

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

This study's main purpose was to explore translation problems in English-Arabic translations empirically and find tangible evidence on the areas that pose real problems for professional translators. Previous studies such as those done by Al-Najjar (1984), Mouakket (1986), Hawas (1990), and Saraireh (1990) have mainly relied on assumptions. Though useful in describing linguistic properties of the two languages involved, they fall short of providing applicable examples to the categories they embark on. Further, such studies have not attempted to account for the translation problems encountered by English-Arabic translation practitioners in real life translations; rather their main focus was either student translations or translation extracts. The same is true to some extent to examining translator strategies. This study hoped to contribute to the study of translation problems and strategies of dealing with them by providing empirical evidence on translators' lexical, grammatical, and textual errors and proposing ways of dealing with them.

The empirical data collected in this study were English-Arabic political translations done by professional translators in Jordan and therefore are expected to provide evidence on a selection of proposed translation problems by previous studies (discussed in detail in chapter two and three) as well as other problems found in the corpus.

1.2 Justification of the study

The interest of this research in the translation problems faced by professional translators arises from their great importance in determining a successful translation product. Problems at the lexical, grammatical, and text level play an important role in the outcomes of a translator's task and are present in all text types. The study of English-Arabic translation problems has been underscored by many researchers in the field of translation. With the help of contrastive linguistics, the systems of the two languages can be compared, and some generalizations can be drawn with respect to the possible problematic areas in translation. However, whether these problems really cause any difficulty for the translator can never be proved without the actual examination of the translators' products. Further, the problems that may impede students in the process of language learning may not be problems for them during the translation tasks. Similarly, in the field of translation training, there is also the need of finding translation errors and the problematic areas surrounding them for student translators in order to raise their awareness. This study arises from the fact that there has not been much previous research that has investigated English-Arabic translation problems faced by professional translators. By using an empirical approach, it is hoped that fresh insights into problematic areas facing the translator will be achieved in this study.

1.3 Outline of the study

A brief presentation of how this study is structured will be given in this section.

The thesis is composed of seven chapters. This chapter, chapter one, presents the purpose and justification of the study, the general research questions and the overall plan of the dissertation.

Chapter two presents a review of literature related to the key concepts of translation equivalence, translation problems, translation errors and translation strategies. The relevant theories presented in this chapter underline the theoretical frameworks used by studies focusing on English-Arabic/Arabic-English translation. Further, they provided insights into the interpretation of translation problem outcomes which helped in foregrounding the main methodological procedures applied in this study.

Chapter three, builds on the main theories introduced in the previous chapter from English-Arabic perspective on problems. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to review all relevant research on English-Arabic translation problems which assists the researcher in establishing the framework of the present study.

Chapter four outlines the methodology. This chapter gives a detailed account of the research design in which description of the sources of data used in the study, i.e. the translated texts and the questionnaire as well as methods of data analysis. Chapter five reports the results of translation corpus analysis and questionnaire administered to professional translators.

Chapter six discusses the findings of the study. Chapter seven concludes the thesis and presents limitations of this study and provides some recommendations and suggestions for further studies in the field. Appendices of the questionnaire, source texts and target texts, and corpus tool used in the study are attached to the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As the prime aim of the present study is to detect translation errors resulting from translation problems in the production of translations it is crucial to review the pertinent and recent literature which contributes to the understanding and explaining of how problems are analyzed and how they might result in translation errors. All these studies are reviewed from the view point of their contribution to the study of translation problems faced by the translator to achieve equivalence and errors resulting from failures to solve them with the intention of providing theoretical foundation to the present study. The review will initially address the terms and main concepts used in the areas of translation errors, problems and strategies.

2.2 Translation process and product

A variety of approaches exist in researching the translation process and its product (cf. Koller, 1995; Venuti, 2000). In general terms, Koller (1995:192) provides the following account for both process and product:

“The activity of translating and the products of this activity, translations, are studied from various perspectives, in accordance with various theoretical interests and aims, and with the recourse to various methods: literary, text theoretical, philological, and linguistic (including contrastive and psycholinguistic), comparative and cultural-historical etc. This multiplicity of approaches is

reflected in a multiplicity of definitions which conceive the process and products of translation from the most diverse standpoints”

The terms process and product cover respectively the difficulties that occur during the translators comprehending process (e.g. lack of linguistic knowledge) and the linguistic and cultural problems faced transferring the source text into the target language, for both will assist in explaining why errors occurred in the target text. Studies into the translation process (the mental processes that take place in the translators mind) have helped in identifying, and explaining the strategies that translators choose to adopt when faced with translation difficulties on all text levels. For instance, through use of think aloud protocols (Lörscher, 1990, 1992, 2005).

The translation process is seen by some scholars to consist of the two phases: analysis (comprehension) and synthesis (reconstruction) (cf. Wilss, 1982; Bell, 1991) and by others (Nord, 1991) to consist of the three phases of analysis, transfer, and synthesis.

Wilss (1982: 60) argues that ‘... comparative descriptive linguistics includes the theory of translation.’ He also believes (Wilss 1982: 59) that the science of translation is prospective in the sense that it includes the study of the process and its underlying transfer strategies, and is also retrospective because it starts from the target language linguistic features and ends with a comparison between the quality of the target language text “TLT with that of the original” and this comparison leads to the identification of the ‘formulation processes directing the production of TLT...’.

Wilss (1982:60) believes that the principle task of the science of translation in developing operating procedures is more rigorous than it appears. He considers the process as performance linguistics, thus he considers context, i.e. the extralinguistic reality, as stable and as accountable as syntactic and lexical regularities.

Newmark (1981:144) believes that the translation process includes the following three processes:

- (a) the interpretation and analysis of the source language text;
- (b) the translation procedures, which may be direct, or on the basis of the source language and the TL corresponding syntactic structures, or through an underlying logical 'interlanguage' (the *tertium comparationis*);
- (c) the reformulation of the text in relation to the writer's intention, the readers' expectation, the appropriate norms of the target language, etc.

There were a number of attempts to analyze or map the cognitive processes of translation but few had the empirical evidence to back up their hypotheses (Bell, 1991; Fraser, 1996; Campbell, 1998). For example, in Bell's (1991) model of translating, the following sequences of processes take place:

- 1) the reading and comprehension of the source language text which he labels as the stage of 'analysis' and within this stage three operational analyses take place consecutively: 'syntactic analysis', 'semantic analysis', and 'pragmatic analysis' (Bell, 1991:45).
- 2) the construction and writing of the target language text which Bell labels as the

stage of 'synthesis' and within this stage the same three operations listed above (i.e. syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic) act as synthesizers in the following sequence : pragmatic, semantic and syntactic (Bell 1991:59-60).

In respect to the assumptions made in Bell's (1991) model, Ronowicz (2003) interestingly, tests one assumption, among others, regarding text processing in translation in which Bell claims that the translator 'operates at the linguistic level of **clause**' (1991:44) [emphasis in original] and demonstrates empirically that professional translators and student translators tend to process texts differently. One of Ronowicz's (2003) main findings, which also verifies the above claim by Bell (1991), shows that while student translators translate 'phrases for phrase', professional translators 'tend to work mainly at the level of clause and occasionally at the level of phrase or sentence' (Ronowicz 2003:9).

Emery (2004:144) adopts a pragmatic approach to defining translation and equivalence, and defines translation as 'a complex construct, consisting of a process (translating) and a product (an equivalent). In his pragmatic approach to the translation process, Emery (2004:146) asserts that it comprises the following two phases:

"...interpretation of a text/author's meaning (as expressed in a SL code) **and** analysis of the factors that govern the translator's choice in rendering this meaning into a TL code in line with TL expectancy norms. The translator's task is to re-negotiate this meaning into a TL code." [bold emphasized in original]

In reference to investigating the processes that involve English-Arabic translators, few process-oriented studies exist and they only started to take place in the twenty first century. Moreover most studies involved students as subjects. For example, a study carried out by Al-khanji *et al* (2000:448-557), although looking at interpreting, provided a rather ambitious classification of the strategies that Arabic speaking interpreters employ in simultaneous interpreting. In a more recent study conducted by Atari (2005:181) in which he used think-aloud protocols in order to reveal problem-solving strategies employed by student translators/ trainees (cf. Krings 1986; Lörcher, 1986, 1991; Kussmal, 1995). Atari (2005) found that his student translators tended to use all the source text comprehension strategies and target text production strategies proposed by other researchers (i.e. Krings 1986; Lörcher, 1986, 1991 and Gerloff 1986). However, the most frequent strategies employed by student translators (Atari 2005:188) were the monitoring of the source text segments, which includes the use of substrategies such as repetition of linguistic units at the level of word and morpheme only and the re-reading source text segments, and the monitoring of target text segments, which includes frequent use of immediate correction before writing and congruity assessment. Atari's (2005) findings point towards English-Arabic translator trainees tendency to focus on transferring words, morphemes and phrases rather than whole sentences and a tendency to ignore assessing the target text's syntactic, stylistic and text type adequacy, in other words these trainees major translation problem is with lexical transfer. This could be due to their 'inadequate level of competence' in the source language, i.e. English (Atari 2005:189). It could also be due to the influence of the training techniques adopted in their classrooms and pressure resulting from the lack of comprehension of large segments

which leads to the attempt of handling smaller units instead. Unfortunately, no study has yet examined English-Arabic professional translators' problem-solving strategies.

Since the purpose of this study is to locate errors in the translations of professionals it would be interesting to see whether their errors occur at the linguistic level of the clause (Bell, 1991).

2.3 Translation equivalence

Jakobson (1959/2000) was the first to tackle the notion of problems of equivalence in meanings of words and concluded that full equivalence does not exist.

The notion of equivalence has been discussed by many translation scholars such as Catford (1965), House (1977) , Bassnette-McGuire (1980), Nida and Taber (1982), Hatim and Mason (1990), Hatim (1990 ,1997, 2001), Hatim and Munday (2004), Neubert and Shreve (1992), and Koller (1995).

Catford (1965:49) discusses "the conditions of translation equivalence" and points out that items in two given languages rarely have "... 'the same meaning' in the linguistic sense; but they can function in the same situation." Catford (1965:49) also suggests that translation equivalence can nearly always be established at sentence level, "the grammatical unit most directly related to speech-function within a situation." Catford (1965:49) then concludes that "The aim in total translation must... be to select TL equivalents not with 'the same meaning' as the SL items, but with the greatest possible overlap of situational range."

Nida and Taber (1969) introduce the concept of “dynamic equivalence”. They believe that the target text should have, on its readers, the same effect the source text has on its readers. Nida (1969/2000:129) who introduced the notion of dynamic equivalence states that “a translation of dynamic equivalence aims at complete naturalness of _expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture; it does not insist that he understand the cultural patterns of the source-language context in order to comprehend the message.”

