

Translating English Cultural Terms into Arabic: A Gift from Saint Nicolas as a Case Study

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the translator's approach in translating a story from the domain of children literature. It analyzes several Arabic translations of an English novel titled: A Gift from Saint Nicholas by Carole Kismaric as a case study. The intention is to study how to translate ST cultural items in children literature into Arabic by distributing a Christian story to be translated. MA translation students did the translations at An-Najah National University. Then, the researchers indicated the terminologies and categorized them both in the ST and the TT. The TT equivalence was studied and analyzed according to lexical items and the translation strategies used. The researchers adopted the qualitative approach in the study by examining the translated versions. The paper concludes that the translators used either dynamic equivalence for early readers or formal equivalence with footnotes for adult readers as a main strategy among others.

Keywords: An-Najah National University- Children literature- Gain and loss- ST/ TT- Story- Translation.

Introduction

In our minds are typically thoughts that we translate and put into words. We turn our feelings into actions or even facial expressions. Everything in life passes through translation. In the 21st century, interpretation becomes a profession. However, transferring cultural terms from one language into another is the most critical activity in human life especially during the globalization era. It covers all aspects of daily life: political, economic, social, educational, cultural and literary elements. However, there is a lack of research in translating children literature since it is not an easy job to discuss children's minds and translate them according to Maureen White (1992). Many scientists and researchers stressed the necessity of children literature "as a medium for sharing common cultural interests"(IBID:261). In an approach which is both pragmatic and systematic she has identified 572 translated children books which were in print in the U. S. in 1990. From those books she selected 131 titles which she classified as "successful translated children's books" according to the criteria listed in her book

and that motivated the current study to investigate children literature from a translational perspective.

The Significance and the problem of the study

Nowadays, millions of Arab children watch translated cartoons from different cultures and read many translated literary works which leads to imposing an essential question whether these translations are adequate or not or whether children depend on colorful images of cartoons and stories in understanding them. This study will help the translators to pay more attention to the target audience to bridge the cultural gaps and the acceptability of their translated works. Notably, children who are categorized according to their age, sex, class, and level of intelligence in the light of their physical, educational, and social backgrounds. This study will add value at a pedagogical level in translation studies where it justifies and presents an applied aspect of translating children literature. This research will improve learners' understanding and achievements. Moreover, this study will give linguists a proof of how language is acquired by

native speakers and how it differs from one age to another.

Objectives of the Study:

The current study aims to achieve the following goals:

- 1- Shows the translation strategies employed by the translators in translating children literature.
- 2- Elaborates on the standards considered in translating children literature.
- 3- Classifies the variables that determine the translation strategies of translating children literature.

Questions of the Study:

This study answers the following questions:

- How do translators deal with such a genre? Should they adhere to the source text or change it for the sake of the new reader's comprehensibility?
- Are all children equal in the domain of literature and translation based on their age and religion?

The Hypothesis of the Study

The researchers are expected to either accept or reject the following:

- Translators choose the translation strategy based on the commissioner's request. Or
- Translators are free to choose the approach based on children's age and religion among other variables.

The Sample of the Study

The researchers examine the translations of seven MA translation students at An-Najah National University who study Translation and Applied Linguistics.

2 Theoretical Frame

In translating children literature which is considered crucial and sensitive, the translator

should put into consideration many factors and questions before starting the process of translation. He/she should ask questions such as: what is the theme that the translator is dealing with? Is it legal, religious, socially documented.? Who is the reader? Is he a child, a student, the public, women ...etc? Also, to whom the translator translates? For a publisher? A company, a court. Finally, one can add another question of how can the translator make the translation acceptable to the target culture especially when there is a cultural gap between the literature of the source audience and the target one?.

Methodology:

The researchers selected a religious story from children literature and distributed it to graduate students of the Applied Linguistic and Translation program at An-Najah National University. A gift from Saint Nicholas was assigned to be translated into Arabic for Muslim children readers aged between 6-12 years. The students were commissioned to explain the source text to a completely different and diverse culture. Many researchers and writers talk about translating children literature and what translation strategies are used in this kind of translation. . This issue will be viewed in the following literature review. The two researchers finally examine, analyze, critique the translations and come up with conclusions.

Related Literature

The rapid development of science and technology accompanied the continuous growth of cultural, economic, and political relations between nations that have confronted humanity with exceptional difficulties in the assimilation of the useful and necessary information. The translation is a comprehensive science, which includes children literature that witnessed a rapid development in recent years. There is apparent concern about children literature translation all over the world.

Many translators and scholars pay attention to children literature because the child is a crucial stage of his life, the step of formation of

his character, the scene in which his cognition is simple with less experience than adults. Many concerns and interests in children and children literature increase day after day. When practitioners of translating children's literature came to action, they asked many questions about how to translate children's literature. What strategies can they use? What equivalence of translation will they assume? They wondered about the cognitive environment of the child, they look for the mini-max model, and if they should adhere to the source text or target text. No doubt that translating children's literature has been the center of attention for who are interested in this subject.

Dynamic vs. Formal equivalence

In translation, there are formal and dynamic equivalences that are entirely different from each other. In formal interpretation, the translator adheres to the form of the source text. Therefore, the target text is a reflection of the source text. The translator translates adjective for the adjective, verb for verb...etc. In the dynamic approach, any translator puts into consideration the response of the target audience as well as the message of the source text that will be translated for his new audience.

In translating children's literature, some translators follow formal equivalence that could open a new wave of questions about ambiguous events, names, items ...etc, which need clarification and explanation by parents or babysitters, for example. Children raise these questions about new terms, new names, unique occasions, and the modern environment, which are far from their one.

Some translators use dynamic equivalence that shortens the way to the message of the target text by using different strategies and following the mini-max principle.

Munday (2004) presents the two main orientations or sorts of equivalents; formal and dynamic equivalents, Dynamic equivalent based on what is called the principle of equivalent effect, where the relationship between the receptor and the message, should be the same as that which

existed between the source text and its receptor. The translated word should meet the receptors' language needs and cultural expectations. Many strategies are used in this kind of equivalence as omission, adaptation, lexical, and cultural references to achieve the message to the new receptor.

This source is helpful in this paper because it presents the best choice of equivalence that will be used in translating the story because of the different cultures of the source text and target text. The source text is not related to the culture of Arab children with its concepts and expressions. So dynamic equivalence translates the message of the source text to a target audience with the same level of effectiveness of the source text on its receptors.

Alberta Mira (1998) states the classical ideologies of literary history, stressing the importance of linguistic or rhetorical devices, provide a stable framework for a translator. It generally agreed on the composition of the literary canon and a belief that there was a right interpretation. In addition to debates on how to translate and what the best approach to translation was.

Recent inquiries into the concept of "faithfulness" reveal it as fundamentally flawed. It is riddled with ideological discourse and unstable when taken as a starting point for the translator. After multi-cultural and deconstructionism, faithfulness can no longer be regarded as an absolute need. It becomes a limitation for the translator, but can never be a fixed formula that offers translators a stable framework for their task.

This concept is useful for translating the story. The translator stills faithful to the source text when s/he keeps the central theme in the story in *A Gift from Saint Nicholas*. The idea is religious one where it is a reward for the good and a punishment for the bad, such as the girl's two suiters. However, at the same time, he used to replace the concepts of culture-bound with others from the target texts culture.

Kattan(1999) talks about deletion, which takes place on two levels; syntactic and semantic or could be cultural, regarding removal, the meaning of a sentence may be implied, vague, or

even ambiguous. Nevertheless, this ambiguous specification is often at the basis of jokes, as more than one interpretation. In literature, it is an essential device and the base of poetic effect. The usefulness of deletion appears in the everyday talk when they are compared to registers of language which attempt to render in the surface structure, a faithful mirror of the total possible representation.

However, on a cline of deletion, lexical items relating to values should be allowed to remain prominent compared with those relating to style. Arabic, for instance, has a very different style of orientation compared to English. The mediator will need to check that the surface feature is indeed the only surface in meaning and does not open mortal frames. A translator may decide to omit or replace the whole stretch of text, which violates the reader's expectation of how a taboo subject should be handled.

Deletion is helpful in the current study because the gap between the two languages and cultures of both the ST and the TT is there. So some phrases in the ST were omitted like church mice or offer-eight mind. These do not affect the meaning of the story or have implicit meaning. However, to achieve the comprehensibility of the TT for the audience, the translator omit them.

Basil Hatim and Munday(p.60) present a mini-max principle to reduce the effect of the reader or the parents as in A Gift from Saint Nicholas. It is postulated as underpinning the complex decision-making process characteristic of translation. It is considered away, for a translator, to choose between several solutions to a given problem. Minimax suggests what the writers tend to ensure, and the reader to expect, that any extra effort is justified and commensurately rewarded.

Minimax principle, proposed by Levis, is beneficial in the story. The translator's criterion of judgment to avoid too many questions by children in the TL about items and expressions in the ST, which are strange for them and need too many explanations as who is John Calvin? How did the older man disappear through the chimney? and why? ...etc.

Farghal and Shunnaq (1999) talk about the concept of emotiveness when they say that this concept was investigated by some linguists who assured that poetic texts are rich in emotive connotations that the other versions may lack. They suggest that translators sometimes have to give precedence to the emotive and active element in the source text over the informative or content part if the context requires that.

The emotive meaning of a lexical item refers to the emotional response in which that item arouses the text receiver. This response could be positive, negative, or neutral at a different degree.

Some times the lexical item could be pleasant to a particular receiver but unpleasant to another.

They argued that an emotive meaning is a function of response to words. The emotive meaning of a word is a tendency of an award, arising from its historical usage, to produce adequate reactions in people. When translating the emotive texts as poetry, plays, and politics, the translator has to put into consideration that emotive expressions should be rendered in an emotive manner in the TL. In other words, the translator should do his best to create the same feeling and affects in the TL.

This source is related to translating the story since emotiveness is apparent in the story. The Class is characterized in a way that the reader sympathizes with him and understand that he is not greedy. While Antejy is shown in a beautiful way that more than man could love her, at the same time, the burgomaster has described in a way that the receiver agrees with Alentejo to marry Class, not him. Considering the theme of the story, the reader fears the punishment of doing bad things and a desire for a reward for a good thing or work as what happened with Class.

Douglas Robinson (2003) presents terminology by asking the question, how does the translator say x; y, and z in language B?

Yes, it is the translator's job to manage terminology through being exposed to it, evaluating its correctness or appropriateness in

specific contexts, storing, and retrieving it. The studies of vocabulary are the key sub-discipline within the broader field of translation studies. However, since terminology studies are typically grounded methodologically in the neglect of one crucial point: that it is quickly learned in context-in actual use-situations, in which people use in their daily lives are talking or writing to each other. While terminologists say that terminology is a stable objective reality exists in some systematic way in language" and secondarily "used" by people. Some times used in confusing and contradictory ways, which causes the imagination of a pure or stable primary state so attractive.

What Douglas says is related to the story. It is the translator's job to pick out the words and classify them, in this case –story- the terms used should be simple and understandable for children especially, they are from 6 to 12 years old.

Radegundis Stolze (2002) talks about children as the audience in his article. He states that children as the audience are so different from adults in their role of reading, hearing, and understanding a text. Stolze (Slatyer 2002) argues that translating for children is not very different from translating for adults. Moreover, when children's books are converted for children, the original content is already adapted to the world of thought of children. Therefore, translation presents the original text in another language.

There is a difference in translating classical children's literature and recent translation. It means that the first is full of stylistic blunder, while the latter is more faithful to the original and linguistically understandable, at the same time recent translation is more purified of strange expressions, old –fashioned words, and interferences to these translations are more comfortable to be understood and better for the children.

This article is so related to children's literature. It helps the translator which route to follow in translating the story, should he/she stick to the original text with its complicated expressions for children aged 6-12 years, or

should the translator reproduces it in a simple mold to make it comprehensible for these children. The second choice was effective in this case; this what motivates the translator to use the mini-max model.

Gillian Lathey says that discussion of translated texts is ever more fruitful than of the original text because translation norms exposed more clearly the constraints imposed on a text that enters the children's system. Because in transferring the text from the source into the target system, the translators are forced to take into account systematic constraints. The translator is permitted to manipulate the text by adding, deleting, enlarging, ...etc. This strategy could be achieved if there is adherence to two main principles which have had different hierarchal relations in different periods. For example, the first principle was considered as a tool for education through understanding children's literature, and it was dominated. However, at present, the emphasis differs.

