Pragmatic Failure in Translating Arabic Religious Politeness Formulas into English
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Abstract

The current research focuses on the pragmatic failure of translating into English some Arabic religious politeness formulas. The formulas, which have been selected from everyday communication in different speech events, were translated by 10 M.A. students in the translation department at Oran University. The study has shown that inadequate pragma-religious competence often leads to the alteration of the source message. It has revealed that while a few Arabic religious formulas may be translated into corresponding English religious formulas, many Arabic formulas fail pragmatically to give comparable religious meaning in English.

Keywords: Politeness, religious formulas, Arabic, English, translation, pragmatic failure.

فشل براغماتي في ترجمة صيغ الأدب الديني العربي إلى اللغة الإنجليزية

ملخص

تشمل البحوث الحالية الفشل العملي للترجمة الإنجليزية لبعض العبارات الدينية وصيغ التحية باللغة العربية. تمت ترجمة الصيغ، التي تم اختيارها في التواصل اليومي خلال خطب مختلفة، من طرف عشرة (10) طلبة ماستير في قسم الترجمة بجامعة وهرانحيثتبين من خلال هذه الدراسة عدم كفاية الكفاءة العملية الدينية وغالباً ما يؤدي ذلك إلى تغيير المعنى الموجود في نص المصدر. كما أظهرت أنه على الرغم من إمكانية ترجمة بعض الصيغ الدينية العربية إلى صيغ دينية إنجليزية مقابلة (موافقة)، تبقى ترجمة العديد من الصيغ العربية غير موافقة علميا في إعطاء معنى ديني مقابل باللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفاتيح: أخلاق، صيغ دينية، عربية، إنجليزية، ترجمة، فشل عملي.

Échec pragmatique dans la traduction de formules de politesse religieuse arabe vers l'anglais

Résumé

Cette étude porte sur l'échec pragmatique de la traduction en anglais de certaines formules de politesse religieuse en arabe. Les formules, qui ont été sélectionnées dans la communication quotidienne lors de différents discours, ont été traduites par 10 étudiants en maîtrise au département de traduction de l'Université d'Oran. L'étude a montré qu'une compétence pragmatique religieuse inadéquate conduit souvent à une altération du message source. Elle a révélé que, si quelques formules religieuses arabes peuvent être traduites en formules religieuses anglaises correspondantes, de nombreuses formules arabes échouent de manière pragmatique à donner un sens religieux correspondant en anglais.

Mots-clés: Politesse, formules religieuses, arabe, anglais, traduction, échec pragmatique.

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Introduction

Learning a new language is not simply a matter of mastering its grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Learning the rules of appropriateness, i. e, to say the right thing to the right person at the right time is also important[1]. A considerable part of learning the rules of appropriateness is among other things, to know how to use politeness formulas in daily social interactions.

Politeness in its relation to speech acts has long been a great concern of many linguists all over the world. It is nowadays a concept which is heavily studied in cultural studies and pragma-linguistics. Consequently, any research that identifies the use of speech act realization strategies can be extensively helpful to understand the culture of its speech community. For decades, politeness phenomena have been a persistent interest of anthropologists, psycholinguists, sociolinguists, etc. Pragmatics, i. e, language in use, has also been highly concerned with the notion of politeness through speech act theory.

As a community that is claimed to have strong social ties among its members, speakers of Arabic are expected to exhibit differences which distinguish them from speakers of other communities. However, it has been observed that the Arab society has been far less investigated in politeness studies. Therefore, this study widens the scope of pragmatics by investigating politeness in Algerian Arabic.

The aim of this article is to show some major problems of linguistic politeness in connection with translation studies. In other words, the purpose of this study is to examine to what extent a failure to grasp the pragmatic and cultural condition of the use of politeness formulas may lead translators to render Arabic religious formulas in English inappropriately. The most serious problems in translation are, in fact, those difficulties arising from differences of culture[2]. However, the question is: how can a translator bridge the cultural gap in rendering a religious Arabic formula in English without committing a pragmatic failure which usually distorts the message?

1- Pragmatic Competence

Pragmatics can provide a fuller, deeper and generally more reasonable account of human language behaviour[3]. Leech (1983)[4] also says that we cannot really understand the nature of language itself unless we understand pragmatics: how language is used in communication. Yule (1996)[5] adds that among the three linguistic components of syntax, semantics and pragmatics, only pragmatics allows humans into the analysis. The advantage of studying language via pragmatics is that one can talk about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions (for example, requests, condolences, congratulations) that they are performing when they speak. Thus, pragmatic communication is the use of a set of sociolinguistic rules related to language within a communicative context; that is, pragmatics is the way language is used to communicate rather than the way language is structured.

Pragmatic competence consists of the knowledge that speaker-hearers use in order to engage in communication, including how speech acts are successfully performed[6]. Koike (1989b)[7] emphasizes the speaker's ability, and according to him, pragmatic competence lies in the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which influence the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts. Thus, pragmatic competence involves a variety of abilities concerned with the use and interpretation of language in contexts. It includes speakers' ability to use language for different purposes - to request, to instruct, to invite. It includes listeners' ability to understand the speaker's real intentions, especially when these intentions are not directly conveyed in the forms-indirect requests, irony and sarcasm. It consists of command of the rules by which utterances are strung together to create discourse. Bachman (1997)[8] gives a very detailed model of pragmatic competence which he considers as a part of language competence. He divides 'language competence' into two components: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. Organizational competence consists of grammatical competence and textual competence. By

contrast, pragmatic competence consists of illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence.

Table 1.1: Components of language competence (Bachman, 1997)[9]

Language Competence			
Organizational Competence		Pragmatic Competence	
Grammatical Competence	Textual Competence	Illocutionary Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence
Vocabulary	Cohesion	Ideational Functions	Sensitivity to Dialect or Variety
Morphology		Manipulative Functions	ensitivity to Register
Syntax	Rhetorical Organization	Heuristic Functions	Sensitivity to Naturalness
Phonology		Imaginative Functions	Cultural References and Figures of Speech

Illocutionary competence here is the knowledge of pragmatic conventions for performing language functions. Kasper (1997)[10] simplifies illocutionary competence as, "knowledge of communicative action and how to carry it out". Illocutionary competence as Bachman describes it, covers different uses of language for expressing ideas, accomplishing goals, extending knowledge or giving vent to humour and the imagination. By contrast, sociolinguistic competence is the knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing language functions appropriately in a given context. Sociolinguistic competence covers sensitivity to differences in dialect or variety; sensitivity to differences in register; sensitivity to naturalness; and ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech. Therefore, pragmatic communication or competence can be simply defined as having the knowledge of communicative action and ability to use language appropriately according to the context.

2- Politeness and Translation

As a significant part of pragma-linguistic study, politeness principle applies outstanding impact on the achievement of communication. Politeness is not used, here, in its conventional sense of displaying courtesy, but rather, it is intended to cover all aspects of language usage which serve to establish, maintain or modify interpersonal relationship between interlocutors. As far as translation is concerned, politeness in translation plays the most brilliant key in interpersonal communication. Henceforth, the translator as the mediator between two or more languages should consistently consider some significant facets of this field. Politeness is considered as a universal fact in all cultures. However, English and Arabic languages have their system of expressing polite expressions in many aspects. Therefore, in spite of undeniable existence of common traits of politeness amongst English and Arabic languages, the translator might encounter some sorts of culture-bound aspects, which can be considered as the critical turning points. In other words, the translators are limited by politeness strategies used in the source language to some degree due to cultural clashes.

2-1-   Lingua-pragmatic Failure

Etymologically, the term "pragmatic failure" was firstly coined by Thomas (1983)[11] in an article entitled "Cross-cultural Pragmatic failure", where she provides definitions and classifications to the term. Since then, pragmatic failure has become the core of cross-cultural pragmatics (Tang, 2013)[12]. According to Thomas (1983)[13], pragmatic failure is generally defined as the "inability to understand what is meant by what is said". Closely related to pragmatics are two basic notions that need to be identified here, i.e, linguistic competence and communicative competence, since full mastery of these two competences helps avoid

pragmatic failures. Linguistic competence is simply defined as the knowledge of a language use and users, including interlocutors' "ability to create and understand sentences, including sentences they have never heard before, knowledge of what are and what are not sentences of a particular language, and the ability to recognize ambiguous and deviant sentences" (Lou & Goa, 2011)[14]. In other words, linguistic competence is the mastery of a foreign language "standard pronunciation, accurate grammatical rules and vocabulary" (Lou & Goa, 2011)[15]. In addition to the abstract knowledge of linguistic properties, linguistic pragmatic competence is more concerned with the interlocutor's ability to use a language communicatively (Amaya, 2008)[16]. Having realized that, the notion of linguistic competence, proposed by Chomsky, is inadequate,

