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Examining the Challenges of Translating Cultural Bound Expressions: The Case of Arab Professional Translators

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Abstract
The translation of culture-bound expressions such as idioms, proverbs and similes can be a challenge even for professional translators, who are expected to have an excellent command of the languages they work with, at least theoretically. Therefore, in this paper we aim to examine the five categories of challenges and find out by conducting a survey of Arab professionals. In our survey, 56 Arabic translators in Saudi Arabia are asked to select the English and Arabic culture-bound expressions they know. Furthermore, this study is significant since it attempts to answer the question of whether translation CBIs with direct equivalent constitutes a problem when translating between English and Arabic or whether translation CBIs with no equivalent is translatable or not. Our initial results show that the translation of culture-bound expressions can indeed cause significant challenges for professional translators. Overall, our results suggest that testing the cultural knowledge for translators between Arabic and English is a possible task and therefore it is possible to improve a reliable translation product. Also, the findings propose that there is a pressing need to have a corpus of the most frequent uses of CBI in translator training programmes.
Keywords: word for word translation, word translation type, cultural expressions

INTRODUCTION

The translation of CBIs requires translators to have an excellent command of the languages and cultures they work with. Studies that test translators' cultural knowledge not only in their target language but, most importantly, in their native language are few and far between. Thus, in this exploratory study, the CBI challenges will be tested based on the five categories of the image and meaning of expressions that were identified early study by Aldhahi, Fernández-Parra and Davies (2018). This exploratory study will be a first attempt to determine and rank the levels of CBI challenges, starting from the least difficult to the most difficult category to translate. The survey in this study can be also used as a tool to measure cultural knowledge of translators.

Measuring translator's SL and TL cultural knowledge will help in three distinct ways. First, to evaluate their cultural knowledge of their own CBIs and TL CBIs; second, to explore the influence of SL knowledge on the acquisition of TL cultural knowledge to

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find out whether they have less exposure to TL or whether their own cultural expressions are limited, which can be a reason for less exposure to cultural knowledge in TC; third, to investigate whether acquisition of certain categories in the SL can assist in exposing categories in the TL, which can help indicate which categories present the greatest challenge. The assumption is that English CBIs that have a direct Arabic translation equivalent are better known than those that do not.

THE SURVEY: CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN CBIS

Aldhahi et al. (2018) presented five categories of challenges and solutions in translating CBIs based on two variables, i.e. image and meaning, between English CBIs and their equivalents in Arabic. These categories needed to be examined in order to ascertain whether they present a challenge for Arabic professional translators' in Saudi Arabia or not. Hence, in this study, there is a need to evaluate Arabic professional translators' knowledge of English CBIs and Arabic CBIs by presenting the list of English expressions and their equivalents in Arabic.

In this study, each category of translation challenges, as presented in (Aldhahi et al., 2018), is investigated exploratory. It is particularly important to examine categories 3 (DI-SM) and 5 (NOEQ) and whether expressions with no direct translation are the most challenging or whether it is category 4 (SSI_DM) where their direct translation is connoted with a different meaning. It is assumed that categories 1 and 2 are the easiest among the other categories, as Masrai and Milton (2015, p. 198) claim that learners 'have a greater potential to learn words which have a direct translation equivalent in Arabic than words that do not have a direct translation equivalent' which can be applied to CBIs as well. This is also supported by the findings of other empirical studies (Alhaysony, 2017; Karlsson, 2013) that learners tend to rely on the transparency of idiomatic expressions that are similar to their native language.

Sections in the Survey

To evaluate the level of challenges to translate CBIs, two tests of cultural competence (CC) are used to measure the cultural competence of professional translators in both Arabic and English. These are the English CBI Knowledge Test (ECBI_KT) (see Appendix B) and Arabic CBI Knowledge Test (ACBI_KT) (see Appendix C).

ECBI_KT: a test designed for this paper, aimed at measuring English cultural knowledge of Arabic professional translators.

ACBI_KT: a test designed for this paper, aimed at measuring Arabic cultural knowledge of Arabic professional translators.

The ECBI_KT tests the knowledge at five levels of challenges in translating English CBIs and presents an estimate of the overall breadth of knowledge of the expressions. The ACBI_KT is built to give the equivalences of ECBI_KT (i.e. by giving the equivalence of each expression in ECBI_KT). With this approach, the researchers explores whether English CBIs that have direct translation equivalents are better known by translators than those that do not have direct translation equivalents, and whether having high scores in Arabic CBIs helps to have high scores in English CBIs. This will bring into the

discussion the five categories of similarities and differences which is the second aim of this study.

The tests consist of 138 expressions, i.e. 69 expressions in English and 69 corresponding expressions in Arabic. Categories 1 to 4 contains 15 CBIs each, i.e. five examples of each type of CBI (i.e. idiom, proverb and simile), amounting to 120 expressions in total across the four categories (60 in each language). However, in Category 5 (i.e. 'no equivalence'), there were 18 examples (9 in each language). The reason for increasing the number in the case of the no equivalence category is that in the four previous classes each expression in English has an Arabic equivalent, while in the case of the fifth class there is no equivalent.

Thus, it is a question of presenting a range of challenges in both English and Arabic expressions. As a consequence, six examples of each type of CBI were presented in category 5, i.e. three expressions in English and three expressions in Arabic for each of the three types of CBI. This amounted to 18 expressions. The combined total number of expressions across the five categories is therefore 138 expressions, i.e. 69 per language. This total arose from efforts to make the test as comprehensive as possible, yet short enough to obtain responses from busy professional translators. It may be argued that 138 expressions is a large number for the participants as many of them may be busy and not able to complete the survey. Therefore, this part of the survey was designed as a checklist, rather than free text questions in order to encourage as much participation from the professional translators as possible.

In order to prevent the participants from overestimating their knowledge and selecting expressions that they thought they knew, a systematic correcting formula was adopted from the Masrai and Milton XK-Lex test (2012). Thus, both tests have expressions that are considered to be correct CBIs (75%, i.e. 54) to which no changes were made, e.g. a leopard never changes its spots, in the nick of time, معظم النار من مستصغر الشرر and الأعمال أعلى صوتاً من الأقوال); These expressions will be referred to as 'real expressions'. While 25% (i.e. 15) are invented but are made to look like correct Arabic and English expressions (e.g. all that glitters is not steel, she was the joy of her father's eye, لا ناقة لي فيها ولا حمل and إذا كان السكوت من فضة فالكلام من ذهب). These expressions will be referred to as 'incorrect expressions'.

In Categories 1 to 4, there are four correct expressions and one incorrect per type. However, in Category 5 (i.e. 'no equivalence'), there were 18 examples, i.e. three examples for each type (i.e. idioms and idiomatic expressions, proverbs and similes) in Arabic and three in English. Thus, in Category 5, there are two incorrect expressions (i.e. one incorrect expression in Arabic and one incorrect expression in English) and four correct expressions.

The participants in this survey are 56 professional translators in the source culture (i.e. Saudi Arabia) who work in two sectors (i.e. private and public). The participants were targeted by social networks (i.e. forums, websites, Twitter and LinkedIn). However, only 34 participants completed all of the sections of the survey, so this study focuses only on these 34 participants.

The ECBI_KT and ACBI_KT have six scales of answers adapted from Karlsson's test (2013) in order to obtain more comprehensive responses as explains below. Given the fact that approaching an idiomatic expression is different from approaching vocabulary, the six scales were necessary. This is because participants can guess or recognise the CBIs from different factors such as the direct translation equivalent in their native language in idiomatic senses (Baker, 2011) or for a direct translation equivalent for the individual words in the literal sense (Baker, 2011). Hence, the researchers adapted Karlsson's (2013) six scales for the comprehension of idioms into a scale for the comprehension of CBIs in order to measure their degree of relative accessibility. Three answers are negative:

1. *I do not know this expression.*
2. *I am guessing the meaning of the expression.*
3. *I recognise this expression, but I don't know what it means.*

The other three answers for 'yes' are:

1. *I recognise this expression and I'm guessing its meaning.*
2. *I recognise this expression and I think I know what it means.*
3. *I know what the expression means.*

These six answers can offer a discriminating account of the translators' knowledge of Arabic and English expressions. The first three answers are negative answers as the participants' either guess the meaning since their knowledge is imperfect or are unsure about it. But the other 3 answers are positive, as the participants recognise the expressions and know their meaning. This may be because they have similar expressions in their TL.

It will help to determine the degree to which it is important for professional translators to live in the country where their native language is spoken in order to develop local knowledge. Or they may develop a third language or translationese; where the target text reads like a 'foreign' language and it 'sounded wrong' (Duff, 1981, p. xi). The tests will help to evaluate both their knowledge of Arabic and English CBIs in the first instance but also to explore their knowledge of cultural equivalences.

PROCEDURE

The Survey was sent to individuals and organisations such as the UK's Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI) by using social network programs such as LinkedIn, Twitter, e-mails with a set of demographic questions (Appendix A) to exclude those who are not Arabic professional translators. The participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they think they are familiar with the expressions by selecting the most appropriate response from the six scale levels of relative knowledge (Karlsson, 2013). There was no time constraint in doing the test and they were allowed to use reference sources. However, the test itself was designed not to exceed 15 minutes to complete.

After the 56 responses to the tests were collected, they were marked manually in order to obtain a final score for each participant. A 100% score would be obtained by highlighting the 54 correct expressions as correct and the 15 incorrect expressions as

incorrect, totalling 69 expressions. When expressions were marked incorrectly by participants, the percentage score for the incorrect expressions was deducted from the percentage score for the correct expressions.

Finally, the resulting score for each participant was recorded. Normally, the incorrect responses came from guessing and would, of course, produce a score lower than that for correct expressions. For some participants, however, their score for incorrect expression was higher than that for their correct ones which led to them having a negative score. This indicates that the participant did not perform seriously in the test or s/he did not have appropriate knowledge. In this case and in order to avoid any negative results, the scores were recorded as zero instead of minus which meant that the participants did not get any score. Others scored zero in one of the tests (i.e. ECBI_KT and ACBI_KT) because they failed to respond to one of them. However, those who failed to respond to one of the tests were excluded from the discussions as the discussion was exploring the relationship between the two tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researchers presents the results of the analyses using SPSS. First, a descriptive statistic for the participants' demographic and personal characteristics was analysed (see below). Secondly, a descriptive statistics analysis was produced, based on participants' scores for both tests (see below). A correlation coefficient analysis was also performed to explore the relationship between English scores and Arabic scores (see below). Finally, the levels of challenges are presented below.

Demographic and Personal Characteristics

This section presents the demographic and personal characteristics of the professional translators participating in the cultural competence survey and provides the responses to the 12 questions in the demographic section (Appendix A). This section can provide insights into factors such as gender, age, education, experience which may affect the translators' cultural knowledge as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic and Personal Characteristics of the participants

ID	Characteristics		N	Per Cent
1	Gender:	Female	30	54%
		Male	22	39%
		Prefer not to say	4	7%
2	Age:	21 – 30	45	80%
		31 – 40	7	13%
		41 – 50	1	2%
		Prefer not to say	3	5%
3	Ethnic origin:	Saudi	33	70%
		Lebanese	4	7%
		Jordanian	4	7%
		Egyptian	1	2%
		Yemeni	1	2%
		Sudanese	1	2%
		Syrian	3	6%
		Iraq (Gulf country)	1	2%

		Prefer not to say	1	2%
4	SL:	Arabic	55	98%
		English	0	0
		Prefer not to say	1	2%
5	Education level:	Diploma	2	4%
		BA	36	74%
		MA	10	20%
		PhD	0	0
		Prefer not to say	1	2%
6	Professional Experience:	0-5	41	84%
		6-10	3	6%
		11-15	2	4%
		16-20	1	2%
		Prefer not to say	2	4%
7	What is your profession?	None	2	4%
		Private sector	25	51%
		Public sector	18	37%
		Other	3	6%
		Prefer not to say	1	2%
8	Where do you live now? :	Saudi Arabia	54	96%
		UK	1	2%
		Prefer not to say	1	2%
9	Have you lived in an English-speaking country?	Yes	10	20%
		No	38	78%
		Prefer not to say	1	2%
10	How many years have you been in the English-speaking country?	0-1	38	78%
		1-5	9	18%
		6-10	1	2%
		Prefer not to say	1	2%
11	Are you a member of any of these associations or any others? Please indicate:	None	36	64%
		ATA	1	2%
		ITI	1	2%
		CIOL	0	0
		JTA	1	2%
		ALTA	0	0
		AUSIT	1	2%
		CTTIC	0	0
		Other	14	25%
		Prefer not to say	2	3%
12	Have your studies helped you to improve your translation of CBIs?	Yes	38	78%
		No	7	14%
		I do not know	3	6%
		Prefer not to say	1	2%

Table 1 shows that 30 participants were female (i.e. 54%) and 22 male (i.e. 39%), whereas four (7%) preferred not to say. The majority (i.e. 80%) were between 21-30 years old, only seven participants (13%) were aged 31-40 and one (2%) was aged 41-50. The rest (5%) preferred not to say.

Almost 84% had 0 to five years' experience, with 6% of the participants six years to 10 years' experience. A small number, 4%, had 11 years to 15 years' experience. Finally, one person (2%) has more than 16 years' experience and two participants (4%) preferred not to say.

In general, almost all the participants were Arabic speakers except one participant (2%) who preferred not to say. The participants were from: Saudi Arabia 70%; Lebanon 7%; Jordan 7%; Syria 6%; Egypt, Yemen, Sudan 2% each; Iraq (Gulf country) 1%; and 1% preferred not to say. Although this participant did not indicate where s/he was from, s/he indicated that s/he was an Arabic speaker. For this reason there is no need to exclude the participant as the criterion of this research is that respondents are Arabic professional translators regardless of their nationality.

The majority of participants (i.e. 74%) held a BA, two of the participants (4%) held a Diploma, and ten participants (20%) held an MA (i.e. 20%) but no one held a PhD and only one participant (2%) preferred not to say.

Twenty-five of the participants (51%) worked in the private sector and 18 (37%) in the public sector. Two (4%) did not specify a sector and one (2%) preferred not to say. Three (6%) stated that they worked in different sectors, possibly as freelance translators.

Ninety-six per cent live in Saudi Arabia while only 2% live in the UK and 2% preferred not to say. Even so, the survey was sent to many UK organisations involved in translation. The majority (78%) had lived in an English-speaking country for about one year or less while about 18% had lived there for up to 5 years. One participant (2%) had lived there for 6-10 years and one (2%) preferred not to say.

The majority, 64%, are not members of any translation associations, only 2% were members of ATA, 2% of ITI, 2% of JTA, 2% of AUSIT and 25% indicated that they belonged to other associations and 3% preferred not to say.

Regarding the final question, about 78% of the participants believed that their studies helped them to improve their translation of CBIs, while 14% believed that it did not help them and 6% did not know. The remaining participants (2%) preferred not to say.

