STRATEGIES USED IN TRANSLATING ENGLISH IDIOMS INTO CHINESE IN THE OXFORD IDIOMS DICTIONARY

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STRATEGIES USED IN TRANSLATING ENGLISH IDIOMS INTO CHINESE

IN THE OXFORD IDIOMS DICTIONARY

ABSTRACT

Idioms are widely used in people's daily lives, and thus have a profound influence on our language. An idiom is a group of words in a fixed order that has a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own. This study on idioms will employ a qualitative method where the source text (ST) and target text (TT) will be compared and contrasted. Data are collected from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary* (English-Chinese Edition) and are categorized according to Nida's cultural category (1945) which includes (1) ecology, (2) material culture, (3) social culture, (4) religious culture, and (5) linguistic culture. The origin of each idiom is used to determine its cultural category. Based on Baker's translation strategies (1992) which are (1) using an idiom of similar meaning and form, (2) using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, (3) translation by paraphrase, and (4) translation by omission, the translation strategies are then identified. The example sentences containing the idioms in this dictionary will also be used as data. The translation strategy is identified by comparing and contrasting how each idiom is translated from English to Chinese. This will enable us to identify which translation strategy is most frequently used and which cultural category contains the most idioms. Lastly, the differences between the origins of the English idioms and the origins of the Chinese idioms are discussed to better understand these idioms.

The findings of this study show that most of the selected idioms belong to social culture. Readers, who want to get more information about the background of English idioms, can check out sports and entertainment activities, such as horse racing, poker, boxing, cricket, running, football, basketball, and wrestling. They can better understand the

origins of idioms by reading the *Bible*, Greek mythology, *The Fables of Aesop*, Shakespeare's play and *One Thousand and One Night*.

The difference between the origins of these two idioms is that the origins of most Chinese idioms are from linguistic culture while English idioms are from five cultural categories. Three out of four translation strategies as proposed by Baker have been found in the selected data. These three translation strategies are translation by paraphrase, translation by using an idiom of similar form and meaning, translation by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. Other translation strategies found were literal translation, translation by using two idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form, literal translation plus an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form.

Translation by paraphrase is the most common translation strategy used in translating English idioms into Chinese. 74% of the selected idioms were translated using this strategy. The findings also show that the onus is on the translators to choose the translation strategy suitable for translating English idioms into Chinese.

Keywords: English idioms, Chinese idioms, translation strategies, culture.

STRATEGI YANG DIGUNAKAN DALAM MENTERJEMAH IDIOM BAHASA INGGERIS KE DALAM BAHASA CINA DI DALAM *OXFORD IDIOMS DICTIONARY*

ABSTRACT

Idiom digunakan secara meluas di dalam kehidupan harian manusia dan oleh yang demikian mempunyai pengaruh yang mendalam ke atas bahasa. Idiom adalah sekumpulan perkataan dengan aturan yang tetap dan mempunyai makna yang tertentu, berbeza dari makna setiap perkataan tersebut secara tersendiri. Kajian ini yang dilakukan ke atas idiom akan menggunakan kaedah kualitatif di mana teks sumber (ST) dan teks sasaran (TT) akan dibandingkan dan dibezakan. Data dikumpul dari *Oxford Idioms Dictionary* (edisi Inggeris-Cina) dan akan dikategorikan menurut kategori budaya Nida (1945) yang merangkumi (1) ekologi, (2) budaya kebendaan, (3) budaya sosial, (4) budaya agama, dan (5) budaya linguistik. Sumber asal setiap idiom akan digunakan untuk menentukan kategori budayanya. Berdasarkan kepada strategi terjemahan Baker (1992) iaitu (1) menggunakan idiom dari segi makna dan bentuk yang sama, (2) menggunakan idiom dengan makna yang sama tetapi bentuk yang berbeza, (3) menterjemah dengan menggunakan parafrasa, dan (4) menterjemah dengan menggugurkan perkataan, strategi terjemahan kemudiannya dikenal pasti. Contoh ayat yang mengandungi idiom di dalam kamus ini juga akan digunakan sebagai data. Strategi terjemahan dikenalpasti dengan membandingkan dan membezakan bagaimana setiap idiom diterjemahkan dari bahasa Inggeris ke dalam bahasa Cina. Ini akan membolehkan kita untuk mengenalpasti strategi terjemahan yang manakah yang paling banyak digunakan dan kategori budaya yang manakah yang mengandungi paling banyak idiom. Akhir sekali, perbezaan di antara sumber asal idiom bahasa Inggeris dan sumber asal idiom bahasa Cina dibincangkan agar kita dapat memahami idiom ini dengan lebih baik.

Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa kebanyakan idiom yng dipilih adalah dari budaya sosial. Pembaca yang ingin mendapat maklumat lanjut mengenai latar belakang idiom bahasa Inggeris, boleh merujuk aktiviti sukan dan hiburan, seperti perlumbaan kuda, permainan poker, tinju, permainan kriket, lumba lari, bola sepak, bola keranjang dan gusti. Mereka akan lebih memahami sumber asal idiom ini dengan membaca kitab Injil, mitologi Yunani, *Kisah-kisah Dongeng Aesop*, kisah pementasan Shakespeare dan *Kisah Seribu Satu Malam*.

Perbezaan di antara sumber asal kedua-dua idiom ini adalah kebanyakan idiom bahasa Cina adalah dari budaya linguistik sementara idiom bahasa Inggeris adalah dari lima kategori budaya. Tiga dari empat strategi terjemahan yang dicadangkan oleh Baker telah ditemui di dalam data yang dipilih. Tiga strategi terjemahan ini adalah menterjemah dengan menggunakan parafrasa, menterjemah dengan menggunakan idiom yang sama dari segi bentuk dan makna, menterjemah dengan menggunakan idiom yang mempunyai makna yang sama tetapi bentuk yang berbeza. Strategi terjemahan lain yang ditemui adalah terjemahan literal, terjemahan dengan menggunakan dua idiom yang mempunyai makna yang sama tetapi bentuk yang berbeza, terjemahan literal bersama idiom yang mempunyai makna yang sama tetapi bentuk yang berbeza.

Menterjemah dengan menggunakan parafrasa merupakan strategi yang paling banyak digunakan di dalam menterjemah idiom bahasa Inggeris ke dalam bahasa Cina. 74% dari idiom yang dipilih telah diterjemah dengan menggunakan strategi ini. Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa pemilihan strategi terjemahan yang sesuai untuk menterjemah idiom bahasa Inggeris ke dalam bahasa Cina merupakan tanggungjawab penterjemah.

Kata kunci: idiom bahasa Inggeris, idiom bahasa Cina, strategi terjemahan, budaya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SL   :   Source language

TL   :   Target language

sb.   :   Somebody

sth.   :   Something

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction of idiom

Idioms are an important constitution of people's daily language which conveys information about social and cultural development. Idioms form in long-term usage of language, thus, all the time-honored languages contain idioms. Therefore, Chinese, one of the oldest languages and English, one of the most widely used languages, have a large number of idioms. Idioms are short sentences or phrases extracted from the language, which contain the cultural information of that time. Language is lifeless and dull, without idioms; when used appropriately, language becomes brief but more vivid. In short, idioms give the effect of icing on the cake to a language.

Idioms, as a special form of language, can also be used in daily life, but its structure and vocabulary are not necessarily consistent with the modern language and vocabulary. Instead, they are formed by long-term use of conventional and unique words. They have different characteristics comparing to the form of general language. Baker (1992) gives two characteristics of idioms; the first one is that the form of idioms usually cannot be changed, meaning, they have frozen patterns. The other one is that the meaning of idioms usually cannot be deduced from their lexical meaning.

Baker's observation is further highlighted in the definitions provided by online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, online Cambridge dictionary and online Merriam-Webster dictionary; their definitions of English idiom is similar which is "a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own". Moreover, the idiom can be "a style of expression in writing, speech, or music that is typical of a particular group of people". This study is, therefore, using idioms based on Baker's characterization and the dictionaries'

definitions of idioms. In this study, the first definition of the idiom will be used, which also accords to what Baker said above.

In this study, Chinese idioms are used but the definition of "idiom" is not specified in the Chinese language. From online *The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary,* the definition of Chinese idiom includes different kinds of idioms, such as slang, proverbs, motto, sayings, quotation and etc. Another authoritative Chinese online dictionary *Cihai* defines Chinese idioms like this.

> 习语语言是文化的载体，习语又是语言的精华。习语一词的含义甚广，一般指那些常用在一起，具有特定形式的词组，其蕴含的意义往往不能从词组中单个词的意思推测而得。习语通常包括成语、俗语、格言、歇后语、谚语、俚语、行话等。(辞海之家，http://www.cihai123.com/)
> Idiom language is the carrier of culture and idiom is the essence of language. The meaning of the word idiom is very broad, generally refers to those commonly used together, has a specific form of phrase, the meaning of the phrase often can not be inferred from the meaning of a single word. Idioms usually include idioms, colloquialisms, aphorisms, two-part allegorical saying, proverbs, slang, jargon and so on. (Online Cihai dictionary, http://www.cihai123.com/)

Therefore, the Chinese language has a broader perspective of the word "idiom". Shi (1979) claimed that colloquialisms, such as ballads and common sayings which contain allusions to historical, quasi-historical, legendary, or mythical persons or events, are the main source of idioms. Through the span of time, a great number of poetic lines and common sayings of high literary quality became conventional in society. As such, they were widely used by the common folk, and also adopted by scholars in their literary writings. Once they survived the test of time and were used in literary writings, their status as idioms was established.

1.2 Idiom translation

Translation means translating one language into another, but from another point of view, translation is also the way to exchange two cultures. Translation, as a cross-cultural exchange, is required to maintain linguistic and cultural diversity as well as

promote cultural interaction. Collision and fusion of cultural information embodied in the translation between the source language and target language. As long as the culture is carefully studied, most of the common cultural information between the two cultures can be passed equivalently in language. However, translation is difficult when there are many differences between the two cultures.

Idioms are fixed phrases in simple forms but have rich information according to cultural factors. Thus, cultural differences are the key problems of idiom translation. This means a penetrating analysis of idioms should be made while translating them. Cultural factors which include history, geography, religions, customs, ethnic psychology and ways of thinking should be considered in the process of translation of idioms. If these are not properly dealt with, translation may cause language misunderstanding and culture information loss. When cultural factors are considered for idiom translation, there are macroscopic and microscopic perspectives. The macroscopic perspective, responds to how the cultural factors of idioms affect translation externally; In other words, it deals with elements which cause inaccuracies of idiom translation. Meanwhile, the microcosmic perspective explores strategies for specific cultural translation phenomena in order to successfully accomplish cultural transmission.

This study, therefore, seeks to find some ways to know about the background of idioms, discuss cultural factors which can affect idiom translation and provide some suggestions of translation strategy in the translation of English idioms into Chinese language translating.

1.3 Idiom translation and culture

Newmark (1988) defined 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"

(p.94). Such cultural factor does not pose a problem in idiom translation. The problems usually occur when the source culture of idioms and the target culture overlap. For example, both English and Chinese have "dog" in their idioms. But the "dog" in English idioms normally has a positive meaning, such as loyalty. On the contrary, "dog" mostly have a bad reputation in Chinese idioms. In this study, the source culture is English while the target culture is Chinese. There are quite a lot of similarities and differences between them. This will be further discussed in the chapter on literature review.

It is these differences between English and Chinese cultural backgrounds which cause difficulties in the translation of English idioms into Chinese. Nida (2005) points out: "for truly successful translating, biculturalism is even more important than bilingualism, since words only have meanings in terms of the cultures in which they function" (p.5). Translation, in essence, is a communication activity that transforms one culture of language into another. English idioms are an important part of western culture. By studying English idioms, the relationship between the English language and western culture can be better understood. Hence, this study discusses translation strategies for translating English idioms into Chinese, and what cultural factors affect the understanding of idioms.

1.4 Research problem

Idioms are fixed expressions that are typically used in a figurative sense. For example, "It's **a real feather in his cap** to represent his country in the Olympics." The English idiom in this sentence is "a feather in your cap" which is taken from the data of this study. Obviously, both the meanings of "feather" and "cap" are not involved in the meaning of this sentence. This idiom comes from the American Indian custom of giving a feather to somebody who had been very brave in battle. So, idioms can be used to describe more abstract things. In this sentence, "a feather in your cap" was translated by

the translator of this dictionary as "骄傲"(meaning: pride). All time-honored languages contain plenty of idioms; these idioms often make language learners difficult to understand.

An idiom is hard to translate unless the translators have a good understanding of it and find the right strategy. Mollanazar (2004) thinks that the first step of translating idioms is to understand them because it will be ridiculous to translate word by word. According to Baker (1992), there are two main issues when translating idiomatic and fixed expression. The first one is to recognize and understand the idiom while the second one is to reproduce all the aspects of that idiom. This means one has to understand the idiom and then seek the right strategy to translate it.

So, it is obvious that the problem on how to translate idioms has been studied for a long term. In order to explore this problem, this study first focuses on how to explore an idiom's background. Then it focuses on what kind of translation strategy should be adopted for translating English idioms into Chinese.

1.5 Research objectives

According to the research design of this study, the following objectives are proposed:

(1) To classify the cultural categories of the selected idioms

(2) To find out the types of translation strategies used in the selected idioms

(3) To find out the differences between the origins of the English idioms and the origins of its equivalent Chinese idioms

1.6 Research questions

Based on the research design and purpose of this study, this study puts forward three research questions:

(1) What cultural categories do the selected idioms belong to?

(2) Which translation strategy is most frequently used in selected idioms from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary*?

(3) What are the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of their equivalent Chinese idioms?

1.7 Significance of this study

First of all, this study is of great practical value. The results can guide the practical activities of idiom translation from English to Chinese because the translation strategies of selected idiom examples are analyzed. Then, the origins of idioms are portrayed in this study, so readers can get a deeper understanding of both the idioms and the culture of English. Thirdly, the implications can be further applied to other fields in theoretical studies and practices of translation, such as the effect of cultural factors in language and the difficulties of translating idioms.

In summary, from the theoretical aspect, this research can benefit researchers who are interested in the cultural factors of idiom translation. From the practical aspect, teachers can use these translation strategies in class to guide students in translation studies. Also, readers can use the result as guidance to learn more about the background of English idioms.

1.8 Scope of this study

Hockett (1958) has made a great contribution to the studying of English idioms in the 1950s. His definition of idioms ranges widely from words, phrases, and sentences. It is obvious that this way in the delimiting of idioms is extreme so much so the scope for idioms is blurred. From online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, online Cambridge dictionary and online Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of an

English idiom can be concluded as "a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own". So in this study, the above definition for English idiom is taken. The reasons for choosing this dictionary as the data source are given in section 3.2 (p. 43).

For Chinese idioms which are also studied in this study, the definition of Chinese idiom is taken from an authoritative Chinese dictionary *Cihai*. According to Xia (1999), "熟语是语言中固定的词组或句子，使用时一般不能任意改变其组织，且要以其整体来理解语义，包括成语、谚语、格言、惯用语、歇后语等." "Shuyu are fixed phrases or sentences of a language, which cannot be modified arbitrarily. They must be interpreted as a semantic unit. They include set phrases, proverbs, maxims, locutions, two-part allegorical sayings, and etc." A Chinese idiom is newly defined as "a Chinese idiom, constituted by words, relatively fixed in structure, is a narrative language unit which can perform a multiple of functions."(Wen, 2005, p.17) *The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary* defines Chinese idioms in many different forms, such as slang, proverbs, motto, sayings, quotation and etc. The definition of Chinese idiom from *Cihai* is used in this study. And the scope of Chinese idioms is limited in an authoritative Chinese idiom dictionary *Xinhua Chengyu Cidian* (2002) and Hanci Website (http://www.hydcd.com/). The Chinese phase will be considered as an idiom after being found in these two places. Some Chinese words are idiomatic; but they cannot be found in these two places, they will not be considerate as Chinese idioms in this study, such 老掉牙(Meaning: Old. Literal translation：old enough to lose one's teeth). *Xinhua Chengyu Cidian* has been one of the most popular dictionaries which has been consistently perfected for a long time in China. Hanci Website is the official website of the Chinese dictionary.

From the definition and explanation about idioms, the meaning of "idiom" in both English and Chinese are very wide. For the scope of the data, this study will only focus on the English idioms which can be found from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary (English-Chinese Edition)* and Chinese idioms which can be found from *Xinhua Chengyu Cidian* and Hanci Website. And the main point of this study is to discuss the translation strategies in translating English idioms into Chinese from the cultural perspective, so the analysis of the differences between English and Chinese are not fully explained in this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As the main topic of this research is about translation strategies for translating English idioms into Chinese, the literature review section is divided into two parts. First of all, idiom translation is talked about in the first section. The data used in this study are English idioms which have rich cultural information. And the culture has a great influence on translation. So the second part of literature review is the cultural issues of idiom translation.

2.2 Idiom translation

In this section, researches on translation strategies of idiom are reviewed. Not only the researches about translation strategies of idiom between English and Chinese are reviewed, but also the researches between other languages. Then, it is necessary to talk about the difficulties in translating idioms as the topic of this study is about idiom translation. Baker's translation strategies of idioms translation are employed in this study, the detailed information about these translation strategies is reviewed. Lastly, this study reviewed the translation strategy in a wide scope, instead of only in the field of idiom translation. More insights about idiom translation strategies are expected to get.

2.2.1 Research on translation strategies of idiom

Idiom translation has been studied for a long time, and many methods and strategies for idiom translation have been put forward by many Chinese scholars who had done research about English and Chinese idiom translation. And they discussed some translation strategies which can be applied to idiom translation between Chinese and English.

Three translation strategies for idiom translation between English and Chinese were recommended by Liu D.Y. (2012). They are literal translation, literal translation with footnotes, and equivalent target language idiom. According to the author, the requirements of faithfulness and effectiveness in translation can be fulfilled by using these translation strategies.

Nida's theory of functional equivalence was adopted by Zhang Q. & Wang J.Q. (2010) to illustrate some examples of translating Chinese idiom into English. In their study, Nida's nine translation strategies discussed were literal translation, free translation, borrowing, combination, omission, literal translation plus annotation, integration, transposition, and amplification. Among these translation strategies, the researchers found that the literal translation strategy could fulfill the functional equivalent theory mostly. The literal translation strategy ensured the meaning and form could be equivalent to the source language. And for the rest of the eight translation strategies, the functional equivalent theory only can be fulfilled partly. Finally, the researchers suggested that the translators need to take three key points of functional equivalence theory into account which are equivalence, receptor's response, and diversity while doing translation between Chinese and English.

A sufficient explanation about idiom's characteristics and cultural differences between Chinese and English were given by Wang L.C. & Wang S. (2013). These researchers gave three principles that should be employed in idiom translation. The first one is that idiom should not be translated too literally. The second one is that the cultural characteristics of a nation should be taken into consideration at first place. The third one is that the artistic characteristics of idiom should be taken into account. Based on these three principles, four strategies were recommended by the researchers for

translating idioms between English and Chinese. They were literal translation, free translation, abridged translation, and borrowing translation.

Besides Chinese, the researches on idiom translation from other languages have done by many researchers. Abu-Ssaydeh (2004) discussed the translation of English idioms into Arabic. In his study, 253 Arabic idioms were randomly taken from *Newsweek*, a weekly publication. The result was as follows. Literal translations (around 17%); Borrowings (around 23%); Substitutions (around 13%); Paraphrasing (around 42%); Idioms not translated in the translated text (less than 1%); Idioms translated incorrectly (less than 6%). Also, the researcher found that paraphrasing may cause cultural information loss. And this kind of translation strategy may make the target idiom lost its concision, which makes target idiom less attractive to readers. Therefore, literal translation still is the dominant strategy in the translation of English idioms. According to Abu-Ssaydeh, the borrowing strategy could enrich the Arabic language.

Akbari (2013) reviewed a number of idiom translation strategies which were proposed by very famous researchers in the field of translation studies, such as Catford (1965), Baker (1992), Newmark (1988), and Larson (1984). And the author pointed out that translation strategy used during rendering idiom between the source language and target language depended on the translator himself. Thus, there is no ready-made, fixed strategies to be prescribed to translators in dealing with idioms.

Khosravi (2012) discussed translation strategies in translating English idioms into Persian. Two novels were used as the material for data analysis for his corpus study. Baker's four strategies for translating idioms were chosen as the framework for translating the 407 idioms found in these two novels. The result showed the frequency of these strategies used as follows: translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and

form (2.21%), translation by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form (18.18%), translation by paraphrase (71.25%), and translation by omission (8.35%).

Despoina Panou (2014) in her book "Idiom Translation in the Financial Press: A Corpus-based Study" explores the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic changes. And these changes propose possible parameters that license a particular idiom-translation strategy to be used in preference to another during translation. The author suggested that the four major strategies dominant in idiom translation which are idiom adherence, literalization, deletion, and compensation.

2.2.2 The difficulties in translating idioms

Saeed (2012) did research about the difficulties that Arab translation learners would face while translating common idioms. 71 of the most commonly used idioms in British and American English were taken as data. 18 master students and 41 senior undergraduates were chosen as subjects. The result showed that the major difficulties faced by these learners included misunderstanding of words of idiom, the inability to reproduce the effect of the idiom, the influence of translator's cultural background, the confusion of idiom's resemblance between the source language and target language and the inability to recognize an idiom in a translated sentence.

Inevitably, these difficulties that occurred in idiom translation were the focus of many scholars. According to Baker (1992), the following situations caused difficulties during idiom translation.

(1) An idiom or fixed expression may have no equivalent in the target language.
(2) An idiom or fixed expression may have a similar counterpart in the target language, but its context of use may be different.
(3) An idiom may be used in the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time.
(4) 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. (Baker, 1992, p. 65-71)

2.2.3 Baker's translation strategies

Mona Baker's translation strategies for translating idioms were employed in this study. In her book *In Other Words: A Coursebook for Translation*, Baker (1992) suggests the following strategies for translating idioms. Also, Baker gives a concise explanation about these four strategies and several examples to illustrate each translation strategy.

(1) Using an idiom of similar meaning and form.
This strategy involves using an idiom in the target language which conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the source-language idiom and, in addition, consists of equivalent lexical items.
Example
Source text:
The Sultan's magnificent income was distributed impulsively at his command. The rain fell on the just and on the unjust.
Target text (French):
Le revenue fabuleux du Sultan était distribué sur un simple ordre de sa part. **La pluie tombait aussi bien sur les justes que sur les injustes.**
Back-translation:
The fantastic income of the Sultan was distributed on a simple order on his part. **The rain was falling on the just as well as on the unjust.** (Baker, 1992, p. 72)

(2) Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form.
It is often possible to find an idiom or fixed expression in the target language which has a meaning similar to that of the source idiom or expression, but which consists of different lexical items.
Example:
Source text:
The serow, a type of wild mountain goat, is very much at home among the rocky outcrops of Sichuan.
Target text (back-translated from Chinese):
The serow, a type of wild mountain goat, is **totally at ease** in Sichuan's many rocky levels.
The Chinese idiom used to replace very much at home is *shi fen zi zai*. It consists of a measure word based on a ten-point scale, plus 'self at ease'. The measure word means '100 percent' but the scale used is out of 10 rather than out of 100. (Baker, 1992, p. 74)

(3) Translation by paraphrase.
This is by far the most common way of translating idioms when a match cannot be found in the target language or when it seems inappropriate to use idiomatic language in the target text because of differences in stylistic preferences of the source and target languages.
Example
Source text:

<u>Best news of all</u> is the decision to develop a system of five nature reserves totaling 2000 sq.kms. where representative examples of the region's unique ecosystems will be protected for the future.
Target text (back-translated from Chinese):
The best news is a decision to develop a system of 2000 sq.kms. consisting of five reserves. In such a system representative animal and plant species within the unique ecosystem of this area will be protected.
'The best news is' does not have the status of a fixed expression in Chinese. Although it looks very similar to *Best news of all*, it is just a paraphrase of the English expression. (Baker, 1992, p. 74,77)

 (4) Translation by omission.
As with single words, an idiom may sometimes be omitted altogether in the target text. This may be because it has no close match in the target language, its meaning cannot be easily paraphrased, or for stylistic reasons.
 Example:
It was bitter, but funny, to see that Professor Smith had doubled his own salary before recommending the offer from Fayed, and added a pre-dated bonus <u>for good measure</u>.
 Target text (Arabic):

وقد استغل هذا التشهد فيما بعد من قبل نورمان ليبيت باعتباره وزيراً للتجارة والصناعة، حين أعلن دون عمل غرق لونرو بينما أمان متصابها" آخر على يبلوغ نهاية السباق.

Back-translation:
It was regrettable, even funny, that Professor Smith had been able to double his salary twice before offering his recommendation to accept Fayed's offer, and that he added to this a bonus, the date of which had been previously decided on. One strategy which cannot be adequately illustrated, simply because it would take up a considerable amount of space, is the strategy of compensation. Briefly, this means that one may either omit or play down a feature such as idiomaticity at the point where it occurs in the source text and introduce it elsewhere in the target text. (Baker, 1992, p. 77-78)

According to He X.B. (2002), Baker's book *In Other Words: A Coursebook for Translation* is based on the theory of modern language and it is practical. He made some comments on the book. First of all, the theoretical analysis of each chapter in the book has a large number of examples, which enhance persuasiveness and facilitate understanding. Secondly, a large number of examples are used in each chapter to explore the countermeasures that should be taken in translation. All these examples in the appendix of the book come from nine real articles that use English as the source

language and use Spanish, Greek, German, Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Arabic as target language.

In this book, the translation strategies are descriptive, not prescriptive; not the "right" strategies as the author thought, but the "actual" countermeasures that author summarizes through the analysis of the translation of multilingual examples. Therefore, this book is both theoretical and practical. So Baker's translation strategies on idiom are employed in this study.

2.2.4 General translation strategies

The main topic of this study is translation strategy. So it is necessary to review the translation strategy in a wide scope, instead of only in the field of idiom translation. Newmark has a big contribution to translation studies. In his book, *A textbook of translation*, Newmark (1988) gives the following translation methods.

> Word-for-word translation: This is often demonstrated as interlinear translation, with The TL immediately below the SL words. The SL word-order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context. Cultural words are translated literally.

> Literal translation: The SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context.

> Faithful translation: A faithful Translation attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the TL grammatical structures.

> Semantic translation: Semantic translation differs from 'faithful translation' only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value.

> Adaptation: This is the 'freest' form of translation. It is used mainly for plays, comedies and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture converted to the TL culture and the text rewritten.

> Free translation: Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original. Usually, it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called 'intralingual translation', often prolix and pretentious, and not translation at all.

Idiomatic translation: Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

Communicative translation: Communicative translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership. (Newmark, 1988, p.45-47)

2.3 Cultural issues of translation

Idioms are fixed phrases in simple forms but have rich connotations according to cultural factors. Thus, cultural differences are the key problems of idiom translation. So, in this section, general reasons for cultural differences are given based on previous research. In this study, Nida's cultural categories will be employed in this study. Therefore, detailed information about cultural categories is discussed.

2.3.1 General reasons for cultural differences

Culture cannot be separated from a certain natural geographical environment; however, it is not determined by natural geographical environment because different cultures exist in a similar natural environment. The value of culture is to make people adapt to the natural environment, such as the way of people's life, social structure, customs, morals, and etc. Natural geographical environment's factors have great influence on people's psychology. In a certain geographical environment, people who live for a long time have a psychological adaptation to their natural environment. This means people living in Australia may find it difficult to adapt to the natural environment of extremely cold weather in which Eskimos live. Nevertheless, if the Australians are given opportunities to adapt to this environment after a long time, they, the Australians, are not only adapting to this environment physically but also mainly because of accepting the corresponding culture and then form the corresponding consciousness. So it can be said that they have become the Eskimos. This proves that culture is not abstract, but concrete. For example, Eskimos live in the Arctic. Their culture includes eating raw

meat and living in a snow house (igloo). To live in the Arctic, you can't live without these cultures. These are survival strategies and cultural behaviors.

Evidently, people of different nationalities in different countries have their own manners, customs or lifestyle. Thus, language in this situation becomes particular to translate. Obviously, idioms which are part of the language condense the culture of that community. This leads to the key point of idiom translation is to make a proper interpretation of its cultural information. America's most famous linguist Eugene Nida (1984) once said that the similarities among people of different cultures are much more than that which distinguishes them from each other. However, these differences among them are the difficult point of translation. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss the cultural differences while study idiom translation. Quite a lot of researchers have talked about cultural differences between English and Chinese. So a general conclusion of these reasons can be made.

(a) *Geographical environment*

According to Zhang Y.X. (2016), geographical culture is formed by natural and geographical conditions. Languages of different ethnic groups have their own unique natural environment and geographical culture characteristics. In essence, a particular geographical environment normally creates a particular culture. These specific cultures can further form specific language expressions. So in other words, to be more specific, people who live on the mountain will form a kind of "mountain culture". In the same way, people living in cold areas have their own "snow area culture" while people living by the sea will create "ocean culture". For instance, British country is an island country, its land area is not big, but it has a very good natural navigation condition, and the navigation and shipbuilding industries are very developed. The British people have lived in such a marine environment for a long time, and they have formed the "ocean

culture" which creates many idioms related to the life of the sea, such as "all at sea"(Meaning: confused; not organized), "between the devil and the deep blue sea" (Meaning: in a situation where you have to choose between two things that are equally bad), "fish for compliments" (Meaning: encourage somebody(sb.)) indirectly to say nice things about you), "a big fish" (Meaning: an important person (but only in a small community group, etc.),"fish or cut bait" (Meaning: used to tell sb. to make a decision and take the necessary action), "a fish out of water" (Meaning: a person who feels uncomfortable or embarrassed in unfamiliar surroundings), "have bigger fish to fry" (Meaning: have more important, interesting or useful thing to do),"neither fish nor fowl" (Meaning：neither one thing nor another). Wang L. C. & Wang S. (2013) think "China is an agricultural country and its economy is dominated by farming, so cattle, mountains, hills, soil and plants are often used for metaphor. Such idioms as "be as steady as Mount Tai", "spend money like soil" and so on (p.1692)".

In comparison with China, despite facing the sea, it is a semi-landlocked country, with a relatively closed continental environment. Moreover, since ancient times, China has been famous for its mountains and rivers with developed agriculture industry. Therefore, there are many idioms that are related to agriculture in Chinese. Such as 东山再起 [dōng shān zài qǐ] (Meaning: stage a comeback; bob up like a cork; rise from the ashes), 土生土长 [tǔ shēng tǔ zhǎng] (Meaning: Native; be indigenous to), 揠苗助长 [yà miáo zhù zhǎng] (Meaning: pulling up seedlings to help them grow; do harm to a thing by being over-enthusiastic about it), 顺藤摸瓜 [shùn téng mō guā] (Meaning: follow the vine to get the melon-- track down sb. by following clues; follow up a clue and seize the culprit), 瓜熟蒂落 [guā shú dì luò] (Meaning: Fruits fall off when ripe; At the right time everything comes easy).

The geographical environment of China has allowed bamboo to grow in abundance and become part of people's daily life. For instance, Chinese use bamboo chopsticks to eat. Some of them use bamboo to build a house, make a bed and mattress. Therefore, there are plenty of Chinese idioms related to bamboo. Such as 青梅竹马[qīng méi zhú mǎ] (Meaning: childhood sweetheart; Males and females play innocently together during childhood), 势如破竹[shì rú pò zhú] (Meaning: Formidable; Break through; smash into the enemy territory like splitting a bamboo), 胸有成竹[xiōng yǒu chéng zhú] (Meaning: to have a well-thought-out plan beforehand; under one's belt). However, bamboo is not found in the UK, and so it is very difficult for the British to see bamboo. Besides, the word "bamboo" in English is also borrowed from French which clearly indicates that there is no associative meaning in English. Therefore, obviously, there are few idioms related to bamboo in English.

Because of this geographical difference, the meaning of an idiom cannot be determined only by literal meaning. Sometimes, the word needs to be changed. For example, 雨后春笋 [yǔ hòu chūn sǔn] (Literal meaning: bamboo shoots after a spring rain), when translating this idiom, the translator can translate like this "like mushrooms after rain", 挥金如土 [huī jīn rú tǔ] (Literal meaning: to spend money like soil), when translating this idiom, the translator can choose to translate like "to spend money like water" which conforms to the characteristics of the British Marine culture, 害群之马 [hài qún zhī mǎ] (Literal meaning: A bad horse that harms a herd), when translating this idiom, the translator can choose to convert the word horse into sheep, the translator can use "black sheep" to represent this Chinese idiom.

*(b)   **Manners and customs***

According to Ping H. & Zhang G.Y. (1999), manners and customs is a form of the social phenomenon, refers to the behavior and way of life which people comply within a specific culture area. Manners and customs restrict society members' actions, which are not the product of individual factors, but the creation of social groups. Every man, from the moment he is born, begins to shape his feelings, actions, and experiences based on the manners and customs of his social environment; influenced by the social culture of his subordination. When he grows up to participate in various activities, the habit of the society becomes his habit, the faith of the society becomes his belief, the taboo of the society becomes his taboo. Fang F. (2015) gave an example in her paper to illustrate. Chinese people will usually greet by using "你吃了吗？(Have you eaten?)" and "你去哪儿？(Where are you going to?)". So it's different for western people to say hello. This proves that the manners and customs of a region is an integral part of the culture of a region, and become a certain thought and criterion in the life of the people in that region. Since manners and customs are a special part of the culture of this nation, the language of this nation must reflect them. Thus, it is no wonder the idioms are closely related to the manners and customs of the people.

The rich and colorful ethnic customs become the hotbed for the idiom to live on. The differences in the living environment and historical culture are large between Chinese and English. The differences in customs reflect different lifestyles and attitudes towards things. This is particularly evident in the cognition of animals. For example, although both China and the UK have the habit of keeping dogs, the Chinese people used to have a disdain for such animals. Therefore, in Chinese, "dog" is often used as a derogatory term. Such as 狗尾续貂 [gǒu wěi xù diāo] (Meaning: add a dog's tail to the sable coat; make an unworthy continuation of a great work), 狗仗人势 [gǒu zhàng rén shì]

(Meaning: like a dog threatening other people on the strength of its master's power; be a bully under the protection of a powerful person), 猪朋狗友 [zhū péng gǒu yǒu] (Meaning: fair-weather friend), 人模狗样[rén mú gǒu yàng] (Meaning: pretending to be what one is not), 丧家之狗[sàng jiā zhī gǒu] (Meaning: A person who has lost his dependence, or has nowhere to turn), 偷鸡摸狗[tōu jī mō gǒu] (Meaning: do things stealthily; have illicit relations with women). It is difficult to find some idioms that have a positive meaning with the word "dog" in Chinese. However, British people tend to have a favorable opinion of dogs and think that dogs are the most loyal friends of human beings.

Therefore, in English, "dog" is generally a positive word, and it usually comes together with positive things. For example, "be like a dog with two tails" (Meaning: be extremely happy), "every dog has his day" (Meaning: often used to encourage sb, everyone will, at some time in their life, be successful or lucky), "there's life in the old dog yet" (Meaning: a person is old but is still active and enjoys life), "top dog" (Meaning: a person, group or country that is better or more powerful than all the others)

(c) *Religion*

In the book *English idioms and British and American culture* written by Ping H. & Zhang G.Y. (1999), it says "宗教是一种文化现象，习语与文化的关系极为密切，更能折射出宗教对语言的影响" (Religion is a kind of cultural phenomenon. Idioms are closely related to culture, which can reflect the influence of religion on language). According to Zhang Y.X. (2016), social science believes that religion an important social ideology is a form of the cultural phenomenon that emerged only after the development of human society at a certain historical stage. The main characteristics of religion are the belief of some mysterious force or supernatural entities that exist in the real world, which makes people worship and respect these forces. Religious belief is a

part of human spiritual life and cultural life whereby different religions are manifestations of different cultures and traditions. In other words, religions have different cultural characteristics and different cultural backgrounds and show different cultural traditions.

Undoubtedly, English and Chinese idioms, with different religious beliefs, have different reactions towards idioms. For example, the Christian culture of the British, which is the faith of most of the people in this region, has a history of nearly two thousand years. Therefore, religious beliefs have a profound influence; these people believe that God is the creator and master of the universe, HE is unique and sovereign. Therefore, the expression of related idioms comes into being in English. Such as "a broad church" (Meaning: an organization that accepts a wide range of opinions), "poor as a church mouse" (Meaning: very poor), "work all the hours God sends" (Meaning: work all the time), "God help sb." (Meaning: used to say that you are afraid sb. will be in danger or that something (sth.) bad will happen to them), "so help me God" (Meaning: used when making a serious promise, threat, etc.), "in the name of God" (Meaning: used especially in questions to show that you are angry surprised or shocked), "put the fear of God into sb." (Meaning: frighten sb. very much, especially in order to force them to do what you want).

Like Britain, China is also a country of many religions. The main religions in China are Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Christianity. But Buddhism is the most influential and profound religion in China. Chinese Buddhist culture originates in ancient India. Buddhism, as one of the three major religions in the world, though born in India, has thrived in China, and become an important part of Chinese traditional culture. Buddhism, China's national religion has created a unique Chinese Buddhist culture by blending with Chinese native traditional ideology. This kind of Buddhist culture has

gradually become an important part of Chinese traditional culture. In ancient China, Buddhism has involved various areas in China, such as social politics, economy, philosophy, religion, ethics, literature, art and so on. At the same time, the spread of Buddhism among different ethnic groups promoted the integration of ethnic groups and has a profound influence on people's ideology and lifestyle. These influences are portrayed in the idioms. 晨钟暮鼓 [chén zhōng mù gǔ] (Meaning: morning bell and evening drum -- reminders), 立地成佛 **[**lì dì chéng fó] (Meaning: become a Buddha immediately; abruptly change one's ways), 六根清净 [liù gēn qīng jìng] (Meaning: free from human desires and passions), 借花献佛**[**jiè huā xiàn fó] (Meaning: present Buddha with borrowed flowers -- to borrow sth. to make a gift of it), 临时抱佛脚 **[**lín shí bào fó jiǎo] (Meaning: make effort at the last moment), 不看僧面看佛面 [bù kàn sēng miàn kàn fó miàn] (Meaning: do sth. out of consideration for sb. else).

From the above observation, different religion and culture have idioms with different images. Therefore, since most Chinese and English people have different religious beliefs, the idioms contain different images. Westerners have a deep-rooted Christian tradition of going to church. Therefore, western idioms especially English idioms have images of Christian faith appearing in the expressions of their language. Meanwhile, Chinese people are for age-long deeply influenced by Buddhism. Therefore, images of Buddhist faith appear in the expressions of their language used in the idiom; which need to be considered while translating idioms of both languages.

For example, there are two famous translated versions of the classical Chinese novel *Honglou meng.* And these two versions are often used by scholars to discuss the translation strategies between them. One sentence in this novel "谋事在人，成事在天", was translated by the British translators David Hawkes and John Minford translated as

"Man proposes, God disposes". This translation makes the sentence structure equal with similar meaning, thus, making it an appropriate translation. The same sentence, "谋事在人，成事在天" was translated by a married couple, one of them a Chinese translator Yang Xianyi and his wife Gladys into "Man proposes, Heaven disposes". The word "God" in English is changed into "Heaven". This change, not only conforms to the original intention but also can scientifically comply with the characteristics of two cultures. From this example, we cannot determine which version is better. The main point of translation is that cultural factors need to be taken into consideration while doing the translation.

2.3.2 Nida's cultural categories

Nida (1945) says "the person who is engaged in translating from one language into another ought to be constantly aware of the contrast in the entire range of culture represented by the two languages" (p.194). People from different social and cultural backgrounds have different conceptual systems, cognitive structure, cognitive models, and cognitive habits. Without reference to their particular culture and cognition, the meanings of the idioms cannot be understood, what more in translating idioms properly. Also, Nida (1945) gives the following opinions about culture equivalence.

> Words are fundamentally symbols for features of the culture. Accordingly, the cultural situation in both languages must be known in translating, and the words which designate the closest equivalence must be employed. An examination of selected problems in various aspects of culture will make it possible for one to see more clearly the precise relationship of cultural information to the semantic problems encountered in descriptive linguistics. Translation-problems, which are essentially problems of equivalence, may be conveniently treated under (1) ecology, (2) material culture, (3) social culture, (4) religious culture, and (5) linguistic culture. (Nida, 1945, p.196)

All data from the dictionary are analyzed to find out what category they belong to. This analysis is done so that readers are given a direction or guidance to learn the background of idioms. For example, idioms from religious cultural category can be

found in the *Bible*. So readers can read some chapters of the *Bible* to gain background knowledge of these idioms.

Since Nida published his article, cultural categories have been studied by a great number of people. Newmark (1988) adapted Nida's theory in his book *A Textbook of Translation* and gave several examples of the cultural categories.

(1) Ecology: flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills
(2) Material culture (artifacts): food, clothes, houses and towns, transport
(3) Social culture: work and leisure
(4) Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts: political and administrative, religious, artistic
(5) Gestures and habits (Newmark, 1988, p.95)

Wei Q. Q. (2015) based on Nida's classification of culture, discussed the applicability of functionalist translation theory. The author gave the following description of Nida's cultural categories.

(1) Ecology means the ecological culture in a given area, which includes the natural environment, geographic conditions, climate and so on. Because of the different ecological cultures, even the same word may have different connotations in different regions.
(2) Material culture refers to the material products human beings create and the corresponding culture, which includes food, clothes, architecture, etc. The words that carry Chinese material culture can be found everywhere in the novel.
(3) Social culture refers to social customs, beliefs, values, ways of living, etc. in a society. As the encyclopedia of the late feudal society in China, the novel contains countless words that reflect Chinese social culture.
(4) Different nations have different religious cultures. Buddhism and Taoism are the main religions in China, whereas westerners mainly believe in Christianity and Catholicism.
(5) Linguistic culture refers to the specific characteristics each language has, including phonetic, lexical, grammatical features, etc. (Wei Q. Q., 2015, p.56-58)

Ana Fernández Guerra (2012) revised the literature dealing with the main typologies and classifications proposed as regards cultural terms.

Finally, Fernández Guerra ("Tradicionalismo" 139) describes four major types of realia, which can turn translation into a very difficult process.

a. Geographic and ethnographic terms: Albufera, gorrilla… (in Spanish), or The Square Mile, cockney… (in English).

b. Words or expressions referring to folklore, traditions and mythology: Toro embolado, romería, pena, tracas, entierro de la sardina, rociero… Ceilidh, Christmas stocking, touchdown, tag…

c. Names of everyday objects, actions and events (such as food and drinks, clothes, housing, tools, public transport, dances and games, units of measurement, money, etc.): Agua de Valencia, bunuelos, paella, migas, mantilla, barraca… Christmas pudding, cottage pie, happy hour, miles, earmuffs…

d. Social and historical terms denoting territorial administrative units or divisions; departments, professions, titles, ranks, greetings and treatments; institutions, patriotic and religious organisations; etc.: oposiciones, Diputación provincial, guardia civil, pata negra, caudillo…sophomore, A-level(s), Salvation Army, Christie's, YMCA…(Guerra, 2012, p.4)

Although Nida gives some example to illustrate the five cultural categories, the definition of each category is not given. And the examples are limited in his book. No one can give a specific definition about each category of Nida's cultural theory as Nida did not give out the definition in his book. However, according to research carried out by Newmark (1988), Wei Q. Q. (2015), Guerra (2012) and Zhang W. F. (2012), more detailed information about each category is given below in order to classify the idioms that collected in this study.

(a) Ecology: Nationalities from different area and ecological conditions present different characteristics which are reflected in animals, plants, climate, topography appearance, etc. Furthermore, the ecological condition inevitably affects each other's national culture to show a distinctive regional culture. So ecology includes the natural environment, geographic conditions, and climate and so on.

(b) Material culture: Material culture involves people's daily life, and some words of material culture are exactly the same in two cultures, while others have different meanings. Material culture refers to the material products created by human beings. It includes food, clothes, architecture, etc.

(c) Social culture: Social culture permeates daily life and communication activities. Social culture refers to social customs, beliefs, values, ways of living, professions, titles, ranks, greetings, treatments, and institutions etc. Thus, different ethnic groups have different ethnic cultural conventions and social conventions in greeting, addressing and flattery.

(d) Religious culture: Religious culture is composed of religious legends and religious belief, religious system, religious writing, and religious rules and so on. Inevitably, different nations have different religious cultures. In China, Buddhism and Taoism are the main religions while the English believe in Christianity and Catholicism.

(e) Linguistic culture: Linguistic culture refers to the specific characteristics of each language, including phonetic, lexical, grammatical features, words or expressions referring to folklore, traditions, mythology and etc.

Besides, quite a lot of researches about English and Chinese translation based on Nida's cultural categories have been done.

Yu J. H. (2013) studied some Chinese sentences to illustrate Nida's cultural categories. In this study, therefore, the author tries to raise awareness about cultural factors which are essential to consider when translating Chinese-English idioms.

Xu Y. J. (2014) also adopted Nida's cultural categories as a perspective to discuss the translation between Chinese and English. The author indicates that cross-cultural communication emerges due to the rapid development of world globalization. In the process of translation, there is no denying that translators will face a lot of problems especially the culture conflict.

Zhang W. F. (2012) stated that the close relationship between language and culture dooms the close relationship between translation and culture. This is because two cultures are involved in the process of translation. The author also uses Nida's cultural categories as the framework to discuss the translation strategies related to cultural factors. The author refers to the words from a talk about the relationship between culture and translation by Chinese famous professor Wang Zuoliang, who indicates that the translator may be dealing with individual words, but he is faced with two large cultures.

Chen L. L. (2011) adopts Nida's theory and discussed culture-loaded words in translation. The author believes that translating culture-loaded words is challenging because it involves a wide range of categories as well as variable characteristic. Also, it has the characteristic of the variable. Thus the target language readers are the focus while translating culture-loaded words. The readers' ability to understand the idiom must be fully considered by the translator. Furthermore, the translators must ensure that the translated version is close to the original text to achieve the goal of cultural communication. Chinese ancient literature often contains a large number of culture-loaded words. When translating such texts, translators need to follow the translation strategy of being loyal to the original text. Today, with the deepening of globalization, translators should firmly inherit and carry forward the splendid culture and civilization of China. Therefore, while translating, translators need to take foreignizing translation as a translation strategy in order to constantly strengthen their own culture, rather than bury their own cultural civilization under other countries' language and culture. Therefore, translators have the responsibility and obligation to preserve culture information. In doing translation, translators should seek common points while reserving differences. The acceptability of the original text in the readership and the cultural factors of source language should be considered.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study will employ the qualitative methods where a compare and contrast mode between source text (ST) and target text (TT) will be carried. Data are collected from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary (*English-*Chinese Edition).* According to the four strategies used for translating idioms as proposed by Mona Baker (1992), compare and contrast is used to find out what kind of translation strategy is used to translate an idiom from English to Chinese. And according to cultural categories as proposed by Eugene Nida (1945), the origin of the idiom will be used to find out its belonged cultural category. And which translation strategy is mostly used and what kind of cultural category have more idioms will be found out. Lastly, the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of Chinese idioms are discussed to deepen this study.

3.2 Data collection

The data for the study is extracted from sentences selected of idioms from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary (English-Chinese Edition).* The second edition is used in this study which published in 2004. According to the cover page of this dictionary, the data is suitable for this study.

> The *Oxford Dictionary of Idioms* is based on the resources of Oxford's unique language research programme; each entry has been meticulously researched by the Oxford Dictionary department, with many new findings being incorporated for the new edition. Several hundred new idioms have been added together with many new examples of use; in addition, the text has been redesigned, presenting idioms alphabetically by keyword and including special new origin and background notes. Lastly, a new thematic index groups together idioms and phrases which have a common theme, such as jealousy and envy, strength, age, and death.
>
> The *Oxford Dictionary of Idioms* is an essential reference tool for students and teachers of English, both at university level and for English as a second language, as well as for anyone interested in the more colourful side of the English language and its history. (Oxford Idioms Dictionary, 2004, cover page)

This dictionary has plenty of accurate words and appropriate explanations and examples with suitable translations. Furthermore, the tagged idioms in this authoritative dictionary are easily identifiable as informal, disapproving or old-fashioned. As convenience sample, the first ten idioms with origin note are chosen from every chapter of the dictionary as data to make sure the data comes from the whole dictionary and to authenticate the results of the study.

First of all, cultural categories are discussed in this study, thus, only idioms with origin note in the dictionary are chosen. To understand the English idioms, the meaning of each individual word cannot help to understand the meaning of the whole idiom, but the origin of the idiom can help to understand. (Please refer to the example in Figure 3.1.)
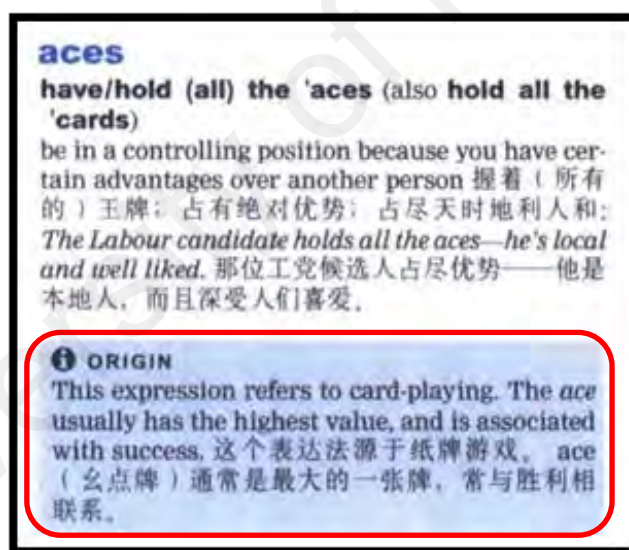
Figure 3.1: Idiom with origin note in the dictionary

Secondly, idioms tagged as informal, disapproving or old-fashioned were not chosen for this study in order for the data to be adapted to make the study more practical and useful to the readers. (Please refer to the example in Figure 3.2, p.45)
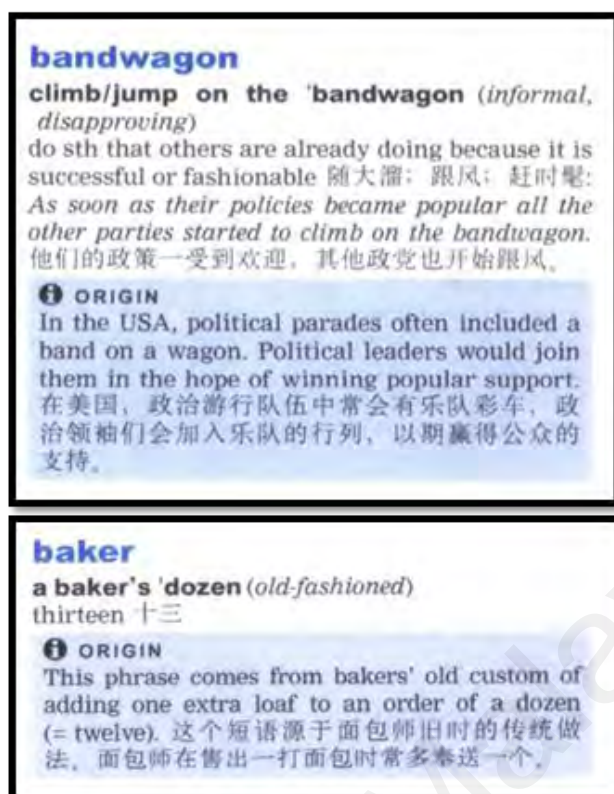
Figure 3.2: Unsuitable idioms

Table 3.1: The number of idioms chosen from each chapter

A	5	B	10	C	10	D	6	E	3
F	10	G	9	H	10	I	1	J	2
K	4	L	7	M	9	N	3	O	2
P	10	Q	1	R	10	S	10	T	9
U	0	V	0	W	9	X	0	Y	0
Z	0	**Total**	140						

Last but not least, this dictionary is chronologically arranged in the order of A to Z,
The data for this study was a selection of 10 idioms from each chapter; however, there
were not enough suitable idioms in every chapter. Hence, the number of all the idioms
from each chapter is shown in the following chart. (Please refer to the number of idioms
chosen from each chapter in Table 3.1.)

This study also required the origins of some Chinese idioms to be included. The origins of Chinese idioms are taken from Hanci Website which is the official website of the Chinese dictionaries.

So in the appendix of this study, I put all the data as below. All the data in the appendix has its origin. And what kind of translation strategy has been used in translating the English idiom into Chinese is given out. What kind of cultural category both the English idiom and Chinese idiom belong to is given out. Here are two examples.

1. have/hold (all) the aces (also hold all the cards) -- Translation by paraphrase -- Social culture.

The Labour candidate **holds all the aces** – he's local and well liked. 那位工党候选人**占尽优势**——他是本地人，而且深受人们喜爱。

ORIGIN：This expression refers to card-playing. The ace usually has the highest value, and is associated with success. 这个表达法源于纸牌游戏。Ace (幺点牌)通常是最大的一张牌，常与胜利相联系。

2. an/sb.'s Achilles' heel -- Translation by paraphrase -- Linguistic culture

The opposition realized they had found the Prime Minister's **Achilles' heel**. 反对派意识到他们已经发现了首相的**致命弱点**。

ORIGIN：This expression is named after the Greek hero *Achilles*. When he was a small child, his mother dipped him into the river Styx, which meant that he could not be injured. She held him by his heel, which therefore was not touched by the water. Achilles died after being wounded by an arrow in the heel. 这个表达法源于希腊神话，

希腊英雄阿喀琉斯(Achilles)很小的时候，母亲将他在斯提克斯冥河中浸过，这样他就能刀枪不入。可是她用手握着他的脚踵，因此那个部位没有接触河水。阿喀琉斯最后因一支箭射中脚踵而死。

3.3 Sampling

This study used convenience sampling. The first example sentence of the idiom was chosen as some idioms have several example sentences. And the first ten idioms with their origin stated in the dictionary were selected from each chapter. And this dictionary is chronologically arranged in the order of A to Z. Therefore, 260 example sentences should have selected for this study. However, there are not enough suitable idioms in some chapters. Thus, in the end, only 140 examples are selected in this study. Table 3.1 (p.45) shows the number of selected idioms from each chapter. This research adopts this sampling to fulfill the research design which was to extract data from every part of the dictionary in order for the validity and reliability of research results is ensured.

3.4 Research procedures

First of all, as the source text and target text are compared and contrasted to determine the translation strategy used to translate the idiom from English to Chinese. Then, the qualitative approach was then used to analyze these data. The cultural category of the idiom was also to be analyzed. Finally, the translation strategy and cultural category that were commonly used and appeared respectively in most of the researched sentences of the selected idioms will be found out. An example is given below to show how to process the data.

First stage: Suitable idioms are collected as data in this study. Figure 3.3 (p.48) shows the first idiom that taken in this study. This English idiom has origin note. Also, there is no tag suggests that this idiom is unsuitable. An idiom is unsuitable for this

study means the idiom is labeled with the tag such as informal, disapproving or old-fashioned. Some idioms in this dictionary may have more than one example sentence. The first example sentence will be chosen in this study. (Please refer to the example in Figure 3.2, p.45)
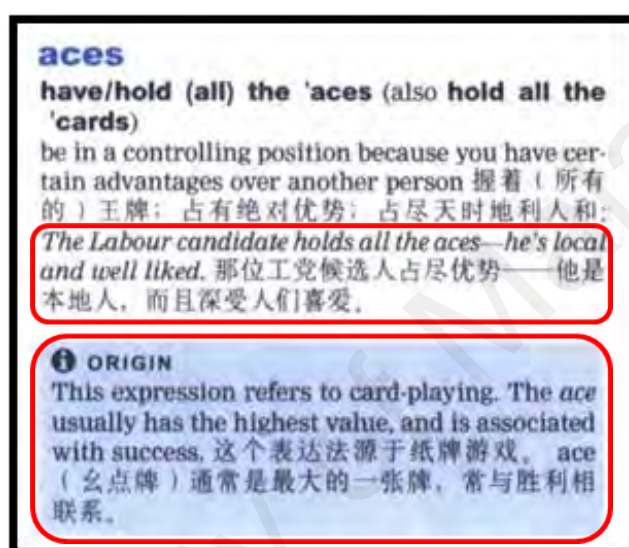
Figure 3.3: Example of data

Second stage: The cultural categories of selected idioms are classified. From Figure 3.3, the origin of this English idiom is given. This expression refers to card-playing. The ace usually has the highest value, and is associated with success. According to Nida's cultural category (1945) which includes (1) ecology, (2) material culture, (3) social culture, (4) religious culture, and (5) linguistic culture. And this idiom is classified into social culture. The origin of this idiom will be used to find out which cultural category it belongs to. The explanation about each cultural category has been given at section 2.3.2. Here are some examples to show how the analysis is done in this study. Please refer to the example in Table 3.2 (p.49). The detailed and full analysis is given in chapter 4.

Table 3.2: Examples of analyzing idioms' cultural categories

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin	Cultural Category
1	hold all the aces	This expression refers to **card-playing**. The ace usually has the highest value, and is associated with success.	Social culture
2	an Aladdin's cave	This expression comes from a story in ***The Arabian Nights***. Aladdin was trapped in a cave full of gold and jewels by a magician.	Linguistic culture
3	be out of the ark	This idiom refers to a story in the **Bible**. The ark was a large boat which Noah built to save his family and two of every type of animal from the flood.	Religious culture
4	get sb.'s back up	This idiom refers to the way **cats** arch their backs when they are angry.	Ecology
5	a ball and chain	In the past, prisoners had to wear **a heavy metal ball on a chain** around one leg so that they couldn't escape.	Material culture

Another example of this study for analyzing how to classify its cultural category, "an Aladdin's cave", the image of this idiom is "cave". So this idiom seems to belong to ecology. But from the origin of this idiom, "this expression comes from a story in *The Arabian Nights*", this idiom is from a story. So it should belong to linguistic culture. All the analysis of this study is based on the origin of the idiom instead of the image of the idiom. The first research question of this study is "what cultural categories do the selected idioms belong to". After all the data have been analyzed, the first research question can be answered.

Third stage: The translation strategies of selected idioms are analyzed. Also, back-translation is used in this study to identify which translation strategy is used in example sentences. From Figure 3.3 (p.48), the example sentence of this idiom is "The Labour candidate **holds all the aces** – he's local and well liked. 那位工党候选人占尽优势—

一他是本地人，而且深受人们喜爱。" "holds all the aces" is the English idiom. Through compare its Chinese translation, this English idiom has been translated into "占尽优势". "占尽优势" means "have an advantage over others". According to four translation strategies proposed by Baker (1992) which are (1) Using an idiom of similar meaning and form, (2) Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, (3) Translation by paraphrase, and (4) Translation by omission. So the translation strategy used in this English idiom is translation by paraphrase. After analyzing all the data collected in this study, the second research question "which translation strategy is most frequently used in selected idioms from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary*?" can be answered. Here are some examples to show how the translation strategies are found out in this study. Please refer to the example in Table 3.3. The detailed and full analysis is given in chapter 4.

Table 3.3: Examples of analyzing idioms' translation strategies

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Back-translation	Translation strategy
1	hold all the aces	占尽优势	have an advantage over sb.	Translation by paraphrase
2	down at heel	邋邋遢遢，不修边幅	messy and unkempt	Using two idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form
3	the genie is out of the bottle	放出魔瓶的妖怪	the genie is out of the bottle	Literal translation
4	you reap what you sow	自食其果	you reap what you sow	Using an idiom of similar meaning and similar form

Fourth stage: The differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of Chinese idioms are discussed. At data collection stage, it can be clearly seen that some English idioms can be translated by using Chinese idioms. According to the

statistics of Hanci Website which is the official website of the Chinese dictionary, the origins of these Chinese idioms can be found. Also, according to Nida's cultural categories, these Chinses idioms are classified to find out its belonged category. To deepen this study, the third research question is put forward which is "what are the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of their equivalent Chinese idioms". Here are some examples to show how to find out the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of its equivalent Chinese idioms in this study. Please refer to the example in Table 3.4. The detailed and full analysis is given in chapter 4.

Table 3.4: Examples of analyzing the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of its equivalent Chinese idioms

Number	English idioms	Cultural categories of English Idioms	Chinese translation	Cultural categories of Chinese idioms
1	the whole caboodle	Linguistic culture	焕然一新	Linguistic culture
2	call sb's bluff	Social culture	顺水推舟	Linguistic culture
3	take coals to Newcastle	Ecology	多此一举	Linguistic culture
4	cross the Rubicon	Ecology	破釜沉舟	Linguistic culture
5	a dark horse	Social culture	真人不露相	Linguistic culture

To sum up, based on the research design of this study, the research procedures are set as above to answer of research questions of this study. According to these research procedures, the objectives of this study can also be achieved.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A total of 140 example sentences were selected from chapters A to Z of the Dictionary for this study. Of which there were no suitable idioms from chapters U, V, X, Y, and Z. They were unsuitable because they were informal, disapproved and old fashioned. For data analysis, this chapter is divided into three parts which are the discussion about cultural categories, the discussion about translation strategies and the discussion about the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of its equivalent Chinese idioms. This is also consistent with the three research questions raised by this study. And the answers to the research questions are given in these three sections.

4.1 Data analysis and findings on cultural categories

The first research question, "what cultural categories do the selected idioms belong to", form the result below, most of the selected idioms belong to social culture. Please refer to Figure 4.1 below. A detailed analysis of this question enabled readers to learn and understand the background of English idioms with more focus. For example, a finding in this study was that 19 out of 140 idioms were from religious culture, of which 16 out of 19 come from the *Bible*. Since the majority of these idioms were from the *Bible*, readers got to read some chapters of the *Bible*.
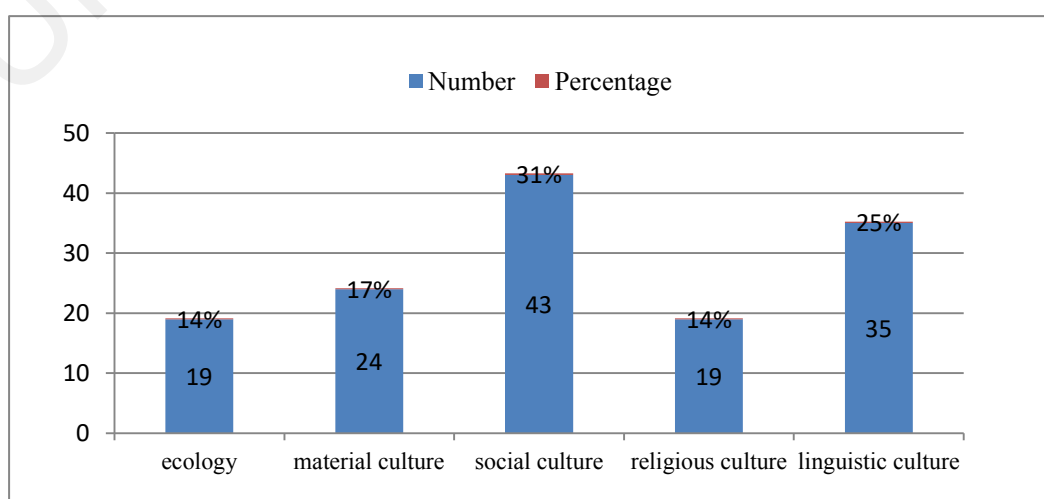
Figure 4.1: Cultural categories of English idioms

4.1.1 Ecology

19 out of 140 English idioms come from ecology. Figures 4.1 (p.52), shows 14% of all selected idioms have the origins from ecology. Table 4.1, shows the images inside these idioms which are cats, bay tree, lightning, coal-mining center, crocodiles, steam, doldrums, fox, sea, horse, ostrich, animal's teeth, tide, crops, town, and iceberg. However, there was not much information or pattern to be determined from this cultural category. For example, if there are a lot of English idioms in this cultural category come from "cat", then the background of "cat" can be given for readers to learn the background of idioms. But the origin of this cultural category is random, thus, these ecology things cannot be classified into a specific category.

Table 4.1: Ecology

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
1	get sb.'s back up	This idiom refers to the way **cats** arch their backs when they are angry.
2	keep sb./sth. at bay	The Greeks and Romans believed the **bay tree** provided protection against thunderbolts because it was never struck by lightning, so they wore its leaves on their heads to protect themselves during thunderstorms.
3	a bolt from the blue	This idiom refers to a bolt of **lightning** from a clear sky.
4	take coals to Newcastle	Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the north of England, was once an important **coal-mining centre**.
5	crocodile tears	When **crocodiles** produce tears, it is a physical response, not an emotional one.
6	cross the Rubicon	This expression refers to the **Rubicon**, a stream which formed the border between Italy and Gaul. When Julius Caesar broke the law by crossing it with his army, it led inevitably to war.
7	in the doldrums	The **doldrums** is a place in the ocean near the equator where there are sudden periods of calm. A sailing ship caught in this area can be stranded due to a lack of wind.
8	go to ground	This expression refers to a **fox** hiding underground when it is hunted.

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
9	the ebb and flow (of sb./sth.)	This expression refers to the movement of the **sea** away from and towards the land.
10	full of beans	This phrase was originally used to talk about **horses** that were fed on beans.
11	Bury your head in the sand	This phrase refers to the common belief that the **ostrich** buries its head in the sand when it is in danger.
12	lock horns with sb.	This idiom refers to fighting with horns or antlers between **animals** such as bulls, stags, etc.
13	(be) long in the tooth	This idiom refers to the fact that some **animals' teeth** keep growing as they grow older.
14	(at) a low ebb	This idiom refers to a very **low tide**, when the sea is a long way from the land.
15	Have (got) nine lives	This idiom refers to the traditional saying that **cats** have nine lives.
16	put sb./sth. through his, their, its, etc. paces	These expressions refer to judging the performance of a **horse** before deciding to buy it.
17	you reap what you sow	These two phrases refer to farmers cutting and collecting **crops** from a field.
18	send sb. to Coventry	Coventry is a **town** in the centre of England. It is said that in the past, people there did not like soldiers and refused to talk to any who were sent to the town.
19	be the tip of the iceberg	Only 1/7 or 1/8 of an **iceberg** can be seen above the water.

(Table 4.1, continued)

4.1.2 Material culture

24 out of 140 English idioms belong to material culture. From Figure 4.1 (p.52), it is clear that 17% of all selected idioms' origins are from material culture thus making this cultural category to have the third most number of English idioms. Table 4.2 (p.55), shows the images inside these idioms as the ball on a chain, wool, meat, dice, glove, large machine, gun, heels, boat, handle, bucket, lime, loggerhead, machinery, colours, olive branch, bridge, wallpaper, rack, ship, carpet, stage, table, and tenterhook but information or pattern of this cultural category is also difficult to find.

For example, if there are a lot of English idioms in this cultural category come from "glove", then the background of "glove" can be given for readers to learn the background of idioms. But the origin of this cultural category is random; also, these items cannot be classified into a specific category.

Table 4.2: Material culture

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
1	a ball and chain	In the past, prisoners had to wear **a heavy metal ball on a chain** around one leg so that they couldn't escape.
2	a black sheep of the family	Shepherds used to dislike black sheep because their **wool** was not as valuable as white wool.
3	give sb. the cold shoulder	One theory about the origin of this expression is that it refers to **meat**. Meat cut from the shoulder of an adult sheep was very cheap, so giving visitors this meat served cold was a sign that they were not welcome.
4	the dice are loaded against sb.	This phrase refers to putting a piece of lead (= a heavy metal) inside a **dice** so that it always falls in a particular way.
5	take up the gauntlet	A gauntlet is a kind of **glove**. In medieval times a Knight threw his gauntlet at the feet of another knight as a challenge to fight. If he accepted the challenge, the other knight would pick up the glove.
6	grind to a halt	This idiom refers to the way a very **large machine** slowly stops working.
7	hang fire	This phrase refers to a **gun** which does not fire immediately.
8	down at heel	This idiom refers to the worn **heels** of old shoes.
9	high and dry	This expression refers to **boats** left on the beach after the tide has gone out.
10	to the hilt	This expression refers to the full length of a sword, up to its **handle** (= the hilt).
11	kick the bucket	This idiom refers to the killing of animals for food. They were hung from a **wooden frame** (the bucket), which they would kick as they were dying.
12	in the limelight	In theatres, **lime** used to be burnt in front of the stage to give a bright light.
13	at loggerheads with sb.	In the past, a **loggerhead** was a long iron instrument which may have been used as a weapon.

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
14	put/set sth. in motion	This expression refers to starting a large and complicated piece of **machinery.**
15	nail your colours to the mast	In this expression, **colours** are flags. In a battle at sea, a ship would nail its colours to the mast to show its intention to continue fighting and not surrender.
16	hold out/offer an olive branch (to sb.)	The **olive branch** is an ancient symbol of peace.
17	be like painting the Forth Bridge	The Forth Bridge is a very big **bridge** over the river Forth in Edinburgh.
18	paper over the cracks	This expression refers to putting **wallpaper** on a wall in order to hide the cracks in the plaster.
19	(be) on the rack	The **rack** was an instrument of torture, used in the past for punishing and hurting people. Their arms and legs were tied to a wooden frame and then pulled in opposite directions, stretching the body.
20	rearrange the deckchairs on the Titanic	This expression refers to the famous **ship** that sank after hitting an iceberg on its first voyage.
21	the red carpet	A strip of **red carpet** is usually laid on the ground for an important visitor to walk on when he or she arrives.
22	behind the scenes	This expression refers to the parts of the **stage** in a theatre which the audience cannot see.
23	(be) on tenterhooks	In the past, a **tenterhook** was used to keep material stretched on a drying frame during manufacture.
24	turn the tables (on sb.)	This idiom possibly originates from the time when **furniture** had more than one use. A table have a polished surface to impress neighbors and friends, but when meal time came the surface was turned over to reveal an unpolished surface underneath.

(Table 4.2, continued)

4.1.3 Social culture

For social culture, 43 out of 140 English idioms are from this category. Figure 4.1 (p.52), clearly indicates 31% of the selected idioms' origins are from social culture, making it the largest number of English idioms. Table 4.3, shows the origins of selected idioms to be from card-playing, past social custom, boxing, wrestling, horse racing, American Indian custom, people's habits, profession, chess, people's names, military, place, law, taverns, and gladiator.

Table 4.3: Social culture

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
1	hold all the aces	This expression refers to **card-playing**. The ace usually has the highest value, and is associated with success.
2	get the all-clear	This idiom refers to the signal that is sounded in **wartime** when a bombing raid is over.
3	below the belt	This expression comes from **boxing**, and refers to the rule that forbids boxers from hitting each other below the waist.
4	lay your head on the block	In the past when people were **executed** (= killed as a punishment), they had to lay their head on a block so that it could be chopped off.
5	above board	If **card players** keep their hands above the table (the board), other players can see what they are doing.
6	call sb.'s bluff	If you *call somebody's bluff* in the game of **poker**, you force them to show their cards.
7	catch-as-catch-can	Catch-as-catch-ran is a type of **wrestling** in which most things are allowed, including many that are not allowed in other forms of wrestling.
8	out for the count	This idiom refers to the rules in **boxing**. If a boxer is still down when the referee has finished counting to ten, he loses the game.
9	under the counter	This expression comes from **World War II**, when some shops held scarce or special goods for their best customers. They would aide them under the shop counter so that the other customers could not see or buy them.
10	a dark horse	This phrase comes from **horse racing**. Horses that often won races were darkened to hide their identity so that more money could be won from the betting.

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
11	a feather in your cap	This idiom comes from the **American Indian custom** of giving a feather to somebody who had been very brave in battle.
12	fiddle while Rome burns	This phrase refers to the **Roman emperor** Nero, who fiddled(= played the violin) during the burning of Rome in AD 64.
13	in single file	When **American Indians** walked in a group, each person walked in the footsteps of the person in front so that they could not be counted by the enemy.
14	with flying colours	In the past, a ship returned to port after a **victory in battle** decorated with flags (= colours).
15	the full monty	This expression may refer to **Field Marshal Montgomery** (Monty), who insisted on a full cooked English breakfast wherever he went; or it might refer to a full three-piece suit from the **tailors Montague Burton**.
16	reveal your hand	These expressions refer to showing your cards (=your hand) in **card playing**.
17	give sb. their head	This idiom refers to allowing a horse to go as fast as it likes when you are **riding** it.
18	Hobson's choice	This expression refers to a 17th-century Cambridge man, **Tobias Hobson**, who hired out horses; he would give his customers the 'choice' of the horse nearest the stable door or none at all.
19	on the home straight	This expression refers to the last part of a **horse race** when the horses are approaching the finishing line.
20	have (got) many, etc. irons in the fire	This idiom refers to **blacksmiths** (= people whose job it is to make and repair things made of iron), who have several pieces of iron in the fire at a time, so that there is always one piece that is hot enough to work with.
21	a Jack the Lad	This was originally the **nickname** of an 18th century thief called Jack Sheppard.
22	a king's ransom	In the past, if a king was captured in a **war**, his country would pay a ransom for his release.
23	meet your Waterloo	This idiom refers to the **Battle of Waterloo** in 1815, in which Napoleon was finally defeated and taken prisoner.
24	make a move	This phrase refers to moving your pieces in a game such as **chess**.
25	Murphy's Law	This expression was named after **Edward A Murphy Jr**, an engineer in the US Air Force.

(Table 4.3, continued)

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
26	Your, his, etc. name is mud	Some people say that this expression refers to **Dr. Mudd**, the doctor who treated the broken leg of the man who shot and killed Abraham Lincoln. Mudd claimed he didn't know that the man had just killed the President, but he was still sent to prison.
27	beyond the pale	In the fourteenth century, the **part of Ireland** that was under English rule was called the pale. The area outside this was beyond the pale.
28	a parting shot	Parthia was a kingdom in ancient times. **The Parthians** used to fire arrows at the enemy as they were retreating from battle.
29	buck-passing	The buck is a small object in a **poker game** that is placed in front of the player whose turn it is to deal.
30	(buy) a pig in a poke	This expression refers to an old **market trick** of putting a rat in a bag (= a poke) and selling it as a young pig.
31	(the) rank and file	In the military, the rank and file are **ordinary soldiers** who are not officers.
32	come up/rise through the ranks	In the military, the ranks refers to the **position** of ordinary soldiers rather than officers. Some may become officers if they have the right qualities.
33	read (sb.) the Riot Act	In 1715 the **Riot Act** was passed in Parliament. Groups of more than twelve people were not allowed to meet in public. If they did, an official came to read them the Riot Act, which ordered them to stop the meeting.
34	a red herring	This idiom comes from the **custom** of using the scent of a smoked, dried herring (which was red) to train dogs to hunt.
35	saved by the bell	This expression refers to the bell that marks the end of a round in a **boxing** match.
36	up to scratch	This expression comes from **boxing**: the line in the ring which the boxers have to come to when they start to fight is called the scratch.
37	a shot across sb.'s bows	This expression refers to encounters between ships of hostile nations. One ship might fire a shot at another, not in order to hit it, but to **warn** it to move.
38	There's no such thing as a free lunch	In the past, **taverns** offered their customers a "free" lunch, but they had to buy drinks first.
39	give the thumbs up	In **contests** in ancient Rome the public put their thumbs up if they wanted a gladiator to live, and down if they wanted him to be killed.

(Table 4.3, continued)

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
40	May as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb	In the past, the **punishment** for stealing any livestock (=farm animals) was death by hanging.
41	a whipping boy	In the past when a royal prince made a mistake in his lessons, another boy was **whipped** (= punished) for his mistakes.
42	on a wing and a prayer	This expression was first used in the **military** to describe how pilots flying very badly-damaged planes succeeded in returning to base.
43	worth your/its salt	In **Roman times**, soldiers were given an allowance of salt as part of their pay.

(Table 4.3, continued)

43 idioms are from social culture. Of which 13 of them are related to the war. They are No.2, No.9, No.11, No. 12, No.13, No.14, No.22, No.23, No.31, No.32, No.37, No.42, and No.43 as seen in Table 4.3 (p.57). If readers want to know the background of these idioms, they need to know the history of western countries. 15 of these idioms are from the tradition of sports entertainment in western countries, such as boxing, horse riding, wrestling, and card-playing. They are No.1, No.3, No.5, No.6, No.7, No.8, No.10, No.16, No.17, No.19, No.24, No.29, No.35, No.36, and No.39 at the above Table 4.3 (p.57). For the remaining 15 idioms, come from fields which are difficult to conclude and be directed, such as the law of old times, people's names, and people's habits.

Since 15 out of 43 idioms of social culture are from sports entertainment which accounts for 35%. They are the focus of this study with some typical activities summarized for readers to understand. Many researchers have done research related to idiom translation in sports entertainment. According to Fan Y. (2007), With the vigorous development of China's sports and the constant increase of international sports exchanges, more and more people begin to pay attention to sports, sports English comes into being, and a large number of English idioms often appear in various newspapers,

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magazines, radio and other media. The author divides sports idioms into the following categories: horse racing, football, basketball, running and boxing, but the detailed information about each sport is not enough. Liu X. (2009) made a background introduction to several sports of common idioms, including ball games, horse racing and boxing. But her introduction to ball games is more general. Xu T. P. (2013) gave some examples of idioms related to horse racing, football, baseball, cricket, basketball, running, and wrestling, but gives little introduction to each sport. Ping H. & Zhang G. Y. (1999) in their book made a good introduction to the three sports of horse racing, poker and boxing, with abundant examples, but the sports involved are less diverse. So in this study, based on the results of this study and researches on idioms of sports entertainment done by Fan Y. (2007), Liu X. (2009), Xu T. P. (2013), Ping H. & Zhang G. Y. (1999), the following activities that English idiom mostly appear can be concluded.

With the development of human productivity, people need not spend all their time on labor of subsistence, instead recreational activities emerged. Sports and entertainment activities have a long history, which coincides with the development of human civilization. Sports entertainment is a part of national culture. Many of the current international sports competitions are developed based on primitive national sports activities. Different primitive tribes have different forms of original sports entertainment. Sports and entertainment activities are closely related to national culture. An idiom is a mirror of socio-cultural life, it will inevitably reflect sports and entertainment activities. Some typical activities are summarized for readers to understand.

(a) The influence of horse racing on English idioms

England was the birthplace of thoroughbred horses in the 17th century. King Charles II was the first king to support the horse race. And perhaps it is the reason why this kind

of sport is called Sport of Kings. Horse racing used to be royal aristocrats' entertainment project, later due to the composition of gambling, Horse Racing activities became an ordinary activity for the public. And then it became one of the most popular spectator sports in the world, which attracted a large number of audience and people who like gambling. Today, horse racing is found all over the world, mostly concentrated in North America, South America, Western Europe and Australia.

It is recorded that the earliest horse racing originated in Egypt in the 15th century BC, while organized horse racing began in the 12th century in Britain. The world's first stake race was held in the UK in 1776 at the Doncaster, known as the St Leger Jockey Club, which was held every September. In 1780, the Derby was organized every June in Epsom, England. In 1875, in the United States, the first US Derby Kentucky began to race in Louisville, Kentucky. Later there were two other jockey clubs Preakness Stakes and the Belmont Stakes were set up. These three Jockey Clubs were together known as the United States Triple Crown of horse racing.

(b) The influence of poker on English idioms

Playing cards originated in the Far East and introduced into Europe in the 14th century. Today, the four suits in the playing card are rules from French from the 16th century. There are 13 cards in each suit and two jokers in modern poker. So there are 52 cards in total. There are many card games in the west, including Bridge, Blackjack, and Canasta. All these games are popular as gambling has become a way of life, which inevitably have had a great influence on English idioms.

(c) The influence of boxing on English idioms

Boxing is an ancient sport, originating from the ancient Greek Olympic Games and the ancient Roman wrestling, which later went down with the decline of the Roman Empire. By the early 18th century, boxing was on the rise again in England. In 1719,

James Figg, an Englishman, opened his first boxing ring in London. In 1865, Marquess of Queensberry, in England, set out a complete set of rules for boxing, which was for the first time padded gloves were made compulsory to be worn in an amateur boxing match. Since then, the history of modern boxing became more civilized. In the United States, boxing is considered illegal until 1896 when the state of New York declared boxing as legal. Later, boxing soon became legal in the whole United States. In 1904, boxing became an official event in the international Olympic Games.

(d) The influence of cricket on English idioms

Cricket is one of the UK's traditional sports, and its origins are unknown. It is recorded that the sport was popular in Britain at least three hundred years ago. The cricket match is now mainly held in the Commonwealth Countries and is most famous in England and Australia; thus making cricket a very important sport in England. The idiom "as significant as a game of cricket" which means something is important and it clearly indicates its origin from the game of cricket. The British play cricket with a sense of sportsmanship and gentility, so the idiom "play cricket" means to play by the rules of the game. In the same way, "not cricket" is a metaphor for "without gentility" or "not fair and square".

(e) The influence of running race on English idioms

Running is the basic human ability, which has been a form of competition since ancient times. And it is described in the literature of almost every country. According to historical records, the sprint was the only event in the ancient Greek Olympic Games in 776 BC, with a distance of 192.27 meters. Modern sprinting originated in Europe and was first included in the formal competition at the University of Oxford in 1850, with a distance of 100 yards, 330 yards, and 440 yards. At the end of the 19th century, in order to standardize the project, the distance was changed from yard to metric. The athletes

had to use the starter and listen to the signal to start the race and run in their own lane all the time. Thus the race, being the simplest and most popular in the world has become the source of many idioms.

(f) The influence of football on English idioms

Football is an ancient fitness sport with a long history. It originated in ancient China as a ball game called Cuju, which later spread to Europe by the Arabs where it developed into modern football. Football, known as the world's first sport, is the most influential single sport in the world. So it's obvious that quite a lot of idioms are related to it. The standard football match consists of 10 players from each team and 1 goalkeeper, a total of 11 people. The players attack and defend on a rectangular grass field, each team guarding their goal post. This is portrayed in the idioms such as "to keep the ball rolling" which means to keep something going on etc.

(g) The influence of basketball on English idioms

The basketball game originated in the United States. Basketball was invented by PE teacher James Naismith in School for Christian Workers in Springfield, Massachusetts (now known as Springfield College) on December 21, 1891. It was universally welcomed; today, every NBA game has become the focus of most people worldwide, and an overwhelming sensation in the United States.

(h) The influence of wrestling on English idioms

Wrestling is one of the world's oldest and most people-engaging sports. The modern wrestling movement originated in Greece, because ancient Greeks advocated wrestling, as evidenced by many famous philosophers, poets and military leaders were wrestlers, one such famous Greek philosopher cum great wrestler, Plato.

Wrestling is different from ball games; ball games originated from a certain region or country while wrestling comes from almost every nation because the focus of the primitive society of all ethnic groups in the world was survival, which undoubtedly was wrestling, the most basic method. Wrestling has developed through the process of practice, continuous improvement of agile skills and enhancement of strength to win the survival. People of all origins and societies across the universe and era created all kinds of training methods in accordance with the national habits, customs, habits and cultural characteristics.

4.1.4 Religious culture

Figure 4.1 (p.52), shows the origins of selected English idioms from religious culture take 14% of all selected idioms. Table 4.4, portrays 19 idioms out of 140 which belong to this cultural category. Also, the origins of these idioms mostly come from the Bible. So it is suggested that to read the *Bible* to get a better understanding of the background of English idioms for the readers. Interestingly, according to Martin (1995), there are 122 everyday idioms come from the *Bible.* Zhou Y. (2017) did an analysis of the influence of the Bible on English Idioms with some cases study.

Bible, a precious heritage of human culture, influenced western history and culture deeply especially English language. Produced by the biblical story, many idioms and proverbs become a part of the English language. Because of this origin, the idioms and proverbs had a strong religious color. In the process of social and historical development, most of them become household daily expressions. Therefore, seriously studying Bible helps people understand the essence of English language and culture better. (Zhou Y., 2017, p.56)

Table 4.4: Religious culture

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
1	be out of the ark	This idiom refers to a story in the **Bible**. The ark was a large boat which Noah built to save his family and two of every type of animal from the flood.
2	cast pearls before swine	This expression comes from the **Bible**. Swine are pigs.
3	a doubting Thomas	This expression comes from the **Bible**. Thomas refused to believe that Jesus had been brought back to life until he saw Jesus for himself and touched his wounds.
4	fall by the wayside	This idiom comes from a story in the **Bible**, in which the seeds that fell on the wayside (= the path) did not grow.
5	feet of clay	This idiom comes from a story in the **Bible**, where the king of Babylon saw an image with a head of gold and feet of clay.
6	forbidden fruit	This expression refers to the story of Adam and Eve in the **Bible**, in which Eve ate an apple when she wasn't allowed to.
7	gird (up) your loins	In the **Bible**, to gird your loins meant to pick up your robe and tie it about your waist so that you could run or move much more quickly.
8	hide your light under a bushel	This phrase comes from the **Bible**.
9	kill the fatted calf	This comes from a story in the **Bible**, in which a father arranged a banquet when his son returned to the family.
10	a/the land of milk and honey	This phrase comes from the **Bible**, referring to the Promised Land.
11	manna from heaven	This phrase comes from the **Bible**. Manna was the food the Israelites found in the desert.
12	if the mountain will not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain	This phrase comes from a story about the **prophet Mohammed**.
13	the patience of a saint	Job was a character in the **Bible** who lost his family his home and his possessions, but still did not reject God.
14	the salt of the earth	This expression comes from the **Bible**.
15	be in (your) seventh heaven	This expression comes from the belief that God and the highest class of angels live in the **seventh heaven**.

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
16	touch wood	In the past, trees were believed to contain **guardian spirits** and people touched the tree to show respect. People still touch something that is made of wood when they use this expression.
17	turn the other cheek	This is a phrase used by Jesus in the **Bible**.
18	wash your hands of sb./sth.	This idiom refers to Pontius Pilate in the **Bible**, who refused to take a decision about what should happen to Jesus.
19	the writing (is) on the wall	This phrase comes from the **Bible** story in which strange writing appeared on a wall during a feast given by King Belshazzar, predicting his death and the end of his kingdom.

(Table 4.4, continued)

4.1.5 Linguistic culture

Lastly, Figure 4.1 (p.52), 25% of the selected idioms originates from linguistic culture making it have the second largest number, which is 35 out of 140 English idioms in this cultural category.

Table 4.5: Linguistic culture

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
1	sb.'s Achilles' heel	This expression is named after the **Greek hero** *Achilles*. When he was a small child, his mother dipped him into the river Styx, which meant that he could not be injured. She held him by his heel, which therefore was not touched by the water.
2	an Aladdin's cave	This expression comes from a story in ***The Arabian Nights***. Aladdin was trapped in a cave full of gold and jewels by a magician.
3	Big Brother	This comes from the **novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*** by George Orwell, in which the leader of the government. Big Brother, had total control over people. The slogan "Big Brother is watching you" reminded people that he knew everything they did.

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
4	a brave new world	This phrase comes from **Shakespeare's play** *The Tempest*. It was later used by Aldous Huxley as the title of his most famous book, which described a vision of the future.
5	the whole caboodle	This idiom originally came from the **Dutch word** *boedel*, meaning "possessions".
6	Sb.'s just deserts	This phrase originates from the **old French** word *deservir*, meaning "to deserve".
7	a dog in the manger	This expression comes from *Aesop's fable* about a dog which lay in a manger (= a long open box) filled with hay In this way he stopped the other animals eating the hay even though he could not eat it himself.
8	eat humble pie	This comes from a pun on the **old word** *umbles*, meaning "offal" (= the inside parts of an animal), which was considered inferior food.
9	a Freudian slip	This expression is named after **Sigmund Freud** and his theories of subconscious thought.
10	the genie is out of the bottle	In **Arabian stories**, a genie is a spirit with magical powers, especially one that lives in a bottle or lamp.
11	gild the lily	This idiom is a misquotation from **Shakespeare's *King John***: "to gild refined gold, to paint the lily…is wasteful and ridiculous excess".
12	untie the Gordian knot	This expression comes from the **legend** in which King Gordius tied a very complicated knot and said that whoever untied it would become the ruler of Asia. Alexander the Great cut the knot with his sword.
13	the green-eyed monster	This comes from **Shakespeare's play** *Othello*.
14	grin like a Cheshire cat	The Cheshire Cat is a character in **Lewis Carroll's story**, *Alice in Wonderland.*
15	grow like Topsy	Topsy was a female character in **Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel** *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*
16	a Jekyll and Hyde	This expression comes from a **story** by Robert Louis Stevenson, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, in which Dr. Jekyll takes a drug which separates the good and bad sides of his personality into two characters. All the negative aspects go into the character of Mr. Hyde.

(Table 4.5, continued)

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
17	kill the goose that lays the golden egg/eggs	This saying comes from a **Greek legend** about a farmer who had a goose that laid golden eggs. The farmer thought that he would make himself rich by killing the goose, expecting to get all the eggs inside. However, by killing the goose, the farmer ended up with nothing.
18	the lion's share (of sth.)	This idiom comes from one of ***Aesop's fables***. The lion is helped by other animals to kill a stag, but then refuses to share it with them.
19	There's method in sb.'s madness	This comes from **Shakespeare's play** *Hamlet*: "Though this be madness, yet there is method in't (= in it)."
20	(have) the Midas touch	In **Greek legend**, whatever King Midas touched turned to gold.
21	the milk of human kindness	This expression comes from **Shakespeare's play** *Macbeth*.
22	Open sesame	This expression comes from the story ***Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves***. The words open sesame opened the door of the thieves' cave where they kept their treasure.
23	Pandora's box	In **Greek mythology**, Pandora was the first woman on earth. Zeus gave her a box that she was forbidden to open, and when she opened it, all the evils flew out of it into the world.
24	Parkinson's law	This is the title of a **book** by C. Northcote Parkinson about inefficient administration.
25	a quantum leap	*Quantum* comes from the **Latin word** meaning 'how much'.
26	a rare bird	This expression is a translation of the **Latin idiom** *'rara avis'*.
27	take sth./it as read	This comes from an **expression** used in committees. At the start of each meeting the committee must agree that the minutes (= notes) of the last meeting are a correct record. To save time the members are asked if the minutes can be takers as read.
28	Save your breath	This phrase comes from a longer **saying**: 'save your breath to cool your porridge'.
29	no shit, Sherlock	Sherlock in this expression refers to **Sherlock Holmes**, the fictional detective.
30	the silent majority	The US President, Richard Nixon, used this **phrase** during the Vietnam War.

(Table 4.5, continued)

Number	English Idioms	English Idioms' origin
31	tilt at windmills	This expression comes From Cervantes' **novel** *Don Quixote*, in which the hero thought that the windmills he saw were giants and tried to fight them.
32	time flies	This phrase is a translation of the **Latin** *'tempus fugit'*.
33	wear your heart on your sleeve	This phrase is from **Shakespeare's play** *Othello*.
34	a white elephant	This comes from the **story** that in Siam (now Thailand), the king would give a white elephant as a present to somebody that he did not like. That person would have to spend all their money on looking after the rare animal.
35	your wish is my command	These are the words of the genie (= a spirit with magical powers) in the story about Aladdin in **The Thousand and One Nights**.

(Table 4.5, continued)

Another point to note is that 6 of these 35 idioms' origins come from old English or other languages, such as No.5, No.6, No.8, No.25, No.26, and No.32as shown in Table 4.5 (p.67). It's difficult to get more information about idioms' background from this aspect.

But it is clear that so many idioms are from several certain books. Out of 35 idioms in the cultural category, 15 idioms originate from classic literary works, such as No.4, No.11, No.13, No.19, No.21, and No.33 are from Shakespeare's plays; No.1, No.17, No. 20, and No.23 are from Greek mythology; No.2, No.22, and No.35 are from *The Arabian* Nights; No.7 and No.18 are from *The Fables of Aesop*. The remaining 14 idioms are from other novels or stories although there are not so many idioms as in the classical works. According to Martin (1995), there are 135 phases in William Shakespeare's play. In order to better understand these idiomatic phrases, Shakespeare plays can be read.

Words as a tool in literature, is a kind of advanced form of human culture, because words reflect people's life, express ideas and emotions. The literary language of a nation is often the essence of the national language. The literary language comes from the folk. After being refined by the writers, it appears in their literary works. When these literary works are widely read by people, the development of the national language is promoted. The beautiful words of literary works are popular among the folk which eventually become the idiom.

The influence of literary language on idioms is manifested in four ways. The first one is that some of the beautiful literary words or sentences in literary works have become part of people's daily language which eventually becomes idioms. The second way is that some stories or plots in literary works leave a deep impression on people. The extensive reading of these stories contributes to the formation of idioms. The third one is that some characters in literary works have distinctive characteristics, whose names have symbolic meanings, and widely spread by extensive readers which eventually form into idioms. The fourth is that some idioms although used sparingly, but with reference of literary classics, these idioms become popular and have far-reaching influence.

A brief introduction to the effect of literary works on idioms is given, which will enhance the reading of these masterworks. Based on the results of this study and researches on idioms done by Ping H. & Zhang G. Y. (1999) who gave a detailed introduction about English idioms in Shakespeare's work. The following masterworks that English idiom mostly appear can be concluded for reader to better to understand the cultural background which is also one of the aims of this study.

(i) The influence of Greek mythology on English idioms

The ancient Greeks were known to have low social development, low production level, and inadequate knowledge which led to their difficult livelihood. There is a story

in Greek mythology that the king, Tantalus, who was punished by God. He was steeped in the deep water until his neck, and surrounded by fruit trees. He tried to drink water from his surrounding, but each time he tried, the water receded. When tried to pluck fruit from the trees, the trees were unreachable, which led to his constant suffering from hunger and thirst. At the same time, he was tempted with desire, and this punishment was to show that one cannot get everything one desires. This philosophical story depicts the image of the ancient Greeks who were tortured and confused in nature and society. In this condition, the only thing the Greeks can survive is to use imagination to understand natural phenomena and social phenomena. And that's how the myth comes into being.

Greek mythology is the spiritual product of primitive clan society, the earliest literary form in Europe. Greek mythology came about in the 8th century BC, and has borrowed from the myths of other countries which had spread to Greece. These mythologies were then recorded in books such as *Homer's Epic*, Hesiod's *Theogony* and the ancient Greek poetry, drama, history, philosophy, and others. The descendants of the ancient Greeks then arranged them into the ancient Greek mythology, which was divided into two parts, the story of god and the legend of heroes. Greek mythologies' language expressions have had a great impact by leaving profound and vivid allusions on English idioms.

(j) *The influence of The Fables of Aesop on English idioms.*

It was said that there was a Greece slave named Aesop at 6th century BC who told a lot of fables, spread them widely in the folk. These tales were recorded and compiled into a book known as *The Fables of Aesop*. Most animal stories in *The Fables of Aesop* adopt anthropomorphic methods which make the story more vivid while stories about hardworking laboring people are praised for their simplicity, industry and courage.

There are fables which criticize and satirize stupid, tyrannical and brutal rulers. The fables also depict people's way of life and teach people how to live and behave.

The Fables of Aesop also has very high artistic value, is considered the father of the western fable, and has been translated into many languages. It has a profound effect on philosophy thinking and literary art from the west to the world. Until today, many allusions, proverbs, and idioms in English come from *The Fables of Aesop.*

(k)   *The influence of Shakespeare's plays on English idioms.*

William Shakespeare is a great dramatist and poet from the era of English Renaissance, and also one of the most famous writers in the world. His collection of work comprises of 37 Shakespeare's plays, 2 long poems, and 154 sonnets. The artistic feature of Shakespearean plays is the ingenious combination of fantasy and reality, showing the two spirits of realism and romanticism. The characters in the play are distinctive; while the plot of the play is vivid; the language in the play is concise and expressive. Shakespeare's plays written mainly in blank verse, prose and verse, have had a great influence on the development of European literature. His language is abundant, flexible and metaphorical. So many beautiful lines in the plays have become the essence of English language as they are often quoted by people making Shakespeare as one of the most influential writers on English idioms. According to Martin (1995), there are 135 idioms in William Shakespeare's play.

(l)   *The influence of One Thousand and One Nights on English idioms.*

The stories of *One Thousand and One Nights* were told by people at a very early time in the Arabic folk region. The first manuscripts of this tale appeared at about the end of 8 to 9 AD. In the 12th century, the Egyptians gave the title *One Thousand and One Nights*. Once the book of *One Thousand and One Nights* was produced, it spread

extensively to Europe during the period of Crusades. *One Thousand and One Nights* also had a profound influence on the literature of later age.

4.2 Data analysis and findings of translation strategies

The second research question, "which translation strategy is most frequently used in selected idioms from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary*", translation by paraphrase was mostly used translation strategy in selected idioms from *Oxford Idioms Dictionary*. Please refer to the result in Figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2: Translation strategies used in translating English idioms

	idiom of similar meaning and form	idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form	paraphrase	others	omission
■ Number	1	22	103	14	0
■ Percentage	1%	16%	74%	10%	0%
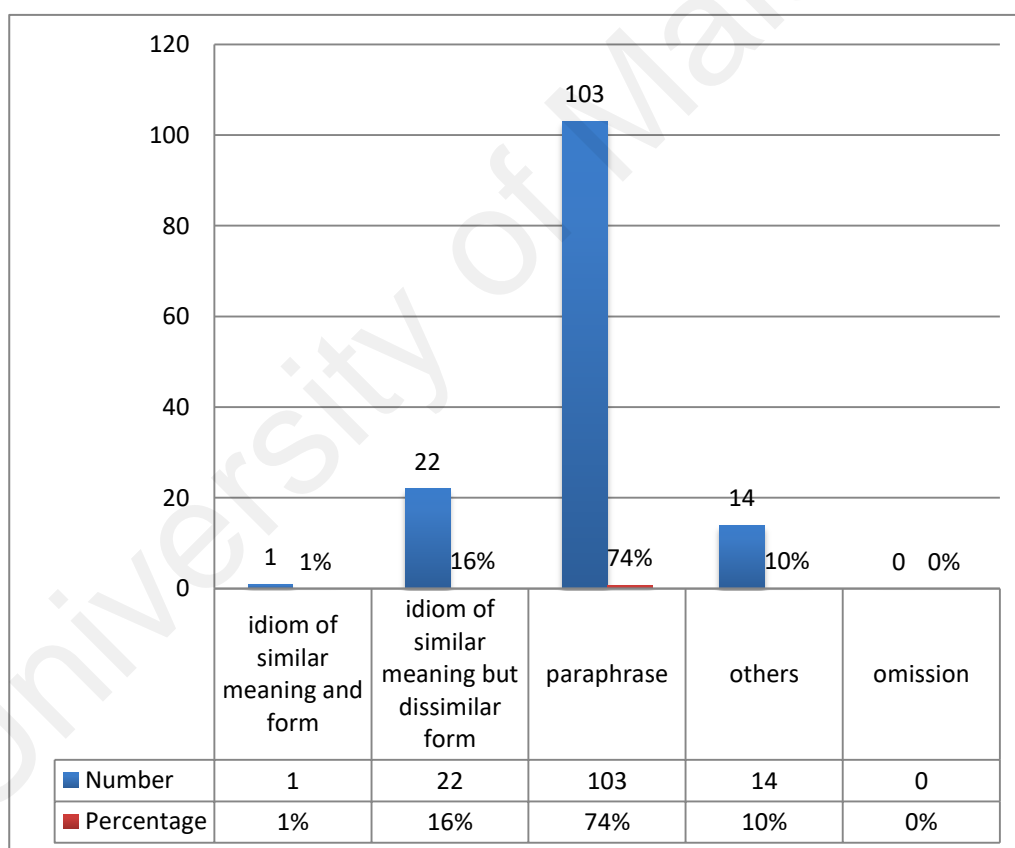
This research question in this study provides readers with the most frequent strategy used in translating English idioms into Chinese. Apart from Mona Baker's four translation strategies, there were also other strategies discovered in this study. As stated above, translation by using other translation strategies accounts 10%. In 4.2.5 section

(p.86), more detailed information will be given. From this, readers could understand fully the translation strategies applied for translating English idioms into Chinese.

4.2.1 Translation by paraphrase

Figure 4.2, indicates translation by paraphrase as the most used translation strategy in translating English idioms into Chinese. 74% of the selected idioms which means 103 out of 140 idioms used this translation strategy. This finding concurs with Baker's (1992) conclusion who theorized that this translation strategy is most common especially when the translator cannot find a suitable idiom from the target language. However, there is a possibility of losing some information from the source language. For this translation strategy, the translator cannot just give out the meaning of the idiom from the source language. In many situations, the translator can achieve more rather than that. And it depends on the translator's translation skills, the context of the source language and etc. For example, sometimes, if a translator cannot find a Chinese idiom to translate an English idiom, he can choose a four-character word of Chinese to translate the English idiom. A four-character word is not always a Chinese idiom. For example, in below Table 4.6, English idiom "sb.'s Achilles' heel" has been translated as "致命弱点". Chinese idioms, most of which consist of four characters. However, four-character words are still widely used in Chinese language; it can make the target text concise also with rich connotation.

Table 4.6: Translation by paraphrase

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Meaning
1	hold all the aces	占尽优势	have an advantage over sb.
2	sb.'s Achilles' heel	致命弱点	fatal weakness
3	an Aladdin's cave	一屋子偷来的杰作	a house full of stolen treasures
4	get the all-clear	没有危险	no danger
5	be out of the ark	老掉牙的	old

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Meaning
6	get sb.'s back up	使…恼火	annoy
7	a ball and chain	累赘	encumbrance
8	keep sb./sth. at bay	预防	precaution
9	below the belt	刻薄	unkind
10	Big Brother	头儿	boss
11	a black sheep of the family	不肖女	unworthy daughter
12	lay your head on the block	冒风险	take a risk
13	above board	正当的	legitimate
14	a bolt from the blue	真是太突然	unexpected
15	a brave new world	前景美好	bright prospects
16	cast pearls before swine	不识货	not knowing the true value of things
17	catch-as-catch-can	尽一切可能	try everything possible
18	give sb. the cold shoulder	对…很冷淡	unconcern
19	out for the count	累得倒头大睡	so tired that fall asleep
20	under the counter	私下	in private
21	sb.'s just deserts	应有的惩罚	deserved punishment
22	the dice are loaded against sb.	可能没什么戏了	there's no possible way
23	a doubting Thomas	觉得	think
24	go to ground	音信全无	no news
25	eat humble pie	低头道歉	lower the head to apologize
26	a feather in your cap	骄傲	pride
27	feet of clay	弱点	weakness
28	in single file	排成一队	stand in line
29	with flying colours	取得优异成绩	achieve outstanding result
30	forbidden fruit	得不到的总是好的	what you can't get is always good
31	a Freudian slip	口误，还是你的真实想法	a slip of the tongue or your true thought
32	the full monty	把所有衣服脱光	take all clothes off
33	take up the gauntlet	迎接挑战	meet the challenges
34	gird (up) your loins	准备好	ready
35	untie the Gordian knot	果断地解决这个难题	resolve the problem decisively
36	grin like a Cheshire cat	咧着嘴傻笑	grin
37	grind to a halt	逐渐停了下来	it gradually stopped
38	grow like Topsy	迅速扩大	expand rapidly
39	reveal your hand	摊牌	lay one's cards on the table

(Table 4.6, continued)

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Meaning
40	hang fire	推迟	postpone
41	Bury your head in the sand	逃避现实	escape from the reality
42	give sb. their head	给…自主权	give sb. autonomy
43	hide your light under a bushel	深藏不露	a diamond in the rough
44	high and dry	被困	get trapped
45	to the hilt	完全支持	full support
46	Hobson's choice	没有别的选择	no other choices
47	on the home straight	马上就要解脱了	it's going to be a relief
48	have (got) many, etc. irons in the fire	有好几件事同时要做	there are several things to do at the same time
49	a Jack the Lad	整天和一帮哥们儿胡闹	spent the day messing around with a bunch of buddies
50	a Jekyll and Hyde	有双重性格的人	a person with dual character
51	kill the fatted calf	好好地为…庆祝一番	grand celebration
52	kill the goose that lays the golden egg/eggs	自绝财源	cut off your own source of wealth
53	a king's ransom	一笔巨款	a large amount of money
54	a/the land of milk and honey	乐土	paradise
55	in the limelight	众人关注的焦点	the focus of publics' attention
56	the lion's share (of sth.)	最大的一怀羹	the largest portion
57	lock horns with sb.	争论不休	argue
58	at loggerheads with sb.	争执不休	argue
59	(be) long in the tooth	年岁大了	old
60	(at) a low ebb	不足	lack
61	meet your Waterloo	击败	defeat
62	there's method in sb.'s madness	自有道理	has its own reason
63	(have) the Midas touch	点金术	the Golden touch
64	put/set sth. in motion	启动	start
65	make a move	采取行动	take action
66	nail your colours to the mast	公开立场	take a stand publicly
67	hold out/offer an olive branch (to sb.)	示好	show kindness
68	Open sesame	芝麻开门的咒语	the spell for opening door

(Table 4.6, continued)

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Meaning
69	put sb./sth. through his, their, its, etc. paces	测试性能	test performance
70	beyond the pale	令人不能容忍	intolerable
71	paper over the cracks	掩盖问题	cover issues
72	a parting shot	一句狠话	a malicious word
73	buck-passing	推卸责任的行为	the act of shirking responsibility
74	a quantum leap	重大进展	significant progress
75	(be) on the rack	急得快发疯了	very anxious
76	(the) rank and file	队员们	team members
77	come up/rise through the ranks	由普通员工逐步升上来	promoted gradually from an ordinary employee
78	a rare bird	真不是一般人	not an ordinary people
79	read (sb.) the Riot Act	严厉警告	sternly warn
80	take sth./it as read	认定	affirm
81	the red carpet	非常隆重的接待	very grand reception
82	a red herring	转移视线	divert attention
83	the salt of the earth	可靠	reliable
84	save your breath	白费唇舌	waste one's breath
85	saved by the bell	你在关键时刻救了我	you saved me in the very moment
86	behind the scenes	内幕	inside story
87	up to scratch	达到标准	up to the standard
88	send sb. to Coventry	不理睬他	ignore him
89	no shit, Sherlock	别废话了，真是善于推理	Stop talking nonsense. You're really good at reasoning.
90	a shot across sb's bows	警告	warning
91	the silent majority	沉默的民众	silent people
92	give the thumbs up	没问题	no problem
93	time flies	时间过得真快	time goes really fast
94	touch wood	希望好运气一直都在	hope to have good luck all the time
95	turn the tables (on sb.)	一箭之仇	revenge
96	wash your hands of sb./sth.	脱离关系	renunciation
97	wear your heart on your sleeve	感情外露	easy to show one's emotion
98	May as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb	反正已经迟到了，再晚一会儿也无妨。	It's late anyway. It's ok to be a little late.
99	a whipping boy	替罪羊	scapegoat
100	a white elephant	累赘	burdensome
101	on a wing and a prayer	本没有指望会有多大成功	not expected to succeed

(Table 4.6, continued)

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Meaning
102	your wish is my command	听您的	as you wish
103	worth your/its salt	称职	competent

<div align="right">(Table 4.6, continued)</div>

Translating by using paraphrase is most frequently used in the selected English idioms in this research. One reason is that the translator of this dictionary chose paraphrase strategy despite having Chinese idiom which has a similar meaning but different form as found in the English idiom. The reasons are showed in Section 4.2.2 (p.82) because the reasons are related to that section. The following examples are taken from the data of this study. These examples show that the translators use paraphrase to translate English idiom rather than use an idiom with similar meaning but a different form. Table 4.7 is a summary of the idioms which can be translated by equivalent Chinese idioms. Several examples of analysis are also given after below table to show how the equivalent Chinese idioms are suitable.

Table 4.7: Translation by using an idiom

No.	English Idioms of the dictionary	Chinese translation from the dictionary	Translation by using an idiom
1	be out of the ark	老掉牙的	老古董
2	get sb.'s back up	使…恼火	火冒三丈；怒不可遏
3	a ball and chain	累赘	悬疣附赘
4	below the belt	刻薄	尖嘴薄舌
5	a bolt from the blue	真是太突然	晴天霹雳
6	a brave new world	前景美好	前程似锦
7	cast pearls before swine	不识货	不辨龙蛇；明珠投暗；明珠夜投
8	give sb. the cold shoulder	对…很冷淡	冷眼相待

No.	English Idioms of the dictionary	Chinese translation from the dictionary	Translation by using an idiom
9	out for the count	累得倒头大睡	筋疲力尽
10	Sb.'s just deserts	应有的惩罚	罪有应得
11	go to ground	音信全无	杳无音信
12	with flying colours	取得优异成绩	连战皆捷
13	untie the Gordian knot	果断地解决这个难题	快刀斩乱麻
14	hide your light under a bushel	深藏不露	真人不露相
15	(be) on the rack	急得快发疯了	心急如焚
16	Save your breath	白费唇舌	白费口舌
17	send sb. to Coventry	不理睬他	不理不睬
18	a white elephant	累赘	悬疣附赘

(Table 4.7, continued)

1. get sb.'s back up. (Meaning: to make sb. annoyed)

Source text: His silly remarks always get her back up.

Target text:他的蠢话总惹得她很恼火。(This Chinese sentence is cited from the dictionary)

Back-translation: His stupid remarks always annoyed her. (Back-translated from Chinese)

Target text: 他的蠢话总惹得她火冒三丈。(This is a translated version by using a Chinese idiom with similar meaning but dissimilar form)

Back-translation: His stupid remarks always made her angry. (Back-translated from Chinese)

Target text: 他的蠢话总惹得她怒不可遏。(This is another translated version by using a Chinese idiom with similar meaning but dissimilar form)

Back-translation: His stupid remarks always made her boil with anger. (Back-translated from Chinese)

2. a ball and chain. (meaning: a problem that prevents you from doing what you would like to do"

Source text: The business never made any money and was regarded more as a ball and chain than anything else.

Target text: 这家商行从未赚到过钱，只不过是个累赘。(This Chinese sentence is cited from the dictionary)

Back-Translation: The firm has never made money, it's just a drag. (Back-translated from Chinese)

Target text: 这家商行从未赚到过钱，只不过是个悬疣附赘。(This is a translated version by using a Chinese idiom with similar meaning but dissimilar form)

Back-translation: The firm has never made money, it's just an encumbrance.

3. below the belt. (meaning: unfair and unkind)

Source text: Her remarks about his age were a bit below the belt.

Target text: 她对他年龄的评价有点刻薄。(This Chinese sentence is cited from the dictionary)

Target text: 她对他年龄的评价有点尖嘴薄舌。(This is a translated version by using a Chinese idiom with similar meaning but dissimilar form)

Back-translation: Her remarks about his age were a bit acerb.

4.2.2 Translation by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form

The translation strategy of using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form was used for only 22 out of 140 idioms. This works out to be only 16% of the 140 selected idioms for this research.

Table 4.8: Translation by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Meaning
1	the whole caboodle	焕然一新	acquire a completely new outlook
2	call sb.'s bluff	顺水推舟	make use of an opportunity to do sth.
3	take coals to Newcastle	多此一举	make an unnecessary move
4	cross the Rubicon	破釜沉舟	cut off all means of retreat
5	a dark horse	真人不露相	Good lenses, bad frames
6	a dog in the manger	占着茅坑不拉屎	hold on to a post without doing any work and not let anyone else take over
7	in the doldrums	无精打采	Laziness
8	the ebb and flow	此起彼伏	as one falls another rises
9	fall by the wayside	半途而废	give up halfway
10	full of beans	活蹦乱跳	alive and kicking
11	gild the lily	画蛇添足	superfluous
12	kick the bucket	翘了辫子	pass away
13	the milk of human kindness	恻隐之心	sense of compassion
14	Your, his, etc. name is mud	过街老鼠，人人喊打	rats cross the street and chased by everyone
15	Have (got) nine lives	大难不死	escape from death in a great catastrophe
16	(buy) a pig in a poke	隔山买牛	decide without knowing the situation
17	be in (your) seventh heaven	天伦之乐	family happiness
18	(be) on tenterhooks	坐立不安	be restless whether sitting or standing
19	tilt at windmills	庸人自扰	worry about troubles of one's own imagining
20	turn the other cheek	逆来顺受	adopt a submissive and tolerant

			attitude toward harsh conditions or rude treatment
21	the writing (is) on the wall	大难临头	to be faced with imminent disaster
22	manna from heaven	及时雨	timely rain

<div align="right">Table 4.8, continued</div>

First of all, from the analysis in section 4.2.1 (p.75), 18 English idioms are translated by using paraphrase by the translators of this dictionary, and these English idioms can be translated by using similar meaning but dissimilar form. Although more equivalent Chinese idioms of English idioms can be found, limited knowledge of Chinese idiom, allows only 18 equivalent Chinese idioms from 103 English idioms which were translated by using paraphrase in this study. In other words, 17% of English idioms translated by using paraphrase can be changed to use an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form.

As the problem has been found in this section which is that the translator can use translating by an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, but they use paraphrase instead. The reasons found are as follows. The definition of English idiom is a phrase or short sentence with several words in a fixed order, the order of it usually will not change even though in long-term use. Furthermore, the meaning of English idiom is not the same as the meanings of each word found in the idiom. The data is chosen from the *Oxford Dictionary of Idioms* which contains about 10000 frequently-used British and American idioms as stated in the introduction of this dictionary. In Figure 3.2 (p.45), even some disapproved and old-fashioned idioms are included in this dictionary. So *Oxford Dictionary of Idioms* contains almost all the English idioms. However, the definition of Chinese idiom, it includes set phrase, proverb, maxim, Chinese common saying, and two-part allegorical saying and etc. According to the statistics of Hanci Website which is the official website of the Chinese dictionary, there are 51398 set phrases, 1200 proverbs, 13752 maxims, 1929 Chinese common saying and 16648 two-

part allegorical saying. So there are more than 80000 Chinese idioms. Compared to the number of English idioms, Chinese idioms are far greater in number; hence there is more likely to find a Chinese idiom which has a similar meaning to the English idiom.

Secondly, quite a lot of English idioms can be translated by using similar meaning but dissimilar form, but the translator of this dictionary chose to use paraphrase translation strategy. One possible reason is that the translators themselves have insufficient knowledge of Chinese idioms because some native speaker may not have the extent of Chinese knowledge and thus not have heard of some idioms. Such as the second example above 悬疣附赘 [xuán yóu fù zhuì], most native Chinese people hardly use it. Another possible reason is that, even if the translators know the corresponding Chinese idioms of English idioms, the recipient from source language may not be familiar with these Chinese idioms, so translators avoid confusion among the recipients of source language by not translating an English idiom with an equivalent Chinese idiom. Instead, they choose the way of paraphrasing to translate English idioms.

Last but not least, the strategy chosen by the professional translators of this dictionary depends on the translator themselves. Abu-Ssaydeh (2004) reviewed the options adopted by some professional translators in translating idioms and opined that a translator can choose several translation strategies. Importance of choosing translation strategies depends on the closeness of the source language and target language, the interaction between them, the translator's experience, the adequacy of dictionaries and the nature of the idiom in question.

4.2.3 Translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and form

Figure 4.2 (p.74), shows less than 1% (1/140) of English idiom was translated by using an idiom of similar meaning and form. Only one English idiom of 140 is translated by using this strategy in selected data. The conclusion is that the chance for

translating English idioms into Chinese by using an idiom with similar meaning and form is very low.

Table 4.9: Translation by using an idiom of similar meaning and form

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Back-translation	Translation strategy
1	you reap what you sow	自食其果	you reap what you sow	Using an idiom of similar meaning and similar form

As mentioned above, according to the statistics of Hanci Website which is the official website of the Chinese dictionary, there are 51398 set phrases, 1200 proverbs, 13752 maxims, 1929 Chinese common saying and 16648 two-part allegorical saying. So the set phrases make up a large number of Chinese idioms. These set phrases are called *Chengyu* in Chinese. *Chengyu* are mainly four-character idioms, and some of them can be three-character idioms, five-word idioms, six-word idioms, etc., until thirteen-character idioms. The Chinese idioms are generally used in four words. Because of the structure of Chinese idiom, it is hard to find English idioms which have a similar form to Chinese idioms.

Another reason for there are not so many English idioms which are translated by using an idiom of similar meaning and form is that the context between English idiom and its equivalent Chinese idiom is different. From the above example, "you reap what you sow", it means "if someone reaps what they sow, they suffer or benefit as a result of their own actions". This explanation is taken from the online dictionary -- The Free Dictionary. And the meaning of this Chinese idiom "自食其果" is "指自己做了坏事，自己受到损害或惩罚". This explanation is taken from Hanci Website. It means that you have done something bad, you harmed or punished by yourself. So, this Chinese idiom is used in a negative context in Chinese.

Therefore, the context of using English idiom and its equivalent Chinese idiom can be different which makes it more difficult to find a Chinese idiom which has similar meaning and form to an English idiom.

4.2.4 Translation by omission

Translation by using omission cannot be found in these 140 examples. As the data is from a dictionary, the translators are forced to use an example sentence with the meaning of the English idiom, which means the meaning of the English idiom in these sentences cannot be omitted. Otherwise, it's meaningless to show the readers example sentences in this dictionary. Although this translation strategy is not used in this study, it will not affect the result and objectives of this study. The translation strategies for translating English idioms into Chinese still can be fully discussed. Also, cultural categories will also be fully discussed. So, the result will not be affected and the objectives don't need to be changed.

4.2.5 Translation by other strategies

Although Baker's translation strategies are used in this study, it is not enough. About 10% or 14 English idioms of 140 used other translation strategies, such as literal translation and translation by using two idioms. Through more detailed analysis of Baker's translation strategies and the translation strategies found in this study, the reason for two more translation strategies found in this study can be given. The four translation strategies for translating idiom summarized by Baker based on nine real articles that use English as the source language and use Spanish, Greek, German, Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Arabic as target language. And in this study, the data were collected from the example sentence of the idiom which used English as source language and used Chinese only as target language. So the data are different. That's why two more translation strategies can be found in this study.

Table 4.10: Translation by other strategies

Number	English Idioms	Chinese translation	Translation strategy
1	crocodile tears	鳄鱼的眼泪	Literal translation
2	the genie is out of the bottle	放出魔瓶的妖怪	Literal translation
3	the green-eyed monster	这个绿眼恶魔	Literal translation
4	if the mountain will not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain	如果大山不肯来见穆罕默德，那么穆罕默德必须去见大山	Literal translation
5	Murphy's Law	墨菲法则	Literal translation
6	be like painting the Forth Bridge	好像油漆福思大桥	Literal translation
7	Pandora's box	潘多拉之盒	Literal translation
8	Parkinson's law	帕金森定律	Literal translation
9	the patience of a saint	有圣人般的忍耐力	Literal translation
10	There's no such thing as a free lunch	天下没有免费的午餐	Literal translation
11	be the tip of the iceberg	冰山一角	Literal translation
12	fiddle while Rome burns	无动于衷，漠然视之	Using two idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form
13	down at heel	邋邋遢遢，不修边幅	Using two idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form
14	rearrange the deckchairs on the Titanic	重新摆放泰坦尼克号上的甲板躺椅一样，无济于事	Literal translation and an idiom with similar meaning

So in this study, literal translation has been found. Literal translation means translate ST into TT word-for-word, rather than giving the sense of the original. Nida (2010) says that finding suitable equivalents for idioms is one of the most difficult aspects of translating. Although literal translation may lead to wrong translation when translating some texts, it can also raise the reader's interest when reading the translated text. For example, in the above table, "Pandora's box" is translated as "潘多拉之盒" by using literal translation, so the reader may wonder know what is this " box". And they may check it. In classical mythology, a box that Zeus gave to Pandora, the first woman, with

strict instructions that do not open it. Pandora's curiosity soon got the better of her, and she opened the box. All the evils and miseries of the world flew out to afflict mankind. The behind story of the idioms makes the idioms more charming.

Another two translation have been found in this study which are using two idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form and literal translation plus an idiom with similar meaning. Firstly, using two idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form, this kind of strategy will definitely make the form of source text and target text different, because one is one idiom, the other are two idioms. For example, from above chart, English idiom "down at heel" has been translated into two Chinese idioms "邋邋遢遢" and "不修边幅". Although the translated Chinese texts are two idioms, the translated version is still concise but strengthens the tone of the idiom. Then, literal translation plus an idiom with similar meaning, this kind of translation strategy can make the reader know the original source text so to feel the source culture. Also, by using another target idiom, it makes the text have cultural ambience. For example, from above chart, English idiom "rearrange the deckchairs on the Titanic" translated into Chinese text "重新摆放泰坦尼克号上的甲板躺椅一样，无济于事".

These two translation strategies seem quite different comparing the translation strategies that familiar to us, such as literal translation, free translation etc. So this study provides the readers with new ways to translate idioms.

4.3 Discussion about the differences between idioms' origins

The third research question is "what are the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of their equivalent Chinese idioms". In this study, only 23 English idioms out of these 140 examples sentences have their equivalent Chinese idioms. These 23 English idioms are translated by using an idiom of similar meaning

but dissimilar form (22) and translated by using an idiom of similar meaning and dissimilar form (1). Therefore, these 23 English idioms are used to analyze the differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of its equivalent Chinese idioms. The English idioms were from these five cultural categories, while most of the equivalent Chinese idioms come from linguistic culture; thus, cultural differences between English and Chinese from idioms' origins were found. Please refer to Figure 4.3 below.
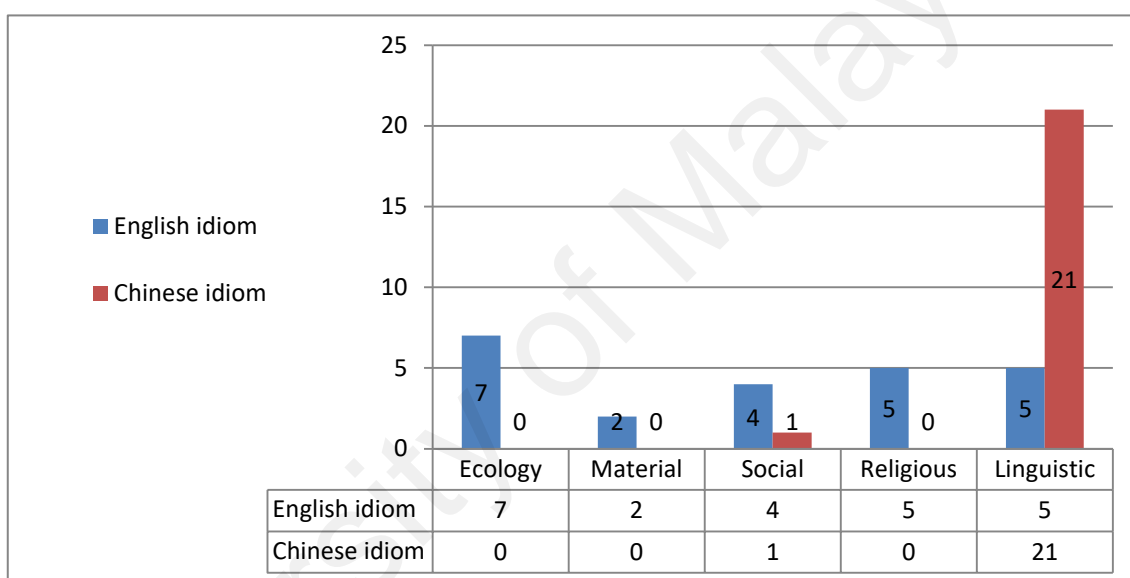

	Ecology	Material	Social	Religious	Linguistic
English idiom	7	2	4	5	5
Chinese idiom	0	0	1	0	21

Figure 4.3: Culture categories of English idiom and its Chinese equivalent

Figure 4.3, shows the origins of English idioms from all the cultural categories. Figure 4.3, also shows only one Chinese idiom's origin from social culture. And the rest of the 21 Chinese idioms' origins are from linguistic culture. One Chinese idiom's origin is unknown. No Chinese idioms' origins are from ecology, material culture, and religious culture. Although only 23 Chinese idioms were taken as the sample, it can be said that almost Chinese idioms' origins are from linguistic culture.

The finding of this question brings about a deeper understanding of English and Chinese cultures among the readers. The reasons for these differences in origins of

idioms between English and Chinese were discussed. Detailed information about the cultural category of each English idiom and its equivalent Chinese translation, please refer to Table 4.11 (p.90) below.

Table 4.11: Cultural categories of English idioms and its equivalent Chinese translation

NO.	English idioms	Cultural categories of English Idioms	Chinese translation	Cultural categories of Chinese idioms	Era of Chinese idioms' origin
1	the whole caboodle	Linguistic culture	焕然一新	Linguistic culture	Tang dynasty (618-907)
2	call sb.'s bluff	Social culture	顺水推舟	Linguistic culture	Yuan dynasty (1271-1368)
3	take coals to Newcastle	Ecology	多此一举	Linguistic culture	Qing dynasty (1636-1912)
4	cross the Rubicon	Ecology	破釜沉舟	Linguistic culture	Western Han (206 BC-9 AD)
5	a dark horse	Social culture	真人不露相	Linguistic culture	Ming dynasty (1368-1644)
6	a dog in the manger	Linguistic culture	占着茅坑不拉屎	Linguistic culture	1975
7	in the doldrums	Ecology	无精打采	Linguistic culture	Qing dynasty (1636–1912)
8	the ebb and flow	Ecology	此起彼伏	Linguistic culture	Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD)
9	fall by the wayside	Religious culture	半途而废	Linguistic culture	Unknown
10	full of beans	Ecology	活蹦乱跳	Linguistic culture	1935
11	gild the lily	Linguistic culture	画蛇添足	Linguistic culture	Warring States period (475BC-221BC)
12	kick the bucket	Material culture	翘辫子	Social culture	Qing dynasty (1636–1912)

NO.	English idioms	Cultural categories of English Idioms	Chinese translation	Cultural categories of Chinese idioms	Era of Chinese idioms' origin
13	manna from heaven	Religious culture	及时雨	Linguistic culture	Song dynasty (960-1279)
14	the milk of human kindness	Linguistic culture	恻隐之心	Linguistic culture	Warring States period (475BC-221BC)
15	Your, his, etc. name is mud	Social culture	过街老鼠，人人喊打	Linguistic culture	1942
16	Have (got) nine lives	Ecology	大难不死	Linguistic culture	Yuan dynasty (1271－1368)
17	(buy) a pig in a poke	Social culture	隔山买牛	unknown	Unknown
18	you reap what you sow	Ecology	自食其果	Linguistic culture	1946
19	be in (your) seventh heaven	Religious culture	天伦之乐	Linguistic culture	Tang dynasty (618－907)
20	(be) on tenterhooks and needles	Material culture	坐立不安	Linguistic culture	Ming dynasty (1368–1644)
21	tilt at windmills	Linguistic culture	庸人自扰	Linguistic culture	Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127)
22	turn the other cheek	Religious culture	逆来顺受	Linguistic culture	Ming dynasty (1368–1644)
23	the writing (is) on the wall	Religious culture	大难临头	Linguistic culture	Song dynasty (960-1279)

(Table 4.11, continued)

There are so many Chinese idioms' origins from linguistic culture. Firstly, Most of Chinese idioms are four-word set phases as shown in above chart. Secondly, most of the four-word set phases are from ancient time. Lastly, most of these four-word set phases are related or found from Chinese folklore, traditions, mythology and etc. So that's why there are so many Chinese idioms from linguistic culture. Below is a detailed analysis of the reasons.

Firstly, according to the statistics of Hanci Website which is the official website of the Chinese dictionary, there are 51398 set phrases, 1200 proverbs, 13752 maxims, 1929 Chinese common saying and 16648 two-part allegorical saying. The set phrase takes most part of Chinese idioms. Then, according to An L. Q. (2012) and Qin X. Z. (2003), Chinese idioms' formation, has been divided into two categories: ancient idioms and modern idioms. According to *The Chinese Idiom Dictionary* which has 10158 set phrases, 3.7% idioms' origins are from modern times, and idioms without origin account for 5.8%. It is certain that more than 90% of the idioms are from ancient times. Also, according to these two researchers, as time passes, more idioms are formed. However, most of the Chinese idioms are from the ancient era where the book is the best medium to convey and record words. This explains why so many Chinese idioms are related to folklore, traditions, mythology and etc. thus belong to linguistic culture. Lastly, as mentioned above in section 2.3.2 (p. 38), the definition or scope of linguistic culture in this study refers to the specific characteristics of each language, including phonetic, lexical, grammatical features, words or expressions referring to folklore, traditions, mythology and etc. And most of the Chinese idioms are from the essays of the ancient book which are related to traditions of Chinese, Chinese mythology or Chinese folklore. So based these reasons, most of Chinese idioms' origins are from linguistic culture.

Another reason for the huge number of Chinese idioms and why so many Chinese idioms are from linguistic culture is because of Chinese history. Table 4.11 (p.90), shows the Chinese idioms have a wide range of time. China has a very long history. Chinese history refers to the history from the birth of Chinese civilization to the present. From the Huangdi (黄帝) dynasty's Ji Xuanyuan (姬轩辕) to now, it's about 5000 years. Also, it is about 2240 years from the Qin dynasty (秦朝) to now. Qin dynasty is the first unified central government in Chinese history.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

To sum up, the origins of English idioms are discussed in this study to help readers to get a deeper understanding of idioms' background. From the analysis of this study, most of the selected idioms belong to social culture. For readers who want to learn more about English idioms' background, they can get information on sports and entertainment, such as horse racing, poker, boxing, cricket, running race, football, basketball, and wrestling. They can go deeper into the understanding of origins of idioms by reading the *Bible*, Greek mythology, *The Fables of Aesop*, Shakespeare's play and *One Thousand and One Night*.

The differences between the origins of English idioms and the origins of Chinese idioms are most Chinese idioms' origins are from linguistic culture while English idioms are from five cultural categories. As mentioned in section 4.2.5 (p.86), the main reason can be that Chinese idioms have a much longer history than English idioms. Baker's translation strategies used to analyze English idioms, help to guide the researcher to decide on which translation strategy should be chosen for translating English idioms into Chinese. 3 of 4 translation strategies proposed by Baker have been found in selected data. These three translation strategies are translate by paraphrase, translate by using an idiom of similar form and meaning, translate by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. Other translation strategies found were literal translation, and translate by using two idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form, literal translation plus an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form.

As mentioned in section 4.2.1 (p.75), translation by paraphrase as the most used translation strategy in translating English idioms into Chinese. 74% of the selected idioms which means 103 out of 140 idioms used this translation strategy, and 17% of them can be translated by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. The

findings also show that the translators of this dictionary choose to use paraphrase instead of using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. It is also clear that the onus is on the translators to choose the translation strategy suitable for translating English idioms into Chinese.

No research is without its limitations, this research is no exception. First of all, this research gives too general introduction about the reasons for cultural differences between China and Western countries as it is not the main focus of this study, if the introduction were more specific, readers can have a deeper understanding. Although the origins of English idioms were stated in this study, how these idioms came about was not researched. For example, some idioms are from horse racing or other fields, how these idioms come into being in these fields are not given out.

For future study, the researcher can focus on the comparison of culture between Chinese and western countries in details based on idioms. Secondly, there are so many fields or masterpieces which readers can learn from about the origins of English idioms, the researcher can only focus on one field to deepen the research, such as the idioms in Shakespeare's play. Thirdly, in section 4.2.5 Translation by using other translation strategies (p.86), using two Chinese idioms to translate one English idiom by the translators of this dictionary is found in this study. The reasons can be explored in the future study.

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