

A Sociolinguistic Approach to Translating Jordanian Proverbs Related to Women as Mothers into English

مقاربة لغوية اجتماعية لترجمة الأمثال الخاصة بالأمهات الأردنيات
من اللغة العربية المنطوقة إلى اللغة الإنجليزية

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Abstract:

This study investigates the translatability of proverbs in Jordanian Spoken Arabic (Henceforth, JSA) pertaining women as mothers into English. In addition, it sheds light on the image of Jordanian mothers expressed by these proverbs. The data consisted of 14 proverbs in JSA that were classified according to the role of a mother in the society. They were translated into English by 20 MA translation students (both males and females) at Yarmouk University, Jordan. Then, the translated data were analyzed and evaluated according to the adequacy scale of translation (Adequate, Semi-adequate and Inadequate). Sociolinguistic approach to translation was employed as a theoretical framework of the current study. The study concluded that most translators provided inadequate translation to these proverbs due to their lack of cultural and social knowledge, and they neglected the social meaning during translation.

Keywords: Translation ; Women ; Sociolinguistic approach ; Proverbs ; Jordanian Spoken Arabic.

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ملخص:

تبحث هذه الدراسة في إمكانية ترجمة الأمثال الخاصة بالأهميات الأردنية من اللغة العربية المنطوقة إلى اللغة الإنجليزية. كما تسلط الضوء على صورة الأهميات الأردنية من خلال هذه الأمثال. تتشكل المعطيات من أربعة عشرة مثلاً (14) تم تصنيفها حسب دور الأم داخل المجتمع الأردني. قام بترجمتها إلى اللغة الإنجليزية عشرون (20) طالباً من قسم الماستر في الترجمة (ذكوراً وإناثاً) بجامعة اليرموك بالأردن. بعد ذلك، تم تحليل البيانات المترجمة وتقييمها وفقاً لمقياس كفاية الترجمة (كافية وشبه كافية وغير كافية). تم الاعتماد على المقاربة اللغوية الاجتماعية في الترجمة كإطار نظري لهذه الدراسة. وقد خلصت إلى أن معظم المترجمين قدموا ترجمة غير كافية لهذه الأمثال بسبب افتقارهم إلى المعرفة الثقافية والاجتماعية وإهمالهم للمعنى الاجتماعي أثناء الترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ترجمة؛ نساء؛ مقاربة لغوية اجتماعية؛ أمثال؛ العربية الأردنية المنطوقة.

1- Introduction :

Translation is a channel of communication between cultures. It is the bridge that transfers the meaning from one language into another and it makes cultures closer (Al-Harabsheh, 2013; Al-Harabsheh and Obeidat, 2014). Translation does not only include rendering the meanings of words but the culture itself. Every speech community has its own unique cultural norms and even culture-specific terms or expressions. That is, the Source Language (henceforth, SL) text may have word that expresses concept related to religion, belief or food; this word may be unknown or not existed in the Target Language (henceforth, TL) (Baker, 1992). "The purpose of translation is to give a flavor of the source culture" (Baker 1992:24) i.e. the translator should take into consideration the cultural meaning of the SL text, and render this meaning as adequate as possible in the TL text. For instance, a social concept can be existed in the SL culture but it is not in the TL culture, such as: الأقربون أولى بالمعروف "relatives have solely the right of charities." Culture-specific terms have been controversial issues in the translation field, because a proverb in a certain language conveys not only

the literal meanings of words included in the proverb but also the cultural background of that language. Therefore, they are categorized as a culture-specific terms. Thus, its translation can be challenging and require a lot of attention.

Culture-specific terms are part of the culture of a language; they are also part of the social norms of that culture. Therefore, the employment of sociolinguistic approach to translation will facilitate the process of translating these terms. Paoletti (2011) defines sociolinguistics as "an interdisciplinary field of research in which linguistics and sociology, and other human sciences, join together to study verbal and other human conducts." In other words, a discipline deals with the relationship between language and society. This includes the study of language variations, dialects in terms of phonology, vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, this field is an integral part of translation process for it helps the translator to understand the text and its social context. For example, Fawcett (1997: 116) indicates, "knowing the slang is only half of the battle, however, because you then have to decide whether the target language has anything comparable." In other words, a translator should understand the social meaning of the word or expression, so that s/he can give an appropriate equivalent for it and keep the same or nearly the same effect of SL readers on TL readers.

The translation of proverbs seems to be challenging, as translators render them literally and out of their social contexts. As a result, this kind of translation can be inadequate, so it leads to misunderstanding. The present study aims to examine the translatability of proverbs related to women as mothers from JSA into English. This study employs the sociolinguistic approach to translation as a theoretical framework to understand the intended social and cultural meaning of these proverbs. It also suggests the adequate strategies to translate the social and cultural meaning of these proverbs from JSA into English. This study also attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent can Jordanian proverbs related to women as mothers be translatable into English?
2. How can the sociolinguistic approach to translation be beneficial in translating such expressions?

