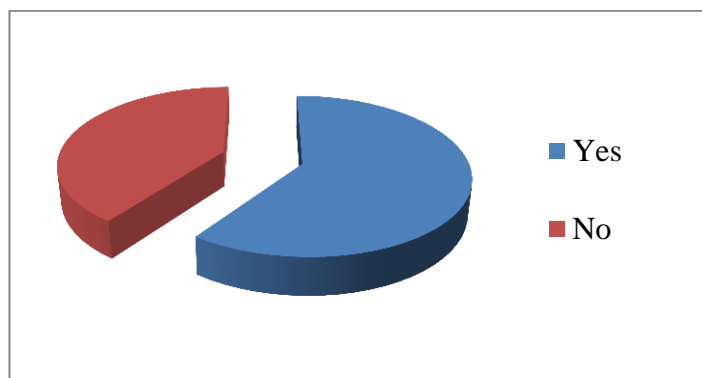


Figure 30: Teachers' notice about any cultural differences in the way EFL learners translate or use idiomatic expressions compared to native speakers

In the figure above, three teachers (60 %) said yes; they noticed cultural differences in the way EFL learners translate or use idiomatic expressions compared to native speakers and the remaining two teachers (40 %) didn't notice any cultural differences.

For those who answered yes; they described some examples as the following:

- In term of content and context
- There some idiomatic expressions that cannot be translated word by word from the source to the target
- Break a leg which means good luck

Question 12: What advice would you give to other teachers who are teaching the translation of culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to their students?

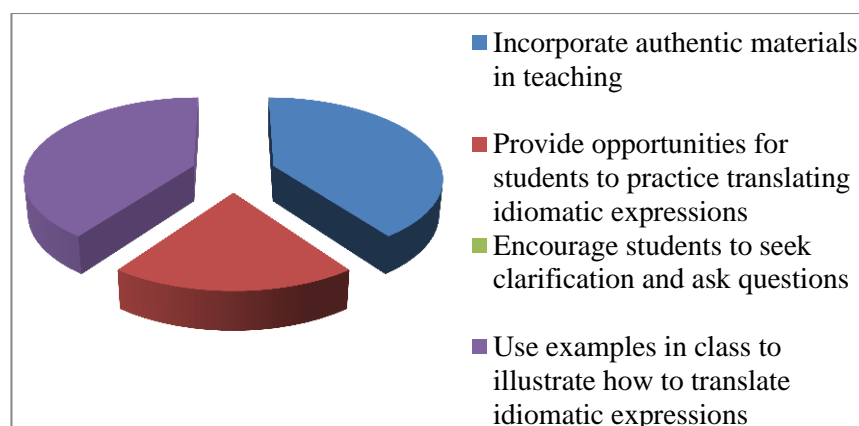


Figure 31: Teachers' advice to other teachers about how to teach the translation of culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to students

This question is designed to recommend other teachers about how to teach the translation of culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to students, the findings demonstrate that two teachers (40 %) from the sample said that it is better to incorporate authentic materials in teaching and two other teachers (40 %) claim that it should be better to use examples in class to illustrate how to translate idiomatic expressions whereas only one teacher (20 %) said that it has to provide opportunities for students to practice

translating idiomatic expressions. Encourage students to seek clarification and ask questions not recommended by any teacher from the sample.

4.2. Discussion of the findings

Through this survey presented to English language teachers who specialize in translation in particular, we were able to reach many important points that helped expand the field in general. With regard to our title of work and our basic concept, which is "idioms", the introduction of cultural expressions is particularly important because it stimulates the student's ability to learn and acquire concepts and terminology that he or she prepares for in that language. But it is not necessary; for example, the teacher does not teach cultural expressions in the form of a lesson or a programmed curriculum. However, the teacher teaches this type of activity in the form of cultural exercises or motivates the student by giving him a list of the most common and used cultural expressions or by providing more constructive observations and criticism in order to teach this type of cultural expression. Because some students face a lot of problems when translating idiomatic expressions, for example, when the expression has multiple possible translations, it means that there is more than one translation, or the expression cannot be used in Arabic, this leads to the student being distracted and not focusing on the proper meaning when he translates. Another problem is when the teacher gives students an expression that does not have a direct meaning. This can make students think a lot or choose the wrong translation for the expression. As a means of helping students and as a solution, some teachers try some methods, such as giving a list of the best known and most useful idiomatic expressions, encouraging them to use some extra resources such as dictionaries, and Use examples in class to illustrate how to translate idiomatic expressions. This can be an effective technique to solve many problems that learners face in terms of translating idiomatic expressions.

