

Translating Arabic Culture-Bound Terms (CBTs) into English: A Pilot Study of Translation Students' Challenges and Strategies

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Abstract

In the current research, the focus is on exploring some of the most common translation problems encountered by undergraduate translation students when translating Arabic culture-bound terms (henceforth referred to as CBTs) into English. The mentioned terms pose serious obstacles to translation, as they carry complex cultural connotations and cannot be regarded as equivalents in other languages. Based on existing translation theories by scholars such as Peter Newmark and Mona Baker, this study aims to define the nature of the aforementioned problems and the ways undergraduates can solve them. This study is exploratory and serves as a pilot for a larger-scale investigation. Thus, the chosen methodology was of the same nature and included a sample of 30 undergraduate translation students who translated 10 Arabic statements containing culture-bound terms into English. The data collected from the students were analyzed using the thematic analysis framework proposed by Newmark (1988). In particular, he proposed defining categories that include various cultural objects in accordance with Peter Newmark's classification. Then the chosen expressions were assigned to the appropriate categories, while their translation difficulties were identified with respect to the three mentioned aspects: semantic accuracy, syntactic appropriateness, and cultural adequacy. According to the findings from this sample, students face a significant challenge in retaining the cultural meaning when translating culture-bound expressions. They translate them using literal translation or partial equivalence, thus losing meaning and cultural essence. Moreover, the findings show that students prefer foreignization over domestication, with 67% preferring foreignization and 33% domestication. This is mainly because of their lack of understanding of the target culture.

Keywords: Culture-Bound Expressions; Translation Difficulties; Domestication; Foreignization; Translation Strategies

INTRODUCTION

The definition of translation as a process by which meaning is transferred from source language into the target one seems quite simple; however, in reality, translation involves much more. It should rather be regarded as a means of communication between two distinct cultures. While performing translation, translators do not only work on linguistic structures, but also on cultural values, beliefs, and conventions shared by certain groups of people. It is especially true when one speaks about culture bound terms (CBTs)

since these expressions are hardly ever translated literally. They often carry meanings deeply rooted in values and social contexts, requiring strategies like cultural adaptation, borrowing, or amplification to convey their nuances across cultures (Dafaallah et al., 2023). The very essence of the term makes CBTs resistant to translation and thus poses numerous challenges to the translator who tries to cope with this task. Difficulties arising in relation to CBTs are well known in the sphere of translation studies. According to Newmark (1988), culture bound terms can be defined as a combination of vocabulary items associated with a certain culture which cannot be easily translated. In the same way, Baker (1992) notes that a translator experiences difficulty in conveying the meaning of an expression when there is no equivalent at word level in the target language (Hamamoto, Hideki: 2020).

Indeed, translating between Arabic and English raises even more challenges since there are many differences in how religion, social norms, and culture are represented in both languages. In this regard, Arabic is characterized by a number of idioms and phrases that bear some implied meaning, depending on the religious or cultural background of the speaker. As Ernst-August Gutt (1991) argues, successful translation entails presenting explicit and implicit information in a manner that is relevant for the addressee. However, such an approach requires significant interpretive skill, which students lack.

In this regard, scholars working within the framework of Arab translation tradition share the same concern. For instance, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1997) focus on the role of contextual and discursive factors in forming meaning, especially pragmatically. Jassim Al-Qinai (2000) states that the literal translation of Arabic culture-related expressions causes meaning loss and poor communication. In addition, Farghal and Shunnaq (1999) find that idioms and culture-related expressions should be interpreted carefully, as their meaning is highly dependent on the social and cultural context. Further researches conducted by Al-Qinai (2020), Al-Hassan (2021), and Tergui (2024), find similar results.

Taken together, these studies suggest that the main challenge in translating CBTs does not lie in language alone, but in the ability to interpret and mediate between cultures. This is precisely where student translators tend to struggle, often relying on literal translation when deeper cultural understanding is required. In this same train of thoughts, Venuti (1995) introduces the concepts of domestication and foreignization, highlighting the translator's intervention when adapting the text to the target culture or preserving its foreign characteristics. When dealing with CBTs, this decision becomes particularly critical, an excessive use of domestication may lead to loss of cultural identity, while excessive foreignization may hinder comprehension. Pym (2010) further stresses that novice translators tend to rely so much on form-based strategies like literal translation, often at the expense of communicative effectiveness, due to limited strategic awareness and lack of cultural competence.

In light of pedagogical perspectives, it seems that these theories imply that learners need both language knowledge and strategic skills. Nonetheless, very few studies exist that focus on empirical data regarding how translation students cope with CBTs while translating within an Arabic academic environment. What is more important is the fact that there are very few systematic studies concerning how students translate this sort of linguistic feature. The study utilizes tools designed to measure various dimensions of translation competence, such as semantic accuracy, syntactic appropriateness, and cultural transfer (Tavares et al., 2023).

The fast growing trend of using technology within the translation process requires looking into the issue from another angle. There have been many controversial debates surrounding the effectiveness of artificial intelligence tools for enhancing translation performance by facilitating meaning comprehension and providing contextualized solutions (Mohamed et al., 2024). However, it is vital first to define the baseline of performance among learners and verify the validity of the employed assessment tools. With all these things taken into account, this research project is going to be carried out with the aim of exploring how difficult it is for translation students to translate the Arabic CBT into English, what translation techniques they have employed in order to find its equivalent in English, and finally, offering some pedagogical recommendations in this area.

METHOD

This study, after testing its reliability as an exploratory research, adopts a quantitative descriptive design to evaluate students' translation performance and diagnose the strategies used to carry out a translation of CBTs in two Arabic novels.

The participants consisted of 30 undergraduate translation students enrolled in the translation program, at Al Buraimi University College, in Oman. All participants had prior experience in translation courses since they are 3rd and 4th year students. It is paramount to choose advanced learners since this type of translation requires a good deal of linguistic competence and cultural awareness that beginners naturally lack.

The instrument was a translation test consisting of 10 statements encompassing culture-bound expressions. The sentences are all extracted from two Arabic literary novels; *The Thief and the Dogs* by the Egyptian Nobel-prize winner Naguib Mahfouz, and *Men in the Sun* by the Palestinian novelist Ghassan Kanafani. The expressions were selected for their significant cultural and literary value, as well as their use of language that is deeply rooted in Arabic social, historical, and cultural contexts. These culturally rich elements would help set an ideal basis for analyzing students' approaches to translating culturally dense expressions in Arabic literature. The selected terms are categorized following Peter Newmark typology and classification of CBTs. Students were required to translate these expressions into English. A scoring rubric was used, comprising: 1) Semantic accuracy (3 marks) 2) Syntactic appropriateness (2 marks), and 3) Cultural transfer (5 marks). (See Appendix 1)

The test was administered in the class, under controlled conditions, and without the use of external tools, like dictionaries or online resources. Students completed the task individually. The study, then, focuses exclusively on Arabic-English translation and does not explore other language pairs or directions (e.g. English-Arabic). Similarly, the research is confined to written literary translation from the novel of *The Thief and the Dogs*, and *Men in the Sun*. Data collection relies on the 10 CBTs translation output of the 30 students. Two independent raters evaluated the papers following the mentioned scoring rubric. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores, were calculated. Inter-rater reliability was assessed by comparing the scores assigned by the two raters.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the test were analyzed to examine the general performance of students when translating the culture-bound terms (CBTs).

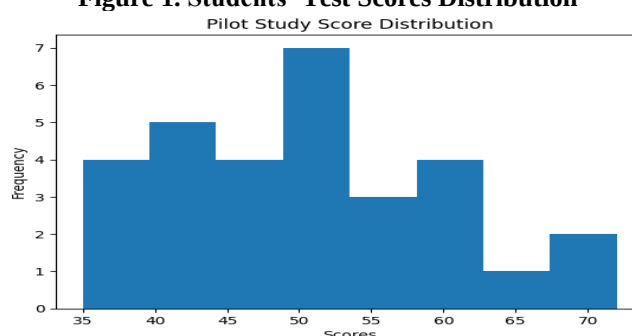
Table 1. Overall Performance

Statistic	Value
Number of Participants	30
Mean Score	50.83
Standard Deviation	8.95
Minimum Score	35
Maximum Score	72
Rater 1 Mean	50.60
Rater 2 Mean	51.06

The table shows that the mean score of 50.83 indicates a moderate level of performance among students in translating the CBTs. The range of scores (35–72) shows noticeable variation in students' translation performance, which is expected in a study involving advanced learners at different competence levels. The standard deviation (8.95) suggests moderate dispersion, meaning that while many students performed around the average, some achieved higher or lower scores.

In order to guarantee the reliability of scoring, the translations were rated by two independent raters. The correlation coefficient between Rater 1 and Rater 2 is: $r = 0.90$. The high value of r indicates very strong correlation between the two raters. Hence, it can be concluded that the method of scoring used in evaluation of the translations is reliable.

By looking at the histogram below, one would find out that its distribution is roughly normal with some slight concentration within the middle region (scores 45–60). It implies that the test is well-balanced in regard to difficulty level, enabling discrimination between low-scoring and high-scoring candidates. In addition, it lacks any severe skewness, meaning that the test is appropriate and valid. Therefore, students' translation of culture-bound terms will be appropriately rated in this research. Besides, as was mentioned earlier, the rubric for scoring is reliable because of high inter-rater reliability. Finally, variation of scores implies that the CBTs chosen are difficult enough to make the researcher reveal students' translation problems.

Figure 1. Students' Test Scores Distribution

This section in the article highlights the results of the study in relation to its objectives: (1) the identification of students' problems in translating culture-bound terms (CBTs), (2) the strategies used, and (3) suggestions on pedagogical approaches. The discussion is based on Newmark's (1988) categorization of CBTs.

Problems Based on Newmark's Classification

From the analysis of the students' translation, it is observed that participants showed good language skills. However, they found it difficult to translate the CBTs especially those that are idiomatic and culturally-based. This result is similar to other

studies that show students find it hard to render a cultural equivalence of the source text (Baker, 1992; Newmark, 1988). This observation is congruent with the idea that translation requires more than language abilities because it is actually an act of intercultural communication that requires cultural competence and understanding of the situation (Nida, 1964; Katan, 2004). In the test statements, the expressions are classified according to Newmark's categories of CBTs. In the ten statements, there are three statements related to material culture, two social culture expressions, two concerning organizations and customs, three idioms, and one gesture expression.

Material Culture

Table 2. Material Culture Difficulties

Items	Possible Translation
خرجت نبوية تحمل دقيق العيد	"Nabawiyia went out carrying home flour to make Eid sweets"
أعطاه كوفية لفت بها رأسه	"He gave him a kufiya/ headdress to cover his head"
تعال إلى الدكان لنشرب الشرابات	"Let's drink sherbet/ cold drink (to celebrate) in the shop"
Difficulties encountered	
Cultural: Limited awareness of cultural connotations associated with festive practices	
Semantic: Partial transfer of meaning without contextual depth	

As shown in Table 2 above, there are difficulties faced especially on the cultural and semantic level in translating material culture terms. It can be noticed that most of the students did not face many difficulties with the syntactic level in these statements. Only a minority struggled with the simple past forms of *خرجت* and *أعطاه*. However, their understanding of the cultural implications of certain expressions referring to practices and traditions, for example, those relating to preparation of Eid celebration, is quite poor. In most of the translations made, only referential meaning was transferred but no attempt was made to retain the rest of other meanings (associative and cultural). One of such difficult culture-specific items is the term " الشرابات " because the readers in the target culture will not know what it means due to the difference in the cultural context. So, a good translation would involve the use of elaboration by adding a lexical item in the process of translation. In this case, it would be appropriate to say "Come to the shop and have a cold drink to celebrate". The addition of the infinitive 'to celebrate' makes the reader aware that the Arabic term " الشرابات " is, according to the Egyptian culture, a cold drink that people are accustomed to drinking during happy occasions, when celebrating something. Unfortunately, no single student has provided such a translation.

These problems may be traced to the reality that Arab students are inadequately introduced to items that are saturated with cultural connotations. Thus, students often translate items individually without taking into account their cultural implications. According to Peter Newmark (1988), items in material culture should be properly contextualized in order for the proper transfer of meaning to take place during the process of translation. The results point out that students do not find it difficult to translate vocabulary terms themselves, but they find translating cultural depth challenging. The challenge to interpret a cultural concept and decipher its deep connotation seems not easy for any translator, let alone a student.

Social Culture**Table 3. Social Culture Difficulties**

Item	Possible Translation
جلس في الديوانية بقرقر ينجيلته	"He sat in the diwaniya/ reception room gurgling his shisha "
Difficulties encountered	
Cultural: Misunderstanding of <i>الديوانية</i> as a social institution	
Stylistic: Unnatural lexical choices (e.g., <i>gurgling</i>)	
Semantic: Loss of implied social meaning	

As indicated in Table 3, there were two items on social culture which combined challenges of cultural, semantic, and stylistic nature. A major problem involved the failure to comprehend culturally specific institutions (such as *diwaniya* (الديوانية), an institution full of communicative and social meanings beyond its literal sense. Most students did not convey such hidden meanings as regards the communicative and social environment, hence losing the whole meaning related to them.

Moreover, there were stylistic problems in the selection of inappropriate lexicon that made translations sound unnatural. The problem worsened due to the use of inappropriate verbs like gurgling, which made the meaning of the item deviate from the intended one. Translations were quite different from each other ranging from the transliteration *نرجيلته* to the usual name 'Shisha' in the Arab world. Many students offered wrong or even non-existent responses to this item. This finding shows that, in addition to failing to understand cultural items, students have challenges with translating such terms into the target language. As argued by David Katan (2004), interpretation should be done when translating cultures.

Organizations, Customs, and Concepts (Religious/Political)**Table 4. Religious and Conceptual Difficulties**

Items	Possible Translation
لكل خلاف حل في الشرع	"Every conflict has a solution in Islamic law "
ترك الجيش و انضم الى فريق المجاهدين	"He joined the mujahideen/ resistants team"
Difficulties encountered	
Semantic: Misinterpretation of culturally specific concepts	
Cultural sensitivity: Inadequate handling of politically and religiously loaded terms	

As evident from the findings in Table 4, this category included issues pertaining to semantic and cultural aspect, with the problems associated with interpreting culturally-loaded terms. Partial knowledge on some critical concepts including the terms *الشرع* indicated that students only had partial understanding of their meanings. In this case, they simply relied on literal translation or even transliteration of such concepts into simpler or generalized meanings, such as *shari'a* and *mujahideen*. As such, these problems caused semantic distortions of culturally-loaded concepts. For instance, in terms of the concept *الشرع*, it would become an oversimplification and distortion of the actual meaning which is "Islamic law."

The main challenge here is that the interpretation of culturally-loaded terms requires one to achieve balance between semantic precision and sensitivity. The problem was evident among students who did not know how to interpret terms carrying political and religious aspects, thus making them overgeneralize or avoid giving the exact definition. This issue aligns with Baker's (1992) view of semantic reduction due to insufficient conceptual understanding of terms. Overall, the second statement was interpreted quite successfully by students since they were familiar with the term *المجاهدين* widely spread in the media and other social platforms.

Idioms and Abstract Expressions**Table 5. Idioms and Abstract Expressions difficulties**

Items	Possible Translation
القسمة و النصيب	Marriage
يا ألف نهار أبيض	What an amazing day /a good news
كأن الحياة شربة ماء	Life is a piece of cake
Difficulties encountered	
High semantic complexity	
Literal translation leading to meaning loss	
Cultural opacity	

It can easily be deduced from Table 5 that idioms and abstract phrases represented the most challenging category to the translation students. Semantic challenge was the major problem associated with translating this group of phrases as the learners had great challenges trying to decode their meanings. The learners made translations based on literal interpretation of the idiomatic phrases and thus making some meaningless statements. Also, cultural challenge characterized the category. The idioms are culturally based expressions whose meanings are dependent on shared cultural knowledge among the speakers. Thus, the learners failed to identify the figurative sense of the idioms, hence causing much of the loss of meaning. For example, the phrase *القسمة و النصيب* was interpreted by many students as *Division and share* or *division and luck* while few students got the actual meaning, which is marriage.

The above observation aligns well with the view by Mona Baker (1992) who argues that idioms should be understood through interpretation and not translated literally. Additionally, Hassan Ghazala (2008) says that translating idioms literally causes semantic distortion of the meanings. In line with the same train of thought, Lahiani (2024) identifies idioms as culturally embedded expressions that are linguistically crystallized yet semantically abstruse. Idioms accrue fixed meanings within a speech community rather than by compositing constituent denotations. Thereby, successful idiom translation is defined not by formal correspondence, but by conveying implicated meanings and intended impacts.

Gestures and Habits (Implicit Culture)**Table 6. Implicit Culture difficulties**

Items	Possible Translation
بارك الله فيك	May Allah bless you/ Thank you
Difficulties encountered	
High semantic complexity; Literal translation leading to meaning loss	
Cultural opacity and obscurity	

As is evident in Table 6, the phrase *بارك الله فيك* holds much concealed meanings for a person who is not an Arab or Muslim in nature since the phrase may hold a wide range of cultural and religious implications. Although implicit cultural expressions were easy for Arab students compared to others, students faced problems in pragmatics. In this case, the problem involved variation of meaning depending on the context used. This means that the phrase could be used to convey several messages depending on the context such as conveying 'thank you'. In some cases, students would translate the phrase literally without paying attention to its practical use.

In this category, students did well, compared to other categories, due to existence of equivalent phrases and easy transfer of meaning. This conforms to Eugene Nida's theory (١٩٦٤) of dynamic equivalence that states that transfer of meaning is possible when there exist functional parallels within the language. Dynamic translation, indeed, requires much linguistic competence and culture understanding. Thus, discovering these intended meanings present the ultimate goal of any translator, and throughout his 'trip' between languages, translation strategies is his tool to reach that goal. Therefore, the coming part of this article is to tackle this issue of strategies used by 3rd and 4th year students to convert the CBTs.

Translation Strategies Used by Students

The analysis revealed four dominant strategies in addition to a fifth one labelled as mixed or hybrid strategy where more than a strategy is used in a single attempt.

Table 7. Frequency of Used Strategies:

Strategy	% Usage
Literal Translation	46%
Transliteration	21%
Functional Equivalence	15%
Paraphrase	10%
Mixed / Hybrid	8%

From the table, it is crystal clear that the students used four main strategies to solve the problem of translating CBTs. It appears that approaches that depend much on form more than content were dominant in solving the translation problem. The strategy used by most students was literal translation (46%) that suggests that students prefer using lexis over the sense, especially idioms. This finding agrees with the observations made by Peter Newmark (1988) and Gideon Toury (1995), suggesting that beginner translators use the source-text structure strictly. For example, the idiom *يا ألف نهار أبيض* was literally translated into thousand white days while losing its positive meaning. The second example is *القسمة والنصيب* that means something about one's destiny; however, students incorrectly translated it as division and share. In another case, students failed to understand that *جلس في الديوانية يقرقر بنرجيلته* means sitting in the Diwaniya with a pipe. This sentence includes several words that are not understood in English, but still students should have tried to translate it culturally as sitting in the Diwaniya smoking Narguila. These examples illustrate how reliance on literal translation often leads to semantic inaccuracy and loss of cultural meaning.

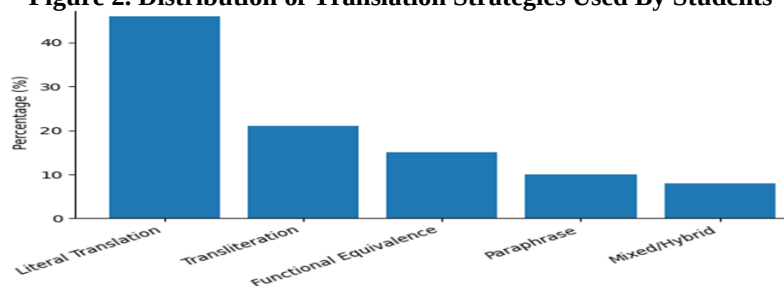
Transliteration (21%) was another frequently used translation strategy, especially when dealing with culturally-specific terms like *kufiya* كوفية and *diwaniya* الديوانية. Although this method indicates a recognition of cultural specificity, it is typically devoid of any supporting explanation, thus hindering the comprehension of the target reader, according to David Katan (2004). The use of transliteration can be considered a foreignization strategy because it is aligned with Lawrence Venuti's (1995) theory. On the other hand, functional equivalence (15%), despite being employed infrequently, generated better translations that were consistent with their contexts (such as *بارك الله فيك* → May God bless you). Functional equivalence is based on the theory of dynamic equivalence, advocated by Eugene Nida (1964), which emphasizes meaning rather than form.

Finally, the same trend was observed for paraphrase (10%). As this technique focuses on the meaning rather than the form, it enabled the students to probe into the

underlying message and communicate the hidden culture-bound content, even if it was applied sparingly. For instance, in the case of *يا ألف نهار أبيض*, some students translated it as “what a wonderful day,” “that’s a good news,” “great news,” and so forth. By paraphrasing, students seem to capture the intended positive connotation rather than its literal meaning. Likewise, *القسمة والنصيب* was translated as *it is all a matter of fate and destiny*, or *luck*, reflecting an attempt to convey the underlying cultural concept. In another instance, *تعال إلى الدكان لنشرب الشربات* was translated as *come to the shop to have a sweet drink*, where the culturally specific term *الشربات* was paraphrased for clarity. These examples demonstrate that while some students were able to move beyond literal translation, the overall use of paraphrase remained limited compared to strategies based on form. The latter seem simpler and easier for translation students.

Finally, hybrid or mixed translation strategies (8%) can be identified, where multiple strategies are applied during one translation process. In some cases, this strategy enables the students to achieve balance between the clarity of their interpretation and its faithfulness to the original. For instance, students applied transliteration strategy “*kufiya*” followed by the explanation “(traditional Arab headscarf)” when translating the term *كوفية*. Similarly, the phrase *القسمة والنصيب* was translated by one of the students as “fate and destiny decided by God”, which combines literal translation “fate and destiny” and cultural paraphrase “decided by God”. In most cases, students applied only one of the two strategies or did so in an inconsistent manner so that one of them contradicted the other, thus failing to provide semantic meanings and cultural nuances of the expressions under translation. Thus, students’ efforts to apply two different strategies led them to contradicting or blurring their meanings, resulting in failure to grasp both cultural and semantic components. *يا ألف نهار أبيض* *Ya Alf Nihar Abi'd*, for instance, was interpreted by one of the students as “what a thousand white days and how wonderful!”. Here, literal translation failed to deliver the intended meaning, which could have been achieved by applying paraphrase strategy. These examples demonstrate how hybrid strategies can enable students to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps more effectively, but also can be misleading in some other students’ output and blur the intended meaning of the utterance.

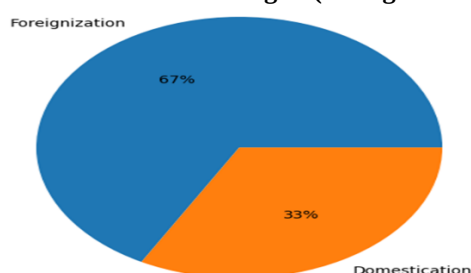
Figure 2. Distribution of Translation Strategies Used By Students



On examination of the employed strategies, it is apparent from the pie graph below that there is a high prevalence of foreignization strategies among the students (67%) using literal translation and transliteration. Nevertheless, it seems that only slightly above one-third of the participants use domestication-based strategies (33%) including functional equivalence and paraphrasing. Domestication, indeed, involves modifying the cultural references to align with the expectations and familiarity of the target audience, while foreignization aims to preserve the “foreignness” of the source culture in the translated text (González & Carreres, 2021). The disparity in the employment of the strategies implies that the students have a preference for foreignization due to their lack of strategic

knowledge in determining suitable translation techniques. This result aligns with previous studies (Anthony Pym, 2010; Tergui, 2024; Lahiani 2024).

Figure 3. Orientation of Translation Strategies (Foreignization VS Domestication)



Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Accordingly, cultural competence needs to be incorporated into translation pedagogy because cultural competence is a prerequisite for proper meaning transfer in the target text. The problem that students encounter does not stem from language-related issues but from lack of awareness of the culture inherent in the source text. Consequently, students enrolled in translation classes need to undertake tasks and exercises that increase their awareness about cultural competence. Some of the possible activities may include comparing the cultures of the target language community and source language community; studying culture-specific expressions and idioms, among others. Indeed, when students translate authentic texts – especially literary texts – they will be exposed to actual instances of culture-bound terms (CBTs). Literary texts offer authentic contexts rich in culture-specific expressions. This will allow the students to learn language in authentic situations. As Katan (2004) observes, translation involves much more than mere linguistics; rather, it is a matter of culture, which entails the need for the learner to act as an intercultural mediator. Increasing the cultural competence of students will lead to improved translation competence. As for Christiane Nord (1997), authenticity is key in fostering functional translation competence.

The other equally important recommendation would be the teaching of various translation strategies, which must be employed when handling a challenging translation assignment. Students tend to do literal translations because of their limited knowledge of appropriate strategies, and such translations often turn out to be either incorrect or unnatural. Hence, the teacher ought to ensure that students learn about functional equivalence, descriptive translation, and adaptation as possible approaches to tackling various translation assignments. Through learning such strategies, students will be able to make informed choices depending on the purpose and circumstances associated with the translation task at hand. The approach is consistent with Newmark's (1988) model, which advocates the need for a translator to be conversant with several translation strategies.

Results show that idiomatic expressions are the most difficult to translate; hence, it becomes imperative that emphasis be put on idiomatic translations during the training process. This is mainly due to the fact that idioms are culturally entrenched phrases whose meanings are not derivable from the literal meaning of their constituent words. Consequently, the student ends up doing the literal translations that cannot possibly pass the message as intended by the original author. The way to deal with this problem is to pay special attention to idiomatic expressions and understanding of their meaning through

context analysis. In classroom practice, the tasks can be related to idiom analysis, comparison of linguistic equivalents in different languages, as well as paraphrasing skills training. As mentioned by Baker (1992), translation of idioms belongs to the crucial skills in obtaining natural target language.

The results have demonstrated various difficulties encountered by the translation students while completing the task, which makes the incorporation of AI into teaching translation another vital suggestion. The use of AI technologies can provide information about cultural values in foreign languages as well as offer more translation options and enhance the whole learning process. This is consistent with the results of (Pym, 2014; Kenny, 2022; Al-Jarf's 2021) studies on digital technologies in translation education.

CONCLUSION

From this conducted exploratory study, it has been noted that the translation of culture-specific expressions poses great challenges to the undergraduate students in Oman, specifically at cultural and semantic level. This further proves that there is a gap both in terms of linguistic knowledge as well as cultural competence. Additionally, from the study, it has been confirmed that the research instrument is valid and suitable for the main study. This study will further explore how AI assisted software aids the process of translation and improves the performance of the students.

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