2. Method and Procedures

The sample of the study consisted of 20 MA translation students (males and females) at Yarmouk University. They studied some translation courses that are related to the topic of the study such as Literary Translation, Advanced General Translation from English into Arabic and vice versa. A translational test was designed to investigate some challenges encountered by Jordanian M.A students while translating these proverbs into English. It was pretested before it was administrated on the sample. It consisted of 14 proverbs in JSA related to women as mothers, the participants were asked to translate them from Arabic into English; they were given a two-hour session. These expressions were mostly obtained from Al-Amad (1978; 2006) and Al-Awawdeih (2000). These proverbs were purposefully selected to show the position of women, especially mothers, in Jordanian society and how they are reflected in proverbs on the one hand and to investigate the translatability of these proverbs from Arabic into English on the other hand.

The data of the translational test were analyzed in the light of sociolinguistic approach to translation, because the selected proverbs are only understood within their social and cultural context. These proverbs were categorized into five categories according to the social meaning that the proverb conveys; (1) proverbs related to giving birth, (2) proverbs related to raising children, (3) proverbs related to the family status after the mother's death, (4) proverbs related to the traits of the mother, and (5) the duty of children towards their mothers. Then, the participants' translations were evaluated according to the adequacy scale that consists of two levels: adequate translation, when the translation is grammatically and semantically correct and the social meaning of the proverb has been successfully conveyed. Inadequate translation, when the translation is neither

grammatically and semantically accurate nor the social meaning is rendered accurately.

3. Cultural Translation

Hardwick (2000) defines cultural translation as the act of translating “that involves transplanting into the receiving culture, the culture framework within which an ancient text is embedded” [as cited in Bassentt 2007:15]. This type of translation deals with texts related to the culture of a certain society that includes specific customs, traditions, thoughts, and language that consists of folk stories, folk songs, and folk sayings (i.e. proverbs). Thus, the translator should be fully aware of both languages (SL and TL) and cultures (the SL and the TL culture).

However, there are certain issues related to cultural translation that should be taken into consideration such as the inevitable loss of meaning. This problem is due to the different nature and culture of the SL and TL. For instance, the translation of the Quran should not be literal because the meaning will be lost. An illustrative example could be the translation of Marmaduke Pickthall of "وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ" (الإسراء: 29) into “And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded (17:29).” Pickthall translated the verse literally, he neglected the pragmatic and cultural meaning of the verse, that is, a person should not spend or give in an extreme way nor s/he stops spending or giving.

The other issue is the untranslatability, i.e. impossibility of translation. Catford (1965) categorizes the untranslatability issue into two types: the linguistic untranslatability and the cultural untranslatability. The linguistic untranslatability occurs when the functionally relevant features of the language of the SL text are not found in the language of the TL text. The ambiguity in lexical items represents an example for this issue, as in the word “عين” which has more than one meaning in Arabic such as an eye, a spring, an important figure, a parliament member, or a spy. To overcome

this problem, we can disambiguate the lexical item through putting it in a certain context, and giving a translation for it. For example, "جاء عين يوسف" can be translated into "Yousef's spy came".

The cultural untranslatability usually happens "when a situational feature, functionally relevant for the SL text is completely absent from the culture of which the TL is a part" (Catford 1965:99). This matter applies to culture-specific terms or 'culture me' as Nord (1997) calls them. These terms occur when there is a cultural difference between the SL and the TL culture.

In Arabic, there are many culture-specific terms, such as some types of clothes, are found in Jordanian culture but not in the English culture such as the word شماغ (Shemagh) which represents a traditional headdress that Arab men put on and is usually made of cotton. Proper names are also culture-specific terms like the name 'Mohammad' that is used frequently in the Arab world. There are also certain proverbs that are considered culture-specific, especially when they represent some significations that are not available in the other culture, for instance: "القهوة يمينا ولو كان أبو زيد يسار", that is "coffee has to be served from the right to left even if Abu Zaid was sitting on the left." This indicates that in the Arab culture serving food and drinks must be from the right to the left no matter how important the person in the left side is. Another example of this issue is "مجنون ليلى" can be approximated into "Romeo and Juliet."

4. Sociolinguistics and Translation

The importance of this discipline comes from the fact that it studies the relationship between the language and the society that determines the language use. However, Sanchez (2007) believes that it must go beyond that importance, especially when it comes to translation, where it should deal with the relation between the linguistic and social relation and its use in analyzing the language in each society and given social context. She indicates that this can be problematic for translators as "context and register

are one of the great challenges the translator has to face as they carry the social connotation reflected in the ST” (Sanchez 2007: 127). She takes time, space, and society as an example of this problem. Time “relates to the period or age to which language used in the ST corresponds” (p.125). It causes a dilemma to the translator, whether s/he must approximate this period in the TL or correspond it to the modern period of the translation, so that the readers cannot feel that it is strange to them, such as translating old proverbs in Classical Arabic into old Archaic English or into modern English. She explains that the second option is better because it would attract the target reader more, and helps to understand the target text.