Conclusion

Finally, based on the answers of the teachers' and students' questionnaires, It appears that the difficulty in translating culture-specific idioms arises from the fact that the meanings of idioms should not be known from a literal translation; students need to read more about both the source and target cultures because they cannot find the equivalent in the target language if they have limited knowledge. As the quote says, "the more you read, the more you know". In addition, students are not familiar with such cultural idiomatic expressions due to cultural differences since each language has its own features. Therefore, practicing translation a lot with a grammatical and lexical base, raising students' awareness about cultural variation and background knowledge about the two languages, and determining and applying the appropriate strategy can build the best translators.

General conclusion

Through this research, we tried to shed light on translation as an important means of communication and its relation to culture since they are intimately connected in order to achieve equivalence between the source language and the target language. Moreover, the research conducted clearly revealed that culture-specific idioms are one of the most challenging issues in the field of translation, requiring deep study and sufficient knowledge because figuring out the correct meaning can be hard for students to recognize and translate to the target language. It may also provide language teachers with a better understanding of some of the strategies that language learners use to comprehend figurative language and find the appropriate equivalent.

Following the obtained results, third-year EFL learners have great cultural gaps and difficulties in deducing the appropriate meaning of idiomatic expressions, realizing the context, and inability to get the equivalent due to their unawareness of cultural aspects of the target language, mainly because of a lack of reading skills in both languages. Accordingly, there is a lack of deep awareness about translation strategies that might help them meaningfully and successfully translate these culture-specific idioms.

Therefore, students should be aware of cultural differences between the two languages, i.e., the source and target languages, in order to understand and use them fluently. They have to take into consideration the importance of learning idioms and employ a suitable strategy away from word-by-word translation to enhance their communication skills in a daily context. And, of course, teachers have to encourage their students to read to become more acquainted with the target language.

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Appendices

Students' Questionnaire

Level: Third year students

Dear learners

This questionnaire is intended to gather data needed for the accomplishment of a Master dissertation. It seeks to obtain your perceptions and attitudes concerning the difficulties you encountered in translating Culture-Specific Idioms, as well as the most essential strategies used in the translation process. Therefore you are kindly requested to respond the following questions by putting a tick for the appropriate answer, and make comments where necessary.

Section 01: Basic Concepts on Translation

1. According to you what is the appropriate terminology to the term translation?

A process of transmitting a passage from the source language to the target language

An approach helps learners to develop their communicative skills and facilitates the learning of new language by transmitting new concepts.

2. Among the fields suggested below, which one do you encounter a large percentage of problems with when you translate?

Grammar

Context

Syntax

3. During the translation process, which one of these you use in order to obtain the correct meaning?

Translate word by word

Translate the whole sentence

Pick up the idea mentioned, and then translate it

Use other means such as dictionary in order to ensure proper translation

4. Translation is the main effective engine for acquiring new language and bringing cultures closer, where translation and culture are two parts that are indivisible from each other.

Strongly agree

Agree

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

5 Translating cultural expressions and idiomatic ones that differ from one language to another require:

Having a perfect mastery of both source and target language

Trying to get acquainted with the culture of target language

Need to study translation for a long time

6. According to you, what is the main factor that can contribute to mastering translation and creativity in it from Arabic to English or vice versa?

.....

7. Do you think that sometimes you need to use some extra tools (sources as Google translator or online dictionary), in order to translate and solve some translation problems that you may

Yes No Maybe

Section 02: Culture-Specific Idioms

1. Do you think that understanding culture of a language may help you to translate culture-specific idiomatic expression properly?

Yes No Maybe

2. How much do you know about English culture- specific idioms?

Little Average High

3. How often do you encounter culture-specific idiomatic expressions in the languages you translate into Arabic?

Very often Often Rarely

Occasionally Never

4. How would you define a culture-specific idiomatic expression?

An expression that has a different meaning in different cultures

An expression that is specific to a particular culture and cannot be translated directly into another language

An expression that is only used in certain dialects of a language

An expression that is used in many cultures around the world

5. Which of the following is an example of a culture-specific idiomatic expression?

It's raining cats and dogs

Break a leg

To bite the bullet

A penny for your thoughts

6. How confident do you feel in your ability to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic?

Very confident

Somewhat confident

Not very confident

Not at all confident

8. What difficulties do you face when trying to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? (Select all that apply)

The expression has no direct translation

The expression has multiple possible translations

The expression is not commonly used in Arabic

The meaning of the expression is not clear

Others (please specify).....

