Strategies Employed by Jordanian Subtitlers in Translating the Dialect Used in the Movie "Theeb"

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the translation strategies employed by subtitlers in the translation of the Jordanian dialect used in the movie "Theeb" into English. The dialectical expressions investigated in this paper were taken from the dialogue between actors in the movie "Theeb". The movie focused on a young Bedouin boy his name was "Theeb" (ذيب, wolf) and displayed Bedouin life during World War I. The actors were non-professional actors who came from the Bedouin community in southern Jordan (Petra). To critically analyze the dialectical expressions and their translations, the actors' dialogues and their corresponding subtitles were investigated. To examine the translation strategies use, the dialect was first defined, and the translations used in the subtitles were examined. To illustrate the strategies employed by subtitlers in dealing with the translation of the dialectical expressions examples were listed in tables. The findings might offer perspicacity to the subtitlers in selecting strategies used in translation and it gives more attention to the cultural differences between the source language (SL) and target language (TL). The subtitles of the movie preferred to transfer the dialectical expressions into modern standard Arabic (MSA) by using the standardization strategy and then translated it into the TL.

Keywords: Culture, dialect, subtitling, transliteration, translation strategies

INTRODUCTION

The internet and other new technologies have made the world a very small place by allowing people, culture, and languages to interact more effectively. The television

and movie industries have been expanding rapidly and the role of translators have been increased. The translation of dialectical and cultural expressions as part of any language is also an intimidating task. The actors' dialogues in the movie are based on the Jordanian Bedouin dialect which comes from the southern part of Jordan, near Petra. The data of this paper was collected from the movie (https://ok.ru/video/91070138943). This dialect requires very close attention in order for it to be accurately and concisely translated into English. The translation of the movie, therefore, requires special skills and excellent attention to detail.

Key Terms of the Article

Dialect. A regional variety of languages, distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties that together constitute a single language (Webster, 2006). Dialect is also a very powerful way of characterization, which elaborates on the geographic and social background of any character. It should be noted the Arabic spoken dialects are acquired and taught as native languages, while modern standard Arabic (MSA) is learnt and taught in schools. Moreover, another dialectal difference exists between the Bedouin and those who live in cities and villages, with other differences being used by different ethnic or religious groups, and by different social classes (Badawi, 1973).

Culture. Newmark (1988) stated that culture was the way of life and its manifestations peculiar to a society. The culture is a cumulative experience affected by morals, art, knowledge, beliefs, and traditions. Hofstede (1980) stated that culture was learnt, rather than inherited, and was derived from the social environment. The culture includes three levels, the first of which is the universal level, which is associated with the common nature of all human beings. The second is the collective level, which is common within a group of people and it can be learnt from other individuals in the group. The final level is that of the individual, which specific to every person. The language reflects the thoughts, notions, ideas, habits, and any other cultural aspects of the community. The terminology of a language shows the culturally important sides of people such as social, religious or geographical themes.

Transliteration (TRL). Transliteration is the representation of a word or phrase written in a script different from the source language achieved by using the characters or letters of the target language (Muscat, 2011). Also, it is the process of transferring a word, a phrase from the alphabet of the source language (SL) to the target language (TL), which can be helpful for students, scholars, and readers in understanding and pronouncing words, phrases, and names in the TL and vice versa. Additionally, transliteration provides readers with an idea of how the word is pronounced only through transferring the words and phrases into a familiar alphabet. For example, الفاعل' '(faᶜel) (doer),'الفعل' (feᶜel) (verb), and 'حروف الجر ,'(huroof aljar, prepositions).

Subtitling. A printed translation of foreign-language dialogue shown at the bottom of the screen, in a film or a television broadcast (American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, 2011). Subtitles are the words or sentences that appear at the bottom of the screen. They are the translation of the movie's spoken dialogue into a different language for the target audience. Subtitling is also a very important method used in allowing the hearing impaired to follow the movie. In addition, the subtitlers should have the knowledge and the ability to localize the spoken dialogue in the movie to suit the dialect and culture of the target audience. As a subtitler, it is very important to have deep knowledge of SL dialects, slang, and culture.