Descriptive Summary of Participants' Scores of English and Arabic CBIs

This section presents a descriptive summary for professional translators' knowledge in both Arabic and English CBIs. In general, the researchers predicted that their Arabic knowledge would be higher than English, as Arabic is their native language. The researchers also hypothesised that their Arabic score is a reflection of their English score; if they attained a high score in Arabic, they would attain a high score in English and vice versa. A minus sign ('-') in this case is used to show that the participant relies on significant guesswork, e.g. when participants did not complete the whole survey, usually in the Arabic section, as the Arabic is the last section on the survey. This means those participants will be excluded before doing any inferential. Their knowledge of both Arabic and English CBIs is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Total knowledge in both Arabic and English CBIs

ID	ECBIs			ACBIs		
	Correct (54)	Non-correct (15)	Total (%)	Correct (54)	Non-correct (15)	Total (%)
1	42(78%)	13(87%)	-9	43 (80%)	12 (80%)	0

2	31(57%)	8(53%)	4	49 (91%)	6 (40%)	51
3	43 (80%)	9 (63%)	63	-	-	-
4	25(46%)	6(40%)	6	47 (87%)	9 (60%)	27
5	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	54 (100%)	15 (100%)	0	54 (100%)	15 (100%)	0
7	18(33%)	6(40%)	-7	38 (70%)	6 (40%)	30
8	37 (69%)	10 (67%)	2	51 (94%)	11 (73%)	21
9	34 (63%)	0	63	42 (78%)	2 (14%)	64
10	40 (74%)	10 (67%)	7	51 (94%)	12 (80%)	14
11	10 (19%)	5 (33%)	-14	46 (85%)	7(47%)	39
12	30 (56%)	10 (67%)	-11	46 (85%)	9 (60%)	25
13	38 (70%)	8 (53%)	17	50 (93%)	13 (87%)	6
14	39 (72%)	7 (47%)	25	47 (87%)	9 (60%)	27
15	26 (48%)	2 (13%)	35	50 (93%)	10 (67%)	26
16	46 (85%)	11 (73%)	12	52 (96%)	12 (80%)	16
17	21 (39%)	6 (40%)	-1	48 (89%)	11 (73%)	16
18	32 (59%)	6 (40%)	19	47 (87%)	7 (47%)	40
19	22 (41%)	10 (67%)	-26	45 (83%)	6 (40%)	43
20	41 (76%)	11 (73%)	3	49 (91%)	12 (80%)	11
21	35 (65%)	9 (17%)	48	53 (98%)	12 (80%)	18
22	34 (63%)	4 (27%)	36	46 (85%)	7 (47%)	39
23	31 (57%)	9 (17%)	40	4 (7%)	3 (20%)	-13
24	33 (61%)	7 (47%)	14	49 (91%)	9 (60%)	31
25	54 (100%)	15 (100%)	0	54 (100%)	15 (100%)	0
26	27 (50%)	9 (17%)	33	48 (89%)	11 (73%)	16
27	22 (41%)	5 (33%)	8	33 (61%)	6 (40%)	21
28	49 (91%)	12 (80%)	11	54 (100%)	15 (100%)	0
29	25 (46%)	4 (27%)	19	-	-	-
30	39 (72%)	5 (33%)	39	40 (74%)	6 (40%)	34
31	54 (100%)	14 (93%)	7	54 (100%)	15 (100%)	0
32	53 (98%)	13 (87%)	11	54 (100%)	15 (100%)	0
33	34 (63%)	2 (13%)	50	52 (96%)	8 (53%)	43
34	31 (57%)	4 (27%)	30	50 (93%)	10 (67%)	26
35	19 (35%)	6 (40%)	-5	-	-	-
36	34 (63%)	9 (17%)	46	53 (98%)	14 (93%)	5
37	40 (74%)	12 (80%)	-6	-	-	-
38	11 (20%)	3 (20%)	0	37 (69%)	5 (33%)	35
39	16 (30%)	4 (27%)	3	45 (83%)	8 (53%)	30
40	18 (33%)	3 (20%)	13	51 (94%)	10 (67%)	28
41	23 (43%)	10 (67%)	-24	-	-	-
42	34 (63%)	7 (47%)	16	37 (69%)	6 (40%)	29
43	14 (26%)	6 (40%)	-14	41 (76%)	7 (47%)	29
44	11(20%)	4 (27%)	-7	29 (54%)	7 (47%)	7
45	18 (33%)	6 (40%)	-7	38 (70%)	6 (40%)	30
46	37 (69%)	10 (67%)	2	51 (94%)	11 (73%)	21
47	34 (63%)	0	63	42 (78%)	2 (14%)	64
48	40 (74%)	10 (67%)	7	51 (94%)	12 (80%)	14
49	10 (19%)	5 (33%)	-14	46 (85%)	7 (47%)	39
50	30 (56)	10 (67%)	-11	46 (85%)	9 (60%)	25
51	38 (70)	8 (53%)	17	50 (93%)	13 (87%)	6
52	39 (72)	7 (47%)	25	47 (87%)	9 (60%)	27
53	26 (48)	2 (13%)	35	50 (93%)	10 (67%)	26

54	46 (85)	11 (73%)	12	52 (96%)	12 (80%)	16
55	21 (39%)	6 (40%)	-1	48 (89%)	11 (73%)	16
56	54 (100%)	14 (93%)	7	54 (100%)	13 (87%)	13

Table 2 presents a descriptive summary of the 56 participants' scores in both ECBI-KT and ACBI-KT. Those 56 participants are Arabic professional translators based on the demographic set of questions. The first column (ID) shows the participants' ID, and is followed by two major columns; ECBI-KT and ACBI-KT. Each of these two columns has 3 sections; the first indicates how many real expressions they know, based on their answers on 6 scales; the second shows how many non-real expressions they assumed they knew it, which were included in the test to 'allow for the score to be adjusted for guessing and overestimation' (Masrai, 2015, p. 79).

The last column shows the final scores for each participant by considering the percentage in calculating the real expressions after taking guesswork into account. This is because the value of real expressions is different from the value of non-real expressions; non-real expressions percentage is out of 15 expressions while the percentage of real expressions derives from a set of 54. Then, the next column ACBI-KT is similarly followed by three sections.

The tests, however, were designed under five categories, each category has 15 expressions; three types of CBIs (5 idioms/idiomatic expressions, 5 proverbs and 5similes). Each type has one non-real expression to adjust the overestimation of answers.

The table (2) shows figures highlighted in red, green and grey. The red highlight indicates that the participant has conducted much guesswork, as s/he shows all the real expressions and non-real expressions. While the green highlight indicates those who got a negative score on their total results because the non-real expressions are higher than the real expressions, which indicates more guesswork. And the grey highlight indicates those who did not complete the Arabic section. Therefore, all highlighted figures will be excluded before drawing any conclusions in the following sections.

For example, participant ID (56) is highlighted in red; although s/he got 7 in the final score, the guesswork was high since the real expressions were 54 out of 54 and the non-real expressions were 14 out of 15. Comparing participant ID (56) with participant ID (9) (not highlighted) who got 34 real expressions, which are much fewer, but s/he is considered better in the final score as the guesswork is 0. Therefore, any high numbers of non-real expressions will be excluded from further discussion. Thus, there will be 34 participants in the following discussion sections.

Participants' Comments in the Comments Box

Some comments, in the comments box in the survey (see Appendix B and C), from the participants can be useful for developing this test. However, they can be excluded because they did not provide responses for whole sections or relied heavily on guesswork. For example, participant (ID 28) clarified, regarding ECBI_KT, that some words are replaced in some expressions and s/he gives an example; all that glitters is

not 'gold' instead of all that glitters is not 'steel'; likewise, as brave as a 'lion', instead of as brave as a 'cow'; furthermore, as cool as a 'cucumber', instead of as cool as a 'lemon'.

This shows that maybe some participants have not paid attention to the written instructions given to them, which might be a problem in addressing these instructions in the test. In the written instructions, it was made clear that some of these expressions have been invented but are made to look like a real expression which means that if they have the CBIs' knowledge, they would have known that these expressions were incorrect. This survey can be revised more before further study to clarify this issue.

By contrast, participant (ID 34) claims that this test is interesting. Likewise, a participant (ID 16) points out that 'these cultural-bound idiomatic expressions are not easily recognised by translation trainees as they are not taught properly in translation courses available in some of Saudi Arabia's universities.' The participant also claims that 'such expressions along with their suggested translational strategies need to be part of the translation curriculum.' These responses underline the crucial need for this study whose results can help in drawing up guidelines for the curriculum in Saudi universities and could play an important role in developing a test for an evaluation system for translators.

Referring to the same respondent, participant (ID 28) scored 11% on the ECBI_KT and 0% on the ACBI_KT. The participant's profile is as follows: s/he is from Saudi Arabia, obtained a BA, has had experience of approximately 11-15 years, is in the age group of 31-40 and s/he works in the public sector. This background information indicates high qualification in translation, unlike the results. Further explanation for this case is given in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive profile of participant (ID 28)

Example ID	Category ID	Incorrect expression	Correct expression	Answer selected	
6	1	all that glitters is not 'steel'	all that glitters is not 'gold'	6	incorrect
12	1	as brave as a 'cow'	as brave as a 'lion'	6	incorrect
67	5	as cool as 'lemon'	as cool as 'cucumber'	6	correct

Table 3 describes the incorrect expressions that participant (ID 28) presented and his/her responses to these expressions. Expressions (ID 6) and (ID 12) are in Category 1; this category shares the same image and meaning with Arabic expressions, which means that this category is considered the simplest one of the five categories. The participant has three mistaken responses as s/he chooses no. 6 in the scale (i.e. I know what the expression means) and no other correct responses. Therefore, his/her misunderstanding, probably, has contributed to the low scores s/he obtained.

The third example (ID 67) is in Category 5, where there is no equivalent. This can be seen as the most difficult category. However, s/he scored on the three incorrect examples; two correct and only one incorrect, but s/he has discussed the correct response as aforementioned. The best description of his/her status is that s/he does not pay attention to the written instructions, even though s/he might have the knowledge. This may be the case with other participants, which explains the lower results. This

directs the researchers to simplifying the test design further for future studies. This participant was excluded because s/he got zero in the ACBI-KT and seems to have a lot of guesswork, therefore, would not give clear explanation of the relationship between the score in ECBI-KT and ACBI-KT.

A few participants commented on the ACBI_KT test. For instance, a participant (ID 10) stated that s/he does not know the expressions 'ارحموا عزيز قوم ذل' and 'مثل القرد', the back translation is 'have mercies on an honourable person of a nation reduced to disgrace' and 'like a monkey', respectively. S/he said that s/he 'does not know what the purpose is of sending these expressions to translators'. Similar to his/her queries, a participant (ID 21), claimed that some of these expressions should not be provided; s/he said that these expressions are 'unpleasant' and 'boring'. S/he also suggested that 'providing another test with fewer expressions and categories would be beneficial; s/he suggested three categories: five common expressions, five uncommon expressions and five average common expressions.' These disagreements are understandable; however, Saudi culture specifically, and Arabic and Islamic cultures in general, represent these expressions as bad and strong language that cannot be confidently used because they are considered highly sensitive. Hence, the same participants do not refuse the equivalent of these expressions in English, but strongly refuse these expressions in Arabic (cf. Olwi, unpublished thesis).

On the other hand, one of the participants (ID 16) raised the issue regarding the different dialects used in Arabic-speaking countries. Participant (ID 16) claims that 'I think some of the above expressions are derived from different Arab contexts such as Egyptian or Syrian. Some translators, from the Gulf States, might not be familiar with them', a point with which the researchers is in total agreement. During test preparations, the researchers looked at the expressions in English and then tried to find first a modern standard Arabic (MSA) equivalent. If there was not any, then the researchers tried to find the equivalent in Saudi dialects. However, sometimes there are equivalents in other dialects but not in Saudi dialects. There is always a debate regarding the use of MSA or local Arabic language. While it is recommended to learn MSA, i.e. the Arabic language that all Arab speakers can understand, MSA is not a good option for using some CBIs. This is because CBIs are often a reflection of our local cultures, norms and values and this research focuses on Saudi Arabian CBIs specifically (Zaharna, 2009, p. 3). While some countries speak Arabic as a monolingual language, others consider Arabic as a third language (Zaharna, 2009, p. 3). Therefore, in order to give an equivalent, it seems better to use the culture of the TL. In this case, any equivalents from other dialects except the one that Saudis use (i.e. they borrow it) with the same original dialects were excluded.

In general, it seems that their knowledge of Arabic is low considering that it is their native language; they clearly need to improve this first, which accounts for their difficulty in understanding the English CBIs. Another possible conclusion is that because they assume that they should know more in Arabic then they guess more, while in English they tend not to guess to a great extent. Also, maybe the test is too long which explains that many participants responded to the first test (i.e. ECBI_KT) and left the

second (i.e. ACBI_KT). Finally, this represents a challenge with the test which requires revision before further study to clarify this issue.

Relationship between ECBI_KT and ACBI_KT

Table 4 presents descriptive statistics for the 34 participants who have less guesswork. The table shows the participants' minimum scores, maximum scores and mean scores.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics

	Minimum score	Maximum score	Mean	Mode
ACBI_KT	0	64	30.27	16a
ECBI_KT	0	63	16.66	0
a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown				

The results in the table above show that the maximum scores for ACBI_KT and ECBI_KT are very close, 64% and 63% respectively. Notably from table 2, only two participants (ID 5, & ID 29) are scored high in in ECBI_KT (63%) those also who scored high on ACBI_KT (64%). The other participants' attained marks of 50% or less in both ECBI_KT and ACBI_KT.

The scores vary considerably between high and low scores; therefore, in the interests of accuracy, the mean scores measure the average level of participants. The mean score for the participants on ACBI_KT is only 30%, while in ECBI_KT it is lower, as they scored 17%.

Table 4, however, shows that the mode number for both English and Arabic was 0, & 16 times respectively, which indicated that there is a need for more exposure to expressions whether in English or in Arabic. And this could be a reason for not gaining English expressions. Further information regarding the relationship between their scores in English and Arabic expressions can be found in table 5.

Table 5. relationship between ECBI_KT and ACBI_KT

		ECBI_KT
ACBI_KT	Pearson Correlation	.380*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027
	N	34
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).		

Pearson correlations1, as shown in Table 5, show that the results indicate a positive significant relationship between the ECBI_KT and ACBI_KT scores (r =. 380). This means that if the translator has a high knowledge in ACBI_KT it can help him/her to get a high score in ECBI_KT which is clearly from the summary results in Table 2. To examine the data more closely, further analyses using correlation were performed in order to find

1 The Pearson correlation coefficient is used to measure the strength of a linear association between two variables where the value r = 1 means a perfect positive correlation and the value r = -1 means a perfect negative correlation. (Fenton, & Neil, 2012)

whether having high scores in ACBI_KT can increase any of the five levels of challenges on ECBI_KT. The results are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6. relationship between ACBI_KT and the performance of participants on the five categories of ECBI_KT

		SI-SM	SiI-SM	DI-SM	SSI-DM	NOEQ
ACBI_KT	Pearson Correlation	.370*	.672**	.334	.434*	.419*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	.000	.054	.010	.014

The figures presented in Table 6 suggest a positive and strong relationship (r = 0. 672) between translators' knowledge of Arabic expressions and their knowledge of English expressions that share the similar image and meaning. For a more in-depth illustration, see Table 7 below.

Table 7. strong relationship between Arabic knowledge and English with same meaning

Category	ECBI_KT	Score	ACBI_KT	Score
SiI-SM	As quick as a flash	93%	بسرعة البرق	97%

Table 7 suggests that sharing the same concept, and using similar imagery to explain it, makes it easier to understand the expression than those expressions that identically use the same image and meaning. This could be because participants are confused when it is exactly the same and think that it is a literal translation instead of having two expressions exactly the same in two distinct cultures and languages.