9. Which type of meaning should be focused on when translating culture-specific idiomatic expression?

Semantic meaning

Pragmatic meaning

Both, semantic and pragmatic

10. Have you ever had a situation where you misunderstood or mistranslated a culture-specific idiomatic expression when translating it into Arabic?

Yes

No

I am not sure

If yes, can you describe the situation?

.....

11. Have you ever used a resource (e.g., dictionary, online resource, language consultant) to help you translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? If so, which one(s) have you found helpful? (Select all that apply)

Dictionary

Online resource

Language consultant

Others (please specify).....

12. Do you think it's important to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions accurately when working with texts in Arabic? Why or why not?

Yes, because it ensures the correct interpretation of the text

No, because the meaning can be inferred from the context

Not sure

13. What strategies do you employ when learn and translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? (Select all that apply)

Using an idiom of similar meaning and form

Translation by paraphrase

Translation by omission

Other (please specify).....

14. What advice would you give to someone who is struggling to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic?

Consult a dictionary or online resource

Ask a language consultant

Learn more about the culture in which the expression is used

Practice translating more expressions to improve your skills

Other (please specify).....

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers and professors.

The present questionnaire is an attempt to collect data in order to find accurate answers to study the main problems and obstacles that students face while translating culture-specific idiomatic expressions, as well as we try to find successful solutions to overcome these challenges. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions.

1. Have you ever taught the translation of culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to your students?

Yes, frequently

Yes, occasionally

No, never

2. How do you introduce culture-specific idiomatic expressions to your students?

As part of regular lessons

Through dedicated lessons on idiomatic expressions

As part of cultural activities or discussions

3. How do you assess your students' understanding of culture-specific idiomatic expressions?

Through written assignments

Through oral assessments

Through in-class activities

4. What difficulties do your students face when trying to translate culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? (Select all that apply)

The expression has no direct translation

The expression has multiple possible translations

The expression is not commonly used in Arabic

The meaning of the expression is not clear

5. How do you help your students overcome the difficulties they face when translating culture-specific idiomatic expressions into Arabic? (Select all that apply)

Provide them with a list of common idiomatic expressions

Use examples in class to illustrate how to translate idiomatic expressions

Encourage them to use dictionaries and online resources

Encourage them to ask questions and seek clarification

6. How do you ensure that your students understand the cultural context in which idiomatic expressions are used?

Through explanations in class

Through discussions of cultural practices and traditions

Through use of authentic materials (e.g., texts, videos, audio clips) that include idiomatic expressions

7. Do you think it's important to teach culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to your students? Why or why not?

Yes, because it improves their understanding of the language and culture

No, because it is not a priority in language teaching

Not sure

8. How do you assess the effectiveness of your teaching methods for culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic?

Through student performance on assessments

Through student feedback

Through self-reflection and evaluation

9. Do you think it is more effective to teach culture-specific idioms through explicit instruction or through implicit exposure to them in authentic materials (e.g., movies, TV shows)?

Yes

No

10. What resources do you use to help EFL learners understand the cultural context behind idiomatic expressions?

11. Have you ever noticed any cultural differences in the way EFL learners translate or use idiomatic expressions compared to native speakers?

Yes

No

If yes, could you describe some examples?

12. What advice would you give to other teachers who are teaching the translation of culture-specific idiomatic expressions in Arabic to their students?

Incorporate authentic materials in teaching

Provide opportunities for students to practice translating idiomatic expressions

Encourage students to seek clarification and ask questions

Use examples in class to illustrate how to translate idiomatic expressions

Others (please specify)

Résumé:

Cette étude examine les perspectives des apprenants d'anglais sur les difficultés rencontrées lors de la traduction d'idiomes spécifiques à la culture de l'anglais vers l'arabe et vice versa.