Space and society can also be problematic to the translator “because geographical and ideological considerations of both SL and TL society have to be taken into account” (ibid: 125). Therefore, the translator deals not only with one society and its culture but also with two societies and their cultures or maybe more than two. Thus, Sanchez (2007) points out that it is important for the translator to consider these factors during the process of translation. Therefore, she designates that culture-specific terms can be transferred but “some of their values will be linguistically translatable but culturally non-transferrable” (p. 129). This issue depends on the nature of the SL and TL, the nature of the text itself, and the knowledge of the translator in both languages and their culture.

Most translators concentrate on the linguistic aspects and neglect the socio-cultural factors, which are very important in the process of translation. Toury (1995: 53) manifests that translation can play the social role, which means that it “fulfills a function allotted by a community ... to the activity, its practitioners and/or their products ...in a way which is deemed appropriate in its own team of reference” (Toury 1995: 53).

Therefore, the translator should take both the linguistic and the social meaning into consideration during the translation process. The social meaning refers to “a piece of language conveys about the social circumstances of its use” (Leech 1994:14). The social meaning is expressed in colloquialism. For example, the Moroccan Arabic differs from the

Jordanian Arabic. This applies to vocative terms, such as greeting and gratefulness expressions, for instance, the expression “يعطيك العافية” is translated into “May God give you better health” in Jordanian society. However, in Moroccan Arabic, it means, "to wish for someone to be burned."

5. Findings and Discussions

The translation of proverbs relies on the social recognition of the contexts in which these proverbs are used. The findings and discussions have been merged together in this section. Also, this section has been divided into the following categories:

5.1. Proverbs Related to Expectancy and Delivery

The stereotypical image of a woman in Jordan is the one who should deliver kids and take care of them. A woman gains her status in the society based on the number of her delivered baby-boys. Therefore, when the mother gives birth to a boy, the family celebrates; however, they do not when the baby is a girl, the family becomes sad and upset, as Jessup (1873:28) describes both occasions: “The birth of a son is the occasion of great rejoicing and presents to the family. But the birth of a daughter is considered a misfortune.”

Boys are more preferred than girls in Jordanian family, for it is assumed that the boys take care of their family and the family’s business when they grow up. Therefore, the mother of boys gets a stronger social position than the mother of girls. Yet, the mother of girls is blamed for delivering a girl. Consider the following proverbs that describe the image of expectancy and delivery in the Jordanian society:

(1) أم البنت مسنودة بخيط وأم الولد مسنودة بحيط

/ʔumm l-bint masnu:deh ib khait w ʔumm l-walad masnu:dih ib hait/

(Literally: a string supports the mother of the girl, and a wall supports the mother of the boy.)

This proverb indicates the status of the mother in the society depending on her delivery. If she delivers a girl, then a string backs her up. This indicates that the mother is in danger, and then she will have unstable social life with her husband. Conversely, if the mother delivers a boy, then a wall backs her up, which means she will have a stable and a happy life with her husband. Only 10% of the participants were successful in providing an adequate translation for this proverb such as:

(1a): *The daughters' mum is backed up by a few but the sons' mum is backed up by a lot.*

(1b): *The daughter's mother is in the edge, while the son's mother is on the bridge.*

Both translations were adequate, whereas (1a) has directly provided the social meaning of the proverb. (1.b) has also translated the proverb using metaphorical or idiomatic equivalence. Therefore, both translations conveyed the right meaning of the proverb. The majority of the participants relied on the literal translation such as:

(1c): *The mother of the daughter is supported by a string and the mother of a boy is by a wall.*

(1d): *The girl's mother is propped by a thread, and the boy's mother is propped by a wall.*

In this proverb, the words (خيطة) and (حيطة) indicate how strong the mother is backed up by her family and the society and how her social status gets stronger for it depends on the baby's sex. Thus, the word (thread) خيطة shows that the mother of a girl is only backed up by a few like the thread that is very weak and cannot support anything. Yet, the word (wall) حيطة indicates how the position of the mother of the boy is strong in the society, which is as strong as a wall. Thus, a literal translation to this proverb does not provide the appropriate social meaning, as it is culture- specific term.

There were also different renditions for the word (مسنود) which was translated into “support, prop, and backed.” Although, these verbs show the act of support, they indicate different types of it. The verb “prop” means “to prevent from falling”, and “support” means “to sustain (a person, the mind, the spirit, courage, etc.) under trial or affliction” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary). In other words, these verbs are used to indicate the help in emotional, physical, or financial acts. Thus, they are unsuitable for this context. The verb “backup” is the most suitable in the rendition of this proverb, as it indicates that “a person or a thing that supports or reinforces another” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary). Thus, when the mother of the boys is backed up, it means that giving birth to boys has reinforced her status and increased her social rank, unlike the mother who delivers girls.

(2) الشجرة اللي ما بتثمر حلال قطعها

/Al-shajarah illi: ma btithmir halal qatfha/

(Literally: a tree that does not give fruit should be cut)

This proverb indicates that if a woman is barren, then this is a good excuse for her husband to divorce her, as she is like a fruitless tree. This is a simile; as barren women are linked to fruitless trees that should be cut. Thus, this tree is useless and “the only benefit a person can get from is to cut its branches and burn them in the fire” (Al-Amad 2006: 269). Only 15% of the participants provided an adequate translation for this proverb such as:

(2a): *It is better to divorce the woman if she doesn’t give birth*

(2b): *The fruitless tree should be cut. (The barren woman must be divorced)*

The rendition (2.a) has provided the social meaning accurately by giving an ideational equivalence to the proverb. In addition, (2.b) is also considered adequate because the translator did not only provide the social meaning but also indicated the simile in the proverb.

The participant gave a literal translation for the proverb at first, then provided the connotative meaning of the proverb. Therefore, both renditions were considered adequate. 85% of the participants provided inadequate translation for this proverb as:

(2c): *A mother who does not bring children, must be divorced*

However, using “mother” in this context is unacceptable, for the proverb is about the barren woman who is unable to give birth to children. Thus, using “woman” or “wife” is more acceptable. Other inadequate translations where some translated it literally as the following:

(2d): *No need to have a fruitless tree.*

(2e): *The tree that doesn't give a benefit can be cut off.*

These renditions are inadequate because they provide the literal meaning and they do not imply the social meaning which is “the barren women should be divorced.” Thus, it may cause misunderstanding for the target reader as understanding the social meaning facilitates the process of translation. Ideology has appeared in translating this proverbs, especially by female translators as they criticize men rather women of not having children. They translated it as:

(2g): *A man can do no more than he can.*

(2h): *An unproductive man is unworthy of living.*

Although, translators are trained to be faithful to the ST, the ideological bias is clearly shown in translating these proverbs. For example, (2.g) suggests that the man has consumed all his chances in doing anything. (2.h) suggests that the man is disable and blamed for not having children; therefore, he does not have the right to live. Thus, both renditions are far away from the intended meaning.

(3) جيبوا بنات ولا تقعدوا بطالات

/ji:bu banat wala tq'udu: battala:t/

(Literally: Deliver baby-girls and don't be workless)

This proverb indicates that if a woman did not deliver a baby-boy, then it is better for her to deliver girls, for it is better to have a girl than having nothing. It is used as a comfort for those women who did not give birth to baby-boys. Unfortunately, only 5% of the participants provide adequate translation for this proverb, as:

(3a): *It is better to deliver girls rather than staying without children.*

However, 95 % of the participants provided inadequate translation for this proverb.

(3b): *Delivering girls and don't be as the barren.*

(3c): *Give birth daughters and don't stay without a thing.*

Some of these translations provided the right social meaning but they were grammatically incorrect, such as (3.b); where the gerund phrase “Delivering” is not suitable in this rendition, it is better to use the imperative “deliver” or use a better equivalent as “give birth.” Other translations such as (3.c) show how committing a grammatical mistake can cause a misunderstanding. Thus, the target reader may think that the message is for the daughters not the mothers.

(3d): *Do anything but sitting doing nothing.*

(3e): *It's better than nothing.*

These renditions are considered too general and do not show the exact social meaning of the proverb. Some participants also misunderstood the meaning of the word (بطّالات), so they translated it into (jobless) or (without work); however, the correct meaning is (not having any kids).

(4) يا ريتها بعد الطلق جابت غلام

/Yari:tha ba°d I-ttaliq ja:batighlam/

(Literally: I wish that after labor she gave birth to a boy)

This proverb indicates that the society does not accept the birth of a girl at all (Shorfat, 2011). The mother has suffered a lot during the pregnancy and labor, but in the end, she delivers a baby-girl. This suffering has been fruitlessly, because she has not delivered a baby-boy. Only 20% of the participants provided adequate translation for this proverb. The following translations were adequate for they convey the social meaning and are grammatically correct:

(4a): I wish she gave birth to a boy.

(4b): All of this effort of delivery and she delivered a girl.

However, 80% of the participants provided inadequate translation as in:

(4c) If only after the labor begot a boy.

(4d) Wish that after this suffering she got a boy.

(4e) I wish she had a real man after all the travail.

(4f) I wish she gives birth a boy after delivery.

(4g) After a lot of pain, she born a girl.

The word “جابت” in this proverb indicates the process of delivering and not the act of giving something. The verb “begot” in (4c) is also inadequate because it indicates “to procreate or generate (off spring) (especially of male parent).” Therefore, it gives the meaning that the man is one who is responsible for giving birth and not the woman in the society. This differs from the right social meaning of the above proverb, which shows that the pain, the mother has suffered during delivery, is useless when she gave birth to a girl.

The word “طلق” was also mistranslated. It refers to the enormous suffering and pain the mother has been through during the delivery. The appropriate equivalent is ‘labor’ (the act of mother giving birth), whereas the word “travail” in (4e) is an archaic term, so it might be difficult for the target reader to understand. The word ‘pain’ (4g) also does not show how much the mother had suffered during the delivery process.

