

Strategies of Translating Idioms in English-Arabic Dictionaries

Showqi Bahumaid
University of Sharjah

Abstract: *This study examines the strategies of translating English idioms into Arabic in three of the most widely used general English-Arabic dictionaries. A total of fifty English idioms have been selected by a panel of three professors of linguistics and translation out of a hundred idioms culled from various English-Arabic translation studies on idioms in the light of an operational definition of idioms attempted by the researcher. It was found that of the five commonly used strategies of translating idioms, paraphrase was the most dominant one counting for 73-87% of the renditions of the idioms listed in those dictionaries. The second commonest strategy was "using equivalent idioms that are dissimilar in words and structure to their English counterparts", followed by "calquing". The adequacy of the translation strategies employed in rendering those idioms and the extent of appropriateness of the Arabic renditions proposed in such dictionaries as equivalent to those idioms as well as their usefulness to the translator are then discussed. The researcher concludes by making some recommendations aimed at a more adequate handling of English idioms in English-Arabic dictionaries and a more efficient utilization, by translators, of such dictionaries in rendering English idioms occurring in different types of texts.*

1. Introduction

An idiom is generally defined as a group of words that is recognized as a unit of usage whose meaning cannot be deduced from its constituent words. For example, the meaning of the oft-quoted idiom *kick the bucket* is not related to the meanings of the individual words *kick* and *bucket* comprising it. The lack of predictability of the meanings of idioms as well as a few other features thereof discussed in Section 2 below make them particularly difficult for non-native speakers of a language to master. Indeed, familiarity with a wide range of idioms and their appropriate use in context are considered a major asset of native speakers of a language. In the words of Cowie and Mackin (1975: vi) the proper knowledge and use of idioms are '*the distinguishing marks of a native-like command of English.*'

Although idioms are often associated with informal spoken language, they are very common in several written forms. They are particularly pervasive in stories, and in articles in journals and magazines as attested by the ample evidence from the Bank of English reported in the *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Idioms* (1995:vi). Idioms are used specifically because, as noted in the introduction to the *Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms* (1998:1), they are more colorful and forceful in meaning than non-idiomatic phrases. For

example, the idiomatic expression *look dagger at someone* is much more vivid and emphatic in meaning than *look angrily at someone*. Recognizing the significance of idioms in language and their rather intricate features, lexicologists (Makkai 1972; Fernando and Flavel 1981; Carter 1987; McCarthy 1990; Moon 1998, to mention a few) have accorded particular attention to this lexical category. Meanwhile, a great deal of discussion of idioms is also found in several sources in the area of translation studies (Newmark 1988, Baker 1992, Wehrli 1998, etc.) albeit for a different reason, namely the special difficulties encountered by translators in rendering idioms in the target language (Section 3).

This study investigates the strategies of translating English idioms in general-use bilingual English-Arabic dictionaries. The rationale, objectives and methodology of the study are discussed in Section 3 below. Prior to this, the researcher will attempt a working definition of the term “idiom” and discuss the strategies of translating idioms as revealed in relevant literature

2. Idioms: A working definition

In this section, the term “idiom” will be defined on the basis of a number of criteria drawn from the available literature. This operational definition will then be consistently applied in identifying the types of expressions that meet those criteria and would therefore qualify as idioms.

An idiom, as used in this study, may be defined as an institutionalized lexical phrase that acts as a single semantic unit and displays, to a greater or lesser extent, the two main features of (a) semantic opaqueness, or non-compositionality, and (b) lexical and syntactic fixedness. These two aspects of idioms may be best viewed as a cline or continuum where idioms that allow little or no semantic transparency and/or lexical and syntactic variation are placed at one end, while those which reflect the highest permissible level of such features are placed at the other end with the remaining idioms falling somewhere between these two ranges. Thus, the meaning of such semantically opaque idioms as *jump the gun*, *bite the dust* and *go to the dogs* cannot be elicited from the denotative meanings of their constituent words. Meanwhile, it would be much less challenging to guess the meanings of such semi-opaque idioms as *look for a needle in a haystack*, *speak your mind* and *hold all the cards* since their literal and idiomatic meanings are related through figurative usage. As for lexical fixedness, it may be noted that some idioms (Examples: *bury the hatchet*, *move heaven and earth* and *smell a rat*) do not permit any of their lexical constituents to be altered while others may allow two or more lexical variants to be used (Examples: *let / blow off steam*, *tread / skate on thin ice* and *not give a damn / a toss / a hoot / a tinker’s cross*) as revealed in the British National Corpus. The same corpus provides evidence indicating considerable variation in the syntactic behavior of idioms. Here, one may notice that only in a few idioms (e.g. *under the weather*) no substitution, modification, transformations, or deletion is permitted. Meanwhile, several idioms may allow only a single syntactic transformation such as passivization (e.g. *The beans were spilled*), or

inflection in the past tense (e.g. *He kicked the bucket*) while others (e.g. *keep tabs on*) may tolerate different kinds of transformations and modification. A further syntactic variation, pointed out by Pulman (1986:4) is that parts of some idioms can serve as antecedents to pronouns (e.g. *He turned the tables on me and then I turned them on him*) and ellipsis (e.g. *They said the tide would turn, and eventually it did*).

The careful application of our operational definition of what constitutes an idiom would enable us to identify the lexical phrases that may qualify as idioms. They include the following categories:

- a. Lexical phrases that are totally opaque (Examples: *bite the bullet, red herring, bear the brunt*)
- b. Metaphor-based lexical phrases such as *rain cats and dogs, spill the beans* and *let the cat out of the bag*.
- c. Semantically opaque and syntactically immutable pairs of words joined by *and / or*. These may be nominal (e.g. *huff and puff*), adjectival (e.g. *alive and kicking*), or adverbial (e.g. *hammer and tongs; by hook or by crook*)
- d. Restricted collocations in which each of their collocates has a figurative sense (e.g. *fat cat*)
- e. Dead and frozen metaphors that have gained currency among the speakers of English and acquired conventionalized meanings (Cooper 1999). Examples: *play with fire, light at the end of the tunnel* and *sail close to the wind*.

3. Strategies of translating idioms: An overview

In translating idioms, translators would have to perform three interrelated tasks, namely recognizing and interpreting the SL idiom and then finding an appropriate equivalent for it in the TL. These aspects will be investigated in this section with special reference to the translation studies involving English and Arabic which have been conducted by a rather limited number of researchers (Awwad 1987; Baker 1992; Kharma 1997; Bataineh and Bataineh 2002; Ghazala 2004; Abu-Ssaydeh 2004, 2006).

Recognizing that a certain group of words constitutes an idiom would be fairly easy in the case of some idioms (e.g. *jump down somebody's throat*) that 'violate truth conditions.' (Baker 1992:65). Likewise, idioms which are grammatically idiosyncratic (e.g. 'blow someone to kingdom come') or totally opaque (e.g. *white elephant*) will not pose a serious challenge for the translator to recognize as idioms. Having recognized that a certain lexical phrase constitutes an idiom, the translator will then attempt an interpretation of that idiom. In some cases, the translator will succeed in their attempt even if they are unfamiliar with that idiom by processing it as a metaphor (Pulman 1986:2). This would be the case, for example, of the English idiom *skate on thin ice* in such a sentence as *We feel that they are skating on thin ice with that project*. However, translators would face a great challenge in interpreting culture-specific idioms. Problems of interpreting idioms will be further augmented if

the cultures of the SL and TL are far apart from each other as in the case of Arabic and English. For example, the translator's familiarity with the culture-specific Arabic item الرحي (A tool that consists of two circular mill-stones used for grinding up something such as beans or peanuts into small pieces) is quite essential for them to correctly interpret such an idiom as بين شقي الرحي (lit. 'between the two parts of hand mill') in order to provide its translational equivalent in English: *between the devil and the blue deep sea*.

Following the correct interpretation of an idiom, the translator proceeds to find its translational equivalent in the TL by employing certain strategies. In this paper, the term 'strategy' is used, following Loescher (1991:8), to refer to 'a *potentially conscious procedure for solving a problem faced in translating a text or any segment of it.*' Other translation scholars (Vinay and Darblent 1958/1995; Newmark 1988) use the term 'procedure' to designate the same concept. Five strategies for translating idioms are often discussed in translation studies. These are as follows:

(a) Translating an SL idiom by an equivalent TL idiom that is identical or similar in both words and structure.

This strategy would perhaps be considered the most appropriate one for translating idioms. However, such a strategy would not hold in most cases especially when the two languages involved in the translation are culturally divergent and have different linguistic and historical origins. Indeed, there are only a few equivalent idioms that are similar in their structural and lexical make-up in such pairs of languages as English and Arabic whose cultures and linguistic affiliations are disparate. Examples:

English	Arabic
<i>save somebody's skin</i>	ينجو بجلده (lit. 'save his skin')
<i>wash his hands of (something)</i>	يغسل يديه من (شيء) (lit. 'wash his two hands of something')
<i>I am all ears</i>	كلي آذان صاغية (lit. 'I am all ears')

(b) Translating an SL idiom by an equivalent TL idiom that uses different words and structure

Although this strategy is less acceptable than the first one, it may be considered more feasible since many idioms that have the same semantic content but different forms and lexical items would be available across languages. The following examples illustrate the use of this strategy for translating some English idioms into Arabic:

English	Arabic
<i>have somebody in the palm of your hand</i>	خاتم في إصبعي (lit. 'a ring on my finger')
<i>a thorn in your side</i>	شوكة في الحلق (lit. 'a thorn in the throat')

eat dust

يبتلع الإهانة (lit. 'swallow the insult')

sit on one's hands

يقف مكتوف اليدين (lit. 'stand with his hands tied up')

(c) Paraphrase

A paraphrase may be defined as an expanded target text version of a source text lexical unit written in the translator's own words in order to reproduce the source text author's meaning as closely as possible (Munday 2009:214). Using paraphrases in translating idioms would be the safest and most appropriate strategy in cases where no idioms that correspond to SL ones are available in the TL. It must be pointed out that employing the strategy of paraphrasing for translating idioms would entail that the rhetorical effect and cultural implications of the SL idioms will be dispensed with thus leaving the reader of the TL text with much to be desired. Examples of possible paraphrases in Arabic that may fit as translational equivalents for English idioms are given below:

English

dry behind the ears

Arabic

محنك 'experienced'

raise eyebrows

بيدي الدهشة 'show great surprise'

hammer and tongs

بعنف 'violently'

spill the beans

يفشي السر 'disclose a secret'

feast one's eyes on

يمتع ناظريه 'enjoy the sight of'

(d) Calque

A calque or, to use Newmark's 1988's terminology, a 'loan translation' is a translation strategy whereby the individual elements of an SL item are translated literally to reproduce a TL equivalent (Shuttleworth and Cowie 1999:18). The dominance of English worldwide due to political, economic and historical factors has led, among other things, to the spread, mainly through the media, of expressions and phrases including idioms borrowed from English to several languages. The borrowed idioms correspond both literally and figuratively to their English counterparts. In Arabic, a number of English calques are currently in frequent circulation among native speakers of the language. Such calques have become part and parcel of the Arabic lexicon and have even found their way into some monolingual Arabic-Arabic and bilingual English-Arabic dictionaries. For example, the Arabic idiom كسر الرقم القياسي ضرب/ which is borrowed from English *break a record* is found in *Al-Mu'jam Al-Wajeez* (2007:378) - an Arabic-Arabic dictionary published by the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo- and Ba'albaki's *Al-Mawrid: a modern English -Arabic dictionary* (2000:766). Examples of some English calques that appear in spoken and/or written forms in Arabic are listed below:

English	Arabic
<i>twist his arm</i>	يلوي ذراعه
<i>tighten the belt</i>	شد الأحزمة على البطن
<i>strike a (sensitive) chord</i>	يضرب على وتر (حساس)
<i>get the lion's share</i>	يحصل على نصيب الأسد

(e) Literal translation

In both calques and literal translation, a word-for-word correspondence exists between the SL idioms and their TL counterparts. However, unlike calques which have been transferred from the SL to the TL through borrowing and ‘*may over time become fixed*’ (Munday 2009: 171), literal translation reflects the attempts made by individual translators to produce what they would perceive as correct renditions of the SL idioms. It should be pointed out that since idioms primarily convey figurative meanings, they would not be expected, in the overwhelming majority of cases, to lend themselves easily to literal translation. Hence, using literal translation as a strategy for translating idioms will be always fraught with problems. It is for this reason that translation scholars often caution translators against the use of literal translation in rendering idioms into the TL, although they do not rule it out completely. In this respect, Newmark (1998:73) states that ‘*idioms cannot be translated literally ... unless they have a perfect literal equivalent in the TL.*’ Thus, translators may attempt a literal translation of an SL idiom only as a last resort when the four translation strategies discussed above cannot be employed.

As far as the translation of English idioms into Arabic is concerned, Abu-Sayyideh (2004:125) points out that only in a few cases literal translation may fit snugly in the idiomatic system of Arabic. The most significant requirement that must be fulfilled in translating an SL idiom literally is that the TL items must have the literal and figurative potential of that idiom as in the case of the literal Arabic rendition of the English idiom *broaden his horizons* as *يوسع آفاقه*.

Before concluding this section, it is worth mentioning that the translator’s selection of specific strategies for translating idioms in a certain text will be determined by several factors including the source-text type, its genre, style and rhetorical effect, the context in which the SL idiom is used, the purpose of the translation and its target readership.

4. The Study

4.1 Objectives

The present study aims at (a) investigating the accuracy of the Arabic translational equivalents proposed in general-use bilingual (English-Arabic) dictionaries for their corresponding English idioms, (b) assessing the extent of

usefulness of such translational equivalents for translators while translating English texts in which those idioms may occur, and (c) identifying the strategies employed by the compilers of those dictionaries in translating idioms and examining the extent of adequacy thereof. Some implications and recommendations will be made by the writer for the purpose of achieving a more adequate handling of English idioms in English-Arabic dictionaries and an efficient utilization, by translators, of such dictionaries in their translation of English idioms occurring in different types of texts.

4.2. Rationale

Idioms occupy a significant position in both spoken and written forms of English (Section 1); hence, they are expected to occur in various types of texts. From the translator's perspective, English idioms pose a serious challenge in terms of recognition, interpretation and identification of their proper equivalents in the TL (Section 3). As such, translators would often rush to search for the translation equivalents of those idioms in a bilingual dictionary which is '*the translator's single, first and foremost important aid.*' (Newmark 1998: 29) A study of the Arabic translational equivalents of English idioms presented in English-Arabic dictionaries would therefore be justified to determine the extent to which the translator's needs in this specific area of lexis are catered for in such dictionaries. Since the Arabic translational equivalents proposed in those dictionaries are the product of the types of strategies employed in the translation of their corresponding English idioms, an investigation of such strategies would be necessary to assess their appropriateness and explore possible means for improvement. The paucity of research on this particular subject further enhances the need for such studies as the present one.

4.3 Methodology

4.3.1 Data collection

In collecting the data for this study, the researcher followed a 4-step procedure. The first step involved selecting a hundred English idioms, on the basis of the writer's working definition of "idiom" in Section 2 above, culled from several English-Arabic translation studies on idioms ((Awwad 1987; Kharma 1997; Bataineh and Bataineh 2002; Ghazala 2004; Abu-Ssaydeh 2004, 2006). In the second step, the writer presented the 100-idiom list to a panel of three native Arabic-speaking professors of linguistics each of whom has compiled at least one English-Arabic / Arabic-English dictionary. These scholars, who hold doctoral degrees from British and American universities and have taught translation to both undergraduate and graduate students for more than twenty years, were asked to select from the 100-idiom list a total of fifty idioms which they strongly believe should be included in general – use bilingual English-Arabic dictionaries. In the third step, the writer made the final list of the fifty English idioms that constituted the data for the study: 29 idioms were unanimously selected by the three members of the panel while the rest were

selected by two of them. The writer then proceeded to the fourth and last step in which he selected three bilingual English-Arabic dictionaries which are widely used among translators. These are Al-Karmi's (1987) *Al-Mughni Al-Akbar, A Dictionary of Classical and Modern English, English-Arabic*, Ba'albaki's (2000) *Al-Mawrid, A Modern English-Arabic Dictionary* and *Atlas Encyclopedic Dictionary* (2002). A list of the fifty English idioms investigated in this study and their Arabic counterparts proposed in those three English-Arabic dictionaries are provided in Appendix 1.

4.3.2 Limitations of the study

The present study suffers from the limitation pertaining to the rather small size of its data i.e. 50 idioms. It was thought that in addition to space limitations, the analysis of the Arabic translational equivalents of a greater number of English idioms as well as the strategies employed in their renditions in three English-Arabic dictionaries would be too cumbersome to handle in a single study. Further research involving a greater number of English idioms may be conducted along the lines of this study to confirm or refute its findings.

4.3.3 Data analysis

A careful look at the three English-Arabic dictionaries surveyed reveals that the number of English idioms listed varies from one dictionary to another. However, no specific criteria have been stated, in any of the three dictionaries, or, for that matter, can be inferred regarding the inclusion or exclusion of certain idioms. This issue, it appears, has been determined on the basis of the personal judgments of the compilers of those dictionaries. It may be noted that all the fifty idioms investigated in this study have been listed in such general-use monolingual dictionaries as *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English – LDCE-* (1999). As far as the bilingual dictionaries under study are concerned, the highest number of idioms (38) is listed in *Al-Mughni Al-Akbar* followed by *Atlas* (31) and *Al-Mawrid* (29) – See Table 1. In each of these dictionaries, the idioms are listed at the end of each entry and are even labeled as such in *Atlas*. However, no indication has been given in any of the three dictionaries regarding the exact location of such idioms. In fact, idioms have been listed in those dictionaries in a rather inconsistent manner: some idioms have been listed under the first content word in the idiom (e.g. *Al-Mawrid*: 91; *Al-Mughni Al-Akbar*: 110; *Atlas*: 103 *not bat an eye*) while others have been listed under the second (e.g. *Al-Mawrid*: 760 *smell a rat*) or even the third one (e.g. *Al-Mughni Al-Akbar*: 598 *skate on thin ice*). Thus, for some idioms such as *take something with a grain of salt*, one has to look at three entries i.e. *take*, *grain* and *salt*, in order to find that idiom. By contrast, the compilers of *LDCE*, which is a user-friendly dictionary, have indicated in “The Guide to the Dictionary, p. xv” that an idiom will be listed under the main word in it, and they have consistently applied this guideline throughout the dictionary. In addition, *LDCE* provides cross-references to the idioms listed. For example, the meaning of the idiom *beat about the bush* is given at *beat* (p. 98); if the reader looks at this idiom at

bush (p. 171), they will find a cross-reference note at the end of the entry telling them where to find it. No cross-references to the idioms listed in the three English-Arabic dictionaries surveyed have been provided. As for the level of usage of an English idiom, this has been occasionally indicated in *Atlas* and *al-Mawrid*. For example, *Atlas*: 1047 uses the Arabic word عامية "colloquial" as in عامية "تمطر بغزارة – عامية" "rain cats and dogs" while *Al-Mawrid*: 502 uses the contracted form ع as in ع "يموت – ع" "kick the bucket". This is however rather confusing to the dictionary user who is led to believe that the equivalent Arabic expression is colloquial. It would have been more appropriate if the level of usage of the English idiom (informal, formal, humorous, etc.)

is provided in English while that of its Arabic equivalent is given in Arabic.

In rendering the English idioms surveyed into Arabic, the compilers of the three English-Arabic dictionaries have employed five strategies. Table 1 lists those translation strategies and indicates the frequency of use of each strategy in the three dictionaries:

Table 1. Frequency of the strategies of translating idioms in English-Arabic dictionaries

Translation strategy	Frequency					
	<i>Al-Mawrid</i>		<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i>		<i>Atlas</i>	
	No. of Idioms	Percentage	No. of idioms	Percentage	No. of idioms	Percentage
1. Equivalent TL idiom using similar words and structure to those in the SL idiom	1	3.5	0	0	1	3.3
2. Equivalent TL idiom using dissimilar words and structure to those in the SL idiom	1	3.5	7	18.4	0	0
3. Paraphrase	24	82.7	28	73.7	27	87
4. Calque	3	10.3	1	2.6	2	6.4
5. Literal translation	0	0	2	5.3	1	3.3
Total number of idioms listed in each dictionary	29	100	38	100	31	100
Total number of idioms investigated in the study: 50						

As shown on Table 1 above, paraphrasing is by far the most frequently used strategy for rendering the English idioms into Arabic, with *Atlas* recording the highest percentage (87%) followed by *Al-Mawrid* (82.7%) and *Al-Mughni al-Akbar* (73.7). There is however some variation in the second highest strategy of translating idioms. While *Al-Mughni al-Akbar* tends to employ the strategy of "providing an equivalent Arabic idiom using dissimilar words and structure" (18.4%), both *Al-Mawrid* and *Atlas* have opted for the use of "calquing" with the former recording a slightly higher percentage (10.3%) than the latter (6.4%). Literal translation into Arabic has been attempted in the three dictionaries in rendering three English idioms only and even a smaller number of idioms i.e. two have been translated by "providing Arabic equivalents that are similar in both words and structure to their English counterparts."

5. Discussion of results

This section discusses the extent of adequacy of the strategies employed in the three general-use bilingual English-Arabic dictionaries for translating, into Arabic, the English idioms under study and the accuracy of the resultant Arabic renditions of those idioms.

5.1 Adequacy of the strategies used in translating idioms in the dictionaries surveyed

As indicated in Section 5.3.2 above, there has been a high incidence of the strategy of paraphrasing in translating idioms in the three dictionaries. It must be pointed out that the provision of Arabic paraphrases as equivalent to their corresponding English idioms would not be very helpful for the translator who would often search for precise, brief and compact renditions that would fit neatly in a given target text. As stated in Burkhanov (1998: 249), the bilingual dictionary "*should offer not explanatory paraphrases or definitions, but real lexical items of the target language which can be inserted in the context and produce a smooth translation.*" Two possible explanations may be offered by the writer of this study for giving priority, by the compilers of the three dictionaries, to the strategy of paraphrasing over the other strategies in rendering English idioms into Arabic. First, the compilers' major concern might have been to provide explicit meanings of the English idioms, through paraphrases, to the users of those dictionaries. This concern overrides, from the compilers' perspective, the particular needs of any specific category of dictionary users, such as translators. Second, the compilers might not have been aware of the special preferences given by translators to equivalent idioms in the TL over paraphrases in rendering their SL counterparts. Support for this explanation is evidenced in the presence of eight English idioms included in the study which could have been more appropriately rendered by employing the strategy of "providing equivalent Arabic idioms that are dissimilar in forms and lexical items" than the strategy of "paraphrasing" employed in the three dictionaries

(Appendix 1). Table 2 below lists those English idioms and their Arabic equivalent idioms proposed by the writer of the present study.

Table 2: Arabic idioms proposed by the writer as equivalent to their English counterparts

English Idioms	Arabic equivalent idioms proposed by the writer
kick the bucket	ارتاح / ودع (lit. see somebody off / rest) (lit. get transferred to Allah's mercy / the vicinity of his God)
bury the hatchet	عاد حبل الود بينهم من جديد (lit. the rope of cordiality between them is back again)
smell a rat	يشتم رائحة مكروه (lit. smell something fishy)
leave no stone unturned	لم يترك بابا إلا طرقه (lit. knock on every door)
move heaven and earth	أقام الدنيا وأقعدها (lit. make the earth stand and sit down)
wild-goose chase	أمل إبليس في الجنة (lit. the hope of Satan to be in paradise)
wet behind the ears	ما زال غرا / في المهد (lit. he is still a baby / in the cradle)
break new ground	يفتح آفاقا جديدة (lit. open new horizons)
hit the roof	أرغى وأزبد / هاج وماج / فقد أعصابه (lit. act furiously / lose his nerves)

It has been further observed that in several cases where more than one Arabic rendition is proposed in those dictionaries as equivalent to their corresponding English idioms, the renditions resulting from the utilization of the strategy of "paraphrasing" have been listed ahead of those involving the use of the strategy of "providing equivalent Arabic idioms that are dissimilar in forms and lexical items". For example, *Al-Mughni al-Akbar*: 1638 has proposed, as a first option, the paraphrase مطاردة عبث (lit. futile chase) followed by the equivalent idiom كمن يتطلب في الماء جذوة نار (lit. like someone looking for amber inside water) as equivalent to the English idiom *wild-goose chase*. Likewise, in rendering the English idiom *smell a rat* into Arabic, *Al-Mawrid*: 760 gives precedence to the paraphrase يخامر الشك (lit. have doubts) over the equivalent colloquial idiom يلعب الفأر في عبه (lit. a hidden rat is moving inside somebody).

The foregoing discussion highlights the need to involve translation scholars, among other specialists, in the process of compiling and editing general-use bilingual English – Arabic dictionaries. Apparently, this group of scholars who are expected to be well versed in identifying the translator's needs and preferences in translating idioms have not been involved in the compilation of the dictionaries under study. In fact, two of these dictionaries i.e. *Al-Marid* and *Al-Mughni al-Akbar*, have been produced by individual compilers who are mainly linguists. As for the third English-Arabic dictionary i.e. *Atlas*, it has been compiled, as stated in the "Introduction" (p. vii), by 'a team of language

specialists'. It should be emphasized that the present writer's call for involving translation scholars in the compilation of bilingual dictionaries by no means underrates the great merits of the dictionaries surveyed and the valuable contribution they have made in meeting the needs and requirements of their users, including translators.

The strategy of providing equivalent TL idioms dissimilar in structure and words to their SL counterparts has been employed in rendering twelve English idioms into Arabic (Appendix 1). It has been used as a first-choice strategy in rendering eight idioms (See Table 1 above) and as a second option, following a paraphrase, in the rest. Of these, nine equivalent Arabic idioms have been proposed in *Al-Mughni al-Akbar*, one i.e. يلعب الفأر في عبه (lit. a hidden rat is moving inside somebody) – English *smell a rat*, is found in *Al-Mawrid*: 760, and another i.e. يقضي عليه / قمعه في المهد (lit. put an end to something in the cradle) – English *nip in the bud*, and another is provided in both *Al-Mawrid*: 614 and *Al-Mughni al-Akbar*: 866. The nine Arabic idioms attempted in *Al-Mughni al-Akbar* are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Arabic idioms used as equivalent to their English counterparts in *Al-Mughni al-Akbar*

English idioms	Arabic equivalent idioms	Page number
kick the bucket	قرض رباطه (lit. die because of hunger and thirst)	677
rain cats and dogs	جاءت بغزاليها (lit. when it rains, the clouds spread and cover the sun and the moon)	1106
rain cats and dogs	أمطرت من أفواه القرب (lit. rain water pours as if from the mouths of water skins)	1106
bury the hatchet	تدافنوا= تداملوا (lit. become friends again)	170
bear the brunt	تحملوا حم المعركة (lit. bear the intensity of the battle)	163
with flying colors	أتى بقصب السبق (lit. precede other runners in a race and pull up a post usually put at the end of the racecourse)	457
wild-goose chase	كمن يتطلب في الماء جذوة نار (lit. like someone looking for amber inside water)	1638
fish in troubled waters	يشوي في النار سمكته (lit. grill his fish on fire)	442
in the same boat	في الهوى سواء (lit. in love we are equal)	142
wet behind the ears	على البركة (lit. on the blessing of God)	373

A close examination of the Arabic idioms listed in Table 3 above reveals that all of them except the last two are rather archaic. In fact, most of those idioms appear in classical Arabic dictionaries such as *Al-Qamoos Al-Muheet* and *Lisan Al-Arab* (See: الباحث العربي at <http://www.baheth.info/index.jsp>). However, it would be difficult to ascertain, in a reliable and objective manner, the circulation of those Arabic idioms in current usage among native speakers of the language due to the lack of Arabic lexical corpus similar to the British National corpus (BNC) or the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Meanwhile, a search made by the writer of the present study in Hans Wehr's (1980) *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* which is considered an authoritative source on Modern Standard Arabic has yielded only two of those idioms i.e. أتی بقصب (lit. die because of hunger and thirst) "kick the bucket" and قرض رباطه السبق (lit. precede other runners in a race and pull up a post usually put at the end of the racecourse) cited on pages 757 and 766 respectively. It appears that the circulation of those Arabic idioms in current usage has been determined by the compiler of *Al-Mughni al-Akbar* on the basis of his personal judgment, something which would be, in our viewpoint, difficult to justify. Having said that, one would not embrace the idea of dropping those idioms altogether as they might be useful to translators in specific settings such as translating an English literary text to postgraduate students in a literary translation course. A more feasible is to include, alongside those rather infrequent Arabic idioms, some commonly used equivalent expressions in which a more appropriate translation strategy is employed. For example, a plausible Arabic equivalent of the English idiom *fish in troubled waters* would be the loan translation or calque بصطاد في الماء العكر. Similarly, the paraphrase تمطر بغزارة (lit. it is raining heavily) would be appropriate to include, as equivalent to the English idiom *rain cats and dogs*. Both the calque and paraphrase just mentioned are, in fact, available in *Al-Mawrid* (pages 350 and 158 respectively). Apparently, the compiler of *Al-Mughni al-Akbar*, which was produced some twenty years following the publication of *Al-Mawrid*, had not looked up the renditions of those English idioms in the latter or had opted to stick to his own renditions. It would be, therefore, worth stressing that the compilation of English-Arabic dictionaries should be viewed as a cumulative process in which the compilers of newly produced dictionaries benefit from and build on previous publications rather than starting the whole process anew. In this way, appropriate renditions that are found in previously published dictionaries would be retained in new ones, errors and deficiencies could be avoided and improvements may be made.

Two other idioms which, rather surprisingly, belong to the colloquial variety of Arabic i.e. في الهوى سواء (lit. in love we are equal) and على البركة (lit. on the blessing of God) have been used in *Al-Mughni al-Akbar* as equivalent to their English counterparts *in the same boat* and *wet behind the ears* respectively. The inclusion of such Arabic idioms might be beneficial to the translator who could use them in the context of, for example, translating a dialogue in an English play that would be translated into Colloquial Arabic and acted on stage or shown on television.

With regard to the translation strategy of "calquing", it has been employed, in the dictionaries surveyed, in the rendition of four English idioms listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4: English Idioms translated into Arabic by means of calquing

English Idiom	Arabic calque	Page Number		
		<i>Al-Mawrid</i>	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i>	<i>Atlas</i>
fish in troubled waters	يصطاد في الماء العكر	350	-	484
storm in a tea cup	زوبعة في فنجان	-	1377	1261
behind the scenes	خلف الكواليس	817	-	1134
food for thought	غذاء للفكر	-	460	-

The above calques may be considered, from the writer's point of view, the most appropriate renditions of their corresponding English idioms as they seem to occur fairly frequently in various Arabic texts, in particular journalistic ones, and have become part of the educated Arabic speaker's repertoire. Three more English idioms investigated in this study i.e. *a nail in somebody's coffin*, *make your blood boil* and *the ball is in somebody's court* could have been more appropriately rendered into Arabic by means of the calques مسمار في نعش، يغور الكرة الآن في ملعبك، respectively than by using paraphrases as is the case in the three English-Arabic dictionaries surveyed (Appendix 1).

Proceeding to the translation strategy of "providing Arabic equivalents that are similar in both words and structure to their English counterparts", one may note that such a strategy has been employed in two cases only:

English	Arabic
not bat an eye / eyelid	لا تطرف عينيه/ لا يغمض له جفن (<i>al-Mawrid</i> : 91; <i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i> : 110)
poke your nose into	دس أنفه في (<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i> : 1018)

The extremely few renditions in which this strategy has been employed may be ascribed to the great linguistic and cultural disparities between English and Arabic (Section 3).

As for the "literal translation" strategy, it has been employed in rendering two idioms followed by paraphrases:

English	Arabic
burn somebody's boats (lit. burn his boats = cut the way of return for himself) –	حرق مراكبه = قطع على نفسه طريق الرجوع <i>l-Mughni Al-Akbar</i> : 169

لا يترك حجرا إلا قلبه: عندما يحاول الشخص كل الطرق الممكنة لتحقيق هدف ما

(lit. leave no stone unturned: when somebody tries all possible means to achieve a goal (*Atlas*: 1259)

The two literal Arabic renditions are, in the present writer's opinion, rather unacceptable. A plausible alternative is to retain the explanatory phrases and drop the literal renditions altogether. Better still is rendering the second idiom by using the equivalent Arabic idiom لم يترك بابا إلا طرقه (lit. knock on every door) which is dissimilar in structure and words to its English counterpart.

5.2 Erroneous, Imprecise and Inappropriate renditions

Several English idioms have been incorrectly, imprecisely or inappropriately rendered into Arabic in the three English-Arabic dictionaries surveyed.

There are five incorrect renditions of English idioms in those dictionaries. One of these is *break new ground* for which an erroneous literal rendition is proposed in *Al-Mughni Al-Akbar*: 535 i.e. افتح أرحيا أرضا كانت ممتة (lit. cultivate a plot of land that was uncultivated) instead of the optimal Arabic idiom i.e. يفتح أفقا جديدة (lit. open new horizons). A further erroneous rendition, provided in *Al-Mughni Al-Akbar*: 1377, involves the use of the Arabic proverb تمخض الجبل فولد فأرا (lit. a mountain shakes and brings forth a mouse) as equivalent to the English idiom *storm in a tea cup* instead of the Arabic calque زوبعة في فنجان. The proposed Arabic proverb describes a situation in which a person keeps making great promises and raises high hopes but with only a little achievement. In a third case, the meaning of English idiom *mend fences* i.e. to talk to someone you have offended or argued with, and try to persuade them to be friendly again (*LDCE*: 894) is incorrectly rendered into Arabic as يحسن الظروف الرديئة وخاصة في السياسة (lit. improve bad conditions especially in politics) -*Atlas*: 784. The Arabic paraphrase يسوي الخلافات would fit nicely in this context. A similar instance involving the incorrect Arabic rendition of the English idiom *skate on thin ice* as يتحدث عن موضوع يحتاج إلى كثير من اللباقة (lit. speak about a topic that requires a lot of tactfulness) is found in *Al-Mawrid*: 1344. Finally, the English idiom *jump the gun* has been incorrectly translated as يبدأ بعمل شيء بشكل مبكر جدا أو باستعداد كاف (lit. start doing something too soon or by making sufficient preparation for it) - *Atlas*: 688. Here, a printing slip might have occurred as the compiler must have intended to use يبدأ بعمل شيء غير كاف (lit. by making insufficient preparation for it).

Seven cases of imprecise Arabic renditions have been noticed; these are listed in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Imprecise Arabic renditions of the English idioms

No.	English idioms	Imprecise Arabic renditions	Location
1	the ball is in somebody's court	الدور الآن (في هذه المرة) لك (أو له) في الكلام (أثناء المحادثة) your / his turn in speech -	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i> : 103

		during communication)	
2	jump the gun	سارع إلى بدء السباق قبل الأوان (start racing ahead of time)	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i> : 699
3	kick the bucket	فطس (die because of unapparent cause)	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i> : 677
4	bury the hatchet	يتوقف عن القتال (stop fighting)	<i>Atlas</i> : 170
5	in the same boat	في نفس وضع وحالة الآخرين (in the same situation as that of other people)	<i>Atlas</i> : 137

The Arabic renditions proposed in Table 5 above are considered, in the writer's opinion, rather imprecise because they convey incomplete or inaccurate meanings of the corresponding English idioms. Thus, the Arabic renditions of the English idioms 1 and 2 unjustifiably restrict the context of usage of these two phrases to "communication" and "racing" respectively. Such idioms could have been more appropriately rendered by means of the Arabic calque الكرة الآن في ملعبك and the paraphrase يتعجل الأمور (lit. rush things) respectively. Meanwhile, the Arabic lexical item i.e. فطس used as equivalent to English *kick the bucket* means, according to *Al-Mu'jam Al-Wajeez*: 476 – a monolingual Arabic – Arabic dictionary, يموت من غير علة ظاهرة (lit. die because of unapparent cause), whereas its English counterpart has the general sense of "dying" under any circumstances. The meaning of the fourth idiom i.e. to agree to stop arguing about something and become friends again (*LDCE*: 171), is not precisely reflected in its Arabic rendition. Likewise, the fifth English idiom refers to someone in the same "unpleasant" situation as someone else (*LDCE*: 132), yet this specific meaning is not accurately reflected in the Arabic rendition. One may suggest that the latter two English idioms should be rendered into Arabic as يتصالحوا (become friends again) and في نفس المشكلة / الورطة (in the same problem) respectively.

Inappropriate Arabic paraphrases of some English idioms have been further observed. An inappropriate paraphrase may be defined, following Delisle, Jahnke and Cormier (1999:1460), as 'a translation error that ... consists of translating a text segment from the source text using an inappropriately long target text'. Examples of inappropriate Arabic phrases provided in the dictionaries surveyed are listed in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Inappropriate Arabic paraphrases of the English idioms

No.	English idioms	Inappropriate Arabic renditions	Location
1	leave no stone unturned	إستقرغ ما عنده من الحيلة والوسيلة. لم يترك واسطة ولا وسيلة إلا اتخذها (he exhausted all tricks; he tried every means)	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i> : 1376

2	fish in troubled waters	يغتتم مصائب غيره ليجر النفع لنفسه = يتحين المحن لجني الفوائد لنفسه (take advantage of the misfortunes of others for his own interest; wait anxiously for misfortunes to happen to take advantage of them)	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar:</i> 442
3	wild-goose chase	مطاردة عبث = مطاردة لا تنتهي إلى شيء. سعى إلى شيء لا يسوى التعب. بحث (a futile chase; a chase that ends in nothing; seek something that is not worth the effort; seek something unattainable)	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar:</i> 1638
4	break the ice	يقوم بالخطوات الأولى، يتغلب على الصعوبات الأولى ويستهل الحديث (take the initial steps; overcome initial obstacles and start talking)	<i>Al-Mawrid:</i> 126

Apparently, the above paraphrases are "too long" and therefore too cumbersome for the translator to use while translating a given source text. More appropriate Arabic equivalents could have been attempted such as the idiom لم يترك بابا إلا (lit. knock on every door), for the first idiom, the calque يصطاد في الماء العكر (lit. a futile matter) for the second one, and the paraphrase أمر مئوس منه (lit. a futile matter) for the third one. A plausible rendition of the fourth idiom is the Arabic paraphrase يمهد يكسر الجليد (lit. pave the way for talking) or even the literal equivalent يكسر الجليد.

6. Implications for Translators and Translator Trainers

The extensive discussion, made in Section 6 above, of the strategies employed in English-Arabic dictionaries for translating the English idioms under study and the Arabic renditions offered therein have some important implications for translators and translator trainers.

First, practicing freelance translators as well as translation trainees should be cautioned against the blind acceptance and outright copying of the Arabic renditions proposed in those dictionaries as equivalent to their corresponding English idioms. Rather, such Arabic renditions should be simply used as a stepping stone in the quest for the most acceptable equivalents of those idioms. After all, the translator's selection of a certain translation strategy for rendering a specific English idiom into Arabic will be determined on the basis of several criteria including such macro-factors as the type of source-language text they are translating, its genre and style, the purpose of the translation and its target readership, as well as micro-factors in particular the specific context in which an idiom occurs.

Second, in cases where several Arabic expressions are proposed in those dictionaries as equivalent to the same English idioms, translation trainees should be trained on how to weigh the pros and cons of each expression vis-à-vis its context of usage and the perceived rhetorical effect of that expression on the target readership, and how to make the ultimate decision on which of those expressions to select. Besides, sufficient and interesting class exercises and home assignments on this specific aspect should be provided for translation trainees in relevant translation courses.

Third, translator trainees should be particularly alerted to the fact that bilingual English-Arabic dictionaries may occasionally provide incorrect, imprecise and inappropriate renditions of English idioms. Some of those trainees may hold the rather naïve view that those dictionaries will never contain errors on account of their compilers' high qualifications and enormous experience in the field. As this study has revealed, idioms are a rather intricate category of lexis and their translation into another language such as Arabic constitutes a serious challenge, hence erroneous, imperfect and inappropriate renditions thereof are quite possible.

7. Recommendations

A number of recommendations may be made by the writer on the basis of the results of this study.

- 7.1 It would be most beneficial to translators if general use bilingual English-Arabic dictionaries incorporate, on the basis of some sound criteria, as many English idioms as possible.
- 7.2 English-Arabic dictionaries need to be made user-friendly by listing idioms in a systematic manner that should be explicitly stated in the "Introduction" or "Guide" section and consistently used throughout, and providing cross-references to those idioms.
- 7.3 The inclusion in English-Arabic dictionaries of appropriate expressions which belong to the standard and colloquial varieties of Arabic, and that stand as equivalent to their English corresponding idioms would be most beneficial to translators who often have to translate a range of texts of different types and genres. However, archaic Arabic equivalents, if used, should be accompanied by expressions that are in current circulation among native speakers of the language.
- 7.4 In proposing Arabic equivalents of English idioms, compilers of newly produced English-Arabic dictionaries or edited versions of current ones need to search for plausible renditions that may have been used in previously published lexicographic works. This will enable those compilers to benefit from and build on the experiences of their colleagues and eventually include the most appropriate Arabic equivalents of the English idioms in their dictionaries.
- 7.5 Researchers in the area of translation studies who are presumably well versed in the strategies for translating idioms should be involved, along with other specialists, in the compilation of English – Arabic dictionaries.

- 7.6 The process of determining the appropriateness of current Arabic renditions and exploring fresh ones would be enhanced by establishing effective networks that utilize various means, in particular online resources (emails, discussion forms, etc.) among dictionary compilers, as well as researchers in this important area of lexis especially linguists and translation scholars.
- 7.7 There is a dire need in Arabic lexicography for the creation of an electronic Arabic lexical corpus similar to the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). This type of corpus will be a great boost for research on Arabic as it will provide compilers of dictionaries, including bilingual English-Arabic ones with valuable information on, among other things, the currency and frequency of occurrence of Arabic lexical items including idioms. Pertinent Arab institutions in particular the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and the Arabic Language Academies are urged to take the initiative in launching this enormous project and pool their resources for its accomplishment.

8. Conclusion

This study has investigated the adequacy of the translation strategies employed in some of the commonly used English – Arabic dictionaries for rendering a carefully –selected sample of English idioms into Arabic and the extent of appropriateness of the proposed renditions. Certain deficiencies and pitfalls have been identified in both the translation strategies used in those dictionaries and the Arabic renditions offered. Meanwhile, specific alternatives have been suggested by the writer of this study to tackle such defects. The study has concluded by highlighting the implications of the study findings for translators and translator trainers. Several recommendations aimed at a more adequate handling of English idioms in English-Arabic dictionaries have been made. It is hoped that this study will contribute towards a more efficient treatment of English idioms in English –Arabic dictionaries.

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Appendix 1: Translational Equivalents of the English Idioms in English-Arabic Dictionaries

S.N.	English Idioms	English-Arabic Dictionaries		
		<i>Al-Mawrid</i>	<i>Al-Mughni Al-Akbar</i>	<i>Atlas</i>
1	kick the bucket	يموت	مات، فطس، قرض رباطه	يموت
2	jump the gun	NA	استبق أو ان بدء السباق، سارع إلى بدء السباق قبل الأوان	يبدأ بعمل شيء بشكل مبكر جدا أو باستعداد كاف
3	rain cats and dogs	تمطر بغزارة	جاءت بغزاليها. أمطرت من أفواه القرب	تمطر بغزارة
4	have an axe to grind	يكون له هدف شخصي يسعى إلى تحقيقه أو الاهتمام بأمر	له أرب (أو) مأربة	هدف أناني أو شخصي
5	bury the hatchet	يعقد صلحا	تدافنوا= تداملوا	يتوقف عن القتال
6	pass the buck	يحمل المسؤولية أو الملامة أو العمل إلى	رفع عن نفسه المسؤولية وأحالتها على آخر	ينقل المسؤولية واللوم على شخص آخر

		شخص آخر		
7	throw caution to the wind	NA	NA	NA
8	skate on thin ice	يتحدث عن موضوع يحتاج إلى كثير من اللباقة	في موقف خطر (أو) غير مأمون (أو) دقيق	NA
9	burn somebody's boats	يقطع على نفسه طرق التراجع جميعا	حرق مراكبه=قطع على نفسه سبيل الرجوع	يقصي احتمالية العودة أو التراجع
10	smell a rat	يخامره الشك. يلعب الفأر في عيه	استعش	يشك بوجود أمر أو شيء خاطئ
11	bear the brunt	NA	تحملوا حم المعركة	NA
12	give somebody the sack	يصرف من الخدمة	طرد من العمل أو الوظيفة	يصرف أو يعزل من الخدمة
13	go to the dogs	NA	حل به الخراب	ينحل، يتفسخ
14	mend fences	NA	NA	يحسن الظروف الرديئة وخاصة في السياسة
15	with flying colors	بنجاح عظيم	أتى بقصب السبق=أتى ظافرا (أو) موقفا	بنجاح وتفوق كامل وتام
16	take something with a grain of salt	بشك، بارتياح، بتحفظ	خذ كلماته على علانها (أي على ما فيها من مبالغة)	بشك، بارتياح، بتحفظ
17	make your blood boil	NA	أهاج. أغضب	NA
18	a nail in somebody's coffin	NA	حفر قبره. نكبه=أوقع فيه فقرب خرابه	NA
19	leave no stone unturned	يحاول بكل وسيلة ممكنة	استفرغ ما عنده من الحيلة والوسيلة. لم يترك واسطة ولا وسيلة إلا اتخذها	لا يترك حجرا إلا قلبه: عندما يحاول الشخص كل الطرق الممكنة لتحقيق هدف ما
20	foot the bill	يدفع حوالة	دفع الحساب (في مطعم مثلا)	NA
21	alive and kicking	NA	NA	NA
22	not bat an eye	(1) لا يغمض له جفن (2) لا يظهر أي اندهاش	لم يتحرك له ساكن. لا تطرف عينيه. لم ينم طرفة عين. لم يبد استغرابا (أو)	يرف، يطرف وخاصة من دهشة وانفعال

			دهشة	
23	food for thought	NA	شئ حري بالتفكير. غذاء للفكر	NA
24	storm in a tea cup	NA	زوبعة في فنجان. تمخض الجبل فولد فأرا	غضب شديد أو إثارة حول موضوع تافه (زوبعة في فنجان)
25	move heaven and earth	بيذل جهودا جبارة، يحاول بكل طريقة ممكنة	حاول المستحيل. بذل كل ما في وسعه. لم يترك وسيلة	بفعل المستحيل لتحقيق هدف
26	let off steam	(1) يتخلص من فائض الطاقة (2) ينفس عن مشاعره	نفس عن غضبه	ينفس عن غضبه ويتخلص من مشاعره القوية والعنيفة
27	fat cat	NA	NA	NA
28	wild-geese chase	محاولة عقيمة، مشروع أحرق لا طائل تحته	مطاردة عبث = مطاردة لا تنتهي إلى شئ. سعى إلى شئ لا يسوى التعب. بحث عن شئ لا يرجى نواله. كمن يتطلب في الماء جذوة نار	بحث أو تقص لا جدوى منه
29	eat somebody alive	NA	NA	يقهر أو يسحق أو يهزم كليا
30	beat about the bush	يحوم حول الموضوع	أخذ في معالجة الأمر بطريقة ملتوية	يحوم حول الموضوع دون أن يتطرق إليه مباشرة
31	a hard nut to crack	مشكلة عسيرة جدا	أمر (أو) شخص عسير (أو) معضل (أو) متعذر	NA
32	lock horns with	NA	NA	يشتبك في صراع
33	bite the dust	يخر صريعا	سقط صريعا. خر أو سقط متعفرا. وقع ميتا (أو) جريحا	(1) يموت وخاصة في معركة أو قتال (2) ينهزم (3) ينتهي
34	nip something in the bud	يقضي عليه في المهد	قمعه وهو لا يزال في أوله. قمعه في	NA

			مهده (كالفتنة قضى عليها في مهدها	
35	wet behind the ears	NA	عمر = غير مجرب = ساذج = بسيط = على البركة	ليست له خبرة بعد
36	red herring	شئ يراد به صرف الانتباه (عن المسألة الحقيقية)		شئ يبعد أو بصرف الانتباه عن القضية الرئيسية
37	speak your mind	يعبر عن رأيه بصراحة	أفصح عما في نفسه	NA
38	have cold feet	NA	جبن = لم يجد في نفسه الشجاعة = أحجم = هاب	خوف يمنع سير عمل ما
39	poke your nose into	يدس، يقحم، يتدخل في ما لا يعنيه	تخشش (أو) تحسس (في شئون الغير) = دس أنفه في ...	NA
40	be a hot potato	NA	NA	NA
41	break new ground	NA	أحيا أرضا كانت مماتة. افتلح. اشتق بابا جديدا	NA
42	break the ice	يمهد السبيل، يقوم بالخطوات الأولى، يتغلب على الصعوبات الأولى ويستهل الحديث	فتح الباب للتعارف والتأنس	(1) يبدأ (2) يكسر حدة التوتر أو جمود موقف اجتماعي رسمي
43	fish in troubled waters	يصطاد في الماء العكر	يشوي في النار سمكته = يغتنم مصائب غيره ليجر النفع لنفسه = يتحين المحن لجني الفوائد لنفسه	يصطاد في الماء العكر. يستفيد من موقف شائك
44	light at the end of the tunnel	NA	NA	NA
45	the ball is in somebody's court	NA	الدور الآن (في هذه المرة) لك (أو له) في الكلام (أثناء المحادثة)	NA
46	hit the roof	NA	NA	يعبر عن غضبه بصورة عنيفة
47	hold all the cards	NA	NA	NA
48	time bomb	NA	NA	NA

49	in the same boat	NA	في المصيبة سواء. في الهوى سواء	في نفس وضع وحالة الآخرين
50	behind the scenes	(1) خلف الكواليس، وراء ستار المسرح (2) سرا	من وراء حجاب (أو) ستار. في الخفاء. خفية	خلف الكواليس

S.N.: Serial Number

NA: Not available

