MAINTAINING CULTURAL IDENTITY: TRANSLATING RIFFIAN-AMAZIGH PROVERBS INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract

The present paper seeks to shed light on the cultural transfer of Riffian-Amazigh (RA) proverbs to English as a translational process foregrounding different aspects of Riffian-Amazigh cultural identity. Certainly, oral culture is the ideal environment where proverbs are born. In addition to denoting cultural signs of oral tradition, proverbs also trace back the cultural history of a nation. These oral expressions are the outcome of different events throughout the history of nations. Bearing in mind the huge cultural and cross-cultural specificities such as traditions, customs, idioms, modes of address, etc., a translator of these cultural expressions often comes across proverbs that include proper names and refer to historical, religious, cultural, social, etc. events which gave birth to this type of popular expression. The translator's task, then, lies in identifying the RA cultural elements and trying as much as they can to transfer them into the target language (TL) without having to lose the spirit of the source language (SL) proverb. Cultural literacy in the TL is of paramount importance for the translator: they need to know about the cultural intricacies and peculiarities of the TL since subtle aspects of culture may play a key role in understanding

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the gist of the proverb. Finally, the study is based on a mixed methodological approach to data analysis, i.e. quantitative and qualitative methods.

Keywords: Riffian-Amazigh, English, source language, target language, cultural translation, strategies.

Resumo

O presente artigo procura lançar luz sobre a transferência cultural dos provérbios Riffian-Amazigh (RA) para o inglês como um processo de tradução que coloca em primeiro plano diferentes aspetos da identidade cultural Riffian-Amazigh. A cultura oral é certamente o ambiente ideal onde surgem provérbios. Para além de denotarem sinais culturais de tradição oral, os provérbios também traçam a história cultural de uma nação. Estas expressões orais são o resultado de diferentes acontecimentos ao longo da história de nações. Tendo em conta as enormes especificidades culturais e transculturais, tais como tradições, costumes, expressões idiomáticas, modos de tratamento, etc., um tradutor destas expressões culturais depara-se muitas vezes com provérbios que incluem nomes próprios e se referem a acontecimentos históricos, religiosos, culturais, sociais, etc., que deram origem a este tipo de expressão popular. A tarefa do tradutor consiste, portanto, em identificar os elementos culturais de RA e tentar, tanto quanto possível, transferi-los para a língua de chegada (LC), sem perder o espírito do provérbio na língua de origem (LO). A literacia cultural na LC é de extrema importância para o tradutor: este precisa de conhecer as complexidades e peculiaridades culturais da LC, uma vez que aspetos subtis da cultura podem desempenhar um papel fundamental na compreensão da essência do provérbio. Por último, o estudo baseia-se numa abordagem metodológica mista para a análise de dados, ou seja, métodos quantitativos e qualitativos.

Palavras-chave: Riffian-Amazigh, inglês, língua de origem, língua de chegada, tradução cultural, estratégias.

1. Introduction

Translation is a means of cross-cultural communication between people belonging to different communities. It enhances cultural exchange, bridges cultural gaps, and promotes cultural awareness and understanding. Hence, the translator's role as an interlingual and cross-cultural mediator is of paramount importance. Thus, an adequate translation goes beyond the linguistic elements and seeks to transfer into the TL, as much as it can, cultural specificities being displayed in the ST. The move from translation as text to translation as culture is what Mary Snell Hornby (1990) names 'the cultural turn', as a metaphor for this cultural move. In short, language and culture are inseparable, a fact that the translator should bear in mind. The "cultural turn" represents a central shift in translation studies. It is a move from emphasizing the textual perspective in translation to highlighting the key role culture plays while translating. Translation is not a matter of replacing words of the source language by others in the target language, but it involves negotiating the meanings embedded in SL to successfully transfer them into the TL. Hence, being aware of the different cultural connotations and values subsumed in the source text is a prerequisite for the cultural mediator, i.e., translator.

Proverbs also display creatively aesthetic language use and they are often heavily loaded with cultural content, ranging from customs, values, traditions, religion, to lifestyle, etc. That is, translation loss frequently occurs when the translator confronts cases of cultural transfer. In this context, Nida and Taber (1982) refer to the fact that "differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure". Therefore, a translator's task is quite demanding since they have to faithfully transmit and

preserve the cultural values and aspects of the ST and manage to produce an aesthetically beautiful text that appeals to the TR. For this, translators are called 'couriers of culture' as they deal not only with words but also with culture (Landers, 2001, pp.72-74). Hermans (2004) stresses the fact that translators have to identify culture specific elements in a text, decide what needs to be translated, what techniques and procedures to apply, and what effects these techniques are supposed to produce on the TR. With such challenges in mind and other complexities confronted while trying to transfer such fixed expressions, what are the most frequent strategies used to achieve a successful transfer between the two languages in question?

2. Problem statement

2.1. Riffian-Amazigh

Riffian-Amazigh (also called *Tarifit*, *Tarifiyt Berber*, *Riffian* or *Rif Berber*) is the name of a large group of dialects (Lafkioui 2007) spoken in the Northeastern part of Morocco (Rif region). Its current number of speakers is unknown, as there are no published census data for native language use in Morocco, but population statistics of the provinces which are mainly Tarifiyt-speaking, Alhoceima and Nador, suggest it has between one million and a million and a half speakers (Maarten Kossmann, 2013). The Berber family is a separate branch of the Afroasiatic language family, also known as Hamito-Semitic (Maarten Kossmann, 2009).

2.1.1. Cultural dissimilarity between RA and English

RA as an Amazigh variant spoken in the North of Morocco (Rif Region) and English are structurally, phonologically and semantically different. In addition to the fact that they do not belong to the same language family, the two languages are anchored to basically different cultures. Hence, the translator as a cultural mediator between these two languages

should, in addition to possessing the required linguistic competence, be aware of other non-linguistic factors such as intercultural nuances and their significance for translation. To transfer all this cultural richness into English, and to preserve the aesthetic and literary exquisiteness of the proverbs is a doubly challenging task. Newmark (1988, p.103) refers to the same idea by arguing that, "frequently where there is a cultural focus, there is a translation problem due to the cultural gap or distance between the source and TLs".

3. Research questions

The present paper will seek to find some accurate answers to the following questions:

a. What are the different Moroccan-Riffian cultural and social aspects embedded in the proverbs in question?

b. What strategies, procedures and techniques opted for in order to achieve an effective cultural transfer?

c. To what extent are the culture-specific proverbs translatable?

d. How are the various intercultural challenges involved in proverbs addressed?

4. Literature review

4.1. Cultural aspect of translation

Gideon Toury (as cited in Venuti 2000, p.200) defines translation as follows, "Translation is an activity which inevitably involves two languages and two cultures". It is quite clear then that if the translator wants to come up with an adequate translation, they should be not only bilingual but bicultural as well. They ought to know the language of the author

they translate to perfection and they should achieve excellent command of the TL in addition to being aware of the cultural aspects implicit in the SL which they are expected to render successfully into the receptor language. In light of this, Lotman (as cited in Bassnet, 2005, p.23) summarizes the interrelationship between language and culture, "no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language". He stresses the inextricable relationship between language and culture. That is language reflects culture and it is the vehicle that transfers the values and the meanings embedded with a given culture.

In a like manner, Julian House (2015, p.4) stresses the interplay between language and culture by claiming that "in the process of translation, not only two languages, but also two cultures come into contact. In this sense, then, translation is a form of intercultural communication". She believes that translation is not a question of rendering words from one language to another, but it implies an interaction between the cultures (cultural expressions, idioms, figurative language etc) associated with the languages involved in the translation process. It follows that translating stretches of the SL into the TL is not only a matter of linguistics but of cultural considerations as well. Therefore, Lefevere (Ed, 2003, p.9) states that "Scholars interested in the study of translation and cross-cultural communication are beginning to realize that the study of translation is much more than mere normative rule-giving designed to ensure the production of the "best" possible translations". Said otherwise, translation is much more than abiding by the grammatical rules and linguistics norms of the target language. The translator should be aware of the cultural, social and ideological factors that may influence the translation choices.

4.2. The translatorial action from Riffian to foreign languages

In fact, the translation of Riffian literary works into foreign languages remains quite uncommon. Most of the attempts that have been carried out in this regard are limited to translating such products into Arabic. In this regard, I can mention the translation of Sifaw

Lhanis of the novel "*Aẓẓəmmaḏ i Yiləl*" (Beyond the Sea) for instance. As to translating to foreign, colonial languages in particular, I can refer to Mohammed Serhoual who translated the poetry collection of Abdellah El Manchouri "*Gguẓẓəɣ ar Uẓẓənna*" (Leaving for the Sky) into French. The diaspora poet Ahmed Essadqi translated his poetry collection "*Rəɛyaṯ n Ṯmurṯ*" (the Play of the Ground) into Dutch. Karima Bouallal translated and analyzed a collection of Riffian riddles in Spanish "*Adivinanzas Populares Rifeñas*" (Popular Riffian Riddles).

Concerning the translation of proverbs, I can refer to Mohamed Mira who translated proverbs into Arabic in his book "الأمثال الشعبية في الريف" (Proverbs in Rif, edition 1 and 2 in 2009, 2014 respectively). Similarly, Hassan El Moussaoui also translated a set of Rifi proverbs into Arabic, "Riffian Proverbs". Driss Azdoud (2012) translated two hundred and twenty-five Riffian proverbs into Arabic. Further, David Hart in his book *The Aith Wayagher of the Moroccan Rif* translated twenty proverbs into English as a part of his ethnographic and anthropological study of this tribe in the North of Morocco. As to translating the cultural expressions into French, reference should be made to Bouylmani 1993, Hamdaoui 2004 and Moudian 2004.

To conclude, translating Rifi literature is still in inception due to many factors. Afterall, publishing in RA language and culture is insufficient due to lack of institutional support and high publishing costs. In this context, Daniela Merolla (2020, p.39) confirms that, "publication is limited, as the works are often self-published or scattered in small periodicals". She also believes that because of "the colonial and postcolonial school policy, it is not surprising that a large proportion of Amazigh/ Berber speaking authors wrote in other languages until about the 1990s". First and foremost, Riffian writers need to initially write and publish in their own mother tongue, then translation can occur afterwards. Tarifit dialects and standardization is another issue that needs reconsideration.

5. Translation strategies

Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) are considered to be the first scholars to develop a taxonomy of translation strategies. They divided these strategies into two main categories: methods of direct or literal translation and methods of oblique translation. Methods of direct or literal translation include borrowing, calque and literal translation, whereas methods of oblique translation involve transposition, modulation, adaptation and equivalence. Besides, J.C. Catford (1965) believes that certain changes or shifts occur while translating. Further, Peter Newmark (1988), following the classification by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), draws a distinction between translation methods and translation procedures.

Moreover, Mona Baker (2011) claims that there are some misleading fixed expressions in all world languages. She suggested the following translation strategies to deal with fixed expressions: a) using a fixed expression of similar meaning, b) using a fixed expression of similar meaning but dissimilar form, c) borrowing the SL expression, d) translation by paraphrase, e) translation by omission, f) translation by compensation.

Chesterman (2016, p.90) makes a distinction between comprehension strategies and production strategies. The former refer the inferencing strategies which help to understand the ST, whereas production refer to "how the translator manipulates the linguistic material in order to produce an appropriate target text". He dealt with in detail with production strategies which he divided into syntactic/ grammatical, semantic and pragmatic strategies.

5.1. Foreignization vs Domestication

5.1.1. Definition

"Foreignization and Domestication" are translation strategies originating with Schleiermacher but popularized in 1990 by Lawrence Venuti. Schleiermacher (as cited in Rubel & Rosman, 2003, p.7) thought that "a translation could move in either of two directions: either the author is brought to the language of the reader or the reader is carried to the language of the author". According to him, domesticating a text means that the translator "leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author toward him" (Schleiermacher, as cited in Venuti, 1995, p.84). On the other hand, foreignizing is retaining the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text and 'sending the reader abroad'.

5.2. Interepistemic Translation

Interepistemic translation, as proposed by Douglas Robinson (2017) and Karen Bennett (2024), among others, sheds light on a new approach to translation. It claims that translation should go beyond language and culture and deal with what is known as epistemic systems, i.e. how people of a given community make sense of the world. In this regard, Robinson (2017, p.200) states, "we might want to expand Jakobson's framework by naming the sort of translation at work in TM *interepistemic translation:* translation from one "epistemic system" (George A. Miller, quoted in Gazzaniga 2015, 376) to another".

In the light of translating proverbs, interepistemic translation suggests that proverbs may not only reflect cultural differences but also different ways of understanding the world, or different epistemic systems. By translating proverbs, translators are not just transferring words from one language to another; they are also translating the underlying epistemic systems that the proverbs represent.

6. Methodology

As a matter of fact, the area of research of the present study falls within translating as well as writing commentaries on my own translation process. This process-based study is one of the areas of research in Translation Studies introduced by Williams and Chesterman

2002 in their book *The Map*. In principle, I would be discussing my translation choices and reasonably account for the solutions I come up with to successfully cope with the translation problems I encountered while translating Rifian-Amazigh proverbs into English. Thus, a collection of twenty-eight proverbs are the focus of this study which is based on a l quantitative method. Concerning data collection, secondary data is used: Bouylmani (1993), Hamdaoui (2004), Moudian (2004), Azdoud (2012) and Mira (2009), (2014). It is worth noting that these books have dealt with the translation of RA proverb either into French or Arabic, but not English. Besides, I personally collect and compile my own data as a native speaker of RA. On this basis, I have to translate the proverbs myself as there are no existing English translations of the proverbs on which I can base my study.

Concerning the translations, they are validated by my supervisor Ahmadou Bouylmani, a Professor of Linguistics and Translation at the English Department and a native speaker of Riffian-Amazigh. I also have a second reader from USA Niko Doezema who currently lives in Morocco to check elements like accuracy, fluency, equivalence, cultural appropriateness to enhance cross-cultural understanding.

7. Analytical part

7.1. Translation and analysis

Proverbs will be presented, translated and studied on the basis of topic-based classification and the format of data analysis will be as follows:

a) proverb transcription (phonetic and morphological)

b) word-for-word translation

c) literary translation

d) comment on the meaning of the proverb

e) comment on the translation strategy adopted for translating the proverb.

Step (a) can help non-native readers identify the roots, prefixes and suffixes of the word in question and this will ultimately help readers understand the word as a whole. The step shows how words are combined and inflected. Step (b) helps readers to understand the literal meanings of the words composing the proverb. Step (c) aids readers go beyond the literal meaning and capture the figurative meaning and the intended message of the proverb. Step (d) offers readers insights into the cultural, social and historical contexts. Step (e) refers to the translation strategies adopted and how these choices maintain the spirit of the proverb and help readers understand the proverb.

The main focus is on the translation of RA proverbs and the strategies implemented in the process; however, equivalents of the proverbs under study are given in English if there exist any to help the English readers understand the meaning better. Also, the cultural and contextual allusions are explicated when necessary to help the TR to understand the content of the original proverb in step (d). Concerning the untranslatable items, detailed explanations are provided in footnotes as they help to get additional information about the original proverb. Nida (1964) favours the use of footnotes as fulfilling at least two functions: to provide supplementary information and to call attention to the original's discrepancies.

7.1.1. Dignity

1

a) afḏir ḏ i-ṣəfḏ-awən wara ttriḏ ḏ i-məṭṭa-wən[4].

b) pancakes/ and/ embers/ rather-than/ ttrid/ and/ tears.

c) Pancakes and embers are better than ttrid and tears.

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[4] *ttrid* is a dish composed of a kind of salted pancakes, cut into small pieces, mixed with chicken and sprinkled with its sauce. This dish is offered in certain religious ceremonies such as Achoura and Prophet's birthday and is also offered for a new mother.

d) This proverb means that living with dignity and in peace, even with limited resources, is preferable to being rich but facing significant challenges. On this basis, English is replete with tropes, quotes and proverbs that prioritize dignity over wealth like "it is better to live on your feet than die on your knees", "die standing than live in servitude and slavery", "dignity does not consist in a silk dress", to mention but a few.

e) The proverb is translated literally. The word "ttrid" (or "Rfissa" in MA) refers to a traditional Moroccan dish and, hence, has no equivalent in the culture of the TL. Therefore, the culture-bound word is borrowed in its original form and incorporated into the TL without translation but with explanation.

2

a) aman ugərmam ura aɣi n ššmayṱ.

b) water/ of-the-pond/ rather-than/ the-butter-milk/ of/ the- immoral-people.

c) Better the water of the pond than the buttermilk of dishonorable people.

d) The proverb pinpoints that it is better to live poor and be satisfied with the little you have than to ask rude people for help and, thus, expose yourself to their humiliation. In English, they say "better poor with honor than rich with shame".

e) The proverb is literally translated. The words composing the original proverb are lexicalized in the TL except for the word "ššmayṱ" (a superordinate) which has got a general meaning. In addition to referring to "cowards", the other possible meanings include, but not limited to, "the villain", "the unreliable", "the irresponsible" etc. So, though a lexical equivalent (cowards) is found for ššmayṱ, yet there is still some semantic distortion.

