A Pragmatic Analysis of Arabic Proverbs with Reference to their Equivalence and Non-equivalence in English

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Proverbs can be defined as culture-laden expressions used for transferring wisdom, recommendations, warning, giving a piece of advice…etc. Theoretically, they are treated as something that should always be replaced by equivalent in the target language. They are also required to be clarified and justified in the source before the target culture since many of them cannot be easily understood. Thus, the translator seeks to find an equivalent of the proverb in the target language. If he does not find a translation of the meaning behind these words, he would delete the proverb altogether or translating them by word-for-word translation. This may be the best way to translate instead of confusing the reader with words that he does not understand its cultural connotations. Proverbs can close the door that may lead the readership to the customs, morals, ideas and even the myths of these cultures that s/he reads about. In this paper, the researcher tackled some Iraqi Arabic famous proverbs to be pragmatically analyzed to show their meaning with reference to their equivalents in the target language. It has been shown that the Iraqi proverbs involve a speech act of warning, advice, irony, etc.

Keywords: Proverbs, Pragmatics, Cultural Equivalence, metaphor

1. Introduction
This paper is a kind of qualitative research approach that aims at exploring and revealing the pragmatic meaning of some Iraqi Arabic proverbs with referring to their equivalence in English. The data in this paper were selected on the basis of their daily use in the Iraqi Arabic everyday banal language. The motivation to do such analysis stems from the fact that an Iraqi Arabic native speaker may need to use them in English as a target language whether in an academic or social context. The research questions posed in this study are:

What is the nature of Iraqi Arabic proverbs?

- What pragmatic function they involve?

- What are their English equivalences?

2.1 Proverbs: Types and Functions
Proverbs, as a folklore discourse, have been the concern of researchers in different areas of research. Thus, they have been defined and categorized differently according to the domain they prevail in. There is, in any case, some broad arrangement with regards to what comprises a proverb. Proverb is “a saying in more or less fixed form, marked by ‘shortness, sense, and salt’ and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it". Moreover, he shows that proverbs are multifunctional and adaptable instruments of ordinary thinking, despite the fact that they might keep up with solidified perspectives or convention modes of thought about a specific culture. Proverbs are illocutionary acts that imply hidden meaning, wishes and goals of the speaker. They can fill in as tools to cover individual views in open interactive situations (Kassis, 1999).

In various societies there are different underlying social portrayals about the essential idea of world proverbial discourse, despite the fact that there are a few circumstances common to the greater part of the way of life. For instance, the utilization of proverbs in Arabic societies contrasts from European societies according to their classification from informal to formal style of communication. In this manner, from the perspective of their own way of life researchers once in a while will generally disregard very fundamental elements of world of proverbial speech, similar to ritual use of these expressions (Brosh, 2013).

Public proverbial discourse of ceremonies is a huge component of communication. But in regular use, proverbial expressions, similar to greetings, openings and leave-takings, appear to have practically inverse capacity in friendly connection than in others relationships. They fill in as repetitive easing up component in discourse. General rhetoric (in traditional meaning) apply to use of proverbs, when it is heard as an indirect speech. The theme under question can be covered, undetectable, however it ought to be figured out between the lines. Proverbs are devices that deal with the data that are not directly or indirectly existing. The socially dominated normal equipment makes it conceivable to allude to imperceptible knowledge. Individuals can talk without giving continually clarifications to the expressions or perspectives. Yet, the need to involve hidden messages in proverbial speech should be deciphered comparable to social situations with the speaker and listeners. The more a person is reliant of the feelings and acknowledgment of the one with whom the conversation is conducted, the more he needs indirect tools of conversation. Various classifications of proverbs have been proposed by various researchers. To meet the aims of this paper, we present two main classifications. The first is that presented by Norrick, who analyzed an example of the proverbs from the oxford dictionary of English Proverbs. He developed a more observationally arranged and less affected schematization that sorts proverbs according to the kind of figuration they use. He recognized five types of figurative proverbs: synecdoche, metaphoric, metonymic, hyperbolic and paradoxical proverbs. It should be referenced that as would be natural for Norrick, metaphorical proverbs have non-literal implications that contrast from their
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2.2.1 Metaphoric Proverbs
A nominal becomes metaphoric because of its collaboration with another proverb constituent, or the nominal represent some feature attribute. An illustration of the first example is, “favor will as surely perish as life and of the second, fair play is a jewel” (Penfield and Duru, 1988).

