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Translation of Twenty Yemeni Short Stories: Evaluation of the Problems and the Strategies Employed

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ABSTRACT

Cultural items are part and parcel of any culture and their translation is one of the most difficult tasks a translator may encounter. This research paper attempts to evaluate the translation of short stories shedding light on some problematic areas of literary translation (i.e., metaphors, idioms, irony, etc.) that play a significant role in characterizing a literary text. It also aims to identify the strategies applied by the translator in rendering such problematic areas into the TL with evaluative commentaries. The comparative descriptive method was followed. The 20 story translations were randomly selected out of 40 Yemeni short stories done by Dr. Shirin Mohammed. Researchers evaluated the translation using the triangulation method. First, the problems were identified through a qualitative analytical comparison of the ST to the TT. Then, frequencies and percentages were quantitatively used to determine the size of each translation strategy adopted by the translator (literal translation, free translation, translation by Paraphrasing, translation by Omission, Transliteration) in relation to the translation of literary problem type (metaphors, idioms, proverbs, irony, religious expressions, cultural-specific lexical items, illusion). Results show that the most three problematic areas are idioms, religious expressions, and cultural-specific lexical items respectively. On the other hand, the less problematic areas are metaphors and allusions with the same rank, irony, and proverbs respectively. In addition, the most frequently used strategy is literal translation, followed by paraphrasing, omission, free translation, and transliteration. The strategic-problem tactic of the translator shows ST is mostly rendered word-for-word into the TT which demonstrates how the translator is stuck to the ST lexis. Ineffective and inadequate uses of the strategy of omission result in an unnecessary exclusion of some idioms and religious expressions. Although transliteration endows the TT with local colour and atmosphere, it hampers the TT reader's comprehension when it is used without adding explanatory notes. Occasionally, the translator fails to achieve comprehension at the ST level and understand the ST intended message. Therefore, the outcome is a mistranslation. However, the use of translation by paraphrasing and free translation establish bridges of effectiveness and acceptability between the ST and TT.

Keywords: *Literary Translation, Evaluation, Translation Quality, Yemeni, Short Stories*

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1. Introduction

Undoubtedly that translation has greatly occupied a significant place in our world today. Its significance stems from its

vital role as a tool for global dialogue and for cross-cultural understanding. Moreover, translating literary works effectively provides new knowledge of other nations'



cultures, customs, traditions, beliefs, ideologies and values. It plays a vital role in mutual exchanges between cultures.

There is now more attention being given to the assessment of what constitutes a good translation. For Newmark (1988: 192), "a good translation fulfills its intention". Linguists and theoreticians have given great attention to providing some guidelines to translation criticism. However, to augment the communicative function of translation and to further enhance its status as an independent discipline, more attention should be given to issues pertaining to translation evaluation. Therefore, translation evaluation forms a challenge to translation scholars to objectively assess translation quality. It needs to be supported and justified.

If a critic wants to offer a balanced judgment on translation, s/he has to work hard on the level of both SLT and TLT to determine some evaluation criteria. One has to keep constantly comparing the TT with the ST. It is a two-sided process. According to Reib (cited in Lauscher, 2000: 51), "evaluating a translation means reversing the translation process and reconstructing the translation strategy". However, the task becomes more difficult if the critic deals with literary texts which are form-focused texts, and culture forms a snag in translating and evaluating them. Newmark (1988: 94) states "Frequently where there is cultural focus, there is a translation problem due to the cultural 'gap' or 'distance' between the source and target languages". So, the critic has to give serious consideration to both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors because the latter may affect the translation and evaluation. Finally, after comparing the ST with TT and giving judgment, the critic has to offer alternative translations to the ones s/he regards as negative, inadequate or inappropriate translations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Translation Evaluation

Newmark (1988: 184) defines translation criticism as "an essential link between translation theory and its practice...". Also, he (1982: 181) states "translation criticism purpose is to:

- [1] improve standards of translation,
- [2] provide an object lesson for translators,
- [3] throw light on ideas about translation at particular times and in particular subject-areas,

[4] assist in the interpretation of the work of significant writers and significant translators and

[5] assess critically semantic and grammatical differences between SL and TL"

2.2 Literary Translation

From time immemorial, literature has been part and parcel of people's lives. It immortalizes ancient and modern civilizations and reflects people's way of life and culture. Therefore, translators tend to translate literary works. However, in literary translation, translators have to take linguistic and extra-linguistic elements that affect a literary text into account to find an analogous form in the translation to create a corresponding impression in the target language. For Jones (2019), literary translation depends on a group of strategies and techniques. Some are shared across various literary and non-literary genres, and some others are genres specific. This viewpoint is also similar to that of Lataiwish, (1995), Al-Masri, (2004), Gaber, (2005), As-Safi, (2011), Jibreel, et al (2016), Akan, (2018), and Akan, Karim & Chowdhury (2019).

2.3 Short Stories

The art of short story is distinguished from other literary forms by formal and thematic concentration and unity which commit the translator to preserving cohesive effects in translation. Moreover, dialogue is a salient feature of most short stories in which certain phrases become attached to characters and these have to be foregrounded in translation (Newmark, 1988: 171).

Al-Adwan and Abuorabiedwan (2019) attempted to examine the translation of one of the devices of creative writing used in the construction of Arabic short stories, namely semantic repetition. They compared the occurrences of semantic repetition in the Arabic short story (*صفحة من كتاب الموتى*) *Excerpt from The Book of The Dead* with their translations in the target text. They found that the translators adopted four main strategies when translating semantic repetition into English: retention, compression, grammatical shift and deletion. The analysis also revealed that instances of semantic repetition were often omitted or modified in the English translation, and consequently their functions were sacrificed. They concluded that omission and modification resulted in affecting the representation of the original literary work

and offered target readers a slightly different version of the text.

Yemets & Zakharchuk (2021) explored the strategies of investigating and translating poetical prose of the classical and contemporary English short stories. The investigation involved the analysis of *The Fairy Tales* by Oscar Wilde, the short stories by Kate Chopin and Dylan Thomas. They found that the most foregrounded device of poeticalness is stylistic approximation. It helps to create a strong emotional effect.

2.4 Yemeni Short Stories

According to Al-Hamdani (2004: 9), the short story occupies a special status among other literary forms in Yemeni literature. Yemeni short story has won the interest of the Yemeni authors and writers, and poetry is no longer that literary form that possesses alone the whole literary interest. The great contribution was made by the Yemeni press in spreading the art of short story in Yemen. Al-Hamdani (2004: 10) argues that the Yemeni short story appeared and grew in the press, in Yemeni journalism. The newspaper "Fatat Aljazeera" was a loyal sponsor that embraced this literary genre in the early forties till the late sixties. It encouraged many writers and translators who did their best to make the short story a mature literary genre in modern Yemeni literature.

Al-Motaokel (2008: 81-109) writes that Ahmed Albaraq's "Ana Sa'eed" [I am Happy] is considered the first Yemeni short story. It saw the light in November 1940 on some pages of "Al-Hikmah Alyamania" magazine. Moreover, the first collection of Yemeni stories was Saleh Addahhan's "Anta Shyou'ai" [You are a Communist] published in 1957.

Commenting on the themes, Al-Hamdani (2008: 29) states, "The themes of Yemeni stories are about Yemeni life in all its aspects. They deal with political, social, economic problems and the effects of religion on people's lives. Moreover, they draw more attention to the personal life of individuals and community."

For Al-Magalih (2009: 10-11), the short story is a wonderful narrative art that is considerably flourishing in Yemeni literature due to creative youths who skillfully write short stories. Furthermore, we cannot forget the great contribution of Mohammed Abdul Wali and Zaid Mute'e Dammaj; the pioneers of this art in Yemeni literature.

2.5 Aims of the Study

This study aims to offer an evaluation of the translation of a selection of Yemeni short stories. In details, it attempts to:

- [1.] shed light on the size of some problematic areas of literary translation, especially metaphors, idioms, irony, cultural-specific lexical items, religious expressions, proverbs and allusions
- [2.] identify the strategies applied by the translator in rendering such problematic areas into the TL with evaluative commentaries.
- [3.] offer suggestions for alternative translation

2.6 Limitation of the Study

All the examples selected in this research are selectively taken from 20 short stories from *Translated Yemeni Short Stories*. The translation has been done by Dr. Shirin Mohammed. The appendix shows the titles of the selected stories. The study deals with the translation of ST metaphors, idioms, irony, proverbs, cultural-specific lexical items, religious expressions and allusions. It doesn't tackle the translation's grammatical mistakes.

2.7 Originality

This is the first study that deals with the translation of a collection of Yemeni short stories. So, it will provide unique insights into the problems of translating highly literary texts that are immersed in Yemeni culture to a great extent. In other words, the importance of this study lies in drawing the attention of those who are interested in translation in general and literary translation in particular to the difficulties of translating literary texts- such as these selected short stories- from Arabic into English. This study also throws light on the different possible translation strategies that can be used to deal with these difficulties in the translation process. In addition, it modestly contributes to the popularity of Yemeni literature.

It's worth mentioning here, for the researchers' best knowledge, *Translated Yemeni Short Stories* is the first book that has a collection of 40 Yemeni short stories along with their translations. These stories have been written by different Yemeni authors. Some of them have used dialects and non-standard Arabic to express their themes. These stories excitingly offer an opportunity to the reader to know more about the Yemeni people, society, political system, culture, tradition, etc.

3. Methodology

This research is an analytical descriptive. It provides a detailed analysis of



the problematic areas of the translation and the strategies used to tackle the problems. The researchers randomly chose 20 short stories from a book of 40 Yemeni short stories entitled *Translated Yemeni Short Stories*. These stories are heavily loaded with figures of speech and cultural items that create problems for any translator. Therefore, the focus of this paper is on the translation of these problematic areas.

The researchers identified the SL problems, which are mainly found in literary texts, such as metaphors, idioms, irony, cultural-specific lexical items, religious expressions, proverbs and allusions. Then they prepared two checklists. One of them included SL items that could create a problem in the translation process, and the other included the ST problematic areas alongside their translations and the strategies used by the translator in rendering them into the TL. After that they were given to three validators for feedback. Finally depending on the validators' feedback, the criteria of the study were adopted.