(4h) *She will never give birth (bring) a son.*

(4i) *Women, born boy is quite happy and not offensive.*

(4j) *Oh, if he just did something worthy after all.*

The former translations were inadequate because they do not provide the right social meaning of the proverb. For example, (4h) shows that the family frustration that the mother will not deliver a baby-boy. (4i) indicates that the mother of baby-boy is happy and respected. However, the social meaning is conveyed, the sentence is ungrammatical. (4j) indicates the regret of the man’s family in doing nothing. None of these translations gave the right meaning of the proverb, as the suggested translation should be “*Although the mother experienced a lot of pain during childbirth, she delivered a baby-girl.*”

(5) أم البنين تمشي وتنين. وتقول وين درب الحبس يا مظلّمين

/Um ilbani:n timshi witni:n witqu:l wi:n darb ilh̄abis ya maTHlmi:n/

(Literally: the mother of boys walks, weeps, and says where the path of the prison is, oh! people)

This proverb indicates that giving birth to a boy is not always good for the mother because nurturing baby-boys is more difficult than nurturing baby-girls. Thus, baby-boys are not necessarily a reason of happiness for the mother (Al-Amad 2006). This is the only proverb that indicates delivering a baby-girl is not a bad omen for the family. This is from the mother’s point

of view not the society's view. Only 15% of the participants provided adequate translation for this proverb as:

(5a) *A mother of boys works sunup to sundown.*

(5b) *The mother of boys is always tired.*

Both renditions provided the adequate social meaning of the proverb, as the mother of the boys is always tired and does not get any rest because of her baby-boys who need a lot of care and attention for they are troublesome, and she is always worried about them. Whereas, 85% of the participants provided inadequate translation as:

(5c) *The boy's mother is always tired and sick of them.*

(5d) *Taking care of boys is so difficult and hardship.*

(5e) *Boys are troublesome.*

The former translations attempted to produce an adequate translation; however, they do not render the precise meaning; they can be considered as semi-adequate renditions. For example, (5c) indicates that the mother hates her children for the troubles they do. This distorts the image of the mother in the society, in which she is known as a sign of kindness and heart warmth. In addition, (5d) and (5e) focus on how baby-boys can be troublesome in general. The use of literal translation does not help in understanding the social meaning of the proverb. In addition, these translations have grammatical mistakes. The participants translated this proverb as the following:

(5f) *Sons' mum walks with suffering where is the path who are unjust*

(5g) *The mother of the sons walks and say where are the jail's way misjudged people*

(6) *اللي بدها يسعدھا زمانھا بتجيب بناتها قبل صبيانھا*

/illi bidha: yis^cidah zama:nha: bitji:b bana:tha qabil siya:nha:/

(Literally: The mother who wants to have a happy life should deliver her baby-girls before her baby-boys)

This proverb indicates that the society does not always believe that the girl is a sign of shame. Some people think that delivering baby-girls is shameful and sad. However, others believe that delivering baby-girls is a joyful occasion. Therefore, this proverb is said when the mother delivers a baby-girl and shows how delivering a girl can be better, especially when she is delivered before the boy, because she helps her mother in daily chores of the house and can be a friend to her (Al-Amad, 2006). Only 25% of the participants provided adequate renditions such as:

(6a) She, who wants to live happily, bears a son before a daughter.

(6b) The happiest mother who deliver the girl before the boy.

The former renditions are adequate for they provide the accurate social meaning the proverb tries to convey. However, 75% of the participants provided inadequate translation, as the following:

(6c) The one who wants to be happy must get the daughters before the sons.

(6d) Who will be happy must beget daughter before her sons.

The renditions (6c) and (6d) indicate generally that if a person wants to live happily, s/he needs to bring a child. In other words, these renditions refer to both the mother and the father. Thus, they are inadequate because the social meaning of the proverb is only meant for the mother to show how pleasant having a daughter is.

(6f) Many woman do noble things, but you surpass them all.

(6g) You can have fun with a son, but you got to be a father to a girl.

These translations are incongruent, as the participant tried to find functional equivalence in English for this proverb, but they misunderstood

the social meaning of this proverb. An equivalent translation for this proverb provided by Launde and Wintle (1984:83) as the following: *Lucky is the woman who has daughters before sons.*

2. Proverbs Related to Maternity and Care

After delivery, the mother is the only member of the family who is responsible for nurturing the children. It is a huge responsibility on the mother's shoulders, so if the mother nurtures her children very well, they will have a successful future and vice versa. In other words, the future of the family and of the children rely on the mother. So, if anything bad happens to the children, she is the only one to be blamed by the family and the whole society. This huge responsibility can be approximated to the pain that the mother had during her labor; therefore, some people believe that the word mother must refer to the one who raises the children not the one who delivers them.

Most proverbs related to mothers indicate how the mother should nurture her children and their future success depends on this way. Some of the proverbs also show that the society believes if the children, especially boys, are raised by the mother with the absence of the father, then will not be nurtured well because a mother is usually known for spoiling her children in Jordanian society.

(7) الأم اللي ربت موالي ولدت

/Il-ḡummilli: rabbat mu illi wildat/

(Literally: Mother is the woman who nurtures the child not the one who delivers it)

This proverb shows the importance of nurturing children. This proverb indicates how difficult this job is and how great it is. The mother, who nurtures children, suffers more than the mother who gives birth to them, because nurturing children needs too much care, time, patience's and effort. 20% of the participants provided adequate translation such as:

(7a) *It takes more than just giving birth to be a mother*

(7b) *giving birth to a child doesn't make you his mother, raising him does.*

The former renditions were adequate as they conveyed the social meaning of the proverb, i.e. the real mother is the woman who nurtures children not the one who delivers them. Yet, 80% of the participants provided inadequate translation for this proverb.

