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STUDY OF THE TRANSLATION OF ECUADORIAN IDIOMS AND THEIR EQUIVALENCE BEYOND WORD LEVEL

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We certify that this research Project was present by **DANIELA YELA GUDIÑO**, as a partial fulfillment for the requirements for a **BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE WITH A MINOR IN TRANSLATION**

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ABSTRACT

As a result of their openness to international markets, more and more Ecuadorian writers, singers, songwriters, film makers and authors in general seek for the help of a translator before attempting to reach international audiences.

An incredibly challenging issue for translators is to render the translation of all sorts of culturally bound words. When it comes to idioms, translators must determine whether there exists an equivalent for the intended message in the target text.

The following paper studies the different strategies used to translate idioms and when to use them within the needs of the customer. However, usually it is merely the translators' decision to choose the best and most suitable way to convey meaning, even if it implies translating a phrase beyond word level.

Keywords: *idioms, Ecuadorian, strategies, target text, culturally bound words, equivalent.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Usually, it takes a while for people to get the gist of the different idioms and culturally bound words that can be found in a specific language.

Now, for translators, this process needs to speed up and it is not only important but also crucial to be aware of all the terms out there in order to render a translation that denotes the same exact meaning as the intended message to be communicated in the source text, a translator then will need to take the figurative meaning of the Source Text and find a parallel expression that can be used in the Target Text.

The use of different translation strategies is necessary to overcome certain translation problems and losses, such as an idiom that has no direct equivalent in the target text. In two cultures and cases where main features of culture, language, economic activity and education vary, as in the case of Ecuadorian Spanish and English, loss may be common in texts where the translator ignores the mentioned features of the cultures. This research paper aims to investigate the possibilities available for translators to render an appropriate translation since, despite the fact that all languages have idioms, finding an exact equivalent will sometimes be hard because they belong to human and in most cases spoken communication and Translation Machines will not be able to cope with them. When we compare languages, we can see that the social features of cultures depend on their knowledge and experience, this causes the differences and similarities between English and Ecuadorian Spanish. For example, the English idiom 'between a rock and a hard place' has a Spanish counterpart 'Entre la espada y la pared', the idiom has different words and lexical items but the meaning still remains the same.

1.1 TOPIC AND JUSTIFICATION

Throughout the years, as international relationships have grown, the translation field became a common area of study for scholars, particularly structures that can be commonly known in the translator's community as problems and delay the translation process.

The study of Idioms, their translation and their translation strategies have been undertaken by translators and linguists from all over the world, in a huge variety of languages.

In Ecuador, idioms and idiomatic expressions are known to be used by most people, regardless their social class, level of education, age and gender.

The well-known Spanish idiom "Llueve a cántaros" meaning that there is a lot of rain, or it is raining heavily, has an English counterpart "It is raining cats and dogs". If either idiom is translated literally, the message will not be understood and the target audience will face difficulties, since Spanish speakers will find no relation between rain and cats and dogs as English speakers will find no relation between rain and pitchers

Among different researches, several techniques and options have been given to translate idioms and the options they would choose.

Authors like Newmark, Larson and Baker, have all studied and analyzed strategies to translate idioms in different languages. The counterparts will always vary depending on the Target and Source languages, but the main similarity in most findings is that a literal translation will not be appropriate for idioms, sociolects or idiomatic expressions.

2. PROBLEM

2.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

When a native Ecuadorian is trying to render a translation from Spanish to English or vice versa, he or she, is not aware of all the amount of idioms in English, and is not familiar with cultural issues of English idioms; will find it very hard to succeed, which in this case would be communicating the exact same message from the original text into the source language. Despite the fact of a translator speaking perfect English or Spanish, there needs to be an awareness of idioms in both the source and target languages, or his or her translation will lack the desired form, register, style and structure.

When a translator finds an expression within a text such as 'Me estás tomando el pelo' he or she, if not aware of Spanish idioms, will image someone

is taking somebody's hair, but the Spanish expression has an English counterpart 'You´re pulling my leg'. Both expressions mean someone is tricking or making fun of someone else, and therefore convey the same meaning.

2.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the different types of idioms?

- Who uses idioms in Ecuador?

- What techniques are there available to translate idioms?

- What strategies are there available to efficiently translate idioms?

- How does a translator know when to use different strategies to translate idioms?

2.3 GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

2.3.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of this research project is to identify the different strategies available to translate idioms and to provide a glossary of the most commonly used Ecuadorian idioms.

2.3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this research project are to identify the dominant strategy to translate idioms applied by Ecuadorian translators, provide Ecuadorian translators with a study of the best techniques posited by different researchers to translate idioms and choose the best option for their client's needs to improve the quality of Ecuadorian translations.

2.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this section of the project, a guide and explanations of terms and the techniques to translate idioms are presented to expose a clearer understanding of the translation of idioms.

As described by Oxford Advanced learner's dictionary, an idiom is:

"a phrase or sentence whose meaning is not clear from the meaning of its individual words and which must be learnt as a whole unit".

(Oxford Dictionary)

Therefore, idioms are words that need to be understood as a whole because isolated their meaning can vary or not be the intended by the author.

Rosamund Moon also provided a definition of idioms in her book *Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English (1998):*

"an ambiguous term, used in conflicting ways. In lay or general use, idiom has two main meanings. First, idioms is a particular means of expressing something in language, music, art, and so on, which characterizes a person or group. Secondly (and much less commonly in English), an idiom is a particular lexical collocation or phrasal lexeme, peculiar to a language"

(Moon, 1998, p3)

Mona Baker in her book In Other Words specifically provides five things that, if done, will make an idiom lose its sense: change the order of the words; delete a word from it; add a word to it; replace a word by another one; or change its grammatical structure. (Baker, 1992, p.63). Spanish idioms are no different than English idioms as the meaning or an English or Spanish idiom can not be understood in isolation of words, for example the Ecuadorean idiom "ponerse once" (means 'pay attention or be alert') in isolation of words would mean 'to get eleven'. In other words, Ecuadorean Spanish idioms are frozen sets of words, as words order in idioms can be frozen and impossible to change so as not to lack meaning (Paulauskas, 1977, p.7).

Newmark (1988, p.104) points out two main functions of idioms: *pragmatic and referential*.

Pragmatic Function: Newmark explains that this function appeals to the senses, its aims is to interest, surprise or delight. This function is also called by Newmark cognitive function.

Referential Function: It "*describes a mental process or state, a concept, a person, an object, a quality or an action more comprehensively and concisely than is possible in literal or physical language*" (Newmark, 1988, p.104).

Ecuadorian idioms may also convey other meanings, such as thanks, agreements, apologies, actions or feelings. Fernando (1996, p.72-214), identifies three more functions that idioms can perform: *ideational, interpersonal and relational.*

Ideational function: They denote content that includes actions, situations, people and things*.*

Interpersonal function: It includes interaction with other in apologies, greetings, directives, etc.

Relational function: They give the speech act cohesion and coherence; these types of idioms integrate and sequence the information.

When translating an idiom from English into Spanish a translator may come across difficulties hard to overcome. It is necessary to review the difficulties in order to provide some possible solutions to translate idioms effectively.

Mona Baker (1992, p.68) identifies three main problems that translators need to overcome when translating an idiom. The lack of equivalence in the target language is the first problem posited by Baker, as Baker writes (1992, p.68) different languages express meanings using different linguistic means such as fixed expressions, idioms, words, etc. Finding an equivalent for the

same word will then become a difficult task. Culturally bound idioms will also be a problem since they are unique to a particular culture or group. Another problem that Baker identifies (1992, p.69) is the use of an idioms similar in form and meaning in different context in the target language. As Baker explains, idioms may be used in both literal and idiomatic sense at the same time.

Mollanazar on the other hand reports that, '*the first step in translating idioms is to recognize them. The pitfall for the translators is to translate idioms literally. A word-for-word translation of idioms is often nonsense or even sometimes amusing*' (2004, p. 52).

Nolan (2005) adds that ' *The most common pitfall to be avoided is not recognizing*

figurative or idiomatic language and translating it literally' (2005, p. 67).

Baker (1992) mentions two cases that can make a translator misinterpret an idiom within a text:

1) when an idiom's literal meaning also makes sense

2) when there is an idiom in the target language which has a similar form but refers to a different solution.

Straksiene (2009), explained that the lack of equivalence on the idiom level is one of the most common problems that a translator can face.

It is also important for translators to identify the meaning of words or phrases, Baker (2006) identifies two different types of meaning: propositional and expressive.

Propositional meaning: The propositional meaning of words or utterances arises from the relation between the word and what it refers to or what it describes in a real or imaginary word, as conceived by the speakers of the language which meaning it has. For example, the propositional meaning of the word *table* is 'an article of furniture consisting of a flat, slablike top supported on one or more legs or other supports'. It would not be accurate to use *table* to describe a piece of clothing.

The meaning of words can be propositional and expressive.

Expressive meaning: The expressive meaning of words cannot be judged as true or false as it relates to the feeling or attitude of the speaker rather than what words may refer to.

All the above mentioned features of idioms apply for all the languages that contain them and such features lead to the difficulty of finding an equivalent in the Target Language.

2.5. TRANSLATION AND IDIOMS

2.5.1 TRANSLATION

To be aware and notice the differences in different strategies and techniques when translating, we need to be aware what a Translation is and how it works.

A translation is every text in a Source language, replaced by its equivalent in the target language. A translator needs to pay close attention not only to the actual and intended message but also the style of the text, the type of text and the register of the text. In order to render a readable translation, translators must overcome language barriers and master both the target and the source language since a counterpart in most cases will be anything but the literal replacement of words from the source into the target language.

According to Larson (1984:10), there are two types of translation. The first type of translation is focused on the form of the source language and the strategy is commonly a literal rendering of words keeping close attention to the general form of the document. The second type of translation is more focused on the meaning, rather than the style of the text. The translator needs to understand the source text to translate the meaning and intended message rather than the general style of the document.

According to Newmark (1988, p.19) the translation process contains four levels:

The Textual Level: It is closely related to the Source Text. At this level, the syntactic structures of the Source Language are rendered into the structures of the Target Language.

The Referential Level: It is related to the message or meaning of the Source Text. The intended message is decoded to be encoded into the appropriate expressions and words in the Target Text.

The Cohesive Level: The cohesive level is where the textual and referential levels are linked. It deals with the form and the meaning of the text.

The Level of Naturalness: This level refers to the language; it needs to be natural and neutral. Newmark explained that a natural translation is written in ordinary language-grammar, idioms and words in general.

2.5.2. TRANSLATION PROCEDURES

Nida (1964) divides the translation procedures in two parts:

1. *Technical Procedure*: In this procedure both the source and target texts are analyzed, the source language text is studies before translating it, the semantic and syntactic approximations of the texts are judged. (Nida 1964, p.241-245)

2. *Organizational Procedure*: It includes the constant reevaluation of the attempt made; contrasting it with the existing available translations of the same text done by other translators, and checking the communicative effectiveness of the text by asking the audience of the Target Language to evaluate its accuracy and effectiveness and studying their reactions. (Nida, 1964, p.241-247)

2.5.3. TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

Newmark (1988b) mentions different translation techniques that can be used depending on the client's needs.

2.5.3.1. WORD FOR WORD TRANSLATION

The Source Language word order is preserved and the words are translated by their most common meanings out of context.

2.5.3.2. LITERAL TRANSLATION

The Source Language grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents; the lexical words are translated one by one, out of context.

2.5.3.4. FAITHFUL TRANSLATION

It reproduces the precise contextual meaning of the original Source within constrains of the TL grammatical structures.

2.5.3.5. SEMANTIC TRANSLATION

It differs from Faithful Translation as it takes more account of the aesthetic value of the SL text.

2.5.3.6. ADAPTATION

The Source Language culture is usually converted to the TL culture and the text is rewritten.

2.5.3.7 FREE TRANSLATION

It produces the TL text without the style form, or content of the original.

2.5.3.8. IDIOMATIC TRANSLATION

It 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.

2.5.3.9. COMMUNICATIVE TRANSLATION

It 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, 1988b:45-47)

Mona Baker in her book *In Other Words* (1992), provides with four main strategies to translate idioms: Using an idiom with the same meaning and form, using and idioms with the similar meaning but different form, by paraphrase or by omission.

Translation by using an idiom with similar form and meaning in the target language

The first strategy given by Mona Baker explains that it must have the same meaning and be of equal lexical items. For examples, the English idiom 'the devil's advocate' has an Spanish counterpart 'el abogado del diablo'.

Translation by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form

In this case, the semantic equivalent is found beyond the lexical items and word level so as to convey the exact same meaning. As in the case of the English idiom 'it is raining cats and dogs' that can be translated as 'está lloviendo a cántaros'. These two idioms have different lexical items but the same meaning.

Translation by paraphrase

This strategy can be used when the idioms in the Source Text is lexicalized in the Target Text in a different form.

Translation by omission

Baker explained that this may be a drastic strategy since it consists of omitting the translation of a word or expression.

2.5.4. THE PROCESS

It is important to review the concept of translation given by different researches in order to have a clear idea of the translation process. Hatim and Mason (1990) agree that translation is a process involving the negotiation of meaning between producers and receivers of the text. Picken (1989) states that a general translation is a method of transferring oral and written messages from writing to speech, or from one language to another. Nida (1974) explains that translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, in terms of meaning and style.

In consequence, a translator can be recognized as a mediator between two unknown cultures and languages and someone who can transfer the Source Language to the Target Language.

In order to render a readable translation that matches the Source Text, the translator needs extensive training because translation demands a specific knowledge of both the source text and the target text. Translating will also become easy when a translator masters all the lexical parts of speech and their features in the two languages.

A translator also needs to be good at both writing and listening since he or she must be familiarized with the languages to be translated.

2.5.5. THE TERM

Idioms are expressions that, by using figures of speech, explain something in a popular way. They can be limited since different idioms may mean something different according to the culture, areas and even contexts.

J.SeidlMcMordiew in her book English Idioms and Ho to Use Them (1983) explains, "We can say that an idioms is a number of words, which, taken together, mean something different from the individual words of the idiom when they stand alone."

As McMordiew explains, idioms do not mean the same when they are translated in isolation as when they are translated as a single phrase. In many cases, an idiom can make no sense in the target language if there are culturally bound words from the source language.

According to Ezugu (1995, p.29) there are two main types of idioms.

- *Pure Idioms:* Pure idioms are non-literal, which means they are the ones with the less chances to be translated word for word, they always mean one things different from the words used and if taken apart, will make no sense.

- *Figurative Idioms:* Figurative idioms usually contain verbs that give them broader meanings and are easier to understand.

- *Restricted Collocations or Semi-Idioms*: They are two word expressions that have one or more figurative interpretations.

- *Open Collocations or Free Expressions or Loose Collocations*: They are formed of verbs plus objects. Each element is used in a literal sense individually and therefore each element can be combined again.

Now, according to both meanings, it is particularly crucial for translators to be aware of idioms not only in the Source text but they need to find a suitable counterpart in the Target Text, keeping the original style and register.

As a result, in order to widen the target audience of Ecuadorian films, books, research papers, comedies, magazines, products and music proper translations, subtitling and dubbing are needed. To render a translation that is understood by the Target audience, the translator must be able to determine both the locutionay and the perlocutionary acts of speech. For example, some indigenous people tend to borrow words from dialects such as Quechua and on the other hand, villagers from coastal regions might tend to use a more informal language that might be considered rude to those from other regions of the country.

Anton Popovic (1976, p.6) describes four types of Translation Equivalences:

Linguistic Equivalence: There is homogeneity on the linguistic level of the Source Language and the Target Language texts

Paradigmatic Equivalence: Equivalence of the elements of a paradigmatic expressive axis, i.e. elements of grammar.

Stylistic Equivalence: There is functional equivalence of elements in both the original text and the translation aiming at an expressive identity with an invariant of identical meaning.

Textual Equivalence: There is equivalence of syntagmatic structuring of a text, i.e. equivalence of form and shape

Now, the aim of the translator is somehow more complex. She/he needs to look up linguistic equivalents that the target audience is familiar with and without proper command of idioms, it is impossible to reach this goal.

2.6. TYPES OF IDIOMS
Frederik Wood (1978) in his book English Verbal Idioms, divides idioms into five categories:

2.6.1. VERBAL IDIOMS
A verbal idiom is a group of words that contain a verb and has a different meaning from the meaning of the individual words.

Examples, "act against", "act for" "act on", "break away", "break down", "call up", "call upon", "call off", "fall away", "fall back upon", "take after", "take in", "ponte once", "eres codo" etc.

2.6.2. NOUN IDIOMS
They consist of nouns that have a meaning that can be similar or completely different from their individual meaning.

Examples, "a bolt from the blue", "a chip off the old block", "crocodile tears", a maiden edition", "an Utopian project", etc.

2.6.3. PREPOSITIONAL IDIOMS

They begin with prepositions. The preposition used depends on the context of the sentence.

Examples, "for ages", "of age", "cast an aspersion on", "brood over", etc.

2.6.4. COLLOQUIAL IDIOMS

They make references to cultural or historical events or are created by people in dairy conversations.

Examples, "A1 (A-one)", "bad egg", "by and by", "drop a line", "face the music", "gate crash", "kill two birds with one stone", "off the record", "ups and downs", etc.

2.6.5. IDIOMS COMPOSED OF A PAIR OF WORDS

They consist of two words. The word order cannot be changed and words cannot be omitted.

Examples, "all and sundry", "in black and white", "null and void", "hue and cry", "left and right", "kith and kin", "safe and sound", "to and fro", "well and good", etc.

The translation strategy for idioms that is most suggested is finding a natural target language idiom that matches the meaning of the source language idiom. Nida and Taber (1969, p.106) give three translation strategies, which do not include literal translation:

1.- Translating idioms with non-idioms

2.- Translating idioms with idioms

3.- Translating non- idioms with idioms

They posed these strategies because, ideally, an idiom in the source language will be translated with another idiom in the target language, but in many cases, a counterpart is difficult, or impossible to find.

2.7. USE OF IDIOMS

The Cambridge University (2006) provides a list of the different uses of idioms:

"● For emphasis, e.g. The singer's second album sank like a stone. [failed completely]

● To agree with a previous speaker, e.g. A: Did you notice how Lisa Started listening when you said her name?

B: Yes, that certainly made her prick her ears up. [start listening carefully]

● To comment on people, e.g. Did you hear Tom has been invited for dinner with the prime minister? He's certainly gone up in the world! [gained a better social position – or more money – than before]

● To comment on a situation, e.g. The new finance minister wants to knock the economy into shape. [take action to get something into a good condition]

● To make an anecdote more interesting, e.g. It was just one disaster after another today, a sort of domino effect. [when something, usually bad, happens and causes a series of other things to happen]

● To catch the reader's eye. Idioms – particularly those with strong images – are often used in headlines, advertising slogans and the names of small businesses. The writer may play with the idiom or make a pun (a joke involving a play on words) in order to create a special effect, e.g. a debt of dishonour instead of the usual debt of honour. [a debt that you owe someone for moral rather than financial reasons]

● To indicate membership of a particular group, e.g. surfers drop in on someone, meaning to get on a wave another surfer is already on. This kind of group-specific idiom is outside the focus of this book. "

Cambridge University Press (2006)

2.8. UNDERSTANDING IDIOMS

The Cambridge University (2006) highlights different aspects of idioms that will help translators identify and understand them.

Metaphor

Many idioms are based on metaphors but they are so common to native speakers that they do not usually think about the metaphor behind the idiom. One examples is the idiom ''The new president was / took centre stage at the meeting' [was the most important or noticeable thing or person], without thinking of the original image of a theatre.

Emotion

Idioms very often contain colors and each color represents a feeling or emotion.

Red: Red can suggest anger, e.g. My mother saw red when I didn't come home early.

Black: Black is linked to unpleasant feelings, e.g. If you get a black mark for your mistake, it will ruin your future.

Blue: Blue is often related to sickness, e.g. I was feeling blue when you arrived.

Understanding

Idioms often equate seeing with understanding, e.g. Karol never saw the point.

In many cases, the first problem that a translator faces to translate an idiom is actually identifying the existence of the idiom. According to Baker (2006) there are various types of idioms and some are easier to recognize than other.

Idioms that are easily recognizable are those that violate truth conditions, such as *It's raining cats and dogs* or *food for though.* Expressions that sound ill-

formed because they do not follow the grammatical rules of the language are also part of this category, i.e. *Put paid to* or *the powers that be.*

Expressions that start with like are also an indicator that a literal translator is not the best option, these include idioms such as *like a bat out of hell* and *like water off a duck's back.*

The more difficult it is for a translator to understand a set of words or the less sense a phrase makes within a given context, the more chances it has to be an idiom because they do not make sense if interpreted literally

2.9. SOCIAL CLASSES IN ECUADOR

The idioms used by Ecuadoreans vary according to their level of education, economic activity, social classes and other factors. It is important for translators to be aware of the different social classes in Ecuador in order to identify the meaning of the idiom and the reason why the idiom is told, since in some cases idioms may have different meaning depending on the context.

The social classes that can be distinguished in the Ecuadorean community are Higher class, Middle class and Lower class.

2.9.1. HIGHER CLASS

People from a High Social Status are mostly large landowners, agro-exporters, financiers and industrialists. The basis of Class in Ecuador is settled by the control of land or big businesses and the development of them among family members, which leaves no place for newcomers or people trying to upgrade their way of life.

The way to address people tends to be formal and asymmetrical as they consider themselves to be higher and better than others. They tend to address people in a way that others identify their level of education, using more academic terms.

Dennis M. Hanratty (1989) in his paper Ecuador: A Country Study, divides social classes in Ecuador in Higher Class, Middle Class and Lower Class.

2.9.2. MIDDLE CLASS

The Middle Class in Ecuadorian Society is made up by people who have the opportunity to and education and means to improve their lifestyle. Most people belonging to this class are working people. Businessmen, professionals, managers, army officers and teachers form the middle levels of society. These people have somehow achieved a certain level of education, practices an occupation with a salary higher than the minimal wage and that does not require manual labor.

Ethnically speaking, the middle class is more diverse than other groups, belonging to this group, are also immigrants from Europe and other countries of Latin America.

People from this social status are less formal when referring to others; they tend to use a more asymmetrical speech since they are neutral in society.

2.9.3. LOWER CLASS

The lowest class Ecuadorian population is formed by the majority of inhabitants. Despite the efforts of the government in trying to assist the poor by promising free health care, education and housing, the evidential lack of resources and the lack of funds have had little impact on poverty. The discourse of lower class Ecuadorians is very diminishing; they use a lot of regional accents and slangs.

2.10. ECUADORIAN REGIONS

The usage of idioms can also be different depending on the region where the speakers come from and their background. If the speaker is related to agriculture, the highlands and labor work, he or she will use idioms according to his/her personal life and their cultural group.

The online journal Your Escape to Ecuador, divides the regions of Ecuador in the Pacific Coast, the Andes, the Amazon and the Galapagos.

2.10.1. PACIFIC COAST

The dialect used by people from the Pacific Coast is quite outstanding; people from lower social status tend to aspirate the sound of the letter S when

preceded by another consonant or at the end of a word. Another feature is also the accent typical of people from the largest city in the Coastal Region: Guayaquil. They also tend to aspirate the letter 's' and people from higher social status tend to correct and opt for a more standardized Spanish. Another important feature of this region is the way people from rural areas speak, they are called Montubios and have developed new words derived from their economic activity which is farming, some Montubios who get education tend to speak similar to people from Guayaquil, while others do not pronounce the 's' at all when speaking.

2.10.2. ANDES

People from this region speak a Spanish that is very different from the other regions, they use a lot of idioms and they speak in a way that might be similar to singing. The sound 'r' is often dragged and they use many idioms and words borrowed from the Native languages such as Quichua. Voseo, which is the usage of informal 'you' for the Second Person Singular, is also used by people from the Andes region but only in informal conversations among friends and close relatives.

2.10.3. AMAZON

Dialects from the Amazonian region are similar to the ones in the Andes region, the usage of words borrowed from Native languages is less noticeable.

2.10.4. GALAPAGOS

Due to migration and tourism issues, the dialect of people from Galapagos is quite similar to that of people from Guayaquil. Thanks to the huge amount of foreign visitors, Galapagos inhabitants use a lot of words borrowed from other languages and there is an obvious influence of English in their speech.

2.11. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

While rendering a translation, the translator will notice that certain units will be easier and faster to translate than others. Among the difficult units are usually idioms and culturally bound words and for a long time, have been a

broad field of study for translators around the world, trying to decode and properly change such meanings into the codes of the Target Text without any loss.

As Newmark explained in 1988, in translating idiomatic into idiomatic languages, it is particularly difficult to match equivalence of meaning with equivalence of frequency. In many cases, the translator will find that there is no equivalence of idioms in the target language that matches the meaning conveyed in the source language.

English has an enormous amount of idioms used from formal to vulgar register, by all sorts of social classes and both educated and uneducated individuals. Idioms are found in literature, songs, movies, formal speeches and even the Bible.

When a translator sets to translate a piece of paper containing idioms, he or she may face the following problems:

1. No equivalent for a very specific and culturally bound idiom
2. Recognize an idiom within the complete paper

Those, together with the challenge of recognizing and interpreting an idiom and complying with the correct and exact same intended message will lead to confused translators who in many cases lack the ability to recognize idioms on the first place.

Due to the amazingness of language in many cases idioms can have a literal meaning in other languages but not the same message used in the source language. Some languages may have a single word for a five word idiom. Idioms can also change connotations regarding context, so when a translator finds the counterpart for an idiom in the source language, maybe the context refers to another interpretation of the idiom.

Despite the fact that all known languages do have idioms, some idioms may use cultural references, strictly linked to their own culture, which may leave no counterpart in other languages with other cultures.

2.12. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

A survey is presented in order to analyze the different features of the translation of Idioms, the frequency of idioms in translations, the techniques used to translate idioms, translations that will result in loss or misunderstandings and the needs of Ecuadorian translators in order to render translations. The survey was presented online to several forums of translators as well as directly to Ecuadorian translators.

An observation chart of the survey answers and statistics is presented in order to analyze each question and the percentage of the answers within the group.

A chart by Langlotz was used to analyze the semiotic features of idioms.

3. FINDINGS

How to translate an idiom depends mainly on the client's purpose, whether the text should be translated literally or communicatively will give translators the option to look for the most suitable equivalent.

When attempting to translate a new document containing idioms, the first thing that a translator needs to find an idiom in the target language with the same words of the original idiom in the source language. Finding a direct equivalent with the same words will be accurate, but it does not usually happen.

If a direct counterpart was not found, look for an idiom with different words but similar structure and that conveys the same message as the original idiom of the source language.

When the two previous options did not work, the last option, and the most common one, is to find an idiom that has different words, different structure and perhaps a different meaning and add an explanation so as to complete the idea and avoid any possible loss.

Newark (1988) argues that in most texts, the translator needs to make sure that his or her translation actually makes sense, since sometimes maybe translating an idiom literally will not be understood. He also adds that the idiom needs to be read naturally written in ordinary language complying with the context and using the common grammar, idioms and vocabulary that meet the

situation, which explains the usage of idioms in the target language, so as not to lose the original format and the innate language structure.

The translation of an idiom can vary depending on a number of situations such as the author of the text, the topic, the register, the purpose of the text or the existence of equivalents.

Translators who find a counterpart for idiomatic expressions tend to find idioms and figures of speech in the target language that match the source language but not necessarily follow the word order or comply with the original word level.

There are several things and factors that a translator must take into account when translating an idiom, such as whether the term already exists in the target language, whether the lexical items of the idioms were previously or will be used in the source language and if it is suitable to use an idiom regarding the style and register of the given text.

Baker (1992, pp. 72/77) has presented four strategies to efficiently translate idioms.

1.- Using an idiom of similar meaning and form

This strategy consists of using an idiom in the target language with exactly the same meaning and equivalent lexical items in the target language. One example of this is the English idiom "A rebel without a cause", which can be translated to Spanish as "Rebelde sin causa". The idiom in both languages has the same meaning and form.

2.- Using an idiom similar of meaning but dissimilar form

In many cases, idioms that have the same meaning in both languages but different lexical items are found. The English idiom "To get ones foot on the door", is a counterpart to the Spanish expression "Abrirsepaso."Despite the lexical differences, the two expressions convey the same intended message and convey the same register.

3.- Translation by paraphrase

Translation by paraphrase is the path most translators take when the context does not allow adding an idiomatic expression. It is used when the counterpart cannot be found. "A low profile," and "Tratar de pasar desapercibido" can be an example of paraphrasing in idioms.

4.- Translation by omission

When all the previously mentioned strategies did not seem to work for the requirements of the document, no counterpart has been found and there is no match in the target language, translators may opt that the idiomatic expression be omitted from the text.

The translation of idioms has been studied for many years and literal translation is usually the worst strategy to be considered. Newmark (1981, p.125) points that translating idioms word for word is not a suitable option. Larson (1984, p. 142) explains "the same translation principles apply for idioms as for other figures of speech. Sometimes it will be necessary to translate with a nonfigurative expression, but sometimes a good receptor language idiom may be used. And there will often be words in the source language which are not idioms, but are best translated with an idiom." He mentioned that translating idioms literally will result in loss and misunderstanding for the Target Language reader.

Langlotz (2006, p.3) used a chart to summarize the semiotic features of idioms.

SEMIOTIC DIMENSION	FEATURE	TERM
GRAMMATICAL	Degree of conventionalization or familiarity	Institutionalization
STATUS	Formal complexity of construction: multi-word unit	Compositeness
FORM	Lexicogrammatical behavior: restricted syntactic, morphosyntactic and lexical variability	Frozenness
MEANING	Meaning cannot be	Non-compositionality

	derived from constituent words but is extended/figurative	

<div align="right">Langlotz (2006)</div>

The grammatical dimension comprises the idioms used by and specific group coming to use into society to later be acquired by bigger audiences and be part of dictionaries.

The status of idioms describes the fact that they usually are formed by more than one word to convey meaning.

The form of idioms is usually frozen due to the fact that by changing one word only, the meaning of the idiom can either completely change or make no sense within the sentence in the target language.

The meaning dimension of idioms explains the fact that the meaning of idioms goes beyond the word level, it is a figurative language which means that there needs to be a context and probably even a background to understand the meaning of idioms.

A survey was conducted in order to analyze and identify the different usages and existence of idioms in Ecuadorian material and what Ecuadorian translators think will be useful in order to improve the effectiveness of their translation of idioms.

Question #1
How often do you find idioms in translations?

How often do you find idioms in translations? (143 respostas)
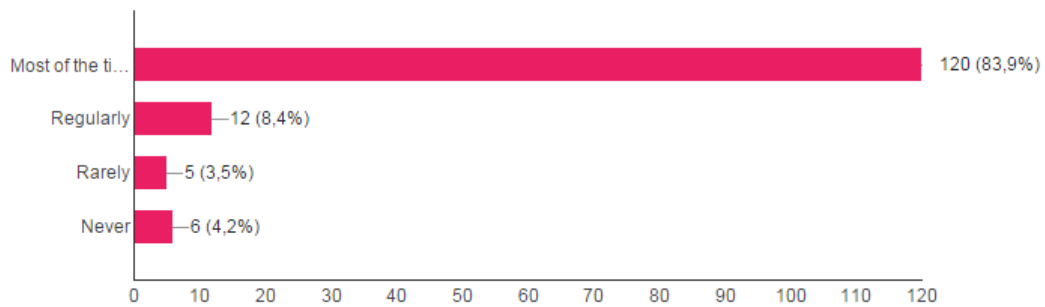
Out of 143 answers, 120 translators answered that they find idioms most of the times. 12 translators answered that they regularly find idioms in translations. 5 translators answered that they rarely find idioms in translations and 6 translators answered that they never find idioms in translations.

This proves the importance of being able to identify, understand, be familiar with and chose the best options to translate idioms, since in most of the Ecuadorian translations idioms will be common and easy to find. If a translator is not aware of the different idioms in the Source Language, he or she will not be able to identify the idiom and will therefore cause a loss in the translated document.

Question #2

From your experience, what is the best technique to translate idioms?

From your experience, what is the best technique to translate idioms?
(143 respostas)
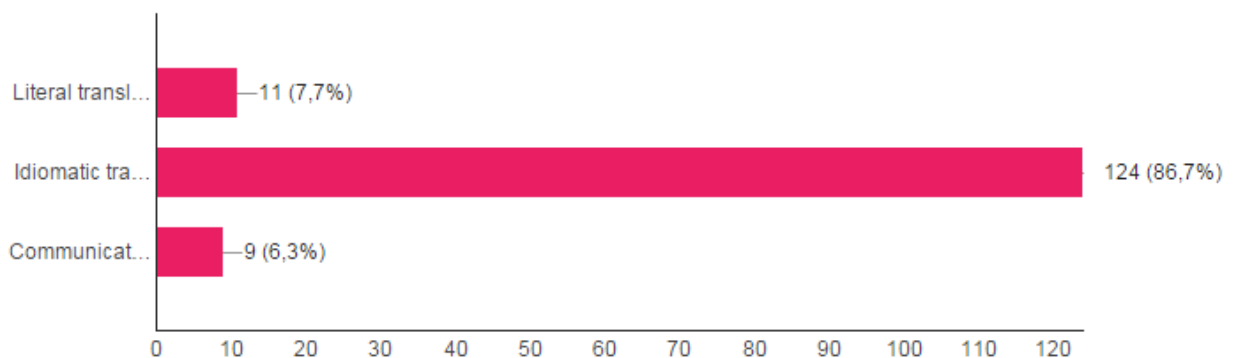
Out of 143 answers, 124 translators found Idiomatic Translation the most appropriate technique to translate idioms.

In an idiomatic translation, the translator brings the Source Text idioms into a contemporary expression in the Target Text. In order to do so, translators need to identify the idiomatic expression in the Source Text and find the equivalent of such expression in the same register in the Target Text.

By choosing an idiomatic translation, the translator will have to look for a counterpart of the idiom found in the Source Language in the Target Language.

Question #3

When translating idioms, which of the following options do you think will lead to loss or misunderstandings?

When translating idioms, which of the following options do you think will lead to loss or misunderstandings?
(143 respostas)
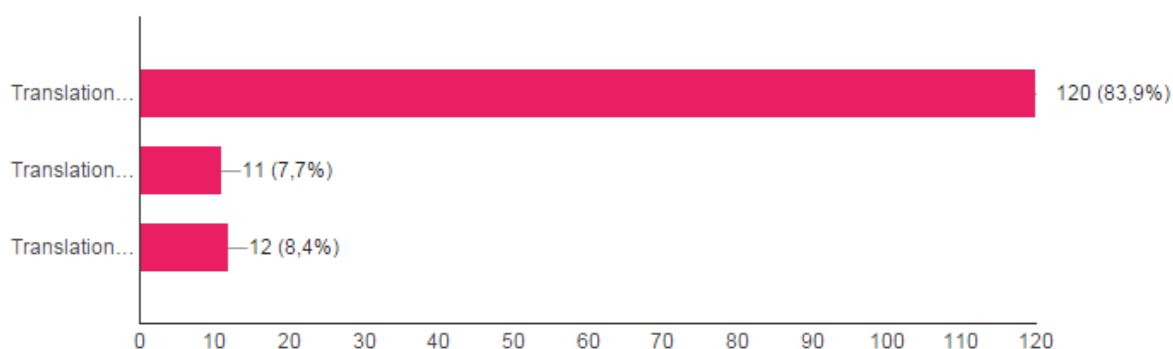
Out of 143 answers, 120 translators think that to translate an idiom from the Source Text into a non-idiomatic expression in the Target Text will lead to loss or misunderstandings.

Idioms are usually culturally bound words and their meaning varies depending not only on the language but also the country, the region, the culture and the economic activity of the population, using a non-idiomatic expression in the target text will leave the Target audience who is not familiar with the Source language or culture confused and they will not understand the intended message.

For the Target Audience to understand the message intended to send by the author, the register also has to be clear and consistent. If idioms are omitted or not translated, the Target Audience will miss an important part of the text.

Question #4

What do you think will be useful for the Ecuadorean community of translators regarding the usage of idioms and idiomatic expressions?

What do you think will be useful for the Ecuadorean community of translators regarding the usage of idioms and idiomatic expressions?
(143 respostas)
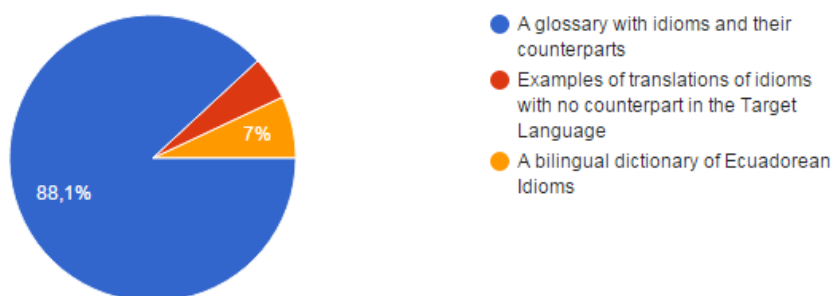
Out of 143 answers, 126 translators found useful a glossary with idioms in the Source language and their counterparts in the Target language.

When translating any document with idioms, translators will use a glossary to save time and look directly for idioms when in doubt and use an appropriate counterpart. A glossary will also be useful for translators who do not know all the Ecuadorian idioms, if they find a term that is not clear or understood and that sounds informal, the grammatical rules are not followed and it qualifies as an idiom, the translator can easily check for the meaning or counterpart of the idiom.

As in language, the culture of the speaker will always be present, idioms are an important phenomenon and they even represent the essence of language. Idioms play an important role in the communication of people of all ages since they are created in the daily life of people and they relate to many things, from education to food.

Idioms are independent and fixed expressions and since they come from different allusions we must take them as a whole in order to translate them and the context must also be clearly identified. Therefore, idioms cannot be taken apart.

The results of this study suggest that even if idioms can be identified as a difficult task by translators, they do not represent a major problem in terms of whether their meaning can actually be translated or not because the meaning of idioms in the Source Text can always be transmitted to the Target Text by some means.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

The translation of idioms needs extensive research and knowledge of both, the source and the target language. For a translation to be readable there needs to be an understanding of the cultural features of the languages, the different meanings an idiom can have and the meaning of an idioms when spoken by someone from a different region.

Quechua words are commonly used by a significant number of the population, both young and the elderly.

The way Ecuadorians speak varies according to social status and the idioms they use depend on their economic activity, among other features of their lifestyle. As in the case of people from the highlands who will use words related to agronomy and farming since they know the vocabulary and everyone who is part of this particular speech community has a previously shared context of expressions and terms related to it. On the other hand, people from the Coastal region are likely to use words related to fishing.

When rendering a translation, translators must be able to determine whether a term is said by a person from the Coastal, Andes or Amazon region in order to identify the meaning because among Ecuadorians, a word can have two meanings from someone in the Coastal region but that word might mean something different to someone from the Andes region.

'Cachos' is a slang that has two meanings, while to people from the Coastal region, 'cachos' are related to someone who has been cheated on, highlanders use 'cachos' as a synonym to the word 'jokes'.

In order to correctly identify the meaning of a term, the translator must first determine the social status and place of origin of the speaker and from that determine the meaning of the term and find the equivalent for it in the Target Language.

Idioms and idiomatic expressions will always be transmitted by some means, depending on cases where a particular strategy needs to be used in order to render such translation.

Because normally the meaning of an idiom will depend on many factors such as the context, the place, the speaker, etc, the Source Text idiom is not very likely to have a corresponding idiom in the Target Text, and therefore there does not seem to be a 'perfect strategy'. The translator will have to analyze the client's needs, the type of text, the register, etc, so as not to render a translation that will not be understood by the Target audience.

When translating a text that contains idioms, the translator needs to be aware of the cultural and lexical features of the Source Text and the Target Text. If the translator opts to translate literally, the result would be a text that is not natural and the Target Text speakers will not understand the desired meaning.

The translator also needs to be familiar with and understand idioms in both the Source and the Target Languages and they need to be able to recognize them within a text, as Gottlieb suggests, '*an idioms is difficult to decode correctly for someone who only knows normal meanings of its constituent elements'* (1977, p.260).

When a translator has a prior knowledge of a particular culture, the meaning of an idiom can be recognized, especially those idioms that do not have a literal meaning and can be simply understood because they demand translators to be sensitive to any possible hidden features of language.

Several strategies have been used for the translation of idioms and a translator, after identifying the purpose of the translation, will choose the best option bearing in mind that no meaning should be omitted.

4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Once a translator identifies and interprets an idiom correctly, he or she needs to decide how to transfer the meaning of such expression into the Target Language.

As idiomatic expressions may have a different meaning than that attached to each individual word that makes up the expressions, difficulties are common in the process of translating idioms. A translator must have a proper command of idioms and needs to identify them and their hidden meaning within a text.

Translators need to identify the purpose of the text and the client's needs in order to choose the best strategy or translation technique to translate an idiom. Before opting for a Literal Translation, translators must be aware of all the possible techniques and the different strategies available that will lead to better results.

Translators also need to be aware of the culture, religion, historical background and main features of the Source Text and the Target Text to render a translation that will not be misunderstood by the Target Audience due to a possible lack of knowledge of terms.

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6. APPENDIX

6.1GLOSSARY ECUADORIAN IDIOMS

The following glossary divides the most frequently used Ecuadorean idioms by alphabetical order. Each idiom is also classified according to the place where used: The Pacific Coast **(PC)**, Andes **(AD)**, Amazon **(AM)** or Galapagos **(GP).**

Achachai   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

Very cold conditions

Acolitar   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   ✓ GP✓

To help others, give support for something

Agachaditos   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

Food from street vendors

Amiguero   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

Friendly, person who makes friends easily

Aniñado   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

Wealthy person, usually someone from a fancy neighborhood

Arrecho   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

To be feeling frustrated, energetic or horny.

B

Bacan   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP

Something nice, cool

Batracear   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

To mock someone

Biela   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP✓

Beer

Buitre   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP ✓

Traffic Officer

Buena carne   PC   AD ✓ AM   GP

Used to describe someone you're attracted to

C

Chancleta   PC ✓ AD   AM ✓ GP

Flip flop or sandals

Cabrearse   PC✓AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

To get mad

Cachar   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

To understand something

Caleta   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

House

Chiva   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

Party bus

Coco   PC ✓ AD ✓AM ✓ GP✓

Term used to refer to a person who is a virgin

Chuchaqui   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP

To suffer a hangover

Camellar   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

To work

Camarón   PC ✓AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

Bad driver, person who is just beginning to learn to drive

Canguil   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

Informal way to refer to popcorn

Cargoso   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

Someone who jokes and tends to be annoying

Chichis   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

Term to refer to boobs

Cholo   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

Used to refer to tacky people

Chompa   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP✓

Sweater

Choro   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP

People who steal; thieves

Chullo   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

Only one when there were supposed to be two, lacking one

Chumado   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

To be drunk

Chuta   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP✓

Expression when feeling frustrated

Cojudo   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP✓

A person who is stupid or silly

D

De una   PC   AD ✓ AM   GP

Absolutely, for sure

Doña   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

Polite way to address women

E

Embalado   PC ✓   AD   AM   GP✓

Someone super excited

Engrupirse   PC ✓   AD   AM   GP✓

Term used to describe a person who's fallen in love

Estar chiro   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP✓

To have no money

F

Finde   PC ✓AD ✓ AM   GP

Weekend

Farra   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

A party

Farrear   PC ✓   AD   AM   GP✓

To go out to party

G

Guagua   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

A young baby

Guambra   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

A kid

Guayaco   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

Person from Guayaquil

L

Lámpara   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

Sketchy situation or place

La yoni   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP

The United States

Liguista   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

Soccer fan of theteam Liga Deportiva universitaria de Quito

M

Man   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM   GP✓

Used to refer to people among friends, 'La man' is the feminine and 'El man' is the masculine

Mande   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP
Polite way to ask for a command

Mentira   PC ✓AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓
Expression used to show disbelief

Mi llave   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP
Informal term used to refer to friends

Mono   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP
Coastal person

Ñ

Ñaño/a   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓
Brother or close friend

O

O sea   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓
Used to join thoughts together

P

Pana   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

Buddy, close friend

Pelada/o   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP

Girlfriend or boyfriend

Pelucon   PC ✓ AD ✓AM ✓ GP✓

Person who has a lot of money

Ponerse once   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

To pay attention or be alert

Poner los cachos   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

To cheat on their partners

PoliciaAcostado   PC   AD ✓ AM ✓ GP

Speed bumps on streets

S

Señora   PC ✓ AD ✓ AM ✓ GP✓

Married woman

Señorita   PC ✓AD ✓AM ✓ GP✓

Single woman

Ser codo/ tacaño   PC ✓ AD ✓AM ✓ GP✓

Miserly person

Serrano   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

Person who lives in the mountains, highlander

Simón   PC   AD ✓AM ✓ GP

Informal affirmation

Soroche   PC ✓ AD✓AM ✓ GP

Altitude sickness

T

Taita   PC   AD ✓AM ✓ GP

Dad, father

Timbrame   PC ✓AD   AM   GP✓

To call someone, set off ringtone of a friend

Tirar los perros   PC ✓AD   AM   GP✓

Seduce someone

U

Un arreglo   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓

A sweet deal

V

Vacilar   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓
To hook up with someone

Verás   PC   AD ✓AM ✓GP
Warning

Y

Ya no jalar   PC   AD ✓ AM✓ GP
Tobe tired

Yasabe   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓
An informal way to say you already know or are aware of something

Z

Zancudos   PC ✓ AD   AM   GP✓
Mosquitoes

6.2 SURVEY

Translation of Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions

Survey for the analysis of Translation of Idioms beyond Word Level

How often do you find idioms in translations?

o ☐ Most of the times
o ☐ Regularly
o ☐ Rarely
o ☐ Never

From your experience, what is the best technique to translate idioms?

o ☐ Literal translation
o ☐ Idiomatictranslation
o ☐ Communicativetranslation

When translating idioms, which of the following options do you think will lead to loss or misunderstandings?

o ☐ Translation by using non-idiomatic expressions
o ☐ Translation by usuing idiomatic expressions
o ☐ Translationbyparaphrasing

What do you think will be useful for the Ecuadorean community of translators regarding the usage of idioms and idiomatic expressions?

o ● A glossary with idioms and their counterparts
o ● Examples of translations of idioms with no counterpart in the Target Language
o ● A bilingualdictionary of EcuadoreanIdioms

DECLARACIÓN Y AUTORIZACIÓN

Yo, Yela Gudiño Daniela Eliud, con C.C: # 0950700609 autor/a del trabajo de titulación: Study of the Translation of Ecuadorian Idioms and their Equivalence beyond Word Level previo a la obtención del título de **LICENCIADA EN LENGUA INGLESA CON MENCIÓN EN TRADUCCIÓN BILINGUE** en la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil.

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RESUMEN/ABSTRACT (150-250 palabras):

As a result of their openness to international markets, more and more Ecuadorian writers, singers, songwriters, film makers and authors in general seek for the help of a translator before going to international audiences.

An incredibly challenging issue for translators is to render the translation of all sorts of culturally bound words. When it comes to idioms, translators must determine whether there exists an equivalent for the intended message in the target text.

The following paper studies the different strategies used to translate idioms and when to use them within the needs of the customer. However, usually it is merely the translators' decision to choose the best and most suitable way to convey meaning, even if it implies translating a phrase beyond word level.

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