

**The Difficulties that MA Students Face in Translating**

**Jokes from English to Arabic in Middle East**

**University & Petra University**

الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلاب الماجستير في ترجمة النكات من  
الإنجليزية إلى العربية في جامعتي الشرق الأوسط وجامعة البتراء

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master in English Language and Literature**

**Faculty of Arts and Sciences**

**Department of English Language and Literature**

**Middle East University**

**January, 2018**

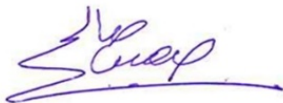
## Authorization

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## Thesis committee decision

This thesis titled "The Difficulties that MA Students Face in Translating Jokes from English to Arabic in Middle East University & Petra University" was successfully defended and approved on 14 / 01 / 2018.

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## **Acknowledgement**

My deepest gratitude is paid to my mentor and supervisor, Dr. Majed Abdulatif, for extending his knowledge and consideration during my journey of writing the thesis, and for offering his most gracious and kind guidance, which enabled me to achieve this work. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all the professors who humbled me with their endless help, advice and effort in answering all my questions and guiding me to the right path.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to the one and only, the one who has been always my role model, my Father, the translator, Mr. Rebhi Saleh.

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**The Difficulties that MA Students Face in Translating Jokes from  
English to Arabic in Middle East University & Petra University**

**Prepared By: Sohayb Rebhi Yousef Saleh**

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**Abstract**

This study aims at exploring the difficulties that MA students of two different universities face in translating jokes from English to Arabic. The researcher uses two instruments; the first one is a test, which includes 10 English and American jokes that deal with different political, racist, and social aspects. The second instrument is an interview with three professors in two different universities. The results of these two instruments lead the researcher to a fact that culture plays a big role in this regard. The cultural, religious, and social background affects the way MA students comprehend jokes. Cracking a joke in America or in Britain may bear many cultural and societal dimensions that make people respond to the joke and consider it funny. Hence, what sounds funny in a culture does not necessarily sound that funny in the other cultures.

Although American and English people are sharing the same language with almost zero language barriers, some American jokes are not understandable to English people and vice versa.

Thus, it is justified that MA students are confused in using the proper techniques & strategies in their translations.

**Keywords: Difficulties, Jokes, Students.**

الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلاب الماجستير في ترجمة النكات من الانجليزية للعربية

في جامعتي الشرق الأوسط وجامعة البتراء

اعداد: صهيب ربحي يوسف صالح

اشراف: الدكتور ماجد عبد اللطيف

### الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اكتشاف الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلاب الماجستير في ترجمة النكات من الانجليزية إلى العربية في جامعتي الشرق الأوسط وجامعة البتراء. استخدم الباحث أداتين ، الأول هو اختبار يتضمن عشرة من النكات الانجليزية والأمريكية تتعامل مع مختلف الجوانب السياسية والعنصرية والاجتماعية ، الأداة الثانية هي مقابلة مع ثلاث أساتذة (برتبة بروفيسور) في جامعتين مختلفتين، ومن شأن نتائج هاتين الأداتين أن تقود الباحث إلى حقيقة أن الثقافة تلعب دورا كبيرا في هذا الصدد.

إن الخلفية الثقافية والدينية والاجتماعية تؤثر على طريقة الطلاب في فهم النكات . إن قول نكتة في أمريكا أو بريطانيا قد يحمل العديد من الأبعاد الثقافية والمجتمعية التي تجعل الناس تتفاعل مع النكات وتعتبرها مضحكة . وبالتالي، ما يبدو مضحكا في ثقافة ليس بالضرورة أن يكون مضحكا في الثقافات الأخرى.

رغم أن الشعبين الانجليزي والأمريكي يتشاركون بنفس اللغة ، ورغم أنهم يتشاركون بنفس اللغة، ومع ذلك ، بعض النكات الانجليزية غير مفهومة في أمريكا والعكس.

وهذا يعني أنه من الطبيعي ما يواجهه طلاب الماجستير صعوبات في استخدام الإستراتيجية المناسبة في الترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصعوبات، النكات، الطلاب.

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1.0 Introduction**

A joke is something amusing that is said or done to make people laugh; jokes are part of our everyday life. People in different parts of the world make fun in different ways, however, this is mostly related to cultural and linguistic aspects of a particular language; they do not make the same kind of jokes.

There are also differences in the process, style, and in the content of jokes, whether jokes are clean or not; offensive or neuter or taboo related subjects. All differ from one culture to another, and this poses a lot of challenges for translators.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

According to House (1977), the most important task for translation "lies in maintaining the 'meaning' across two different languages".

Although, as technology creates cultural interactions between the world countries, translation is increasingly needed as a means of communication between people of different languages. Unfortunately, the relation

between translation and joking has not received sufficient interest on the part of scholars, especially in the jokes translatability question, and the way they travel across languages. (Mahdjoubi & Djafour, 2015)

Hertzler (1970) stated that each community has a different culture, and has its own set of conventions, principles, and rules of what is suitable and tolerable to make jokes about. What one finds humorous is related to social and cultural situations. Cultural values play a crucial role in shaping the target, content and style of joking that a society makes.

A challenging task for translators is dealing with jokes. Joke is closely connected to the language and culture in which it is produced. Hence, any attempt to translate a joke should take into consideration a range of linguistic and cultural factors. (Hockett, 1977)

In translating jokes from English to Arabic, a translator usually encounters some difficulties which are different from other types of translation. In other words, finding an equivalent translation that makes the joke comprehensible and humorous is very difficult due to the great differences between some languages and cultures, such as English and Arabic.

According to Vandaele (2002), the translation of jokes is subjectively unique in relation to "other types" of translation and, therefore, students

of translation can't study the translation of jokes in a similar manner of studying the different types of translation.

Translating Jokes requires a linguistic knowledge in the types of equivalence, especially those proposed by Nida (1964) i.e. the formal equivalence in which the translator focuses on the form and the content between the SL and the TL and the dynamic equivalence in which the translator gives an equivalent effect in the TL as it is in the source language. It also needs cultural knowledge of the similarities and differences between cultures, i.e. beliefs, ways of life, arts, traditions, conventions, values and food.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In translating jokes, translators come across some problems as a result of the big linguistic, stylistic and cultural gap between Arabic and English. Therefore, the researcher aims to explore the troubles that MA students when translating jokes from English to Arabic and the strategies they employ when translating them.

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to:

- 1- Explore the problems/difficulties that M.A students face when translating jokes from English to Arabic.

- 2- Trace the strategies they employ when translating jokes from English to Arabic.

## **1.4 Questions of the Study**

The present study aims to answer the following questions:

1. Is "translation of jokes" prominently unique in relation to any other type of content to translate & how does culture play a role in this regard?
2. What are the difficulties that M.A students face in translating jokes from English to Arabic?

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Studies that deal with translating jokes are relatively limited. This study is one of the few studies that have been conducted on translating jokes to the best of my knowledge.

Moreover, the study is important with regard to its benefits to MA students since it will expectedly draw a conclusion about their problems in translating jokes.

## **1.6 Limitation of the Study**

The findings of the study are limited to the academic year 2017/2018. The study is limited to the instruments which are implemented in the study, namely, a test and interviews. Additionally, the findings of this study are limited to its sample and cannot be generalized beyond the sample of the study.

## **1.7 Limits of the Study**

The study is conducted in Middle East University during the first semester of the academic year 2017/2018.

## **1.8 Definition of Terms**

**Translation:** Theoretically, it is "Rendering the meaning of a text (SL) into another language (TL) in the same way that the writer intended the text" (Gaber, 2005). Operationally, it refers to translating jokes from English into Arabic, maintaining the sense of humor.

**Joke:** Theoretically, it is "a short narrative with a punch line that is meant to generate mirthful laughter" (Propp, 1968). Operationally, it refers to the funny and amusing things told to make people laugh.

**M.A. Translation Students:** Students who are majoring in translation at Middle East University. Operationally, the targeted people in my thesis.

**Difficulties:** Difficulties that MA translation students could have when dealing with the translation of jokes from English to Arabic.

Operationally: The obstacles that make the process of translation harder.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher deals with the literature review related to translating jokes, as well as the difficulties which face translators in this kind of translation. The review of literature is divided into two sections; the first one deals with the theoretical literature, and the second deals with the empirical studies.

#### **2.1 Review of Theoretical Studies**

Since jokes are often associated with specific linguistic and cultural elements, communities differ in their joking process and style. There are many issues that should be examined in translating jokes, such as: translation susceptibility of jokes, the methods of transmission across languages and cultures, and the kind of difficulties faced. (Mahdjoubi & Djafour, 2015)

The translation of jokes has not received enough attention on the part of scholars in both translation and humor fields. (Vandaele, 2002)

### **2.1.1 Theoretical Studies Related to the Definition of Jokes**

According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, jokes are "something said or done to provoke laughter; especially: a brief oral narrative with a climactic humorous twist".

Ritchie (2004) defined joke as "a relatively short text which, for a given cultural group, is recognizable as having, as its primary purpose, the production of an amused reaction in its reader/hearer, and which is typically repeatable in wide range of contexts".

Wilson (1979) defined joke as "any stimulation that evokes amusement and that is experienced as being funny". He also states that a joke involves two incongruous, incompatible, or contradictory meanings which are combined in one entity.

### **2.1.2 Theoretical Studies Related to the Classification of Jokes**

According to Schmitz (2002), jokes are categorized into three types: universal joke, cultural joke, and linguistic joke.

Zabalbeascoa (1996) divided jokes into six types:

- 1- International Joke: The content of this type of joke is internationally known for audiences to understand and does not share features or references related to a specific culture.

- 2- National-Culture-and-Institutions Joke: It is related to cultural or institutional references.
- 3- National-Sense-of-Humor Joke: It is a joke used in particular country or nationality and basically contains bias and prejudice of one country over another specific country.
- 4- Language-Dependent Joke: It depends on features of specific language and is differently understood in different context.
- 5- Visual Joke: It depends on conveying information visually and the facial expressions of the actor.
- 6- Complex Joke: It contains some features of the above types.