Hymes (1971)[17] coined the term 'communicative competence', which refers to the mastery of both linguistic competence and sociolinguistic knowledge of language in a given context. Accordingly, interlocutors in cross-cultural communication must have communicative competence including the socio-cultural rules of both the source and the target languages. In this way, interlocutors can avoid the possibility of native language transfer, i.e. pragmatic transfer, during cross-cultural communication and the probable occurrence of pragmatic failure (Hashimian, 2012)[18]. Based on Hymes (1971)[19], Lou & Goa (2011)[20] has thoroughly defined communicative competence as the knowledge of not only if something is possible in a language, but also the knowledge of whether it is feasible, appropriate or, done in a particular Speech Community. It includes, 1) formal competence -knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary, phonology and semantics of a language. 2) socio-cultural competence-knowledge of the relationship between language and its non-linguistic context, knowing how to use and respond appropriately to different types of Speech Act, knowing which Address Forms should be used with different persons one speaks to and in different situations, and so forth.

2-2-   Lingua-pragmatic Failure in Translation

Lingua-pragmatics is a field of linguistics that studies "fixed" language forms having fixed socio-pragmatic meanings (Shammas, 2006)[21]. Lingua-pragmatics is useful in developing social relationships through culture-specific politeness in interpersonal communication. These "fixed" forms define the speaker's attitude towards the hearer but also represent such norms of speaker's language through which the speaker could use the language to request, congratulate, greet, and apologize with other members of their community. If the speaker fails to use appropriate forms corresponding to these norms, it would be considered as a pragmatic failure. All such forms are within the scope of lingua-pragmatics. Speakers with same cultural background and who speak the same language can easily understand these lingua-pragmatic forms, but non-native speakers face difficulties in understanding the message carried by these forms. Hence, lingua-pragmatic forms can be said to be totally language-specific and culture specific. One of the forms of lingua-pragmatics is expressions of politeness in multiple situations.

Lingua pragmatic failure is the interpreter's failure in conveying the intended meaning (pragmatic knowledge) of the message as the result of the inappropriate use of language. Pragmatic knowledge includes the ability to know the relationship between the propositional content (i.e. semantic meaning) and illocutionary force (i.e. pragmatic function) of any politeness formula. Sometimes the relationship between the two is very obvious and easy to determine as in the case of the Arabic formula /lila mabrouka/ "have a blessed night". In other cases, however, it is not possible to relate the propositional content to its function. One may need to learn the conventions and conditions of use of a formula like /flæ:n aba bæ:sek/ literally meaning "so and so took your suffering" politely implicating that the person has died.

A difficulty may arise also when the same formula is used to perform more than one illocutionary act in different situations. The expression /n allah/ literally meaning "if God permits" can be interpreted differently. If the phrase is uttered as a response to a command by a speaker of a higher social status or of an older age, it would carry the force of a speech act

and forms a commitment to execute the command quickly; it would be approximately translated as 'definitely' or 'absolutely'. However, if the same phrase is used in response to a request by someone, who is of equal or inferior status, then it would not necessarily constitute a moral obligation, and it would better be translated as "ok", "alright", "I'll see what I can do", "I'll let you know".

3- Research Methodology

The current research focuses on the pragmatic failure in interpreting religious formulas. The subjects are MA students of translation. The research uses translation model by Larson (1984)[22]. There are two models of translation, form-based and meaning-based. A form-based translation is usually referred to as a literal translation, in which translators are attempting to follow the form of the source language. Secondly is the meaning-based translation. It is the one which is known as the idiomatic translation – the meaning of the source text is expressed in the natural form of the target language.

This study examines some Arabic politeness formulas identified by the researcher as highlighting pragmareligious difficulty to translators of Arabic texts into English. Our concern here is only with individual formulas which are drawn from everyday conversational behaviour. As for the choice of religious politeness formulas rather than any other expressions, it is motivated by the intuition that underlying principles may govern politeness phenomena in human languages (Brown and Levinson, 1987)[23], the means whereby politeness is encoded linguistically often vary from one language to another, especially where religion is considered a standard in expressing politeness. Therefore, Arabic politeness formulas that encapsulate in them religious background are expected to be rich ground for pragmareligious failure.

4- Description of the Sample

Ten MA students enrolled in Translation studies volunteered to be the subjects in this study. The students are native speakers of Tlemcen Arabic, holding a degree in translation and reading for their Master degree in translation studies at the University of Oran. Their ages ranged between twenty-two and twenty-six years old. The choice of this population was not fortuitous. The participants have been studying translation and pragmatics for about three years and must have acquired the necessary knowledge which enables them to be aware of the role of pragmatics in the field of translation. They were asked to provide their own translations of the different speech acts, namely religious politeness formulas, relying on their intuitions. The results and discussion will concentrate on formulas pertaining to four speech acts: requests, thanking, condolences and congratulating.

5- Results

The translations of the religious politeness formulas by the subjects in this research have been analysed and discussed in an attempt to examine the area of politeness translation and to investigate the major causes of inappropriate translation. The goal of a good translator is to reproduce a text in the target language which communicates the same message as the source language but using the natural grammatical and lexical choices of the target language. The misconception of transferring meaning can happen. It can be seen from the following table which summarizes the results by giving the percentage of inappropriate translations of each politeness formula.

Table n 1: Percentage of inappropriate translations of each formula

| Request	Percentage %	Inappropriate Translation
[llah jxalli:k]	60%	May God preserve you
[llah ja afdek]	30%	May God Protect you
[llah jsad i:k]	60%	May God make you succeed
[llah jfarhek]	30%	May God Make you Happy
[llah jar a li:k]	60%	May God be happy with you
[llah jafteh li:k]	50%	May God make things easy for you
Thanking	**Percentage %**	**Inappropriate Translation**
[baraka llahu fi:k]	80%	Bless you
[llah ja i:k Sa a]	80%	May God give you good health
[llah jkattar i:r k]	70%	May God increase your welfare
[llah j a i:k b stt r]	80%	May God cover you with his protection
[llah ja afdek]	80%	May God protect you
Condolences	**Percentage %**	**Inappropriate Translation**
[el baraka f rasek]	50%	Blessing on yourself
[llah ja i:kum sber]	30%	May Allah comfort you
[llah jbaddel m abtu b sber]	50%	May Allah replace his love with patience
inna lillah wa inna ilajhi ra: i u:n	80%	We belong to Allah and to him we return
Congratulations	**Percentage %**	**Inappropriate Translation**
[mabru:k ʕli:kum]	50%	May you be blessed
[rabbi jsaxxar]	50%	May God bless your union
[llah jʔallaf al ʕuʃra]	35%	May Allah bless your union
[llah jad al sa dek xi:r mennek]	50%	May God make your luck i.e., husband better than you
[amdullah ʔla slæ:k]	20%	Relief to you
[llah jad al ad ek mabru:k]	20%	May Allah bless your hajj

6- Data Analysis

In this section, we will discuss some pragma religious failures in translating Arabic politeness formulas into English. The tables below contain some of the lingua-pragmatic religious polite formulas in Arabic with a form-based translation (literal translation) into English and a meaning-based translation (pragmatic translation) equivalent in English when available. It might be beneficial to examine some of these expressions and their translation from Arabic to English to see the differences between both languages and try to find the equivalent of each form and its realization.

6-1- Requests

Requests are one of the many speech acts used quite frequently in every day human interaction. In Brown and Levinson's (1987)[24] terms, requests are face-threatening acts (FTAs), which threaten the hearer's negative face. So, those who perform a request need to reduce the level of imposition created by an act being requested in order to save the hearer's face and, at the same time get his/her compliance with a request.