2.2.2 Metonymic Proverbs
This kind of proverb depends on relationship between something in a real sense named and the thing intended. One example of a metonymic proverb is "who has a fair wife needs more than two eyes" in which the eye stands metonymically for the "sight" (Muxtorova, 2022).

2.2.3 Hyperbolic Proverbs
According to Norrick, “hyperbole has generally been viewed as a logical figure alongside, while perhaps not exactly of a similar significance of synecdoche, metaphor and metonymy”. In fact, hyperbole considers intensification. Intensification says more than needed. For instance, the proverb "faint heart never lost fair woman" is an exaggerated saying because of the presence of “never” in it. This proverb is related to the logical orientation whose meaning and interpretation involves an intelligent inconsistency which is considered as contradictory proverb. This type of proverb has a second meaning on the behalf of the hearer. For example, the proverb “fair is not fair” means please. Indeed, the condition of such proverb is that it declares unmistakable legitimate inconsistency. Another example of paradoxical proverb is “A man home is paradise and hellfire too” (Mieder, 2004). All communities and societies have a set of proverbs used predominantly as effective method for communicating cultural and social norms and values. Proverbs can be used in different parts of conversations. We can find and hear proverbs like a verse poetry, social saying or wisdom as well as day-to-day routines in all cultures, to address circumstances or simply to raise laughter. Proverbs have different kinds of functions. Some of these functions are identified by Horneck. Literary Function for example can be relevant to the literary works such as poetry, prose and songs. They often involve wisdom, pragmatic meaning including advising, ordering, warning and other pragmatic values. Another function of proverb is a practical function so that they can be valuable and impactful in the everyday life purposes. They also used for teaching, apologizing, complaining and other pragmatic functions.

2.4 Proverbs and Translation
Some researchers have been interested in translating proverbs out of admiration and fascination with them and to make them heard to different peoples of different cultures and languages. It is acknowledged that proverbs and judgments include metaphors that are intended to have another meaning. The translator has expected obstacles to achieve the intent and convey the meaning, and the reason for this is the difference in cultural patterns between societies and peoples that reflect a range of cultural contexts, historical, political, social, economic, moral, and cultural values. For example, the wisdom that says, “Someone knows where the shoulder is eaten from.” If a translator translates a verbal translation into a foreign language, it loses its significance and value and may not mean anything to the recipient. Therefore, the translator must be keen on translating the meaning, not the literal layer, and bearing in mind that the cultural pattern is different. It must be a prelude through which he explains the environmental and cultural conditions in which the proverbs arise (Nida, 1964). According to Newmark (1988), there are many linguistic problems that a translator faces while translating like mistakes in usage resulting from the translator’s lack of competence in writing properly, wrong use of dictionaries, using literal translation or the lack of translator’s common sense. Moreover, these linguistic problems may result from the little knowledge of grammar, style, lexical words, collocations, or idioms. Proverbs are fixed expressions that are significant in any language because they denote meanings that can cover all aspects of life and, this in turn, makes them important elements in peoples’ speech. According to Litovikina (2014), they could carry themes related to women, professions and occupations, money, love, marriage, divorce, friendship, education and learning, alcohol and drugs, children and parents, taxes, God and religion, telephones, cars and computers. According to Owji (2013), translation problems fall into two main categories: lexical problems and grammatical problems. 1. Lexical problems When interpreting lexical problems, Owji shows that although words are entities that refer to things or concepts, we may not be able to replace a word in one language with a word in another language when referring to the same concepts or things. Owji also divided lexical problems into two subcategories: Clear semantic meaning: this type of meaning refers to the words of the source text that can match words in the target text “without missing images” (such as mother, father, etc.). The lexical meaning refers to words or phrases that
appear to be equivalent, but in that situation they may not be. The translator must be aware of the intent behind the words so that the author’s message is not distorted. **Figurative expressions:** this subcategory refers to problematic issues when translating idioms and the like. Ginting (2022) makes the following suggestions for translating idiomatic expressions: (a) Distinguish between regular expressions and metaphors (b) Access to resources for translating a metaphor (c) Understand the different contexts and their limitations on the use of metaphors (d) Correct awareness of the limitations imposed on translation and the transmission of the message. The most important thing to focus on in this process is to avoid literal translation and only search for the connotation or figurative expression closest or corresponding to the required proverb in a way that simulates the culture of the target language. The origin of proverbs is that they are the result of real situations. Each proverb has a written history known in its place, and for the translation to be clear and include the meaning, it is necessary to know the origin of the proverb, and literal translation is not required (Talbi and Haifaa, 2019).

