



Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana  
ISSN: 1315-5216  
ISSN: 2477-9555  
diazzulay@gmail.com  
Universidad del Zulia  
Venezuela

## Translation strategies in the translation of idioms in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

**ABDELAAL, N.; ALAZZAWIE, A.**

Translation strategies in the translation of idioms in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana, vol. 24, núm. Esp.5, 2019

Universidad del Zulia, Venezuela

**Disponible en:** <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=27962050031>



Esta obra está bajo una Licencia Creative Commons Atribución-NoComercial-CompartirIgual 3.0 Internacional.

## Translation strategies in the translation of idioms in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

Estrategias de traducción en la traducción de modismos en Romeo y Julieta de Shakespeare

N. ABDELAAL  
University of Nizwa  
nourabdelal@yahoo.com

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7706-0413>

A. ALAZZAWIE  
University of Nizwa  
abdulkhaliq@unizwa.edu.om

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4922-4836>

Redalyc: <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=27962050031>

Recepción: 01 Octubre 2019  
Aprobación: 06 Noviembre 2019

### ABSTRACT:

Translating idioms is challenging for translators due to the cultural differences between a source language and a target language. In this regard, this research aimed to identify the translation strategies adopted by Anani in the translation of Romeo and Juliet, and the extent of the source text (ST) meaning of the idioms was conveyed in the target text (TT). A qualitative analysis was conducted to identify such translation strategies and determine the extent of ST meaning of such idioms was conveyed. Baker's translation strategies were used as a theoretical framework of the research.

**KEYWORDS:** Idioms, Meaning, Romeo and Juliet, Translation strategies.

### RESUMEN:

Traducir modismos es un desafío para los traductores debido a las diferencias culturales entre un idioma de origen y un idioma de destino. En este sentido, esta investigación tuvo como objetivo identificar las estrategias de traducción adoptadas por Anani en la traducción de Romeo y Julieta, y la extensión del significado del texto fuente (ST) de los modismos que se transmitió en el texto objetivo (TT). Se realizó un análisis cualitativo para identificar tales estrategias de traducción y determinar el grado en que se transmitió el significado ST de tales expresiones idiomáticas. Las estrategias de traducción de Baker se utilizaron como marco teórico de la investigación.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** estrategias de traducción, modismos, Romeo y Julieta, significado.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Idioms have gained much attention in formulaic language research due to their peculiar nature. They do not function as single units though they consist of multiple words. Besides, idioms are difficult to define or describe in exact terms. Richards et al. (2002) defined an idiom, as "An expression which functions as a single unit and whose meaning cannot be worked out from its separate parts." (p.246). For example, the idiom "a bird told me that", which means that "I have known this piece of information in my way, and since nothing further is said, implies an unwillingness to reveal the source if there is one or that the source is to remain a mystery, cannot be perceived literally as if the bird was the agent. Hence, the meaning of the idiom has nothing to do with the separate lexemes of "bird, or tell". However, one view holds that an idiom usually starts as a phrase having a literal meaning, and which then it gets used figuratively. In other words, this view holds that there is a relationship between the components of idioms and their idiomatic or figurative meaning (Al-Haddad: 1994). Baker (2018) postulates that idioms are frozen strings of language whose meanings are not deducible from their single components. Consider the idiom/collocation "fed up". Animals and people can

be fed, and there could be other usages involving feed or fed. However, when it comes to being fed up, the word "up" must follow "fed". It has to be in the past tense "fed up"; one cannot say 'feed up', using the present tense of feed; this combination makes no sense (Akbari: 2013).

se (Akbari: 2013). Imagine how funny it would seem if somebody said "I'm fed down" or "I'm fed upward" or "I'm fed sideways" - that combo may be possible if somebody cannot normally eat because of some sickness or handicap. However, in the sense that "fed up" means, it can only be "up" after "fed". Otherwise, it would take on a physical meaning that somebody is being fed sideways. I'm fed across. I'm fed outwards. I'm fed diagonally. It has nothing to do with direction. Otherwise, "upward" should be able to be used if "up" can be used. At any rate, in the sense of being tired of and annoyed by someone or some situation, the only word that can follow "fed" is "up". A mother who is losing her patience with the ongoing noise of her children may say, "I'm fed up with this noise. Quiet down!" or if a child is whining a lot, a parent may say, "I'm fed up with all your whining. Stop it!" A wife may want to divorce her husband because he has a drinking problem and says, "I'm fed up with all your drinking; it's over." This combo is fixed because there is no substituting "up" with another part of speech in order to have/maintain the meaning it does (Shojaei: 2012).

Idioms are not a common phenomenon. There are several definitions of idioms. Joeline and Maureen (2003) define idioms as "non-literal phrases whose figurative interpretations cannot be derived from their literal meanings" (p.188). However, Marlies (1995) defines an idiom as "an expression whose overall figurative meaning cannot be derived from the meaning of its parts" (p. 283). Cain et al. (2005) define idiom as a figurative expression that may be interpreted literally, but it takes a nonliteral meaning when used in a specific context (p. 66). Whereas, Laval (2003) and Rowe (2004) define idioms as idiomatic expressions whose literal meanings and interpretation are different from what they mean (i.e., idiomatic interpretation). Overall, idioms are such a complicated phenomenon to characterize or describe in precision, as there is no universal definition of an idiom and its characteristics. Some scholars (e.g., Cooper: 1998) consider idioms as such a broad term, which includes metaphors, similes, proverbs, and even individual words (e.g., Hockett: 1964; Katz & Postal: 1963), whereas other scholars strictly view idioms. Whatever the case, idioms are an essential phenomenon in vocabulary acquisition (Adelnia & Dastjerdi: 2011).

Idioms have always been a worth-studying and exciting phenomenon in the language (Cacciari & Tabossi: 1993). One characteristic of idioms, as identified by Johnson-Johnson-Laird (1993), is that they are mysterious and "the poetry of daily discourse". They, moreover, are so exciting, as they occupy imagination, and have the liability to transform abstract meanings into more concrete ones and augment the meaning of simple concepts (Levorato: 1993). They exist in every area of human communication (Levorato: 1993). Besides, idioms are prevalent, which confers more importance on their use in the language. Another critical feature of idioms is that they contribute to fluency and speech spontaneity (Johnson-Laird: 1993).

Fernando (1996) states that three features characterize idioms, namely, compositeness, institutionalization, and semantic opacity. Compositeness refers to the nature of idioms, which are made up of more than one word (i.e., multiword expressions). Institutionalization implies that idioms are conventionalized expressions, which are a product of 'ad hoc', or serve specific purposes. Semantic opacity refers to figurative or nonliteral features of idioms, in the sense that meanings of idioms are not the mere sum of their critical parts. Fernando (1996) adds that these characteristics are not only characteristics of idioms, but they are shared by the other multiword expressions, such as collocations, proverbs, and idioms (Ordudari: 2007).

Mäntylä (2004) argued that five features were always used to (i.e., traditionally) characterize idioms.

These standard or traditional features are metaphoricality or figurativeness, analyzability or non-compositionality, fixedness of form, the level of formality, and being multi-word expressions. Metaphoricality is deemed the principal feature of idioms. Non-compositionality indicates that idioms are dead, whereby their meanings are arbitrary and not figurative. Fixedness of form signifies the intolerant syntactic nature of idioms, as they are frozen. The level of formality is related to the fact that idioms are considered to belong

to informal, spoken language rather than formal, written language. Last, of all, idioms are composed of more than one word and, thus, they are multi-word expressions.

However, Mäntylä (2004: 28) argues against these classical features of idioms. He believes that idioms are not merely dead, frozen metaphors, as there are some idioms that are not dead or frozen. There is much literature that is in line with Mäntylä, and which rejects the idea that idioms are dead and frozen metaphors (Gibbs & Nayak: 1989; Glucksberg: 1993). For example, Gibbs (1993: 58) states that some scholars' assumption that idioms are dead metaphors is far from being accurate. He adds that the arbitrary conventions of usage might determine idioms' meanings. Take for example, the idiom of "break a leg", which means to wish a good luck before a performance; this idiom originated from the old superstition that wishing good luck to someone would be bad luck, and hence by the progress of time people started to use it and now it becomes fixed as a convention. However, Mäntylä (2004: 29) adds that detecting the link between the origins of an idiom and its meaning is difficult because such interrelationship got weaker by time.

As such, the translation of idioms poses many challenges for a translator whose job goes beyond merely translating lexical items from a source language to a target language. It is a process of translating the style of language and, therefore, the culture of a source language to a target language. Consequently, it is principal optimal and essential that a translator is cognizant of the cultural variances and the various discursal strategies in the source and target languages. The hidden structure of the source text should be analyzed through the use of various discursal strategies by the translator (Razmjou: 2004). Aldahesh (2013) argues that the semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic complexity of the ST idioms makes translating them a challenging task.

Baker (2018) postulates that the problems in translating idioms are prompted by two causes, viz., the ability to recognize and interpret an idiom correctly, and how to render the various aspects of the meaning of the ST idiom into the TL. Recognizing an expression as an idiom may not be an easy task as it might seem to. Translators sometimes fall in the trap of perceiving an idiom literally, and thus the inability to recognize it as an idiom. While some idioms lend themselves to literal rendering, others do not. "Birds of a feather flock together" is an example of an idiom which can be translated literally and make perfect sense and be understood in a way in which it maybe was not intended. This statement is true. Sparrows are with sparrows; robins are with other robins; crows with other crows, etc. The variations within the bird species do not mix. However, this statement is usually intended to describe humans and, these days have more to do with the character of a person (like-minded or alike) than race or ethnicity, although this idiom can be used in this way as well. With this idiom "kill two birds with one stone" as well, it is possible that a literal application could happen. However, the English idiom, "got my goat" (to get a person's goat means to irritate them as in "He's got my goat", cannot be translated literally.

Baker believes that the more complicated an expression to understand in specific contexts, the more likely it will be recognized as an idiom by a translator. For example, the expression "Put your money where your mouth is" surely must mystify target-language readers, and the translator would realize that this saying is not meant to be taken literally. However, Baker mentioned that there are some instances where idioms can be misleading for a translator. Some idioms can be interpreted, and they render some vague, poorly understood meaning, the meaning that is obvious resulting from the most straightforward word to direct word translation. However, the problem is that these idioms may have a different meaning from the literal meaning that they mean. A case in point is the idiomatic expression "go out with", which if translated the meaning literally will not correspond with the ST meaning in some contexts. People who are just starting dating are said to be going on a date. If they continue past the first date, people will ask "Are you going to see him/her again?" or "Are you going to go out with him/her again?" or "Are you going to go on another date with him/her again?" Or someone will say, "They're going on another date." If they continue to date, they're "checking each other out.", seeing how it goes and where or how far it goes. When the dates continue, and it

becomes a pattern, then people will say, "They're dating" When the couple becomes a couple, then the terms "boyfriend" and "girlfriend" will be used. Or people may describe the couple as "being an item."

"People in a boyfriend-girlfriend relationship are supposed to be more serious, supposed to like and care for each other truly. This is why, if one person is being insincere and "stringing the other person along, the other person gets so upset and feels so hurt and betrayed and let down, of course. It is supposed to be an exclusive relationship, thus the term "cheating on someone", is used when someone is not loyal. Thus, the idiom means and refers to a somewhat committed and exclusive relationship with someone rather than just going out with. The idiom lends itself to a play on words or meaning, as it can be used to mean the literal meaning or even the idiomatic meaning. In Arabic, there is a corresponding idiom, that is, #####, which can also mean literally 'go out with her' (just hanging out in the same crowd) or it can mean idiomatically 'go on a date with her', (and there is no sex involved, and the difference between SL and TL is that no sex is involved at all. However, in western culture, at least in some western cultures, to go out on a date does not mean that sex is going to be taking place nor that it is intended nor understood that it should be taking place).

To sum up, the expression "going out with" can be applied to different sorts of relationships, as explained earlier. This idiom does not always imply that the relationship is a boyfriend/girlfriend, one where sexual intercourse is a given, although this idiom can also be used to refer to that type of relationship. "Going out with each other" better describes or clarifies the nature of a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, but "each other" is usually left off and this may create some misunderstanding in certain circumstances, like when a guy and a girl are going out on dates but not engaging in sex. Baker gives another example of idioms, which may be misleading and might be translated literally; the example is "drain the radiator", which means 'to urinate'. However, it might be perceived literally as an action of emptying a radiator. If this idiom were translated and understood literally, people might be perplexed, wondering why all of a sudden, someone is going out to work on their car. Clearly, this idiom can only be properly understood in a figurative sense.

Another problem with idioms is that "An idiom in the source language may have a very close counterpart in the target language which looks similar on the surface but has a totally or partially different meaning." (Baker: 2018). Baker gives the example of "pull his leg", which has an equivalent idiom in Arabic, viz., yashab rijluh. (This means what literally "pull his leg") However, the Arabic and English idioms have different meanings. The English idiom means to tell a joke to somebody, and then tell the truth. It means "to deceive someone playfully" and maybe people might tell the truth if needs be, but that is more what follows than what is part of the definition). For example, an uncle tells his niece, "The sun is going to rise and set in the east tomorrow." The young niece replies, Really?

Furthermore, the uncle says, "Nah, I was just pulling your leg." Another usual reply in such a circumstance is, "Nah, I was just teasing you." In contrast, the Arabic idiom means to deceive and trick somebody purposefully. Thus, the Arabic version is meant to be a real deception (not teasing someone) and is, therefore, more sinister.

It is, thus, clear that a lot of translation is a hit or miss situation - a meaning hit with an idiom loss. Or, to be more exact, it is a literal-meaning hit but an idiomatic-meaning loss or lost altogether. A literal-meaning hit, but an idiomatic-meaning loss can be defined as a Source Text to Target Text translation in which the literal meaning is achieved (successfully translated), but the flavor of the idiomatic meaning is lost. We call this type of translation a real hit but idiom loss.

According to Baker (2018), there are some challenges in translating idioms that have nothing to do with the nature of idioms. Put in other words, these difficulties are faced in translating opaque as well as transparent idioms. These problems are:

1. Lack of equivalence: some idioms are culture-specific, and therefore, they do not have equivalents in the TL. This capitalizes on the fact that culture and language are two faces of the same coin, to the extent that led Damen & Savignon (1987) to pose a question if culture preceded language or vice versa. As regards translation, culture is an inseparable component of the translation process.

Sheikh (2014) mentioned that translation is not only decoding and recoding of lexemes, but it is also a process of decoding and recoding culture. A case in point would be "yours faithfully," which does not have an equivalent greeting in Arabic. A translator then has to translate it as *watfadallou biqoboul faiq al ehtram* (which means, please accept the utmost respect), or any other standard greeting in Arabic. In this regard, Snell-Hornby (1998) states that translation can no longer be envisaged as occurring at the level of language only; it is instead a cross-culture transfer. Fenyo (2005) puts it straightforward that a translator is a bilingual mediator who should be able not only to decode and code a source text, but he should also be able to transcode it to the target language readers in a way that does not leave some information out or distort the meaning of the source text. Therefore, as proposed by Fenyo, knowledge of the source and target cultures is proximal, premium, and a prerequisite to proper translation. A culture-specific idiom is not necessarily to be untranslatable. For example, the English idiom "to carry coals to Newcastle" means "something brought or sent to a place where it is already plentiful". So, this means that the action was useless because the material/item was not needed. Or, "it is best sent where it can be sold or used". This idiom can be translated into Arabic as *yabaaa mayyeh fi haret assaqqayeen* (to sell water in the district of water sellers). The idiom in SL may have a similar counterpart in the target language, but the connotations are different, and they may not be pragmatically transferable. Baker gives the idiom "sing a different tune" which has a similar counterpart in the Chinese language, viz., *chang-dui-tai-xi*. However, the two idioms are connotatively different. The English idiom highlights the contradiction in opinions and views, which is harmful. The Chinese idiom, in contrast, is complimentary and has a positive meaning.

2. An idiom in the SL may have idiomatic and literal senses at the same time, which are not represented (at the literal or idiomatic level) in many languages. For example, the play on a meaning that exists with the English expression "to poke your nose into something" is not represented at the literal and idiomatic level in many languages. The play on this idiom is different. In English, it is possible to "poke your nose into something", usually by accident. Perhaps you got whip cream or ice cream on your nose when you were eating a dessert, or perhaps your nose got too close to a flower you were smelling. An example of a literal meaning: "I poked my nose in (into) that flower, and now it feels itchy like I have to sneeze." An example of a figurative meaning: "John is always poking his nose into other people's business", which means to pry into someone's personal affairs.
3. The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, the contexts in which they can be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages. For example, English makes large use of idioms in written discourse, which is not the case in Arabic and Chinese.

