



Problems of Translating Colloquial Expressions in Naguib Mahfouz's Novel "Children of the Alley" into English: Proverbs as a Case Study

Suzan Ismail Hussein

Najat Abdul Rahman Hassan

M.A Student/ Translation Dept. / college of Art
/University of Mosul

Assist. Prof. / Translation Dept. / college of Art /
University of Mosul

Article information

Article history:

Received August 21, 2022
Review September 25, 2022
Accepted October 1, 2022
Available online September 1, 2023

Keywords:

proverbs,
procedures,
language levels,
and standard(formal) Language.

Correspondence:

Suzan Ismail Hussein
suzanismai1050@gmail.com

Abstract

Colloquialism is a remarkable language level that reflects the social and cultural influences of certain people. This study is an attempt to figure out the problems of translating Egyptian colloquial proverbs in Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Children of the Alley" into English. In fact, it is challenging for a translator to correctly convey the meanings of these aphorisms while preserving their content and effect. Hence, unless a translator understands the intended meaning of such colloquial proverbs, he/she may make blunders in translation and may not elicit the same emotional response as the original. One possible explanation is that the TL has a different level of formality than the SL. The study aims to identify the appropriate translations and the best strategy to adopt in addition to clarifying whether the translator maintains the same level of formality or switches to another one to preserve the meaning. To realize the previously-mentioned aims, the study hypothesizes that translators face difficulties when translating colloquial proverbs since they are linked to socio-cultural ties and reflect the author's unique mindset. Also, there is no obvious translation equivalent for several common colloquial proverbs. That's why translators may switch to the formal level of language when dealing with colloquial proverbs. Vinay and Darbelnet's model (1958/1995) will be applied to colloquial proverbs selected from Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Children of the Alley" in terms of analyzing and evaluating the two translations submitted by the two translators: Stewart's (1981) and Theroux (1999). The study finds out that the absence of equivalence in most cases plays a vital role in making the process of translation more problematic. Therefore, a translator is preferred to switch to formal TL expressions over informal ones, despite the fact that he/she does not maintain the author's attitude behind using such an expression.

مشكلات ترجمة التعابير العامية في رواية نجيب محفوظ "أولاد حارتنا" إلى اللغة الإنجليزية: الأمثال نموذجاً دراسياً

سوزان إسماعيل حسين * نجاة عبدالرحمن حسن **

المستخلص

تُعدُّ اللغة الدارجة أو ما تسمى بـ(العامية) شكلاً لغوياً مميزاً و تعكس التأثيرات الاجتماعية والثقافية لأناس معينين. تُعدُّ هذه الدراسة محاولة جادة للوقوف عند مشكلات ترجمة الأمثال العامية المصرية التي جاء ذكرها في رواية نجيب محفوظ "أولاد حارتنا" إلى اللغة الإنكليزية. في حقيقة الأمر، من الصعوبة بمكان أن يقدم المترجمون نقلاً دقيقاً لمعاني تلك الأمثال بطريقة تحتفظ بالمحتوى والتأثير نفسيهما. فضلاً عن ذلك، فإذا لم يتمكن المترجم من فهم المعنى المقصود لهذه العبارات العامية، فإنه قد يقع في شرك ترجمي ضحل وقد يتقاصر أيضاً في استفزاز الهواجس العاطفية نفسها التي في اللغة الأصل. وقد يُفسر ذلك بأن الترجمة المصاغة في اللغة الهدف تكون في شكل آخر غير الشكل العامي للغة. تهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على مسألة كون الترجمات مناسبة أم لا وأية إستراتيجية هي الأفضل إتباعاً، كما تحاول توضيح فيما إذا حافظ المترجم على الشكل العامي نفسه للغة أو نقله إلى شكل لغوي آخر حفاظاً على المعنى. ولتحقيق الأهداف المذكورة آنفاً، افترضت الدراسة أن المترجمين يواجهون العوائق في أثناء ترجمة الأمثال العامية كونها ترتبط بانعكاسات ثقافية واجتماعية كما تعكس النكهة الخاصة بالمؤلف وأسلوبه. كذلك، من المفترض أن لا نجد مكافئاً ترجمياً لبعض الأمثال العامية؛ ولهذا قد يلجأ المترجمون إلى اعتماد الأسلوب الرسمي في الترجمة الذي ينظوي على المعنى لكنه يفتقر للأثر المقصود في اللغة الأصل. سيتم تطبيق النموذج الترجمي الذي قدمه العالمان فيني وداربلي (1958/1995) على الأمثال العامية المختارة من رواية نجيب محفوظ (أولاد حارتنا). كما تم تحليل وتقييم الترجمتين المطبوعتين لهذه الرواية التي ترجمها كل من ستيوورد (1981) و ثوروكس (1999). وقد خلصت الدراسة إلى أن غياب المكافئ في معظم الحالات يؤدي دوره الأساسي في جعل عملية الترجمة أكثر تعقيداً. بناءً على ما تقدم، يرى الباحث أن من الأفضل للمترجم أن يعتمد الأسلوب الرسمي للغة الهدف كي يحافظ على نقل المعنى العام لتلك الأمثال، رغم أنه في حقيقة الأمر سيتعذر عليه الحفاظ على النكهة الخاصة بالمؤلف ورؤيته الخاصة وراء استعماله لتلك العبارات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأمثال، الإجراءات، مستويات اللغة، واللغة القياسية (الرسمية).

1. Introduction:

Every language has its own characteristics; yet all languages share some aesthetic traits and meanings that are quite adaptable and can keep up with socio-cultural changes. The colloquial aspect is one of the language levels employed in regular informal situations which illustrate a distinctive feature of a given culture and country. So, the usage of the colloquial level of language creates a more democratic tone in the individual's linguistic style. Commonly, when people hear the word "colloquialism," they think of a particular regional or local accent. Furthermore, words, phrases, or aphorisms can all be considered colloquial expressions. In addition, non-native speakers may misunderstand idiomatic or metaphorical colloquial expressions that are employed accidentally.

2. Research Methodology

The term 'colloquialism' is to be described thoroughly, focusing on its various

* طالبة ماجستير/قسم الترجمة/كلية الاداب/جامعة الموصل
** استاذ مساعد / قسم الترجمة/كلية الاداب/جامعة الموصل

characteristics and most prominent types in English and Arabic. Moreover, the practical work of this research conducts the following procedures:

1. Analyzing SL proverbs in accordance with syntactic, semantic, and stylistic perspectives.
2. Analyzing TL proverbs based on the model adopted.
3. Giving an explanation for the use of a certain procedure and showing how well or poorly the chosen method is suitable to transfer the intended meaning to the TL readers.
4. Identifying the procedure that is the most suitable among those presented.
5. To give an objective evaluation, the intended meaning is the criterion for assessing whether the translation is appropriate or not.
6. Providing suggested translations for the inaccurate submitted one(s).

3. What is Colloquialism?

The term ‘colloquialism’ is basically derived from the Latin term ‘colloquium,’ which means ‘conference’ or ‘conversation’ as borrowed into English. ‘Colloquialism’ is used as a rhetorical device that refers to the daily or informal language used in literature (www.iterarydevices.com).

McCrimmon (1972: 136) defines the term ‘colloquialism’ as “a characteristic which is appropriate to the spoken language or to writing that seeks its effect; informal in diction or style of expression.” That is, the colloquial expression does not refer to the notion of incorrectness. McCrimmon (*ibid.*) goes with Richards & Schmidt (2010: 96) who describe colloquialism as conversational in characteristics in which various kinds of words and phrases are used when people speak together quite informally and in which the speakers do not pay special attention to pronunciation, choosing specific formal words, or forming more grammatical sentence structures. They further mention that educated local speakers usually use colloquial speech in informal conditions with their classmates, co-workers, and family members. In this respect, they also argue that colloquial speech is more proper than highly formal speech. Richards & Schmidt elaborate that colloquial speech is not inevitably a non-prestigious one and should not be regarded as substandard. Concerning the written text, McCrimmon mentions that the manner and the technique that may be used in a written text is the writer’s tendency to convey an immediate and intimate impression of talking to the reader. In such a situation, the writer will usually avoid all formal expressions; instead, he/she will use contracted and clipped words numerous to achieve informality as much as possible in writing (*ibid.*).

Popowich, et al. (1997: 5) define ‘colloquial language’ as “the one that includes a remarkable deal of idioms and slang expressions which are frequently ungrammatical.” In addition, concerning the use of colloquial expression, he draws a line between usual conversations and written texts found in technical instructions, journals, and books. Phrases, in this connection, seem to be shorter, less advanced, and frequently violate linguistic rules. Consequently, colloquial expressions usually are formulated within a chain of unstructured and short phrases rather than long and complex sentences (*ibid.*: 1,

5). Concerning the form, Crystal (1999: 61) defines ‘colloquialism’ as a “pronunciation, word, or grammatical construction that is heard in the most informal levels of speech, which tends to be avoided in formal spoken and written language.”

While Nofalli (2012: 10) states that ‘colloquialism’ is usually adopted in a limited geographical zone and is regarded as the broad category of informal style which involves slang. So, slang is a sub-category or part of colloquial expressions. To put it differently, colloquial language lies between informal language and slang. For instance, people formally call some beverages ‘carbonated soft drinks.’ Whereas, informal colloquial expressions may include words such as “y’all” and “wanna” (i.e., “you all” and “want to” respectively), or even phrases like “old as the hills” (i.e., describing something “very old”), or sometimes an entire aphorism like “There’s more than one way to skin a cat” (i.e. “here is another way to get what you want”). (macmillandictionary.com; dictionary.cambridge.org; onlineslangdictionary.com).

To sum up, ‘colloquialism’ is usually of geographical characteristics in addition to its association with a ‘regional’ or ‘local’ dialect. On a syntactic basis, colloquialism can occur as “a word or group of words, phrases, or aphorisms.” Moreover, language users may use colloquial expressions unconsciously, while non-natives may find difficulties in translating these expressions because they are classified as idiomatic or metaphorical sayings rather than literal units.

4. Characteristics of Colloquialism

McCrimmon (1972: 167) describes English colloquialism as follows:

- 1 Some short, simple, and often incomplete clauses, with a few rhetorical devices.
- 2 A copious use of ‘contractions’ (e.g., “I’ll, we’ve, didn’t, can’t, ...etc.”), ‘clipped words’ (e.g., “cab, exam, phone, ...etc.”), and omitting the relative pronouns (e.g., “who, which, that”) that would be kept in the formal style.
- 3 Vocabularies are characterized by widespread evasion of high-level words and insertion of some less offensive slang terms.
- 4 A grammatically simple structure that depends highly on idiomatic constructions and sometimes disregards the distinctive aesthetic features of formal grammar.
- 5 The addressee attempts to create an impression in his speech by using a personal or usual tone.

Bussmann (1996: 201), However, describes colloquialism as an everyday language, illustrating that colloquial speech points to the entire set of expressions in an informal and familiar context like that happen at home or place of work. He also states that idiom resembles colloquial expression in the following characteristics (ibid.: 533):

- a) The real meaning cannot be deduced from the meaning of its individual elements, as in ‘to have a crush on someone’ may mean ‘to be in love with someone.’

- b) The replacement of particular elements leads to a systematic change of meaning, as is the case of exchanging 'crush' with 'smash' in the abovementioned example.
- c) The literal reading brings about a homophonic non-idiomatic variety, to which both mentioned characteristics (a) and (b) no longer apply metaphor.

