Discrepancies of Figurative Language Use Reflected Through Cross-Linguistic and Intercultural Differences in English and Albanian Language

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Abstract

The present paper aims at highlighting some cultural and cross-linguistic aspects of idioms causing miscommunication in language. Learning a foreign language shapes the language system of communication with its literal and figurative meanings. While the literal meaning is the direct reference of words or sentences to objects, the figurative sense is used for giving an imaginative description or a special effect. Gaining competence in language enrolls a good command of the figurative use of that language together with its frequent, spontaneous and appropriate use of idioms being an indicator of native or near native mastery of the language. When such command of a foreign language lacks then it gives rise to discrepancies in language, and idioms for the sake of truth become often subject to misconstrued utterances in a target language on the part of L2 learners. Using literal senses of words to trigger the recognition of idioms brings some potential problems. Thus, this article brings together the findings and insights of figurative aspect of English and Albanian language system and its cultural aspect to further the understanding of the phenomena of communicative failures and mismatches in language. The study seeks to analyze and present through a corpus analysis idiom occurrences of communication failure in both languages. A variety of figurative use of language is illustrated in certain contexts and situations to lighten up the usage of idiom mismatches in second language acquisition and provide the paper with rich examples as well.

Keywords: cross-linguistic, intercultural, discrepancies, idiom, communication, English, Albanian language

Introduction

Theoretical background

The issue of communication has recently become an important means of building up relations between language, culture, human beings and the mixed interrelation

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between them. The inextricable connection highlights various manifestations of conventionalized language including the idiomatic expressions as one of the important and pervasive language uses reflecting culture in real life.

Peterson and Coltrane (2003) emphasize that to achieve desired communication, culturally appropriate language use appear to be a must. In other words, knowledge of linguistic features is not adequate for successful intercultural communication (Scarino, 2010). This knowledge, in fact, must be supported by an awareness of sociocultural context, tendencies, conventions, and norms in which the communication takes place (Baker, 2012). Culture as a body of knowledge of common beliefs, behaviors and values appear to be the factor to establish and interpret meaning in both verbal and nonverbal language. Alptekin (2002) explains this conceptualizing process as the enculturation of the foreign language learner and states: " Learners are not only expected to acquire accurate forms of the target language, but also to learn how to use these forms in given social situations in the target language setting to convey appropriate, coherent and strategically- effective meanings for the native speaker'. Thus learning a new language becomes a kind of enculturation, where one acquires new cultural frames of reference and a new world view, reflecting those of the target language culture and its speakers." (2002, p.58) The cloze relation between language, culture and the role of culture in language are crucial issues which have not been studied even before.

On the other hand Min (2007) categorizes culture in English under two phenomena; high culture, and anthropological culture. The first underlines the intellectual and artistic achievements; the second refers to any of the customs, worldviews, languages, and conventions that make some people distinct from other social group. Culture, accordingly, encompasses three aspects, that is, material culture, social (institutional) culture and ideological culture. Language, as a special product of human society and an instrument of human thinking and communication, is a kind of institutional culture. Given the intermingled relationship between language and culture, the analysis of the ideological ground enriches the analysis of linguistic forms which show the language forms. In Peterson and Coltrane (2003, cited in Al-Issa, 2005) state that language and culture are interwoven and the students" success in achieving higher level of oral proficiency in target language relies on the consideration of culture in designing and developing course materials.

Research findings show that formulaic language comprises up to one half of language. In the traditional view, idioms, "notoriously difficult" (Celce-Murcia& Larsen-Freeman, 1999) are considered special multiwords, and merely a matter of linguistic device with a special meaning and have certain syntactic properties. However, Kovecses (2002, p. 201) suggests that in contrast to traditional view, an idiom is not merely an extraordinary and somewhat complicated utterance of meaning which is special and hard to understand and requires deep linguistic knowledge, but many of

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them arises from our conceptual understanding comes from human's conceptual system which is natural and not subtle.