Nida (1964/2000; Nida and Taber, 1969) believes that translation entails two major areas of adaptation:

“...namely, grammar and lexicon. In general the grammatical modifications can be made the more readily, since many grammatical changes are dictated by the obligatory structures of the receptor language. That is to say, one is obliged to make such adjustments as shifting word order, using verbs in place of nouns, and substituting nouns for pronouns. The lexical structure of the source message is less readily adjusted to the semantic requirements of the receptor language, for instead of obvious rules to be followed, there are numerous alternative possibilities. There are in general three lexical levels to be considered: (1) terms for which there are readily available parallels, e.g. river, tree, stone, knife, etc.; (2) terms which identify culturally different objects, but with somewhat similar functions, e.g. book, which in English means an object with pages bound together into a unit, but which, in New Testament times, meant a long parchment or papyrus rolled up in the form of a scroll; and (3) terms which identify cultural

specialties.” (Nida, 2000:136-137)

However, Nida (2000:137) believes that the first set does not cause problems; the second set can cause confusions while in case of the third set ‘certain “foreign associations” can rarely be avoided’. He believes that a translation that intends to bridge a cultural gap can not avoid foreign traces in the translation.

Wilss (1982:141) speaks of text specific translation equivalence problems such as the problems of semantic ambiguity which ends in overtranslation and the problem of syntactic complexity.

Koller (1995:211) defines translation equivalence, from a linguistic and textual point of view, as:

“...the result of a text-processing activity by means of which a source-language text is transposed into a target-language text. Between the resultant text in L_2 (the target- language text) and the source text in L_1 (the source-language text) there exists a relationship, which can be designated as a translational or equivalence relation.”

Further, Emery (2004:149) defines translation equivalence, within the framework of pragmatic meaning, as “the notion of a TL text purporting to be a rendering of a particular SL text’s pragmatic meaning”.

Hatim and Mason (1990) emphasize achieving pragmatic equivalence in translation and draw attention to the consideration of the rhetorical purposes of texts. They further conclude that the notion of achieving equivalence should entail the matter of adequacy rather than what is called complete equivalence.

Neubert and Shreve (1992:143) argue that “equivalence is not really a relationship between textual surfaces; it is a relationship of textual effect-of communicative value”. Neubert and Shreve (1992:143) also postulate that “communicative equivalence” and “textual equivalence” are the measures “of how well a text ‘stands in the place’ of another text across cultural and linguistic boundaries’. They (1992:145) also believe that “Only the professional translator can produce translations which are the communicative equivalents of source texts”.

In an attempt to clear any misconceptions surrounding the idea of complete equivalence, Bassnett-McGuire (1980:29) states that “equivalence in translation should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two TL versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL versions.”

Baker (1992) believes that the concept equivalence is influenced by linguistic and cultural factors and she addresses the constraints of non equivalence at all linguistic levels; word, collocation, syntax, theme and information structure, and cohesion and coherence.

Koller (1995:196) perceives equivalence as ‘a relative concept’ determined by the ‘historical-cultural conditions under which texts...are produced and received in the target culture’ and by ‘linguistic-textual’ and extra-linguistic factors’.

Koller (1995:196-197) lists these linguistic-textual and extra-linguistic factors and acknowledges the fact that they may sometimes be incompatible:

- the source and the target languages with their structural properties, possibilities and constraints,
- the “world”, as it is variously classified in the individual languages,
- different realities as these are represented in ways peculiar to their respective languages,
- the source text with its linguistic, stylistic and aesthetic properties in the context of the linguistic, stylistic and aesthetic norms of the source language,
- linguistic, stylistic and aesthetic norms of target language and of the translator,
- structural features and qualities of a text,
- preconditions for the comprehension on the part of the target-language reader,
- the translator’s creative inclinations and understanding of the work,
- the translator’s explicit and/or implicit theory of translation,
- translation tradition,
- translation principles and the interpretation of the original text by its own author,
- the clients guidelines and the declared purpose of the translation ,
- the practical conditions under which the translators chooses or is obliged to work.

(Koller 1995:196-197)

In an attempt to study the nature of translation equivalence, Lotfipour-Saedi (1990:390) believes that in order to achieve translation equivalence there are seven interacting components that should be considered : 1) vocabulary items conveying different levels of meanings; denotative meaning, connotative meaning, collocative meaning, contrastive or paradigmatic meaning, stylistic meaning, and implicative meaning; 2) structure; 3) texture; 4) sentence meaning as opposed to utterance meaning; 5) language varieties; 6)

cognitive effect; 7) aesthetic effect.

The author emphasizes that these components do not act in isolation from one another and therefore should be considered as interactive parts in achieving equivalence. Although, the author extracts a few examples from Farsi, his study does not provide a comprehensive analysis of the components which is reflected in the lack of examples derived from translations that might explain the interaction between these, listed above, components. Furthermore, his study tends to alert translators to some potential difficulties that might arise when considering some of the aspects he outlines, such as culturally bound terms, but makes no attempt to relate these sources of difficulties to the components mentioned in the study. In general, the failures to achieve equivalence results in what theorists tend to label as incorrect or simply wrong equivalences. Along this line, Abdel-Hafiz (2002:82) illustrates that the concept of wrong equivalence can be described as the situation when “The translator may go for a word or expression believing that it is equivalent to the SL word or expression. Sometimes, s/he may miss the target by picking out the wrong word or expression.”

It can be said that translation problems can be identified by translation errors appearing in the translation product i.e. the target language text. The problems can be attributed to failure in achieving equivalence at the different level of text, i.e. lexical, grammatical and textual (cf. Nord, 1991; Baker, 1992; Wilss, 1982).

2.4 Translation problems and errors

2.4.1 Translation problems

Translating is guided by principles and constraints as moving between two cultures and languages places additional demands on the translator. With economic and technical development, translators, too, are faced with new challenges, and diverse skills like computer skills, technical knowledge, and the ability to acquire information as well as common social skills and flexibility are required.

Much research has been done on the problems of translation between languages, for instance, Nida (1964), (1984), Nida and Taber (1969), de Waard and Nida (1986), Catford (1965), McGuire (1980), Toury (1980), Newmark (1981), Wilss (1982) and Baker (1992). These works and many others concentrate on building up a theoretical framework for translation and are closely attached to the concept of achieving equivalence.

Catford (1965:94) describes how translation problems occur as follows:

“Translation fails—or Untranslatability occurs—when it is impossible to build functionally relevant features of the situation into the contextual meaning of the TL text.”

Hatim and Mason (1990:21) share a similar view that translation problems occur at the

stage of comprehending the source text, transferring the meaning and, assessing the target text. They (1990:27) also assert that the lack of one to one correspondence between grammatical categories in languages pose problems for the translator.

Catford (1965:94) draws a distinction between two broad types of translation problems or what he labels as ‘untranslatability’ problems:

- (a) Linguistic problems, which occur when the target language has no formal correspondence to a certain linguistic feature in the source language. According to Catford (1965:94-95) this type of problem can be caused by types of ambiguities: 1) ‘*shared exponence* of two or more source language grammatical and lexical items.’ 2) ‘polysemy of an SL item with no corresponding TL polysemy’ which occurs when ‘one single item has more than one meaning’. In addition to ambiguity, Catford (1965: 96) adds another type of linguistic untranslatability what he calls oligosemy which occurs when an item in the SL ‘has a particularly restricted range of meaning’ that can not be matched in the TL.
- (b) Cultural problem; ‘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 type of problem usually results in the production of unusual collocations in the target language and so Catford (1965:101) considers this type of untranslatability to be a matter ‘collocational untranslatability’ and defines it as:

“untranslatability arising from the fact that any possible TL near-equivalent of a given SL lexical item has a low probability of collocation

with TL equivalents of items in the SL text which collocate normally with the given SL item.”

Wilss (1982:164) attempts to define translation problems, which he calls translation difficulties that:

“occur whenever a lexical or syntactic one-to-one correspondence between SLT and TLT cannot be practiced, because literal translation would inevitably entail a negative transfer. A comparison between the respective SLT element and stored TL information decides whether the translator is confronted with a TD, or, in other words, whether he may adopt a literal transfer procedure or whether he must translate non-literally.”

Wilss (1982:174) emphasizes that translation problems must be determined in their ‘respective textual environment’ and so must not be analysed as independents from the text and he (Wilss 1982:170) recommends the application of ‘structural-functionalist procedure of text segmentation’ as means of determining translation problems. Furthermore, he (1982:174) acknowledges the fact that translation problems are ‘an empirical phenomenon; once they have been recognized they can be analysed relatively precisely’. Thus, Wilss (1982:174) draws attention to an important issue in investigating translation problems in which any attempt to put forward an ‘exhaustive typification’ of translation problems would be ‘futile’.

Nord (1992:46) takes the notion of translation problems a step forward and classifies them into four categories: 1) pragmatic , 2) cultural, 3) linguistic and 4) text specific. The two most prominent according to Nord (1992:46) are pragmatic and cultural. Pragmatic problems according to Nord (1992:46) are defined as “those arising from the particular transfer situation with its specific contrast of source language vs. target language recipients, source language vs. target language medium, source language vs. target language function etc.” Second, cultural translation problems are considered to be (Nord, 1992:46) “a result of the differences in culture-specific (verbal) habits, expectations, norms and conventions concerning verbal and other behavior, such as text-type conventions, general norms of style, norms of measuring, formal conventions of marking certain elements in a text, etc.” Third are linguistic problems, by which different structures between the source language and the target language at the level of lexis, sentence structure and “suprasegmental features” are believed (Nord, 1992:46) to pose translation problems for the translators regardless of the languages involved. Fourth, are text-specific problems which are considered to be those problems that do not fall under the other three categories (i.e. pragmatic, cultural and linguistic), such as puns, metaphors, figures of speech, etc. (Nord, 1992:47). In her course book on translation “In other Words’ Baker (1992) discusses some common translation difficulties and prefers to call them ‘problems of non-equivalence’ at word level and above word level and then suggests strategies of how to handle them through illustrations in different languages, including Arabic.

2.4.2 The concept of translation error

In the context of translation, errors have been given different labels such as ‘mistranslations’ (cf. Baker, 1990), ‘wrong equivalences’ (cf. Abdel-Hafez 2002), ‘defects’ (Pym, 1992) and mainly ‘translation error’ (cf. Hatim and Mason, 1997; Newmark, 1993; Sager, 1983; Kussmaul, 1995).

Wilss (1982:196) has contributed to the area of error analysis in translation in general and specifically to the study of error analysis for translations from the second language to the first language. He explains that errors to be analysed in this case are those originating in the second language (the product) and not the first language and these errors can be attributed to two reasons; the translators’ insufficient comprehension of the source text and their insufficient target language transfer competence. Wilss (1982:214) indicates that the aim of exploring the area of translation errors is to provide student translators with feedback on gaps in their ‘syntactic, lexical and stylistic transfer competence and thus initiate a self-learning process’. Further, Gile (1995:119) believes that “the vast majority of errors found in translations“ can be attributed to “inadequate preexisting Knowledge Base, mostly in the linguistic component...or to faulty procedure”.

Pym (1992:281) believes that translation competence combines two skills:

- “- The ability to generate a target-text series of more than one viable term (target text₁, target text₂...target text_n for a source text.
- The ability to select only one target text from this series, quickly and

with justified confidence, and to propose this target text as a replacement of source text for a specified purpose and reader.”

Pym (1992:281-282) uses the definition of translation competence to define translation error ‘as a manifestation of a defect in any of the factors entering into the above skills’.

Pym (1992:281) adds:

“But such simple negation puts relatively little order into a very confused field, basically because errors may be attributed to numerous causes (lack of comprehension, inappropriateness to readership, misuse of time) and located on numerous levels (language, pragmatics, culture), but also because the terms often employed to describe such errors (over-translation, under-translation, discursive or semantic inadequacy, etc.) lack commonly agreed distinctions or fixed points of reference: ‘equivalence’ has been used and abused so many times that it is no longer equivalent to anything, and one quickly gets lost following the wanderings of ‘discourse’ and associated concepts. Although it is relatively easy to produce a terminological system of three or seven or perhaps twenty odd types of translation error and then find examples to illustrate the phenomenal level and presumed causality of each, it is quite a different matter to classify errors as they actually appear in translated texts, where elements of different types are perpetually mixed and numerous cases straddle the presupposed distinctions. Such classifications will always have either too few or too many terms, at least for as long as there is no clear awareness of why translation errors should be classified in the first place.”

Despite the fact that such counterarguments, as that by Pym (1992), have been offered to the study of translation errors, a sufficient body of literature has reported evidence that supports the significant role translation errors assessment has in determining the quality of translations.

Sager (1983:127) believes that:

“A basic distinction must be made between errors caused by the inadequate knowledge of the vocabulary, orthography, morphology or syntax of the target language and those resulting from misinterpretation of the text or inadequate expression.”

Sager (1983:127) considers the occurrence of the first type of errors to be rare since the target language is ‘the language of habitual use of the translator’ and claims that the second type should be the focus in evaluating translations. Sager (1983:127) suggests a matrix of elements to be considered when assessing errors at the lexical and the syntagmatic level:

- Types of error:— inversion of meaning
- omission

— addition

— deviation

— modification

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unless justified by the specification.

Effect of error on the whole text e.g. a typographic error can change the meaning of a word and thereby distort the whole text.

- linguistic effect: does the error affect a main or secondary part of the sentence, e.g. the subject or a modifier?
- semantic effect: does the error affect a major or minor element, e.g. the main argument, or an example
- pragmatic effect: does the error affect the intention in a significant or negligible way, e.g. the general persuasive purpose or the tone of voice?

(Sager 1983:127)

Despite Pym's (1992:282) counterargument mentioned above, he introduced two types of errors; non- binary and binary. Non-binary errors, according to (Pym, 1992) should all have 'the similar basic form' and involve at least two right answers from a least two selected target texts and wrong ones. In other words there should be at least one target text selected that is opposed to at least another possible target text and then opposed to possible wrong answers. And their correction in the classroom should extend' as long as significant differences remain, terminating quickly at the point of diminishing returns'.(Pym, 1992:285). Whereas, binary errors imply finding either a right answer or wrong answer and their correction, in the translation class, should be immediate and punctual. Hatim later (2001:169) agrees with Pym on that translation errors are caused by a variety of reasons 'ranging from lack of comprehension to misuse of register' and could occur on different levels such as language, pragmatics and culture. Hatim (2001: 169) also acknowledges the important impacts of the distinction between the two types of translation errors on translation teaching. Hatim (2001:169) also adds that 'typologies of errors and examples to illustrate them cannot therefore be the answer, and what is urgently needed is a scheme which does away with such taxonomies.' Hatim (2001:170) and Pym (1992) both emphasize that even if all translational errors are non-binary not all no-binary errors are translational. Hatim (2001:170) and Pym (1992:283) both question the claim that binary errors occur in language classes while non-binary errors occur in translation classes. Pym (1992:283) further argues that whether teaching language or translation non-binary errors, when teaching beyond the basic forms, as well as binary errors are bound to occur and both should be corrected.

Based on the analysis of an English translation of Paul VI mass from Latin, Sullivan (1994:1) defines translation errors as “encodings that distort the message evoked by the source text” and classifies errors under two categories: minor errors and major errors. Minor translation errors are according to Sullivan (1994:1) represented by ‘imprecise encodings’ that cause ambiguities and lead to misunderstandings in the target texts. Major translation errors, however, according to Sullivan (1994:2) “introduce and require misunderstanding” and are categorized according to their linguistic type and semantic effect.

In the analysis of errors two main elements should be considered: the locus of the error and the effect of the error on the message. In terms of the locus of the error, Sullivan (1994:2) postulates that:

“...the distribution of errors may be significant. That is, if the translator is incompetent in the grammar of the language, this will show up in syntactic and morphological errors....Incompetence in discourse structure will show up in errors in pronoun or other deictic reference, verb sequencing or tense, arrangement of subordinacy, etc. Insufficient familiarity with the subject matter results in inapt or arbitrary vocabulary choices from dictionary entries. General incompetence should show up as mistakes randomly scattered throughout linguistic structure. Morphology, syntax, discourse structure, and the lexicon all participate. In short, the distribution of error loci will give some indication about the translators' competence. The distribution of the effect of errors, on the other

hand, may tell about the translators' intent. That is, the occurrence of ideologically random effects would be a sign of honest mistakes. However, if the effect of errors is frequent and patterned, it suggests an unconscious bias or even a conscious ideological predisposition on the part of the translators.”

Major translation errors that could have been avoided are of three types (Sullivan 1994):

- (a) omissions involving words and phrases
- (b) additions
- (c) mistranslations at the lexical, morphological, syntactic, or discourse level.

There are many ways to evaluate translation errors and different approaches are adopted.

However, the are usually designed to evaluate student translators' performance

(Waddington, 2004). For example, Kussmaul (1995:130) approaches the evaluation of translation errors from a communicative perspective in which he proposes a model for evaluating errors in which each error is graded According to its communicative effect.

The evaluation of professional translator errors should be as Kussmaul (1995:143)

explains: “a quantitative process . Errors in professional translation are typically non-binary, and have to be graded along a scale. The more far-reaching their negative effect is the more serious they are”. Further, Kussmaul (1995:144) emphasizes that the standards used to evaluate linguistic errors in translation is different from that used in language teaching. Therefore, when assessing the seriousness of translation errors one should consider the following: (a) the consequences and the extent of the far-reaching

communicative effects, and (b) the effect the misuse of tense, word order, prepositions, etc. has on the target reader.

As can be seen from the literature reviewed so far, translation errors influence the quality of the final product and the degree of miscomprehension by target language readers.

Since there is no unified framework to identify and classify errors, a list of criteria based on those suggested by scholars such as Sager (1983) , Nord (1991), Hurtado Albir (1996) and Waddington (2004) will be used in the identification and interpretation of translation errors and problems (see chapter four).

2.5 Translation techniques/procedures and strategies

Wilss (1982:96-99) summarizes the classification and description of seven translation procedures developed by the ‘representatives of stylistique compare (SCFA)’ (Vinay Darbelnet, 1958; Malblanc, 1961) and based on examples from English –French and German-French. He points out that the first three types (Direct borrowing, Calque and Literal translation) fall under the category of literal translation and the other four (Transposition, Modulation, Equivalence and Adaptation) belong to non-literal translation. The classification is described below with English-Arabic examples given by the present researcher where applicable:

1. Direct Borrowing; “the carryover of SL lexemes or lexeme combinations into the TL normally without formal or semantic modification (Wilss, 1966:98).”

Wilss adds: “as these words become naturalized, orthographic and phonetic adaptations in accordance with the TL pattern of writing and speaking give them the status of “Germanized”. An English-Arabic example would be the carryover of the words “computer” and “mall”.

2. ‘Calque; i.e. loan translation (linear substitution) of morphologically analyzable SL syntagms (primarily noun compounds and adjective-non-collocations) which, after a time, are often accepted, or at least tolerated, by the community’. An English-Arabic example would be the expression “Drive In”.

3. Literal translation; ‘i.e. the replacement of SL syntactic structures, normally on the clause/sentence scale, by TL syntactic structures which are isomorphic (or near-isomorphic) concerning number and type of speech parts and are synonymous in terms of content’.

4. ‘Transposition, i.e. the rendering of an SL element by syntactico-syntagmatic structures which have the same meaning but do not correspond formally (because of changes in the class of words used)’. (p.98).

5. ‘Modulation refers to shifts in semantic perspective which, while preserving functional equivalence, entail shifts of meaning of varying size between SL and TL textual segments. Modulation, specifically, indicates a change in the angle from which something is seen.

6. Equivalence is the replacement of an SL situation by a communicatively comparable TL situation.

7. Adaptation amounts to textual compensation of sociocultural differences between the SL and the TL communities.’ (p.99)

Newmark (1981:28-29) favours componential analysis as a translation procedure over synonymy and labels it as an “extracontextual procedure”. Newmark (1981:29) explains how Nida’s (1964) componential analysis, as strategy works in solving translation problems at the lexical level, as follows :

“...the translator takes a lexical unit, looks into it as widely and deeply (in its historical resonance) as a monolingual dictionary will permit, and decides on its limits- its meaning can stretch so far, but no further...However, there is no reason why a different componential analysis should not also be made contextually, by detecting the semantic features ‘imposed’ on a word by its linguistic and situational context.”

According to Newmark (1981:30) the translator can resort to this procedure in the following eight translation conditions:

1. To translate a SL word into two or more TL words by distributing its semantic components over a larger TL area.
2. To distinguish the meaning of two collocated SL synonyms, if the distinction is emphasized in the SL text...

3. To analyse the content of one or more SL words within a series (e.g. of meals, clothes, etc.).
4. To expose and fill in gaps in the TL lexis, due to cultural distance between SL and TL, in the same semantic field (e.g. carafon, Generalberst, bourgade, bourg, Ordinarius or any French term for bread).
5. To analyse neologisms (e.g. 'zonked'—exhausted, slang).
6. To explain cultural differences between one word with one common main component, but different secondary components, in SL and TL.
7. To analyse theme words that require extended definitions in TL (e.g. 'spirit').
8. To reduce metaphor, which always has two or more sense-components, to sense.

Newmark (1981:32) believes that translation procedures could be mandatory or optional. He gives the following list of translation procedures with illustrations:

1. *Transcription* ('loan words' adoption, transfer), which may or may not be required for SL institutional or cultural words to provide authenticity or local colour respectively. Some of these remain in TL permanently—*détente*, *demarche* ('adopted words'); others are 'loans'—*kolkhoz*, *komsomol*, *sputnik*—they will not stay.

2. *One-to-one translation*, e.g. *la maison*, 'the house'.

3. *Through-translation* ('loan-translation'), e.g. 'People's Chamber' for *Volkskamer*, 'Committee on Trade and Development' for *Comité et du Développement*, a common procedure for international institutional terms.

4. *Lexical synonymy*, translation by a close TL equivalent. It is often possible to achieve closer interlingual than intralingual synonymy, particularly in reference to objects and actions. 'To die, to sleep, to dream' can be translated literally into any language, and therefore is hardly synonymy. Objects with identical functions, e.g. 'a house', 'a window', 'a bath', can be usually translated literally provided there is cultural overlap, although the objects may have a different shape, size and/or composition within the SL culture and the TL culture. Similarly, general (non specific) qualities can often be translated. There are, however, many specific objects, actions and qualities, often defined by inadequate and inaccurate synonyms both in mono-and bilingual dictionaries, where a neat componential analysis will give the translator a somewhat more satisfactory version, e.g. *ein Greis*: a very old (aged) man (secondary components: greyness, senility).

5. *Componential analysis* (already discussed). Some form of componential analysis should always be preferred to synonymy as a provisional translation procedure, particularly if the lexical unit is a key-word or is important to the context. Synonymy is more acceptable for 'peripheral' words not directly related the main argument of the text. But, in general, the use of synonymy, the kind of synonymy one finds in *ab lib* and *ad nauseam* in *Cassell's German Dictionary* (e.g. *Ende* is 'end; conclusion; close, finish; result, issue, goal, aim, object, purpose; extremity'), is the ruin of accurate translation, and paraphrase is even worse.

6. Transposition, the replacement of one grammatical unit by another. 'According to my friend', *mein Freund meinte*.

7. *Modulation*, (see Vinay and Darbelnet, 1976)—variation in point of view: e.g. *Lebensgefahr*, *danger de mort*, 'mortally dangerous' (i.e. no English equivalent);

assurance-maladie, health insurance.

8. Compensation, when loss of meaning or sound effect or metaphor in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part.

9. Cultural equivalence, e.g. (baccalauréat, 'A-level').

10. Translation label, i.e. an approximate equivalent, sometimes proposed as a collocation in inverted commas, which may later be accepted: e.g. *promotion sociale*, 'social advancement'; *autogestion*, 'worker management' or 'self-management at all levels'.

11. Definition, usually recast as a descriptive noun-phrase or adjectival phrase.

12. Paraphrase, an amplification or free rendering of the meaning of the sentence: the translator's last resort.

13. Expansion (*étoffement*) — grammatical expansion: e.g. 'taste of', *avoir le gout de*.

14. Contraction— grammatical reduction: (F) *science anatomique*, 'anatomy'; (E) 'empty phrases', *des phrases*.

15. Recasting sentences. French complex sentences are sometimes recast as English co-ordinate sentences. German complex sentences are sometimes rendered as two or more TL sentences.

16. Rearrangement, improvements (jargon, mistakes, misprints, idiolect, clumsy, writing, etc.). Only justified if (a) the SL text is concerned mainly with facts, or (b) the writing is defective.

17. Translation couplet, literal translation or translation label plus transcription.

Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002: 509) found translation techniques to be ‘procedures to analyse and classify how translation equivalence works.

They propose a classification of translation techniques, a list claimed to be tested in Molina’s (1998) study when used as an instrument to analyse translations. Their classification came as an attempt to modify earlier classifications: Vinay and Darblat’s (1958/1995) seven procedures discussed above, Nida’s (1964) techniques of addition, subtraction and alternation, Delisle’s (cited in Molina and Hurtado Albir, 2002: 505) review of Vinay’s and Darblat’s classification (SCFA) and the taxonomies of addition vs omission, paraphrase and discursive creation (cf Molina and Hurtado Albir 2002) as well as Newmark’s (1988) classification of translation procedures (discussed earlier), based on that of comparative stylistics and bible translators, of recognized translation, functional equivalent, naturalization and translation and Newmark (1988) adds the taxonomy of synonymy to his classification, listed earlier, of procedures (see Newmark, 1981).

Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) believe that it is extremely important to draw a distinction between translation method, strategy and technique. According to them (2002: 507) the term translation method “refers to the way a particular translation process is carried out in terms of the translator’s objective, i.e., a global option that affects the whole text” and the selection of a translation method depends on the aim of the translation, for example if the translation had a communicative function that the method would be a free translation opposed to literal if the function was “linguistic

transcodification". Drawing a distinction between translation strategies and techniques is also essential in discussing translation process and translation product.

Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002:508) argue that no matter what method the translator adopts he/she may still face problems in the translation process attributed to either a difficult translation unit or to "a gap in the translator's knowledge or skills" and they believe that this is the point when the translators strategies are activated. They define strategies as 'the procedures (conscious or unconscious, verbal or non verbal) used by the translator to solve problems that emerge when carrying out the translation process with a particular objective in mind and define (Molina and Hurtado Albir, 2002:509) a translation technique as "the result of a choice made by a translator, its validity will depend on various questions related to the context, the purpose of the translation, audience expectations, etc." They (2002:508) distinguish between two types of translation strategies: 1) strategies that translators use for comprehension and 2) the strategies translators use for reformulation.

Molina and Hurtado Albir describe the roles of strategies and techniques in problem solving as follows (2002:508):

"Strategies open the way to finding a suitable solution for a translation unit. The solution will be materialized by using a particular technique. Therefore, strategies and techniques occupy different places in problem solving: strategies are part of the process, techniques affect the result. However, some mechanisms may function both as strategies and as techniques. For example, paraphrasing can be used to solve problems in the process (this can be a reformulation strategy) and it

can be an amplification technique used in a translated text (a cultural item paraphrased to make it intelligible to TT readers) This does not mean that paraphrasing as a strategy will necessarily lead to using an amplification technique. The result may be a discursive creation, an equivalent established _expression, an adaptation, etc.”

Translation techniques, in Molina’s and Hurtado Albir’s (2002:509) view, have the following five characteristics:

- 1) They affect the result of the translation
- 2) They are classified by comparison with the original
- 3) They affect micro-units of text
- 4) They are by nature discursive and contextual
- 5) They are functional

Abbadi (manuscript in preparation) demonstrate how the strategies of comprehension and reformulation, discussed by Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002), affect the translation product. Following, Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) she provides the following account:

“In a real life translation task, the translator may come across a difficult unit that will

impede his/her comprehension. The translator will use cognitive strategies to solve this problem, e.g. paraphrase. That strategy might help in resolving the comprehension problems but not the reformulation one". As can be seen in the diagram below the strategies that take place during the phase of comprehension and reformulation do not necessarily lead to the employment of correct strategies in the production stage.

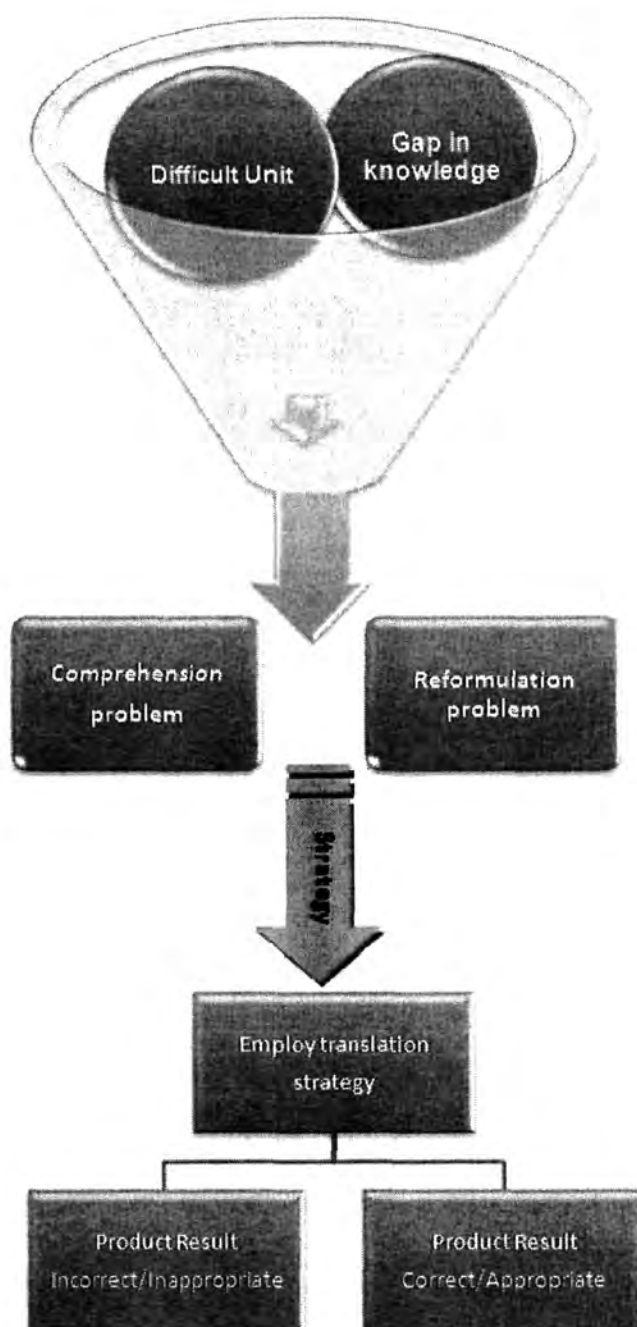


Diagram 2.1 Translation Strategies

Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002: 509) propose the following classification for translation techniques:

- Adaptation. To replace a ST cultural element with one from the target culture, e.g., to change *baseball*, for *fútbol* in a translation into Spanish. This corresponds to SCFA's adaptation and Margot's cultural equivalent.

- Amplification. To introduce details that are not formulated in the ST: information, explicative paraphrasing, e.g., when translating from Arabic (to Spanish) to add *the Muslim month of fasting* to the noun *Ramadan*. This includes SCFA's explication, Delisle's addition, Margot's legitimate and illegitimate paraphrase, Newmark's explicative paraphrase and Delisle's periphrasis and paraphrase. Footnotes are a type of amplification. Amplification is in opposition to reduction.

- Borrowing. To take a word or expression straight from another language. It can be pure (without any change), e.g., to use the English word *lobby* in a Spanish text, or it can be naturalized (to fit the spelling rules in the TL), e.g., *gol*, *fútbol*, *líder*, *mitin*. Pure borrowing corresponds to SCFA's borrowing. Naturalized borrowing corresponds to Newmark's naturalization technique.

- Calque. Literal translation of a foreign word or phrase; it can be lexical or structural, e.g., the English translation Normal School for the French *École normale*. This corresponds to SCFA's acceptance.