Dans Enquête sur trois facteurs fondamentaux qui font de la culture des expressions idiomatiques telles que le défi pour les étudiants de premier cycle au centre universitaire Abdelhafid Boussouf-Mila:

Absence d'équivalence dans la langue cible, Absence de contexte culturel, compréhension insuffisante des techniques de traduction. L'étude vise également à déterminer si les étudiants ont des difficultés à mettre en œuvre les procédures appropriées lors de la traduction d'idiomes spécifiques à la culture en arabe. Pour atteindre cet objectif, la méthode analytique descriptive prescriptive est utilisée et doit être suivie. Un questionnaire est utilisé comme instrument de collecte de données administré à cinq (5) professeurs de traduction et soixante-quatre étudiants (64) de troisième année à l'université de Mila. Les résultats obtenus montrent clairement que les étudiants ont du mal à traduire de telles expressions culturelles qui sont des idiomes dus à des différences culturelles puisque chaque langue avait ses propres expressions et significations qui sont difficiles à comprendre pour les non-natifs à moins qu'ils n'approfondissent la langue cible. De plus, les résultats démontrent que les étudiants emploient généralement différentes stratégies. Et tomber dans le problème de choisir la stratégie appropriée lors de la traduction d'idiomes spécifiques à une culture ainsi que la manière de l'appliquer avec succès ; utiliser un sens et une forme similaires est la stratégie la plus utilisée, suivie de la paraphrase et de l'omission. Dans le cadre de solutions. Il est recommandé aux étudiants de lire davantage sur les cultures afin de donner le bon sens à chaque expression ou phrase qu'ils apprennent.

En conséquence, les enseignants doivent fournir aux élèves des expressions idiomatiques culturelles communes pour améliorer leur compréhension de la langue et de la culture.

Mots-clés : difficultés de traduction, idiomes spécifiques à la culture, apprenants d'anglais tant que langue étrangère.

ملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة فمنظور متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية حول الصعوبات التي يواجهونها اثناء ترجمة التعبيرات الاصطلاحية الثقافية من العربية الى الانجليزية او عكس ذلك، كما يعتمد على التحقيق في ثلاثة نقاط رئيسيه التي لها علاقه بالثقافة بشكل كبير. عثرات بالنسبة للطلبة في المركز الجامعي بالصوف ميلة وهي:

عدم التكافؤ في اللغة الهدف واللغة الام، عدم وجود سياق ثقافي، فهم غير كافي لتقنيات الترجمة. كما تهدف الدراسة إلى معرفة ما اذا كان الطلاب يواجهون صعوبات في تنفيذ الاجراءات المناسبة عند ترجمة المصطلحات الثقافية الخاصة إلى اللغة العربية أو ما تعرف بالتعبيرات الاصطلاحية.

ولتحقيق هذا الهدف تم استخدام الأسلوب التحليلي والوصفي. كما تم استخدام استبيان كأداة لجمع المعلومات والبيانات، فقد تم تقديمه لخمسة أساتذة (5) مدرسين للترجمة. وأربعة وستين طالبا (64) سنة ثالثة ليساناس من نفس الجامعة جامعة ميلة. تظهر النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها بوضوح أن الطلاب يجدون صعوبة في ترجمة مثل هاته التعبيرات الثقافية ويرجع السبب إلى الاختلاف الثقافي بين اللغتين. لأن كل لغة لها تعابير ومعاني خاصة بها يصعب فهمها من غير المتحدثين الأصليين. إلا في حالة ما إذا تم التعمق في دراستها. علاوة على ذلك، تظهر النتائج أن الطلاب بشكل عام يستخدمون استراتيجيات مختلفة لأجل الترجمة كما أنهم أحيانا يقعون في مشكلة اختيار الاستراتيجية المناسبة بالإضافة الى طريقة تطبيقها. كما لوحظ أن استخدام نفس المعنى والشكل هو الاستراتيجية الأكثر استخداما تليها إعادة الصياغة التي تعتبر كجزء من الحلول. ومن بين النصائح والحلول الناجعة المقترحة هي التعمق في دراسة ثقافة اللغة الهدف بشكل اوسع من أجل إعطاء المعنى بصفة أدق لكل تعبير يتم تعلمه، وفقا على ذلك يتعين على المعلمين تزويد الطلاب بتعابير اصطلاحية ثقافية مشتركة لتحسين فهمهم للغة والثقافة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: صعوبات الترجمة، التعبيرات الاصطلاحية الثقافية، متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية.