

Difficulties and Problems Facing English Students in Translating Culture-Specific Items from English to Arabic and their Solutions

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Abstract

Translation of CSIs in literary texts poses many problems for the translator. This study explores problems faced undergraduate students of English language when translating culture-specific items from English to Arabic. To achieve this aim, the researcher selected 38 undergraduate students randomly, level four, who were registered for the B.A program in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, Thamar University that exists in the Republic of Yemen. The study took place during the second semester of the academic year 2016/2017. The researcher carried out a translation test that consisted of 20 relatively short sentences which the learners were required to translate from English into Arabic. The findings show that the students encounter different kinds of problems when translating culture-specific items. These problems are mostly related to: Unfamiliarity with some of these culture-specific items; Failure to achieve the equivalence in the Arabic language; Ambiguity of some cultural items; Lack of knowledge of translation techniques and translation strategies; The incompetence of students in their mother tongue, i.e. Arabic language. At the end of the study, the researcher offered numerous recommendations that may help in overcome the problems of translating culture-specific items.

Introduction

Translation of CSIs has been and still is a largely debatable issue in translation studies which propose problems for translators. Essentially human beings use language as the most important means of communication, and language is influenced by people's culture and beliefs whether consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, translation involves both language and culture; yet most translation definitions do not directly involve cultural expressions as Catford (1965), Peter Newmark (1981), but Nida (1964:13), in his attempt to

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define translation and the role of a translator, took into consideration the cultural elements by asserting that "the role of a translator is to facilitate the transfer of the message, meaning, and cultural elements from one language into another and create an equivalent response to the receivers". He also suggested that the message from the source language is embedded by a cultural context. He believes that the translation of cultural items from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) should have the same effect on the (TL) readers as it does on the (SL) readers.

The problem with translation culture-specific items are perhaps related to the cultural gaps between (SL) and (TL). Knowledge of the target culture is essential for successful English-Arabic translation. Poor comprehension may arise from lack of insight into the target culture. There is a mismatch in cultural norms and beliefs between the Arab and Western culture. Each different language has its own individuality, which makes it distinctive and peculiar to the people who speak it. The common point is that cultural specific items may constitute translation problems. Students in this case, are required to adopt certain translation strategies to solve these problems.

The Importance of the Study

This study would shed some light on the nature of some problems students might encounter in translating culture-specific items from English to Arabic and would offer some awareness about what might go wrong in dealing with them.

The Objectives and Questions of the Study

This study aims at investigating the problems that undergraduate students majoring at English Department, Faculty of Arts, Thamar University face in translating culture-specific items from English into Arabic. It also attempts to clarify the elements that cause these difficulties and gives some suggestions on how to overcome them. In order to achieve these goals, the study will answer the following questions;

-What are the difficulties faced by the fourth-year students who study English language at English Department, Faculty of Arts, Thamar University in Yemen when translating cultural specific items from English into Arabic?

-What types of strategies are chosen by fourth-year students when confronted any culture-specific items?

Definition of Terms

Translation:

Ghazala(2008:1) used the term translation to refer to " all processes and methods used to render and/or transfer the meaning of the source language into the target language as closely, completely and accurately as possible."

Culture:

The term culture refers to a set of beliefs that control a particular country or group behavior. It is defined by Taylor (1871) as a "... complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a group". Newmark(1988: 94) defined culture as: "The way of life and its manifestation that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means and expression."

Translation Difficulties:

Translation difficulties are difficulties that individual translator could have when dealing with the translation process.

Translation Problems:

Translation problems are linguistic phenomena known to be problematic in translation. Ghazala (2008:17) argued that a translation problem is " any difficulty which makes us stop translating to think about it."

Translation Strategies:

The term 'strategy' refers to a method or a procedure used by a translator to solve a particular problem while translating.

