

Translating Food Menus from English into Arabic: Linguistic and Cultural Dilemmas

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Abstract

Translating food menus is a fundamental communication tool for restaurants and coffee shops to market their products and to inform their costumers about the type, quality and diversity of food and products available for their use. This study aims at investigating some translation strategies used to translate food menus from English into Arabic and the salient linguistic and cultural problems resulted from the usage of such inappropriate strategies. This study the focuses the translation strategies used to translate food menus in 10 restaurants and coffee shops in Muscat, Oman and the problems which resulted from the usage of such strategies and what could be suggested to help translation practitioners to handle such challenges. The selection of the corpus was based on practical reasons. The data was analysed descriptively by using frequencies and percentages. The findings revealed that there was a number of translation strategies used frequently to translate food menus in the corpus in questions which are: borrowing, literal translation, using a super ordinate word, amplification, reduction and using a load word plus an explanation respectively. The usage of these strategies caused several problems such as lexical ambiguity, lack of clarity and confusion. The study recommends that choosing the appropriate strategy for translating food menu is of a vital importance to help avoiding translation problems. What is the aim of the study?

Keywords: Food terms, translation strategies, culture-specific terms

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1. Introduction

Globalization and the friendly approach towards foreign investment led major brands to open outlets in different parts of the world. For instance, well-known chain restaurants such as KFC can be found in many Arab countries. It is undoubtedly true that a significant part of the success of such restaurants is contingent upon their ability to communicate effectively with their clientele. Since the linguistic diversity of the world creates barriers to communication, translation plays a key role as “a builder of bridges” which enables people to “go beyond the borders of the world staked out by their own language” (House, 2015, p. 3.). An effective translation of restaurant menus can facilitate and enhance understanding between such restaurants and their clients. Nonetheless, the process of translation food menus is not an easy task and it poses several challenges and difficulties. Unquestionably, translation practitioners need to put into account the cultural aspects when translating food menus as they play a significant role in conveying the meaning to the target audience. Translators need to be aware of the differences between the two linguistic systems and their cultural differences and the culture-specific concepts in order to render the meaning accurately and successfully. In this regard, Toury (1978) states that translation is a matter of an act that inevitably involves at least two systems and two cultural traditions and values. Using the appropriate translation strategy when translating culture-specific concepts is of vital importance as it may help to convey the exact and near meaning and foster the translation quality, accuracy and faithfulness.

1.1 Objectives & Research Questions

The over-arching objective of this study is seeking to answer the following research questions: What are the most frequent translation strategies used by practitioners to translate food menus? What are the linguistic and cultural translation problems resulting from the usage of such strategies when translating food menus from English into Arabic? What could be done to help translation practitioners to handle food menu translation challenges?

2. Theoretical Underpinnings

2.1 Food Menu as a Genre

Food menus play a primordial role as an advertising strategy for attracting customers. Zwicky and Zwicky (1980) emphasize that at their core menus are catalogues that are “subdivided according to the traditional parts of the meal” (p. 88). Saleh (2011) quotes several researchers who emphasize that menus have two main functions: to inform and to attract. The customers are informed about the food items offered in the restaurant and they are also tempted to choose them. The function of a particular text certainly influences the writer’s choice of language. A text that aims to persuade has different linguistic features from a text that aims to entertain, for instance. Duyen (2012) states that one of the linguistic features found both in Vietnamese and English menus is the use of noun phrases. Zwicky and Zwicky (1980) also explain that “Menus supply their information in a list of noun phrases, heavy with modifying past participles like topped, dipped, and garlic-accented, often macaronic, and larded with appealing adjectives like rich, crisp, special, choice, generous, natural, zesty, and of course fresh” (p. 91). The use of noun phrases and adjectives is also common in many Arabic menus. In recent years, food menus are no longer short simple lists of food as they contain visuals, more food items classified into several sections, attractive designs, and several other components.