- Compensation. To introduce a ST element of information or stylistic effect in another place in the TT because it cannot be reflected in the same place as in the ST. This corresponds to SCFA's conception.
- Description. To replace a term or _expression with a description of its form or/and function, e.g., to translate the Italian *panettone* as *traditional Italian cake eaten on New Year's Eve*.
- Discursive creation. To establish a temporary equivalence that is totally unpredictable out of context, e.g., the Spanish translation of the film *Rumble fish* as *La ley de la calle*. This coincides with Delisle's proposal.
- Established equivalent. To use a term or _expression recognized (by dictionaries or language in use) as an equivalent in the TL, e.g., to translate the English _expression *They are as like as two peas* as *Se parecen como dos gotas de agua* in Spanish. This corresponds to SCFA's equivalence and literal translation.
- Generalization. To use a more general or neutral term, e.g., to translate the French *guichet*, *fenêtre* or *devanture*, as *window* in English. This coincides with SCFA's acceptance. It is in opposition to particularization.
- Linguistic amplification. To add linguistic elements. This is often used in consecutive

interpreting and dubbing, e.g., to translate the English expression *No way* into Spanish as *De ninguna de las maneras* instead of using an expression with the same number of words, *En absoluto*. It is in opposition to linguistic compression.

- Linguistic compression. To synthesize linguistic elements in the TT. This is often used in simultaneous interpreting and in sub-titling, e.g., to translate the English question *Yes, so what?* With *¿Y?*, in Spanish, instead of using a phrase with the same number of words, *¿Sí, y qué?*. It is in opposition to linguistic amplification.

- Literal translation. To translate a word or an expression word for word, e.g., *They are as like as two peas* as *Se parecen como dos guisante*, or, *She is reading* as *Ella está leyendo*.

In contrast to the SCFA definition, it does not mean translating one word for another. The translation of the English word *ink* as *encre* in French is not a literal translation but an established equivalent. Our literal translation corresponds to Nida's formal equivalent; when form coincides with function and meaning, as in the second example. It is the same as SCFA's literal translation.

- Modulation. To change the point of view, focus or cognitive category in relation to the

ST; it can be lexical or structural, e.g., to translate *سَتَصِرُ أَبَا* as *you are going to have a child*, instead of, *you are going to be a father*. This coincides with SCFA's acceptance.

- Particularization. To use a more precise or concrete term, e.g., to translate *window* in

English as *guichet* in French. This coincides with SCFA's acceptation. It is in opposition to generalization.

- Reduction. To suppress a ST information item in the TT, e.g., *the month of fasting* in opposition to Ramadan when translating into Arabic. This includes SCFA's and Delisle's (1973) implicitation Delisle's concision, and Vázquez Ayora's (1987) omission. It is in opposition to amplification.

- Substitution (linguistic, paralinguistic). To change linguistic elements for paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures) or vice versa, e.g., to translate the Arab gesture of *putting your hand on your heart* as *Thank you*. It is used above all in interpreting.

- Transposition. To change a grammatical category, e.g., *He will soon be back* translated into Spanish as *No tardará en venir*, changing the adverb *soon* for the verb *tardar*, instead of keeping the adverb and writing: *Estará de vuelta pronto*.

- Variation. To change linguistic or paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures) that affect aspects of linguistic variation: changes of textual tone, style, social dialect, geographical dialect, etc., e.g., to introduce or change dialectal indicators for characters when translating for the theater, changes in tone when adapting novels for children, etc.

A recent study was conducted by Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes (2005) to get an insight on how students tend to solve translation problems using Baker's (1992)

translation strategy taxonomy. The study involved 160 third year English studies students undertaking a course in 'General Translation' at the University of Murcia, Spain. It was part of the study that the students were first introduced to basic concepts in translation theory specifically the translation process before practicing English > Spanish and Spanish>English translation . The students were taught Baker's strategies to solve problems of non equivalence that might appear at word level, above word level, grammatical, textual and pragmatic. The main focus of the study was to see what are the strategies that these student use in solving difficult nominal groups. The study found that new strategies, which diverge from Baker's (1992) classification, were used in students' translations of the seven noun phrases into Spanish. Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes (2005:308) found that Spanish students did not use strategies such as 'translation by a more general word and translation by cultural substitution' and were attributed to students need for further translation training in the target language. Their study involved two languages that are from the same family, English and Spanish, and share close vocabulary banks. So Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes (2005:308) believe that this is cry out for further studies to explore 'the territories in which Baker's translation strategies best deploy and manifest themselves if we are to grasp their ultimate impact on translation quality' and based on their results they hold the belief that 'the more divergent the languages implied, the more accurate Baker's translation strategies application will be. Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes (2005:308) also posit that 'the choice of these strategies depends on at least, two factors: translators' L1 and SL translation unit'.

Non-equivalence at word level forces translators to adopt different strategies in order to deal with the fact there is no single lexical unit in the target language equivalent to the

lexical unit used in the source text. The following table lists the techniques, cited in Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes (2005) and Baker (1992), used by translators to solve problems of non equivalence at word level.

	STRATEGY	COMMENTS
1	Translation by a more general word (superordinate)	Baker: Related to propositional meaning. It works in most languages (p.26)
2	Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word	Baker: It has to do with differences in expressive meaning (p.28)
3	Translation by cultural substitution	This strategy involves replacing a culture-specific item with a target language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader (p.31)
4	Translation by loan word or loan word plus explanation	Baker: Related with culture-specific items, modern loan word plus explanation concepts and buzz words (p.34)
5	Translation by paraphrase using a related word	Baker: This is used when the concept expressed by the source item is lexicalized in the target language but in a different form, and when the frequency of use in the source language is higher than in the target language (p.37)
6	Translation by paraphrase using unrelated words	Baker: This used when the concept in the source language is not lexicalized in the target language (p.38) Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes: Use of paraphrase strategy using unrelated words when the source language concepts are lexicalized in the target language source, to provide a definition/ explanation in order to characterize the term translated (299-300)
7	Translation by omission	Baker: Omission of words which are not vital to the development of the text (p.40)
8	Translation by illustration	Baker: Use of illustrations when the source word lacks an equivalent in the target language (p.42)
9	Translation using a related word	Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes :Use of the word, even if it is inflected or derived. No change of grammatical category is detected. (299)
10	Translation by a new category	Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes : Use of a new word with no paraphrase, which turns into a new grammatical category.(299)
11	Translation by an usual collocation in the target language	Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes : Use of an unusual collocation in the target language. (299)

2.6 Concluding Summary

This chapter has attempted to analyze various theoretical assumptions as well as empirical research findings pertaining to the present study that examines translation errors indicative of problems and the strategies that could help interpret such errors.

This chapter has reviewed literature that provided a number of suggestions for analyzing and interpreting translation problems and resulting errors when employing the wrong strategies and these will be valuable when analyzing the data in later stages of this study. The following chapter will review literature specific of English-Arabic translation problems that are likely to face translators.

CHAPTER THREE

AN OVERVIEW OF ENGLISH-ARABIC TRANSLATION PROBLEMS

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has provided theoretical basis for the major concepts in the present study and has summarized the main theoretical studies on translation problems and their outcomes. This chapter extends this theoretical account and provides an overview of some of the translation problems that are likely to face an English-Arabic translator and result in producing translation errors. With regard to research on translation problems or difficulties, there have been a number of attempts to broadly discuss some of the problems faced when translating between the two languages by researchers such as Shamaa (1978) Aziz (1983) , Al-Najaar (1984), Mouakket (1986), Saraireh (1990) and (1992) , Baker (1992) , Farghal (1995) and Farghal and Shunnaq (1999), Kashoob (1995) , El-Shiyab (1999), Jabr (2001), Al Ghussain (2003) and Deeb (2005). However, some of these attempts lack the theoretical framework for both the contrastive analysis and translation analysis. In other words, their objectives were to contrast certain structures of Arabic and English without necessarily being concerned whether they evidently pose problems for translators. Nevertheless, these studies are useful because they can be utilized in the form of an empirical study like the present. Some of the contributing studies, (Shamaa, 1978; Al-Najjar, 1984; Mouakket, 1986) available focused on Arabic-English translation problems and gave rise to potential linguistic and cultural problems

that are also likely to be faced in English-Arabic translation. Therefore, a review of the central issues these studies put forward is presented in the following section.

3.2 Studies focusing on problematic areas of Arabic-English translation

Linguistic competence in both languages is considered to be a prerequisite for practicing translation (Homeidi, 2000) and the awareness of the similarities and discrepancies between the two language patterns springs from that competence. An early attempt to identify linguistic problems in translating into the second language was a study conducted by Shamaa (1978) in which some problems of translation from Arabic into English are examined. Shamaa's (1978) study was based on the analysis of English translations of Arabic fiction and found that some of the problems of non equivalence that appear at the lexical level are mainly attributed to 'lexical incongruence' and lexical gaps. 'Lexical incongruence', consists according Shama (1978:67-84) of four types : first, lexical items which have only partial equivalence; second, lexical items that exhibit the same referential meaning but have different stylistic value; third, lexical items that exhibit the same referential meaning but have different connotation, fourth, lexical items that exhibit the same referential meaning but have different intensity. Lexical gaps on the other hand occur when the concept of lexical item does exist in the target language (Baker, 1992; Kussmaul, 1995). Nevertheless they are considered by Shamaa (1978:86) to be the 'extreme case of lexical non-equivalence'. Further, Shamaa (1978:87) classifies lexical gaps into three types; those that are related to the environment and gaps that spur from social customs such as, modes of address, religious concepts family structure etc., and finally gaps that arise from the different grammatical categorizations the two languages assign to lexical items. To overcome these lexical gaps in Arabic-English translation

Shamaa (1978:88-89) proposes a number of strategies to overcome the difficulty and bridge the gap. These strategies include paraphrasing the source language item through definition or specification of components, borrowing the source language item into the target text provided that an explanation is given which might be in the form of a footnote, and finally by using a dynamic or functional equivalent that might be used in the target language in similar situations . These strategies also correspond in nature to the strategies proposed by Baker (1992), Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) and Aguada-Giménez and Pérez-Paredes (2005) to overcome problems of non-equivalence at the word and phrase level (see chapter two, section 2.5). Along this line of argument Miremadi (1992:139) finds that when translators come across source language concepts for which they do not find equivalents for in the target language they usually resort to one of the following strategies (Miremadi, 1992:139) :

- 1) avoid the concept completely
- 2) coinage of a nonsense word
- 3) use of existing morphemes at hand in their language to create a new word
- 4) loan translation (i.e. calque)
- 5) expansion and description

Studies that tackled English-Arabic translation difficulties focused on different types of difficulties at different textual levels in light of different text types. The majority of studies either focused or mentioned English –Arabic translation problems based on the examination of student translations or based on isolated examples produced by the author. In a study that examines some lexical and discoursal problems faced by fifteen

advanced student translators , Farghal (1995) finds that the students faced five lexical and discorsal problems. The problems discussed by Farghal (1995:56-60) are : 1) a culture-bound metaphor; "*Hail Mary passes*", 2) a semi lexical gap in the form of the English phrasal verb '*argued for*', 3) "the impersonal use of the English personal pronoun *you*" [italics in original], 4) the English phrasal verb "lean on", and 5) a thought-relationship between two sentences and the case here was that a cause-effect relationship was in most of the translations mistranslated into Arabic using the discourse marker /fa/ as a contrast and addition marker.

In a study that analyzes translations on different levels, examines three translations done by presumably two professional translators and one student translator and so traced mainly lexical and grammatical errors. At the lexical level, he refers to examples of the employment of literal translation in places where functional translation was required. At the grammatical level Jabr (2001:314) reported instances of "copying the SL linguistic conventions without taking into account that what may sound natural to the ST audience may not be so to the TT reader". Further at the discourse level Jabr finds that (2001:318) " Arab translators, whether they be professional or translator trainees, continue to face problems at both the textual and the structural level across language and text type". As a result, Jabr (2001:310) attributes these problems, to translators' tendency to work at the sentence level rather than the textual level, "the translator's lack of awareness of the differences between the SL and the TL in terms of their varying resources for creating text texture and structure" and the "translator's lack of familiarity with the textual and

structural differences displayed by different text types can result in inadequate or even erroneous translation” (p.310).

At the level of pragmatics, Kashoob (1995) discusses some cultural problems that might face the translator when translating advertisements from English into Arabic, such as socio-political, socio-cultural, technical, etc. He also proposes a number of techniques and methods to handle these types of problems in the context of advertising and he calls for the localization of translated advertisements rather than standardization.

In a more recent study, Gadacha (2006:45-46) postulates that translators problems are attributed to the following reasons:

- 1) ‘Misreading’ the source text in which the translator fails to ‘appreciate the true worth of the lexical choice’ made by the writer (Gadacha, 2006:45).
- 2) Failure to grasp and construe ideas the way they were intended and textured. However Gadacha (2006:46) emphasizes the fact that “There is no point in accumulating theoretical knowledge if the students are unable to benefit from what they already know- failure to associate, say, aspect or mood whether with wording or structure.”
- 3) Non-linguistic factors that result in peculiar style and lexical deviations which might lead to the production of odd collocations, word order, fronting and foregrounding of theme.

Lexical items or semantic units are labels for concepts that a translator might be knowledgeable of or not. Al-Najjar (1984:180-181) illustrates that these concepts and the

lexical items that label them pass through a three stage process of familiarisation among the speakers of one language. First the concept initiated by a speaker is coined into a lexical item. Second, the concept is transmitted from the addresser to the addressee.

Third, the addressees might redefine the concept to others. Finally “the processes of transmission and possible redefinitions of that concept continue until that the concept and the lexical item or semantic units labeling it are familiarized”. (Al-Najjar, 1984:181)

He claims that lexical items that belong to narrow fields of knowledge are acquired through higher academic instruction and that “very few people undergo narrow and detailed academic instruction in more than one narrow field of knowledge” (Al-Najjar 1984, 181-182) and as result the translator who is trained in translating literature will find it difficult to translate texts written in the jargon of medicine for example. Al-Najjar (1984:182) identifies three major problematic areas relating to lexical equivalence: 1) faulty lexical analysis and reconstructing, 2) concepts with no equivalence in the receptor culture and, 3) linguistics formulas and idioms. According to Al-Najjar (1984: 183) the analysis and reconstructing of lexical items in translation involve subcomponents of the lexical component of meaning which are (1) semantic content of morphemes, idioms, etc., (2) status of lexical items, (3) lexical category, (4) selectional relations, (5) phonological structure, (6) derivational content and (7) inflectional content.

According to Al-Najjar (1984:184), and later, lexical items are considered to fall into two classes. First, lexical items (signifiers) which denote similar, but not identical, concepts in

both languages (i.e. signified) (Al-Najjar, 1984:184). Second, lexical items (signifiers) that label partially similar concepts in both languages (i.e. signified, (Al-Najjar, 1984: 186) because of the following factors: 1) Structure is different, function is similar, 2) Structure is similar, and function is different, 3) Structure and function are slightly different, and 4) Structure is similar, connotation is different. Sararieh (1990, 1992) adopted these two classes in his study of “some lexical and syntactic problems” but added a third class. That is cultural concepts that do not exist in the target language (receptor culture). A class considered by Sararieh (1990, 1992) to be the most problematic at the lexical level (see section 4.3 below).

Al- Najjar (1984:189) suggests that the semantic content of the lexical item should be explained in the form of footnote until it becomes familiar. He proposes the following methods, based on the classifications of Haugen (1956) and Chejne (1969), to translate new concepts into Arabic. First, loanwords, also referred to as Arabization through phonemic diffusion. For instance, acronyms, he says are translated into Arabic in two ways; one rendering them phonemically as loanwords if they are familiar or give the full word each acronym stands for with its phonological substitution between parentheses, another would be ‘translating the words for which the acronyms stand into Arabic if these acronyms do not constitute a pronounceable word. Second, loanblends ‘*isti’aara*’ in which the coined word in Arabic is a blend of the Arabic and English morphemic structure. Third, semantic loans by semantic extensions ‘*majaaz*’. Fourth, derivation ‘*ishtiqaq*’. Fifth, the process compounding Arabic words ‘*naHi*’. Sixth, Calque, or loan translation ‘*tarjamah mustaara*’. Seventh, definition. Al-Najjar believes that a translator

should account for five “essential aspects” when translating lexical items:

1. The translator should find a lexical item which labels a concept in the target language similar to the concept in the source culture.
2. If the concept of the target language is partially similar to the concept of the source culture, the lexical item employed to label that partially similar concept in the target language should be supplemented with a footnote that gives the exact meaning of the source language concept.
3. If the source culture concept does not exist in the target language, the translator has to choose a method for coining a lexical item in the target language to label that source language concept. The translator should also provide an explanation of what that new lexical item means for the target reader.
4. “Linguistic formulas” and idioms should be translated according to their overall meaning and not by the individual meaning of each lexical item in them if the concepts they label or refer to exist in both the source culture and the target culture.
5. If the lexical item of the source language does not exist in the target language “but must be deleted in the target language for syntactic reasons without changing the meaning of the source language utterance, the translator should delete it outright” (Al-Najjar, 1984:112).

Al- Najjar (1984) addresses the correlation between meaning and translation claiming that the major problems in translation are problems of meanings. He acknowledges that overtranslation and undertranslation are the result of either the translators’ performance or discrepancies and idiosyncrasies between the linguistic systems for example of the two

languages involved in translation. He also raises the role of the translator for he draws the following assumption (1984:26):

“unbalanced and inadequate knowledge of both the source language and the receptor language could often end in overtranslating or undertranslating the source- language text in the receptor language”.

The assumption that the translator's lack of knowledge can end in overtranslation or undertranslation requires modification to include mistranslation. The translator's knowledge of both linguistic patterns and competence is not enough to ensure an adequate translation unless the translator successfully finds and employs the proper translation strategy.

However, the main focus of his study was on elements of meaning and components of structures that resist translation. The correlation he refers to between translator performance and the linguistic or cultural discrepancies between the source language and the target language in translation difficulty was not thoroughly investigated. When linguistic discrepancies between the source language and the target language pose difficulties for the translator it is the translators' linguistic and cultural competence, in the source language and target language, and the strategies they actually employ are also in question when a mistranslation occurs along with the discrepancies between the two language patterns.

In other words, the translator's competence and those differences are not two discrete

factors one could refer to as sources of translation difficulty, rather they are interrelated.

Studies as such which point to difficulties in translation and propose strategies to handle them failing to take into account the probability of the following:

First, the translator might be aware of the differences between the language structures involved and admit to facing a difficulty due to these differences but might not follow the strategy proposed by scholars and end up using a different strategy. Second, the translator might lack the knowledge of the differences but manage to use proper strategies. Third, the translator might not consider that differences might pose difficulties at all.

In addition to Al-Najjar (1984), Mouakket (1986) tackles some semantic problems when translating from Arabic into English. However, Mouakket (1986) approaches structural and semantic problems in the framework of case grammar analysis, particularly Cook's (1979) Matrix model, and its semantic representations. He found that even though there are areas of semantic overlap, the semantic areas in Arabic and English are very frequently non identical. In his study Mouakket (1986) applies Chafe's (1970) bidirectional derivation system that "links State, Process and Action verbs by means of four derivational forms inchoative, causative, decausative, and resultative" (Mouakket 1986:58).

Mouakket (1986) focuses on the problems of words and meaning such as dictionary versus contextual meaning, polysemy, synonymy and lexical translatability, and antonymy. He also addresses problems of Arabic sentence structure base on the analysis

of text of about seven thousand sentences extracted from the famous Arabic novel “*mawsim alhijrah ila alshamaal*”, ‘Season of Migration to the North’ along with their English translation. The sentences were analysed in terms of their formal structure based on the distinction between kernel sentences and their derived forms (1986:103). Mouakket proposes a set of general rules for translating kernel and their derived sentences from Arabic into English along with certain exceptions. Based on these rules he (1986:152) further concludes that “the agreements between the two languages are far greater than the differences” and should receive attention in the field of teaching translation. Mouakket (1986) also addresses the concept of untranslatability which, according to, involves linguistic problems related to addition, omission, and alteration to the text. Based on his analysis of literary texts, instances of unjustified omissions unnecessary additions were noted and attributed to the translators’ excessive liberty in handling the source text. He then examines sets of Arabic words that represent basic colors, aspects of dimension and selected sensational and emotional states in Arabic and their occurrence in English. Lexical gaps were found to exist in the corresponding English Process and Action-Process forms and were solved by paraphrasing them and so considered as not to pose difficulty. However, this finding is strictly based on the selection of sets of words that can be considered as basics in the lexical knowledge build up of the translator. So extending the sets of lexical items through the examination of real life translations will not only assist us in revealing the precise difficulty that stops the translator but will also help us in identifying the tendency translators opt for when facing lexical gaps.

In general, the comparison between the Arabic and the English derivational paradigms in Mouakket's study (1986:231) revealed that fewer lexical gaps exist in Arabic than in English due to the flexibility of the Arabic root system which allows "modifications in the root by means of internal vowel substitution, or through the use of affixes and inserted consonants". He rightly points out that such findings should not lead to a false assumption that translating into Arabic is much easier than translating from it, for translating either way involves 'complex procedures' and requires 'equally deep perceptions' (Mouakket, 1986:232). Further, Mouakket (1986:231) reinstates his position by putting forward the presumption that lexical gaps are paraphrased in translation so they should not pose difficulties for the translator. However, there is no empirical evidence to prove or disprove this assumption especially since the study tackles Arabic-English literary translations. Although his study noted instances of paraphrasing in cases where the translator of the literary novel found it necessary to explain a lexical item in order to fill the gap in English, there were instances when this paraphrase was considered unnecessary. Understanding why lexical gaps in the derivation system should not pose difficulty seems satisfying, though the question here is whether translators at different levels of experience find it not to be a source difficulty and one cannot assume that translators will consistently find paraphrasing an appropriate solution for every lexical gap in the derivational system they come across; there are other elements that should be taken into account. Furthermore, Mouakket emphasizes the role case grammar has in determining the underlying structures languages have in common and maintains that the translator can approach "the differing surface structures more systematically" provided he begins with case grammar analysis" (Mouakket, 1986:52). Another study proposing

problems, similar to that of Mouakket's (1986), is that done by El-Shiyab (1999) in which he compared two ways (prose and verse) of translating a piece of poetry in order to show the difficulty of translating literary texts and found that translation as verse was more effective, in terms of accuracy and stirring emotions, than that of the translation as prose.