As for Holmes (2013: 270), he explains two linguistic aspects of colloquial in English. They are as follows:

1. Pronunciation Aspects: consider the following among other cases:

- ❖ Dropping the sound /h/-, e.g., "Oh well," "e said," "I suppose you can 'ave it."
- ❖ Dropping the sound /ɪ/ in the [-ing] form to be just [in], e.g. "We was up there cuttin."

2. Grammatical Features: consider the following among other cases:

- ❖ 'was' with subject in plurality like 'we,' e.g., "we was up there cuttin."
- ❖ 'come' instead of 'came,' e.g., "Frazer come on to us."
- ❖ Omitting the verb 'be,' e.g. "How you doin?" instead of "How are you doing?"

5. Types of Colloquial Expressions

Colloquial expressions are classified as follows:

5.1 Classification According to Aspect

Partridge (1990: 262) classifies colloquialisms into five types, according to its aspect. They are as follows:

1. Single Words:

This aspect comprises informal (single) words that are usually used in everyday conversation. To be sure whether single words belong to colloquial expressions or not might be checked in the authorized dictionary. [e.g.: The word 'folks' is used to denote 'relatives' in "Did you meet my folks?" and 'tremendous' is used to point to 'excellent' in "The movie was tremendous."]

2. Clipped Words:

Clipped words are new ones that are coined via shortening their original lexical items. This may be made by omitting a syllable or more. [e.g.: 'phone' is a clipped word of the original lexical item 'telephone', 'lab' is a clipped word of the original lexical item 'laboratory', and 'bike' is a clipped word of the original lexical item 'bicycle'].

3. Short Picturesque Words for Technical Terms:

The third aspect presents a “short and picturesque word which is used as a variation to call another technical term”. [e.g., ‘bugs’ is colloquially used to refer to ‘insects’ or ‘mechanical faults.’

3. Contractions:

Contractions are shortened forms of their original words by omitting internal letter(s). Instead, the punctuation mark (') (i.e. apostrophe) is replaced by the omitted letter(s). [e.g.: ‘we’ll’ for ‘we will,’ I’d for ‘I would’ or ‘I had,’ ‘can’t’ for ‘cannot,’ ... etc.].

5. Verb-adverb Combinations:

This aspect of combination contains a verb followed by an adverb to give a new meaning(s). [e.g., ‘put’ + ‘out’ to be ‘put out’ referring to new meanings like ‘expel,’ ‘extinguish,’ ‘publish,’ ‘inconvenience,’ ‘embarrass,’ or ‘retire’ (in the baseball game), and ‘lay’ + ‘off’ to be ‘lay off’ denoting a new meaning(s) like ‘discontinue’ (a job or an activity), or ‘rest,’... etc.].

5.2 Classification According to Form

It is worth mentioning that colloquialisms can be also classified into three sub-categories according to their forms. They are either ‘words,’ ‘phrases,’ or ‘aphorisms.’

When such words are realized in the speakers’ certain dialects, they can be described as colloquial expressions. Likewise, such phrases and aphorisms belong to colloquialisms when they are not utilized in their literal sense. Instead, they are generally comprehended within a certain geographical region (Literary Devices, 2017). Below are some details for the three forms of colloquial expression:

1. Word: it is realized as follows:

- a) **Regional differences:** It is one of the common colloquial variants used in the United States, where individuals use single words like ‘soda,’ ‘pop,’ ‘soft drink,’ and ‘coke’ to refer to ‘carbonated beverages.’ That is, in some regional boundaries, isolated words are used as an umbrella term regardless of pointing to a certain brand(s). In this respect, it can be noted that there are many dissimilarities between British English and American English, throughout using such colloquial words and the like [e.g.: ‘truck/lorry,’ ‘soccer/football,’ and ‘parakeet/budgie’].
- b) **Contractions:** It is a matter of fact that contracted words are highly used in colloquial expressions, rather than formal style, like ‘ain’t’ (i.e., “am not, are not, is not, have not, or has not” as in “It’s a free country, ain’t it?” and “those people ain’t got a clue”).
- c) **Profanity:** it is to be noted that there is a group of expressions that can be regarded as ‘disrespectful’ in some English dialects whereas in other dialects they are absolutely not irreverent or swearword [e.g.: the word ‘bloody’ represents a

normal adjective in American English usage, yet it seems like a swearword in British English usage.