3.1 Evaluation Criteria

3.1.1 Comparative Analysis of Source & Target Texts

The researchers compared the ST with the TT in the sense that some examples were randomly selected from different stories and compared with their translations. Furthermore, comments were given on the translation wherever possible. The problematic areas the researchers dealt with were metaphors, idioms, proverbs, irony, religious expressions, cultural-specific lexical items, and allusions.

3.1.2 Tools and Statistics

Literary areas in 2.4.1 were identified in the ST and then compared to the translation to see how they were rendered. Moreover, an evaluative commentary was offered on some translation examples and the use of translation strategies alongside the problematic areas to illustrate whether they were appropriately or inappropriately rendered into the TT. In both cases, frequencies and percentages were used.

4. Results and Discussion

The present study is an attempt to investigate the size of problematic areas of literary translation, especially metaphors, idioms, irony, cultural-specific lexical items, religious expressions, proverbs and allusions. It also attempts to identify the strategies applied by the translator in rendering such problematic areas into the TL with evaluative commentaries to suggest

alternative translation. Based on a checklist formulated, the translations of the 20 short stories were analyzed. The following section illustrates the results in the light of the explained aims.

Table 1: Problem and Strategies used by the Translator

| Translation strategy | Literal Translation | Free Translation | Translation by paraphrasing | Translation by Omission | Transliteration | Total | % |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Problematic areas | | | | | | | |
| Metaphors | 8 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 15.60% |
| Idioms | 11 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 29 | 20.57% |
| Proverbs | 5 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 5.67% |
| Irony | 9 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 7.80% |
| Religious expressions | 16 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 26 | 18.44% |
| Cultural-specific lexical items | 13 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 23 | 16.31% |
| Allusions | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 9 | 22 | 15.61% |
| Total | 62 | 14 | 37 | 17 | 11 | 141 | 100% |
| % | 43.97% | 9.93% | 26.24% | 12.06% | 7.80% | 100% | |

From the bottom up, Table 1 shows the most frequently used strategy is literal translation (43.97%, N = 62), followed by translation by paraphrasing (26.24%, N = 37), translation by omission (12.06%, N = 17), free translation (9.93%, N = 14), and transliteration (7.80%, N = 11).

Table 1 also shows the most three problematic areas are idioms (20.57%, N = 29), religious expressions (18.44%, N = 26), and cultural-specific lexical items (16.31%, N = 23). However, the less problematic areas are metaphors and allusions with the same rank (15.60%, N = 22), irony (7.80%, N = 11), and proverbs (5.67%, N = 8).

4.1 Problematic Areas and The Use of Strategies

4.1.1 Idioms

According to Baker (1992: 65), the main problem in translating idioms are due to "two main areas: the ability to recognize and interpret an idiom correctly; and the difficulties involved in rendering the various aspects of meaning that an idiom or a fixed expression conveys into the target language."

These stories are heavily loaded with idioms. The translator generally applied four procedures to render them into the TL.

Literal Translation

Literal translation forms a dominant procedure in translating the ST idioms. Occasionally, there are some TL idioms that can be lexically and semantically equivalent to the ST idioms.

- 1- بدأت جدتي تقطب حاجبيها
My grandmother knitted her eye-brows
- 2- ها.. ها.. عشنا والله و رأينا
Ha! Ha! We live and see
- 3- فهم قليلون يعدون بأطراف الأصابع
.. they are very few and can be counted on the fingers.
- 4- أعطته جل اهتمامه
A'teka [...] gave it care and concern

By looking carefully at these examples, it can be concluded the literal translation of some of them yields nearly similar idioms in the TL. However, some modifications should be made to the translations to produce exact TL idioms. For instance, in example No.1, "eye" is an intruder to the TL idiom "knit one's brows". So, it will serve the translation if "eye" is not added.

Moving to example No.2, "see" could be better replaced by "learn". The outcome will be the English idiom "Live and Learn" which is "used for expressing surprise at something new which you have just heard, read, etc." (Parkinson & Francis, 2006: 223). This suggested idiom could be a suitable parallel to the ST idiom "عشنا والله و رأينا".

Turning to example No.3, the idiom will be more accurate and acceptable if it is completed. The exact TL idiom is "count on the fingers of one hand". So, it will be sufficiently important to complete the idiom to produce an effective and readable translation.

In example No.4, the resultant rendition represents an inadequate translation. A suitable TL equivalent idiom to the ST idiom "أعطته جل اهتمامها" could be "...gave it her undivided attention".

Free Translation

By resorting to free translation in rendering ST idioms, the translator makes her translation more lively and dynamic. Furthermore, applying this procedure means generating idioms that semantically, but not lexically, resemble their counterparts in the ST. This procedure makes it possible for the translator to maintain the impact of the ST idioms in the TT despite the cultural dissimilarities between the SL and the TL. For example:

- 1- أبجديات السياسة
..the abcd [sic] of politics
- 2- كبد السماء
..the heart of the sky

These two examples illustrate that the outcomes of free translation can be as effective as the originals. The only comment is about the adding of the letter "d", in example No.1, to the TL idiom "the ABC of" which should be appropriately deleted.

Translation by Paraphrasing

This strategy is very commonly applied by the translator in rendering the ST idioms into the TT. Mostly, it produces accurate translations that mainly communicate the semantic content of the ST idioms. However, using paraphrasing in translating an idiom means that "the impact

of the idiom will be totally sacrificed, and any cultural significance associated with it will be lost in the target text" (Abu-Ssaydeh, 2004: 119).

- 1- جنود مدججون بالأسلحة
..soldiers fully armed
- 2- قبل أن تأخذني المكلا و أتخذها ملاذاً و مأوى.
..before I was taken by Mukalla where I found my love.
- 3- أطلق ساقى للريح
I run away

It can be figured that the meaning, not the form, of the ST idiomatic expressions is rendered into the TL. Though translating an SL idiom into a TL idiom wherever possible is the best a translator can hope for. For instance, in example No.1, the translation is clear and precise. However, it will be much better and more effective if the ST idiom "مدججون بالأسلحة" is translated into its TL counterpart "armed to the teeth".

However, the translation, in example No.2, demonstrates the translator totally misinterprets the ST idiom. The general meaning of the ST idiom "ملاذاً و مأوى" is that providing someone with support and shelter. This meaning could almost be conveyed by the corresponding TL idiom "A Pillar/Tower of Strength" (*Oxford Idioms Dictionary*, 2006:386).

In example No.3, the resultant rendition is correct but lacks the metaphorical potential of the ST idiom. However, "I run like the wind" can form a suitable alternative to "I run away". It can also semantically and metaphorically parallel the ST idiom "أطلق ساقى للريح".

Translation by Omission

With a number of ST idioms the translator resorts to the strategy of omission. Though translating them would be possible. For example:

- يوماً بعد يوم، بين فترة و أخرى، في عمرة حديثه،
على حين غفلة، لم يكثر له أحد...

4.1.2 Religious Expressions

Regarding the fact that religious expressions are culture-bound and so form a hindrance in translation, the translator "may find certain lexical items in Arabic having no equivalents in English because the concepts they refer to do not exist in the English-speaking culture" (Bahameed, 2008: 6). In such case, the translator is professionally obliged to accompany his/her translation with a commentary note to overcome the lexical and cultural mismatch between the two languages (Homeidi, 2004: 24).



The translator employs different procedures to render the ST expressions into the TL. Yet, literal translation is the overriding procedure.

Literal Translation

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|----|
| God knows | الله أعلم | -1 |
| My God | يا إلهي | -2 |
| The houses of the blessed | بيوت الأولياء | -3 |

In example No.1, it will be more precise and adequate if the translation is followed by the word "best".

Moving to example No.3, the translation here is inappropriate. "The houses of the blessed" should properly be replaced by "shrines". In the TL culture "shrines" properly refers to the same thing that "بيوت الأولياء" refers to in the SL culture.

Free Translation

The translator resorts to this procedure in translating the following religious expression:

| | | |
|--------|--------|----|
| School | معلامة | -1 |
|--------|--------|----|

Here, an explanatory note should be added to illustrate what exactly the ST "معلامة" means in the Yemeni culture. A note such as in what follows will be more suitable:

"معلامة" is a simple school consisting of one class. It is mostly in a village, meant for a single purpose, i.e., for children to learn how to recite the Holy Koran correctly and the basics of Arabic.

Translation by Paraphrasing

With some expressions, the translator applies this procedure to make up for both lexical and cultural gap between the SL and the TL.

| | | |
|--|-----------------|----|
| I [...] recited some verses from the Holy Koran. | قرأت آية الكرسي | -1 |
| He [...] cleaned himself. | توضأ | -2 |

Clearly the above translations almost lack the effectiveness of the ST expressions. Moreover, in example No.3, the translator completely fails to accurately convey the concept referred to by "توضأ" into the TL. The given translation is inappropriate and very far from the exact meaning of "توضأ". It is true that the concept referred to by "توضأ" is exclusive to Arabic and has no existence in English. Yet, the translator could have managed to render something better than "He cleaned himself". Alternatively, she could appropriately have translated it into

"he performed the ritual ablution". A commentary should also be added to explain what exactly "ablution" means from the Islamic perspective.

Translation by Omission

A few numbers of religious expressions are deleted from translation though it is all possible to be rendered into the TL. For example:

| | | |
|------------|----------------------|----|
| Some words | الله أكبر..الله أكبر | -1 |
| | السجادة | -2 |
| | صوفية | -3 |

In example No.1, "الله أكبر" can be rendered into "Allah is the greatest". "السجادة", in example No.2, can sufficiently be translated into "the prayer rug". Similarly, "صوفية", in example No.3, can be rendered into "mysticism". Briefly, gratuitously omitting such expressions from translation means depriving the TT reader from knowing more about the SL culture.

4.1.3 Cultural-Specific Lexical Items

Culture is defined "as a way of life[...] that uses a particular language as its means of expressions" (Newmark, 1988: 94). Generally speaking, cultural expressions are part and parcel of any language. Moreover, translating cultural expressions is one of the most difficult tasks a translator may encounter. So, in translating cultural-specific lexis and allusions, the translator is advised to give explanatory notes to achieve a satisfactory rendition. Ordudari, (2007: 8) believes "employing 'notes' in the translation [...] seems to be indispensable so that the foreign language readership could benefit from the text as much as the ST readers do."

The translator applies different procedures to translate the ST cultural-specific lexis. For example:

Literal Translation

By applying this procedure, the translator renders the ST cultural specific items into their closest TL counterparts as in examples 1 and 2.

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|
| The furnace | التنور | -1 |
| The veil | الثلثة | -2 |
| Almaqaleh Locality | مقيل "المقالح" | -3 |
| Stream | كريف | -4 |
| The hall | الديوان | -5 |
| A smoking hookah | النارجيلة (المداعة) | -6 |

Some of the previous examples show that the translator is not familiar with some dialects spoken in different parts of Yemen. Therefore, she improperly renders some cultural-specific items into the TL. For instance, the cultural focus embodied in example No.3 is completely missed when she translates "مقيل" into "locality". Generally "مقيل" in the Yemeni culture means, to a great extent, a reception/sitting room where people gather to chew Qat. Also, "مقيل" here, in the ST, refers exactly to a special Qat chewing session held weekly in the reception/sitting room of the famous educated and cultured man, Almaqaleh. So, in this case, "مقيل" can be either rendered into "a reception/sitting room" or transliterated provided that a note should be given in both cases to compensate for any loss of cultural meaning.

In example No.4, "كريف" in Taizi dialect means a small area of still water. Consequently, translating "كريف" into "stream" is undoubtedly wrong. Alternatively, "pool" can form a correct TL counterpart for "كريف".

In example No.5, "the hall" is not an appropriate equivalent to "الديوان". However, in Sana'ani dialect "الديوان" refers to a long reception/sitting room. However, the SL words "المجلس", "الديوان", "المبرز" and "المفرش" are different names given to the same place which is a reception/sitting room where people often sit together to relax and chew Qat.

In the last example, translating "المداعة" into "a smoking hookah" is lexically correct. Yet, functionally it is inappropriate because "hookah" is usually used for smoking drugs (*Longman Dictionary*, 2005:783). On the other hand, "المداعة" in the Yemeni culture is used for smoking tobacco. Therefore, "water pipe" can be quite a comparable item for "المداعة".

Translation by Paraphrasing

Here paraphrasing procedure can be regarded nearly the same as the componential analysis procedure proposed by Newmark in translating cultural-specific items in the sense that it "excludes the culture and highlights the message" (Newmark, 1988: 96). Moreover, the resultant translation lacks the economical nature and the pragmatic effect of the originals. For example:

القمریات -1
The colored, moon-shaped windows

بخرناها بالمر والحلتيت -2

We also scented it with burning scent

In example No. 1, the translation is inaccurate. "القمریات" basically means a semicircular stained glass built on the top of windows in many Yemeni buildings. Consequently, "القمریات" doesn't at all refer to ordinary windows but to the stained glass semicircular shape on the top of them.

In example No. 2, the translation is improper. "المر و الحلتيت" are two substances used as incense by Yemeni villagers who believe their scents and smoke cure those who are sick. So, "incense" will be quite acceptable to replace "المر و الحلتيت" in the TT.

Translation by Omission

The translator leaves some ST cultural-specific items out of translation such as:

المغموق -1
الدلالة -2

Transliteration

With some cultural-specific items the translator resorts to transliteration. This procedure bestows the text with local color and atmosphere. It highlights culture and ignores the message (Newmark, 1988: 96). Examples:

الشرشف -1
Cloak [*Sharshaf*]
القات -2

The Qat

Regarding the first example, the transliteration is accompanied with the nearest TL equivalent. Therefore, the TT reader will get a chance to understand what the ST cultural-specific lexis generally means.

However, in the second example, the TT reader, who doesn't know what Qat is, will understand nothing from this transliteration. So, it is necessary to give a note explaining what Qat is. A note such as "Qat is a plant that most of Yemeni people have a habit of chewing its green leaves during the afternoons" could be sufficiently satisfactory to make Qat understandable to the TT reader.

4.1.4 Metaphors

Metaphors are a figurative form of language. Similes and personifications are also regarded as forms of metaphors. Generally, metaphors are applied to convey meaning but in an emotively colorful manner. The translator generally adopts three procedures for rendering the ST metaphors into the TL.

Literal Translation



The translator very frequently resorts to this procedure in dealing with most ST metaphors. For example:

1- كل أصابع الفرح كانت تشير باتجاه هلال .

All the fingers of happiness were pointing towards Hilal.

2- في محاولة يائسة لكسر حالة الحزن الشديدة، التي تحلق عليه دائماً.

..in an effort to break through the state of great sorrow which often befell him.

3- وألسنة النيران ترقص داخل حلبة التتور الواسع

..and the tongue of flames danced in the wide furnace

4- فوزية تسمرت في النافذة ترقب الشارع من بعيد كانت تمثالاً بديعاً نصب في النافذة

Fawzeyya got nailed at the window watching the street from a distance, like a statue in the window.

5- كانت ساقية من حليب وسمن.

It became a churner of milk and [sic] butter and fat.

As it is clear above, literal translation sometimes reproduces metaphors that are lexically and semantically equivalent to the ST ones as shown in examples 1 and 3. However, in example No. 2, the metaphor implied by "تحلق" "to hover over" is lost in the translation. The ST metaphor indirectly compares the state of great sorrow that overwhelms the hero of the story, Hilal, to a bird hovers over him. This image is completely missed in the TT. Therefore, "befell" should be replaced by "hovers over" to capture the ST metaphor. Moreover, by neglecting to translate the adjective "يائسة" "desperate", the TT sentence loses some of the effectiveness of the ST sentence.

The deletion of the adjective "بديعاً" "wonderful", in example No. 4, yields an inadequate translation. Translating "تمثالاً" "statue" without the modifier "بديعاً" "wonderful" doesn't sufficiently meet the ST author's intention. On the contrary, it may convey negative implications that are not intended by the author who aims to express admiration and approval.

In example No.5, the translation is inappropriate. Nearly, "ساقية" in Taizi dialect means a brook. It has nothing to do with "churn" which means "a container used for shaking milk in order to make it into butter" (Longman Dictionary, 2005: 263). The ST author compares the white cow that provides villagers with a large quantity of milk and butter to a brook that generously supplies villagers and agricultural lands with water. Therefore, the appropriate equivalent to

"ساقية" could be "a brook". Furthermore, in the same TT sentence, there is also an instance of an unacceptably additional word. "Fat" is "a substance that is stored under the skin of people and animals" (Longman Dictionary, 2005: 575). Therefore, the "fat" of the animal, is something we can only get from the animal after its death.

Free Translation

This is one of the translator's least frequently applied procedures. It is almost due to the cultural gap between the SL and the TL.

1- ماتت الدموع في عينيها
The tears dried in her eyes
2- عادت لتستقبل زوجها العائد في اعماقها ضربات سرور
The woman [...] returned to welcome her husband, her heart singing with joy

The woman [...] returned to welcome her husband, her heart singing with joy

Translating by Paraphrasing

The translator very often opts for this procedure to translate ST metaphors. The following examples will demonstrate how this procedure enables her to capture the content but not the aesthetic nature of the ST metaphors.

1- عدت إلى بيتي و الكآبة تعصف بي
I returned home depressed.
2- وعندما كانت الهموم تعصف بنا كنا نتسلسل إلى غرفته
..when we had any problem we used to rush up to his room

..when we had any problem we used to rush up to his room

The examples show that the aesthetic effect of the ST metaphors is missed in the TT. The ST metaphors are reduced to senses in the TT, which probably serve the semantic and contextual part but not the overall pragmatic effect of the text. Moreover, in example No. 2, the ST author uses "تسلسل" "sneak" to endow the context with a veil of secrecy, privacy and quietness. However, these connotations are lost in the TT when the translator offers "to rush up" for "تسلسل". Also, a TT reader may deduce opposite connotations such as openness, noise and fast movement from this translation. Therefore, "to sneak" could be a proper equivalent to convey the ST author's intention.

4.1.5 Allusions

As Arabic and English belong to two different cultures, a TT reader cannot understand the ST allusions unless the translator is competent enough to invest all feasible procedures to reproduce them in the TT.

The translator applies the following procedures to transmit the ST allusions to the TL:

Transliteration

The translator mainly employs the procedure of transliteration in transferring the ST allusions into the TL. However, she shows no interest in combining this procedure with the procedure of adding footnotes or glossing. Consequently, the resultant translation hampers the comprehension of the TT reader. For example:

- 1- عين جالوت
Ein Gallot
- 2- حطين
Hattin
- 3- ليست الهزيمة هي هذا الانكسار الذي عانىنا في 48 و 56 و 73 م

The defeat is not what we suffered in 48, 56 and 73.

The above examples are allusions made to famous battlefields and wars in the Islamic and Arabic history. However, to enable the TT reader to appreciate these allusions, such renderings should appropriately be accompanied with notes explaining what these names and numbers are.

- 4- بلقيس
Bilqis
- 5- "سبأ"
Sheba

In examples 4 and 5, "Bilqis" "بلقيس" is not just the name of the heroine of the story *A Heart from Sana'a*; it is actually the name of an eminent Yemeni queen who ruled Yemen in ancient times. Moreover, "سبأ" "Sheba" is a name given to her kingdom.

- 6- تقرأ أبا العلاء المعري
You read Abal-Ula Alma'ri
- 7- تقرأ أبا الطيب المتنبي
You read Aba-Altayeeb Almutnabi

Both Abal-Ala Alma'ri and Aba-Altayeeb Almutnabi are two of the most celebrated poets in the history of Arabic literature. However, unfortunately, the target reader will not perceive that from the above renderings. S/he may think they are the names of magazines, novels or something else.

- 8- ابن علوان
'Ibn Alwan' (the name of the blessed Sofi)
- 9- الولي "شعلان"
The good soul, Sha'lan

Actually, "Ibn Alwan" and "Sha'lan" are well-known saints in the middle part of Yemen. Nevertheless, such cultural information is not brought forth in the TT due to using the procedure of transliteration only.