Strategies for Translating Dialect

One of the most problematic issues in the translation of audio (spoken language) is how to deal with the dialects and slang (nonstandard language) that is used in movies and television. This help develops the characters and put them in specific groups of communities or cultures by use of specific linguistic patterns. This paper identifies the possible methods and strategies that help in translating dialects and slang with specific examples from the Arabic translation of the dialogue in the movie "Theeb."

Linguistically, dialects and slang are categorized as subdivisions of the standard language. The varieties of the language and its subdivision (dialect and slang) can be recognized either socially or geographically.

Therefore, in this paper, the dialect and slang used in the movie have been strongly connected and tied to the geography of the primary location shown in the movie, South Jordan, near Petra. However, Perteghella (2002) had developed a remarkable definition of five possible strategies for translating dialectical and slang expressions, that could be applied in any language. These strategies are discussed in the following paragraph.

Dialect Compilation. The Arabic speakers and scholars believe that the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) was originally a collection of slang and dialects ensuring that the Arabic speakers using different slang and dialects, from Morocco in the west to the Gulf States in the east, could more or less can all understand each other. The Arabic language is a language that stands by itself, there are slight differences between it and its related languages in the region, such as Hebrew, Turkish (Turkey), Persian (Iran), Urdu, Swahili, and Malay. All of which are somehow unintelligible to the Arabic speakers. However, the dialect is deep-rooted in a particular group of people, where the background of this social group remains the same. For example, they are welcome, which is the translation of Hayahom Allah حياهم الله.

Pseudo-Dialect Translation. The deep meaning of the phrase "pseudo" is the usage of adjective or nounthat refers to something different from the meaning it is claimed to be. So, if you are trying to describe a person as a pseudo-honest or a country

as pseudo-economic, your intention is to mean that the person is not really honest and the country is not really economically strong. In the same vein, the translation of Pseudo-dialect is usually used for indistinct dialects, nonstandard language, and idiomatic features of different target language dialects, where the proper names, topical, and cultural references are kept as in the original. For example, thank you, which is the translation of E'sht, عشت, long life.

Parallel Dialect Translation. Parallel or parallelism linguistically refers to use the same pattern of phrases or words to clarify that the two phrases, words, or ideas have the same importance in the spoken language. Therefore, the words, phrases, or ideas should have the same impact, tense, and structure. Subtitlers and producers usually use parallel phrases and ideas to increase the transparency of their stories and to make their language understandable by their audience. Grammatically, their intention is to illustrate that the language used in their sketches is grammatically and structurally correct, which can help them to add value to their movie. Additionally, parallel in the structures of the writing will provide flow in the sentences and phrases used. It also maintains the stream of writing in a sentence. It keeps your writing balanced and well-adjusted to make it easier for readers. On the other hand, making any errors in the writing will cause loss of the ideas and the story will sound strange to the readers and hearers. In the same context, to translate a dialect into another specific target language (TL), usually the languages that have similar implications and occupies the same correspondence position in the TL linguistic system. Names, places, jokes, and other source-language cultural references are kept as in the original. This strategy can achieve the goal of the translation only if the translators work closely with the actors and producers.

Dialect Localization. Localizing the dialect is the matter of adjusting and acclimating the dialect/slang that has been previously rendered into different multiple languages. Also, it is the most important stage in adapting to the targeted cultures that belong to specific regions, areas, or groups of people. The localizing process differs from the translation process due to the need for studying the targeted cultures to render your story to comply with local requirements. Generally, the notion of localizing the dialect is linked to the adaptation of targeted cultures and interpreting movie sketches, websites, or audiovisual contents. It can be made for a group of people or regions where this region and groups of people use different languages or where the same language is spoken. For example, different dialects, with different expressions, are used in North Africa. Frequently, the names of characters the actors play in the movie are changed to the TL to TL cultural references. This is an acculturating strategy, domesticating that limits on adaptation and version (for example, an Arabic version of American movies such as the film Titanic. A dialect-localization strategy is every so often chosen by scriptwriters or a director

to express a different perspective on a movie or for a particular production. The dialect-localization strategy might restrain reception, especially in those countries in which regionalisms are stronger.