As figurative language such as idioms, metaphors, and metonymies is pervasive in real life as a part of the culture, then language learners will be certainly encountered and exposed with idiomatic expressions as a part of language learning and they should attempt to build up their knowledge of idioms if they want to survive in real communication settings. (Boers et al., 2004, p.376) Idioms in particular are widely recognized to be a stumbling block (Buckingham, 2006) in the acquisition of a foreign language; though they are often recognized as incongruous, occasionally ungrammatical and difficult to figure out and resistant to translation for language learners and their contribution to communicative competence and intercultural awareness is both theoretically and empirically acknowledged (Boers et al, 2004; Kovecses& Szabo, 1996; Lin, 2012; Littlemore& Low 2006; Martinez & Schmitt, 2012). More than the Albanian language English is full of idiomatic expressions, hence learning these idioms constitutes the spirit of language and idioms have a considerable role in an L2. This does not necessarily imply that Albanian is a poor language regarding this aspect, but based in a comparative analysis of both of them English language level of idiomaticity gives it the unique and undisputable value of importance in speech and written language as well.

Culture and language

Culture and language are means of collective co-existence and social practice kept in the memory of the society that is created by the people during the centuries. Cultural awareness helps people to become more understanding and tolerant of behaviors which are different from their own. Acquiring another language need not only linguistic competence but cultural awareness as well. Difference between cultures cause some misunderstandings in the interactive communications. The native speaker's vocabulary focuses on cultural and social factors while the non-native one neglect to consider such factors because of the lack of cultural and moral beliefs of that nation. There is a difference between the native and the non-native speaker's focus in an oral discussion. The native speaker puts into his language his mentality, culture, world vision in a cross-cultural dialogue and the non-native speaker receives that vision.

The indispensable condition of realization of any communication is that a speaker and a listener should have a mutual knowledge of realities or the background knowledge as a basis of a language interaction to understand each other. A "Language world picture" gives a non-native speaker the opportunity to realize the implicit meaning of the vocabulary through explicit meaning, to understand accumulated unconscious cultural information via background knowledge, to investigate cultural values via communicative process, to synthesize interrelation and interaction of the culture and the language.

Idioms are considered as the reflection of the national specificity of the people, the origin of which in many cases is difficult to ascertain. They give a figurative interpretation of reality and an emotional model of communication. They are strong and colorful examples of cross-cultural relations. The problem of misunderstanding and confusion comes when a non-native speaker tries to translate an idiom or collocation from his native language into English. Since idioms evaluate the whole narrative summarizing the main events or opinion, a native speakers' unconscious knowledge of collocation is an essential component of their idiomatic and fluent language use and is, therefore, an important part of their communicative competence. Knowing culture, literature, history, traditions of other nationalities equips oneself with the proper language competence easying the communication with a native speaker adequately. According to L. Prodromou (2003, 42) "what is striking about informal uses of language is not only how common the idiom principle is, but just how common creativity with idioms is among native-speakers".

Misunderstandings arise in language based on the fact that language is characterized by the fascinating aspect of figurative language where the meaning cannot be discovered by parsing out these non-literal expressions of speech word-by-word. The meaning is contextual, rather than literal, and we must examine culture in order to discover what these expressions mean. As a result of these the idiom "*kick the bucket*" may cause a lot of discrepancies in Albanian if the non-native speaker does not know the relation between the meaning and the idiom. In Albanian we show the meaning of this expression by using the expression "*ktheu këmbët/patkonjtë nga dielli*", "*iu fik kandili/qiriri*", "*mbylli sytë*", "*ndërroi jetë*", "*iu shua / fik jeta*" etc. Structural components of this expression "*këmbë*" (foot) and "*diell*" (sun) are semantically different from the English components "*kick*" and "*bucket*", an expression that might cause misunderstanding in Albanian (or in any other language as well). The idiom "*It's raining cats and dogs*," which means it is raining hard, the expression is not literal, but rather conveys an idea through an image. In Albanian the same concept is expressed by using other structural and semantically different components "*bie shi me gjyma*". Or idioms "*pay through the nose*" (paguaj shtrenjtë); "*penny wise (and) pound foolish*" (i lire në miell, i shtrenjtë në krunde); "*dog in the manger*" (egoist); "*cast pearls before swine*" (ku di dhia ç'është tagjia); "*go at it hammer and tongs*" (zihen, grinden me të madhe); "*hate sb's guts*" (urrej për vdekje, kam antipati të thellë për) etc. We can give a lot of examples like this to justify that English is a highly idiomatic language and the cases for causing discrepancies in communication are great, since languages use different conceptual metaphors and structural components and the meaning is also conveyed through different linguistic tools. A corpus analyses in both languages is presented below based in an empirical study of idioms.

The origin of idiomatic expressions in both languages varies from history, mythology, folk and traditions to literature, sports, agriculture, medicine, science and technology. The immense variety of sources of idioms shapes language peculiarities of each language. In the examination of language universals, figurative speech plays an

important role. This is because universal or near-universal ideas, while conveying the same idea across languages, use varying expressions of speech to do so. As Kövesces (2010) shows in his article "Metaphor, Language, and Culture," three main views explain near-universal metaphors. First, near-universal metaphors could be a miracle with no logical reason behind them. Perhaps similar concepts arose in different languages by chance, and the study of near-universal metaphors will lead to no conclusive explanation. Second, near-universal metaphors could exist due to languages borrowing words from each other in the past. This is a logical idea, as the existence of the thousands of languages in the world today can be mapped as having descended from common languages. Lastly is the view that people in all cultures share a universal bias for certain metaphors. This view is based on the idea that people in all cultures share elementary human experiences and that these common experiences create universal meaning.

Culture expresses meaning through a variety of ways such as art, dance, music, ceremonies, names, and narratives. Language expresses meaning through the words that give verbalization to the experiences that humans share. According to Han S. J. Verneer, language is an intrinsic part of culture. Language not only preserves and transmits culture, but it is also a vessel of cultural change (Liu, Yin, & Zhang, 2014). Without the use of language to convey meaning and transmit ideas, cultural changes would be limited to non-linguistic ideas. Because a culture without language is not true reality, cultural studies should be closely tied with language studies. L2 learner shows that language is composed of more than linguistics; language requires cultural understanding in order to speak and comprehend the meaning of the language (Byram, 2012).

In the study of the connection between language and culture, one of the main theories is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis—also called the theory of linguistic relativity. Sapir (1929) summarizes the ideas of the hypothesis: "Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society" (p. 207). Sapir argues that language has great control over a society and the people within it. This view also signifies that language is a tool to direct speakers' attention to specific attributes of the real world.

Cross-cultural differences and translation relationship in language interpretation

Considering the relationship between culture and language in language learning, it can be said that culture has its own language - our culture by all means of social activities speaks. By using this tool, people can have ideas about how the environment under the impact of culture is expressed, interpreted, and spoken. As founders of language Vereshagn and Kastamarov (1990), in their book title "Language and culture," argued that though people speak a common language, they may not properly

understand each other due to intercultural differences. Since language has a social nature the main function of language is its instrumental role in communication between individuals. Culture not only reflects the real world around humans and their living conditions, but a nation's social consciousness means thinking, lifestyle, traditions, value systems, and world views. Ter-Minasova (2000) states that language as a coating material for culture, in vocabulary, grammar rules, idioms, proverbs and interpretation, folklore, literature, science, in written and oral discourse, cultural values are maintained.

According to Bruner (1990, 29) a human being is related to culture by the system of values, which "inhere in commitment to "ways of life", and ways of life in their complex interaction constitute a culture". For Boas (1986) there is no direct relation between language and culture - the former is 'modeled' by the latter; culture defines the way of thinking by members of the community – it may require some abstract thinking from them – generalized terms appear in the language, as a result of that demand. Then, there is a direct relation between culture and thinking, as well as between thinking and language, whereas culture and language are indirectly connected.

The link between an idiom and its meaning is provided by the image and conceptual metaphors known as image-schematic structure and basic-level structure. To predict the meaning of an idiom one should find motivating links which consist of images and metaphors as previously said. In case this link can be traced idioms become subject to processing and easier for guessing. If one knows the background reasoning of a word or idiom he can hypothesize about its meaning, including the figurative one as in the examples *to win sb's hand, be all thumbs, to fall on one's feet.* Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen (2005, 141) argue that the comprehension of an idiom is based on backward reasoning rather than conceptual mapping. In other language the idiom "*to keep someone at arm's* (that is you keep a safe distance away from them) may mean quite the opposite: "to be available, to be at someone's disposal'. The expression *red tape* in English has the Albanian equivalent "formalitete (proçedura) administrative". As it is seen there is no relationship between the color 'red' and 'collar' and the paraphrased meaning in Albanian is rather given by a non-idiomatic expression.

