

Translating Idioms from English to Arabic among IUG Students: Difficulties Encountered and Suggested Solutions

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Abstract: *This article aims to determine difficulties that IUG students encounter while translating idioms from English into Arabic, and suggest some strategies that can be adopted to overcome these difficulties. To achieve this aim, the researcher relies on Moon's (1998) classification of idioms into four types: transparent idioms, semi-transparent idioms, Semi-opaque idioms, and opaque idioms. Moreover, the study is limited to 20 MA students at IUG. To pick the needed results, the researcher examines the following two hypothesis: 1) IUG students face more difficulties in translating opaque and semi-opaque idioms than in translating transparent and semi-transparent idioms. 2) Students should adopt SL oriented strategies, such as literal translation in translating transparent and semi-transparent idioms, and TL oriented strategies, such as TL equivalence and explanation or paraphrasing in translating opaque and semi-opaque idioms. So, the researcher skims "dictionary of idioms and their origins" to pick 12 sentences including idioms. Every three sentences are related to one type of idioms. Then, the students are asked to take a test to translate these sentences. The results show that the dominant strategy used by males and females at the first section is literal strategy, and the outcomes are correct translation. So, literal translation is acceptable to be used to render transparent idioms. Regarding the second section, males and females use literal translation and TL equivalence. The majority of their translations are acceptable and correct. Moving to the third section, both males and females use explanation, TL equivalence, and literal translation. However, the most appropriate strategy is TL equivalence. Finally, idioms in the last section hold cultural references, so males and females encounter difficulties to render them. Actually, idioms related to opaque idioms category are best translated by TL equivalence. Literal translation gives wrong renditions.*

Keywords: Transparent idioms, semi-transparent idioms, semi-opaque idioms, and opaque idioms

1. Introduction

During 1960s and 70s, linguistic theory was dominating the translation movement. This theory focuses mainly on maintaining only the linguistic features of the source text. Due to its limitation in producing a comprehensible and acceptable translation, some theorists emphasized the role of cultural aspects of the text in producing an understandable translation. One of the most obvious limitations of linguistic theory is located in the area of translating idioms which can be defined as "any group of words whose meaning cannot be deduced from the meaning of the individual words" (Healey, 1968, p.71). Actually, the study of idiom translation emerged during 1990s when it has been recognized as a clear-cut evidence on the insufficiency of the linguistic approach in translation. To elaborate, following linguistic approach, only and exclusively, when translating "a piece of cake" literally does not make any sense for an Arab reader. Relaying to his/her culture, s/he uses شربة مياه to convey the intended meaning.

The need for the study:

Most of the researchers who investigated the difficulties encountered IUG students in translation, such as Badawi (2008), and El-Haj Ahmed (2009) focused on Adverbial error and lexical, cultural, and grammatical problems respectively. No one conducts a research to identify the difficulties that IUG students face while translating English idioms into Arabic, or suggest some techniques to be adopted to overcome such difficulties.

The purpose of the study:

This study aims at identifying the difficulties that IUG students encounter while translating idioms from English

into Arabic, and suggesting some strategies that can be adopted to overcome these difficulties.

Research hypothesis:

- 1) IUG students face more difficulties in translating opaque and semi-opaque idioms than in translating transparent and semi-transparent idioms.
- 2) Students should adopt SL oriented strategies, such as literal translation in translating transparent and semi-transparent idioms, and TL oriented strategies, such as TL equivalence and explanation or paraphrasing in translating opaque and semi-opaque idioms.

Limitation

This study is limited to a sample of 20 students (10 male and 10 female), studying MA in translation and applied linguistics at IUG. The study is limited to translating English idioms into Arabic only. Regarding the scope of the study, it covers the four types of idioms, classified by Moon (1998) as follows:

- 1) Transparent idioms: the meaning of the idiom is closely related to the literal meaning of its constituents.
- 2) Semi-transparent idioms: idioms in this type have metaphorical meaning and the meaning of its constituents plays a minor role in comprehending the overall meaning of the idiom.
- 3) Semi-opaque idioms: the meaning of the idiom is derived partially from the literal meaning of its constituents and partially with reference to idiomaticity.
- 4) Opaque idioms: idioms in this type have cultural references.