As can be seen from the above, Arabic-English translation problems are discussed across a range of text types, such as literary texts, political speeches and legal texts. Shunnaq (1998, 2000) for example has leading studies along all the above text types in which he addresses some of the main translation problems that an Arab translator is likely to encounter when translating from Arabic into English. The problems he lists fall under syntactic problems, problems related to number and gender, problems involving handling relative nouns, pronouns, and clauses, lexical non-equivalence, culture-specific expressions, synonymy, emotiveness, and text type. Shunnaq (1998:42) also speaks of problems of non-equivalence at the lexical level and mentions in particular lexical gaps due to cultural differences, the different 'shades of meanings' a lexical item might have in English but with no clear one Arabic, and finally the problem of tense in which English assigns more categories to tense than Arabic.

3.3 Studies focusing on English-Arabic translation problems

This section examines the recent relevant literature on the problems of English-Arabic translation that are likely to be faced at the lexical, grammatical and textual translation level (Saraireh, 1990; Al Ghussain, 2003; Deeb, 2005).

Saraireh's (1990) approaches lexical items and examines "them in their semantic domain. Then, the contrasted lexical items would be examined with regard to other related semantic domains" (Saraireh, 1990:45-46). He posits that such procedures in determining the lexical or syntactic meanings bring "ambiguities in translation to minimum". Saraireh (1990) follows, within the frame work of the sociosemiotic approach, Waard and Nida (1986) in distinguishing two types of lexical meaning; designative and associative. And accordingly, the most likely type to pose difficulty to translators is the latter. So, Saraireh (1990:86) attributes lexical problems in translation to two main sources; "the linguistic components of lexical items" and "the cultural factors which determine the selection of lexical items." The linguistic components that according to Saraireh (1990:89) are more likely to pose difficulties for English-Arabic translators are lexical ambiguity and problems related to classes of lexical items. He defines lexical ambiguity as having multiple yet different meanings for one lexical item. Although Saraireh highlights the importance of the translator operating beyond the sentence level in order unravel the intended meaning when faced with lexical meaning, he fails to expand on how ambiguity poses a problem in real life translated texts. In an attempt to illustrate lexical ambiguity and how the author might purposefully produce a double meaning text he derives the following single sentence: "*Jaa al-kafer*" meaning "came the-unbeliever/farmer". This

illustration is an out of context sentence, so the meaning cannot be inferred from an extracted example. This lexical item is also not representative of lexical ambiguities that might occur in real life source texts.

The two lexical classes, mentioned earlier, that Saraireh (1990) discusses are those coined by Al-Najjar (1984). Moreover Saraireh expands on the notion of the two lexical classes with sets of examples. However in terms of translating lexical items, Saraireh (1990) in his study adopts the same techniques of semantic extension and derivation proposed Haugen (1956), Chejne (1969), and Al-Najjar (1984) adding to them the techniques of compounding and invention. Saraireh (1990:64) maintains “the translator should know how the TL employs its vocabulary to form natural appropriate sentences. A natural structure in the TL does not mean that it should be grammatical only, but also it should not look strange to the receptors (even if it is grammatical).” He believes (Saraireh 1990: 53) that there are two types of procedures employed in the process of translation; machine translation and “human analysis and recomposing”. Highlighting the pitfalls of machine translation the author fails to consider developed translation programs as possible translation tools for human translators. It should be noted though that the two procedures should not be regarded as two distinct methods for the translation process might construe of the two procedures combined and lead to a successful translation. Furthermore, employing one procedure does not mean entirely excluding the other; that is a real life translation situation definitely requires the trained translator’s judgment on the appropriate usage of words and structures which in return does not mean there is no need to seek tools that might facilitate the process of translation for translators and this is

despite the benefit that trainee translators might gain from using such tools. Based on this, a practical analysis of the tools employed in real life translation tasks is required to explicate what procedures exist in translation rather than using arbitrary categorization. However the degree of reliance on translation programs and how translators perceive the role of such programs would be a worthy investigation (Olohan, 2004).

In his further account of English-Arabic lexical translation problems, Sarairoh (1990) addresses the problems related to foreign proper nouns, namely problems of transliteration that have no equivalence in the target language. These problems are attributed to four main sources: a) Capitalization in English, b) Discrepancies in the English and Arabic phonological system, c) Affixation in Arabic, and d) English proper noun initials (Aziz, 1983; Sarairoh, 1990) and can be summarized as follows:

a) the difficulty of capitalization is said to be overcome by placing the transliterated proper noun between brackets or inverted commas until that borrowed proper noun is well established in Arabic (Sarairoh, 1990:123-124). However one potential problem in this case would be that the translator is the judge of whether a certain proper noun is yet known in Arabic which would in fact depend on the translators' own competence . Further, this might lead to confusion as when to use inverted commas and whether they should be only be used the first time the proper noun appears in the translation and dropped when it reoccurs. This also gives rise to the significance of consistency in terms of usage not only among translators, but through out the translator's individual task or assignment.

b) As for the phonological differences between English and Arabic sound representation, there should not be any potential problems for example using /f/ or the Persian symbols 'پ' and 'ف' in Arabic to substitute the English /v/ sound that has no representation in the Arabic writing system. Maintaining stylistic consistency in translation although having no serious ramifications on the readerships comprehension should not be overlooked.

c) As for the other problems related to English proper nouns, affixation and prefixes are those that cause confusion in determining whether the proper noun actually consists of the prefix or not. For example, Aziz (1983) and Saraireh (1990:126) both illustrate this problem through the use of the borrowed proper noun 'Paul' when adding a prefix in Arabic as in: "This glass is for Paul"

لبول الكأس هذا

Hada al-kaas libawlin

Translating the sentence in this format might lead to the following two interpretations:

1. This glass is for Paul.
2. This glass is for urine.

(Saraireh, 1990:126-127)

On this, Aziz (1983) posits that this kind of misinterpretation can be prevented by enclosing the proper noun in punctuation marks such as parentheses (بول) and leaving the prefix /ل/ outside which then assures a correct Arabic translation, i.e. 'ل الكأس هذا (بول)' 'This glass is for Paul'. The final problem related to proper nouns discussed by Saraireh (1990) is basically the difficulty of borrowing proper nouns initials into Arabic in which the translator has to decide whether to use single letters to represent proper noun initials or

transcribe their phonetic value in Arabic.

Saraireh (1990:64) also asserts that “The translator should know how the TL employs its vocabulary to form natural appropriate sentences. A natural structure in the TL does not mean that it should be grammatical only, but also it should not look strange to the receptors (even if it is grammatical)”. Saraireh (1990:138) assumes that translators resort to what he labels as general processes in handling lexical items. The strategies are addition, deletion and substitution and each strategy consists of two types; justified and unjustified. In the present thesis these strategies are be used to explain the occurrence of translation errors and problems detected, and later classified, in the analysis of this present study.

In another contrastive based study, Emery (1987) based on a comparison of English technical and journalistic texts with their Arabic translations studies the linguistic aspects of English-Arabic translation, which he believes can provide great assistance to the translation trainee. Emery (1987:62) believes that “A consideration of these features will permit certain trends to be detected and some translation ‘tips’ to be deduced” so he compares the English texts with their Arabic translations by undertaking an analysis of linguistic features on three text levels: phrasal, sentential, and supra-sentential.

The three levels analyzed by Emery (1986:62-64) can be summarized as follows:

(a) Phrasal level:

1. Verbs/Verb Phrases
2. Nouns/Noun Phrases

3. Adjective/Adjective Phrases

4. Adverbs/Adverb Phrases

5. Pronouns

6. Prepositions

(b) Sentence level

1. Voice

2. Tensed clauses

(c) Supra-sentential level

Admitting to have used selective and restricted samples, Emery (1987), manages to find one general difference between the two languages that is: “Arabic tends to be more explicit than English: what is implicit in English has to be spelled out in Arabic” (Emery, 1987:64).

Further, Emery (1987:64) makes a number of observations related to Arabic style, such as:

- “English –especially in the journalistic domain- favours rather loosely strung and sometimes ambiguous phrasal structures. These have to be ‘unpacked’ (i.e. relations between the several components explained) and if necessary disambiguated”.
- “Fluent Arabic style” is favoured over “literal translation of the English, although the linguistic means for this are available. Thus adverbs and pronouns are transported and modulated in various ways and the normal procedures for translating “be/have” are avoided in favour of more familiar verb/noun

collocations. Arabic appears to have a lower tolerance of both agentive and agentless passives than English, hence such structures are often turned in various ways. Complex verb forms involving modal auxiliaries and finite verbs in dependent clauses tend to be changed into non-finite forms by the use of nouns or verbal nouns. ” (Emery, 1987:64).

Lexical problems such as idioms and polysemy were addressed by Hawas (1990) who believes that lexical translation problems in particular, tend to be one of the basic persisting problems faced by translators and student translators. Hawas (1990:60-66) anticipates some of the lexical problems facing English-Arabic translators. Hawas (1990:61-64) posits that the following pose potential lexical problems for the English –Arabic translator: (1) “Polysemy Exhibited by the English lexical items” and (2) “The problem of equivalence in idiomatic expressions”. How these problems are sought to pose problems is explained below:

1. “Polysemy Exhibited by the English lexical items”

It is common in translation to come across English lexical items that have more than one meaning in Arabic. Hawas (1990:61) explains“...one English lexical item can be freely used in different contexts to convey different semantic implications. To cope with English, in this respect, Arabic employs words with different semantic and morphological structures.”

For example, the word ‘expand’ has several meanings according to different contexts; take for instance the following three sentences:

- (a) To expand employment in a country

(b) The dough expands

(c) Expand the house by adding another room

And so 'expand' can mean (a) make larger in quantity '*zyada fi...*', (b) extend in one or more directions '*tamadud*', and (c) make bigger or wider in size, volume, or quantity '*tawsy3*'

Although it seems that his illustration of lexical problems are based on a selection of fragmented examples produced from an unknown source, Hawas (1990:61) rightly points out that the translator unawareness of the contextual appropriateness of each option may lead to the 'mislocation' of words in the translation. The problem is said (Hawas, 1990) to worsen when the translator resorts to the Bilingual Dictionary² which provides literal lexical options with no sufficient contextual examples that might help in showing the meaning implications these options have. But if the bilingual dictionary falls short in assisting the translator he/she can always resort to a monolingual dictionary. Hawas (1990:63) also mentions the problem of "Polysemy Exhibited by the Arabic lexical items" which translators might face in Arabic-English translation.