Culture-Specific Items:

CSIs are items in the source text that are problematic for the translator, either because they do not exist in the target language or because they have different functions or connotations for TL readers.(Aixelá, 2007)

Review of Related Literature

Mohammad Salehi (2013) conducted study that explored to what extent the strategies of translating culture-specific items applied by native and non-native translators differ from each other in terms of frequency and secondly to determine the most frequent translation strategies applied by native translator compared to non-native translator in translating culture-specific items. The result affirmed the native Persian-speaking translator and the non-native Persian-speaking translator, have applied absolute universalization as their frequently used strategy facing with culture-specific items(CSIs).

Moreover, Kourosh Akef and Tahmineh Vakili (2010) study aimed to compare the strategies used by two Iranian translators in rendering the culture-specific items (CSIs) of *Savushun* English. The findings showed that in the translation of the culture-specific items (CSIs) of *Savushun*, Ghanoonparvar had a greater tendency towards conveying the sense of cultural terms outside the text by giving extra-textual explanations for 120 items (together with the proper names used in *Savushun*), whereas Zand has explained 35 items (together with proper names), extra-textually.

Furthermore, this study showed that neither of the translators has adhered to a single strategy in the process of translating Farsi (CSIs) of a certain subcategory into English. Therefore, they have both subscribed to the practice of employing a variety of strategies in translating (CSIs).

Erika Mussche and Klaas Willems (2010) investigated the transfer of proper names and references to food in the Arabic translation of the first three *Harry Potter* volumes. In this study it was found that culture-specific references to food may be translated by general hyperonyms or transferred by culture-specific analogues. However, one of the most pervasive procedures across all items that we have investigated is clearly omission.

Mohammad Noruzi (2012) attempted to investigate the issue of culture-specific-items in journalistic texts three major domestic news agencies were chosen and the news items in Persian and English were compared and contrasted. The translations were not evaluated and the broadcast versions considered to be correct. The comparison revealed that most of the cultural items in Persian texts have Islamic and Arabic roots and some others have their roots in ethnic groups living in Iran.

The previous studies focused on the different types of translation problems. The present study dealt with some cultural problems that undergraduate students face in translating from English to Arabic. Here the researcher used (20) sentences carried different cultural terms according to the level of fourth year students, to show the difficulties that face university students during translation processes.

Arabic and English: Cultural Overview:

The use of linguistic elements by the member of society affect by culture and the understanding of these cultural elements between two languages communities also affect by cultural variables. In this case, language is an essential part of cultural because the meaning of such vocabulary gets its meaning from its cultural. Arabic and English are associated with specific cultural and social customs, but in different forms. According to Sapir (1949), "environment and culture have a considerable influence on the language of speakers as is clearly seen in their vocabulary".

One of the important reasons behind the difficulties between Arabic and English in translation is the cultural differences. The role of translator is to fill the gap between the two different cultures by finding the close cultural equivalent which meet the TL Arabic readers' expectations.

Translation Procedures for Culture-Specific Items (SCIs)

Baker M. (1992:21) stated that " the source-language word may express a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture. The concept in question may be abstract or concrete; it may relate to a religious belief, a

social custom, or even a type of food. Such concepts are often referred to as 'culture-specific'."

The translation of culture-specific items carry many problems for both translators and students. They need to follow certain strategies and procedures in their translation. Vinay and Darbelnet, in their cultural theory of translation, mentioned seven procedures for rendering a word from SL to TL. They carried out a comparative stylistic analysis of French and English. They looked at texts in both languages, noting differences between the languages and identifying the following translation strategies as cited in Munday J. (2001:56-59)

1-Borrowing:

According to Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet borrowing is the simplest of all translation methods. By using the process of borrowing the translator introduce the flavour of the source language (SL) cultural, i.e. add the local colour. Here the word or expression is taken from the source language (SL) and used in the target language(TL), but in a naturalization form, that means to follow the grammar and pronunciation of the (TL). For example, French words such as "chic", "rendezvous" were borrowing and widely used in English, also the Russian *rouble*, *datcha* etc. are used in English and other languages to fill a semantics gap in the target language.