2. Literature Review

This part consists of two sections related to the topic under investigation.

1) Difficulties in translating the idiom from the ST into the TT.

After analyzing the data of their studies which tackled translating idioms, some researchers reach Baker's classification. For instance, Al-Shawi and Mahadi (2012) identify two areas of problems: 1) The translator's abilities to identify and interpret the idioms. 2) Difficulties in specifying the aspect from various aspects of meaning which the idiom conveys in the TL. Moreover, Bekkai (2010) reaches the same result, identifying two main difficulties: 1) decoding the cultural message of the idiom which means to analyze and understand the cultural message. 2) Encoding the cultural message to produce an equivalent one in the TT. So it is crystal clear that both empirical studies agree totally with Baker's classification.

Turning back to Baker's second difficulty which deals with translating the idiom, she introduces four sub difficulties as follows:

- Idioms may be culturally specific, relating to a particular culture. They are not necessarily to be untranslatable out of the items which the idiom includes rather is it the meaning conveyed and the association of the specific context. For example, religious terms, such as Merry Christmas is untranslatable out to the its usage in the religious context rather than due to the items includes
- Idioms have equivalent ones in the TC, but the context of usage is different. For instance, the English idiom "to sing a different tune" means to say or do something which contradicts with what is said or done. Its counterpart in Chinese is "chang-dui-tai-xi" which is used in political situations to express complementary rather than contradictory views.
- The idiom can be understood in its literal and idiomatic meanings at the same time. In other words, the target cultural idiom should correspond the source cultural one in both the form and the meaning.
- Convention of the idiom usage in written discourse and context may differ in the SL and the TL. Arabic passages tend to be formal, avoiding the usage of idioms, but English ones are widely used in ads and promotions.

Furthermore, Davies (2004, cited in Akbari 2013) summarizes the difficulties that the translators face throughout their work in translating idioms as follows:

- Recognition and understanding of the idiom.
- Culturally specific, having no equivalent in the TC.
- The idiom has a similar counterpart in TC, but the context in which the idiom is used is different.
- The idiom is used literally and idiomatically at the same time in the SC.
- Differences in conventions between the SC and the TC.

If a comparison is held between Baker's beliefs and Davies's views, the result will be approximately the same since the first difficulty stated by Davies corresponds the Baker's one

regarding the interpretation of the idiom. Also, difficulties number 2, 3, 4, and 5 in Davies's statements are similar to Baker's four difficulties which deal with the translation process.

To give an empirical example about Baker's first difficulty in translating idioms and Davies's second one, Bekkai (2010) discovers that students face difficulties in translating Islamic concepts based proverbial expressions because some idioms relate to particular religious concepts which reflect a specific connotation in a particular culture, such as *نعم صومعة بيته*. And also, they face difficulties in translating Heroes bound idioms which are associated with some heroes in a particular culture. In this type of idioms, it is difficult to give an appropriate translation without having an idea about the leader included in the idiom, such as the English idiom "Hobson's choice". Another study concludes that translators find a difficulty in translating Islamic religious idioms which are used in different social occasions, such as marriage (*بارك (عظم الله)*) and condolence (*الله لكما وبارك عليكما وجمع بينكم على خير أجرکم*) because they do not exist in English language, Khammyseh (2015).

Also, as an example of empirical study which reflects Baker's third difficulty and Davies's fourth one is that students face a real difficulty in translating idioms, such as break the ice because the first part of the idiom (break) can be understood literally from its constituent word, while the second part (ice) has an idiomatic sense, Meryem (2010).