Table n°2: Requests and Politeness

ReQUEST	%	Form-based Translation	%	Meaning-based Translation
[llah jxalli:k]	60%	May God preserve you	40%	Could you…?
[llah ja afdek]	30%	May God Protect you	70%	Could you Please…?
[llah jsad i:k]	60%	May God make you succeed	40%	Do you mind...?
[llah jfarhek]	30%	May God Make you Happy	70%	Would you kindly …?
[llah jar a li:k]	60%	May God be happy with you	40%	Could you…?
[llah jafteh li:k]	50%	May God make things easy for you	50%	Could you…?
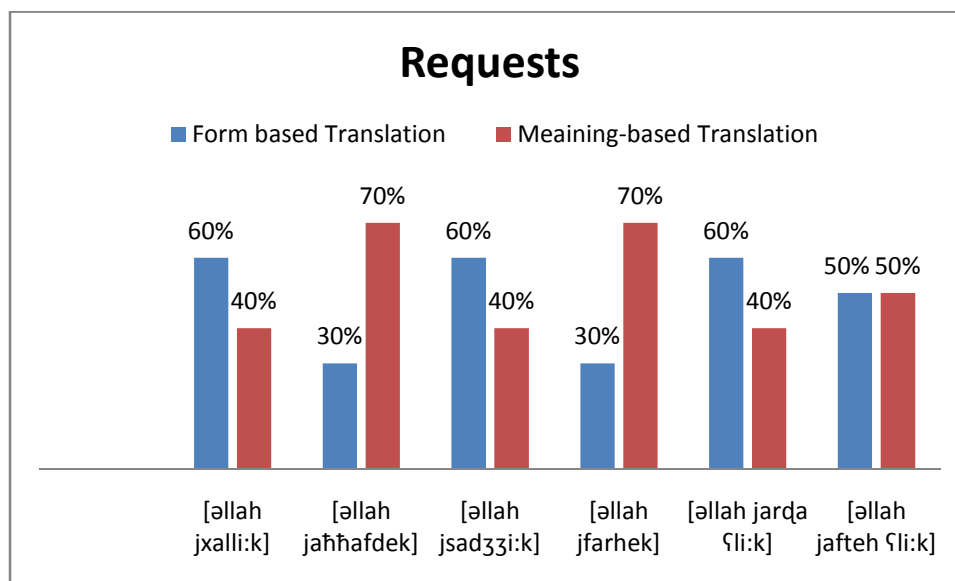
Most subjects (60%) opted for 'May God preserve you','May God make you succeed', May God be happy with you' as a form-based translation of the following formulas respectively [llah jxalli:k], [llah jsad i:k], [llah jar a li:k]. The translation of those formulas is inappropriate, as it is culturally and linguistically insufficient for the target reader to grasp the intended meaning of the formulas. This is because the implicature encapsulated in the Arabic formulas, that is, implicating requests, is completely missed in English if the translator relies only on the semantic meaning, thus entailing the praise of God independently of the speech act of requests.

Many students translators (70%) seem to have understood the illocutionary force intended by the following formulas [llah ja afdek] and [llah jfarhek] when used as requests through the use of modals, e.g. 'will, would, could, etc' and question forms to minimize imposition and maximize the factor of optionality in favour of the addressee.

6-2- Thanking

Thanking or expressing gratitude is a convivial speech act which is frequently used in daily communication, for it is the universal ritual and convention that all the people around the world observe. From the following table, it is noticed that Arabic is rich in polite expression of thanking.