2.2 *The Importance of Menu Translation and Statement of the Problem*

A restaurant's food menu is one of the main tools to inform as well as to attract customers. The variety of dishes offered these days by restaurants, which come from all over the world, might be totally unfamiliar to customers. In addition, the terms used to describe such dishes might be culture-specific and cannot be easily and directly translated. Since a restaurant menu plays a major role in aiding customers to understand what is being offered, an accurate and effective translation is of paramount importance. As in all domains of life, translation can play a key role since it enables "access to a different world of knowledge, traditions, ideas" (House, 2015, p. 3). However, without an awareness of the intricacies involved in the translation process, a translator might unconsciously produce a translation characterized by unintelligibility or inappropriateness. For instance, Al-Agha (2006) discovers that "problems in translating fast-food advertisements are attributed to the employment of non-professional translators" (p. 2). Pouget (1999) also attributes the poor quality of menu translation from Spanish to English to non-professional translators. In addition, Saleh (2011) also found that some menus contain "poor translation, wrong choice of lexical items, or misleading translations" (p. 14-15). The cultural element involved in terms related to food makes the process of translation very complex. Chiaro and Rossato (2015) indicate that food is "deeply ingrained in our cultural identity" (p. 237). Since, as Newmark (1988) notes, "food terms are subject to the widest variety of translation procedures" (p. 97), an understanding of the nature of the translation process is necessary before embarking on translating food terms and it will help translators to make decisions as to the most appropriate translation procedures they need to use.

2.3 *Linguistic and Cultural Challenges Encountered in Food Menu Translation*

The literature abounds with discussions on problems that translators generally face during the process of translation. According to Catford (1965) "the central problem of translation-practice is that of finding TL equivalents" (p. 21). Lack of equivalence is caused by several factors chief among which is the cultural specificity of some concepts which makes the task of finding a suitable equivalent arduously difficult. Toury (1995) stresses, "translation is not only a linguistic activity but a cultural one as well" (p. 26). If the source language contains concepts, which the target language speakers find totally unfamiliar because they are related to religious beliefs, social customs or a particular kind of food, then such concepts might be referred to as culture-specific (Baker, 1992). Just like idiom translation where some idioms are peculiar to a certain culture, there are also certain types of foods and that exhibit such peculiarity. Baker (1992) makes a mention of two other sources of the problem of non-equivalence which are the *non-lexicalization* of some concepts in the target language and the lack of a *superordinate* or a *specific term*. For example, in English, there is no word which expresses the "opposite of loneliness". However, in Arabic the word (أنس) refers to the feeling of joy that you have as a result of having people around you. As for the second source, Baker explains that the target language may "have specific words (hyponyms) but no general word (superordinate)". The opposite is also common. For instance, in Arabic, there are two words which mean "garden": *bostan* (بستان) and *hadiqa* (حديقة). *Bostan* is a garden which is enclosed by a fence or a wall while *Hadiqa* is a garden without any walls or fences.

Another challenge that faces translators is how to create "equivalent effect". Newmark (1988) indicates that a translation achieves equivalent effect when it produces "the same effect (or one as close as possible) on the readership of the translation as was obtained on the

readership of the original” (p. 48). The translator’s desire to achieve equivalence effect might lead to some problems, especially in menu translation. For example, part of designing menus is about creating something that is appealing and attractive. Therefore, menu translators do not only try to convey the meaning, but also to convey the appealing and attractive nature of food terms usually found in menus. In order to achieve this aim, some translators consciously or unconsciously fall into *overtranslation*. According to Saleh(2011), some menus translated from English to Arabic contain over-translation. She found, for instance, that the Arabic adjective “*mogrmisha*” which means “crispy” is added although it does not exist in the source language. It is a controversial issue whether such translation is accurate and faithful.

Furthermore, one of the challenges is related to how the readers’ cultural beliefs influence their perception of the translated text. For instance, Chidiac and Saliba (2016) indicate that certain advertisements in the west can be offensive to an Arab audience because they contain taboos. Therefore, a full and direct translation is not recommended. A lack of knowledge of the target culture might cause the translator to produce a text which might be unacceptable. Since restaurant owners are very cautious about respecting their clients, they need to make sure that their menus do not contain anyoffensive or sensitive terms. Some translation practitioners raise a question related to this discussion, which is: *can we consider a particular text inaccurate or unfaithful if the translator adapts it in order to be suitable for the target culture?* Baker (1992) emphasizes that in such situations:

Being polite can be far more important than being accurate. A translator may decide to omit or replace whole stretches of text which violate the reader's expectations of how a taboo subject should be handled - if at all - in order to avoid giving offence(pp. 263-264).

2.4 Translation Procedures: Literal Versus Free

When embarking on translating any text, the translator usually adopts a particular strategy or procedure. Some beginner translators might opt for a *word-for-word translation*, as they believe it is more faithful. Nonetheless, as Crystal (1987) remarks, the result of word-for-word translation “often makes no sense, especially when idiomatic constructions are used” (p. 344). Moreover, the syntactic structures of the target language are usually different. Another strategy is the use of *literal translation*, which is often confused with word-for-word translation. This strategy is different because the translated text, although maintains the linguistic structure of the source text, is written in accordance with the rules of the target language (Crystal, 1987). When it comes to culture-specific concepts, a translator would make an obvious error if he or she uses literal translation since that, as Newmark (1988) remarks, “would distort the meaning” (p. 95). Nonetheless, literal translation is not an ineffective procedure in all types of situations. Saleh(2011) notes that literal translation of some food terms from English to Arabic is completely intelligible. She concludes “Concerning menus and food terms translation, literal translation is a successful choice since the menu usually consists of short terms and phrases without a sentence structure. For example, “kids’ meal (وجبة أطفال) and chicken wings (أجنحة دجاج). However, the reason why literal translation was effective is perhaps the universality of such words and phrases which do not pertain to a particular culture. Such universal words and phrases, as Newmark (1988) remarks, do not contain “cultural description of the referent”. Words, which contain a cultural description, are often difficult to translate. One strategy to

handle such difficulties is to use, what Newmark calls, *a classifier*. For instance, there are many Arabic terms which refer to camels, and each one of them contains a description of the animal (e.g. its age, breed, etc.). As a translator, I can just use the classifier *camel* to translate all of these words. The use of classifiers is also common when translating food terms. Moreover, although literal translation is acceptable when translating single words or phrases, its utility for translating a whole text is questioned. Saleh(2011)makes a good point by indicating that the success of literal translation in the case of menu translation is because the translation is only at the word or phrase level. When translating a text containing a group of sentences, literal translation might not be as effective as a translator might desire. In fact, Newmark (1988) notes that there is a tendency to reject literal translation among translation practitioners “as a legitimate translation procedure” (p. 68) for rendering meaning. Nonetheless, it is still widely used. The opposite of literal translation that some translators prefer to use, for linguistic and non-linguistic factors, is “free translation”. Free translation is a broad term that refers to a wide range of translation strategies. In this type of translation, “the linguistic structure of the source language is ignored, and an equivalent is found based on the meaning it conveys” (Crystal, 1987, p. 344). Whether to favour literal translation over free translation or vice versa is not an easy choice to make. However, Newmark (1988) writes, “Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, many writers favoured some kind of free translation” (p. 45). In this study, we are concerned with translating food menus and the procedures that are used to translate food terms.

2.5 Strategies for Handling Food-Related Culture-Specific Terms

In addition to word-for-word translation and literal translation strategies, there are a number of strategies that can be used to deal with culture-specific words. One of them is *borrowing*, which refers to “the process of transferring a lexical item into the TL directly” (Almanna, 2016, p. 56-57). Newmark (1988) calls this procedure “*transference*” and he indicates that a translator usually resorts to transference when a word is peculiar to the source language (SL). For example, the names of people, geographical names, street names, food terms, etc. are usually transferred. If the pronunciation and the morphology of the borrowed word are adapted to be similar to the words of the target language, then the translation procedure is called “*naturalization*” (Newmark, 1988). There are a lot of English words in Arabic whose pronunciation and morphology have been changed such as *technologia* (which means technology). Sometimes there are equivalents in the target language, but transference is used because the foreign words can have prestige. Saleh (2011) provides a thorough discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of transference in menu translation. On the one hand, the borrowed words have some prestige, they can solve the problem of non-equivalence, and they help when literal translation is misleading or do not make any sense at all. On the other hand, it can cause cultural sensitivity, restricts the translator’s creativity, and can cause confusion and ambiguity (see pp. 60-64). Newmark (1988) also believes that transference “blocks comprehension, it emphasizes the culture and excludes the message, does not communicate: some would say it is not a translation procedure at all” (p. 96). In addition to borrowing, Baker (1992) describes a number of strategies that translators can use with culture-specific terms. One of them is “*translation by cultural substitution*”. She defines this strategy as “replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader (p. 40). She explains that the reader is presented with a concept that is familiar and easy to identify and this is an advantage. By way of explanation, the English phrase “strong coffee” can be rendered into Arabic as قهوة ثقيلة, (literally: heavy coffee) since the adjective “heavy” is usually

associated with coffee that has high amount of caffeine. Another strategy that is commonly used with culture-specific concepts is *using a loan word plus explanation*. As for the benefits of this strategy, Baker writes, “once explained, the loan word can then be used on its own; the reader can understand it and is not distracted by further lengthy explanations” (p. 43). This strategy might be useful to use with food terms that cannot be translated directly; a short explanation under the food term would facilitate the reader’s understanding. In several cases, translators might add some elements that do not exist in the source text or do the opposite by eliminating certain elements. The first procedure is called *amplification* while the second is called *reduction* (Malone, 1988, cited in Almann, 2016). There are several reasons why a translator may opt for amplification such as removing confusion and ambiguity and to make translation comprehensible. Sometimes translating everything can make the target text look unnatural and therefore removing some elements for the purpose of maintaining naturalness is opted for by some translators (Almann, 2016). This point is stressed by Baker (1992) who points out that “we cannot and should not distract the reader by looking at every word in isolation and attempting to present him/her with a full linguistic account of its meaning” (Baker, 1992, p. 33).

3. Methods

This study employed a descriptive research methodology approach to collect and analyze English food menus translations into Arabic to find out their problems resulting from the usage of some translation strategies adopted as they do not help customers to meet their demands. Additionally, some solutions to these problems in question were suggested.

3.1 Corpus of the Study

The corpus under investigation consists of 10 shops and food menus. The sample used in the present study consists of famous international coffee shops and restaurants menus in Muscat and Barka, Sultanate of Oman. All the menus are bilingual and they include English food terms and their Arabic translations. The sample is collected from Muscat and Barka the rationale behind choosing them is practical. The entire corpus is collected by the researchers from different coffee shops and restaurants such as the Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, Pizza Inn, and McDonald’s. These coffee shops and restaurants offer foreign food items and dishes. The study is limited to 10 coffee shops and restaurants only for practical reasons. The study focuses only on linguistic and cultural aspects and translation strategies used in food translation as other dimensions are beyond the scope of the study. The study adopted a descriptive approach, by which the translation problems in all the samples are described, discussed and illustrated with examples from the corpus. The procedures, which were used to analyze the data, include textual analysis by comparing and contrasting the English food terms and their Arabic translations and quantitative analysis using frequencies and percentages. All the translation problems were highlighted and the most frequently used strategies associated with problems were discussed. Issues related to the accuracy and faithfulness of the employed strategies were judged by the researchers and some possible alternative approaches for improving the translation quality of English food menus were suggested.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 *What are the most frequent translation strategies used by practitioners and professional to translate food menus?*

In response to this study main research question, a number of the most common strategies used in translating food menus in questions were presented and discussed in the light of the existing relevant literature. These strategies vary from one food item to the other and some of them they were used inappropriately which caused many ambiguities and lack of clarity. The most prevalent strategies are: borrowing, literal translation, using a superordinate word, amplification, reduction and using a load word plus an explanation respectively. The use of these strategies in translating certain culture-specific food items has created a number of problems in the translated food menus and these problems could be linguistic or cultural ones.

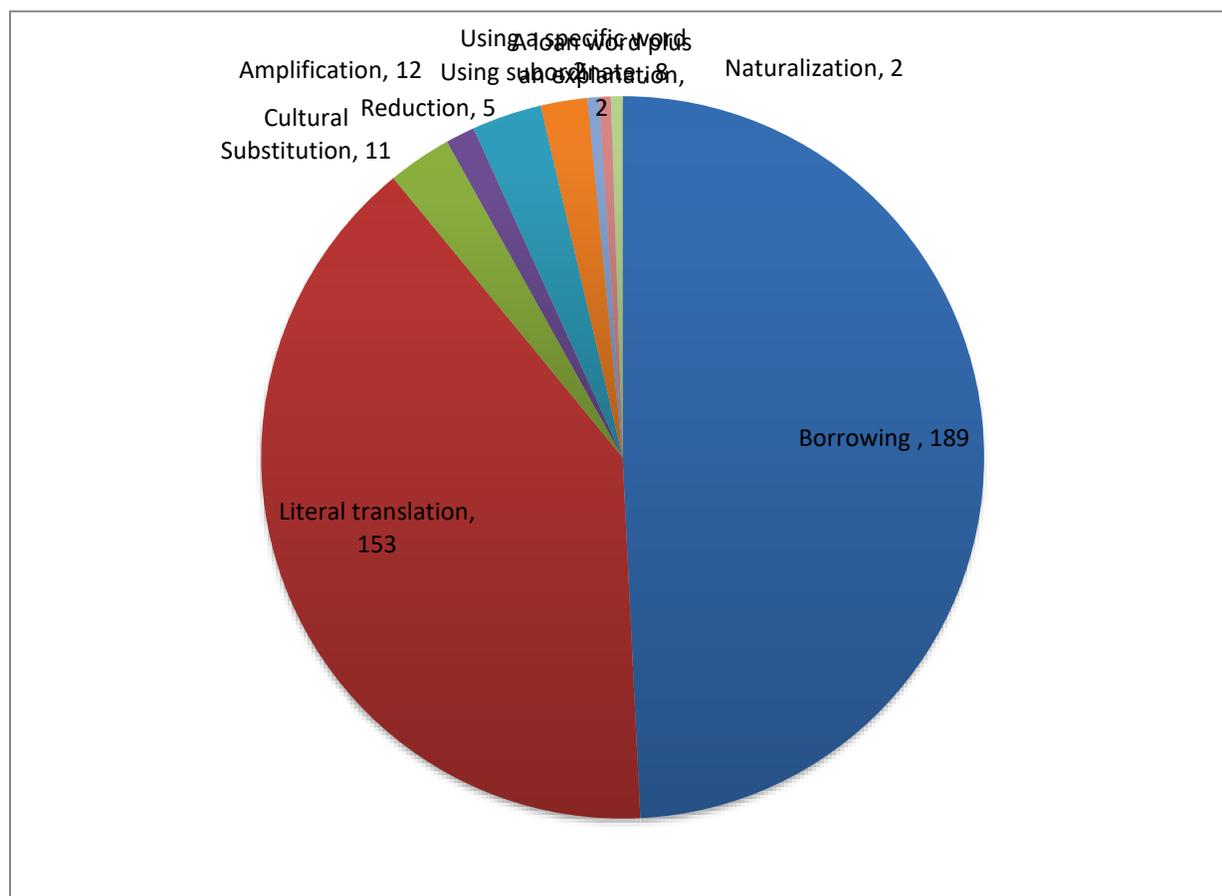


Figure1 Translation strategies used in translating food menus

4.2 Borrowing

The translators of the menus in question have applied a variety of translation procedures to encounter the problem of lack of equivalence. The most common translation procedure is borrowing which was used 189 times (47% of all the translations). This finding is consistent with Saleh's study (2011) that discovered that "the translated versions (of menus) abound with borrowed terms". (p. 14). There are unquestionably a number of borrowed words which can be easily identified by a wide range of Arab readers such as *cappuccino*, *burger*, *sandwich*, *chips*, *pasta* etc. Some of these words, especially the ones related to coffee drinks, were themselves borrowed into English from other languages. Such words like *cappuccino* can be recognized by

many people around the world and might become universally known in the recent future as a result of globalization. Trying to learn such well-known food terms might be a worthwhile endeavour, as they will help Arab readers to use them in many contexts with speakers of various languages. Therefore, the translator might be excused for borrowing such terms based on the assumption that these words can be recognized internationally. Nonetheless, there are also a fairly big number of words that cannot be easily recognized such as *wedges*, *wings*, *waffle*, *veggie*, etc. In a later section, we will discuss whether such terms should or should not be transliterated.

4.3 Literal Translation

The second most common strategy that has been used is literal translation. Words that can be considered universal (e.g. salad, water, bread, juice, meat, seafood, etc.) since they do not contain a cultural description of the referent, as Newmark (1992) remarks, were usually translated literally. The quality of the translation is acceptable even when translating phrases that are not commonly used in the Arabic language, for instance the translation of “*chicken legend*” as الدجاج الأسطورة is not a bad translation. Literal translation might not be useful when translating culture-specific terms, but when it comes to general words it seems to work well. In fact, Al-Agha (2006) reports that when he asked people to choose between a literal translation and a transliteration of the phrase “*Chili chicken*”, 90 % of them preferred literal translation. This finding is consistent with Saleh’s (2011) conclusion that “literal translation is a successful choice since the menu usually consists of short terms and phrases without a sentence structure” (p. 65). Nonetheless, when there is no equivalent, literal translation usually falls short. The translators of the menus in question employed other strategies to deal with this issue which are translation by using a *superordinate* word, *amplification*, *reduction* and other strategies that will be discussed below in detail.

4.3 Using a superordinate Word

One of the techniques of translating words that have no equivalents in the target language is using a *superordinate* word. For instance, the word ‘*Muffin*’ refers to a type of cake not recognized by everyone in the Arab world and there is no specific word for it. As a result of lack of equivalence the translator used the general word “cake” to translate this word. Another example is the word smoothie, which refers to a type of thick beverage; it was translated using the general word “drink”. Table 1 shows the English words which have no equivalence in the Arabic language and the superordinate words that were used to translate them.

No	English words	Translation by using a superordinate term
1	Muffin	Cake كعك
2	Scone	Cake كعك
3	Toppings	Contents محتويات
4	Key Lime	ليمون (lit. refer both to lemons and lime)
5	Smoothies	Drink شراب
6	Submarine	Sandwich سندويكه
7	Mutton	Meat لحم

Table 1 examples of using superordinate terms in translating food items

4.4 Amplification

One of the translation procedures used in the menus in question is amplification, where the translator adds some elements that do not exist in the source text. Several food terms, which are culture-specific, were transliterated but some elements were added to clarify the meaning. For example, the words *Italian* and *bread* were added to the translation of *Ciabatta* and *Panini*. Without these two words, the Arabic reader would have no clue about the meaning of these foreign terms. In addition, the word *cheese* was added to the translation of *cheddar*, *feta*, and *mozzarella* to clarify that these terms refer to cheese.

4.5 Reduction

Reduction is the opposite of amplification. In several occasions, the translators of the menus decided not to translate some elements for several reasons. First, the translator may want to avoid words which would rather render the text somehow awkward. For example, when translating *Black Forest Mocha*, the translator did not translate the adjective *black*. The translator might have assumed that in the Arabic culture, the phrase *black forest* الغابة السوداء would appear somehow strange and not suitable for describing any kind of food. The colour black is often associated with negative things. Sometimes it is not clear why the translator uses the reduction strategy. For instance, when translating *Tasty Toast Treat*, the translator decided not to translate *Treat*. If what is meant by *treat* is something that gives pleasure, then there are several Arabic that convey this meaning. Another reason why the translator might use the reduction strategy is that the concept that the word expresses is not lexicalized in the Arabic language.

4.6 Translation by Cultural Substitution

In several occasions, the translators neither borrowed the term nor used a literal translation but adopted a free translation which is intended to have an effect on the reader as the source text did. For instance, one breakfast meal that carries the name of '*Food For Thought*' was translated as الفطور الذكي (literally means *smart breakfast*). Had it been translated literally, the translation would make little sense. Nonetheless, the translation *smart breakfast* cannot be considered a good translation since the adjective *smart* is not usually associated with food in the Arabic culture. As in English, the adjective *smart*, when it is used to describe something that is non-human, it is associated with technology such as a smart phone. Another example is the name of a breakfast meal which is *Afarmer's egg*. A literal translation would be somehow funny. Therefore, it was translated as البيض بالطريقة الريفية (literally, *eggs in the rural style*), a translation which is more attractive than a literal translation of this term. Al Agha (2006) reports that 25% of the respondents in his study preferred cultural substitution as a translation procedure when rendering the meaning of food items. Nonetheless, looking at the findings of this study, this translation procedure is not given sufficient attention.

4.7 Using a Loan Word Plus an Explanation

Despite its usefulness as indicated by (Baker, 1992), the translation procedure *using a loan word plus an explanation* was not commonly used in the translation of food menus. Although this procedure might also be considered as amplification, the researchers' criterion to differentiate between *using a loan word plus an explanation* and *amplification* is that the reader in the case of amplification is not notified about the added elements, while in the first strategy the reader recognizes that added elements because they are placed between brackets, for instance. Concerning the menus in question, there are only a few instances where *using a loan word plus*

an explanation was used. The first one is when translating the word Naan, the translator between brackets explained that it is a type of bread and the second one is when translating the word *Kartoffelsalat*, the translator between brackets explained that it is a potato salad.