The second principle – the adjustment of the text to the child's level of comprehension is more dominantly. Nevertheless, they might not be complimentary; sometimes, they might even contradict. However, in such a situation, the translator could delete one aspect in favor of another.

This book is useful for translating the story. The second principle is adopted in translating the story; in other words, the outcome of translation is at the same level as the child in order to read and understand or listen and comprehend.

One distinction is that books for younger children tend to contain illustrations, but picture books that feature art as an integral part of the overall work also cross all genders and age levels. Generally, the implied reader of a children's or young adult book is -3 years younger than the protagonist, for example, Orson Scott cards Ender's Game not necessarily written for children but co-opted by a child and young adult audience.

This source is useful since it gives the translator general look on the children at different

ages and helps her/him how to translate and deal with children's books and put into consideration the cognition of children at these ages.

Mc Gillis describes children as well as professional academic readers, he says in his book for children are more than adults. We find ourselves in the awkward position of writing about the voices of the other –especially children as "other"- about the importance of hearing these voices; children will find it difficult. Our gesture can only be meaningful if they result in calling attention to voice other than our own.

Mc Gillis rehabilitates otherness as part of the self. To enter the world of another, he said, "We must become "other than we are. We always face the "other," and we cannot escape otherness. To read, to live in a language and society is to share oneness with others. He describes self-others as a hybrid.

This source is helpful for the translator, and he should put into consideration the audience as "others" to be able to find the suitable equivalence with its language and convey the message of the story to his audience.

Data analysis

Source text analysis

The translations process has three stages; analysis, transfer, and translation according to Newmark (1981). At the analysis process, the translator has to understand the source text; this comes through analyzing semantic, syntactic levels, and analyzing the theme of the source text and find the suitable equivalence. This analysis is vital for both the translator and the audience; for the translator to make a good sense of the source text and find out the main items and concepts that affect the meaning of the literary work. Then, the translator finds a suitable equivalence for his audience.

As for the audience, the outcome made by the translator will be comprehensible for them and suits the child's cognition and knowledge. In the story A Gift from Saint Nicholas, the translator intended to pick the most useful words in the story and classified them. These categories are social, cultural, and religious. This lexical analysis is

essential in translation to save effort for the translator and the audience. The following table shows the categories.

Religious	Social	Names	Cultural bound
	Burgomaster	Class	Pipe
1. Church bells	Alderman	Ateji	John Calvin
2. Christmas	Dutch house		Chimney
3. Saint Christmas Eve	English Setting		Stockings

Table 1 Categories of the main concepts in the source text.

The previous survey of words and categorizing them is done to choose a suitable equivalence for this kind of text. It is a religious story for children who are 6-12 year old, and hence the suitable equivalence is the dynamic one due to several reasons: Firstly, the religion of audience of the source text and the religion of the target text are different from each other in beliefs, behavior, customs, and traditions. It means that Arab children are not familiar with concepts like Christmas, Christmas Eve, church bells, so the suitable alternative is from their daily life activities or their environment as Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, masjid (Feast, mosque). These are more comprehensible for these children who are at the beginning of learning and reading.

Secondly, the difference between the two cultures makes it difficult for the target text's audience to grasp and understand the term chimney, for example, and to know why does the Saint come or go through it. Since its cultural bound, it could not be comprehended without explanation. The child can understand and see people come and get out through the door but not through a chimney.

Thirdly, the names of places and people seem to be strange for children or to be also pronounced. Some seem ambiguous and need clarification as John Calvin. Since John Calvin was a famous character in Western countries, he is unknown in Arab countries, but Arabs have others, on the other hand, as Sultan Othman, Ala' Eddi so that John Calvin could be replaced by one of these heroic characters.

Reconstruction of values

After analyzing the source text, it is essential to reconstruct the values of the source text into the target text. Before this, one should remember the challenges the translator face, especially his audience, who are children from six to twelve years. These children are early readers; they face many challenges in understanding the new items and concepts. This kind of audience needs something that attracts their attention and involves them with the text. Besides, translators seek to market the new story for the publisher's benefits and the comprehensibility of the target text.

3.3 Target text analysis

The following table shows the analysis of the translators' works if they are the same as the source text or not, how the translators transfer the previous categories to the target text, and what equivalence and strategies they used.

Source Text	Target Text	Percentage
Saint	1. Formal: Qedees Nichola Khen Nichola	28%
	2. Dynamic : * substituted adapted terms (Sheikh, old man (rajul ajuz).	72%
Church bells	1. Christian equivalents	28%

In A Gift from Saint Nicholas, the translators kept the central values of the story. The theme is a religious one that enhances the excellent morals in Christian society and blocks the bad morals in an entertaining frame. The story is about a beautiful lady who is beloved by two men. One is cobbler, modest, honest, and respected by people. The other is rich, greedy, and who likes unjustified revenge. It shows the honest person is rewarded by a religious symbol that is Saint Nicholas, and the evil person is punished for his unjustified revenge. The cobbler's family ran into a financial problem yet, and they come to a beautiful, happy end, which is a favored one by children. Children like to reward the good, punish the devil, and conquer him. The burgomaster s defeated, and the cobbler became a council member of the town. As an entertainment element, reward and punishment come through magic and abstract elements in the source text as changing the old house into a new brick-made one or finding a bag of gold coins with writing on them A Gift from Saint Nicholas.

	(ajras Alkaneesa)	
	2. Islamic adapted equivalence (Alathan, sawtatakbeer, athan alfajr).	72%
Christmas	1. Christian occasion: (eid almeelad)	28%
	2. religious Islamic occasion (eleid)	72%
Christmas Eve	1. Christian feast (Christmas Eve, Lailat almeelad)	28%
	2. Islamic feast: Eid aladha, Eid alfitr).	72%

Table (2) the analysis of the translators' choices used in the translating cultural terms.

From the previous table, it is clear that the translators are divided into two kinds: those who translated the story literally and those who translated it dynamically. Those who translated it dynamically represent 72% of translators who use adaptation as a strategy of translation. They substituted the Christian occasions and celebrations with cultural and Islamic ones from the children's environment and their translations and norms. The following table shows these dynamic translators how they moved the message from the source text to the target text concerning the culture-bound and religious myth.

Source text	Target text	Percentage
Pipe	1. Cultural substituted terms (qomqom, khanjar, asa, masbaha)	80%
	2. Literal equivalence (ghalun)	20%
John Calvin	1. Cultural adapted characters (Saedna Sulayman , Sultan Mansour, Alhajaj , Alafandi Murad)	80%
	2. neutral (than)	20%
Chimney	1. omission	20%
	2. Substituted adapted terms (nafetha, alreeh) besat	80%
Stockings	1. omission	60%
	2. neutral terms (Jawareb, qadeema) abya	40%

Table (3) the equivalent of the culture-bound terms and religious myth.

As for the religious myth and culture-bound term, the translators follow new strategies. The first strategy of omission, which registered 20% and 60% of translation in some words. The other is a neutral strategy where the translator does not show interference in the text. The translators also adapted and substituted terms for John Calvin from the children's environment and culture.

There is still the social category which contains the characters' names and social titles. The following table shows the translators' dynamism in translating these names and titles.

Table 3.3

Source text	Target text	Percentage
Burgomaster	1. substituted adapted terms (basha, Wali, Omda, Rais baladeya)	80%
	2. omission	20%
Alderman	Adapted titles (omda, sayed, za'im, Hakem)	100%
British	1. omission	40%
	2. neutral-sulutat	20%
	3. substituted adapted term (Muhtal)	40%
Chest	1. omission	20%
	2. substituted adapted term (Sonuk)	80%
Class	1. Modern names substituted (Maher, Abdelrahman, Omar, Ali, Asa'ad).	100%

Antejy	Modern names (Hasna', Salma, Laila, Fatema, Sara).	100%
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Table (4) the translators' dynamism in translating names and titles in a religious story

From the above table, it seems that the translators are between adaptation and omission. Some omitted terms as British, chest, and burgomaster, others adapted terms from the target text's environment.

The translators substituted translational names with new Arab names, related to the environment of the audience.

Target Text media

It is very important to discuss three essential elements in translating children's literature: the audience, the commission, and the traditions of translating children's literature.

Audience

Before talking about the audience, it is important to remind readers that children literature in the field of research that many researchers and writers wrote on. Nonetheless, it is crucial to know who the children are and if we deal with them in the same way and at the same level. According to sociology and psychology, childhood is divided into stages based on the age of the child and his/ her growth. Literature puts this into consideration when the target readers are children. The division of the childhood stage is as the following: 1- pre-readers (3-6 years) 2- early-readers (7-9) and 3- chapter book reader (9-12 years). (Dweikat, 2017)

This division of children's literature is not arbitrary since the environment of the child forms his knowledge and enhances his cognition. Since translation could be defined as rereading or rewriting the ST to the TL audiences, the TT becomes unique and different from their originals. Every time texts are translated, they are partially different in language, culture, reader, and a new point of view. In this sense, the translation of children's literature is very similar to that of other

literary texts. However, translating children's literature has its distinctive features. For children, we have to pay more attention to this issue.

According to the audience of A Gift from Saint Nicholas, they are Arab Muslim children aged 6-12 years whose cognition is so pure with little experience and wealth of vocabulary, and also with no vast knowledge about other cultures and traditions. They are dependent on their readings and comprehending what they read and hear. They are only familiar with their environment and where they live. So the Christian traditions and customs at Christmas seem strange and unfamiliar for these children and some times need effort from their parents to explain them, for example, why Christians use stockings and hold them on Christmas tree. To avoid all these, the translators use the mini-max principle and adjust to reveal the message of the target text.

Commission

Each translated text has to be translated to Arab Muslim children aged from 6-12.

Its commission and the commission of A Gift from Saint Nicholas is to translate the English story to An Arab Muslim children who are 6-12 years old. The translators were given enough time to do it as homework and return it after a week. The source of power in the commission is the publisher, whose voice is about 70%.

Traditional Norms of children's literature

According to Dar Al Fikr for publication, there are some traditions for translating children's literature. These traditions measure literary work from three dimensions:

- 1) The content should
 - A- be interesting.
 - B- motivate thinking.
 - C- create imagination.
 - D- link child with culture.
 - E- enhance religion.

F- and make the child discover the environment.

2) The form and editing

A- The book size.

B- colorful and thick cover.

C- The title is attractive.

E- Clear writing and separated from drawings, pictures...etc.

3) The language should be

A- suitable for the reader's level.

B- structured correctly in spelling and grammar.

C- aesthetic language, includes imagery, metaphor...etc.

In evaluating any children's literary book, it is necessary to concentrate on the age level of the reader or the audience and put into consideration the mental, behavioral, emotional, and physical growth of the audience. (Salem, M. 2010)

Conclusions:

The main objective of this study is to present the theoretical and practical framework

of a research that provides more knowledge and a better understanding of how children literature is to be translated for children by focusing on the adequate equivalence and the translation strategies being used.

The overall calculations show that:

1) It is evident that the dynamic translation equivalence strategy is an effective translation strategy especially in the domain of translating children literature.

2) Using and following hybrid translation strategies is also effective to achieve the aim of translation including the following:

a- Omission

b- Adaptation

c- Adjustment

d- Substituting words in the source text with words in the target texts as names of people.

3) Using the mini-max principle, especially for children from six to twelve to save the effort of parents, for example.

4) Formal equivalence and using explanatory footnotes is also important.

5) Finally, what suits a particular group of children does not necessarily suit others.

Recommendations:

The two researchers recommend the following:

1. It is recommended that the translators of children literature should be eclectic by using hybrid translation strategies and never stick to one rigid translation strategy.
2. The ST genre especially the cultural one is very sensitive and hence the translator should be aware of the cultural differences between the ST and the TT and should raise the awareness of his/her TT readership to such cultural differences and do his/her best to bridge the cultural gaps.
3. Literal translation strategy in the domain of cultural translation may not be the optimal translation strategy as it may yield a rigid and a monolithic translation.

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