

**INTROSPECTING TRANSLATION OF BUSINESS IDIOMS  
CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS IDIOMS  
TRANSLATION FROM ENGLISH INTO ARABIC;**

تحليل ترجمة التعبيرات الاصطلاحية الاقتصادية: دراسة تحليلية لترجمة التعبيرات  
الاصطلاحية من الإنجليزية إلى العربية:

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**Abstract:**

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One of the most challenging issues in the realm of translation is translating idioms. This study shall review the main problems encountered when dealing with the translation of business idioms and the extent to which idiomaticity in economic texts is retained, distorted or lost; and why? In addition to discussing possible strategies to keep losses to a minimum. The research shall adopt a corpus-based analysis to highlight that literal translation is not valid with idioms, however, in economic texts, it may be the only solution for the translator to convey idiomaticity with respect to the characteristics of economic discourse.

**key words:** business discourse; business idioms; idiomaticity; idiomatic expressions; translation;

**ملخص باللغة العربية:**

تشكل ترجمة التعبيرات الاصطلاحية أحد أهم التحديات في عالم الترجمة. تحاول هذه الدراسة عرض أهم المشاكل التي يمكن مصادفتها عند ترجمة التعبيرات الاصطلاحية الاقتصادية، وما هي العوامل المؤثرة على نقل معانيها مع اقتراح مجموعة من الاستراتيجيات التي تحاول دونه ضياع المعنى. تعتمد الدراسة على منهجية تحليل المتن لإظهار أن الترجمة الحرفية وعلى الرغم من عدم كونها الاستراتيجية الأنسب للتعامل مع هذه التعبيرات، إلا أنها قد تكون الاستراتيجية الواعدة أمام المترجم لنقل المعنى مع الحفاظ على خصوصية النص الاقتصادي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اصطلاح اقتصادي؛ خطاب اقتصادي؛ ترجمة؛ تعبير اصطلاحية؛ تعبير اصطلاحية اقتصادي؛

## Introduction

Idiomaticity constitutes a common factor in all today's world languages. The surface meaning of idioms deserves interpretation before being conveyed in another language. The complexity involved in the translation of idioms requires convenient techniques and/or likely strategies. Translating business idioms is no exception since the language of economics and business is full of figurativeness despite of being a scientific discourse.

This study aims at discussing the phenomenon of idiomaticity inside economic texts along with the main difficulties faced while translating business idioms from English into Arabic.

Semantic, syntactic and pragmatic complexity of idiomatic expressions combined with the special characteristics of economic language poses a great deal of challenges for specialized translators. The translator of economic texts employs strategies that aim to convey the idiomaticity of the source language; and this is not an easy task due to the absence of a similar situation in the target language.

### 1. Literature Review

#### 1-1 Idioms and idiomaticity in language

Every language has phrases that cannot be understood literally. Even if you know the meaning of all the words in such a phrase and you understand the grammar completely, the total meaning may still be confusing. This is the reason why translating this grammatical structure is one of the most intricate topics in the field of translation.

Being as inseparable component of language, idioms have a special position within it. They have been defined in various ways by English linguists, grammarians, lexicographers, and pedagogues. Webster's new world college dictionary defines idiom as 'a phrase, construction or expression that is recognized

as a unit in the usage of a given language and either differs from the usual syntactic patterns or has a meaning that differs from the literal meaning of its parts taken together'. An idiom is, 'a phrase whose meaning is different from the meaning of each of its words considered separately' (Cambridge dictionary of American idioms).

Mona Baker (1992) in her book *In Other Words* defines idioms as 'Frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components' (Baker, 1992, p. 63).

Most of idiom's definitions share several similarities: according to Ghazala (2003), there are five common points in almost all idiom's definitions:

1. 'Idioms are all in all metaphorical and cannot be understood directly.
2. They should not be taken literally; in the sense that their meaning are not the outcome of the individual meanings of their constituent words taken collectively.
3. Their syntactic form is usually fixed and cannot be changed or described as ungrammatical. Moreover, no word can be added, deleted or replaced.
4. Their meanings are also invariable.
5. They are mainly cultural and informal' (Ghazala, 2003, p.204).

The existence of idioms is related to a specific feature of language that is idiomaticity. Ghazala (2003) defines idiomaticity as idioms' 'most special and essential component, namely, their metaphorical aspect' (Ghazala, p.204). He describes idiomaticity as 'the heart of the matter of any idiomatic expression' (Ghazala, p.208). Warren (as cited in Aldahesh, 2013, p.25) offers the following two definitions of idiomaticity:

- Nativelike selection of expression;
- That which one has to know over and above rules and words;

Therefore, understanding idioms and using them properly entails a degree of proficiency, which is hard for the non-native speaker of a given language to acquire. When it comes to English language, learning and mastering idiomatic expressions are the most difficult task even for advanced learners.

Idiomatic expressions exist in Arabic as well. Arab people use them for two main reasons:

- To beautify their language and distinguish it through such stylistic phenomenon;
- To avoid mentioning a word that may cause embarrassment or annoyance.

Hence, idiomaticity is seen by Scholars as the essence of all idiomatic expressions in both English and Arabic. It is the reason why the meaning of idioms is not deductible from the meaning of their individual components. What adds also to their complexity is that idiomatic expressions in both languages are culture and language-specific. They have specific meanings, which are, due to linguistic and/or cultural considerations, confined to the speakers of that particular language and cannot be easily understood by the speakers of other languages. Therefore, the intended meaning of idioms cannot be deduced without knowing the social, political or historical narrative behind it and the moral it may impart. (Aldahesh, 2013)

To recapitulate, idioms are specific expressions that show a high semantic density and an abstract meaning, usually has nothing to do with the meanings of the separate words of which the idiom is composed. All these features have to be transferred into the target language. The translator must learn a lot about idioms to be able to deal with whatever problem arises during the process of translation.

## **1-2 Translating Idioms from English into Arabic: Techniques and Obstacles**

As cited earlier, idioms often carry metaphorical meanings, which cannot be interpreted from their individual items. Thus, translating idioms requires certain skills in order to convey the meaning as well as idiomaticity from SL into TL, and the translator in this case is obliged not only to understand the meaning of English idiomatic expressions, but also to render their meaning into Arabic. In the following part, we try to highlight the main problems faced when translating English idioms into Arabic.

Idioms belong more to the culture of language than to its systematic features. The translator must completely understand the meaning of idiom before giving its natural equivalent. However, he may face many problems summarized in the following points :

1) Some idioms are to be recognized easily than the others. This is why translator may use literal translation to help him identify idioms in case the literal meaning gives no sense. Baker (1992) states in this sense that ‘Generally speaking, the more difficult an expression is to understand and the less sense it makes in a given context, the more likely a translator will recognize it as an idiom’. (Baker, p. 65)

2) An idiomatic expression may have two meanings, a literal and an idiomatic one.

3) A lack of an equivalent expression in the TL.

4) A TL equivalent that has a different context of use.

5) Using the SL idiom in its idiomatic and its literal meanings for the purpose of producing a play on meaning.

6) Frequency of idiomatic expressions use in written texts varies from language to another. (Baker, 1992).

In order to tackle all issues related to the translation of idioms, researchers in translation studies have suggested several techniques and strategies to facilitate the task, and to succeed in conveying the meaning from SL into TL. Mona Baker (1992), for

instance, outlines these four most commonly-used translation strategies:

1- Using a TL idiomatic expression that has a similar form and meaning to the SL expression.

2- Using a TL idiomatic expression that has a similar meaning to the SL expression, but a different form.

3- Paraphrasing the SL idiomatic expression to render its meaning without adhering to its idiomatic form.

4- Omitting the TL idiomatic expression.

In the other hand, Ghazala (2003) argues 'that two major procedures are overwhelmingly dominant in the translation of idioms, or more precisely, idiomaticity, the gist of any idiomatic phrase'. Translating idioms ranges between evasion and invasion: **evasion** refers to translating idiomaticity altogether by way of eliminating it for reasons of the translator's incompetence or simplification of the message for the TL readers; or **invasion** of idiomaticity that is translating idiom in a challenging spirit in an attempt not only to match it but also sometimes to supersede it. According to him, both are valid procedures on the right occasion for the right reason(s)'. (Ghazala, p. 209)

### 1-3 Business Idioms and Translation

As seen earlier, the phenomenon of idiomaticity constitutes a common factor between English and Arabic. The complexity of idioms poses a great deal of challenges to translators to render their meaning into Arabic. The following part investigates idiomaticity inside business language, and discusses the obstacles and solutions related to the translation of business idioms. For this reason, we have to understand first the main features of business writing.

#### 1. Idioms in business discourse

Economic texts like any other scientific or technical texts use a specialized language. This latter constitutes a pragmatic set of the General Language (GL). Language for Specific Purposes

(LSP) is defined as ‘means of linguistic communication required for conveying special subject information among specialists of the same subjects’ (Sager, 1980, p.21). LSP is different from the common language due to the scientific prose style that marks various scientific reports and essays, and in which we notice the use of terminology, objectivity, accuracy and expert knowledge. (zábelková, 2009). Clarity, concision, and correctness the principal stylistic goals of technical writings, are simultaneously those of technical translation. (Wright & Wright, 1993, p.11)

Special language can also have a poetic function. Vicente (2007) goes further and asserts that business discourse unlike other LSPs ‘shows a high degree of emotive meaning, abstract processes like metaphor, which bring about the great number of idioms used in business English’. However, scientifically minded economists refuse the use of metaphorical expressions arguing that ‘...we, as scientists, write down in a precise way what we mean. Precision is one of the standard by which we measure science. And by that standard, metaphors are nonscientific’ (Klamer & Thomas, 1994, p. 20-21).

It seems to be a common sense saying that a scientific language should be free of ambiguity, figurativeness and as much precise and literal as possible, preferably mathematical to this end. Metaphor, traditionally viewed as a master rhetoric device, a trope, seems to be an essence of figurative language. In other words, just the opposite of what a scientific language is supposed to be- at least as far as ‘the metaphor is viewed as a pure frill of language, an avoidable figure of speech’. (Langer, 2015, p. 308)

The survey of business metaphors conducted by some authors trying to prove the existence and importance of this image in business discourse reveals the high frequency of business idioms in English. Economic metaphors are everywhere. Some of them are used for a long time; others became dead metaphors through the process of lexicalization. This is why

some economists are not even aware that what they are using in their daily lexicon are simply idioms. (Langer, 2015, p. 310)

The most famous business idiom used even by non-specialists is the expression ‘time is money’. This phrase obviously metaphorical because time is not money as the sentence literally claims. Other examples of idiomatic expressions can be found in different economic branches such as in finance, accounting, marketing and management. McCloskey (1983, 1985) mentioned many of them (as cited in Klamer & Thomas, 1994, p. 23). For instance, the expression ‘GNP (Gross National Product) is up’. We do not expect the audience to scan the horizon in search for ascending goods and services. We do not watch for bloating price tags when we hear the expression ‘prices are inflated’. Likewise, do Alaskans have trouble keeping their ‘liquid assets’ from being frozen?. When using expressions like ‘price mechanism’ ‘transmission mechanism’ ‘policy instrument’ we know that the intended meaning has nothing to do with machine.

All these examples used constantly by economists demonstrate the importance of metaphorical expressions in business discourse. To explain the unfamiliar or the unknown (especially new concepts and ideas), scientists inevitably resort to the familiar, and this is the main function of a metaphor in economics. McCloskey (1995) emphasizes its importance by saying that ‘Metaphor is often a serious figure of argument, not an ornament. It is not merely pretty talk or poetic talk or all figures of speech’ (McCloskey, p. 215).

## **2. Translation of Business Idioms: Problems and Solutions**

Economics is a field of knowledge that has witnessed a major shift after the World War II and the Cold War. In order to stay updated and to keep pace with the latest changes, specialists in this domain have to read and learn directly and quickly in the original language of publication that is to say in English. This



entails a dilemma that is associated with all other scientific branches: if a specialist in another language (Arabic language for instance) has to stay informed of latest publications, he is obliged to translate, however an economist has no translating experience. If this translation is carried out by professional translators, and starting from a hypothesis that an effective business translation relies on translator's capacity to understand terminology; the translator of business text has to be an economist to succeed in his mission. Researchers in translation studies have discussed these questions in several studies, and concluded that a specialized translator needs to have a double training, i.e. to be trained in both translation and the specific domain. (Lavoie, 2003)

Several features characterize business language in Arabic, among which we can find some elements that can be traced back directly to translation. Like other scientific fields, all inventions and theories are written in English. Translators into Arabic cannot keep pace with these developments and new terms in language. 'multilingual dictionaries and terminological database do not cover every possible field of knowledge and activity... and they do not include every possible term' (Postolea, 2016. P.56-57); this is why we observe a high frequency of loan words in Arabic business language. In their work, specialized translators may come across neonyms – terms that are neologisms, new creations in the source language- and they try to find the best solution to introduce them in the target language, and this is where the translator's creativity appears and plays an important role. (Postolea, 2016. P. 57). In Academia for example, specialists in this field suffer to find appropriate equivalents when writing their scientific work. In conferences for instance, some researchers held their presentations in English or in best case in French to avoid the risk of improvising and giving their own equivalents, especially if they treat new ideas and concepts. Even if they use Arabic, they refer constantly to the original term

in English (or in French) in brackets or they use a whole sentence to explain its meaning to increase the reader's comprehension. Thus, the main characteristic of Arabic business language is the lack of precision due to the inexistence of exact Arabic equivalents. Many less developed countries lack and do not benefit from lexicographic and terminographic work, and translators have to come up, through their own documentary and terminological research, to appropriate equivalents in the target language.

In other cases, we may find more than one equivalent in Arabic due to different translations. This difference in terminology is commonly seen between business language used in Middle East (ME) and the one used in North Africa (NA). Due to historical reasons, the source language for specialists in ME is English, while in NA they translate generally from French. The result of this difference can be seen in examples such as the word 'التسيير' is used in NA and it is translated from the French word 'la gestion'. However, in ME, they use the word 'الإدارة' that is the equivalent of the English word 'management' while both terms refer to the same concept. This kind of translation problems create a lot of confusion for economics learners, and can sometimes lead to mistakes especially when dealing with figures.

In a branch like accounting, a huge difference in terminology is observed between ME and NA. Translating from French means adopting France's accounting system that is different in many aspects from other Anglo-Saxons countries (although this problem is disappearing due to international efforts to reach accounting standards harmonization). For example, the balance sheet that is the main financial statement is divided in France into two main classes: 'les actifs' and 'les passifs'. This classification is used by countries in NA and it is translated into 'الأصول والخصوم'. The same statement is classified in English into 'assets' (the same as in French and it is also translated into

‘الأصول’ in ME countries) and the other class is divided into ‘liabilities’ and ‘ownership equity’ that are translated into ‘الالتزامات’ and ‘حقوق الملكية’ in ME countries. This create a lot of confusion even for advanced learners in NA when they use ME references since the term ‘الالتزامات’ refers also to the word ‘الخصوم’. Thus, they often think that the balance sheet is the same; however, it differs due the difference of accounting system in the source language used to translate. The result is that we do not have a unified business language that is used both in ME and NA countries.

The lack of precision can be also the result of a third translation; most of business terminology (especially in NA countries) is translated from French after being translated from English. This kind of translation leads to many losses and sometimes many mistakes made initially by French translators and transferred directly into Arabic. A famous example is seen in the translation of the name of a major financial theory that is ‘efficient market theory’ this is known in French as ‘la théorie d’efficience des marchés’ and in Arabic as ‘نظرية كفاءة الأسواق’. However, the term ‘efficient’ in the SL (English) refers to ‘الفعالية’ in Arabic. The mistake in this case resulted from a mistake in the French translation. Instead of saying ‘l’efficacité des marchés’, French translators used the word ‘efficience’ that means in French ‘الكفاءة’ and the same mistake was transferred into Arabic while the original meaning is ‘l’efficacité’ or ‘الفعالية’. This translation error is actually linked to the mix up of false friends since translators think that the word ‘l’efficience’ in French is the equivalent of the English word ‘efficiency’ and this is wrong because its French equivalent should be the word ‘efficacité’, while the French word ‘l’efficience’ refers to the English word ‘effectiveness’.

Business translation when carried out by specialists in the field, tends to produce mistakes that will be used later, thus the mistake will persist and may become a part of economic lexicon.

For instance, the users of technical analysis (a method to evaluate financial performance) are called ‘chartists’ because they rely mainly on ‘charts’ in their analysis. This English term is also used in French; however, French conservators prefer the use of the word ‘analystes graphiques’. When it comes to Arabic, the used equivalent is ‘مستعملوا الخرائط’ that has nothing to do with the original meaning. The mistake comes from mixing up the word ‘chart’ with the French word ‘carte’, and this term is widely used among learners and even specialists.

Another problem of business translation is the absence of the equivalent in Arabic especially while translating new concepts. Without a unified terminology fixed by specialized institutions, inexact term will be used and it will be very hard to change them later on. One example is the expression ‘creative accounting’ that refers to accounting practices that follow required laws and regulations but deviate from what those standards attend to accomplish. It is also called ‘window dressing’. Its meaning in Arabic refers to ‘التلاعبات المحاسبية’; however, the commonly used name is the literal translation of the term, which is ‘المحاسبية الإبداعية’. It is obvious that the Arabic name holds a positive connotation in the opposite of the intended meaning. Another term may be more appropriate and it is up to both translators and specialists to come up with this term that reflects its exact meaning.

The absence or the difficulty to find an exact equivalent is very common in Arabic business language especially when dealing with idioms. As mentioned before, idiomatic expressions are generally culture-specific. They are created and used by native speakers to describe specific situations. English business language is very rich of such idioms as seen before. This is due in a huge part to the development of economic system of these countries. In other words, a highly developed economic system induces systematically a developed business language.

Practitioners are in a constant need for new terms and expressions because there is always new inventions and products.

It is clear now why Arabic business language is less developed and poor -terminologically. There is no urgent demand for new terms because economic systems of Arab countries are less developed than other industrial countries. Many aspects of economic system are not sufficiently developed in Arab countries such as financial markets and banking, thus both terminology and idioms are absent and may appear only in academic writing. For instance, a famous idiom used in financial markets trading is 'Bull market' to refer to an 'ascending market price' and the expression 'Bear market' to refer to a 'descending market price'. The use of this animal idiom 'Bear/Bull' originated from the way in which each animal attacks its opponent. That is the bull will thrust its horns up into the air, while the bear will swipe down. The origin of this idiom is the old fights organized in Mexico that gathers these two animals to entertain the crowd. As if to say that financial market is similar to these fights. In Arabic, we do not find a similar situation and hence, literal translation is used. The terms used are only 'سوق صعودي/هبوطي' with no culture-specific meaning.

Another idiom that is classified among color idiom is the expression 'Blue chip' that refers to a stock in a corporation with a national reputation of quality. No Arabic equivalent exists neither a French one, which still uses the same expression as in English. In French, sometimes we notice that even if the equivalent for some idioms is created, specialists still prefer to use the original term in English because it expresses the idea better than the French equivalent. Many examples can be cited like start up, subprime crisis, credit crunch...etc.

All previous examples show clearly that Arabic business language is still poor comparing to English. Economists suffer to find appropriate equivalents of the already existing lexicon, and they suffer even more when dealing with new concepts and ideas.

Translation problems faced with business terminology double when specialists have to work with business idioms that have no equivalents neither in words nor in situations. This is why we notice that the commonly employed strategy to deal with idioms is evasion; a literal translation is the most used technique to face the problem of equivalent nonexistence, and this can be seen more through the analysis of the following corpus.

## 2. Research Method

The study aims to answer the following questions:

- How can business idioms be translated into Arabic?
- What strategies to adopt in order to naturalize them in Arabic?

In order to answer these questions, it is hypothesized that :

- Translating business idioms on the surface leads to inconvenient translation, i.e. using indirect procedures is a must,
- Invasion or finding an equivalent match in the TL is the ultimate translation solution to face difficulties idioms pose.

In this research, we will use an analytical and comparative study of the corpus that consists of two different texts: the first text is an economic report; the second is the first chapter of an economic book. Through the analysis of the two samples, we try to identify business idioms in each of them. We will then compare idioms in the source text with their translations in the target text. This method helps to identify the non-equivalence problem posed while translating business idioms into Arabic.

## 3. Corpus Analysis

### 3-1 Analytical contrastive study of the translation of business idioms

In order to shed some light on the translation of business idioms, we are going to analyze two samples: the first is a report issued in May 2009 in the aftermath of the global financial crisis

by the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC). It discusses the causes and implications of this crisis especially on the developing countries. The report is available on the organization's website in English and in Arabic (the translated version). This document in its English version comprises of 15 pages, whereas the Arabic version contains 23 pages. The second sample is a book written by Micheal L.Ross in 2012, entitled 'the oil curse: how petroleum wealth shapes the development of nations'. It was translated by Mohammed Haythem Nachwati in 2014. The book discusses the economic reality of oil producing countries, and how natural resources can have a negative impact on countries, especially whose economies rely completely on one resource, such as gas and/or oil. It provides series of arguments about the effect of a country's oil revenue on its political and economic development and stability. We will take only the first chapter of this book namely 'the paradoxical wealth of nations' that consists of 26 pages in its English version, and 35 pages in the Arabic version.

The reason behind our choice of the corpus is the following: as to the first text, we have chosen a report that discusses the financial crisis, which is a new topic at that time (and still is, since the global economic system is still suffering from its implications). This means the appearance of new terms and expressions with the necessity to find their appropriate equivalents in Arabic. Since the report has to be issued quickly (which is a main characteristic of scientific and technical translation in general where the time is an important element to consider), translators have to deal as fast as possible with the problems faced during the translation process especially when translating business idioms; so we expect to find translation that is more literal. However, our second text that is a chapter of a book, took almost two years to be translated into Arabic. Thus, we expect a more careful choice of equivalents.

We start our analysis with the first sample, which is the report on the 2008 financial crisis. Our search for business idioms is based on Ghazala's (2003) definition of idiom as any 'special, metaphorical, fixed phrases whose meaning and forms are not negotiable'. We will try to select some examples of each sample to illustrate the idea.

### 3-2 Analysis of the Sample 1: SESRIC report on the Global Financial Crisis of 2008-2009

#### Pattern A

*The turmoil in the US sub-prime mortgage triggered by 'reckless' lending institutions was only part of a far more extensive problem in the global financial system affecting the entire \$20 trillion US housing market.*

#### Translation of pattern A

وكان الاضطراب الذي أضرت مؤسسات الإقراض "الطائشة" ذنده في قطاع العقارات السكنية على أسس مخالفة للمعايير الأساسية للاقتراض في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية جزءا من مشكلة أبعد عمقا في النظام المالي، مؤثرة على مجمل سوق الإسكان الذي يبلغ حجمه التداولي عشرون تريليون دولار أمريكي.

#### Analysis of pattern A

- In this paragraph, we find several business idiomatic expressions. The first one is the word 'turmoil' that means in a general context a state of great excitement, noise or confusion. It would be translated literally in 'الهيجان'. However, this would eliminate the idiomaticity of the expression in the TL because we cannot say in business language 'الهيجان المالي'. This is why the translator uses another equivalent that is more adequate which is 'الاضطراب'.
- The second expression is in the sentence 'The turmoil in the US sub-prime mortgage triggered by 'reckless' lending institutions'



which is ‘**the US sub-prime mortgage**’. This expression refers to a specific category of loans that was the principal cause of the crisis. These loans can be described as bad loans given by financial institutions to persons with no solvency or ability to repay the debt. These loans were used to purchase houses and then causing the collapse of housing market. The translator prefers to translate this expression by addition. He explains the meaning of the expression without giving its equivalence though it exists in TL. In order to translate this expression, the translator changes the whole structure of the SL sentence to avoid dealing with it by saying:

أضمرت مؤسسات الإقراض ذنده في قطاع العقارات السكنية على أسس مخالفة  
للمعايير الأساسية للاقتراض في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية

Literal translation would be more appropriate to respect technical text characteristics by saying:

الاضطراب الذي سببته مؤسسات الإقراض "الطائشة" في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية  
بمنحها قروضا عقارية رديئة

- The final expression is ‘**housing market**’ that is translated literally into ‘سوق الإسكان’. A more appropriate translation can be given using the Arabic equivalent that is ‘سوق العقارات’ as the French equivalent ‘le marché d’immobilier’.

### Pattern B

The financial crisis in the US housing market has evolved into a large-scale liquidity crisis as the banks, credit institutions and *other players* in the financial market preferred to *hold cash* rather than lending to each other amidst the rush to get rid of the so-called *toxic assets*.

### Translation of pattern B

وتصاعدت أزمة سوق الإسكان في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية لتصبح أزمة واسعة النطاق شملت السيولة النقدية عندما أثرت البنوك ومؤسسات الاقتراض والناشطين الآخرين حجب أصولها النقدية بدلا عن تسليف بعضها البعض، كما كان متعارف عليه، في وسط حالة الذعر للتخلص مما يسمى "بالأصول الورقية المسمومة"

### Analysis of pattern B

- The first business idiom is 'the other players'. In English, investors in the financial markets are called 'players' since investment is considered as a game where we find winners and losers. However, due to the underdevelopment of Arab countries' financial systems, players are usually referred to in Arabic as 'المتعاملون'. The translator suggests another equivalent, which is 'الناشطون' though we think that this equivalent is more appropriate in a political context.
- The second idiom is 'to hold cash'. While looking to convey the idiomaticity of this expression, translator suggests saying "حجب" أصولها النقدية. However, this expression does not go in line with the characteristics of technical text. It is more appropriate to say "الاحتفاظ بالسيولة النقدية". Hence, idiomaticity can be retained by keeping the same structure of the SL expression that is to say abortive idiomaticity.
- The final expression is 'toxic asset', that is asset resulted from the securitization of bad mortgages. Since it is a new expression, abortive idiomaticity that is copying the English idiom literally in Arabic would be more appropriate. However, there is no need to add the word "الورقية" as done by the translator since there is no such a thing called "الأصول الورقية". so it is sufficient to say "الأصول المسمومة".

### 3-3 Analysis of Sample 2: the first chapter of the book ‘the Oil Curse: how petroleum wealth shapes the development of nations’

#### Pattern A

Understanding the resource curse is important for countries that export petroleum, but it also matters for countries that import it *to fuel their economies*.

#### Translation of pattern A

إن فهم لعنة الموارد أمر هام بالنسبة للبلدان المصدرة للنفط، لكنه مهم أيضا للبلدان التي تستورد النفط لتحرك به عجلات اقتصاداتها.

#### Analysis of pattern A

The expression ‘to fuel their economies’ is translated into "لتحرك" using modulation, since the point of view was changed from the cause (using fuel) into the result (moving the wheels). The use of this procedure helps the translator to transfer the idiomaticity of the expression from the SL into TL.

#### Pattern B

Petroleum revenues have four distinctive qualities: their scale, source, stability, and secrecy. These qualities arose, or got worse, thanks to the rising power of *state-owned oil companies*.

#### Translation of pattern B

عموما، هناك أربع صفات مميزة لعائدات النفط : حجمها، ومصدرها، واستقرارها، وسريتها. وهذه الصفات المميزة ترتقي أو تسوء حالا تبعا للقوة المتنامية لشركات النفط المملوكة من قبل الدولة.

#### Analysis of pattern B

The translator uses a literal translation to convey the meaning of the expression ‘state-owned oil companies’. However, it exists a more appropriate equivalent in Arabic to describe this type of companies, that is "الشركات العمومية" or in this context, we may

use the expression "الشركات الوطنية" as opposed to foreign companies. Even with keeping the same structure, the translator may use modulation to say "شركات الدولة" instead of passive voice 'شركات مملوكة من قبل الدولة' that does not go in line with the genius of TL.

#### 4. Findings

The main findings of the analysis as well as the comparison of the two samples are:

-We find more business idioms in the first sample compared to the second one. Most of them are new expressions appeared with the emergence of financial crisis, while business idioms in the second sample are old and were already a component of economic lexicon.

-Although the first sample has to be translated in a short time, we noticed that the translator has tried to avoid literal translation either by giving the equivalence or by explaining the expression or even by changing the whole structure of the SL sentence. However, the choice of equivalents led to inappropriate translation, which may reflect the translator's incompetence or can be justified by time limits.

-Seemingly, there are only few times when the translator uses literal translation in the translation of the second sample. Unlike the first sample, the translator succeeded in choosing equivalents that go in line with the genius of Arabic language (the stylistic features of Arabic business language). The problem is seen only when dealing with new expressions where we could find a more adequate equivalent than the one suggested by the translator.

-The translation of business idioms imposes on the translator to use literal translation most of the time due to the absence of the

same situation in TL, and suggesting an equivalent may result in creating structures different from the business discourse style in TL.

-The challenge for both translators was to convey the SL idiomaticity into TL with respecting the characteristics of technical texts mainly the direct style. Faced with the need to translate new expressions, and due to the absence of the same situation in TL, both translators tried to save and compensate idiomaticity by changing the whole structure of the SL sentence. This resulted in a literary translation that is different from the language used in business context.

### **Conclusion**

This study discusses the complexity of translating business idioms from English into Arabic. For this purpose, an analytical and comparative study of the corpus is used in which several patterns have been compared and analyzed. The results show that the strategies adopted when dealing with business idioms ranges between evasion and invasion. Although translator tries to avoid literal translation, the problem of finding the matching equivalent prevents the transference of idiomaticity from SL into TL.

The difficulties involved in the translation of business idioms do not necessarily reflect the translator's incompetence, other contributing elements can be identified; the most important one is the different level of economic systems' development. Since idioms are established socially to express the needs of their users in a specific social and cultural situation, they reflect the development and maturity of their environment. Therefore, it is hard to find an appropriate equivalent for an expression with the absence of a similar situation.

To face this problem, translator prefers to use literal translation rather than using an equivalent that is not homogeneous with the business language style. Thus, there are no ready-made, fixed strategies to be prescribed to translate business idioms, and it is up to the translator to choose and select the translation solution that renders the meaning of the expression as well as its idiomaticity.

Other recommendations can be suggested in this regard to facilitate the work of translators when dealing with business idioms is the creation of specific department within the international organizations in which we find trained translators in the field of business, thus, any report or document issued in English or in Arabic will contain appropriate equivalents in the target language. In addition to this effort, economists may help in the development of Arabic business language by avoiding third translation, i.e. translating from French while original documents already exist. This will minimize losses in both meaning and idiomaticity.

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