2. **Phrases:** here, there are a set of words used together to refer to a certain (idiomatic) meaning of the colloquial expression, as in:
 - “*Old as the hills* (i.e., very old)”.
 - “*Eat my dust* (i.e., to be completely defeated by another person in a competitive situation as in: “we were all eating his dust. I didn't know he could run so fast).” (www.collinsdictionary.com).
3. **Aphorisms:** Likewise, some aphorisms (i.e., proverbs, well-known sayings, or clichés) belong to aspects and forms of colloquialism, as in:
 - “*I wasn't born yesterday* (i.e., someone is unlikely to believe something).” (www.merriam-webster.com).

6.Types of Written Colloquial Arabic Expressions

It is a matter of fact that processing written colloquial Arabic is not an easy task. The reasons behind this difficulty are attributed to several changes. Shaalan et al. (2007:526) summarize these changes, taking into consideration the Egyptian colloquial expressions, as follows:

1. **Changing at the phonological level**, as in ‘تلات’ and ‘أوي’ which are amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘ثلاث’ (three) and ‘قوي’ (strong) respectively.
2. **Changing at the morphological level**, as in ‘إديني’ and ‘ببغغان’ which are amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘إعطني’ (give me) and ‘ببغاء’ (parrot) respectively. Below are some relevant classifications of morphological changes:
 - a) **Verb change**, as in ‘بلليتته’ and ‘ضربتته’ which are amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘بللته’ (wetted it) and ‘ضربته’ (you hit him) respectively.
 - b) **Noun change**, as in ‘أفندم’ and ‘مرّوح’ which are amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘سيد’ (mister) and ‘رائح/ذاهب’ (the one who is going away) respectively.
 - c) **Pronoun change**, as in ‘احنا’ and ‘هُوا’ which are amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘نحنُ’ (we) and ‘هُوَ’ (he) respectively.
 - d) **Demonstrative change**, as in ‘ده’ and ‘دُول’ which are amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘هذا’ (we) and ‘هؤلاء’ (those) respectively.
3. **Changing at the lexical level**, as in ‘بُوء’, ‘نقّاش’, and ‘مناخير’ which are amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘فم’ (mouth), ‘صباغ’ (painter) and ‘أنف’ (nose) respectively.
4. **Changing at the syntactic level**, as in ‘سعيدة!’ and ‘حرماً!’ which are minor clauses amended from the standard Arabic forms ‘ليلة/أوقات سعيدة!’ (Have a good night/time!)

and 'تصلي في الحرم إن شاء الله' (I ask Allah to allow you to pray in Mecca/Madinah) respectively.

5. **Changing into clipped expressions**, as in 'مالك', 'إيه' and 'فين' that are contracted expressions from 'ماذا بك؟' (What is wrong with you?), 'ماذا؟' (What?), and 'إلى أين؟' (Where?).

To sum up, it is clear that Arabic colloquialisms have been derived from the standard Arabic for decades and centuries, due to various factors, like regional, social, cultural ...etc. This derivation of each colloquialism is made via changes at phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic levels.

6. Data Analysis

SL Text (1):

P.22 "بين يوم وليلة انقلب أدهم غراب البين بنعق."

Text Analysis:

As a matter of fact, the phrasal colloquial expression 'غراب البين' is related to a well-known Arabic proverb (its original form is 'أشأم من غراب البين' (more pessimist than the black crow). Basically, this proverb indicates the meaning of mourning, pessimism, separation, and other negative connotations. Likewise, this image is usually used to refer to the same function (i.e., pessimist meaning) (www.thaqafaonline.com; worldbirds.com/crow-symbolism).