Table n°3: Thanking and Politeness

	%	Form-based Translation	%	Meaning-based Translation
[baraka llahu fi:k]	80%	Bless you	20%	God Bless you
[llah ja i:k Sa a]	80%	May God give you good health	20%	Thank you
[llah jkattar i:r k]	70%	May God increase your welfare	30%	Thank you
[llah j a i:k b stt r]	80%	May God cover you with his protection	20%	Thank you
[llah ja afdek]	80%	May God protect you	20%	Thank you
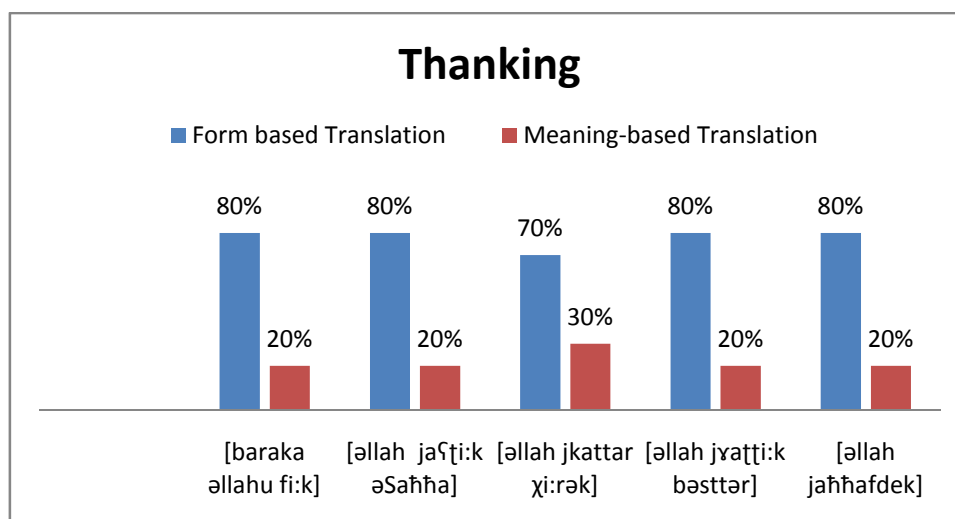
The students translators used the same formula, namely, "God bless you" for both form-based translation (80%) and meaning-based translation (20%) for the expression [baraka llahu fi:k].A contrast can arise when two languages contain routines which are semantically similar but differ in the functions they can fulfil. For instance, the expression "God bless you!" is used in both cultures, but for different effects: in English, it is usually said to somebody sneezing; in Arabic, it is an expression of gratitude said in return to a service or kind act. It is noticed that Allah is in almost every aspect of real life situations, while it is not exactly the case in English. For instance, it is a matter of routine politeness that, after sneezing, the Arab sneezer should praise Allah by invoking / l amdu lillah/ (praise be to Allah). In English by contrast, the sneezer has no formulaic expression to use after sneezing. Thus, it may also happen that a formula is required in one language whereas in the other no formula is required at all in the corresponding situation.

It seems that there is no one to one equivalent term in English for the different gratitude formulas. This is the reason for providing a same word translation 'thank you' for different lexicons by (20%) of the respondents. The translation of thanking formulas seems to be nearly impossible because of the specific religious connotations inherent in religious expressions and the pragmatic functions they exhibit.

6-3- Condolences

In condolences, whereas in Arabic there are several expressions that designate the degree of loss (death/failure, etc.), the formality of the situation, and the interpersonal level of relation, in English, such expressions are few and lack the level of formality expressed in Arabic utterances. Thus, all the condolence expressions used in Arabic are formally equivalent to only one or two English expressions:

