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Assessing the Machine Translation Quality of  
Decontextualized English Sports Idioms into  
Arabic

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#### ABSTRACT

This current paper investigates the assessment of the machine translation of selected decontextualized sports idioms from English into Arabic. The idiom is a fixed expression whose meaning is not immediately obvious from looking at the individual words in the idiom. Machine translating of idioms is one of the most challenging tasks in translation, due to their cultural specificity and non-literal meanings. There are significant problems arise when these idioms are rendered by machine because this translation tackles the meaning without a context. This paper hypothesizes that the machine translation may give a literal meaning which is easily understood in Arabic. In this paper, Nababan's model is employed to assess the accuracy of the machine translation for fifteen English sports idioms rendered into Arabic

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تقييم جودة الترجمة الآلية للمصطلحات الرياضية الإنجليزية منزوعة السياق الى اللغة العربية

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#### المستخلص:

يدرس هذا البحث تقييم الترجمة الآلية لتعبيرات رياضية مختارة منزوعة السياق من الإنجليزية إلى العربية. التعبيرات الاصطلاحية عبارة ثابتة لا يتضح معناها فوراً بمجرد النظر إلى كلماتها الفردية. تُعد الترجمة الآلية للعبارات الاصطلاحية من أصعب مهام الترجمة، نظراً للخصوصية الثقافية ومعانيها غير الحرفية لهذه التعبيرات. تنشأ مشاكل كبيرة عند ترجمة هذه التعبيرات الاصطلاحية آلياً، لأن هذه الترجمة تتناول المعنى دون سياق. تفترض هذه الورقة أن الترجمة الآلية قد تُعطي معنى حرفياً يسهل فهمه في اللغة العربية. في هذا البحث يُستخدم نموذج نابابان لتقييم دقة الترجمة الآلية لخمس عشرة عبارة رياضية إنجليزية منقولة إلى العربية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الترجمة الآلية، المصطلحات الرياضية، السياق المنزوع، انموذج نابابان

## 1. Introduction

Over the last twenty years, machine translation (MT) has become one of the most important uses of artificial intelligence in language processing. It provides quick and cheap translation services in many fields. MT systems like Google Translate, DeepL, and Microsoft Translator have made great strides in translating literal texts, but they still have a hard time with idiomatic or figurative language. Idioms are inherently non-compositional units of meaning, and their interpretation cannot be deduced from the literal meanings of their individual words.

Machine translation faces a major obstacle because idioms lose their meaning when they are removed from their original context. The research focuses on English sports idioms because this subcategory of idiomatic language produces numerous expressions which appear in sports communication and regular English usage. People use sports-derived expressions including "throw in the towel" and "hit below the belt" and "level playing field" to describe political and business and interpersonal situations. Machine translation systems encounter difficulties emerge when they translate sports idioms into Arabic language. The translation process of Arabic idioms from English produces two possible results: either the translator finds equivalent expressions or they interpret the idioms literally which results in meaning distortion. The solution of this problem becomes more complicated because English and Arabic cultures exhibit distinct characteristics. The translation process of English sports idioms into Arabic requires either direct substitution or creative explanation because these expressions lack direct Arabic equivalents. Machine translation tools lack the cultural awareness and practical decision-making abilities required for these translation tasks which results in semantically incorrect and pragmatically incorrect and culturally inappropriate outputs. The research investigates how well machine translation systems translate English sports idioms into Arabic when they lack their original context. The research evaluates MT system performance in two areas: their ability to recognize figurative language and their handling of literal versus idiomatic expressions and their adherence to Arabic idiomatic language rules. The research evaluates MT system performance while demonstrating their strengths and weaknesses and providing guidelines for idiomatic translation between English and

Arabic and illustrating their impact on translation education and natural language processing research.

## **2. Translation and Language Industry**

The translation and language industry operates as an active market which unites human abilities with technological advancements and worldwide market requirements. The industry started with independent linguists and tiny translation agencies but has evolved into a sector that includes major language service providers (LSPs) and digital platforms and multiple specialized services for translation and interpreting and localization and subtitling and multilingual content creation (CSA Research, 2023). The combination of globalization and digital transformation has accelerated the industry's expansion into diverse service offerings. Organizations together with businesses and governments need to establish fast and extensive multilingual communication systems because of increasing global demands.

