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Translation of English and Arabic Binomials by Advance and Beginning Student Translators

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Abstract

This study examines English and Arabic binomials, identifies the similarities and differences in their semantic features, semantic structure, and semantic relations between the members of binomials. It also investigates translation students' ability to comprehend and translate binomials from English to Arabic and vice versa. It was found that binomials fall into three categories: (i) binomials that exist in English but have no equivalents in Arabic, (ii) those that exist in Arabic but have no equivalents in English and (iii) those that exist, i.e., are similar in both languages. A sample of translations students was given a test consisting of English and Arabic binomials, which they had to translate. Responses were analyzed to find out problematic areas, and strategies they used in translating binomials, especially those with a cultural content. Results are reported in detail, and recommendations for teaching and learning how to translate binomials are given.

Keywords

English binomials, Arabic binomials, binomial expressions, binomial translation problems, irreversible binomials.

1. Introduction

A binomial is a formulaic expression consisting of two or more words of the form *x and/or y*, where the paired items belong to the same word class (grammatical category), are syntactically coordinated, semantically related and often appear in a preferred linear order. Binomials are also called contrastive lexical couples. They are common in all languages. For example, *"black and white"* in English is "أسود وأبيض" in Arabic, *"blanco y negro"* in Spanish, and *"Preto e Branco"* in Portuguese. In most cases, the binomial is irreversible. Thus, *"black and white"* is a binomial,

whereas *"white and black"* is not (Malkiel, 1959); Mellinkoff, 1963); Gustaffson, 1984); Carvalho, 2006); and Gorgis & Al-Tamimi, 2005).

Structurally speaking, binomials may contain an abbreviation or initial letters such as *"R and R"; "P and P"*, and may combine rhyming words as in *"hustle and bustle;* همز ولمز*"*. They can be joined by prepositions and conjunctions as in *hit or miss*; *give and take*; كر وفر; may combine a noun + noun as in: *law and order* برا وبحرا، كر وفر*;* adjective + adjective as in *safe and sound*; عاطل باطل ; verb + verb as in *rise and shine* هلل وكبر*;* preposition + preposition as in *ups and downs; ifs and buts* من إلى ، لعل وعسى.

Paired elements in binomials are also semantically related. They can be synonymous as in: *Bits and pieces* مشافى معافى; near synonyms as in: *peace and quiet; null and void;* الحسب جهارا نهارا، صال وجال، والنسب؛ antonymous as in: *take it or leave it; back and forth* حق وباطل، مد وجزر، كر وفر؛ complementary as in: *bread and butter; shoot and kill* على قدم وساق، الأسورة والمعصم، عيش وملح; subdivision as in: *head and toe* من راسه لساسه; consequence as in: *shot and killed* الجريمة والعقاب; worthless doubling as in: *force and effect* لا كاني ولا ماني; and/or useful binomials as in: *full faith and credit* زادة وزوادة.

Binomials can be specialized. Examples of Islamic binomials are الجنة والنار، الحق والباطل الحلال والحرام, biblical binomials *(lo and behold; saints and sinners)*, legal binomials *(null and void; authorize and empower*، المواصفات والمقاييس، اللوائح والقوانين*)*. Some have an idiomatic meaning such as: *rough and ready; leaps and bounds* in English, and بشحمه ولحمه، الحابل بالنابل، بقده وقديده in Arabic.

Some binomials are culture specific as in *dollar for dollar, nickel and dime, nuts and bolts, bread and butter, nip and tuck, wine and dine, cloak and dagger, cops and robbers, fish and chips, ladies and gentlemen, horse and carriage, ragtag and bobtail* in English; and خلط الطين بالعجين، بقده وقديده، الحابل والنابل، الحسب والنسب، حلال زلال، كر وفر، بالهنا والشفا، هرج ومرج، زيد وعبيد، هلل وكبر in Arabic.

Since Arabic is a diglossic language (has a standard form and a non-standard colloquial form, with different dialects used across and within Arab countries), binomials are common in both Standard as well as

colloquial Arabic. For example, سرّي مرّي، طالع نازل، فيه ويخطيه، سكتم بكتم، هلا بقده وقديده، الحابل والنابل، الحسب والنسب، كر وفر، وغلا، are colloquial; whereas هرج ومرج، زيد وعبيد، are used in Standard Arabic.