Table n°4: Condolences and Politeness

Condolences	%	Form-based Translation	%	Meaning-based Translation
[el baraka f rasek]	50%	Blessing on yourself	50%	Sorry to hear about your loss
[llah jera mu]	30%	May God bless him	70%	May God have mercy on him!
[addam llah a rakum]	50%	May God increase your reward	50%	Sorry to hear about your loss
[llah ja i:kum sber]	80%	May Allah comfort you	20%	Please accept my sincere condolences
[llah jbaddel m abtu b sber]	60%	May Allah replace his love with patience	40%	Please accept my sincere condolences
inna lillah wa inna ilajhi ra: i u:n	80%	We belong to Allah and to him we return	20%	Please accept my sincere condolences
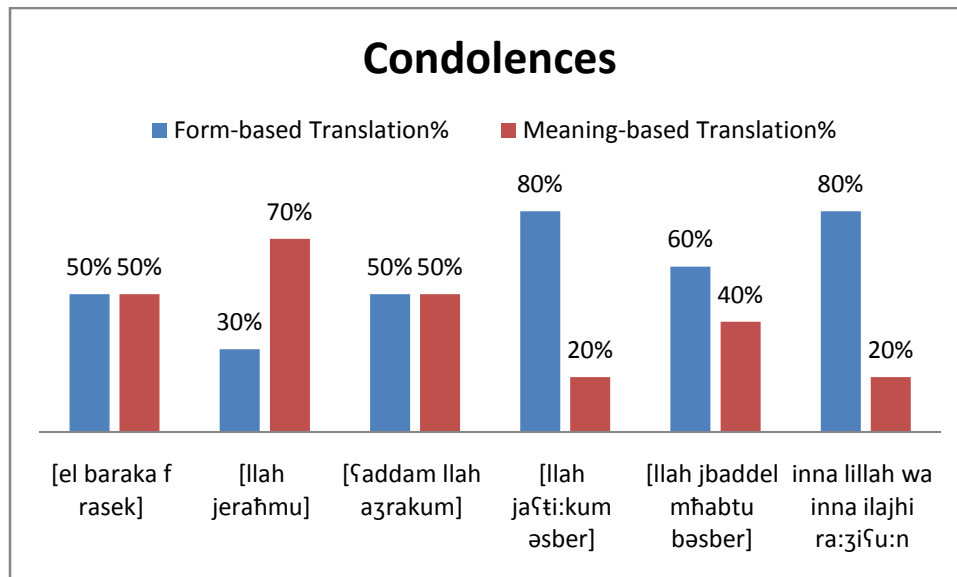
A large number of students (50%) adopted, more or less, form-based translations that were inappropriate and too direct. They sacrificed politeness in the target culture as they tended to paraphrase the source formula as can be illustrated in:

- [el baraka f rasek] "Blessing on yourself"
- [llah jbaddel m abtu b sber] "May Allah replace his love with patience"

These politeness formulas can be simply rendered as: Please accept my sincere condolences. Thus, most of the students (80%) did not maintain the polite speech act of condolences in the target language. They gave their own interpretations of the implicated meaning, namely, meaning-based translation of the formulas.

6-4-   Congratulations

Congratulations may be classified under the category of expressive because in performing such acts, the speaker expresses his feelings. Congratulations are uttered in the context of happy events, such as linguistic formulas used in weddings, births, religious festivals – all occasions for public as well as private joy - in traditional Tlemcenian society, which has a rich historical heritage in this regard. Tlemcenian marriage ceremonies have a unique identity, which binds together the different practices followed in the region. The following religious expressions are noticed:

Table n°5: Congratulations and Politeness

Congratulations	%	Form-based Translation	%	Meaning-form Translation
[mabru:k ʕli:kum]	50%	May you be blessed	50%	Congratulations!
[rabbi jsaxxar]	50%	May God bless your union	50%	May the love you share today grow stronger
[llah jʔallaf al ʕuʃra]	35%	May Allah bless your union	65%	Congratulations!
[llah jad al sa dek xi:r mennek]	50%	May God make your luck i.e., husband better than you	50%	Congratulations!
[amdullah ʔla slæ:k]	20%	Relief to you	80%	Congratulations!
[llah jad al ad ek mabru:k]	20%	May Allah bless your hajj	80%	Congratulations !
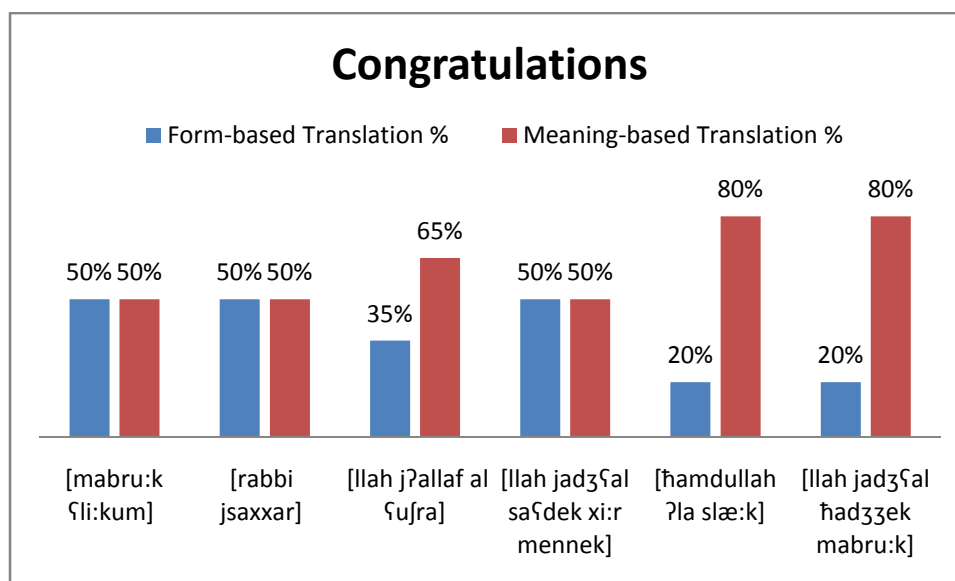
The analysis of the students' translations of congratulations formulas showed that 50% of them were form-based translations. Thus, they failed to translate most congratulation formulas and often did serious damage to the pragmatics of the discourse as can be exemplified in:
- May you be blessed
- May God bless your union
- May God make your luck i.e, husband better than you