Standardization. Language standardization is attentive to the forms of linguistic and social functions of the language. The standard language is a rational sketch and normally accompanies the development of the discourse practices, which stress the accuracy of language usage. It may also come as a natural development of the language. MSA is a standardized form of the Arabic language, normally used by government authorities in political speeches or official correspondence, media, universities, and schools. Standardization can be considered as a way of applying and enhancing the technical standards based on the consensus statement of different government official parties, in order to help the language's speakers to take the full advantage of language compatibility and repeatability. Political and economic issues in the country play a remarkable role in this, where the officials usually choose to implement a standard language in order to enhance comprehensibility and to safely convey their message to multiple groups within a region, and thus to the widest audience possible. Arabic speaking nations often substitute their regional dialect with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). This is because the spoken Arabic language is often mixed with colloquialisms, which may not be understood by non-local audiences. This approach is more suitable for drama, but

also for productions that universalize some issues, as in the movie "Theeb".

Subtitling

The first subcategory of screen translation is subtitling. It is a complex form of translation in which the source SL / spoken language of a drama series or movie is conveyed into the TL/ the written language. Subtitling is a new translation category falling under audiovisual translation. This type of translation has its own requirements, characteristics, and rules. As a translator, subtitler, or producer the first thing you should start with is an understanding that this type of translation belongs to "subordinate translation". Also, you must know that this type has special limitations, and that time greatly affects the end results. Consequently, the space for the translation that is given to the translator is usually limited to 2-3 three short lines. Also, the subtitles will be centred and placed at the bottom of the screen.

Ideally, the first line of a subtitle is limited and should not exceed 35 letters, while the second line can go up to 60-70 letters. As for the limitation of time, each subtitle normally has only one to six seconds in which it will be displayed on the screen. With much depending on the number of letters and the reading speed. Technically, the translator and subtitlers should know the time of the appearance and disappearance of the subtitle on the screen, in addition to the changing of the clip.

The process of subtitling includes spotting to determine the time of exit and entrance of the subtitles matching with the

audio; translation to adapt and translate from the SL to TL; adjusting it to the number of letters that will be displayed on the screen in the allotted time; imitation (simulation) to illustrate and represent the translated subtitles with the image and the audio to make sure that they meet the minimum standards, and that can be read properly. If done properly, the subtitles should follow the audiovisual presentation in such a way as to become natural, fluent and easily read.

Limitations of Subtitling. Gottlieb (1992) indicated that subtitler was faced with formal and textual limitations, where the textual limitations were those imposed on the subtitles by the visual context of the movie, whereas the formal limitations were the space factors (a maximum of two lines are allowed, with some 35 characters each) and time factor. However, the length of a subtitle depends on the quality and complexity of the spoken language and on the speed of the actors' speech in the movie. Along the same vein, Delabastita (1989) explained that subtitles were limited forms of translation since the spoken language must be translated as segments with no more than two lines usually. Typically, the audience reads more slowly than they speak, therefore, the subtitles try to summarize some of the spoken languages in order to make it more readable in accordance with the audiences reading speed. In the same context, Delabastita (1989) mentioned that "the constraints of space and time lead into the problem of selection as the translator has to analyze the source text material carefully to decide what should be transferred to the target text and what can or must be left out".

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

The material and information used in this paper were taken from the movie "Theeb"," which was produced in 2014. The movie was in the Arabic language, using the Jordanian Bedouin dialect. The colloquial and dialectical terms used in the dialogue in the movie were carefully selected to give the readers and scholars a clear idea regarding the nature of the Bedouin dialect and the manner for transferring it into English. Moreover, the selection process for the terms used was meant to cover the entire movie, from the beginning to the end (https://ok.ru/video/91070138943).

Methods

Around six dialectical and slang expressions were collected from the movie. These represent the whole of the dialectical Bedouin expressions occurring in the movie. Bear in mind that all of the spoken languages in the movie was in the Jordanian Bedouin dialect/slang. These selected expressions were written in tables in Arabic (SL, MSA) that illustrated the dialectical term, transliteration, original English translation, alternative translation to see how it had been translated into English, and its time in the movie. After examining the translation of each term, the strategies that users would be identified and the final conclusion would be made.

Dialectical Expressions and Its Translation.
The following tables show the dialectical expressions that were selected from the movie along with their transliterations, original English translations, and the alternative translation suggested by the writer. Additionally, the following abbreviations (Table 1) are used in the tables; dialectical term (DT), modern standard Arabic (MSA), English translation (ET), transliteration, and alternative translation (ALT).

