



ISSN: 2957-3874 (Print)

Journal of Al-Farabi for Humanity Sciences (JFHS)

<https://iasj.rdd.edu.iq/journals/journal/view/95>

مجلة الفارابي للعلوم الإنسانية تصدرها جامعة الفارابي



Translating English proverbs into Arabic

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ترجمة الامثال الانكليزية الى العربية

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كلية الآداب: قسم اللغة الانكليزية وآدابها دائرة التعليم الديني والدراسات الإسلامية - ديوان الوقف السني

الملخص:

تُعدّ ترجمة الأمثال من القضايا المحورية في مجال التبادل اللغوي والثقافي، نظراً لما تطوي عليه الأمثال من طبيعة اصطلاحية عميقة الارتباط بالبيئة الثقافية واللغوية للمجتمع الذي تنشأ فيه. وتكمن صعوبة ترجمتها في أنّ النقل الحرفي لا ينجح في الغالب في توصيل الدلالات والمعاني الضمنية التي تصدها الثقافة المصدر. ومن هنا تنشأ الحاجة إلى توظيف استراتيجيات متباينة، مثل إيجاد المثل المكافئ في اللغة الهدف، أو استخدام الشرح وإعادة الصياغة، أو اعتماد البدائل الثقافية الملائمة، بما يضمن تحقيق الدقة في نقل المعنى. إن اختيار الاستراتيجية الأنسب للترجمة يقتضي دراسة متأنية للسياقين الثقافي واللغوي معاً، سواء في اللغة المصدر أو اللغة الهدف، مع الأخذ بعين الاعتبار طبيعة الجمهور المتلقي. ومن خلال ترجمة الأمثال يتاح للباحثين والمتقنين على حد سواء الاطلاع على منظومات المعتقدات والقيم والممارسات الاجتماعية التي تميز كل مجتمع، الأمر الذي يسهم في تذليل العقبات الثقافية ويعزز من فاعلية التواصل بين الثقافات المختلفة. وبناءً على ذلك، يضطلع مترجمو الأمثال بدور جوهري في تكريس التبادل الثقافي، حيث تُمثل جهودهم إضافة نوعية تسهم في إثراء المعرفة الإنسانية وتعميق الفهم المتبادل بين الشعوب واللغات السياق الثقافي، استراتيجيات الترجمة، التواصل بين الثقافات، التكافؤ. , ترجمة الأمثال : الكلمات المفتاحية

Abstract

Translating proverbs is an important aspect of language and cultural exchange. Proverbs are idiomatic expressions that are deeply rooted in the culture and language of a particular community. Translating proverbs can be challenging because a literal translation may not always convey the intended meaning. Therefore, translators must employ various strategies such as equivalent proverbs, explanation or paraphrase, and cultural substitution to ensure that the meaning of the proverb is accurately conveyed in the target language. The selection of the translation strategy must be based on a careful consideration of the cultural and linguistic context of both the source and target languages, as well as the intended audience. Through the translation of proverbs, we can gain insight into the beliefs, values, and cultural practices of different communities, and this can help to break down cultural barriers and foster greater intercultural communication. Overall, translators of proverbs play an important role in promoting cultural exchange, and their work contributes to the enrichment of our understanding of different cultures and languages. **Key Words:** Translation of Proverbs , Cultural Context , Translation Strategies, Cross-Cultural Communication , Equivalence

1. Introduction

Proverbs are concise and metaphorical expressions that convey universal truths and wisdom, which are deeply rooted in the cultural and linguistic context of the language they belong to. English proverbs, like other forms of cultural expression, have gained global popularity due to the spread of English as a lingua franca and the globalization of media and communication. However, the translation of English proverbs into Arabic, one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, remains a challenging and understudied area of research. The aim of this paper is to explore the process of translating English proverbs into Arabic, highlighting the cultural

and linguistic differences between the two languages and the challenges and strategies involved in producing a successful translation. Several studies have examined the translation of proverbs in general, but few have specifically focused on the translation of English proverbs into Arabic. In a study by Al-Shehari (2012), the author analyzes the translation of English proverbs into Arabic and highlights the challenges and strategies involved. Al-Shehari emphasizes the importance of understanding the cultural and linguistic context of both languages, and suggests that translators must adapt and modify the original proverbs to ensure their appropriateness in the target culture. Similarly, in a study by Tawalbeh and Al-Kabi (2015), the authors investigate the translation of Arabic proverbs into English and highlight the cultural and linguistic differences between the two languages that affect the translation process. The authors suggest that successful translation requires not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness and sensitivity, and propose a framework for translating Arabic proverbs into English that takes into account the cultural and linguistic context of both languages.

٢. The concept of translation

Translation is a complex and multifaceted process that involves the transfer of meaning from one language to another while maintaining the original message and intention of the source text. The concept of translation has been studied extensively by scholars from different disciplines, including linguistics, literature, philosophy, and cultural studies. In the field of linguistics, translation is defined as the process of transferring meaning from one language to another. According to Newmark (1988), translation involves the transfer of the content and meaning of a text from the source language to the target language, while maintaining the style, tone, and register of the original text. Translation requires an understanding of both the source and target languages, and a knowledge of the cultural and social context in which the text is produced and consumed. In the field of literature, translation is viewed as a creative and interpretive act that involves not only the transfer of meaning but also the adaptation of the text to the target culture and literary tradition. According to Bassnett (1991), translation involves not only the linguistic transfer of a text but also the cultural transfer of the literary conventions and values embodied in the text. Translation is thus a process of negotiation between the source and target cultures, and requires a sensitivity to the nuances and complexities of both. In the field of philosophy, translation is viewed as a problem of communication and interpretation. According to Benjamin (1923), translation involves not only the transfer of meaning but also the interpretation and transformation of the original text. Translation is thus a process of creative interpretation that reveals the hidden meanings and possibilities of the text. Translation, for Benjamin, is a means of overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers and promoting cross-cultural understanding. The concept of translation is a complex and multifaceted one that has been studied extensively by scholars from different disciplines. Translation involves not only the transfer of meaning but also the adaptation and transformation of the text to suit the target culture and audience. Translation is a creative, interpretive, and political act that reveals the hidden meanings and values of the source text while promoting cross-cultural understanding and dialogue.

٣. Types of Translation

3.1. Literal Translation

Literal translation, also known as word-for-word translation, is a translation technique that seeks to render the original text into the target language word-for-word without taking into account the context or cultural nuances. This technique involves translating the text without any alterations or interpretations, which can lead to awkward and stilted translations that do not convey the intended meaning of the original text. According to Baker (2011), literal translation can be useful for technical or scientific texts, where precise meanings and terminology must be conveyed accurately. However, this technique is often ineffective for literary texts, idiomatic expressions, and proverbs, which require a more nuanced approach to translation. Moreover, literal translation can also lead to cultural misunderstandings or offense. For example, the Arabic proverb "الملجمة خير" is often translated literally as "War is better than forced labor." However, this literal translation fails to capture the intended meaning of the proverb, which is that it is better to fight for one's freedom than to live in captivity (Yaghi, 2017).

3.2. Free Translation

Free translation, also known as dynamic translation, is a technique in which the translator focuses on conveying the intended meaning of the original text rather than a literal translation. This technique allows for more flexibility and creativity in the translation process, allowing the translator to make modifications to the text to better convey the meaning of the original. According to Newmark (1988), free translation is particularly useful

for literary texts, where the aesthetic qualities of the text are important, and idiomatic expressions, which may not have an equivalent in the target language. However, free translation can also be problematic as it may result in changes to the tone, style, and intended meaning of the original text. Free translation can also be useful in adapting texts for different cultural contexts. For example, when translating children's books, translators often use free translation techniques to make the text more relatable and understandable to children in the target culture (Venuti, 2008).

3.3. Idiomatic Translation Idiomatic translation is the process of translating an expression or phrase in a way that conveys its intended meaning in the target language, even if the translated phrase is not a literal translation of the original. This is particularly important for idiomatic expressions, which are commonly used in everyday language and often do not have a direct equivalent in the target language.

One example of an idiomatic expression that can be difficult to translate is "break a leg," which is commonly used in English to wish someone good luck. In Arabic, a similar expression is "الله يوفقك", which means "may God grant you success." This translation conveys the same sentiment as "break a leg" without a literal translation of the original expression. Another example of idiomatic translation to Arabic is the English expression "to kick the bucket," which means to die. In Arabic, a similar expression is "راح في ذمته", which translates to "he went into his own safety," conveying the same meaning as "to kick the bucket."

3.4. Technical Translation Technical translation is the process of translating technical documents such as manuals, specifications, patents, and scientific articles. It requires a high level of expertise and knowledge of both the source and target languages, as well as the subject matter being translated, Newmark (1988). One example of technical translation to Arabic is the translation of a user manual for a computer software program. The translator needs to have a thorough understanding of the technical language used in the manual, as well as the technical terminology related to computer software. Additionally, the translator must be aware of the cultural and linguistic differences between English and Arabic to ensure that the translated manual is accurate and easily understood by Arabic-speaking users, Mellinger, C. D. (2008). Another example of technical translation to Arabic is the translation of a scientific research article. The translator must have a deep understanding of the subject matter being discussed in the article, as well as the scientific terminology used in both English and Arabic. Additionally, the translator must be aware of the cultural and linguistic differences between the two languages to ensure that the translated article is accurate and easily understood by Arabic-speaking researchers.

3.5. Literary Translation

Literary translation is the process of translating works of literature, including novels, poetry, and plays. It requires a high level of proficiency in both the source and target languages, as well as a deep understanding of the literary and cultural context of the work being translated. An example of a literary translation to Arabic is the translation of the novel "One Hundred Years of Solitude" by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The translator needs to have a strong command of the Spanish language and a deep understanding of the literary and cultural context of the novel. Additionally, the translator must be familiar with the nuances and idiomatic expressions used in both languages to ensure that the translated work conveys the intended meaning and literary style of the original. Another example of a literary translation to Arabic is the translation of poetry by the American poet, Robert Frost. The translator must have a strong command of the English language, as well as a deep understanding of the literary and cultural context of Frost's work. Additionally, the translator must be able to convey the poetic style and nuances of the original work into Arabic, while still maintaining the beauty and flow of the poetry. Literary translation is a complex and challenging task that requires both linguistic proficiency and cultural sensitivity. A successful literary translation must accurately convey the intended meaning and style of the original work, while still appealing to the target audience's cultural and literary sensibilities.

4. Translating Proverbs: Translating proverbs is a complex task that requires a deep understanding of both the source and target languages, as well as the cultural and historical context in which the proverb was written. A proverb is a concise, memorable statement that conveys a universal truth or piece of wisdom. Translating proverbs is particularly challenging because they often contain cultural references or wordplay that do not translate directly into another language. Baker, M. (2011). One approach to translating proverbs is a literal translation. This involves translating each word in the proverb directly into the target language. However, this approach can often result in a translation that sounds awkward or unnatural in the target language. For example, the English proverb "you can't have your cake and eat it too" would translate literally into Arabic as "لا تستطيع الاكلها ايضا" which sounds unnatural to native Arabic speakers. Yaghi, M. (2017). A more effective approach to translating proverbs is idiomatic translation. This involves translating the meaning of the

proverb rather than the words themselves. Idiomatic translation requires the translator to understand the cultural and historical context of the proverb and find an equivalent expression in the target language. For example, the English proverb "when in Rome, do as the Romans do" would translate idiomatically into Arabic as "عندما تكون في روما، افعل ما يفعله الرومان" which conveys the same meaning in a way that is natural and idiomatic to Arabic speakers. Yaghi, M. (2017). Another challenge in translating proverbs is preserving the rhyme, alliteration, or other poetic devices used in the original language. For example, the English proverb "time heals all wounds" uses alliteration and would lose its poetic effect if translated literally. A skilled translator may choose to preserve the alliteration by finding an equivalent proverb in the target language that uses a similar poetic device. Munday, J. (2016). Translating proverbs also requires an understanding of the cultural significance of the proverb in the source language. Proverbs often reflect the values, beliefs, and customs of a particular culture, and translating them without considering their cultural context can result in a translation that does not convey the same meaning. For example, the English proverb "all is fair in love and war" would not translate literally into Arabic because the concept of "fairness" in love and war is not as culturally significant in Arabic culture as it is in English-speaking cultures.

5. Difficulties of Translating Proverbs

Translating proverbs is not an easy task, and it comes with its own set of challenges. Proverbs are idiomatic expressions that convey a message, and these messages are often embedded in the cultural and linguistic context of the language in which they were created. As such, the process of translating proverbs involves a high level of cultural competence, and it is essential that the translator understands the cultural nuances of both the source and target languages. In this section, we will explore the difficulties in translating proverbs, Baker, M. (2011). One of the challenges in translating proverbs is that they are deeply rooted in the culture from which they originated. Proverbs reflect the values, beliefs, and customs of a particular culture, and as such, they may not make sense when translated literally. The cultural context of proverbs must be considered when translating them to another language to ensure that the translated proverb conveys the same meaning as the original proverb. For example, the English proverb, "actions speak louder than words," may not have an equivalent in other languages, as the cultural context may differ, Benjamin (1923). Another difficulty in translating proverbs is the use of idiomatic expressions. Proverbs are often constructed using idiomatic expressions that cannot be translated literally. The meaning of the proverb may be lost if the translator attempts a literal translation, and as such, an idiomatic translation must be used instead. Idiomatic translation involves translating the meaning of the proverb rather than the words themselves, which can be a challenging process. For example, the English proverb, "don't count your chickens before they hatch," may be difficult to translate into other languages due to the use of idiomatic expressions. Translating proverbs also requires the translator to understand the poetic devices used in the original language. Proverbs often use poetic devices such as rhyme, alliteration, and metaphor, which may not translate directly into another language. The translator must find an equivalent poetic device in the target language to ensure that the translated proverb maintains the same poetic effect as the original proverb. For example, the English proverb, "a penny saved is a penny earned," uses alliteration, and this poetic effect must be preserved when translating the proverb into another language.

A- Strategies of Translating Proverbs

Translating proverbs can be a complex task, but there are various strategies that can be used to effectively translate these idiomatic expressions. In this section, we will explore some of the strategies of translating proverbs. One strategy of translating proverbs is the use of equivalent proverbs. Equivalent proverbs are proverbs that exist in both the source and target languages and have a similar meaning. This strategy involves finding a proverb in the target language that has the same or similar meaning as the proverb in the source language, Bassnett (1991). Another strategy of translating proverbs is the use of explanation or paraphrase. This strategy involves explaining the meaning of the proverb in the target language rather than translating it directly. The translator may provide a literal translation of the proverb followed by an explanation or paraphrase to ensure that the meaning is clear to the target audience. For example, the English proverb, "actions speak louder than words," may be translated into the Arabic language as "الأفعال تتكلم أكثر من الأقوال," which literally means "actions speak louder than words," followed by an explanation or paraphrase to clarify the meaning, Yaghi, M. (2017).

Conclusion : In conclusion, translating proverbs can be a challenging task, but it is essential for effective communication and cultural exchange. Proverbs are deeply rooted in the culture and language of a particular community, and a literal translation may not always convey the intended meaning. Therefore, translators must employ various strategies such as equivalent proverbs, explanation or paraphrase, and cultural substitution to

ensure that the meaning of the proverb is accurately conveyed in the target language. The selection of the translation strategy must be based on a careful consideration of the cultural and linguistic context of both the source and target languages, as well as the intended audience. Despite the challenges involved, translating proverbs is an important aspect of language and cultural exchange, and it helps to promote cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. Through the translation of proverbs, we can gain insight into the beliefs, values, and cultural practices of different communities, and this can help to break down cultural barriers and foster greater intercultural communication. Overall, translators of proverbs play an important role in promoting cultural exchange, and their work contributes to the enrichment of our understanding of different cultures and languages.

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