Such cases of non-equivalence may pose various problems for the language translator. If translators attempt to translate and use their first-language formula in the target language, the result may be a fairly appropriate contribution to the conversation, one which seems exaggerated or stylistically odd, or one which seems to make no sense at all.

(80%) of the students translators used meaning-based translation "congratulations!" for the formula [amdullah la slæ:k] saidto a woman who has just had a baby and [llah jad al ad ek mabru:k]said to one about to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. On the other hand, only (20%) used form-based translation. Thus, one of the most striking contrasts between the content of the Arabic and English routines is that many of the Arabic formulas involve references to religious concepts, where the corresponding English ones do not.

7- Discussion

The present section deals with the major pragma religious problems in translating Arabic religious formulas. For the purpose of the study, the term religion means the feelings, emotions, attitudes, and moral traditions expressed in the formulas, which manifest themselves in socio-religious system of the Arab culture. According to Piamenta (1979)[25]"Islam was the one major factor that saved the Arabic language from degeneration". Interestingly, Allah which is frequently mentioned in Arabic politeness formulas dominates the Arabs' social relations. These religious politeness formulas are culture specific and language specific in their use, so that, the translation equivalent in most cases is only a rough approximation and does not yield the effect intended by the speaker. As a matter of fact, there are hundreds of similar formulas that reflect the influence of Islam on native speakers of Arabic, thus revealing Arab's great veneration of Allah. This belief is constantly consolidated by worshipping him, in praising and thanking him.

It was noticed that the translator may sacrifice religious background for the sake of creating the equivalent translation. In other words, Arabs resort to fixed linguistic expressions for conveying polite attitude, on the other hand, While the use of models for requests is a more natural speech acts in English, religious politeness formulas are much more indicative in terms of the source language culture. Thus, Arabic and English present cultural and social differences and these result in a considerable difference on the level of lingua-pragmatic expressions and their translation.

Another predominant action carried out by religious lexicon is to add legitimacy and authority to one's speech. This is rooted in the ideology that the name of God had tremendous power. With regard to the action, we have seen that the fulfilment of requests, condolences, thanking and congratulations depend no longer on the performance of the speaker and the hearer, but on the mediation of a third participant /Allah/ (God) as well. The appeal to 'God' serves as a warrant for the speaker to obtain the solicited act, and for the hearer as well, inasmuch as he believes that if he satisfies the requested act, he would get his recompense from the third participant. In order to perform the act, both the speaker and the hearer need to have a suitable intermediary, which serves as a guaranty for the speaker to get the solicited act executed and for the hearer to get the recompense if he carries out the solicited act.

Conclusion

Arabic and English present cultural and social differences and this result in a considerable difference on the level of lingua-pragmatic expressions and their translation. For instance, Arabic has quite elaborated sets of polite lingua-pragmatic forms, while English has a limited number of polite formulas. The intimate relationship between family members, relatives and neighbours might be the reason why Arabic is rich in polite expressions of requests, thanking, congratulations and condolences. In Arabic these expressions are composed of different words with different semantic and linguistic characteristics. Thus, the translation of politeness formulas is fully pragmatic and contextual rather than linguistic and semantic. This is why the translator needs to pay more attention while translating these expressions and their intended meaning from Arabic to English and vice versa.

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