4.4. What are the Linguistic and Cultural Translation Problems Resulting from Usage of such Strategies and what could be done to help translation practitioners handle food menu translation challenges?

As for this study question, this section summarizes the present study linguistic and cultural translation problems resulting from usage of such strategies when translating food menus from English into Arabic. One of the problems is the case of unnecessary borrowing. It is interesting to note that many food items could be translated easily from English to Arabic but were borrowed in some menus. The same food items were translated literally or adapted in other menus and the translation was perfectly clear. For instance, in the menu of Domino's Pizza, the term *wing* and *bread sticks* were transliterated. The same terms in the menu of Pizza Inn were translated literally (e.g. wing as أجنحة) or by cultural substitution (bread sticks as أصابع الخبز). Another surprising example is the word *chicken* that is very easy to translate. In McDonald's menu, it was transliterated while in several other menus it was literally translated. It is clear here that it is not an issue of lack of equivalence but it is related to prestige reasons. Moreover, one of the surprising findings is that the same food item is sometimes transliterated and sometimes literally translated *in the same menu*. In the menu of Domino's Pizza, the term cheese is transliterated when translating the name of the meal, but it is literally translated when translating the explanation under the name of the meal. The use of borrowing might be justified if the food terms are internationally known, but it is arguable whether it is recommended when translating terms of unknown food items or when translating something that is universally known such as the word chicken. Although some customers might find such foreign terms attractive, there are a few studies that point to the contrary. Al-Agha (2006) investigated people's perceptions of translation strategies used in fast food advertising texts from English to Arabic. He found that borrowing was the main strategy used and when people asked about their perceptions of the foreign terms found in menus, "97% percent of the respondents believed that the translations are incomprehensible in Arabic" (p. 82). Moreover, he reported that the respondents think that adaptation, literal translation, and cultural substitution should replace transliteration and borrowing. Saleh (2011) quotes some authors who argue against the use of foreign terminology in menus and consider it to be old phenomenon. As for the use of superordinate words, although such words convey the meaning of the word in some ways, they cannot be described as adequate since the reader does not have a very clear picture of the food item. Furthermore, the use of amplification also posed some problems. There are some elements that were added without an apparent need. For instance, in several occasions, the words غني (meaning rich) خاص (meaning special), طازج (meaning fresh) were added although they did not exist in the source text. Such words do not have any explanatory function but they are intended to make the translation more attractive. Some researchers consider such additions as overtranslation, as noted in the literature review. All in all, based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that translators reconsider the use of borrowing as a translation procedure in menus as there are other alternatives. If translators insist on using loan words, then including a brief explanation would be useful. Using a loan word plus an explanation is not commonly used in the menus that have been investigated. Moreover, it is suggested that translators, if they want to produce effective and

attractive translations, they need to consider the target culture. Using cultural substitution might be a good solution, but as indicated before, it has not been used in menu translation.

5- Conclusion and Recommendations

Given the findings and results presented, the current study sought to answer the following study questions: What are the most frequent translation strategies used by practitioners to translate food menus; what are the linguistic and cultural translation problems resulting from the usage of such strategies when translating food menus from English into Arabic; what could be done to help translation practitioners to handle food menu translation challenges. Therefore, it could be concluded that choosing the appropriate strategy for translating food menus is of vital importance as most of the translation problems of the corpus in question and reported in this study were mostly resulted from employing inappropriate translation strategy such as the overuse of transliteration and literal translation for rendering meaning. Additionally, translating food menu is not an easy task as it has linguistic and cultural and religious connotations and challenges. The study offers some recommendations which hope to facilitate the process of translating food menu. Translation strategy should be chosen according to the function that it can achieve because the significance of each strategy is determined by its appropriateness with certain food items rather than the others. The study recommends a study with a wider scope which includes a larger corpus may lead to more specific and significant conclusions and solid results. Specialized dictionaries should be utilized when translating food menu to help translation practitioners to render meanings accurately and faithfully.

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