Translation by Paraphrasing

The translator opts for this procedure in rendering two ST allusions. For example:

- 1- يبطل عنتريته
To stop his endeavors
- 2- الساعة السلمانية
The peak hours of relaxation

In the first example, an allusion is made to Antar, the famous strong Arab man who lived in the past.

In the second example, an allusion is made to the hour when Prophet Solomon, as it is said, used to relax. However, literal translation, "the hour of Solomon", will be more effective because there is such belief in the TL religious culture.

Translation by Omission

The translator resorts to this procedure in dealing with an allusion made to the well-known fiction in the Arabic literature "حكاية جحا وابنه و الحمار".

In addition, the Holy Koran is no exception in the sense that a number of allusions are made to some Koranic words and phrases. However, it seems the translator treats these Koranic allusions as any other ST words and phrases. Accordingly, the intention here is limited to listing the Koranic allusions and their translations together with the Koran verses to which these allusions refer. Besides, these Koranic verses will be associated with a translation of their interpretation. The translations are taken from *The Glorious Kur'an* translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Table 2: Allusions along with Author and Qur'anic Translations

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| ST | 1- كانت هناك قرية آمنة تعيش في طمأنينة ووداعة |
| TT | There was a village that lived in peace and satisfaction |
| Koranic verse | قال تعالى: "وضرب الله مثلا قرية كانت عامنة مطمئنة" (النحل، 112) |
| All's translation | "God sets forth a Parable: a city enjoying security and quiet" (S. XVI. 112) |
| ST | 2- وأصبحت القرية خالية على عروشها |
| TT | The whole village was empty. |
| Koranic verse | قال تعالى: "أو كذاي مر على قرية وهي خاوية على عروشها" (البقرة، 259) |
| All's Translation | "Or (take) the similitude of one who passed by a hamlet, all in ruins to its roofs" (S. II. 259) |
| ST | 3- اللهم لا تؤاخذنا بما يفعله السفهاء منا |
| TT | O God do not punish us for what the ill-natured do |
| Koranic verse | قال تعالى: "أتهلكنا بما فعل السفهاء منا" (الأعراف، 155) |
| All's Translation | "Wouldst Thou destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us?" (S.VII.155) |

4.1.6 Irony

The translator applies literal translation to most ST ironical expressions except for some where she resorts to paraphrasing.

Literal Translation

Assuming that a TT reader could grasp the ST irony through literal rendering, the translator shows complete inclination towards this procedure.

- 1-...ماذا أرى؟ [...] إنسان بلحمه ودمه يتوسل إلى حمار...ها...ها...عشنا والله ورأينا.



“What do I see?” [...]A man in flesh and blood is requesting a donkey. Ha! Ha! We live and see”.

2- ملايين الأسر في هذا الوطن العربي تعيش في أكواخ أشبه بمأوى الحيوان... وهم يكتبون هلوسات و يدعون أن البشرية بعد خمسين عاماً أو مئة عام ستفهم ما يكتبون.

millions of families in this world live in caves like those of animals, and they write about hallucination and presume that the human race will understand it after fifty or a hundred years.

Generally speaking, it can be deduced that literal translation could be very revealing of the ironical use that wraps the ST examples. Nevertheless, the translation of some examples is not satisfactory. For instance, in example No. 1, "requesting" doesn't capture the connotations of "يتوسل". Actually, "يتوسل" reflects the urgency for something accompanied with some sense of humiliation. Whereas "requesting" means asking “for something in a polite or formal way” (Longman Dictionary, 2005: 1397). Therefore, the TL "begging" can appropriately play a comparable role to that of "يتوسل" in the TT.

In example No. 2, omitting the adjective "العربي" "Arab" from the TT inevitably leads to an inadequate transfer. The translator tends to generalize whereas she has to particularize. The translation here shifts the focus from a particular world, the Arab world, to the whole world which is not the intent of the ST author. Furthermore, translating "تعيش في أكواخ أشبه بمأوى الحيوان" into "live in caves like those of animals" doesn't adequately reflect the ST image. Translating that phrase literally into "live in shacks like the shelters of animals" can be precise and equivalent to the ST phrase. Also, using literal translation to render "هلوسات" into "hallucination" makes no sense in the TT. It is not suitable for the context. Alternatively, "nonsense" could sufficiently fit the context.

Translation by Paraphrasing

The translator rarely resorts to this procedure to render some of ST ironical expressions.

1- سأخبره أن يبطل عنتريته في مثل تلك الساعة المتأخرة من الليل.

I will tell him to stop his endeavors at such an hour of the night...

2- هكذا أنت، لسانك طويل في البيت فقط، أما خارج البيت فلا تصلح لشيء.

That's how you are. You can only talk at home but outside you are good for nothing.

In the first example, the ST irony, "يبطل عنتريته", is achieved by cultural reference which is difficult to be equivalently reflected in the translation. Although the translator offers an attempt to translate it, the resultant translation "stop his endeavors" unfortunately fails to grasp the ST irony. The purpose of irony here is to criticize the misbehavior of a soldier and to create a sense of humor along with cultural reference. Ignoring the cultural implications of the ST irony, she could produce quite a similar irony. For example, if she translates it into something like "stop his acrobatics", she can at least convey some of the ST ironical sense.

In the second example, paraphrasing procedure takes away some of the ST irony. In this case, literal rendering of the ST irony, "you have a long tongue at home", might be preferable and more emotive.

4.1.7 Proverbs

Translating proverbs is not an easy task. They are rich in connotations and also distinguished in their economical nature that conveys more than what it literally states. So, maintaining such special characteristics may sometimes be impossible unless a translator is able to find a TL proverb that plays the same role played by an SL proverb in the context (El-Yasin & Al-Shehabat, 2005: 170). These short stories contain a few numbers of proverbs. Most of them are literally rendered into the TL. The translator exactly chooses two strategies for translating them.

Literal Translation

Presuming that the implied meanings of the ST proverbs can be conveyed through literal rendition, the translator applies this procedure.

1- الحمار هو الحمار!!

A donkey is a donkey!

2- إذن من سيسوق الحمير؟

And so who will lead the donkey?

The translation of the first example is supposed to be accessible to the TT readers because a donkey, as well as a mule, forms an archetypal symbol of stubbornness in many cultures. It conveys an idea that is quite similar to the idea of the TL proverb "the leopard cannot change its spots".

Going to the second example, "إذن من" "إذن من" is actually the second part of the Arabic proverb "سيسوق الحمير؟ أنا أمير، وأنت أمير، فمن يسوق؟" "I am a prince and you are a prince, and who shall lead the donkeys?" [Researchers' translation]. The ST author quotes the second part of the Arabic proverb

leaving the first part for the readers to deduce it from the context. Moreover, the ST proverb equivalently expresses the root idea of the TL proverb "I am proud, and you are proud, and who shall bear the ashes round" (Kilani & Ashour, 1991: 165).

Translation by Paraphrasing

The translator follows this strategy in dealing with some ST proverbs. It enables her to capture the meaning, but not the form, of the ST proverbs.

1- لقد بلغ السيل الزبي وجاوز الحزام الطيبين

[sic]

The worse has come to the worst!

2- الرياح جرت بما لا تشتهي السفن

The wind drove the ship elsewhere

Rendering proverbs by paraphrasing entails some gain in meaning but a great loss in the cultural dimensions and their impact on the readers. However, example No.1 is taken from a long conversation between two friends. It is said by one of them as a result of getting bored with his friend's ironical and pessimistic way of criticizing the status quo of Arabs. So, by using, "لقد بلغ السيل الزبي", "وجاوز الحزام الطيبين", he intends to tell his friend that he has gone too far in his criticism. Consequently, "you have gone too far" could be more accurate and satisfactory than "the worse has come to the worst".

5. Conclusion

Regarding the discussion, the researchers would like to recommend the following:

1. The ST is wholly retranslated by a team consisting of at least one native Arabic-speaker as a translator, who is acquainted with the variety of dialects and culture used in the ST as well as a translator who is a native English-speaker with an aim to investigate the response of a sample of TT readers towards the pragmatic effects of the text to make up for any translation inadequacy
2. An authoritative source of the translation of the interpretation of the Holy Koran verses should be consulted.
3. Footnotes or any other explanatory notes should be utilized to compensate any loss in meaning.

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Appendix: The titles of the 20 selected short stories as they appeared in the book are as follows:

| Title in English | Title in Arabic |
|---|---|
| "A Complement to Another Face" | 1- "نتمة لوجه آخر" |
| "The Harvest of the Bad Times" | 2- "حصاد الزمن الرديء" |
| "The Steed that Lost its Sound" | 3- "الجواد الذي فقد صوته" |
| "The Points of Light and Noise" | 4- "نقاط الضوء والضوضاء" |
| "What Happens in Tunka, the Country of Mosquitoes" | 5- "ما يحدث في تونكا بلاد الناموس حزب الفحشات المطير" |
| "The Sorrowful Nights of Hilal" | 6- "الليالي هلال الحزينة" |
| "The Woman who Jumped in the Brightness of the Sun" | 7- "المرأة التي ركضت في وهج الشمس" |
| "The Mad Dog" | 8- "الكلب المسعور" |
| "A Heart from Sana'a" | 9- "قلب من صنعاء" |
| "A'teka's Swelling" | 10- "ورم عتكة" |
| "The Humming" | 11- "دبنة" |
| "The Boots" | 12- "الحذاء" |
| "The Death of the White Cow" | 13- "موت البقرة البيضاء" |
| "The Crippled" | 14- "الكسيع" |
| "Autumn Basil" | 15- "ربحانة الخريف" |
| "The Color of the Rain" | 16- "اللون المطر" |
| "If Only He Had Not Returned!" | 17- "الليلة لم يعد" |
| "A Night Like a Ghoul, Eats the Sun" | 18- "الليل كالتغول يفتريس الشمس" |
| "A Joke" | 19- "مزحة" |
| "Bus No 99" | 20- "99 الحافلة" |