In this part of the film, the actors were trying to slaughter a goat in an acceptable Islamic way (Halal). The elder brother tried to teach Theeb what he had to say and what he had to do when he slaughtered a goat. The elder brother used the Bedouin Islamic cultural expression ' سمي ' (Sami), which meant 'say In the name of Allah'. The translators/subtitlers conveyed it into the English language as 'say a prayer'. The interpretation of the term does not reflect the deep dialectical Islamic cultural expression as it meant in the sentence. They transferred it into MSA and translated it into English ignoring the real meaning of this dialectical Islamic cultural expression.

However, their translation 'say a prayer' might be suitable for another culture, in which beliefs and customs differ from Bedouin Islamic culture. Usually, when it comes to Muslims, especially the Bedouin, they start by mentioning the name of ALLAH when they intend to do something (see Table 2). The term 'say a prayer' does not exist in Bedouin culture at all. Obviously, the subtitlers are not familiar with Bedouin culture and they just quoted the translation from other English movies.

The term refers to the death of Sheik Mahmoud, The translator converted the expression to MSA and conveyed it literally to English as an MSA term, which caused a loss of meaning, as well as ignoring the sense of the dialect and culture used. In Bedouin culture when someone dies, they would use the term 'اعطاك عمره' (a'tak o'mroh) instead of saying he died. Using such dialectical expression will reduce the shock of the death and the effect of this bad news. Instead, they are asking Allah to extend the life of the one who asked about him.

The term is not transferred precisely and accurately to the TL by the subtitlers and

Table 1

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	سمي
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
English translation (ET)	Say a prayer
Transliteration	Sami
Alternative translation (ALT)	In the name of Allah

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 11.7.

Table 2

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and their English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	أعطاك عمره
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	توفي
English translation (ET)	passed away
Transliteration	a'tak o'mroh
Alternative translation (ALT)	He gave you his life

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 13.6.

the phrase "a'tak o'moroh" is not translated well, thus, a senseless translation has been made and the shock of this bad news has been increased. Therefore, using the polite sense in telling such kind of shocking news, the term 'gave you his life' is more appropriate to this dialectical Bedouin expression (see Table 3).

The term (ابشر, e'bsher) is an Arabic verb derived from the root verb 'أبشرَ' (a'bsher) and it refers to the 'obligation' in English, which means "something that you must do with pleasure because it is morally

right," as defined in the Merriam Webster Dictionary (2006). As we have noticed from the spoken Bedouin dialect in the movie, the Bedouin always connect their answers with Islamic culture, where they can praise Allah in each sentence.

In this example, they link their answer 'أبشر' (e'bsher) with the Islamic term (حياك الله, hayak Allah, Allah bless you). The subtitlers/translators of the film do not convey the same sense and image of the dialectical term into the TL when they translated it as 'of course'. This

Table 3

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	ابشر حياك الله
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	ماذا تريد
English translation (ET)	Of course,
Transliteration	e'bsher hayak Allah
Alternative translation (ALT)	Allah bless you, will do it with pleasure

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 16.3.

deviates from the true meaning of the term in the SL. Therefore, 'Allah bless you, will do it with pleasure' is more appropriate, in order to reflect the sense and the image of the dialect (see Table 4).

Again, the term 'وصلتوا' (weselto) is an Arabic verb derived from the root verb 'وصل' (wasal). This verb is similar to the previous verb 'ابشر, e'bsher' and it refers to the 'obligation' in English, which means "something that you must do with pleasure because it is morally right" as defined by the Merriam Webster Dictionary (2006). The subtitlers/translators did not impart the sense of the dialect into the TL, having translated it too literally as 'you have arrived'. The true translation has a far deeper meaning, conveying much more than someone was on a trip and he just arrived.

The real meaning of this term is that the Sheik sent them to ask something (a favor) from the eldest brother. Bear in mind,

that this term is widely used in Jordan, in both Bedouin and urban communities. Thus, since the subtitlers/translators were Jordanian they should have been aware of such a common phrase, but it seemed as if they used MSA to avoid making mistakes in their translation. Instead of the translation they used, 'you are welcome, will do it with pleasure' is more appropriate to reflect the real sense of the dialect (see Table 5).