Based on the above examples it can be concluded that the words can be conceptually equivalent completely, but in terms of schematic knowledge, they may not be entirely equivalent. Words with no equivalent throughout foreign language learning can cause many problems. Because it implies that the concepts in a language and culture may not exist in another. Thus, words with no equivalent of the former reflect the underlying characteristics of each nation's culture. Various thoughts on understanding various nations and nationalities come from different ways of thinking and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, their understanding of abstract equivalents and methods can vary as well. Finding two words in two distinct languages that have the same meanings are very rare. Thus, as result idiomatic language is a cause for a lot of

discrepancies when translating or communicating from one language to another. Based on the fact that figurative language reflect a nation's spirit it is clear that it's geographical, literature, spiritual, moral beliefs and traditions are reflected in the language.

Cultural knowledge and differences have represented a major focus of translation scholars. It is frequently difficult for a translator to match or give and equivalency of idioms from one language to another. It has become the issue of many researchers adopting the appropriate ways and methods of conducting the right meaning. The definitions of translation appearing in the 1960s-1970s cover some guidelines: first, there is a change of expression from one language to another one. Second, most of the theorists are for the primacy of rendering the message and its meaning in the target culture. Third, the translator is obliged to find the closest equivalent in the target language. T. Vianu (cited in Kohn 1983:106) says that a good translation stands for the product of delicate equilibrium between what is national and what is foreigner, between the ways in which both source and target languages express themselves. Micaela Muñoz-Calvo, from the University of Zaraoza, Spain, affirms that translators need "cultural literacy, communicative language competences and cross-cultural competencies as well" (2010:2-3), because they must interpret "socio-cultural meaning in cross-cultural encounters, contributing to the transfer of knowledge across cultures and to cultural development as well". There are many 'culture-bound' terms, deeply rooted in culture, which the translator or a non-native speaker finds difficulties in dealing with. According to some researchers, areas of culture such as jobs, positions, professions, food, drink, baking are particular aspect of social life, which differentiate a community from another and are difficult to translate. For Santoyo sport, dances, musical and artistic terms are "specific areas of activity which correspond in the end to actions which are unique to a person or social group, subject to very specific place and time" (2010:15).

The process of translation is seen as means to perceive our own culture reported to the others' cultures. As the structuralists claim for, the use of language as a means for communication between people underlines its social function; each culture has its own language. As a result, Humboldt shows the fact that every community talk about their thought and ideas in reference to their own way of perceiving the universe, to their intellectual knowledge and experience. In other words, culture is the implicitness shared by a community.

Methodology

This paper aims at presenting the discrepancies of figurative language of English and Albanian idiomatic phrases through a corpus analysis of idioms in both languages. Data were collected from two English-Albanian dictionaries and one Albanian-Albanian dictionary and a considerable number of phrases form literary books in both languages were taken for analysis. Examples were selected according to the different syntactic and semantic structure noticed in either of the languages in dictionaries and

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the literary books. Dictionaries were studied by the semantic group under which the idiom falls as idioms with body parts, idioms with proper nouns typical of the culture of a certain language, idioms that come from customs and traditions, literature, fables, religious beliefs, the life of sea and seaman, idioms that come from sports and politics, etc. The figurative language from literary books was selected after a continuous and careful reading of the books to depict the figurative language used by authors.

Discussion of corpus analyses

Communication does not necessarily result in understanding. Cross-cultural communication continually involves misunderstanding caused by misperception, misinterpretation, and misevaluation. In approaching cross-cultural situations, one should therefore assume difference until similarity is proven. Culture strongly influences, and in many cases determines, our interpretations. Both the categories and the meanings we attach to them are based on our cultural background. Sources of cross-cultural misinterpretation include subconscious cultural "blinders," a lack of cultural self-awareness, projected similarity, and parochialism. In subconscious cultural "blinders," most interpretation goes on at a subconscious level, we lack awareness of the assumptions we make and their cultural basis. Our home culture reality never forces us to examine our assumptions or the extent to which they are culturally based, because we share our cultural assumptions with most other citizens of our country. All we know is that things do not work as smoothly or logically when we work outside our own culture as when we work with people more similar to ourselves. The figurative meaning of idioms offers less possibility for a non-native speaker to communicate and thus get understood in a language. Since we cannot sum up the meaning of the whole expression by the meaning of each constituent it creates a gap for getting lost in languages. Literary meaning of each component can result in language discrepancies and failure in communication.

Literary works, proverbs and idioms are a real and vivid source of illustrating idiom discrepancies in language. To accomplish the aim of this article we have provided several typical situations from some literary works both in English and Albanian.

He nodded, knowing it was true. And so John left their lives, for good. Ben had been with him almost every day of his life since he was rescued from the Institution.

Ben took it hard. At first he did not believe it. (Doris Lessing, The Fifth Child, p. 133)

*With characteristic insight he saw he must part with one or with the other; no half-measures could serve in such a situation. In that lay its tragedy. And the tiny, helpless thing prevailed. He would not **run with the hare and hunt with the hounds**, and so to his son he said good-bye.*

(J. Galsworthy, The Forsyte Saga, p. 22)

And here Jolly, having begun the day badly by introducing fizzy magnesia into Mademoiselle Beauce's new-laid egg, and gone on to worse, had been sent down (in the absence of his father)

to the ensuing dialogue:

"Now, my boy, you mustn't go on like this."

*"Well, she **boxed my ears**, Gran, so I only **boxed hers**, and then she **boxed mine** again."*
(J. Galsworthy, The Forsyte Saga, p. 325)

*In another moment, he stood as he had stood all the time – his usual stoop upon him; his pondering face addressed to Mr. Bounderby, with a curious expression on it, half shrewd, half perplexed, as if **his mind were set upon** unraveling something very difficult; his hat held tight in his left hand which rested in his lip; his right arm, with a rugged propriety and force of action, very earnestly emphasizing what he said; …..*

   (Charles Dickens, Hard Times, p. 80)

From the examples above *boxed my ears, ….. boxed hers, …… boxed mine* they can be confused if seen about of the context. For a non-native speaker sometimes even the context might represent problems. If taken only the last sentence alone without considering the context it is pretty sure that it might show problems of misunderstanding idioms even in one sentence. The proverb *run with the hare and hunt with the hounds* might be more common to the ear of the non-native speaker. The idiom *his mind were set upon* becomes more clear in the context since the reader might understand and catch the meaning from the context.

*Mbathën apingat e veshën zhgunet dhe u nisën prapë për udhë. Ec e ec, kapërcyen shumë male e shumë pllaja. Moti ishte i egër e i keq. U lodhën e u këputën e **u plasi shpirtin** kjo punë. As era, as dëbora nuk u tregonin ku gjendeshin ushtarët që kërkonin.*

(I. Kadare, Gjenerali i ushtrisë së vdekur, p.198)

*Ah, more Mina! Një gjë është kryesore. Sot njeriun e mbron nga rreziqet shoqëria. Kjo mbrojtje nuk është individuale, gabon rëndë. Doemos, individi **nuk duhet të rrijë duarkryq.** Po **qëndroi duarkryq**, nuk ka të drejtë, as guxim t'i kerkojë shoqërisë mbrojtje.*

(D. Agolli, Trëndaili në gotë, p. 273)

Idioms given above are illustrated in figurative contexts which makes easier for the foreigner to understand the expression better. The contexts provide vivid situation where the speaker might find himself more comfortable in understanding them based on the clues the context or situations provide.

A lot of idioms with semantic components body parts lead also to a lot of discrepancies in language. In the examples given below idioms have a semantic component with body parts but the equivalent in Albanian is in most of the cases

expressed with a different one compared to English. The idiom *frame of mind* "gjendje shpirtërore" in English we have the body part *mind* while in Albanian the equivalent is given with another component shpirtërore (used as adjective, shpirt (soul). If we would make an analysis of the idioms below *get the length of somebody's foot* "e njoh dhëmbë e dhëmballë" (foot – këmbë); *get the upper hand* "bëj zap" (the meaning is given with a non-body equivalemt), each one of them creates a different perception in guessing the meaning if the non-native speaker (in our case the Albanain) did not it before or is not provided in a certain context. Other examples to illustrate misunderstanding in both languages taken into consideration in this article are shown as below: *get under somebody's skin* "i ngre nervat"; *give one's ears* "sakrifikoj gjithçka"; *hang heavy (heavily) on one's hands* "mezi kalon (koha etj)"; *head and ears* "i mbytur në borxhe"; *jump down somebody's throat* "ndërpres në mënyrë të ashpër"; *keep a good heart* "e mbaj veten"; *keep a stiff upper lip* "nuk e lëshoj veten"; *lie in one's teeth (throat)* "gënjej sy për sy"; *pass one's lips* "fus në gojë", *get one's teeth into* "merrem (angazhohem) seriozisht".

Other than body-part idioms, a rich source of idioms in both languages there are other idiom origins too be considered. A typical example of them are idioms with proper nouns typical of the culture of a certain language, idioms that come from customs and traditions, literature, fables, religious beliefs, the life of sea and seaman, idioms that come from sports and politics, etc. Such sources of idioms are non-motivated and make the understanding of the Albanian speaker difficult to comprehend without knowing the history and traditions they have come from. In the examples below *before you can say Jack Robinson* "sa hap e mbyll sytë" the Albanian equivalent is not given with a proper name because it is very difficult in almost all the cases to find a typical example with the same semantic and structural components. The name *Jack Robinson* is approximate in meaning with the idiom "*sa hap e mbyll sytë*" the paraphrased meaning in English could be "as soon as you open and close your eyes" but we encounter an idom with Jack Robinson and not with the component "eye". Also in "*give sb. a Roland for an Oliver* "i përgjigjem me të njëjtën monedhë" the Albanian component lacks the proper name so the meaning cannot be inferred by the proper noun components Roland and Oliver; *castles in Spain/castles in the air – ëndrra me sy hapur; spitting image/chip off the old block – sikur e ka nxjerrë nga hundët (i ati /e ëma); Jack of all trades – ç'i sheh syri i bën dora* are typical examples of this case. The interpretation of the last idiom in Albanian might be Xheku që i bën të gjitha but in Albanian *Jack* is unknown and the equivalent exists with the components "sy" and "dorë" in the expression "ç'i sheh syri i bën dora". Taken from the other side we can provide in the article idioms with Albanian proper names the meaning of which can be paraphrased in English and could not be given with a synonymous since it is an idiom which originates from the Albanian social conditions, cultural and moral beliefs. In most of the cases it is difficult to explain the origin of such idioms since they might have been created based on a situation or social event of the time and has not left traces in the history to get an explanation. These are highly non-motivated idioms

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which a non-native or an English speaker cannot understand and might lead to cases of misinterpretation as well. Typical examples are: *si Xhaferri simiten, si ferra Ibrahim, si Kolja me Deden*; idioms with place names: *për një fërgesë në Shalës, rrip i kuq i Korçës, për një kockë gjer në Polos.* In English: *meet one's Waterloo, paint the Fourth Bridge, pile/heap Pelion on Ossa, send someone to Coventry, built castles in Spain, carry/take coals to Newcastle, fiddle while Rome burns,* etc.

In English and Albanian are also evident phrases with synonymous component parts which according to the Albanian linguist A. Jashari lexical diversity become more evident when verbal components are framed according to the level of the action intensity as in examples "*e karfosi me shpatulla për muri*" instead of the verb "*karfos*" (put) where the intensity of the action is higher than in the verbs "*mbërthen, vë*". We can give similar examples with a synonymous noun component *"i dha udhët"* or *"i dha rrugët/duart"; "ngre kryet" – "ngre kokën"; "kruan dhëmbin" – "kruan thonjtë"* etc. In English *find one's tongue - find one's voice; fold one's arms - fold one's hands; get out of one's mind/head; lick one's chops – lick one's lips; cut to the soul- cut to the heart; drenched to the bone - drenched to the skin etc.*

On the other hand some figurative expressions in both languages leave speakers and foreign users of language to grasp the meaning of the idiom in cases when they are partly or totally motivated. Such idioms are those originating from bible, mythology, literature, sciences, sports and other fields of life. Totally motivated idioms: The idiom *the Achilles heel* is translated the same in Albanian "*thembra e Akilit*"; Pandora's box "*kutia e Pandorës*"; a doubting Thomas "*si shën Thomai mosbesues*"; many are called, but few are chosen "*shumë të thirrur pak të zgjedhur; hatred stirreth up strife "urrejtja shkakton grindje; to bury one's talent "gropos talentin"; the bed of Procrustes "kallëpi i Prokrustit"; Danaide's work "kova e Danaideve";* partly motivated idioms: thirty pieces of silver "*shitet për tridhjetë aspra*"; the confusion of Babylon *"është Babiloni"*; the rich hath many friends, make friends with sb "*i pasuri ka shumë miklues*"; keep company with "*shoqërohem me*"; hate like poison " *urrej për vdekje*"; gather one's courage "*marr kurajo*", cost money "*do para*"; console oneself with "*ngushëlloj veten me*"; come to an end "*përfundoj, i vij në fund*"; etc. From these examples it is clear that the meaning of the idiom can be easily grasped by the reader but it is worth mentioning that English has a lot of idiomatic expressions which create little or no chance of understanding or translation. Thus, idioms are subject of discrepancies in language since a non-native speaker is not based on the literary meaning of the idiom neither on the meaning of separate components of the figurative expression, but rather on the meaning of it as a whole. Based on this fact true for each language idioms can cause a lot of misunderstandings and are means of confusion and create problems in communication for every non-native speaker of a foreign language. Thus it is necessary for every speaker to have a good command of the language to result in successful communication. As a consequence, a non-native speaker might know the meaning of the idiom used in one of the synonymous versions, but might not know if

the idiom is used with an equivalent counterpart in another context, thus leading to difficulties for interpretation for native speakers of the language as well.

Conclusion

Like other types of figurative language, idioms appear to be the natural decoders of customs, cultural beliefs, social conventions, and norms. Idioms, as a major component of native-like communication, enable a language learner to understand the thoughts, emotions and views of the speakers of target language. Idioms are a constituent part of language and play a crucial role in understanding and as a part of language learning and they should attempt to build up their knowledge of idioms if they want to survive in real communication settings. Acquiring another language need not only linguistic competence but cultural awareness as well.

Difference between cultures cause misunderstandings in the interactive communications. The origin of idiomatic expressions in both languages varies from history, mythology, folk and traditions to literature, sports, agriculture, medicine, science and technology. The immense variety of sources of idioms shapes language peculiarities of each language. They are strong and colorful examples of cross-cultural relations. Misunderstandings and confusion of idiomatic expressions come when non-native speakers try to translate an idiom or collocations based on native language into English. Based on cultural knowledge and background this task becomes simpler.

This paper aimed at presenting in detail some specific issues concerning the discrepancies in English and Albanian language caused by the misinterpretation of idioms. We have taken into consideration a number of idioms and certain literary contexts to illustrate the contexts they are used. Based on the degree of motivation idioms cause a lot of difficulties in understanding and use from non-native speakers. Highly motivated idioms present sources of national and social characteristic as in the examples *kick the bucket* or *spill the beans.* Typical examples are present even in the Albanian language *shkoi dushk për gogla* or *si Xhaferri simiten*. Other idioms possess a lower degree of motivation and might lead to lesser cases that cause misinterpretation. However idiomatic language in all the languages specifically for the two languages we have taken into consideration in this article are subject to discrepancies in many situations. A non-native speaker should possess cultural background of the language to reduce cases of misinterpretation. In approaching cross-cultural situations, one should therefore assume difference until similarity is proven as culture strongly influences, and in many cases determines, our interpretations.

Idioms become often subject of getting lost in languages since the literary meaning of each constituent does not contribute to the overall meaning of the expression. Acquiring good knowledge of them enhances the chances of good communication from the non-native speaker and establishes strong ties in cross-cultural and inter-language relationship. Interpretation in terms of culture means the study of language

symbols and cultural concepts in foreign languages, not only possible but also necessary.

Based on the corpus analyses of idioms in both languages, the empirical study carefully analyses cases of misinterpretation from several perspectives. The study sheds light into cases and situations where the idiomatic structure and syntactical components lead to difficulties of idiom understanding. We can conclude that idioms from the linguistic perspective are culturally bound units that shape and intensify the colorful diversity of a language, hence making communication an immense source of discrepancies if one doesn't possess the cultural and national characteristics of it. Possessing idiomatic competence of a language opens new doors to the figurative and linguistic usage of the language itself, mastering with professionalism and having a good command of that language.

The study creates possibilities and opens new ways for further future researches in this deep and immense field, consolidating the strong linguistic and communicative relationships between languages. Language and phraseology are closely related disciplines and offer great opportunities for new contributions in the field.

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