As discussed above, translating idioms is challenging, and translators deal with it differently. This research aims at examining the strategies used by one of the expert translators in translating one of Shakespeare's plays. This study, specifically, aims to:

1. identify the translation strategies used by Dr. Anani in translating some of the idioms in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet."
2. Examine the extent the strategies used to convey the meaning intended in the ST, without creating a loss of meaning:

Theoretical Framework: Baker (2018) postulated that some strategies could be followed in translating idioms. These strategies

1. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form: this involves using an idiom in the TL, which has roughly the same meaning as the SL and consists of equivalent lexical items. For example, the

Arabic idiom *raasan ala aqeb* has an equivalent in English, viz., *head over heels*. So, the Arabic idiom, when translated, consists of the same (except for the preposition) and an exact number of words and has the same meaning.

2. Using an idiom of similar meaning but different form: this involves using an idiom in the TL which has roughly the same meaning as the SL. However, it does not have similar lexical items. For instance, the English idiom "One good turn deserves another" is equivalent in meaning to the French idiom "À beau jeu, beau retour" ('a handsome action deserves a handsome return), though the lexical items in the SL and TL are different.
3. Borrowing the source language idiom Sometimes, borrowing the source language idiom would be a way to translate culture-specific items. For example, the idiomatic word "feedback" is sometimes translated literally into Arabic as #####
4. Translation by paraphrase Another common strategy of translation is a translation by paraphrase, whereby a translator paraphrases the SL idiom. Example of this is the English idiom "take in one's stride", which was translated, according to Baker, as ##### (overcome). The dictionary gives two definitions: 1) clear (an obstacle) without changing one's gait to jump, and 2) manage without difficulty. For example, translating "Scratch my back, I scratch yours" as "help me and I will, in return, help you).
5. Translation by the omission of a play on the idiom "This strategy involves rendering only the literal meaning of an idiom in a context that allows for a concrete reading of otherwise playful use of language" (Baker: 2018).
6. Translation by the omission of the entire idiom Importar lista This strategy of omitting a whole ST idiom in the TT is followed when there is no equivalent for the ST idiom, and it cannot be paraphrased, or because of stylistic reasons.
7. Compensation A translator sometimes seeks to omit or play down some features of the idiom in the ST, which occurs at a specific point in the text, and present it somewhere else in the TT.

## 2.METHODS

Based on the objectives of the study, this study is appropriate for qualitative research, in particular, descriptive studies that are pertinent to the descriptive translation studies. Besides, this research does not use the quantitative measurements and analyses of quantitative research, which is one of the features of a qualitative paradigm (Creswell & Creswell: 2017). In this sense, the approach is deemed suitable as it describes and interprets events instead of controlling them (Higgs & Cherry: 2009).

The data was collected from two sources: the first source is Shakespeare's play "Romeo and Juliet" while the second source is the Arabic translation of the play by Anani (1993). The idioms were selected purposefully to address the research objectives. In this regard, Marlies (1995) and Cain et al. (2005)'s definitions of idioms were adopted. Marlies defines an idiom as "an expression whose overall figurative meaning cannot be derived from the meaning of its parts" (p. 283). Cain et al. (2005) define idiom as a figurative expression that may be interpreted literally, but it takes a nonliteral meaning when used in a specific context (p. 66). In a similar vein, Laval (2003) and Rowe (2004) define idioms as idiomatic expressions whose literal meanings and interpretation are different from what they mean (i.e., idiomatic interpretation).

The data was collected from two sources: the first source is Shakespeare's play "Romeo and Juliet" while the second source is the Arabic translation of the play by Anani (1993). The idioms were selected purposefully to address the research objectives. In this regard, Marlies (1995) and Cain et al. (2005)'s definitions of idioms were adopted. Marlies defines an idiom as "an expression whose overall figurative meaning cannot be derived from the meaning of its parts" (p. 283). Cain et al. (2005) define idiom as a figurative expression that may be interpreted literally, but it takes a nonliteral meaning when used in a specific context (p. 66). In a similar

vein, Laval (2003) and Rowe (2004) define idioms as idiomatic expressions whose literal meanings and interpretation are different from what they mean (i.e., idiomatic interpretation). Twenty- one example were selected purposively for this research

The collected data were qualitatively analyzed. The researcher examined the ST idioms and compared them to the translations in the TT. Guided by Baker’s (2018) classification of idioms’ translation strategies, the researcher identified the translation strategies employed in the TT. He also examined the extent the meaning intended in the ST was conveyed in the TT by employing some techniques such as back translation. Semantic loss, in this context, refers to “over-, under-, or mistranslation of a source text (ST)” (Abdelaal & Md Rashid: 2015, p.1).

### 3.RESULTS

This research aimed at identifying the translation strategies used by Anani in translating some of the idioms in Shakespeare’s “Romeo and Juliet” and the extent the strategies used to convey the meaning intended in the ST, without creating a loss of meaning. The two objectives are addressed in this section. Sometimes some examples show more than one strategy use, and therefore, they were presented under one strategy, and the other strategy use is explained in the same occurrence as well. Translation by paraphrase is one of the strategies that translators follow to solve the problem of lack of equivalence, as mentioned by Baker (2018). The following examples indicate that.

ST	Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals
TT	أقسم يا جرجوري الا نتحمل اي اهانة
Back-translation	I swear, Gregory, we will not tolerate any insult

Table 1. Example 1

Sampson said this idiom to Gregory; both are servants to Capulet. In this idiom, Sampson swears that he will not tolerate insult. The idiom stems from the fact that carrying coal, in Shakespeare’s time, was considered to be a demeaning job and was disrespected; thus, people then might hurl insults at coal carriers. The translator opted to translate the idiom by paraphrase, leaving the figurative nature of the idiom out in his translation. Although the ST denotative meaning was conveyed in the translation, the idiomatic sway of the use of the idiom was overlooked in the translation. The audience of the translation may get the meaning, but definitely, they will not get the sense, drift, or nuance of the meaning of the idiomatic language by the ST author.

ST	. Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground, And hear the sentence of your moved Prince! Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word
TT	القوا بأسلحة العداة من الأيادي الدامية. و اصغوا إلى حكم الأمير الغاضب!
Back-translation	Throw the weapons of hostility from the bloody hands. And listen to the ruling of the angry prince!

Table 2. Example 2

The ST idiom was said by Prince Escalus, warning miscreants that he will torture them if they do not stop fighting. He asked them to throw what he described as “mistempered weapons”, which in this context refers to misused weapons. He described them as misused weapons because the miscreants used them to fight among each other instead of fighting their antagonists. It refers to weapons that are made for a harmful purpose. The translator paraphrased the meaning of the ST idiom without keeping the play on the ST idiom

in the TT. The "color" or "nature" of the idiomatic meaning is compromised, a case of a literal hit but idiom loss. The translator compensated for the play loss that resulted from translating the ST idiom literally by adding the expression #####, which means "bleeding hands".

There seems to be something lost: The sense of the misuse of the weapons and something added that was not in the source language, "which is bloody hands". Also, "throw down" may have been intended and implied, but you can also throw weapons in the air in an attempt to hit a target. However, in context, this meaning (to disarm; to disengage from fighting each other) was probably understood. In example 2, the translator seems to have used two of Baker's proposed strategies, viz., translating by paraphrase and compensation as well.

ST	But every man betakes him to his legs.
TT	فليبدأ كل منكم في الرقص
Back-translation	Let everyone start dancing

Table 3. Example 3

The idiom was said by Benvolio to Romeo, asking him to start dancing the moment they enter the ball they are not invited to, and which is organized by the Capulets. The translator opted to render the ST idiom by paraphrase, which made it lose its aesthetic value. The denotative meaning is conveyed; however, the connotative meaning, which connotes how Benvolio advises Romeo to look to their legs (the means with which to dance) as a reference to dancing and forgetting about anything else, was lost.

ST	Nay, if our two wits run the wild-geese chase, I am done, thy <sup>1</sup> for thou hast more of the wild goose in one of thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five. Was I with you there for the goose?
TT	لا لا .. إذا كان ذكائي و ذكائك ميستر كان في مابق مثل هذا فسوف أخسر! لأن خبرتك بهذا المباق قدر خبرتي خمس مرات! بل إن حاسة واحدة من حواسك تمسب حواسي الخمس في متابعتة .. به .. هل تعادلت معك في هذا المباق إذن؟
Back-translation	No no .. If my intelligence and your intelligence will participate in a race like this I will lose! Because your experience in this race overnumbers my experience five times! But the sense of one of your senses precedes the five senses in the follow-up .. Yah .. Have you tied with you in this race, then?

Table 4. Example 4

This statement is said by Mercutio to his friend Romeo. This was the first time Shakespeare used this idiom. This idiom is likened to a game - Methinks their "wits" were likened to a game, and the speaker is saying there is no competition, that the other guy is far superior in terms of "wits". The idiom is "run the wild goose chase". Of course, Shakespeare might be using plain English. He might be using a metaphor, for example, which compares things whereby a horseman does complicated maneuvers that ordinary people need only to repeat. The game is named after the flight pattern of a flock of wild geese that obediently follows the leader-geese. The translator failed to find an equivalent idiom in the TL or even to transfer the idiom to the TT. Instead, he opted to paraphrase the meaning of the idiom, which made it lose its play and aesthetic value in the TT.

ST	A plague o' both [your]+ houses! I am sped.
TT	لقد جرحت! لعنة الله على الأمرين! لقد قتلني! هل هرب؟ ألم يصب بجرح واحد؟
Back-translation	I've got injured! God curse on both families! He killed me! Has he escaped? Did he not hurt one wound?

Table 5. Example 5

The ST idiom in example 5 was said by Mercutio while he was dying after being stabbed by Tybalt, a result due to his reaction to Tybalt's provocation. He was killed because he reacted to the provoke he received

from Tybalt, who refused Romeo and Mercutio's presence to the all without being invited. Mercutio, whose antagonism towards each other created the environment which instigated his death in this idiom. The translator opted to paraphrase the ST idiom, conveying a similar meaning to the ST. In this example, the translator did a good job of capturing the emotion of the moment. It appears that Mercutio is basically saying Curse the Montagues and Capulets. I am dying. It is implied that he is dying because of them - the feuding between them, so sad and tragic!

Sometimes a translator renders an ST idiom to a semantically similar TT idiom but which is lexically different. Examples of such strategies are provided below.

ST	Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar.
TT	سنخرج رءوسنا من حبل المشنقة
Back-translation	We will get our heads out of the gallows

Table 6. Example 6

In this idiom, Gregory tells Sampson that they should do their best to stay out of trouble while they can when they are alive and free to do so. It might imply to do this in a stealthy way or to keep a low profile. The translator translated the ST idiom using a similar idiom in Arabic but in different wording. The ST idiom means "so long as you live, do your best to keep out of difficulties, and that this was said merely for the sake of the pun on colliers, choler, and collar. The intended meaning could also be, for example, while you are alive or while you can, do your best to stay out of trouble. Or, while you are alive, escape from being arrested and punished/hung, which means literally to get one's necks out of the gallows, which denotes saving one's lives. If you do not want to go to hell, do something to save your soul (while you are alive, of course). However, the TT idiom means to have (keep one's) necks out of a collar to escape punishment under the law, which is used for the purposes of creating a pun. The TT meaning is similar but not the same as the ST idiom.

The translator translated the ST idiom using a similar idiom in Arabic but different wording. The ST idiom means literally to get our necks out of the gallows, which denotes saving our souls. However, the TT idiom means to have necks out of a collar, which is used mostly for a pun purpose. The TT meaning is not precisely the meaning of the ST idiom, but it is similar to it. The ST meaning was, however, conveyed in the TT.

ST	Let us take the law on our side. Let them begin
TT	فليكن الحق بجانبنا إذن.. وليكونوا هم البادين
Back-translation	Let the truth be with our side then... and let them be the ones who start it

Table 7. Example 7

The ST idiom in example 7 was said by Sampson to Gregory informing him that they should not start fighting with their enemies so as not to be legally convicted. The translator used similar words in the TT but with the exception of the word "law", which was translated as ##### (meaning truth or justice) instead of ##### (meaning law) because it sounds more idiomatic in the target language. The form of the TT, however, is not far in meaning from the ST in trying to escape the gallows or punishment by acting within the law. The concept of law, however, is quite different from the concept of truth.

The omission is one of the strategies employed by some translators when they feel that the ST idiom is challenging to render to the TT or that the ST idiom is not important enough to sacrifice the naturalness of the TT for the purpose of conveying the ST idiom meaning. An example of such a strategy is provided below.

ST	Tis true, and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, gender Are ever thrust to the wall. Therefore I will push Montague's always men from the wall and thrust his maids to the wall.
TT	هذا صحيح! و لذلك ما نلقى بالنساء دائما بالحائط .. لانهن ضعيفات! و إذن سأبعد رجال مونتاجيو عن الحائط و ألقى نساءه عليه!
Back-translation	

Table 8. Example 8

In this idiom, Shakespeare refers to women as weaker vessels, the "weaker sex" who "are ever thrust to the wall", depicting the attitude towards women in the 17th century and how women could be humiliated and downgraded. During the Elizabethan Era, women were viewed as being submissive and weak, while men were seen as dominant. In the reading of this text, one would gather that violence is prevalent in this culture where the weaker ones (women or men) had to give way to or were pushed aside by their "superiors" or enemies. However, the translator failed to find an equivalent idiom in the TL and opted for the omission of the idiom. He compensated for such loss of meaning by adding the adjective ##### (which means weak females) to convey the denotative meaning of the ST idiom. This, however, downplayed the aesthetic and connotative value of the ST idiom in the TT.

A translator sometimes renders an idiom by the omission of a play on it, as he may succeed in conveying the denotative meaning, but he may not be able to convey the play on the idiom. Examples of such a strategy use are provided below.

ST	I will bite my thumb at them, which is a disgrace to them if they bear it.
TT	إنني أعض إبهامي بالفعل يا سيدي
Back-translation	I am actually biting my thumb, Sir

Table 9. Example 9

In example 9, Sampson uses this idiom, "bite my thumb at (someone)" which is a gesture of insult to those who are bitten the thumb at. However, the translator rendered the idiom leaving out the play on the idiom, preserving the concrete meaning of the idiom. The translation thus failed to convey the ST meaning.

ST	What, art thou drew among these heartless hinds? Turn thee, Benvolio. Look upon thy death!
TT	إتبيالت: يا عجباً! سيفك مملول وسط الخدم الجبناء؟ واجهني يا بنفوليو كي تشهد موتك
Back-translation	Tybalt: what a surprise! Is your sword drawn among the coward servants? Face me Benvolio to witness your death

Table 10. Example 10

The translator translated the ST idiom, in example 10 literally, leaving out the play on the idiom. The idiom has a literal meaning which is "timid servants" and another idiomatic meaning which is "female deer", an insult originating from Tybalt who is provoking Benvolio to fight by calling him a female deer (basically manless), which is an insult to his manhood and worth as a man. The translation partially conveyed the meaning of the ST.

Borrowing is a translation strategy that a translator uses to render some items either because of a lack of equivalents or because he wants to flavor the TT with the SL culture. Examples of the use of borrowing as a strategy are provided below.

ST	A visor for a visor. What care I What curious eye doth cote deformities? Here are the beetles brows shall blush for me.
TT	قناع فوق وجه كالقناع! و هكذا لن أكثرث للعيون التي تتأمل وجهي الدميم! سيحمر خجلا إحاجياني الكثيفان
Back-translation	Mask over the face like a mask! And so I will not care about the eyes that contemplate my face! The thick eyebrows will be reddened!

Table 11. Example 11

The translator borrowed the ST idiom and translated it metaphorically to the TT. The ST idiom is said by Mercutio, the friend of Romeo to Romeo. Who decided to attend the ball organized by the Capulets without being invited? The ball attendees were assumed to wear masks because it was a masquerade. The idiom shows how Mercutio feels that he is an ugly person who is wearing a mask over his ugly face, which he considered as another mask or visor. The translator thus decided to borrow the idiom from the SL to convey the meaning in the TL. The borrowing strategy seems to have succeeded in conveying the intended meaning.

ST	He jests at scars that never felt a wound
TT	من لم يذوق طعم الجراح يسخر من الندوب
Back-translation	Those who did not taste wounds make fun of scars

Table 12. Example 12

In example 12, Romeo is stating the fact that it is easy for Mercutio to joke about Romeo's predicament because Mercutio has never experienced such feelings. Mercutio is joking about something he has no knowledge or understanding of. Romeo is saying that those who have not experienced wounds will never feel them. He is referring to those who blame him for his love stories, the first love story with Rosalina, and the second one with Juliet. The translator could convey the ST idiom through borrowing it in the TT.

ST	But soft, what light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
TT	قل إنه المشرق لاح، قل إنها جوليت بل شمس الصباح
Back-translation	Say that it is the Orient, but say it is Juliet, but the morning sun

Table 13. Example 13

In example 13, Romeo is drawing similitude between Juliet (soft light in the window) and the rising sun. The Sun reawakens the world each day, bringing and sustaining life, and similarly, Juliet enlivens and enlightens - brings life to the heart of Romeo, makes him come alive, feel alive. The light in that scene is actually candlelight that illuminates the darkness of the night. Romeo feels that Juliette is as radiant and brilliant and dazzling as the rising sun. He is bedazzled, completely smitten. And the sun. The sun brings life to the world, and similarly, Juliet brings life and happiness to the heart of Romeo. Juliet is rising in the east, like the sun. The translator could render the ST by borrowing it in the TL. The ST meaning was conveyed accurately.

ST	Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
TT	هيا امطعي شمسي الجميلة و امحقي البدر الحمود
Back-translation	Come on my beautiful sun and overshadow the jealous full moon

Table 14. Example 14

In example 14, Romeo compares Juliet (the “fair sun”) who, being so “fair” (beautiful to the point of causing envy) in a radiant and dazzling way eclipses (kills) the moon (any competition in terms of giving light); thus, the moon is “envious”. Romeo is clearly struck by Juliet’s beauty and is basically saying that it surpasses and overpowers all others. No one compares to Juliet. The translator could transfer the meaning of the ST idiom to the TT through the strategy of borrowing.

ST	ye, if you1 should lead her into1 a fool's paradise, as they ye2, in2 say, it were a very gross kind of behavior, as they say,
TT	جنة الحمقى-كم يقولون-فذلك سلوك بالغ الذناءة و الحقاارة!-كما يقولون- لأن سيدتي النبيلة صغيرة و لا .. يجوز أن تخدعها فذلك سلوك منحط إزاء أي فتاة نبيلة شابة- و خلق وضع جدا
Back-translation	"Fool's Paradise"- as they are saying;- this is a very demeaning behavior. 'Because my noble lady is small and should not be fooled' - that is demeaning behavior towards any young noble girl - and very low behavior.

Table 15. Example 15

In example 15, the ST idiom “a fool's paradise” was rendered into ### #####, which is a translation by borrowing. The idiom was uttered by Juliet’s nurse to Romeo. The nurse does not really approve of a secret marriage between Romeo and Juliet, fearing that it would cause the animosity between the Capulets and the Montagues to flare up once their secret is discovered. A “fool's paradise” is described as “to be happy founded on false hope” (Google). The nurse wants to ensure Romeo has good intentions towards Juliette, is serious about her. In an attempt to protect the interests of Juliette, the nurse both pries for information and appeals to Romeo's sense of duty and manliness. The nurse is basically saying,

If you string her along (lead her on/deceive her/lead her astray), as the saying goes, that would be a disgusting thing to do, so is said, for this noble lady is young. Therefore, if you mislead her, it would really bedespicable (maybe doubly so), so unbecoming of any noble or good woman, and deplorable behavior on your part.

The nurse is also warning Romeo that it would not look too good on him if he treated a lady like that. Anyone would understand by reading this passage that the Montagues would not tolerate such a thing. Arabic speakers do not use such an idiomatic expression, which affected the conveyance of the ST meaning.

One of the translation strategies that were discussed by Baker (2018) is using an idiom in the TL, which has a similar meaning and form to the idiom of the ST. Examples of the use of such a strategy are provided below.

ST	A torch for me. Let wantons light of heart Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels, For I am proverbial with a grandsire phrase:
TT	يكتفيني حمل الشعلة! أما أصحاب الفراغ و القلوب الخوالي فليدغدغوا القش الذي يكسو الارض بكعوبهم أما أنا فأفعل ما يقوله المثل القديم
Back-translation	Enough for me to carry the torch! As for the carefree and heart-free people, they will wear the straw that covers the earth with their heels, but I will do what the old saying says.

Table 16. Example 16

In example 16, the ST idiom refers to the fact that Romeo rejected Benvolio’s invitation to dance in the ball. He said that dancing is only for people who are care-free, not for those who are suffering from lovesickness, as it is the case with Romeo. Romeo was lovesick because he had unrequited love with Rosaline, who refused to return love to him. The translator rendered the ST idiom “light of heart” to the TT, using a similar idiom and form, viz., ##### ##.

The ST “the senseless rushes” refers to the rushes that used to cover the ground of the houses of rich people. It used to be like a carpet. The idiom denotes the act of dancing, as people step over the rushes while they are dancing. The translator rendered the ST idiom literally, conveying the denotative meaning of the ST idiom.

ST	Can I go forward when my heart is here? Turn back, dull earth, and find thy center out
TT	كيف أمضي بينما قلبي هنا؟ لا! فلتعد أيها الصلصال يا جسدي وفتش عن فؤادك
Back-translation	How can I leave while my heart is here? No! Come back, O clay, my body, and look for your heart!

Table 17. Example 17

The idiom is said by Romeo to himself. He is wondering how can he leave a place where his heart lies. His heart here refers to Juliet, whom Romeo started to fall in love with. The translator rendered the idiom using an idiom of similar meaning and form. Arabic has a similar idiom to the ST idiom, which conveys the meaning. Also, Romeo used the expression “dull earth” to refer to his body, which cannot live without its soul. The translator opted to translate the idiom by paraphrase, conveying the meaning of the ST idiom

ST	If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark
TT	إن كان الحب أعمى فليسوف يحد عن المرمى
Back-translation	If love is blind, it will deviate from its goal

Table 18. Example 18

The idiom in example 18 was said by Mercutio to Benvolio criticizing Romeo's ideal love. It means that ideal love will result in losing the chances of making love to the beloved. Although the meaning of the ST idiom in example 18 was conveyed through the use of a similar idiom in the TT, some of the ST idiom shades of meaning and implications were not conveyed in the TT.

ST	Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
TT	لا بأس عيناها تخاطبني! سأجيبها
Back-translation	No problem! Her eyes are speaking to me. I will answer them

Table 19. Example 19

In example 19, Romeo is thinking that Juliet is looking at him and that her eyes are speaking to him. This is a kind of personification, which the translator transferred to the TT through using an idiom that is similar in meaning and form to the ST. The ST meaning was completely conveyed to the TT.

ST	I mean, if we be in choler, we'll draw.
TT	و إذا غصبنا سنخرج سيوفنا
Back-translation	If we get angry, we will withdraw our swords

Table 20. Example 20

In this dialogue between Gregory and Sampson, Sampson tells Gregory that if they are humiliated by their foes, the Capulet (the family of Romeo), they will not stay silent; they will pull out their swords and fight. The translator translated the ST idiom by an equivalent TT idiom in the target language. Arabic and English express the same meaning idiomatically. The idiom, however, seems to be a dead metaphor as it can be perceived literally without any cognitive effort.

Compensation is a translation strategy, whereby a translator compensates for the loss of meaning of the idiom in one occurrence in another occurrence, through the use of other lexical devices. An example of such a strategy use is provided below. Other examples of such a strategy use can be seen in example 2 as well.

ST	Parting is such sweet sorrow That I shall say good night till it be morrow
TT	هذا وداع الحب حزن يكتسي إشراقاً الأفراح فليتني أودعك .. حتى يشق الصباح
Back-translation	This love farewell is melancholy covered with joy. I wished I could keep bidding you farewell till morning

Table 21. Example 21

This idiom is uttered by Juliet in the balcony scene. Juliet is saying goodbye after she has agreed with Romeo to send her a letter to inform her about the place that they could meet and get married. So, though they are leaving each other, which is a sad feeling, the good thing is that they will meet the next day. The translator opted to translate by compensation. He used a different metaphorical expression in the TT to compensate for the loss of the ST idiomatic meaning.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research aimed at identifying the translation strategies adopted by Anani in the translation of Romeo and Juliet, and the extent these translations convey the meaning of the ST idioms. A qualitative analysis was conducted to identify such translation strategies and see the extent the ST meaning of such idioms was conveyed. The analysis showed that Baker's idiom translation strategies were used by the translator. It was also found that the ST meaning of the identified idioms was conveyed in most of the cases. This research suggests further studies about the translation of idioms in literary and media work.

#### BIODATA

**NOURELDIN MOHAMED ABDELAAL:** Noureldin Mohamed holds a PhD in translation and interpretation, preceded by an MA in English applied linguistics. He is an assistant professor of translation at the University of Nizwa. His research interests and publications are in the areas of translation and applied linguistics.

**ABDULKHALIQ ALEZZAWIE:** Abdulkhaliq is an associate professor at the University of Nizwa. He has worked for different universities in different parts of the world including Canada and United Arab Emirates. His research interests and publications are in the areas of translation and applied linguistics.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABDELAAL, NM, & MD RASHID, S (2015). Semantic Loss in the Holy Qur'an Translation With Special Reference to Surah Al-W a qiAAa (Chapter of The Event Inevitable) SAGE Open, 5(4), p.1.
- ADELNIA, A, & DASTJERDI, HV (2011). "Translation of idioms: a hard task for the translator", in: Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 1(7), pp.879-883.
- AKBARI, M (2013). "Strategies for translating idioms", in: Journal of Academic and Applied Studies (Special Issue on Applied Linguistics) Vol, 3(8), pp.32-41.
- AL-HADDAD, K (1994). Investigating Difficulties Faced by Advanced Iraqi Students of English in and Using English Idioms Unpublished MA Thesis, College of Arts, University of Baghdad
- ANANI, M (1993). Romeo and Juliet [translation] Cairo: Egyptian Publishing House.
- BAKER, M (2018) In other words: A coursebook on translation Routledge.
- CAIN, K, OAKHILL, J AND LEMMON, K (2005). "The relation between children's reading comprehension level and their comprehension of idioms", in: Journal of experimental child psychology, 90(1), pp.65-87
- CRESWELL, JW, & CRESWELL, JD (2017). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches Sage publications.

- DAMEN, L, & SAVIGNON, SJ (1987). *Culture learning: The fifth dimension in the language classroom* (Vol. 11478) Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company
- FENYO, SS (2005). "The Translator's Cultural Competence", in: *European Integration Studies*, 4(2), pp.61- 72.
- HIGGS, J, & CHERRY, N (2009). "Doing qualitative research on practice", in: *In Writing qualitative research on practice* (pp.1-12). Brill Sense
- LAVAL, V (2003). "Idiom comprehension and metapragmatic knowledge in French children", in: *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35(5), pp.723-739.
- ORDUDARI, M (2007). "Translation procedures, strategies and methods", in: *Translation journal*, 11(3), p.8.
- RAZMJOU, L (2004). "To be a good translator", in: *Translation Journal*, 8(2), Retrieved from <https://translationjournalnet/journal/28eduhtm>
- RICHARDS, JC (2002). *Longman Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. Pearson Education
- ROWE, RC (2004). "Rumour has it--a tale of idioms", in: *Drug discovery today*, 9(10), pp.428-429.
- SHEIKH, SH (2014). "The Importance of Cultural Awareness in English–Arabic Translation", in: *Arab World English Journal*, 3, pp.173-181
- SHOJAEI, A (2012). "Translation of idioms and fixed expressions: strategies and difficulties", in: *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(6), pp.1220-1229.