

THE EFFECT OF INTERLINGUAL AND INTRALINGUAL FACTORS ON COLLOQUIAL ARABIC PROVERBS' TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract:

This paper addresses the effect of interlingual and intralingual on colloquial Arabic proverbs' translation. This qualitative and quantitative study consisted of 6 translation students at the Department of English Language and Literature at Jordan University / Aqaba Branch in Jordan. The sample of the study was selected purposively. The researcher used two research instruments to elicit data from the participants. The data of the research included 10 colloquial Arabic proverbs. The findings of the study showed that interlingual and intralingual factors have both positive and negative effect on the translatability of the colloquial Arabic proverbs at both sentence and text level translation. This study recommended that further future research be conducted in this field.

Keywords: Translation, Interlingual, Intralingual, Colloquial, Proverbs, Source Language and Target Language.

1. Introduction

The process of information and words' translation amongst varied language has become a social demand during the past few decades. Thus, the development of translation field in relation to other multidisciplinary areas in language and linguistics has enabled the communication, translation and transmission of knowledge from one language to another through generation very simple and accessible to every individual (Abu-Ayyash, 2017). Translation as a process of information transmission is highly associated with human beings cultural and social ethics and beliefs. Much research has been conducted in the field of translation by scholars across different academic disciplines. This included areas such as linguistics, anthropology, psychology, literary theory, philosophy, cultural studies and various other disciplines of knowledge, as well as on its own techniques and methodologies (Al-Saggaf et al, 2014). Translation as a process is very demanding field that requires a translator to be knowledgeable and have advanced linguistic skills in addition to being educated. On the contrary, most of the translations in the world are not involved in aspects of literary and cultural translations. They are basically concerned with scientific and technical documents, commercial and industrial transactions, legal documentation, instruction manuals, technical and medical text books, industrial patents, news reports, etc. (Alefian et al., 2017).

Lately, it was noticed that there have been a lot of developments in the field of translation in general. That is, these significant changes have led to minimizing the complexity of linguistic problems in which they became apparent and less ambiguous when transforming a text from the source into the target language. Also, such development and changes have helped in engineering much system related to text translation in which a translator can take a text in any language and generate a perfect translation in any other language without human intervention or assistance (Almadi et al., 2012). In the past few decades, the

demand over the translation has developed and became an urgent need beyond the translator's capacity. Because of the development of social media and other means of communication, there is a drastic increase for information flow worldwide. This has encouraged many academic institutions to provide a lot of efforts for delivering better translation services (Chen et al., 2017).

As a result translation has become a local problem. Translation is not in itself an independent field of pure research. It is an interdisciplinary research that combines different areas in language and linguistics. Generally, translation has many linguistic and cultural problems. These may be related to lexical ambiguity, syntactic complexity, elliptical and 'ungrammatical' constructions, etc. (Elior et al., 2018). In order to avoid these problems, sometimes input texts may be written in a controlled language, which reduces potential ambiguities and restricts the *complexity* of sentence structures.

In addition, such problems may be associated with interlingual and intralingual hindrances when translating a text from one language to another. These problems are very much related to the analysis of the source language sentences into a language-neutral representation, mutual to more than one language (Hamed et al., 2017). Therefore, the translation is achieved through two different steps. The former step is from the source language to the interlingual. The latter is from the interlingual into the target language. In connection, this research attempts to investigate the interlingual and intralingual hindrances of colloquial proverbs translation taking into consideration the obstacles that may face the translators in translating proverbs such as the differentiation in cultural background, the interlinear translation, the ambiguity and multi-meaning of the expression in addition to, the lexical differences and the structural ordering, and trying to focus on the reasons why such a problems can be mentioned for the translators (Houghton, 2014).

Proverbs have been defined differently by many scholars and linguists in the field of language and linguistics. Lamidi (2008:p.61) defined proverbs as "a witty saying that captured the logic, culture, and observation of people. It often evolves from traditional lore, history and religion. Usually, it attributed to elders or ancestors in the society. It is seen as one of the longest surviving artifacts of heritage". This assumed that proverbs are a reflection of diminution in our life whether they are social, cultural, logical, historical or any other sides which determine and make a popular saying to be common one.

It is not easy to get the perfect definition of proverb, but in general there are unchangeable significances and meanings which are unchangeable even by interpreting it amongst languages. Nida (1985) noted that translators should recognize the proverbial concepts in both TL and SL where proverbs have a metaphorical expression. The equivalence of the proverb in translation is crucial in order to get the notion of the proverb from one language into another. Therefore, translations find obstacles in interpreting proverbs from one language to another. Consequently, many reasons stand for the storage of a adequacy to get the proper equivalence in proverbs' translation. According to Cafford (1965) when the lexical substitutes are unavailable in the target language; equivalence is not achieved at all. For specific reasons, the proverb equivalence becomes difficult to be achieved in some cases as will be shown in the next sections. As far as this research is concerned with investigating the effect of interlingual and intralingual on colloquial Arabic proverbs' translation; much research has been conducted to discuss the problems and difficulties of translating colloquial Arabic proverbs that encounter translators in this regard.

2. Statement of the Problem

English is taught worldwide as a foreign or a second language whereby learners are estimated to master all the four basic language skills i.e. reading, listening, speaking, and writing (Zidan et al., 2016). In Jordan, it is the medium of instruction at schools and universities in both private and public sectors. But, most of the English language learners in Jordan encounter problems translating cultural equivalence from Arabic into English language (Abu-Ayyash, 2017).

One of the major difficulties is associated with the interpretation of context issues related to the background of the source language. These English learners who have already studies translation and EFL

courses for many years at university level are still incompetent and unable to translate colloquial proverbs from Arabic into English language. This may be associated with many reasons such as the translation curriculum which is imposed by decision makers; requiring translation students to adopt specific traditional method to teach translation (El-Gayyarat et al., 2016). That is, the major translation problems of colloquial Arabic proverbs are related to those learners of translation in Jordan complain about are those related to the translators inability to find proper equivalence to achieve well-translated text in English language.

Similarly, Alefan et al., (2017) claimed that Jordanian translation students encounter difficulties when they attempt to translate colloquial proverbs from the Arabic language into English language. They believe that Jordanian translation learners at university level are incompetent in translating colloquial proverbs because they face difficulty finding equivalence. Honek (1997: p.130-135) classifies proverbs and their figurative types into five types of figurative proverbs: synecdoche, metaphoric, metonymic, hyperbolic, and paradoxical. Moreover, the literal meaning of the proverb differs from the figurative meaning. It is, however, hoped that this study which investigates the interlingual and intralingual hindrances of colloquial proverbs translation by English Language and Literature students at Jordan University in Jordan for the academic year 2018 will shed some light on the translation that Jordanian university students face.

4. The Research Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the effect of interlingual and intralingual on colloquial Arabic proverbs' translation.
2. To investigate the extent in which lexical differences and structural ordering affect the translation of colloquial Arabic proverbs from interlingual and intralingual point of view.

5. Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of this research, this study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the effect of interlingual and intralingual on colloquial Arabic proverbs' translation?
2. To what extent lexical differences and structural ordering affect the translation of colloquial Arabic proverbs from interlingual and intralingual point of view?

6. Methods

This qualitative and quantitative research uses two different approaches. In the first place, the text analysis consists of 10 colloquial Arabic proverbs that were provided to 4th year translation students at Jordan University (Aqaba) in a well formed text. Only 6 translation students from the Department of English Language and Literature were selected for the purpose of this study. The participants were selected purposively during the first semester for the academic year 2018.

The second research instrument that was used for data elicitation from the participants was the semi-structured interview for the 6 students as translators. The interview was constructed to conclude the translators' perceptions and point of views concerning their treatment of colloquial Arabic proverbs' translation from Arabic (SL) into English (TL) as well as achieving the equivalence of these proverbs. Briefly, this research used two instruments for collecting data, the first mentioned is the Translation Test for the participants, and the other instrument is the Interview Technique with the translators.

7. Discussion and Findings

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of interlingual and intralingual on colloquial Arabic proverbs' translation. The study also sought to explore the perceptions of Jordanian translation learners on the difficulties and problems of translating colloquial Arabic proverbs through conducting interviews and using textual analysis. The results of statistical analyses in Table 1 display the finding of the analysis related to the translation test.

In addition, some statistics have been analysed based on the translation of the participants to the

chosen proverbs. The frequency in translating the proverbs differs when comparing the percentage of the correct answers with the wrong ones whether at the sentence or text level as depicted in Table 1 in the next section. In translating these proverbs, it can be assumed that the percentage of adequacy in translating the colloquial Arabic proverbs at sentence level was low and the range of the correct answers was about 7% as minimum and 27% as maximum and 2 to 9 frequencies, whereas it was about 73%-83% in the wrong answers with 21 to 24 frequencies'. This shows that it is sophisticated for the translators to translate the proverbs separately without referring to the context especially when handling with new proverbs that never dealt with before. Contrariwise, the percentages of the correct answers was greater in translating the proverbs at text level, whilst the percentages of the correct answers varied between 53%-90% at text level showing that the performance of the participants clearly improved compared with their performance at sentence level. Consequently, participants who provided no answer at sentence level varied from 0 to 3 (0% to 10%) and those at text level ranged from 0 to 1 (0% to 3%) as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The Frequencies and Percentages of Colloquial Arabic Proverbs

Proverb	Sentence Level				No Answer		Text Level				No Answer	
	Correct Translation		Wrong Translation				Correct Translation		Wrong Translation			
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
1	7	23%	23	77%	0	0%	18	60%	12	40%	0	0%
2	5	17%	25	83%	0	0%	17	56%	13	44%	0	0%
3	4	13%	24	80%	2	7%	20	67%	10	33%	0	0%
4	8	27%	22	73%	0	0%	19	63%	11	37%	0	0%
5	6	20%	23	77%	1	3%	21	70%	9	30%	0	0%
6	2	7%	25	83%	3	10%	18	60%	11	37%	1	3%
7	9	30%	21	70%	0	0%	23	77%	7	23%	0	0%
8	8	27%	22	73%	0	0%	22	73%	8	27%	0	0%
9	3	10%	24	80%	3	10%	16	53%	13	44%	1	3%
10	8	27%	22	73%	0	0%	24	80%	6	20%	0	0%

In reference to Table 1, the analysis of data included 10 different colloquial Arabic proverbs. For instance, the proverb *a cat may look at a king* was translated by 23% of the participants correctly using a literacy translation as: *ما حدا أحسن من حدا* (الجميع متساوون بالحقوق والواجبات). Whilst, 77% of the participants have translated this proverb literally without getting the meaning of this proverb as: *القطعة تنظر إلى الملك* (using literal translation. This did not convey the real meaning of the proverb is lost and this make the meaning has no sense and there is a mistake in the equivalence of the proverb. In the other side of translation we can see that the percentage of the correct answers has increased to be 60% in translation at text level which prove that there is a motivation occurred to improve the translation outcomes which is the context that helped the translators.

In translating proverb *two a city that parleys is half gotten*, 83% of the participants have literally translated this proverb such as: *المدينة التي تفاوض على الاستسلام نصف مأخوذة* which make no sense in this translation, 17% of them provided a correct translation as: *لا تساو على حقوقك* at sentence level; whilst level 56% of the respondents gave a correct translation at text level. This indicates an improvement in the translators' performance.

Likewise, 13% of the participants provided correct answers in translating the third proverb *a*

creaking door hangs long on its hinges which was of the Arabic equivalence (الباب المخلوع يطول على مفصليه) whereas 7% of the respondents gave no answer assuming that no equivalent translators has found. In the other side 80% gave wrong rendering of the proverb such as (المريض يطول عمره). This average of the correct translation of 67% among the respondents gave the correct equivalence at discourse level such. In this case the participants find difficulties to get the correct equivalence since there are some reasons that stand against finding the right equivalence. These reasons will be mentioned in the following section of the study.

Another insufficient percentage of the correct rendering occur in the fourth proverb *a hard nut to crack* which incorrectly translated by 73% of the respondents as (بندق قاس على الكسر); while just 27% have correctly translated this proverb. At discourse level 63% gave the correct answer of the proverb as (شخص صعب المراس). In the proverb *a nod from a lord is a breakfast for a fool* in this proverb 20% of the translation at sentence level gave wrong equivalence as (هزة رأس الغني فطور الفقير) whereas 77% of the rendering was wrong as 3% never gave translation. At discourse level the wrong answers have reduced to be 30% while 70% of the participants have given the correct equivalence as (الناس مراتب).

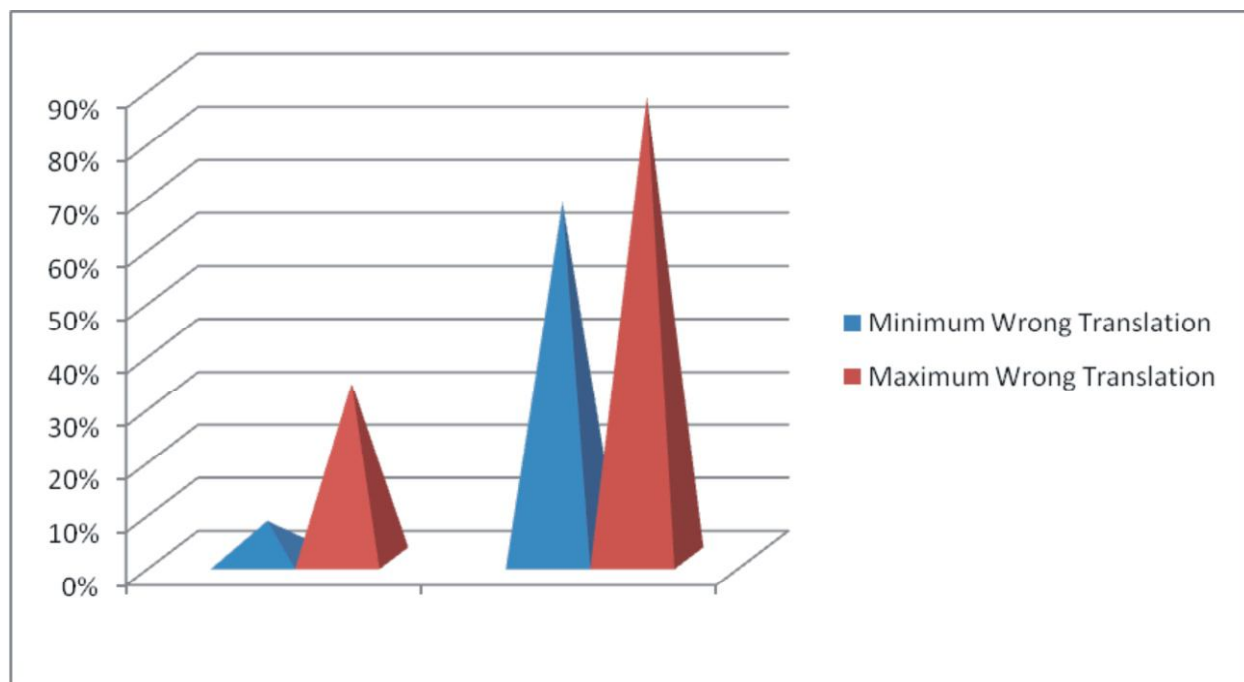
The proverb *a rolling stone gathers no moss* just 7% of the translation was correct where 10% gave no translation. But most of the participants (83%) translated the proverb wrongly as (الحجر المتدحرج لا يجمع الطحالب) which gives no sense in the reader's perspective. But when dealing with the previous proverb at text level, 60% of the participants correctly did the translation as (كثير النط قليل الصيد). Conversely, 37% of them provided wrong answers even when putting them in context. This proves that sometimes some proverbs are difficult to find its equivalent depending on interlingual and intralingual reasons.

The seventh proverb *a round peg in a square hole* 30% of the participants found the right equivalence of this proverb even at sentence level, whereas 70% of them rendered the proverb wrongly as (الإسفين الدائري في الثقب المربع) reporting a high percentage of the participants. On the other hand 77% of the translation for the proverb (الرجل المناسب في المكان غير المناسب) was correct as participants provided the right equivalence. This increase in the percentage of responses refers to the dependency on the context. In proverb eight *wonder lasts but nine days* at sentence level reported that 73% of the participants rendered wrongly and could not provide the proper equivalence as (الأعجوبة تدوم تسعة أيام فقط) as just 27% of them translated the proverb correctly, whilst 73% of the participants showed correct translation at text level as (بكر اذيب الثلج ويبان المرج).

In this proverb it was difficult for the participants to find the right equivalence: *a word spoken is past recalling*. This is because 80% of them rendered the proverb literally at sentence level as (الكلمة هي) (الرجل يربط من لسانه). Comparison this with the correct equivalence at text level as (استعادة شيء من الماضي). 53% of the translation was done correctly. This indicated that a very low percentage of the participants proved that this proverb is somehow difficult to find equivalence.

Finally, in the tenth proverb *advice when most needed is least heeded* the researcher found some difficulties to collect a standard literal translation because there were many ways of translating this proverb by the participants. But about 73% of the participants wrongly translated the proverbs and just 27% of them did that correctly. On the contrary, 80% of the participant found the correct equivalence with the help of the context translating this proverb as (النصيحة كانت بجمال).

Figure. 1 depicts the percentage of the wrong and correct translation of the colloquial Arabic proverbs by the translators.

Figure.1: The Percentage of Wrong and Correct Translation of the Proverbs at Text Level

Based on the finding of the translation test provided by the students (translators) at Jordan University, it is concluded that the percentage of the adequacy in translating the colloquial Arabic proverbs into English is variable where the adequacy to find the proper equivalence is low in the translation at sentence level compared to text level. So, this difference must be clarified in order to understand the motives that led to such a difference in the translation outcomes. This is of course, not from the researcher perspective but from the translators' perspective. For this sake the researcher has already interviewed the students as translators in progress.

8. Conclusion

The findings of the analysis of the translation test and the interview showed that interlingual and intralingual factors affect the translation of colloquial Arabic proverbs either negatively or positively depending on the context either on sentence or text level.

Generally, the participants' inability to produce incorrect translation may unanimously ascribed this to the following reasons; the diversity in the cultural background between the target language and the source language; the shortage of knowledge in the source language by the translators which leads to insufficient understanding of the proverb where wrong translation appears as a result; the strategy of using literal translation is likely to be used by the translators when there is a gap between the target and source languages and the in proverb translation; the inability of the translators to find the proper equivalence in the target language; some of the proverbs in source language have no equivalence in the target language; some of the proverbs have some expressions that have no equivalence in the target language; most of the proverbs cannot be understood separately at sentence level, but it has clearer meaning at text level; the multi-meaning of some expression that cause confusion to the translators and mislead the translators to get the proper meaning in the context; the ambiguity of the meaning in some proverbs leads to wrong translation; the grammatical order in some proverbs deceives the translators to give wrong translation because of this disordering; the insufficient exposure of the translators to the source languages' communities, culture, religion, and the other sides of the source language which has an effect on the

meaning of certain proverb or expression and finally the effect of the interlingual and intralingual factors on translators' knowledge and understanding of the proverbs.

In this study the researcher concentrated on the proverb translation and the problems that face the translators in this matter. In trying to make a difference there is comparison conducted between the translation of proverb at sentence level and discourse level which showed findings that proved the variation in the adequacy to find the proverb equivalence. The percentage of the adequacy in proverbs translation at sentence level was low, where it showed a higher percentage in adequacy at discourse level. Consequently, the findings proved that the proverb translation at sentence level is much more difficult for the translators for many reasons that have mentioned above. In connection with the discussion of the findings, this study recommends the following:

1. The learner of the language or the translators must have a well knowledge of the source language and the proverbs in this language.
2. The translator must know the background of the source language whether it is social, cultural, religious habitual or the other sides of the source language background that affect the outcomes of the translation.
3. It's essential for the translator or the learner of the source language to get a sufficient exposure to the source language, considering that the language is a way of communication which can be variable depending on the communities of the source language which can be different from the target language.
4. The translators must be aware of the proper use of translation techniques since the most adequate technique is the literacy one, where the literal technique is beneficial in proverb translation but the least.

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