Finally, different empirical studies reveal a variety of difficulties faced the students while translating idioms between English and Arabic. For example, Bekkai (2010) conducts a study in which she asks the participants about the main difficulties they face. One of the participants says that if he is lucky and hardly identifies the cultural Arabic connotation of the idiom, he will be unable to produce the natural English equivalent idiom. He thinks that this is due to his unawareness of the cultural differences between the two languages. Also, the researcher states that sometimes students fail to translate some idioms since they are not aware of the influence of ecological conditions, such as rainy day has a negative connotation in English since rain sometimes comes side by side with hurricanes, destroying villages and killing people. On the other hand, it has a positive connotation in Arabic and is usually associated with fortune and welfare. Moreover, Suleiman (2010) summarizes all the difficulties that face the participants in his study as follows: 1) the unfamiliarity of the expression. 2) failing in finding the equivalent expression in ordinary dictionaries. 3) lack of knowledge in legal terms. 4) ambiguity of religious terms. 5) uncertainty of translation techniques used.

2) Strategies used to overcome these difficulties

Beginning with Baker's suggestions (1992), she offers a variety of strategies as follows:

- Using a TL idiom which has a similar meaning and contains similar lexical items and forms and conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the SL. For

example, translating the English idiom "turned on its head" into انقلب رأساً على عقب

- b) Using a TL idiom with similar meaning, but with different lexical items. For example, translating the English idiom "when pigs fly!" with the following Arabic one: لمن ينور المشمش
- c) Paraphrasing: the most common strategy used in translating idioms when it seems impossible to use an idiomatic language due to stylistic and structural factors.
- d) Omission: the whole idiom can be omitted if the overall meaning of the text can be conveyed without translating it. Also, translators rely on this strategy when the idiom is difficult to be paraphrased.

Moreover, to deal with translating idioms as an important issue, (Abu-Ssaydeh, 2006 cited in Balfaqeeh 2009) suggests five strategies:

- a) Translate an idiom with its identical equivalent in the TL.
- b) Translate an idiom with its non-identical equivalent which conveys the same meaning.
- c) Paraphrasing the idiom
- d) Translate the idiom literally
- e) Delete the idiom (8, 9)

Comparing the two strategies proposed by Balfaqeeh and Baker, the researcher thinks that translating the idiom with its identical equivalent is the same strategy of translating the idiom with another one which has the same meaning and lexical items in the TL. Also, the idea is the same in non-identical equivalent which has the same meaning and replacing the idiom with another similar one in meaning but different in lexical items. And deletion corresponds to omission. From this comparison, the difficult strategies proposed by both of them are similar.

Moreover, Khalil (2008) identifies three strategies in her study as follows:

- a) Total equivalence (in the form and meaning). This strategy corresponds to Baker's first one.
- b) Partial equivalence (similar in meaning not in the form). This also is similar to Baker's second strategy.
- c) Paraphrasing.

Regarding the empirical studies, Meryram (2010) conducted a study in which he organizes a test to see the methods adapted by the students while translating. The results reflect the limited use of a variety of techniques. The participants make use of literal translation, paraphrasing, and explanation, ignoring the usage of omission, illustration, superordinate, cultural substitution, or loan words, so that they come up with weak translations. The researcher recommends that the teachers should encourage the students to conduct research papers which tackle issues of idioms and culture in general. Also, they should put more focus on the cultural differences while teaching the students. Another study which targets 25 third year students in Mentouri university shows that 40% of the participants use literal translation, producing a non-understandable TT since the meaning of the idiom included in the task cannot be

predicted from the meanings of their constituents. Also 30% of participants try to translate the idiom throughout paraphrasing technique, but 23% of them failed to produce correct translations because they do not have background knowledge about the origins of the idioms, and the cultural context in which it is used. For example, none of the participants translate the following idiom correctly: Hobson's choice because they do not know the origin of this idiom in which talks about a myth. Hobson is a person who gives his customers no choice to which house they can buy. This origin helps giving a correct translation, such as . إن غام . Finally, the researcher recommends the students to know the origin of the idiom. After that, they can adapt the suitable strategy in translation. Finally, (Khammyseh, 2015) suggests two strategies to be adapted while translating Islamic based idioms: 1) transcription with little illustration in which the translator writes the expression with Arabic alphabets, and then the translator should provide some explanations. 2) Paraphrasing.