2-Calque:

It is a special kind of borrowing where the source language word or structure is translated into a target language literally. The translator imitates in his translation the structure or manner of expression of the source language. For example:

English-French calque :

Compliments of the season!

Compliments de la saison!

Science-fiction

Science- fiction

Week-end

Week- end

3-Literal Translation:

It is word-for-word translation, According to Veinay and Darbelnet, this method is common between languages of the same family and culture. For example, 'I left my spectacles on the table downstairs' which becomes (وضعت نظارتي على الطاولة في الطابق الأسفل)

4-Transposition:

Transposition concerns the changes of grammatical categories in translation. It involves a change a verb to noun, noun to verb, and noun group to noun and so on, without changing the meaning. This strategy can also be found within a language, 'I give him a kiss' is semantically no difference from 'I kiss him' though the word 'kiss' is changed from a noun into a verb.

Another example, "a red car" (سيارة حمراء), the position of adjective changes from English into Arabic. This change in position depends on the target language structure.

5-Modulation:

According to Vinay and Darblenet, as cited in Munday (2001: 57), it refers to "a variation of the form of the message, obtained by a change in the point of view". This change of point of view allows us to express the phenomena in a different way. The change can be from negative into positive or vice versa. E.g. "It is difficult" translate to French as "Cen'est pas facile" and to Arabic (ليس من السهل)

6-Equivalence:

This implies searching the target language for the most appropriate and equivalent expression corresponding to the one in the source language. It is the technique most frequently applied in the translation of proverbs, idiomatic expressions and figures of speech. The translator has no choice than find a similar situation in the target language. For example, "Like father like son" ((الولد سر أبيه/الولد طالع لبيه عامية))

7-Adaptaion:

Adaptation means the modification of the idea in the source language and find an acceptable one in the target language. Adaptation can be used where the translator does not find an appropriate equivalence. He works on changing the content and the form of source language in a way that conforms to the rules of the language and culture in the target language. For example, the English metaphor". He is a ship without compass" has no cultural equivalent in Arabic but the saying could be translated as (انه يعيش في عالم من الضياع لا موجه له فيه)

In Mona Baker's theory(1998:26-63), seven different procedures could be seen for translation of culture-bound elements which are summarized as follow:

- 1- A more general word (subordinate)
- 2- A more neutral/less expressive word
- 3- Cultural substitution
- 4- Using a loan word or a loan word plus explanation
- 5- Paraphrase using unrelated words
- 6- Omission
- 7- Illustration

Aixelá (2007:61-78) summarized 11 translating strategies of culture-specific items: (1) Repetition: reproducing the original text; (2) Orthographic Adaptation: transformation or transliteration; (3) Linguistic (non-cultural) Translation: preserving referential meaning in the source language text as far

as possible; (4) Extra textual Gloss: based on the first three methods to add interpretation such as using footnotes, endnotes, text comment method, etc; (5) Intratextual Gloss: the interpretation placed in the body; (6) Synonymy: the use of different ways to translate the same culture-specific items in order to avoid duplication; (7) Limited universalization: selecting another source culture-specific item which the readers are more familiar with; (8) Absolute universalization: using non-culture-specific items to translate culture-specific items; (9) Naturalization: selecting culture-specific items in the target language to translate the ones in the source language; (10) Deletion: omitting the culture-specific items in the target language; (11) Autonomous Creation: introduction of culture-specific items which the source language does not have.

Theoretical Framework:

One important thing is that translation process starts from the understanding of the source text and then producing the close natural equivalent in target language. Robnenson (2003: 16) stated that "profession translators need to slow down to examine a problematic word, or phrase, or syntactic structure, or a cultural assumption painstaking with a full analytical awareness and its possible solution"

By the way, the various problems of cultural-specific items direct the researcher's attention to the work of students and the translation processes they follow to produce a good translation in the target language

Scholars as Newmark (1988:95) has tried to classify culture-specific items into different categories which make them easily recognizable in any text.

1-Ecolog: a geographical features which includes: Flora (all the plants grow in a particular place or country). Fauna (all animals living in particular area or period in history) plains, hills, winds.

2 -Material culture: include food and drinks: like milk-porridge, apple sauce, whisky, brandy. Clothes: as red coat .Houses and towns. Measuring system: units used in the determination of the size, weight, speed, length, etc.

3- Social culture: work and leisure like: barbecue

4- Organization, customs, activities, procedures, concepts: political, artistic, and religious.

5- Gestures and habits. For example, "shake the head to assent." or "give a thumbs- up to signal ok."

Method of the Study:

a- Sample of the Study

The study involved a sample of 38 undergraduate students majoring in English Department, Faculty of Arts, Thamar University in the second semester of the academic year 2016/2017. It dealt with some culture specific

items that undergraduate students of English face in translation from English into Arabic and their solutions.

b- Instrument of the Study

In this study, a translation test was designed by the researcher to find the various strategies that were employed by the students in translating cultural-specific items. The test consisted of 20 relatively short sentences of cultural items.

c- Data Analysis

The analysis of some culture-specific items are discussed through the following procedures; cultural equivalent, naturalization, (general) sense , classifier, and literal translation (of the meaning).

Cultural Equivalent

It is an easy procedure which is popular and available for many speaker of Arabic language. In the first sentence "**England is the mother of Parliament.**" The word "Parliament" is belong to the material cultural category. The cultural equivalent in Arabic is مجلس الشعب/ مجلس الأمة/ المجلس الوطني

which is perfectly identical to that of the (SL)

expression. One student gave the correct translation by using the exact equivalent of the word "Parliament" to (مجلس الشعب)

Thirty three students gave acceptable translation by using the technique of transcription and naturalization, they translated it into (البرلمان)

On the other hand, four students gave incorrect translation by using meaningless translation into (الدولة الحاكمة/ ام المحادثات/ ام السينمات)

In the second sentence "**During this autumn the British Council has sent eight scholars to study Master in UK to study Master in UK.**" "The British Council" (المركز الثقافي البريطاني) has the same context and function in English and Arabic.

Twenty students gave acceptable translation. They translated it into (المجلس البريطاني)

Eighteen students mistranslated it, using incorrect words. They translated it into (القنصلية البريطانية/ السفارة البريطانية/ البعثة البريطانية/ الجمعية البريطانية)

The third sentence which is a proverb "**As beautiful as a lark**" has an Arabic equivalent (أجمل من البدر/ أحلى من القمر ليلة البدر). Twelve students translated it into (أجمل من القمر) which is a correct translation. Twenty six students translated it incorrectly into (يا لجمال الطير/ جمال يخطف الطير/ جمال كالطير).

Proverbs cannot be translated literary. They should be rendered with care to carry the same cultural conventions in the original proverb. The cultural

item" a lark" was replaced the word (البدر/القمر), students used the technique of cultural substitution.

The fourth sentence is "**It is raining cats and dogs**". It has an equivalent in Arabic (إنها تمطر بغزرة/ إنها تمطر كأفواه القرب). It is common to students so they did not find much difficulty in translating it. Thirty four students gave a correct translation, they translated it to (إنها تمطر بغزارة) Four students give incorrect translation they translated it to

(هناك الكثير من الكلاب والقطة/تهاجم الكلاب القطة/ الجو مشحون بالمشاكل/ الجو سيء ومملوء بالمشاكل)

Table (1) students' performance in translating CSIs concerning cultural equivalent

| NO | sentence | Correct | | Acceptable | | Incorrect | |
|-------|--|---------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | No | Percentage | No | Percentage | No | Percentage |
| 1 | England is the mother of <u>Parliaments</u> | 1 | 2.5% | 33 | 86.8% | 4 | % 10.5 |
| 2 | During this Autumn <u>the British Council...</u> | 0 | 0 | 20 | 52.6% | 18 | 47.3% |
| 3 | <u>As beautiful as a lark</u> | 12 | 31.5% | 0 | 0 | 26 | 68.4% |
| 4 | <u>It is raining cats and dogs</u> | 34 | 89.4% | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10.5% |
| Total | | 47 | 31% | 53 | 35% | 52 | 34% |

The percentage of correct translation reached to 31% while the percentage of acceptable translation reached to 35%. On the other hand, the percentage of incorrect translation reached to 34%.

The cultural equivalent is the easiest, popular for handling culture items, here students failed to give the exact equivalent specially for the items in the first and the second sentence. The reason was the inability to find in Arabic an equivalent for the same cultural item. Students were varied in understanding the proverbs as in the third and fourth sentence. Vinay and Darbelnet, as cited in Munday J.(2001:59) believed that the target language equivalent should "replicate the same situation as in the original, whilst using completely different wording"

Naturalization:

Newmark(1988:82)stated that "this procedure succeeds transference and adapts the SL. word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology(word-forms) of the TL". Here the change will be on spelling of one or more of its letters into target language, as "performancz" in German and "performance" in English.

In the first sentence "**French and England are the official language of the Olympics**" Seven students translated the word "Olympics" to (الألعاب الأولمبية) which is correct translation. Eleven students translated it to

which is acceptable translation because it is widely used all over the world.

Twenty students gave incorrect translation by using such words like (الاولمبيات/الأولمبيات/أولمبيد/ أولمبيين) which are unnaturalness of sound in Arabic.

The second sentence is "**Democracy is a means for the people to choose their leaders.**" "Democracy" is naturalizes and transcribes in Arabic into (الديمقراطية).

This word did not cause much problems for students, because it is popular and widely used by Arabic speakers. Thirty eight students translated it into (ديمقراطية) which is a correct translation.

The third sentence is "**Guava is the queen of fruits**". "Guava" is a new fruit came to environment from Western. The word "guava" is naturalizes and transcribes into Arabic(الجوافة)

It does not caused much problems for the students because they are familiar with this fruit. Thirty eight students translated it into(الجوافة) which is correct translation.

The fourth sentence "**Hercules was the greatest of the mythological Greek heroes.**" English and Arabic share certain names in religion, and history. Therefore, the English names was naturalized into Arabic. "Hercules" was a famous leader and mythological heroes known in both cultural. The name translated to (هرقل). Thirty one of the students translated to (هرقل), which is a correct translation. Seven students gave incorrect translation, they translated it to unnatural names like: (هيروكليس / هيروكليوس/ هيروكلاس)

Table (2) students' performance in translating CSIs concerning naturalization

| NO | Sentence | Correct | | acceptable | | Incorrect | |
|-------|--|---------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | No | Percentage | No | Percentage | No | Percentage |
| 1 | French and England are the official language of the Olympics | 7 | 18.4% | 11 | 29% | 20 | 52.6% |
| 2 | Democracy is a means for the people to choose their leaders | 38 | 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Guava is the queen of fruits | 38 | 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | Hercules was the greatest of the mythological Greek heroes | 31 | 81.5% | 0 | 0 | 7 | 18.4% |
| Total | | 114 | 75% | 11 | 7.3% | 27 | 17.7% |

According to the table, students did not seem to have a particular difficulty in translating culture-specific items as "Democracy", "Guava", and "Hercules" which 100%, 100%, and 81.5% of the students managed to give correct

translation respectively. In the first sentence, only 18.4% of students gave correct translation for the cultural item "Olympics", while the rate of acceptable and incorrect translation reached to 29% and 52.6% respectively. Most of the students were unable to give the correct naturalization word in Arabic for "Olympics" which reflect the absence of mastery of the target language in naturalize some culture- specific items.

General Sense

In this procedure the translator ignores the cultural item, because there is no cultural equivalent in the target language. In the first sentence " **The President has lost the support of Congress**" Here, the word "congress" can be transcript and naturalize in Arabic to الكونجرس (الأمريكي) and it is well-known now for Arabic speakers.

Twenty three students gave a correct transcription by translating it into (الكونجرس)

Fifteen students gave incorrect translation as they used wrong word like (الاجتماع/ الجماهير/ الأعضاء) which were far away from the meaning of the word "Congress"

The same thing applied to the second example "**The Privy Council is a group of important people in Britain who advice the king or queen on political affairs.**" Five students translated ("The Privy Council"

(مجلس الملكة الخاص/المجلس الملكي الخاص). They translated it into its sense in Arabic because there were no equivalent in Arabic.

Twenty eight students gave acceptable translation by translated it to (المجلس السري/ المجلس الاستشاري/ المجلس الخاص)

which sound like the (SL) item.

Five students gave incorrect translation by using a random answers to (خصوصية المجلس/ مجلس الشورى/ الخصوصية القنصلية) which tell us that they did not know the meaning of this cultural item. The problem in translating this cultural item lies in the inability of students to find the close cultural item in target language.

In the third sentence "**Bullfight is popular in Spain, in which a person fights and kills a bull**", the word "Bullfight" was linked directly to Spain and Spanish culture. It cannot be acceptable by Arabic readers who mainly view it as act of harshness, not sport. The Arabic version for this cultural items was (مصارعة الثيران). Thirty five students translated it correctly to (مصارعة الثيران/قتال الثيران) Three students gave incorrect translation by using such words like (بول فايت/ المصارعة/ لعبة)

The fourth sentence was " **A paddy field is a field in which rice is grown in water.** Eight students translated the item "A paddy field" to (حقل الأرز)

which is correct translation. On the other hand, thirty students translated it incorrectly to (الحقل السعيد/ حقل بادي/الحقل الواسع) these translations did not reflect the meaning of the cultural item.

Table (3) students' performance in translating CSIs concerning general sense

| NO | Sentence | Correct | | Acceptable | | Incorrect | |
|-------|---|---------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | No | Percentage | No | Percentage | No | Percentage |
| 1 | The President has lost the support of <u>Congress</u> . | 23 | 60.5% | 0 | 0 | 15 | 39.5% |
| 2 | <u>The Privy Council</u> is a group of important people in Britain who advice the king or queen on political affairs. | 5 | 13.2% | 28 | 73.6% | 5 | 13.2% |
| 3 | <u>Bullfight</u> is popular in Spain, in which a person fights and kills a bull. | 35 | 92.1% | 0 | 0 | 3 | 7.9% |
| 4 | " <u>A paddy field</u> is a field in which rice is grown in water. | 8 | 21.1% | 0 | 0 | 30 | 79 % |
| Total | | 71 | 47% | 28 | 18% | 53 | 35% |

The percentage of correct translation reached 47% while the percentage of acceptable and incorrect translation reached 18% and 35% respectively. The table shows the problem faced students is in translating of the cultural item in the four sentence "A paddy field". Students unable to find an equivalent in Arabic and they are not familiar enough with this cultural item.

Classifier :

It is a kind of couplet translation which involves using a combination of two translation processes as a means of solving a cultural problems. Classified explain the unknown cultural expression in simple items.

In the first sentence "**Baseball is a bat-and-ball game played between two teams of nine players**". The word "baseball" transcribed into Arabic with modifying words to explain the meaning of this game. Here, it translated into (لعبة/كرة/ رياضة البيسبول)

Sixteen students gave a correct translation, they translated it into (لعبة البيسبول/كرة البيسبول/ كرة السلة/رياضة البيسبول). Here they used translation triplet (transcription + naturalization + classifier). Twenty students gave acceptable translation by using the process of transcription and naturalization, they translated it into (البيسبول)

Two students did not give any answer for this item, which treated incorrect translation.

In the second sentence "**Steppes are an area in central Asia.**" Two students translated it into (سهل ستبس) which is a correct translation. Eighteen students translated it into (ستبس), it is acceptable because the item is popular for Arabic speaker and it is a famous place in Russia. Eighteen students gave incorrect translation, they used such words like (الوادي/ الصحراء العربية/ الباديات)

In the third sentence "**Rock is a type of popular music that originated in the United State in the 1950s.**" Ten students translated it into (موسيقى الروك) which is a correct translation, they used translation triplet (transcription + naturalization + classifier).

Twenty four students gave acceptable translation by using the process of transcription and naturalization, they translated it into (الروك) and it is a popular music in these days.

Four students gave incorrect translation, they translated it into (الصخرة)

In the fourth sentence "**Sake is a Japanese alcoholic drink made from rice.**" Seven students gave a correct translation. They translated it into (شراب الساكي/ مشروب الكحول)

They used translation triple (translation or transcription + classified + naturalization). Two students gave acceptable translation by using the word of (الخمير)

where this item is a kind of alcohol.

Twenty nine students gave incorrect translation by using such words like (شراب الامل/ جوز الهند/ السيك/ السك/ الساكي)

Table (4) students' performance in translating CSIs concerning classifier

| NO | sentence | Correct | | Acceptable | | incorrect | |
|--------------|---|---------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | No | Percentage | No | Percentage | No | Percentage |
| 1 | <u>Baseball</u> is a bat-and-ball game played between two teams of nine players. | 16 | 42 % | 20 | 53% | 2 | 5% |
| 2 | <u>Steppes</u> are an area in central Asia. | 2 | 5.2% | 18 | 47.4% | 18 | 47.4% |
| 3 | <u>Rock</u> is a type of <u>popular music</u> that originated in the <u>United States</u> in the 1950s. | 10 | 26 % | 24 | 63% | 4 | 11% |
| 4 | <u>Sake</u> is a Japanese alcoholic drink made from rice. | 7 | 18.4% | 2 | 5.2% | 29 | 76.3% |
| Total | | 35 | 22.9% | 64 | 42.1% | 53 | 35% |

The result showed that the percentages of correct, acceptable and incorrect translation reached to 22.9%, 42.1% and 35% respectively. The table shows that students were failed in translating some cultural items as " sake" where

the percentage of incorrect translation reached to 76.3%. The reason is that they were not familiar with this item and it is forbidden in Islamic religion.

Literal translation of meaning:

Sometimes the use of literal translation of meaning is unwillingly applied to translate culture-specific items, because the problem is the difficulty of being understood by the foreign readers.

This kind of translation can be called close or direct translation."It can be described as the best method of literal translation because it translate the real meaning of an expression in its linguistic context , regardless of whether it is direct or indirect, common or uncommon, non-metaphorical or metaphorical use."Ghazala (2008:11)

In the first sentence "**The harvest supper was very popular in late Victorian times.**"

It refers to special meal during the harvest time in the England which has no Arabic equivalent.

Seven students gave a correct translation for the cultural item " The harvest supper they translated it into"عشاء الحصاد",they used literal translation of the meaning."

Thirty one students gave incorrect translation by using different words like "الإنتاج/ المحصول الزائد/ الحصاد الأعظم/ حضارة هارفست /المحاصيل الزراعية الحصاد الموسمي/الحصاد/حصاد العشاء / العشاء المفضل"

They did not reflect the real meaning of the cultural equivalent situation.

