

**THE TRANSLATION OF IDIOMS AND FIXED EXPRESSIONS BETWEEN
TSHIVENḐA AND ENGLISH**

by

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RESEARCH

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DECLARATION

I declare that *The translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English* hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of PhD in Translation Studies and Linguistics has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Nengovhela R.E.

Date

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my amazing wife, Nengovhela Maite Blantina for her support and encouragement. This study could not have come to fruition without her enthusiastic support. Thank you love.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. The aim of the study is to explore factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions between the two languages. The study presents problems that are encountered in the translation of the idioms and fixed expressions between these languages and looks at translation strategies that can be used. In translating idioms, the translator encounters various difficulties that are not usually easy to overcome mainly due to lack of equivalence. It is rare to come across an idiom in the source language that shares the same form and meaning in the target language. In order to deal with the problems that arise in the process of translation, translators use various strategies. Among others, the translator must have extensive knowledge about the function of idioms in the source and target languages.

From the data collected, the study revealed that there are numerous problems that the translator comes across in the process of translation. These include the ambiguity of idioms; idioms expressing meaning at a literal level; idioms that do not exist in the target language and the frequency of use of an idiom. The study adopted the qualitative research approach to collect and analyse data. Through use of this approach, it was noted that the translator needs to take into account cultures associated with the languages involved as well as the context in the translation process. The translation of idioms cannot be properly done without considering the impact of culture. A translator must be well-versed in the culture of both the source and target languages. It is important for one to know that language and culture are two entities that are inseparable. Idioms and fixed expressions express the uniqueness of the language and culture of the respective languages. Therefore, translators must have a comprehensive knowledge base of both languages and cultural context.

From the recommendations made in this study, the following are the most prominent ones: Linguists should be exposed to idiomatic expressions in order to enhance their knowledge of the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. There are instances where idioms are translated literally because the translator does not understand or recognise the idiom. Therefore, this study recommends that translators need to learn more about idioms in order to have better understanding of translation of idioms and fixed expressions. Translators need to learn more about the translation strategies that are available to deal

with the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. The first strategy is translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and form. This strategy involves using an idiom in the target language consisting of equivalent lexical items, which conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the source-language idiom. The second strategy is translation by idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form. This strategy uses an idiom in the target language which has a meaning similar to that of the source idiom or expression, but consists of different lexical items. The third strategy is translation by paraphrasing. In this strategy, the translator transfers the meaning of an idiom using a single word or a group of words which roughly correspond to the meaning of the idiom but is not an idiom itself. The fourth strategy is translation by omission. This is used to completely omit the idiom from the target text where there is no close match between the items of the two languages. Where the idiom is very difficult for the translator, one tries to eliminate the whole part of the idiom. The fifth strategy is translation by a superordinate. This strategy is used to solve the problem of non-equivalence across languages because the hierarchical structure of semantic fields is not language specific. This strategy involves translation by a more neutral and less expressive word. Lastly, it is translation by cultural substitution which is a method that requires the replacement of a culture-specific item or expression with a target language one that has no exact meaning, but has an impact on the target reader. However, this study recommends translation by idioms of similar meaning with a dissimilar form. The researcher believes that this strategy provides the closest meaning of the idiom in the target language. Idioms might not be the same in form but the meaning can be derived from the idiom with a dissimilar form.

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LIST OF ANNEXURE

A1: Interview guide (English version)

A2: Interview guide (Tshivenda version)

B: Data from the respondents

C: Consent form (English version)

D: Consent form (Tshivenda version)

E: Turfloop Research Ethics Committee Clearance Certificate

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGR: Agreement

AUX: Auxiliary verb

MC: Male circumcision

DET: Determiner

DT: Direct translation

EI: Equivalent idiom

GL: Gloss

IE: Idiomatic expression

NEG: Negative

PER: Personal pronoun

SL: Source language

ST: Source text

TL: Target language

TT: Target text

CHAPTER 1 : ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Translation plays a significant part in the use of two mutually unintelligible languages whose speakers do not understand one another. It is a channel through which speakers exchange their cultural, scientific and literary achievements. It also serves as a process of passing on written messages from one language into another language. This includes transmitting the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the source language (Larson, 1984; Benfoughal, 2010). This involves the use of two or more languages of which one is the source, and the other is the target language. The source and the target languages contain the original and the translated meanings respectively. However, translation is not always easy as there are many factors that may impact negatively in the process.

Translation would be simple if it were simply about replacing a word, phrase or sentence from the source language (SL) with a word, phrase or sentence or their equivalents in the target language (TL). This chapter pays attention to the background to the study and the research problem.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The term 'idiom' is commonly used in a diversity of different senses. Cacciari (1993) is of a view that the problem is that idioms are part of a language that is not easy to define. Henceforward, there is disagreement over the kind of expressions that should be considered as idioms. An idiom can be seen a structurally complete unit because the word order in idioms cannot be omitted, added, replaced by another, and even the grammatical structure does not change (Baker, 1992).

Idioms and fixed expressions are syntactically unchangeable in most languages of the world. Most of idioms have fixed grammatical structures and when the structure changes, it results in the change of meaning (De Caro, 2009). For example, 'to be broke' is considered to be ungrammatical but it signifies an understandable meaning as an idiomatic expression that means a person has no money. If one can change 'to be broke' and make it 'to be broken', the meaning would literally mean that something is broken, which makes it to be totally different from an idiomatic expression.

1.2.1 Towards the definition of idioms

Naciscione (2010:18) defines an idiom as “a concatenation of more than one lexeme whose meaning is not derived from the meanings of its constituents and which does not consist of a verb plus adverbial particle or preposition”. Thus, Naciscione’s (2010:18) definition of an idiom follows a functional approach. Crystal (2003) is of the view that “a lexeme is a unit of lexical meaning which exists regardless of any inflectional endings it may have, or the number of words it may contain”. Below is an example of an idiom (where EI stands for equivalent idiom and GL stands for Gloss):

(1)

SL: The sooner the better.

GL: *U ʔavhanya hu khwiṇe.*

EI: *Mu ʔa khulu u ya fhinḁuwa.*

The TL in (1) above means that it is better to do something now than to put it off until a later time or if you get it done now, the better things will be. The expression is composed of more than one lexeme (‘the sooner’ and ‘the better’) which when combined, give us one concrete meaning that cannot be derived from the individual words. In addition, the main problem lies in distinguishing idiomatic expressions from expressions that are not idiomatic. It is difficult to recognise idiomatic expression since many idioms cannot be understood on their surface structures. Some idioms have meanings at a literal level in the target language. For example:

(2)

TL: *U ʔiluma lulimi.*

GL: To self-bite tongue.

SL: (To bite one-self’s tongue).

U ʔiluma lulimi has both literal and figurative meanings in Tshivenda. The figurative meaning is that one avoids talking because he/she does not want to tell the truth. This can be confusing in English because the idiom *U ʔiluma lulimi* has a well understood literal meaning which is to bite one-self’s tongue. Figuratively, it means to struggle to say something that one really wants to say.

However, in Tshivenda, fixed expressions are commonly used as idioms. They are typical of Tshivenda culture and a person who is not familiar with the language cannot

gather the meaning of fixed expressions from the component elements which constitute them. Some expressions may seem illogical but they have been accepted and are well understood by the speakers of the language.

(3)

SL: *U vha na ṭhoho*.

GL: To have head.

TL: To have a headache.

IE: (One can plan well and also that one is intelligent).

The example in (3) above seems to have a straight forward meaning which is to have a head. On close reading, one observes that there are different meanings attached to it whose interpretations require someone with in-depth knowledge of Tshivenda language. The first meaning is to “have a head-ache”. The second meaning is that someone can plan well. In order to arrive at the meaning of the fixed expression, the translator must be familiar with the situation in which the expression is used. This is because one expression can be used in different contexts resulting in different meanings. Using the example given above, *u vha na ṭhoho* can be used to refer to both someone who is suffering from a head-ache and to someone who can plan well.

Fernando (1996) alludes that the three most commonly mentioned features of idioms includes compositeness, institutionalisation/conventionality and semantic opacity. Other essential characteristics of idioms include lexical fixity, ambiguity, collocability, and semantic unity (Makkai, 1972; Cowie & Mackin, 1975; Strässler, 1982; Weinreich, 1969; Tabossi & Zardon, 1993). Compositeness means that idioms are expressions that are composed of multiword which function as a single-word expressions and are made up of at least two words (Makkai, 1972; Cowie and Mackin, 1975; Strässler, 1982; Weinreich, 1969). Accordingly, Cowie & Mackin (1975) perceives idioms as ‘a combination of two or more words’. In the same vein, Makkai (1972) views that an idiom is composed of “more than one minimal free form or word”, and Weinreich (1969) posits that only expressions that are made of more than one words can be accepted as idioms. Institutionalisation means that idioms are conventionalised expressions (Makkai, 1972; Fernando, 1996). The expression must be well established and gain stability in the language in order to qualify as an idiom.

The point that idiomatic meaning is non-literal should be considered as the most often used feature of idioms. Non-literality of an idiom means that meaning of an idiom cannot be gathered from the meanings of the individual words that build up the idiom. There is typically very little or totally no relationship between the actual meanings of the individual words that build up the idiom and the figurative meaning of the idiom as a whole (Fernando, 1996:61).

Makkai (1972: 118) points out that “the meaning of an idiom is not predictable from its component parts because they are used in a figurative, non-literal sense”. According to Strässler’s (1982: 79), “the meaning of an idiom cannot be concluded by adding up the meanings of its constituents. The meaning of an idiom is therefore hardly ever the sum of its individual parts”.

Cowie and Mackin (1975) and Fernando (1996) claim that lexical fixity is one of the vital features of an idiom. Fernando’s (1996:30) view on idioms is that idioms are inseparable units whose components do not usually allow much of a change. This means that the structure of an idiom cannot be changed. Fernando further states that “those idioms which can be modified, can only be modified within certain limits and they have only a limited range of possible variants” (Fernando,1996:30). Cowie and Mackin (1975) view lexical integrity as the most defining characteristic of idioms; therefore, an idiom cannot be changed in terms of its physical arrangement, that is, it not be possible to rearrange the unison of the expression by substituting the elements that build the idiom by some other components. Nevertheless, Cowie and Mackin (1975) acknowledge that there are cases in point where exceptions can be given to the rule. Some idioms do allow modifications to a certain degree or substitution of a word by another word. For example: ‘to kick the bucket’ (to die), ‘to bury the hatchet’ (to become friendly again after a disagreement or a quarrel) and ‘raining cats and dogs’ (to rain heavily) are examples of idioms that allow no variation. One should understand that the probability of changes depends deeply on the individual idioms. In this regard, there are idioms that cannot be substituted, deleted or other changes, whereas others may allow the possibility of some internal changes. Essentially, many idioms are not flexible to a greater or lesser extent, that is, they do not allow any changes as compared to what expressions that are not idiomatic will do (Cowie & Mackin, 1975).

According to Fernando (1996:43), “constraints on word replacements and word order are an important difference between idioms and non-idiomatic expressions”. There is a claim that it is because of idioms, rigidity that they come into existence. This claim appears whenever the characteristics of idioms are mentioned. Accordingly, Fernando (1996:7) argues that “the co-occurrence of words is a feature which is present in both collocations and idioms, but in an idiom this results in ‘a special semantic relationship’, which separates them from collocations”.

In the sixth place, we have semantic unity as one of the features of the idiom. Although idioms are comprised of multiple words, they operate as single semantic units. This concerns especially phrasal verbs. Cowie and Mackin (1975) argues that with semantic unity, one can be able to substitute a verb with a single-word verb that contains the same meaning as the idiomatic expression. Cowie and Mackin (1975: ix) stress that “idioms are ‘units of meaning’ which is a fact that distinguishes them from non-idiomatic expressions, which consist of distinct meaningful components”.

According to Weinreich (1969:45), “ambiguity is one of the most fundamental features of idioms”. In terms of this study ambiguity arises after the realisation of that the idiom can have two different meanings. In addition to Weinreich, Makkai’s (1972) study also looks at idioms vis a vis ambiguity in terms of which true idioms carry a meaning that misrepresent the truth about the meaning of the individual words that constitute the idiom (be ambiguous) as one of the huge factor for identifying idioms. Furthermore, “idioms are often subject to a possible lack of understanding despite familiarity with the meaning of the components” (Makkai,1972:122). In terms of this view, this misrepresentation occurs when the structure of the idiom leads the individual to have a wrong interpretation of an idiom.

Nonetheless, scholars do not commonly agree that misrepresentation of truth by the idiom can be a criterion for establishing the expression to be idiomatic. Fernando (1996: 6) argues that “this ambiguity which Makkai talks about is highly improbable in practice, because the literal senses of idioms do not survive alongside their figurative ones in normal everyday use”. This means that people comprehend the figurative meaning of the expression before the literal meaning. In the same vein, Tabossi and Zardon (1993:146) claim that “it is the figurative meaning of an idiom which becomes available first, rather than the literal meaning of the phrase”. In the same vein, Fernando (1996:6.)

argues that “an adequate contextualisation considerably minimises the possibility of disinformation potential, which is the reason why disinformation potential is relatively unlikely to occur”. Furthermore, “situational improbability, as in *rain cats and dogs*, is yet another factor working against disinformation” (Fernando, 1996:6). Whereas the issue that idioms violate the truth is not the same with the native speaker of the language, Fernando would argue that “for non-native speakers, the possibility of understanding the idiom in an erroneous way does exist”.

In conclusion, it seems reasonable enough to claim that idioms are relatively complex in their nature. Therefore, it is also expected for their characteristics to be equally useful and diverse. Many scholars came with their viewpoints in attempt to approach idiom with different angle and that could be one of the reasons many view points exist. Therefore, it is no easy for one to tell which characteristics of idioms are most important and can be used to distinguish idioms from non-idiomatic expression. After all, it remains a tough task for one to provide features that can at least give a clear cut that distinguishes idioms from non-idiomatic expressions.

1.2.2 Towards the definition of translation

There are many different definitions of translation. Webster’s New World dictionary (2002:152) views ‘to translate’ as follows:

- “To move from one place or condition to another; transfer; specif..., a) Theol. to convey directly to heaven without death, b) Ecless. To transfer (a bishop) from one see to another; also, to move (a saint’s body or remains) from one place of interment to another.
- To put into the words of a different language.
- To change into another medium or form to translate ideas into action.
- To put into different words; rephrase or paraphrase in explanation.
- To transmit (a telegraphic message) again by means of an automatic relay”.

Accordingly, Foster (1958:1) views translation as “the act of transferring through which the content of a text is transferred from the SL into the TL.” In the same vein, Williams (2013:79) explains the process of translating as “reproducing in the receptor language

the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style". In view of this, the implication of translation is to have the meaning and the style from the language in which the original message is written (source language) to the output language (target language). In some cases, one cannot have the exact equivalent. It is for this reason that Williams (2013) uses the term 'closest natural equivalent'.

Furthermore, Lebesse (2013) gives a more expansive definition, intimating that translation is a common term that is used to refer to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source language) to the receiver's (target language), in written form; in regardless of whether the language is a standardised variety or not; or whether one or both languages are based on signs, as with sign languages of the deaf. Similarly, Kitishat (2013) maintains that translation is a linguistic process of finding an exact equivalent or nearest equivalent for a source language message in the target language. In view of the above, an equivalent is a word that denotes the same meaning of a word in a source language in the target language.

Lilova (1985:17) views translation as "a specific oral or written activity aimed at the recreation of an oral or written text (utterance) existing in one language into a text in another language, accompanied by keeping the invariance of content, qualities of the original and author's authenticity". The view is supported by Beloruchev (1980:13) who states that "translation is a type of speech activity, aimed at transmitting a message, doubling the components of communication in those cases, when there is a discrepancy between codes used by the sender and the receiver of the message".

Similarly, Popovic (1980:43) argues that "translation is recoding of a linguistic text, accompanied by the creation of its new linguistic appearance and stylistic shape". This argument is supported by Catford (2004:56) who admits that "translation may be defined as the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)". Subsequently, Solodub (2005) explains that translation is a process that entails creativity, the information from a source language (SL) is transformed into a target language. In the same vein, Fedorov (2002:121) states that "to translate means to precisely and completely express by means of one language the things that had been expressed earlier by the means of another language". This

claim concurs with Komissarov's (1980) view that linguistic translation can be defined as a specific type of languages correlative functioning.

According to Alekseeva (2004:3), translation is "an activity, which consists of variable re-expression, converting of the text in one language into the text in a different language, which is carried out by a translator, who creatively chooses variants depending on language variability resources, text type, translation tasks, and under the influence of his (her) own personal individuality". Vinogradov (2006:15) relates translation as "a process (and its result) caused by social necessity of information (content) transmitting, expressed in a written or oral text in one language by the means of an equivalent (adequate) text in another language". Semenov (2005:16) declares that, "first of all, translation is the translator's activity of transforming a message in one language into a message with the same meaning in another language; secondly, translation is a *result* of the translator's activity, that is an oral or written language utterance".

Sobnikov and Petrova (2006) treat translation as a means of providing communication between languages by means of creation of a text in TL intended to fully replace the original text. However, Garbovsky (2004) views translation as a social activity that is used to share information between two or more groups of people that sees a need of interaction and speaks different languages. The task of translation is executed by someone who is able to communicate in both source language and the target language. The translator conveys the message of the source language into the target language. In this regard, the translator finds the closest equivalent in the target language that contains the message of the expression in the source language.

Latishev (1988:7) avers that "translation is a type of language mediation, socially serving to approximate a mediated bilingual communication by fullness, effectiveness and naturalness to a common monolingual communication". Accordingly, Newmark (2001) argues that translation is an art that attempts to substitute a written message or statement from one language into the other by the same message in another language while maintaining the same meaning. These definitions do not include all possible essential aspects with regard to defining translation. However, the definitions are meant to give light on the different ways in which translation can be viewed. If one takes a close look on the definitions of translations above, one can realise that most of definitions can be categorised in more than one category.

Clearly, in terms of the definitions provided above, translation can be viewed simply as a process and the results of the process, a communication based process aimed at transferring meaning from one language (SL) to the other (TL). These definitions are different and their distinction features are based on the criteria such as social status of translation (Vinogradov, 2006; Garbovsky, 2004; Latishev, 1998), requirements for the relationship between original text and its translation (Vinogradov, Lilova, 1985; Garbovsky, Catford, 2004; Fedorov, 2002; Latishev; Newmark, 2001), teleological explanation (Minyar-Beloruhev, 1980; Garbovsky, Latishev, et cetera. A critical examination of these definitions singles out several important translation contradictions that are source text and target text based.

1.2.3 The problem of zero equivalence

Lack of two similar words in terms of meanings in two languages poses a challenge because it is not easy to find words that meant the same between two languages that does not share the same cultural background. The term equivalent can refer to words which are corresponding or virtually identical especially in effect or function (Cohen, 2003). In simple terms, it refers to a word, phrase or sentence in a target language that carries the same meaning as a word, phrase or sentence in a source language, yet reflecting the very same meaning or function. Baker (1992) concurs that one of the main difficulties for the translator may be to find a word in the target language that means the same as the word in the source language (equivalent). As Baker (1992:68) writes, “different languages express meanings using different linguistic means such as fixed expressions, idioms, words, et cetera. It is very hard to find an equivalent of the same meaning and form in the target language”. Mustonen (2010:18) claims that “some confusion and vagueness exists in the very definition of the concept of ‘equivalence’ which is one of the most central concepts in translation theory”.

A number of contradictory statements have been made about translation equivalence and its applicability, and translation theorists have attempted to define equivalence from various points of view. Different kinds of categories of equivalence have also been suggested within the field of translation theory. The complexity and elusiveness of the concept has resulted in the fact that a universally valid, comprehensive definition of equivalence does not exist (Mustonen, 2010:18).

This theoretical view emphasises that the equivalent is a centre of translation that connects two languages and their cultures. It is further stated that the equivalent definition has gone through many changes in the translation theory history. In Bassnett and Andre (1998:2) view, “in the early days of translation theory it was believed that there could actually be something like a universally applicable equivalence”. “However, today the common view is that translators themselves have the power to decide on the specific degree of equivalence that they choose to strive for in each translation assignment” (ibid.). Equivalence is no longer viewed as an art of matching the words between two languages. Instead, now translators have freedom to choose the words or expressions, in their opinion, that the translated text is given to the target audience with the best meaning (Bassnett & Andre, 1998:2). However, the main aspect that poses challenges to the translator is the cultural bond idioms or fixed expressions.

If one can think about this in a cultural perspective, one can realise that the nature of our cultural situations, whether emotional, social or psychological, cannot be simply carried through to another language. Therefore, the translator is expected to use a translation strategy that will cater for both meanings and emotions expressed in the source language. One of the above aspects is usually unaccounted for, which is what translators have to fight against. In a sense, people actually create a new expression in the target language that does not represent what has been said in the source language. For example:

(4.)

SL: *U fara ludongo nga hu fhisaho.*

GL: To handle earthenware-plate on AGR hot-side.

EI: To face the music

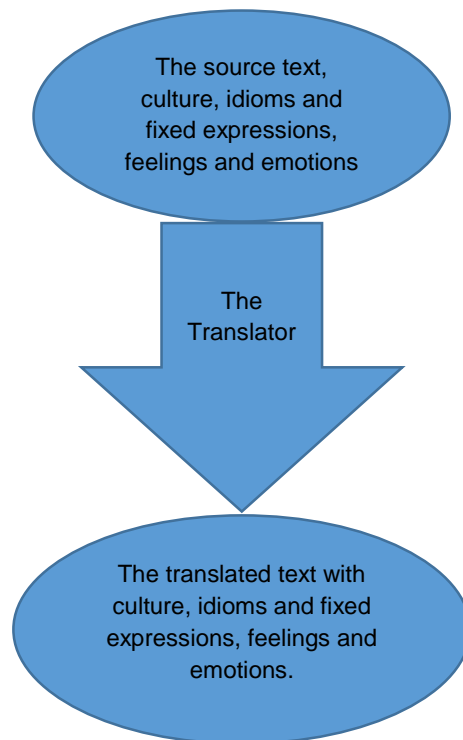
TL: (To be in trouble).

The example in (4) above *u fara ludongo nga hu fhisaho* does not refer to a situation where one is handling an earthenware plate on the hot side. It refers to a situation where one is faced with a challenge that is difficult to handle. It is evident from this example that if a translator is not fully bilingual and bicultural, the translation thereof may be incorrect. This occurs as a result of the fact that fixed expressions and idioms disguise their meanings.

When the translator is faced with complications of zero equivalence, which is difficult to overcome, he/she is more likely to feel that he/she has hit the rock bottom. Be that as it may, the translator is expected to serve as a bridge that links the two languages and their cultures as well. The message in the SL must be conveyed into the TL in a way that is user friendly to the target group or target readership without distorting the meaning.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the process of translation from source text to the target text through the translator who serves as a linking bridge between two languages and their cultures.

Figure 1.1: Translation process from source text culture to target text culture



Usually, the translator receives a document to be translated that contains aspects of culture such as idioms and fixed expressions. The document could be coupled with the translation brief that outlines the commissioner's expectations. All the emotions and facts that languages are not the same create challenges, and it is expected of the translator to overcome these problems.

It would be perfect and easier for the translator if one could find an idiom in the target language which contains the same form and meaning as that of the idiom in the source language. However, each and every language has its own idioms that might not be the

same as idioms in the next language. Therefore, makes it hard to find the exact equivalent idiom or fixed expressions between two languages. Idioms are difficult to translate because of their unpredictable syntax and meaning, hence the lack of equivalence.

Moreover, most of idioms are culture-bound and this may cause even more problems for the translator. Therefore, in order for the translator to convert a source idiom into the target language, he/she ought to find the most appropriate strategy. The translator must learn a lot about the role of idioms in both the SL and the TL, that is, in addition to the characteristics of idioms in both languages.

Baker (1992) discusses challenges related to the problem of zero equivalence. In the first place, there is usually a lack of sense equivalence in the TL; most of idioms are based on the culture, which means that the sense they express may not occur in the TL. Baker (1992) stresses this point when she argues that:

Idioms and fixed expressions which contain culture-specific items are not necessarily untranslatable. It is not the specific items an expression contains but rather the meaning it conveys and its association with culture-specific context which can make it untranslatable or difficult to translate (1992:68).

Consequently, the translation of the idiom largely depends on the context in which it occurs. The literal meaning of an idiom may be understandable in the TL, but the idiomatic meaning may be totally different from the literal meaning. In other words, an idiom may have the same sense in the TL but a different meaning. For example, 'To play for another team, (literal in Tshivenda: *u tambela inwe thimu* which means playing for a team that is different from the speaker's team) is used to refer to situations in which a person is gay or lesbian.

Some of the problems that the translator can come across when translating idioms and fixed expressions include the following (Baker, 1992):

- the translator may not know that he or she is dealing with the idiom;
- the idiom may not have an equivalent in the target language;
- the idiom may be misleading; and

- the source language idiom may have a very close counterpart in the target language which seems similar on surface but has a partial or a total different meaning.

One major challenge that a translator may be faced with is that one must know whether or not he/she is dealing with an idiomatic expression in a given context. It is somehow difficult to figure out. This difficulty may be brought about by sociolinguistic and semantic reasons. Failure to determine whether or not an expression constitutes an idiomatic expression might lead to mistranslation or the distortion of the message from the source language. For instance:

(5)

SL: *Mulalo u na mbilu.*

GL: *Mulalo has AGR heart.*

TL: *Mulalo is fond of other people's food.*

Mulalo u na mbilu literally means that *Mulalo has a heart as it is expected of anyone.* The expression is commonly used among the Tshivenda speakers and this may tempt the translator to translate it literally while the intended meaning is an idiomatic one. The meaning that needs to be conveyed in a target language is that *Mulalo desires other people's food.*

(6)

SL: *O mu fara mulomo a tshi kha ɔi amba.*

GL: PER AGR held mouth while AGR still AGR talk.

TI: He/she raised his/her opinion before he/she could finish talking.

U fara mulomo is an idiom that has a well understood meaning at a literal level. This may create a serious challenge to the translator with regard to recognising whether or not he/she is dealing with an idiom. This is where the understanding of both source language and target language culture is highly required. For this reason, Balfaqqeh (2009: 6) writes:

Idioms are difficult to translate. It is sometimes hard to find the right equivalent for a single word without finding equivalence for a sequence of words that convey one specific meaning. ... First, there is a lack of sense equivalence in the TL; idioms are culturally specific, which means that they may express a sense that doesn't occur in

the TL. Thus translating the idiom mostly depends on the context in which it has occurred.

The second challenge relating to zero equivalence is that the equivalent idiom may be found in a target language but the context of use from the SL differs. In other words, an idiom in the SL may have the idiom in the TL with the same sense but a different implication (Baker, 1992:34). “For example, ‘to sing a different tune’ means to say or do something that contradicts what has been said or done before” (ibid). “The Arabic equivalence for that idiom is *yuGanni 'la Laylah* (literal: sing to his own Laylah) and is used to refer to situations in which a person only cares about his/her own benefit. Both idioms share the surface meaning but are used differently”.

Thirdly, the frequency and the formality of idioms may differ from one language to another. It appears that there are some socio-linguistic factors for this claim. For instance, idioms may have some culture-specific or culturally-bound items which cause some difficulties in the process of translating. For example: *O wa ka lenaka* which translates to *fall by the horn*. The idiom is used in Sepedi to refer to the death of a prominent person. It is *u wa nga luṅanga* in Tshivenda which is used when there is a celebration that people are going to eat meat and have fun. “The difficulty arises from the problem of finding adequate target language equivalents for terms conveying culture-sensitive notions in the source language as a result of the fact that the two languages have different meaning sub-systems and cultures” (Teilanyo, 2007:16).

The fourth challenge relates to the fact that languages have different world views. (Baker, 1992). This means that one language might use a single word to express a certain meaning, meanwhile another language uses a fixed expression or an idiom to express such meaning. This occurs largely in the case where a language uses culture-specific items, whether they are single words with defined attributive meanings, or idioms and fixed expressions with opaque and dim meanings. For example, “categories such as ‘fixed expressions with fixed formulae’ such as ‘Merry Christmas’ and ‘Say when’ or idioms with fixed formulae such as ‘Yours sincerely’ and ‘Yours faithfully’ (ibid)”.

Amir (2012:8) posits that “while the single word ‘baptize’ is completely tangible for a Christian English audience, it is a fully unknown and vague concept for a Turk or Persian Muslim, requiring the translator to give such explanatory information as: *‘birini din yolūnda yūndurmağınan məsihiyət dininə gatirmax’* (making a person Christian through

a ritual bath) for an Azeri Turk, or "كزدي وارد هسيح ديي ب تعويذ غسل بارا كسي" (*making a person Christian through a ritual bath*) for the Persian one". In other words, the translator should convey this meaning: a Christian ceremony in which a person has water poured on their head, or is covered briefly in water, in order to show that they have become a member of the Christian Church (Amir 2012).

Another example is "to carry coals to Newcastle' and its Persian equivalent كزهاي زيس ب بزدي" (To carry *caraway* to *Kerman*) in which the English idiom uses the city *Newcastle* as the reference or measure of abundance while the Persian one applies the city *Kerman* for this aim". Furthermore, "besides, the English idiom uses the material 'coal' for which the Persian one applies "سيز" (*Caraway*)". Furthermore, Grauberg (1989:35) declares that "the German equivalent 'Eulen nach Athen tragen' (to carry owls to Athens) and the French one 'porter de l'eau a la riviere' (to carry water to the river) approve the mentioned idea". There is also another example such as "the idiom 'I'll say' where the Turkish equivalent uses 'ağziva qurban olum!' (thanks for your mouth!) and the Persian one applies "گفتی آي" (You just told it!)".

To explain further, although the idiom *u vhuisa* (to bring back the spirit of the dead) is completely tangible and well understood in Tshivenda culture, it is a different case in English. In English *U vhuisa* will simple mean to bring back either something that was lost, stolen or borrowed whereas more is attached to the word in Tshivenda. *U vhuisa* is a ritual performed in Tshivenda for a person who died far away from home and did not receive a proper burial. The death of that nature is called *u fhalala* (to scatter away). The belief is that because such a person did not receive a proper burial, misfortune would befall the family. In the event where the person died of a car accident and did not receive a proper burial, again the belief is that the spirit of such a person might cause accidents at the very same spot of his death. In order to resolve the spell of misfortunes, accidents and unnecessary deaths, the spirit of such a person must be brought back home through the process of *u vhuisa* (Nengovhela: 2010).

In this situation, the translator should convey this meaning: "a Tshivenda ceremony wherein the spirit of the dead person who did not receive a proper burial is brought back home" in order to make it understandable.

1.2.4 Translation, language and culture

Translation has traditionally been perceived as inter-lingual communication, where words are converted from one language to the other. However, theorists like Bassnett & Andre (1990) are strongly against perception of taking translation as simply a matter of language. Bassnett & Andre (1990:4) view “translation primarily as a cross-cultural transfer or intercultural communication”. In this view, culture plays a vital role in the translation process.

What influences this type of intercultural communication is that the major problem is caused by the disagreement over the ambiguous and fascinating concept of culture. There are over 200 definitions of culture each with its own perspective. Lui (2012) notes that culture and civilisation, taken in its broad ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Some of the definitions of culture have a direct bearing on translation. Nord (1997) cited in Lui (2012:24) maintains that “culture is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them”.

In support of Vermeer (1996), Nord (1997) stresses a number of essential features of culture (see table 1.1 below):

Table 1.1: *Features of culture*

Dynamic qualities	Focusing on human action and behaviour
Comprehensiveness	Regarding culture as a complex system determining any human action or behaviour, including language; and the possibility of it being used as a starting point for a descriptive and explicative or prescriptive approach to culture-specificity.

Adopted from Vermeer (1996)

Translation becomes a difficult task to do because one has to translate meaning and its culture from one language into the other language. Thus, the difference between languages and cultures poses a great challenge as far as translation is concerned. This is because things are done differently in different cultures. The manner in which words are used in diverse cultures also reflects the differences in the respective languages.

Culler (1976:21) argues that “languages are not nomenclatures and the concepts of one language may differ radically from those of another, since each language articulates or organises the world differently, and languages do not simply name categories; they articulate their own”. From Culler’s argument, one can conclude that one of the most troublesome problems of translation is the lack of correspondence in words and meanings among languages. The bigger the difference between the SL and the TL, the more the message may become distorted in the target culture.

Campbell (2000:38) defines culture as “a complex web of information that a person learns, and which guides each person’s actions, experiences and perceptions”. On the other hand, Banks (1984:52) regards culture as “the behavior, patterns, symbols, institutions, values, and other human made components of the society”. Banks’ definition of culture indicates human attributes and products that distinguish a person from another. It indicates the essence of culture in molding human behaviour within the society. In South Africa, one may mention the Western culture as well as diverse African cultures as integral parts of the South African national culture. This is the reason why the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) makes reference to unity in diversity.

What compounds the problem of translation between diverse cultures is that every language comprises of features which are derived from its culture. Idioms and fixed expressions are culture based units of language. In other words, the translation process becomes more complex when it involves the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. These language phenomena are among the major problems in translation, especially when translation takes place between two different languages such as English and Tshivenda which have different cultures. English is a Germanic language and Tshivenda is a Bantu language. For instance:

(7)

(a) SL: *Kholomo dzi dipa na namana.*

GL: Cattle they deep with calves.

TL: Elderly people are involved in sexual relationships with children.

(b) SL: It is a dose of one’s medicine.

GL: *Ndi AUX DET tshikalo tsha iwe mune mushonga).*

EI: *I tou vha philiphise.*

TL: You caused it to yourself.

The literal translation of the idiom in (7a) above does not reflect its true meaning of the said idiom. The meaning attached to the idiom has nothing to do with calves or cattle. It is just a common norm in Tshivenda for idioms to use animals but while referring to human beings. The correct interpretation should be: it is possible for elderly people to fall in love with young people. The same applies to (7b) where the meaning of the English idiom has nothing to do with medicine. The correct interpretation should be: *I tou vha philiphise or ndi tshi londa tsha u tou divhangela*. In order to derive the correct interpretation, the translator must act as a bridge that links two different cultures, conveying the meaning in the TL that fully or partially means the same as the expression in the SL.

“Idioms are figures of speech found in most, if not all languages around the world” (Mojela, 2004:1). In terms of this view, most people prefer to use figures of speech to express figurative meanings in their culture, and in most cases, these figures of speech include idioms. Idioms are important carriers of culture in the communities. The challenge they pose is that they are connotative because the message or the meaning they express is not as direct as is reflected in words themselves. The meaning is hidden and it thus needs someone with in-depth knowledge of the culture of both the source and the target languages to translate them accurately.

The translation of idioms and fixed expressions is also difficult because they are both culturally bound. In most cases, it is difficult to find the equivalent idiom in the target language that denotes the same meaning as it is in the source language. An idiom might express a sense that does not occur in the target language. As it occurs any language, Tshivenda uses some of idiomatic expressions that reflect the Tshivenda culture and environment. The translation of such idioms into English may result in comprehension problems if the translator is not familiar with the culture of the source language. Thus, when translating Bantu languages such as Tshivenda into Germanic languages like English or vice versa, there would be a prevalence of non-equivalence. For instance:

(8)

SL: *Ngoma hu tshinwa i no fhela.*

GL: Drum AGR danced AGR AGR finish.

TL: Everything started must come to an end.

The idiom in (8) above suggests that one can attend and graduate once at a circumcision school. It figuratively means that any work that a person undertakes at a point in time should be completed. The problem of zero equivalence in this expression in English originates from the fact that in Western culture, men are not required to attend initiation schools; therefore, the word *ngoma* is unknown in the Western culture because it is culturally bound particularly to African cultures. In this case, people from a Western culture are more likely to translate “*ngoma*” as “drum”. *Ngoma* in this context means an initiation school rather than a drum.

People may have different views pertaining culture, but there are some aspects that are common between language and culture. This leads to a point raised by Jiang (2000:18) who states that “it is commonly accepted that language is a part of culture, and that culture plays a very important role in a language. Some social scientists concede that without language, culture would not be possible”. Furthermore, “language simultaneously reflects culture, and is influenced and shaped by it”. In the broadest sense, “it is also the symbolic representation of a people, since it comprises their historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as their approach to life, and their ways of living and thinking”. Figure 3 below illustrates the relationship between language and culture.

Figure 1.2: *Language and culture are not easy to separate*

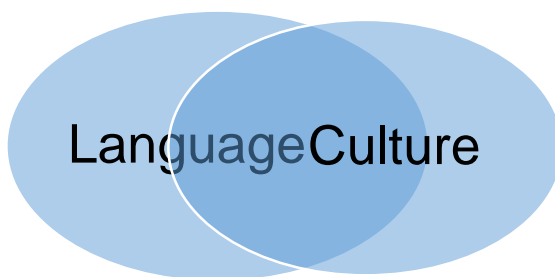


Figure 1.2 above shows that language and culture are interdependent, one cannot exist without the other. Every language possesses a double character; it is a carrier of culture

and in a same way, a means of communication and identity whereas culture is a carrier of people's values. Culture provides the environment in which languages develop, even as it influences how they are used and interpreted (Crystal, 1987). People's culture and values are portrayed through their language. This stresses the point that the two (language and culture) are interdependent. Therefore, it is impossible for the translator to translate language and leave out the culture. The translator is obliged to have an understanding of both source language and target language cultures in order to make an accurate translation.

Consequently, Brown (1994:165) describes the two (language and culture) as follows: "A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.' Summarily, culture and language are not easy to separate". Neil (2008:23) alludes to the fact that "the relationship between language and culture is deeply rooted. Language is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. Different ideas stem from differing language use within one's culture and the whole intertwining of these relationships start at one's birth". Linguists such as Jiang (2000), Nida (1998) and Brown (1994) explored the relationship between language and culture in an attempt to deal with the challenges experienced by translators when translating between two mutually unintelligible languages. In most cases, the two languages have distinctive features (such as usage and the meaning) with respect to their cultures. Nida (1998) writes:

Language and culture are two symbolic systems. Everything we say in language has meanings, designative or sociative (sic), denotative or connotative. Every language form we use has meanings, carries meanings that are not in the same sense because it is associated with culture and culture is more extensive than language.

People from different cultural background and different geographical setting may use the same language forms to refer to different things. "For example, when one says '*lunch*', an Englishman may be referring to hamburger or pizza, but a Chinese man will most probably be referring to steamed bread or rice. The word 'dog' in English, and the character *gou* in Chinese, refer to the same kind of animal. However, most English people associate dog with man's best friend, a good companion, being kept as a pet, together with many commendatory idioms, such as 'lucky dog'" (Jiang, 2000). "Most

Chinese people, by contrast, associate *gou* with watchdogs, defending the household from thieves, a noisy animal, together with such derogatory idioms as *gou tui zi* ('hired thug')" (ibid.). Being culturally loaded, English words and their Chinese translations (or vice versa) are seldom equivalents, and often give rise to different associations or images.

The process of translating idioms and fixed expressions requires a translator to have a shared knowledge of both languages and both cultures that will assist in converting the meaning from one language to another. In the process of finding an efficient equivalent for the target language this knowledge must be identified and transferred. People of different languages use completely different expressions to convey similar meanings in such a way that the expression might be completely noticeable and easy to understand. The same set of words and expressions may seem ambiguous, unclear and unintelligible to the speakers of the other language.

Each language is unique and contains culture-specific items that cannot be compared with the corresponding items in another language. Besides, lifestyles and social groups that people belong to also make the process of understanding and translating idiomatic expressions difficult.

1.2.5 The context of use of idioms

Baker (1992: 36) alludes that "an idiom or fixed expression may have a counterpart in the target language, but its context of use may be different, that is, an SL item has got an exact TL counterpart but the usage or pragmatic functions of the two may differ from each other". In support to that, Amir (2012:14) point out that "The English idiom 'to sing a different tune' means to say or do something that signals a change in opinion because it contradicts what one has said or done before. The Chinese equivalent '*chang-dui-tai-x*' (to sing different tunes/to sing a duet) has strong political connotations".

The context of use of an idiom may reflect a positive connotation in one language and negative one in another. It is therefore important for the translator to have in-depth understanding of the relevant languages. If the culture and the meaning of the idiom is not taken into account, the translator's efforts will be in vain. For instance:

(9)

SL: The first cut is the deepest.

GL: DET *thoma thukhula ndi* DET *yo-tsesaho*.

EI: *Thuba hu vhavha ya u thoma*.

The idiom ‘the first cut is the deepest’ may mean that one’s first love will always define the way one understands love and the first woman or man you loved will always live in you. The equivalent idiom of ‘the first cut is the deepest’ in Tshivenda would be ‘*Thuba hu vhavha ya u thoma*’ as indicated in (9) above. The context of use is completely different from the one in English. The Tshivenda idiom indicates that the pain that one feels if one had been beaten first is more painful than the one inflicted as revenge. The two idioms seem to denote the same meaning at a literal level but the context of use is completely different. Another example is as follows:

(10)

SL: *U shela muṅo*.

GL: To pour salt.

IE: To add salt to injury.

TL: To exaggerate.

U shela muṅo is a Tshivenda idiom which means to exaggerate. It is commonly used when someone is saying more than what happened or more than what has been said in order to add some element of fun. The English saying ‘to add salt to injury’ refers to a feeling that arises from a person who has made a bad situation worse by doing something else to upset someone. Thus, the two idioms seem to share the syntax but the context of use differs.

Baker (1992) in Amir (2012) recognises diverse types of idioms (which are idioms that violate truth and idioms that include expressions which seem grammatically ill-formed) and believes that it is easy to recognise some of these than others. In terms of this view, the easier way to notice an idiom is to know that an idiom is an expression which violates truth conditions. Thus, the idiom alludes to a situation that cannot be practically possible in a real world. This knowledge enables the translator to identify an idiomatic expression. For instance:

(11)

SL: *U gonya thavha nga maṅo.*

GL: To climb mountain by teeth.

EI: To face the music.

TL: To be faced with hardships of life.

In reality, one cannot climb a mountain by teeth. The expression expresses the degree of the hardship one is faced with. In a situation like this, it is easy to realise that the meaning is not supposed to be treated at a literal level. However, the translator needs to be conscious of the meaning attached. Baker (1992) also contends that the fact that the translator fails to make sense of an expression will alert him that there is an idiom used. She mentions two conditions in which an idiom can be easily misinterpreted if the translator is not acquainted with it.

The first instance is that some idioms are 'misleading'; they seem transparent because they offer a reasonable literal interpretation and yet their idiomatic meanings are not necessarily signaled in the surrounding text. The translator might be tempted to translate the expression at a literal level rather than giving an idiomatic expression that contains the primary meaning (Baker, 1992). For example:

(12)

SL: *U rwa danda.*

GL: To hit dry-log.

TL: To have a good harvest.

The expression *u rwa danda* in the above example is both a literal and an idiomatic expression. This poses a challenge to the translator because 'to heat a log' is practically possible. Therefore, a naive translator might take the expression as it is and give a literal translation.

(13)

SL: To throw in the towel.

GL: *U laṭa ngomu DET thawula.*

IE: *U laṭa thawula.*

TL: To give up.

Based on its ambiguous meanings, this idiom is misleading. It can be used to refer to throwing away a towel literally and to giving up on something or someone. Thus, the ambiguous meanings may create a challenge to the translator. In this regard, the translator has to be fully conversant with the context of usage. Secondly, Baker (1992) argues 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”.

(14)

SL: To pull one’s legs.

GL: *U kokodza ya-munwe milenzhe*.

TL: To joke.

The above example clarifies a case where in the SL idiom may have a very close equivalent in the TL which looks similar on the surface but has a totally or partially different meaning. *U kokodza milenzhe* is an idiom in Tshivenda which literally translate that someone or something is dragging the legs. This is a misleading idiom for a person who is not a Tshivenda speaker and who does not understand its meaning. Since its literal meaning appears correct in Tshivenda, the translator might be misled and focus on this surface meaning.

Since the meaning of an idiom cannot be gathered from the individual words that it be made up of, then we cannot recreate the same meaning merely by substituting a literal TL item for the SL one. There are some primary problems to this, the most noticeable of which are connected to the concept of equivalence.

1.2.6 The simultaneous use of idiom

Baker (1992:68) writes that it is possible to simultaneously use an idiom in “the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time”. In this regard, the focus is on both meaning and the form of the figurative expression. “If the target-language idiom resembles the source-language idiom both in form and in meaning, the production on idiom cannot be successfully reproduced in the target text”. For an example:

(15)

SL: *Ku ba nenge*.

GL: To hit leg.

TL: To dance.

The Xitsonga expression '*ku ba nenge*' has both a literal and a figurative meaning to dance and to hit a leg, respectively. The translation of this idiom out of context can lead to mistranslation. The challenge faced by the translator in this situation is to make an informed decision on how to translate the saying. The decision must be influenced by whether or not the idiom is understood literally or figuratively.

1.2.7 The convention and frequency of use of idioms

"The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages" (Baker, 1992: 70). Amir (2012) argues that "all languages have '*rhetorical*' formulae which belong merely to their own language". These rhetorical aspects of languages differ from each other. Amir (2012:18) further argues "that while a language may use a high number of honorifics in its pronominal system as a rhetorical means, another language may make a vivid distinction between the written and spoken discourse where the written form is regarded as more formal than the spoken mode". "A good example of this case includes such languages as Turkish and Persian in which the written mode is considered with a high level of formality that ignores informal and spoken idioms as a rule" (ibid).

To highlight on this issue are the following examples: "خوردی آب هتئل" and „*sũ içim*“ (Literally: *like drinking water*; Implied meaning: *very easily*) (Amir, 2012:18). Furthermore, Amir (2012:18), alludes that "these examples are two highly informal idioms in Turkish and Persian, respectively. Both languages use these idioms in informal contexts, especially in the spoken form but they ignore using such cases in the formal written mode". Instead they may use "ساد خیلی" or „*çok rahat*“ (very easy) in such formal and written modes. In this regard, Baker (1992: 71) holds that "translation is an exacting art. The idiom, more than any other feature of language, demands that the translator be not only accurate but highly sensitive to the rhetorical nuances of the language".

To sum up, it can be said that some languages use a great number of idioms in both formal and informal contexts but as it was shown in the cases of Turkish and Persian,

others avoid using them in formal contexts. The impact of the convention and frequency of use in this study is of paramount significance since it has to be known that the literalness and the familiarity of the idiom is taken into account as it plays a big role in the translation of idioms.

1.3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Language can be considered as a system of communication that has both literal and figurative meanings. The literal meaning is the direct one whereas the figurative meaning is connotative in nature. The meaning of individual words in an expression has nothing to do with the comprehension of the whole meaning. The whole meaning characterises ideas like idioms and fixed expressions (Mezmaz, 2010). The use of idioms and fixed expressions makes translation to be more complex because they cannot be literally translated into another language. The meaning cannot be interpreted from their component parts. Some words used in idioms and fixed expressions do not reflect their true meanings since they disguise the true meaning. This makes translation to be more complex since meanings of idioms and fixed expressions are not easily interpreted.

Figurative meaning, though, differs from literal meaning in the sense that the former is used for giving an imaginative description of a situation or event or in order to achieve a special effect. With regard to idioms and fixed expressions, the meaning of individual words that constitute the idiom has nothing to do with the understanding of the idiomatic expression meaning. Such a meaning characterises concepts like metaphors, similes and idioms. Idioms are, to a great extent, used in everyday language, and they are considered as some of the most frequently used means of non-literal language. Their frequent, spontaneous and appropriate use is usually a mark of good language, and an indication of native or near native command of the language. In this respect, linguists do their best to translate idioms correctly and efficiently in order to provide the correct meaning. The problem, however, is that despite recent developments in the field of translation theory and application, idiomatic expressions still pose serious challenges for translators.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to explore the factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. In order to achieve this aim, the study will endeavour to answer the following research questions:

- (a) What are the factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions in Tshivenda and English?
- (b) What is the impact of literal translation in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English?
- (c) What are the major problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English?
- (d) What are the translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English?

1.4.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

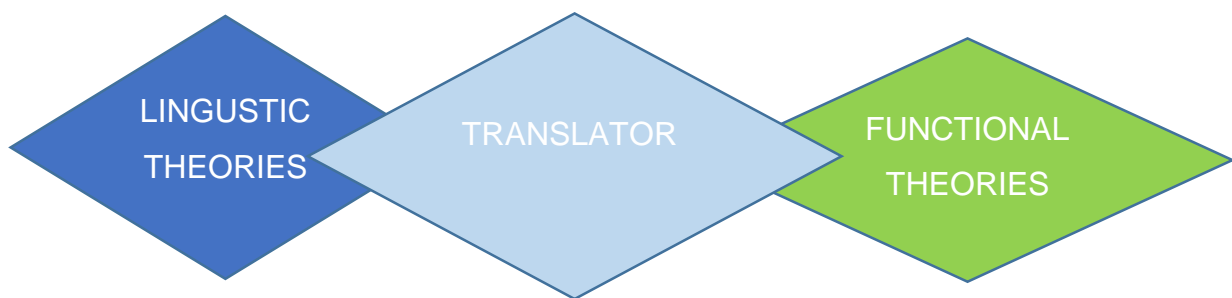
- (a) To identify factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions.
- (b) To determine the impact of literal translation in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda.
- (c) To examine the major problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English.
- (d) To recommend the translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This sub-section discusses the theories of translation applicable to the study. In order to have a proper examination of the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between

English and Tshivenda, the researcher uses functional theories. However, linguistic theories will be briefly discussed as a foundation of functional theories. Figure 2.4 below illustrates the relationship between the translator and theories of translation. The diagram places the translator at the centre of the theories of translation.

Figure 1.3: *The translator and theories of translation*



1.5.1 Linguistic theories

Functional theories came into place as a criticism of linguistic theory. The linguistic theory of translation pays more attention on the fundamental issues of meaning and/or equivalence. It views the entire purpose of translation as achieving equivalence (Karavind). In terms of linguistic theories, the target text is expected to match the source text as fully as possible. The source text is viewed as a yard stick of translation. These theories were used before theorists realised that language is not all about its structure. Nida (1976:46) argues that “linguistic theories of translation are based on a comparison of the linguistic structures of the STs and TTs, rather than a comparison of literary genres and stylistic features of the philological theories”. “Their development is due to two factors. The first is the application of the rapidly expanding linguistics, the scientific study of language to several fields such as cognitive anthropology, semiotics, pragmatics, and teaching translation/interpreting skills. The second is the emergence of Machine Translation (MT) which has provided a significant motivation for basing translation procedures on linguistic analysis as well as for a rigorous description of SL and TL” (ibid).

Consequently, linguistic approach came in as a results of theories which view translation as an activity of substituting the linguistic units of the ST (source text) with equivalent TT (target text) units without paying attention to aspects such as context or meaning. Equivalence is at the centre of linguistic theories. According to Nida and Taber (1969:134), “it is only a linguistic translation that can be considered ‘faithful’, because it is one which only contains elements which can be directly derived from the ST wording, avoiding any kind of explanatory interpolation or cultural adjustment which can be justified on this basis.”

However, Nida and Taber (1969) do not consider the fact that languages are not the same in terms of word order, which can affect the meanings in the different languages. In a nutshell, one can conclude that linguistic theory views the SL as a yardstick of translation and the TT is expected to be a mirror image of a ST. This theory does not take into account the distinction between the two languages. Languages are not the same and for that reason it is impossible to have a target text that can be a mirror image of a source text.

1.5.2 Functional theories

Functional theories are more concerned with the aim of the translation. The functionalist approaches in translation have made a notable switch from a linguistic oriented to a functional or socio-cultural concept of translation. The translator is now regarded as an expert within his area of expertise, just like a doctor or a historian is in his respective fields. Functional theories take into account not only literary or religious, but a broad variety of text types, from legal and scientific to commercial and touristic. These theories bring to an end the reign of the source-text itself, and sometimes a translation process can even happen in its absence (Nord, 2005). Consequently, “translation is considered primarily as a process of intercultural communication whose end product is a text which has the ability to function appropriately in specific situations and context of use” (Schaffner, 1998a). There are many functional theories in the study of translation. The skopos theory, which forms the basis of this study, is one of them.

Skopos theory, as a functionalist theory of translation, was initiated by the German translator Vermeer in 1978. Skopos is a Greek word for 'purpose'. “According to skopos

theory, the basic principle which determines the process of translation is the aim or purpose (skopos) of the translational action” (Chesterman, 1989:8). “The idea of intentionality is part of the very definition of any action” (Nord, 1997:24). Skopos is a term in translation that is used to refer to the aim or purpose of a translation. In Vermeer’s theory, there is a slight distinction between the terms aim and purpose. The essence of Vermeer’s discussion is that an aim of translation is considered as the end product of translation which the commissioner strives to achieve via an action; whereas purpose is a provisional stage in the process of achieving an aim. The aim of translation is considered as communicative acceptability (Honig, 1998).

In terms of the skopos theory, the process of translation is determined by the function of the product. In other words, the aim is to make translation to be user friendly to the target users unlike linguistic theories that strive to have a mirror image of a source language without taking in to account differences in languages (Jawad, 2006). Function is yet another term that refers to what a text means. “The meaning of the text is viewed by the receiver. Another related term to skopos is intention which is regarded as an aim-oriented plan of action on the part of both the sender and the receiver” (Zhang, 2014:18). This points towards an appropriate way of producing or understanding the text. The translator’s better understanding of the source text is important here for the production of the desired target text. In this theory, the interest of the target reader is prioritised.

The aim of skopos theory is to dethrone the source text (ST). This is done by emphasising the role of the translator as a creator of the target text (TT) by prioritising the purpose of producing TT. Nord (1991) proposes a difference between intention and function as follows:

- “The sender is responsible for specifying intention and by using a text he/she tries to achieve a purpose.
- The receiver uses the text with a certain function, depending on his/her own expectations, needs, previous knowledge and situational conditions” (Nord (1991:24)

This difference is significant to the field of translation because the sender and receiver normally belong to different cultural and situational settings. Goodenough (1964) maintains that translation involves translating cultures, the totality of knowledge and model for perceiving things, immediate connection between culture and behavior and

events, and culture's dependence on norms. So, intention and function can be analysed from two different angles. The former is viewed from the sender's point of view while the latter is seen from the receiver's. According to the Skopos theory, translation does not have to focus on the equivalent. The priority should be given on achieving its purpose. This theory further views translation as a form of action which has its own aims as opposed to the aims of the original text. Chesterman (1989:173) summarises what Skopos entails as follows:

The client who commissions the translational task determines the aim of the translation and its mode of realization. The translator is then responsible for the performance of the translational task and adjusting the skopos for the target audience's needs. The skopos of the target language text is therefore determined by the target audience's requirements, as defined by the translator.

The above quotation emphasises that Skopos theory is concerned with translation results that will deliver the correct meaning to the target audience. The translator has to take into account the requirement given by the commissioner in the translation brief. In this case, it can be concluded that in order to get the message across to the target group, the translator should act as a bridge that links the two cultures. In a nutshell, Skopos' aim is to convey the message from the source language to the target language as clearly and as unambiguously as possible. "The whole process of translation must aim at fulfilling the final expectations. In other words, the end justifies the means" (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984:101). Furthermore, Vermeer in Nord (1997:100) explains the skopos rule as follows:

Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The skopos rule thus reads as follows: translate / interpret / speak / write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function.

The translators' responsibility is to substantiate their choice of a particular skopos in a given translational situation. The purpose of a particular translation task may require a 'free' or 'faithful' translation. Kangaroo (2004:24) argues that "there are new considerations concerning target readers, the unavoidable translator subjectivity and the purpose and function of translations".

“Accordingly, in terms of the skopos theory, the receiver is the main factor determining the end product of the translation. A client needs a text for a particular purpose and calls upon the translator for a translation, thus acting as the initiator of the translation process” (Nord, 1997:88). The workability of the brief is based on the target culture. The source text forms part of the translation brief that constrains all the instructions that the translator might require. Receivers are responsible for making the text meaningful. It is important for one to understand that different receivers will receive the message in different ways. “According to the skopos theory approach, the text is considered as an offer of information. This offer is directed from the producer of the text to its recipient. Translation is then a secondary offer of information about information originally offered in another language within another culture” (Schaffner, 1998:236).

Translators understand that the norms and values of the source language might not be the same as those of the target language. As a result, the translator is expected to adjust it in order to arrive at a solution to the problem (Baker, 1992). In this regard, the skopos theory is appropriate as it offers flexibility to the translator. Accordingly, a TT provides the information produced by the translator from the source culture in the target culture. This allows the translator to produce a meaningful text to target culture receivers. According to Vermeer (1980:45), “the TT should conform to the standard of 'inter-textuality coherence'. For a text to be communicative and understandable, it has to be coherent with the receivers' situation. Being 'coherent with' is synonymous with being 'part of' the receivers' situation and context of use. What is significant is that there is a relationship between a ST and TT since a translation is an offer of information about a preceding offer of information”. Nord (1997:27) calls this relationship “inter-textual coherence or fidelity’. The inter-textual coherence relationship holds between source and target texts. The form of this coherence depends on two aspects namely, the translator's interpretation of the ST and the translation skopos”.

Skopos theory and functionalism as a whole allows the translator to have more freedom and more responsibility in the whole translation process. When situation is like this, the translator becomes the target text author that is on liberty from all sorts of limitations and restrictions imposed by the aspects of loyalty to the source text (Schaffner, 1998). Dissimilar from non-functional approaches, the translator in functionalist approach gives loyalty to the client. The translation processes are more focused on the target text than the source text.

Notwithstanding, “the skopos theory has been criticised by the linguistically oriented approaches on the ground of the over-simplification that is inherent in functionalism, the focus on the message at the expense of richness of meaning and to the detriment of the authority of SL text” (Newmark, 1991 in Baker, 2005:237). This theory has also been criticised for allowing the end to justify the means in the translation process. This would make this theory inappropriate to the translation of texts such as literary or religious translation – that are largely determined by the author's personal intention. Newmark (2000: 259- 260) criticises this theory by saying that, “to translate the word 'aim' into Greek, and make a translation theory out of it, and exclude any moral factor except loyalty ... is pretending too much and going too far”.

Nord (1997) defends skopos theory against these criticisms. The first criticism is that not all actions have an intention. Thus, the essence of action-based translation theories is questioned. Secondly, it is claimed that not every translation can be interpreted as purposeful. In addition to that, the translator does not necessarily have a specific purpose in mind while translating the ST. Having such a purpose would limit the possible translation procedures and thus the interpretations of the TT. Thirdly, it is also claimed that skopos theory is not an original theory in that since functionalism is based on something as obvious as the fact that human actions are guided by their purposes, it cannot claim to be an original theory. Newmark (1991) (cited in Nord, 1997) attacked this theory harshly saying that “...in order to do anything well, you have to know why you are doing it, and that if you're translating a soap advert, you won't do it in the same way as you translate a hymn. This is a common sense”.

Replying to the criticism against skopos theory, Nord contested that “this is a misinterpretation of the theory” (Nord 1997a:117). To avoid this misinterpretation, Nord suggested her principle of ‘loyalty’ as the answer to this criticism. “Loyalty in this context means the responsibility that translators have toward their partners in the translation situation. This gives the skopos theory an ethical element, which limits the unlimited range of skopos which could otherwise be used” (Nord, 2006:33). This also means that because clients are not translation experts, they often do not know what information the translator needs in order to produce a translation that will fulfil their needs and expectations. “Therefore, it is the translator’s responsibility to educate clients so that they can learn to provide the necessary information and other available data” (Nord, 2006: 30).

“It is also claimed that functionalism is not based on empirical findings but on the speculative approach” (Koller, 1995 in Nord, 1997:116). Another important point of criticism is that functional approaches go beyond the limits of translation proper. This is basically related to the feature of equivalence which is considered as a constitutive one as far as translation is concerned.

Koller (1995: 193) considers equivalence as “a flexible and relative concept. This is in contrast to the earlier definitions of this concept such as the one given by Catford (1965:20) as the “replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language (TL)”. As for Koller, skopos theory makes the contours of translation vague and difficult to be surveyed. The last point of concern is the one that is raised by House (2001). In his view, skopos theory fails on a number of issues:

- The notion of function which is crucial to the approach is never made explicit in any satisfactory way,
- Its inability to determine the (relative) equivalence and adequacy of a translation,
- The indeterminacy of the linguistic realisation of the skopos of a translation; and
- Due to the role of the 'purpose' of a translation, the ST is considered as a mere offer of information.

Skopos theory claims to be a general or universal model of translation. The main idea of skopos theory could be paraphrased as the translation purpose that justifies the translation procedures (Jawad, 2006). The translation purpose must be in line with the communicative intentions of the original author. Thus, things related with source text are essential. We cannot dethrone the ST since it will negatively affect the translation process. Besides, due to absence of massive evidence of empirical nature, skopos theory cannot be considered as a universal theory.

Jawad (2006:34) view translation brief, as “a term brought into focus by skopos theory, limits the job of the translator. This is because the instructions received do not let the translator to follow up his job as he wants”. Furthermore, “If the translation brief requires a translation whose communicative aims are incompatible with the author's opinion, the skopos rule can be interpreted as 'the end justifies the means', and there would be no restriction to the range of possible ends” (Jawad, 2006:34). Furthermore, the ideal brief will provide explicit or implicit information about the intended TT function(s), the TT addressee(s), and the medium and so on. In this theory, the notion of the translator as

a mediator has been challenged by the skopos theorists who regard the translator as an independent text producer who produces a new text based on criteria determined by the target receivers. Turning his back on the source text, Vermeer (1989) views the translator as a text designer whose task is to design a target text capable of functioning optimally in the target culture.

The skopos theory pays attention in how the translated text works in the target text users. Since idioms and fixed expressions should always be translated with the target audience's interests at heart and through expressions which function in the target language, the Skopos theory is definitely important in this context. The target languages in this study is English. This theory is useful in this study because in the translation of idioms, it is the target readers whose interests the translated expressions should first and foremost serve. Since source language idioms rarely function in another language, they should be translated so that they become clear and meaningful to the target language reader. The Skopos theory emphasises the role of the target language audience and the translator during the translation process.

1.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter focused on the translation of idioms and fixed Expressions between Tshivenda and English languages. The discussion was based on the background to the study, definition of idioms, definition of translation, the problem of zero- equivalence, translation, language and culture, the context of use of idioms, the simultaneous use of idioms, the convention and the frequency of use of the idiom, the research problem, purpose of the study as well as translation theories.

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present a literature review of the study. The chapter looks at the concept of meaning, idioms as translation problems, features of idioms, their structure and classes of idioms. This is followed by a review of the strategies used in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions as well as the translation theories.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF MEANING

“Translation is an effort of finding an equivalent meaning of a text into the target language” (Nugroho (nd): 1). In other words, meaning of the idioms in the SL is the object to be rendered into the target language text. The process of transferring meaning requires one’s in-depth knowledge of aspects such as grammatical structures, communication settings, and cultural contexts of both the source and the target texts. It is generally agreed among scholars such as Baker (1992) and Saldana (2009) that translations are supposed to have at least 'the same meaning' as the original texts. Newmark (1977) emphasises that meaning is complicated, many-levelled, a network of relations as divergent as the channel of thoughts in the brain. The more the communication, the more generalisation, the more simplification, the less meaning. Idioms are a group of words or phrases whose meaning is different from the literal meaning of the words (Innovateus.net). They are thus a phrase which may flout the regular rules governing grammar and meaning. The meaning of an idiom, for example, can be replaced by a single word. For example, to ‘kick the bucket’ is an idiomatic expression which means to ‘die’.

There are different types of meanings which should be considered in the process of translating (Nida & Taber, 1969; Larson, 1984; Bell, 1991; Finegan, 2004). These are the referential, connotative, social and the affective meaning. Referential meaning works as a symbol which refers to an object, process, abstract thing, and relation (Nugroho (n.d)). This means that the meaning of a word or sentence is the actual person, object, abstract notion, event, or state to which the word or sentence makes reference. The phrase ‘Scott’s dog’, for example, refers to the particular domesticated canine belonging to Scott. The canine described by the expression ‘Scott’s dog’ is the referent

of that expression. However, not all expressions have referents. Neither a unicorn nor the present king of France has an actual referent in the real world, but both expressions have meaning (Finegan, 2004).

In addition, Zagy (2000:22) holds that “referential meaning is known as the meaning of reference, [which] is often referred to as the referential meaning, the ‘lexical’ meaning, the “conceptual” meaning, or the denotative” meaning”. There are two markers that can be used to give the meaning of words, that is; syntactic marking and semotac marking (Zagy, 2000).

2.2.1 Syntactic marking

“Syntactic marking refers to the fact that in some cases, the meaning of a word is governed by its grammatical structure” (Finegan, 2004:41). Below are some of the examples.

Table 2.1: *Examples of syntactic marking*

I	II
a. He <u>picked up</u> a stone.	They will <u>stone</u> him.
b. He saw a cloud.	The quarrel will <u>cloud</u> the issue
c. She has a beautiful face	He will <u>face</u> the audience.
d. He fell in the water.	Please, <u>water</u> the garden.

In Table 2.1 above, it is clear that in column I the words ‘stone’, ‘cloud’, ‘face’, and ‘water’ are nouns. In column II, the underlined words are not nouns, but are verbs.

2.2.3 Semotac marking

The meaning of a word is also determined by its relationship with other words in a certain context (Larson, 1984). In other words, the semotac environment differentiates the meaning. Here are the examples.

Table 2.2: *Examples of semotac marking*

I	II
a. The horse runs fast	The water runs through the path.
b. Your hand is dirty.	All hands up!

The words 'runs' in the sentences (a) in column I and II have different meanings because they have different subjects. In column I, the word 'runs' has to do with the 'movement' of the subject, that is; the horse, while in column II, it means the 'flowing' of water. The word 'hand' in example (b) of column 1 refers to the palm of the hand, and in column II, it refers to arms. So, they too differ in meaning. From Tables 2.1 and 2.2, it is clear that the translator should be aware of both the syntactic and semotac markings of lexical items because these may have an impact on the target text.

Connotative meaning refers to "the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to" (Leech, 1981:14). It embraces the properties of the referent and is, therefore, peripheral (Leech, 1981). It seems reasonable to claim that understanding the meaning of a word is not merely based on the referred object of the word. Sometimes, a translator also needs to give an emotional reaction to the word. The reaction might be strong, weak, positive or negative. This kind of meaning is closely related to an individual's emotional reaction which, then, is named as connotative meaning. In other words, the meaning of a word is not only concrete or having abstract dimensions, but it also involves the sender's emotional condition.

Zagy (2000) identifies three main principles of understanding connotative meaning. The first is the relationship between the word and the speaker. When certain words become very closely related with certain types of speakers, this will be well accepted by the members of the group. The words include those which are used and understood by members of certain social class in terms of their level of education and religion. For instance, 'floor crossing' is a common word among South African politicians under which members of parliament, members of provincial legislatures and local government councillors could change a political party (or form a new party) and take their seats with them when they do so. This word might not be understood by the commoners and those not familiar with the South African political context. The second relates to the condition of the speaker. When the same word is expressed by the same speaker, but in different conditions or settings it may raise different connotative meanings. Some words are related to certain environments as in court, police station, market and tourism objects. In terms of linguistic factors, parallel words which are always in pairs with other words give various connotations. The word 'green', for example, when it is in pair with the following words, has different meanings:

(16)

- a. Green with envy – to be very unhappy because someone has something that you want: ‘Chad is heading off to Spain for the week’, and ‘I’m green with envy’.
- b. ‘Green at the gills’ – ‘to look ill and pale’: ‘Some of the passengers looked kind of green around the gills after the trip’.
- c. ‘A green worker’ – ‘immature in age or judgment’; ‘untrained’; ‘inexperienced’: ‘His ideas could not be implemented because he is just a green worker’.

It seems reasonable to claim that the word ‘green’ can be used to refer to different things depending on the way it is used. However, it is upon the translator to find the correct meaning contained in the word from different contexts.

“Idioms are highly conventional expressions in that their meaning generally cannot be predicted by applying the rules that determine the meaning or use of their constituent parts when they occur in isolation (Glucksberg, 1993; Hamblin & Gibbs, 1999). Nevertheless, “the syntactic and semantic features characterising, for instance, the verbs are still preserved when the verb is inserted in an idiom string (for example, one cannot slowly ‘kick the bucket’, neither idiomatically nor literally, since ‘to kick’ cannot be used to refer to a slow action” (Glucksberg, 1993; Hamblin & Gibbs, 1999).

“Social meaning is what we rely on when we identify certain social characteristics of the speaker and situation from the character of the language used (Finegan, 2004:181)”. “It is a meaning that which a piece of language conveys about the social circumstances of its use”. The understanding of social meaning allows the recognition of different dimensions and levels of style within the same language (for example, dialect, level of formality, slang, and so on) (Leech, 1981; Finegan, 2004). Leech’s observation is that words that have both the same conceptual and social meaning imply the non-existence of true synonymy, and lead to the conclusion that ‘synonymy’ should be restricted to equivalence of one of these two meanings. Conceptual meaning is considered to be the focal centre of understanding. Finegan (2004) presents the following examples of social meaning:

(17)

- a. So I say to him, “you can’t do nothing right”.
- b. Is it a doctor in here?
- c. Yáll gonna visit over the holiday.
- d. Great chow.

In addition to representing action, state and mental process, the sentences above convey information about the identity of the person who has uttered them or about the situation in which they have been uttered. In (17a) above, the use of the verb ‘say’ with the first person singular pronoun ‘I’ indicates something about the speaker’s social status. In (17b), the form *it* where some other varieties use ‘there’ indicates the speaker of an ethnically marked variety of English (African American English). In (17c), the pronoun *yáll* identifies a particular region dialect of American English (southern). Finally, the choice of words in (17d) indicates that the comment made was in an informal context. Social status, ethnicity, regional origin, and context are all social factors that affect meaning construction. In addition to linguistic meaning, therefore, every utterance also conveys social meaning, not only in the sentence as a whole but in word choice (*yáll* and *chow*) and pronunciation *gonna* or *nothing* (Finegan, 2004).

Affective meaning is the emotional connotation that is attached to words and utterance (Finegan, 2004). This kind of meaning deals with personal feelings and attitudes. It is often conveyed through the conceptual and connotative content of the words used. However, other factors such as intonation and voice-timbre are also important. Leech regards affective meaning as a parasitic category since it relies upon the mediation of other categories of meaning – conceptual, connotative and stylistic (Leech, 1981; Finegan, 2004).

(18)

- a. Tina, who always boasts about her two doctorates, lectured me all night on Wharhol’s art.
- b. Tina, who has two doctorates, gave me a fascinating overview of Wharhol’s art last night.

Because the two sentences can be used to describe exactly the same event, one can say they have the similar referential meaning. Sentence (18a) gives the impression that the speaker was bored by the lecture she received from the boastful Tina. Sentence (18b), in contrast, indicates that the speaker finds her interesting. The “stance” of the speaker in these utterances thus differ.

2.3 IDIOMS AS TRANSLATION PROBLEMS

“Due to the language-specific nature of idioms, their translation can be somewhat challenging at times. Idioms must be recognised, understood and analysed before appropriate translation methods can be considered” (Strakšien, 2009). Likewise, “one must, first of all, be able to spot idioms from a text - it is absolutely crucial that a translator recognises an idiom when s/he sees one” (ibid). It cannot be argued that the ability to identify idioms is of enormous importance, since their meaning should never be understood literally (Strakšien, 2009). As Ingo (1990:23) puts it, “the translator must first analyse what the writer has intended to say before she/he can even think of translating the expression”. Larson (1984) agrees, as he argues “that the first crucial step in the translation of idioms is to be absolutely certain of the meaning of the source language idiom”. “Therefore, the most important issue in translating idioms is the ability to distinguish the difference between the literal meaning and the real meaning of the expression” (Ingo, 1990:248). This is why recognising and being able to use idioms appropriately requires excellent command of the source language.

It is expected that the challenge faced by translators may influence scholars to conduct research works on the translation of idioms. Mustonen’s (2010) study investigated strategies that can be employed in the translation of idioms on the basis of a prose fiction novel, *The Secret History* by Tartt and its Finnish translation *Jumalat juhliivat öisin*. The aim of the study was to collect English idioms from the original English novel and to compare them with their Finnish translations, which were gathered from the Finnish translation of the book. The research examined the kinds of strategies that the translator used in the translation of English idioms into Finnish. Furthermore, the study looked at cases where English non-idiomatic expressions had been translated into Finnish idioms. These cases are presented below.

2.3.1 Idioms with the same image

Mustonen (2010:18) argues that “although it can be assumed that English and Finnish idioms are different in terms of their character and imagery, the data in this study indicate that there are a few corresponding idioms in Finnish that are very similar to the English ones”. In other words, Finnish idioms often use the same kind of figurative ideas to express the same meaning. Baker (1992) claims that “the translator may translate using an idiom that is very similar in its form and meaning to the source language idiom. An idiom that is similar in its form and meaning to the source language idiom must convey roughly the same meaning and have equivalent lexical items”. A number of English idioms are translated with a precisely or partly similar Finnish idioms. This is surprising because idioms are usually language-specific expressions, which more often than not cannot be understood in another language. Table 2.3 below illustrates similar idioms in both English and Finnish (Mustonen, 2010).

Table 2.3: *Similar idioms in both English and Finnish*

English	Finnish
He'll be eating out of your hand	<i>hän syö kädestäsi</i>
We were heading here towards treacherous waters	<i>lähestyimme vaarallisia vesiä</i>
Suddenly all ears	<i>äkkiä pelkkänä korvana</i>
The salt of the earth	<i>maan suola</i>
Rub salt in my wounds	<i>hieroa suolaa haavoihini</i>
Cleared the air	<i>puhdisti ilmaa</i>
Lays his cards on the table	<i>lyö kortit pöytään</i>
At all costs	<i>hinnalla millä hyvänsä</i>

Adopted from Mustonen (2010)

“The idioms in the table above are well-established and widely used in both languages. Expressions such as ‘eat out of someone's hand’, ‘the salt of the earth’, ‘rub salt in one's wounds’ and ‘clear the air’ have virtually word-for-word equivalents in Finnish” (Mustonen, 2010). In the theoretical considerations of the study, Nida and Taber (1969) cited in Mustonen (2010) state that “idioms usually suffer a great deal of semantic adjustments in translation, since it is highly unlikely that the same type of peculiar expression will have the same meaning in another language”. However, in the case of

English and Finnish, the various idioms do actually have the same kind of idiom with the same meaning.

2.3.2 Idioms with partly the same image

“English language idioms can also be translated into Finnish language idioms which contain partly the same image or idea as the original English idiom” (Mustonen, 2010:68). This can be stated as follows:

The idioms ... make use of extremely similar images to express the same idea, although they are not exactly literal equivalents of each other. The similarity between the English and the Finnish idioms in these examples is, however, rather striking. Each of the English idioms ... has been translated with a Finnish idiom which contains at least one same element as the English one. These idioms may not mean the same literally, but are very close to doing so in any case (Mustonen, 2010:68).

Examples of idioms with partly the same image are presented in table 2.4 below:

Table 2.4: *Idioms with partly the same image*

English	Finnish
On the warpath	<i>Sotajalalla</i>
Was out of her league	<i>paini väärässä sarjassa</i>
On the brink of taking wing	<i>oli saamassa ilmaa siipien alle</i>
Keep my head	<i>pitää pääni kylmänä</i>
She was bad medicine	<i>hän oli vaarallista lääkettä</i>

Mustonen, (2010) analysed the table stating that “some English language idioms remain as idioms in Finnish when they are extended or modified slightly”. “For instance, the English idiom ‘take wing’ becomes an idiom in Finnish when it is extended to ‘get air under its wings’, *saada ilmaa siipien alle*. Similarly, the English idioms ‘keep one’s head’ and ‘out of one’s league’, have similar, slightly longer corresponding idioms in Finnish: *pitää päänsä kylmänä* (keep one’s head cold) and *painia väärässä sarjassa* (‘wrestle in the wrong league’), respectively”. All these examples share one element which is used figuratively (‘wing’ - ‘siivet’, ‘head’ - ‘pää’ and ‘league’ - ‘sarja’) (Mustonen, 2010).

“Some English idioms are almost the same in Finnish when one element in them is replaced by a different element. For instance, the English idiom *on the warpath* has a corresponding Finnish idiom *sotajalalla*, in which ‘path’ is replaced by *jalalla* (on warfoot).

Similarly, the English idiom *bad medicine* can be translated with an equivalent Finnish idiom by changing the adjective in front: '*bad*' *medicine* becomes 'dangerous' *medicine* in Finnish, *vaarallista lääkettä*". It is further stated that "despite having different second elements, all these examples share one figurative element which is exactly the same in both languages: 'war' (*sota*) and 'medicine' (*lääke*). The English idiom *rake someone over the coals* ('to give someone a hard time') has a very similar Finnish idiom *grillata jotakuta* ('grill someone'). The verbs in these idioms are different, but they both refer to the same action ('barbecuing' or 'grilling')" (Mustonen, 2010).

2.3.3 Idioms with different images

"There are a number of idioms which are vastly different in English and Finnish languages. In other words, these English language idioms have been translated with a Finnish language idiom which contains a completely different figurative image than the original idiom" (Mustonen, 2010:68). Despite having entirely different literal meanings, these expressions have the same figurative meaning. Table 2.5 below presents examples (Mustonen, 2010:68).

Table 2.5: *Idioms with different images*

Lying on my feet	<i>kirkkain silmin valehtelemisessä</i>
Piece of cake	<i>helppo nakki</i>
I got his drift	<i>ymmärsin yskän</i>
Three sheets to the wind	<i>hyvässä laitamyötäisessä</i>
The last straw	<i>viimeinen pisara</i>
This is a hell of a note	<i>nyt on piru merrassa</i>
He's got a stick up his butt	<i>näyttää vähän seipään nielleeltä</i>

Adopted from Mustonen (2010).

Mustonen, (2010:68) alludes that "the English idioms above have Finnish equivalents that use entirely different kinds of images to express the same meaning". For instance, "lie on one's feet ('obnoxious lying') has a completely different equivalent in Finnish: *valehdella kirkkain silmin*, that is, 'lie with bright eyes'. *Piece of cake* has the equivalent Finnish idiom *helppo nakki* ('easy sausage') and *have a stick up one's butt* has a corresponding Finnish idiom *näyttää seipään nielleeltä* (whose literal meaning is 'look like s/he's swallowed a pole')". However, "when someone is drunk out of their mind, the English expression *be three sheets to the wind* translates into Finnish as *olla hyvässä laitamyötäisessä* (whose extremely clumsy English translation would be something like 'be in good broad reach')".

Nevertheless, “despite using different images, it must be noted that there are some minor similarities between the examples above. For instance, the idioms *in debt to the eyebrows* (*korvia myöten veloissa*, that is, 'in debt to the ears') and *lie on one's feet* (*valehdella kirkkain silmin*, 'lie with bright eyes') make figurative use of body parts”. Furthermore, “one can spot the figurative use of food in both *piece of cake* and its translation *helppo nakki* ('easy sausage'), as well as similar imagery, 'stick' and 'pole' in the idioms *stick up his butt* and *näyttää seipään nielleeltä*. English and Finnish idioms can therefore use totally different imagery to express the same meaning, but even these idioms sometimes make use of images from the same subject area (food, body parts and so on)” (Mustonen, 2010:68).

In the same vein, Strakšien's (2009) study on idioms pays attention to a linguistic investigation of equivalence above word level. The study deals with the difficulties of non-equivalence posed in translating English idioms into Arabic and vice versa. One of the difficulties is that there may be lack of equivalence in the target language. For instance, 'I kept late hours' (*valvon myöhään*) and footing his bills (*maksoi hänen laskunsa*) have no equivalent in Arabic. As Baker (1992:68) writes, “different languages express meanings using different linguistic means such as fixed expressions, idioms, words, and so on and it is very hard to find an equivalent of the same meaning and form in the target language”. Baker (1992:68) continues stating that “this is the main aspect that causes problems is culture specific idioms or expressions. They are not necessarily untranslatable, however, they may refer to some specific item or event common to that particular culture, and therefore it is hard to translate such an idiom”.

Strakšien (2009) further states that another difficulty that Baker (1992) points out is the use of the idiom similar in its form and meaning in different context in the target language. A lot of idioms are used in the literary texts in both English and Lithuanian languages. For instance, “‘the salt of the earth’ is (*maan suola*), ‘rub salt in my wounds’ (*hieroa suolaa haavoihini*) and ‘cleared the air’ (*puhdisti ilmaa*) in Lithuanian”. Expressions such as ‘the salt of the earth’, ‘rub salt in one's wounds’ and clear the air’ have virtually word-for-word equivalents in Finnish. They mostly appear in dialogues, belong to the informal register and can be used both in their literal and idiomatic sense. Baker (1992:44) writes that “idioms may be used in both literal and idiomatic sense at the same time. In this case, if the target-language idiom does not correspond to the source language idiom in its form and meaning, then it is hard to make a play of words

and transfer the meaning". For example, "he had sufficient influence to be able to poke his nose into the private affairs of others where less aristocratic noses might have been speedily bloodied". In this example, Baker introduces the idiom 'to poke your nose' which is used in both literal and idiomatic sense. To translate such an idiom, the translator must find an equivalent in the target language.

Strakšien's (2009) study also looks at the methods used by Master's first level students (M1) to find suitable equivalents in the target language. The aim of the study was to examine the type of difficulties M1 students faced while translating idioms. Most types of translation difficulties are mainly grammatical and lexical problems. The difficulty includes lack of equivalents. According to Catford (1974:17), "source and target language words do not usually have precisely the same meaning in the linguistic sense, but that does not mean that they could not nevertheless function well enough in the same situation". Thus, Catford (ibid.) argues that "the translation is equivalent with the source text when they are interchangeable in a given situation". "Lack of equivalents occurs when an idiom in the SL does not have an idiom that means the same in the TL. The way a particular language chooses to express or not to express various meanings cannot be predicted and only occasionally does it match with the way another language expresses the same meaning". One language may express a given meaning by means of a single word, another may express it by means of transparently fixed expression and yet, a third may express it by means of an idiom. It is, therefore, unrealistic to expect to find an equivalent idiom in the target language (Chinwuba, 2015).

Furthermore, the findings from Strakšien's (2009) study show that the context of use helps a lot of English students to guess the appropriate meaning of idioms. For instance, the use of an idiomatic expression '*to press buttons*' may mean 1) to do something that makes one happy or 2) to do something that makes one angry. If the context of discussion is about happiness, the translator may easily guess the meaning of the expression used. The analytical part of Strakšien's study is based on Christie's novels *Appointment with Death* (2001) and *Death on the Nile* (1977) and their translations made by Kirvaityt from English into Lithuanian. Analysis is made of each book separately. The study further shows that there is a lack of equivalent idioms between English and Lithuanian. For instance:

(19)

“English: ‘You came up here after Mortimer died, expecting to step into his shoes’... (Christie, 2001:86).

“*Po Mortimerio mirties tu buvai atvykęs čia, nes tik-jaisi užimti jo vietą...* (Kristi, 1999:200) Strakšien’s (2009).

Strakšien’s (2009) further alludes that “the English idiom ‘to step into his shoes’ is translated more neutrally into Lithuanian language by a group of words which are not an idiom *tik-jaisi užimti jo vietą*”. In addition, “the most prevailing translation strategy turned out to be paraphrasing, including both stylistic and explanatory paraphrasing. There are examples of idioms with the same meaning and form such as ‘on the warpath’ (*sotajalalla*) ‘was out of her league’ (*paini väärässä sarjassa*) and ‘on the brink of taking wing’ (*oli saamassa ilmaa siipien alle*)” (Strakšien, 2009).

Amir’s (2012) study, which is motivated by Baker’s (1992) classification of difficulties, focuses on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions in terms of strategies and difficulties. The research investigates existing obstacles in the process of translating inter-lingual idiomatic pairs. This includes the ability to recognise and interpret an idiom correctly; and the difficulties involved in rendering the various aspects of meaning that an idiom or a fixed expression conveys into the target language. The study suggests weighty theoretical strategies to overcome such difficulties. Furthermore, the study analyses classifications of difficulties and strategies in the process of translating idioms and practically applies the strategies largely for some English idioms, equivalents of Turkish (Azeri) and Persian pairs. The classification is as follows:

An idiom or fixed expression may have no equivalent in the target language. This occurs when an idiom used in the SL language does not have an equivalent in the TT. The root to this challenge is the fact that languages are not the same. The way in which meaning is conveyed varies from one language to another. Idioms and fixed expressions may be culture specific. However, such idioms and fixed expressions are not untranslatable. It is generally not the specific items in the expression that make it difficult to translate, but rather the meaning that has to be conveyed and the references to culture specific contexts.

An idiom or fixed expression may have a similar counterpart in the target language, but its context of use may be different. Baker (1992) puts “the English idiom ‘to sing a different tune’ that means ‘to say or do something that signals a change in opinion because it contradicts what one has said or done before’ and compares it with the Chinese equivalent *changdui-tai-xi* (to sing different tunes/to sing a duet) mentioning that the Chinese one has strong political connotations as well as expressing complementary rather than contradictory points of view which results in a quite different usage.” “This is correct in the case of Turkish *günda bir tar calmax* (to sing a different tune everyday) and Persian روسی ساسی سدی زُ (to sing a different tune everyday) equivalents as well” (Amir, 2012).

An idiom may be used in the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time. The target language must correspond to the source language both in form and in meaning or the translation will not be successful. To illustrate this point, Bujic (2014: 13) hypothesises that “this is the case which is the most difficult to translate unless the target-language idiom corresponds both in form and meaning to the source text idiom”. Take for instance, the situation from the 2007 feature film *Garfield Gets Real* in which a character says: ‘I was run over by a milk truck’. That was the first time ever the drinks were on me.’ Since there is no idiom in Croatian which could convey both the humorous effect and meaning of ‘paying for the drinks’, the translator opted for retaining the element of drink and translated the expression as *Prvi put da sam imao gomilu cuge* (‘First time that I had loads of booze.’).

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. The meaning and the intention of such idioms can only be conveyed if the target language has the same idiom (Baker, 1992). For example, there is no English idiom that can replace the Arabic idiom ‘I’ll cut off my right arm’ because the literal meaning of the Arabic expression is as important as its idiomatic meaning in the context.

The findings show that there are a number of factors which should be considered in order to translate idiomatic expressions correctly. The factors include context, the function of the translated document, culture and religion. Amir’s study realised that there is no clear-cut and predefined way to cope with idiomatic expressions, but it is the situation which decides which strategy should be taken. Amir’s study concludes the fact

that the more two cultures and languages are identical to each other, the more easily the process of translating idiomatic expressions becomes. It is also noted that it is important for the translator to have a deep knowledge of both SL and TL so as to understand the connotative meanings of idioms and fixed expressions of the SL and then to recreate their exact counterparts in the TL.

Balfaqeeh (2009) conducted a study based on the strategies for translating idioms and culturally-bound expressions within the human development genre. The study pays attention to the idioms and culturally-bound expressions that need to be carefully translated into Arabic. The results of the study show that domesticated translation strategies (that are Arabic equivalent and paraphrasing meaning) are more acceptable to Arab readers. Moreover, the data indicate that Arab readers care more about the core message and appreciate translated idioms and cultural expressions using Arabic equivalents, though literal translation and deletion gained minor preferences.

“Idioms and fixed expressions are two different categories under the multi-word units. Idioms are seen as frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form, and often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components” (Baker, 1992:63).

Some constraints on the idiom usage of idioms include the inability to change word order or structure and the inability to delete, substitute or add words. In terms of this view, idioms and fixed expressions which contain culture-specific items should not be added, deleted or substitute anything. The translation process should take place taking into account that the main aim is to translate the meaning rather than the counter parts of an idiom (Baker, 1992:63).

The translation of an idiom also depends on the context in which it is used. There may be equivalence for the idiom in the TL, but the situation in which it has been used differs from the SL to the TL. In other words, an idiom may have the same sense in the TL but a different connotation. For example, “‘to sing a different tune’ in English means to say or do something that contradicts what has been said or done before. The Arabic equivalence for this idiom is *yuGanni 'la Laylah* (literal: sing to his own Layla) and is used to refer to situations in which a person only cares about his/her own benefit” (Balfaqeeh, 2009:6). Both idioms share the surface meaning but are used differently. Furthermore, the frequency and the formality of idioms differ from one language to

another. Baker (1992) demonstrates this point by giving Arabic and Chinese as examples of languages that allow limited use of idioms in formal written texts.

“It cannot be argued that idioms usually denote phrases or strings of words that are idiosyncratic (idiomatic) in that they are language-specific, not easily translated into another language in that their meaning is not easily determined from the meanings of their constitutive parts” (Wales, 2001:198). This idea supports Palmer’s (1976) contention that “the meanings of idioms cannot be found in individual words”. According to Simpson (2004:93), “idioms have their origin in metaphors which have become fixed phrases in language. They are frequently referred to as clusters of words whose meaning can hardly be deduced from their constituent parts. Simpson’s view of idioms is similar to the one by Baker, suggesting that the meaning of an idiom cannot be deduced from individual words”. Accordingly, Carter (1987) claims that “meanings of idioms, as special combinations with restricted forms, cannot be deduced from the literal meanings of the words which make them up”. Consequently, an idiom is learned and used as a single unit rather than individual words. It should not be analysed into its constituents; it is unchangeable and always carries a figurative meaning.

“Idioms are treated as figures of speech such as similes in which words do not have their literal meaning, but are categorised as multi-word expressions that act in the text as units” (Collins, 2006:32). This definition claims that idioms do not have meanings on a literal level. It further claims that idioms are based on multi-words and not on multiple meanings. This argument will be useful in this study to explore different ways in which idioms are treated. To further elaborate on this, the Student’s Dictionary (1985:265) treats idioms as “a group of words which have different meanings when used together from one they would have the meanings of when treated individually”. The meaning cannot be understood from the ordinary meaning of the words comprising the phrase. The meaning of the idiom becomes clear if it is studied as a whole unit. On the same note, Palmer (1976:36) states, “... semantically, idioms are single units”.

When the translator recognises and interprets an idiom, he/she has to make a decision about how he/she intends to translate the item into the target language. There are common problems encountered in the translation of this linguistic phenomenon (Baker, 1992). In the first place, an idiom or fixed expression does not have an equivalent in a target language. Baker (1992) avers that the way in which meaning is conveyed varies

from one language to the next. Idioms and fixed expressions may be culture specific. For instance, the phrase 'Merry Christmas' is an expression that might have equivalent in Tshivenda. However, such idioms and fixed expressions are not untranslatable. It is generally not the specific items in the expression that make it difficult to translate, but rather the meaning that has to be conveyed and the references to culture specific context. Secondly, an idiom or fixed expression may have an equivalent in the target language but the context of use differs. For instance, the English idiom 'to go to the dogs' has an equivalent in German which is *auf den Hund gehen*. The English idiom can be used in relation to a person or place, while the German equivalent can only be used in relation to a person.

Thirdly, the literal and idiomatic meanings of an idiom can be used in the target language. The meaning and the intention of such an idiom can only be conveyed if the target language has the same idiom (Baker, 1992). For example, there is no English idiom that can replace the Arabic idiom "I'll cut off my right arm" because the literal meaning of the Arabic expression is as important as its idiomatic meaning in the context. Lastly, the use of idioms in discourse as well as the context and frequency of use may vary from the source and the target language. In English, the use of idioms forms part of a certain style and register. Languages such as Arabic and Chinese make a distinction between spoken and written discourse. The written form is more formal and avoids the use of idioms (Baker, 1992).

Glucksberg (2001) notes that "the non-logical nature of idioms is what sets them apart from single words because of the absence of the relations between their literal meanings and their idiomatic meanings". Most idiomatic meanings have no relationship with literal meanings of the idiom at the literal level. A fine example is 'to kick the bucket', in which he stresses that syntactic and semantic analysis of this item would never produce the meaning of 'to die'. The figurative meaning of 'to kick the bucket' is what makes it unique, because when the meaning of individual words of the idiom are taken separately, one ends up with a strange meaning and lose the idiomatic and intended meaning of the combination of words that create the idiom.

"Idioms have concatenation of more than one lexeme whose meaning is not derived from the meanings of its constituents and which does not consist of a verb plus adverbial particle or preposition" (Langacher, 1968; Strässler, 1982). They further base their

decision not to include phrasal verbs as idioms on the fact that the second parts of these phrases are semantically empty. Idioms are a kind of complex lexical items. They are phrases whose meaning cannot be predicted from the meanings of the morphemes they are made of. Lyons (1987:45) states that idioms are phrasal lexemes whose distribution throughout the sentences of the language or whose meaning is unpredictable from the syntactic and semantic properties of the constituents. This shows two basic characteristics of the idiom; it is a complex lexical item, and its meaning cannot be inferred from its parts. Such characteristics exposes challenges when it comes to the translation process. Be that as it may, one must take into consideration that one of the most important aspects of language is idioms. They are frequently used in a wide variety of situations, from friendly conversations and business meetings to more formal and written contexts.

“The combination of words that have meanings different from the meanings of the individual words themselves makes idioms uneasy to translate. Idioms can have a literal meaning in one situation and a different idiomatic meaning in another situation. It is a phrase which does not always follow the normal rules of meaning and grammar” (Niergarth, 2007). Niergarth further elaborates this by providing the following example: “‘To sit on the fence’ can literally mean that one is sitting on a fence ‘I sat on the fence and watched the game’. However, the idiomatic meaning of the idiom to ‘sit on the fence’ means to be indecisive about something”. An example of this put in a sentence could be, ‘James sat on the fence about staying with timothy or Aunt Joyce? Many idioms are similar to expressions in other languages and can be easy for a learner to understand.

Balfaqeeh’s findings are that at the qualitative stage, translations using AE (Arabic equivalent) and PM (paraphrasing method) were the respondents’ favourite strategies for most idioms. Also one-third of the female interviewees chose LT (literal translation), but men never liked LT. At the quantitative stage, and across all idiom questions on the questionnaire, AE was most frequently chosen by female respondents. PM was their second favourite strategy, and they chose LT on the questions where the LT of the idiom resembled the AE. By contrast, PM was chosen most by male respondents, with AE as the second most popular. This result appears to indicate that women are more interested in the beauty of language than men are.

2.4 FEATURES OF IDIOMS

Idioms have special features that distinguish them from other forms of language. Glucksberg (2001) notes that idioms are not just long words, but rather ready-made words that behave like phrases. Unsurprisingly, Newmeyer (1974:327) says that “there is far more regularity to the behaviour of idioms than is generally believed”. This means that the behaviour of idioms is not chaotic but normal and natural.

Baker (1992), who claims that “idioms are frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form, identifies five conditions for idioms”. Firstly, the order of the words in an idiom cannot be changed. The way the words are put together is fixed and they cannot change their place. For example: “*go to rack and ruin*” cannot change into “*go to ruin and rack*”. Once the word order of an idiom is changed, the meaning will be lost. This is a unique feature of idioms. Secondly, the words in an idiom cannot be omitted. Language users are not permitted to delete some of the words of a particular idiom. For example, to “*shed crocodile tears*” not “*shed tears*”. Once a word is deleted from an idiom, the expression is no longer that of an idiom. To “shed tears” does not have the same meaning as to “shed crocodile tears”. To shed crocodile tears means to pretend that one is mourning; it shows one’s act of deceiving others whereas to shed tears means to cry.

Thirdly, “there are no extra words that might be added to an idiom. Adding any word to an idiomatic expression would alter its meaning, or remove its idiomatic sense. Consequently, the meaning of the idiom to ‘have a narrow escape’ is totally different from to ‘have a narrow quick escape’” (Mezmaz, 2010:17). An idiom remains as it is, no words should be added to smoothen or modify it. Noteworthy, addition of a word to an idiom results in the loss of its meaning. Once a speaker says ‘I had a narrow quick escape’, the expression is no longer idiomatic but something else.

Fourthly, no words in an idiom can be replaced by another word even if those words are synonyms. For instance, ‘the long and short of it’ means the basic facts of a situation (Baker, 1992). The adjective ‘long’ cannot be substituted by another adjective like tall, despite having nearly the same meaning. Furthermore, an idiomatic expression such as ‘out of sight, out of mind’ cannot be the same as ‘out of sight, out of heart’. A replacement of a word in an idiom is a replacement in a meaning as well. There are instances where one will find that the object used in an idiom is no longer applicable in a particular time.

One might be tempted to use something that is more recent and up to date. As a result, it brings about a change in the idiom. This means that the meaning of an idiom will completely change from its original meaning. Thus, the words in an idiom cannot be replaced by other words. If 'mind' is used as part of an idiom, it should remain 'mind' and not 'heart'.

Lastly, "the grammatical structures of an idiom cannot be changed. Any change in the grammatical structure of an idiom leads to the destruction of the idiom's meaning" (Baker, 1992). For instance, the expression 'stock and barrel lock' is no more idiomatic because of the altered order of the items in the expression 'lock, stock and barrel'. In the same vein, Mezmaz (2010:17) comments that the idiom 'ring the bell' and 'the bell was rung' have two different meanings. Once the grammatical structure changes to 'the bell was rung, the meaning varies from the original meaning. The intended receptor may not receive the same expression, feelings and emotions as it is in the source or original idiom. This goes as far as changing the form of an idiom, such as the passive form on 'some beans were spilled' which has a different meaning from its active form 'they spilled the beans' meaning 'they revealed a secret. De Caro (2009:7) claims that "idioms are unique and fixed in their grammatical structure. The expression 'to sit on the fence' cannot become 'to sit on a fence' or 'to sit on the fences'. However, there are many changes that can be made to an idiom". De Caro (2009) further argues that "some of these changes result in a change in the grammatical structure that would generally be considered to be wrong".

"All these features should be taken into consideration since they affect the degree of idiomacity of idioms and they may remove their main feature of figurativeness" (Mezmaz, 2010). Therefore, idioms must be treated as a single entity whose words order cannot be changed, whose words cannot be omitted, which need no addition of extra words, whose words cannot be replaced by other words, and whose grammatical structures cannot be changed. Nonetheless, whether or not this is the case in Tshivenda is still yet to be discussed in the successive sections of this study.

2.5 CLASSIFICATION OF IDIOMS

With respect to the classification of idioms, Gates (1972) notes that there are different types of idioms. These idioms are classified according to their unique features based on their grammatical form and constituent words or speech sounds. The first type is the semantic idiom which is described by Gates as “a fixed expression with peculiarity of meaning” (Gates, 1972:72). The meaning of this type of idiom cannot be understood by just knowing the meaning of its individual parts or the function of its grammatical construction. Phillip (2007) argues that despite the appearance to the contrary, each word in this kind of an idiom does not contribute to the overall meaning of the phrase. There is a word in the idiom that operates as a lexical item in its own right and expresses a semantically complete idea, which might be quite independent of the meaning of its components. The reason for this semantic anomaly derives mainly from the fact that an idiom is not built up word by word, according to the grammar of a language, but is a non-compositional phrase which is learned, stored and recycled as a single chunk.

Furthermore, what is strange about the semantic idiom is that in order to understand its meaning, one has to understand either the extended meaning of the idiom as a whole or the unique meaning of one of the words in it. This kind of idioms often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components (Carter, 1998). For instance, the meaning of the idiom ‘in the doghouse’ has neither relation to dogs nor their houses; instead, it means that someone is in trouble with someone else. In another example, the idiom ‘get off on the wrong foot’ does not relate to feet but rather means ‘to make a bad start’. A case can be made that these idioms are very figurative and unique to their whole meaning, and one cannot understand them simply by understanding their individual parts.

The second type of idioms in Gates’s classification is grammatical idioms. In elaboration, it is stated that some of these idioms are signified by an odd inflectional form where there is a subject and a verb or a head and modifier which do not agree in number as in the idioms. Examples are: “Traffic light, take care of, by the way, and it's raining cats and dogs”.

The third type of idioms in Gates’ classification is lexical idioms. These are referred to as lexical idioms because they are generally understood to convey a single meaning, much as lexeme, but are not limited to single words. Gates views a lexical idiom as “a

fixed expression containing one or more words found only in the expression or in a small set of related expressions” (Gates, 1972:74). Examples of this kind of idiom are ‘to and fro’, ‘spick and span’, ‘by and by’ and ‘cut to the quick’. The study further argues that other idioms of this same type may be the product of word play. For example, *helter skelter* and *hocus pocus*, or phrases borrowed from other languages such as *ad libitum* from Latin or *faux pas* from French.

Finally, the fourth type of idioms in Gates's classification of idioms is the phonological idioms. This idiom is defined as “a fixed expression which has an oddity of pronunciation”. Gates further argues that these contain a speech sound or a combination of sounds not ordinarily used in English. For instance, the word *tsetse* in *tsetse* fly is borrowed from an African language. This sequence does not occur at the beginning of native English words (Gates 1972:75). Hoff (2009) holds that phonological idioms are words which are pronounced in an adult-like manner, but which contain phonemes that the child is unable to produce in other words. Researchers have been unable to establish the reasons for such phenomena, but the forms suggest that early word representations are of the whole word, rather than as separate phonemic segments.

Glucksberg (2001:71) classifies idioms on the basis of compositionality and transparency. “Idioms can be classified on the dimension of compositionality. They can be non-compositional, partially compositional or fully compositional – explaining the relationship between the idiom’s constituents and the idiom’s meanings”. The expectation is that “in non-compositional idioms, no relations between the idiom’s constituents and the idiom’s meaning can be discerned, as in the idiom *cheesecake* to refer to pinup art”. Pinup photos are often called *cheesecake* photos.

The idiomatic meaning of partially compositional idioms can, to some degree, be discerned from its constituents. Glucksberg (2001:69) gives the expression “to ‘kick the bucket’ as an example where “one could not infer the meaning ‘to die’ from the literal meaning but the idiom’s literal meaning can constrain its use and comprehension”. A fully compositional idiom maps directly onto the idiomatic referents, “as in the idiom ‘pop the questions’. In this idiom, the verb ‘pop’ and the noun phrase ‘the question’ refers to the idiomatic meanings of ‘suddenly utter’ and ‘marriage proposal’” (Ibid. :73). “Idioms vary as to their semantic transparency, namely in the ease with which the motivation for

their structure can be recovered. Idioms can involve figuration and can be originally metaphorical (For example, 'take the bull by the horns'), even if speakers may not always perceive the precise motive for the figure involved" (Nunberg et al., 1994).

Cowie, Mackin and McGraig (1983) view pure idioms as "fixed word combinations that have been established through continual use over time. They are non-compositional in meaning, and do not permit substitution of words by similar words". According to Fernando (1996:35), "pure idioms are type of conventionalised, non-literal multiword expression whose meaning cannot be understood by adding up the meanings of the words that make up the phrase". For example, the expression 'spill the beans' is a pure idiom, because its real meaning has nothing to do with beans. Mitchell (1975:143) defines collocation as "an association of roots or potential lexical meanings rather than actual words". He writes:

a linguistic item or class of items is meaningful not because of inherit properties of its own but because of the contrastive or differential relationships it develops with other items or classes. Meaning is much less in the name than in the network of relevant differential relationships (1975:143).

However, Mitchell also stressed the 'on-going' nature of collocations, the fact that they can cut across sentence boundaries, underlining the persistently syntagmatic nature of Firthan or "lexical" approach to linguistic analysis.