(7c) *the mother who breeds not who gives birth*

(7d) *the real mother who is growing up not who is delivering*

The Arabic verb (رَبَّتْ) has different equivalents in English. However, the participants used inappropriate lexical equivalents during translation. For example, (7c) has used the English verb (breeds) for the verb (رَبَّتْ) which is inadequate for it means to raise (cattle, sheep) (Webster Dictionary), not to raise children as the proverb indicates. (7d) also used the verb (grow up) which is also inappropriate in this context, where it refers to the mother not the child.

(7e) *A worthy woman is the crown of her husband*

This rendition is inadequate because it does not show the social meaning of the proverb. It only shows the relationship between a woman and her husband, not the importance of nurturing children and how it is greater than delivering them.

(8) *الأم تعشش والأب يطفش*

/Il- ʔumm itʕashshish wilʔab yitfish/

(the mother gathers, and the father scatters)

This proverb shows the importance of mother in the family. She is the one who gathers the family and takes care of children and nurtures them.

Thus, she takes the responsibility of running the family affairs. Yet, the only responsibility of the father is to work and earn money; therefore, he does not recognize the burdens of the mother such as nurturing, serving and taking care of his children. Therefore, “the mother’s nature that makes her more companionate to her children more than the father who is busy working outside and does not have time” (Hasaneen 2006: 46). 15% of the participants provided an adequate translation for this proverb. Consider the following renditions:

(8a) *The mother gathers the whole family, but the father doesn't.*

(8b) *A father's work is from sun to sun, but a mother's work is never done.*

These renditions cover the intended meaning of the proverb, whereas some renditions, such as (8a), provided the literal meaning of the proverb that shows how the mother is so passionate to gather the family; however, the father gives less love than the mother. Other participants provided a functional translation to show how the mother handles all the house chores and takes care of the children, while the father’s role is limited to spend on the family, and he does not spend much time with his children like the mother. 85% of the participants provided inadequate translation such as:

(8c) *Mother gathers father divides.*

(8d) *A mother bring her children together and their father sends them away.*

Both renditions show that the participants did not fully understand the meaning of the proverb, whereas the verb “يَطْفُشُ” means to scatter. However, the participants understood it as to divide or spread something. Therefore, it provides a mistranslation that exhibits a negative image about the father, that is, he does not show any love to his family and is a mean person. The proverb mainly focuses on mother and how she sacrifices her entire life to provide her family with love, care and passion.

(8e) *The mother has the advantages of her son's success.*

(8f) *Women in mischiefs are wiser than men.*

Both renditions are inadequate to the intended meaning. For example, (8e), shows that the mother is given all the advantages when her son succeeds even if she does not provide anything for him to become successful. (8f) also gives the inadequate social meaning, that is, women are more capable in dealing with difficulties and hardships than men do. Thus, they are inadequate because they do not convey the intended social meaning of the proverb (A mother gives more love, passion and care to her children than a father does).

(9) عمرالنسا ما تربي عجل يحرث

/umr il-nissa ma trabbi'ijil yuhruth/

(Literally: Women can never raise a plowing calf)

This proverb describes the mother from a negative perspective, that is, how some people perceive mother in the society. It indicates that the mother is weak or vulnerable and cannot nurture her children well, especially boys, because a mother is known as a compassionate and she may spoil her children. Jordanian society is a masculine society as man is perceived as tough and full of manhood. Thus, if a woman nurtures baby-boys by herself, they will be so spoiled. Also, they will not have a successful future and will be unproductive in the society. Even if she nurtures them very well, and they become successful in life, the credit of nurturing them will go to father. Only 20% of the participants provided an adequate translation as the following:

(9a) *Woman don't know how to raise men*

(9b) *The weak woman can't grow up a strong/successful man*

These renditions were adequate, as they convey the intended social meaning by giving an ideational equivalent to the proverb. However, 80% of the participants provided inadequate rendition as:

(9c) Women's treatment of raising their children is not that good.

(9d) The women can't bring up without help.

The previous translations are inadequate for they only show some parts of the social meaning of the proverb. For example, (9c) and (9d) show how woman raises their children in a bad way and women need help to raise their children. However, the proverb demonstrates the negative impact of women's nurturing to their children.

(9e) Women have no enough power to lead the cattle.

(9f) No longer for a woman that breeds a calf that plows.

(9a) and (9f) are rendered literally; therefore, the intended social meaning of the proverb is not provided correctly. In addition, the participants did not give the right literal translation. Some renditions, such as (9g), provided the opposite social meaning. Again, women translators expressed ideology and bias during the translation process.

(9g) Women grow up real men.

(9h) Woman knows well how to raise children.

This is also another clear ideological bias in the translation of such proverbs that some of the participants have. These renditions show that the participants stand by the women's side. The following renditions are also inadequate:

(9i) Do not give your secret to any woman.

(9j) Women forgive but never forget.

Apparently, (9i) and (9j) did not convey the social meaning of the proverb. Both renditions are related to the general characteristics that a woman has, and they are not related to how a mother raises her children.

3. Proverbs Related to the Traits of the Mother

Children may acquire the characteristics of their mother. There is a general thought in Jordanian society that the wise mother teaches her children to follow the right path while the unwise mother will lead her children to the wrong path. In addition, the mother's characteristics have impact on her daughter's marriage. It is socially assumed that when the mother has good traits; these traits will be positively reflected on her daughter. Therefore, the groom asks about the mother's reputation and traits before he marries her daughter.

(10) اسأل عن الأم قبل ما تلم

/ʔisʔalʕan il-ʔumqabl ma itlum/

(Ask about the mother before you get married)

This proverb gives an advice to the groom who wants to get married to a woman. The groom must ask about the mother of this woman such as her reputation, conducts and traits. If he finds out that the mother has a good reputation in the society, then her daughter will be the same i.e. like mother like daughter. However, if the mother does not have a good reputation, the groom will avoid marrying her daughter. Only 35% of the participants could provide adequate translation for this proverb as:

(10a) Ask about the bride's mother before getting married.

(10b) Ask about the mother before getting married.

Apparently, the translations imply the social meaning of the proverb. Thus, they can be classified as adequate translation. However, 65% of the participants provided inadequate translation as:

(10c) Ask about your girlfriend's mother before you propose to her.

(10d) Choose your future wife carefully.

(10e) *Ask about your future partner.*

(10c) is inadequate as it did not take into consideration the customs and traditions of Jordanian society, for this relationship (girlfriend) is prohibited and unacceptable in the society. The other translations were nearly general and did not specify the relationship between the mother and her daughter's marriage.

Other examples on inadequate translation is “***what the mother did, the daughter does***”. This rendition is inadequate because it does not reflect the social and cultural meaning impeded in the proverb. Other renditions of this proverb were inadequate, because they were too literal such as:

(10f) *Ask about mum before you collect.*

(10g) *Ask for the mother before you gather.*

(10h) *Ask before you choose.*

These translations do not show the intended social meaning of the proverb; whereas (10f) and (10g) are too literal and unclear as ‘collect and gather’ are vague. In addition, (10h) is too general and it indicates that a person should ask and inquire information before s/he chooses something. An equivalent proverb was found in Jessup (1873:3).

If you would marry a girl, inquire about the traits of her mother (Jessup 1873: 3).

(11) اقلب الجرة على ثمها بتطلع البنت لأمها

/ʔqlib il-jarrah ʕala thummha, titl^c il-bint la ʔummha/

(Literally: turn the pot upside down, and the girl will be like her mother).

This proverb is one of the most common proverbs in the Jordanian society. It shows how the characteristics of the mother either bad or good

are transferred to the daughter naturally. 70% of the participants provided an adequate translation as:

(11a) like mother like daughter.

(11b) *The apple does not fall from the tree.*

The above renditions of this proverb were adequate, for example, (11a) is the most common translation for the proverb where it is like the translation of “like father like son.” (11b) is also adequate for it indicates that the child acquires his/her parents’ traits. However, 30% of the participants provided inadequate translation such as:

(11c) *The daughter looks like her mother.*

(11d) *Turn the jar into its top, like mother like daughter.*

The rendition (11c) can be considered a semi-adequate. In addition, some renditions were word for word such as (11d). Therefore, it was considered as a semi-adequate translation for the proverb, because the translator must approximate or foreignize the proverb for the target reader to understand it and maintain its social meaning. Moreover, some inadequate translations were provided such as:

(11e) *Turn the power to her mouth aspiration of the girl to her mother.*

(11f) *Turn up the cooker on her mouth, she will look like her mother.*

(12) إذا انصلحت الأم انصلحت العيلة

/ʔiDa iṣalḥat il-umminṣalḥat il-^cai:leh/

(Literally: *If the mother becomes straight, the family will be too)*

This proverb shows the importance of the mother in the family and how her traits, conducts and attitudes will affect the whole family including her husband. Thus, in the society’s perspective how the family will turn out to be in the future depends on the mother herself; for example, if the mother

has good traits, her children will turn out to be like her and will have a successful life and vice versa. Therefore, a mother makes balance in the family and she is a role model for every member in the family. Only 15% of the participants provided adequate translation. Consider the following translations:

(12a) *if a mother is good, the family is good.*

(12b) *Mothers are the heart of any household.*

Both renditions were considered adequate for they imply the social meaning of the proverb, as some participants used literal translation to convey the intended meaning of the proverb as in (12a). Other participants provided functional translation for the proverb such as (12b). Thus, they convey the appropriate social meaning of the proverb. However, 85% of the participants provided inadequate translation. Consider the following translation:

(12c) *If the mother is good then everything is good.*

In the former translation, the translator provided a general rendition by using the word *everything*. However, the proverb was specific when using العيلة “family.” Therefore, it is only related to how the mother herself affects the family, but not everything in life.

4. Proverbs Related to the Status of Children after the Mother’s Death

Since the mother is the backbone or the pillar of the family, her death will be catastrophic not only for the family but also for the society, for she is the only one who knows how to run the house affairs. She is so close to her children, she feels their pain, sadness and happiness. She is like a candle that burns to light the life of her family. Therefore, some proverbs show the suffering of children after their mother’s death, and how horrible the whole family life would be without her. Consider the following proverbs:

(13) *اللي من غير أم حالة يغم*

/Illi: min ghi:r?umm Haluhyighum/

(Literally: Who is without a mother, his life is miserable)

This proverb exhibits how terrible the loss of mother can be. It explains that the child suffers a lot due to the death of his mother. Therefore, the child, who does not have a mother, lives in a sorrow for the whole of his/her life and will never be happy. Only 10% of the participants provided an adequate translation for this proverb such as:

(13a) Who doesn't have a mother his life is miserable.

(13b) The death of a mother is the first sorrow wept without her.

The former renditions were considered adequate, because they conveyed the intended social meaning of the proverb which shows how the child's life becomes sorrowful and miserable after his mother's death. Conversely, 90% of the participants provided inadequate translation such as:

(13c) Who doesn't have a mother is worthless.

The verb (يغم) mentioned in this proverb can be translated into (sad, sorrowful, painful, etc.). However, (13c) is translated it into (worthless) which is incorrect, because a child may have a successful life and future. However, s/he can never be happy in life because s/he does not have a mother who will provide him with love and passion.

(13d) One has no mother, wouldn't find another.

(13e) Mother is one to whom you hurry when you are troubled.

The rendition (13d) shows that the mother is irreplaceable and is very important. However, this proverb mainly focuses on the child and how his life will be filled with sadness after his mother's death. The rendition (13e) also indicates that the child runs to his/her mother when he/she is in trouble. This shows that both renditions are considered inadequate, because they do not provide the intended social meaning of the proverb.

5. *The Duties of Children towards their Parents*

Most proverbs are concerned with giving advices to mother on how to raise her children and treat them. However, a few proverbs about are existed on how the children must deal with their parents, especially, the mother. In Jordanian society, there are religious and social obligations that a son or a daughter has to treat his/her parents well, because their parents have suffered a lot while nurturing them, tried so hard to build a good future for them and provided them with everything possible in life. However, some do not go by these obligations and they treat their parents badly.

(14) ألف عين تبكي ولا عين أمي تدمع

/ʔalfʕai:ntibki: walaʕai:n ʔumi tidmaʕ/

(*Literally: To see thousand eyes cry, but not to see my mom's tear.*)

This proverb is commonly used in Jordanian society. It indicates how the son compassionate with his/her mother, as she is the most important person in his/her life. So, s/he is willing to do everything for the sake of keeping his/her mother happy even if it angers others. Only 20% of the participants provided adequate translation to this proverb such as:

(14a) *Thousand eyes to cry but not to see one tear of my mother's eyes.*

(14 b) *I don't care about anyone just my mother.*

Although the participant translated it literally as in (14a), the rendition was adequate for it gave the exact social meaning of the proverb. The rendition (14b) provided the pragmatic meaning of the proverb, whereas the child does not care about other peoples' feelings if his/her mother is fine and happy. Therefore, both translations are acceptable. 80% of the participants provided inadequate translations. The participant in (14d) used (tear) as a noun; however, it is incorrect. The participant should have used (tear) as a verb to keep the grammatical parallelism during the translation.

(14d) *feeling a thousand-eye tear, better than see a suffering mother even a tear.*

(14e) *a broken hand works but not a broken heart.*

The former renditions were considered inadequate because their meaning is not related to the social meaning of the proverb. The rendition (14d) shows that it is better to see a thousand-persons cry than to see a mother sheds tear. However, the proverb indicates that a son/ a daughter is willing to do anything to make his/her mother happy. The rendition (14e) refers to how a person can be healed from broken hand but it is difficult to be healed from an emotional wound. Thus, both renditions are inadequate. An equivalent translation was provided by Lunde and Wintle: ***It is better that a thousand mothers should weep than that mine should shed a single tear*** (Lunde and Wintle 1984: 123)

Conclusions

The study concludes that proverbs related women as mothers in JSA are translatable. Most of the participants provided inadequate translation to such proverbs due to their lack of cultural and social background on the one hand and to their carelessness on the other hand. Translators of this kind of proverbs should have a wide cultural background to render the intended social and cultural meaning adequately. Most of the participants' translations were literal; this method can be helpful in some situations but not in all. Sociolinguistic approach to translation is so beneficial in translating cultural expressions and proverbs. Unfortunately, the social meaning has been neglected by many translators. The participants encountered two main challenges: first, cultural, as they were unable to understand or interpret the social meaning of the proverbs because they focus on the denotative or literal meaning. Second, linguistic, as some students committed grammatical mistakes when rendering these proverbs into English. However, it is expected that they should master both Arabic and English. Furthermore, some female translators show ideology when translating proverbs that negatively pictured women in Jordanian society.

This study recommends that translation students should be aware of the social meaning and the social context of the texts, as this will help them to avoid literal and inadequate renditions and they should be faithful to the SL.

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