The term (حرمته, horomtoh) is an Arabic verb derived from the root verb "حرَّم" (harama) and it refers to the 'women' in Arabic. In the English language, this term is equivalent to 'inviolable', which means 'secure from violation or profanation' as defined in the Meriam Webster Dictionary (2006). In Arab Bedouin culture, a wife or a woman is something very valuable, and it is totally prohibited to mention or to talk about. That is why when Theeb saw the picture of the English man's wife he asked who was

Table 4

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	وصلتوا
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	أهلا وسهلا
English translation (ET)	You have arrived
Transliteration	Weselto
Alternative translation (ALT)	You are welcome

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 16.31.

Table 5

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	حرمته
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	زوجته
English translation (ET)	his wife
Transliteration	Huromtoh
Alternative translation (ALT)	his wife

she? The eldest brother answered she was hishoromtoh (wife), meaning 'don't be rude and stop asking'.

As we have noticed from the spoken dialect in the movie, Arabs always limit their answers to Islamic values, culture, tradition, and habits. The subtitlers literally translated this term into TL as 'his wife', dealing with it as if it was in MSA. However, this kind of translation may be acceptable when the translators cannot find any equivalent for the term. On the other hand, I do believe that translators have to explain the real meaning of this Bedouin expression in order to clarify

the deep meaning of the expression for the reader. (see Table 6).

The elder brother was trying to protect Theeb from the English man when he said 'ايدك عليه' (la tmed edak a'laih), where Theeb was very curious to know what was in the English man's box. He used this dialectical term to warn the English man not to touch his brother. In their work, the subtitlers conveyed the term into English as 'don't you dare touch him'. They transferred the term to MSA and translated it into the TL. Actually, the phrase 'لا تمد ايدك عليه' (la tmed edak a'laih) represents protection in

Table 6

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	لا تمد أيدك عليه
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	لا تضربه
English translation (ET)	Don't you dare touch him
Transliteration	la tmed edak a'laih
Alternative translation (ALT)	keep your hands off him

the English language, and it means 'to stop holding or touching something' as defined in the Macmillan dictionary (Dictionary, 2007). Therefore, 'keep your hands off him' is a more appropriate equivalent, reflecting the same meaning as the original dialect.

RESULTS

The most frequent strategy for translation of dialectical expressions used by subtitlers in the movie "Theeb" was the strategy of standardization. By using this strategy, the producers and the translators transferred the spoken language in the film into the MSA and then they translated it into the TL in order to avoid translation errors. Generally, the original translation of the movie did not reflect the sense and the image of Bedouin dialect and Islamic culture, which was the core theme of the movie. The following Table 7 shows the statistical analysis of applied strategies.

It is noticed that out of the five strategies for the translation of dialect mentioned above. The only one used in the translation of this movie is strategy number five, which is standardization, with the other strategies being totally ignored. This is because (1) the

producers and subtitlers were not aware of the Jordanian dialect, (2) they were overly cautious against making translation errors, and (3) they do not find more appropriate equivalents for the dialectical terms used.

CONCLUSIONS

As the results show, the Jordanian producers and subtitlers generally prefer to transfer the dialectical expressions into MSA, and then translate into the TL. There is no doubt that this type of translation caused a loss of the sense of the dialect and real meanings of the Bedouin expressions used in the movie. Which was one of the main themes of the movie? The findings of this paper may be useful for translation classes, as well as any discussions concerning the translation of dialect. Additionally, it could also illustrate ways to enrich the translation of dialects with a view towards reproducing more precise equivalents of the original terms and phrases. Additionally, the findings of this paper may offer perspicacity to the translators in selecting translation strategies from those discussed above. It will also bring attention to the cultural differences between source languages and

Table 7

Statistical analysis of applied strategies of dialect translation in the movie "Theeb"

Strategies	Percentage
Number of dialectical expressions	6
Dialect compilation	0%
Pseudo-dialect translation	0%
Parallel dialect translation	0%
Dialect localization	0%
Standardization	100%

target languages. Finally, the researcher found that there is not enough research on audiovisual translation, especially in translating dialect, and therefore, hopes that this paper might be lead to further research.

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