There is also a positive significant relationship (r = 0. 434, r = 0. 419, r = 0. 370) between Arabic knowledge and SSI-DM, NOEQ and SI-SM in English. This moderate relationship suggests that the more you learn in your native language the more likely you are to understand the TL, even with the most difficult categories. Further discussion of the results is highlighted by the regression model summary provided in Tables 8 and 9.

Table 8. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.380a	.144	.117	18.455
a. Predictors: (Constant), ACBI_KT				

Results presented in Table 8 show a statistically significant relationship between ACBI_KT and ECBI_KT. As illustrated, the R square value (r2 = .144) suggests that ACBI_KT can explain 10% of the variance of the regression model. The ACBI_KT influence on the ECBI_KT can be seen, as the increase of Arabic expressions knowledge results in increases in understanding English expressions. Moreover, ANOVA (Table 9) shows a significant effect of ACBI_KT on achieving high scores on ECBI_KT (P < .01), so the null hypothesis can be rejected; 'the model has no predictive value.'

Table 9. ANOVA[a]

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

1	Regression	1835.801	1	1835.801	5.390	.027[b]
	Residual	10898.560	32	340.580		
	Total	12734.360	33			
a. Dependent Variable: ECBI_KT						
b. Predictors: (Constant), ACBI_KT						

In Table 9, the ANOVA produces a p-value of .027 which lies below all α values. So, one could conclude that the score of ECBI_KT for Arabic professional translators changes significantly with respect to their score in the ACBI_KT. Table 10 evaluates ECBI_KT depending on their performance on ACBI_KT. The effect of ACBI_KT on competence in the ECBI_KT was used by 'standardised coefficients'.

Table 10: Coefficients[a]

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		-.070	.945
	ACBI_KT	.380	2.322	.027
a. Dependent Variable: ECBI_KT				

In Table 10, the beta coefficient for ECBI_KT is 0.319. This means that ECBI_KT makes a strong unique contribution to explaining the ACBI_KT. To conclude, the significant value for ECBI_KT is .026 (i.e. less than 0.10), which means that the ACBI_KT makes a significant unique contribution to the performance of the ECBI_KT. Further analyses of the participants' performances are presented below.

Culture-Bound Items and Typology of Challenges

In this section, the scores of knowledge in English and Arabic CBIs are analysed based on the total scores for participants in each category and in each type (Tables 11 and 12). Thus, in order to have a valid result, only those who responded to the whole test were analysed. The results will help to evaluate and/or to predict the level of challenges of cultural knowledge of translators in Saudi Arabia which can also be used as a guideline for professional translators and translation teachers and learners.

Table 11. Descriptive Statistics for translators' scores in ECBI_KT

ECBI-KT	SI-SM	SiI-SM	DI-SM	NOEQ	SSI-DM	Mean
Idiomatic expressions	77	63	50	52	52	59
Proverbs	79	56	53	52	42	56
Similes	67	60	52	40	59	55.6
Mean	74	60	51	48	48	-

Table 11 presents a summary of the results of the average score for each type in each category. It also shows the mean scores for all categories and for all types. As the results suggest, the level of challenge starts from the easiest to the most challenging as follows: (1) 74% for category SI-SM, (2) 60% for category SiI-SM, (3) 51% for category DI-SM and (4,5) 48 % for last two categories NOEQ and SSI-DM; although SSI-DM seems a little more difficult. It could be because in the case of NOEQ it is clear as it can be identified as a visible culture using an image that not used in the source culture, while notably the most challenging category would be SSI-DM among the five categories.

This is because the equivalent seems to be using exactly the same/similar image but these images carry different perspectives because different cultures perceive things differently and thus, in order to give the right meaning, the translator has to explain the meaning according to the TC understanding. And on closer inspection, it could be due to the fact that SSI-DM contained several expressions in which CBIs about animals were used to refer to people, e.g. as strong as an ox / قوي كالثور. The general feeling among participants was that animals should not be used in comparisons with people in Arabic; this was considered to be inappropriate (cf. aldhahi et al., 2018).

Moreover, it was found that participants did not comment on the appropriateness of the expressions to refer to people in English. The strong reaction from participants to the CBIs in category ٤ suggests the extent to which the same expressions can conjure up a variety of subjective interpretations by different translators, even among a relatively homogeneous cohort of participants, both linguistically and geographically.

On the other hand, the table suggested that the difficulty with the three types examined are as follows(starting with the easiest):

(1) 59% mean score for Idiomatic expressions,

(2) 56% mean score for Proverbs,

(3) 56.6% mean score for similes.

An Analysis of the translators' scores in ACBI_KT is shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Descriptive Statistics for translators' scores in ACBI_KT

ACBI-KT	SI-SM	SiI-SM	DI-SM	NOEQ	SSI-DM	Total
Idiomatic expressions	83	77	91	69	71	78.2
Proverbs	75	80	64	70	61	70
Similes	79	77	76	67	52	70
Total	79	78	77	69	61	-

The findings in Table 12 support the results in Table 11 for English expressions with slight differences between the four categories (SI-SM = 79, SiI-SM = 78, DI-SM = 77 and NOEQ = 69). This is due to the fact that they are Arabic expressions and there would be no difference in the acquisition and comprehension of these expressions. But the last category (SSI-DM) seems much more difficult competence than the others (i.e. SSI-DM = 61) which supports the analysis in ECBI_KT (see Table 11).

Although it should be no different than any other categories in Arabic expressions, the results show a lower mean score on this category (SSI-DM) as this category contains the most expressions that use animals for comparisons. Overall, the participants' scores seem higher in the Arabic test than in the English test. This is understandable as the participants are Arabic professional translators.

On the other hand, the levels of challenges among the three types are also similar to the ones in English, starting with idiomatic expressions as the easiest category, followed by proverbs and similes. Further examination of each category in both SL and TL is

presented in the following sections according to the levels of challenge in table 11 and 12.

Category 1: Same Image - Same Meaning (SI-SM)

In this category, the English and Arabic expressions are straightforward as they use the same image and meaning. For example, the ECBI_KT 'at the tip of one's tongue' and the ACBI_KT is 'على طرف لسانه', the back translation is 'at the tip of his tongue' which uses the same images and gives the same meaning. This category is the easiest category for translators as it has a direct translation equivalent for the images used and the meaning associated with both SL and TL. It seems that CBIs in this category represent universal perspectives. Table 13 presents the relationship for participants' scores in this category between the two tests, ACBI_KT and ECBI_KT. The responses in this category have unexpected score variations which will be explained further in Table 14.

Table 13. relationship between Scores in category SI-SM for both English and Arabic expressions

	SI-SM	ACBI_KT
ECBI_KT	Pearson Correlation	.354*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040
	N	34

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 13 suggests that there is a significant relationship between comprehension of Arabic expressions with understanding of English expressions that have similarity in image and meaning. The total scores for participants in each type (idioms and idiomatic expressions, proverbs and similes) for this category are discussed in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Total of participants' scores in SI-SM

ECBI_KT	Score	ACBI_KT	Score
Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	77%	Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	83%
Total percentage of proverbs	79%	Total percentage of proverbs	75%
Total percentage of similes	67%	Total percentage of similes	79%

Table 14 shows the total percentage of each type (i.e. idioms and idiomatic expressions, proverbs and similes). The data reported in the table suggests that the lowest scores for each type are in the incorrect CBIs. This result indicates that the participants guessed the meaning, maybe because the test was too long or maybe because the answers were complicated as it has six scales. Overall, the total average for each type in the TL is less or close to the SL, which confirms the importance of increasing cultural knowledge in SL, as well as TL, in order to acquire cultural knowledge in the TL. More importantly, the total percentage of each type in TL suggests that proverbs have higher scores, notably because proverbs generally are easy to understand as they reflect general truth, while in the SL, it seems that idioms and idiomatic expressions have the higher total percentage.

