Problems of Translating Jordanian Lullabies and Amatory Songs from Arabic into English

by

Walaa Talal Al – Ajaj

Supervisor

Prof. Abdullah Shunnaq

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Translation at Yarmouk University.

2012
Problems of Translating Jordanian Lullabies and Amatory Songs from

Arabic into English

مشكلات ترجمة النهويات والأغاني الغرامية الأردنية من العربية إلى الإنجليزية

by

Wala'a Talal Al - Ajaj

Supervisor

Prof. Abdullah Shunnaq

Committee Members

1-Prof. Abdullah Shunnaq (Supervisor)
2-Prof. Fawaz Abdel-Haq (Member)
3-Dr. Mohammad Alquraan (Member)

Signature

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

of Master in Translation at Yarmouk University.

26/11/2012
Dedication

To my father
To my mother
To my husband
To my brothers
To my sisters
To my uncle
To my grandpa

I dedicate this work
Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof Abdullah Shunnaq for his insightful suggestions, guidance and encouragement.

My profound appreciation is extended to Dr. Fawaz Abdelhaq and Dr. Mohammad Abdelwali for their approval of being members of the committee as well as for their valuable directions and comments which will surely constitute indispensable support linked to the completion of this work.

Also I would like to thank Dr Fayez Abul-Kas for his help in translating some of the songs.

Finally special thanks are borne to my father, my mother, my husband, my brothers and sisters and finally my uncle and my grandpa.
# Table of Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgment</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Content</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter One: Introduction and Review of Related Literature</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Review of Related Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Statement of The Problem</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4. Purpose of The Study</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5. Questions of The Study</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6. The Hypotheses</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7. Method</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7.1. Data Collection</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.7.2. Data Analysis ................................................................. 14

Chapter Two: Discussion and Analysis of Subjects Translations .......... 15
  2.1. Introduction ........................................................................ 15
  2.1.1. Context ......................................................................... 16
  2.1.2. The Absence of Conceptual Relevancy ............................... 22
  2.1.3. Inexperienced Translators .............................................. 26

Chapter Three: Poetic Translation and Suggested Translations .......... 31
  3.1. Introduction ......................................................................... 31
  3.2. Poetic Translation ............................................................... 32
  3.3. Functional Translation ......................................................... 35
  3.4. Suggested Translations ....................................................... 38

Chapter Four: Conclusion and Recommendations .......................... 43
  4.1. Summary ........................................................................... 43
  4.2. Conclusion .......................................................................... 44
  4.3. Recommendations ............................................................. 45

References ................................................................................. 47

Appendix ....................................................................................... 51
Abstract

This study aims at investigating some problems faced by translators when translating Jordanian lullabies and amatory songs into English.

It investigates reasons for these problems and suggests certain strategies to deal with them. To enrich the study, a questionnaire was distributed among 30 M.A. students of translation at Yarmouk University. It includes randomly chosen Jordanian lullabies and amatory songs, which were taken from senior people living in some villages in north Jordan. The students were asked to give adequate translations to the utterances of the questionnaire.
The thesis is divided into four chapters, the first chapter introduces the thesis and elaborates the approach used to achieve the thesis and presents a review of the related literature.

The second chapter includes more elaboration on the main subject of the thesis by examining critically the renditions of the students in order to pinpoint the problems.

The third chapter discusses poetic translation as the suitable solution beside some suggested translations provided by the researcher.

Finally, the last chapter presents the recommendations the researcher has come up with besides the findings of the study which are:

1- Most subjects adopt literal translation

2- They were unaware of target culture as well as of their own
3- They ignore poetic translation

4- They mistranslate some concepts

Jordanian lullabies are more difficult to translate than amatory songs.
ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة لبحث المشاكل التي بواجهها المترجمون عند ترجمة بعض التهويتات والأغاني الغرامية الأردنية، وقد أُطلقت هذه الدراسة اهتماماً بانواع هذه المشاكل واسبابها وكيفية التعامل معها.

وبانسجام مع خطة البحث، فقد اجريت هذه الدراسة بالاستعانة باستبان تضمن بعض الأدبي المختارة عشوائياً والتي تم جمعها من كبار السن الذين يعيشون في قرى شمال المملكة، حيث وزع هذا الاستبان على 30 طالب من طلبة الماجستير في جامعة اليرموك حيث طلب منهم تقديم ترجمة كافية وواقية.

قسمت هذه الاطروحة إلى أربعة فصول، حيث يتعرض الفصل الأول لموضوع الاطروحة وشرح منهجية الدراسة بالإضافة إلى المسار الذي اتبع لإنجازها، كما تضمن عرضاً وافياً للدراسات المقارنة في هذا المجال.

اما الفصل الثاني فيعرض بشكل تفصيلي لمشكلة الدراسة من خلال تحليل ترجمات الطلاب تحليلاً نقدياً وذلك من اجل تحديد المشاكل التي بواجهونها.

ويتناول الفصل الثالث الترجمة الشعرية بوصفها الحل الامثل لترجمة مثل هذه النصوص كما يعرض لتترجمات مقترحة من الباحثة.

اما الفصل الاخير، فيطرح للتصويتات التي خرجت بها الباحثة الى جانب نتائج هذه الدراسة وهي:

1- تبني معظم الطلبة لأسلوب الترجمة الفورية
2- لم يكن الطلبة على معرفة وافية بثقافة اللغة الهدف بالإضافة إلى جهلهم بثقافتهم
3- تجاهل الطلبة لأسلوب الترجمة الشعرية

4- اسالة ترجمة بعض المفاهيم

5- التهويهات الاردنية اصعب بكثير عند ترجمتها من الأغاني الغرامية.
Chapter One

Introduction and Review of Related Literature

1.1. Introduction

Many people believe that translation is a magical tool and the translator therefore is a wizard who has the power of transferring any utterance from one language to another without any hindrances. On the other hand, there are others who refute this assumption by proving the partial untranslatability of some expressions especially those related to the deeply rooted cultural terms such as the Islamic term (حالة) which means "a period for a Muslim woman, divorced or widowed, during which she cannot remarry" Abulkas (1995:4). Confirming the previous issue, Catford (1965) points out that the cultural untranslatability occurs where the source language contextual features do not exist in the culture of the target language. In this spirit, Nida (1994:147) points out that:

Everywhere, people share many more cultural similarities than differences and even the differences between cultures are often less than varieties of thought and behavior within specific cultures. In the final analysis it is this remarkable