The industry transformation stems from advances in modern technology. The implementation of neural machine translation (NMT) and large language models (LLMs) has produced better machine translation output which now supports various operational needs (Stahlberg & Byrne, 2019). The systems face challenges when processing languages with limited resources and when dealing with culturally embedded content and delicate conversational nuances. The industry now relies on hybrid workflows because human translators perform editing tasks and provide consulting services and maintain quality standards. The practice of post-editing machine translation output has become widespread although results vary between different applications. The process enhances operational efficiency for technical and routine content but creates difficulties with complex or culturally complex material (Yang et al., 2023).

The implementation of automation technology has created new obstacles for both individuals and business operations. The transition of clients toward affordable machine-based translation services has created financial stability concerns for translators who face difficulties in earning sufficient income and receiving proper compensation (The Guardian, 2024). The industry now requires professionals who possess expertise in both language skills and technological competencies to perform tasks such as machine translation assessment and terminology management and

quality assurance. The translation industry faces an ongoing discussion about AI implementation rather than AI replacement of human translators because training standards and ethical frameworks and regulatory systems need to establish guidelines for human-machine collaboration (CSA Research, 2024.)

The industry will adopt hybrid operational systems as its future standard. Machine tools will process extensive amounts of urgent content but human translators will maintain their essential role for delivering cultural and contextual understanding in legal and diplomatic and literary communication. Educational institutions together with professional organizations update their standards and teaching programs to teach students advanced language abilities together with technological competencies. The translation and language industry demonstrates how people and machines collaborate but human interpretation remains essential for cultural understanding.

### **3. Machine Translation**

Machine Translation (MT) operates through computer systems which translate natural language text from one language to another using algorithms. The translation process through computers represents Machine Translation (MT) but human translators need to understand context and cultural aspects and perform practical evaluations. The first MT systems from the 1950s and 1960s operated through rule-based systems which required extensive linguistic descriptions and bilingual dictionaries to generate target texts (Hutchins, 2005.) (The initial models proved translation automation possible yet they failed to deliver satisfactory results while handling extensive workloads. The development of technology has led to three major shifts in machine translation methods starting with rule-based systems followed by statistical models and ending with neural architectures. The development of each new approach has brought significant advancements to computational linguistics research. The introduction of Statistical Machine Translation (SMT) during the 1990s brought a significant transformation to the field. The SMT systems used extensive bilingual corpora to calculate the probability of word and phrase relationships between source and target languages (Koehn, 2010). The probabilistic approach of this system produced better results than rule-based systems but it generated translations that were difficult to understand and contained grammatical errors. The

introduction of Neural Machine Translation (NMT) through deep learning and artificial neural networks brought a major transformation to the field by delivering more natural and understandable translations (Bahdanau et al., 2015). The technology behind NMT operates in research facilities and business environments to drive Google Translate and DeepL translation services. The language services industry depends on Machine Translation (MT) because it enables fast and affordable text translation for worldwide communication needs. The technology serves essential functions in e-commerce operations and international business operations and social media platforms and borderless information sharing (Stahlberg, 2020). Experts who study and practice machine translation identify multiple weaknesses in the system which affect its ability to translate cultural elements and idiomatic language and sensitive dialogue. The standard professional approach to work involves using machine translation systems in combination with human expertise through post-editing tasks. The hybrid approach demonstrates how MT evolved from its initial experimental stage into its current role as a vital tool for contemporary multilingual communication.

#### **Advantages of Machine Translation**

- **The system operates at high speeds to translate extensive text content within seconds which makes it essential for immediate communication needs and large-scale translation operations (Koehn, 2010).**
- **The translation process through MT technology proves more affordable than human translation services for organizations that need to translate repetitive or technical content (Stahlberg, 2020).**
- **The free translation tools Google Translate and DeepL provide instant multilingual access to information for users across the world (Bahdanau, Cho, Cho, & Bengio, 2015).**
- **The technology integration capabilities of MT enable organizations to achieve globalization through their deployment of multilingual chatbots and e-commerce platforms and cross-border communication systems (Hutchins, 2005).**
- **The system maintains consistent terminology throughout documents by translating identical phrases and technical terms which benefits legal and medical and technical fields (Stahlberg, 2020).**

