

Strategies Adopted When Translating Culture-Specific Concepts in Naguib Mahfouz's Palace Walk: A case study of Students at the Faculty of Al Alsun, SCU

Dr. Nihal Hassan Abdel Aziz^(*)

Abstract

The translation of culture-specific concepts represents one of the paramount challenges encountered by translators, as they result in a potential source of untranslatability. The primary concern of the current study is to identify the main strategies employed by second-year students in the Department of English, Faculty of Al Alsun, Suez Canal University, when attempting to translate culture-specific concepts (CSCs) in Naguib Mahfouz's "Palace Walk" into English. Also, the study aims to assess the accuracy of their target translations. The sample of the study comprised 100 students enrolled in the second year at the Faculty of Al Alsun. The students study literary translation, and were asked to translate (15) extracts from Palace Walk, including CSCs arising from different bases: religious base, food items, and cloth items. The strategies employed by the students were analyzed in light of Mona Baker's (2011) Taxonomy of Translation Strategies. The results of the study show that the second-year students faced obstacles when translating the CSCs. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that the students applied different strategies when rendering the CSCs into English, as follows: the strategy of transliteration (alone) was applied by the majority of the study sample, and it came in first place. The strategy of transliteration and paraphrasing together got second place. The strategy of omission came in the third place, and it was used by a large number of students who ignored the importance of the CSCs, as they represent the heritage of the source language. The strategy of literal translations came in the penultimate order. The strategy of translation using a superordinate term came in last place. Applying transliteration and paraphrasing together helped convey the correct meaning, while transliteration alone and literal translation did not convey the meaning. So, this study recommends: 1- integrating the most prominent translation theories of literary translation in the curriculum of literary translation, 2- specifying a part in the academic course to address the potential obstacles encountered when translating a literary text, 3- providing students with the strategies of translation, 4- conducting further research to identify tother hindrances faced when translating literary texts.

Keywords: *Culture-Specific terms, Obstacles of Translation, Strategies of Translation, Baker's (2011) Taxonomy of Translation strategies, Palace Walk by Naguib Mahfouz.*

^(*) Lecturer in Translation, Faculty of Al Alsun, Suez Canal University

ملخص

تمثل ترجمة المفاهيم الخاصة بالثقافي أحد أبرز التحديات التي تواجه المترجمين، إذ تعد مصدرا محتملا لعدم قابلية الترجمة. نهدف الدراسة الحالية الى تحديد الاستراتيجيات الرئيسية التي يطبقها طلاب الفرقة الثانية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، بكلية الألسن - جامعة قناة السويس، عند ترجمة المفاهيم الثقافية في رواية "بين القصرين"، للأديب العالمي نجيب محفوظ، إلى اللغة الإنجليزية. كما تهدف الدراسة الى تقييم دقة الترجمات من النص الأصلي الى اللغة المستهدفة. تكونت عينة الدراسة من مائة طالب مقيدين في الفرقة الثانية - بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية - بكلية الألسن بجامعة قناة السويس. قام الطلاب بترجمة خمسة عشرة مثالا من رواية "بين القصرين" حيث يشتمل كل مثال على احدى المفاهيم الثقافية والتي تنشأ من أسس الدين أو الغذاء أو الملبس. قامت الباحثة بتحليل الاستراتيجيات التي استخدمها الطلاب عينة الدراسة في ضوء منهج منى بيكر (٢٠١١) لاستراتيجيات الترجمة. أظهرت النتائج أن الطلاب استخدموا استراتيجيات مختلفة عند ترجمة المفاهيم الثقافية الى الإنجليزية كما يلي: جاءت استراتيجية "النقل الحرفي / Transliteration" في المرتبة الأولى، يليها استراتيجية "النقل الحرفي المتبوع بشرح Transliteration+ Paraphrasing/ Translation by"، ثم جاءت استراتيجية "الترجمة بالحذف الترجمة Translation by Omission/"، ثم يليها "استراتيجية الكلمات العامة أو الفوقية أو Translation using a Superordinate word"، ثم جاءت استراتيجية "المكافئ الوظيفي Functional equivalent /"، ثم جاءت استراتيجية الترجمة الحرفية / Literal Translation في المركز الأخير. وتوصلت الدراسة الى أن استراتيجيتي "الترجمة بالنقل الحرفي المتبوع بشرح" و "استراتيجية المكافئ الوظيفي" كانتا الأكثر فاعلية على نقل معاني النص المصدر الى اللغة المستهدفة. لذلك توصي الدراسة الحالية بتطوير المناهج الدراسية لتشمل نظريات الترجمة الأدبية واستراتيجياتها المتنوعة. كما توصي الدراسة بإجراء أبحاث أخرى في الترجمة الأدبية لبحث الإشكاليات الأخرى المتعلقة بها.

1.0.Introduction:

In order to have an effective intercultural communication, the translator should understand the lexis and culture of the source text, and he should render them successfully into the target culture. This can be achieved if the translator has a strong awareness of cultural diversity phenomena (Novakov, 2016). Language is deeply intertwined with culture. Understanding the target culture and the cultural context confirms that the translated text conveys the intended meanings of the source text avoiding misunderstandings because it preserves the tone and spirit of the source text through the choice of words, it fosters better communication, it avoids cultural blunders such as using improper language that may contradict with the social norms, it shows how certain language represented in its words, idioms, and expressions can be utilized by its speakers to convey certain meanings. These factors can influence the success or failure of communication across cultures at both linguistic and cultural levels (Deka, 2020).

1.1. Statement of the Problem:

The translation of the cultural-specific concepts in literary works poses significant challenges, particularly when rendering the nuances and complexities of cultural references from one language to another. Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Bayn al-qasryn", and which is translated into English as "Palace Walk", is a seminal work of Arabic literature which is rich in the cultural concepts that are deeply rooted in Egyptian culture. Despite its significance, the translation of the cultural terms in "Palace Walk" has not been thoroughly examined and the strategies employed when rendering these terms have not been systematically analyzed. Thus, this study aims to investigate the translation strategies adopted by the second- year students at the Faculty of Al Alsun when translating these cultural terms from Arabic into English, with focus on identifying the challenges, and accuracy of their translations. So, this study will hopefully contribute to a deeper understanding of the nuances faced and the ideal strategies to overcome this.

1.2. Significance of the Study:

It is often the case that translators of literary texts are challenged with CSCs that may arise from either cultural or linguistic bases. These difficulties are either omitted or disregarded, or neutralized or replaced with inaccurate words because these terms are either unknown or unlexicalized in the target language. That's why translators sometimes consciously or unconsciously perform these translation practices, which produce inaccurate target translations that are inaccessible to the target reader. So, this study seeks to identify the translation strategies applied by the second-year students who study literary translation and to indicate the most effective translation strategies to use in order to overcome the problem of untranslatability, which is encountered when rendering the CSCs from Arabic into English.

1.3. Objectives of the Study:

The current study aims to:

- 1- Identify the strategies adopted by the second-year students at the faculty of Al Alsun (SCU) when rendering the culture-specific concepts (CSCs) in Naguib Mahfouz's Palace Walk.
- 2- Reveal the extent of accuracy of the target translations of the CSCs in light of Baker's (2011) Taxonomy of Translation Strategies.
- 3- Indicate the most effective translation strategies to be used when rendering the (CSCs) in a literary text.

1.4. Questions of the Study:

The current study aims to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the strategies adopted by the second-year students at the faculty of Al Alsun (SCU) when rendering the culture-specific concepts (CSCs) in Naguib Mahfouz's Palace Walk?
- 2- What is the extent of accuracy of the target translations of the CSCs in the light of Baker's (2011) Taxonomy of Translation Strategies?
- 3- What are the most effective translation strategies to be used when rendering the (CSCs) in a literary text?

1.5. Data of the Study:

The current study derives its data from the following:

- A- Palace walk (1965), an Arabic masterpiece novel, written by Naguib Mahfouz was used as the corpus of this study. The researcher extracted the culture specific terms arising from: food, religion, and outfit bases and categorized them according to their types into three tables, each of them comprises five cultural terms. Thus, the total number of the cultural terms, representing the samples of this study are reached fifteen cultural terms as follows:

- *Cultural terms arising from food bases:*
 Basbousa /بسبوسة- Molokhiya /ملوخية- Khushaf and Qata'if /خشاف وقطائف-
 Moghat /الموغات- /مهلبيةمهلبانMalban /القشطة ومهلبية وملبن Qishta, Mehalbya, and
- *Cultural terms arising from religious bases:*
 As-Salamu Alykum /السلام عليكم- Al Mawlid /المولد- Ashraa /عاشوراء
 Al Dhikr /الذكر- Madhab Al Hanbali /الحنبلية
- *Cultural terms arising from outfit bases:*
 Malaya- /ملاءة- Jilbab /جلباب- Abaayeh /عباءة- Jubba wa Qaftan /جبة وقفطان-
 Tarboush /طربوش

B - Two monolingual dictionaries

- 1- The Arabic-Arabic dictionary: (El Mogam El Wageez) was utilized in order to search for the different meanings of the words in Arabic. This monolingual dictionary was adopted to help the researcher know about the several precise meanings in the source language.
- 2- The English- English dictionary: (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary: Third Edition). The translator depended on this monolingual dictionary to have the exact meaning of the words in the target language.

1.6. Methodology of the Study:

- 1- This study adopts the descriptive analytical approach, which analyzes the target translations of the second-year students in light of Baker's (2011) Taxonomy of Translation Strategies, which is proposed to overcome the problem of untranslatability.
- 2- (100) students enrolled in the second year at the department of English at the faculty of Al Alsun, who study literary translation, during the academic year 2023-2024, were asked to translate (15) extracts, including CSCs, from Naguib Mahfouz's Palace walk and to mention the strategy adopted to translate these CSCs involved in each extract.
- 3- The students translated the extracts showing the strategies adopted.
- 4- The target translations of the students were analyzed to identify their accuracy.
- 5- The translation strategies adopted by the students were analyzed in light of Baker's (2011) taxonomy of translation strategies.
- 6- Students' target translations were classified in the order they were used, from the greatest to the least used.
- 7- The target translations were assessed in terms of the extent of their success in rendering the meaning of the source text term and to make it obvious for the target reader.
- 8- In light of the results, the current study proposes some recommendations.

1.7. Review of Literature on Translation and its studies:

1.7.1. Obstacles of Culture and Translation:

Translation theorists have observed many hindrances in relation to intercultural translation. As a result, they have widely explored the cultural differences among languages and facilitated the development of translation procedures in order to overcome these hindrances. Culture signifies an interwoven network of different aspects of life. Theorists thus realize that culture is a very complex and debatable issue because "all human groups are cultured, though in vastly different manners and grades of complexity". In addition, it has been noted that such complexity lies in the fact that what is considered culturally acceptable to one group of people can be regarded as totally bizarre and vague to another. For instance, "In the Muslim Arab society, it is lawful for a man to marry up

to four wives if he can treat them equally and fairly, whereas in the Christian West, polygamy is prohibited" Polygamy, thus, is strange and unacceptable to the people of the West because normally it never happens in their society and it is by no means part of their culture (Bahmeed, 2008).

As for translation, the differences among cultures represent an area of difficulty, and the degree to which it depends on whether the languages involved are close or remote culturally. This suggests that translation between languages of distant cultures is more difficult than carrying out translation between languages that are culturally related or similar. This does not imply that translation between languages that are culturally related or similar is a direct activity. Indeed, it represents some serious pitfalls for translators as well, though to a lesser degree compared with translation between languages of different cultures (Munday, 2011).

The difficulties encountered when translating are often unavoidable, simply because the culturally emotive terms of the message lose some or all of their connotative meaning when rendered by translators. In other words, the meaning of some linguistic elements arrives at the readers of the target language with partial or total loss. As a result, they do not elicit the expected response as they do from source language speakers. In this case, the translator should make a compensation to make the meaning more accessible. "When the languages involved are so distant that the same figures do not exist in one or the other, different techniques for the translation are adopted to achieve a partially successful rendition, compensation is nearly always resorted to" (García, 1996: 64).

Ilyas (1989: 124) provided the word "moon" as an example. Suppose one comes across the English term "moon" in text, which is to be translated into Arabic. The term "moon" refers to any natural satellite of a planet. The difficulty lies in the fact that, in English, it stands for or carries negative connotations (bad mood, depraved disposition, and melancholy), but in Arabic, it is a symbol of beauty and has other negative associations. The translator in such a case has either to add extra material in his target text version in order to make such implied connotations obvious in the target language, or resort to explanatory footnotes to compensate for the lost connotations in his target text. Moreover, according to Ilyas (1989: 124), when the translator comes across the obstacle of not finding a corresponding target language equivalent for the source language item, the translator usually makes use of a functional equivalent item, which may have an equivalent effect or function in the target culture. Ilyas (1989: 124) stated that a single concept can be transferred using several functional equivalents if the translator cannot find a direct lexical equivalent. For him, the notion of "whiteness" can be expressed in English using the phrase "as white as snow," and it can be very accessible to the English people who are familiar with snow. Also, it can be rendered effectively using another non-corresponding equivalent but functionally equivalent target language expression that would match the source language term. This can be achieved by rendering it using: "as white as cotton", or "as white as milk" for instance, depending on the familiarity of the

target reader with the chosen elements, since both accomplish and convey the concept of "whiteness" in an expressive way. This is referred to as "Dynamic Equivalence" (Nida, 1986).

Dynamic equivalence could be used when translating idioms or proverbs, which are rooted in the source culture. The translator can apply different translation strategies, which confirm the accurate rendition of the idiom or the proverbial expressions to the target, maintaining the cultural context. Translators can successfully transfer these idioms and proverbs from Arabic into English if they are aware of both cultures and the appropriate translation strategies.

1.7.2. Untranslatability due to culture-specific terms:

Untranslatability takes place when intercultural equivalence does not exist. Intercultural non-equivalence, which can cause untranslatability, occurs when a situational feature is functionally relevant to the source language text, but fully unknown in the target language text in which the TL culture is rooted. The differences in the cultural or linguistic features between the source text and the target text may result in numerous obstacles during the process of intercultural translation. (Catford, 1965).

Winter (1969: 478) indicates that another source of untranslatability can result from the tension between form and meaning. Thus, achieving a full equivalence is challenging, or even impossible. He states:

The system of form and meaning in language A may be similar to that in language B, but it is never identical with it. This statement has a very simple, yet very important corollary: There is no completely exact translation. If an interpretation of reality as formulated in language A does not exist in isolation, but as part of the total system of this language, then its correlative in language B cannot be isolated from the overall system of B, which must be different from that of A.

Winter's claim is related to the translation of text in which form and meaning are closely connected. However, the cultural gap among nations could still be bridged; in recent times, globalization and modern communication technology have helped the world's cultures to get closer and become more accessible. This, of course, helps to enlighten the TL reader and increase his awareness of many concepts that belong to cultures completely alien to his own. Thus, Al-Najjar (1984: 25) states:

The receptor-culture reader may share with the source-culture reader knowledge about the life patterns of the source culture. He may have been informed previously about the source culture. He may have read an anthropological study of the other culture, or may have lived for a certain time with the society of the source culture. The role of the translator is quite complex as he has to decode the SL message and analyze its meaning,

and re-encode it into an equivalent TL message. This process is affected by various factors such as his knowledge, culture, performance, skill, experience, and proficiency to remove the vagueness of the SL to make it obvious in the TL and thus making it comprehensible to the target reader. Thus, the translator should exploit his skill and experience in order to render the untranslatable elements, producing accessible, meaningful target translations. On this basis, translatability can be defined as the process by which an equivalent TL text exists for a particular SL text. On this basis, a particular Arabic cultural item is considered translatable as long as a translator is able to offer an equivalent TL translation.

Buhmeed (2008) provided some examples to reflect the concept of untranslatability. The Arabic language has some lexical terms that have no equivalents in English because what they refer to does not exist in the English-speaking culture. Such items are normally culture-bound terms. From an Arabic-English intercultural translation perspective, examples can illuminate the issue of translatable versus untranslatable terms. These examples include:

صلاة الاستخارة – Slat Al Estkhara), (A prayer asking God for guidance when choosing between two matters).

صلاة الاستسقاء – Salat Al EStesqaa), (A prayer asking God to make it rain).

1.7.3. The Intercultural Communication and Translation:

Hatim (1997) states that intercultural communication and translation seek to spread the acceptance of cultural diversity in different settings and work with and for people of various backgrounds. Identifying how cultural differences are reflected in the source language (SL) and finding ways to properly transfer those differences into the target language (TL) is one of the objectives of translation. Thus, a study is conducted, and the students are asked to translate passages containing culture-specific items (CSIs) from English into Serbian as part of their final exam. The students are given containing CSIs and are asked to render them into Serbian and to pay attention to what these CSIs refer to and what meaning they intend to convey. The study concluded that translating these cultural items is challenging.

Many translation scholars have stressed that the concept of culture is crucial for understanding the importance of culture-specific items in translation. Culture has been defined as a way of life and a complex system of beliefs, values, attitudes, and rules that a group of people shares (Larson 1984). Culture encompasses language, history, social structure, religion, tradition, and daily life of a group, and is reflected in culture-specific features and items in the language (Newmark 1998: 95).

Novakov (2016) believes that, in order to translate the cultural items adequately into the target language or the target culture, the translator not only has to be proficient in both the source language and the target culture. For him, these items reflect the SC, and a successful translation often depends on the translator's ability to use the cultural

approach and think of translation as a process of communication between cultures, as well as between languages. Moreover, the cultural approach involves identifying and understanding culture-bound elements in the SL, and then integrating them in the TL translation using the translator's extra-linguistic knowledge. This approach also involves the translators doing research of their own, using printed and online sources, in a quest for the most adequate translation for the TC audience (Novakov 2016). The importance of the cultural approach cannot be overestimated: through adequate translation and the translators' remarks and explanations, readers are able to understand the communicative purpose of the text, and become familiar with some aspects of the SC and, more often than not, of their own culture (Sentov 2017).

Prčić et al. (2001) indicate that many strategies emerged in order to address the problems arising from the existence of CSIs during the process of translation. The discussions have revolved around the distinction between the main objectives of translation: maintaining the features of the source text as faithfully as possible, keeping the strangeness of the source text, or localizing it into a target culture and making it familiar and accessible to the target audience. These two strategies are usually seen as the opposite ends of a continuum: in Venuti's (1995) terms, foreignization as opposed to domestication of the target text. In this regard, translating CSIs presents a particular challenge: the role of culture-specific content in literary texts is to set them against a specific cultural background, or, as Davies (2003: 72) remarks, to give them an authentic local flavor. Making a text familiar and accessible to the target audience may result in the loss of this authentic flavour. On the other hand, preserving the CSIs of the source text as much as possible might make the target text incomprehensible to the readers.

1.7.4. Cultural untranslatability:

Untranslatability is the incapacity of translation, meaning that the translator is unable to find an equivalent element in the target text. The inability to express an idea in another language is one of the translator's worst problems. As a matter of fact, cultures differ from place to place. Because culture is a unique experience within a limited area, "The more distant the culture is, the more instances of untranslatability found in the text". Therefore, it is important to point out that awareness of the source culture helps in avoiding misunderstandings.

Wilss (1982) states that: "The translatability of a text is guaranteed by the existence of universal categories in syntax, semantics, and the (natural) logic of experience". Should a translation nevertheless fail to measure up to the original in terms of quality, the reason will (normally) not be an insufficiency of syntactic and lexical inventories in that particular target language, but rather the limited ability of the translator in regard to text analysis.

Catford (1965) distinguishes two types of untranslatability: linguistic and cultural. Linguistic untranslatability refers to the inability to find an equivalent of a specific utterance in the target language. However, the cultural untranslatability occurs when it is related to a certain part of culture that cannot be translated into the target language. In the case of this cultural medium, the translator has to represent the foreign aspect of the other to the target readers.

1.8. Theoretical Framework of Baker's (2011) Taxonomy of Translation Strategies:

The source-language word may express a concept that 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 concepts'. An example of an abstract English concept that is notoriously difficult to translate into other languages is that expressed by the word privacy. This is a very 'English' concept which is rarely understood by people from other cultures. Speaker (of the House of Commons) has no equivalent in languages such as Russian, Chinese, and Arabic, among others. It is often translated into Russian as 'Chairman', which does not reflect the role of the Speaker of the House of Commons as an independent person who maintains authority and order in Parliament. An example of a concrete concept is an airing cupboard in English, which, again, is unknown to speakers of most languages. In order to overcome this dilemma, Baker (2011) presents five strategies of translation to overcome the obstacle of untranslatability. Baker (2011) provides a set of strategies that translators can resort to overcome the problem of untranslatability when translating culture-specific terms as follows:

1.8.1. Translation by a Superordinate: (a more general word)

This is one of the commonest strategies for dealing with many types of non-equivalence, particularly in the area of propositional meaning. It works equally well in most, if not all, languages, since the hierarchical structure of semantic fields is not language-specific.

1.8.2. Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word:

The translator could have used a TT phrase, which means, roughly, 'behind the times' and which would have been closer to both the propositional and expressive meanings of the ST term. This, however, would have been too direct, too openly disapproving by Japanese standards. The expressive meaning of archaic is lost in the translation.

1.8.3. Translation by cultural substitution:

This strategy involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target-language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but is likely to

have a similar impact on the target reader, for instance by evoking a similar context in the target culture. The main advantage of using this strategy is that it gives the reader a concept with which he or she can identify something familiar and appealing. On an individual level, the translator's decision to use this strategy will largely

1.8.4. Translation using Paraphrasing:

This strategy is particularly common in dealing with culture-specific items, modern concepts, and buzzwords. Following the loan word with an explanation is very useful when the word in question is repeated several times or has cultural importance in the text. Once explained, the loan word can then be used on its own. The reader can understand it and is not distracted by further lengthy explanations.

1.8.5. Translation using a related word:

This strategy tends to be used when the concept expressed by the source item is lexicalized in the target language but in a different form, and when the frequency with which a certain form is used in the source text is significantly higher than would be natural in the target language.

1.9. The Discussion and Analysis of the Study Samples:

This part tackles the analysis of the target translation (TT) by the second-year students who were asked to translate the cultural terms extracted from Naguib Mahfouz's (Palace Walk). Also, their translations were analyzed in light of Baker's (2011) Taxonomy of translation strategies.

Table (1): Culture-specific Concepts Arising from Food Bases

Culture-specific concepts arising from Food bases
١- خشاف رمضان وقطائفه (ص، ١٩).
٢- ملوخية (ص، ٤٤).
٣- فانتهى الى دكان البسبوسة (ص، ٥٥).
٤- خدك القشطة يا ملبن ... يا حلوة زى البسبوسة، يا مهلبية كمان واحسن، (ص، ٣٣٦).
٥- الموغات المألوفة (ص، ٥٨١).

Analyzing the target translations of the first example: "خشاف رمضان وقطائفه"

As is known, food is an important part of culture, and it becomes problematic to render food items from one culture to another. The translations of the sample of this study varied when translating food terms in Nagib Mahfouz's "Palace Walk" into English. As for the first example, "خشاف رمضان وقطائفه" / Khushaf wa Qata'if/ :

- (52) students used the strategy of "literal translation". So, their translations were "Ramadan's khushaf and Qata'if". This translation is vague and does not make sense for the target reader; in addition, it leaves the reader wondering.
- (19) students applied the strategy of "translating using a superordinate term so they rendered it as "Ramadan's deserts" and "Ramadan's Pastry," which are very general.
- (15) students adopted the strategy of "Omission," so they did not provide any translation for it.
- (14) students managed to search for the cultural substitution or nearest target equivalents. Students in this group rendered the ST item as "compotes" and "doughnuts" for Ramadan". This translation is the most suitable and most acceptable one. In English, "compotes" means" A dessert made of fruit cooked in sugary syrup" and "doughnut" means "a deep-fried piece of dough or batter commonly of a toroidal shape.., filled with jam, custard or cream ".

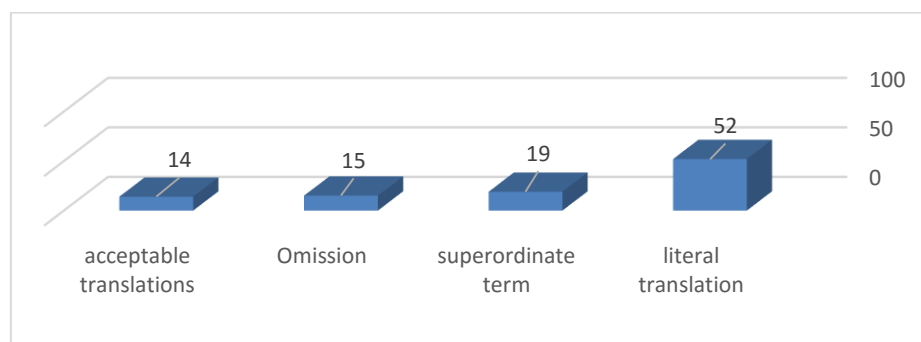


Chart (1): Strategies Applied in the first example: "خشاف رمضان وقطائف"

Analyzing the target translations of the second example: "ملوخية"

The sample of this study provided various translations when translating the second food item in Naguib Mahfouz's "Palace Walk" into English. The item "ملوخية"/ Molokhiya / is a very popular food item in Egypt.

- (٥٥) students adopted the strategy of "transliteration", alone without paraphrasing, so they rendered the ST "ملوخية" into English as "Molokhyai". This TT is still ambiguous and inaccessible for the target reader.
- (١٦) students used the strategy of "literal translation", so they provided the target translation "mallows", and "green mallow leaves". Here, transliteration works because the ST term is lexicalized in English, so the meaning is more comprehensible.

- (٢٩) students applied the strategy of "Transliteration+ paraphrasing" to describe the ingredients of this dish. So the TTs of this group were: "mallow cooked with chicken soup and garlic", "a green plant cooked in rabbit soup to be eaten with rice or bread", "a main dish in Egyptian cuisine made of green vegetables cooked in soup to be eaten with chicken and rice providing acceptable translations. Here, the meaning can be easily understood by the target reader.

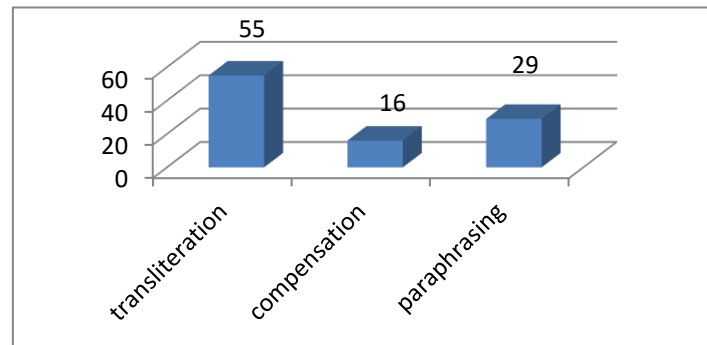


Chart (2): Strategies Applied in the second example: "ملوخية"

Analyzing the target translations of the third example: "فاتتهى الى دكان البسبوسة"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the third food item "البسبوسة" / Al-Basbousa/.

- (٤٢) students adopted the strategy of "transliteration" so they rendered the ST "دكان البسبوسة" into English as "Basbousa shop". The target reader will find this translation ambiguous and unfamiliar.
- (٢٨) Students applied the "strategy of translating using a superordinate". So their translations were: "He finally reached the pastry shop", "He reached the dessert shop", and "He reached the sweets shop. The target terms "pastry", "desserts", and "sweets" are all general terms that include a lot of hyponyms. For example, the term "pastry" is an umbrella term and it means "a baked food made from flour and fat pastes, such as pie, crust, tarts, bear claws, napoleons, puff pastries, etc".
- (١٥) Students rendered this example as "He reached the candy shop".
- (١٥) Students provided the Literal translation as: "He reached the semolina cake shop". This translation is acceptable and conveys the true ingredients of this food item .

Chart (3): Strategies Applied in the third example: "فانتهى إلى دكان البسبوسة"

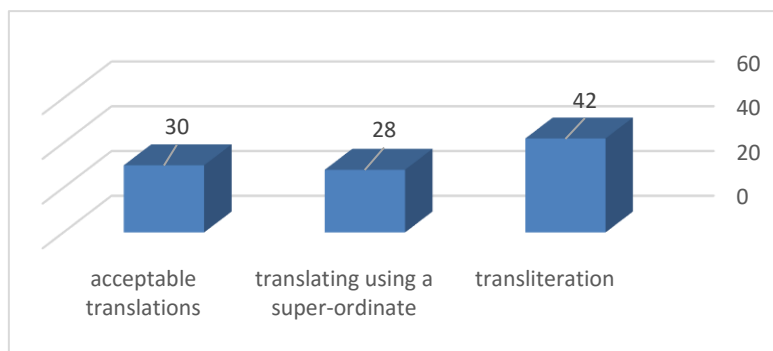


Chart (3): Strategies Applied in the third example: "فانتهى إلى دكان البسبوسة"

Analyzing the target translations of the fourth example:

"خدك القشطة يا ملبن ... يا حلوة زى البسبوسة، يا مهلبية كمان واحسن"

/ Khadek El qishta ya malban ya helwa zay el basbousa, ya mehalbya we ashen Kaman/

This example is problematic as it uses some food items to express the notion of beauty. The sample of this study provided different translations for this example, and the differences emerge from the different interpretations or understanding of the meaning of this example.

- (45) students applied the strategy of "literal translation," which is also known as "word-for-word translation". So, they provided unacceptable translations that did not convey the true meaning of the sentence. The translations like: "your creamy cheeks, you're sweet like desserts, you're like custard and better", "you are as sweet as tart, and you're smoother than pudding", "you've creamy cheeks, you're delicious like candy, and you're better than desserts". These translations are senseless and do not convey the meaning of the ST.

- (28) students used the "strategy of transliteration" so the renditions included: "you've a creamy cheek, you're sweet like basbousa, you're better than mehalabia", "you look like malban, you're basbousa and mehalabia", and "your cheeks seem like cream and milk, you're basbousa, you're malban and even better". Again, these translations are not accurate and do not convey to the target reader the idea of beauty mentioned in the source text.

- (27) students were able to understand the correct meaning of the source text and managed to provide the correct translations in English. Some students rendered the notion of beauty from Arabic into English using "lexical equivalent" and others used "functional equivalents". Their translations were: "you're gorgeous", "you are glamorous", "you're very beautiful", "you're as pretty as snow white", "you're handsome and stunning", and

you're lovely and attractive". The translations of the third group are more accurate and convey the notion of beauty.

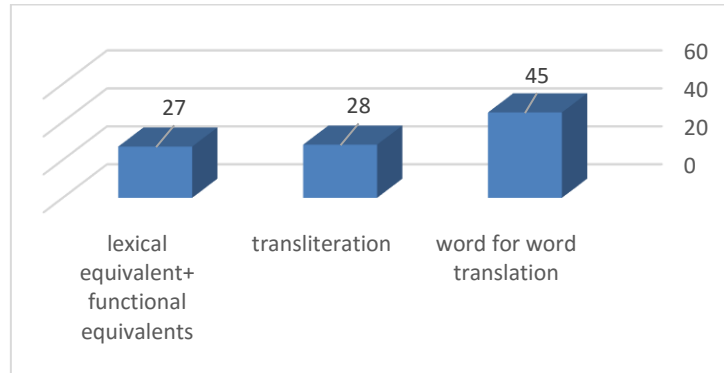


Chart (4): Strategies Applied in the fourth example: " خدك القشطة يا ملين ... "

Analyzing the target translations of the fifth example: "موغات"

The sample of this study provided diverse translations for the ST "موغات" /Moghat/.

- (65) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST term. So their translation was "Moghat".
- (20) students provided inaccurate and irrelevant translations like: "new baby's soup", "broth", "baby's drink", "woman's energy drink", "yellow drink". The translations of the second group are not accurate.
- (15) students applied the strategy of "transliteration + parenthetical paraphrasing" so they provided different translations like: "Moghat (it is a popular drink made for a women after giving birth)", "Moghat (it is a hot beverage that people drink when celebrating the birth of a new baby)", "Moghat (it is familiar drink for the guest of a new baby)", Moghat (ground fenugreek), Moghat (it is a drink for a woman after childbirth as it acts as diuretic", Moghat (it is the fenugreek drink after delivery). The translations of the third group are more acceptable and convey the meaning of the ST term.

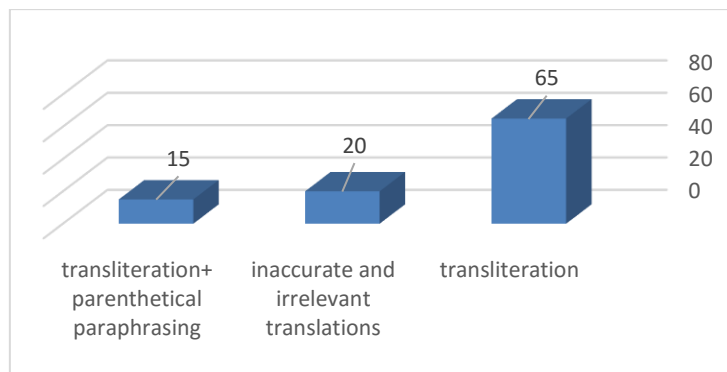


Chart (5): strategies Applied in the fifth example: "موغات"

Table (2): Culture-specific concepts Arising from Religious Bases

Culture-specific concepts arising from Religious bases
١- منذ عاشوراء لم تستمع برؤيتك (ص، ٤٢).
٢- جعلهن بعرائس المولد اشبه (ص، ٧٦).
٣- قال السلام عليكم، ابي (ص، ١٠٧)
٤- مذهب الحنبلية في الدين (ص، ٢١٢).
٥- الذكر (ص، ٢٠١)

Religion is one of the cultural references that represent the core of a culture's belief system. Palace Walk is a narration of the concerns of a middle-class Muslim family in the 60s in Egypt. In the novel, the characters' main religion is Islam. Their sense of what is right and wrong is derived from religion. Some conversations are loaded with religious expressions and allusions. The TT readers might distinguish the religious codes if they have some awareness of the Islamic religion. Otherwise, they can depend on either the translator's notes or explanatory language to comprehend the TT. The two following examples demonstrate the resorted-to strategies in order to translate some religious expressions.

Analyzing the target translations of the first example: "عاشوراء"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the ST term "عاشوراء/Ashuraa."

- (67) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST term. So their translation was "Ashuraa," which provided an unapproachable meaning for the target reader, and it leaves him confused.
- (10) students applied the strategy of "omission," so they provided no translations.
- (23) students adopted the strategy of "transliteration + paraphrasing". So this group provided various translations for the ST term including: "Ashuraa /the tenth of Moharram", "the tenth day of Moharram in Hijri calendar", "Ashuraa/ the religious occasion of the prophet's birth", "Ashuraa /that Islamic occasion celebrated in the 9th of Moharram Month (the first month in the Islamic lunar calendar), "Ashuraa/the 10th day in Moharram month in the Hijiri calendar", "Ashuraa/ an annual religious occasion in the 10th of Moharram", " Ashuraa/ a religious occasion the 10th day Moharram month during which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset". The translations of this group are acceptable and convey the meaning of the source text term.

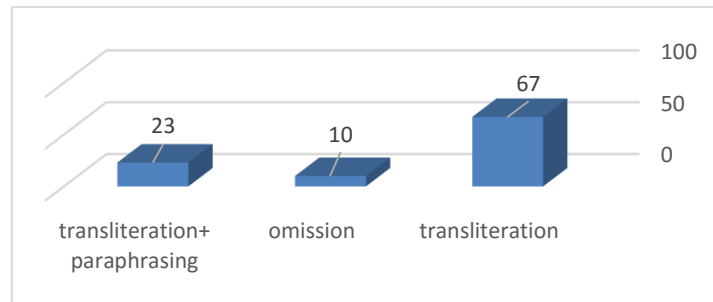


Chart (6): Strategies Applied in the first example: "عاشوراء"

Analyzing the target translations of the second example: "المولد"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the ST term "المولد" / Al Mawlid/.

- (66) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST term. So their translation was "Ashuraa," which provided an unapproachable meaning for the target reader, leaving him confused.
- (13) students applied the strategy of "omission," so it provided no translations.
- (21) students adopted the strategy of " transliteration + paraphrasing" so this group provided translations for the ST term like: " Ashuraa /the tenth of Moharrm", "the tenth day of Moharram in Hijri calendar", "Ashuraa/ the religious occasion of the prophet's birth", " Ashuraa /that Islamic occasion celebrated in the 9th of Moharram Month (the first month in the Islamic lunar calendar), "Ashuraa/ the 10th day in Moharram month in the Hijiri calendar", "Ashuraa/ an annual religious occasion in the 10th of Moharram", " Ashuraa/ a religious occasion the 10th day Moharram month during which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset". The translations of the third group are acceptable and convey the meaning of the source text term.

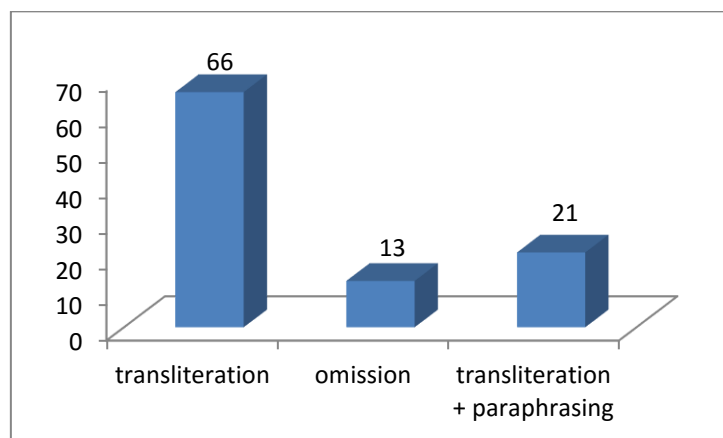


Chart (7): Strategies Applied in the second example: "المولد"

Analyzing the target translations of the third example: "السلام عليكم"

The sample of this study provided three translations for the ST phrase "السلام عليكم" / As-Salamu Alykum/.

- (46) Students applied the strategy of "transliteration" as "Assalamu Alikom".
- (51) students applied the strategy of "functional equivalent", so it provided as "greetings", "Hi", "Hello".
- (3) students adopted the strategy of "literal translation". So, this group provided the translation "Peace be upon you " .

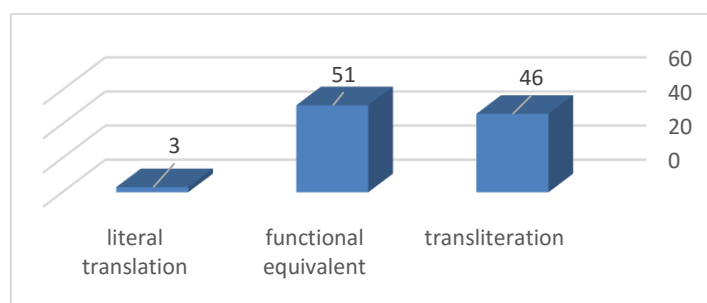


Chart (8): Strategies Applied in the third example: "السلام عليكم"

Analyzing the target translations of the fourth example: "مذهب الحنبلية"

The sample of this study provided diverse translations for the ST phrase "مذهب الحنبلية" / Madhab Al Hanbali/.

- (56) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST phrase, so their translations included: "Hanbali belief", "Hanbali doctrine", "Hanbali Bias", and "Hanbali school". So, their translations are accessible to the target readers because the word "Hanbali" is lexicalized in English as it means "about the Hanbali school of jurisprudence".
- (24) students applied the strategy of "transliteration + paraphrasing". So, their translations included: "Hanbali/ it is a way of thought that refers to Imam Ahmed ibn Hanbali", "Hanbali/ it is a doctrine in the Islamic religion attributed to Ahmed ibn Hanbali", and "Hanbali/ it is a school of thought or a sect in Islam".
- (20) students adopted the strategy of "Omission," so this group provided no translations for the ST phrase.

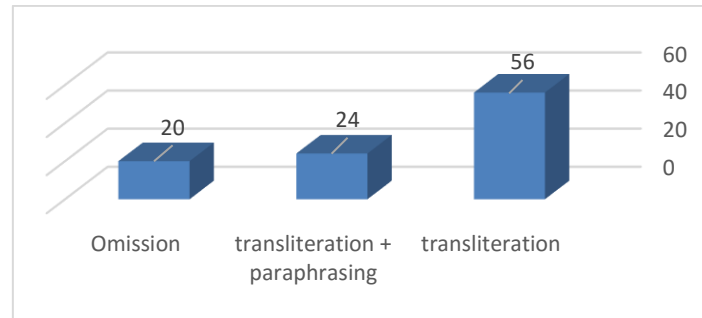


Chart (9): Strategies Applied in the fourth example: "مذهب الحنبلية"

Analyzing the target translations of the fifth example: "الذكر"

The sample of this study provided various translations for the ST term "الذكر" / Al Dhikr/.

- (٥٣)students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST term. So their translation was "Al Dhikr" which provided an unapproachable meaning for the target reader, leaving him confused .
- (٢٧)students applied the strategy of "literal translation," which provided various lexical terms in English, such as: mention, remembrance, invocation, saying, appeal, worshipping, the Sacred Book, the Holy Qur'an, and supplication .
- (٢٠)students adopted the strategy of "transliteration + paraphrasing" so this group provided translations for the ST term like: /Al Dhikr / it is a kind of worship in Islam", / Al Dhikr / it is the repetition of the name of Allah and a kind of a praise of Allah ", and / Al Dhik / a kind of worship in which people praise Allah.

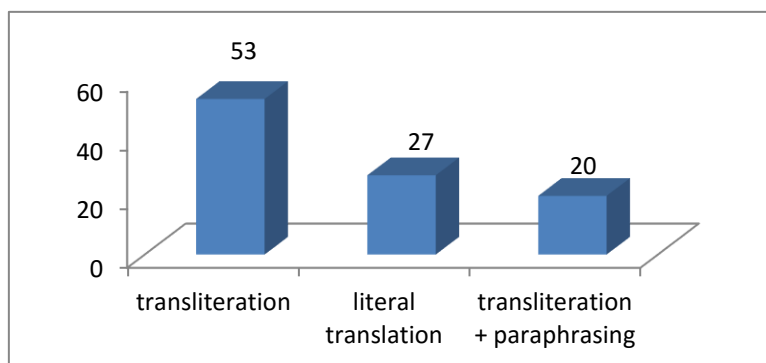


Chart (10): Strategies Applied in the fifth example: "الذكر"

Table (3): Culture-specific concepts Arising from Outfit Bases

Culture-specific concepts arising from Outfit bases
١- وبدا في وقفته طويل القامة يرتدى جبة وقفطان في أناقة (ص٩،).
٢- رفع طرف عبائته ومسح به على وجهه (ص٥٤،)
٣- وكان مرتديا جلبابا (ص٨٤،)
٤- قد انحسر طرف ملائنتها عند اعلى الرأس عن منديل قرمزي ذي اهداب منمنمة (ص٩٣،)
٥- خلع الطربوش (ص٨،).

Clothes represent another CSI. Each piece of clothing has its distinguishing property noun, especially traditional garments. That's why it is problematic to translate these outfits in a way that capture the true description.

Analyzing the target translations of the first example: "جبة وقفطان"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the ST phrase "جبة وقفطان" /Jubba wa Qaftan/.

- (71) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST phrase, so their translations included: "Jubba wa Qaftan". So their translations are not familiar to the target readers.

- (16) students applied the strategy of "transliteration + paraphrasing". So, their translations included: " Qaftan/is a kind of dress open on the front with wide sleeves", "kaftan /is a long-sleeved coat open in the front and tightened by a belt". " Qaftan/ a long tunic with a belt on the waist worn over the Jubba ", " Qaftan/ a variant of a tunic or robe worn in originating in Asia and the Middle East", and " Jubbah / a loose outer garment that has sleeves and covers the body from shoulder down", "Jubba /a Tunisian traditional men's costume with long sleeves worn over clothes.

- (13) students adopted the strategy of "Omission". So, this group provided no translations for the ST items.

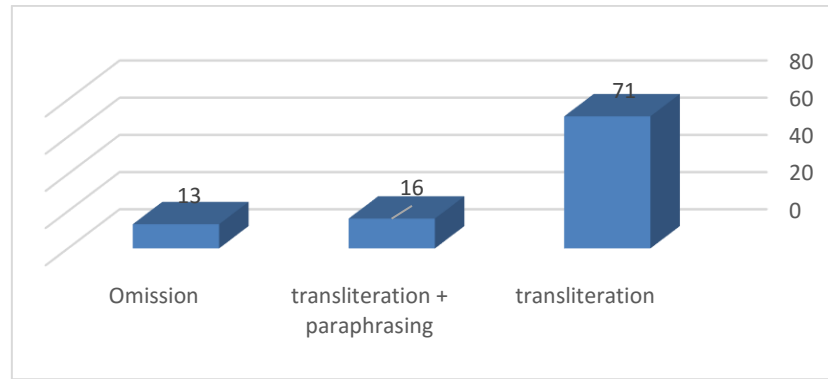


Chart (11): Strategies Applied in the first example: "جبة وقفطان"

Analyzing the target translations of the second example: "عبائه"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the ST phrase "عباءة"/Abaayah/ .

- (49) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST phrase, so their translations included only: "Abaayah". So their translations are not accessible to the target readers.
- (18) students applied the strategy of "transliteration + paraphrasing". So, their translations included: "Abaayah/ a loose outer garment without sleeves worn by men", "Abaya/ a broad, ripped one".
- (33) students adopted the strategy of "Omission," so this group provided no translations for the ST phrase.

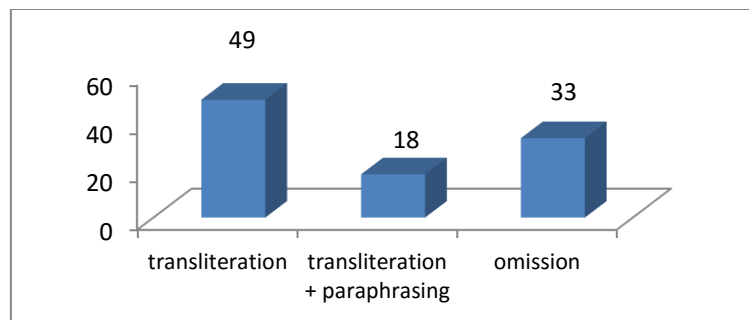


Chart (12): Strategies Applied in the second example: "عبائه"

Analyzing the target translations of the third example: "جلبابا"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the ST term "جلبابا"/Jilbab/.

- (٥٦) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST term, so their translations included: "Jilbab". So their translations are not accessible to the target readers and are still vague .

- (١٧) students applied the strategy of "partial equivalent". So, their translations included: "Cloak", "Robe", "Mantle", and "Vestment".
- (27) students adopted the strategy of "Omission", so this group provided no translations for the ST term, replacing the piece of cloth with the clause "He was dressed well". The translation of the second group was more accurate.

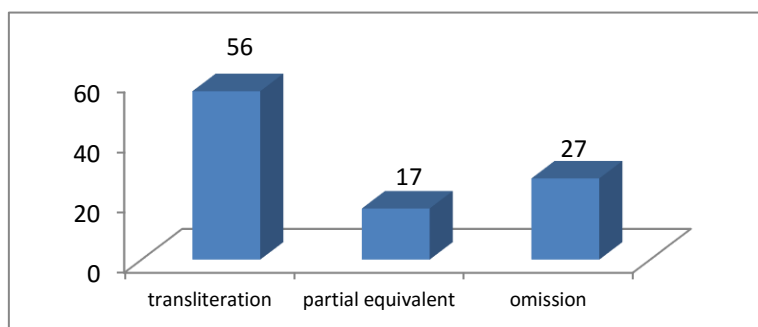


Chart (13): Strategies Applied in the third example: "جلبابا"

Analyzing the target translations of the fourth example: "ملانتها"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the ST term "ملانتها" / Mala'atha/.

- (43) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST phrase, so their translations included: "Mala'atha". So, their translations are not accessible to the target readers because the word seems very vague and weird.
- (28) students applied the strategy of "literal translation". So, their translations included: "sheet/ /cover/ cloth. The renditions of this group are not accurate.
- (29) students adopted the strategy of "Omission," so this group provided no translations for the ST term.

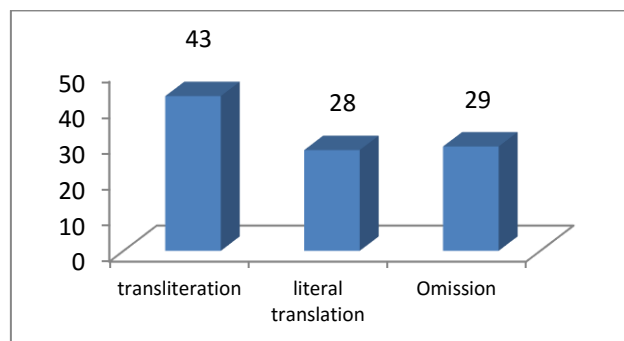


Chart (14): Strategies Applied in the fourth example: "ملانتها"

Analyzing the target translations of the fifth example: "الطربوش"

The sample of this study provided different translations for the ST phrase

الطربوش / Tarboush.

- (٤٢) students applied the strategy of "transliteration" without providing any extra information that explains the meaning of the ST phrase, so their translations included: "Tarboush". So, their translations are not accessible to the target readers and remain ambiguous .
- (٣٧) students applied the strategy of "transliteration + paraphrasing". So, their translations included: "Tarboush/ a covering for the head, Tarboosh/ a headwear, "Tarboush/ a cylindrical red hat with a black tassel worn by men in some Middle Eastern countries during certain eras .
- (21) students adopted the strategy of "partial equivalent," so this group provided translations that convey some aspects of the ST term. Their translations included: "hat", "cap", "tuft ", and "turban". These renditions are not accurate either, and the most accurate translation should have been "Fez".

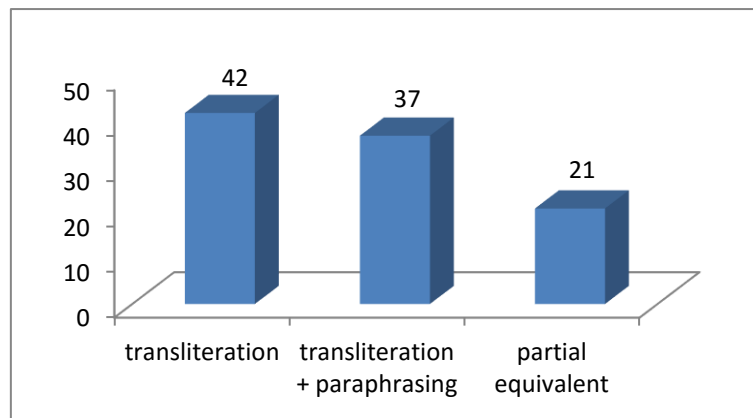


Chart (15): Strategies Applied in the fifth example: "الطربوش"

Conclusion:

Based on the above analysis, it is remarkable that culture-specific terms represent a great hindrance and they are very difficult to be translated by the majority of the second-year students at the faculty of Al Alsun, Suez Canal University. The second-year students used different strategies to render these cultural terms such as: Transliteration, transliteration+ paraphrasing, literal translation, and translation by omission, translation using a superordinate term, respectively. The strategy of Transliteration alone was not effective and did not manage to render the meaning of the CSCs of the ST, maintaining the strangeness of the source text term making it inaccessible to the target reader. The strategy of Transliteration+ paraphrasing was effective and it conveyed the meaning of the ST terms through the explanation it provides for ST term. The strategy of translation using a superordinate term provided a partial meaning of ST term. The strategy of omission resulted in a loss of the meaning of the ST. So, it should not be applied when rendering the cultural elements which reflect the culture and heritage of the source language. The strategy of literal translation works well only in few examples. Thus, the current study recommends conducting further studies in order to identify other hindrances of literary translation and to investigate the strategies that can be applied to render the meanings of literary texts.

References

- Azizinezhad, M. (2006). Is Translation Teachable? *Translation Journal*. Retrieved from: <http://accurapid.com/journal/36edu.htm>
- Bahameed, A. (2007). Hindrances in Arabic-English Intercultural Translation. *Translation Journal*. Retrieved from: <http://translationjournal.net/journal/43culture.htm>
- Baker, M. (2011a). *In Other Words: a Coursebook on Translation*. London: Routledge.
- Catford, J.C. (1965). *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Enani, M. (1997). *Al-Tarjamah Al-Adabiyya Bayn An-Nadhariyya Wat tatbeeq (Literary Translation: Theory and Practice)*. Cairo: Longman.
- Enani, M. (1992). *The Art of Translation*. () Cairo: Longman.
- García, F.A. (1996). *On Translating Figurative Language from English into Spanish: A Perceptual Problem*. BABEL. 42(3): pp. 158-164.
- Hatim, B. (1997). *Communication Across Cultures: Translation Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics*. Exeter: Exeter University Press .
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences. International Differences in Work-Related Values*, Sage. Beverly Hills, CA .
- Hornby, A. S., Cowie, A. P. and Gimson, A. C. (1974). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ilyas, A. (1989). *Theories of Translation*. Mowsil: University of Mowsil .
- Ito, M. and Nakakoji, K. (1996). Impact of Culture on User Interface Design. In: M. Elisa and J. Nielsen, Editors, *International User Interfaces*, New York: Wiley, pp.105-126 .
- Kroeber, A.L. and Kluckhohn, C. (1963). Culture: A critical review of concepts and definitions. New York: Vintage Books, (Originally Published as: Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Volume XLVII, Number 1, Harvard University, USA, 1953.

- Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics Across Culture*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Mahfouz, N. (1956). *Palace Walk*. Misr Printing House: Egypt.
- Makhlouf, M. (1996). *Libyan Proverbial Expressions: A Translation Perspective of Arab Subculture*. Thesis. Irbid: Yarmouk University.
- Massoud, M. (1988). *Translate to Communicate: A Guide for Translation*. David C. Cook Foundation.
- Newmark, P. (1981). *Approaches to Translation*. Oxford: Pergamon Press .
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Nida, E. (1986). *From One Language to Another. Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers .
- Pym, A. (2010). *Exploring Translation Theories*. USA and Canada: Routledge.
- Rohner, R.P. (1984). Toward a Conception of Culture for Cross-Cultural Psychology. *Journal of Cross-cultural psychology*. 15(2): pp. 111-138.
- Sapir, E. (1949). *Culture, Language and Personality*. California: University of California.
- Shunnaq, A. (1998). Problems in Translating Arabic Texts into English. In Abdullah Shannaq, Cay Dollerup, and Mohammed Saraireh (eds), *Issues in Translation*. Irbid: Irbid National University & Jordanian Translators' Association, pp.33-52.
- Stevenson, L. (1963). *Facts and Values*. Yale: Yale University Press.
- Theodory, C. (1959). *A Dictionary of Technical Terms*. Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Press.
- Van, F. and Hutschemaekers, G. (1990). *The investigation of culture: Current issues in cultural psychology*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.
- Wilss, W. (1996). *Knowledge and Skills in Translator Behaviour*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Winter, W. (1969). *Impossibilities of Translation*. In Thomas M. Olszewsky, (ed.), *Problems in the Philosophy of Language*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, pp. 477-489.