Category 2: Similar Image – Same Meaning (SiI-SM)

This category was considered the second easiest because it ranked second in terms of challenges to translation, as illustrated in Tables 11 and 12. The English and Arabic expressions in this category use almost the same image and meaning, but not exactly. For example, the ECBI_KT 'A man's home is his castle' and the ACBI_KT is ' جنة الرجل بيته', the back translation is 'A man's paradise is his house' which has the same meaning and uses almost the same images, except that 'home' in English was replaced by 'paradise' in Arabic. The results shown of the relationship between participants' scores in English and Arabic for this category are presented in Tables 15 and 16. And further illustration is offered in Table 19.

Table 15. Scores in category SiI-SM

	SiI-SM	ACBI_KT
ECBI_KT	Pearson Correlation	.375*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.029
	N	34

The table above shows that there is a significant relationship between understanding Arabic expressions and acquiring English expressions. Although the relationship in this category seems greater than SI-SM, it might be due to the level of guesswork but in general this category and SI-SM have a significant relationship between English and Arabic expressions. This is discussed further in Table 16.

Table 16. Total of participants' scores in SiI-SM

ECBI_KT	Score	ACBI_KT	Score
Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	63%	Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	77%
Total percentage of proverbs	56%	Total percentage of proverbs	80%
Total percentage of similes	60%	Total percentage of similes	77%

Table 16 presents the results of mean scores for each type of this category SiI-SM in both English and Arabic. In this table, the results were slightly different from other categories which will be discussed later. In the ECBI_KT, the participants' scores were high in idioms and idiomatic expressions (63%) and proverbs in the ACBI_KT (80%). The other categories (SI-SM, DI-SM and SSI-DM) found that participants have achieved a higher percentage score in ACBI_KT in idioms and idiomatic expressions in their native language (83%, 91% and 71%) respectively, while this category, i.e. SiI-SM, scored highly in proverbs (80%). Yet their general scores in idioms and idiomatic expressions is 77% which suggests an average score compared to other categories. The results in this category do not diminish the results in the other categories.

The findings in the ECBI_KT also show that the higher scores were achieved in idioms and idiomatic expressions (63%); nonetheless, translators' achievement in translating proverbs is 56% which is an average score compared to their other scores in categories SI-SM and DI-SM, i.e. 79% and 53% respectively. Nonetheless, the level of guesswork in this category seems high as the lower scores were in the incorrect CBIs which can explain the different findings in this category compared to other categories. Category 3 is DI-SM and is discussed below.

Category 3: Different Image – Same Meaning (DI-SM)

This category is the third most challenging among the five categories (cf. Table 17, & Table 18). In this category, the English and Arabic expressions use different images in order to give a close natural equivalence. For example, the ECBI_KT 'The early bird catches the worm' and the ACBI_KT is 'بورك لأمتي في بكورها', the back translation is 'honouring my nation in their earliness' which gives the same meaning by using different images. For this category, it is the same challenge for translators as they need to have a great cultural background of the target culture. The data for this category is shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Scores in category DI-SM

	DI-SM	ACBI_KT
ECBI_KT	Pearson Correlation	.102
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.566
	N	34

As shown in Table 17, there is no relationship between obtaining a high score in Arabic and understanding English for this category. This is due to the different image used to express one idea, which suggests more cultural training is needed in the TC. More data for each type are provided in Table 18.

Table 18. Total of participants' scores in DI-SM

ECBI_KT	Score	ACBI_KT	Score
Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	50%	Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	91%
Total percentage of proverbs	53%	Total percentage of proverbs	64%
Total percentage of similes	52 %	Total percentage of similes	76

Table 18 shows the results of the participants' score for each type in category DI-SM. This category confirms the previous result that participants are more knowledgeable in proverbs in their TL and idioms and idiomatic expressions regarding their SL. However, the findings in this table confirm that participants are not guessing, at least in this category, since their lower scores were verified between the correct and incorrect CBIs. Similar to the findings in the category SI-SM, the total average for each type in the SL is higher than in the TL, which explains the challenge in English expressions for this category. Exposure to TC expressions is highly important to understand this category. The fourth category according to tables 19 and 20 will be NOEQ.

Category 4: No Equivalent (NOEQ)

In this category, the ECBI_KT used an image or meaning that does not exist on the ACBI_KT and vice versa. For example, in the ECBI_KT 'Beware of the Greeks bearing gifts', each individual word has an equivalent in Arabic but the meaning for the whole sentence does not have any equivalence in Arabic. This points to this category's similarity to the DI-SM category.

In this study, the researchers is looking at the most natural equivalent; in other words, looking to rendering a CBI a to a CBI b which is the case of DI-SM. If a CBI cannot be

found in the TL, a further explanation has to be given which is the case in the NOEQ category. Thus, the NOEQ does not have a natural equivalent in the TL even if the single words have an equivalent because of the lack of compositionality, i.e. the sum of the meanings of each single word does not add up to the meaning of the whole CBI. This is because some expressions in one culture reflect its history and values but do not have any meaning in other cultures.

To illustrate the challenge, an example from ACBI_KT will be discussed. For instance, the expression'رحم الله امرئ أهدى إلينا عيوبنا', which is a saying by Umar2, reflects the need for English speakers not only to master the Arabic language but also the Islamic ideology. The literal translation for this example is 'womb of God who gifted us our mistakes' which means that you should ask someone to tell you truly your mistakes and show that you would be pleased if s/he does so because this advice will help you be a good modest Muslim, and more importantly, avoid being a hypocrite. Even religious values usually reflect general concepts; nevertheless, some expressions do not have equivalence. The scores for this category are discussed in Table 19.

Table 19. Scores in category NOEQ

	NOEQ	ACBI-KT
ECBI-KT	Pearson Correlation	.309
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.075
	N	34

The results in Table 19 above show that there is no relationship between knowing the deep culture of SL with understanding the deep culture of the TL. This suggests precisely the need for Arabic professional translators in Saudi Arabia to increase their awareness of this category and improve their knowledge of these expressions in both Arabic and English. Further discussion will be found in Table 20.

Table 20. Total of participants' scores in NOEQ

ECBI_KT	Score	ACBI_KT	Score
Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	52%	Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	69%
Total percentage of proverbs	52%	Total percentage of proverbs	70%
Total percentage of similes	40%	Total percentage of similes	67%

Table 20 presents the results of category NOEQ. Although the results of ACBI_KT's total score for each type was less than the other categories, participants in this category achieved a higher score in proverbs (70%) which was similar to the SiI-SM category. In general, all types are close in their averages (69%, 70%, & 67%). Furthermore, the results of the total average in ECBI_KT scores are high in proverbs and idioms/ idiomatic expressions (52%, & 52%). Yet their achievement in proverbs is 52% which is

[2] Also spelled Omar, was one of the most powerful and influential Muslim caliphs in history. He was a senior Sahabi of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.

an average score compared to their previous scores in category SI-SM, DI-SM, i.e. 79% and 53%, respectively.

On the other hand, although similes are generally considered easy to recognise, they were not as easy to handle as the other types of CBIs in this study except in one category: SSI-DM. Overall, there scores in Arabic were much higher than in English, as these expressions (ACBI-KT) are considered to be the deep culture to which beliefs and myths are normally linked. This supports the result in the following category where participants do not accept many of expressions related to comparing humans to animals. And these categories (NOEQ and SSL-DM) could be considered as the most sensitive ones among the five categories. The last and most challenging category, SSI-DM, is addressed in the following section.

Category 5: Same/ Similar Image - Different Meaning (SSI-DM)

In this category, both the ECBI_KT and the ACBI_KT are using the same or similar images but with different meanings. For example, in the ECBI_KT 'Bury one's head in the sand' and the ACBI_KT is 'يدفن رأسه بالتراب', the back translation is 'Bury his head in the sand (because of shame)', the same image is used but with a different meaning in each language. The appropriate equivalent in ACBI_KT for the previous ECBI_KT example is 'لا تختبئ عن القيام بما يلزم', the back translation is 'do not hide from doing what you have to do', which gives the same meaning by explaining or finding another expression. This category seems highly challenging for the translators as they have to distinguish between the meaning they have in their background culture and the real meaning carried in the target culture.