Regarding the English culture, the terms "monkey" and "crow" both refer to a pessimistic outlook (Thomas and Fogen, 2017: 429-31). In addition, there are other kinds of animals that are also considered to be "omens of ill fortune". For example, "black cat" is associated with darkness and gloom (Bradway, 2001: 25).

TL Texts:

- 1) Stewart "All of a sudden, he felt as much out of place as an owl amongst ravens" (p. 12).
- 2) Theroux "Overnight Adham himself had become as inauspicious as a cawing crow..." (p. 18).

Discussion:

It is clear that translator (1) goes with the 'indirect translation' since he tries to be free from the ST constraints. That is, he adopts the 'adaptation procedure' via reproducing a new image (i.e., an owl) referring to the SL image (i.e., the black crow). Despite the fact that he maintains the formality style (i.e. he gives a TL colloquial expression), he is unlucky in this reproduction because the image of 'owl' in the English culture has a

positive purpose (i.e., it is the symbol of wisdom). As for the proverb used by the translator (1), i.e., ‘an owl amongst ravens,’ in American culture denotes hostility and domination rather than a sign of ominous (www.capeandislands.org). As for translator (2), he uses the indirect translation strategy by adopting the ‘modulation procedure.’ In other words, he partially amends the intention of the word ‘البين’ (separation) into ‘مشؤوم / منحوس’ (inauspicious). Honestly, he succeeds in his rendition since he maintains the precise intended meaning of the SL colloquial expression. However, he adopts the formal style in his rendition. The table below is illustrative:

	ST (1)	TT		Sense Compromise
	<u>غراب البين</u>	(1) as <u>an owl amongst ravens</u>	(2) as <u>inauspicious as a cawing crow</u>	
Direct translation	<i>Borrowing</i>			
	<i>Calque</i>			
	<i>Literal Translation</i>			
Oblique / Indirect Translation	<i>Transposition</i>			
	<i>Modulation</i>		(✓)	(+)
	<i>Equivalence</i>			
	<i>Adaptation</i>	(✓)		(-)

SL Text (2):

“لولا تعاسة أهلي ما اشتترطت في خدمتك شرطاً قط. واقترب من الناظر فرفع يده تحية وقال بشجاعة: ”وعد الحر دين عليه“ p. 192.

Text Analysis:

The above-mentioned clausal colloquial expression can be sorted under the category of aphorisms. This proverb is used to remind us that ‘promises made should be honored or must be kept’ whatever the outcome is by all means. Semantically, it comprises the notion of maintaining the promise and reflects a person’s characteristics of masculinity and chivalry (Qirqar, 2016: 200). This Arabic proverb has an equivalent English expression, i.e., “a deal’s a deal” or “a promise is a promise” (idioms.thefreedictionary.com).

TL Texts

- 1) Stewart “*But for my people’s misery, I should never have made any conditions for serving you. Then he went up to the Trustee and said boldly: “The word of free man is binding” (p. 128).*

- 2) Theroux “*If it weren’t for my people’s misery, I would never have laid down a single condition to help you. He went to the overseer and saluted him. “A free man promise must be kept”*” (p. 157).

