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Sometimes, however, difficulties arise not only from cultural or linguistic causes, but also from the translator's decision which sometimes carries very important semantic implications.

The findings of this research, it is hoped, will provide students of translation with insight into the consequences which their decision and choice in translation can have.

Finally, in order to produce the desired effect, a translation should be equipped with explanatory matter in the notes. Such notes, we believe, provide relevant redundancy which is essential for a full understanding of the TL text.

homographic word can function as two distinct word-classes-was responsible for the confusion, which in turn made the TL text incomprehensible.

Conclusion

The study reported here was undertaken to test particular hypotheses pertaining to the theoretically predictable difficulties encountered by the average Englishman reading the DTOWH.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion the following observations have been made:

Since language is an essential part of culture, from which it derives much of its meaning, it is imperative for the translator to be well-acquainted with the culturally important features of both the SL and TL texts, especially those terms or expressions which are peculiar to a particular culture. Any misinterpretation of the culture-specific terms and their subtle semantic implication will lead to an inadequate or ambiguous rendition.

Such being the case, words referring to certain features of the culture in question proved to be problematic, in that they are sometimes difficult to render and require at best circumlocution and lengthy explanations as illustrated by examples involving such words and phrases as *صلى بنا*, *ستر*, *غريب*

Excuse me, my son, while I perform the sunset prayer-it is said that the sunset prayer is "strange" if you don't catch it in time it eludes you (p. 88).

The inadequate rendering of غريب into "strange" with typographical devices arises from the translator's confusion between the two grammatical uses of the word in Arabic. Speakers of Arabic are in no doubt about what it means. English people (readers), however, have to have it explained to them, i. e. to be informed that غريب can be used as an adjective as well as a noun. In the SL text غريب is used as a noun and not as an adjective, as rendered above. Thus it means a stranger in the sense of a passer-by who does not usually stay long, hence the implicit simile between a stranger and the sunset prayer-both being transient.

The sunset prayer is singled out as different and described as a stranger, because the time between the prayer which comes immediately after the glow of sunset has disappeared and the night prayers the shortest between any two of the five prayers. Such that if you do not perform the sunset prayer in time, you miss it because you will be overtaken by the night prayer which comes soon afterwards.

The translator seems to have overlooked the grammatical fact that the word can be used adjectivally as well as nominally. Failure to notice this homonymic clash-that the same homophonic and

major challenge. A striking example is furnished by the Arabic word *ستر* as in the following quotation from the DTOWH.

(ليس عندنا من هذا شيء ... نحن قوم نعيش على الستر) ص ٣٣ .

We have none of all this-we are people who live on what God sees fit to give us.

One cannot but be struck by the fact that the Arabic word has been rendered by a paraphrase consisting of no less than seven words. *ستر* is a comprehensive Arabic word which implies several shades of meaning, which it is impossible to comprehend in one English word; it has therefore no exact lexical equivalent in English. Admittedly, *ستر* is one of those multifaceted terms which defy the best translator and reader. The Arabic word in Ali's terms is often a full ray of light. An English reader who looks at it through the prism of his own language, misses a great deal of its meaning, by confining his attention to one colour only (Ali, 1934). The paraphrase provided by the translator covers only one shade of meaning.

Sometime the obvious explicitness in the SL text is replaced by apparent inexplicitness in the TL text. The following example from the DTOWH illustrates this point:

(أمهلني يا بني ريثما اصلي صلاة المغرب ... يقولون ان المغرب غريب ان لم تدركه في وقته فانك).

Another culturally important example is of the Arabic phrasal verb *صلى بنا* which occurred in the DTOWH.

(وتصبر وصلى بنا صلاة العشاء في الليلة التالية) ص ٣٦.

He bore this manfully and joined us in the evening prayers on the second night (p. 84).

It is clear that the translator has totally overlooked the religious significance of the verb phrase *صلى بنا* and has consequently rendered it inadequately. In Arabic the verb *صلى بـ* implies that "he became Imam" i. e. a leader in a congregational prayer is assigned a position superior to an individual one, let alone being a leader in that prayer. This implication has disappeared altogether from the English translation, and the verb has been simply rendered into a secularized verb "joined", which is a very general word, free from any religious signification.