In the second sentence "**To put cart before the horse**". Thirteen students translated the proverb into "يضع العربية أمام الحصان" which is correct translation. Twelve students gave acceptable translation by using such expression like "يضع الشخص المناسب في المكان المناسب / يضع الأمور في مكانها المناسب/"

It is a metaphorical translation which convey the real meaning of the proverb. Thirteen students translated it incorrectly into "اشترى الحصان قبل العربية/ الجار قبل الدار/ لا تعجل/ وضع طعام الحصان"

In the third sentence "**German measles is an illness caused by a virus.**" "German measles" is not difficult to understand by Arabic speakers because it is a worldwide disease known to people everywhere. Twenty Three students translated the item to "الحصبة الألمانية", which is a correct translation. Six students gave an acceptable translation by using the word "الحصبة" Nine students gave incorrect translation as "الحصبة البريطانية/الميزلز الألمانية" which were far away from being correct."

In the fourth sentence "**The White House is the official residence of the President of the United States**" The cultural item " The White House " is the easiest one among this group because of its popularity and famous place

in U.S. Thirty seven students translated it correctly into (البيت الأبيض) where they used literal translation of the meaning of individual word. One student gave incorrect translation, he translated it into "الحصان الأبيض" Maybe he misunderstood or confused between "house and horse.

Table (5) students' performance in translating CSIs concerning literal translation of meaning

| NO | Sentence | Correct | | Acceptable | | incorrect | |
|--------------|---|---------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | No | Percentage | No | Percentage | No | Percentage |
| 1 | <u>The harvest supper</u> was very popular in late Victorian times. | 7 | 18.4% | 0 | 0 | 31 | 81.6% |
| 2 | <u>To put cart before the horse.</u> | 13 | 34.2% | 12 | 31.5% | 13 | 34.2% |
| 3 | <u>German measles</u> is an illness caused by a virus. | 23 | 60.5% | 6 | 15.7% | 9 | 23.6% |
| 4 | <u>The White House</u> is the official residence of the President of the United States. | 37 | 97.3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.6% |
| Total | | 80 | 52.6% | 18 | 11.8% | 54 | 35.5% |

The table above revealed that the highest score of correct translation was recorded for the four cultural item "The White House" with 97.3% . On the other hand the highest score of incorrect translation was recorded for the first cultural item, "The harvest supper", with percentage of 81.6%. The total percentages of correct and acceptable translation reached to 64.4% while the percentage of incorrect translation reached to 35.5%. This indicate that most of the students apply the literal translation of the meaning in translating these cultural items into Arabic.

Conclusion :

The study aimed at investigating the difficulties faced by the students of English language, at English Department, Faculty of Arts, Thamar University, Yemen. Selecting (38) participants, both male and female randomly. It was observed that the participants faced various difficulties in process of translation culture-specific items from English into Arabic. It also observed that some difficulties were related to students' unfamiliarity with cultural expression, failure to get the absolute equivalence in target language and lack of knowledge of translation techniques and translation strategies.

Majority of students find it hard to get the equivalent of the culture-specific items that were used in the test. The findings also showed that the students were extremely affected by their cultural, and this realized in their translation. The difference between both cultures, English and Arabic, was the important factor in making translation task hard for translators in general and students in particular. Furthermore, the difficulty showed that the reasons behind that were the absence of cultural consciousness among the students which led to

inappropriate and incorrect translation, and the incompetence of students' mother tongue.

Recommendation

The researcher believes that following recommendation may help in overcoming the difficulties faced by the students in translating culture-specific items;

- 1-Teaching and introducing all translation difficulties and problems in details .
- 2-Paying the attention to the cultural difficulties countered by students in the process of translation.
- 3-Teaching the students the principles of translation from English to Arabic.
- 4-Teaching English language in comparison with Arabic language for the students of English at university level.
- 5- Giving more attention to English style and Arabic style.
- 6- Encouraging the students to consult with other people.
- 7-Helping students to use effective strategies to solve translation problems that they may face while translating in all fields; grammatical, lexical, cultural. Stylistic and phonological problem

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