Discussion:

Translators (1 and 2) try to submit this well-known saying keeping on its functional meaning. As for the translator (1), he goes after the ‘indirect translation’ strategy via adopting the ‘modulation’ procedure. To put it differently, he changes the specific notion of the SL expression ‘وعد’ (promise) into a more generic expression, i.e., ‘كلمة’ (word). Besides, he also modifies the word ‘دين’ (debt) into ‘إلزام’ (binding). Contrarily, the translator (2) uses the ‘direct translation’ strategy by adopting the ‘literal translation’ procedure, since he sticks to the SL orientation verbatimly in his translation. So, the rendition submitted by translator (1) is more appropriate than that of translator (2). although both translators follow the formal style in their renditions, the most appropriate (informal) translation for this proverb is that of the ‘equivalence’ procedure, as mentioned below in the suggested translation. Consider the table below:

	ST (2)	TT		Sense Compromise
	وعد الحردين	(1) <i>The word of free man is binding</i>	(2) <i>A free man promise must be kept</i>	
Direct translation	<i>Borrowing</i>			
	<i>Calque</i>			
	<i>Literal Translation</i>		(✓)	(-)
Oblique / Indirect Translation	<i>Transposition</i>			
	<i>Modulation</i>	(✓)		(+)
	<i>Equivalence</i>			
	<i>Adaptation</i>			

Suggested translation: ‘A promise is a promise.’

SL Text (3):

طرردنتي إكراماً لأحققر من انجبت، أرايت كيف كان سلوكه نحوك، ها أنت ترميه بنفسك الى التراب، عقاب بعقاب والبادي أظلم). p.51

Text Analysis:

The previously mentioned colloquial expression is in the form of a proverb which means that the punishment for wrongdoing should match the severity level of the initial act of violence. The proverb talks about exacting punishment on someone who injured you. It specifies the notion of the Quranic Aya (Surat Al-Ma’idah, Aya: 45):

﴿وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ﴾

“And We ordained therein for them: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth” (Hilali and Khan, 1427/2006: 132).

It is clear that the English colloquial equivalence for the SL proverb is ‘tit for tat,’ and the common notion is “a similar punishment that should be given in return.” (ar.encyclopedia-titanica.com). Whereas, the formal style of the SL expression is “An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,” which holds the same previous meaning (www.collinsdictionary.com).

TL Texts:

- 1) **Stewart:** “*For the sake of your most despicable child you throw me out, and you see how he treated you? and now you have thrown him out. Tit for tat - and the first is the worst*” (p. 32).
- 2) **Theroux:** “*you kicked me out to please the lowest of your children – and do you see how he has treated you? Now you yourself are throwing him out into the dirt, just as you did to me, and you’re worst off of all.*” (p. 42).
- 3)

Discussion:

Concerning the discussion of the aforementioned renderings, both translators employ the ‘indirect (oblique)’ strategy. As for translator (1), he adopts the ‘equivalence’ procedure with which he describes the same situation and conveys the same effect of the proverb in the TL. So, he succeeds in both keeping on the informal style and adopting the most appropriate procedure. Translator (2) is unlucky while adopting the ‘modulation’ procedure with which he gives a generic TL expression (i.e., just as you did to me) for the specific SL one. Moreover, he uses formal expression to render the colloquial SL. Consider the table below:

	ST (3)	TT		Sense Compromise
	عقاب بعقاب والبادي أظلم	(1)Tit for tat	(2)just as you did to me	
Direct translation	<i>Borrowing</i>			
	<i>Calque</i>			
	<i>Literal Translation</i>			
Oblique / Indirect Translation	<i>Transposition</i>			
	<i>Modulation</i>		(✓)	(-)
	<i>Equivalence</i>	(✓)		(+)
	<i>Adaptation</i>			

SL Text (4):

(فهز ادريس رأسه الاشعث في يأس وقال: أكبر منك بيوم يعرف أكثر منك بسنة، وأنا اكبرك بعشر سنوات لا بسنة واحدة) p.37.

Text Analysis:

This underlined clausal colloquial expression is a proverb that is usually said to refer to an elder person who has more experience in life than the junior one(s). Such an experience is related to age. In English, a similar meaning may be conveyed as i.e., “Older than you by a day, wiser than you by a year.” (kalimaquotes.com)

TL Texts:

- 1) Stewart: “Idris shook his head hopelessly. I am much older and more experienced than you.” (p.23).
- 2) Theroux: “Idris shook his disheveled head in despair. ‘Older by a day, wiser by a year’- and I am ten years older than you are, not just one.” (p.30).