3. Methodology

Participants

The study will include 20 participants who are studying MA at IUG, majoring in applied linguistics and translation (half males and half females). Those participants will be seated separately because of the culturally-sanctioned segregation system followed in IUG. They will be asked to pass a four part translation test during 15 minutes maximum. Regarding the sampling, the researcher will follow cluster random sampling in which he will select two classes randomly (one male class and one female class). Following this approach, the researcher will get reliable results since the students who enroll in the selected class may not enroll in other classes. Moreover, the researcher sees that it is difficult to use simple random sampling because he will face difficulty in gathering the selected students. Some of them may be absent.

Materials

The researcher scans a book entitled "*dictionary of idioms and their origins*" to choose 12 idioms to include them in his test. This book is chosen since it is considered one of the best sources that deal with idioms and their origins. After that, The researcher conducts a test, consisting of two parts. The first part aims at collecting bio-data. On the other hand, the second part contains four sections. Every section includes three sentences in which they contain three idioms, belonging to a specific type as classified by Moon (1998).

Research design

This research has a qualitative nature, aiming mainly at testing the two hypothesis that previously mentioned. The researcher will adopt an emic perspective in which he will analyze his test's results according to the meanings that people attach to the idioms included in the test. Moreover, the research will be full of description and explanation of the results in terms of the difficulties encountered by the students, the reasons behind these difficulties, the strategies they use, and comparing the difficulties faced and the

strategies used with other research which have dealt with the same topic.

Procedures

After scanning the book and choosing 12 idioms and putting them in sentences, the researcher organizes the test without clarifying the idioms' types. He sends a copy for his instructor who advises the researcher to make some clarifications and to correct some words. The instructor's comments are taken into consideration. Moreover, to ensure the credibility of the test, the researcher makes a pilot test, including 15 senior students. After correcting their sheets, the researcher identifies some weak points in the test. For example, some participants give the English explanation of the idiom instead of the Arabic translation. The researcher makes some clarifications to avoid miscarrying out the test. He clarifies that he wants the Arabic translation of the idiom. Also, he classifies the four types of idioms, giving the definition of every type. Moreover, he gathers the idioms which belong to the same type together. Finally, test is administered in two Master classrooms (one for males and another for females) at IUG during 15 minutes maximum.

Analysis of the data

The researcher will correct the items according to these criteria:

- a) The correct answer is the one which is rendered clearly and understandably.
- b) The acceptable answer is the one which is rendered ambiguously and not clearly, but still the meaning is conveyed.
- c) The wrong answer is the one which is rendered wrongly.
- d) No answer.

After that, the researcher will identify the difficulties based on the results. Which items that are rendered wrongly, why, and to which type of idioms they belong? In correct and acceptable answers, the researcher will identify the strategies that students follow in rendering the idioms of each type. Finally, he will put common categories, and relate every difficulty, and strategy to one category.

4. Results

4.1 The results of the male students

1) Transparent idioms:

Table 1.1

Transparent idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong/no answer	
	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
1)	10	100%	0	0	0	0
Strategy used	Literal	-	-	-	-	-
2)	10	100%	0	0	0	0
Strategy used	Literal	-	-	-	-	-
3)	9	90%	0	0%	1	10
Strategy used	Literal	-	-	-	Wrong TL equivalence	-

As shown in table 1.1, all of the male students render the first and the second sentences correctly, and all most of them render the third one correctly with 90% and give acceptable translation with 10%. Moreover, in the three sentences, the dominant strategy used is literal translation and the outcome is a correct translation. The exception is the use of TL equivalence strategy, but the outcome is a wrong translation. Its answer does not convey the intended meaning.