Lack of familiarity with category five can present a potential challenge to translation training programmes in Saudi Arabia since cultural awareness has been given little attention in general. This is because in the case of SI-SM and SiI-SM categories there are CBIs which can be familiar and predictable in the SL. In the case of the DI-SM and NOEQ, they are not familiar in the SL but once the translator has recognised the CBI, they will either omit it because it is difficult to render into their SL or they will look for sources to find the meaning. Whereas in the SSI-DM category, the transparency of the expressions presents a greater challenge for translators, as they think they know the expression because they are familiar with the expression/image in their native language and therefore think they could predict the meaning. Further details are found in Table 21.

Table 21. Scores in category SSI-DM

	SSI-DM	ACBI-KT
ECBI-KT	Pearson Correlation	.071
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.689
	N	34

In Table 21 suggests that there is no relationship between understanding Arabic expressions and understanding those in English, as they have same/similar images but a different meaning. This is the challenge for this category, as knowing expressions in one language does not help the translator to pick up the meaning of the same/similar

expressions in the other language because the meaning is different. More explanations will be found in Table 22.

Table 22. Total of participants' scores in SSI-DM

ECBI_KT	Score	ACBI_KT	Score
Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	52%	Total percentage of idioms and idiomatic expressions	71%
Total percentage of proverbs	42%	Total percentage of proverbs	61%
Total percentage of similes	59%	Total percentage of similes	52%

The results in Table 22 go in line with this research and with previous categories (i.e. SI-SM and DI-SM) where the participants have a higher level in idioms and idiomatic expressions in their SL, unlike the idioms/ idiomatic expressions in TL for this category. In the previous categories, participants have achieved a higher score in proverbs (79% and 53%), explained by their base in moral teaching; but in this category, they also achieved higher scores in similes (59%). Their scores in proverbs (42%) were not high in general but the example provided was very challenging and less frequently used. The guessed responses were not recorded in this category; nonetheless, the total average for each type in SL is higher than the TL.

Summary and Conclusions

In this Study, the researchers aimed to explore the requirement of translators' cultural competence in both SL and TL in the translation process. To this end, the researchers designed a cultural competence survey (CC) containing two tests: English Culture-bound Items Knowledge Test (ECBI_KT) and Arabic Culture-bound Items Knowledge Test (ACBI_KT). 34 complete responses were received from the total of 56. The 34 participants were asked to only tick the CBIs (i.e. 69 in ECBI_KT, & 69 in ACBI_KT) if they knew the CBI by using six scales of knowledge (adapted from Karlsson, 2013).

The limitations of these tests are threefold: firstly, the tests addressed only three types of CBIs; secondly, it was a long list of CBIs (in total, 138 in both tests); thirdly, the six scales seemed difficult for the participants to follow. However, it was crucial at this stage to investigate any potential challenges in this particular area of translation skills, and to focus first on specific types where particular factors come into play. Then, in a future study, this test could be developed to address different variations of CBIs, a list with fewer items and easier requirements such as yes/no questions that can evaluate cultural knowledge in Arabic translation into English. Also, this test could be developed further by giving the most frequent expressions in English with consideration to the different levels of challenges compared to Arabic CBIs.

Regarding the first objective of exploring the levels of professional translators' knowledge in both Arabic and English CBIs, the findings of the survey suggest that they need to improve significantly. It is noticed that the participants' levels in Arabic CBIs diverge owing to different experience levels, but in general their level in Arabic is higher than in English. Nonetheless, translators who know large numbers of CBIs in their SL are most likely recognise CBIs in the TL (Karlsson, 2013).

Regarding the second research question of whether translators rely on words with a direct translation equivalent into English, the analysis of the survey showed a higher relationship among the five categories when words had the exact image and meaning (as in category SI-SM) or similar image and meaning (SiI-SM).

The results also showed that there was less competence in the NOEQ category, as these CBIs do not have a direct translation equivalent either in image or meaning (even if there is a direct translation equivalent for the individual words). The third most challenging category was in DI-SM, where there is a direct translation equivalent but the image used was different. The challenge is because they are not familiar with different expressions in TL that give the exact meaning in their culture, which explains that expressions without direct equivalent are the very challenge.

The most challenging category was SSI-DM, since there are direct Arabic translations of the exact same English expressions, but the meaning is different and sometimes opposite. For example, as strong as an ox has a positive meaning in English and a negative meaning in Arabic, which, in this case, indicated that the direct translation equivalent is not equivalent in meaning.

The following list places the challenges identified in order of their relative difficulty, beginning with the easiest. There are two subgroups for category NOEQ: 'no equivalence in meaning' and 'no equivalence in image':

1. Same image - same meaning
2. Similar image - same meaning
3. Different image - same meaning
4. No equivalence : (a) in image and (b) in meaning
5. Same/ similar image - different meaning

Overall, the results show that the translation of CBIs can indeed cause significant challenges for professional translators even when there is a direct equivalent in the target language of each of the component words of the expression. This would suggest that testing the cultural knowledge of translators between Arabic and English is highly advisable and that it can lead to increasing the reliability of their translations.

One final conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that the new tests i.e. ECBI_KT and ACBI_KT are reliable and valid; however, these tests are long and complex. Therefore, to explore further the structure and design of these tests, a follow-up study will be conducted.

Regarding the changes among the different types, the results show that although similes are the easiest ones to identify, they become the most challenging expressions among the three types when it comes to understanding either the Arabic or English similes. In the case of the Arabic similes, the reasons could be because the images that compare humans with animals are not appropriate in Arabic cultures.

On the other hand, proverbs are the easiest among the three types in English proverbs, maybe because they represent common sense which makes them easy to comprehend.

In Arabic, idioms are the easiest and this could be because idioms are more frequently used than the other types.

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Appendix A: Demographic Data

Please insert a tick mark (√)in the right option:

What is your ethnic group?

□ Saudi □ Gulf Countries □ Sudanese □ Egyptian

□ Syrian □ Jordanian □ Palestinian □ Lebanese

□ Yemeni □ British

Where do you live know?

□ Arabic Speaking Country □ English Speaking Country

Your native language (Source language) is:

□ Arabic □ English □ Bilingual

Your second language (Target language) is:

□ Arabic □ English □ Bilingual

Level of Education:

□ High School □ Diploma □ Bachelor

□ Master □ Doctorate

Gender:

□ Female □ Male □ Prefer not to say

Years of professional experience:

□ 0-5 □ 6-10 □ 11-15 □ 16-20

□ 21-25 □ 26-30 □ 31-35 □ 36-40

□ Above 40

Your age:

□ 21 – 30 □ 31 – 40 □ 41 – 50 □ 51 – 60 □ Above 60

□ Prefer not to say

Have your studies helped you to improve your translation of CBI (proverbs, idioms, similes, prayers, etc)?

□ Yes □ No □ I do not know

Have you lived in an English-speaking country?

□ Yes □ No

How many years have you been/had been in the UK?

□ 0-1 □ 1-5 □ 6-10

□ 11-15 □ 16-20 □ 21and above

How many years have you been/had been in the TL country?

□ 0-1 □ 1-5 □ 6-10 □ 11-15

□ 16-20 □ 21and above

What is your profession?

□ Freelance □ In-house □ Other

Are you member of any of these associations or any others please indicate:

□ ATA □ ALTA □ AUSIT □ CTTIC

□ ITI □ CIOL □ JTA

□ Other (please indicate)

Appendix B: ECBI_KT

Please look at these expressions. Some of these expressions are real English expressions and some are invented but are made to look like real English expressions. Please indicate the degree to which you think you are familiar with the expressions listed according to the following continuum:

1. I don't know this expression.
2. I'm guessing the meaning of the expression.
3. I recognise this expression, but I don't know what it means.
4. I recognise this expression and I'm guessing its meaning.
5. I recognise this expression and I think I know what it means.
6. I know what the expression means.

