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## **Deconstructing the Influence of Idioms and Phrases Cross-linguistically: a Comparative Study of English vs. Arabic Usages**

This Dissertation is submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master in Linguistics

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## **Dedication**

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious and the most Merciful

I like to dedicate this work to my parents who suffered to raise me up, who have stuck by me through thick and thin, I wish you are proud of me. You are my precious treasure.

Also, I would like to say thank you my brother Salah and my sisters Dalel, Nihad and Fatima for their morale support and for the joy they bring to my life. For my best friend Fafa and dear friends Wissem and Hiba and my family I love you.

Finally, I would like to say that our past years at the university were hard, but it is worthy at the end.

**BOUSSAID Ines**

## **Didication**

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious and the most Merciful

I like to dedicate this work to my parents who have been my source of inspiration and gave me strength when I thought of giving up without your prayers, I would have neither the confidence nor the will to finish this work .To my grandmother who passed away, to my husband **Khaled**, my brother **Mohamed** and my sisters **Nadia** ,**Assinat** and **Manel** . to my best friend **Ines**, dear friends and my family I love you.

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	II
Dedication.....	III
Dedication.....	IV
List of content.....	V
List of Tables.....	IX
List of Graph.....	X
List of Abbreviations and Coding Conventions Used in the Dissertation.....	XI
Abstract.....	XII
Résumé.....	XIII
Abstract in Arabic.....	XIV
General introduction.....	14

### **CHAPTER ONE: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective to Idioms in Multicultural Contexts.**

1.1 Introduction.....	17
1.2 Definition of idioms.....	17
1.3 Culture and idioms .....	18
1.4 English and Arabic idioms.....	20
1.5 Idiomatic Expressions in Arabic.....	21
1.6 Types of Arabic Idioms.....	21
1.6.1 Contextual Expressions.....	21
1.6.2 Idiomatic Expressions.....	21

1.7 Idiomatic expressions in English.....	21
1.8 Types of idioms in English.....	22
1.8.1 Simile Idioms.....	22
1.8.2 Metaphorical Idioms.....	22
1.8.3 Phrasal Idioms.....	23
1.8.4 Slangs.....	23
1.8.5 Jargon.....	23
1.8.6 Colloquialisms.....	24
1.8.7 Proverbs.....	24
1.9 Categories of Idioms.....	25
1.9.1 Figurative or Opaque Idioms.....	25
1.9.2 Semitransparent Idioms.....	25
1.9.3 Transparent Idioms.....	25
1.10 Characteristic of idiomatic Expressions.....	26
1.10.1 Delection.....	26
1.10.2 Addition.....	26
1.10.2.1 Changing the Grammatical structure.....	26
1.10.2.2 Substitution.....	26
1.10.2.3 Changing the words Order.....	27
1.11 Features of idioms.....	27
1.11.1 Structural Features.....	27
1.11.2 Semantic Features.....	27
1.12 A Historical Overview of Idiomatic Expression In Western And Arabic Studies.....	28
1.13 Function of Idiomatic Expressions.....	29
1.14 Problems in translating idioms.....	31

1.14.1 Religious Difficulties.....	31
1.14.2 Cultural Difficulties.....	32
1.14.3 Semantic Difficulties.....	33
1.14.4 Stylistic Difficulties.....	34
1.15 Strategies in Translating Idioms.....	35
1.15.1 Literal Translation.....	35
1.15.2 Transposition.....	36
1.15.3 Modulation.....	36
1.15.4 Equivalence.....	36
1.15.5 Peter Newmark’s Strategies.....	36
1.15.6 Adaptation.....	38
1.15.7 Claque.....	38
1.15.8 Borrowing.....	38
1.16 Idiomatic Expression Metonymy.....	38
1.17 Metaphor Metonymy and their relationship to Idiomatic Expression.....	39
1.18 Idiomatic Expressions and Metaphor (Allegory).....	39
1.18.1 Metaphor is Linguistic Allegory.....	40
1.18.2 Synecdoche ( hypallage).....	40
1.19 Similarities Differences Between Proverbs And Idiomatic Expressions.....	40
1.20 Conclusion.....	41

## **CHAPTER TWO: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria**

2.1 Introduction.....	42
2.2 Algeria before the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.....	42
2.2.1 The Tamazight Variety .....	43

2.3 The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria after the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.....	43
2.3.1 Diglossia in Algeria.....	44
2.3.2 Bilingualism .....	45
2.3.3 Arabic (A.A) French Bilingualism.....	46
2.3.4 Code mixing /Code switching.....	46
2.3.4.1 Arabic (A.A) French switching.....	47
2.3.5 Borrowing.....	47
2.3.5.1 Borrowing in Algeria.....	48
2.3.5.2 Arabization Policy in Algeria.....	48
2.5 Conclusion.....	49

### **CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology, Findings and Analysis**

3.1 Introduction.....	50
3.2 Description of the Questionnaire.....	50
3.3 Design of Questionnaire.....	50
3.4 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire .....	50
3.5 Summary of Findings.....	66
3.6 Observation.....	67
3.7 Summary of the Findings.....	67
3.8 Conclusion.....	68
General Conclusion.....	69
Appendix.....	69
Questionnaire .....	70
Bibliography.....	71



## **List of Tables**

<b>Table 3.1</b> thePossible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘Cat Got Your Tongue’.....	60
<b>Table 3.2</b> The Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘A blessing in disguise’ .....	60
<b>Table 3.3</b> ThePossible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘Bite off more than you can chew’ .....	61
<b>Table 3.4</b> Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘Bit the bullet’ .....	61
<b>Table 3.5</b> Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘Adding insult into injury’ .....	62
<b>Table 3.6</b> English and Arabic Idioms that Hold the Same meaning.....	63
<b>Table 3.7</b> The Common English Idiomatic Expressions Used By both Teachers and Students.....	66

## List of Graphs

<b>Graph 3.1</b> The Respondents' Sex.....	49
<b>Graph 3.2</b> Respondents' Ages.....	50
<b>Graph 3.3</b> Respondents' Education Level.....	50
<b>Graph 3.4</b> Students' Knowledge about idioms.....	51
<b>Graph 3.5</b> The Main Obstacles in Learning Idioms.....	52
<b>Graph 3.6</b> TheUsage of Idioms in Text.....	53
<b>Graph 3.7</b> Incorporating Idioms in Teaching.....	54
<b>Graph3.8</b> Importance of Idioms in Teaching.....	55
<b>Graph 3.8</b> TheImportanceof Idioms in Everyday Communication in Showing the Cultural Differences and Similarities.....	57
<b>Graph 3.9</b> The Etymology of Idioms.....	58
<b>Graph 3.10</b> Understanding English Idioms by Translating them into Arabic.....	59

## **List of Abbreviations and Coding Conventions Used in the Dissertation**

**ADA:**Algerian Dialectal Arabic

**CA:** classical Arabic

**EFL:** English as Foreign Language

**L1:** First Language

**L2:** Second Language

**SC:** Source Culture

**SL:** Source Language

**ST:** Source Text

**TC:** Target Culture

**TL:** Target Language

**TT:** Target Text

## **Abstract**

This research attempts to give different definitions of idiomatic expression and analyses the differences and similarities between Arabic and English idioms. It also explains the relation between culture and idioms i.e. the important role of culture in translation for such fixed expressions. This work investigates problems in translating idiomatic expressions and provides different strategies to translate idioms and idiomatic expressions properly and effectively. This can be as a starting point towards resolving students' problems in translating idioms and helping them foster their translation skills. Data were collected by questionnaire destined to 93 EFL students in the Section of English at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret, and by observation of teachers and students activities during every day sessions in which content analysis methods was used to unravel the obtained data from the observation stage. The results gleaned from both research tools reveal that translation idioms is impossible without referring to the cultural background of the Source Language and Target Language. This research concluded that the misunderstanding and/or mistranslating of idioms and idiomatic expressions are mainly due to cultural differences, students' ignorance of learning and the teacher's neglect to teach this linguistic phenomenon.

**Key words:** EFL Learners, Cultural-bound Meaning, Translation, Idioms, Idiomatic Expressions.

**Résumé :**

Cette recherche tente de donner différentes définitions de l'expression idiomatique et analyse les différences et les similitudes entre les idiomes arabes et anglais. Il explique également la relation entre la culture et les idiomes, c'est-à-dire le rôle important de la culture dans la traduction pour de telles expressions fixes. Ce travail étudie les problèmes de traduction des expressions idiomatiques et propose différentes stratégies pour traduire les idiomes et les expressions idiomatiques correctement et efficacement. Cela peut être un point de départ pour résoudre les problèmes des étudiants dans la traduction d'expressions idiomatiques et les aider à développer leurs compétences en traduction. Les données ont été collectées par questionnaire destiné à 93 étudiants EFL de la section d'anglais de l'Université Ibn Khaldoun de Tiaret, et par observation des activités des enseignants et des étudiants au cours de sessions quotidiennes au cours desquelles des méthodes d'analyse de contenu ont été utilisées pour démêler les données obtenues à partir de l'étape d'observation. Les résultats glanés à partir des deux outils de recherche révèlent que les idiomes de traduction sont impossibles sans se référer au contexte culturel de la langue source et de la langue cible. Cette recherche a conclu que l'incompréhension et/ou la mauvaise traduction des idiomes et des expressions idiomatiques sont principalement dues aux différences culturelles, à l'ignorance des élèves en matière d'apprentissage et à la négligence de l'enseignant à enseigner ce phénomène linguistique.

**Mots clés :** apprenants EFL, signification culturelle, traduction, expressions idiomatiques, expressions idiomatiques.

## المخلص

هذا البحث يسعى إلى إعطاء تعاريف متنوعة عن العبارات الاصطلاحية و تحليل الاختلافات و التشابه بين العبارات الاصطلاحية في اللغة العربية و اللغة الانجليزية. كذلك توضح العلاقة بين الثقافة و العبارات الاصطلاحية وأهميتها وأهمية الثقافة في ترجمة هاته العبارات الثابتة. هذا العمل يحقق في مشاكل ترجمة العبارات الاصطلاحية وتوفير إستراتيجيات متنوعة للترجمة الصحيحة و المناسبة . هذا قد يكون أيضا نقطة بداية نحو حل مشاكل ترجمة العبارات الاصطلاحية لطالب و تساعده لتطوير مهاراته في الترجمة . تم جمع المعلومات بواسطة استجواب لطلبة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية 93 طالب شارك في استجوابنا و كذلك بملاحظة نشاطات الأساتذة و الطلاب خلال الحصص اليومية . النتيجة لكلا الوصيلتين توضح أن ترجمة العبارات الاصطلاحية مستحيلة الترجمة بدون الرجوع إلى الخلفيات الثقافية اللغة المصدر و اللغة الهدف. هذه الورقة تشرح جهل الطالب في تعلم و إهمال الأساتذة في تعليم هذه الظاهرة اللغوية .

**الكلمات المفتاحية : الترجمة ، العبارات الاصطلاحية**

## General Introduction

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### General Introduction

First, idiomatic expressions are phrases that carry different meanings than the literal definition of their component words. Therefore, there are some problems in both processes of understanding and translating them. In the course of idiom interpretation, culture plays an important role.

As a result, it necessitates the development of cross-cultural awareness as well as an open-minded comprehension of the culture of the second language from various perspectives.

Also, idioms are a stumbling mental block for EFL students due to a complete lack of teaching materials and technique. As a result, teaching and learning idioms have become difficult tasks.

In addition, the role of translation cannot be ignored to avoid the misunderstanding. Translating and rendering cultural elements of the source texts into the target language is significantly important. The non-existence of equivalence between two languages syntactically semantically, lexically, pragmatically and culturally makes the activity of translation problematic. Furthermore, researchers consider idioms as an important area of linguistic investigation. Translation is a difficult task for EFL students since they must guess the meaning as well as discovers an appropriate equivalence. This is evident when translating idioms. Mastering idioms is believed by many scholars as a sign towards proficiency for EFL learners.

Comparing between Arabic and English languages, cultures, dialects, and being aware of the differences and similarities can avoid the misunderstanding of idioms and idiomatic expressions.

The main statements of this research are: Idioms are one of the most important linguistic phenomena in both Arabic and English. Translating them is a difficult task since it requires a

## **General Introduction**

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linguistic competence of both the source and the target language. Learners should be aware of the differences and similarities of the cultural and linguistic aspects especially when translating them from the SL into the TL. Because of their metaphorical implications, idioms frequently have meanings that cannot be derived from a literal interpretation of the individual elements. The current study deals with the difficulties which EFL learners face when translating idioms.

The choice of investigating the current issue was motivated by the fact that idiomatic expressions are very important in both language and culture, they convey meanings that a literal expression cannot convey. In addition, idioms have considerable value in literature and linguistics. EFL students must be aware of idioms and their translation.

Also, the lack of teaching idioms and the ignorance of students and teachers should be taken into consideration.

This research aims to answer the main research questions below:

**1. What is really meant by ‘idioms’ and what are their features, characteristics, and types?**

**2. How far can idioms and idiomatic expressions be culturally and/or linguistically-bound?**

**3. To what extent can the awareness of the cultural and/or linguistic differences or similarities serve or hinder the understanding or translation of such idioms?**

To answer the aforementioned questions, some hypotheses are provided to be confirmed or refuted in the course of our study to better interpret the issue and meet our premeditated objectives. On the basis of the research the following hypotheses are suggested:

**1. It is impossible to translate idioms without referring to the cultural context/background of the Target Language.**



- 2. The EFL learners have first to master their Source Language so that the foreign idioms and idiomatic expressions can be appropriately explained and/or translated.**

The main objectives of this research are:

- A.** To define idioms and to shed the light on their importance.
- B.** To highlight the strong interrelation between culture and idioms to be understood.

Moreover, the researcher attempts to figure out the main problems encountered by EFL learners when dealing with translation of idioms, and provide different strategies for an effective translation. In addition, the research examines the use of idioms by students and teachers at the Section of English in Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

This research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter defines idioms and describe the relation between idioms and culture, clarifies the nature of idioms and it also mentions features and characteristics of idioms and provides strategies to translate idioms successfully.

The second chapter analyses the linguistic situation in Algeria since it is particular and very complex. Language exists only when a community uses it. It is the image of the society. A language is not only phonetics, syntax and semantics; it is also an imaginary, a legendary, and a historical reference. It is regarded as the expression of personality and identity.

The third chapter aims to analyse the data gleaned from the students' questionnaire and the classroom observations.

## **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a review and discussion of the concept of idiomatic expression, tracing the historical background of the term 'idiom' in both western and Arabic studies. It further aims to highlight the influence of culture on idioms and examines syntactic and semantic features as well as the sources of idiomatic expressions, including metaphor and metonymy. Also, consideration is given to the problems and strategies of translating idioms.

Finally, attention is also paid to establishing the similarities and differences between idioms and other linguistic features.

## **1. 2.Definitions of Idioms**

According to oxford dictionary second addition, (2003) "Idiom / idiəm / Noun: group of words with a meaning that is different from the meaning of all the individual words: 'Pull your socks up' is an - meaning 'improve your behaviour' idiom of atic / dia'mætik / adj ( of language ) as natural and correct idiosyncrasy ."(p. 140).

A group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words (e.g. *over the moon, see the light*). The Word 'idiom' is a Greek term means 'own' or 'peculiar.'" An idiom is a figurative expression that can usually be interpreted literally but that takes meaning when used in a specific context." (Ketabi& Rohani, 2012). they are pervasive in the English and Arabic language. They are used in formal style and in slang. Idioms may appear in poetry, literature, and daily life and even in teaching ELF Learners. Idioms are linguistic phenomenon, grammatical forms phrases or words that are used conventionally and process a figurative meaning which cannot be predicted from the individual component or literal meanings of the constitute parts.

An idiomatic expression ‘let the cat out of the bag’ for instance, is composed of several words (let/the/cat/out/of/the/bag) whose individual meanings do not seem to contribute to the meaning of the idiom as a whole.

### **1.3 Culture and Idioms**

Idiomatic expressions provide a unique opportunity to educate and learn about the target language's lexical richness as well as the cultural characteristics concealed behind each idiom, every culture has its unique expressions, which include Second Language (SL) and Foreign Language (FL).

As well as other linguistic styles (e.g. proverbs, metaphors, jokes, newspaper, headlines, and advertisements) “idioms involves a form of language use which is clearly connected to a specific culture.”(Carter, 1997.p. 167), “Thus in order to ensure that a text has been correctly interpreted, it is necessary to possess suitable cultural knowledge.” (Carter, 1997, p. 168) .The development of distinct "constructions of reality" is an indigenously anchored and maintained mechanism within each culture's language.

“Idioms are an essential aspect of culture and may best be described as a culture vehicle because they served as a carrier of culture. “In the literature, idioms referred to as (culture bound), (culture specific) or (culture-dependent structures).”(Solomon, 2013). The nature of idiomatic terms can be substantially motivated by the culture from which they are derived.

Idioms are a type of speech that frequently has a condensed meaning, grammatical structure, and usage. Some non-native speakers may have difficulties in understanding certain idiomatic expressions because their meanings cannot be discovered by analyzing individual words. The circumstances alone may not always be sufficient to convey the intended idea. Unlike literal translations, it is impossible to deduce the meaning of an idiom from its

## **CHAPTER ONE: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective to Idioms in Multicultural Contexts**

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literal definition (Words on their own). Thus, idioms are difficult to understand and acquire since they are a combination of two words or more function as complicated unit of meaning. Idiomatic expressions frequently have cultural specific metaphorical or figurative meanings; they are used and understood in certain cultural situations.

One of the main reasons that make idioms difficult to be recognized and interpreted is their cultural specificity. An idiom, according to the Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology "is a form of expressions peculiar to a given language." as cited in (Bouarroudj, 2010).

Sapir (1970) stated that "language does not exist apart from culture that is; from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives." (p. 207). "It is a key to the cultural past of a society." (Salzmann, 1929, p. 41), "a guide to social reality" (Sapir, 1998, p. 41). In other words, language and culture are inseparable and they affect each other.

Idioms are one of the most significant aspects of language, and they are heavily influenced by culture. In other words, idioms are closely linked to civilizations, and language is one means to express culture.

Furthermore, culture and community distinctions result in a wide range of languages and expressions; each group has its own unique manner of expressing thoughts and ideas, which distinguishes it from others.

As a result, both English and Arabic contain a large variety of idioms and idiomatic expressions, the character of their idioms clearly reflects the distinctions between them in terms of their origins, cultural aspects, habits, beliefs, and so on.

"Idioms can be the source of potential misunderstandings when culture-specific knowledge is implied. This is especially true for those idioms which their literal meaning

could hinder understanding.” (Gluckberg, 2001). Or those expressions that reflect themes and ideas not present in the learners’ own culture.

#### **1.4. English and Arabic Idioms**

Similarly, emphasizing the influence of Arabic on other languages, as it is mentioned in idioms and culture: exploring the inter-influence between English and other languages by Al-Fauzanb and Lakshmi, Habeeb Salloum says “Arabic, the language of the men from the desert, was one of the most important vehicles which carried the culture of the East to Europe . . . if today, we leaf through the English dictionaries, we will find that words of Arabic origin are found, here and there, under every letter of the alphabet.” It may surprise many that a study made by some scholars of the Skeat’s Etymological Dictionary found that Arabic is the seventh on the list of languages that have contributed to the enrichment of the English vocabulary and idiom.”

Also, Arabic is certainly qualifies as a rich language due to its intricacy and texts that occur in the nature of the languages itself. Idioms, proverbs, and the like are examples of that as they mostly express concrete opinions and can be very *العصا والجزرة- الوعد بالوعيد، ترغيب*, as such instructive“. This means, a mixture of promises and threats to persuade someone to do something, especially to work harder. It is similar to the English idiom ‘carrot and stick’ (emotional blackmail). In Arabic, one can also say *”صدري أتلج*, cool my breast /chest” meaning ‘give comfort’ or ‘bring hope for good news’.Antze, (1992)“As the Arabic language has many deep roots and has been enriching other languages as well as getting enriched by them.”

## **1.5 Idiomatic Expressions in Arabic**

The Arabic language, like the English language, is rich in idiomatic terms because Arabs employed idioms to communicate emotions such as happiness, wealth, and poverty.

Backwards the idioms, on the other hand, symbolize the Arabs wisdom, authenticity, and communal development. People employ idiomatic terms for two main reasons, according to Abu Saad (1987):

### **1.6 Types of Arabic Idioms**

There are two types:

#### **1.6. 1. Contextual Expressions**

These are expressions that take on new meanings as a result of their context or structure, such as the verb ضرب (daraba) "to hit" or "to throw something," which takes on new meanings as a result of its structure and use, as in "he blew the horn," "he set up the tent," and "he mixed them."

#### **1.6.2. Idiomatic Expressions**

Are those that derive their meanings from the image they depict, such as "to pull the fire towards his loaf," which denotes selfishness, and "the war showed its legs," which denotes a terrible and violent conflict.

## **1.7 Idiomatic Expressions in English**

The origins of English culture, like the most western cultures, may be traced back to Greek and Latin ancestors, with Christianity serving as a cultural background. English language is full of idiomatic expressions because they are originated from literary

masterpieces , the Bible, Greek and Roman mythologies, historic events, customs, daily life ...etc. That is why idioms are hard tasks to understand. Idioms are unique to a language, group of people, locality, or region, just like culture is unique to a country. According to Langlotz, (2006)"idiomatic constructions can be described as complex symbols with specific formal, semantic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic characteristics." (p.3). Idiomatic statements in English are confined to idioms, idiomatic expressions, fixed expressions, and expression turns.

## **1.8 Types of English Idioms**

According to Lakhdari and Benmahdjouba, (2019) the study of investigating the problems facing EFL Learners in Translating Idioms in university of Msila they classify idioms to many types:

### **1.8.1 Simile Idioms**

According to Baker (1992) "these idiomatic expressions should not be translated literally. They can be either like-structure (like + noun) for example "like a bat out of a hell and like water off a dock's back." or have the structure of as + adjective + as such as: "as dry as a bone and as free as a bird ,these idioms are distinguished by a distinctive comparative structure and irregular word combinations.

### **1.8.2 Metaphorical Idioms**

Ghazala, (2008) named this type of idioms indirect idioms, which cannot be understood, from the literal or the explicit meaning of the words. For instance: "my aunt is a dog in the manger" the meaning here refers to an extreme selfish aunt if the idiom interpreted literally, it would be unacceptable and abusive. Indeed, because metaphorical idioms construct

metaphors and carry out a form of image like happiness, rage, success, failure, power, and weakness, their meaning goes beyond the surface meaning of the words.

### **1.8.3 Phrasal Verbs**

According to Ghazala, (2008) "phrasal verbs are well-established extremely popular idioms. They are a combination of a verb+an adverb/preposition, or both an adverb and a preposition such as (up, down, on, off, in, out, over, etc). For example: "you light up my life" no one can produce physical and actual light, so this statement just indicates that someone makes him or her happy. "This type of idioms has a special idiomatic meaning that cannot be understood from the individual meaning of verb and the adverb/preposition taken." (p. 133).

However not always this kind of expression represents phrasal idioms, it can be the literal meaning of the expression.

### **1.8.4 Slangs**

Richards and Schmidt, (2002) consider slang as a kind of idioms. They define slang as "casual, very informal speech, using expressive but informal words and expressions." (p. 490)

Slang and colloquial speech are synonyms for some people, yet it indicates bad speech for others, according to them. Usually, colloquial speech refers to a speech variety used in informal situations with colleagues, friends or relatives, and slangs are used for a very informal speech variety, it is frequently used in-group language by a certain group of individuals, such as teens, army recruits, and pop bands.



### **1.8.5 Jargon**

According to oxford dictionary fourth addition, (2012).Noun (no plural) special or technical words that are used by people who work in a particular job andthat other people do not understand: The contract is full of legal jargon. (p. 210).

Richards and Schmidt (2002) define jargon as "speech or writing used by a group of people who belong to a particular trade, profession, or any other group bound together by mutual interest, e.g. the jargon of law, medical jargon." (p. 278). They claim that jargon have its own set of words and expressions that an outsider may find incomprehensible.

Furthermore, the term jargon is often employed by individuals who are unfamiliar with or despise that particular form of language, rather than by the group itself.

### **1.8.6 Colloquialisms**

Richards and Schmidt (2002) find out that, "colloquialism is a word or phrase that is more commonly used in informal speech and writing" (p. 88). For example, boss is a colloquialism for employer.

Furthermore, colloquial speech is not always non-prestige speech and should not be seen as substandard. Therefore, educated native speakers of a language normally use colloquial speech in informal situations with friends, fellow workers, and members of the family.

### **1.8.7 Proverbs**

Proverbs shared cultural wisdom, easily understandable and considered as culture-specific because they are very bound to culture, in many languages, proverbs have direct translations.For example: one hand does not clap يد واحدة لا تصفق

## **1.9 Categories of Idioms**

After making a quick but thorough attempt to grasp idioms, it is evident that the English language is full of idiomatic expressions, and most of us have probably said, heard, or read at least one idiom or idiomatic statement. At the same time, many people are still having difficulties in learning and comprehending these cultural and creative jewels. As a result, it is critical to concentrate on the classification and variation of idioms in order to assist a better comprehension of them. Because idioms differ in both form and meaning. Mantyla scholars commonly divide idioms into three categories based on their figurativeness as follow:

### **1.9.1 Figurative or Opaque Idioms**

In this type, there is no connection between the meaning of individual words and the meaning of the whole idiom. Hence, it is impossible to understand the figurative meaning of an opaque idiom if one is not familiar with its etymology. For example “piece of cake ”means something easy.

### **1.9.2 Semitransparent Idioms**

Some of the idiom's terms are utilized in their literal sense, which serves as a hint to the figurative meaning of the phrase. For example: “promise somebody the moon” means to promise someone that one will do something great or wonderful even though it is not possible.

### **1.9.3 Transparent idioms**

In these idioms one can see a clear connection between the literal and the figurative sense, so the expressions are almost self-explanatory. For example: “give the green light” means to give someone authorization to carry out a specific action.

## **1.10 Characteristics of Idiomatic Expressions**

Baker, (1992) “a speaker or writer cannot normally do any of the following with an idiom.” (p. 63). According to Baker, Idioms have grammatical and syntactic constraints.

### **1.10.1 Deletion**

The meanings of the idioms "have a sweet tooth" (strong desire to eat sweet food) and "spill the beans" (to divulge a secret) would be completely altered if the adjective "sweet" and the article "the" were removed.

### **1.10.2 Addition**

Any word added to an idiomatic expression changes its meaning or eliminates its idiomatic sense. Adding the adverb "very" to the adjective "red" in "red herring" (something that misleads or distracts from a crucial or essential subject), on the other hand, completely changes the meaning's figurativeness.

#### **1.10.2.1 Changing the Grammatical Structure:**

The passive form "some beans were spilled" means "they expose a secret," as opposed to the active form "they spilled the beans," which means "they expose a secret."

#### **1.10.2.2 Substitution**

Idioms do not accept the substitution of words, even if they are synonyms. The phrase "the long and short of it" refers to the essential facts of a situation. Despite having almost identical meanings, the word "long" cannot be replaced with another adjective, such as "tall."

### **1.10.3 Changing the Words Order**

Any change in the order of the words in an idiom causes lost of its meaning, For example: in the term 'the long and the short of it,' the order of the words cannot be changed to 'the short and the long of it'.

## **1.11 Features of Idioms**

Their are two main idioms' structure:

### **1. 11.1 Structural Feature**

Abdou,(2011) “What distinguishes idiomatic expressions from conventional expressions is that their properties and order are fixed or constant.” (P. 20). As a result, grammatical means cannot change or modify them (Katz and Postal, 1963.Husam Al-Din, 1985, p125). However, this fixedness does not mean total immobilityas in the case of proverbs, but that this element is restricted in expression.

### **1. 11.2 Semantic features**

Idiomatic expression is a semantic unit or phrase that cannot be comprehended, derived, constructed, or predicted from the meaning of individual.

As a result, “idiomatic expressions have little to do with the lexical context in which they are used. Furthermore, idioms do not have a denotation meaning. Rather, they are identified only by their practical importance or use.” (Al-Hannash, 1991, p. 36).

## **1.12 A Historical Overview of Idiomatic Expressions in Western and Arabic Studies**

“Idiomatic expressions have also been referred to variously as lexical clusters, semantically exocentric expressions, collocations, formulas, phrases, compound lexical units, and specialized hyper morphemes.” (Makkai, 1972, p. 26). “Although idiomatic expressions are a widespread linguistic phenomenon which has been studied by many scholars. “(Al-Qassimi, 1979, p.17).

“The study of these linguistic systems has long piqued the curiosity of Arabic scholars. Early Arabic poetry and prose texts were rich in idioms, attracting the attention of linguistic scholars at the time. Idiomatic expressions appeared in the Holy Quran and Al Hadith Al Sharif, while early Arabic poetry and prose texts were rich in idioms, attracting the attention of linguistic scholars at the time. Arabic has kept a significant number of these idioms, each with its own structure and meaning.” (Al-Anbar, 2001, p. 1).

In Arabic Studies, interest in studying these linguistic structures dates back many centuries.

Fraser, (1970) “Idioms are defined as a constituent or series of components whose semantic interpretation does not have a compositional function of the formative parts in which they are seven levels of frozenness in idioms: Level Six (L6) – unrestricted– presents the most extreme level of allowing change operations, whereas level zero (L0) is the extreme level of frozenness.”(p.22).

the idiomatic expression is a phrase or sentence which is used conventionally in a different meaning from its literal meaning. Moreover, he considers that some idioms do not have a literal meaning, and if the phrase has a literal meaning, that will cause ambiguity.

Davies, (1983) defines idiom as “an expression that has a conventional meaning that differs from its literal meaning. Furthermore, he believes that some idioms do not have a literal meaning and that if they do, the phrase will be ambiguous.”(p. 68). idioms are not dead metaphors but have more complex meanings that are motivated by conceptual metaphors linking idiomatic phrases with their figurative interpretations

Furthermore, according to Cacciari and Tabossi (1988) “an idiom is defined as "a string of words whose semantic interpretation cannot be inferred compositionally from the interpretation of its parts.”(p. 668). idioms have both literal and figurative meaning, depending on the context.

Some idiomatic expressions deal with landmark events and important historical figures. They are therefore particular to certain cultures. For example, in the United States, "John Hancock" means to provide a signature. This expression references one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, John Hancock, whose signature is one of the largest and most distinct on the document. Another example is "Honest Abe." This idiom alludes to the fabled honesty of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States.

### **1.13 Functions of Idiomatic Expressions**

Fernando (1996); Halliday, (1985) classifies idioms in three groups according to their functions: (1) ideational, (2) interpersonal and (3) relational.

Ideational idioms, also known as idioms for "the condition and way of the world," transmit the message's content and provide a description of the message's essence. This type

## **CHAPTER ONE: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective to Idioms in Multicultural Contexts**

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of idioms is frequently used in informal speech or journalism, but rarely used in formal speech (Fernando, 1996; Halliday, 1985) divides ideational idioms into those which describe: actions (to spill the beans); events (a turning point); situations (to be in a pickle); people and things (a red herring); attributes (cut-and-dried); evaluations (A watched pot never boils); and emotions (green with envy).

By expressing greetings and farewells (good morning); commands (let's face it); collecting opinions (what do you think?); agreements (say no more); and rejections (come off it!), interpersonal idioms can play an interactive role.

Furthermore, they may serve as a means of characterizing the message. Interpersonal idioms can be used subtly, such as believe (you) me, or blatantly, such as believe (you) me.

First, relational idiomatic expressions effectively serve as a connector.

According to Domyati, (2009) "in MSA, idiomatic terms are utilized in place of more literal language to achieve a variety of functions."

Second, idioms are frequently substituted for literal words or expressions for aesthetic or rhetorical objectives, as they enrich the text by adding depth to the intended meaning and increasing the impact on the intended audience. Second, people are sometimes scared to use terminology that are considered cultural taboos, particularly those related to death and killing, and instead of employing colloquial formulations that communicate the same meaning. For example, direct mention of the word (الموت) (death) is usually avoided, replacing it instead by some idiomatic expression that conveys the same message such as غادرا الدنيا.

Third, idiomatic terms are sometimes employed to demonstrate respect for and knowledge of the feelings of others.

Finally, idiomatic expressions are used when people experience embarrassment or to express feeling and situation easily.

### **1.14. Problems in Translating Idioms**

As an area of study or a science, translation might be considered a challenging task. To put in another way, finding counterparts from one language to another is a difficult undertaking. If the right equivalence for phrases in the same language cannot be found, what about trying to discover it cross-linguistically?

This is seen clearly in translation of idioms as Pederson, (1997) argues "translation of idiom is a difficult as it is central" (p. 109). All human languages have idioms.

Different languages may have the same meaning for these idioms. However, due to linguistic, cultural, theological, semantic, stylistic, and social variations between the SL and the TL, many of them have different association meanings, making translation problematic.

#### **1.14.1 Religious Difficulties**

The translator must be well-versed in religious principles. For example, Islam culture is the religion predominated in Arabworld, but Christian culture is the religion predominated in theEnglish-speaking world. The language is influenced by variances in culture and religion.

As a result, the idioms employed in Arabic and English will be influenced by the cultural and religious ideas of these two languages. Thus, religious idioms are employed to describe feelings and common tradition in the Arab and English culture's socio-religious systems.

Religious phrases are notoriously difficult to decipher. According to Larson, (1984) "terms dealing with religious aspects of culture are frequently the most difficult, both in terms of analyzing the source, vocabulary and determining the optimal receptor language equivalency. The reasons in that: these words are intangible and many of the practices are so automatic that the speakers of the language are not conscious of the various aspects of meaning involved." (p. 180).



Therefore, the translator will encounter many difficulties in translating terms and expressions, which are not used or practiced in the TL. These are several religious idioms unique to Arabic and culture, such as (رمضان كريم) is an idiom unique for Arabic culture; it is used in a situation where someone comes to visit someone else and it is used during the Holy fasting month (Ramadan) to express the holiness.

The fundamental issues that idioms present in translation are twofold: the ability to recognize and interpret an idiom, and the difficulties in expressing the many components of meaning that an idiom transmits into the target language. Therefore, translation involves far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between two languages.

Furthermore, an idiom may not have a translation in the target language. The meanings are unpredictable, and they occasionally correspond to the same meaning in the TL.

In some circumstances, a word-for-word translation of Arabic into English appears to be impossible, mainly because the words in the target language do not exist.

### **1.14.2 Cultural Difficulties**

According to Richard and All, (1995) "culture as a perspective is defined in language teaching and applied linguistics Dictionary as: "the total set of beliefs, attitudes, customs, behaviour, and social habits etc..., of the members of a particular society." (p. 94).

Many individuals regard culture as a path into the core of a society, allowing them to gain a deeper understanding of its identity. Culture, on the other hand, is a stumbling block for any translator, especially when the two cultures in question are vastly different, such as Arabic and English. In this respect, Nida (1964) stated "the person who is engaged in translating from one language into another ought to be constantly aware of the contrast in the entire range of culture represented by the two languages." (p. 90). This means that language is regarded as an integral aspect of culture and the social identity of a society.

Furthermore, the reproduction of the source text entails more than the translator understands of the grammatical, lexical, and stylistic components of language; cultural aspects are also important and should be given sufficient attention by the translator.

There is a clear distinction between Arabic and English social culture, whether in terms of marriage, friendship, family, food, rituals, worldview, or manner of life...and this has a significant impact on their languages.

Consider how the term "nose" is regarded differently in different cultures; in Arabic civilization, the word nose is used to indicate pride (seen positively); however, in English, it means "nose". As a result, the translator can capture the suggested meaning if they have a strong foundation in the target language's culture. This necessitates increased cross-cultural awareness and an open-minded comprehension of the second language's culture from various perspectives. As a result, he or she colors his or her translation to match their way of thinking, resulting in a swift understanding of the information. Furthermore, a translator's understanding of culture help the production of the most accurate expression, which is sometimes dependent on culture.

### **1.14.3 Semantic Difficulties**

Idioms are an example of figurative and connotative meanings that provide a significant challenge to translators. To put it another way, the translation product should have the same meaning as the ST while retaining the semantic and stylistic qualities of TT. Nida and Taber (1969) also point out that "idioms and other figurative expressions usually suffer a great deal of semantic adjustment in translation since an idiom in one language rarely has the same meaning and function in other language as such the figurative meanings of the phrase." (p.

106). For instance, the Arabic word قلب it means (01) center; (02) قلب heart; (03) قلب the middle.

Because it is impossible to understand the meaning of these expressions by adding up the meanings of the individual words, the translator must look beyond the literal meaning and detect the metaphorical meaning of the phrase.

Due to the many challenges described in translating idioms, many linguists such as Darbelnet and Vinay propose various tactics and procedures based on various problems of interpreting and translating idioms.

#### **1.14.4 Stylistic Difficulties**

Because style is so crucial in translation, translators should be aware with both SL and TL styles. In other words, translators may have difficulties due to differences in SL and TL styles and structures. The significance of style in translation stems from the current relevance of style.

Nowadays, style is valued more than ever, especially when it comes to conveying the appropriate message.

In whatever facet of language, and thus in all areas of meaning, style has a role, in other words a writer can pick between formal and informal writing styles, as well as loaded and colloquial terminology, such styles are incompatible and cannot be employed interchangeably. Ghazala, (1995)"Such styles are important and strongly relevant to meaning, and can sometimes affect it heavily"(p. 22).A shift in style implies a shift in meaning.

As a result of this stylistic alteration, a poor text may be rendered as a good text if the original style is not retained, and vice versa, a good text may be rendered as a poor text if the original style is not preserved.

Joos, (1962) distinction of five different tones or styles of English language:

Frozen formula, formal, informal, Colloquial and vulgar. This classification is general but proved widely acceptable and helps to clear out some points.

### **1.15. Strategies for Translating Idioms**

There are eight strategies to translate idioms successfully:

#### **1.15.1 Literal Translation**

This is a word-for-word translation, as described by Vinay and Darbelnet and Vinay, which is most prevalent among languages of the same family and culture.

"I left my glasses on the table below," for example, becomes "j'ai laissé mes lunettes sur la table en bas." (Darbelnet & Vinay, 2000, p. 68-88).

According to Newmark (1998) "literal translation is the optimum technique for all translations, and while the bad translator will try to avoid using literal translation (word-for-word), all excellent translation should be literal". Vinay and Darbelnet said the same thing, but in different ways. According to Darbelnet and Vinay (1995), the literal translation may be deemed unsatisfactory since it:

- a- conveys a different meaning;
  - b- Conveys no meaning;
  - c- is structurally impossible.
  - d- Does not have an equivalent expression in the target language (metalinguistic equivalence),
- this strategy, however, is not applicable in all situations or with all languages. For example, the Spanish sentence: "El equipo está trabajando Para terminar el informe" could be translated into English as "The team is working to finish the report" Up until now, this method can be considered as a workable, yet sometimes it cannot be so. For example, the Spanish sentence above could not be translated into French or German using this technique because the

French and German sentence structures are different, besides a sentence that can be translated literally across languages does not mean that all sentences can be translated literally.

### **1.15.2 Transposition**

It is to switch from one part of speech to another without losing the meaning. It is in a sense a shift of word class (blue ball becomes boule bleue in French). Transposition can be; obligatory: like in "dés son lever" in a particular past context would be translated "as soon as she got up"

### **1.15.3 Modulation**

This alters the source language text's semantics and point of view. In other words, "modulation" consists of conveying the same information using a term that is different in the source and destination languages.

### **1.15.4 Equivalence**

It is called a creative strategy when you have to explain something in a complete different way. Darbelnet and Vinay (1995) coined the phrase to describe situations in which languages utilize diverse stylistic or structural techniques to depict the same situation. For instance: The Arabic idiom "أدار ظهره" in English "turn his back" it has the same literal and idiomatic meaning. And express the same situation of abandoned and giving up.

### **1.15.5 Peter Newmark's Strategies**

According to Newmark (1988) "in translating idiomatic into idiomatic language "strategies of translating idioms are:

Translate an idiom with a counter identical target language-equivalence: The translator applies the same qualities of the idiom existent in the source language to the type of idiom mentioned: formality, frequency of use, and shades of meaning covered.

This forces translators and learners to employ the closest similar idiom or idiomatic expression for the one given in the source text without infringing on the original linguistic characteristics and specificities of the idiom, therefore absence of idiom equivalence is one of the key issues for translators.

Paraphrase the idiom: This method is most typically utilized in the translation of idioms when the translator is unable to discover a suitable counterpart for the source idiom.

When there are no analogues, it is preferable to add extra clarification. This method is most typically utilized in the translation of idioms when the translator is unable to discover a suitable counterpart for the source idiom. When there are no analogues, it is preferable to add extra clarification

Provide a literal translation: This is a method that Newmark places a lot of attention on. He perceives that it was the first stage in the translation process and one of the most crucial procedures. Literal translation deals with converting SL grammatical structures to their closest target language equivalents, whereas lexical translation is done separately, outside of the text.

Translate an idiom with a non-identical target language idiom that conveys the same sense: the translator should endeavour to express the intended meaning while exhibiting the original's idiom effect, which means finding an idiom in the TL with the same meaning as the SL but different lexical components.

Otherwise, some people may resort to literally replicating the same idiom and using the same words.

Translation by omission: This method may appear extreme, but in some cases, leaving a word or an expression non-translated is not harmful. It is permissible to delete a term or an expression if the meaning supplied by it appears to be unimportant or superficial to the development of the text, so that the reader is not confused by a lengthy explanation.

### **1.15.6 Adaptation**

When a type of situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture, this includes modifying the cultural reference.

In other words, adaptation occurs when something peculiar to one language culture is presented in a totally different way in another language culture that is familiar or suitable; it is a shift in cultural context. Darbelnet and Vinay, (1995) suggest that a reference to the game of cricket in an English book might be effectively translated into French by a mention to the Tour de France. While their solution may work for some limited symbolic usage, changing cricket to cycling in sentences makes little sense.

### **1.15.7 Calque**

“Where the source language expression or structure is transferred in a Literal translation. This special kind of borrowing” (Darbelnet and Vinay, 1995, p. 85)

For example, "compliments de saison" is a French calque for "compliments of the season" in English.

Both borrowing and calque, according to Darbelnet and Vinay, are frequently fully integrated and broadly accepted in the destination language.

### **1.15.8 Borrowing**

“It is a method in which the source language word is transferred directly to the target language without being translated.”(Darbelnet and Vinay, 1995, p. 85). English borrows a lot of words from German, Arabic, Greek, French, Spanish.....

## **1.16 Idiomatic Expressions and Metonymy**

According to Ateeq, (1980), Metonymy is an antonym of explicit meaning, which is described as expressing one thing but implying another. For rhetoricians, it is a word that is

employed to convey a different meaning while also allowing them to use the genuine meaning.

According to Abdul-Raof (2006) “metonymy is a term that signifies the allusion to someone or something without specifically alluding to his or her or its identity.”(p. 233).

The literal and non-literal readings of metonymy, according to Abdou, (2011) “are in a relationship of contiguity rather than resemblance.” (p. 79).

### **1.17 Metaphor, Metonymy and their Relationship to Idiomatic Expression**

The notion that metonymy and metaphor are two forms of idiomatic expressions on which the semantic property of the expression is built. Most idiomatic expressions, according to Kövecses and Szabó (1996), are based on metaphor and metonymy.

In other words, idiomatic expression, like metonymy and metaphor, entails the use of words or phrases to establish a meaning that differs from the literal meaning of those words or phrases. This means idiomatic expression is a type of metaphorical usage of language.

### **1.18 Idiomatic Expressions and Metaphor (Allegory)**

According to Al-Jurjani (1994), metaphor is one of the types of allegory [المجاز] alMajaz] which refers to any word that is used implicitly.

There are two sorts of allegory:

The first is mental or cognitive allegory, which is employed as an attribution, i.e. attributing the verb or what is in its position to some other lexical item which is not normally used in that position e.g. (العشب المطر أنبت) literally, the rain planted the grass) because it is God who gives us the grass, not the rain (Ateeq, 1980; Al-Jurjani, Abdul-Raof, 2006).

The second sort of allegory is linguistic allegory, in which words are employed with meanings that are distinct yet linked to those for which they would ordinarily be used, such as using lion to indicate man or hand to mean favour. Allegory can, in turn, be subdivided into:



### **1.18.1 Metaphor Is a Linguistic Allegory**

In which the real and metaphorical meanings are related by a resemblance relationship.

### **1.18.2 Synecdoche (المرسلاالمجاز) (hypallage)**

Is a sort of metaphor in which the relationship between the literal and metaphorical meanings is a difference relation (Ateeq and Abdul-Raof, 2006).

## **1.19 Similarities/Differences between Proverbs and Idiomatic Expressions**

Since idiomatic expressions and proverbs are born out of certain linguistic and cultural contexts, their meaning is closely related to those contexts.

As a result, as linguistic constructs, they are difficult to comprehend for individuals who are not familiar with the context and culture to which the idioms and proverbs refer.

Knowing the context in which they are used is sometimes necessary to grasping their full meaning. It is tough to tell the difference between idiomatic expressions and proverbs because they are generally treated as a single conceptual unit.

Idiomatic expressions and proverbs, unlike regular sentences and structures, are fixed to varying degrees. Proverbs are more fixed, with a non-changing structure that defies the language's structural framework (Al-Hamzawi, 2000; Al-Anbar, 2001).

Fraser, (1970) "Idiomatic expressions, on the other hand, have a variable frozenness and are subject to transformational grammar, which means that their structure changes when the syntactic circumstance needs it." Despite the reference to Rome, the adage does not apply to a specific location; rather, it is used to convey the broad idea that there are many alternative methods to attain a goal or solve a problem.

To perform their expressive role, idiomatic expressions, on the other hand, require a clear linguistic reference and a specific conversation context. Furthermore, Al-Hannash, (1991) claims that proverbs are always associated with a historical event, implying that each proverb has its own tale, which is not the case with colloquial expressions. (p. 36).

### **1.16 Conclusion**

This chapter tackles different definitions of idioms, types, difficulties and different problems encounter translator while translating idioms. Mentioning perfect strategies to translate idioms also highlights difference between idiomatic expressions and other linguistic structures and the influence of culture on idioms. The next chapter aims to explain the features of the sociolinguistics situation in algeria.

## 2.1 Introduction

People from the Maghreb and especially Algerians have always been in contact with foreign populations, at different periods of the Algerian history. European languages influenced the Algerian languages created a particular sociolinguistic situation which gave birth to different phenomena such as bilingualism, code switching and borrowing; this situation is due to French colonisation which lasted more than 130 years.

What makes the language setting so complex is the use of Arabic with its different varieties, often mixed with French, the colonial language? We are rather interested in Arabic diglossia in the Algerian setting. One of the main remarkable facts about the linguistic situation in all Arabic-speaking societies in general, and in Algeria in particular, is the co-existence of two varieties of the same language, each one used for specific purposes with clearly defined roles. The code used in informal contexts, for example, at home, workplace, market and among friends and for low functions, is a local form of Arabic, whereas Modern Standard Arabic is the code utilized openly in formal situations, for high roles, such as public meetings, scientific conferences and educational purposes.

## 2.2 Algeria before the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The Romans lasted more than six centuries. After a settlement of more than one century until the invasion of the Arabs, whose conquest aimed at implementing and introducing the Arabic language and Islam. This civilisation lasted more than seven centuries.

In the late 15th century, Spain settled in some coastal cities of Algeria for nearly two centuries. This explains why in Oran, for instance: there are many words used by Oranian people, borrowed from the Spanish language. By mid 16th century, the Turks took control

over them. Therefore Algeria became under the Turkish protectorate until 1830, during more than 300 years.

Since many civilisations have settled in Algeria, the inhabitants were exposed to different languages in addition to the North African dialects. This fact has made of Algeria a multilingual country.

### **2.2.1 The Tamazight Variety**

The term Berber is derived from the Greeks. They used it for of North Africa. Several Berber dialect groups are recognized in Algeria but the major groups are the Kabyles of the Kabylie Mountains, east of Algiers, in Tizi Ouzou and Bejaia.

### **2.3 The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria after the 19th Century**

The linguistic situation of Algeria is multilingual. Algerian Arabic represents one variety of the ones spoken in Algeria. French is used as a language of everyday life interactions. It is the technical language for development.

Finally, Classical Arabic, the official language of Algeria which is used only in the courts, in most of the media, in mosques, schools, universities and in many publications. But, even if it is the official language of the country, no one uses it in everyday life conversations. Thus, some people in Algeria use two distinct varieties of Arabic according to contextual situations. They use CA in official settings whereas Algerian Arabic and/or Berber in informal situations such as with friends, at home and in daily life in general.

However, if we refer to Ferguson's 5 views we can say that Algeria is in a diglossic situation.

### 2.3.1 Diglossia in Algeria

Situation in which two varieties of the language are used under a different conditions within a speech community. The standard language is the high variety while the colloquial language is the low variety.

As we have already mentioned, the official language in Algeria is Classical Arabic. Each region has its own dialect. William Marçais, (1930) used the term “Diglossia” to describe the linguistic situation in Arabic-speaking countries. He said: “Arabic language appears under two perceptibly different aspects. A literary language so called written Arabic or regular or literal or classical, the only one that had always and everywhere been written in the past, the only one in which still today are written literary or scientific works, newspaper articles, Judiciary acts, private letters, in a word, everything that is written, but which exactly as it is, has perhaps never been spoken anywhere, and which in any case, is not spoken now anywhere) spoken idioms, patois... none of which has ever been written... but which everywhere and perhaps for a long time are the only language of conversation in all popular and cultural circles.”(p. 401).

For Marçais, Arabic has two forms, one classical used for the written form and another used almost orally. It was not even written during the Advent of Islam since it was written well after the prophet Mohamed died. Ferguson used the term «Diglossia» to describe a linguistic situation where two varieties of the same language, are used for different purposes.

Ferguson, (1959) “Diglossia as follows “Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and

respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but it is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.”(P. 16).

He described Diglossia as a kind of Bilingualism in a given society in which one language is the high variety «H» and the other, which belongs to the same language, is the low «L» variety. He differentiated the two different varieties of the same language.

In this context, Ferguson, (1959) describes the “H” as the “Superimposed variety, [...] which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.”(p. 245)

Some linguists thought about the phenomenon of Diglossia and the co-existence of the two varieties, which gave birth to an intermediate variety called “Modern Standard Arabic” “MSA”. MSA is used by educated people for communication in semi-formal situations such as interviews. Modern Standard Arabic is a modernized and simplified version of Classical Arabic. It serves for formal written and spoken communication in the media, in politics and in business. Gumperz says to explain this need to have an intermediate variety.

### **2.3.2 Bilingualism**

Is the ability of speaking and understanding two languages .The term can refer to individuals as well as to an entire society .Weinreich (1953) defined it as: “the practice of using alternately two languages?” Bilingualism is concerned with - at least - two languages? When a speaker comes in contact with people speaking another language, he/she faces a situation of language shift and bilingualism represents one case. The extent of bilingual

competency differs from one person to another. The degree of fluency is not the same for all bilinguals.

Sayad declares: "The concept of Bilingualism, in its wide acceptance, covers multiform linguistic realities, starting from a light sabir, less respectful of the grammar and the morphology of the borrowed vocabulary, to the most accomplished bilingualism which supposes according to the necessities of discourse, a self-confident, correct and distinct practice of two languages."

### **2.3.3 (AA) Algerian Arabic**

The Arabic - French bilingualism took root when Algeria fell under the French colonial domination. It is the result of the presence of the French. The Algerians were exposed to the French culture and the French language. The French colonization aimed at fighting education, they controlled the teaching of Arabic and encouraged the population to acquire French, the language of knowledge and civilisation.

Thus, bilingualism started when the Algerians came in contact with the French people and the French language at school because they were sent to French schools with French people. However, Algerians acquired French and became as proficient as the French but they knew that French was their L2 rather than their mother tongue L1.

### **2.3.4 Code Switching /Code Mixing**

In sociolinguistics, the term «Code Switching» refers to the use of two different languages, codes within the same sentence. A situation where we use two distinct codes in our discourse. In Algeria, code switching is a very common linguistic phenomenon which occurs every day whatever the type of the speech community. Gumperz, (1982) defines code

switching as “The juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems.” (p. 59).

People can master both languages and switch between them in the middle of a conversation or either a sentence. This happens when people know more than one language and produce, in a conversation with other speakers a speech composed of two varieties or more. We speak about code mixing when a word or an item of the second language is interposed into a sentence which remains in a first language. It means that we change codes from one language to another, alternatively, in the same utterance.

Within the same conversation, some words are taken in one language and others are taken from the other variety and are mixed together.

#### **2.3.4.1 Arabic/French Switching**

People use Arabic and French within the same conversation and even the same sentence  
With regard to.

Amghar (February 8th, 1974) “They speak to you two minutes in French, 30 seconds in Arabic then one minute in French and so on, sometimes the two languages are mixed to such a point that these results are bizarre, unintelligible language, and one wonders if these people are not themselves bizarre.”

#### **2.3.5 Borrowing**

Is the process by which bilingual or multilingual speakers introduce words from one language into another language, and these words eventually became adopted as an integral part of the second language?



When people from two different speech communities come in contact, they influence each other. There is a tight link between bilingualism, code switching and borrowing. And as said previously, code switching practised by a group of people is the beginning of borrowing.

### **2.3.5.1 Borrowing in Algeria**

We speak about the influence of French on colloquial Arabic because the main influence that exists is oral. There are a lot of basically French words integrated into Algerian Arabic. There is also a kind of borrowing between Arabic and Spanish in some regions in Algeria such as Oran. These loan- words are used in daily life interactions as if they belonged to Algerian Arabic, as a part of its vocabulary.

### **2.3.5.2 The Arabization Policy in Algeria**

The politicians decided to appoint Classical Arabic as the official language of the state. The government wanted to arabize all the Algerian speech community and tried to make it unified by using one language. They wanted to achieve this goal by applying a process called «Arabization» which is the official word referring to the introduction of Classical Arabic at different levels in Algeria.

On October 5th, 1962 the President Ben Bella declared that Classical Arabic is the national and official language of Algeria: “Arabic will regain its rank.”

By using one language, Algerians could return to their culture. In this concern, the president Boumediene (1968) noted that: “without the recuperation of this essential and important element which is the national language, our efforts will remain useless, our personality incomplete and our entity a body without soul.”

He was the most fervent partisan of the Arabization policy and he was committed to restore Classical Arabic at all costs. We have the impression that the history repeats itself concerning Algerian Arabic since all the governments from 1962 undertook the same linguistic policy which was applied by the colonizer with regard to Arabic. They started by promoting Arabic in the bureaucracy and in education. They increased the teaching of Arabic and reduced the hours of teaching French. He announced addressing himself to secondary school students

What we can advise you, is to save the Algerian personality. It is true that Algeria is situated between two continents. In fact, it belongs to the African continent but it is at the Occident doors. So, we belong to an under-developed continent which has its qualities and its personalities. As much as we are open to science and progress that are given to us by the countries which precede us in this domain, as much as we have to be careful to preserve our personality and our values, and as much we have to work to preserve our country and reinforce its bases.

The President tried to influence the students by making them conscious about their nationality and «Algerianness». He reminded them the importance to conserve the Algerian identity.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is very complex and heterogeneous due to the co-existence of many language varieties such as Arabic and its varieties, Berber and its varieties and French besides English, Turkish, Spanish and even German on small scale. These language varieties are resulted from the various invasions and conquests passed through the country which enrich the Algerian linguist repertoire. The next chapter aims to analyse finding and to give results and generale conclusion.

### **3.1 Introduction**

The following chapter is devoted to the empirical part. The data were gleaned from a mixed method approach will be analysed quantitatively and qualitatively with regard to their experiences in the use and translation of idioms and the obstacles that may face students in translating idiomatic expressions.

The results are presented in form of tables, pie chart and percentages, including the results and findings analysis. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse, interpret and discuss the responses.

### **3.2 Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire, consisting of three sections, is direct to students. The first section deals with students' personal information, it includes three main questions: their sex, age and education level.

Whereas the second one gauges the respondents' attitudes toward idiomatic expressions and their use, notions, obstacles, and daily use.

The third one is meant to check students hardships while dealing with translation from arabic to english languages, and find possible equivalents.

### **3.3 Design of the Questionnaire**

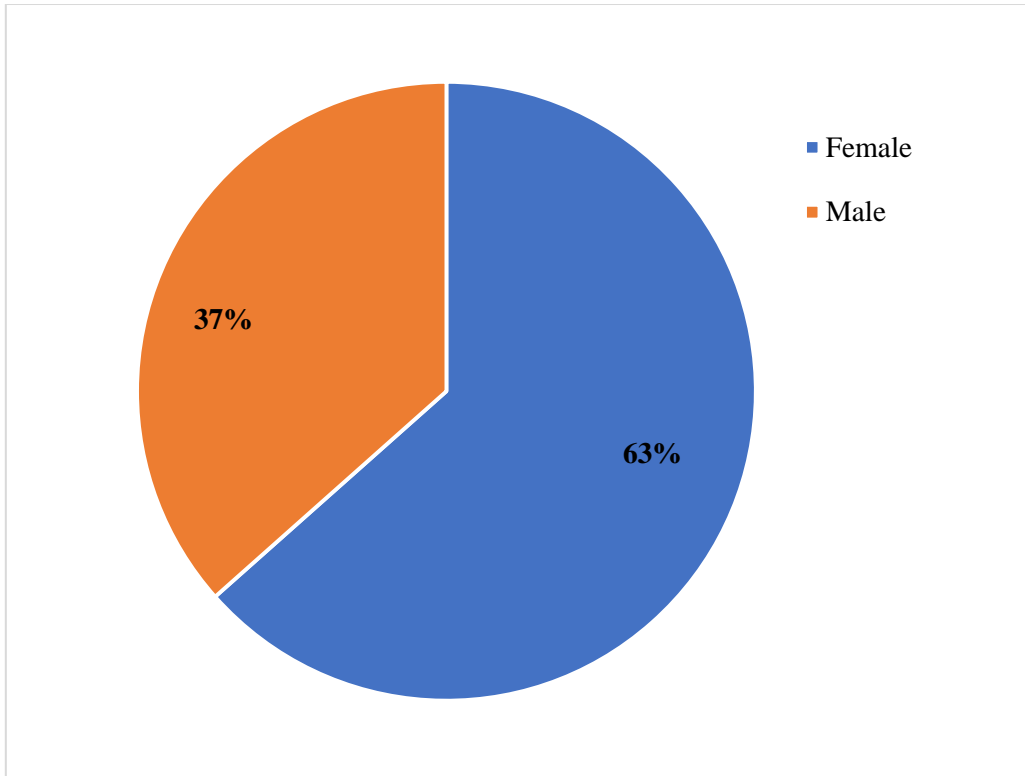
The questionnaire was based on personal experience and with the assistance of various students and teachers' help.

### **3.4 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire Data**

This section is devoted for the analysis of student's questionnaire. The data in this section are presented in form of tables, graphics and pie charts.

**Section 1: Personal Information**

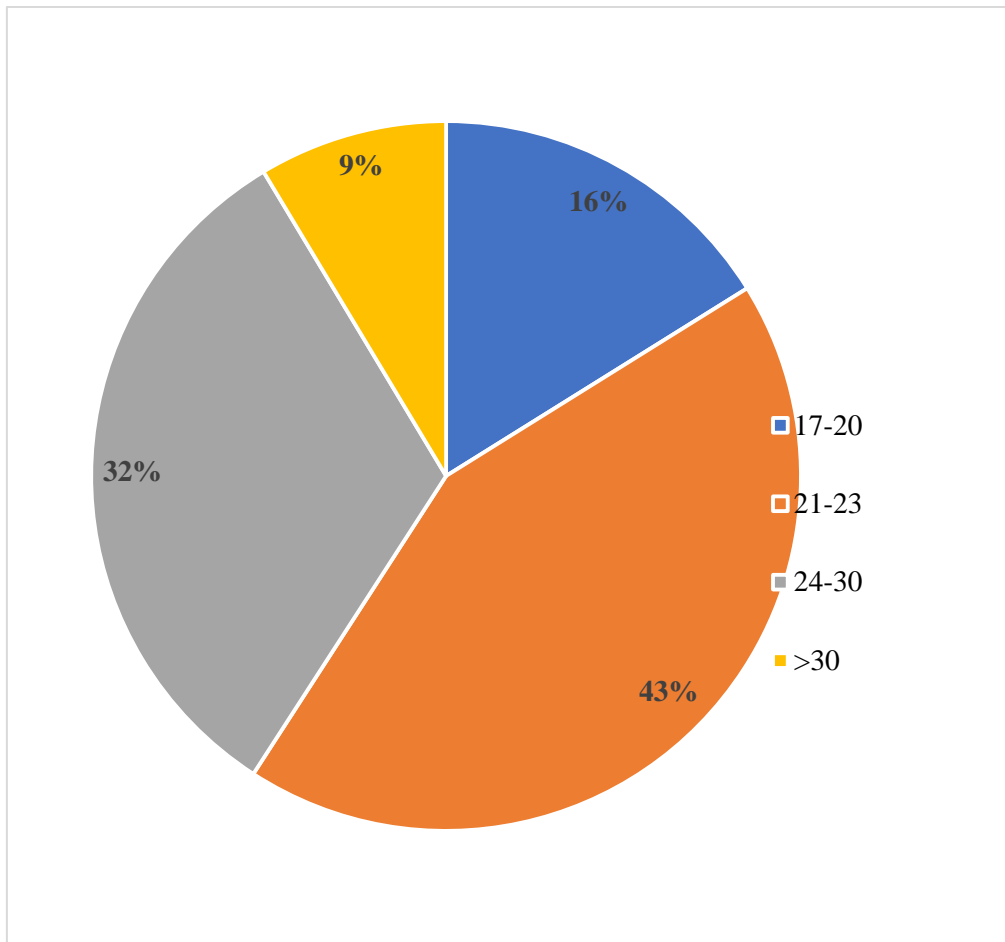
**Q1: Sex?**



**Graph3.1 Respondents' Sex**

Graph 3.1 illustrates that 37 of the respondents were 'males'; while, 63 were 'females' are more respondents rather than males because females are more cooperative.

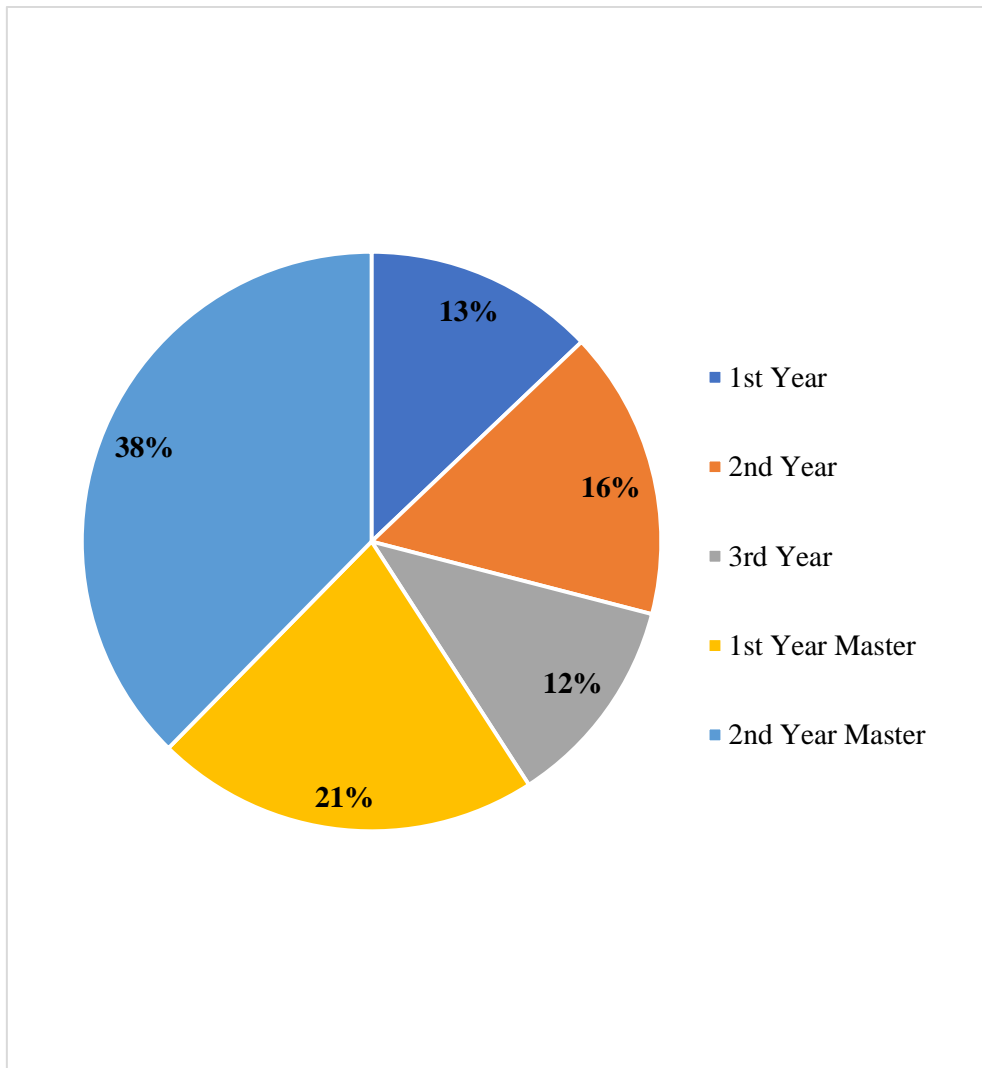
Q 2: Respondents' Age.



**Graph3.2 Respondents' Ages**

Graph 3.2 illustrates the highest percentage may be attributed to the fact that the majority of Ibn Khaldoune university students 43% aged between 21-23, and the minority 9% are in the age of 30 years and more.

Q 3: Academic Level

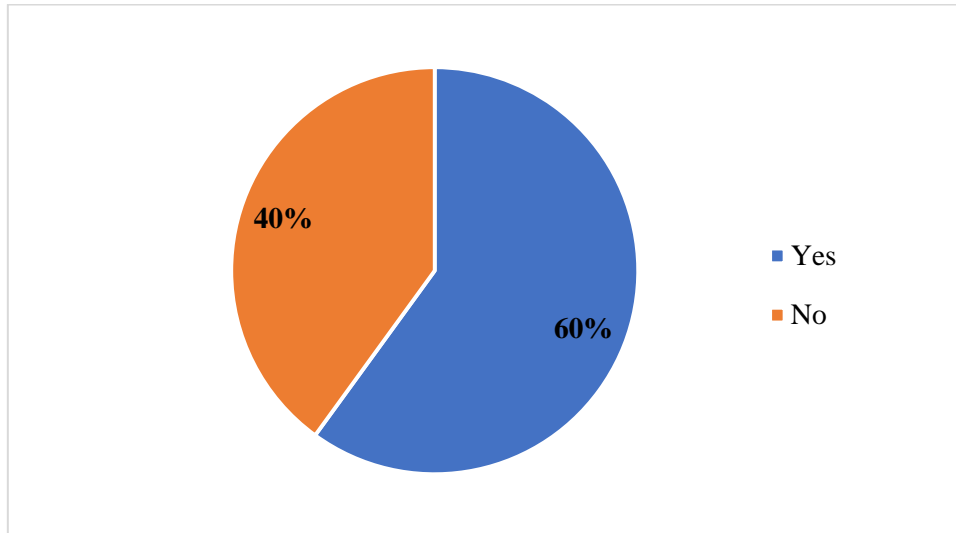


**Graph3.3 Respondents' Academic Level**

Graph 3.3 illustrates the highest percentage 38% of the respondent are the second year master students because second year master are more interesting and their knowledge in language is more than the first year students. The lower percentage represent the percentage of 12% are the third year students.

**Section 2: Attitudes towards Idioms and their Use**

**QQ1:** Have you even heard about the term ‘idiom’?



**Graph 3.4 Students' Knowledge about Idioms**

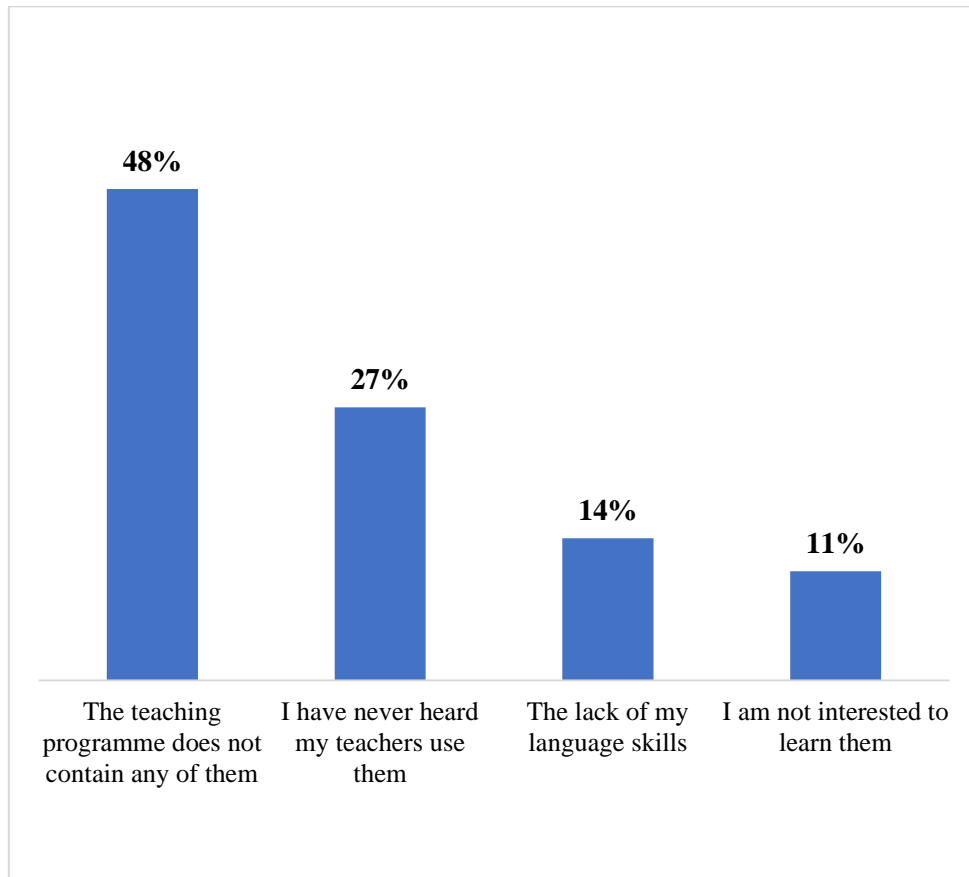
Graph 3.4 elucidates the students knowledge about idioms majority of them answer by yes 60%, while the rest of them answer 'No' 40% the reason of their ignorance is due to many obstacles.

**Q 2:** If yes, would you define it or give an example(s) to illustrate:

**Some answers:**

1. Piece of cake.
2. Break a leg.
3. It is raining cats and dogs.
4. Taste of your own medicine.
5. Not my cup of tea.
6. When pigs fly.

**Q 3:** If no, would you please tell why?

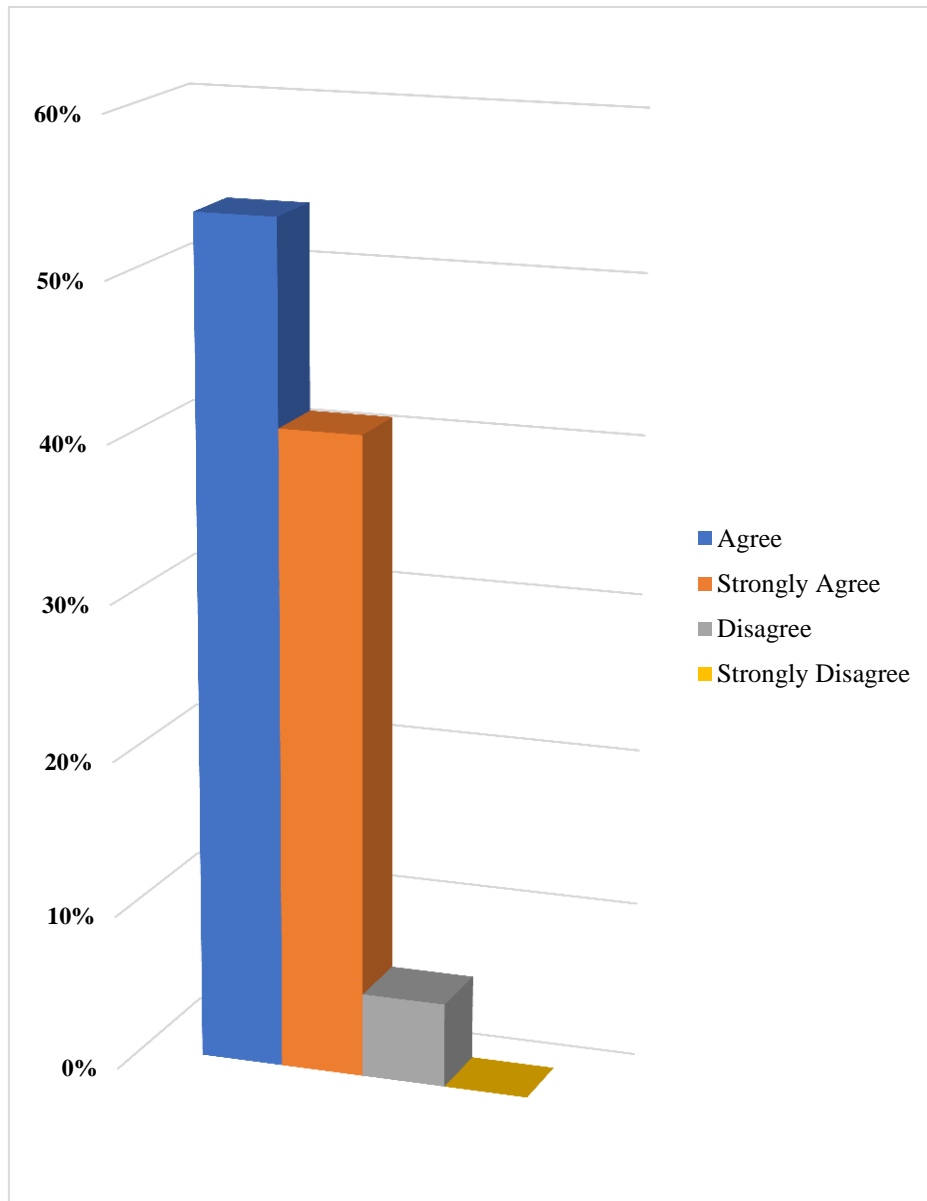


**Graph3.5 The Main Obstacles in Learning Idioms**

Graph 3.5 indicates different reasons why students do not know idioms. The first and most selected reason 48% was “the teaching programme does not contain any of them” idioms need to be taken into consideration and to be provided as lessons or module for EFL students in Algerian universities, the carelessness of students is one of reasons minority of students faced, 11% of students are uninterested in learning this linguistic phenomenon.



Q:4.1. I learn a new idiom better when a text supports its use

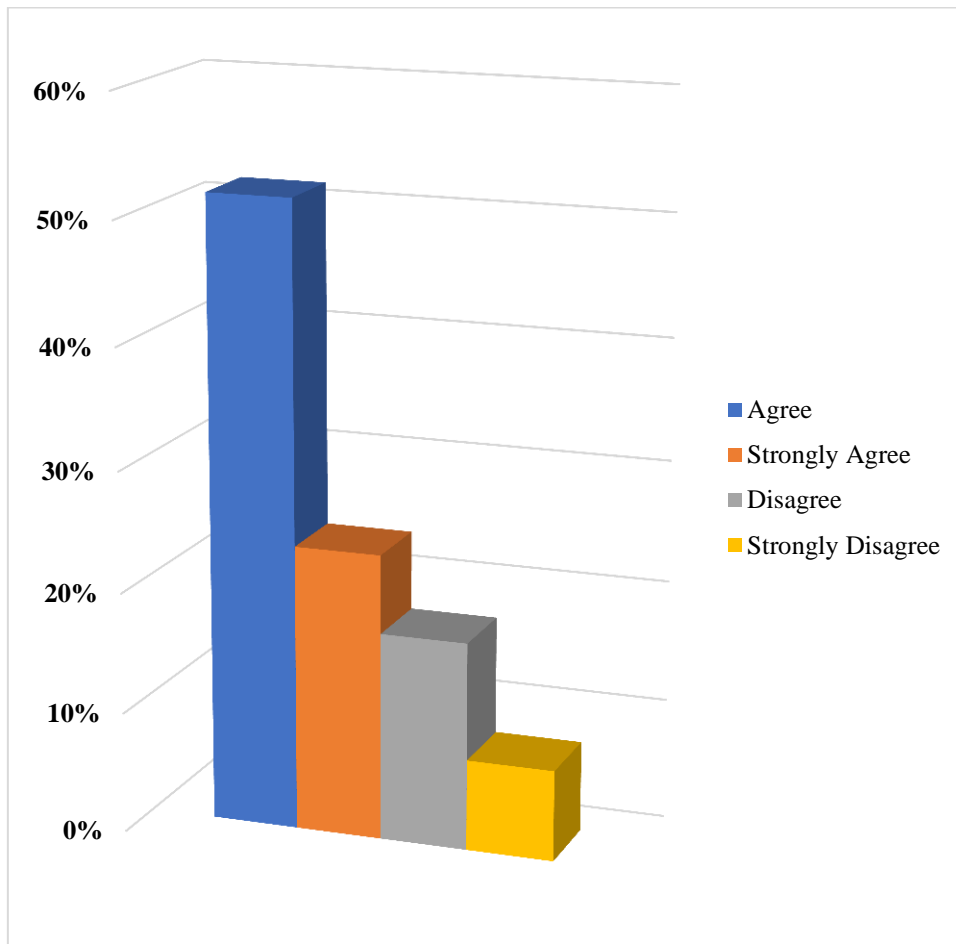


**Graph3.6The Usage of Idioms in Text**

According to the graph 3.6 represent the use of idioms in text majority agree 50%and, respondents said that they understand idioms better by understanding the context meaning.

0% disagrees because they find idioms understanding idioms alone is hard task.

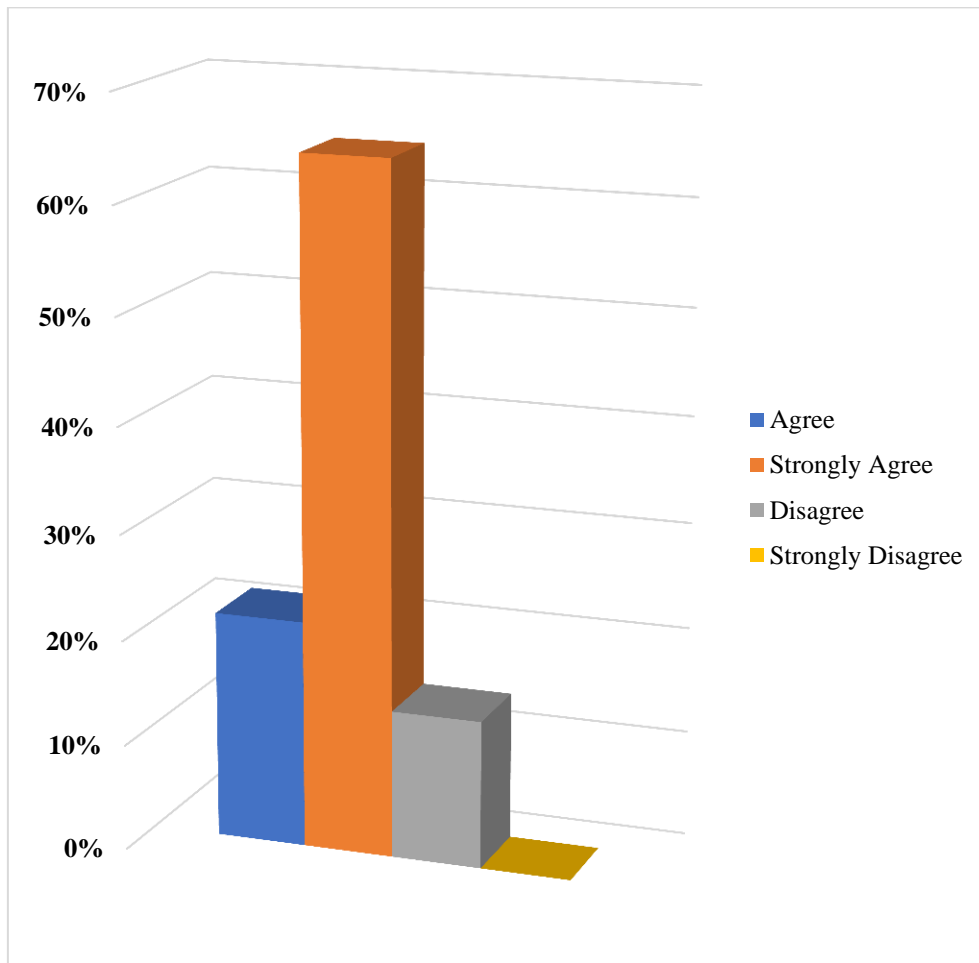
4.2 It is mandatory to incorporate idioms in teaching?



**Graph 3.7 Incorporating Idioms in Teaching**

Graph 3.7 clarifies the respondents' opinion of the importance of incorporating idioms in teaching. The results reveal that more than the average 52% said that they agree and to incorporate idioms in teaching regarding their importance in learning language. And 8% strongly disagree they think that the process is not important.

4.3. I think that idioms are useful in everyday communication

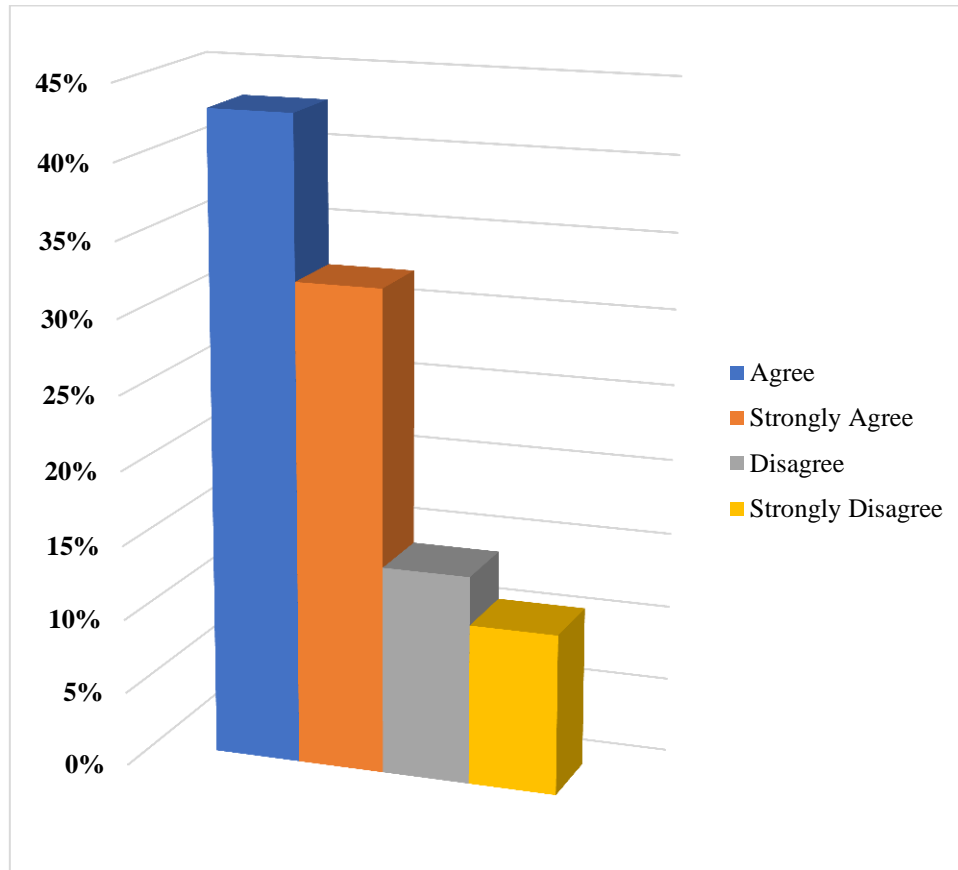


**Graph 3.7: Importance of Idioms in Everyday Communication**

Graph 3.7 demonstrates the importance of idioms in every day communication. The major part 65% strongly agree and declared that the use of idioms is important while 15% disagree they perceive idioms are not important in daily communication.

4.4 English idioms are important for me to perceive cultural differences and similarities

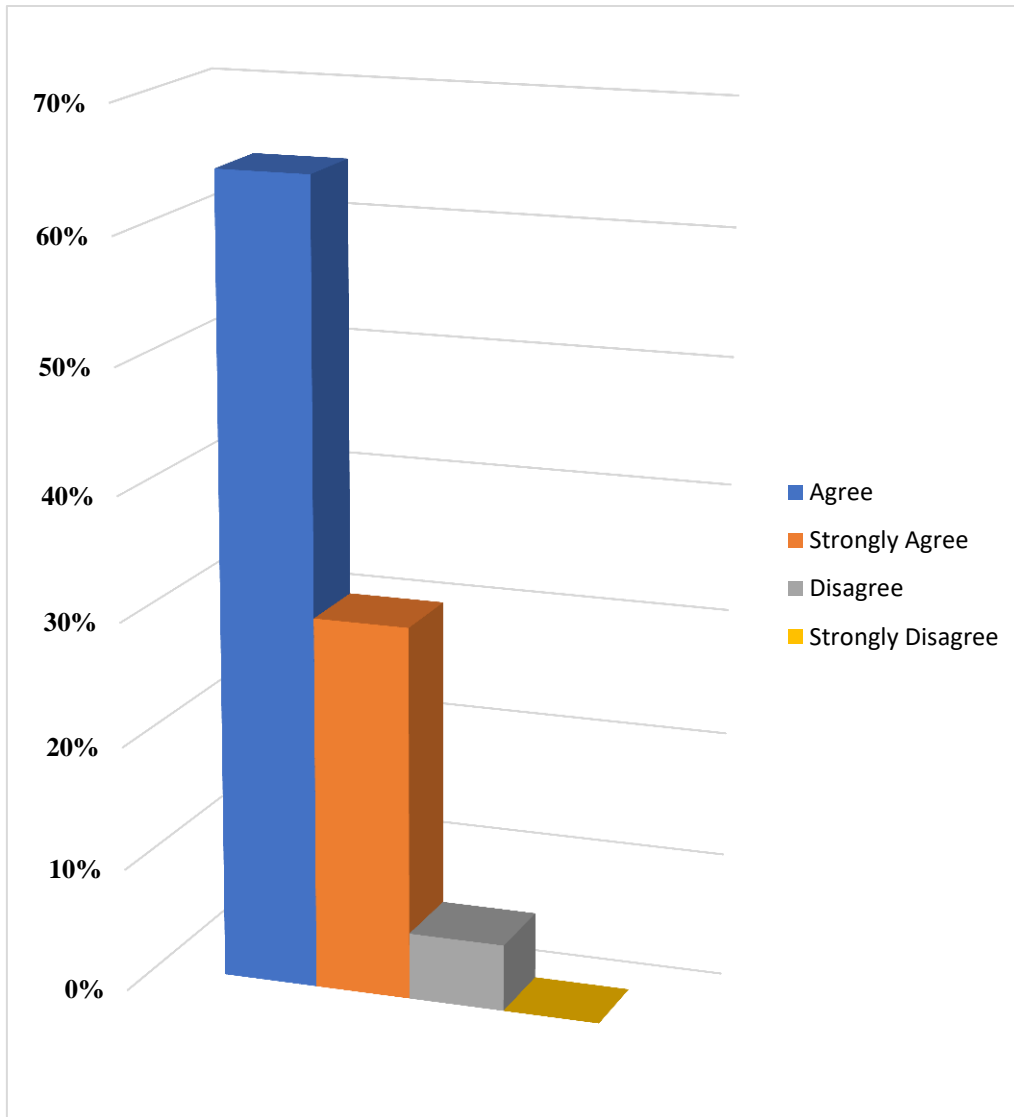
better.



**Graph3.9**The Importance of Idioms in Showing Cultural Differences and Similarities.

The main part of respondents 48% said that idioms help them to know differences and similarities between culture by understanding the metaphorical and the historical meaning behind the literal words of the idiom. 11% students strongly disagree they said that idioms do not show any cultural side.

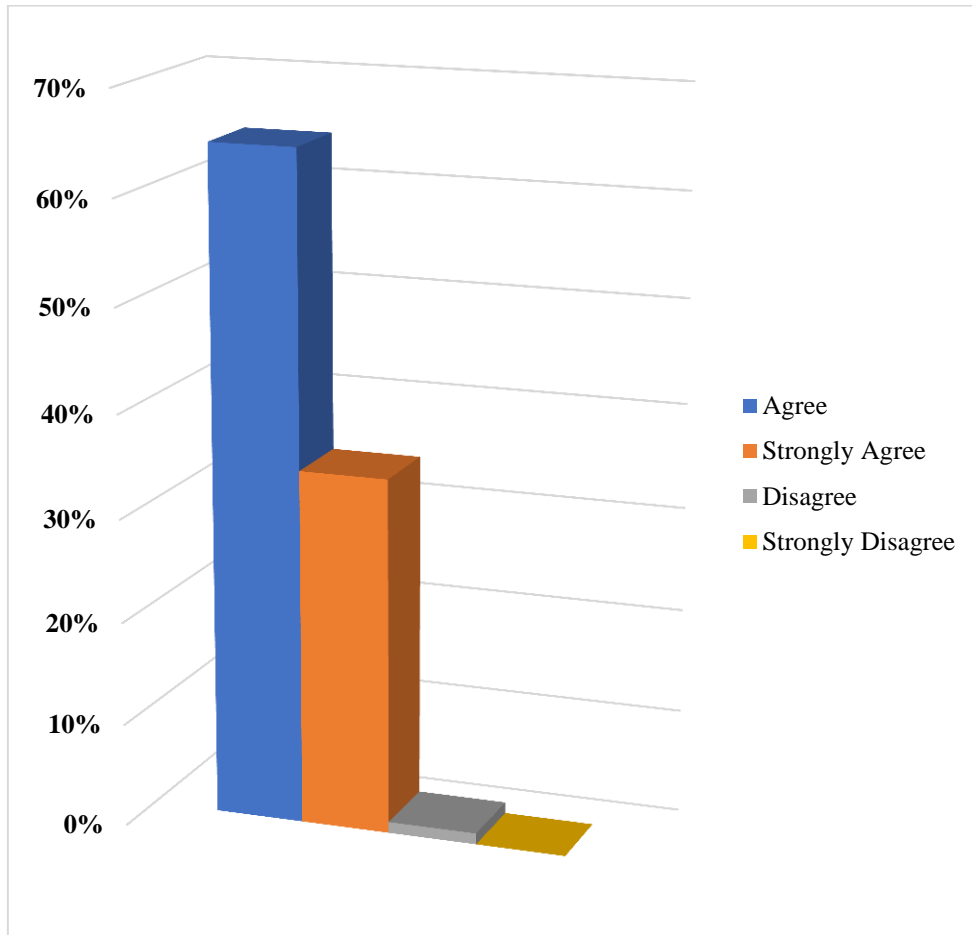
4.5 The etymology of idioms helps me to acquire them more quickly



**Graph 3.10: The Etymology of Idioms**

The high numbers of respondents 60% agreed that knowing the etymology facilitate the process of acquiring idioms. And 3% of them disagree.

4.6 I try to guess and understand the meaning of idioms by translating it into Arabic



**Graph3.11** Understanding English Idioms by Translating Them into Arabic

More than the average of respondents 65% said that they translate English idioms into Arabic in order to understand them and this helps students a lot to understand the meaning of the idiomatic expression, while 1% disagree.

**Section 3: Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions Cross- culturally and/ or Cross- linguistically.**

**Q.1:** Could you mention some Arabic Idioms that are similar to the following English Idioms?

**Q1.1** Cat got your tongue.

Idiomatic Expression	Number	Percentage
أكل القط لسانك	60	71%
بلع القط لسانك	24	29%
	84	100%

**Table 3.1** The Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘*Cat Got Your Tongue*’.

Table 3.1 illustrates the possible translations, meanings and/or interpretation of the idiomatic expression ‘*cat got your tongue*’: 71% of the respondents translates it as ‘أكل القط لسانك’; while 29% interpreted it as ‘بلع القط لسانك’ it appears that the first interpretation is more logical.

**Q.3:** A blessing in disguise.

Idiomatic Expressions	Number	Percentage
عسى أن تحبوا شيء و هو شر لكم و عسى أنتكر هو شيء و هو خير لكم	68	75%
نعمة في تنكر	23	25%
	91	100%

**Table 3.2** The Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘*A blessing in disguise*’

Table 3.2 demonstrates the possible translations, meanings and/or interpretation of the idiomatic expression ‘*A blessing in disguise*’: 75% of the respondents translates it as ‘عسى أن

’تحبوا شيء و هو شر لكم و عسى أنتكر هوا شيء و هو خير لكم’; while 23% interpreted it as ‘نعمة في تنكر’ it comes into view that the first interpretation has more similar sense with the English one.

**Q 3.3:** Bit off more than you can chew.

Idiomatic Expression	Number	Percentage
لا يكلف الله نفسا إلا وسعها	16	53%
اقضم أكثر مما تمضغ	14	47%
	30	100%

**Table3.3**The Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘*Bit off more than you can chew*’.

Table 3.3 demonstrate the possible translations, meanings and/or interpretation of the idiomatic expression ‘*Bit off more than you can chew*’ 53% of the respondents translates it as لا يكلف الله نفسا إلا وسعها; while as 47% translated as ‘اقضم أكثر مما تمضغ’. The first expression seems closer in meaning with the English expression.

**Q 3.4:** Bit the bullet

Variables	Count	Percentage
افشى السر	12	48%
عض رصاصة	13	52%
	25	100%

**Table3.4**Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘*Bit the bullet*’.



Table 3.4 reveals the possible translations, meanings and/or interpretation of the idiomatic expression ‘*Bit the bullet*’ 48% of the respondents translates it as ‘افشى السر’; while as 52% translated as ‘عض رصاصة’. The first expression seems closer in meaning with the English expression.

**Q .5:** Adding insult into injury.

Idiomaticepression	Number	Percentage
يزيد الطين بلة	34	74%
يحط على الملح جرح	12	26%
	46	100%

**Table 3.5:** Possible Translations and/or Interpretations of ‘*Adding insult into injury*’.

Table 3.5 clarifies the possible translations, meanings and/or interpretation of the idiomatic expression ‘*Bit the bullet*’ 74% of the respondents translates it as ‘يزيد الطين بلة’; while 26% translated as ‘يحط على الملح جرح’. It appears that both expression have the same meaning with the English expression.

**Q6: Some other idioms in both English and Arabic languages that students provide.**

The English idioms	The Arabic idioms
The black duck	البطة السوداء
It costs me an arm and a leg	كلفني كلية
Do not judge a book by its cover	لا تحكم على الكتاب من عنوانه
Tit by tat	واحدة بواحدة
Cristal clear	واضح وضوح الشمس
Fishing in troubled water	يصطاد في المياه العكرة
From different angles	من زاوية مختلفة
Calm before the stone	الهدوء ما قبل العاصفة
Slip of the tongue	زلة لسان
Turn over new leaf	يقطب الصفحة
Strike while the iron when is hot	اضرب الحديد و هو ساخن
Haste makes waste	في العجلة الندامة
One hand does not clap	يد واحدة لا تصفق
Adding insult into injury	يزيد الطين بله
Born with silver spoon in his mouth	ولد في فمه ملعقة من ذهب
Jump for joy	يطير فرحا
Look on the bright side	انظر إلى الجانب المشرق

Chicken heart	قلب الدجاجة
Life turns black in his eyes	اسودت الدنيا في عينيه
He is playing with fire	انه يلعب بالنار
As if the earth swallowed him	كما لو ابتلعتة الأرض
Hands lifted	رفعة الأقدام
Their hands are one	يدهم واحدة
A needle in haystack	إبرة في كومة قش

**Table 3.6 English and Arabic Idioms that Hold the Same meaning.**

Table 3.6 illustrate a list of English and Arabic Idioms that Hold the Same meaning. Students provide some English idioms and their similarities. Some of them are literally translated and others have not the same structure and word combination however they convey the same meaning.

### 3.5 Summary of Findings

According to the data collected, 40% of EFL students in Ibn Khaldoune university of Tiaret do not know what the concept "idioms" means. The main reason behind this ignorance is the teaching programme, it does not contain lessons to teach idioms or they are rare. Moreover, teachers do not give any attention neither to the use of idioms nor teaching them. Thus students are influenced by teachers.

Also, students acknowledge that they have lack in their language skills, one other obstacle is the lack of interest; students are not interested on learning idioms and idiomatic expressions.

The majority of students understands idioms better when a text support it use; According to them, when they master using idioms, they will be able to communicate effectively and appropriately. They have positive attitudes towards learning idioms, 52% of them agree and 22% strongly agree to incorporate idioms in teaching. They perceive that idioms are useful in everyday communication. As stated by students, idioms help them to recognize the differences and similarities among cultures. Large number of participants have agreed that etymology helps students to acquire idioms in short time. Furthermore, the greater part of students translate directly the idiom's meaning from the english into arabic language. Finally, the major part believes that idioms should be presented in the target language in order to reflect the real life with the regard if language use.

### **3.6 The Observation**

As it mentioned before, our observation have taken place in English department at Ibn Khaldoune University of Tiaret. Therefore we have attended English sessions of different modules and educational levels.

### **3.7 Summary of the Findings**

As outcome of our studies , we notice that; teachers barely use idioms, thus students are influenced by the way teachers speak. As result, the lack of the use of idioms in the sessions explains the lack of knowledge and the ignorance of this linguistic phenomenon by students Here are some idioms used in English session by both students and teachers

<b>The idiomatic expression</b>	<b>Its meaning</b>
A for effort	Recognizing that someone tried hard to accomplish something although they might not have been successful.
Learn (something) by heart	to memorize something completely
Copycat	someone who copies the work (or mimics the actions) of others
Teacher's pet	the teacher's favourite student
Bookworm	someone who reads a lot

**Table 3.7 The Common English Idiomatic Expressions Used By both Teachers and Students.**

Table 3.7 demonstrate the most idioms used by students and teachers during English sessions.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter explores the students' attitudes towards learning idioms and its significance while dealing with the target language. In fact, it tackles the students' obstacles towards idioms' translation and understanding in the Arabic context. It also provides an outcome of idioms' use by teachers' and its influences on student's leaning skills.

### General Conclusion

This work attempts to investigate linguistic phenomenon of idioms and idiomatic in terms of similarities and/or difference between Arabic and English in terms of culture. It also endeavours to highlight the definition of idioms their history, and their relation with the cultural components. It is a matter of fact that idioms have features, types and categories to classify them. As it is mentioned in this research translators find idioms a hard task, and a challenge. In order to facilitate this task this research provides with strategies of translating idioms. Moreover, it analyses the linguistic situation in Algeria. This dissertation is divided into; the theoretical aspect which consists of two chapters. The first two chapters deal mainly with the conceptualization and reframing our research topic. This is attempted through the analysis of the data generated by the research tool.

The first chapter reveals that idioms are fixed patterns of language that cannot be always translated literally (the importance of translation and culture in understanding the meaning of idiom) and demonstrate the value of idioms, the relationship between idioms and culture, their types and translation strategies and the differences and similarities between English and Arabic idioms.

The second chapter focuses on the linguistic situation in Algeria. It is widely acknowledged that Algeria is a diverse and heterogeneous country due to the co-existence of many language varieties such as Arabic and its varieties, Berber and its varieties and French besides English, Turkish, Spanish and even German on a small scale. These language varieties are the result of various invasions and conquests passed through the country which enrich the Algerian linguistic repertoire.

The third chapter deals with the practical side in the study. In this part, it aims at analyzing students' questionnaire answers and observation of the English sessions. The results of the analysis reveal that the majority of students like translation, but they find hardship in

## **General Conclusion**

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translation when dealing with idioms. Moreover, students rely on different strategies and techniques to understand and translate idioms. Furthermore, they face many lexical and cultural problems while translating idioms due to cultural and linguistic differences.

The research also aims to analyse the EFL students knowledge about idioms especially students in the Section of English at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret , to provide some Arabic English similar to the English expressions, observe the use of students and teachers and the influence of teachers on students in the term of idioms' usages.

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**Appendix 1:**

**Questionnaire**

The aim of this study is to investigate the way EFL learners learn and/ or the use of idioms or idiomatic expressions, their attitudes towards their utilization in their speech or writing in particular and their influence on expressing meaning in general.

**NB:** please! Answer the questions below by putting either a tick (√) in the appropriate circle or feel free to express your opinions in the provided space.

**Section 1: Personal Information**

- 1. Sex:** Male  female
- 2. Age:** 17-20  21-23  24-30  ≥31
- 3. Education level:** 1<sup>st</sup>Year  2<sup>nd</sup>year  3<sup>rd</sup> year   
 1<sup>st</sup> year master  2<sup>nd</sup> year master

**Section 2: Attitude towards Idioms and their Use**

**1. Have you even heard about the term ‘idiom’?** Yes  No

**2. If yes, would you define it or give an example(s) to illustrate:**

.....  
 .

**3. If no, would you please tell why?**

- The teaching programme does not contain any of them  The lack of my languages kills
- I have never heard my teachers use them  I am not interested to learn them
- Others

.....

**4. If you do not know idioms, here is a simple definition to help you knowing the concept:**

Idioms are a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meaning of each word on its own .

**Acronyms: Agree (A) Strongly Agree (SA) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)**

Questions	(A)	(SA)	(D)	(SD)
I learn a new idiom better when a text supports its use				

## Bibliography and Appendices

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It is mandatory to incorporate idioms in teaching idioms?				
I think that idioms are useful in everyday communication				
English idioms is important for me to perceive cultural differences and similarities better				
The etymology of idioms helps me to acquire them more quickly				
I try to guess and understand the meaning of idioms by translating it into Arabic				

### **Section 3:Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions Cross- culturallyand/ or Cross-linguistically**

#### **1. Could you mention some Arabic Idioms that are similar to the following English Idioms?**

1-Cat got your tongue

The Arabic idiom:

.....

2-A blessing in disguise

The Arabic idiom:

.....

3-Bit off more than you can chew

The Arabic idiom:

.....

4-Bit the bullet

The Arabic idiom:

.....

5-Adding insult into injury

The Arabic idiom:

.....

**2. Please! Would you provide some other idioms in both English and Arabic language.....**

**Thank you for your participation.**