"Figurative idioms are those phrases that have both a literal and non-compositional (figurative) meaning" (Cowie et al., 1983). The figurative interpretation is the more common, and the literal one is seldom, if ever, applicable. For example, when one says that someone 'kicked the bucket', one usually means that the person died. However, in different contexts, one could intend this to mean that someone literally kicked some bucket. Cowie et al. (1983), McKeown and Radev (2000) and Nunberg et al. (1994:7) believe that "the words in idioms can be present in more than one form albeit not in every form. They acknowledge that some idioms are inflexibly rigid, but claim that these comprise the smaller portion of all idioms". "Since parts of many idioms are modifiable using adjectives and relative clauses, these parts must have a well-understood meaning". Thus, they are at least partly semantically compositional. Table 2.6 below shows some examples of partly compositional idioms cited by Nunberg et al (1994). In these examples, it is claimed that some of the words must be semantically recognisable in

order to be modified. This contrasts with the broadly accepted concept of non-compositionality.

Table 2.6: *Examples of partly compositional idioms from Nunberg et al. (1994)*

Idiom	Modified idiom
Leave no stone unturned	Leave no legal stone unturned
Pulling strings	Pat got the job by pulling strings that weren't available to anyone else.
Touch a nerve	Touch a couple of nerves

If an idiom is modifiable, then the modified word or words must be semantically understood. Smith and Zygoris-Coe (2009:1) hold the view that idioms can be transparent and opaque in nature. Glucksberg (2001:74) holds the view that transparency refers to “the extent to which an idiom’s meaning can be inferred from the meaning of its constituents”. Transparent idioms are those idioms that can be more easily derived. “In this category, idiomatic expressions have a very close meaning to that of the literal one. Hence, transparent idioms are usually not difficult to understand and to translate, because their meanings can be easily inferred from the meanings of their constituents” (Fernando, 1996). For example, to ‘fight a losing battle’, ‘stand firm’, ‘back and forth’, ‘lend me a hand’ and to ‘hit the nail on the head’. The idiom to ‘fight a losing battle’ is used in a situation wherein one is trying hard to do something when there is no chance that one will win. This idiom is usually used in one of the continuous tenses, such as ‘I was fighting a losing battle’ or ‘is fighting a losing battle’ or ‘has been fighting a losing battle’. The meaning of the idiom can easily be understood. Unlike idiomatic expressions, the meaning of transparent idioms can easily be associated with their components.

“A compositional idiom can be either opaque or transparent and the meaning of individual words can constrain both interpretation and use” (Hamblin & Gibbs, 1999). “In compositional-opaque idioms, the relations between an idiom’s constituents and its meaning may be opaque, but the meanings of individual words can nevertheless

constrain both interpretation and use” (Glucksberg 2001:74). The semantics of the verb *to kick* can constrain interpretation. Kicking is a discrete act, and so one could not say ‘he kicked the bucket all week’, even though one could say ‘he lay dying all week” (Ibid.74). An idiom that is both compositional and transparent includes constituents that have one-to-one semantic relations to its idiomatic meaning. For example, in the idiom ‘*break the ice*’, “the word *break* corresponds to the idiomatic sense of abruptly changing an uncomfortable social situation, whereas the word *ice* corresponds to the idiomatic sense of social or interpersonal tension” (Ibid.75).

Idiomatic expressions pose a particular challenge for theories of language comprehension as they seem to ignore the rules of compositional language. Rather than being defined compositionally by the sum of the literal meanings of their parts, idioms are not constrained by this definition of meaning. Relatively, idioms often mean something other than what one would expect based on the literal components. One can ask if the meanings of idioms are not defined by the meaning of the parts, is literal meaning still active in comprehension. And when does figurative meaning become active? (Beck & Weber, n.d).

According to Kharma (1997:41) in Mezmaz (2010:19), “opaque idioms are viewed as the most difficult type of idioms because the meaning of the idiom is never that of the sum of the literal meanings of its parts. In other words, it would be impossible to infer the actual meaning of the idiom from the meanings of its components. This is mainly because of the presence of items having cultural references”. Examples such as ‘to burn one’s boat’ (to make retreat impossible), ‘to kick the bucket’ (die) and ‘to spill the beans’ (reveal a secret) Mezmaz (2010:19). These culture specific items have a great influence on the comprehensibility of idiomatic expressions. In this instance, the meaning of an idiom should be gathered from the whole phrase and not individual words.

2.6 THE PROCESSING OF IDIOMS

Ortony, Schallert, Reynolds and Antos (1978) investigated the processing of idioms in a study based on the interpreting of metaphors and idioms. They argue that their non-literality is not always the factor that makes it difficult to interpret them. The authors maintain that familiar idioms are processed as quickly as and sometimes faster than their literal interpretations when idioms are given contextual support. However, when

there is minimal contextual support, then the understanding of an idiom takes longer than its literal interpretation. Thus, the authors point out that relatedness to context and not non-literality is what determines the difficulty of idiom processing. Likewise, the familiarity of idioms leads them to being interpreted idiomatically before interpreting their meaning literally. The authors also state that the meaning of an idiom is stored in a similar manner to that of the meaning of a single lexical item; therefore, it takes less time to process when provided with context.

Swinney and Cutler (1979) share the view offered by Ortony et al. (1978) regarding idiom storage in a similar way as a single lexical item by stating that the lexical representation model implies that idiomatic expressions are stored and retrieved from the lexicon similar to the way long words are stored. Swinney and Cutler's (1979) idiom processing model is known as the Lexical Representation Hypothesis (LRH), which suggests that the understanding of an idiom's figurative and literal meaning occurs simultaneously. They argue that the figurative meaning of an idiom is stored in a discrete lexical entry. Swinney and Cutler (*ibid*) point out that the figurative meaning of an idiom is retrieved following the recognition of the first part of the idiom. The significance of idiomatic expressions is the lack of logic and the lack of relation between the literal and the idiomatic meaning. Bobrow and Bell (1973) propose a model of idiom processing which they call Idiom List Hypothesis (ILH). According to this model, idioms are stored and accessed from a list where an attempt is made to process the literal meaning of an idiom before processing its idiomatic one.

2.7 THE AMBIGUITY OF IDIOMS

“Ambiguity is the presence of two or more possible meanings in a single passage in a word, phrase, or statement which contains more than one meaning” (Norquist, 2015:3). Idiomatic expressions appear to differ with respect to compositionality, in other words, the degree to which the literal meanings of their constituent words contribute to their overall figurative meaning (Tabossi, Arduino, & Fanari, 2011; Gibbs et al., 1989). Ambiguous words or statements lead to vagueness and confusion, and shape the basis for instances of unintentional humour. For instance, it is ambiguous to say “I rode a black horse in red pajamas,” because it may lead one to think the horse was wearing red

pajamas. The sentence becomes clear when it is restructured “wearing red pajamas, I rode a black horse (Gibbs et al., 1989).

In terms of the ambiguity of the idioms, Jackson (2007) points out that a speaker who encounters the idiom ‘beat a dead horse’ may at first understand its literal meaning which is the beating of the carcass, which can happen in some literal cases. The figurative meaning of the clause is wasting time discussing a matter that has already been closed. Ambiguity is the state of something being unclear, confusing or not certain, especially because it can be understood in more than one way (Collins, 2003:51). The element of ambiguity manifests when such an idiom is used in situations such as: ‘the kids were beating a dead horse’. It is expected for kids to literally beat a dead horse. The idiom can be used to refer to two issues, first issue being that the kids are discussing a matter that has been closed and the second issue being that they are literally beating a dead horse. In this instance, ambiguity is noticeable.

Some authors have found that figurative interpretation of an idiom is available early in comprehension (Tabossi et al., 2009; Swinney and Cutler, 1979), while others have not seen the same results (Cacciari & Tabossi, 1988; Gibbs et al., 1989). For non-native speakers, processing figurative language has been shown to pose even more challenges than native comprehension, and figurative meaning might not be available at all (Cieślicka, 2006). Be that as it may, the literal and figurative meanings of an expression create ambiguity.

Figure 2.1: Figurative interpretation of “to sit on the fence”



The above figure represents the figurative interpretation of the idiom “to sit on the fence”. The figurative meaning of the expression is that one is delaying to make a decision when

s/he has to choose between two sides or two objects. The above picture shows someone who is indecisive of which chair to sit on. For instance, 'when Jane and Tom argue, it is better to sit on the fence and not make either of them angry'.

Figure 2.2: *Literal interpretation of “to sit on the fence”*



The literal interpretation alludes to the fact that one is sitting on top of the fence. This can happen as a result of enjoying the comfort of being on the fence, perhaps influenced by enjoying the view whilst sitting on the fence. The use of this expression automatically creates ambiguity since it contains a meaningful meaning on literal interpretation. Furthermore, an idiom such as 'lady-killer' emphasises the ambiguity of idioms. In order for one to get the accurate meaning attached to it, one must have the in-depth knowledge of both literal and figurative meanings. If one calls a young man a "lady-killer", this may mean that he is probably very handsome and charming and has the ability to attract women. After he successfully entices a woman into a romantic relationship, however, he promptly abandons her and seeks another conquest. Literally, it would mean that that particular young man has a nasty habit of 'murdering ladies'.

2.8 TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

Lörscher (1991:76) holds that a "translation strategy is a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language to another". Cohen (1998:4) asserts that "the element of consciousness is what distinguishes strategies from ...processes that are not strategic." A strategy is a series of competencies, a set of steps or processes that favour the

acquisition, storage, and/or utilisation of information, and that strategies are “heuristic and flexible in nature, and their adoption implies a decision influenced by amendments in the translator's objectives” (Jaaskelainen, 1999:71). “Translation strategies involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it” (Venuti, 1998:240). Filep (2009) believes that the translator should first know the right strategies in order to find equivalences in translating unfamiliar lexicons and expressions in multilingual settings.

There are different categories of translation strategies. The first strategy is translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and form. This strategy involves using an idiom in the target language consisting of equivalent lexical items, which conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the source-language idiom. As Kommissarov (1985) argues, “by employing this method the translator uses an idiom in the TL which has the identical figurative meaning, that is; containing the same image as in the source language idioms, and which preserves the same emotive, stylistic and national characteristics.” Example:

(20)

SL (English) – ‘the rain fell on the just and on the unjust’.

TL (French) – ‘the rain was falling on the just as well as on the unjust’.

The second strategy is translation by idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form. It is often possible to find an idiom in the target language which has a meaning similar to that of the source idiom or expression, but which consists of different lexical items. For instance, the English idiom: ‘It’s raining cats and dogs’ can be presented in Spanish as: *Está lloviendo a cántaros* (It’s raining buckets). The idioms ‘It’s raining cats and dogs’ and ‘its ‘raining buckets’ use different lexemes ‘cats and dogs’ and ‘buckets’ respectively, but have the same meaning that ‘it is raining heavily’ (Toury, 1995). This is in line with the skopos theory that pays attention in the purpose of the translation rather than being loyal to the source text. The third strategy is translation by paraphrase. Authors use different words to refer to this strategy: “metaphor into non-metaphor” (Toury, 1995), “communicative paraphrase” (Hervey & Higgins, 1992), and “reducing to metaphor to sense” (Newmark, 1988). Paraphrasing is one of the most common strategies in the translation of idioms. In the use of this kind of strategy, the translator transfers the meaning of an idiom using a single word or a group of words which roughly

"corresponds to the meaning of the idiom although is not an idiom itself (Newmark, 1988).

"Paraphrase is prompted by the lack or inappropriateness of TT equivalent idioms for stylistic reasons. This, however, negatively affects the force or 'punch' of the message intended by the ST as it transfers the sense rather than the image" (Jamal, 2000). However, the use of paraphrase as a translation strategy has the disadvantage of losing quality and stylistic flavour of the text. Newmark (1988:109) argues that the use of this strategy not only result in the reduction or loss of components of sense and the emotive or pragmatic impact of the TT. For example, *ku sindza* a Xitsonga way of flooring the floor using cow dung has no equivalent in English. The translator has to explain the meaning of a word in a target language for the target text readers to understand the meaning of the word. This strategy is supported by the functionalist theories that are purpose oriented. Functional theories are more concerned with the purpose of the translation. The translator is now regarded as an expert within his/her area of expertise, just like a doctor or a historian is in their respective fields. The idea of intentionality is part of the very definition of any action (Nord, 1997).

The fourth strategy is translation by omission. This strategy is used to completely omit the idiom from the target text where there is no close match between the items of the two languages. When the idiom is very difficult even for the translator, one tries to eliminate the whole part of an idiom (Adelnia & Dastjerdi, 2011). "Translation by omission is referred to 'metaphor to 0', as this strategy implies that sometimes an idiom may be omitted, leaving no traces in the target language" (Toury, 1995:82). According to Baker (1992), "omission is allowed first, when there is no close equivalent in the target language; secondly, when it is difficult to paraphrase; and finally, for stylistic reasons". "This strategy is not used very frequently. In fact, it is not approved by many scholars and some of them do not include it among translation strategies" (Veisbergs, 1989:23). However, in the worst case, the translator may omit an idiom if it is not possible to translate it. He/she will then use strategy by compensation, where he/she can put an idiom in another place of the clause, thus preserving its stylistic effect in the source text.

Another strategy of overcoming translation problems is translation by a superordinate (Baker, 1992). According to Baker, (1992), this strategy is used to solve the problem of non- equivalence across languages because the hierarchical structure of semantic fields

is not language specific. This strategy involves translation by a more neutral and less expressive word. For example, if there is no direct equivalent for a particular SL item in the TL, the translator may use a more formal near equivalent. For example:

(21)

ST: Shampoo your hair with wella.

TT: *Cuci rambutmu dengan wella.*

'Shampooing' can be seen as a type of washing since it is more restricted in its use. However, one can wash a lot of things but can only shampoo his/her hair. In this regard 'wash' is the superordinate.

The sixth strategy is translation by cultural substitution. This method requires the replacement of a culture-specific item or expression with a TL one that has no exact meaning, but has an impact on the target reader (Lörscher, 1991). This strategy makes the translated text more natural, more comprehensible and more familiar to the target reader. The translator's decision to use this strategy will depend on the degree to which he/she is given license by those who commission the translation. For example:

(22)

ST: Tomorrow will be Halloween party.

TT: *Besok akan diadakan pesta topeng.*

Halloween party is held every 31 October by European citizens (www.history.com). During the party, the participants wear masks and perform certain customs. In ancient times, this party was used to scare off ghosts, but today it is done just for fun. In Indonesia, a party of this nature is called *pesta topeng*. *Pesta topeng* can be used instead of Halloween when translating for Indonesians. *Pesta topeng* is the concept with which Indonesians can identify, something familiar and appealing.

Another translation strategy is the use of loan words. This technique works well when dealing with culture-specific items, modern concepts and buzz words (Jaaskelainen, 1999). "The freedom with which translators use loan words depends on the purpose and the type of text. These are used particularly in texts where the translator wishes to preserve and manifest some aspects of the original culture. This also depends on the standards of translation prevailing in a given society. Polish and English languages

seem to be much more tolerant of loan words than, for example, French or Arabic” (Baker 1992:35). For instance:

(23)

ST: Bengitupun di Bali ragam yang unik pada kain gringsing Dari desa Tenganan, adalah desain yang terlukis di langit Yang di ciptakan oleh atara Indra.

TT: This is true of Bali where the unique ornamentation of the gringsing cloths of Tenganan village are said to be designed painted in the sky, creation of Batara Indra. (Indonesia Ikats IX).

From the above example, words are loaned from the SL and used as they are in the target language retaining the meaning as it is in the SL. In this process, the translator adopts words from a source language into their native language. The loaned word remains in the SL and still be used in the TL. There is no actual transfer of words from from one language to another. The word that is loaned cannot be returned back to the source language. The words simply come to be used by a speech community that speaks a different language from the one these words originated in. This translation theory concurs with the assumptions of the skopos theory. In terms of the skopos theory, the process of translation is determined by the function of the product. In other words, the aim is to make translation to be user friendly to the target users unlike linguistic theories that strive to have a mirror image of a source language without taking in to account the differences in languages (Jawad, 2006).

2.9 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

Translation techniques can be classified as direct (or literal) or oblique, to coincide with their distinction between direct (or literal) and oblique translation. (Molina & Albir, 2002). These authors distinguish the translation method, strategies, and techniques. Newmark (1988), Venuti (2000) and Molina and Albir (2002) propose two broad categories of translation techniques, namely Direct and Oblique.

2.9.1 Direct (or literal) translation techniques

Direct or literal translation is one of the common strategies. It occurs when there is an exact structural, lexical, even morphological equivalence between two languages (Molina & Albir, 2002). It is argued that this is only possible when the two languages are very close to each other.

The first direct translation technique is borrowing, which entails taking a word or expression straight from another language into the TT (Venuti, 2000). Borrowing can be pure (without any change). For example, to use the Indonesian word *sampur* in an English text. In some instances, the borrowed word retains the spelling rules for the SL in the TL with a slight change. For instance, the term *stylus* can be translated into *stilus* in Indonesian. The only change in Indonesian is that the speech sound '[y]' is presented as '[i]' of which they mean the same in phonetics (Newmark, 1988; Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). This technique supports the linguistic theory of translation. The linguistic theory of translation focuses more on the key issues of meaning and equivalence. It views the entire purpose of translation as achieving equivalence (Karavim nd). In terms of linguistic theories, the target text is expected to match the source text as fully as possible. The source text is viewed as a yard stick of translation.

The second translation technique is calque. This technique is used when one is literally translating foreign words or phrases. For instance, the English translation of *bamboo* windmills for the Indonesian *baling-baling bambu*. The phrase Secretariat general is translated as *Sekretaris Jenderal* in Indonesia when using the calque technique (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). The third or final technique under direct translation techniques is literal translation. This technique is used to translate a word or an expression word-for-word. For example, the Indonesian expression *buah tak akan jatuh jauh dari pohonnya* is translated as 'the fruit never falls far from its tree' in English (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina and Albir, 2002). This technique is in line with the linguistic theory. The view of the linguistic theory is that the translator focuses more on the key issues of meaning and equivalence. It views the entire purpose of translation as achieving equivalence (Karavim nd). In terms of linguistic theories, the target text is expected to match the source text as fully as possible. The source text is viewed as a yard stick of translation.

2.9.2 The oblique translation technique

The oblique translation technique occurs where word-for-word translation is impossible. The first technique under the oblique translation technique is adaptation. Adaptation oblique translation occurs where a translator replaces an ST cultural element with one from the target culture. For example, to change *petak umpet* in Indonesian can be replaced by 'hide and seek' in English (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). The second technique is amplification translation. This occurs when introducing details that are not formulated in the ST: information, explicative paraphrasing. For instance, this is applicable when translating an Indonesian expression (into English) such as to add the woman's muslim wear to the noun *Jilbab* or adding *bulan puasa kaum Muslim* when translating the noun Ramadan, so that it becomes *Ramadan, bulan puasa kamu Muslim* (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). This translation technique supports the skopos theory of translation in a sense that it pays attention to the end product of the translation, the function or purpose. The aim of skopos theory is to dethrone the source text (ST). This is done by emphasising the role of the translator as a creator of the target text (TT) by giving priority to the purpose of producing TT. Nord (1991) proposes a distinction between intention and function as follows: "the sender is responsible for specifying intention and by using a text he/she tries to achieve a purpose. The receiver uses the text with a certain function, depending on his/her own expectations, needs, previous knowledge, and situational conditions".

Compensation translation technique introduces an ST element of information or stylistic effect in another place in the TT because it cannot be reflected in the same place as in the ST. For instance, the *tikar pandan* in Indonesian is translated to refer to a sleeping mat in English (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). The fourth translation technique is description. In this technique, a term or expression is replaced with a description of its form or/and function. For example, the Indonesian *sampur* is translated as *a long scarf worn by the dancer in Java*. Or the term panettone can be translated as *kue tradisional Italia yang dimakan pada saat malan tahun baru* (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002).

The fifth translation technique is discursive creation. In this technique, temporary equivalence that is totally unpredictable out of context is establishing. For instance, "the Indonesian translation of the book *Sukreni Gadis Bali* as *The Rape of Sukreni*"

(Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). Established equivalent is the sixth translation technique available for the translator. This technique involves the use of a term or expression recognised (by dictionaries or language in use) as an equivalent in the TL. As an illustration, the Indonesian expression *buah tak akan jatuh jauh dari pohonnya* is translated as *like father, like son* in English. The English word teacher is translated as *guru* in Indonesian (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002).

The seventh translation technique is generalisation. This occurs when a translator uses a more general or neutral term. For example, to translate the Indonesian *kopiah* as *cap* in English and the Indonesian words *ikan mujair* as fish in English (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). Modulation is the eighth translation technique, which changes the point of view, focus or cognitive category in relation to the ST. This technique introduces the clarification with respect to the original formulation. For example, to translate the Indonesian *di luar kemampuan manusia* to English, one should present it as 'by the will of God' (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002).

The ninth translation technique is reduction. This technique suppresses a ST information item in the TT. For illustration, *upacara pembakaran mayat di Bali* in Indonesian reduced to 'cremation' when translated into English. This technique is in opposition to amplification (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). Particularisation is one of the translation techniques. In this technique, one uses a more precise or concrete term. For example, *sawah* in Indonesian is translated as 'wet rice fields' in English. This is in opposition to generalisation (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002).

Another translation technique is called transposition. This technique changes the grammatical category. For example, *kerikil* in Indonesian is translated into English as 'pebble stones', changing the word for the phrase, instead of keeping the word and writing 'stones' (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000; Molina & Albir, 2002). Lastly, we have the variation translation technique. This is used to change linguistic or paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures) that affect aspects of linguistic variation such as changes of textual tone, style, social dialect, geographical dialect, and so on. An example of this technique would involve introducing or changing dialectal indicators for characters when translating for the theatre, changes in tone when adapting novels for children (Newmark, 1988, Venuti, 2000 and Molina and Albir, 2002).

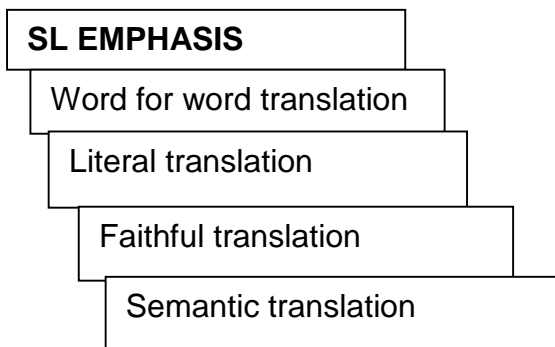
2.10 TRANSLATION METHODS

Molina & Albir, (2002) views translation method as “the way a particular translation process is carried out in terms of the translator’s objective”. In the process of translation, the translator has a choice between imitative translation and functional translation. The two main translation methods are contrary to each other. Imitative translation method emphasise the SL meanwhile the functional translation method empasise the TL. The former strives to retain as much of the purely formal aspects of the source text, and the latter aims at getting the message of the source text across (Newmark, 1988). The first point to be drawn from this is that the imitative translation method strives to reproduce the meaning in the ST as it is in the TL. This kind of method ignores the fact that languages are not equal and their structures are not the same. Lastly, it seems reasonable to claim that the functional translation method pays attention on the end product. The translation is guided by its function rather than using the ST as a yardstick in which the TT is expected to be a mirror image of the ST.

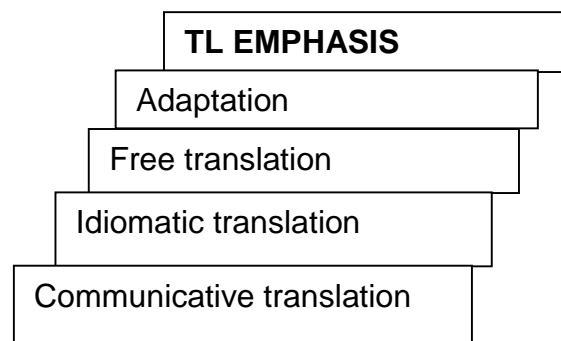
Newmark (1998) identifies the following translation methods; imitative and functional translation methods.

Figure 2.3: *Imitative and Functional research methods.*

Imitative translation methods



Functional translation methods



Adopted from Newmark (1988:45).

The diagram in Figure 2.3 above illustrates two types of translation methods, namely imitative and functional translation methods. The former puts emphasis on the SL and the latter puts it on the TL. There are various subtypes of imitative translation methods. Word-for-word translation is a method of translation in which the text in the SL is

translated into the TL in an interlineal way. In this method, the word order is preserved and the words in the SL are translated one by one into the TL. The grammatical constructions in this method are not converted to their nearest TL equivalents. The main use of word-for-word translation is to understand the mechanics of the source language or to construct a difficult text as a pre-translation process (Mahmoud, 2007).

Literal translation, as the second subtype of the imitative translation method, “is a method in which the SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents, but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context. This method is slightly related to word-for-word translation in the sense that context is not taken into consideration” (Newmark, 1988:46). Faithful translation is a method of translation which tries to translate the accurate contextual meaning in the SL but still within the constraints of the grammatical structures in the TL. This method of translation translates cultural words from the SL but preserves the degree of grammatical and lexical abnormality in the TL. This method tries to be faithful to the original text and intentions of the SL writer (Shadia, 2011). Semantic translation is slightly similar to faithful translation except for some minimal distinctions. “The distinctions between the faithful and semantic translations are that the faithful translation is promising and dogmatic, while the second one is more flexible, admits the creative exception to 100% fidelity and allows the translator’s intuitive empathy with the original” (Newmark, 1988:46).

Functional translation methods comprise four subtypes. The first, which is adaptation, is the freest form of translation. This method translates the SL culture into the TL culture and the text is rewritten. This method is usually used in translating plays and poetry in which the themes, characters, and plot in the SL are usually preserved when they are translated into the TL (Newmark, 1988:47). Free translation is a method of translation which reproduces the content of the SL into the TL but without the same form of the SL. This method usually paraphrases the text in the TL much longer than the SL (Newmark, 1988:47). Idiomatic translation is a method of translation that reproduces the message from the SL into the TL but tends to distort the nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialism and idioms where these do not exist in the SL (Newmark, 1988: 47). Communicative translation, is a method of translation that tries to translate the contextual meaning of the SL into the TL exactly in a particular way so that both the content and language are easily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership (Newmark, 1988:47).

2.11 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presented the literature review of the study. The chapter looked at the concept meaning, idioms as translation problems, features of idioms, classification of idioms, the processing of idioms, ambiguity of idioms, techniques used in the translation process, review of the strategies used in the translation process and translation methods. The following chapter focusses on the research methodology adopted for the study.

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology of the study. In the first place, the chapter looks at the research approach. Qualitative research approach is discussed as the appropriate research methodology of the study. In the second place, the descriptive research design as the chosen design of the study is conversed. Thirdly, population and the sampling technique are presented. Fourthly, the study looks at data collection methods. In the fifth place, a thematic data analysis is discussed. In the sixth place, the chapter discusses quality criteria. In the seventh place, attention is paid to ethical considerations. Finally, a summary of this chapter is presented.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Trochim (2005:1), “research design provides the glue that holds the research project together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project work together to try to address the central research questions. The research design is like a recipe. Just as a recipe provides a list of ingredients and the instructions for preparing a dish, the research design provides the components and the plan for successfully carrying out the study (Trochim, 2005:1)”.

A qualitative research paradigm comprises a number of research designs such as case studies, exploratory studies, descriptive studies, and so on (Kothari, 2004). This study uses the descriptive research design. The Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) (nd) defines a descriptive study as “any study that is not truly experimental.” In human research, a descriptive study can provide information about the naturally occurring health status, behaviour, attitudes or other characteristics of a particular group. Descriptive studies are also conducted to demonstrate associations or relationships between things in the world around people. Bickman and Rog (1998) suggest that descriptive studies can answer questions such as ‘what is’ or ‘what was’? Descriptive studies are usually some of the methods for collecting information that will demonstrate relationships and describe the world as it exists. Thus, descriptive design is appropriate because it assists the researcher to identify factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions. It is also useful in formulating strategies of translating idioms and fixed expressions between the two different languages, that is;

English and Tshivenda. This is because descriptive studies are aimed at finding out "what is," and is so observational in nature (Borg & Gall, 1989). This is in line with Neumann's (2000:22) suggestion that the descriptive design helps in giving the correct picture associated with the context of the study. It is inquisitive in nature by attempting to find out the causes of a particular action or judgment.

The main task of the researcher in a descriptive research design is to attempt to understand the data from the participants' subjective perspective (Christensen, 2011). The translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English is looked at from the perspectives of the respondents. Although there are common meanings attached to idioms and fixed expressions, the meanings depend on individuals' interpretation. Therefore, it is important to find out how different people interpret the meanings of idioms and fixed expressions, including factors that inform this interpretation.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Creswell (2014:2), research approaches are "plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation". Creswell further alludes that the selection of a research approach is based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researchers' personal experiences, and the audiences for the study. There are three types of research approaches: qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the qualitative research approach is used.

Creswell (1994:2) views qualitative research approach as "an inquiry process of understanding social human problems, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed view of informants and conducted in natural setting". In other words, "qualitative research approach is a system of inquiry which seeks to build a holistic, largely narrative, description to inform the researcher's understanding of a social or cultural phenomenon". This type of approach is designed to help researchers understand people, and the social and cultural contexts within which they live (Myer, 2009).

Qualitative research is naturalistic; it attempts to study the everyday life of different groups of people and communities in their natural setting, particularly useful to study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Furthermore, according to Domegan and Fleming (2007:24), “qualitative research aims to explore and discover issues about the problem on hand, because very little is known about the problem. There is usually uncertainty about dimensions and characteristics of the problem. A qualitative study uses ‘soft’ data and gets ‘rich’ data” (Fleming, 2007). “Such studies allow the complexities and differences of worlds-under-study to be explored and represented (Philip, 1998: 267). It employs a combination of observations, interviews, and document reviews” (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2011).

The researcher chose a qualitative approach because it is suitable in describing the phenomenon under study, that is; the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. The table below shows a breakdown of the qualitative research approach.

Table 3.1: Breakdown of the qualitative research approach

	QUALITATIVE
Aim	To present a complete, detailed description of what is observed
Purpose	It involves contextualisation, interpretation, and the understanding of perspectives
Tools	The researcher is the data gathering instrument
Data collection	It uses unstructured techniques
Output	Data is in the form of words, pictures or objects
Sample	Usually involves a small number of non-representative cases. Respondents are selected based on their experience
Objective/Subjective	Subjective - individuals’ interpretation of events is important
Researcher’s role	The researcher tends to become subjectively immersed in the subject matter
Analysis	Interpretative

(MacDonald & Headlam, 2008:09)

The table above breaks down the various aspects of the qualitative research approach ranging from tools, data collection, output, sample, objectives, and researcher’s role to

analysis. The table shows, for example, that qualitative research uses a small number of non-representative cases, and that the analysis of data is interpretative. The gist of all this is that a qualitative study focuses on meaning and interpretation (Liamputtong, 2009), because it implies “a concern for more inductive analysis, for exploring, explaining, uncovering phenomena and for generating new theoretical insights,” (Hammond & Wellington, 2013:107). Similarly, Creswell (2009:4) holds the view “that qualitative inquiry is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem”. This view emphasises the relevance of the qualitative research approach in the study of the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda.

Stainback and Stainback (1988) list three basic purposes of qualitative research, to describe, compare and attribute causality. Maxwell (1998) enumerates five research purposes for which qualitative studies are particularly useful. These involved:

- Understanding the meaning that participants in a study give to the events, situations and actions that they are involved with; and of the accounts they give of their lives and experiences;
- Understanding the particular context within which the participants act, and the influence this context has on their actions;
- Identifying unanticipated phenomena and influences, and generating new, grounded theories about them;
- Understanding the process by which events and actions take place; and
- Developing causal explanations.

On the other hand, there are some scholars who prefer the quantitative approach when dealing with linguistic issues. For example, Mezmaz’s (2010) research uses the quantitative approach to examine the problems of idioms in translation between English and Arabic. The results of the study show that there are potential problems in the process of translating idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa. Furthermore, the findings show that the context of use helps a lot of students of English to guess the appropriate meaning of idioms. Unlike Mezmaz’ study, this is a qualitative study whose purpose is to examine the factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. Moreover, the study strives to find the

strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges that are experienced in the process of translation of the idiom and fixed expressions. This makes the qualitative research more suitable for the study.

Furthermore, the strength of qualitative research approach is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. This is relevant for the study of translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. In order to arrive at the understanding of factors that cause problems in translation of idioms and fixed expressions, the researcher presented a detailed description of the phenomenon by asking the 'what', 'why' and 'how' type of research questions?

"Apart from its inherently descriptive nature, the choice of the qualitative research approach is informed by the understanding that qualitative data are credible and replicated" (Tracy, 2013:24). The credibility of qualitative data lies in the fact that rather than presenting data from the point of view of the researcher, the world is documented from the perspective of the language speakers (Hammond & Wellington, 2013). It may well be that the understanding of people's behaviour requires the understanding of the meanings and interpretations that they give to their behaviour. In fact, this ties in with the aim of qualitative research which is to capture the lived experiences of the social world and the meanings that individuals give these experiences from their own viewpoint. Liamputtong (2009: xi) is more direct about this by stating that:

Because of its flexibility and fluidity, qualitative research approach is suited to understanding the meanings, interpretations, and subjective experiences of individuals. Qualitative inquiry allows the researchers to be able to hear the voices of those who are silenced, bothered, and marginalized by the dominant social order, as qualitative methods ask not only "what is it?" but, more importantly, "explain it to me – how, why, what's the process, what's the significance?". The in-depth nature of qualitative methods allows the researched to express their feelings and experiences in their own words (2009: xi)".

It is through qualitative research that the researcher is able to find more information from the respondents through follow-up questions. Some of the information can be acquired through observation and reading the gestures that can only be accessed through face-

to-face interaction. From the foregoing presentation, it becomes clear that the qualitative research approach provides the best platform for undertaking a study of this nature.

3.4 POPULATION

“Population can be defined as the entire or full set of elements, data or group of people that are of interest to a researcher and from which a sample is selected” (Beins, 2009; Christensen et al., 2011; Hammond & Wellington, 2013). Polit and Hungler (1999:37) view population as “an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications”. In the case of this study, the population entails all language practitioners in the Limpopo Province. The participants were selected in terms of their educational qualifications and profession. The selected subjects were relevant to the study because they deal with language issues on a daily basis as part of their duties in their respective professions. Therefore, their expertise in language issues came in handy in the study of the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English.

3.5 SAMPLING

Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for the study. O’Leary (2004:103) holds that “sampling is a process that is always strategic and sometimes mathematical, which involves using the most practical procedures possible for gathering data. Sampling is therefore an element of data collection”. Bryman and Bell (2007:182) argue that “a sample is a fragment or section of the population that is selected for the research process”. Kumar (2002) defines sampling as a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population.

3.5.1 Sample size

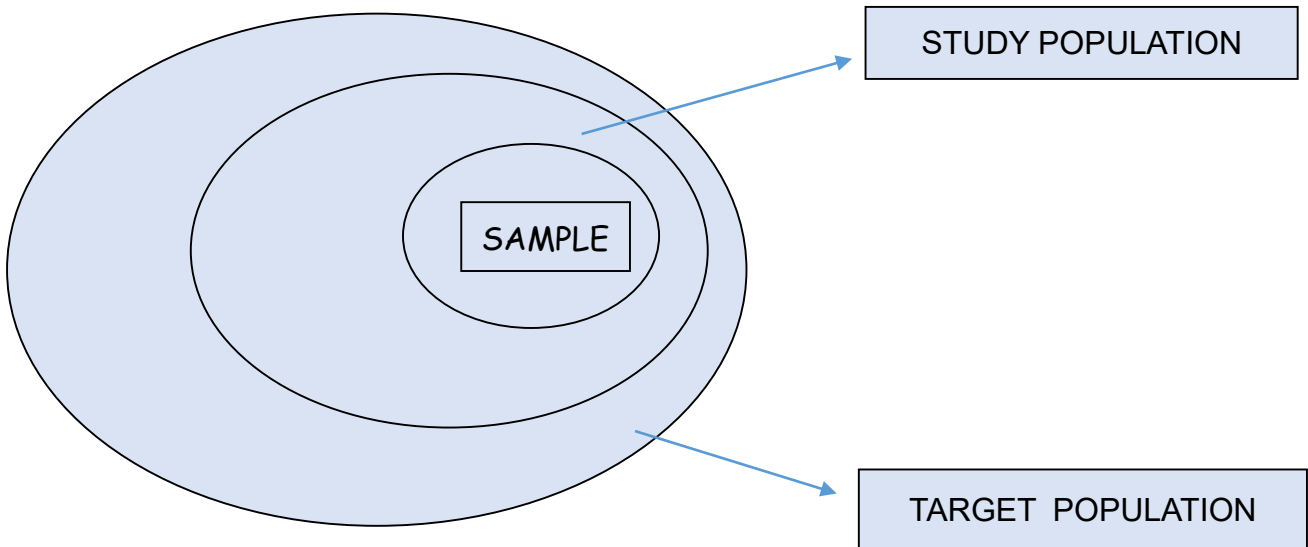
Patton (2002:244) states that “there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with the available time and resources?” In this regard, Liamputtong (2009:11) writes:

Qualitative research is concerned with in-depth understanding of the issue under examination. It relies heavily on individuals who are able to provide rich accounts of their experiences. For this reason, it usually works best with small numbers of individuals. Qualitative researchers

sample for *meaning*, rather than frequency. We are not interested in how much, or how many, in *what*. Qualitative research aims to examine a 'process' or the 'meanings' that people give to their own social situations.

Gill and Johnson (2010:123) warn that “the sample size and selection are major concerns for researchers when designing and planning the research design”. The researcher’s understanding is that when determining sample size for qualitative studies, it is important to align sample size with the aims and the objectives of the study. The number of participants depends on the research question, and the degree to which the discussion is structured (Kroll et al, 2007). From the target population, language practitioners in the Limpopo Province are the study population. From the same study population, eighteen (18) language practitioners were selected as the sample size of the study using purposive sampling. The diagram on sample size is presented below.

Figure 3.1: Sampling size



Adopted from Kanupriya (nd)

The above diagram illustrates the sample size of the study, which is selected from the targeted population. The study population is decided from the target population. From the target population, a sample is drawn.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:112) argue that:

In terms of numbers, rather than selecting a large number of people or sites, the qualitative researcher identifies a small number that will provide in-depth information about each person or site. The larger the number of people, the less the amount of detail typically emerging from any one individual – and a key idea of qualitative research is to provide detailed views of individuals and the specific contexts in which they hold these views. ... The number relates to the question or to the type of qualitative approach used

Anderson (2004:209) holds that “there are no clear answers with regard to how large a sample should be”. In general, sample sizes in qualitative research should not be too large because this makes it difficult to extract thick and rich data. In the same vein, Sandelowski notes that the sample should not be too small that it is difficult to achieve data saturation (Flick, 1998; Morse, 1995). As noted by Sandelowski (1995:179), “a common misconception about sampling in qualitative research is that numbers are unimportant in ensuring the adequacy of a sampling strategy”.

“In order to get credible findings, qualitative sample size must be large enough to ensure that the widest possible coverage of research subjects’ perceptions or opinions are accounted for. It is apparent that there is no set formula which is rigidly applied in the determination of the sample size in qualitative research” (Liamputtong, 2009). The participants must, however, be selected meaningfully and strategically. Thus, the sample size of the present study is limited to 18 participants chosen in terms of being engaged in language matters. They are a suitable number who adds a great value in this study on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. According to De Vos & Strydom (2012:366), a small number of the sample also ensures minimal expenditure of resources in terms of effort, time and money.

3.5.2 Sampling technique

“A qualitative study is concerned with non-statistical methods and small samples” (De Vos et al., 2002:79). For the purpose of this study, the researcher selected non-probability techniques which gives the researcher a chance to select the right respondents for the study about the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. Fox and Bayat (2007:59) indicate that, although units of analysis of non-probability sampling do not have an equal chance of being included in the sample, it still is frequently used because of its convenience and inexpensiveness”. In qualitative research, there is no attempt to create a sample that is statistically representative of a population. Rather, language practitioners are chosen with the purpose to enable the researcher to explore the research questions and develop a theory. The respondents are selected on the basis of characteristics or experiences that are directly related to the researcher’s area of interest and his research questions, and this allows the researcher to study the research topic in-depth. The respondents chosen for the study were those knowledgeable about the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English (Matthews & Ross, 2010).

Purposive sampling was chosen as the type of sampling technique suitable for this study. In this type of technique, subjective judgments are used to resolutely select groups that the researcher believes are the best for the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability based technique “associated with research designs that are based on the gathering of qualitative data and focuses on the exploration and interpretation of

experiences and perceptions,” (Greenfield, 2002:189). In purposive sampling, the researcher chooses subjects who, in his/her opinion, are relevant to the research topic.

The following respondents were selected: Four (4) language practitioners outside the academic field; two (2) from the Limpopo Provincial Department of Arts and Culture and another two (2) from the Limpopo Legislature who were involved in language matters on a day to day basis. Their work involved use of idioms and fixed expressions. Furthermore, four (4) lecturers in the field of Linguistics; two (2) from the University of Limpopo and another two (2) from the University of Venda were sampled based on their expertise in language development issues. Six (6) teachers of languages at Grade 12 level from the education clusters in the Vhembe District, namely Mutale (n-2), Vuwani (n-2) and Thohoyandou (n-2) were engaged to attend to language matters at different levels. As teachers, they dealt with language issues at the grassroots level where elements such as idioms and fixed expressions are often dealt with intensively. There are also four (4) lexicographers, from the University of Limpopo (n-2) and the University of Venda (n-2), who dealt with language issues such as the creation of words and compiling dictionaries. Selected professionals and academics were relevant to the study because they dealt with language issues on a daily basis as part of their work in their professions. In the line of their duty, they also dealt with aspects of language such as idioms and fixed expressions.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

Data can be defined as a collection of organised information or facts through experience, observation, experiment or similar situations external to the researcher (Yin, 2010). Burns and Grove (1998) define data collection as the accurate, organised collection of relevant information to the sub-problems using methods such as the interview, participant observation, focus group discussions and case histories. Data can also be classified as primary or secondary data. Primary data are pieces of information that have to be collected for the first time and secondary data exist as information (Nkuna, 2010). Simply stated, primary data are the raw material that have been gathered by the researcher specifically for his/her own research (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Malhotra and Birks (2007:94) consider primary data as “information collected by the researcher in an effort to address or resolve the specific problem they identified for the research project”.

In the same vein, Williams (2008:18) defines primary data as “a type of information that is obtained directly from first-hand sources by means of surveys, observation or experimentation”.

Secondary data is information that has been gathered by others for public consumption and can be used by other researchers (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Furthermore, Malhotra and Birks (2006:94) define secondary data as “information that has been collected for other purposes. Primary data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews”. Babbie and Mouton (2010:643) define the interview as “a data-collection encounter in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions to another (a respondent)”. Although the study focused on the collection and analysis of primary data, secondary data was also used to validate and support the primary data.

The study focused on attitudes and opinions on the translation of the idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. It attempted to collect data about the perceptions and opinions of language practitioners related to the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. The researcher’s intentions were to recommend strategies that could be used to deal with problems encountered when translating idioms and fixed expressions. Secondary data took the form of information obtained from journal articles, library books, dissertations and standard internet sources.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Once data on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English were collected, they were analysed, interpreted, synthesised into findings and conclusions drawn (Kubayi, 2013). According to Burns and Grove (2003:479), “data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organising data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher”. Consequently, “data analysis is a challenging and creative process characterised by an intimate relationship of the researcher with the participants and the data generated” (De Vos, 2002:339). Cooper and Schindler (2008:93) describe data analysis as “the process where the collected data is reduced to a more controllable and convenient size, and where the researcher can start to identify trends or patterns and summarise the data”. Cooper and Schindler further state that “in

the process of analysing the data, the researcher is simultaneously interpreting them because he engages in the active process of noting significant data and ignoring insignificant data. According to Schwardt (2007:6), “data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data”.

Patton (2002:432) states that “qualitative analysis transforms data into findings”. Patton further points out that qualitative researchers have an obligation to monitor and report the analytical procedures they use in their research projects. This means that they must observe their own processes, and analyse and report on the analytical process.

There are five types of data analysis under the qualitative research method, namely content analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, semiotic analysis and thematic analysis (Liamputtong, 2009; Kubayi, 2013). The responses from structured interview questions in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English are analysed as written data, and therefore thematic analysis has been chosen as the appropriate type of data analysis. Thematic analysis can be described as follows:

Qualitative researchers believe that words are more powerful than numbers. Hence content analysis may not be appropriate for most qualitative researchers. A more common type of analysis in qualitative research is thematic analysis, sometimes called interpretive thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data and is perceived as a foundational method for qualitative analysis (Liamputtong, 2009:284)

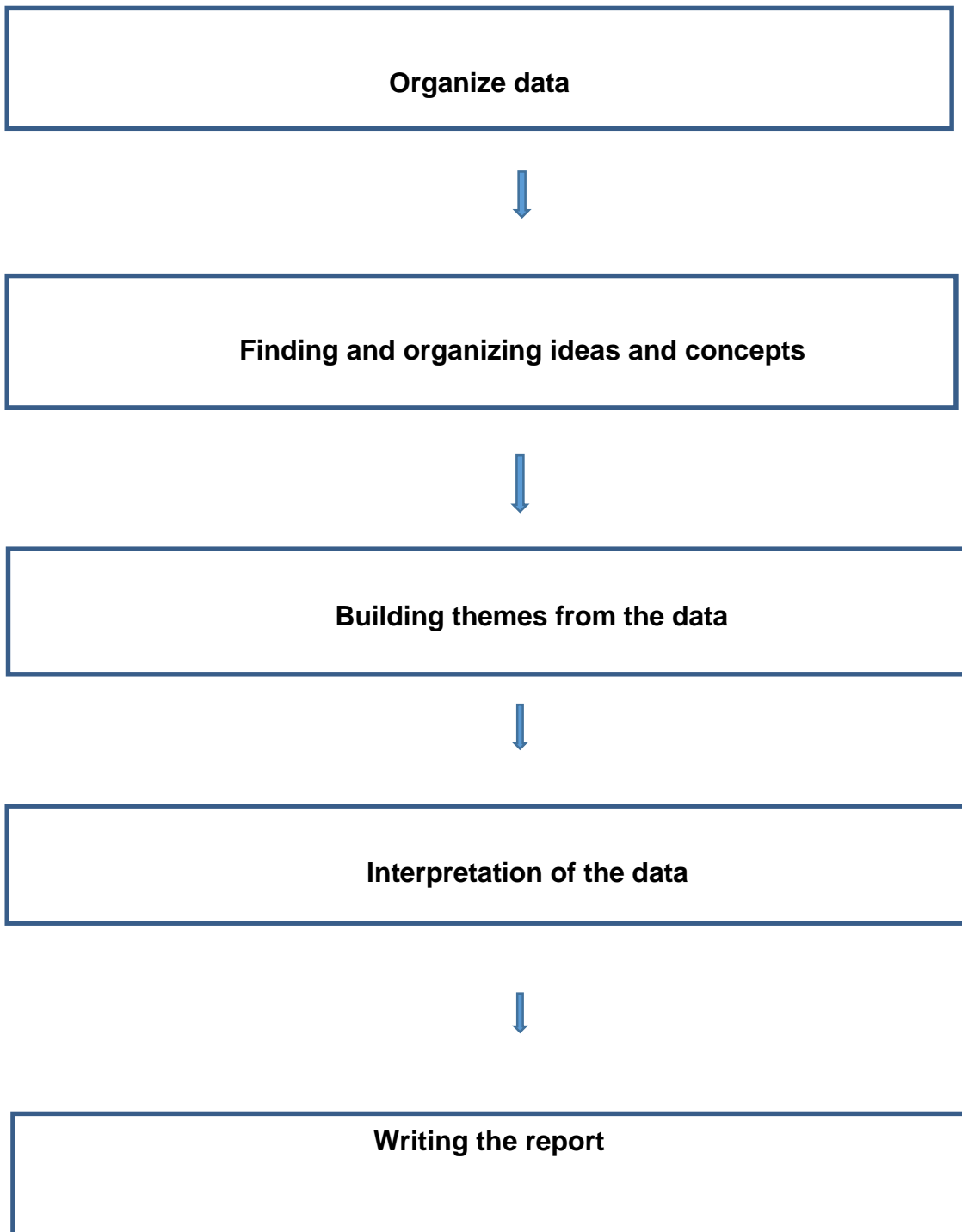
“Thematic analysis is a flexible method where the researcher needs to be clear and explicit about what is to be done and matches up with what is actually done” (Liamputtong, 2009:284). Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that thematic analysis should be seen as a foundational method for qualitative analysis. They further describe thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.

Thematic analysis gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely (Marks & Yardley, 2004). Namey, Guest, Thairu and Johnson (2008:138) assert that;

Thematic analysis moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes are then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code co-occurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships”.

Thematic analysis is a type of qualitative analysis. It is used to analyse classifications and present themes (patterns) that relate to the data. It illustrates the data in great detail and deals with diverse subjects via interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998). The researcher emphasises that a good qualitative research needs to be able to draw interpretations and be consistent with the data collected. With this in mind, thematic analysis can facilitate the detection and identification of factors or variables that influence any issue generated by the participants. Therefore, the participants’ interpretations are significant in terms of giving the most appropriate explanations of their views, and thoughts. The above idea fits well with the features that are involved in the process of thematic analysis (Hatch, 2002; Creswell, 2003). Bernard (2000:780) claims that “analysis involves a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set, the coded extracts of data that you are analysing, and the analysis of the data that you are producing”. The same is expected in the analysis of data on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. It is possible that the researcher may notice specific words or ideas that come up when going through the responses from the respondents. The researcher made notes of the new ideas that came up when analysing the responses. Data analysis was conducted following steps that were recommended by O’Connor & Gibson (2003), as follows:

Figure 3.2: Steps of data analysis



The diagram above indicates steps of analysing data. These steps are given detailed discussion below.

3.7.1 Organising the data

This step is designed to prepare for the analysis of the data that would have been collected. Categorising data involves transcribing the interviews that have been recorded into written form, typing the field notes and arranging the data into different general categories and themes, and in terms of their levels of complexity (Creswell, 2009; Liamputtong, 2009). During this initial stage, tough decisions are taken (Tracy, 2013), because the researcher must know what matters in his/her study because not everything matters (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The researcher believes that writing should begin in phase one, with the jotting down of ideas and potential coding schemes, and continue right through the entire coding and analysis process.

3.7.2 Finding and organising ideas and concepts

Verbal data usually needs to be transcribed into written form in order to conduct a thematic analysis. Bird (2005: 227) argues that, “finding and organising ideas and concepts should be seen as a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology”. This step involves possible interpretations of the data, by among others, listening to the tone of the ideas as expressed by the informants.

3.7.3 Building themes from the data

Detailed analysis of the data should be undertaken through a process of coding, which plays a major role in building the themes. The process of coding is part of the analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), to organise the data into meaningful groups (Tuckett, 2005). However, coded data differs from the units of analysis (themes) which are (often) broader. Coding refers to the process of organising the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information (Rossman & Rallis 1998 in Creswell, 2009). It also refers to the labelling, systematisation and organisation of the data together by making connections between major and sub-categories (Liamputtong, 2009; Tracy, 2013). In this sense, coding enables the generation of meaningful categories or themes through the segmentation of the data collected into well-organised sentences and paragraphs. The themes constitute the major findings in qualitative inquiries and should thus display multiple perspectives from the informants (Creswell, 2009). In this study, data were grouped according to associated categories in order to build overarching themes. This helped the researcher to be able to recognise patterns or

relationships among the categories. Furthermore, it enabled the researcher to group related categories together in sub-categories that emerged under the main theme.

3.7.4 Interpretation of the data

During the data interpretation process, the researcher goes through the data patterns to ensure the correct interpretation of the data provided. This is usually confirmed by developing a systematic and consistent way of carrying out analysis of the data.

3.7.5 Writing the report

Writing the report involves making an interpretation or understanding of the data. The meaning of the data includes the researcher's understanding of the data, taking into account the researcher's and the participants' culture, history and experiences, among other things. During this phase, the researcher made comparisons of the findings with the data gleaned from both the reviewed literature and the theories underlying the study which is the skopos theory, in addition to the objectives of the study. Kubayi (2013:122) argues that it is important to constantly find out whether the findings confirm or diverge from the literature and/or theoretical framework. The findings may, in addition, suggest new questions that need to be answered from both the theoretical exposition and the literature review. New questions may suggest answers requiring the development of new theories that may best respond to the present context of the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. After the due processes had been followed, the researcher presented a final report that summarises the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

3.8 QUALITY CRITERIA

This study has been done with honesty and trustworthiness. The study was truthful in presenting data and there was no manipulating of data. This was due to the concerns relating to ethical issues around cultural sensitivity. Since this study is on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions, the researcher made sure to pay more attention to the sensitivity of cultural issues. The quality and integrity of such a study are insured by making sure that ethical factors are taken into consideration. This include respecting the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Participants' names will not be used

for any other purposes, and the information that reveals their identity in any way may not be shared with anyone.

Conformability refers to the degree to which the results of an inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). The researcher ensured that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but are clearly derived from the data. Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents. This is the interpretive equivalent of generalisability (Bitsch, 2005; Tobin & Begley, 2004). The researcher facilitated the transferability judgment through description and purposeful sampling.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations are commonly understood as rules for distinguishing between right and wrong, a code of professional conduct that distinguishes between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Silverman (2000: 201) reminds researchers that they should always remember that while they are doing their research, they are in actual fact entering the private spaces of their participants. Understandably, this raises several ethical issues that should be addressed during, and after the research has been conducted.

This study on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English took into account the ethical issues that were addressed during, and after the research had been conducted. "A qualitative research such as this one involves researchers and informants based on mutual trust and cooperation between the two groups" (Kubayi, 2013:122). It is also based on promises, conventions and expectations as part of the outcomes of the research project. The research process, therefore, gives researchers few limits and much freedom for action. This freedom of action, can, however, have adverse effects on the participants.

Ethics is a crucial component of a rigorous qualitative research, more so given the close interaction and relationship between the researcher and the participants during data collection, particularly where unstructured instruments are involved hence, the unpredictable nature of qualitative research methods (Liamputtong, 2009). In this

research, ethical considerations were divided into two sub-categories as discussed below:

3.9.1 Informed consent

Informed consent is a vital part of the research process, and as such entails more than obtaining a signature on a form. For this reason, it was given the attention it deserved in the study. Creswell (2003) states that “the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the informants.” Informed consent is based on the understanding that the researcher must provide information to the participants about the purpose of the research, its procedures, potential risks, benefits, and alternatives, so that the individual understands this information and can make a voluntary decision on whether or not to continue with his participation” (Liamputtong, 2009:34; Kubayi, 2013:122). The research participants must understand what they are consenting to without prejudice (Matthews & Ross, 2010). They must be aware of the reasons why the research is being done, what the practical implications of the research are, and that their participation is voluntary, and thus, they have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research. Ethics is thus based on the principle of individualism and free will of the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). It is aimed at respecting the dignity and worth of every individual and his right to self-determination. The very same respect of dignity and worth of individuals applied in the participants that took part in this study. It is therefore a means of protecting the participants in the research from harm or exploitation by the researcher.

According to Kubayi (2013:122), “informed consent also implies that the participants should not be pressured or deceived in any way to participate in the research. It is therefore crucially important for the researcher to inform them about the nature and goals of the study before they are requested to take part in the research project”. The researcher in this study obtained informed consent from the participants before the commencement of the interviews. This entailed making a full disclosure of the nature of the study subsequent to which the participants were required to read and sign an informed consent form (Creswell, 2009).

3.9.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of participants are important elements of research. The aim of confidentiality is to conceal the true identity and to ensure the privacy and anonymity of the participants (Liamputtong, 2009). Confidentiality is based on the principle of respect for autonomy of individuals in terms of keeping their identity unknown (Christensen et al., 2011). “In view of this principle, the participants have the right to decide who should know about their names or any other form of identification in the research” (Kubayi, 2013:123; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The revelation of the participants’ identity may result in serious physical, emotional or social harm not only to the subjects, but also to the community or even the society. In the case of social harm, social problems may emanate from the research. Consequently, the researcher is required to take responsibility to ensure that the subjects’ participation in the research does not adversely affect them (Liamputtong, 2009).

Confidentiality includes respecting participants’ right not to answer certain questions in context where the informants are not comfortable to do so (Sarantakos, 1997). The data collected from the subjects must be used by the researcher only for study purposes (Christensen et al., 2011). The researcher assured participants in this research that every effort would be made to ensure that the data they provided would not be traced back to them. This was confirmed by changing the reported characteristics of participants such as gender or occupation to conceal their identities and thereby maintaining the confidentiality of the data provided. In this regard, codes were used to hide the identity of the participants.

3.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has outlined the research methodology employed in the study. It has identified the research approach and the research design that the researcher considered to be most appropriate for the study. Furthermore, the chapter paid attention to the population of the study which was followed by a section on sampling and data collection. Thematic analysis was presented as the preferred method of data analysis in the study. A section on quality criteria looked at issues pertaining to dependability of the study that includes cultural sensitivity and respecting the confidentiality and

anonymity of the participants. Finally, the study presented a section on issues relating to ethical considerations.

CHAPTER 4 : DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data that were collected through semi-structured interviews. Thematic content analysis is used to analyse data as indicated in Chapter 3. In this case this would be achieved by means of the generated themes to categorise patterns or trends in order to facilitate the realisation of the aim and the objectives of the study.

Firstly, the researcher handed an informed consent form to every participant, which explained the purpose, procedures, risks and the respondents' rights in the study. The respondents then indicated their willingness to participate in the study by signing a copy of the form. Secondly, the researcher went through the interview guide to ensure that the respondents understood the questions before they responded. Lastly, the respondents were assured that personal information and the views expressed would be treated as confidential.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

The demographic data of the respondents who participated in this study are presented below. According to Petersen (2000:27), "demographic information refers to socio-economic characteristics of a population expressed statistically, such as age and gender". For the purpose of this study, the focus is on the profession, employment status and location of respondents. The respondents were from the Limpopo Province under the Capricorn District (Polokwane local municipality) and Vhembe District (Mutale and Thulamela local municipalities). The number of respondents was different in each municipality. Respondents were interviewed individually and data were integrated according to the themes.

Table 4.1: Respondents' demographic information

Respondents	Employment designation	Code and highest qualification	Experience	Geographical location
2	Lecturer	A1= Doctoral Degree A2= Doctoral Degree	22 Years 26 Years	University of Venda
2	Lexicographer	B1= Master's Degree B2= Master's Degree	15 Years 11 Years	University of Venda
6	Teacher	C1= Bachelor of Educatuin (BED) C2=BED Degree C3= Honours Degree C4= BED Degree C5 =BED Degree C6=Secondary Teaching Diploma	15 Years 12 Years 18 Years 9 Years 27 Years 24 Years	Vhembe District (Mutale, Vuwani and Thohoyandou clusters)
2	Lexicographer	D1= Master's Degree D2= Higher Education Diploma	26 Years 12 Years	Department of arts and culture
2	Lecturer	E1= Master's Degree E2= Master's Degree	33 Years 11 Years	University of Limpopo
2	Lexicographer	F1 = Master's Degree F2 = Master's Degree	11 Years 13 Years	Limpopo Legislature
2	Lecturer	G1= Master's Degree G2 = Master's Degree	8 Years 11 Years	University of Limpopo

The above table indicates the number of the respondents that were interviewed in this study. The respondents are listed according to their employment, profession, as well as location. The codes are used to identify the respondents.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THEMES

This section presents and discusses themes emerging from participants' responses. For easier analysis and interpretation of the data, this chapter is divided into a number of themes and subthemes. Firstly, this chapter discusses factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions as a first theme. Secondly, the chapter

looks at the impact of literal translation in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. Thirdly, major problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expression between Tshivenda and English are examined. Fourthly, the chapter explores the impact of culture in the translation process. In the fifth place, the chapter pays attention to the role of context in translation. Lastly, the translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English are presented.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions

This theme is based on the question which the researcher asked the participants. The question asked was: What causes mistranslations of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English? From this theme, the following sub-themes emerged:

- (i) The language-specific nature of idioms;
- (ii) Failure to recognise idioms; and
- (iii) Lack of understanding of the idiom by the translator.

The process of translation may look easy from a layman's point of view, but it is a challenging experience (Sanchick, 2016). Mistranslation is one of the many challenges. This theme discusses language-specific nature of idioms. It further looks at the translator's failure to recognise idioms as a factor that leads to mistranslation of idioms. Lastly, this theme pays attention to lack of understanding of the idiom by the translator as an aspect that leads the translator to mistranslate idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English.

(a) The language-specific nature of idioms

The first sub-theme that emerges from the theme factors that leads to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions is that idioms are language specific in nature. In other words, they are made up of language specific items that are not the same across languages. As a result, an idiom in Tshivenda is more likely to have words that are completely different from the words that constitute an equivalent idiom in English. Below is an example of an idiom that is language specific in nature (where GL stands for gloss and DT stands for direct translation).

(24)

SL: *U vula maṭo.*

GL: To open eyes.

IE: To keep an eye out.

TL: To maintain awareness as it occurs.

U vula maṭo is an idiom that is built-up of the words that are easy to understand in Tshivenda because the idiom is in Tshivenda. However, it is a different case when the same idiom is presented in English:

(25) To keep eyes out.

The meaning of both idioms (that is, in Tshivenda and English) is that one should maintain awareness of what might be happening at a specific time. However, the English idiom used means 'to keep an eye open' whereas the Tshivenda one uses *u vula* (to open) or *u tsha* (to be awake). The nature of Tshivenda language does not allow such an idiom to use *u bvisela maṭo nnda* (to keep eyes out) as it appears to be proper in English. Nevertheless, the similarities between the two idioms (in Tshivenda and English) is that they both use the word 'eyes' as a symbol of awareness. This is in line with the skopos theory of translation. In terms of this theory, the basic principle which determines the process of translation is the aim or purpose (skopos) of the translational action (Chesterman, 1989).

Respondent A1 argued that "languages are not the same and the way things are expressed in a language are different. Some idioms are [of a] language specific nature and cannot exist in the other language". The quotation makes it clear that by virtue of being different, languages tend to express a variety of idioms and the attendant meanings differently. This brings about a challenge to the translator to get the real meaning of the idiom. For instance:

(26)

SL: *U omba gologodo.*

GL: To hold-tight old-cow.

DT: To hold tight to an old cow.

TL: To smoke dagga.

The idiom *u khou omba gologodo*, cannot be interpreted as 'he/she is holding tight to an old cow'. This indicates that the nature of language in which words are used is not the same as it is in the target language. The same goes for the way in which meaning is interpreted from idioms. Meanings are sometimes depicted literally. This may not be the case with idioms because the meaning of idioms cannot be deduced from individual words because idioms are indivisible units (Cowie & Mackin, 1975; Strässler, 1982; Fernando, 1996). In the same vein, respondent B1 thought that the incorrect selection of words and misunderstanding of the fact that idioms are language specific by nature may result in misinterpretation of idioms and fixed expressions. Some idioms only exist in one language and this may lead to mistranslation.

Respondent C1's view was that:

*Maidioma ndi kuambele kwo ditikaho nga luambo lune muthu
arali a sa divhi luambo a nga si kone u pfesesa na luthihi.
Arali jidioma ji kha Tshivenda, ndi Muvenda ane a nga
pfesesa tshidziki tsha jidioma ilo.*

The quotation above means that idioms are expressions that are language based. Therefore, it requires someone who has an understanding of the language in use because without fulfilling this requirement, one cannot understand idioms at all. If the idiom is presented in Tshivenda, only Tshivenda speaking people will best understand the depth of such an idiom. The respondent proposed that the idiom can only be best understood by the native speaker of a language in which the idiom is presented. It is worth noting that idioms are created from specific aspects of language that address situations in the specific language. The emphasis in this regard is that the meaning of an idiom cannot be easily transferred to another language because idioms are language specific in nature. For instance:

(27)

SL: *U haka midzi.*

GL: To hook roots.

IE: To hit a wall.

TL: It is tough.

The example above emphasises the point that idioms are language specific in nature. One could not understand the meaning of *u haka midzi* unless one is a Tshivenda native speaker. *U haka midzi* means to reach a point where one is physically or mentally unable to make progress or to continue doing something. The idiom is commonly used in a sentence as *zwo haka midzi* (it is extremely tough). *U haka midzi* is not lexically related to 'to hit a wall'. Nevertheless, 'to hit a wall' is the closest equivalent in English that refers to *u haka midzi*. *U haka midzi* is also cultural in nature because it originated from the way Tshivenda people use an ox-drawn plough to till the fields. In some instances, the plough will come across roots and get stuck, thus hampering progress in the activity of tilling.

Respondent A1 argued that:

The original meaning is always lost unless the translator has the understanding of both source and target languages. Ethno-pragmatics emphasises that one should know the language and the culture of such languages in order to have the best understanding of idioms. For example, *luambo lwa musanda* and the influence of dialects. Ethno-pragmatics helps one to know the culture best and the language. Understanding of a language includes knowing that idioms are a special aspect of language that is bound to its own language. What is expressed in a Tshivenda [idioms are] specific words that are found in Tshivenda.

The respondent acknowledged that the meaning of an idiom can be lost if the translator does not understand both the SL and TL. The point emphasised here is that the translator must know the culture of the people that use the language that contains the idiom as well as understanding that idioms are language based by nature. For example:

(28)

SL: *Mapfura o fhisa ludongo*.

GL: Oil has burned earthenware-pot.

IE: To spill the beans.

TL: To reveal the secret.

The literal translation of the idiom *mapfura o fhisa ludongo* refers to the oil that has burned the earthenware. The literal meaning is far from what the idiom means. The actual meaning that is contained in the idiom is that one has revealed the secret

information unintentionally or indiscreetly. One may not understand what the idiom means unless s/he has the deeper understanding of Tshivenda language and culture. The individual words that build the idiom are *mapfura* (the oil) and *ludongo* (the earthenware) that are totally different from the constituents of the English equivalent 'spilling' and 'the beans'. If one pays attention to the English equivalent, one will realise that the equivalent provides the meaning of a Tshivenda idiom in English. This is supported by skopos theory, which claims that the process of translation is determined by the function of the product. In other words, the aim is to make translation to be user-friendly to the target users. This is unlike linguistic theories that strive to have a mirror image of a source language without taking into account differences in the languages involved (Jawad, 2006).

(29)

SL: *Ndi thophi i fhola n̄ha fhasi i tshi fhisa.*

GL: Is *thophi* is cold on-top underneath AGR is hot.

IE: He/she is an imposture.

TL: He/she is dangerous.

This idiom uses *thophi* to indicate that things are, at times, not what they appear to be. In this instance, the idiom is used to express the fact that some people may seem to be kind and generous meanwhile they are just pretending so that they can execute their evil plan. However, the use of *thophi* in this idiom poses a challenge to the translator who may not be well-versed in both Tshivenda and English cultures. The word *thophi* makes the idiom to be language specific. *Thophi* does not have an immediate equivalent in English. It is a Tshivenda traditional food that is prepared using pumpkin and maize meal. The pumpkin is cooked until it is soft and then mashed to be smooth like soft porridge. It is then mixed with maize meal as if one is cooking ordinary porridge. When it is thick enough, it is served in bowls for people to eat. Usually, it will be cold on top but when one gets deeper, s/he will find that it is still hot. So, in the instance of this idiom, the person who is an impostor is compared to *thophi*.

Apart from using food as part of the formation of idioms, Tshivenda also utilises natural phenomena such as animals. For example:

(30)

SL: *U gotsha ǀula*.

GL: To grill frog.

TL: To get nothing.

The idiom *u gotsha ǀula* means that one did not get anything for what he/ she was doing. It is commonly used when one ploughs and sows' seeds expecting a good harvest. If the harvest becomes insufficient than what was expected, one will say *ndo gotsha ǀula* which simply means that "I got nothing". This idiom can best be understood by Tshivenda language native speakers because it is a language based idiom. In many instances, this idiom is used wrongly. People use this idiom to refer to the fact that it is extremely hot. If one understands that this idiom is language based by nature, the meaning would not be confused with the weather (that is; extremely hot).

One cannot deny the fact that language specific idioms create translation problems. Pay attention to the following example:

(31)

SL: *U bata nzie*.

GL: To catch locust.

TL: To fall.

U bata nzie is an idiom that is used to indicate that the child has fallen. The fact that this idiom is used only to refer to the children makes it unique in Tshivenda language. Only someone who understands the Tshivenda culture will be able to depict the correct meaning of the idiom. The idiom is used to encourage a child not to cry because to fetch a locust is something good for a child. Locusts serve as a delicacy in Tshivenda. It is improper to use this idiom referring to an elderly person. This emphasizes that this idiom is language specific and its accurate meaning can therefore be interpreted by someone who knows Tshivenda culture extremely well.