Please look at these expressions. Some of these expressions are real English expressions and some are invented but are made to look like real English expressions. Please indicate the degree to which you think you are familiar with the expressions listed according to the following continuum:

1. I don't know this expression.
2. I'm guessing the meaning of the expression.
3. I recognize this expression, but I don't know what it means.
4. I recognize this expression and I'm guessing its meaning.
5. I recognize this expression and I think I know what it means.
6. I know what the expression means.

ID	Degree of Knowing 1 2 3 4 5 6	English Expressions	Types of CBIs	5 groups
1		Pull the rug from under (a person)	idiomatic expressions	Group 1
2		Wash one's hands of (someone or something)		
3		Play with fire		
4		To shed king's tears		
5		At the tip of one's tongue		
6		All that glitters is not steel	proverbs	
7		People who live in glass houses should not		

	throw stones		
8	Speech is silver, but silence is golden		
9	Actions speak louder than words		
10	A drowning man will clutch at a straw		
11	As light as a feather	similes	
12	As brave as a cow		
13	As proud as a peacock		
14	They are as different as night and day		
15	As pretty as a picture		
16	Waste one's breath	idiomatic expressions	Group 2
17	By heart		
18	She was the joy of her father's eye		
19	Let bygones be bygones		
20	Jack of all trades and master of none		
21	A friend in need is a friend indeed	proverbs	
22	An English man's home is his castle		
23	A bird in the hand is worth ten in the bush		
24	Better an open enemy than a false friend		
25	Too many cooks spoil the broth		
26	As quick as a flash	similes	
27	be as busy as a bee		
28	Like father like daughter		
29	work like a beaver		
٣0	Like cats and dogs		
31	You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink	idiomatic expressions	Group 3
٣٢	In the nick of time		
٣٣	Love me, love my wife		
٣٤	live in a fool's paradise		
٣٥	Hell hath no fury (like a woman scorned)		
٣٦	Constant dripping wears away a stone	Proverbs	
٣٧	Lock the stable door before the horse is stolen		
٣٨	A leopard never changes its spots		
٣٩	The early bird catches the worm		
٤٠	Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you		
٤١	As wise as an owl	Similes	
٤٢	As silent as a shoes		
٤٣	Like a snail		
٤٤	As tough as nails		
٤٥	As different as chalk and cheese		
٤٦	Better to be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion	idiomatic expressions	Group 4
٤٧	Three sheets to the wind		
٤٨	Bury one's head in the sand		
٤٩	On the horns of dilemma		
٥0	Have a tiger by the head		
51	A good excuse is better than none	proverbs	
52	When in Rome do as the Romans do		
53	Absence makes the heart grow fonder		
54	To win at a canter		

55	The tail wagging the dog		
56	As tall as a giraffe	similes	
57	As strong as an ox		
58	As funny as a barrel of camels		
59	As innocent as a lamb		
60	As the crow flies		
61	Christ!	idiomatic expressions	Group 5
62	Golf widow		
63	To get in Greeks with someone		
64	Beware of the Dutch bearing gifts	proverbs	
65	Too many chiefs and not enough Indians		
66	You are barking up the wrong tree		
67	As cool as a lemon	similes	
68	As drunk as a Lord		
69	As nutty as a fruitcake		
	Any comment about the above:		

Appendix C: ACBI_KT

Please look at these expressions. Some of these expressions are real English expressions and some are invented but are made to look like real English expressions. Please indicate the degree to which you think you are familiar with the expressions listed according to the following continuum:

1. I don't know this expression.
2. I'm guessing the meaning of the expression.
3. I recognise this expression, but I don't know what it means.
4. I recognise this expression and I'm guessing its meaning.
5. I recognise this expression and I think I know what it means.
6. I know what the expression means.

Please look at these expressions. some of these expressions are real English expressions and some are invented but are made to look like real English expressions. Please indicate the degree to which you think you are familiar with the expressions listed according to the following continuum:

1. I don't know this expression.
2. I'm guessing the meaning of the expression.
3. I recognize this expression, but I don't know what it means.
4. I recognize this expression and I'm guessing its meaning.
5. I recognize this expression and I think I know what it means.
6. I know what the expression means.

Types of CBIs	5 groups	ID	Arabic Expressions	Degree of Knowing 1 2 3 4 5 6
idiomatic expressions	Group 1	1	يسحب البساط من تحته	
		2	غسل يده من	
		3	يلعب بالنار	
		4	ضحكة التماسيح	
		5	على طرف لسانه	
Proverbs		6	ليس كل ما يلمع ذهباً	
		7	من كان بيته من زجاج لا يرشق الناس بالحجارة	
		8	إذا كان السكوت من فضة فالكلام من ذهب	
		9	الأعمال أعلى صوتاً من الأقوال	
		10	الغريق يتعلق بقشة	
Similes		11	أخف من الريشه	
		12	شجاع مثل الأسد	
		13	أزهى من ديك	
		14	مختلف مثل الليل والنهار	
		15	جميله كأنها رسمة	
idiomatic expressions	Group 2	16	يضيع وقته	
		17	عن ظهر قلب	
		18	كانت قرت عين ابيها	
		19	عفا الله عما مضى/سلف	
		20	عشر صنائع والبخت ضايع	
Proverbs		21	الصديق وقت الضيق	
		22	حياة الرجل بيته	
		23	عصفور في اليد خير من عشرة على الشجرة	
		24	عدوٌ يجاهرك العداء خيرٌ من صديق زائف	
		25	كثرة الطباخين تفسد الطبخة	
Similes		26	بسرعة البرق	
		27	كخلية النحل	
		28	الإبنُ سرُّ أبيه	
		29	يعمل مثل الحمار	
		30	مثل القط والكلب	
idiomatic expressions	Group 3	٣١	وما على الرسول إلا البلاغ المبين	
		٣٢	قبل فوات الآوان	
		٣٣	إكراما للورد يشرب الماء	
		٣٤	نائم بالعسل	
		٣٥	إن كيدهن عظيم	
Proverbs		٣٦	معظم النار من مستصغر الشرر	
		٣٧	إذا فات الفوت ما ينفع الصوت	
		٣٨	من كبر على شيء شاب عليه	
		٣٩	’بورك لأمتى فى بكورها‘	
		٤٠	دع العوراء تخطاك	
Similes		٤١	حكيم كلقمان	
		٤٢	صامت مثل الجدار	
		٤٣	بطيء كالسلحفاه	
		٤٤	قاسي مثل البحر	

		٤٥	بإختلاف الليل والنهار
idiomatic expressions		٤٦	الفرس من خيالها
		٤٧	ذهب مع الريح
		٤٨	يدفن رأسه بالتراب
		٤٩	على كف عفريت
		٥0	جاب الذيب من راسه
Proverbs	Group 4	51	عذر اقبح من ذنب
		52	أهل مكه أدرى بشعابها
		53	البعيد عن العين قريب عن القلب
		54	أن تكون فرداً في جماعة الأسود خير لك من أن تكون قائداً للنعام
		55	ذيل الكلب أعوج
Similes		56	طويل كالزرافة
		57	قوي مثل الثور
		58	مثل القرد
		59	مثل الخروف
		60	كالنعام البين, ضيع المشيتين
idiomatic expressions		61	لا ناقة لي فيها ولا حمل
		62	صل على النبي
		63	أبصر من زرقاء اليمامة
Proverbs	Group 5	64	ارحموا عزيزاً ذل
		65	القول ما قال زيد
		66	'رحم الله امرء أهدى إلينا عيوبنا'
Similes		67	كأن على رؤوسهم الطير
		68	كشعرة معاوية
		69	كمسمار علي

Any comment about the above: