Translating Taboo Expressions in Anderson's *Speak* into Arabic

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Abstract


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This study aims at investigating the translatability of taboos – sex related language - from English into Arabic as used in Anderson's Speak novel to assess the acceptability of utilizing taboos in the Arabic target texts (TTs). It combines both practical and theoretical aspects. After translating 50 pages from Speak novel from English into Arabic, the researcher discusses in depth the translation of taboo words and expressions and suggests three ways to translating taboos; deletion, euphemism and taboos as taboos. An online survey was conducted for 35 Americans to provide explanation for 50 words and expression the researcher found to be a challenge in translation, accordingly; the researcher suggested a translation into Arabic. The basic tool of assessing the translations of some selected excerpts from the source language texts, which comprise taboos, is a questionnaire distributed among a number of professors in translation, English literature and linguistics in three Jordanian universities: Yarmouk University, Jordan University of Science and Technology and Mutah University, number of professional translators and two Arabic language experts. The finding of this research shows that, the percentage of the satisfaction of the referees with the four categories of taboo's suggested translations is high (81.5%). Finally, the study presents some recommendations for further studies in this field.

Keywords: Taboo words, online survey, sex-related language, euphemism.