Discussion:

In this text, both translators go with an ‘indirect’ strategy. In other words, translator (1) follows the ‘modulation’ procedure because he conducts the cause and effect technique involved in this procedure, as mentioned in the theoretical side of the study. Nevertheless, he follows the formal style in his rendition in which he conveys the function rather than the sense behind using this proverb. However, the translator (2) represents a more appropriate rendition than the translator (1) as he adopts the ‘equivalence’ procedure, which is considered an appropriate informal expression of this SL proverb maintaining the effect alongside the function. Consider the table below:

	ST (4)	TT		Sense Compromise
	<u>أكبر منك بيوم يعرف أكثر منك بسنة</u>	<u>(1)I am much older and more experienced than you.</u>	<u>(2)Older by a day, wiser by a year.</u>	
Direct translation	<i>Borrowing</i>			
	<i>Calque</i>			
	<i>Literal Translation</i>			
Oblique / Indirect Translation	<i>Transposition</i>			
	<i>Modulation</i>	(✓)		(-)
	<i>Equivalence</i>		(✓)	(+)
	<i>Adaptation</i>			

SL Text (5):

”فقال عبدون وهو يقدم الشاي الى فوانيس: خطوة عزيزة وبعدها تحفر القبور. فضحكت تمر حنة قائلة: اسمعوا فالكم من عيالكم“ p.122.

Text Analysis:

This proverb belongs to the category of aphorisms. It is similar to ‘خذوا فالها من ‘اطفالها and ‘خذ علومها من وسومها’. it is said to express either optimism or pessimism toward certain behavior of some children (i.e. to expect something happens as the children say it or express it via body language or temper). It is considered an old habit or doctrine.

concerning English culture, a similar expression with a slightly different meaning is basically taken from the Biblical verse (with paraphrasing): Jesus (p.b.u.h.) “ordains strength and praise out of the mouth of babes.” The full version of this saying is “Out of the (oft) mouths of babes oft times come gems.” (www.dictionary.com; ich.gov.jo/node; almaany.com).

TL Texts:

- 1) Stewart: “Listen! Out of the mouths of babes!” (p.80.)
- 2) Theroux: “Listen to your future from your children!” (p.99.)

Discussion:

It is clear that throughout renditions, each translator has his own view toward this Egyptian proverb. Translator (1) adopts the ‘indirect strategy’ via submitting the ‘equivalence’ procedure. He is lucky in both conveying the similar meaning of the ST and keeping on the same formality (i.e. using an informal style).As for translator (2), he goes after the ‘literal translation’ procedure. It is true that he submits the functional meaning that can be acceptable, yet, he changes the style to formal. Consequently, the rendition submitted by the translator (1) is better than that of the translator (2). The following table is illustrative:

	ST (4)	TT		Sense Compromise
	<u>اسمعوا فالكم من عيالكم</u>	<u>(1)Listen! Out of the mouths of babes!</u>	<u>(2)Listen to your future from your children!</u>	
<i>Direct translation</i>	<i>Borrowing</i>			
	<i>Calque</i>			
	<i>Literal Translation</i>		(✓)	(+)
<i>Oblique / Indirect Translation</i>	<i>Transposition</i>			
	<i>Modulation</i>			
	<i>Equivalence</i>	(✓)		(+)
	<i>Adaptation</i>			

7. Conclusions:

The current study concludes that most colloquial terms are socio-culturally bound. To translate such words, a translator must have extensive knowledge; otherwise, he/she will lose the intended meaning and function. Moreover, in some cases, translators can't identify a TL equivalent. The researcher, in turn, proposes a 'couplet' translation procedure to bridge SL and TL gap. Finally, in both translations, translators apply formal TL terms to be as close as possible to the functional meaning of a colloquial expression, but they lose the author's spirit.

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