3

a) ṱayarza x yiṱan wara zzɛəf yɣyar.

b) plowing/ on/ dogs/ better-than/ the-humiliation/ of-donkeys

c) Better to plough using dogs than to get humiliated by donkeys.

d) This proverb is used to deny help from a rude person.

e) The proverb is literally translated in conformity with the structural constraints of the TL. This translation involves grammatical transposition. The noun "ṯayarza" (the act of ploughing) is rendered as a verb "to plough" (infinitive with 'to') and the noun "zzɛəʕ" is rendered into an English construction "get humiliated" (get + past participle).

4

a) ṯayarza s isəgni wara ṯa-xəmmas-t ɣa wiḏi[5].

b) plowing/ with/ a-large-eyed needle, a chenille needle/ rather than / cultivating-land-for-a-share-of-its-yield/ at/ a-dog

c) Better to plough using a chenille needle than to be a servant to an indecent person

d) This proverb is used to deny help from people who might belittle and humiliate you.

e) This translation involves grammatical transposition: a change of the grammatical category of the gerund "ṯayarza" (the act of plowing) that functions as a noun in the SL into a verb with infinitive "to plough". Translation by expansion or addition: the adjective "large" is added as the SL language "isəgni" (a large needle) is not lexicalized in the TL. There is also translation by paraphrase using related words, "isəgni" is transferred as "a large needle", "ṯa-xəmmas-ṯ" as "a servant to" and "wiḏi" as "an indecent person".

7.1.2. Evidence

5

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[5] *Khammâs* (خماس in Arabic) : someone who receives only the quint of gross production for the price of his labour.

a) wa(ṛ) i-tišš ḥəd aɣanža ynə-s nha n rɛiḏ? [6].

b) not/ he-give/ nobody/ ladle/ of-his/ the-day/ of/ Eid.

c) Nobody lends their ladle on Eid day.

d) The proverb means that one should choose the right time to ask someone for something. During Eid celebration, everyone needs their ladle. It is never the right time to ask someone to lend it to you because you will certainly get a negative response to your request

e) This translation involves borrowing accompanied with explanation. The culture-specific term "Rɛiḏ" is accommodated and rendered as "Eid festival" in the TL.

6

a) am qaddur am ɛmar, mara sasḅu i-ɛəmmar[7]

b) like/ Qaddur/ like/ Amar/ if/ the-gun-stock /it-is-full.

c) Like Amar like Qaddur if the gun is full.

d) The proverb means that when one has got a weapon, they become dangerous. What counts here is the danger generated by the weapon. If we take the example of social networks, we can notice how much damage people cause to each other since such virtual spaces allow freedom to write and express oneself. For instance, one is physically weaker, yet they can do as much harm as a strong person.

e) The proverb is translated literally and there is complete replication of the pattern of original proverb in the TL. The traditional names Amar and Qaddur are retained (transliterated) since they are specific to RA culture.

7.1.3. Marriage and divorce

7

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[6] *Rɛiḏ Aməqran* (Eid-ul-Adha in Arabic) is a major celebration in the Muslim world. It is usually characterized by the sacrificing of a sheep in memory of the ransom of Ismail with a ram.
[7] *Qaddur* is a traditional proper name in Riffian and Ɛmar is the Riffian version for the proper name Omar.

a) ura n ḅuqəyyuɛ, i-tət nniṯ i-sriwriw nniṯ[8]

b) the-wedding / of/ Bouqayyouɛ / he-eats/ by-himself/ he-ululates/ by-himself.

c) It's Bouqayyuɛ's wedding party. He both eats and ululates by himself.

d) This proverb is often used to criticize someone for holding a ceremony with family but without inviting friends and neighbours. This goes counter to the Riffian traditions.

e) The proverb is literally translated, and the proverb terms are lexicalized in the TL. The proper noun "Bouqəyyuɛ" is kept intact in translation because it is culture bound (transliterated with explanation). Concerning the culture-specific vocal sound 'isriwriw' (a loud rhythmical sound uttered as an expression of joy or grief) is rendered as ululate in the TL. In so doing, the true meaning is sacrificed (semantic distortion), for the verb "ululate" is defined as 'owl or wail with grief' and this sounds different from how the term is defined and used in the RA community.

8

a) am ṯanni y-wyən awəssa am ṯanni y-wyən aḅriḏ ɣa rɛaṣa[9]

b) like/ she/ who-got-married-to/ an-old-man/ like/ she-who/ took/ road/ in/ the-afternoon

c) A woman who is married to an old man is like a woman who started her journey late in the afternoon.

d) The proverb means that certain activities or events should be held in due time. Otherwise, you will be out of time. For example, a woman getting married to an old man will soon be a widow since her spouse is already older, whereas a woman who waits till afternoon comes to travel will get nowhere.

e) The proverb is translated literally by retaining the form, the style and the lexicon of the original proverb. The SL words are lexicalized in the TL.

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[8] Bouqayyouɛ is a traditional proper name for males in Riffian culture.

[9] Rɛaṣa -Asr عصر in Arabic- is a prayer time (afternoon) for Muslim community.

7.1.4. Joy and happiness

9

a) am uɣambuḅ i-šši-n ṯ-afḏi-ṯ am uɣambuḅ i-swi-n ṯaḥriṯ

b) like/ the-face/ that-ate/ pancake/ like/ the-face/ that-drank/ soup

c) A person who eats pancake is like a person who drinks soup.

d) The proverb means that one's appearance does not change regardless of what they are eating or drinking.

e) The proverb is literally translated, and the word order of the TL is respected. The parallelism exhibited in the original proverb is retained in the TL. There is translation by a general word "person" to transfer the word "aɣambuḅ" (face). Hence, what matters most are physical, psychological and mental status like health, happiness and peace of mind.

7.1.5. Politics

10

a) amžar ḏ w-ənni, ḅəddr-ən-as ṯ-fus-t waha.

b) the-sickle / is/ the-same / changed-they -it/ the-handle/ only.

c) A change of the sickle's handle is made but unremoved remains the blade.

d) The proverb is quoted to show that the current situation remains the same and the living conditions, be them social or economic, are not improving since no strict measures are taken. Its origins date back to the distant past, but it became more popular in the 1980s due to a wise man in the Rif region named "*Ɛəddanḅi N Ssuq*" (Addenbi of the Market. He was called so because he used to visit the Riffian weekly markets and kept wandering there). He was known for his wisdom among the Riffian tribes, particularly Aith Ouayagher. Although people considered him to be a madman, when

he spoke, his words were filled with pearls of wisdom. Among many other proverbs, he used to reiterate the proverb above whenever the context seemed appropriate.

e) This translation involves modulation and grammatical transposition. Concerning modulation, there is shift from active "ḅəddrən-as ṯfusṯ" (they changed it handle) to "a change of the handle is made" and there is also a shift from affirmative "ḅəddrən-as" (they changed it) into "unremoved" (not removed). As for transposition, there is a change of the grammatical category of the verb "they changed" (ḅəddrən-as) into a noun "a change". There is also translation by omission: "waha" (only) is omitted in the TL and translation by expansion or addition: "but" is added to highlight the idea that no real change has taken place.

7.1.6. Deception and scam

11

a) i-təgg rxiʳ s uɣrum m-midən

b) he-does/ good / by/ the-bread/ of/ others

c) It is easy to be generous with someone else's bread.

d) In Riffian culture, 'bread' holds a revered position as a cultural symbol, much like in many other cultures around the world, especially in Mediterranean nations. The proverb refers to individuals who use the possessions and resources of others to enhance their own image and appear generous to those around them. It is a false altruism.

e) The proverb is translated by paraphrase using related words such as 'rxi' (generous), 'aɣrum' (bread) and, finally, 'midn' (others). There is translation by addition: dummy-subject "it" which is frequently used in English to function as a subject of the sentence.

7.1.7. Dependence

12

a) i-tšar x lmaɛṛuf n siḏi šɛayḅ[10]

b) he-relies/ on/ prayer/ of/ Siḏi-Šɛayḅ.

c) He counts on the favour of Siḏi Šɛayḅ.

d) The proverb is quoted to refer to an idle and lazy person who does not take any initiative to improve his situation.

e) The proverb is translated literally via retaining the form, the style and the diction of the original language. Subject-verb-object is respected. As for vocabulary, the marabout siḏi šɛayḅ is a culturally specific concept and, therefore, has no translation equivalent in the TL. The word is transferred verbatim to the TL with detailed explanation in the footnote.

7.1.8. Tricks and lies

13

a) žəḥḥa zi y-ufa yən ɣa yə-ndr-ən yəmma-s, y-snuffar-asən arizim[11]

b) Jəḥḥa / though/ he-found/ them/ will/ bury/ mother-his/ he-hid-them/ the-pickaxe

c) Despite finding volunteers to bury his mother, Jəḥḥa hid their pickaxes

d) The proverb is quoted when someone is offered help but because of ignorance and naivety they lose the chance of being helped. The character, *Jəḥḥa*, in Moroccan culture in general and Riffian local culture in particular symbolizes tricks and epitomizes deceit. In this way, it is not strange of him to hide things like the digging tool since it is part

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[10] *Siḏi Šɛayḅ U Nftaḥ* was a former singer from the Temsamane tribe in North-Eastern Morocco (Nador) who is believed to fulfill certain wishes.

[11] *Jəḥḥa* (Juḥa جحا in Arabic) is a typical character found in Amazigh oral culture like proverbs, riddles, stories etc. Moreover, it is also a proper name given to a male person..

of his character. Jəḥḥa's action is, in all probability, a product of his cunning. Therefore, he is called "Jəḥḥa ḏ aḥraymi", that is, *Jəḥḥa* is deceitful.

e) This translation involves partial grammatical transposition. There is shift from future simple "ɣa yndrən" (will bury) to infinitive with 'to' "to bury". The translation also involves cultural borrowing with further explanatory material as is the case with the word 'Jəḥḥa' (transliterated).

7.1.9. Usurpation

14

a) mayəmi šək yə-zɛaf wiḏi a ɛri[12]

b) Why/ did/ bite-you/ the-dog/ Oh/ ɛri?

c) Why did the dog bite you Ali?

d) This proverb is used when someone asks stupid questions.

e) The proverb is literally translated by retaining the form and the diction of the original proverb. The proper name ɛri of the original proverb is incorporated into the TL and left intact.

7.1.10. Religion

15

a) mimuna ṭə-ssən rabbi, rabbi i-ssən mimuna[13].

b) Mimouna/ she-knows/ God/ God/ knows/ Mimouna

c) Mimouna believes in God and God knows that Mimouna doesn't know Qur'an

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[12] *ɛri* is the Riffian version for the proper name Ali.

[13] Once upon a time, there was a woman called Mimouna. She was illiterate and did not know Qur'an, which is why she prayed by saying: *Mimouna knows God and God knows Mimouna.* That is to say, Mimouna believes in God and God knows that Mimouna does not know Qur'an.

d) This about faith and honesty. Mimouna went to paradise despite the fact that she didn't know how to pray properly

e) This translation involves cultural borrowing and transliteration plus detailed explanation. The proper noun *Mimouna* is transliterated and imported as it is to the TL. Further, the cultural equivalent of "rabbi" is "God" (cultural borrowing).

7.1.11. Courage

16

a) mmi-s n šmat mara i-ṣarrəf arbεin sna gi ḏargzṯ, aḏ i-ḏwar ɣa šmatiṯ.

b) the-son-his/ of/ a-coward/ although/ he-spends/ forty/ years/ in/ manliness/ will/ he-return/ to/ cowardice.

c) No matter how long a coward's son acts bravely, he will end up going back to his cowardice.

d) A coward will not fool people indefinitely by fake courage. One day or another he will betray himself.

e) Translation involves modulation as illustrated by the shift from affirmative in the SL into negative in the TL. Grammatical transposition involves the change of the grammatical category of "ḏargzṯ" (manliness) as a noun in the SL into adjective "bravely" in TL. There is also translation by omission: 'arbεin sna' is completely omitted. Further, there is adaptation of the original proverb which is reformulated using patterns like the conditional phrase "no matter how" and moving from nouns to adverbs (class shifts).

17

a) mmi-s w-argaz mara i-ṣarrəf arbεin sna gi šmatiṯ, ad i-ḏwar ɣa ḏargzṯ

b) the-son/ of-a-manly-man/ although/ he-spends/ forty/ years/ in/ cowardice/ will/ he-return/ to/ courage.

c) No matter how long a brave man's son acts cowardly, he will end up resuming his bravery.

d) This is the opposite version of the pervious proverb (cf. 16).

e) Translation involves modulation as illustrated by the shift from affirmative in the SL into negative in the TL. Transposition involves the change of the grammatical category of "šmati$\underline{t}$" (cowardice) as a noun in the SL into adjective "cowardly" in TL. There is also adaptation of the original proverb which is reformulated in conformity with the structural restrictions of the TL as in "he who never acts" and moving from nouns to adjectives.

7.1.12. Morality and values

18

a) rqəb i-$\underline{d}$war ɣa y-$\underline{d}$a-n

b) cob/ turns (upside down)/ towards/ feet.

c) Cap falls down to the ground.

d) The proverb means that moral values and ethics are deteriorating and degenerating in our society.

e) The original proverb is deeply rooted in the culture of the SL and its translation involves translating the verb "i-$\underline{d}$war" (it turns) in the original proverb by a near equivalent "falls down".

7.1.13. Physical appearance and beauty

19

a) ṣḅa x rḥənni nnə-m ar ɣa y-aɣ[14]

b) be-patient/ on/ henna/ of-your/ till/ will/ it-dyes

---

[14] *Rḥənni* or *Henna* -the Arabic term الحناء al-ḥinnā- refers to the dye prepared from the Henna plant. It is used for coloring hair, dye hands and feet in certain celebrations like wedding party.

c) Be patient till your Henna gets brilliant

d) The proverb means that one should be patient in order to get satisfactory results. It can be used to calm down newly-weds who face some problems at the beginning of their marital life and start thinking seriously about divorce.

e) The translation involves paraphrase using related words, i.e., "sḅa" and "y-aɣ" are translated as "be patient" and "gets brilliant". The translation also involves borrowing or loan word "Henna" which is imported to the TL and left intact.

20

a) rḥənni wa(r) i-tiri x ṯišši-n[15]

b) henna/ not/ it-is/ on/ lice

c) Basic needs come before cosmetics.

d) The proverb means that necessities come before luxuries.

e) It is a free translation.

7.1.14. Skills and know-how

21

a) sənnaž i wur adu wur, am ṯyaza w-ɣyur

b) over/ the/ heart/ under/ the-heart/ like/ the-ploughing/of-a-donkey

c) It is as haphazard as a donkey's ploughing.

d) This proverb is cited when a certain work or task is not carried out perfectly.

e) The proverb is freely translated in the sense that the style, the form, the lexicon and the poetic features of the original proverb are not retained in the TL (free translation).

7.1.15. Awkwardness and thoughtlessness

22

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[15] *Rḥənni* (see proverb 19).

a) ṯa-msarqa ṭaya ɣa ṭaya, la u ɣa y-inin man ay-a

b) she-meets/ the-slave-woman / at / the-slave-woman / none/ will/ say/ what/ is-this

c) When maids meet, no work is neat.

d) The proverb means that when leaders are away from the institution, company, business, school etc they run, there will be chaos. In English, they say "when the cat is away, the mice will play".

e) This translation involves paraphrasing for the sake of clarity through using unrelated words like "work" and "neat". There is also translation by a specific word "servant" which is a near equivalent (synonymy) of the word "ṭaya" (female slave), for the TL lacks a super-ordinate.

7.1.16. Selfishness

23

a) ṯ-aẓra i-sərm-an, ṭə-ttu sriman[16].

b) she-saw / fish/ she-forgot / Solomon.

c) Once she saw fish, she forgot about Solomon.

d) This proverb is used when someone forgets their family or friends because of a material interest.

e) It is a direct translation.

7.1.17. Greed

24

a) ṭraži-ɣ ɛma(r) nnə-ɣ aḏ i-žžiwən, ur i-tyiwin ši[17].

b) waiting-I-am/ Amar/ our/ to/ fill-up/ not/ he-fill-up/ not.

c) I am waiting for Amar to get satisfied, but he is not.

---

[16] *Sriman* (Souleyman in Arabic) is a traditional proper name in Riffian dialect.

[17] *Ɛmar* (see proverb (6))

d) The proverb emphasizes that rights must be asserted, not passively accepted.

e) The proverb is literally translated by abiding by the structural restrictions of the TL: the use of (get + past participle) and (be + past participle) are common constructions in English. The culture-bound term Amar is transliterated with explanation.

7.1.18. Injustice

25

a) ttriḏ n ṯayya ššənɛəṯ n ralla-s

b) the-ttrid/ of/ the-slave-woman / the-praise / of/ mistress-her[18].

c) The servant prepares the ttrid and her mistress is praised for it.

d) The proverb is cited when one takes advantage of someone else's work and efforts in an illegal way because they have power and abuse it for personal benefits. This proverb can be applied in case of plagiarism where a writer takes another person's ideas or work and pretend that it is their own.

e) The translation involves foreignizing as the proverb has no equivalent in the TL. There is grammatical transposition, i.e. two phrases in the SL are replaced by two complete sentences connected with a coordinating conjunction 'and' which denotes contrast in this case. The translation also involves borrowing SL culture-specific term ttrid and kept intact in the TL.

7.1.19. Economy

26

a) uss-an uža-n ṯi-ḅasr-in

b) days/ outnumber-they/ onions

c) Days outnumber onions

---

[18] *ttrid* (see proverb 1)

d) The proverb means that one must know how to spend money carefully because everything runs out soon.

e) The proverb is literally rendered, and it is fully replicated in the TL.

7.1.20. Instantaneity

27

a) wa(r) i-qqim min ɣa ṯ-aqqɛ-əḏ gʷ zdžaḅ[19].

b) not / left/ what / will/ you-patch/ in/ the-djellaba.

c) There's nothing left to mend in the *djellaba.*

d) This proverb is used when a situation can no longer be remedied. It is already too late, and nothing else can be done about it.

e) The original proverb is adapted in accordance with the grammatical structure of the TL "there is nothing left + infinitive with 'to'". This translation also involves borrowing and accommodating the word "zdžaḅ" as "djellaba" to the TL and has become part of the lexicon of English.

7.1.21. Love

28

a) w-ənni wa(r) yə-žarḅ-ən ṯsa wa(r) yə-ssin fidžus mani yə-nsa.

b) The-one-who/ not/ he-experienced-he/ parental-love/ not/ he-knows/ baby-chick/where/ it-spent-the-night.

c) If you don't know what parental love is, then you wouldn't know where the chick spent the night.

---

[19] *Azdžaḅ* (djellaba or جلابة in Arabic) is a piece of clothing with full sleeves worn in Morocco.

d) The proverb conveys that only those with children can understand what parental love really means. For example, if a chick goes missing, the hen will never stop searching for it.

e) Translating by paraphrase using related words like "parental love" (ţsa), "know" (yžarbn).

8. Findings and discussion

To answer the first question related to the cultural aspects of RA proverbs, it might be stated that each one of twenty-eight proverbs tend to cover a certain cultural area. Following Newmark's classification (1988) of cultural terms, the following table is made to show aspects of RA culture:

Table 1 - *Classification of translation strategies*

Proverb number	Cultural item/s	Semantic field
(1 and 25)	ttriḏ (trid)	Material culture (food)
(8)	rɛaṣa (afternoon prayer)	Religious
(12)	Siḏi šɛayḅ (it is a marabout)	Religious
(13)	ɣa yndrən (will bury)	Customs / Religious
(15)	mimuna ţəssən rabbi (Mimouna knows God)	Religious
(19 and 20)	rḥənni (Henna)	Customs
(18)	rqəb (cap)	Material culture (clothes)
(3 and 4)	ţyaza (ploughing)	Social culture (work)
(7)	Isriwriw (he ululates)	Artistic

| (27) | azdžaḅ (djellaba) | Material culture (clothes) |
| (5) | rɛiḏ (Eid festival) | Religious |

As for the strategies used to achieve an effective cultural transfer, the study has revealed the following results:

Table 2 - *Translation strategies*

Translation strategy	Occurrences	Percentage
Free translation	1	1.85%
Paraphrase using unrelated words	1	1.85%
Translation by omission	2	3.70%
Translation by addition	3	5.56%
Paraphrase using related words	4	7.41%
Adaptation	4	7.41%
Modulation	4	7.41%
Grammatical transposition	6	11.11%
Transliteration	8	14.81%
Borrowing	9	16.67%
Literal translation	12	22.22%

On the basis of the findings of this study, literal translation procedure is frequently used to transfer the form, the style and the diction of the original proverbs into the TL. In other words, the linguistic and cultural features of the original proverb retained in the TL and the TR, to use Schleiermacher's terms, is sent abroad to discover different aspects of Riffian-Amazigh cultural identity of which such proverbs are an integral part.

Moreover, the use of transliteration and cultural borrowing is accounted for by the fact that RA and English are structurally, phonologically and semantically different. While in certain situations, such borrowed items remain intact as there is no equivalent in English (the case of names), in other ones the borrowed concepts are accommodated and become part of the English lexicon (henna, ttrid). In this vein, English, as an international language, is known for incorporating words from other languages and exchange words with them due to its increasing contact with such languages. David Crystal (2005, pp.224-225) referred to this phenomenon, "Some languages have borrowed so extensively that native words are in a minority. English is a case in point, as it has sucked in words from over 350 other languages".

Modulation and grammatical transposition are used since English and RA tend to differ in terms of structural restrictions. For example, English tends to use the passive form more than RA does, and the two languages utterly differ in the way they use such construction. Concerning grammatical transposition, it is an inevitable outcome of literal translation procedure which usually respects the structure of the TL and its grammar norms.

Figure 1 -*Translation strategies*
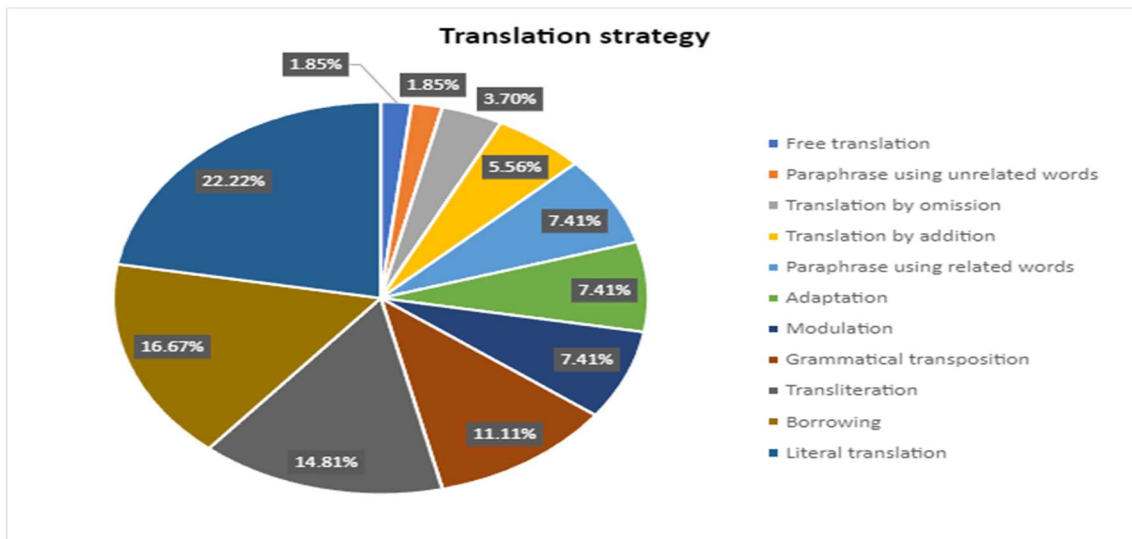
On the other hand, the findings have revealed another fact that is concerned with the use of a combination of strategies (more than two), or what might be termed mixed strategies, to transfer one single proverb from RA to English. Thereby, mixed strategies have been implemented oftentimes while translating. The vast use of a mixture of procedures to transfer one single proverb from the RA to English is justified by the aforementioned reasons and the huge linguistic differences between the two language systems, and most importantly, the given cultural distance between Riffian society and the English speaking world. These assumptions are conducive to answering research questions (c) and (d).

Of course, culture-bound proverbs are translatable by means of using a combination of different translation procedures to palliate translation loss. To overcome intercultural challenges and reduce foreign features specific to SL in the TT, the translator should be aware of the cultural specificities of the source and the receiving language. Cultural transfer inevitably entails translation loss, i.e. the loss of cultural features. To compensate for such loss, detailed explanations are provided in footnotes and, first and foremost, a mixture of procedures are resorted to. Thus, the loss turns into gain whereby the TR has access to discovering facets of a culture that is new to them. For this end, the ultimate goal of translation is not to maximize sameness between ST and TL but to focus on what might be preserved and saved from the ST during the cultural transfer, for a complete replica of the original proverb into the TL is, rather, idealistic.

9. Limitations of the study

The scope of the study is limited in the sense that only twenty-eight proverbs are selected and studied, but of course there are many other culture-bound proverbs. On this basis, more comprehensive and focused studies on such a topic are called for in the field of Amazigh-English translation studies, which will, first, significantly contribute to the field as it is concerned with surveying cultural components of RA proverbs and, second, reduce

subjectivity in the final run. The results of the study may change, either partially or completely, when more proverbs are studied and analyzed. Thus, achieving absolute generalizability and transferability are, mostly, far-fetched and unattainable. Therefore, trying to find a tentative framework for translating Riffian-Amazigh proverbs into English is recommendable.

9.1. A tentative framework for translating Amazigh proverbs to English

Here is a framework to consider when translating proverbs from Amazigh (Tamazight) to English, acknowledging the cultural distance between the two languages:

a- Try to understand the Riffian proverb through knowing the meaning of the individual words composing it which would help understand the whole proverb in the final run.

b- Recognize the culturally specific elements embedded in the Riffian proverb and ponder on the cultural and social context where such a proverb can be used. Here, refer to any story, social background, or historical event that gave rise to the proverb in question.

c- As proverbs are part of poetic language, attention should be drawn on the figurative language exhibited in such oral expressions. On this basis, maintaining the spirit of the proverb is achieved by retaining its figures of speech in translation.

d- In translating a given proverb, it all depends whether the proverb is translatable (English equivalent) or untranslatable (no English equivalent). In the latter case, the translator needs to apply the most optimal strategy to capture the core meaning of the proverb (functional equivalence), to adapt the proverb into English (adaptation), to

translate using a loan word plus explanation (cultural borrowing), to paraphrase, to freely translate etc.

e- Aim to replicate the structure of the proverb in translation in order to preserve its impact through maintaining the original rhythm, rhyme, alongside other poetic features.

g- Seek professional translators to get feedback and native speakers to check the meaning of the translated proverb to see whether it resonates with the English audience and, ultimately, validate the translation.

10. Conclusion

This study focuses on translating RA proverbs into English, and it also examines loss and gain in the cultural transfer of such culture-specific expressions. As previously stated, both languages are from different language families and, by implication, reflect different cultures. The big cultural differences existing between both languages automatically yield complications that are more difficult to figure out than those caused by linguistic dissimilarities when translating culture-bound proverbs. Because of their incompatibility with the target culture, the cultural specificities embedded in the SL tend to be untranslatable in certain situations. Consequently, translation loss tends to be obvious and becomes inevitable. Last but not least, the examination of a plethora of translation strategies and procedures confirms the fact that translation between two different languages belonging to different cultures is quite challenging, but not impossible.

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