2. The problem of equivalence in idiomatic expressions

Hawas (1990:64) maintains:

"The semantic indication of an idiom's lexical components do not always convey its real semantic context, i.e. word-to-word translation in this respect renders meaningless and vague linguistic utterances. Hence arises the necessity of relating lexis to social and cultural connotations as a first step towards a proper translation of

an idiomatic expression. The second step is concerned with finding an equivalent idiomatic expression in the TL, if there is any.”

The translator acquires that translation of an idiom by understanding the meaning and then searching for the proper equivalence in the Target Language and when no equivalent is found, Hawas (1990) recommends resorting to paraphrase as an escape from literal translation. This can be demonstrated through an example of the expression “Boston Tea Party” is commonly used in American journalistic articles and when translated into Arabic literally causes distortion of the meaning. This expression was translated literally in of the translations examined in this present study as: *tea party in Boston ‘Haflat shay fy bustin’* which not only distorted the meaning of expression but also caused a mistranslation in the whole meaning of the sentence it appeared in. This mistake could have been easily prevented by a simple search in any reliable free internet search engines such as *Encyclopedia Britannica* or, *Wikipedia* which gives the following explanation:

.... The Boston Tea Party was a direct action protest by the American colonists against Great Britain in which they destroyed many crates of tea on ships in Boston Harbor. The incident, which took place on Thursday, December 16, 1773, has been seen as helping to spark the American Revolution.

(see: www.en.wikipedia.org)

So, a proper translation of the expression in Arabic could be: *jama3t bustin lilshay* جماعة بوسطن للشاي with an optional footnote that explains the story behind this expression.

A more recent study that examines achieving lexical equivalence through the

lexical choices the translators makes Al-Zubi (2001) attempts to explore two aspects of lexical choice: synonymy and collocation. In terms of synonymy, Al-Zubi (2001) lists the possible forms of occurrence of this semantic relation in English –Arabic Translation. Al-Zubi (2001:136-142) believes that the translators greatest concern is with the interlingual type of synonymy, with intralingual being the second, because it is a rather standard procedure for the translator to “find out TL lexical items that are synonymous to their SL counterparts.”(Al-Zubi, 2001: 136). Al-Zubi’s (2001) study addresses the issue of synonymy by providing sets of examples some driven from *Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary* and others sought by the author to be common. However, in his illustration, he touches upon some areas that can be considered as potential sources of difficulties for the translator and can help synthesizing how a translator came about a certain rendition. Al-Zubi (2001:136-142) draws four categories for the potential cases of synonymy in English-Arabic translation which can be summed up as follows:

1. The case when there is no lexical TL equivalence for the SL lexical item which is attributed here, according to Al-Zubi (2001:136), to cultural differences between Arabic and English. He (2001:136) claims that the *Bilingual Dictionary Al-Mawrid*, based on a number of examples extracted from that bilingual dictionary, bridges the gap between the two cultures by resorting to “partial translation, paraphrase, approximation, or even transliteration”. But, what he fails to consider here is that the dictionary is a tool used by the translator who in fact moulds the lexical item to contextually fit in the target text. However, one can not deny that there are instances when the dictionary lists options that can be picked up without requiring

any changes and used in the target text. In other words, if one uses these lexical items, the author lists, in simple sentences they would definitely produce a funny effect on the text. One of the lexical items listed is the car type ‘station-wagon’ and the proposed rendition in Arabic is the paraphrase of the lexical item as: *‘sayyaratun dhat badanun khashabiyyin muqfalin wa sufufin min almaqa3id alqabilati lil□ayyi khalfa alsaiq’* (English back translation: a car that has a locked body, and rear foldable or removable seats behind the driver).

2. The case when the lexical item in the source language has many target language lexical options. Al-Zubi (2001:138) explains that although the translator will prefer one lexical choice taking into account the source language lexical context, there are still some important factors that need to be considered here. One factor is to consider the specific connotative values each lexical option exhibits. Further, Al-Zubi (2001:138) adds:

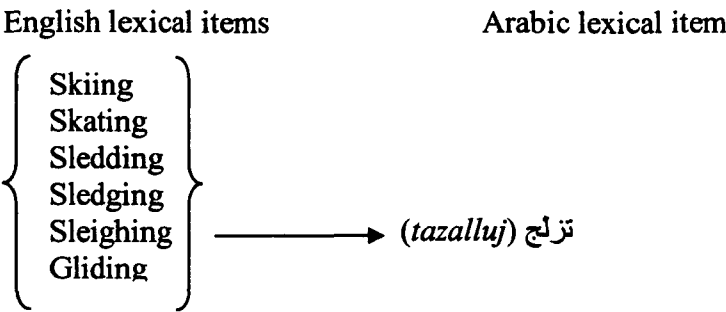
“Although many TL intralingual synonyms may have the same referential meaning, they undoubtedly differ in their expressive and connotative values. The source of difference is the fact that languages emphasize different aspects of the same referent. This variation in emphasis results into a state of imbalance in the number of terms used to refer to single referents across languages.”

A common example of this is the lexical item ‘generosity’ which has the following meanings . سماحة النفس، شهامة، سخاء، جود

Al-Zubi (2001) attributes Arabic’s richness of intralingual synonyms for numerous

distinct English lexical items to its flexible morphological derivation system (cf. Holes, 2004) and its “great lexical heritage” (Al-Zubi, 2001:139).

3. The case when there are many lexical items in the source language and there is only one general lexical meaning in the target language. This type of translation problem is labeled by Baker (1992:23) as the lack of a specific term (hyponym) in the target language which leaves no option but to use the general lexical item. An example of this would be the following English Lexical items and their Arabic translation:



4. The fourth case is when many source language synonyms have many equivalent synonyms in the target language. The translator is faced with many target language lexical equivalents and in order to reach the appropriate choice Al-Zubi (2001:140) believes that the translator should follow the following steps: first, arrange the target language synonyms in the form of a semantic hierarchy that represents the shared componential features between the source language synonyms and the target language synonyms being considered, second, consider the remaining source language lexical items that are “synonymous to the one actually used to find out the reason(s) why the source language writer prefers that one” and by consulting Bilingual and monolingual

dictionaries Al-Zubi (2001:140) believes the translator will become aware of the closest equivalent. However, Al-Zubi fails to consider here the importance of the target language lexical item's contextual appropriateness in the process of achieving the correct equivalent.

In more a text type focused, journalistic texts, study on the problems in the translation of lexical items English, Abdel-Hafiz (2002:82) attributes the production of wrong equivalences to one of three reasons. First, the translator's inability to differentiate between words in the target language and /or the source language that share similar phonological and semantic representations. Second, the incomplete comprehension of the contextual meaning of a source language word, which often leads to distortion of meaning. Third, the inherent linguistic differences between the two language systems (i.e. English and Arabic). So, at lexical level, Abdel-Hafiz (2002) addresses interlingual problems such as polysemy, synonyms, and denotative meaning and he later concludes that the translations he examined show that the translators tended to favour literal equivalence over functional and ideational. At the grammatical level in translation, however, Abdel-Hafiz (2002) addresses intralingual problems such as, verb-subject agreement, adjective-noun agreement, word order, and superfluous prepositions.

Two more recent studies approaching English-Arabic translation problems, facing students were conducted by Al Ghussain (2003) and Deeb (2005) in which they examine translation problems in their student translations of extract of texts from a pedagogical perspective. Al-Ghussain (2003) managed to identify translation problems such as collocations, acronyms

and proper nouns at the lexical level; choice of word order and passive at the grammatical level. Deeb’s (2005) empirical study, extends Al Ghussain’s (2003) range of problems and includes a more comprehensive list of translation problems. She tends to propose a taxonomy of problems that she tests on herself, when translating nineteen texts selected from Duff’s (1989) resource book ‘*Translation*’. And later tests it on a number of her student translators without necessarily having them complete all nineteen texts. Deeb (2005) proposes a list of problems that include most of those already mentioned by scholars earlier in this section, and section 3.3 above. Deeb (2005) classifies the problems her students faced in their English-Arabic translation task into the following taxonomy:

Table 3.1: Deeb’s (2005:257) taxonomy of Translation Problems

Categories of translation problems				
Supra-categories	Main categories	Sub-categories	Sub-sub-categories	
Problems of Comprehension and Production : ST&TT	“Micro/language problems”	Grammar	Morphology	
			Prepositions	
			Tense	
			Articles	
			Word order	
			Passive	
			Negation	
			Conditionals	
			Polysemy	
			Divergence	
			Derivation	
			Technical terms	
			Proper nouns	
			Compounds	
			Collocation	
			Phrasal verbs	
			Fixed expressions	
			Connotative meaning	
			Synonyms	
			Near Synonyms	
			Word formation	
			Lexical voids	
			Arabization	
		Spelling	Invention	
			Morphological spelling	
			Dialect influence and hypercorrection	
			slips	
		“Macro/text-level problems”	Rhetorical and Stylistic Devices	Metaphor and simile
				Repetition and parallelism
				Satire
				Irony
				Puns and Alliteration
			Cohesion	Reference
	Substitution			
	Ellipsis			
	Conjunctions			
	Theme and Rheme			
	Paragraphing			
	Graphic/orthographic marks			
	Register and style			
	Background Knowledge			
	Culture		SL culture-bound item/s	
			TL cultural values interference	
			Humour	
			Religion	
			Politics	
Problems of transfer process	Strategies	Problem realisation and mental search for solutions		
		Physical search for solutions		
		Drafting and editing		
		Back translation		
	Techniques	Addition	Addition of information	
			Addition of stress	
			Alternative translations	
			Expansion	
		Omission	Omission of items	
	Omission of section/s			
	Analogy and coining			
	Other process factors			

3.4 Conclusion

Given the above overview of English-Arabic of translation problems occurring at the lexical, grammatical level, and textual level, it is clear that many areas among those levels were studied in isolation. Further, that main focus was on student translations using small size samples, no more than ten subjects. This represents two of the weaknesses of available research; it is assumed that investigating professional translations using a larger sample will significantly contribute the study of translation problems and their outcomes. Therefore, this study is hoped to partially contribute to the literature on areas of English-Arabic translation problems facing professionals, based on larger size data. Moreover it is hoped that utilizing different methods of identifying problems, e.g. corpus tool and target readership assessment, will constitute a first step towards further exploration of specific issues found by the present study.

Notes:

1. This example is extracted from one of the texts, from the corpus, translated by a professional translator. The text is titled “History will direct Bush’s Fate” and the complete sentence is “Not since the Great Depression has any other president had to run on a record of shrinking rather than expanding employment.”
2. The bilingual dictionary used here is ‘Al-Mawrid: A Modern English Arabic Dictionary’.