3. Data Analysis and Discussion

In this research, we have chosen selected Iraqi Arabic proverbs to examine their realization in English in terms of their equivalence and pragmatic meaning. These proverbs are often used in everyday life. It is worth referring that using such proverbs in this paper will reveal their meaning in Arabic which is sometimes difficult to be understood by an Iraqi Arabic native speaker. Accordingly, this Arabic proverb

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعَسَرِ يَكُولُ حَامضٌ (is religiously and socially rooted in the Arabic culture. It involves the meaning of “With hardship there is ease, a great glad tiding comes with hardship and difficulty, for relief comes with distress, and in defining hardship by definition - and it indicates generality - an indication that no matter how severe and difficult this hardship is. This proverb has a cultural equivalent in English which is *After clouds sun shine.* The proverb literally means that “He who doesn't catch the grapes, says it is sour. This proverb is one of the Najd folk proverbs, and this proverb is said as an argument and justification for the failure that a failed person goes through. Therefore, attributes his failure to the circumstances surrounding him and the external factors, while in fact he lacks the will, enthusiasm and the effort he is making is absolutely not enough to reach his goal. It is said when a person does not love the good of another person and we may have seen such happen in our daily life where people treat each other with respect and talk about them with goodness, and when these people succeed and take a different path from them they start to hate them and change their opinions towards them. This proverb has no cultural equivalent in English. However, the researcher would suggest at the end of the analysis an acceptable equivalent for it. A popular proverb

سَقِطَتْ عَيْنَاتُهَا يَكْتَلَّهَا عَسَا (is the case with the cat, so he only p)

Her response was that this beauty stems from the black frame that surrounds her eyes, which is completely similar to eyeliner. The dog liked the idea of eyeliner around the eye, and wanted his eyes to be beautiful, as is the case with the cat, so he only put eyeliner on his finger and tried to put it on his eye. But unfortunately, his claw entered his eye and pierced it, hence the saying, “He came to eyeliner, but made her a blin. This proverb is one of the Najd folk proverbs, and this proverb is said as an argument and justification for the failure that a failed person goes through. Therefore, attributes his failure to the circumstances surrounding him and the external factors, while in fact he lacks the will, enthusiasm and the effort he is making is absolutely not enough to reach his goal. It is said when a person does not love the good of another person and we may have seen such happen in our daily life where people treat each other with respect and talk about them with goodness, and when these people succeed and take a different path from them they start to hate them and change their opinions towards them. This proverb has no cultural equivalent in English. However, the researcher would suggest at the end of the analysis an acceptable equivalent for it. A popular proverb