2) Semi-transparent idioms:

Table 1.2

Semi-transparent idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong/no answer	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1)	3	30%	6	60%	1	10%
Strategy used		TL equivalence		Literal		
2)	9	90%	1	10%	0	0
Strategy used		TL equivalence		Literal	-	-
3)	5	50%	5	50%	0	0
Strategy used	-	TL equivalence	-	Literal	-	-

Table 1.2 reflects the performance of male students in the second section. Actually, most of the students render the first sentence acceptably with 60% throughout the usage of literal translation. Only 30% of the students give correct translation in which they give a clear identical TL equivalence. The rest of the students give wrong translations. Moving to the second sentence, all most of the students render the sentence correctly and acceptably, using TL equivalence and literal translation strategies with 90% and 10% respectively. Finally, the situation is the same in the third sentence in which half of the students give correct translation by giving a TL equivalence, and the second half uses literal translation strategy to produce an acceptable translation.

3) Semi-opaque idioms

Table 1.3

Semi-opaque idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong/no answer	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1)	7	70%	1	10%	2	20%
Strategy used		Explanation	-	Explanation		Literal
2)	0	0	3	30%	7	70%
Strategy used	-	-	-	Explanation+ TL equivalence	-	Literal
3)	1	10%	5	50%	4	40%
Strategy used	-	explanation	-	Acceptable TL equivalence	-	Wrong explanation

As shown in table 1.3, most of the students give a correct translation for the first sentence with 70% and acceptable translation with 10% throughout using explanation strategy, whereas only 20% of the males translate it wrongly by literal translation strategy. Regarding the second sentence, none of males give a correct translation; only 20% of students give an acceptable translation by using explanation and TL equivalence which convey a similar intended meaning. Actually, the majority of them gives a wrong translation out of literal translation strategy. Approximately, the same situation is found in the third sentence. only 10% of them

give a correct answer by explaining the idiom while 90% give wrong or no answer when they explain the idiom wrongly.

4) Opaque idioms

Table 1.4

Opaque idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong or no answer	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1)	6	60%	2	20%	2	20%
Strategy used	Explanation+ TL equivalence		-	explanation	No answer	-
2)	7	70%	0	0	3	30%
Strategy used	TL equivalence+ explanation		-	-	No answer +	Wrong explanation
3)	1	10%	2	20%	7	70%
Strategy used	TL equivalence		-	explanation	-	Wrong Explanation

Table 1.4 reflects the results of male students in translating opaque idioms. The majority of them renders the sentence correctly with 60% and acceptably with 20% by explaining the idiom or giving an equivalent one in the TL which conveys a similar meaning. On the other hand, only 20% give a wrong translation or no answer. Regarding the second sentence, half of the students gives a correct translation by

explaining the meaning or giving a similar TL equivalent idiom. And 20% give an acceptable translation by explaining the meaning. The situation is completely different in the third sentence in which 10% only gives correct translation. Only 20% gives an acceptable one by producing TL equivalence strategy, while 70% renders it wrongly or gives no translation.

4.2 Results of the female students

1) Transparent idioms

Table 2.1

Transparent idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong or no answer	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1)	10	100%	0	0	0	0
Strategy used	Literal		-	-	-	-
2)	10	100%	0	0	0	0
Strategy used	Literal		-	-	-	-
3)	10	100%	0	0	0	0
Strategy used	Literal		-	-	-	-

As shown in table 2.1, all of the female students render the three sentences correctly. All of them give a correct translation by using literal translation strategy.