The foregoing situation does not only pertain to Tshivenda, but to many other languages as well. For instance, Mezmaz (2010) looks at the difficulties of non-equivalence posed in translating English idioms into Arabic and vice versa, and the methods used by

Master's students to find suitable equivalents in the target language. The results of the study show that there are potential problems in the process of translating idioms from English into Arabic and vice versa. The students find considerable difficulties in guessing the appropriate meaning of idiomatic expressions. Their familiarity with English and especially Arabic idioms is somehow low, and their ability to interpret unfamiliar idioms is limited. This is mainly due to the fact that idioms are language specific in nature and their meaning is not obvious from the meaning of the constituent words.

The language based nature of idioms in Tshivenda creates a translation problem. One cannot get the meaning with ease. The in-depth knowledge of culture of a specific language as well as the context in which the idiom could be used, is required in order to decipher the correct meaning of the idiom. Some idioms in Tshivenda can only be used to a particular age group, gender as well as position. One needs to understand where and when to use the idiom.

(b) Failure to recognise idioms

The second sub-theme that emerges from the factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions is that one may fail to recognise idioms and fixed expressions. This sub-theme looks at the translator's failure to recognise an idiom as a translation problem.

The respondents (A1, B1, C2, C3, C4, C6, D2, E2, G1 and G2) agreed that literal translation is the most cause for the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions. Literal translation comes in as a result of failure to understand that one is dealing with an idiom. This results in the translator translating the individual word instead of the whole idiom. This happens because some translators are not aware that the meaning of an idiom can only be deduced from the idiom as a whole and not individual words. The view from respondents was that the first challenge in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is for translators to realise that they are dealing with idioms and fixed expressions. Consequently, failure to recognise an idiom will result in mistranslation of the idiom under scrutiny. Respondents were of the view that most of the translation problems happen as a result of lack of experience and the naivety of the translator. In this situation, the translator will not realise that he/she is dealing with an idiom and opt for a wrong translation method.

In his study, Strakšien (2009) emphasises that idioms must be recognised, understood and analysed before appropriate translation methods can be considered. Languages are not the same and hence the way things are expressed in different languages would be different. Based on this view, one must, first of all, be able to spot idioms from a text. It is absolutely crucial that a translator recognises an idiom when s/he sees one. It cannot be over-emphasised that the ability to identify idioms is of enormous importance, since their meaning should never be understood literally. As Ingo (1990) puts it, the translator must first analyse what the writer has intended to say before he or she can even think of translating the expression. In the same vein, Larson (1984) argues that “the first crucial step in the translation of idioms is to be absolutely certain of the meaning of the source language idiom”. Therefore, the most important issue in translating idioms is the ability to distinguish the difference between the literal meaning and the real meaning of the expression (Ingo, 1990). The above explanation emphasises that recognising and being able to use idioms appropriately requires excellent command of the source language. For instance:

(32)

SL: *Naho wa ʔamba wa ɖola, senenga a ʔi tuwi.*

GL: Even you bath you smear-body-lotion, bad-smell AGR never leave.

IE: A leopard never changes its spots.

TL: A criminal/bad person does not change his/her habits.

Naho wa ʔamba wa ɖola, senenga a ʔi tuwi is a Tshivenda idiom which explains the way people view others in the community. It implies that one cannot change completely from bad behaviour that s/he is known for. However, the idiom itself can easily be understood at a literal level. One of the characteristics of idioms is that they violate the truth (Amir, 2012 & Baker, 1992) of which the above-mentioned one does not violate the truth. Baker (1992) argues that the fact that the translator cannot make sense of an expression would alert him that there is an idiom used. However, in this instance, this kind of idioms become tricky because one can easily draw the literal meaning from the idiom. If one does not have the in-depth knowledge of a language the whole idiomatic meaning will be lost. *Senenga* is a bad smell that cannot be reduced or gotten rid of by bathing. It sticks with a person for the rest of one’s life unless a special ritual to eradicate it is performed. The fact that *senenga* is known among Vhavenda communities makes

it hard for them to realise that the expression presented is an idiom. The meaning of the idiom is that it is not easy for people to believe that one can really get rid of unbecoming behaviour that he/she is known for. The bad deed that one once committed will forever be remembered by people. Taking into account the literal meaning of the idiom (even if you can bath and apply the body lotion, the bad smell will still stick with you), it seems reasonable to claim that it is imperative to recognise the idiom before one can even try to translate it.

Respondent A1 made it clear that it is key to recognise that one is dealing with an idiom because some idioms have multiple meanings (ambiguity). One idiom can be translated to give more than two meanings. This is because the ambiguity that prevails at the literal level also affects the idiomatic expression. Similarly, Mezmaz (2010) hypothesises that translating idioms is one of the most difficult tasks for translators. The main problems consist of recognising the idiom, understanding it and distinguishing idiomatic from non-idiomatic usage. In this sense, the translator needs to dig deeper so that the translation can be accurate. Regardless of the challenges that prevail, the translator is expected to provide the target readership with the message that the text intends to communicate. For instance:

(33)

SL: U wela.

GL: To fall-into.

Table 4.2: The multiple meanings of *u wela*

Expression	Category	Meaning	Usage
<i>U wela</i>	Figurative	Men sexual sickness	Mulalo o wela (Mulalo fell)
<i>U wela</i>	Figurative	Initiation school	Dakalo o wela ngomani (Dakalo initiated at the mountain school)
<i>U wela</i>	Figurative	Being in trouble	Mpho o wela mulingoni (Mpho is in trouble)
<i>U wela</i>	Literal	To fall inside something	Ñwana o wela damuni (A baby fell into a dam)
<i>U wela</i>	Literal/ Figurative	To cross over	Mulalo o wela mulambo/ Ngauri o mala, o wela mulambo. (Mulalo crossed the river /because he is married, he crossed the river)

The table above indicates the multiple meanings that can be attached to the expression *u wela*. It indicates the category it falls under, the meaning and the usage.

This idiom can be used to indicate many aspects in life. The accuracy of the meaning depends on the interpretation of the idiom in association with the context within which it is used. Its complexity poses a challenge for the translator to find out if he/she is faced with an idiom or not. Firstly, it can be used to refer to sickness:

(34)

SL: *U wela*.

GL: To fall-into.

TL: To have sexual sickness.

U wela is a sexual sickness suffered by men who sleep (have sexual intercourse) with a woman who has just had an abortion. It usually happens when a woman commits street abortion and does not receive proper medical treatment. Whosoever has sexual intercourse with her is more likely to be affected badly. In simple terms, one can say *o wela* which explains what happened to a person. The expression might not be clear to

everyone as it is an idiomatic expression. In most instances where *u wela* is used, the translator opts for the explanation since the idiom does not have an equivalent in English. The paraphrasing or explanation of the idiom is supported by Chesterman (1989:173) who argues that translation should be purpose oriented. The client who commissions the translational task determines the aim of the translation and its mode of realisation. The translator is then responsible for the performance of the translational task and adjusting the skopos for the target audience's needs. The skopos of the target language text is therefore determined by the target audience's requirements, as defined by the translator (Chesterman, 1989).

Secondly, the idiom *u wela* in Tshivenda symbolises to cross over in life stages. If someone just got married, one can easily say that *o wela*. The meaning attached to the expression is to cross over the situation (in marriage); it is derived from the literal meaning that refers to crossing over the river. For instance:

(35)

SL: *U wela*.

GL: To fall-into.

TL: To cross over.

U wela is also used in Tshivenda to refer to boys who undergo the male initiation school, known as male circumcision (MC). The ritual is one of the most important moments in a boy's life: a rite of passage, making him to be a "man" and enabling him to have a status in the community, have sexual relations, in the belief that MC will enhance his sexual capacities. When an uncircumcised male person (*shuvhuru*) joins an initiation school and has just been circumcised, this is referred to as *u wela* (which literally means to cross (a river, to the other side). It is believed that at that point, he will be considered a man and no longer a boy. He would have crossed over from being a boy to a man. It would be worth noting that the use of *u wela* in this instance is different from the one discussed in (35) above. Thirdly, it refers to being in trouble. For instance:

(36)

SL: *U wela*.

GL: To fall-into.

TL: To be in trouble.

In Tshivenda, if one is in trouble or is faced with a tough situation, the expression *u wela milingoni* (he/she is in trouble) might be utilised. In this instance, *milingoni* which means 'being in trouble' assists one to know that the use of *u wela* is specifically used to denote trouble. As compared to other instances mentioned above, *o wela* denotes a completely different meaning.

In the fourth place, *u wela* signifies that one has accidentally fallen inside something. It can be inside a pit, inside a pool of water, and so on. The examples (37) below illustrates this clearly:

(37)

SL: *U wela.*

GL: To fall-into.

TL:

To fall into something.

This is the most literal meaning that can be drawn from the expression. For instance, one can say *Takalani o wela mulindini* (Takalani fell into a pit). The translator is more likely to translate the sentence like this because it is the first meaning that comes to one's mind. However, the recognition of an idiom still plays a vital role here since it is of great importance for the translator to find the accurate meaning intended by the communicator or the initiator. This is where Skopos theory, where the purpose of translation receives prominence, as proposed by Vermeer (1997), applies. Lastly, *U wela* can show a sense of belonging. For instance:

(38)

SL: *U wela.*

GL: To fall into.

TL: To belong to.

The example in (38) above refers to the fact that someone or something falls under or belongs to a particular group, institution, society or category. For example: *Mulalo u wela kha jihoro jihanedzi* (Mulalo belongs to the opposition party). The meaning in this instance indicates a sense of belonging.

From the instances discussed above with regard to the meaning of the idiom *u wela*, it can be deduced that the expression *u wela* has multiple meanings. The multiple

meanings it possesses create a challenge for one to realise its correct use in a text. One may not know as to whether it is used as an idiom or a literal expression. It is not clear as to where the meaning should be deduced, either from the figurative or literal level. In situations like this, the translator's proficiency is highly required. Only the experienced translators would know when, where and why the meaning should be deduced in a certain way and not the other.

Respondent C2 shared an experience where the use of idioms left her confused. It was a situation where elderly people were talking about her sister who gave birth to a number of children. The expression used was that *n̄owa yawe i tou shela, hune a țangana hone na munna i tou luma ya farela heneŋho* which literally translates: to 'her snake pours, when she meets a man, it bites at once'. The expression means that 'she easily conceives, after sexual intercourse, she immediately falls pregnant'. She personally believed that every woman has a snake that develops when they grow. When the time is right, the snake gets activated and when one meets a male person, it starts biting. The respondent indicated how impatient she was to see her snake one day, not to mention her sister's that bites at once. It happened that she had a walk with her sister, unfortunately, she could not see the snake coming out to bite all the men they met. The snake never appeared before her but later when she became an adult, she got to know what was meant by the idiom. This emphasises the point that the understanding of an idiom is important in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. Only if the respondent knew that the expression used was idiomatic, she would have not been worried of the snake that never existed.

The fact that idioms are language specific creates a huge challenge for the translator in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. The translator should have a clear understanding of the meaning of the idiom and fixed expression in order to find the closest equivalent in the target language. In the case where there is no equivalent, it is still the same understanding of the idiom that will guide the translator on which translation strategy would be proper for the correct translation of such an idiom.

(c) Lack of understanding of the idiom by the translator

The third sub-theme that emerges from the theme factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions is lack of understanding of an idiom by the translator. In

this sub-theme, the translation problems that are experienced as a result of the translator's lack of understanding of idioms are discussed.

Respondents aver that one of the problems that lead to mistranslation of idioms and fixed expression is the translator's lack of understating of what is meant by the idiom or fixed expression. It is important to understand the idiom or fixed expressions before one can try to translate it. If there is no understanding of what is meant by the idiom or the fixed expression, the whole translation process becomes useless. For instance:

(39)

SL: *Makhulu ndi tshiulu ri tamba ri tshi gonya.*

GL: Grandparent is anthill we play AGR climbing-over-it.

TL: Wisdom comes with age, elderly people will always understand and accommodate the young ones.

The above idiom means that it is easy to relate with grandparents because they are easy going and caring. However, it is not easy to get the meaning from this idiom. The use of the word *makhulu* in the idiom above brings about a challenge in the expression more especially if one tries to single out words in order to get the meaning. In Tshivenda, *makhulu*, can refer to maternal grandparents, paternal grandparents, uncle's wife (uncle referring to brother to one's mother) and the in-laws. One observes that the translator is faced with an idiom but it is something else to understand its correct meaning. After the discovery of an idiom, the translator is still required to translate the meaning with full understanding of what it means. Another example is:

(40)

SL: *Muḽa khulu u ya fhinduwa.*

GL: Big eater AGR is wakes-up-earlier.

IE: Early bird catches the worm.

TL: Some things are better done on time.

Muḽa khulu u ya fhinduwa does not suggest that there is only one opportunity; rather it means there are plenty of opportunities, but for the sake of the idiom one plays along, and imagines that there is only one opportunity or the first opportunity is the best. Alternatively, the figurative translation of this phrase is that the most attentive and smart

individual, or perhaps the hardest working or most opportunistic receives the most desirable opportunity. The idiom ‘early bird catches the worm’ means almost the same as ‘the sooner the better’. One can say ‘the sooner the better’ when referring to the fact that something should be done as soon as possible. Ultimately, the understanding of this idiom depends on one’s interpretation and the accurate meaning will be determined by one’s understanding and knowledge of idioms. In contrast to the aforementioned idiom, the idiom below denotes the opposite:

(41)

SL: *Ṭhāvḥanyedza i ḵa mbudzi tsalela i ḵa kholomo.*

GL: Earliest AGR eats goat last-one AGR eats cow.

IE: Save best for the last.

TL: It is best to wait than rushing into things.

Ṭhāvḥanyedza i ḵa mbudzi tsalela i ḵa kholomo suggests that there are many opportunities in life and therefore there is no need to hurry for anything. Those who do things in a rush do not receive full benefits as compared to the ones who work patiently. Both idioms in (40 and 41) are used in Tshivenda, but their meanings are different. The use of such idioms depends on the speaker’s intentions and thus the context of use plays an important role. On the one hand, this denotes the fact that there are instances where one should rush or be quick in taking action and on the other hand there are times where relaxing or practicing patience is the best thing to do. However, the translator should know when and where the idioms are supposed to be used. A similar example is provided below in (42):

(42)

SL: Ndi Madele mapfani (Synonyms: *Vhurukhu na bannda / Khii na ganzhe*).

GL: Is good understand-each-other.

IE: To get along (Synonym: a hand and a glove)

TL: They understand each other very well.

The idiomatic expression *ndi madele mapfani* means ‘to get along’ in English. The equivalent ‘to get along’ can be said to have two meanings, it could either refer to two or more people that get along, that they have a friendly relationship, or ‘to get along’, in order to progress in something, one is doing (Longman, 2001).

Consequently, there is a slight difference between Tshivenda and English idioms. The English expression “to get along” has two meanings whereas *Madele mapfani* has one meaning only which simply means that people get along very well. The synonym ‘a hand and a glove’ can only apply when one talks about ‘to get along’ as in two or more people get along, they have a friendly relationship. However, a translator with a limited understanding of the expression would understand it as ‘good together’. In Tshivenda, there is also an expression, *Khii na ganzhe or Vhurukhu na bannda*, with a similar meaning as ‘to get along’. It is likely that the Tshivenda translator might get only one meaning from the English idiom ‘to get along’. This can affect the translation process because one will not be sure as to which meaning is intended by the speaker because the understanding will be based on the one meaning that occurs in Tshivenda. This emphasises the point that it is important to fully understand the idiom or fixed expression for the accurate translation to be delivered.

When a translator fails to understand the idiom, it is akin to the doctor who prescribes the wrong medicine to the patient. The consequences could be very dire.

4.3.2 Theme 2: The impact of literal translation in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda

Not all idioms have direct equivalents in another language, because there are linguistic expressions which are typical for a language and specific to a single culture. It is impossible to define any unique approach in the translating process since so many idioms are culturally specific and thus, the pragmatic meaning must be much more valued than the literal meaning. If idioms are to be translated literally or word for word, they lead to extreme confusion. The literal translation of idioms and fixed expressions hardly helps the target readership. As already alluded to, the meaning of idioms and fixed expressions cannot be deduced from the individual words but the expression as a whole. “The literal translation problems are based on the fact that the words in an idiom should not be translated literally; these (idioms) are never translated word for word” (Newmark, 1988:125). It has also been emphasised by Larson (1984:20), that: “the real danger comes in translating an idiom literally, since the result will usually be nonsense in the receptor language”.

Most of the respondents agreed that the literal translation negatively affects the translation process. Literal translation is detrimental as it means that the meaning will be lost. For example:

(43)

SL: *U tshina ngoma.*

GL: To dance drum.

TL: To be initiated.

The meaning of this idiom in (43) above is far from dancing to the drum. It refers to a situation where one goes to an initiation school (either a male or female). The expression can also be used to refer to someone who has ancestral calling and is undergoing the process of connecting him/her with his/her ancestors. The whole process is called *u thwasa*. It is also known as *u tshina ngoma*. The literal translation which is 'to dance to the drum' denotes a totally different meaning that does not give a clue towards what the expression means. It messes up the translation leading to the new message or meaning being delivered incorrectly in the target language.

It is important to know that just like a scientist, a translator should be a qualified person who knows what is expected of him/her and what to avoid throughout the translation process. Translation is a profession and not everyone who can speak the language can translate. One of the issues a translator should be aware of is that idioms are translated as collective words. This understanding on its own rules out the issue of literal translation. For instance:

(44)

SL: *Ho bikwa nga khulu.*

GL: It's cooked with big.

TL: There is death in the family.

The meaning of the idiom in (21) above has very little to do with the size of the pot. The researcher believes that the idiom was formulated after the realisation that when there is a death case in the family, people come in large numbers to mourn and support the family members throughout the bereavement period. Therefore, the family that is faced with a death case resorts to using a big pot to prepare food so that everyone who visits

the family will be fed. It was on this basis that the idiom was formed. However, people can always cook with a big pot in different occasions but one cannot say *ho bikwa nga khulu* because this expression is used specifically in a death case. This implies that that literal translation can negatively affect the translation process. The translation process also depends on the translator's level of education and level of understanding of the idioms.

Respondent A11 alluded that:

Good translation depends on the level of education and level of understanding the translator has. One can get a wrong message since idioms use hidden language. E.g. *ndi do ni huvhadza*. (I will injure you/ I will destroy you) but in a game, it simply means that I will do my best to win (I will win). The idiomatic meaning is always deeper than that what one can find on the surface. The skill is more important because one will know how to handle the issues and cultural concepts. Language competency becomes handy. People do fight at times unnecessarily because of the lack of understanding.

From the above presented quotation, the respondent used an idiom for illustration:

(45)

SL: *Ndi do ni huvhadza*.

GL: I will you injure.

IE: To break a leg.

TL: To do outmost best for one to win.

Ndi do ni huvhadza is commonly used in sports by the opposing team. Its idiomatic meaning is that 'I will do my best to win the game' or 'to come out victorious' (I will win). The idiomatic meaning is deeper than what one can find on the surface. The translator's level of education and skill are more important because one will know how to handle the issues where cultural concepts prevail. Indeed, the misunderstanding of this idiom can lead into unnecessary fights at times where the meaning is grasped as referring to "I will injure you'.

Respondent A13 proposed that literal context affects the translation process because one may read the idiom on the surface level, which leads to loss of translation. He further suggested that:

What is regarded as an idiom might have a literal meaning elsewhere or in the same language. Literal understanding of an idiom can affect its translation. One needs to be careful when using an idiom. Idioms must not be analysed from the surface level. Idioms are being misinterpreted mostly by those naive people. For example, people on radio use idioms in a wrong context and it goes to vulnerable listeners who believe everything that is said on radio is pure. Radio is considered to be pure and it can be wrongly influencing the use of language.

To illustrate this, the following example is in order:

(46)

SL: *Yo wa nga lunanga.*

GL: It fell by horn.

TL: Come, let us celebrate.

The respondent claimed that the above-mentioned idiom has been improperly used by many people in the communities and even on the radio stations. The expression *yo wa nga lunanga* calls for celebration where there is plenty of offerings, especially food (meat) where people can eat, drink and enjoy themselves. However, people tend to interpret the message at a literal level wherein the expression is used to show pain and sorrow. The respondent alluded that he has on numerous times heard the expression being used in a death case in different languages (*Yo wa nga lunanga* (in Tshivenda), *Yi wile hi rhimondo* (in Xitsonga) and *I wele ka lenaka* (in Northern Sotho) where people associate the falling of the cow by the horn and the pain of death of a prominent person. The literal interpretation of an idiom drives away an important meaning of an idiom that the speaker intends to share.

The foregoing discussion evidently shows that literal translation has a huge impact on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. It is of utmost importance for the translator to know and recognise the idiom during the translation process. This would immensely assist the translator to avoid literal translation that denotes irrelevant meaning of the idiom.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Major problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expression between Tshivenda and English

This theme is based on the question which the researcher asked the respondents. The question asked was: What are the major challenges encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English? From this theme, the following subthemes emerged:

- (i) The ambiguity of idioms;
- (ii) Idioms express meaning at a literal level;
- (iii) Idioms do not exist in the target language; and
- (iv) The frequency of use of an idiom.

(a) Ambiguity of the idioms

The first sub-theme that emerged from the major theme is that the ambiguity of idioms causes translation problems. This sub-theme looks at how ambiguity causes translation problems in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. Ambiguity is the presence of two or more possible meanings in a single passage. It occurs in a word, phrase, or statement which contains more than one meaning (Norquist, 2015). It can be seen that idiomatic expressions appear to vary with respect to compositionality, in other words, the degree to which the literal meanings of their constituent words contribute to their overall figurative meaning (Tabossi, Arduino, & Fanari 2011; Gibbs et al., 1989, Titine & Connine, 1999).

Respondent A16 argued that mistranslation can be caused by a situation where an expression has two meanings (ambiguity), one being literal and the other being idiomatic. If a translator is not aware of this, he/she is likely to fail to achieve the purpose of translating. Ambiguity can also appear in idiomatic expressions. This occurs when the idiom used has two idiomatic meanings. For one to know which meaning to follow, the idiom needs to be analysed based on the context of use. For instance:

(47)

ST: *U vha na mulenzhe.*

GL: To have a leg.

TL: He/she walks a lot.

The idiom *u na mulenzhe* is a common idiom in Tshivenda. However, the meaning of this idiom varies depending on the context of use. As indicated in the example above, *u na mulenzhe* means that one walks a lot. This can be used to refer to someone who is always travelling. Nevertheless, the idioms *u na mulenzhe* can also be used to indicate that one is suffering from a leg illness or one has a leg that is painful as a result of an injury. The two instances are completely different and require one to be familiar with the context in which they are used. There is, of course, no denial that ambiguity causes problems in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. Another relevant example is:

(48)

SL: *U na ito.*

GL: He/she has eye.

TL: He/she is good in choice of things.

Respondent A1 highlighted that for one to realise that he/she is dealing with an idiom, it does not mean that they will automatically understand the meaning intended by the speaker. It is one thing to recognise the idiom but the understanding of the idiom comes with its own price. *U na jito* appears to be an idiom that one can easily understand. This idiom can be used to refer to someone who is good in making life choices; it can be a good choice in clothes, cars, and more. Nevertheless, the same idiom can be used to indicate that one's eye is injured. How could one identify the meaning intended by the speaker? The context will always guide one to interpret the idiom accordingly. There are many idioms that are ambiguous in Tshivenda. The more the ambiguous idioms are in Tshivenda the bigger the problem to the translator. One of the examples is:

(49)

SL: *U na gunwe.*

GL: One has thumb.

TL: One is a thief.

This kind of idiom is mostly used when the speaker tries to be secretive. In this instance, the message gets across without the awareness of the person the speaker is talking about. *U na gunwe* has both literal and figurative meanings. The literal meaning is that one has a thumb which is a natural thing (inalienable possession). However, the

figurative meaning of this expression requires to be disambiguated. The first figurative meaning of this expression is that 'one is a thief'. In this instance, the speaker is alerting other people that there is a thief amongst us. The second figurative meaning is that someone has a painful or injured eye. It seems reasonable to claim that if the translator cannot realise that the idiom used is ambiguous, the whole translation process will be in vain. It takes one to have the understanding of a language and its culture for one to be able to realise that the idiom in use is ambiguous. It further requires total understanding of what the idiom means in two different figurative expressions.

(b) Idioms have meaning at a literal level

The second sub-theme that emerged from the major theme is that idioms have meaning at a literal level. This theme addresses the literal meaning of an idiom as a translation problem in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. Baker (1992) writes that idioms may be used in both literal and idiomatic sense at the same time. In this case, if the target-language idiom does not correspond to the source language idiom in its form and meaning, then it is hard to make a play of words and transfer the meaning.

Respondent C3 argued that the fact that some idioms have meaning at a literal level poses a challenge to the translator. The translator is more likely to take the meaning that appears to be the simplest one. In most cases, the meaning that comes first to the translator is the literal meaning. As regards the literal meaning, the translator translates the words as they are without looking at the probabilities of the second meaning that might be attached to the idiom. This questions the translator's experience. Experience and the knowledge of idioms also count in this instance because one's knowledge will dictate one's realisation of the idiom. For instance:

(50)

a. SL: *U vha na tshivhindi.*

GL: To have a liver.

TL: To be brave.

- b. SL: *Uḽa damba*.
GL: To eat damba. (Vegetable)
TL: To lack food.

- c. SL: *Uḽa mavhele*.
GL: To eat mealies.
TL: To be drunk.

(c) Lack of equivalence between languages

The third sub-theme that emerged from the major theme is that there is often lack of equivalence between languages. In this sub-theme, the problem of lack of equivalence between languages as a translation problem in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is discussed. Translation is considered as an activity of transferring meaning from one language to another. A written or spoken SL text will be exchanged by its equivalent written or spoken TL text. Nevertheless, in most cases, one cannot find the proper equivalent idiom for some of the SL idioms in the TL. Languages contain concepts which differ radically from those of another, since each language organises the world differently. When one compares languages, it can be noted that different cultures have identified similar social observations and according to their knowledge and experience then coin their own phrases. So one can conclude that the disparity among languages is problematic for translators and the more different the concepts of languages are, the more difficult it is to transfer idiomatic meanings from one language to the other (Culler, 1976).

Respondents agreed that lack of equivalent idioms between languages is a huge problem that faces the translator in the translation of idioms between Tshivenda and English. Lack of equivalent idioms pushes the translator to create strategies that can get the message across. If the equivalent idiom existed, the translation process would be easy because one would just swap the idiom in the SL with the idiom in the TL. Unfortunately, there is more that the translator is required to do in order to get the message across due to the lack of equivalent idioms between languages. The way or strategy that the translator employs do not guarantee the accurate meaning of the SL idiom in the TL. However, it tries to give the closest meaning possible to the TT readership.

Respondent G1 remarked that:

The words in languages are not the same. English is rich in words and some English words [do] not exist in Tshivenda. There [are] challenges because idioms are [a] specialised form of language. The idiom or expression does not mean what it appears to.... [little] understanding is needed. Idioms cannot be translated from individual words. Idiom must be understood as a whole. Lack of words that means the same between the two languages that makes one to struggle. Idioms have cultural words that lacks exact equivalent [sic].

The point that the respondent raised is that some idioms that exist in one language do not necessarily exist in the other. That on its own is a major problem to the translator who has the responsibility of transplanting the meaning of idioms from one language to the other. It cannot be denied that two languages that do not share a common culture cannot substitute each other in instances where idioms are used.

Furthermore, Respondent A1 argued that:

The problem lies with the relationship between the two languages; English has its own idioms and [that is different from Tshivenda]. The two languages cannot be compared on parallel terms. The interpretation at some stage might not be exactly as the idiomatic expression requires the accuracy in the explanation. [Tshivenda might run short of the words that will be the exact equivalent of a word in the SL]. The gap between two languages is the main problem.

It is incontestable that language and culture are not easy to separate. Therefore, language depends on the culture and the way in which idioms are presented in a language is a reflection of the culture of such a language. Cultures are not the same and the idioms cannot be the same between two cultures. Some of the idioms that exist in Tshivenda may not exist in English. This is because the two languages have two different cultural backgrounds. For instance:

(51)

SL: *U hoha mpasi.*

GL: To pull mpasi.

TL: To smoke dagga.

This is a Tshivenda idiom that means 'to smoke dagga'. The meaning of an idiom might be easily understood in Tshivenda but the idiom *u hoha mpasi* does not exist in English. Some of the words such as *mpasi* that build this idiom do not exist in English. That makes it difficult for one to guess the meaning because if one cannot understand the idiomatic meaning of the idiom, one must at least understand the individual words that might give an idea of what is meant by the idiom. In this instance, there is no relationship between the pulling of *mpasi* and the actual meaning of the idiom. From the above example, one can realise that zero equivalence is a serious problem that a translator is faced with in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. Another example is:

(52)

SL: *A dzo ngo vhuya dzothe*.

GL: They are not back all.

TL: He/she is mad.

A dzo ngo vhuya dzothe is one of the common idioms that are used in Tshivenda. This idiom is used to refer to someone who appears to be insane. The literal meaning of a *dzo ngo vhuya dzothe* is 'they are not all back'. The idiom is culturally based because it refers to cattle that have not all come back to the kraal. In such an instance, this resembles social disorder because cattle are regarded as a treasure among the Vhavenda people. One will, of course, if not well-versed in Tshivenda culture, ask what exactly those things that are not all back are. It is indeed difficult to figure out the meaning of this idiom. To make the matter worse, this idiom does not exist in English. There is no equivalent idiom of a *dzo ngo vhuya dzothe* that can be used to share the same meaning in English as it is in Tshivenda. This requires one's understanding of this idiom in order for him/her to know the way in which the meaning can be presented in the target language, that is, English.

Respondent A1 pointed out that:

Lack of direct equivalent idiom[s] in the target language is the biggest problem that the translator can face in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. It is worse if the translation is done between languages that have complete different cultures such as English and Tshivenda. E.g. 'make hail [hay] while the sun shines'. We don't have that idiom in Tshivenda, it can only mean that do things while you still have time....

there is no direct equivalent, In Tshivenda we have *la u tavela u li ore* is partial[ly] equivalent but not [a] direct one. The English one refers to making preparation while you still have time and the Tshivenda one means that one must enjoy it while it lasts. [The]Tshivenda one is used to *u holedza muthu ane a khou ita zwithu zwine zwa do disa masiandaitwa a si avhudi* (to scorn a person who is doing wrong.) The meaning is not the same.

However, the idiom suggested by the above respondent which is 'make hail [hay] while the sun shines' has a closest equivalent in Tshivenda which is *Ngoma madzula wo vhamba musu wa mmbi a u dizwi*.

Translation of idioms and fixed expressions would be simple if it was simply about replacing an idiom and fixed expression from the SL with idioms and fixed expressions with their equivalents in the TL. It is indeed a challenge to translate between two languages that do not have much in common culturally. It becomes a huge problem when the translation involves the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. Let us pay attention to the following example:

(53)

SL: *Ho tangana gwagwagwa na gwagwagwa*.

TL: Two people with the same behaviour (that like arguing) have met.

The respondent asked a rhetorical question which is 'How can one deal with the translation of this idiom?' The first challenge here is that the word *gwagwagwa* does not have a clear explanation of its meaning in the SL. If one at least understands what *gwagwagwa* is, maybe he/she would have some light on what is meant by the idiom. The idiom as a whole does not exist in the target language and the translator is expected to translate it even if he/she might not understand it in the SL. At times, the translator might understand the idiom in the SL but fail to get the equivalent idiom in the TL that will deliver the same meaning as it is in the SL idiom. This leaves the translator with a serious challenge to deal with. It is evident that lack of equivalent idioms in the target language is a serious problem in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. Another example in this regard is as follows:

(54)

SL: *A ri na maṭo*.

GL: We don't have eyes.

TL: We don't have money to buy what one is selling.

A ri na maṭo simply means that 'we do not have money to buy what one is selling'. This can be said when one is avoiding to say that 'I am not interested in what you are selling'. It is actually a polite way of saying 'I am not interested' but the excuse used here is lack of money. This idiom is commonly used in Tshivenda and is well understood. However, this idiom does not have an equivalent in English. One can only try to explain the meaning with a lengthy explanation because the idiom only exists in the SL. It seems reasonable to claim that among many problems that the translator encounters in the translation of the idioms and fixed expressions, the issue of lack of equivalents is the biggest problem that the translator has to deal with.

In his turn, Respondent E2 views that:

Since languages and cultures differ, translating idioms and fixed expressions will always present challenges to translators, one of the major challenge is lack of equivalence in the target language, and you may find that an idiom might exist in the source language but it doesn't in the target language. And again failing to recognize a fixed expression or an idiom can also be part of the challenges because it hinders the translators to perform his duties.

However, the translation process is one of the most challenging activities in relation to finding the equivalent words in the target language. An example would be, while translating idioms and fixed expressions, one may come across more than one cultural obstacle for which one must overcome. Among these cultural obstacles, there is an issue of idioms that do not have equivalents in the target language. Through idioms, different cultures can express social, economic, and also political characteristics. Some of these idioms were invented during ancient times. Be that as it may, they are applicable in our daily conversations; they may still be considered up to date even if some of things they refer to are no longer exist. The translator is expected to find a creative but rather culturally relevant way of conveying the same expression that lacks the equivalent in the TL. This is where the translation skills become handy along with the cultural knowledge of the languages.

(d) Frequency of use of an idiom

The fourth sub-theme that emerged from the major theme is the frequency of use of an idiom. This sub-theme discusses how frequency of use of an idiom affects the translation of idioms between Tshivenda and English. The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages (Baker, 1992).

The use of idioms makes a language to sound very creative. Using the literal language sounds very common and appears to be lack of creativity. Often good writers use idiomatic expressions. This is meant to make the familiar become 'defamiliar' to promote literariness (Ryan; 1999). However, it appears that people tend to understand the idioms that are frequently used. There are plenty of idioms but only a few are understood by many people. This creates a problem in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions more especially between Tshivenda and English.

Respondent C5 noted that:

There is a challenge when the translator fails to find or recognise the idioms because they are not constantly used [on a] day to day basis so the translator ends up concluding that the idiom does not exist. Such kind [of] challenge can be considered to be an ignorance. There is no really a challenge because we are the creator of it [sic].

This view is mistaken because the point that the respondent is making is that some of the idioms are not familiar to people because they are not frequently used. It is true that some idioms are easy to recognise and understand than others because they are frequently used. However, like any other subject, idioms need to be learned. If one puts effort in learning idioms and fixed expressions, he/she is more likely to be familiar with them and get to know their meanings and usage. It is the translator's responsibility to get equip him or herself through learning.