### **2.1.3 Theoretical Studies Related to Translation of Jokes**

The audiences of SL and TL share cultural and linguistic differences which are factors create difficulties on translating jokes. Hence, the translation of jokes does not only depend on language but also on the culture. (Mahdjoubi & Djafour, 2015)

Translators encounter several problems in translating cultural jokes, such as; losing the humorous effect of the joke when it is literally translated, the difference of taboos varies from one culture to another. (Mahdjoubi & Djafour, 2015)

As-Safi (2012) explained that by employing the lexicalization strategy, English prepositions rather than being replaced literally by Arabic equivalent prepositions, they are lexicalized.

Verbruggen (2009) stresses that "not only does the translator have to translate the jokes in a sufficient way; she/he also needs to take into account the cultural background of the source language as well as the target language".

Joke translation is different from other types of translation; it focuses on the intended humorous effect. There is always a special cultural element which makes the joke untranslatable. (Vandaele, 2002)

Chesterman (1997) defined translation strategy as any well-established way of solving a translation problem. According to him, translator should differentiate between comprehension strategies and production strategies. Whereas the first is specialized in the process of understanding and analyzing the ST, the second is more concerned with the process of rendering it. He proclaimed that production strategies are formed of three main translation strategies, where each is divided into ten techniques. The three main strategies are syntactic strategies, semantic strategies and pragmatic strategies. Some syntactic techniques are literal translation, transposition, unit shift, and phrase structure change... etc.

Some semantic techniques are emphasis change, distribution change, paraphrase and synonymy...etc. Some pragmatic techniques which are more concerned with the translator choices of the used terms and information are cultural filtering, information change, explicitness change, partial translation as well as coherence change...etc.

Debra (1989) stated that "In order to translate the joke it would be necessary to have an idiomatic expression about humor which contains a word which rhymed with a word that means something about puns or language""p: 23".

Newmark (1988) comments on the difference between translation methods and translation procedures. He explains that, translation methods deal with the whole texts, while translation procedures are used for smaller parts of language and sentences. He verified the following methods of translation:

"Word-for-word translation: This is often demonstrated as interlinear translation. The SL word order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context".

"Literal translation: in which the SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents, but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context"p: 21".

According to Greenbaum, Leech, Quirk & Svartvik (1985), to lexicalize an idea, is "in lay terms, we now have a word for it." "p: 1526".

That is to say, to lexicalize a SL preposition is to have a lexical item, a satisfactory word, as an 'equivalent' or all the more precisely as a 'correspondent' in the TL. If Lexicalization is obligatory or optional, it transfers the meaning of an expression in a clear way.

Ellis (1965) considers training as an important issue to produce a positive transfer or a negative one. Expanding practice builds positive exchange, and with little practice, negative exchange happens.

"P:22" According to Nida (1964), old terms for instance, literal, free and faithful translation were taken away in favor of two essential sorts of equivalence: "1) Standard equivalence which resembles semantic translation of Newmark and 2) Dynamic equivalence which resembles the communicative translation. Nida explains that there are two types of equivalence to be applied to the prepositions which are standard equivalence which centers consideration around the similitude of form between the SL text and the TL text as well as on the content while dynamic equivalence is based on the equality of reaction".

## **2.2 Review of Empirical studies**

Alkadi (2010) conducted a study entitled: "Issues in the subtitling and Dubbing of English-Language films into Arabic problems and solutions".

The study discussed three types of jokes in the American sitcom jokes that rely on sexual references, jokes that rely on puns, and jokes that rely on cultural references. In the study, each instance of humor and its translation are analyzed, and then alternative translations are suggested based on Skopos theory. The study included an experiment, in which three episodes of *Friends* were re-subtitled based on Skopos theory. Then the re-subtitled episode and their official translation were shown to 10 subjects who were requested to compare the two translations. The aim of the experiment is to measure the effectiveness of the suggested translation approach. Alkadi (2010) argues that, based on the experiment, the functional approach, namely Skopos theory (11) has proved to be helpful in bridging the gap between the ST and TT. This was evident in the audience reaction and appreciation of humor in the subtitled three episodes.

Mahdjoubi, N. & Djafour, S. (2015) conducted a study entitled: "Translation of Jokes": The Possibility of Linguistic & Cultural Rendering. they found that jokes translation from English to Arabic and vice versa could be divided into three types; those challenging jokes that introduce a real challenge to the translator due to cultural and linguistic features that are very specific items in the source language that have no equivalence in the target language, the second type is those transferable

jokes that pose no problems and could be translated literally and still be meaningful and funny. The third type is replaceable joke that includes cultural and linguistic items that could be found similarly in the target language in a greater or lesser degree.

Kao & Wu (2014) conducted a study entitled "A Study on the Translation of Jokes: Bridget Jones's Diary as a Case in Point".

The study aimed at examining the Chinese translation and the translation techniques employed to translate the jokes in Bridget Jones's Diary. The findings of the study revealed that two translation approaches, "Source text joke has literal translation with no joke in target text" and "Source text joke becomes target text joke with literal translation" are preferably used by the translator. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the intended humor is not represented in the translation since the translator did not annotate particular cultural references or wordplay.

The study proposed three translation methods: (1) addition of words, (2) footnote (3) an original expression in parenthesis. Adding some words to provide extra information is advised to handle international jokes. When rendering national culture-and-institutions joke and national sense-of-humor joke, footnotes can be added for giving background information and knowledge about the humor in joke. Original expression in



parenthesis and footnotes can be adopted to help the target-text readers decode the wordplay in a joke and to understand the humor in it.

Mounassar (2015) conducted a study entitled: "Problems of translating some Culture-Specific Items from English into Arabic Facing English Students and their Solutions".

This study aimed at exploring the problems that face undergraduate students of English language when translating some culture-specific items from English into Arabic.

The study findings revealed that the students encounter different kinds of problems when translating culture specific items. These problems are mostly related to unfamiliarity with some of these culture-specific items, failure to achieve the equivalence in the Arabic language, ambiguity of some cultural items, lack of knowledge of translation techniques and translation strategies, and the incompetence of students in their mother tongue, i.e. The Arabic language.

Golvar (2009) examined the relationship connection between the type of the two gender of the translator and the gender of the evaluator of the translation of that translator. He tested a sample which consisted of 60 participants, 30 males and 30 females to achieve good results. The test comprised 20 questions about a chapter in a short story with three multiple choice answers. One related to a female translation and one of a

male translation and the third one was a wrong translation. The examined participants were requested to choose the appropriate translation that matches with their own translation if they were the translators. The results of the study revealed that there were no differences between the two genders' translation and attributed that to the easiness of the text used in the translation text.

Dweik & Suleiman (2013) explored the problems that Jordanian graduate students encounter when translating English culturally-bound expressions. Sixty M.A graduate students in three Jordanian universities were the sample of study. A translation test was given which comprised twenty statements of culture-bound expressions based on Newmark's classification of cultural terms for example, collocations, idioms and proverbs. The researcher also used interviews with experts in translation to have extra facts about problems, reasons and answers. The study discovered several kinds of translation problems such as: inability to give the right equivalence in the second language, and lack of knowledge of translation techniques and strategies and unfamiliarity with cultural expressions.

Purtinen (2003) conducted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) aiming at exploring the most probable ideological effects caused by translational solutions. The study's sample consisted of 32 students majoring in

translation. Conducting a translation test, the researcher examined the ideological aspect by tracing the linguistic choices the translators made. In other words, he studied the ideological manipulation from a linguistic perspective. According to him, ideology in translation may be used to achieve different purposes: firstly, it creates a particular perspective of the events portrayed. Secondly, it may reflect the writer's opinions and attitudes. Thirdly, it may be used to influence readers' opinions. Puurtinen illustrated that a translator may intentionally or unintentionally manipulate the text during the process of translation due to the insufficient language or lack of knowledge, or simply to follow his/her own attitude towards the ST subject. The conducted test was extracted from some English magazines, and the students were asked to translate these extracts. The results of the study showed that the ST manipulation was caused mainly by insufficient skills and knowledge rather than ideological motivation.

## **Chapter Three**

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

#### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter shows the method and procedures adopted in this study. The methodology begins with the sample, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments. It also provides data analysis and procedures used in this study.

#### **3.1 Population and Sample of the Study**

The population of the study consists of

1. Students who joined the M.A translation program in Middle East University & Petra University during the first semester of 2017/2018. Samples of 29 students were selected on grounds of convenience and on the basis of availability from both Universities.
2. Professors who are teaching English Language for the MA students in both University of Jordan and Petra University.

In relation to the sample of professors, the researcher has a sample that consists of four professors who teach MA students, two of them hold the Ph.D degree.

### **3.2 Instruments of the Study**

The test is the main instrument used by the researcher to collect the data. The test is designed to serve the purpose of the study. The test is a translation assessment test. It is administered by the researcher in order to trace the problems faced by MA students in translating jokes. The second sample is that of four professors, who are selected to participate in the interviews which aim is to obtain more information about problems, causes and strategies of translating jokes.

### **3.3 Validity and reliability of the Test**

The researcher presents the test to three specialists of translation affiliated to Jordanian universities so as to measure its validity.

In light of specialized professors' assessment, the researcher modifies the test, (See the appendix).

### **3.4 Procedures of the Study**

- 1- The related literature, both the theoretical and empirical, furnishes the researcher with additional information concerning the topic of the current study and supported him with specifying the importance of the research in comparison with other studies.
- 2- Developing the instruments of the study: the test and the interview.
- 3- The researcher identified the population and selected the samples on which instruments were applied.
- 4- Establishing the validity of the instrument.
- 5- Analyzing and interpreting data whose results are illustrated via charts and discussion.
- 6- Presenting these results.
- 7- Results are charted and illustrated with reference to some studies mentioned in the literature.
- 8- Drawing conclusions and providing recommendations.
- 9- All references are listed according to APA style.
- 10- Useful appendices are added at the end of the study.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

*Primary Resources:* which include the data collected from the study instruments; test and interview.

*Secondary Resources:* obtained from internet and libraries or published and non-published journals, such as theses and dissertations and published journals on the internet.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results of the Study**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides answers to the questions of the study which aims at highlighting the difficulties that MA students face, and the techniques used to deal with these difficulties.

The study attempts to answer the following two questions:

1. Is "translation of jokes" prominently unique in relation to any other type of content to translate & how does culture play a role in this regard?
2. What are the difficulties that M.A students face in translating jokes from English to Arabic?

#### **4.1 Results of the test**

To answer the first question of the study, the researcher prepares a test which includes 10 jokes; each joke has its different cultural, societal, religious and political dimension, the researcher asks the MA students to translate the jokes taking into account the cultural differences in the sense of humor.



Although the jokes in the test vary in their taste, the students know how to deal with them: somehow smoothly. It seems that the answers received from MA students for the first question of the study is yes, translation of joke is unique, as it has been the students are forced to use many techniques and strategies in translating the jokes of the test.

Translating jokes is prominently unique as it has been controversial among scholars since a long time.

In addition, culture plays a significant role in dealing with this kind of translation, since the sense of humor varies from one culture to another, and what sounds funny in the Jordanian's culture doesn't necessarily sound that funny in other cultures.

This leads to the fact that "translation of jokes" is really a controversial issue among scholars.

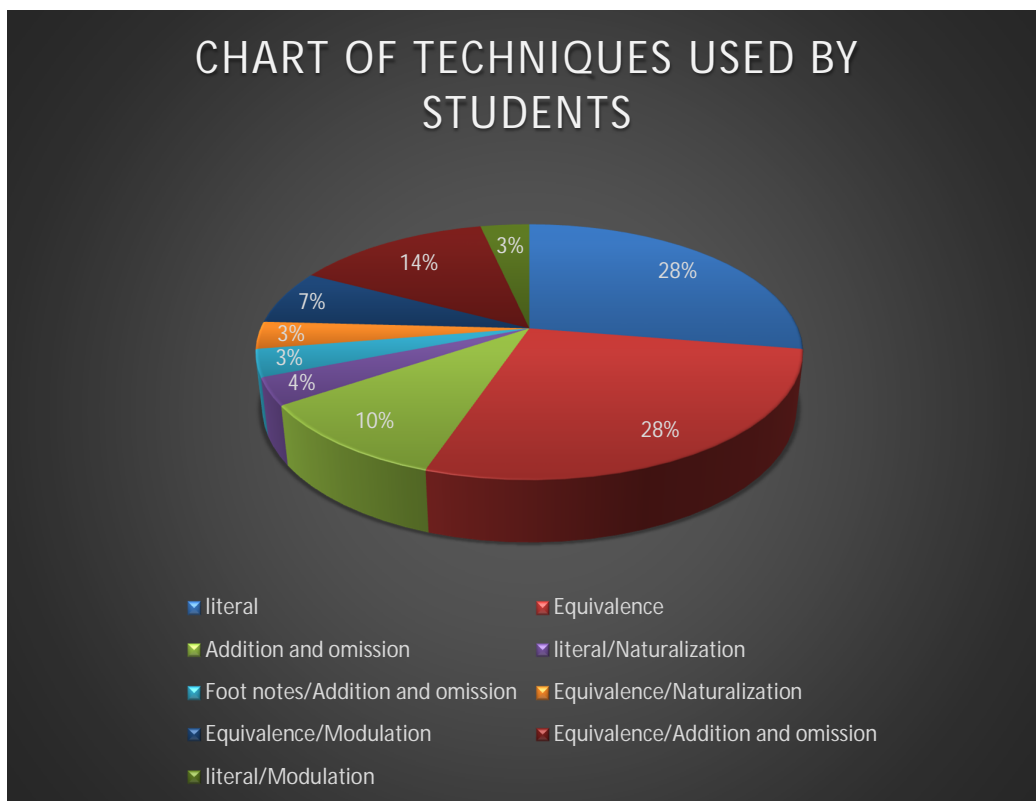
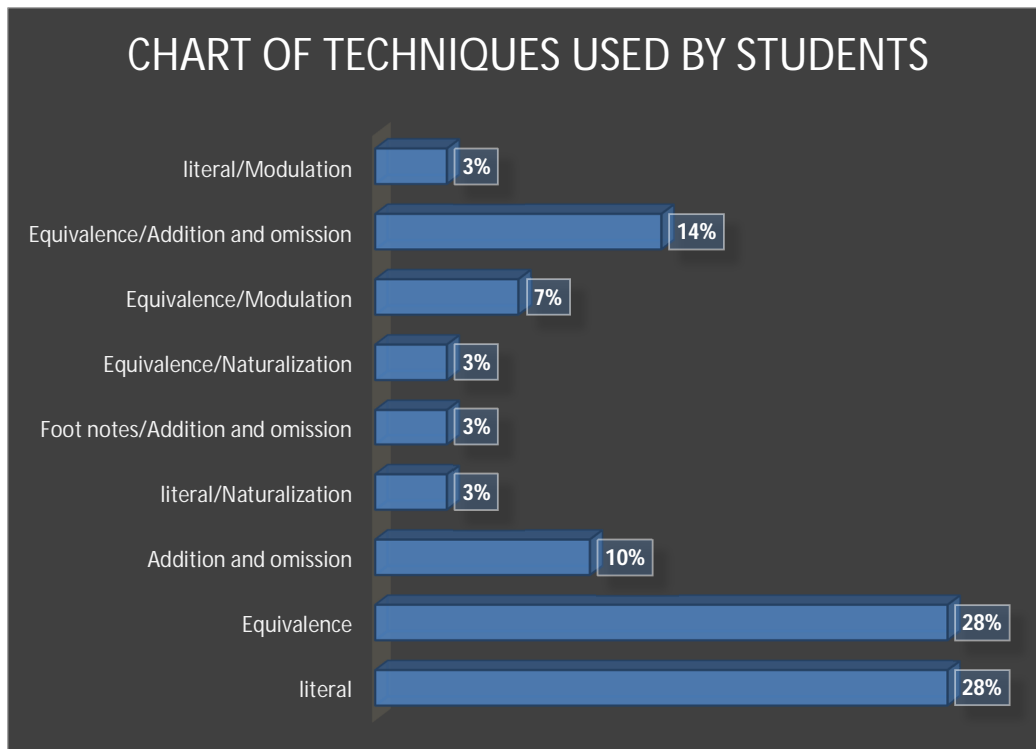
To answer the second question of the study, the difficulties that MA students face, are substantial due to the fact that MA students struggle for finding ways to keep the sense of humor of the joke alive therein.

The difficulties that MA students face are attributed under the decision to choose the right strategy and technique in translating jokes.

Since we live in a society which is somehow considered conservative, many restrictions would control our response to the joke.

Societal taboos, political issues, inside jokes and many other factors play a role in using the appropriate techniques to translate. In fact, they are considered the major part of the difficulties that students face.

## 4.2 Charts of the results of the test



### **4.3 Comments on the techniques used:**

#### **1. Literal:**

This technique actually was the most adopted technique by the MA students, as it hits a percentage of 28 % of the MA students examined.

Literal translation tends to keep the ST the way it is without any distortion.

Example of this usage is translating "mushroom" to "فطر",

Whereas the pun is considered a word play.

#### **2. Equivalence:**

This would be the second predominant technique used by the MA students, trying to find equivalent funny stuff based on the culture background. It's clear that students adopting this technique tended to use the colloquial language form.

This percentage represents also 28% of the total techniques used. For instance, "I don't want to see you when I come home"

is translated to "ما بدي أشوف خلقتك بالدار"

### **3. Equivalence / Addition & Omission (used together)**

The third most used couplet technique represents 14% of students.

Students who tend to use Addition & Omission technique, using equivalence on the top in order to convey the humorous message across.

In the presence of the taboos, "addition|& omission" technique is found acceptable , i.e. using "مشروب" instead of "whisky".

### **4 . Addition & Omission.**

This technique is ranked to be in the fourth place of usage with a percentage of 10% of students examined.

Students who tend to follow this technique are reflecting their own personality rather than being influenced by cultural factors. Some of them are more likely to make shortcuts rendering to twist the joke to sound amusing in short words; others were influenced by their poetic background.

The best example for this technique would be translating "My friend calls me up and asks "Are you free tonight",

I say "of course am American" is translated to

"الأمريكي يرى نفسه على رأس العالم الحر".

### **5. Equivalence / Modulation (used together):**

Modulation technique combined with Equivalence was remarkable with a 7% among students. A good example for modulation is translating

"Hey, are you free tonight" to

"هل تريد الخروج للسهر الليلة؟"

### **6. Literal / Naturalization (used together):**

This combination with a low percentage of 3% among students was noticed to be a strong combination.

A good example for Naturalization is translating "Mushroom" to

"مشروم"

### **7. Footnotes / Addition and Omission (used together):**

The percentage of this technique is lower than the researcher expectations.

People who use "Addition & Omission" are highly expected to use "footnotes" aside. This combination scored 3%.

The perfect example for this is when the students added footnotes to this joke: "What is the smallest room in a house" – Mashroom

The answer:

ما هي أصغر غرفة (room) في المنزل

Mush (room) الفطر

Foot notes = (تلاعب بالكلمات)

## 8. Equivalence / Naturalization (used together):

Sometimes, these two techniques emerge together, as equivalence is the most used one, naturalization comes to complete the meaning; this happened with 3% of the examined students.

Example: What is the smallest room in the house? -Mushroom,

is translated to :

شو أصغر غرفة في البيت .. ماش روم

## 9. Literal / Modulation (used together):

The last remarkable couplet is also ranked the same percentage of 3%.

For instance; translating "What does the elevator say about its job? It always gets me down." to

ماذا يقول المصعد عن عمله .. أحيانا يحبطني.

#### **4.4 Results of the Interviews:**

Confirming the results of the test, the researcher interviewed three lecturers, two of them are holding master degrees, while the other two hold Ph.D degrees. The researcher asked them two questions which are the questions of the study.

1. Is "translation of jokes" prominently unique in relation to any other type of content to translate & how does cultural difference play a role in this regard?
2. What are the difficulties that M.A students face in translating jokes from English to Arabic?

##### **4.4.1 Results of the Interview Related to First and Second Questions:**

The first interview was with Dr. Demaa Amarie. Ph.D. She believes that translating jokes is really prominent in relation to any other type of content. Dr. Amarie thinks that the attracted audience plays a big role in this regard. She also noted that extra explanations shouldn't accompany the joke. Regarding the difficulties that face MA students, she responded that a translator should cover the political, cultural and societal audience and the translator should maintain the essence of the joke as well.



The second interview was with Dr. Omar Atarie. He thinks that jokes are culturally-bound and jokes differ from one culture to another. He thinks that adding extra notes is a good way to clarify a translated joke.

Dr. Omar Atarie said that MA students should have enough training in the pragmatic and semiotic dimensions in order to be able to translate jokes from English to Arabic.

Dr. Hanan Al-jaberie was the third lecturer the researcher interviewed; she agrees that culture is an important element when translating jokes.

Concerning the difficulties, Dr. Hanan also said that cultural and political context of jokes may result in plain translations.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

In this chapter the researcher presents a brief discussion of the study question and attempts to explain the results. The chapter ends with conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

#### **5.1 Discussion Related to the Findings of Question One**

The researcher found that "translation of jokes" varies from any other type of translation, such as literary, political and formal contents.

Some other viewpoints would say that translation of jokes is a controversial field as they think that jokes are unique and somehow not translatable.

Cultural and societal differences influenced MA students the humorous alternatives, so to convey the essence of the joke and in order not to lose the essence of the joke.

Literal and equivalence techniques prevailed over other techniques, techniques needed for such kind of translation, which lead one to the conclusion that culture play a role in translation of jokes.

## **5.2 Discussion Related to the Findings of Question Two**

Difficulties encountered in translation of jokes may be not limited, cultural and societal background, but also would cover the personality of the translator influenced by his/her own thoughts.

Some examined students were more familiar with the American and English way of cracking jokes than others.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In this study, the researcher sheds the light on the humorous side of our daily conversation and how to deal with them in our translation, as well as, the techniques that would be employed in such a field.

Furthermore, the researcher finds out that the scholars have not paid enough attention toward this type of translations, and as such recourses covering this type of translation is rather scarce and seldom.

Although the test that was given to the MA students is a combination of political, societal, racist and play word ones, they were able to handle and convey the humorous message each in his particular way.

Despite the fact that the American and English people are sharing the same language with almost zero language barriers, some American jokes are not understandable to English people and vice versa.

Thus, it is justified that MA students are confused in using the proper technique in their translations.

When complications do arise, they are usually caused by one of two tricky areas: cultural references and wordplay. Culture-bound humor often presents a dilemma: you can either lose readers with a hidden allusion or you can burden the text with explanatory footnotes.

The researcher thinks that translating jokes takes a special hand that only an experienced translator can offer.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

1. Teachers of MA students in universities should endeavor to approach the English speaking people in order to comprehend the others' sense of humor.
2. It would be advisable to say that American and English TV comedian shows are rather helpful in such a matter.
3. MA students should communicate with English native speakers to help them master the language.
4. When you find yourself in a situation where you are asked to translate an impossible joke, the best thing to do is simply acknowledge the person is telling a funny statements. You may be able to relay the basic gist; “he is telling a joke about how bad he needs to go to the bathroom.”
5. MA students should have enough training in the pragmatic and semiotic dimensions of the language in order to be able to translate jokes from English to Arabic.
6. The translator who bears the responsibility of translating jokes has to take into account the attracted audience (TL audience) background, as to find a way to convey the essence of the joke.

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## Appendices

## Appendix (A)

## The "Translation of Jokes" Test

My name is Sohayb Saleh. I am a master degree student, and I'm conducting a thesis on "Difficulties that face M.A. students in translating jokes from English to Arabic at Middle East University.

Kindly translate the following jokes to Arabic taking into account the cultural differences in the sense of humor:

Joke no1:

I have the perfect son.

B: Does he smoke?

A: No, he doesn't.

B: Does he drink whiskey?

A: No, he doesn't.

B: Does he ever come home late?

A: No, he doesn't.

B: I guess you really do have the perfect son. How old is he?

A: He will be six months old next Wednesday.

[illegible]

Joke no. 2:

An Indian man wins 1 million dollars, then calls his wife "Honey, pack your stuff I won a million dollars", wife responds: "Honey, should I pack heavy or light clothes?", Husband: "Who cares, just pack and leave because i don't want to see you when I come home!"

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Joke no. 3:

Japanese joke: Why do Hawaiians never need to go to the dentist?  
 good teeth.

The pun here is that the Japanese word for good teeth sounds like (ha wa ii.)

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Joke no. 4:

Someone who speaks two languages is bilingual, and someone who speaks many languages is multilingual, then what do you call someone who speaks one language?  
 An American.

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Joke no. 5:

My friend calls me up and asks “Hey are you free tonight?”

And I say of course, I’m American

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Joke no. 6:

A: What is the smallest Room on a house?

B: Mushroom.

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Joke no. 7:

When a White guy is... Scared- He gets even whiter. Cold- He turns Blue. Angry-He turns Red. Sick- He turns Green.

When a Black guy is... Scared- He stays Black. Cold- He stays Black. Angry- He stays Black. Black Man to White Man: And you calling us colored.

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Joke no. 8:

Do not be racist, be like Mario. He's an Italian plumber, made by Japanese people, who speaks English, looks like a Mexican, jumps like a black man, and grabs coins like a Jew!

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Joke no. 9:

A survey was conducted by the UN. The only question asked was: "Give me your opinion about solutions to the food shortage in the rest of the world."

In Africa they didn't know what "food" meant.

In Europe they didn't know what "shortage" meant.

In Middle East they didn't know what "opinion" meant.

In the USA they didn't know what "the rest of the world" meant.

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Joke no. 10:

What does the elevator say about its job?

Sometimes it gets me down.

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THANK YOU

## Appendix (B)

### Interview Questions

My name is Sohayb Saleh, I am a Master Degree student, and I am doing a research on the topic "The difficulties that face M.A students in translating jokes from English to Arabic in Meddle East University & Petra University".

So, kindly answer the following questions:

Question no. 1:

Do you think that "translation of jokes" is prominently unique in relation to "other types" of translations?

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Question no. 2:

Do you think that jokes differ from one culture to another?

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Question no. 3:

Do you think that "adding extra notes" is a good way to clarify a translated joke?

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Question no. 4:

In your own opinion, what are the real difficulties that face M.A students in translating jokes form English to Arabic?

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THANK YOU

## Appendix (C)

### Interviewed Professors

<b>Name</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>
<b>Deema Ammarie</b>	<b>Ph.D</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Omar Atarie</b>	<b>Ph.D</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Hanan Aljaberie</b>	<b>Ph.D</b>	<b>8</b>

## Appendix (D)

### Validation Committee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Specialization</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
<b>Dr. Saleh Muqalalah</b>	<b>Linguistics</b>	<b>Al-Israa university</b>
<b>Dr. Basil Hussein</b>	<b>Linguistics</b>	<b>Al-Zaitonah University</b>
<b>Dr. Lutfi Abu Al- Haija</b>	<b>Linguistics</b>	<b>Al-Yarmouk University</b>

## Appendix (E)

### Charts Used

#### Chart no#1

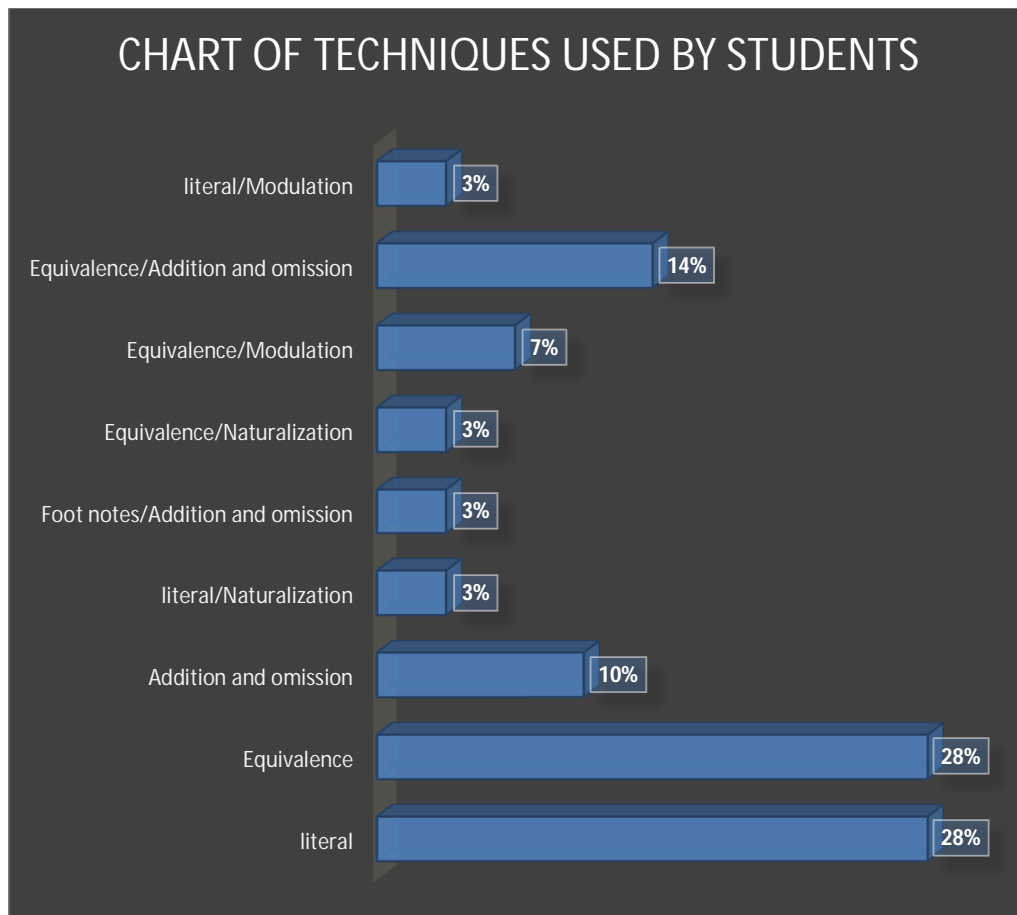




Chart no#2

