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## **Translating English Eye Idioms into Arabic\***

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### **Abstract**

Translating eye idioms is a very difficult task. This is because of its cultural and linguistic features which are unique and cannot be predicted from the individual words.

This study focuses on the characteristics of eye expressions in English, the process of interpreting eye idioms as well as the methods and approaches to translate these expressions perfectly.

The result of the study is based on data test (questionnaire) including ten of prominent types of eyes expressions. The subjects of the research are four university teachers who are well-qualified in English and having the experience to translate such type of idiom.

Finally, the study finds out that the preferable strategy for translating such figures of speech is the idiomatic method, as it takes into consideration the aesthetic values of the source language.

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## ترجمة مصطلحات العيون في اللغة الانكليزية إلى العربية\*

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### المستخلص

تعدّ ترجمة مصطلحات العيون مهمة شائكة وصعبة لاحتوائها على ميزات لغوية وثقافية مميزة والتي لا يمكن استيعابها من خلال معاني كلمات هذه المصطلحات، إذ تركز الدراسة على خصائص تعابير العيون في اللغة الانكليزية و على عملية تفسير هكذا أنواع من التعابير فضلاً عن تركيز الدراسة على الطرائق المتبعة لترجمة هذه التعابير بصورة مثلى.

تعتمد نتائج الدراسة على مجموعة بيانات (استبيان) تضمن عشرة أنواع من التعابير الشائعة للعيون في اللغة الانكليزية. وكانت عينة الدراسة تتضمن تراجم أربعة أساتذة جامعيين ممن يمتلكون خبرة في اللغة الانكليزية ولديهم الدراية والقدرة على ترجمة مثل هذه الأنواع من المصطلحات.

وفي النهاية وجدت الدراسة أن الطريقة المفضلة والمثلى لترجمة هذه الأنواع من المجازات اللغوية هو اتباع طريقة ترجمة مصطلحات العيون الانكليزية بمصطلحات عيون عربية لأن هذه الطريقة تأخذ بالحسبان القيم الجمالية للغة الأصلية.

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

In all languages there are a great number of idioms - unique, language-fixed expressions whose meaning cannot be deducted from the individual words of the phrase. Since each language has its own way of expressing certain things, idiomatic expressions are always language- and culture-specific. An expression in one language may not exist in some other language, or the language may have a very different expression to convey the same meaning. This is why the translation of idioms is problematic.

Furthermore, due to the language-specific nature of idioms, their translation can be somewhat challenging at times. Idioms must be well recognized, understood and analyzed.

### **1.2. The Objective of the Study**

The objective of this research is to cover the theoretical and practical aspects of Eyes expressions. The objectives of the research are:

1. To analyze English eyes expressions and indicate the specific problems in their translations.
2. To investigate and assess the preferable methods of translating this type of idiomatic expression, taking into consideration the transference of the aesthetic and rhetorical values.
3. To draw a clear distinction between the English eyes idioms and Arabic ones.

### **1.3. Data Collection and Procedures**

A questionable test has been applied to the staff members in the Department of English/ Al-Hadbaa University College, due to their experience in English. At the same time, they have some good experience in Arabic idioms, since it is their native language. In this case, the role of cultural differences will be

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clear and their ability to guess and be familiar with "Eye idioms" can be tested. Thus, teachers are exposed to collected data of ten idiomatic eyes expressions. Afterword, an enclitic model of translation (three strategies for translating idioms; idiomatically, non-idiomatically and literally) has been applied to analyze the feedbacks of the chosen teachers.

#### **1.4. The significance of the study**

It is hoped that this study will reflect important insights on the part of the teachers and translators. The study is significant for translating idiomatic expressions in general and Eyes expressions in particular.

### **2. Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.1. Eye Expressions as an Idiom.**

In order to have "a bird's eye view" of English eyes expressions from variant perspective, we should take in our consideration the most prominent aspects of these expressions i.e. idiomatically, figuratively and culturally.

According to McCarthy and O'Dell (2002: 6): "Idioms can be defined as expressions which have a meaning that is not obvious from the individual words". while, Cacciari and Tabossi (1988: 668) define idioms as "strings of words whose semantic interpretation cannot be derived compositionally from the interpretation of their parts".

Providing the example "a gleam in your eye", having the meaning "something that is thought about or planned but not yet started", it is suggested that eyes idioms are usually impossible to predict their meanings based merely on the knowledge of the separate words. More likely they are understood when being placed in context.

Similarly, Swan (2005: 12) claims some idioms are difficult to comprehend as their meaning differs from the meaning of the individual words. These are unique to one language implying the complications connected with a word-for-word translation.

Nevertheless, there are some languages using the same or very similar idioms of eyes e.g. (an eye for an eye - العين بالعين). Another clarification presents an idiom as an expression or a phrase being used in a language that is strange to itself either grammatically or in having a meaning that cannot be understood directly from the conjoined meanings of its elements (O'Dell, 2002: 11). In other words, an idiom is a group of words in which the meaning of this group is different from what would be expected.

## **2.2. Literal Meaning Vs. Figurative Meaning**

To comprehend the concept of idioms, it is important to discuss the meanings of the following terms – literal vs. figurative language. Literal language corresponds to the first original meaning performed by the words, whereas figurative language involves expressions the meaning of which has been changed and has to be interpreted differently, having a second, constant meaning.

In the case of eyes idioms, it is necessary to distinguish between a literal and a figurative meaning since the right meaning of idioms is derived from the latter and can be understood only through common use, while the literal interpretation of the expression itself does not convey its meaning as a figurative usage. Therefore, idioms are widely assumed to be figures of speech (see Wikipedia, 2009).

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Glucksberg (2001:68) notes that the non-logical nature of idioms is what sets them apart from single words because of the "absence" of the relations between their literal meanings and their idiomatic meanings. A good example is "*make sheep's eyes at somebody*", in which he stresses that syntactic and semantic analysis of this item would never produce the meaning of (to look at someone in a way that shows that you love them or are attracted to them). The non-literal meaning of *make sheep's eyes at somebody* is what makes it unique, because when the meaning of individual words of the idiom are taken separately, we end up with an odd meaning and lose the idiomatic and intended meaning of the combination of words that creates the idiom.

In sum, we agree with Saeed (2003: 21) who explains an idiom as words collocated together as a fossilized and fixed expression over time. This expression contains words normally used in a group, alters the definition of the separate words and becomes to be known as one inseparable unit implying a special idiomatic meaning. Thus, a new idiom is developed.

### **2.3. Culture and Eye Idioms**

An idiom is generally a colloquial metaphor. It is a term that requires some foundational knowledge, information, or experience, to use only within a culture where the insider parties must have common reference. Idioms are not considered a part of the language, but rather a part of the culture. As cultures are typically localized, idioms are often not useful outside of their local physical context. Thus, the insiders of a community cannot decode idioms that are related to different linguistic community.. e.g. (a bird's eye = نظرة شاملة). But in spite of the gap that exists between cultures, some idioms can be more universally used

than others, and can be easily translated (an eye for an eye = العين بالعين) (Wikipedia, 2009: idioms).

Moreover, there is a close association with culture since idiomatic expressions are typically metaphors based on the pragmatic context. Accordingly, idioms can be considered to be part of the culture rather than the language (Ibid) since “in many ways idioms reflect the history and way of life of the people who have spoken English over the ages” (Oxford idioms dictionary, 2006).

In sum, some linguists claim that idioms that are concerned with the eyes idioms can be understood more easily because human beings, regardless of their cultures, are familiar with the functions of their eyes (see Abbas & Younis, 2009: 827).

#### **2.4. Types of Idiomatic Expressions of Eye**

Idioms are classified differently by different linguists: each one sees idioms from his point of view. They may add new types of idioms in terms of different considerations. Some linguists try to classify idioms in terms of colour, number, animals, etc. In the current paper the concentration is on eye idioms and their significance in language.

In the case of the classification of idioms, Gates (1972: 72) notes that there are different types of idioms and they are classified according to their unique feature, based on their grammatical form, constituent words or speech sounds. While Spears (1991: 51) lists other different types. However, the prominent types of eyes idiomatic expressions could be summarized as:

### **1. Semantic Idioms**

Gates (1972: 72) defines this type as "a fixed expression with peculiarity of meaning which cannot be understood by just knowing the meaning of its individual parts or the function of its grammatical construction.

e.g. (*hit the bull's-eye*) .... to achieve the goal perfectly. *Your idea really hit the bull's-eye*

Gates states that what is odd about this idiom is that in order to understand its meaning; we have to understand either the extended meaning of the idiom as a whole or the unique meaning of one of the words in it. He stresses that these idioms are very figurative and unique to their whole meaning, and we cannot understand them simply by understanding their individual parts.

### **2. Proverb**

A proverb refers to a fixed saying that is often quoted. We can also consider it as a fixed phrase that has a metaphorical meaning, but at the same time, it offers wise knowledge about human life. It may include old-fashioned words, which make it hard to be understood (Abbas & Younis, 2009: 824).

e.g. (*keep eye open*) ... to remain alert and watchful for someone or something (Oxford Dictionary Online).

### **3. Slang**

Slangs refer to the terms that are recognized as casual or playful. Idioms are yesterday's slang, and slang is tomorrow's idioms which have through use and over time become acceptable to be used in the informal language. Thus, we cannot use slang expressions in writing (Spears, 1991: 52).

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e.g. (***In a pig's eye***) ... something that you say which means you think there is no chance that something is true or that something will happen ***Me, in love with Sandra? In a pig's eye I'am.*** (Oxford Dictionary online)

#### 4. Folksy

It refers to expressions which are rural, and old-fashioned. They cannot be used in writing, it contains a rural word (daisies) which makes the term difficult to be understood.

e.g. (***make sheep's eyes at somebody***) (old-fashioned).... to look at someone in a way that shows that you love them or are attracted to them ... ***Ken's been making sheep's eyes at his ex-girlfriend all night.*** (Ibid)

#### 5. Informal expressions

They refer to a very casual expressions that are suitable to be spoken and not written,

e.g. ***without batting an eye*** .... without showing alarm or response; without blinking an eye. It cannot be used in writing or in spoken English with someone who has a formal position. We can call it idiomatic because we cannot know the meaning of the whole idiom from the meaning of its individual words. (Spears, 1991: 52)

#### 6. Formal expressions

They are literally in origin and usually reserved in writing. They are also found in conversations that taking place among people who share formal relationship (like student\teacher relationship) (Spears, 1991: 52)

e.g. (*a gleam in your eyes*) .. Something that is thought about or planned but not yet started *I remember when that invention was just a gleam in his eye.* (Oxford Dictionary online)

## **2.5. Syntactic and Semantic Features of Eyes Idioms**

Eyes expressions are usually fixed and cannot be altered or varied. Nonetheless, occasionally some grammatical or lexical changes may occur. To illustrate some of the changes, there are idioms that can be transformed from the active into the passive voice and sometimes, verbs, adjectives or other sentence elements can function as nouns or some countable nouns can appear as uncountable and vice versa.

Newmeyer (1974: 329) cites idioms like *get an eye in*, *have eyes in the back of one's head* and *turn a blind eye* as examples of the idioms allow passivisation, since they can be understood literally as well as idiomatically. He goes further by stating that their idiomatic meaning contains passive-governing predicates

The verbs *get*, *have*, and *turn* govern the passive rule, and their literal meaning may allow it, but not their idiomatic meaning due to their semantic fixedness. Thus, idioms like *an eye was gotten*, and *a blind eye was turned* would be odd, and given that his proposal requires that both the idiomatic and the literal meaning constitute the rule, these idioms would not allow passivisation (Newmeyer, 1974: 330).

Many idioms employ regular patterns such as repetition and rhythm (e.g. “an eye as cool as cucumber”). Consequently, consulting a reliable dictionary of idioms is recommended to avoid confusion. (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2002: 6)

Idioms together with other collocations and fixed expressions appear at all levels of English, covering the whole register from informal, formal to old-fashioned, humorous and literary language, being used particularly in informal spoken language (Swan, 2005: 232).

## **2.6. Difficulties of Eyes Expressions**

The factors confirming that idioms are difficult to acquire is that they are necessary to be learned by heart. Often an idiom is composed of meaningless in the collocation; however, they imply certain meaning that cannot be comprehended through any other way than through pure memorizing of the phrase. (Sapacikova, 2010: 16)

When a person uses an idiom, the listener might take the actual meaning wrong if he has not heard this expression before. As a result, the dialect variation in language should be considered as any idioms would sound awkward in some regions or would not been understood at all, e.g. the differences between British and American English (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2002: 8). Therefore, it is essential to apprehend not only the meaning of the idioms but the appropriate use as well.

Regarding learners of English as a second language, there is no doubt that idioms are not easy subjects to study, although they can provide enjoyable study materials because of the great variety. Nevertheless, along with many other aspects of English, idioms are in constant development, sometimes causing confusion among learners. (Sapacikova, 2010: 17).

With respect to culture, it has been suggested above that idioms are closely connected with it. They are acquired by native speakers naturally, without having to be learned and are usually

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related to a particular region. Consequently, idiomatic expressions are often restricted to one language, lacking the word-to-word translation into other languages. Thus, difficulties with translation may occur. (ibid)

As a matter of fact, idioms as well as other collocations are probably one of the hardest things for a person to learn in the process of acquiring a new language because most people, native speakers, grow up using idioms as if their true meaning actually makes sense, however, to a learner of a second language it does not (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2002: 11).

Considering individual types of idiomatic expressions, it is claimed that syntactically frozen idioms are easier to learn than syntactically flexible ones. Further, the idioms whose meanings are figuratively transparent are easier to acquire than those with unclear meanings as learners can predict their real meanings. Idiomatic language could be easier to comprehend if given contextual support (Abisamra, 2003). Therefore, it is crucial to provide learners with as many exercises as possible to demonstrate the right usage of idioms reflected in the examples.

## **2.7. Interpreting Eye idioms**

Interpreting eye idioms goes through different perspectives and opinions. For translators, to be able to conceptualize and render the accurate meaning and to follow the preferable method, we should tackle the following aspects of idiomatic expressions.

### **1. Familiarity and Comprehension**

Moving on to the processing and interpreting of eyes expressions as idioms, scholars like Ortony et al. (1978 cited in Alnaser,2010:14) investigate the processing of idioms. They argue that the figurativeness is not always the factor that makes

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it difficult to interpret idioms. The authors maintain that familiar idioms are processed as quickly as and sometimes faster than their literal interpretations when idioms are given contextual support. However, when there is no contextual support, then the understanding of an eye idiom takes longer than its literal interpretation. Thus, the authors point out that relatedness to context and figurativeness is what determines the difficulty of idiom processing.

Also, Ortony et al. (1978) argue that familiar idioms are processed faster than their literal interpretations, because the familiarity of idioms led to them being interpreted idiomatically before interpreting their meaning literally. The authors also raise another valid point by stating that the meaning of an idiom is stored in a similar manner to the meaning of a single lexical item; therefore, they take less time to process when found in contexts.

Similarly, Estill and Kemper (1982) state that the comprehension of the literal and figurative meanings occurs simultaneously. In contrast, Gibbs (1980: 150) affirms that the conventionality of idioms is what affects the ease of comprehension and not the literal meaning. Gibbs (ibid) notes that language learners spend more time processing idioms with literal meaning than they do with idioms with idiomatic interpretations.

Moreover, Gibbs (1980: 155) states that when language learners encounter an unconventional use of an idiom, they tend to analyze the idiomatic meaning of the idiom before deciding on the appropriateness of the literal meaning.

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## **2. Syntactic Frozenness**

Gibbs and Gonzales (1985 cited in Alnaser, 2010: 16) further refer to the effect of syntactic frozenness when processing and remembering idioms. They argue that idioms may differ syntactically, but still retain their figurative meanings, which mean that this idiom is syntactically productive.

The degree to which the syntax of idioms is frozen affects the processing of idioms and the way they are remembered. Syntactically flexible idioms retain the figurative interpretations, while syntactically frozen idioms cannot do the same as they are restricted to their form. Frozen idioms are processed faster than flexible ones. Also, flexible idioms, which take longer to process, are recalled more often and easily than are frozen ones due to the fact that they are more difficult to process, which makes them memorable (Alnaser, 2010: 16).

Other studies by Gibbs et al. (1989: 58-60) shed further light on the matter of the degrees of syntactic frozenness of idioms and the reason why some idioms are syntactically flexible while others are frozen. They argue that the lexical flexibility of idioms is not arbitrary and depends on the parts of the idiom that contribute to its overall meaning. Gibbs et al. group idioms into two categories: one category to include decomposable idioms in which the individual components contribute to their overall meaning, and another that includes non-decomposable idioms in which the individual components do not contribute to their overall meaning. Then they subdivide the decomposable idioms into two further categories: one to include normally decomposable idioms, such as *pop the question* 'to propose marriage', in which their individual components have a literal relationship to their figurative meaning, and the other to include abnormally decomposable idioms, such as *spill the beans*, in

which their internal components have a metaphorical relationship to the figurative meaning of the idiom.

### 3. Lexical Substitution

Gibbs et al. (1989: 65) argue that substituting a verb or a noun with a synonym is less damaging to the overall meaning of normally decomposable idioms than it is to the non-decomposable ones due to the fact that the internal components of the former contribute to the overall meaning, and replacing the word will not affect it as long as this change maintains the same contribution to the figurative meaning. For example, replacing the verb *break* in the idiom *break the ice* 'to start a conversation' with *burst* as in *burst the ice* will not impair the metaphorical interpretation of the idiom since *burst* is related to the figurative meaning. However, replacing the verb *kick* in non-decomposable idioms like *kick the bucket* with the verb *boot* as in *boot the bucket* will not make sense, since the internal component does not contribute to the figurative meaning of this kind of idiom.

Gibbs et al. (1989: 65) clearly demonstrate that abnormally decomposable idioms are almost as flexible as normally decomposable idioms. For instance, replacing the verb *spill* with *drop* in *spill the beans* to form *drop the beans* may be quite disruptive, but it still maintains the figurative relation between the individual components and the figurative meaning of the idiom. This acceptance of the lexical change *spill* to *drop*, as Gibbs et al. point out, is due to the fact that the new word i.e. *drop* is from the same semantic field as the substituted word i.e., *spill*, which means that *drop* shares the nuclear concept and/or feature of *spill*. Thus, when we replace a word with a similar one in concept and feature, we end up with an idiom that is figuratively similar to the original one (Gibbs et al, 1989: 66).

### **3. Practical Framework**

#### **3.1. Translating Eyes idioms**

The ability to identify idioms is of enormous importance, since their meaning should never be understood literally. As Ingo (1990: 247) puts it, the translator must first analyze what the writer has intended to say before s/he can even think of translating the expression. Larson (1984: 143) agrees, as he argues that the first crucial step in the translation of idioms is to be absolutely certain of the meaning of the source language idiom. Therefore the most important issue in translating idioms is the ability to distinguish the difference between the literal meaning and the real meaning of the expression (Ingo 1990: 248). This is why recognizing and being able to use idioms appropriately requires excellent command over the source language.

It is, thus, only after identifying the non-literal meaning of the idiom that a translator can even think of translating the expression into the target language. In addition to being able to recognize idioms in a source text, the translator must also be able to use idioms fluently and competently in the target language (Larson 1984: 116). Not only does a translator need to master the source language, but s/he must also be able to express him/herself in the target language fluently and smoothly. Larson (ibid.) stresses the importance of the ability to use target language idioms naturally; because that ensures that the translator can produce smooth and lively target language text as well as preserve the stylistic features of the source text.

The final difficulty, then, is to find a TL expression with the same meaning. The problem lies in the fact that an idiomatic expression in one language rather often does not have an

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equivalent expression in another language. The translator has to think of an appropriate translation strategy for the phrase.

### **3.2. Models & Strategies of Translating Eyes Idioms**

In general, translation theorists recognize three different translation strategies for idioms:

#### **3.2.1 Translating an idiom with a non-idiom**

Ingo (1990: 247) counts the strategy of translating a non-idiomatic expression with an idiom as one possible strategy. Nida and Taber (1969: 106) exclude the literal translation strategy and suggest three translation strategies for idioms: translating idioms with non-idioms.

#### **3.2.2 Translating an idiom with an idiom**

Nida and Taber (ibid.) claim that most frequently source language idioms can only be translated with target language non-idioms, although they also admit that sometimes it is indeed possible to match a source language idiom by an equivalent target language idiom.

Nida and Taber (ibid.) also point out that idioms and other figurative expressions usually suffer a great deal of semantic adjustments in translation, since an idiom in one language rarely has the same meaning and function in another language as such.

The most recommended translation strategy for idioms is translating them with a natural target language idiom which has the same meaning as the original source language idiom. For instance according to Ingo (1990: 246), idioms should always be translated with a semantically and stylistically corresponding idiom in the target language. Bassnett-McGuire (1980: 24), on the other hand, suggests that idioms should be translated on the

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basis of the function of the phrase: the source language idiom should be replaced by a target language idiom that has the same meaning and function in the TL culture as the SL idiom has in the SL culture.

Newmark (1981: 8) proposes yet another challenge for the translation of idioms: according to him, the original SL idiom and its translation should be equally frequent in the two languages. However, it seems somewhat impossible to carry out this recommendation in practice, since it is rather difficult to estimate the frequency of certain expressions in certain languages.

The benefits of the strategy of matching an idiom by an idiom are related to the stylistic balance between the source and target language texts. By translating source language idioms with corresponding target language idioms, the style and manner of expression of the source text can be conveyed also to the target language text. The translator should therefore make every effort to find a corresponding target language idiom for a source language idiom - if there is none available, the idiom should be translated with a "normal", non-idiomatic expression which conveys the same meaning (Mustonen, 2010: 41).

### **3.2.3 Translating an idiom literally**

In translation theory in general, literal translation is generally considered to be the worst possible translation strategy— the same seems to apply to the translation of idioms. For instance according to Larson (1984: 116), a literal translation of an idiom will usually result in complete nonsense in the target language. Also Newmark (1981: 125) stresses that idioms should never be translated word for word. Ingo (1990: 246) agrees with

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Larson and Newmark, stating that literal translation of an idiom is rarely successful, and should therefore be avoided at all costs.

Why is the literal translation strategy considered to be such a failed translation strategy, then? Most scholars claim that a literal translation conveys 'foreign' elements into the target language text, which are generally considered unacceptable (Larson 1984: 15). For instance Serazin (1999: 30) argues that the traditional view in translation theory has been that foreign elements seriously disturb the structure of a literary work, and Nida (1964: 16) points out that word-for-word translation damages both the meaning and the beauty of the original expression. However, the purpose of this research is also to diagnose if the literal translation strategy could, after all, work in some instances. It is quite obvious that a literal translation of an idiom simply does not work in most cases, but on the basis of the research done for this study, it seems that in some cases a literal translation can function rather well.

#### 4.1. Data Analysis/ Source Texts

	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
Text 1	Not believe one's <u>eyes</u>	١. لا يصدق ما يرى	-	+	-
		٢. لا تصدق اذا لم ترى بعينك	-	+	-
		٣. لا تصدق كل ما تراه	-	+	-
		٤. لا تصدق كل ما ترى	-	+	-

In dictionary, the definition of this idiomatic expression means: "Not to believe what one is seeing; to be shocked or dumb founded at what one is seeing" (Oxford online dictionary). For example, (*I walked into the room and I couldn't believe my eyes. All the furniture had been stolen!*).

It is obvious that this idiom is familiar to Arabic culture as in the well-known proverb (لا تصدق كل ما تسمع ولا تصدق نصف ماترى) - Don't believe whatever you hear and don't believe in the half of what have you seen). In this case subjects, easily, conceptualize the original meaning, because they have the same cultural background. In fact, in English we use "eyes" which referrer to "vision", and in Arabic they express this situation by using the word (رؤية - vision).

Most of the renderings are correct, though the translators translated this eyes idiom non-idiomatically.

Text 2	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	Somebody's <u>eyes</u> are bigger than their belly	١. العين تاكل مثل الفم	-	-	+
		٢. أبو عين الجوعانة	+	-	-
		٣. شبع العين قبل البطن	-	-	+
		٤. ذو عين فارغة	-	+	-

"Somebody's eyes are bigger than their belly" means: Something that you say when someone has taken more food than they can eat (*I can't finish this piece of cake. I'm afraid my eyes were bigger than my stomach as usual*). As shown above, some of the informants have translated the idiomatic expressions correctly as in (2) who translated idiomatically, though the translation is slang and not standard Arabic, it has the effect and conveys the force of the intended meaning to the recipient. In contrast, subject (4) doesn't comprehend the accurate meaning and gives an opposite image which means a greedy person. Oppositely, translations (1 and 3) are inappropriate ones as they lack the idiomatic and aesthetics senses. Hence, these last renderings are literal and could be considered awkward translations.

Text 3	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	Pull the wool over someone's <u>eyes</u>	١. يعمي شخصا ما	-	+	-
		٢. ذر الرماد في العيون	+	-	-
		٣. انتزع الحقيقة من شخص أخفاها	-	-	-
		٤. -----	-	-	-

To understand the intended meaning of this idiomatic expression, we should consult a reliable dictionary, a competent translator or a native speaker. For "Pull the wool over someone's eyes", it means that to deceive someone. *You can't pull the wool over my eyes. I know what's going on. Don't try to pull the wool over her eyes. She's too smart.*

Cultural specific plays a vital role here, since Arabs use, (ذر الرماد في العيون - to throw dust (ashes) in one's eyes), "ashes" instead of "wool". However, translating this idiom literally will sound nonsense in Arabic. Two subjects have, successfully, rendered this expression; subject (1) who translated that non-idiomatically, but s/he transferred the meaning in an accurate way. Subject (2) has used an Arabic idiom which gives the correspondent. Consequently, we propose subject (2) to be the appropriate rendering.

Text 4	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	Out of the corner of one's eye	١. بعيد عن العين	-	-	-
		٢. سلم عليه بطرف عيني وحاجبه	-	-	-
		٣. البعيد عن العين بعيد عن القلب	-	-	-
		٤. خارج الرؤية	-	-	-

The eyes expression means: seeing something at a glance; glimpsing something, as with peripheral vision. (*I saw someone do it out of the corner of my eye. It might have been Jane who did it).... (I only saw the accident out of the corner of my eye. I don't know who is at fault).*

The table above indicates that most of the renderers have failed to translate the original meaning, as they thought that the idiom means "not seeing something or ignoring someone" due to the absence of equivalence to this idiom. In fact, it, sometimes, confuses with the famous song (سَلَّمَ عَلَيَّ بِطَرْفِ عَيْنِهِ وَحَاجِبِهِ) – Lit: s/he greeted me with hem and brow), but in this case the target readers do not conceptualize the idea. Therefore, in English it seems as nonsense expression, because it is out of the cultural scope. So, we propose (لمح - to see at glance) as an appropriate idiomatic equivalent.

Text 5	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	Turn a blind eye	١. يتجاهل الأمر	-	+	-
		٢. إعطاء الأذن الصماء	-	-	-
		٣. -----	-	-	-
		٤. أعطى الأذن الطرشاء	-	-	-

Turn a blind eye means: to ignore something and pretend you do not see it. (*How can you turn a blind eye to all those starving children?*)

In this example, we have only one appropriate rendering; subject (1) who translated the expression non-idiomatically without attaching the aesthetic value by converting the rhetorical effect into straightforward meaning.

The other subjects (2, 3 and 4) are inappropriate translations, though this expression is familiar in Mosuli Arabic accent as in: (يُثَوِّلُ بِنَفْسِهِ / يعمي بنفسه) – makes himself a blind). Therefore, it is clear that translating an English idioms by an Arabic idiom is the preferable method, since it keeps the force of the message and makes the translation sounds nature. Thus, the proposed rendering is: (يغض الطرف)

Text 6	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	without batting an eye	١. -----	-	-	-
		٢. من دون أن يرمش له طرف	-	-	-
		٣. -----	-	-	-
		٤. بدون رمشة عين	+	-	-

In dictionary, the definition of this idiomatic expression means: without showing alarm or response; without blinking an eye. *I knew I had insulted her, and she turned to me and asked me to leave without batting an eye.* Right in the middle of the speech—without batting an eye—the speaker walked off the stage.(Oxford Online Dictionary)

Subject (4) is the only possible translation to this idiom, because the translator used an idiomatic Arabic equivalent. While, others have failed to accomplish the task and left the idiom without translation or unvalued rendering.

Text 7	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	Fields have eyes,	١. للجدران اذان	+	-	-
		٢. للجدران اذان	+	-	-
		٣. الحقول في المنطقة عيون	-	-	+

	and woods have ears	متربصة			
		٤. الحقول تمتلك عيون والغابات تمتلك أذان	-	-	+

This well-known idiom means: "Even though you are outside in an apparently empty landscape, someone may be eavesdropping on you.

**Jill:** *You said you had a secret. Tell me.*

**Jane:** *Not here. Jill: But there's nobody else in the park.*

**Jane:** *Fields have eyes, and woods have ears.*

(Cited in OxfordOnlineDictionary.com)

Subjects (1 and 2) translated this idiom perfectly, as they offered a translated text which is an Arabic cultural specific idiom and a correspondent to the English one. They, in fact, followed the idiomatic strategy for translating eyes expressions.

On the other hand, subjects (3 and 4) have paraphrased the meaning of the innovative idiom by explaining the meaning only and disregarding the aesthetic and poetic values of the source idiom.

Text 8	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	An eye for an eye	١. العين بالعين	+	-	-
		٢. العين بالعين	+	-	-
		٣. العين بالعين	+	-	-
		٤. العين بالعين	+	-	-

This eye idiom means: "If someone does something wrong, they should be punished by having the same thing done to them".

This idiom shows the common use of this expression in both languages due to the religious root of this expression. In fact, in English this phrase comes from the Bible. *If you murder*

someone you deserve to die. An eye for an eye. While, in Quran we have the following Ayah:

﴿وَكُنِبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنْ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ ۖ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾ المائدة (٤٥)

*And we ordained for them therein a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and for wounds is legal retribution. But whoever gives [up his right as] charity, it is an expiation for him. And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed - then it is those who are the wrongdoers.*

Apparently, we have a universal expression here, so that the translation will be easier and that interprets why all the renders have translated this expression into Arabic perfectly and idiomatically.

	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
Text 9	a bird's eye view	١. نظرة شاملة المدى	+	-	-
		٢. عين الصقر	-	-	-
		٣. نظرة شخص مسؤول - نظرة متعالية	-	-	-
		٤. نظرة الصقر، كعين الصقر	-	-	-

The intended meaning of the expression is: the appearance of something seen from above (*The large painting offers a bird's eye view that shows the layout of the ancient city*).

Most of the subjects failed to transfer or translate the meaning of the idiom because (a bird's eye view) is definitely an

English idiom and has no equivalent in Arabic. In Arabic, we use (نظرة شاملة – a general view / overview) to express this situation. In opposite, subject (1) provided the target text with a correspondent which is an Arabic idiom (idiomatic approach). Therefore, translating an idiom perfectly requires well-acquainted translators who master both cultures and languages.

Text 10	An Idiom	Renderings	Idiom	Non.	Liter.
	a worm's eye view	٥. لا ينظر ابعد من تحت قدميه	-	-	+
		٦. نظرة دونية	-	-	-
		٧. عينك وما تشوف	-	-	-
		٨. نظرة ضيقة المدى	+	-	-

If you have a worm's eye view of something, you only know or understand a part of it, usually the worst or least important part... e.g. (*The novel provides us with a worm's eye view of society*).

This sample refers to the cultural specific or illustrates the profound between the Arabic and English languages, suppose that someone translates (a worm's eye view) into عين الدودة that will be nonsense and out of the linguistic scope of the Arab readers.

Therefore, it is of necessity to translate the idiom whether literally by paraphrasing the meaning or idiomatically which is very rare. Thus, two translations have been translated appropriately (1) literally and (4) idiomatically which is the preferable one While, the rest of the translations are inappropriate.

## **1.2 Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

Three different strategies for translating idioms have been used:

- Translating an idiom with a non-idiom (17.5%).
- Translating an idiom with an idiom (27.5%).
- Translating an idiom literally (12.5%).

The most frequently used translation strategy was translating an idiom with an idiomatic expression. The second most popular strategy was to translate a source language idiom with a non-corresponding target language idiom. The least used strategy is the literal translation strategy.

### **The study comes with the following conclusions:**

1. Idiomatic translation of eye idioms is the most preferable translation, as it keeps the literal and figurative meanings of the source language.
2. The unique formations of eyes idioms such as: (passivation, syntactic frozen and indirectness) are aesthetic value of a particular language.
3. Common expressions between Arabic and English make the translation easier due to the familiarity and the full comprehension.
4. In contrast, cultural specific of eyes idioms make the process of translating idioms very difficult.

Consequently, it is recommended to consult reliable dictionaries to give the translators cultural and linguistic background knowledge.

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