Binomials play several roles in the language. They add "precision and all-inclusiveness" (Bhatia, 1993), are "a convenient linguistic device for adding weight to the end of the sentences", and constitute "a distinct style marker" in legal English (Gustafsson, 1984). In legal English, binomial expressions are needed for technical accuracy, precision and unambiguity (Gustafsson, 1984). They are essential for normal use language, because they are frequently encountered in fiction, films and everyday use of the language (Jasim, 2009).

2. Literature Review

Binomial expressions have received considerable attention from researchers such as Mellinkoff (1962); Bhatia (1993); Malkiel (1959); Bolinger (1962); Cooper and Ross (1975); Benor and Levy (2006); Lambrecht (1984) and others. For example, Gustafsson (1984) classified English binomials according to four syntactic parameters: thematic structure, clausal structure, sentence elements, and parts of speech. She found that the syntactic behavior of binomials does not differ significantly as an adverbial in the rhematic part of the sentence. On the other hand, Lambrecht (1984) classified them into: (a) lexicalized and irreversible, (b) novel but semantically motivated, and (c) semantically unmotivated but pragmatically constrained. In German, Lambrecht (1984) analyzed formulaic binomial expressions of the form N+N and found that the absence of determiners, along with other morphosyntactic and semantic anomalies, makes these phrases non-compositional and thus similar to idioms; but they differ from fixed idiomatic expressions in that their structural pattern can be productively used for the creation of new pairs. These bare binomials are complex word-like expressions, comparable to nominal compounds and can be described by lexical rules. In Arabic, Gorgis & Al-Tamimi (2005) compared 150 binomial expressions in the Iraqi Arabic with their counterparts in Jordanian Arabic. Nominals were found to have the highest frequency (75.33%), paired adjectives (Adj), mostly obligatorily conjoined by 'and' accounted for 13.33%, verb (V) and V (6.0%), and adverb (Adv) and Adv (4%). No instances of a prepositional pattern were found in either dialect.

A second line of research investigated specialized binomial expressions in legal documents in English and Portuguese. Dámová (2007) examined a sample of legal documents to identify their stylistic markers and functional style and their distribution within sentences according to the principle of functional sentence perspective. She also explored four semantic relations of binomials: Opposition, homoeosemy, complementation and hyponymy. Likewise, Carvalho (2006) studied binomials in English legal language and determined their translation equivalents in Brazilian Portuguese.

Since the ordering of binomials exhibits a considerable amount of variation, a third line of research has attempted to find out what determines the order of paired lexical items in binomials. Cooper and Ross's (1975) found that this order is not random, but is based on linguistic and extra-linguistic ordering principles. Semantic, metrical, and frequency constraints contribute to ordering preferences in binomial expressions (Benor and Levy, 2006). The frequency of the two words in spoken English determines which word comes first (Golenbock, 2000). Phonology plays a major role in the ordering of binomial lexical pairs as well (Saaed, 2010). In Iraqi Arabic, the ordering of irreversible binomials is governed by linguistic, cultural and pragmatic constraints, as well as social beliefs, wishes, idea, values and norms (Hamdani, 1997).

A fourth line of research focused on investigating the frequency of binomial occurrence in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries as in Hamdan & AbuGuba (2007) and Hussein & Lingwood (2011).

A fifth line of research focused on L2 students' ability to comprehend and translate binomial expressions. In a study by Jasim (2009), two groups of Iraqi students (one majoring in English and literature and the other majoring in translation) were given a test of irreversible binomials and were interviewed after completing the test. The test aimed at determining the subjects' mastery of binomials at the recognition and production levels and required the subjects to provide equivalent phrases in English to those underlined in Arabic. Although the students were exposed to various aspect language and literature, and to various registers such as legal, scientific, political and literary, the test results showed that advanced learners of English and translation have real difficulty in comprehending, producing and translating irreversible binomials from Arabic into English.

In another study, Hamdan (2002) investigated how freshman and senior EFL Jordanian college students interact with binomials. The data were elicited through a written task that consisted of 30 binomials selected from 90 items, compiled from ELT materials which the subjects encountered in their coursework. Results showed that both freshman and senior students had considerable difficulty supplying the missing members of the target binomial. Only 47.5% and 68.8% of the attempts of both groups were successful. Similar results were obtained by Hussein & Lingwood (2011) who investigated English major M.A. and undergraduate Jordanian students' ability to translate English binomials into Arabic and the strategies used in their translation. Results revealed that the subjects' general performance on the translation test was unsatisfactory. The percentage of correct answers on all items for all subjects was about 44%. The subjects used several strategies in translating English binomials into Arabic such as: Contextualized guessing, avoidance, literal translation, incomplete translation and semantic approximation respectively.

At the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), King Saud University, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, there is a need for Saudi students majoring in translation to acquire binomial expressions and be able to translate general and specialized English binomials into Arabic and vice versa. Therefore, the present study investigates mastery of binomial expressions in English and Arabic by advanced and beginning student translators, and aims to: (i) compare English and Arabic binomials in the collected samples to find out the percentages of English binomials that have an equivalent Arabic binomial, Arabic binomials that have an equivalent English binomial, and those that exist in English only or Arabic only and have no equivalents in the other language; (ii) compare beginning and advanced translation students' ability to comprehend and translate English binomial expressions into Arabic and Arabic binomials into English; (iii) establish a hierarchy of difficulty in comprehending and translating English and Arabic binomials; and (iv) identify the strategies that students utilize in the faulty translations of binomials.

Binomial expressions are essential for the normal use of language, because they are frequently encountered in general, as well as specialized use of English and Arabic, as in legal and Islamic texts. Ability to understand and render the correct meaning of English and/or Arabic

binomials is a necessary requirement for translation students, as it reflects translation competence. Lack of attention to Arabic irreversible binomials might prevent student translators from a rich potential source of rapid and competent development in translation.

Since translation students at COLT take 2 vocabulary building courses, 3 grammar courses, a dictionary skills course and several Arabic language courses, results of the present study will shed light on aspects of English and Arabic binomial expressions that need to be acquired by translation students at COLT, those with which they have difficulty, and aspects that need to receive more attention in the vocabulary, grammar, dictionary skills and Arabic language courses that the students take.

3. Subjects

A total of 193 translation students (73 students in semester 6 and 120 students in semester 9 of the translation program) at the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia participated in the study. Students in semester 6 constituted the beginning translators' group, those in semester 9 constituted the advanced translators' group. The subjects in both groups completed 4 listening, 4 speaking, 4 reading, 4 writing, 3 grammar and 2 vocabulary building courses in the first four semesters of the translation program, in addition to several Arabic language courses (morphology, syntax and rhetoric). In semester 5 they took linguistics (2 hours), semantics (3 hours), text linguistics (2 hours), and 3 interpreting courses (6 hours). Students in semester 6 have completed 2 specialized translation courses in the following subject areas: Physical sciences and the humanities (2 hours each). Those in level 9 have completed 14 specialized translation courses in the following subject areas: Physical sciences, humanities, medicine, engineering, media, Islamic studies, military, administration, sociology, education, security, commerce, politics and computer science (2 hours each).

As for binomial expressions, students in both groups studied a sample of English binomials in the vocabulary II course.

4. The Binomial Data

A sample of 250 English and another of 450 Arabic binomials were collected from various online, paper resources and Arab informants (See

examples in the Appendix). The Arabic binomial sample was verified by two professors at the Arabic department, to make sure that the sample includes binomial expressions only and does not include proverbs, sayings or collocations. The majority of the Arabic binomials are common in Standard Arabic with few from different Arabic spoken dialects.

5. Comparing English and Arabic Binomials

Each English binomial was translated into Arabic and each Arabic binomial was translated into English. The percentages of English binomials that have an equivalent binomial in Arabic, Arabic binomials that have an equivalent binomial in English and binomials that exist in one language and are absent in the other were computed. The translations and comparisons of English and Arabic binomials were verified by two professors of English-Arabic translation.