6. culture-bound Terms

The cultural differences between Arabic and English are so wide that their impact confronts the translator and for that matter the reader with a host of alien concepts for which no words in English exist. Since the vocabulary of a language derives its meaning from its culture, it is bound to contain lexical items which are peculiar to that culture, hence culture-bound. Some Arabic lexical items are typical of this, and the search for their English equivalents is a

a venerable old man with a white beard and wearing a spotless white robe come up to me, a smile on his face. He struck me with his string of prayer-beads and called out: "Arise".

"I swear that I got up I know not how, and I went home and I know not how. (p. 90).

The passage is charged with mystic meaning. Such meaning is most difficult to express and render into English. The English reader, it is predictable, cannot feel the joy nor can he appreciate the sense of wonder and miracles, because the whole theme of the passage is alien to him and hence incomprehensible. This example shows that linguistic knowledge alone falls short of conveying the subtle semantic distinctions and their connotative power, if it is not supplemented by extralinguistic information culled from the relevant culture. The content of this message is culturally significant and cannot be properly understood unless the relevant culture itself is understood. The reader, who is not familiar with the Arab-Islamic culture may not perceive the effect of word-magic and fail to realize that certain words, accompanied by certain types of action can be used in spells and incantation. Accordingly, he cannot sense the magic power of the old man's word "Arise" accompanied by his gentle strike of the ailing woman with his string of prayer-beads as a healing incantation.

social implications associated with people's common belief that أولياء الله are endowed with supernatural powers: They are workers of wonders and removers of worries and troubles. Such beliefs are still deep-rooted and are alive today among many Muslims. The English reader who is living in an age in which it is "unfashionable" to speak of religion or spiritual peace, such implications as envisaged above are quite inconceivable to him, and any attempt to force him to imagine such a state of affairs, makes him think that the source of this information is untrustworthy. It is therefore easy enough to predict his reaction to the story told by the woman whose neck one day swelled and was confined to bed for two months. One night she had a heavy fever so at first dawn she rose from her bed and dragged herself along till she came to the doum tree of Wad Hamid. She said, "I was under the doum tree with hardly sufficient strength to stand up, and called out at the top of my voice.

"O Wad Hamid I have come to you to seek refuge and protection. I shall sleep here at your tomb under your doum tree. Either you let me die or restore me to life. I shall not leave here until one of these two things happens. And so I curled myself in fear". The woman continued. "and was soon overcome by sleep. I suddenly heard sounds of recitation from the Quran and a bright light as sharp as a knife-edge radiated out, joining up the two river banks, and I saw the doum tree prostrating itself in worship... I saw

the west. In other words, the Christian society of the west has become more secularized than the Muslim society of the Arab world (Aziz, 1982). Little wonder then that the people have widely differing reaction to matters related to religion.

Consider the following example from the DTWH:

(كان ود حامد في الزمن السالف مملوكا لرجل فاسق، وكان من أولياء الله الصالحين... ولما ضاق ذرعا بحياته مع ذلك الكافر دعا الله أن ينقذه منه) ص ٤٦ .

Wad Hamid, in times gone by, used to be the slave of a wicked man... when he could no longer bear his life with this infidel he called upon God to deliver him...(p. 90)

Many of the religious terms were known before Islam, but after Islam they took on approximate or different meanings to suit the new religion. Thus, كافر , for example, is the opposite of (a true believer in God. According to the rules of Islamic law كافر and فاسق are great sinners and should consequently be heavily punished. These are basically religious terms and must be referred to their prototypical Islamic meaning. When these terms are translated into English they lose their religious shades of meaning. For example, the phrase أولياء الله الصالحين and "God's holy saints" are equivalent only in their general meaning. The Arabic phrase, however, has extra religious and social implication. The word "saint" which appears in the translation is basically Christian and carries different connotations from those of أولياء . The Arabic phrase has extra

specific meaning of بلد in colloquial Sudanese Arabic and thus rightly rendered it as "village".

(لو جئت بلدنا سائحا فاغلب الظن يا بني انك لن تمكث طويلا)

Were you to come to our village, it's likely, my son, that you would not stay long (p. 83).

This could be a real problem for an inexperienced translator, who is not familiar with Sudanese culture.

5. *Religious Culture*

Religion can have a profound influence on the language and life of society. Thus the introduction of Christianity into Britain in 597 greatly influenced the English language and English way of life. "Christianity," writes Baugh, "preached meekness and humility, patience under suffering, and said that if a man struck you on one cheek you should turn the other (Baugh, 1963:95). Islam, on the other hand, is an ideology which has an even greater impact on the life and language of the Arabs.

Linguistically, the Quran has had the effect of preserving the Arabic language intact over the centuries. A full account of the differences or similarities would carry us far beyond the scope of this paper. I shall therefore explain the relevant points as far as suits my purpose.

The two peoples have different attitudes to religion. It is widely held that religion is taken more seriously in the Arab world than in

“To such tyranny has this government come, that it has begun to interfere in those holy things held most sacred by them” Then taking a most imposing stance and in voice choked with emotion he said:

“Ask your worthy Prime Minister how it was that he permitted himself to send his troops and henchmen to desecrate that pure and holy place” And so the government fell, the first government returned to power, and the leading paper in the country wrote “The Doum Tree of Wad Hamid has become the symbol of nation’s awakening”. (p. 93)

Here the content of the message is not fully comprehensible to an English reader who has to deal with a host of concepts and ideas alien to his way of life. How come! He might wonder that the doum tree incident was powerful enough to topple the government. The whole theme is alien and hence incomprehensible to him.

I shall conclude this section by discussing one more problem related to place names in the two cultures. The Arabic word بلد poses a problem for the translator, since it may mean-country, town, city, place, community and village. The word is usually translated as “country”.

A close reading of the text, however, shows that a translator has to choose the appropriate translation equivalent. His choice will be based on his linguistic and cultural knowledge. In the example, which we have seen already the translator is obviously aware of the

merely another label for imperialism and is equally loaded with unfavourable overtones. So far we have been talking about lexical items, their denotations and connotations cross-culturally. However, sometimes not only the lexical items but even the theme of the whole political message may not be grasped by a reader from a different culture. The impact of the difference between, for instance, Arabic and English confronts the reader with a number of incomprehensible concepts. The following passage from the DTOWH PROVIDES obvious example:

(كانت المعارضة تبحث عن شرارة توقد بها النار. فلما حدث حادث الدومة معكم واخذوكم فالقوا بكم في السجن نشرت الصحف النبأ وخطب رئيس الحكومة المقالة خطبة نارية قال فيها: (لقد بلغ من طغيان هذه الحكومة أنها أصبحت تتدخل في معتقدات الناس، في اقدس الأشياء المقدسة عندهم، ووقف الخطيب وقفة ذات اثر، ثم قال وصوته يتهدج بالعاطفة) اسألوا رئيس وزرائنا الموقر من دومة ود حامد. اسألوا كيف أباح لنفسه أن يرسل جنده وأعوانه فيدنسوا ذلك المكان الطاهر المقدس؟)... وهكذا سقطت الحكومة وعادت الحكومة الأولى إلى الحكم وكتبت الصحيفة الأولى في القطر تقول ان (دومة حامد أصبحت رمزا ليقظة الشعب) ص ٥٠.

'...the opposition looked around for something to spark things off. When the Doum tree incident occurred they marched all off to and slung you into prison, the newspaper took this up and the leader of the government which had resigned made a fiery speech in parliament in which he said:

(حدثونا يومها أن الحكومة التي طردت الاستعمار قد استبدلت بحكومة أكثر ضجة ونوابا) ص ٤٧ .

One day they told us that the government which had driven out imperialism had been substituted by an even bigger and noisier government (p. 91).

The word *استعمار* has been rendered into imperialism which is a modern equivalent, an older equivalent being colonialism. Both Sudanese and Englishmen may refer to imperialism, but for the one it will have connotations of disapproval, for the other of approval depending on one's point of view.

For a Sudanese *استعمار* is his arch enemy under whose yoke he has struggled so hard, it is therefore the oppressor and he the oppressed. By sharp contrast, the Englishman who lives in a culture whose political philosophy stresses the value of colonies and whose government policy is to extend its influence, might take great pride in his politicians expansionist achievements.

To sum up, the strong pejorative implication which is present in *استعمار* is completely absent from imperialism. The same is also true with regard to the phrase *الحكم الأجنبي*, which is usually rendered into "foreign rule". The two phrases look as translation equivalents but upon a close examination, the two exhibit different connotations. In Sudanese politics *حكم أجنبي* conveys a pejorative sense which is not found in the English equivalent. "Foreign rule" is

person addressed. The comparison of Arabic kinship terms and their English equivalents reveals much about the difference between the two societies.

4. *political Culture*

Cultures with different political philosophies and practices tend to have different political terminology, which is difficult to render from one language to another. It is quite possible for political terms to have similar denotations and connotations cross-culturally, in which case there is no real problem in translation. Problems will most often occur where items of similar denotations have different connotations (Wilkins, 1972). The differences will become more evident when we compare the ideological vocabularies of the cultures in question. The Sudan and Britain belong to two different political cultures. The former is a socialist country, the latter a capitalist. It is only natural, therefore, that the terms which exist in one culture do not necessarily convey the same meaning as those of the other culture. They may be highly charged with emotive meaning for the one, but may not have an equivalent meaning for the other. The language of politics is rich in such examples. As such, the terms *استعمار*, *حكم أجنبي*, *طغيان*, *برلمان*, and *معارضة* (All quoted from the DTOWH) WILL HARDLY MEAN THE SAME THING FOR AN Arab and an Englishman. "Imperialism" is one such example:

(اذكر صاحب لابني يزامله في المدرسة استضافة عندنا قبل عام في مثل هذا الوقت) ص ٣٣.

I remember a friend of my son's, a fellow student at school, whom my son invited to stay with us a year ago at this time. (p. 83).

It is also used as a form of address in the two languages.

(لو جئت بلدنا سائحا فاعلم الظن يا بني انك لن تمكث طويلا).

Were you to come to our village as a tourist, it is likely, my son that you would not stay long. (p. 83).

In this respect the two languages may be said to be similar. This similarity, however, is not found, for instance, with "brother". In Arabic, brother is used both as a kinship term and as a form of address. In English, on the other hand, brother is used only as a kinship term, as illustrated by the following table:

Arabic: ابن		English: son	
kinship term +	+	kinship term	+
Form of address	+	form of address	+
kinship term +	أخ	kinship term +	brother
form of address	+	form of address	-

Accordingly, an Englishman would be surprised to be addressed as "brother". When used as a form of address in Arabic, the word أخ reflects a high degree of intimacy combined with respect for the

names for the things that are useful to them in their daily lives, and the camel is a case in point:

Historically the camel used to be an indispensable animal in the life of bedouin Arabs, who spent most of their lives in the desert. Their swift ride gave camel herds a military advantage. The camel made it possible for the Arabs to traverse vast distances. It can carry weights up to four hundredweight, viz., 448 lbs, cover sixty miles in a day and is capable of travelling twenty days without water in temperature reaching 120 F.... (Rodinson, 1973: 13).

In view of the above advantages, the camel was accorded special status, which accounts for the large camel vocabulary. Accordingly, it is essential for the Arabs to distinguish efficiently between different kinds of camel. This is testified by the elaborate camel terminology.

3. *Social Culture*

Not only physical features of the environment are reflected in the vocabulary, but also social features, which manifest themselves throughout the lexical structure of a language. An obvious example is provided by kinship terms. The kinship terms in one language may not have corresponding equivalents in another.

In the examples cited from the DTOWH, the word "son" is used as a kinship term both in Arabic and English.

يصحو الرجل من نومه فيقص على جاره انه رأى نفسه في ارض رملية واسعة
رملها كلجين الفضة... ثم صعد تلاً فلما بلغ قمته رأى غابة كثة من الدوم في
وسطها دومة - دومة طويلة، بقية الدوم بالنسبة إليها كقطيع الماعز بينهم
بعير ص ٣٩.

A man awakens from sleep and tells his neighbours how he found himself in a vast sandy tract of land, the sand as white as silver... how he climbed a hill and on reaching the top he espied a dense forest of doum trees with a single tall tree in the centre which in comparison to others looked like a camel amid a herd of goats (p.86).

فوجدنا خلقاً كبيراً لا أول له ولا آخر وعربات واقفة وخيولاً وجمالاً ص ٤٨.

There we found unbelievably immense gathering of people, carts, horses and camels (p.92)

The word *جمل* in the first quotation is the generic term for camel, in the second quotation *بعير* denotes a male camel. This distinction is not made in English. Both *بعير* and *جمل* are simply rendered into "camel".

It should be noted, however, that this distinction is not to be considered a translation problem, but is to be viewed as an example illustrating the effect of the environment on a language, especially its vocabulary. for the words of a language often reflect the interests of the people who speak it (Palmer, 1976). Thus the Arabs have

meeting place was stipulated in the convention. (The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol.1 1st edition 1960 photomechanical reprint p. 384).

This specific information, which is lacking in the TL text, is bound to contribute to the better understanding of the text by giving the English reader access to the culture of the author.

From the foregoing it must be concluded that no adequate translation can be achieved without careful analysis of the cultural context of the text, since the meaning of the SL text can only be understood within the total cultural setting (Rijab, 1986).

2. *Environment*

Features of the environment, in which a society lives, including topographical features of the country, climate... are best reflected in its language (Sapir, 1949). The effect of the environment is normally detected in the structure of its lexicon. The lexical distinctions drawn by each language will tend to reflect the culturally important features of the object, institutions, and activities in the society in which a language operates (Lyons, 1968). Thus the more distinctions a language makes within a given phenomenon, the more labels it is given (Ilyas, 1981). For example, some forms of Arabic, especially bedouin Arabic, have a large camel vocabulary (reputedly a hundred or more). In the examples quoted from the DTOWH two Arabic words for "camel" have been used, namely بعير and جمال (the plural of which being جمال):

'By God, he said to me if this were the doum tree of Jandal, and you the Muslims, who fought with Ali and Mu'awiya, and I the arbitrator between you, holding your fate in these two hands of mine, I would not stir an inch.'(84).

It is important to note that the information rate has risen far greater in the TL text than in the SL text, i.e. redundancy has decreased in the translated text because the translator has overlooked the relevant cultural parameters, thus making the understanding of the TL text more difficult than the SL text. The redundancy overlooked by the translator may be expressed as follows:

Ali ibin abi Talib, cousin of Muhammed, the prophet of Islam was the prophet's son-in-law, and was the father of Hassan and Hussenin, and was the fourth Caliph from 656 to 661.

Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufian, the founder of the Ummayyad dynasty and Ali's rival became Caliph from 661 to 680. In 657, in the first great battle between Muslims, between Ali and Mu'awiya at Sifin, there was call for a halt to the fratricidal struggle. The two warring factions were obliged to stop fighting and resort to arbitration. The arbitration took place at Doum of Jandal (now al-Djof), approximately half way between Iraq and Syria. The choice of the

from the society where it operates. It is, in fact, used within the society that is closely tied up to it.

The society's beliefs, habits, customs and other aspects of social behaviour constitute the general cultural framework of that language. So cultural background has many advantages for the writer. Thus the writer may carry his words very far, relying on the reader's predictive power aided by a sufficient knowledge of the cultural background.

The translator, however, cannot do so, since the TL reader may not be familiar with the culture lying behind the text, or he may only partially be familiar with it, in which case a cultural difficulty will most often occur. Accordingly, the translator may overcome this difficulty with redundancy. Otherwise redundancy rate will decrease and will consequently disturb the balance (Aziz, 1981). The following quotation from the DTOWH will illustrate the point being made here:

وقال لي (والله لو كانت دومتكم هذه دومة الجنادل وكنتم المسلمين تقاتلون مع علي ومعاوية وكنت أنا حكما بينكم في يدي هاتين مصانركم ما تحركت من مكاني هذا شبراً) ص ٣٦^(٢)

(2) The numbers appearing at the end of the Arabic and English quotation refer to the relevant pages in the SL and TL texts respectively.