### **Disadvantages of Machine Translation**

**The system fails to understand cultural references because it cannot translate idioms and metaphors and humor and culturally specific expressions which results in translation errors (Hutchins, 2005).**

**The quality of machine translation output depends on the specific language combination and subject matter but low-resource languages tend to generate inferior results (Stahlberg, 2020).**

**Users who depend on MT output for translation may face risks because they do not verify the accuracy of the translations which could lead to dangerous mistakes in critical fields like law and healthcare (Koehn, 2010).**

**The process of editing machine translation output requires translators to dedicate equal or more time to fix errors than they would spend on initial translation work (Bahdanau et al., 2015).**

**The use of massive datasets for MT system training creates multiple ethical problems regarding data privacy and copyright and intellectual property protection (Stahlberg, 2020).**

### **4. Decontextualization and Machine Translation**

The process of decontextualization in translation involves removing words and phrases from their original linguistic and cultural and situational framework. Human communication generates meaning through pragmatic elements which include speaker purpose and discourse organization and cultural references and non-verbal signals (House, 2015). The process of translation becomes more error-prone when translators work with isolated units that have been extracted from their original context. Machine translation systems based on extensive parallel corpora data tend to view language as surface-level patterns instead of understanding it as context-dependent discourse. The lack of complete pragmatic and socio-cultural context makes MT systems highly prone to decontextualization because they cannot determine the intended meaning of text (Venuti, 2012).

The lack of context in MT systems produces translations that follow grammar rules but fail to match real-world situations. The removal of idiomatic expressions and humorous content and ironic statements and cultural-specific terminology from their original conversation context results in lost intended meaning. Sequence-to-sequence models with attention mechanisms in neural machine translation (NMT) improve

contextual understanding by processing longer text segments (Bahdanau, Cho, & Bengio, 2015). The ability of NMT systems to handle context remains limited when the context extends beyond single sentences as demonstrated in complex narratives and legal texts and texts requiring broad world knowledge. Research shows that machine translation (MT) produces lower quality outputs when it translates decontextualized units because the system cannot resolve ambiguous words and fails to match the correct communication style (Stahlberg, 2020).

The practice of translation becomes severely impacted by decontextualization. The output of MT systems requires extensive human post-editing to restore contextual information which results in accurate and culturally appropriate translations (Koehn, 2010). The translation of technical terminology through machine translation without proper consideration of jurisdictional and disciplinary contexts leads to dangerous misinterpretations in legal and medical fields. The removal of context leads to translate literary or political texts results in the loss or transformation of irony and hidden meaning. Machine translation (MT) reveals its limitations through decontextualization while demonstrating the critical role human translators play in recontextualizing meaning through their interpretive abilities and cultural expertise (House, 2015; Venuti, 2012). The need for hybrid translation workflows becomes evident through decontextualization because technology enhances speed and efficiency but human translators maintain and preserve contextual depth.

### **5. Sport Idioms in Language and Translation**

Sport idioms consist of athletic expressions which athletes use in their competitions but people apply to describe different social and political and personal situations. The idioms have evolved from their sports origins to describe multiple social and political and personal circumstances. The phrases "throw in the towel" and "hit below the belt" and "level playing field" demonstrate how sports terminology enters regular conversation. According to Kövecses (2010) idioms emerge from conceptual metaphors which become the basis for their development. Sports idioms contain essential cultural values which include competition and success and teamwork and strategy because these elements exist deeply throughout multiple societies.

Sports idioms function as strong linguistic tools which help people express their shared cultural background and social experiences. Sports create opportunities for social connection between people but different cultures develop their own interpretations of sports and their relationships to other aspects of life. The English language contains boxing idioms ("on the ropes") and baseball idioms ("step up to the plate") and horse racing idioms ("front runner") which demonstrate how sports have influenced the development of language. The process of translating idioms becomes challenging when the target language lacks equivalent cultural references. Baker (2018) explains that successful idiomatic translation requires translators to possess both linguistic abilities and cultural understanding to preserve the original figurative and emotional impact of the idiom. Translators who lack this understanding will create direct translations which result in awkward or nonsensical text in the target language. Sports idioms in translation studies demonstrate how cultural non-equivalence affects meaning because their interpretations depend heavily on cultural knowledge about sports. Translators who want to achieve communicative equivalence between languages can choose between three methods which include paraphrasing and using equivalent idioms and cultural adaptation (Newmark, 1988). The English tennis idiom "the ball is in your court" translates to Arabic as "الدور عليك الآن" which expresses the same meaning without referencing tennis. Sports idioms demonstrate the connection between language and culture and translation processes. The effective transmission of messages requires translators to understand cultural differences when working between languages.