4.3.4 Theme 4: The impact of culture in the translation process

This theme is based on the question which the researcher asked the respondents. The question asked was: Scholars contend that culture and translation are not easy to separate. What is your opinion in this regard when taking into account the translation of

idioms and fixed expressions? In this theme, discussions that indicate that culture has an impact on the translation process come under attention.

Newmark (1998) views culture as the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression thereby acknowledging that each language group has its own culturally specific features. From Newmark's definition of culture, one can realise the way in which things are done differently from one culture to the other. The way in which things are done in Tshivenda differ from English and that also affect the formation and use of idioms. For instance, respect can be shown in different ways between Tshivenda and English. In Tshivenda, people sit down or kneel down as a symbol of total respect whereas standing up or giving standing ovation is a sign of total respect in western culture. Furthermore, keeping eye contact is encouraged in Western culture as it symbolises being confident and paying attention whereas it is condemned in Tshivenda culture (it symbolises disrespect and lack of manners). Without knowledge of both cultures (of the SL and TL), the translator is deemed to translate out of context.

Respondents agreed that translation becomes a difficult task to undertake because one has to translate both meaning and culture from one language into the other language. Culture is one of the problems that leads to mistranslation. A number of problems may be raised in cross-cultural translation. If one is not familiar with the culture of both ST and TT, the translation will be in vain. Thus, the difference between languages and culture poses a great challenge as far as translation is concerned. According to Yowelly and Lataiwish (2000:107), "the greater the cultural distance between the source culture and target culture, the more the translator will need to bridge the gap". Translation between Tshivenda and English which belong to two different cultures (Western and African cultures) exemplifies clearly the aforesaid difficulty.

Therefore, one can conclude that the differences in the languages is the main problem for translators because the more different the concepts of languages are, the more difficult it is to transfer messages from one language to the other. Among the troublesome factors involved in the process of translation is the transference of form, meaning and style of idioms and fixed expressions. This is because of the cultural gap between the source language and the target language.

Respondent A1 views that culture plays vital role in the translation of the idioms and the fixed expressions. In order to have the accurate translation, one need to have the knowledge of such language he is translating from because idioms are cultural based. Without the knowledge of the culture, the interpretation of the meaning might lead to the mistranslation.

Larson (1998) states that one of the most difficult problems in translating is found in the differences between cultures, the source language culture and that of the target language. "Different cultures have different focuses. When cultures are similar, there is less difficulty in translating. This is because both languages will probably have terms that are more or less equivalent for various aspects of the culture. When cultures are very different, it is often very difficult to find equivalent items" (Larson, 1998:150). The same difficulties that Larson (1998) talks about appear between Tshivenda and English.

Tshivenda prefers euphemising most of the words that use body parts whereas the case is different in English. For instance:

(55)

SL: *U vhona ñwedzi.*

GL: To see moon.

TL: To menstruate.

It is taboo in Tshivenda for one to say 'one is menstruating'. It is considered immoral and disrespectful. Instead, one should say *u khou vhona ñwedzi* or *u maḍuvhani* (it literally means that one is on days). The idiom *u vhona ñwedzi* euphemises 'to menstruate'. As pointed out above, it is considered immoral and disrespectful to mention that one is menstruating in Tshivenda, hence the euphemism in the idiom. Once again, this argument is supported by the skopos theory, which considers the importance of translation based on its function or purpose. The theory is concerned with the translation of results that will deliver the correct meaning to the target audience. The translator has to take into account the requirement given by the commissioner in the translation brief. In a nutshell, the aim is to convey the message from the source language to the target language as clearly and as unambiguously as possible. The whole process of translation must focus on fulfilling the final expectations. In other words, the end justifies the means (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984:101).

(56)

SL: U swaswa.

GL: To joke.

TL: To lie. (This shows respect for an elderly person)

Furthermore, one cannot tell an elderly person in Tshivenda that he/she is lying about something, but one should say *vha khou swaswa*. Therefore, one needs to stick to cultural values when translating and it is for this reason that the researcher believes that culture and translation are not easy to separate. Another example in this regard is as follows:

(57)

SL: *U zwa*.

TL: To speak. (With special reference to a king)

In Tshivenda culture, there is a specific code that is used in a royal family. Things are said in a different way even if it is in the same language. Accordingly, one needs to be careful when translating a document that talks about a royal family. Tshivenda culture does not allow one to say *vhamusanda vha ri...* (The chief said...) rather, one should say *mavu vho zwa* which is *Luambo lwa musanda* (a Tshivenda royal code) that is used only for the royal family. It cannot be denied that one needs to be familiar with the culture of both the SL and the TL in order to make an accurate translation.

Culture and translation cannot be separated more especially when one is dealing with idioms. One must be able to understand the culture in order to get the idioms and fixed expressions right. Many cultural customs are described in ordinary language, where literal translation would distort the meaning. This brings us to the conclusion that cultural terms (more especially idioms and fixed expressions) are words, phrases or expressions used by members of certain cultures to express their concepts about something closely related to their culture. Furthermore, each and every language has a specific way of presenting idioms and fixed expressions since they are culturally bound. Without the knowledge of the culture, the interpretation of the meaning might lead to a mistranslation. For example:

(58)

SL: *Zwanda mafhini*.

GL: Hands in-milk.

TL: To ask for forgiveness.

Literally, *zwanda mafhini* means that 'hands in the milk'. Milk is pure, white and clean. One cannot just put his hands in the milk because one will spoil it. But the essence of putting the hand in the milk is that if someone has been wronged, and allows hands to be put in the milk, it would signify forgiveness. This is because it purifies the offender since milk is pure, it is considered that the wrong acts are washed with the pure milk. So in this regard, the understanding of culture is needed in order to get a clear understanding of the idiom. When one translates the language, one translates the culture of a particular language to the culture of the target language. If one is translating, he or she will pay attention to what is expected in the TL culture and avoid what is considered to be taboo or offensive.

4.3.5 Theme 5: The role of context in translation

This theme is based on the question which the researcher asked the respondents, that is: What is the role of context (readers, intention of the author and the text, theme, style) in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions in Tshivenda and English? In this theme, the role that the literal translation plays in the translation of idiom and fixed expressions is discussed.

The way in which idioms have to be translated depends on the context in which they are used. There are different and various translation strategies available for the translator, but the translator should determine which kind of these strategies can help the target language readers to better comprehend the meaning of the idioms. When translating a source idiom, the translator should be conscious of the sense. Fernando & Flavell (1981:82) expressed that "there is strong unconscious urge in most translators to search hard for an idiom in the receptor language, however inappropriate it may be".

Respondent A13 remarked that the understanding of context comes in as one of the biggest problem in the translation process. As a matter of fact, one can utter an idiom or fixed expression in a wedding and that might mean a different thing at a funeral. This

point emphasises that context plays a vital role in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. For example:

(59)

SL: *Hu khou fhisa.*

GL: It is hot.

TL: It is tough

Literally, the idiom in (59) above will simply mean 'the sun is hot' or 'the temperature is high'; but one can say *hu khou fhisa Yunivesithi ya Limpopo* meaning that there is a strike or difficulties at the University of Limpopo. However, the same idiom can be used to refer to a bad situation in families. When presented as *hu khou fhisa miṭani*, it would mean that a couple is at loggerheads.

In Mezmaz' (2010) study, the findings show that the context of use helps a lot of students of English to guess the appropriate meaning of idioms. Without the understanding of context, the translation is more likely not to be user-friendly. In Tshivenda, idioms and fixed expressions can have more than one meaning depending on its use in different contexts. To elaborate this, an example is given below:

(60)

SL: *U na ṭhoho*

GL: One has head.

TL: Sickness: he is suffering from head ache.

Idiomatic: to be a great thinker.

Teasing: His head is big.

Food: He has a head of a cow.

The examples above seem to have a straight forward meaning which is to have a head. On close reading, one observes that there are different meanings attached to *u na ṭhoho* and whose interpretations require someone with an in-depth knowledge of Tshivenda language in order to understand the context of use. The first meaning suggests sickness. It means "to have a head-ache". The second meaning denotes someone as a great thinker or who can plan well. The third meaning is that one has a big head in size. The latter interpretation is commonly used when teasing someone. The fourth one is

used to indicate possession. In this case, the head is that of an animal that serves as food. In order to arrive at the correct meaning of the fixed expression, the translator must be familiar with the situation or context in which the expression is used. This is because one expression can be used in different contexts resulting in different meanings. Using the example given above, *u na thoho* can be used to refer to multiple meanings as already indicated. The same applies to the following idiom:

(61)

SL: *U na mbilu.*

GL: One has heart.

TL: One is tolerant.

The expression above can refer to someone who is tolerant. It can as well mean that one has a heart disease as well as that one is very fond of other people's food. The literal meaning is that one has a heart organ as it is expected of anyone. The expression is commonly used and this may tempt the translator to translate it literally while the intended meaning is an idiomatic one. In this regard, the knowledge of culture and context would play a huge role. Translators must know the linguistic boundaries that exists between the two languages in order to deliver the appropriate meaning.

Respondent A1 posed a rhetorical question stating that if context is not important in translation, how would one translate the expression *u na nđevhe*. It is difficult to figure out the relevant meaning of an idiom without understanding the context of its use. Context navigates the translator to the right destination. The connotations of *u na nđevhe* are as follows:

(62)

U na nđevhe. (Big ears)

U na nđevhe. (One is sick; one is suffering from an ear)

U na nđevhe. (One is a good listener)

The expression *u na nđevhe* can also be presented in a negative way, that is; *ha na nđevhe*. It implies that one does not have big ears, or one is in good health (is not suffering from ear pain) or one is not good in listening. In order to interpret the idiom correctly, one is required to be familiar with the applicable context.

Respondents agreed that context is an important element of the translation process because different settings present different meanings. For instance:

(63)

SL: *Nwana wa mbevha ha hangwi mukwita.*

GL: Baby of mouse does-not forget way-of-rats.

TL: People are more likely to behave the same way as their parents.

IE: Like father like son.

The above example means that a baby mouse does not forget its parents' footsteps. The action can be executed literally but the figurative expression is not far from the literal one though. Idioms use one thing to mean the other but in some cases, the literal meaning is closest to the figurative one. The meaning cannot be derived from the individual words of the idiom. In the example above, the literal meaning and the figurative one do not correspond. A correct translation needs someone with an in-depth knowledge of that particular language and the understanding of the context in which that particular idiom is used.

4.3.6 Theme 6: The translation methods and strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English

This theme is based on the question which the researcher asked the respondents. The question asked was: Which methods and strategies can be used effectively in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English? This theme answers the question by discussing methods and strategies that can be employed to effectively translate the idiom and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. From this theme, the following sub-themes emerged: translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and form, translation by idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form, translation by paraphrase, translation by omission, translation by a superordinate term and translation by cultural substitution.

What has been observed from the respondents is that they had different views about the question asked with regard to this theme. Some respondents seemed to be unaware of the translation strategies that can be employed to overcome the translation problems that one may encounter during the translation process. However, there are strategies at

the translator's disposal that can be employed in order to overcome problems in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English.

(a) Translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and form

The first sub-theme that emerged from the theme above relating to the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English is translation by using the idiom of a similar meaning and form. This strategy involves using an idiom in the target language consisting of equivalent lexical items, which conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the source-language idiom. By employing this method, the translator uses an idiom in the TL which has the identical figurative meaning, that is, containing the same image as in the source language idioms, and which preserves the same emotive, style and characteristics. This is in line with the linguistic theory of translation. The linguistic theory of translation focuses on the key issues of meaning or equivalence. It views the entire purpose of translation as achieving equivalence (Karavin n.d). In terms of this theory, the target text is expected to match the source text as fully as possible. In other words, the source text is viewed as a yard stick of the translation process.

Respondent 1 argued that:

Yes! It is possible to find the equivalent but is not often possible between English and Tshivenda. However, we have some [idioms] such as to throw a towel which *means u laṭa thawula* in Tshivenda. In this regard, [idiomatic expression must be used bearing in mind the context]. Here we use the idiom that is the same in structure and meaning in between both languages.

In the above quotation, the respondent argues that idioms are translatable, but this does not mean that all idioms have immediate equivalents in the target language. Some idioms have direct equivalents in the target language that share the same structure and meaning. For instance:

(64)

SL: *U laṭa thawula.*

GL: To throw towel.

TL: To throw in the towel.

The idiom *u laṭa thawula* is one of the most used idioms in Tshivenda, meaning to give up on something that one was pursuing. The study finds that this idiom has been driven from the original idiom which is *u laṭa tshovha* and it has now gained popularity as *u laṭa thawula*. Respondent 4 argued that this idiom has the same meaning as ‘to throw in the towel’ in English. Thus the English idiom is a direct equivalent of the Tshivenda example. The two have similar form and meaning. The example above makes it clear that some idioms have equivalent idioms in the target language with the same meaning and structure. If this was always the case, the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English would be easy to execute. The idioms *u laṭa thawula* and ‘to throw in the towel’ have the same meaning. Thus, the English idiom is a direct equivalent of the Tshivenda example. "This is what the linguistic theory of transaction recommends. "This is a linguistic translation that can be considered ‘faithful’, because it is one which only contains elements which can be directly derived from the ST wording, avoiding any kind of explanatory interpolation or cultural adjustment which can be justified on this basis” (Nida & Taber, 1969:134).

Respondent 8 discussed the following example:

(65)

SL: *U oma ṭhoho*.

GL: To harden head.

TL: To be hard-headed.

A person who is hard headed or *o oma ṭhoho* is someone who will not change their mind easily or who does not engage in reasoning. It is a person who has his/her mind set on something and who cannot easily change without an argument. The two idioms mean the same and their structures are the same. They use *u oma* (to be hard) and *ṭhoho* (head) to express or convey the meaning. This idiom reinforces the idea that idioms are translatable provided one has knowledge of relevant translation strategies. The translation of idioms using the idiom with the same meaning and structure in the target language is one of the translation strategies the translator can use to deal with translation problems.

(b) Translation by idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form

The second sub-theme that emerges from the theme above is translation by idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form. This strategy affords the translator an opportunity to bridge the gap created by the differences between languages. An example of an idiom in the target language which has a meaning similar to that of the source idiom or expression, but which consists of different lexical items is illustrated below:

(66)

SL: *U pwasha luṭanga.*

GL: To break bamboo-tree.

IE: To shake hands with a wife's best friend.

TL: To urinate.

The idiom *u pwasha luṭanga* has a synonym in Tshivenda which is *u kombodza mbevha*. These idioms mean to urinate. There are equivalent idioms in English that mean the same as *u pwasha luṭanga*. In this regard, one may mention idioms such as 'to squeeze a lemon', 'to have a golden shower', and 'to shake a hand with a wife's best friend'. It is interesting to see that there are plenty idioms in English that the translator can use to refer to *u pwasha luṭanga* in Tshivenda. The idiom in English contains the same meaning in Tshivenda. However, the idiom used in the target language, which is English in this instance, contains a different structure as compared to the structure of the idiom in the source language. This strategy pays attention to the meaningful equivalent in the TL that denotes the same meaning as the one in the SL. The attention is not on the SL as a yard stick of the translation process, but on finding the equivalent that is communicative in the target language. In terms of the skopos theory, the process of translation is determined by the function of the product. In other words, the aim is to make translation user friendly to the target users, unlike linguistic theories that strive to have a mirror image of a source language without taking into account differences in languages (Jawad, 2006). Another example:

(67)

SL: *Mulomo na lwanzhe u a wela.*

GL: Mouth and ocean it can cross.

IE: Actions speak louder than words.

TL: People's intentions can be judged better by what they do than what they say.

Mulomo na lwanzhe u a wela is an idiom that is used in Tshivenda to indicate that one can easily say or make promises because talking is easier than doing the actual action. This is the reason why the idiom indicates that the mouth can cross the ocean. This idiom has an English version that denotes the same meaning: 'actions speak louder than words'. This strategy requires the translator to really understand what is meant by the idiom in the SL for the precise meaning of the equivalent idiom in the TL.

(c) Translation by paraphrase

The third sub-theme that emerged from the theme relating to the translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English is translation by paraphrase. Paraphrase is one of the most common strategies in the translation of idioms. In the use of this kind of strategy, the translator transfers the meaning of an idiom using a group of words which roughly correspond to the meaning of the idiom but these words are not an idiom in themselves.

The respondents seemed more familiar with this strategy. In most instances, the respondents would refer to it as a way in which the translator can conquer the challenges experienced in the translation of the idioms and fixed expressions between two languages such as Tshivenda and English. Respondent 16 views:

Faithful translation and free translation methods can play a major role, and the one strategy that plays [a] key role in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is paraphrasing, this strategy allows translators to make use of an explanation in a case where there is non-equivalence.

Paraphrase is prompted by the lack or inappropriateness of TT equivalent idioms for stylistic reasons. However, this negatively affects the strength of the message and the meaning intended by the ST as it transfers the sense rather than the image. In addition, the use of paraphrase as a translation strategy has the disadvantage of losing quality and stylistic flavour of the ST text. The use of this strategy not only results in the reduction or loss of components of sense, but also the emotional or logical impact of the TT. The above mentioned idea is supported by the skopos theory; which maintains that translation does not necessarily have to aim for equivalence. The most important thing

is that the translation should achieve its purpose. This theory further views translation as a form of action which has its own aims, as opposed to the aims of the original text (Goodenough, 1964). For example:

(68)

SL: *Ho penga ngozwi.*

TL: The madness that a child is born with.

Ho penga ngozwi is an idiom that commonly used in Tshivenda to refer to a child whose behavior is unacceptable. Such behavior portrayed by a child is considered as madness that one can do nothing about it since the child attained it from birth. The explanation of the meaning of the idiom in a target language for the target text readers to understand the meaning of the word compromises the quality and the oomph that is carried out through the idiom used. However, the explanation provides an idea of what is meant by the idiom used in the ST. Common as it is, this strategy does not do justice to the ST. It dilutes the richness of the language that is in the ST because the depth and the richness of a language, among others, is found in the use of the figures of speech.

(d) Translation by omission

The fourth sub-theme that emerged from the theme about translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English is translation by omission. This strategy is used to completely omit the idiom from the target text where there is no close match between the items of the two languages. When the idiom is very difficult for the translator, one tries to eliminate the whole part of the idiom (Adelnia & Dastjerdi, 2011).

Translation by omission is referred to as a strategy that sometimes omit an idiom, leaving no traces in the target language. Omission is allowed first, when there is no close equivalent in the target language; secondly, when it is difficult to paraphrase; and finally, for stylistic reasons. This strategy is not used very frequently. In fact, it is not approved by many scholars, resulting in its exclusion as one of the translation strategies. Nevertheless, in the worst case, the translator may omit an idiom if it is not possible to translate it. One will then use a strategy by compensation, which involves putting an idiom in another place of the clause, thus preserving the stylistic effect of the source

text. Additionally, translators use this strategy when the idiom used is unknown to them and they cannot comprehend the meaning entailed in it. For instance:

(69)

SL: *U kokota tshidudu*

GL: To scrape earthenware-pot.

TL: To behave like one's mother.

U kokota tshidudu is an idiom that is not frequently used in Tshivenda. For this reason, the idiom is not known to many speakers. It is even difficult for one to guess the meaning of the idiom on the basis of its structure. The challenges are: (1) the idiom does not indicate that the earthenware pot belongs to a particular person where one can at least guess that it is related to that person; and (2) there is no element that indicates that the idiom is talking about behaviour. In contexts such as this one, the translator opts for omission as a translation strategy. However, this strategy leaves out the meaning that is carried by the idiom that can be handy for the target readership.

(e) Translation by a superordinate

The fifth sub-theme that emerges as one of the translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English is translation by superordinate. This strategy is used to solve the problem of non-equivalence across languages because the hierarchical structure of semantic fields is not language specific. This strategy involves translation by a more neutral and less expressive word. For example, if there is no direct equivalent for a particular SL item in the TL, the translator may use a more formal near equivalent. For example:

(70)

SL: *U fhufha murumba u sa athu lila.*

GL: To jump drum AGR before beat.

IE: To jump the gun.

TL: To be forward.

The idiom *u fhufha murumba u sa athu lila* is a less expressive idiom that generalises an unwelcomed behaviour that is portrayed by someone. It generally means that

someone has done something before the right time. However, the expression is not necessarily polite because it hides details of what one might have done before the time. In English, the closer equivalent will be ‘to jump the gun’. Nevertheless, ‘to jump the gun’ does not mean exactly what *u fhufha murumba u sa thu lila* means. *U fhufha murumba u sa athu lila* is a superordinate that means to be too forward. This strategy provides just a clue of what an expression means rather than providing the whole meaning of the said idiom.

(f) Translation by cultural substitution

The sixth sub-theme that emerged from the theme relating to translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English is translation by substitution. This strategy requires the replacement of a culture-specific item or expression with a TL one that has no exact meaning, but has an impact on the target reader (Lörscher, 1991). This strategy makes the translated text more natural, more understandable and more familiar to the target reader. The translator's decision to use this strategy will depend on the degree to which he/she is given license by the text commissioner. For instance:

(71)

SL: *U fhingula*.

TL: To commit an offence.

U fhingula is an idiom that is used to indicate that one has committed a punishable offence. It is commonly applied where by-laws (unwritten laws) are used. For instance, in the Tshivenda culture, it is expected of every community member to go and plough the chief's fields whenever following his instructions. If one fails to obey the order, it is considered a disgrace, hence the idiom *u fhingula*. Such a person is expected to pay a fine to the chief. In the Western culture, this can be compared to a situation where one is expected to execute a certain task that can be regarded as social expectation. For instance, a fine of R1000 can be set for someone who litters in the community. If a residents do not conduct themselves as socially expected, they will be prone to the fine set for the misconduct. In a nutshell, the punishment for *u fhingula* is more of a fine than imprisonment.

Another context in which *u fhingula* can take place is when uncles are visiting the bride's family (potential in-laws) for *lobola* negotiations. It is expected of them to stand by the gate until it is opened for them. They are not expected to enter the gate even if it is opened unless they are instructed to do so. If they enter without being instructed, they will be told that vho *fhingula* (they have transgressed), and there will be a fine for this misbehaviour to be paid before they start with the negotiations. This practice occurs mostly in African cultures. If the translation occurs between African and Western culture, the translator is expected to find a scenario in Western cultures that can represent the one in the African culture. In this strategy, the main purpose is to make the translated text to be more natural, understandable and familiar to the target reader. This ties in with the skopos theory. In terms of this theory, the recipient is the main factor determining the end product of the translation. Therefore, the translation is then a secondary offer of information about information originally offered in another language within another culture (Schaffner, 1998).

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has presented the analysis and interpretation of data that were collected through semi structured interviews. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse data as outlined in the methodology. The presentation and analysis of the data was done by means of generated themes to categorise patterns that are in line with the aim and the objectives of the study. Furthermore, six (6) themes that emerged from informants' responses have been discussed. For easier analysis and interpretation of the data, the chapter was divided into a number of themes and sub-themes.

Firstly, the chapter discussed the factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions as a first theme. Under this theme a number of sub-themes were generated and discussed. Secondly, the chapter looked at the impact of literal translation in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. This was fully explored. Thirdly, major problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English were examined. Fourthly, the chapter explored the impact of culture in the translation process. In the fifth place, the chapter paid attention to the role of context in translation.

Lastly, translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English were presented.

CHAPTER 5 : SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary, findings, recommendations and conclusion of the study. Firstly, the summary of the study is presented. Secondly, the findings are discussed. This is followed by the recommendations of the study. Lastly, the conclusion of the study is presented.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to explore factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. The main focus was to find the appropriate strategies that can be used to translate idioms and fixed expressions.

5.2.1 Chapter 1: Outline of the study

Chapter 1 is based on the outline of the study. In terms of the background, the definition of idioms is provided and discussed at length. The idea was to provide a clear definition of idioms as compared to other figures of speech. Definition of translation is given in terms of different authors. These provide insight into what translation is. The problem of zero-equivalence in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is discussed in this chapter. The link between translation, language and culture is also outlined. It is indicated that it is difficult to separate the three. The context on the use of idioms as an important aspect in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is discussed. Ambiguity of idioms in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is discussed. The chapter further discusses the convention and the frequency of use of idioms as one of the most important aspects in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions.

The research problem of this study is articulated in this chapter. The aim of the study, which is to explore the factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda, is also laid out in this chapter. Furthermore, the chapter presents the research questions as well as the objectives of the study. Translation theories relevant to this study are also discussed. This includes the linguistic theory as a basis of the skopos theory. The linguistic theory provides

insights of how translation used to be viewed in the past. The skopos theory is discussed as the main theory in the study. This theory contributes greatly to provide insight of how translation should be viewed. This theory views translation as a form of action which has its own aims as opposed to the aims of the original text. In terms of the skopos theory, the process of translation is determined by the function of the product. In other words, the aim is to make the translation to be user-friendly to the target users unlike linguistic theories that strive to have a mirror image of a source language without taking into account differences in languages.

5.2.2 Chapter 2: Literature review

Relevant literature related to the research problems and the research questions is reviewed in the chapter. Relevant and important concepts that are reviewed include the concept of meaning, idioms as translation problems, features of idioms, classification of idioms, the processing of idioms, ambiguity of idioms, techniques used in the translation process, review of strategies used in the translation process and translation methods.

The reviewed literature reveals that there are plenty of problems that the translator comes across in the process of translating idioms and fixed expressions between two languages that do not share a common culture. It is revealed in this review that language and culture are two aspects that are difficult to separate. The literature review further reveals that culture plays an important role in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions since the idioms form a central part of language and culture.

Literature further suggests that when translating, the translator should pay more attention to the meaning of individual words that constitute the idiom. It is also suggested that the ambiguity of an idiom should not be taken for granted in the process of translating idioms and fixed expressions. Some idioms have more than one meaning. This may pose a huge challenge to the translator. Much of what is reviewed in terms of the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is that idioms are not really untranslatable. There are strategies and methods that can be employed to overcome translation problems that are encountered during the translation process.

5.2.3 Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 3 is about the research methodology that was used in the study. Qualitative research approach was used as the appropriate research approach of the study. This type of approach helps the researcher to understand people, and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. The approach was relevant to the study of translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda. It assisted the researcher to seek for detailed descriptions and to attain understanding of factors that cause problems in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions.

A descriptive research design was used in this study. The descriptive design was appropriate because it assisted the researcher to describe factors that lead to misinterpretation of idioms and fixed expressions. This is in line with Neumann's (2000:22) suggestion that "the descriptive design helps in giving the correct picture associated with the context under scrutiny". For the purpose of this study, the researcher selected non-probability sampling which gave the researcher the chance to select the right respondents for the study. A stratified purposive sampling was used. This type of sampling allowed the researcher to select respondents that were relevant to this study. They had the potential to contribute positively to the study. The study focused much on attitudes and opinions in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. This study collected extensive data about perceptions and opinions of language practitioners (teachers, lexicographers and lecturers) related to translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda through the semi-structured interview. Recordings were made to support and to backup evidence of the research. Open-ended questions were preferred. The researcher's intention and motivation in this study was to determine better strategies that can be used in dealing with problems encountered when translating idioms and fixed expressions.

5.2.4 Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis

Chapter 4 presents the analysis and interpretation of the data that were collected through semi-structured interviews. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse data as indicated in Chapter 3. The analysis of data was guided by the research questions. In this case, themes were generated to categorise patterns that are in line with the aim and the objectives of the study.

In the processing of data, the translation problems were identified and were grouped according to themes and sub-themes that were developed to integrate the main theme. The researcher gathered the materials for each theme, which were analysed accordingly. The themes that were identified in this study entail the factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions; the impact of literal translation in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions; major problems that are encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions; the impact of culture in the translation process; the role of context and the translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. The findings in this chapter show that idioms are translatable provided the translator uses relevant translation strategies. The issue of culture cannot be excluded in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions because idioms are culture-bound.

5.2.5 Chapter 5: Findings and recommendations

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the previous chapters that are chapter 1, 2, 3 and 4. This chapter also comments on the findings of the study and makes recommendations. It further provides the limitations of this study.

5.3 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Translation plays an important role in the use of two mutually unintelligible languages. It is a channel through which speakers exchange their cultural, scientific and literary achievements. Translation is not always easy as there are many factors that may impact negatively during the process. The use of idioms places culture at the centre of translation process since idioms are culture-based. Moreover, language and culture are difficult to separate. The findings and recommendations that are presented below are based on the themes that were analysed in Chapter 4.

5.3.1 Factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions

The study managed to identify factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms. Firstly, the study notes that idioms are language specific in nature. In other words, they are made up of language specific items that are not the same across languages. As a result, an idiom in Tshivenda is more likely to have words that are completely different from the words that constitute an equivalent idiom in English. Secondly, the study finds that failure to recognise idioms and fixed expressions leads to their misinterpretation. Literal translation is the main cause of the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions. Literal translation comes about as a result of failure to understand that one is dealing with an idiom. This results in the translator translating individual words and not the idiom as a whole. Usually the challenge is that some translators may not be aware that the meaning of an idiom can only be deduced from the idiom as a whole and not through the meaning of individual words. Lastly, the study observes that lack of understanding of an idiom by the translator results in the misinterpretation of idioms and fixed expressions.

It is recommended that the translator must learn and know the culture of both the source and target languages. The translator's knowledge of the two languages should be almost equal. This will assist the translator to comprehend the meaning of idioms. The study further recommends that apart from knowing the culture of the two languages, the translator should learn more about the idioms and know as many idioms as possible. The knowledge of idioms will assist the translator to identify the idioms whenever they are used. Once an idiom is recognised, chances are high that the idiom will be translated correctly.

5.3.2 The impact of literal translation

The study revealed that not all idioms have direct equivalents in another language, because they are linguistic expressions which are typical for a particular language and specific to a single culture. If idioms are to be translated literally or word for word, the meaning would be distorted. The literal translation of idioms and fixed expressions hardly helps the target readership. As already alluded to, the meaning of idioms and fixed expressions cannot be deduced from the individual words but from the expression as a whole. Literal translation problems are based on the fact that the words of an idiom should not be translated literally; idioms cannot be translated word for word. One needs

to know that as a language scientist, a translator should be a qualified person who knows what is expected of him/her and what to avoid throughout the translation process. One's ability to speak two languages does not make him/her a translator. A translator need to be trained in order for him/her to be a qualified translator. One of the issues a translator should be aware of is that idioms are translated as full expressions. This understanding on its own rules out the issue of literal translation. The foregoing discussion evidently shows that literal translation has a huge impact on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. It is of utmost importance for the translator to know and recognise the idiom during the translation process. This would immensely assist the translator to avoid literal translation that denotes irrelevant meanings of the idioms.

It is recommended that translators should avoid literal translation as it does not provide the relevant meaning of the idioms that need to be translated. Furthermore, the study recommends that the translator explains the meaning of the idiom as a whole rather than translating its individual words.

5.3.3 Major problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English

Firstly, the study examined the ambiguity of idioms as a major problem encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English. In this regard, the study found out that mistranslation can be caused by a situation where an expression has two meanings (ambiguity), one being literal and the other idiomatic. Some idioms such as *u raha bakete* (to kick the bucket) have both literal and figurative meanings. The literal meaning can be driven from the individual words that build up the idiom. It is possible for one to kick a bucket in the literal sense. Some idioms are easy to identify while others are difficult. The easy ones are those that violate the truth (what they say cannot be achieved in a real world knowledge) and the difficult ones can be interpreted at the literal level. Therefore, the translator is required to dig deeper beyond the literal meaning in order to find the idiomatic meaning.

The idiomatic meaning is different from the literal meaning. In other words, idioms do not mean exactly what the words say. The idiomatic meaning is the hidden meaning. The meaning of the idiom 'to kick the bucket' is not the same as the meaning of the

clause 'to kick the bucket'. The idiom means 'to die'. This meaning is well understood by native speakers of the language.

Thirdly, the study observed that some idioms exist in the source language but not in the target language. Lack of equivalent idioms between languages is a huge problem that faces the translator. This compels the translator to create strategies that can help to get the message across. If the equivalent idiom exists, the translation process would be easy because one would just swap the idiom in the SL with the idiom in the TL. Unfortunately, there is more that the translator is required to do in order to get the message across due to the lack of equivalent idioms between languages. The strategy that the translator employs does not guarantee the accurate meaning of the SL idiom in the TL. However, it tries to give the closest meaning possible to the TT readership. In the fourth place, the study examined the frequency of use of an idiom among language speakers. The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages. Therefore, the use of idioms that are not frequently used is one of the major problems that causes the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions.

Lastly, the study examined the context as a common problem encountered in the translation of idiom and fixed expressions. The way idioms should be translated depends on the context in which they are used. There are different and various translation strategies available for the translator, but the translator should determine which kind of these strategies can help the target language readers to better comprehend the meaning of the idioms. When translating a source idiom, the translator should be conscious of the meaning. One of the biggest problems is failure to understand the context. As a matter of fact, the same idiom or fixed expression in a wedding or funeral can mean different things. The idiom *o wela* (in Tshivenda) in a wedding means that one has morphed from being a boy to become a man. In a funeral, the same idiom means that one has crossed over from the living to the ancestors. This point emphasises that context plays a vital role in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions.

The study recommends that the translator should always watch out for the idioms that have multiple meanings. In the case where s/he is not sure of the accurate meaning of the idiom, the translator must be guided by the context so that the meaning will not be

distorted in the process. Furthermore, the study recommends that the translator must learn more about idioms. This will assist in distinguishing between the actual meaning of the idiom and the literal meaning that the idiom has at the literal level. This is because an idiom such as *u vha na thoho* (to have a head) has two meanings at a literal level. The first meaning is to “have a head-ache”. The second meaning is that ‘someone has a monkey’. Thus, in order to arrive at the meaning of this fixed expression, the translator must be familiar with the situation in which the expression is used.

The study further recommends that translators should acquaint themselves with the translation strategies available in order for them to be able to deal with zero-equivalence whenever it arises. It is also recommended that context should always be taken into consideration when translating idioms and fixed expressions.

5.3.4 The impact of culture in the translation process

The study examined culture as one of the common problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. Translation is a challenging task because one has to translate both meaning and culture from one language to the other language. The cultural aspect is one of the problems that leads to mistranslation. A number of problems may be raised in cross-cultural translation. If one is not familiar with the culture of both the ST and the TT, the translation may be done in vain. Thus, the difference between languages and their culture poses a great challenge as far as translation is concerned. This is because of the cultural gap that exists between the source language and the target language.

The study recommends that translators should be taught more about cultures of both the source and target languages so that they will be able to understand what is expected of them in different cultures. It is pivotally important for one to know that language and culture are two entities that are not easy to separate. Furthermore, when selecting a translation strategy, the translator should take into account the cultural dynamics of both the SL and the TL. Idioms and fixed expressions express the uniqueness of the language and culture in which they occur and, therefore, translators must have a deep knowledge of the source and target language cultures.

5.3.5 Findings and recommendations on the role of context in translation

Context is important in the translation of idioms. Social context plays an important role in facilitating the interpretation of idioms and fixed expressions in both Tshivenda and English, leading to correct translation. The translations of some idioms usually ends up with unsatisfactory results simply because an idiom is largely related to the situation that gives it a meaning. In this case, the translator should take into consideration the context in which the translation occurs because it is apparently essential to make a correct translation.

5.3.6 Translation methods and strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English

The translation of idioms and fixed expressions involves six (6) basic translation strategies:

- Translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and form. This strategy involves using an idiom in the target language consisting of equivalent lexical items, which conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the source-language idiom.
- Translation by idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form. It is often possible to find an idiom in the target language which has a meaning similar to that of the source idiom or expression, but which consists of different lexical items.
- Translation by paraphrasing is the most common strategy in the translation of idioms. In the use of this kind of strategy, the translator transfers the meaning of an idiom using a single word or a group of words which roughly corresponds to the meaning of the idiom but is not an idiom itself.
- Translation by omission, which involves completely omitting the idiom from the target text where there is no close match between the items of the two languages.
- Translation by a superordinate involves translation by a more neutral and less expressive word. For example, if there is no direct equivalent for a particular SL item in the TL, the translator may use a more formal near equivalent.

- Translation by cultural substitution requires the replacement of a culture-specific item or expression with a TL one that has no exact meaning, but has an impact on the target reader.

From this study it has been realised that that some idioms in Tshivenda have established equivalents in English and participants were able to compare them as direct equivalents. The findings of this study reveal certain tendencies concerning equivalence in translations. Participants frequently tried to stick to the original text while at the same time trying to apply existing equivalents. As a result, they were translating idioms by using idioms of similar form and meaning, or idioms of similar meaning and dissimilar form, in this way preserving the effect and meaning of the original idiom. Secondly, their paraphrases often contained the structure of the original idioms which resulted in interference in the other language. Thirdly, in some places, they used literal translation which also caused distortion of meaning.

The study discovered that translating idioms from one language to the other requires a lot of knowledge about idioms and their translation problems on the part of the translator. The findings illustrate diverse ways of strategies used for translating idioms. However, idioms and fixed expressions express the uniqueness of the language and culture in which they occur.

Furthermore, it was noted that translators do not use accurate strategies that may help to achieve appropriate meanings. Paraphrasing and cultural substitution strategies are sometimes used, but not in appropriate ways. As a result, translators usually succeed in translating transparent and semi-transparent idioms, but when it comes to opaque and semi-opaque categories, they usually experience problems because these types of idioms have to be regarded as single units in order to provide acceptable translations.

The researcher recommends that in terms of the findings above, the strategies for the translation of idioms needs to be carefully considered. Translators need a deep knowledge of the source and target language cultures. It is further recommended that one must not consider idioms as impossible to translate. Their

meanings can always be transmitted to the target language in one way or the other. Therefore, idioms and fixed expressions are not untranslatable. The actual problem lies in the fact that their 'idiomaticity' cannot always be transmitted from the ST to the TT. The study further recommends that people should understand that some Tshivenda idioms change in meaning when they are translated into English due to cultural differences. The idiomatic balance between the original Tshivenda and English idioms remains slightly uneven which is something one can expect in the translation of two languages that do not share the same culture.

Translators need to learn more about the translation strategies that are available to deal with the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. This will help in improving the selection of a suitable strategy at any given time. It is important to use accurate strategies to solve the problems of non-equivalence, and to be familiar with the differences between the source and target languages. Translators should be exposed to idiomatic expressions in order to enhance their knowledge. There are instances where idioms are translated literally because the translator does not understand or recognise the idiom. Therefore, this study recommends that translators should be familiar with idioms in order to facilitate a better understanding of the translation process.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This study looked at the concept meaning, idioms as translation problems, features of idioms, classification of idioms, the processing of idioms, ambiguity of idioms, techniques used in the translation process, review of the strategies used in translation process, and translation methods. The study outlined the research methodology employed in the study to inform how it was conducted. It identified the research approach and research design that the researcher adopted as the most appropriate for the study. The research approach was presented in order to unpack the qualitative research approach, the non-probability sampling method, that is purposive sampling and sample size, data collection, ethical considerations and report writing. In the data analysis process, thematic analysis was chosen for study.

The analysis and interpretation of data was based on information that was collected through semi structured interviews. This was done by means of themes generated to categorise patterns or trends which led to the consolidation of study themes. Furthermore, six (6) themes that emerged from informants' responses were discussed.

The limitations of this study lie in the fact that there was no original list of idioms to be translated. Most of the idioms translated were examples provided by the respondents. The absence of a list of idioms limited this study from knowing how well the respondents would choose strategies in addressing different idioms. The professions of the respondents who provided the data used in this study lent credibility to the study process and therefore convinced the researcher that the results of this study can be dependable. This study increases awareness of the importance of culture in the translation process and demonstrates how well English idioms can be translated into Tshivenda.

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Annexure A1: Interview guide (English version)

1. Is it possible to translate idioms and fixed expressions (figurative language) between Tshivenda and English? Substantiate your answer.
2. What are the major challenges encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English?
3. What causes mistranslations of idioms and fixed expressions in Tshivenda and English?
4. Which methods and strategies can be used effectively in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English?
5. What is the role of context (readers, intention of the author and the text, theme, style) in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions in Tshivenda and English?
6. Scholars contend that culture and translation are inseparable. What is your opinion in this regard when taking into account the translation of idioms and fixed expressions?
7. Is equivalence applicable in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions in Tshivenda and English? Illustrate your answer with suitable examples.
8. How much can literal context influence the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English? Support your answer.
9. What are the techniques that can be used successfully in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English?
10. In your own opinion, what is more important between the source text and target text as regards the translation of idioms and fixed expressions? Substantiate your answer.

Annexure A2: Interview guide (Tshivenda version)

1. Zwi a konadzea u pindulela maidioma (luambo lwa zwiga) vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane? Tikedzani.
2. Khaedu khulwane dzine dza tʰanganwa nadzo kha u pidulela maidioma vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane ndi dzifhio?
3. Ndi mini zwine zwa vhangwa u pindulela hu si kwao ha maidioma vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane?
4. Ndi afhio maitete na maga ane a nga shumiswa kha u pindulela maidioma vhukati Tshivenda na Luisimane?
5. Mushumo wa mafhungo (fhethu na tshifhinga) ndi ufhio kha u pindulela maidioma vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane?
6. Vhoramaṅwalo vha tʰatisana kha la uri mvelele na vhupinduleli a zwi fhandekanyei. Vhupfiwa haṅu ndi vhu fhio kha ili fhungo ni tshi dzhiela nzhele vhupinduleli ha maidioma?
7. Zwa maipfi a no amba zwi no fana vhukati ha nyambo mbili zwi a konadzea kha u pindulelwa ha maidioma vhukati haTshivenda na Luisimane?
8. U pindilela maipfi o tou ralo zwi kwama hani vhupinduleli ha maidioma vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane?
9. Zwi a konadzea u pindulela u nyanyuwa na vhuḍipfi zwine zwa vha kha maidioma a luambo lwa uthoma u ya kha luambo lwa vhuvhili? Tikedzani phindulo yaṅu. Ndi dzifhio thekiniki dzine dza nga shumiswa kha u pindulela maidioma vhukati Tshivenda na Luisimane?
10. Uya nga kupfesesele kwaṅu, ndi mini tshine tshavha tsha ndeme zwiḥulu vhukati ha maṅwalwa a songo pindulelwaho na o pindulelwaho musi zwo livhana na u pindulelwa ha ha maidioma? Khwaṅhisedzani.

Annexure B: Data from respondents

RESPONDENT A1

1. I don't think it is possible- they are two different languages with different expressions in different circumstances. They are incomparable. There can be the overlapping in some and not all.

2. Languages are not the same and the way things are expressed in a language are different. Some idioms are languages specific nature and cannot exist in the other language. For example,

If someone is smoking dagga one will say *u khou omba gologodo*.

Gologodo is an old cow, you cannot say he is holding an old cow. This indicates that the environment in which languages are is not the same and the way in which things are said is not the same. Meanings are sometimes depicted from literal meanings but it is different case with the idioms.

3. Not strategy

4. The context pays a vital role because different setting presents different meanings. One can first understand the idiom literal and then search for the figurative'

For example, *Nwana wa mbevha ha hangwi mukwita* – the mice do not forget the parents' footsteps. The action can be executed literally but the figurative expression is not far from the literal though. Idioms used one thing to mean the other. The meaning cannot be driven from the counter parts of the sentence. The literal meaning and the figurative do no marry each other. It needs someone with an in-depth knowledge of that particular language and the understanding of the context in which that particular idiom is used. Many idioms are being misunderstood because people does not know the correct context of use....

For example: *Duvha Ji gotsha dula*.

5. Yes! Culture plays vital role in the translation of the idioms and the fixed expressions. In order to have the accurate translation, one need to have the knowledge of such language he is translating from because idioms are cultural based. Without the

knowledge of the culture, the interpretation of the meaning might lead to the mistranslation. For example,

Zwanḡa mafhini. (Figuratively, to ask for forgiveness)

Literally. (Hands in the milk) milk is pure white and clean. One cannot just put the hands in the mil because one will spoil the milk. But the essence of putting the hand in the milk is that if one who have been wronged allows the hand to be put in the milk, it purifies the offender because milk is pure, it is considered that the wrong acts are washed with the pure milk. So in this regard, the understanding of culture is needed.

6. Yes! It is possible to find the equivalent but is not often possible between English and Tshivendḡa. However, we have some such as to throw a towel which means *o laḡa thawula* in Tshivendḡa. In this regard, every expression must be put in to a right context. Here we use the idiom that is the same in structure and meaning in between both languages.

7. It does not have the influence, what is required is the knowledge of the idiom and the culture of such language that is translated. Mostly, people goes for the literal meaning than the figurative.

8. Both languages are equal. they equally contribute to the translation because what is been said in the source language should be presented in the target language. However, the culture and context is so important. For example,

U na mbilu (he is very fond of other people's food).

One is a tolerant person, heart disease, therefore, the knowledge of culture and context with play a huge role in this regard. One must know what is expected and not in the target languages. Know the linguistic boundaries

Respondent A2

1. No! It's impossible because it leads to direct translation and it turns to loose meaning. It results in a meaningless translation. For example, *Nowa yanga I khou rwa nḡha na fhasi* (I am vomiting and I have dihorea) direct translation will be my

snake is beating up and down of which one appears to be psychological out of order.

2. The original meaning is always lost unless the translator has the understanding of both source and target. Ethno pragmatic emphasises that one should know the language and the culture of such language in order to have the best understanding. For example, *Luambo Iwa musanda* and the influence of dialect. Ethno pragmatics help one to know the culture best and the language. Understanding of a language includes knowing that idioms are special aspect of language that is bound to its own language. What is expressed in Tshivenda idiom is specific words that are found in Tshivenda.
3. One need to know the language... some doctors in Grease where forced to learn a language for a year before they can lean medicine.
4. Content is important because the deeper understanding of context lays foundation of better understanding.
5. Culture cannot be separates from translation. For example, sign of respect between e English and Tshivenda ... *u ima* as a sign of respect and *u dzula* as a sign of respect. *U ambara gebisi*.
6. Yes, it is possible. as much as it is happening in languages such as Xitsonga and Sepedi, it still can be done in English
7. Yes. but that cannot be done through direct translation but through the paraphrasing.
8. Direct translation makes the words be translated out of the meaning... For example, the structuring of sentences is not the same between languages.
9. One needs to know both the languages because they are all important. For example, the bible is being re-translated so that it can suit the time. For example, *u rifhe namusi vhuswa hashu*.... Instead of the bread (*vhurotho*) the stable food.

The translation should not be direct. Rather paraphrase the meaning because the language is more fascinating when using figurative speeches.

Respondent B1

1. It is possible. Because we now have idiom dictionaries that assists in translations.
2. Lack of words that means the same between the two languages that makes one to resort in paraphrasing.

3. The wrong selection of words and the misunderstanding of context due to the fact that some idioms are only existing in one language leads to mistranslation.

For example, *U tshina ngoma*. (to dance for a drum) to go to the initiation school.

4. Strategies. transliteration (*u tshina ngoma... tshina—dance ngoma – drum and then paraphrase*

5. Yes... translation cannot be separated from culture. When one translates the language, he also translates the culture more especially when it comes to the idioms and the fixed expressions. If one is translating, he will pay attention to what is expected in the other language culture and avoid what is considered to be a taboo or offensive, in a nutshell culture is an inseparable part of translation that the translator cannot do away with.

6. Yes! To throw the towel. *U ṭata thavhula*

7. It affects it very negatively because people end up translation out of context.

8. Emotions and feelings. This can depend on the idiom and the fixed expressions. However, it is doable in some ways,

9. Source language. Because that's where the original message is. It carries the message that should be used. The target me should be the mirror image. One can say, they are both important because what is in the source should be presented in the TL with the same value and the same meaning in the right context.

Respondent B2

1. Yes.... But not an easy task to execute between Tshivenda and English
2. Lack of words in English from Tshivenda. Idioms have cultural words that lacks exact equivalent
3. The main problem is with the translator's lack of understating of the idiom since we pay attention to the figurative meaning than the literal.
4. The translator must consult to get the meaning from the elders so that they can get the right meaning of the idioms in order to have the accurate meaning that will make sense in the target language. Consultation is key.

5. It is important to understand the context because the time and place plays an important role. For example, the word *u la* can be used to refer to many things so one need to familiarise himself with the context of use.
6. Yes. They go hand in hand because cultural words may have many meanings and when we translate words, we translate culture and the ambiguity should be taken into considerations because words may mean different things across the language.
7. No... I have never seen that. it might be possible but I don't know it
8. Yooo! ... it messes up the translation. For example, *U tshina ngoma*. the meaning here is far from dancing at the initiation school. it badly affects the language if the translator is not aware
9. No! ... feelings and emotions cannot be translated but one can just familiarise himself with the situation and not get the feelings and emotions as they are
10. The source language... because it contains the original meaning, if one fails to understand the SL, will not translate to the TL because TL exist as a result of the SL. What is in the SL (meaning) must be the same but the SL is the most important. For example, in court... the elderly *Nyamasindi* can for instance might say *Eee! Ndo zwiita thi ndi divhelwa zwone...* not literally meaning that she did it.

Respondent C1

1. No! It is not possible because some of idioms are not there in English so one can use equivalent of description because of the gaps between the languages.
2. Problem is lack of understanding to the source language and mistranslation will be the results. *Maidioma o di tika nga luambo lune muthu arali asa divhi luambo a ngasi kone u a pfesesa na luthihi. Arali li idioma li kha Tshivenda, ndi muvenda ane a nga pfesesa tshidziki tsha liidioma ilo.*
3. Mistranslation is caused by misunderstanding. For example, *makhulu ndi tshiulu ri tamba ritshi gonya* might need to be paraphrased of explanation'
4. The role of context is to lay the foundation of the topic in hand and the translator need to understand the context.
5. Yes! The two cannot be separated more especially talking about idioms. One must be able to understand the culture in order to get the idioms right.

6. Yes! It is possible to have equivalent idiom. For example, in English. His face was red (*tshifhatuwo tshawe tshi tswuka* (figuratively. *Tshifhatuwo tshawe tsho nzwinzwimala* (meaning that he is bitter or angry) *u oma thoho...* to be hard headed.
7. Equivalent and paraphrasing as the strategy descriptive translation.
8. They are both important because one cannot have target without source, the source contain the original meaning.

Respondent C2

1. Is possible even though we know that the idioms cannot be translated literally. For example, once bitten twice shy (which mean *maano a vhambwa nga luvhadzi kha Tshivenda*). The best way is to strive for the equivalent before transliteration. Equivalent of idioms is possible.
2. The challenge is failure to find the idioms because they are not constantly used in day to day basis so the translator ends up concluding that the idiom does not exist. There is no really a challenge because we are the creator of it.
3. Literal I translation is the most course
4. Better find the equivalent idiom. If you don't find it, transliterate or paraphrase. Emphasise the point in the translation..... idioms are used to emphasise and spice the language.
5. Context is important It can lead to misinterpretation if not well understood. this makes me not to believe in computer translation because of ambiguity
6. Culture cannot be separated from translation because it is taboo to say things as they are so culture should be taken into account. For example, menstruation should be *u khou vhona n'wedzi* because the culture does not allow the calling of body parts as they are. One cannot tell the older person that he is lying but one will say *vhakhou swaswa* so on need to stick to culture values. This goes to *luambolwa musanda* to because if the document says the chief says... I will say *mavu vho zwa*.
7. It has influences because it comes back to context. Translation is a profession not that everyone who can speak the language can translate. Culture is more impotent.
8. The SL is more important because the original document should be understood first... one need to understand the text before it can be translated...

Respondent C3

1. Yes! Some of them. because languages differ and the cultures are different
2. Challenges are that some of the words does not exist between the two language due to language barrier and the understanding of languages.
3. Strategy is the understanding of both languages. It is easy to translate words from English to Tshivenda and not vice versa.
4. Context... the use of words in English would not be used as it is in English. The gap can also exist between African languages. For example, Tsonga words can be insulting in Tshivenda.
5. Yes... culture is part of language and one cannot separate it from culture. The meaning of idiom is more cultural
6. Equivalent. no two cultures present two different items
7. Literal can affect the translation because the idiom is translated as collective words.
8. Source language is more important because it contains the original meaning. The moment one understand source text, it will be easy to translate to the target language.

Respondent C4

1. No. it is very difficult because languages are not the same
2. The words in languages are not the same. English is rich in words and some English words does not exist in Tshivenda.
3. Nothing has been said.
4. The meaning, for example, direction giving in English is different as in Tshivenda
5. Ambiguity is a challenge. One cannot be clear with the meaning and the use of the word... that affect the translation
6. Culture is the foundation of what we do and one cannot separate translation from it.
7. There are instances but they are very few
8. Yes! It does because if one translates an idiom out of context if one does not know the difference between literal and figurative meaning.

9. Target language is the important one because one need to produce the source language meaning in it.

Respondent C5

1. No. because the meaning cannot be the same/ distorted the challenge is with regard to the meaning because of literal translation. There is a challenge when the translator fails to find or recognise the idioms because they are not constantly used in day to day basis so the translator ends up concluding that the idiom does not exist. Such kind challenge can be considered to be an ignorance. There is no really a challenge because we are the creator of it.
2. Interaction between languages. Sharing and discussing idioms and have common ground to produce common meaning.
3. Context understanding is important because it gives direction on whether it should be literal or figurative
4. Idioms are cultural based so one cannot separate or incorporated into English idioms with Tshivenda
5. I don't think so because I have never encounter such situation
6. They are equally important because they all have the role to play. One is the input and the other is the output. One need to have understanding for both.

Respondent C6

1. No. it is not possible because the is lack of vocabulary between two languages especially with Tshivenda
2. Language barrier.
3. Literacy can be a challenge as well.
4. With lack of words between two languages, one can only suggest the creation or finding a board that can work with creation of new words.
5. Understanding context is very important because lack of understanding might lead to mistranslation of which one need to get it right.
6. Yes... idioms are the integrating part of culture and it cannot easily have separated from the translation process.

7. No! It is not possible. For example, survival of the fittest does not have equivalent on Tshivenda.
8. It plays a vital role and it can influence translation negatively. For example, *Ho bikwa nga khulu* means there is a death not that they have cooked with a big pot.
9. All of them are of equal important because they should be treated equally and serves a great deal in the translation process.

Respondent D1

1. It is not possible. The two languages are different.
2. The problem is that the expression in English might not mean the same in Tshivenda. The two languages do not meet at all. They are totally different.
3. It is because people might fail to understand the idiom. It is important to understand the idiom before trying to translate it.
4. It is important because if one fails to understand the context, the translation will be totally out. The meaning comes from the context.
5. True... culture is important; the language is based on culture. Knowing culture will result in the best translation.
6. There is a gap a huge gap that makes the two idiom not to have the equivalent.
7. The source language is important because it contains the original meaning.

Respondent D2

1. Yes! But it is not an easy task to do. It is very difficult because two languages cannot identical.
2. Lack of idioms that means the same between two languages and cultural aspects in the idioms.
3. Idioms may not be known by the translator.
4. Paraphrasing.
5. It is very important because one expression might mean different thing in a different situation.
6. True, culture cannot be easily separated from the language since the two are interdependent.

7. Yes! It is possible but not often.
8. Literal translation affects the meaning because idioms should not be translated literally, their meaning cannot be found in the literal meaning of words.
9. Target language is the important one because the source language meaning must be produced in it.

Respondent E1

1. Yes! It is possible.
2. The problem is that the expression in English might not mean the same between two languages. Languages are totally different.
3. People's failure to understand the idiom. It is important to understand the idiom before trying to translate it.
4. Context is important in the translation process because if one fails to understand the context, the translation will be totally out.
5. True, culture is important and it cannot be separated from language; the language is based on culture and culture is communicated through the language. Knowing culture will result in the best translation.
6. No! There is a huge gap between languages and their cultures that makes the two idiom not to have the equivalent.
7. Both source and target languages are important because the source language contains the original meaning while the meaning is translated in to the target language.

Respondent E2

1. Yet it is possible. However, the possibility lies in a situation where translators are able to recognise an idiom or fixed expression in a source text. This goes to translators having a sound knowledge of both languages as well as the two cultures. The possibility also depends on the translator paying attention to the context of the source text.
2. Since languages and cultures differ, translating idioms and fixed expressions will always present challenges to translators, one of the major challenge is lack of

equivalence in the target language, and you may find that an idiom might exist in the source language but it doesn't in the target language. And again failing to recognise a fixed expression or an idiom can also be part of the challenges because it hinders the translators to perform his duties.

3. Mistranslation can be caused by a situation where an expression has two meanings, one being literal and the other idiomatic. If a translator is not aware of this, he/she is likely to fail to achieve the purpose of translating.
4. Faithful translation and free translation methods can play a major role, and the one strategy that plays key role in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions is paraphrasing, this strategy allows translators to make use of an explanation in a case where there is non-equivalence.
5. The role of context is made to help translators understand the varieties of contexts and their importance for understanding a text and reproducing the meaning in another language. This also include the types of audiences for which the translation is intended and to also look into the best effective way of producing a text that is communicative in the target audience.
6. Language, culture and translation go hand in hand, as a result separating these will be an impossible practice. Since translation involves the transference of information from one language into the other, that is, from the source text into the target language. This automatically means that culture is involved already, because translating between the languages means translating between two cultures.
7. Yes, it is applicable, we do have those idioms or fixed expression that have the same meaning and form. For example, English: To throw in a towel Xitsonga: *Ku lahlela thawula*. English: To kick the bucket Xitsonga: *Ku raha bakiti*.
8. Literal translation is not recommended because the meaning is likely to be lost and the target audience is likely not to know if that the source text had idioms or not when transferred into a target text.
9. Translators should try to find an idiom in the target language which uses the same structure and also has the same meaning. Trying to find an idiom in your language which uses a different word, but has the same structure and the same meaning.

10. They are both important mainly because the source text acts as a guide to the target text, without a source text it would be highly impossible to start with the translation.

Respondent F1

1. No. It is not easy; it is not possible.
2. The problem lies with the relationship between the two languages English has its own idioms and Tshivenda is different from English. The two languages cannot be compared parallel. The interpretation at some stage might not be exactly as the idiomatic expression requires the accuracy in the explanation because Tshivenda might run short of the words that will fit. The gap between two languages is the main problem.
3. The biggest problem is the gap between the two languages. We use to match the two and they cannot suit. The language gap is the main problem.
4. It is difficult to get the accurate message because one language might be inferior to the other. Every language has its value to be maintained and it might not be pushed through to the other language.
5. Context gives the real meaning, it forms the core, the centre of the language, once you miss the context, and you misinterpret and loses the meaning. The gist of the matter is in the figurative meaning because that is the core of the meaning in the idiom.
6. Culture is the foundation of the language; it forms the base. There should be agreement between two languages if not, there could be discomfort. Languages are independent and they should maintain their independency.
7. It can be possible but impossible in some instances, it can depend on the expression and the context. For example, make hail while the sun shines. We don't have that idiom in Tshivenda, it can only mean that do things while you still have time.... there is no direct equivalent, In Tshivenda we have *La u țavhela u Ji ore* .. is partial but not direct. The English one refers to making preparation while you still have time and the Tshivenda one is used to scorn a person who is doing wrong. The meaning is not the same (*u holedza*) belittling a person.
8. It depends on the level of education and level of understanding. One can get a wrong message since idioms uses hidden language. For example, *ndi țo ni huvhadza*. (I will injure you/ I will destroy you) but in a game it means that I will do my outmost best (I will win) ... the idiomatic meaning is dipper that what one

can find on the surface. The skill is more important because one will know how to handle the issues and cultural concepts. Language competency comes handy. People do fight unnecessary at times because of the lack of understanding.

9. Paraphrase and transliteration but transliteration is not correct. Terminologies must be developed and the gap will always be there... For example, scientific terms.
10. They are all important because they need to complement each other. They are equally important because the meaning in the source language should reflect in the target language. You miss out one, (meaning in the source language) you miss everything (meaning in the TL) if you prefer one in the expenses of the other, you are more likely to miss out the most important meaning.

Respondent F2

1. Yes, it is possible. Because that's we do on daily bases. We translate them between two languages.
2. Problems are there because idioms are figure of speech that are tricky when translating particularly languages that does not share their culture because when you translate idioms you also translate the culture.
3. Culture is one of the problem that leads to the mistranslation. If one is not familiar to the culture the translation will be in vain. The understanding of an idiom or one needs to know that he/she is dealing with idioms otherwise the translation will be out of context or translates literally. One needs to know that is dealing with idioms.
4. By using the exact equivalent or direct equivalent. Literal translation where in the meaning will not be distorted.... Idiom whit the same meaning but different wording... paraphrasing is one of the best strategies.
5. Context also lay an important role. It gives an idea of what is meant by the idiom. If one meets an idiom for a first time, one can associate with the text to get the meaning of the idiom/ context.
6. Context plays very big role in translation of idioms... what is regarded as an idiom might have literal meaning elsewhere or in the same language. One needs to be careful when using an idiom. Idioms must not be analyses from the surface level.
7. The source is containing the message and the target is the output. They are equally important.

Respondent G1

1. Yes. It is possible but it requires someone who specialised with idiomatic translation and experience is needed.
2. The words in languages are not the same. English is rich in words and some English words does not exist in Tshivenda. There challenges because idioms are specialised form of language. The idiom or expression does not mean what is appears to mia understanding is needed. Idioms cannot be translated from individual words. Idiom must be understood as a whole. Lack of words that means the same between the two languages that makes one to struggle. Idioms have cultural words that lacks exact equivalent.
3. The challenges because idioms are specialised form of language. The idiom or expression does not mean what is appears to, little understanding is needed. Idioms cannot be translated from individual words. Idiom must be understood as a whole.
4. The first problem is someone can take words as literal and ambiguity too. Lack of experience, naivety of the translator. Context is the biggest problem. the fact that I am uttering a fixed expression in Tshivenda in a wedding might mean different thing in the funeral
5. The first method is understanding the context. For example, *hu khou fhisa*. (it is hot) literally but one can say *hu khou fhisa* university meaning there is strike or difficulties but if one says *hu khou fhisa miṭani* might mean that there are troubles in the paradise. Or divorces. Context is more importance. One fixed expression can mean many things... read and understand the expression. Read for the second time to get the correct meaning.
6. Yes, I agree because the language used in the bible is a pure example. Culture is a setting. The translation of a Bible need to be translated by someone with Christian background and culture.
7. Yes, there are equivalents but not one to one equivalent. We preserve the meaning and not the words. English cannot fit in Tshivenda.
8. Literal context affects the translation because one may read the idiom from the surface. It leads to loss of translation. Idioms are being misinterpreted by those naive people. For example, people in radio using idioms in a wrong context as it

goes to people and language in radio is considered to be pure and it can be wrongly influencing the use of language.

9. They are all important because source language is the point of departure and the target language is the arrival point (destination). One needs to understand the departure in order to reach the destination. They are all important.

Respondent G2

1. Yes. With the use of the translation strategies that are available, one can do this. For example, one can translate the idioms and fixed expressions by using an idiom or fixed expression in the target language, with the same meanings as those in the SL or even using paraphrasing in a case where one cannot get appropriate and relevant equivalents in the TL.
2. I would say it is a failure to realise that one is faced with an idiom or fixed expression, and end up translating individual words that form them. This results in mistranslation and communication embarrassment on the side of the translator. For example, *u di hwala* (to be pregnant) she is carrying herself/ carrying oneself.
3. Not being aware that one is dealing with such and translating words that form those idioms instead of the meaning.
4. Using another idiom or fixed expression in the TL that has the same wording and meaning. --- using an idiom that is made up of different words but similar meaning.
5. The context is very important because without it all the action might be in vain. It may not be communicative or even functional.
6. It is very important to take culture serious consideration when translating because some /most idioms are cultural bond.
7. Yes/no some idioms may have equivalent in English while others may be untranslatable or have a low level of translatability.
8. Very much, literal translation is detrimental as it means meaning will be lost.
9. Take into consideration the strategies that are in place in this regard. Be familiar with the culture of the TL readership.
10. They are both important. The TL is important because it is the one that we have to kick start the process. The TT is equally important because it means getting

new information that was initially not therein the TL before. People get information in the form of TT.

Annexure C: Consent form (English version)

Nengovhela R.E

32 Tshokwane Ave

Ivy Park

0699

07 July 2015

Dear Mrs/Mr/ Dr/ Prof

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a registered PhD Student in the Department of Translation Studies and Linguistics at the University of Limpopo. My supervisors are Prof R.N Madadzhe and Dr. Kubayi respectively.

The proposed topic of my research is: The translation of idioms and fixe expressions between Tshivenda and English.

The objectives of the study are:

- (a) To identify factors that lead to the mistranslation of idioms and fixed expressions.
- (b) To determine the impact of literal translation in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions between English and Tshivenda.
- (c) To examine the problems encountered in the translation of idioms and fixed expression between Tshivenda and English.
- (d) To look at the translation strategies that can be used in the treatment of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English.

I am hereby seeking your consent to interview you. To assist you in reaching a decision, attached herewith please find:

- (a) A copy of an ethical clearance certificate issued by the University.
- (b) A copy of the research instruments which I intend using in my research.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor. Our contact details are as follows:

The researcher: Nengovhela R.E 072 522 2844 / 015 268 3582

The Supervisor(s): Prof Madadzhe R.N 015 268 2623

: Dr. Kubayi S.J 015 268 3707

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide you with a bound copy of the thesis.

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Nengovhela R.E

.....

Participant - All of my questions and concerns about this study have been addressed.

I choose, voluntarily, to participate in this research project.

Print name of participant

Signature of participant

date

Print name of investigator

Signature of investigator

date

Annexure D: Consent form (Tshivenda version)

Nengovhela R.E

32 Tshokwane Ave

Ivy Park

0699

07 July 2015

Vho- Mrs/Mr/ Dr/ Prof

KHUMBELO YA THENDELO YA U ITA THODISISO

Ndi mugudiswa o di nwaliselaho u ita PhD kha muhasho wa Ngudo ya zwa Vhupinduleli na Ngudadzinyambo Yunivesithi ya Limpopo. Vhatoli vhanga ndi vho Phurofesa R.N Madadzhe na Vho Dokotela S.J Kubayi vhane vha khou shuma vhothe.

Thoho yo dzinginywaho ya ngudo iyi ndi: Upindulelwa ha maidioma na maipfi a sa shandukiswi vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane.

Zwivhangalelwa zwa ngudo iyi ndi zwi tevhelaho:

- (a) U wanulusa zwithu zwine zwa swikisa kha u pindulela ho khakheaho ha maidioma na maipfi a sa shanduki vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane.
- (b) U vhona uri vhupinduleli ho khakheaho hu kwama hani u pindulelwa ha maidioma na maipfi asa shandukiho vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane.
- (c) U todisisa thaidzo dzine dza tanganwa nadzo kha u pindulelwa ha maidioma na maipfi asa shanduki vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane.
- (d) U lavhelesa maitete ane a nga shumiswa kha u pindulela maidioma na maipfi a sa shanduki vhukati ha Tshivenda na Luisimane.

Ndi khou hambela thendelo ya u fara nyambedzano navho. U itela u thusa vhone kha u sewikelela liga, ndo nambatedza kha heli lihwalo:

- (a) Lihwalo la thendelo ya vhudifari libvaho kha Yunivesithi
- (b) Zwishumuswa zwa thodosiso zwine nda do tea u zwi shumisa.

Aralivha tshi do tama u wana zwiñwe zwidombedzwa, vha songo shavha u nkwama kana ha kwama vhatoli vhanga. Zwidombedzwa zwa vhukwamani ndi zwritevhelaho:

Muṭodisisi : R. E Nengovhela 072 522 2844 / 015 268 3582

Vhatoli : R.E. Prof Madadzhe R.N 015 268 2623

: Dr. S.J. Kubayi S.J 015 268 3707

Nga murahuni ha u fhedza ngudo iyi, ndi do vha nekedza khophi ya ngudo iyi

Thendelo yavho ya uri ri bveledzise ngudo iyi i do tanganedza zwi hulu.

Wavho a fulufhedzeaho,

R.E. Nengovhela R.E

.....

A shelaho muledze

Dzina _____ **Datumu** _____

Tsaino _____

Annexure E: Turfloop Research Ethics Committee Clearance Certificate



University of Limpopo

Department of Research Administration and Development

Private Bag 1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 2212, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:noko.monene@ul.ac.za

<p>TURF-LOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE</p>

MEETING: 02 September 2015

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/133/2015: PG

PROJECT:

Title: The translation of idioms and fixed expressions between Tshivenda and English

Researcher: Mr RE Nengovhela

Supervisor: Prof RN Madadzhe

Co-Supervisor: Dr SJ Kubayi

Department: Linguistics, Translation Studies & Interpreting Studies

School: Social Sciences

Degree: PhD in Linguistics, Translation Studies & Interpreting Studies

CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa