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TRANSLATION (STRATEGIES – PROBLEMS – SOLUTIONS)

A Research

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In the Name of Allah Most Merciful Most Gracious



And those who have been given knowledge
see that what is revealed to you from your Lord
is the truth, and it guides to the path of the
Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy.



TRUE ARE THE WORDS OF ALMIGHTY ALLAH

(SABA: VERSE 6)

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ABSTRACT

At the early stages of learning translation, some learners wrongly think that translation is a matter of word-for-word process; hence, translation to them is no more than a mechanical way. It is certain that translation is a human activity, therefore, the text that is translated into the target language should be written in a rhetorical style that is intended to impress or influence readers and must have the same language effect that the source language does. However, this cannot be produced without using imagination or skills, which characterize human mind. Consequently, it is unreasonable to think that computers can be used as an aid to translation.

College students of English face difficulty in translation, especially grammatical and lexical problems. Translation is viewed as a number of problems of different kinds that require suitable and possible solutions. English and Arabic belong to two different language families Germanic and Semitic, therefore difficulty will definitely arise. Some grammatical and lexical features of both languages pose problems in translation from Arabic into English or vice versa. Translation plays an important role in rendering a text from one language into an equivalent version in another language, thus through translation, highly advanced international societies can be created despite their differences or the similarities of their people's culture and the degree of the level of their civilization and superiority.

The greater number of problems posed to the students of translation are grammatical and lexical problems. The following research of the strategies, problems, and solutions in translation from English into Arabic provides a detailed, exemplified survey of these problems, and suggests solutions to them. Therefore, this research is divided into two chapters. In first chapter we are going to discuss strategies of translation

The second chapter is going to deal with grammatical and lexical problems in translation with providing some solutions, followed with some conclusions and bibliography.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

No one can deny the important role of languages in the communication process, since it is a primary function. Furthermore, no one can ignore or neglect the crucial role of translation by helping people who do not speak the same language, or they are not from the same speech community to communicate effectively. That is to say that one may speak and master his mother tongue language; however, he may not understand others' languages. He would not be able to communicate with people out of his own speech community; that is why translation is considered as a remedy for such communicational problems. Students who are learning to translate from their first language into a second language face double difficulties. They are learning translation skills and learning the second language simultaneously. This chapter is going to discuss definitions of translation with kinds of strategies.

1.1 Defining Translation

There is no unanimous agreement on the definition of translation, nor are translation theories agreed on the types or models of translation. Each translator has his own definition, or theory, or model when translating. In its general sense translation is often regarded as a project for transferring meaning from one language into another.

As this can be seen, there are two key words in this definition, that is, transferring and meaning. The first key word indicates that when translating, we must deal with two languages because translation in the standard sense is a form of interlingual communication that involves a source language (SL) and a target language (TL), i.e., the language we translate from and the language we translate into, respectively. The second key term in the definition above tells us that the main concern of translators is to capture or convey meaning in interlingual communication. Meaning is a complex notion; Linguists usually divide meaning into denotation (the core conceptual meaning of the word) and connotation (the shades of meaning that are sometimes added to the denotation of the word). For example, the English lexical pairs (*die* / *pass away*) share the same denotations, but they differ in their connotations, that is, *pass away* expresses positive connotations that do not exist in *die*.

It should be noted that translators should capture both denotation and connotation in their translation (Farghal and Shunnaq, 1999:2). According to other linguists,

translation is a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in another language (Newmark,1982:7) or it could be defined as, " the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another, source language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences, (Bell, 1991:5)".

Nida and Taber (1982:12) believes that" translation is concerned with the reproduction of the closet equivalent of the source language text (SL) in the target language (TL) that means translation is based on equivalence not on transference".

Also," translation is an operation that is performed on languages (two or more) in which the source text is replaced by the target text on the basis of equivalence between both texts (lexis and grammar) of the source text are replaced by equivalent (lexis and grammar) of the target language; and the source language phonology (or graphology) is also consequently replaced by target language phonology or graphology " (Ismail, 1989:19). The views towards defining the term translation varied and the need among different people to communicate their experience and knowledge led to the discovery of translation as a solution that overcomes the barrier of language and a means of conveying ideas, knowledge, and experience from one culture to another. Thus translation is a very old human activity.

1.2 Translation Strategies

1.2.1 Naturalization and Arabicization

Naturalization is a translation strategy where by SL (Source Language) usage is converted into normal TL (Target Language) usage. This naturalization process is basically carried out at lexical, collocational, and structure levels. By way of illustration, the English lexical item *negotiable* translates into *قابل للتفاوض*, the English collocation *pay attention* translates into *يغير الانتباه* and the English sentence *It is raining now* translates into *الجو ماطر الان*. This being the case, naturalization of usage is inevitable in translation, as literal translation would produce unnatural expressions in the TL in cases where naturalization is called for (Catford, 1965: 170).

As for Arabicization, it is a kind of naturalization that takes place either at the sound level where SL spelling and pronunciation are converted into Arabic ones or at the concept level where an SL concept is loan-translated into Arabic. Thus, Arabicization, related to both loan-word and loan-translation. In loan-word, an English word is borrowed into Arabic and subsequently undergoes Arabicization in terms of spelling

and pronunciation, e.g. *garage* is Arabicization to become *كراج*. By contrast, the concept rather than the word itself borrowed in loan-translation e.g. *skyscraper* is Arabicized to become *ناطحة السحاب*

1.2.2 Cultural Approximation

Cultural Approximation is a translation strategy where by a culture-specific expression in the SL is translated into a cultural substitute in the TL expression. Examples that may demonstrate cultural approximation are so many:

- **Lexical items:** *God* is translated into *الله*
- **Phrases:** *American Secretary of State* is translated into *وزير الخارجية الامريكي*
- **Clichés:** *as busy as a bee* may be translated into *زي ام العروس*
- **Proverbs:** *like mother like daughter* may be translated into

أقلب الجرة على ثمها تطلع البنت لأمها

1.2.3 Descriptive Translation

Descriptive Translation is a translation strategy whereby an expression in the SL is paraphrased into the TL by describing it conceptually. This often occurs when the translator comes across a referential or cultural gap where the SL concept is completely missing in the TL culture, i.e., it does not exist in the experience of the native speakers of the TL, e.g. *زكاة* may be translated descriptively into ‘*compulsory charity in Islam when income conditions are met*’ and *تيمم* into ‘*making ablutions with earth by Muslims when water is scare or missing*’. It may also occur when the translator encounters a lexical gap where a lexical item in the SL does not have a single corresponding lexical item in the TL despite the fact that the concept exists in the experience of the native speakers of the TL, e.g. the Arabic kinship term *خال* does not lend itself to translating into single English kinship term, hence its being translated descriptively into ‘*maternal uncle*’.

1.2.4 Lexical Creation

Lexical creation is a translation strategy that involve the coining or new lexical items in the TL to stand for SL cultural-specific element. Example of lexical creation in English may include *poor-tax* or *poor-dues* for *الزكاة*, *breast-brother* for *الأخ بالرضاعة*

, and *co-wife* for *الضرة*. Arabic examples may include *عيد الشكر* for *Thanksgiving*, *عيد الحب* for *Valentine Day*. It should be noted that lexical creation albeit taxing for both the translator's ingenuity and receiver's power of comprehension, contributes to the enrichment of the TL lexis. It should also be pointed out that the strategy of lexical creation may be a hyponym of descriptive translation as well as Arabicization, which is specially called for the lexicalization in the TL of culture-specific terms.

1.2.5 Managing

Managing has recently emerged as a strategy that may be superimposed on the translating process. It involves the alteration of the SL message in such way that makes it meet or approximate the translator's own goals or ideas. Therefore, it is a clear violation of faithfulness whose ethics entails that the translator monitor (i.e., relay) the SL message as is and without any ideological intervention. A classic example of serious managing occurred in *the Security Council Resolution in the aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War whose English version (the accredited one) calls for the Israeli withdrawal from "occupied territories"* instead of "*the occupied territories*". Other examples of managing may include the rendition of "said", "*The Persian Gulf*", and "*Israel*" in an English news report as *الكيان الصهيوني* and *ادعى ، الخليج العربي*, respectively (Bassnet, 1991: 92-93).

CHAPTER TWO

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

2. Introduction

A Translation problem is any difficulty, we come across at translating, that invites us to stop translating in order to check, recheck, reconsider or rewrite it, or use a dictionary, or reference of some kind to help us overcome it and make sense of it. It is anything in the SL text which forces us to stop translating. A translation problem can be posed by grammar, words, style and/or sounds. Thus, we have grammatical, lexical, stylistic, phonological, and cultural problems. In this chapter the researchers will discuss only grammatical and lexical problems, because if they discuss all the problems it is going to be a book not a research because each problem has divisions and each division has sub-divisions and so on.

2.1 Grammatical Problems

English and Arabic belong to two different and distant language families. Their grammars are sharply different. Several grammatical features of English create variable problems of translation into Arabic. Experiences shows that one of the primary mistakes committed by students of translation is their presupposition that English grammar and Arabic grammar can translate each other in a straightforward way. To confirm that, the problems of translating the most prominent points of English grammar into Arabic are discussed below with some suggested solutions.

2.1.1 Translation of Verb “BE”

2.1.1.1 Literal Translation of 'am, is, are'

When these verbs are the main and only verbs in the sentence, many students translate them literally into (يكون), which is a poor translation, for example (Ghazala,1995: 28-29):

1. "I am a student".

(أنا اكون طالبا)

2. "She is kind".

(هي تكون طيبة)

3. "*You are a father*".

(انت تكون أبا)

The solution, **am, is, are**, can be omitted altogether, thus 'changing the English verbal sentences into Arabic nominal ones: i.e. into a topic and comment (مبتدأ وخبر) each, for example:

1. "*I am a student*".

(انا طالب)

2. "*She is kind*".

(هي طيبة)

3. "*You are a father*".

(انت اب)

Therefore, verb "**be**" in the present simple is used here to connect as much as equate between two words. It is exactly like saying: X=Z, thus:

I = student: انا = طالب

She = kind: هي = طيبة

You = father: (انت = اب), that is why it is called an "equative verb".

The same applies to the translation of "**am, is, and are**" when used as auxiliary verbs to form the present progressive tense and the present passive voice. A good number of students translate them literally (Ibid: 29):

1. "*I am leaving now*"

(أنا اكون اغادر/ مغادر الان)

2. "*He is eating an apple*" :

(هو يكون يأكل/ اكل" تفاحة)

3. "*We are speaking English*" :

(نحن نكون نتكلم/ متكلمين الانكليزية)

The good versions of these examples drop verb "be" as follows (Ibid: 29-30):

1. "*I am leaving now*"

(انا اغادر الان / انا مغادر الان)

2. "*He is eating an apple*"

(هو يأكل (أكل) تفاحة)

3. "*We are speaking English*"

(نحن نتكلم (متكلمون) الانكليزية)

Verb "be" disappears completely in Arabic translation simply because there is no equivalent tense in Arabic. Therefore, the progressive tense or the time of action an adverb like "*now*" (الآن) is the only way to refer to the time of action.

2.1.1.2 Literal Translation of "was/ were into (كان)"

Unlike "am, is, are" the past simple of "be", "was", and "were" are translated literally into (كان) both as main as well as auxiliary verbs (Ghazala, 1992:51):

- As main verbs:

1. "*The child was ill*". (كان الطفل مريضا)
2. "*The bird was beautiful*". (كان الطائر جميلا)
3. "*The players were one team*". (كان اللاعبون فريقا واحدا)

- As auxiliary verbs:

1. "*Her mother was preparing lunch*". (كانت والدتها تعد الغداء)
2. "*My brother was writing a letter*". (كان أخي يكتب رسالة)
3. "*Our guests were praying*". (كان ضيوفنا يصلون)

Yet literal translation is unfavorable when these verbs are used as auxiliaries to form the past passive voice, as the following examples illustrate:

1. "*The food was eaten*". (كان الطعام مأكولا / كان اكل الطعام)
2. "*I was deceived*". (انا كنت خدعت / مخدوعا)
3. "*The boys were dismissed*". (كان الاولاد مطرودين / كان الاولاد قد طردوا)

The solution is that, 'was' and 'were' (كان) can be neglected in Arabic, as follows (Ibid: 53):

1. "*The food was eaten*". (اكل الطعام)
2. "*I was deceived*". (انا خدعت)

3. *"The boys were dismissed"*.

(طرد الاولاد)

The past participle of "be" (**been**) is wrongly ignored, or translated literally into (كائن) in Arabic (Ibid: 53-54):

1. *"Where have you been"?*

(اين كنت كائناً؟)

2. *"She has been late"*.

(كانت كائنة متأخرة)

3. *"They had been released"*.

(كانوا كائنين أطلق سراحهم)

The solution is that, **been** (كائن) is change into the past simple see (1 and 2 below) or disregarded see (3):

1. *"Where have you been? = where were you?"*

(اين كنت؟)

2. *"She has been late. = she was late."*

(كانت متأخرة / تأخرت)

3. *"They had been released. = They were released."*

(اطلق سراحهم)

Thus, the dictionary meaning of "**been**" as (كائن) in Arabic is strictly not advisable to use. By contrast, the full form of verb '**be**' is always translated literally and thus possess no problem:

1. *"He will be with us"*.

(سوف يكون معنا)

2. *"You can be a good citizen"*.

(تستطيع ان تكون مواطناً صالحاً)

3. *"We must been the hospital now"*.

(ينبغي ان تكون في المستشفى الان)

2.1.2 Translation of Verb "Do"

As a main verb '**do**', does not pose a grammatical problem. However, as an auxiliary it poses more than one problem (Hatmin and Mason, 1990: 92):

2.1.2.1 "Do" in the Negative

Verb "do" used in English to form the negative of all verbs, except "be", "have", and the **modal verbs**. 'Do' and 'does' are used with the present simple. Whereas 'did' is used with the past. All these forms are meaningless in Arabic. However, they have the function of indicating the tense of the verb (i.e. present or past) what is translated into Arabic is the negative particle 'not' (لا) only, for example (Ibid: 92):

1. "He does not like coffee". (انه لا يحب القهوة)
2. "Some people don't smile". (بعض الناس لا يبتسمون)
3. "That girl doesn't comb her hair". (لا تمشط تلك الفتاة شعرها/ تلك الفتاة لا تمشط شعرها)

2.1.2.2 "Did" in the Negative

The same can be said of the translation of 'did not'. The negative word "not" is usually translated into (لم) with the present and occasionally into (ما) with the past, for example (Ibid: 93):

1. "She did not eat much". (لم تأكل/ ما أكلت كثيرا)
2. "We did not find the money". (لم نجد / ما وجدنا النقود)
3. "The horse did not fall down". (لم يسقط/ ما سقط الحصان)

2.1.2.3 "Do" in Questions

Verb "do" is used to form the questions of all English verbs except "be", "have", and **modal verbs**. At translating it into Arabic, it always implies the question particle (هل) whether in the present or in the past, for example (Ibid: 93):

1. "Do you sleep early"? (هل تنام باكرا؟)
2. "Does John play football"? (هل يلعب جون كرة القدم)
3. "Did Ali wait for you last night"? (هل انتظرك علي ليلة أمس؟)

2.1.2.4 The Misunderstanding of "Do" as a Substitute Verb

'Do' is used as substitute verb replacing a whole clause to avoid repetition, especially as an answer to a question. It is not easy for student to understand it can substitute for all the verbs that require "do" in the interrogative. The general solution for this problem is to translate 'do' into (يفعل), for example:

1. "Do you admit that? Yes, I do". (هل تعترف بذلك؟ نعم اعترف)
 2. "Did she swear? Yes, she did". (هل اقسمت؟ نعم فعلت)
 3. "Do they work at night? No, they don't". (هل يعملون في الليل؟ لا، لا يفعلون)
- (Aziz, 1982: 45)

This solution is acceptable. Not only this, it is easier and more favorable to students. Yet, the better solution is to translate it into the main verb of the first sentence:

1. "Do you admit that? Yes, I do". (هل تعترف بذلك؟ نعم (اجل) اعترف)
2. "Did she swear? Yes, she did". (هل اقسمت؟ نعم اقسمت)
3. "Do they work at night? No, they don't". (هل يعملون في الليل؟ لا لا يفعلون)

2.1.2.5 "Do" as a Main Verb

As a main verb 'do' is meaningful in translation usually. It is translated into Arabic as (يفعل). However, it can sometimes be translated into:

(يقوم بـ (عمل) ، يؤدي عملاً ، يؤدي ، يعمل ، يفعل)

For example, (Ibid: 93-94):

1. "I will do my best". (سأفعل ما بوسعي)
2. "Mary does her job well". (تقوم ماري بعملها على خير ما يرام/تؤدي ماري عملها بشكل حسن)
3. "We did it yesterday". (عملناها / فعلنا أمس)

In the following example 'do' can be translated either as (يؤدي ، يعمل)exceptionally as 'write' (يكتب):

4. "Some students do their homework quickly".

(يكتب / يعمل بعض الطلبة واجباتهم بسرعة)

Thus, at translating verb 'do' the students consider whether it has a grammatical function only [**used as an auxiliary**], or is used as a main verb. As an auxiliary, it has no lexical meaning in Arabic, but implies the grammatical question particle (هل) . However, as a main verb, it has a full lexical meaning.

2.1.3 Translation of Verb "Have"

Like the previous two verbs "Be" and "Do" verb "Have" (have, has, and had) is also used both as an auxiliary and a main verb. As an auxiliary, it is not so problematic. However, as a main verb it can pose a few problems to the students of translation (Farghal and Shunnaq, 1999:80):

2.1.3.1 'Have' as an Auxiliary

Verb "have" is used as an auxiliary to perform important grammatical functions with regard to tenses in particular in this case, it is meaningless in Arabic and the student can simply ignore it altogether, for example:

1. "The workers have left early today". (غادر العمال باكرا" ، اليوم)
2. "Two girl had finished knitting fast". (انتهت فتاتان الحيك بسرعة)
3. "The patient has had the medicine". (أخذ (تناول) المريض الدواء)

2.1.3.2 ‘Have’ as a Main Verb Different Meanings

Many students translate "have" into one version only, that is (يملك), when it is the main verb of the sentence. This is only one of its several meanings, and students advised to be careful at translating it. Students should understand "have" as a verb of several meanings, here they are (Ibid: 81):

1. "She has money ": (هي) تملك نقوداً/ عندها نقود/ في خزنتها نقود/ معها نقود)

(All these translations are possible, but the last version may be the most common, while the first could be the least common).

2. "She has her breakfast 7 O'clock every day".

(تتناول فطورها عند الساعة السابعة كل يوم)

3. "She has the tablets on time". (تأخذ) (تتناول) الحبوب (اقراص الدواء) في الوقت المحدد)

4. "She has just had the ticket". (حصلت على) (أخذت) التذكرة لتوها)

5. "She had a telephone call this morning".

(تلقت مكالمة هاتفية (اتصالاً" هاتفياً" هذا الصباح)

6. "She has to speak two languages". (يجب عليها ان تتحدث بلغتين)

7. "She had a nice holiday". (قضت عطلة جميلة)

8. "Have a good journey". (استمتع برحلة جميلة/ اتمنى لك رحلة ممتعة)

9. "Have a bash". (حاول/ جرب حضك)

What help students distinguish between these meanings of "have" is the consideration of the word immediately after it (**its object**). Together with its object "Have" makes a special combination in Arabic for instance. Although, we can say "Have" makes a special combination in Arabic for instance. Although, we can say (يملك نقوداً). We cannot say (يملك دول) or (يملك مكالمة هاتفية), etc.

2.1.4 Translation of Questions

Questions in English are formed in two ways only (Baker, 1998:90):

1. The conversion of the subject and the verb when one of the following verbs is used **'be'**, **'have'**, and the **modal verbs**.
2. The use of the auxiliary verb **'do'** with the rest of verbs in English.

Problems could arise at translating the different types of questions, because making questions is not the same in Arabic. Both types of questions are called **'Yes-No questions'** because they are answered by (yes or no).

2.1.4.1 The Possibility Might of Imitating the Question Form

The students might think of translating the types of English questions into equivalent types in Arabic. They will find this not possible and quite programmatic, because there are simply no such equivalents.

To overcome the problems of translating all types of English questions is simply by using only one word in Arabic, that is, the question particle (هل) to begin all the equivalent Arabic questions, for example:

1. *"Are you playing tennis"?* (هل تلعب التنس؟)
2. *"Have you played tennis"?* (هل لعبت التنس؟)
3. *"Do you play tennis"?* (هل تلعب التنس؟)
4. *"Did you play tennis"?* (هل لعبت التنس؟)

(Ibid: 93)

2.1.4.2 The Disappearance of (هل) with WH-Questions

Some questions are formed by using one of the following word:

'What' (ماذا ، ما) - 'Why' (لم/لماذا) - 'Where' (أين) - 'Which' (أي) - 'Who' (من) - 'Whom' (من ، ممن ، لمن) - 'Whose' (لمن) - 'When' (متى) - 'How' (كيف) . All these

questions words (except 'how') start with 'Wh' which is why the questions started with them are called **WH-questions** (Baker, 1998:94-95).

When 'do' and the subject –verb conversion are used in a **WH-question**, they are meaningless (هل) is no longer used in the Arabic translation, for example:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. "Why are they crying"? | (لماذا يبكون؟) |
| 2. "What have you said"? | (ماذا قلت؟) |
| 3. "Who can answer"? | (من يستطيع الاجابة (ان يجيب)؟) |
| 4. "When does the baby sleep"? | (متى ينام الطفل؟) |
| 5. "Where did the man disappear"? | (اين اختفى الرجل؟) |
| 6. "Whom are you talking on the phone"? | (الى من تتحدث على الهاتف؟) |
| 7. "Whose money is this"? | (لمن هذه النقود؟) |
| 8. "How do you do"? | (كيف حالك/كيف انت؟) |

2.1.5 Translation of Personal Pronouns

English personal pronouns have a straightforward translation into Arabic. This is correct when they are translated in isolation or translated into a topic followed by a comment in an Arabic nominal sentence, for example (Robinson, 1997: 278-288):

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| - <i>I am tired</i> | انا متعب |
| - <i>She is a nurse</i> | هي ممرضه |
| - <i>They are butches</i> | هم جزارون |

However, in Arabic verbal sentence, they can be omitted, unless emphasized, because there is a letter in the verb which replaces the reference of the pronoun.

The best solution for this is the omission of personal pronoun, when the sentence is verbal in Arabic, the pronoun (*which is subject*) is deleted because it is included in the verb's reference to it as the subject of the sentence, for example:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>I will contact you later</i> | سوف اتصل بك فيما بعد |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|

The letter (أ) in Arabic, the reference to (I) in English, therefore there is no need to repeat the pronoun by saying (انا سوف اتصل بك لاحقا)

2. *She participated in the discussion*

شاركت في المناقشة

(هي) is dropped because in the last letter (ت) implies a direct reference to it, thus, it is unnecessary to translate it as follow: (هي شاركت في المناقشة)

2.2 Lexical Problems

The greater number of translation problems for the students are lexical problems. Words are usually given the first importance in translation., most mistakes of the students are word-for-word translations of SL texts, and ignorance of Arabic equivalence.

2.2.1 Literal Translation of Meaning (Metaphorical vs. Non-metaphorical)

The central lexical problem faced and displayed by the students is their direct, literal Translation of almost all words. They dedicate themselves to it wholeheartedly and in an unusual way in an all texts and contexts, in regard to all words, phrases and expressions.

Although any language is words in isolation, it cannot be understood as such. Words are used to gather in in special combinations, texts and contexts. Furthermore, there are: (1) grammatical words which have no meaning, but used for a specific grammatical function (such as use of verb '**do**' to make questions and negation in English, '**have**' to form the present perfect tense, etc.); and lexical words which have meanings and make up language (Baker, 1998:60).

The relation between language and words is exactly like the relation between the human body and its constituent parts. The body exists and works perfectly only when the parts exist and work perfectly to gather. Likewise, the parts do not, and cannot work in isolation. Each part works in relation to, and in connection with other parts.

Yet, the interconnection among words does not always result in a new combination and a different, in direct meaning of them. In fact, words can keep their direct literal meaning, even when they occur with one another. This means that direct literal translation is sometimes possible and acceptable.

The problem for the students is that they think that literal translation is applicable to everything in language. This makes them commit mistakes.

The comparison of the following three groups of examples to one another illustrates the point here (Ibid: 61-62):

Group A:

1. "Wood floats on water". (يطفو الخشب على الماء)
2. "Answer my question, please". (اجب على سؤالي من فضلك)
3. "The children broke the window". (كسر الأطفال النافذة)
4. "Impossible task". (مهمة مستحيلة)
5. "A word of honor". (كلمة شرف)

Group B:

1. "Rainy day". (يوم ماطر ايوم اسود)
2. "Sweet-tongued". (طري اللسان مخادع)
3. "A can of worms". (كلمة ديدان / حفنة مشاكل (مشكلة عويصة)
4. "Fabrication ". (حبك/تلفيق)
5. "Ugly Person". (شخص قبيح المنظر/ شخص بشع التصرف)

Group C:

1. "A stitch in time saves nine". (درهم وقاية خير من قنطار علاج)
2. "Tall order". (مهمة شاقة/ عسيرة)
3. "Fat salary". (راتب ضخمة/مجز)
4. "Bite the dust". (يخر سريعاً)
5. "If you were in my shoes / boat". (لو كنت (في) مكاني)

By comparing these three groups with one another, we notice that in 'A' a direct translation is quite feasible, in 'C' literal translation is not possible by any means. The following literal translation of the five examples of 'C' into Arabic confirms the point:

1. "A stitch in time saves nine". (درزة في وقت توفر تسعا")
2. "Tall order (امر طويل)
3. "Fat salary". (راتب سمين)
4. "To bite the dust". (يعض التراب)
5. "If you were in my shoes/my boat". (لو كنت في حذائي/قاربي)

All these literal, word-for-word translation are strange and not understandable. Moreover '3' and '5' are funny. More seriously, '5' can be described as a dangerous translation because it is insulting and could put an end a translator's career. Such translations are, therefore, unacceptable.

As regards groups 'B', both literal and non-literal translation are possible, but not at the same time. That is, the types of texts and context are essential in deciding on which translation to choose. For instance, in a sentence describing a day in winter, 'rainy day' has one translation only, for example:

"Today it is sunny, but yesterday was a rainy day":

Only 'يوم ماطر' is applicable here, whereas 'يوم اسود' is not. On the other hand, only 'يوم اسود' is acceptable in the translation of the English proverb:

"Save for a rainy day": (حبي قرشك الأبيض ليومك الأسود/وفر للشدة)

Hence, the text and/or the context can be helpful in deciding whether a literal translation is feasible or not, and the possibility or not of the grouping of certain word together. That is, we cannot describe 'امر' as 'طويل' long, or 'قصير' (short). Therefore, we conclude that such a translation is wrong, and we have to look for the right one (i.e. مهمة شاقة) (Longman, 1979: 455).

The same argument applies to 'راتب سمين' as a literal translation of 'fat salary'. Only a person or on animals can be described as 'fat' (سمين) in Arabic, but not a thing or an inanimate word like 'salary' (راتب). However, we can say (راتب/ضخم/مجز).

The discussion of these three groups of examples shows that literal translation is possible in a few cases, where as in many other cases it is not. This means that literal translation is neither rejected completely nor accepted widely. It is not a matter of nothing or everything.

The problem for students is that they think that everything in language can be translated literally. This is very serious indeed, because it results in many silly mistakes committed by them.

The best way to overcome this problem is, first and foremost, the warning of the students strongly and permanently against the literal translation of everything, by means of:

1. Giving as many examples as possible, to confirm the impossibility of applying literal translation to everything.
2. Assuring the different nature of English and Arabic in various respects.
3. The necessity for understanding words in their special contexts.
4. Concentrating for some time on fixed, special expressions in English such as proverbs, idioms, phrasal verbs, and many collocations, which count in tens of thousands, and resist literal translation.

2.2.2 Translation of Idioms

Ismail (1989: 40-41) states that, an idiom is a fixed phrase whose form is usually unchangeable, and whose meaning is always the same, inflexible, metaphorical, and indirect. For example, '*hard task*' can be translated directly into (مهمة شاقة); whereas '*tall order*' cannot, because it should not be translated into an unclear (امر/نظام طويل) in Arabic, meaning but into (مهمة شاقة) as a fixed, indirect meaning. Therefore, the former is not an idiom whereas the latter is.

The discussion of the translation of English idioms into Arabic can be traced through the following groups:

- **Group A: Direct Idioms: e.g.**

1. "*passing the exam is not a bed of roses*"

النجاح في الامتحان ليس طريقا مفروشا بالورود

2. "*A true friend doesn't stab in the back*"

الصديق الحقيقي لا يطعن في الظهر

3. "*You scratch my back and I scratch yours*"

حكلي لحكالك/امسكلي واقطعك /كل واكل/اضيني لي اقدح لك

Notably, these idioms are translated directly, but should be understood indirectly. That is, they have metaphorical meaning. Therefore, they are all fixed metaphors, saying something to mean something else. To illustrate this further, the intended, direct meaning of the previous examples can be as follows:

1. "*passing the exam is difficult*"

النجاح في الامتحان امر صعب

2. "*A true friend does not betray*"

الصديق الحقيقي لا يخون

3. "*serve me , so that I serve you*"

اخدمني اخدمك

These are direct explanations of the idioms under discussion. However, the student of translation needs to concentrate on translating, not explaining English idioms into Arabic equivalents, explanation is acceptable only when translation is not possible for a good reason

- **Group B: Indirect Idioms:**

1. "*my car is second hand*"

سيارتي مستعمله

2. "*how nice to remember your plamy days*"

ما اجمل ان تتذكر ايام السفر

3. "*let us talk shop*"

دعنا نتحدث (نتحدث) عن العمل

4. "*there is a black sheep in every family*"

هناك ولد نشار/عاق في كل عائله

The examples of this group are quite problematic for the students of translation. Because they are indirect and cannot be understood from the literal common meaning of the words, the problem will be clearer for the student when these idioms are translated literally and directly, proving to be wrong, strange, nonsensical and sometimes funny:

1. سيارتي يد ثانيه

2. ما اجمل ان تتذكر ايام النخيليه

3. دعنا نتحدث عن الحانوت

2.2.3. Translation of Proverbs:

Like idioms, proverbs are special, fixed, unchanged phrases which have special fixed, unchanged meaning.

A proverb cannot be translated or understood as a collection of individual meanings of its words. Moreover, proverbs are metaphors that stand for something else. Besides that they are culture specific, therefore, they should not be translated or understood directly (Newmark, 1988: 156).

Although proverbs are considered as culture-specific because they are very bound to culture, many proverbs have direct equivalents in different languages. For instance, the English expression "*out of sight, out of mind*" has a similar proverb in Arabic "*بعيد عن العين بعيد عن القلب*". Other examples may include:

- *Forbidden fruit is sweet* "كل ممنوع مرغوب"
- *A fox is not taken twice in the same snare* "لا يلدغ المؤمن من جحر مرتين"

2.3 Conclusions

Throughout the investigation of problems in translation, the following results have been reached by the researchers:

1. The translator is expected to have a thorough knowledge of the grammatical rules of the target language. He should be well versed in comparative grammar of the two languages.
2. Both languages differ in terms of tenses and aspects.
3. Arabic students should know that English grammar is not identical with Arabic grammar so we cannot translate each other in a straightforward way.
4. In both languages sentences connectors are very important and should be used in a better way to form a united text.
5. Lexical problems are posed when a word, a phrase or an expression is not understood clearly and directly, misunderstood, not known at all to students, or not found in standard dictionaries.

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