## **6. Problems of Translating Sport Idioms**

People use sports idioms to discuss competition and success and failure and effort in their daily conversations. The idioms "throw in the towel" and "hit below the belt" and "step up to the plate" serve as examples of how sports terminology enters everyday conversation. The process of translating these idioms proves challenging because they contain metaphors and figurative language that require cultural understanding (Baker, 2018; Newmark, 1988.)

### **1. Cultural and Contextual Non-Equivalence**

The main difficulty in translating sports idioms stems from their lack of direct equivalents in target cultures. The English baseball idioms "out of

left field" and "step up to the plate" lack direct translations in Arabic-speaking nations because baseball is not widely popular there. Larson (1998) explains that idioms function as specific cultural elements which cannot be understood through their literal components. The translation of idioms into literal language produces incorrect metaphorical interpretations which leads to communication breakdowns. The translator needs to find equivalent expressions which maintain their original pragmatic value even when the language and metaphorical elements differ (Nida, 1964.)

## **2. Loss of Metaphorical and Pragmatic Force**

The process of maintaining the original idiom's metaphorical strength and practical essence proves to be a significant challenge during translation. Sport idioms frequently express intense emotions and humorous elements and relaxed speech patterns which form essential elements of their original message. Hatim and Mason (1990) explain that idioms create additional meaning in discourse which goes beyond its literal semantic value. Word-for-word translations of idioms result in complete loss of their intended meaning. The Arabic translation of "the ball is in your court" becomes "الكرة في ملعبك" yet this version might sound unnatural when used in official settings. The translator should select "القرار بيدك الآن" (the decision is in your hands) as a cultural adaptation to preserve the idiom's functional value in the target language.

## **3. Register and Audience Awareness**

The usage of sport idioms depends on specific writing types including news articles and commentaries and casual conversations and their interpretations vary based on the context. The translator needs to determine if the source text idiom requires literal interpretation or figurative interpretation or functional communication. The wrong interpretation of an idiom will produce a different tone which affects audience engagement. House (2015) explains that achieving functional equivalence requires understanding both the text function and the genre of the translation. Sports writing becomes more engaging through idioms which also help politicians use these expressions to make points and influence their audience. The translator needs to analyze the idiom's discourse function before selecting an equivalent translation method

#### 4. Strategies to Overcome Idiomatic Challenges

Translators can solve idiomatic translation issues through several available approaches. The translator should use paraphrasing to explain the original message through non-idiomatic language. The translator should select an idiom from the target language that matches the original expression when possible. The process of cultural substitution involves replacing the original sport with a different one which holds more significance in the target culture. The translator should either remove the idiom or reduce its importance when the idiom does not play a crucial role in the message (Baker, 2018). The main challenge in idiomatic translation emerges from the need to balance accurate translation with natural language expression. Sports idiom translation requires more than basic language proficiency because it demands cultural understanding and situational analysis and creative problem-solving abilities. The translator needs to preserve both the original meaning and the original impact and functional role of the idiom when transferring it to the target culture.

#### 7. Translation Quality Assessment

The establishment of Translation Studies as an academic field during the 1960s and 1970s led to the development of Translation Quality Assessment (TQA). The initial translation models focused on maintaining source text fidelity through equivalent message translation. The TQA process involves methodical evaluation of translations to determine their adequacy for their intended purpose and their suitability for the target audience and original text. The evaluation process determines how well a translated text fulfills the requirements of its intended context of use.

TQA is an important part of Translation Studies because it gives us both theoretical frameworks and practical ways to judge how well a translation works, whether for teaching, work, or research (House, 2015). While TQA has advanced considerably, challenges remain. Evaluation often involves a degree of **subjectivity**, particularly in aesthetic or cultural contexts. Moreover, **automatic evaluation metrics** may fail to capture nuance, irony, or emotion in human translation (Koby et al., 2014).