2) Semi-transparent idioms

Table 2.2

Semi-transparent idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong or no answer	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1)	0	0	10	100%	0	0
Strategy used	-		Acceptable TL equivalence + literal		-	
2)	10	100%	0	0	0	0
Strategy used	TL equivalence+ Literal translation		-		-	
3)	8	80%	2	20%	0	0
Strategy used	TL equivalence		Literal		-	

Table 2.2 reflects the female competence in the second section, all of the them give an acceptable translation for the first sentence when they follow literal translation strategy or use TL equivalence which conveys a similar meaning. Also, they give approximately the same results in the second two sentences throughout using the same two strategies. Female

students render the second sentence correctly with 90% and 10% acceptably. Similarly the third sentence, 80% gives a correct translation and 20% gives an acceptable translation. What is common in the three sentences is the absence of wrong or no answer.

3) Semi-opaque idioms:

Table 2.3

Semi-opaque idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong or no answer	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1)	7	70%	2	20%	1	10%
Strategy used	Explanation	-	explanation	-	No answer	-
2)	30	30%	50	50%	2	20%
Strategy used	TL equivalence	-	Explanation	-	No answer	-
3)	5	5%	4	4%	1	10%
Strategy used	explanation	-	Acceptable TL equivalence	-	Wrong explanation	-

As shown in table 2.3, most of the females render the first sentence correctly with 70% and acceptably with 20%, following explanation strategy, whereas only 10% gives wrong translation or no answer. Moving to the second sentence, the results shows that 20% of the female students gives a correct translation and 60% gives an acceptable one by giving a literal translation or TL equivalent idiom. On the

other hand, only 20% gives no answer. In the last sentence, most of the female students give correct translation or an acceptable one with 50% and 40% respectively by using explanation or TL equivalence while only 10% gives a wrong or no answer.

4) Opaque idioms

Table 2.4

Opaque idioms	Correct		Acceptable		Wrong/no answer	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1)	6	60%	0	0	4	40%
Strategy used	TL equivalence	-	-	-	Wrong TL equivalence+	Wrong explanation
2)	7	70%	0	0	3	30%
Strategy used	explanation	-	-	-	Wrong explanation	-
4)	2	20%	2	20%	6	60%
Strategy used	TL equivalence	-	-	explanation	Wrong explanation	-

As shown the table 2.4, 60% of the female students render the first sentence correctly by using TL equivalence, while 40% of them gives wrong translation. In the second sentence, 70% gives a correct translation by explaining the idiom while 30% only renders the translation wrongly. The situation is completely different in the third sentence in which only 20% gives correct translation by producing TL equivalent idiom and 20% renders the sentence correctly by explaining the idioms while the rest render it wrongly.

5. Discussion

First of all, there is not big difference between the performance of male and female students in translating transparent idioms. all of them render the three sentences correctly except one male who answers the third one wrongly. All of the correct answers are resulted from the usage of literal translation strategy. SO, this is crystal clear that they do not face any problem in translating transparent idioms because their meanings can be drawn from the literal meaning of their constituents.

Similarly, there is no huge gap between the performance of male and female students. The only difference occurs in the first sentence in which 10% of males render it wrongly, but the females are not. However, both of them translate the second and third sentences correctly or acceptably. Moreover, in the first sentence, 30% of males give different TL equivalent, such as *يزيل الصعاب و يخفف التوتر*, but most of them and all of females use literal translation in which the meaning is still convey, but not clearly, such as *يكسر حالة ينهي* only one male translates it wrongly as *ينهي الجمود, كسر الحاجز*. This is due to his misunderstanding of the meaning of the idiom. In the second sentence, the same situation

exists in which all of them give correct translation, such as *سأحافظ على عهدي, سأفي بعهدي*. some of them give literal translation which is acceptable as *سأحافظ على كلمتي وأنا عند* finally, they give correct translation to the third sentence as *وجهها لوجه*, but some of them give literal translation as *عين بعين*. Actually, they are influenced by Ali Ibn Aby Talib's (Muslim leader) famous saying: *العين بالعين* *والسن بالسن والبادي أظلم*. Finally, it is clear that all of them do not face any considerable problems when translating semi-transparent idioms because the meaning of the idiom in this type is clear and can be easily understood from its constituents.

From the two paragraphs above, students, either male or female, do not face huge difficulties in translating transparent and semi-transparent idioms since their meanings can be drawn from their constituents. This result agrees with Sajid Juma'a's (2014) results. Moreover, the strategies used in translating these two idioms are literal or TL equivalence in which they are similar to Baker's (1995) first and second strategies and Abu-Ssaydeh's first and second strategies (2006): Translating an idiom with its identical equivalent in the TL (literal translation), and Translating an idiom with its non-identical equivalent which conveys the same meaning (TL equivalence). Finally, the first half of the second hypothesis in which the students should adopt pro SL strategy in translating the first two types is confirmed.

Reaching the third type, unlike the first sentence, there is a big difference in the performance of male and female students in the second and third sentences. To begin with the first sentence, all students, male and female, gives correct and acceptable translation throughout explanation

(paraphrasing). They give different translations, such as أن لم تكن على دراية في خبايا وظيفتك, أسرار مهنتك, أدق تفاصيل عملك. Also, they give other acceptable translations, especially females, such as. the difficulty in rendering this idiom is that it has no identical equivalent in Arabic. moving to the second sentence, 80% of females render the sentence correctly or acceptably throughout giving acceptable explanation, such as التخلص من المسؤولية, تكبد شخص بـ يرمي الكرة في ملعب and TL equivalence which is صديقه. The difficulty emerges out of misunderstanding the idiom. For example, one of the females translates it wrongly as regarding males, they use the same strategies to translate the sentence, giving similar answers. Furthermore, the difficulty is out of unfamiliarity of the idiom itself since three students do not give any answer. The types of difficulties here are similar to those that were summarized by Suleiman (2010). Moreover, the strategies used are similar to Baker's (1995), Abu-Ssaydeh's (2006), and Khalil (2008). Reaching the third sentence, the females render the sentence correctly or acceptably by using paraphrasing, such as قضية أخرى, أمر strategy or giving TL equivalence with a similar meaning, such as شيء من قبيل آخر. Also, some students face difficulty in understanding the meaning since some of them render it wrongly by saying فهذا خيار آخر. This difficulty leads to another one which is giving correct and clear translation. These two difficulties are similar to those which are reached by Baker (1995), Al-Shawi and Mahadi (2012), and Bekkai (2010). Regarding males, they use the same strategies and face the same difficulties. One of the student's answer is عذر actually, this answer has nothing to do with correct or acceptable meanings.

Finally, there is no considerable difference between males and females in translating opaque idioms. Firstly, both of them, male and female, use TL equivalence, such as ما لا تكشف السر, لا تفتش and explanation, such as تطوطش وتفصحنا السر to give correct or acceptable translations. The situation is similar in the second sentence in which they use similar strategies to render the sentence correctly or acceptably. They use TL equivalence, such as أعطاك عمره, قضى نحبه or giving a one word explanation which is مات. one of the females misunderstands the idiom in which she interprets it as. لقد نجى من سكتة قلبية. this difficulty is similar to the one which mentioned in the paragraph above. Finally, the last sentence, the performance of females is slightly better than males. Two females give correct translation throughout giving an identical TL equivalence as تحرق جميع أوراقها and other two give an acceptable translation by explaining the meaning as لا تريد أن تخسر كل ما تملك. Moving to males, they give similar answers, but some of them give an answer which is completely unrelated to the meaning, such as تدمر حياتها, تحفظ كرامتها. This is due to the unfamiliarity of the expression, and difficulty in finding an equivalent idiom.

Finally, unlike transparent and semi-transparent idioms, it is clear that students, male and female, face some difficulties in translating semi-opaque and opaque idioms. so, the first hypothesis is achieved. Moreover, as seen in their answers, they use pro SL strategies to translate the first two types and pro TL strategies to translate the second type. So, the second hypothesis is also achieved.

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