The Challenges Facing Translation Students in Translating Sports Idiomatic Expressions from Arabic into English

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the most commonly used strategies for translating sports idiomatic expressions from Arabic to English. It also aims to address the main difficulties faced by MA translation students when translating sports idiomatic expressions used in sports headlines from Arabic into English. Additionally, it aims to provide solutions and recommendations to overcome these problems. The sample for the study consisted of 40 MA translation students studying at the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University. The study collected data from sports headlines selected from Jordanian newspapers: Alghad, Alrai, and Aldustour, as well as electronic sports news sites such as Kooora and beIN Sport. Two research tools were used to collect the data: a translation test consisting of 15 sports idiomatic expressions and an interview. The study revealed that the most frequent strategy used was total equivalence/literal translation. Moreover, the study found that 58.17% of students provided incorrect translations. In conclusion, the study found that students faced numerous problems in translating Arabic sports idioms into English. These problems included limited knowledge of translation strategies, unfamiliarity with the characteristics of idioms, cultural differences, a tendency towards literal translation, unfamiliarity with sports idioms, and weak linguistic/pragmatic competence. The study also proposed solutions to overcome these problems and difficulties.

Keywords: Arabic-English translation, challenges, idioms and expressions, sports headlines

1. Introduction

Translation plays a significant role in exchanging knowledge between languages and cultures, enhancing communication between speakers of different languages, and bridging the gap between different cultures. It refers to the process of conveying the meaning of a text from one language into another (Newmark 1988). Translation is also seen as the process of transferring both the meaning and style of the source text into the target language (Nida and Taber 1969). During the translation process, translators strive to replace the source text with an appropriate equivalent in the target language. However, finding suitable equivalence is not an easy task due to cultural differences between the source and target languages (Larson 1984). Languages contain numerous culture-specific expressions and ideology-based terms that translators must carefully consider when conveying meaning from the source language to the target language (Hamdan, Naser and Hamdan 2021; Khalifah and Zibin 2022)

One of these culture-specific terms is idiomatic expressions. Idioms are fixed expressions that have a meaning that differs from the literal meaning of the individual words (Baker 1992). Seidl and McMordie (1988: 4) define an idiom as "a number of words which, taken together, mean something different from the individual words of the idiom when they stand alone." Additionally, Richards and Schmidt (2002: 246) also view an idiom as "an expression which functions as a single unit and whose meaning cannot be deduced from its separate parts". Therefore, the meaning of an idiom cannot be predicted from the meanings of its individual parts, making the translation of idioms a challenge for translators.

Translators may encounter numerous challenges when translating idioms from one language to another. These challenges include difficulties in conveying the meaning of the idiom and a lack of awareness of cultural differences between the source and target languages (Awwad 1990). Other challenges arise from the translator's ability to comprehend the idiom in the source language and accurately render it in the target language, as well as the multifaceted nature of idioms in the target language that may have different aspects of meaning (Baker 1992). Furthermore, the absence of direct equivalent idioms in the target language due to cultural differences with the source language presents another challenge for translators when translating idioms (Davies 2004). Hence, cultural disparities between the source and target languages can pose significant problems in translating idioms (Yowelly and Lataiwish 2000; Al-Shawi and Mahadi 2012; Mabrook 2021). Additionally, translators may face challenges in identifying idioms in the source language and resorting to literal translation, resulting in nonsensical translations (Mollanazar 2004).

Regarding the translation of English idioms into Arabic and vice versa, researchers have identified several challenges faced by students. These challenges include the inability to find an equivalent idiom in English, cultural differences between Arabic and English, and students' lack of awareness of idiomatic features (SajidJuma'a 2014). Weak linguistic knowledge also presents a challenge for students when translating English idioms into Arabic (Kohil 2009). Translators themselves encounter various problems when translating English idioms into Arabic, such as difficulty finding suitable equivalents in Arabic, limited exposure to English culture, and unfamiliarity with idioms in both the source and target languages (Alrishan and Smadi 2015; Mabrook 2021). Furthermore, when rendering Arabic idioms into English, students face challenges including cultural differences between Arabic and English, unfamiliarity with English idioms, and limited knowledge of translation strategies (Dweik and Suleiman 2013; Al Mubarak 2017). Translators also encounter translation difficulties when they render Arabic idioms into English due to stylistic differences between the two languages and the lack of appropriate equivalence in English (Khammyseh 2015). Another challenge that translators may face is the temptation to use literal translation when dealing with idioms (Aldahesh 2008; Bekkai 2009).

Significance of the study

Translators may encounter numerous challenges when translating sports language from Arabic into English. Therefore, the present study aims to provide solutions for these difficulties and assist translators in overcoming problems related to the translation of sports expressions. By studying the findings of this research, translators will enhance their ability to successfully translate sports language from Arabic into English. Furthermore, the study can be beneficial for translation professors as it enables them to anticipate the errors that students may make when translating sports language. This, in turn, allows them to focus on providing targeted solutions to address these errors.

Aim of the study

The purpose of this research is to explore the primary challenges encountered by translation students when translating sports expressions from Arabic into English. It aims to provide solutions to these problems and difficulties. The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What strategies are utilized in translating sports idioms from Arabic into English?
- What difficulties do students face when translating sports idiomatic expressions from Arabic to English?
- What are the recommended solutions for overcoming these difficulties?

2. Literature review

Several studies have investigated the translation of sports language. For instance, Shehab and Nazzal (2020) examined the translation of metaphors from English sports business texts into Arabic. The data were selected from sports business articles on online websites such as BBC, CNN, and Project Syndicate. The study employed a cognitive approach for data analysis. The findings revealed four main strategies used for translating game business metaphors. The first strategy involved maintaining the same metaphor in Arabic as in the original English. The second strategy involved translating English business metaphors into different metaphors in Arabic. In the third strategy, the translators conveyed only the meaning of the English metaphors into Arabic. The fourth strategy involved translating English non-metaphorical expressions into Arabic business metaphors.

In another study, Al-Aazzawi (2020) examined the influence of context on the translation of English sports idioms into Arabic. The study sample comprised 30 sports idiomatic expressions selected from ten different types of games. Ten professors from the Department of Translation at the University of Mosul were selected to translate these expressions. The findings of the study indicated that accurate translations were achieved within the appropriate context.

Bani Essa (2019) examined the challenges of translating football idiomatic expressions used in the 2018 World Cup Final. The data included 15 football idioms provided to 25 MA translation students at Yarmouk University, who were asked to translate them from English into Arabic. The study revealed that the primary difficulties in translating football idioms were the cultural disparity between

English and Arabic, the tendency to use literal translation, and unfamiliarity with idioms in both the source and target languages.

Khedri and Fumani (2016) investigated the strategies employed by four translators in translating football idiomatic expressions from English into Persian using Baker's model (1992). The data consisted of 200 English soccer idiomatic expressions collected from three sports websites. The study revealed that the most commonly used strategy was "using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form," while the least commonly used strategy was "translating by deletion."

Al-Hayali and Mohammed (2014) examined the challenges encountered by undergraduate students when translating English sports register into Arabic. The data were collected from various sports newspapers and magazines. Ten undergraduate students from the Translation Department at the University of Mosul were assigned to translate the selected texts. The study revealed that the students made numerous mistakes in translating the sports register due to their reliance on the literal translation.

Schultz (2013) examined the strategies employed in translating football texts from English to Swedish. The researcher selected twelve pages from the second chapter of the book How to Score – Science and the Beautiful Game and translated them into Swedish. The study revealed that the most common strategy used in translating football terminology was "borrowing." Additionally, the findings indicated that translators utilized all three of Newmark's strategies for translating the football is war metaphor. These strategies included reproducing the source language image in the target language, reducing the image of the source language to the literal language, and replacing the source language form with another form in the target language.

Obeid (2018) explored the translation of football nicknames from English into Arabic. The corpora of the study consisted of 29 football nicknames collected from five Arabic sources: Bein sports, Aljazeera channel, Kooora, Al-Ayyam and Al-Hayah newspaper, and Al-Jadida newspaper. The study found out that translators used two major strategies: transliteration and literal translations. The findings revealed that these strategies were not successful strategies because meanings of the nickname were lost or hidden in the target language.

Al-Delaa and Mahadi (2019) investigated the translation of sports metaphors used in sports headlines from Arabic to English. The sample of the study consisted of thirty sports headlines taken from two Jordanian newspapers, namely Aldustour and Alrai. The study discovered that the most frequently used metaphor was the humanizing metaphor. Furthermore, the findings revealed that translators encountered two main problems: missing the connotative meaning and unjustified omission.

In another study, Al-Azzawi and Nasser (2022) examined the role of context in translating sports idioms from English into Arabic. The data consisted of 10 sports idioms collected from different sport games. Ten professors of translation from the University of Mosul voluntarily participated in the study and set for the pretest and posttest. The professors were asked in the pretest to translate 10 English idioms abstracted from context into Arabic. In the posttest, the same professors

were asked to translate the same idioms with context into Arabic. The study found out that translators provided accurate translations of sport idioms within the context.

Based on the existing literature, it is evident that the translation of Arabic sports idioms into English has received limited research attention. This present study differs from previous research as it specifically focuses on the translation of sports idiomatic expressions from Arabic into English.

3. Method
3.1 Sample of the study
The study included 40 MA translation students enrolled at the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University. The participants were selected randomly without considering their social class, age, or geographical background. Of the participants, 28 were female and 12 were male. All participants provided informed consent for the usage of their data for research purposes.

3.2 Instruments of the study
The data were collected through two methods: a translation test and an interview. The test comprised 15 sports idiomatic expressions that the participants were asked to translate from Arabic into English (see Appendix 1). These idiomatic expressions were sourced from sports headlines selected from Jordanian newspapers such as Alghad, Alrai, and Aldustour, as well as electronic sports news sites like Kooora and beIN Sport. The data collection period spanned from January 2023 to March 2023. The translation test was employed by the researcher to identify the challenges that students may encounter when translating sports idiomatic expressions from Arabic into English.

The researcher conducted interviews with all the study participants, inquiring about the primary challenges they encountered when translating Arabic idioms. Additionally, the researcher provided each student with their translation test results. Subsequently, individual discussions were held with the students, addressing the incorrect translations they made and the difficulties that hindered their ability to provide accurate translations. The responses of the participants were also recorded.

A panel of three associate professors of translation, who teach at the undergraduate and MA levels at the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University approved the translation test, the verified translations of the expressions, and the interview questions. The feedback, comments, and suggestions provided by the panel of experts were carefully considered in the preparation of the translation test, interview questions, and the final approved translations.

The researcher further assessed the reliability of the instruments through the utilization of the test-retest method. Five translation students, who were not part of the study sample, were selected and requested to translate the idiomatic expressions from Arabic into English. After a two-week interval, the participants underwent the same examination once again. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was employed to determine the correlation between the results of the two tests. The findings indicated that the test exhibited high reliability, as the test-retest reliability correlation was 0.852, surpassing the threshold of 0.80.

3.3 Data analysis

After collecting the students' responses to the translation test, the researcher compared their translations with the verified translations of the sports idiomatic expressions. The accuracy of each translation was determined and classified into four main strategies following Baker's (1992) model:

1. Total equivalence translation: This strategy was employed when the students' translations closely resembled the researcher's translation, preserving both the meaning and the form of the original text.

2. Partial equivalence translation: This strategy was used when the students' translations resembled the researcher's translation in terms of meaning but did not fully capture the original text's form.

3. Translation by paraphrasing: According to this strategy, the students provided an explanation of the meaning of the source text using the target language.

4. Translation by omission: This strategy refers to the process of deleting parts of the source text in the target text.

After comparing the translations and identifying the strategies employed by the students for each idiom, the researcher conducted discussions to analyze the translation choices made. During these discussions, the researcher examined the specific translation strategies used for translating the idioms and explored the potential challenges that MA students face when translating Arabic idioms into English. After collecting the responses of the students during the interviews, the researcher engaged in discussions with them to explore and understand the main problems they identified from their own perspectives.

4. Results
4.1 Responses to translation test

The researcher utilized the translation test to examine the main strategies employed in translating Arabic idioms into English. The findings of the study are summarized in Table (1) below:

Table 1. Translation strategies

Translation strategies	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency of correct strategies	percentage of correct strategies
Total equivalence/ literal translation	348	58%	72	20.7%
Partial equivalence	41	6.83%	41	100%
Paraphrasing	168	28%	134	79.9%
omission	4	1.33%	2	50%
unanswered	35	5.83%	-------	--------

The table demonstrates that the most commonly employed strategy was total equivalence/literal translation, accounting for 58% of the translations. Paraphrasing was the next most frequent strategy at 28%, followed by partial equivalence at

6.83%. The least utilized strategy was translation by omission, representing only 1.33% of the translations.

With respect to appropriate strategies used, the study found out that paraphrasing was the most appropriate strategy with 136 instances, followed by total equivalence with 72 instances. These results indicated that the strategies used by students were not always appropriate. For example, even though total equivalence strategy was the most used strategy, but it was not always an appropriate strategy since only 20.7% of the total equivalence/literal translations were correct.

The researcher also used the translation test to examine the problems faced by MA translation students in translating sports idiomatic expressions from Arabic into English. The detailed results of the students' performance in the translation test are shown in Table (2) below.

Table 2. Results of the students' performance in the translation test

Arabic statements	Correct answer		Wrong answer		Unanswered	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	percent
Statement 1	40	100	0	0	0	0
Statement 2	7	17.5	31	77.5	2	5
Statement 3	14	35	23	57.5	3	7.5
Statement 4	26	65	12	30	2	5
Statement 5	16	40	22	65	2	5
Statement 6	40	100	0	0	0	0
Statement 7	2	5	34	85	4	10
Statement 8	12	30	26	65	2	5
Statement 9	14	35	22	55	4	10
Statement 10	14	35	24	60	2	5
Statement 11	16	40	22	55	2	5
Statement 12	26	65	14	35	0	0
Statement 13	14	35	24	60	2	5
Statement 14	2	5	32	80	6	15
Statement 15	8	20	28	70	4	10
total	251	41.83	314	52.33	35	5.83

Table 2 indicates that only 41.83% of the respondents provided correct answers. These findings reveal that MA translation students face serious problems when they translate sports idioms from Arabic into English. A detailed explanation of the main problems and translation strategies for each idiom is presented below:

- Statement 1: إنتر يقلب الطاولة على نابولي ويتصدّر مؤقتًا

The meaning of the idiom "يقلب الطاولة على" is to turn a situation to your advantage over someone who previously had an advantage over you. The findings showed that 65% of students translated the statement correctly, i.e., "Inter turn the tables on Naples and take the lead temporarily." The students rendered the idiom "يقلب الطاولة" into English by using the same form and meaning, i.e., "turn the table." The students

succeeded in translating the idiom using literal translation because this idiom has a total equivalence in English. Moreover, 25% of the respondents provided correct translation by using paraphrasing, such as "Inter reverse/change the situation and defeat/slams Naples." The findings also showed that 10% of the students provided correct translation by using a different idiom with the same meaning in English, such as "turns the tide." The familiarity of the expression and the use of literal translation are the main reasons for translating the relevant idiom correctly.

- Statement 2: هامبورغ يضع قدماً في الـ"بوندسليغا

The findings showed that 77.5% of the respondents translated the idiom "يضع قدماً" incorrectly, as they translated it literally, using phrases such as "put forward," "put a foot," and "set a foot." The data also revealed that 2 participants did not translate the idiom at all, indicating either a lack of understanding or an inability to paraphrase it in English. The wrong translations suggest that students lack the necessary linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of English, leading them to rely on literal translations. However, 17.5% of the students provided correct translations by rendering the meaning only, using phrases such as "book a place," "secures a place," "reach," and "qualify for."

- Statement 3: ريال بيتيس يمطر إسبانيول برباعية

The meaning of the idiom "يمطر" is to score multiple goals. Three participants provided correct translations by expressing the same meaning using different phrasing in English, such as "Real Betis showered Espanyol with four goals." Furthermore, the idiom was successfully translated by 27.5% of the respondents using a paraphrasing strategy, such as "Real Betis scores four goals against Espanyol." However, 57.5% of the students provided incorrect translations by translating the idiom literally as "rained the net" and "rained with goals." The data also revealed that three participants did not provide an answer. Possible reasons for these mistakes include unfamiliarity with the idiom in the source language, an inability to find an equivalent idiom in English, and relying on literal translations.

- Statement 4: منتخب لبنان يعدّ العدّة لملاقاة نظيره الفلبيني

The meaning of the idiom "يعدّ العدّة" is to prepare well for something. The findings indicated that 10% of the respondents translated the idiom using a partial equivalence strategy, such as "gear up." They translated the Arabic idiom into a different idiom in English with the same meaning. The results also showed that 55% of the respondents provided the correct translation of the idiom, such as "prepare." They focused on conveying the meaning in English without necessarily preserving the form of the idiom. However, the data showed that 20% of the students translated the idiom incorrectly, such as "prepare the tools," as they relied on a word-for-word translation. Additionally, the findings showed that 10% of the students provided incorrect translations, such as "equip," "plan," and "train," as they paraphrased the idiom incorrectly. It was also observed that 2 participants did not provide any answers. It appears that these students were unable to provide correct translations due to their reliance on literal translation, misunderstanding of the idiom in the source language, or inability to find an English idiom with the same meaning or to paraphrase it correctly in English.

- Statement 5: فالنسيا يرمم دفاعه بالتركي أوزكاكار

The meaning of the idiom "يرمم دفاعه" is to strengthen the defense. The findings revealed that 10% of the students provided correct translations by using the partial equivalence strategy. They rendered the idiom into a different idiom in English with the same meaning, such as "fortify its defense." Additionally, the results showed that 10% of the students provided correct translations using the omission strategy, such as "Valencia sign the Turkish defender Özkacar." The findings also showed that 20% of the students succeeded in translating the statement using the paraphrasing strategy, such as "Valencia sign Turkish Özkacar to strengthen its defense line" and "Valencia reinforces its defenses by signing the Turkish Özkacar." However, the data showed that 55% of the respondents failed to translate the statement correctly as they relied on literal translation, such as "Valencia restores/fixes/repairs its defenses." It was also observed that two participants did not provide an answer. It is evident that relying on literal translation, unfamiliarity with the idiom in Arabic, and the inability to convey the meaning of the idiom in English are among the main reasons for translating the idiom incorrectly.

- Statement 6: الحكومة البريطانية تعطي الضوء الأخضر لبيع تشيلسي

The meaning of the proverb "تعطي الضوء الأخضر" is to grant someone permission or approval to do something. According to Table (1), 100% of the respondents provided correct translations. The findings revealed that 50% of the students gave correct translations using total equivalence. They rendered the idiom in the same form and function, such as "UK Government give green light for Chelsea sale." Additionally, 20% provided correct translations using partial equivalence. They used another English idiom with the same meaning, such as "Chelsea sale gets green light from U.K. government." The results also showed that 30% of the respondents gave correct translations by paraphrasing, such as "UK government has approved the sale of Chelsea" and "UK government agrees to sell Chelsea." The students were successful in translating this idiom into English due to the existence of its English equivalent in both function and imagery, as well as their familiarity with it.

- Statement 7: المدرب جالتيه يُظهر العين الحمراء لنجوم باريس مبكراً

The meaning of the idiom "يُظهر العين الحمراء" is to be strict, tough, or harsh with someone. The results showed that 75% of the students translated the idiom incorrectly. They misunderstood the idiom and translated it literally as "show a red eye." They mistakenly believed that this idiom existed in English with the same meaning and form. This indicates that the students did not grasp the figurative meaning of the idiom, and even those who understood its meaning struggled to render it accurately in English. Consequently, they relied on literal translation. Furthermore, 10% of the respondents provided incorrect translations by paraphrasing it incorrectly in English, using words such as "punish," "be angry with," "dismiss," and "penalize." Additionally, four participants did not provide any translation at all. These results suggest a misunderstanding of the idiom and an inability to paraphrase it effectively in English. However, the data also showed that 5% of the students provided correct translations as they paraphrased it accurately, such as "Coach Galteh is being strict/tough with."

- Statement 8: دورتموند يغلق الباب في وجه برشلونة ومانشستر يونايتد. فلا نيه لبيع مونيه

The meaning of the idiom "يغلق الباب في وجه" is to refuse to do something or prevent someone from having something. The results showed that 65% of the students provided incorrect translations for the idiom "يغلق الباب في وجه". They translated it literally as "close the door on the face." Their reliance on literal translation indicates that they were unsure whether this idiom has a direct equivalent in English or not. Additionally, two participants did not provide any answers. One possible reason could be their inability to understand the idiom in Arabic. However, 10% of the respondents provided correct translations by conveying the meaning of the idiom using partial equivalence, such as "shuts the door on." The results also showed that 20% of the participants gave correct translations using the paraphrasing strategy. They rendered the meaning of the statement accurately, such as "Dortmund have no intention of selling Thomas Meunier to Barcelona and Manchester United," "Dortmund are not planning to sell Thomas Meunier to Barcelona and Manchester United," and "Dortmund do not want/refuse to sell Thomas Meunier to Barcelona and Manchester United."

- Statement 9: يورغن كلوب يكتب التاريخ مع ليفربول

The meaning of the idiom "يكتب التاريخ" is to do something great and significant. The results of the study showed that 55% of the students provided incorrect translations by translating the idiom "يكتب التاريخ" literally as "writes the history." This indicates that some students are not aware that an idiom does not necessarily have to have a direct equivalent in the target language. The data also revealed that four participants did not provide any answers. Furthermore, the results showed that 15% of the students translated the idiom correctly by using a different English idiom with the same meaning, such as "makes history." The data also revealed that 20% of the students provided correct translations using the paraphrasing strategy, such as "creates historical records" and "creates incredible records."

- Statement 10: فرانكفورت ... بين فكي عملاقين كيف سينجو؟

The meaning of the idiom "بين فكي عملاقين" is to choose between two difficult situations. The results revealed that 60% of the participants mistranslated the idiom as "Between the jaws of two giants." They relied on a literal translation because they believed that it existed in the same form in English. Table (1) also indicated that two participants did not provide any answers. It seems that they did not understand the idiom in Arabic or were unable to convey its meaning in English. However, 10% of the participants translated the idiom correctly by finding an English idiom with the same meaning, such as "Between the rock and the hard place" and "Between a rock and a hard place." The findings also showed that 25% of the respondents translated the idiom correctly using a paraphrasing strategy, such as "in a very difficult situation," "facing/playing with two strong teams," and "between two difficult choices."

- Statement 11: إيتو أول ياباني يحمل ألوان ريمس

The meaning of the idiom "يحمل ألوان" in sports is to play for. Table (1) indicated that 40% of the students gave correct translations by using a paraphrasing strategy such as "play for Reims," "move to Reims," and "transferred to Reims." On the other hand, 40% provided incorrect translations by translating the idiom literally as

"carry the colors of Reims." These students understood the meaning of the idiom but were unable to convey it accurately in English, possibly due to a lack of linguistic and pragmatic competence. Moreover, 15% translated the idiom incorrectly using paraphrasing such as "move in Reims." It appears that some participants had difficulty expressing the correct meaning in English, possibly due to writing challenges. Table (1) also revealed that two participants did not provide an answer.

- Statement 12: ريال مدريد يطوي صفحة مبامبي

Table (1) showed that 65% of the respondents provided the correct translation of the idiom "يطوي صفحة" using total equivalence in English, such as "turn the page on." Literal translation is considered a suitable strategy for translating this idiom because there is an English equivalent that maintains the same meaning and form. However, the results also revealed that 35% of the respondents translated the idiom incorrectly using a paraphrasing strategy, such as "ignores," "rejects," and "dismiss."

- Statement 13: لايزيغ إلى دوري الأبطال وأرمينيا بيليفيلد يودّع الأضواء

Table 1 showed that 60% of the students did not provide the correct translation of the idiom, as they rendered it literally into English as "bid farewell to the spotlight" and "say goodbye to the lights." On the other hand, 35% of the students gave correct translations using a paraphrasing strategy, such as "Arminia Bielefeld is out of the championship" and "Arminia Bielefeld was eliminated." Table (1) also revealed that two participants did not provide an answer.

- Statement 14: ميكيسوني ينهي صيامه مع الأهلي

The data showed that 65% of the students provided incorrect translations of the idiom "ينهي صيامه" as they relied on literal translation, such as "Mikisoni ends his fast with Al-Ahly." They depended on literal translation due to their lack of cultural knowledge of the idiom in the source language and their unfamiliarity with sports language. Additionally, 15% of the respondents translated the idiom incorrectly using paraphrasing, such as "Mikisoni ends his contract with Al-Ahly" and "Mikisoni stops playing for Al-Ahly." This indicates that some students did not understand the meaning of this idiom in Arabic. The data also showed that six participants did not understand the idiom or could not paraphrase it into English, so they provided no answer. However, the data showed that 5% of the respondents translated the idiom correctly by rendering the meaning of the idiom as "Miksoni resumes scoring goals after a long break or cessation."

- Statement 15: بايرن ميونيخ يحل ضيفاً ثقيلاً على فياربال

The findings revealed that 60% of the respondents gave incorrect translations of the idiom by translating the form directly into English, such as "Bayern Munich is a heavy guest on Villarreal." One possible reason for using literal translation is their lack of knowledge of collocations. The word "guest" collocates with "unwelcome," not with "heavy."

The data also showed that 10% of the respondents translated the statement incorrectly and ignored the idiom, such as "Bayern Munich will play with Villarreal." They missed the connotative meaning of the idiom. The expression

"ضيفاً ثقيلاً" is used in sports to describe a very strong team that could easily defeat the host team.

On the other hand, four participants provided no answer. This indicates that some students did not understand the idiom in Arabic or were unable to find an equivalent English idiom. However, 10% of the respondents gave correct translations by using a partial equivalence strategy, such as "Bayern Munich is an unwelcome guest on Villarreal." It is also shown that 10% of the students gave correct translations by using a paraphrasing strategy, such as "Villarreal hosts/plays/faces a tough/difficult opponent, 'Bayern Munich'."

4.2 Responses to the interview questions

The researchers also interviewed all participants to further investigate the challenges students may face when translating sports idioms from Arabic into English. The participants reported the following difficulties:

- Some students are unfamiliar with Arabic sports idioms. The majority of the respondents were females, and they were not exposed to sports language.
- Many students relied on literal translation because they were not exposed to English culture.
- Some students expressed that they understood the meaning of the idiom but were unsure of the best strategy to translate it into English. They lacked awareness of translation strategies for idioms.
- Many students understood the meaning of the idiom but struggled to paraphrase it correctly in English.
- Some students were unaware of the nature of idioms and believed they could be translated literally into English.
- Some students lacked an understanding of the connotative meaning of certain idioms and attempted to translate them without considering the implied meaning.
- Some students were unfamiliar with partial equivalent idioms in English mainly in sports. They had limited knowledge of sports idioms in English.
- Some students lacked linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of idioms in both Arabic and English.

5. Discussion
The results of the translation test showed that total equivalence/literal translation is the most common strategy used when translating sports idioms from English into Arabic. The study found that 20.7% of literal translations of Arabic idioms were correct and suitable. These findings indicate that literal translation is not a successful strategy for translating idioms since the meaning of an idiom is not derived from the meanings of its individual parts. Students tended to rely on literal translation when they could not find alternative strategies like partial equivalence, paraphrasing, or omission to render the idiom into English.

It is worth noting that literal translation/total equivalence can be used to translate idioms when the idioms in Arabic and English have the same form and function (optimal translatability). The findings of the translation test revealed that literal translation is a successful strategy for translating idiom numbers one, six, and twelve because these idioms have the same form and function in English. For example, the Arabic idiom "يقلب الطاولة على" has a total equivalence in English as "turn the table on".

The findings of the translation test showed that 58.17% of the participants did not provide correct translations. These results revealed that students encountered serious challenges in translating Arabic idioms into English. The first challenge is related to the unfamiliarity of sports idioms in Arabic and English. These results are consistent with the findings of other studies, such as Alrishan and Smadi (2015); Al Mubarak (2017); Bani Essa (2019); Mabrook (2021). One reason for the unfamiliarity with sports idioms is that the majority of participants were females (70%). The researcher reviewed the responses of the female participants, and they argued that they were not familiar with these idioms because they are not interested in sports. Many male and female students stated during the interview that they did not understand the idiom "ينهي صيامه" in sports because it was unfamiliar to them. As a result, they were unable to find an equivalent idiom in English or paraphrase it correctly.

Literal translation is not an appropriate strategy for translating idioms from one language to another, especially when the two languages have different systems. The findings of the study demonstrated that using literal translation poses one of the main challenges for translation students. These results are consistent with the findings of other studies, such as Mollanazar (2004); Aldahesh (2008); Bekkai (2009); Bani Essa (2019). The meaning of an idiom is not derived from the literal meanings of its individual parts, and thus, employing literal translation often yields nonsensical translations. For instance, the study revealed that 55% of the respondents incorrectly translated the idiom "يرمم دفاعه" using literal translations such as "restores/fixes/repairs its defenses". Additionally, the researcher interviewed the participants who successfully used literal translation to translate statements one, six, and twelve. Some of them mentioned that they were unaware of whether these idioms had a direct equivalent or not. They resorted to literal translation because they did not know how to render these idioms into English using other strategies.

Another challenge that students faced was their inability to paraphrase Arabic idioms in English. The findings of the review revealed that many students understood the meaning of the Arabic idioms, but they struggled to express it accurately in English due to difficulties in writing proficiency. These findings align with the results of Baker's (1992) and Kohil's (2009) studies. Some students who did not provide any translations stated that they comprehended the idiom in Arabic but were unable to paraphrase it. Furthermore, the results of the interviews indicated that some students inappropriately paraphrased certain idioms into English due to their limited writing skills in English. For instance, 15% of the respondents

translated the idiom "يحمل ألوان" incorrectly as "move in" because they lacked sufficient linguistic competence in English.

Another difficulty encountered by translation students is their inability to identify Arabic idioms. These findings align with the results of other studies, such as Mollanazar (2004) and SajidJuma'a (2014). It appears that some students were unable to recognize the idiomatic nature of certain expressions and treated them literally. They translated the idioms word by word, disregarding the fact that idioms often carry figurative or connotative meanings. For example, some students incorrectly translated the idiom "يحل ضيفاً ثقيلاً" as "play with." They overlooked the connotative meaning of the Arabic idiom, which is used to describe an unwelcome guest.

Translation students also face a significant challenge when translating Arabic idioms into English due to cultural differences between the two languages. These findings align with other studies, such as Awwad (1990); Yowelly and Lataiwish (2000); Davies (2004); SajidJuma'a (2014); Al Mubarak (2017); Bani Essa (2019); Mabrook (2021). English and Arabic languages have distinct cultures and employ different culture-specific terms, including idioms. Consequently, an Arabic idiom may not have an equivalent counterpart in English. A proficient translator should possess knowledge of both Arabic and English cultures to accurately translate idioms from Arabic into English. For instance, the sports idiom "يضع قدماً" does not have a direct English equivalent. The translator must convey its meaning through phrases like "book a place," "secure a place," "reach," or "qualify for."

The results of the translation test and interviews revealed that some students struggled to translate Arabic idioms into English due to a lack of knowledge about effective translation strategies for idioms. These findings are consistent with the results of other studies, such as Al Mubarak (2017). The interviews indicated that certain students faced difficulties in translating Arabic idioms because they were unfamiliar with the appropriate strategies for translating idiomatic expressions into English.

As shown earlier, MA translation students have encountered numerous challenges when translating sports idioms from Arabic into English. This study proposes several recommendations to address these problems:

1. Translation students should be familiarized with effective strategies for translating idioms from Arabic into English. They need to understand that literal translation is not always suitable for idiomatic expressions and alternative approaches should be employed.
2. Translators should immerse themselves in the sports language of both Arabic and English. This can be achieved by reading sports news articles in Arabic and English or watching sports matches with commentary in both languages.
3. Culture and language are closely intertwined, and translators should possess a strong understanding of both the source and target cultures. Cultural knowledge plays a significant role in accurately translating idioms.
4. Translation professors should focus on teaching the translatability of idioms to their students. Special attention should be given to the challenges and strategies involved in translating idiomatic expressions.

5. Translation textbooks should include a diverse range of idioms and emphasize the impact of culture on their translation. This will provide students with exposure to different types of idioms and enhance their understanding of cultural nuances.
6. It would be beneficial for translation students to take a dedicated course that highlights the importance of culture in translation. Such a course can deepen their awareness of cultural factors and their impact on translation decisions.

Overall, implementing these recommendations can help translation students overcome the challenges they face when translating sports idioms from Arabic into English.

5   Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the translation strategies employed for rendering sports idioms from Arabic into English. The findings indicated that the most commonly used strategy was total equivalence or literal translation. However, it was observed that literal translation was not effective in accurately translating Arabic idioms into English, as only 20.7% of the literal translations were successful. The study revealed that total equivalence can only be applied when the Arabic idiom has an equivalent idiom with the same meaning in English.

The study also aimed to investigate the main challenges encountered by MA translation students when translating sports idioms from Arabic into English. The findings revealed that a significant number of students (58.17%) encountered difficulties in accurately translating Arabic idioms into English. The study identified several challenges, including cultural differences between Arabic and English, reliance on literal translation, unfamiliarity with sports idioms, limited linguistic and pragmatic knowledge in the target language, insufficient knowledge of translation strategies, and lack of awareness of the characteristics of idioms.

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