#### 8. Research Methodology

##### 8.1 Data Collection and Procedure

The data in this study are collected from a website specified for idioms (<https://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/idioms-sports.php>). Seven English sport idioms are selected to conform with nature of the study.

These idioms give clear meaning when they are translated into Arabic but they are rendered by the **Google Translate** application they meaning is totally jeopardized. This is because of their meaning is transferred into Arabic decontextually. Since these expressions have meaning when they are said in certain situation, they will not be understood as they are translated decontextually. Their translations are assessed according to Nababan TQA model to see if they are translated appropriately.

## 8.2 Model Adopted

The **Nababan Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) model** is one of the most practical and widely applied evaluation frameworks. Originally proposed in the early 2000s and refined in **Nababan, Nuraeni, & Sumardiono (2012)**, the model is one of the few to combine **quantitative scoring** with **qualitative assessment**, making it particularly suitable for **empirical translation studies** and **pedagogical assessment**. According to Nababan et al. (2012), **translation quality** is determined by how well a translated text conveys **meaning accuracy**, **readability**, and **naturalness** within the target language and culture. The Nababan TQA model assesses translation through **three main parameters**:

Table(1): shows the main dimensions of this model

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Assessment Focus</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>	Degree to which the meaning of the source text is accurately transferred into the target language.	Semantic and referential equivalence.
<b>Acceptability</b>	Extent to which the translation conforms to target language norms and is natural for native speakers.	Grammar, style, and idiomaticity.
<b>Readability</b>	How easily the translation can be understood by the target audience.	Clarity and comprehensibility.

The **final translation quality score** is usually computed by averaging the three components. A translation with a total average close to **3.0** is considered of **high quality**, while scores closer to **1.0** indicate **low quality**. Each segment is rated separately for **accuracy**, **acceptability**,

and **readability** using the 1–3 scale. Multiple raters can be involved to ensure inter-rater reliability.

The scores are tabulated and averaged to determine:

- The overall translation quality, and
- The distribution of errors or weaknesses across categories.

A mean accuracy score of 2.8, acceptability of 2.5, and readability of 2.9 indicates a “high-quality” translation with minor stylistic issues.

Table(2): shows scores of each dimension of this model

Score	Accuracy	Acceptability	Readability
<b>3 (High)</b>	Meaning is accurately conveyed; no distortion.	Translation sounds natural; conforms fully to target norms.	Easily understood; clear to readers.
<b>2 (Medium)</b>	Meaning is mostly conveyed, but minor distortions exist.	Slightly awkward or unnatural expressions appear.	Generally clear but may cause minor confusion.
<b>1 (Low)</b>	Meaning is not accurately conveyed or distorted.	Unnatural or inappropriate expressions; ungrammatical.	Difficult to understand; requires rereading.

### 8.3 Data Analysis and Discussion

ST1 Analysis:

ST: All of the students laughed when Joe gave an answer that was **out in left field**.

TT(Machine translation): ضحك جميع الطلاب عندما أعطى جو إجابة كانت في المجال الأيسر.

It is important to understand the meaning of the idiom in order to analyze its meaning according to Nababan model.

- **Literal meaning:** “out in left field” refers to a physical position on a baseball field.
- **Idiomatic meaning (figurative):** In American English, the expression “*out in left field*” means “**illogical, strange, or completely unrelated to the topic.**”

It describes someone’s comment or behavior as *odd, irrelevant, or unexpected*. This criteria assesses how accurately the meaning of the

source message is conveyed. The translation “في المجال الأيسر” is **literal** and retains the *baseball field image* instead of transferring the **figurative meaning** (“غير منطقي” or “بعيد كل البعد عن الموضوع”). Thus, the main intended meaning is **lost**. The score is 1 because of the low accuracy. The idiomatic meaning of “out in left field” was not rendered; the translation only transfers surface form, not sense.

For acceptability, Measures naturalness and conformity to Arabic norms and expressions. The phrase “في المجال الأيسر” is **unnatural and culturally alien** to Arabic readers, since baseball metaphors are not part of Arabic idiomatic repertoire. It sounds translated and unclear. The score is **1 (Low Acceptability) because** The expression is semantically and culturally unfamiliar; it violates target-language naturalness.

Readability, Examines clarity and comprehensibility to the target audience. Grammatically correct Arabic sentence, but the meaning of “في المجال الأيسر” is **confusing and incomprehensible** to most readers. Readers will not grasp the intended humor or context. **1.5 (Low–Medium Readability)**, Structure is readable, but semantic confusion reduces clarity.

ST2 Analysis:

**ST:** You're skating on thin ice by not sending in your college application before now.

**TT(Machine translation):** إنك تتزلج على الجليد الرقيق بعدم إرسال طلبك إلى الكلية قبل الآن

- **Literal meaning:** “Skating on thin ice” describes physically skating on ice that could break — a dangerous situation.
- **Figurative meaning:** The idiom means “**taking a serious risk,**” “**being in a dangerous or unstable situation,**” or “**doing something that could easily lead to trouble or failure.**”

**Accuracy,** the idiomatic meaning “taking a risk” is **not transferred**; the translation is **literal** (“تتزلج على الجليد الرقيق”). Readers will imagine literal skating, not a risky action. This means that it is low accuracy 1.0. The figurative sense lost; message distorted.

For acceptability, the TT “تتزلج على الجليد الرقيق” is **unfamiliar and culturally alien** to Arabic readers. Such imagery doesn't exist naturally in Arabic idioms. The score of this criteria is( **1.0**) which means low acceptability because it is read as an awkward, word-for-word rendering. While readability, grammatically correct and clear words, but

semantically **confusing** ,most readers will not grasp the intended warning or risk implied. The score is (1.5) which refers to ( low-medium readability because readable form unclear meaning.

ST3 Analysis:

**ST:** It's time you stepped up to the plate and apologized for your mistake.

**TT(Machine translation):** لقد حان الوقت لتتدخل وتعذر عن خطئك.

- **Literal meaning:** “Step up to the plate” refers to a baseball player walking up to the batting plate, ready to take their turn to hit.
- **Figurative meaning:** It means **to take responsibility, to face a challenge courageously, or to take action when required.**

Accuracy is assessed according to the model, The translation “لتتدخل” (to intervene) **partly conveys** the sense of taking action, but **misses the idiomatic nuance of responsibility.** The translator captures the general idea of “acting,” but not the deeper meaning “take responsibility.”. The score is seen (2) which fair. This means that the meaning is partially accurate but the meaning is narrowed. Whereas, in acceptability the sentence “لقد حان الوقت لتتدخل وتعذر عن خطئك” sounds **natural and smooth** in Arabic; it fits Arabic communicative norms. This means that score is (3) high acceptability because of the natural wording and the translation culturally suitable. For readability, the sentence “لقد حان الوقت لتتدخل وتعذر عن خطئك” sounds **natural and smooth** in Arabic; it fits Arabic communicative norms. The score of this criteria is (3) high readability because there is no syntactic or lexical difficulty.

ST4 Analysis:

**ST:** The school's no smoking policy is three strikes and you're out.

**TT(Machine translation):** سياسة عدم التدخين في المدرسة هي ثلاث ضربات وسوف تخرج.

- **Literal meaning:** In baseball, after three failed attempts to hit the ball (“three strikes”), the batter is out of the game.
- **Figurative meaning:** In everyday English, “three strikes and you’re out” means a **“three-chance rule” — after three offenses or mistakes, the person is expelled, dismissed, or punished.**

For accuracy, the TT “ثلاث ضربات وسوف تخرج” is a **literal translation** that preserves the surface form (“three strikes”) but **completely loses the idiomatic sense** (“three violations and expulsion”). According to the model scores this translation takes (1.0) low accuracy because the

intended disciplinary rule is not communicated; meaning distorted. For acceptability, The phrase “ثلاث ضربات وسوف تخرج” is **unnatural and culturally meaningless** in Arabic; it sounds odd since “strikes” and “out” have no figurative sense in Arabic discourse. The score is **(1.0)** low acceptability because the rendering is culturally inappropriate and there is unidiomatic phrasing. While readability, the translation is Grammatically simple, but semantically confusing ,Arabic readers do not understand what “ضربات” means in this context. The score of this criteria is **(1.5)** which is seen as (Low–Medium Readability) because the syntax is considered fine but the meaning is obscure.

ST5 Analysis:

**ST:** I don't have a work visa, so they have to pay me under the table.

**TT(Machine translation):** ليس لدي تأشيرة عمل، لذلك يتعين عليهم أن يدفعوا لي تحت الطاولة.

- **Literal meaning:** “Under the table” means *beneath a physical table*, literally a spatial image.
- **Figurative meaning:** It refers to **illegally or secretly paying someone in cash to avoid taxes or legal responsibility** — in this case, *unofficial employment or payment*.

In accuracy, the TT “تحت الطاولة” is a **literal transfer**, but in Arabic, the same idiom actually exists and is **understood figuratively** to mean *secretly, illegally, or unofficially*. Thus, **the idiomatic meaning is preserved successfully. The score is (3) high accuracy because the Arabic readers will correctly infer the idea of secret/illegal payment. For acceptability, the idiom “تحت الطاولة” is a natural and common Arabic idiom meaning in secret or illegally. It fits well in Arabic discourse. The score is also (3) because the equivalent is culturally and widely used. In readability, the TT is fluent, clear, and easy to understand, especially since “تحت الطاولة” is idiomatic in Arabic. The score reached (3) high readability because smooth and fully comprehensible.**

ST6 Analysis:

**ST:** If you wear that dress to the beauty pageant you are going to blow the competition away.

**TT(Machine translation):** إذا ارتديت هذا الفستان في مسابقة ملكة الجمال فسوف تبهر المنافسة.

- **Literal meaning:** “To blow someone away” literally means *to make someone fall or be moved by a gust of wind*.

- **Figurative meaning:** It is an **American idiom** meaning *to impress someone greatly* or *to defeat others overwhelmingly* — to win with excellence, charm, or superiority.

As far as accuracy is concerned, the TT “تبهر المنافسة” conveys the idea of *impressing the competitors* or *astonishing others*, which captures **part of the figurative meaning** of the idiom (“to impress greatly”). However, it slightly weakens the **competitive aspect** i.e., *winning* or *defeating the competition*. The score of this criteria is **(2.5)** moderate to high accuracy because Meaning mostly preserved, but lacks the nuance of *overwhelming victory*. While about acceptability, the expression “تبهر المنافسة” is **natural and idiomatic** in Arabic. It reads fluently and sounds culturally acceptable. The score reaches **(3)** high acceptability because fluent and natural Arabic phrasing. For readability, it is clear and easy to understand and no ambiguity is seen in the TT. The score is **(3)** which means high readability because smooth and immediately comprehensible.

ST7 Analysis:

**ST:** Amanda was hitting below the belt when she called Adrian an unfit father.

**TT(Machine translation):** كانت أماندا تضرب تحت الحزام عندما وصفت أدريان بأنه أب غير صالح.

- **Literal meaning:** To *hit below the belt* comes from **boxing**, where hitting an opponent below the waist is illegal.
- **Figurative meaning:** To behave **unfairly, cruelly**, or say **something too personal or hurtful**, violating moral or ethical norms in an argument.

For accuracy, the TT “تضرب تحت الحزام” is a **literal translation** of the idiom. While this expression exists in Arabic, it is **not commonly used metaphorically** with the same strength or clarity as in English. Some Arabic speakers may understand it, but others may interpret it literally. The intended figurative sense of “unfair/low blow” is **partially conveyed**. The score is **(2)** moderate accuracy because The figurative meaning is not fully communicated; remains partially literal. While acceptability, Grammatically correct, but “تضرب تحت الحزام” sounds **foreign or unnatural** in Arabic literary or journalistic style unless the reader is familiar with Western idioms. The Arabic equivalent would be more idiomatic if replaced with “تتصرف بطريقة غير عادلة” or “توجه ضربة قاسية”. The score is **(2)** which refers to moderate acceptability because the

TT is understandable but not idiomatically natural in Arabic. For readability, it is readable, and structurally clear; however, readers might pause at “تحت الحزام” wondering if it is literal or figurative. The score is (2.5) which refers to good readability. Grammatically smooth, but the figurative nuance might not be immediately recognized.

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