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sleep. Or stay away from evil and sing to it. Some repeat this proverb on many occasions or mention it and comment on it on some events. It could be considered for an individual as a principle upon which many of his actions are based, but there are those who have another opinion, as Opening the door to the wind might prevent some bigger problems. However, there is a cultural equivalent for this proverb which is “solve a problem at hand”. The proverb المال السايب يعلم السرقة literally means that “Unattended money teaches theft”. It is famous popular proverb calls for the imposition of censorship and auditing of funds, and implicitly blames the owners of money in many cases of theft, as they facilitated the tasks of the thief by leaving the money without protection or oversight. It is common to say in English “gear adrift is a gear gift”. This basically means that leaving stuff unsecured is an open invitation to theft. In other words, it prompts those to secure their equipment and belongings or it could be lost or stolen. The social proverb Blanché, Blanché refers to a cultural fact that “The ideal friend is the one you find in times of adversity. It reflects the correct image of true friendship. There are friends who take the place of a brother by standing by their friends through ease and hardness. The cultural equivalent for such a proverb in English is “A friend in need is a friend indeed”. The Arabic proverb سبع صنايع والبخت ضائع literally means that “Seven jobs and fortune telling is lost”. This proverb pragmatically is said to someone who does not benefit from any work and does not benefit from any craft he masters. Perhaps luck has a big role in that, and it may be attributed to the neglect on the part of the person, lack of awareness of things, lack of mastery of his work or inability to carry out things properly, which makes his share of failure in all matters. The English equivalent for this proverb is “Jack of all trades, master of none”.

3.1 Overall Discussion
Knowledge of the target culture is crucial to the success of translation between two languages, since the degree of ignorance of the culture is directly proportional to the degree of resistance to translation. In other words, translation is difficult for a translator who is ignorant of the foreign culture of the target language. The greater this ignorance, the greater the difficulty of translation, a difficulty that reflects the situation in which there is cultural convergence between the two languages, the subject of translation. The problem of transferring cultural elements between English and Arabic is one of the most important things that stand in the way of the translator, and this is due to the lack of harmony between Arab societies and English society at the religious, political level, and at the level of customs, traditions and beliefs in their cultural and social dimensions, as well as other levels. Each language has its own uniqueness which makes it special and special to the people who speak it. The translator must be more familiar with the target civilization and culture and therefore more familiar with it. That is, the cultural untranslatability emerges when one of the functionally important positive characteristics of the source language text is completely absent from the culture of which the target language is a part. The difficulty of translation lies in the fact that the language is not a list of words; it is enough to replace one word with another to obtain the required equivalent in the second language. Therefore, the untranslatability is manifested in the fact that it combines two different linguistic systems, and between two different cultures of the universe and reality. The significance of the concepts is linked in the mind of the individual to a set of special experiences and social events that he is going through, and its implications may differ from one individual to another from the same environment. Trying to transfer religious concepts from one language to another, the translator faces difficulty finding the appropriate equivalent that carries the same connotations and overtones that they express in the original.

4. Conclusion
The origin of proverbs is that they are the result of real situations. Each proverb has a written history known in its place and for the translation to be clear and accommodate the meaning, it is necessary to know the origin of the proverb or aphorism. As such, literal translation is not required. Scholars and practitioners of translation unanimously agree that one of the core problems of translation is the translator’s failure to convey the exact meaning in the source text he wants to transfer to the target language. This problem is due to several factors, the most important of which are: Every language carries with it many synonyms whose meanings differ slightly from each other. Each language must belong to a particular culture, and therefore the translator may transfer the word to another language, but he will fall short to transfer the culture of this word effectively so that he transfers the perception of the owner of the original word to the target language in the translation, and these linguistic differences may lead to misconceptions and misunderstandings. Every language has a special character in the formation of the sentence and the arrangement of its vocabulary (its rules). For example, the Arabic language carries with it the nominal sentence and the actual sentence, while this does not exist in the English language, all sentences in English are actual sentences, so the different rules of
languages lead to problems in translation as there are no clear standards for the transfer of structures. In light of this, the translator must possess the culture of the target language in order to reach the true and accurate meaning from the source culture in the translation process.

**Bibliography**