6. The Binomial Test

At the beginning of the semester (Fall 2012), the subjects in both groups were given one of 4 versions of a binomial test, as the students took the test in different class sessions. Each version of the binomial test consisted of 20 English and 20 Arabic binomial expressions that were randomly selected from the English and Arabic binomial samples collected. Binomial expressions were presented in isolation as presenting them in context would help the students infer the meaning. The test instructions specified what the items were. The subjects were asked to translate English binomial expressions into Arabic and Arabic binomial expressions into English. They were not allowed to use a dictionary. No time limit was imposed on the test session.

7. Data Analysis

The subjects' written responses to the binomial test were marked by the author. To be marked as correct, each English and Arabic binomial had to be translated correctly, either by an equivalent binomial or by an explanation if equivalents are absent. To find out the strategies that the subjects used in translating binomials, mistranslations were compiled and subjected to further analysis. The binomial translation error corpus consisted of 1793 incorrect responses for both groups. Quantitative and qualitative data analyses of the binomial error date are reported.

Since it was not possible to use parallel forms, split-halves, or re-test the students two weeks after the first administration of the test, reliability of the test scores was calculated using the Kuder-Richardson 21' formula as it estimates the internal-consistency of the test items from a single administration of the test. The reliability coefficient of the binomial test scores was .71 for the beginners' group and .74 for the advanced group. Inter-scorer reliability was also calculated by having a colleague who taught translation mark a sample of answer sheets and by comparing both analyses. There was a 93% agreement between the two scorers in identifying those binomials available in both English and Arabic and those that are available in one language only and classifying the faulty responses into translation strategies. Disagreements were solved by discussion.

8. Results

8.1 Translation Equivalence in English and Arabic Binomials

Analysis of the meaning equivalence of English and Arabic Binomials showed that 40% of the binomials in the English sample have equivalent Arabic binomials and 20% of the binomials in the Arabic sample have equivalent English binomials. Examples of binomials that exist in both English and Arabic with identical wording are:

- *Sooner or later* عاجلا أم آجلا
- *Back and forth* ذهابا وإيابا ، جيئة وذهابا
- *Scratch and win* اكشط واربح
- *Do's and don'ts* افعل ولا تفعل
- *no more no less* لا أكثر ولا أقل، لا زائد ولا ناقص
- *up and down* طالع نازل
- *skin and bone* جلد على عظم
- *flesh and blood* لحم ودم
- *ebb and flow* مد وجزر
- *over and over (again)* مرارا وتكرارا
- *needle and thread* الخيط والإبرة
- *Give and take* اخذ وعطاء ، اخذ ورد
- *laugh and cry* مضحك مبكي

Examples of binomials that exist in both English and Arabic (have the same meaning but different wording) are:

- *Bread and butter* عيش وملح
- *Safe and sound* سالم غانم
- *win or lose* يا غالب يا مغلوب

- *Pick and choose* اطلب وتمنى
- *peace and harmony* في ثبات ونبات
- *ins and outs* حركاته وسكناته
- *make it or break it* يا تطخه يا تكسر مخه

Examples of binomials that have similar wording in both languages but different meanings are: *cats and dogs* and القط والفار: *give and take* and خذ واعط.

Examples of binomials that exist in English but have no equivalent binomials in Arabic are: *Rise and shine, rough and ready, sick and tired, wear and tear, wet and wild, wheeling and dealing, aches and pains, cats and dogs, nuts and bolts***.** Examples of Arabic binomials that have no equivalent binomials in English are: غمز ولمز، لا إفراط ولا تفريط، الحسب والنسب، كر وفر، عاطل باطل، أهلا وسهلا، هلا وغلا، الحابل بالنابل، حلال زلال، هاش باش، حسن بسن، الخصم والحكم

8.2 Analysis of Students' Responses

Analysis of the subjects' responses to the English and Arabic binomial tests showed that advanced as well as beginning translation students' had considerable difficulty in translating English binomials to Arabic and Arabic binomials to English. The advanced and beginners group gave a total of 1738 and 824 responses to the test items respectively. Both groups left 5158 items (or 67%) blank. The typical advanced and beginner responded to 35% and 32.5% of the binomials on the test respectively. Less than 20% of the attempts, i.e., test items they responded to, were correct (See Table 1).

Table 1: Mean, Median, Range and Total Number of Correct and Incorrect Responses to the Binomial Tests

Group	Binomials	N	Mean		Median		Range	Sum
			#Items	%	#Items	%	#Items	
Advanced	Arabic	120	6.5	32.4%	6	30%	.00-19	776
	English	120	8.0	40.1%	8	40%	.00-19	962
Beginners	Arabic	60	7.4	37.2%	7	35%	.00-20	446
	English	60	6.3	31.5%	6	30%	.00-15	378

No significant differences were found between advanced and beginning students in the total test scores (T=.21; p>.67), the Arabic binomial test scores (T=1.7; p>.61), nor the English binomial test scores (T=2.2; p>.57). However, results revealed significant differences between the English and Arabic binomial test scores for the advance group (T=3.4; p>.01), but no significant differences between the English and Arabic binomial test scores for the beginner's group (T=1.8; p>.76). This means that advanced students have a slightly more difficulty in translating Arabic binomials than English binomials, whereas beginners have the comparable difficulty in both. A positive correlation was found between the subjects' English and Arabic binomial test scores (r=.37; p>.01), i.e. students' ability to translate English binomials into Arabic and vice versa. This means that competence in translating English binomials is related to that of translating Arabic binomials, and that weakness and/or improvement results in weakness and/or improvement in the other.

Results also showed that about 62.5% of the English binomials on the test were left blank by all the subjects. Fewer than 20 % of the English and Arabic binomials were translated correctly as in the following examples:

- من راسه لساسه > *head to toe*
- عاجلا أم آجلا *sooner or later*
- لا زايد ولا ناقص > *no more no less*
- *Bread and butter* > عيش وملح
- *Scratch and win* اكشط واربح
- *First and foremost* > الأول والأخير
- *Do's and don'ts* > افعل ولا تفعل

Qualitative data analysis of the error data showed that binomials with an idiomatic meaning were found to be more difficult than those that are more transparent. The fact that 80% of the Arabic binomials in the corpus have no equivalent binomials in English, and that 60% of the English binomials in the corpus have no equivalents in Arabic, makes the acquisition of the former more difficult than the latter.

Findings of the presents study are consistent with findings of prior studies by Jasim (2009), Hamdan (2002) and Hussein & Lingwood's (2011) conducted with Iraqi and Jordanian students that showed that L2 and translation students have difficulty comprehending and translating binomials regardless of their proficiency levels. In Hamdan's (2002) study

both freshman and senior students had considerable difficulty supplying the missing members of the target binomial and that only 47.5% and 68.8% of the attempts of both groups were successful. In Jasim's (2009) study, advanced learners of English and translation had real difficulty in comprehending, producing and translating irreversible binomials from Arabic into English. Similarly, Hussein & Lingwood's (2011) study revealed that the subjects' general performance on the translation test was unsatisfactory. The percentage of correct answers on all items for all subjects was about 44%.

Findings of the present study are also consistent with findings of other studies conducted with Yemeni and Jordanian students that revealed semantic errors in English (Al-Shormani & Al-Sohbani (2012), difficulty comprehending and translating different types of English compounds (Al-Kharabsheh (2003), difficulty translating Arabic lexical collocations (Abdul-Fattah, 2011), and idioms (Mahmoud, 2002).

As in the present study, Hamdan (2002) found that the order of binomial acquisition is determined by a combination of transparency, frequency and cultural specificity. Transparent pairs seem to be acquired as multi-word units long before opaque or idiomatic ones, as they are easier to retrieve. The percentages of correct translations of the English and Arabic binomials in the present study seems to be way below those of Jordanian and Iraqi students in the studies mentioned earlier.

8.3 Strategies used in Translating Binomials

No significant differences between the advanced and beginners' groups were found in the strategies they utilized in translating English and Arabic binomials. Those strategies were as follows:

(i) *Avoidance* constituted the most common strategy, as 67% of the items on the test were left blank by all subjects.

(ii) *Literal translation*: The subjects tended to translate binomials word-for-word, i.e. as consisting of two single words, not as a unit, although Arabic equivalent binomials exist, as in the following faulty responses:

- يصيب ويخطئ > *right and wrong*
- *Bread and butter* > خبز وزبدة
- *Black and blue* > ابيض وازرق

- *High and dry* > نظيف وجاف
- *Milk and honey* > حليب وعسل
- *Make or break* > اصنع واكسر
- *Loud and clear* > عالي وواضح

In translating binomials that exist in both languages but differ in part of speech, the subjects transferred the part of speech of the source binomial to the translational equivalent , although the target binomial has a different part of speech. Thus the English binomials *Wash and wear, give and take* that are verbs were translated into verbs اغسل والبس, خذ وأعط , although the equivalent Arabic binomials consist of nouns.

(iii) *Explanation:* In some cases, some students explained the meaning of the binomial, although an equivalent binomial exists, as in:

- بالحفظ والصون > *keep it very well*
- سمن على عسل > *fine relationship*
- مشافى معافي > *O.K., fine*
- خلط الطين بالعجين > *mix things*
- لا يعرف كوعه من بوعه > *he does not know anything*
- صم بكم > *can't hear or speak*
- سمعا وطاعة > *Yes Sir, Yes.*

(iv) *Contextualized guessing*. *Odds and ends* was translated البدايات والنهايات. Here, the student knew the meaning of *"ends"* but not *"odds"*, so she used *"beginnings"* as an opposite of *"ends"*. Other examples are:

- *Salt and vinegar* > حامض ومالح
- لف ودوران > *going around in circles*
- كر وفر > *hit and run*

(v) Partial translation: Here the subjects translated part of the binomial and left the other part blank as in:

- الحظ والنصيب > *luck*
- الحل والعقد > *the solution*
- *Clean and tidy* > مرتب
- *Fair and square* > عادل

(vi) Use of *synonyms* as in:

- *Back and forth* > ذهابا ورجوعا instead of ذهابا وإيابا
- *Win or lose* > فاز وخسر , الرابح والخاسر
- *In whole or in part* > بالجملة أو التجزئة instead of كله او جله، كليا او جزئيا
- *now or later* > عاجلا أم آجلا instead of sooner or later

(vii) *Reversal*: In some cases, the subjects reversed the order of the lexical items comprising the binomial. For example, *Black and white* was translated as ابيض وأسود, not أسود وأبيض.

(viii) *Confusing* binomial with similar common phrases, such as confusing *"up and down"* with *"upside down"* as in the following example:

- *Up and down* > رأسا على عقب
- *overnight* > بين عشية وضحاها

(ix) *Inventing their own binomials:* For example, قيل وقال was translated as *"say and said";* and عيني عينك as *"eyes by eyes"*; زيد وعبيد *as "Bush and John"*. Here again, the subjects resorted to literal translation.

(x) *Extraneous translation:* Some subjects did not know what a binomial means, so they just gave any phrase that they knew, without checking the accuracy of the meaning as in:

- *I have no choice* > لا ناقة لي فيها ولا جمل
- *either me or you* > يا غالب يا مغلوب
- *copy paste* > خبط لزق
- *winner or loser* > اللاحق والسابق
- *sickness and health* > على الحلوة والمرة
- *Back and forth* > هنا وهناك ، المؤخرة والمقدمة
- *Dollar for dollar* > لا يفل الحديد إلا الحديد
- *Sick and tired* > مرهق ومتعب
- *One to one* > واحدا تلو الآخر
- *On and off* > مشغل أو مغلق، يشغل ويطفئ

The strategies that translation students in the present study utilized in translating binomials are similar to those utilized by Jordanian, Iraqi and Portuguese students in prior studies. Carvalho (2006) found that Brazilian translators tended to translate all the elements of a binomial literary. In Hamdan's (2002) study, the subjects used several strategies: Sense relations, particularly synonymy and antonymy, semantic approximation, reiterating the given member of the binomial, overgeneralization and abandonments. They did not try to conjoin a noun with a verb or an adjective with an adverb. In Hussein & Lingwood's (2011) study, Jordanian students used contextualized guessing, avoidance, literal translation, incomplete translation and semantic approximation respectively. In Al-Kharabsheh's (2003) study, the subjects resorted to calque translation, literal translation, idiomatic translation, omission, contraction, transposition, transliteration, expansion, explanation, Naht and blank.

The strategies that the subjects used in their mistranslations reflect insufficient knowledge of English and Arabic binomial expressions, and what they mean, and inadequate ability to comprehend, match and transfer the meaning of binomial expressions from one language into the other. As Al-Kharabsheh (2003) indicated, the subjects' poor linguistic competence, their poor contrastive translation competence, the varying degrees of opaqueness in binomial expressions, lack of sufficient experience and practice in English and Arabic binomials are factors that give rise to a wide range of mistranslations. Failure to provide the missing member of a certain binomial was not due to the absence of the whole binomial as a multi-word unit, but to the learners' inability to activate the passive knowledge of the binomial (Hamdan, 2002). Furthermore, students' difficulty with binomial expressions may be due to inadequate instruction. Translation and English and Arabic language instructors do not seem to provide sufficient information about binomials and sufficient practice in translating them. They seem to pay more attention to grammatical correctness, fluency and accuracy of expression in oral and written language tasks.

9. Conclusion

Findings of the present study showed that beginning as well as advanced translation students at COLT have considerable difficulty in translating English and Arabic binomials especially those with an

idiomatic meaning. To help students master English and Arabic binomials, the present study recommends that binomials be directly and explicitly taught in English and Arabic language courses offered to translation students at COLT. It also recommends that English and Arabic language and translation instructors raise students' awareness of the similarities and differences between English and Arabic binomials, the idiomatic meaning of some binomials, and how to translate binomials that exist in one language but not in the other. Providing students with language and translation activities can help enhance their knowledge of this aspect of language learning (binomials) and develop their ability to transfer the meaning of binomial expressions from English into Arabic and vice versa.

Appendix

A Sample of 150 English binomials

aches and pains, alive and kicking, all or nothing, authorize and empower, back and forth, bed and breakfast, bigger and better, bit by bit, bits and pieces, black and blue, black and white, body and soul, bow and arrow, bread and butter, bride and groom, bright and sunny, brother and sister, cats and dogs, chalk and cheese, checks and balances, clean and tidy, cloak and dagger, cops and robbers, crash and burn, cut and dried, dead or alive, death and destruction, dollar for dollar, dos and don'ts, duly and validly, ebb and flow, fair and square, fast and loose, first and foremost, fish and chips, flesh and blood ,flesh and bones, foot and mouth, for and against, fruits and vegetables, give and take, give or take, goods and services, ham and eggs, hand to mouth, hands and knees, hard and fast, head and shoulders, head over heels, heads or tails, hearts and flowers, hem and haw, here and there, high and dry, high and low, hit and miss, hit and run, hit or miss, home and dry, horse and carriage, hot and heavy, hot and spicy, huff and puff, hugs and kisses, hustle and bustle, ifs and buts, in whole or in part, ins and outs, kick and scream, kiss and make up, kith and kin, knife and fork, ladies and gentlemen, laugh and cry, law and order, leaps and bounds, life and death, life and soul, life and times, little by little, lo and behold, long and short, loss and gain, lost and found, loud and clear, love and peace, make or break, man and wife, meet and greet, milk and honey, needle and thread, nickel and dime, nip and tuck, nook and cranny, now and then, now or never, null and void, nuts and bolts, odd and even, odds and ends ,on and off, on and on, one to one, open and shut, out and about, part and parcel, peace and quiet, pick and choose, pins and needles, plug and play, pots and pans, prim and proper, pros and cons,

rack and ruin, rags to riches, ranting and raving, rise and fall, rise and shine, rock and roll, rough and ready, rough and tough, safe and sound وsaints and sinners, salt and vinegar, scratch and win, shake and bake, show and tell, sick and tired, sink or swim, skin and bone, slowly but surely, soap and water, sooner or later, surf and turf, sweet and sour, take it or leave it, thick and thin, through and thorough, tooth and nail, toss and turn, trial and error, true and false, up and down, ups and downs, wash and wear, wear and tear, wet and wild, win or lose, winners and losers, wit and wisdom.

A Sample of 200 Arabic binomials

إبرة وخيط، اخذ ورد، اخذ وعطاء، ادم وحواء، الحق والباطل، ارض جو، أسفرت وأنورت، الأسورة والمعصم، اشعث اغبر، اقبل وادبر، أهلا وسهلا، أولا وآخرا، بالحديد والنار، بالحفظ والصون، بالطول والعرض، بالهنا والشفا، البداية والنهاية، بر جو، برا وبحرا، بشحمه ولحمه، بقده وقديده، البؤس والحرمان، بين حانا ومانا، بين عشية وضحاها، تبرق وترعد، التّجاذب والتّنافُر، التحول والثبات، تطبيل وتزمير، ثبات ونبات، الثواب والعقاب، الثوابت والمتغيرات، جملة وتفصيلا، جهارا نهارا، جيئة وذهابا، الحابل والنابل، حار بارد، حامض حلو، الحر والبرد، حركاته وسكناته، الحرية والعدالة، حزر فزر، حسب ونسب، حسن بسن، الحظ والنصيب، الحق والباطل، الحل والربط، الحل والعقد، حلال زلال، الحلال والحرام، حلوها ومرها، حياة أو موت، الحياة والموت، حيّاك وبيّاك، حيص بيص، الخاتم والأصبع، خبط لزق، الخصم والحكم، الخطأ والصواب، خل وخردل، الخير والشر، الخير والعطاء، الدنيا و الأخرة، ذهابا وإيابا، الرضا والقبول، رعد وبرق، زيد وعبيد، زين وشين، السابق واللاحق، سالب وموجب، سالم غانم، سداح مداح، سكتم بكتم، سلب ونهب، سمعا وطاعة، السيف والقلم، شايب وعايب، شختك بختك، شطّ ومطّ، شطح نطح، شكلا وموضوعا، صادر وارد، صال وجال، الصالح والطالح، صحة ولجة، صحة وعافية، الصراخ/الصياح والعويل، صعودا ونزولا، صم بكم، الصلاة والصوم، صنة ورنة، الصواب والخطأ، صولات وجولات، صياح ونياح، صيت وسمعة، ضمَ ولمَ، طالع نازل، طب غم، الظالم والمظلوم، الظلام والنور، عاجلا ام آجلا، عازب لازب، عاطل باطل، العدو والصديق، عدوة وروحة، عكّوز بكّوز، على الحلوة والمرة، على الرحب والسعة، على سن ورمح، على قدم وساق، عمّال على بطّال، عيانا بيانا، عينك عينك، عيني عينك، الغث والسمين، الغدو والآصال، الغمز واللمز، الغنى والفقر، غيض من فيض، الفرح والترح، الفرد والجماعة، الفضيلة والرذيلة، فلان وعلان، في التو واللحظة، في الحفظ والصون، في حله وترحاله، القاصي والداني، قايم قاعد، القبول والرفض، قدح وذم، قدم وساق، القرطاس والقلم، قسمة ونصيب، قص ولصق، قضاء وقدر، القط والفار، قلبا وقالبا، قول وفعل، قيل وقال، كثير بثير، كر وفر، كفّيت ووفّيت، كل شاردة وواردة، كل من هب ودب، لا إفراط ولا تفريط، لا اكثر ولا اقل، لا أنيس ولا ونيس، لا بميزان ولا بقبان، لا حس ولا خبر، لا حق ولا باطل، لا حي ولا ميت، لا زائد ولا ناقص، لا عدو ولا صديق، لا غالب ولا مغلوب، لا كاني ولا ماني، لا يحل ولا يربط، لا يزيد ولا ينقص، لا يساير ولا يناور، لا يصد ولا يرد، لا يضر ولا ينفع، لا يقدم ولا يؤخر، لا يكل ولا يمل، لت و عجن، لعل وعسى، لف ودار، لف ودوران، ليل نهار، مد وجزر، مسك وعنبر، مشافى ومعافى، مشمر ومحمر، المعارضة والموالاة، مقطوع مفصول، من إلى، من ساسه

لراسه، من كل حدب وصوب، الموجب و السالب، نهارا جهارا، النوم واليقظة، النيل والفرات، هاش باش، هرج ومرج، هس نس، هشك بشك، هلا وغلا، هلل وكبر، هم وغم، الهمز واللمز، هنا وهناك، الواقع والحلم، الولاء والبراء، يا تصيب يا تخيب، يا خابت يا صابت، يا غالب يا مغلوب، يا قاتل يا مقتول، يزبد ويرعد، يسرح ويمرح، يلف ويدور، يمنة ويسرة، اليمين واليسار، يمين ويسار، يؤشر ويبشر.

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