ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSLATION INTO ARABIC OF RELIGIOUS ITEMS OF *THE DA VINCI CODE* BY DAN BROWN

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BY

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DEDICATION

TO MY BELOVED

FATHER AND MOTHER

Who gave me the greatest gift any one can give another:

THEY BELIEVE IN ME

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SL   Source Language

ST   Source Text

TL   Target Language

TT   Target Text

DTS   Descriptive Translation Studies

DC   The Da Vinci Code

ShD   Sheefrat Da Vinci (The translated version of the novel)

TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

glottal stop	ʾ
أ	a
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	ʿ
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y
long vowel **a**	ā
long vowel **i**	ī
long vowel **u**	ū

[Source: ALA-LC (American Library Association-Library of Congress)]

ANALISIS TERJEMAHAN DALAM BAHASA ARAB BUTIRAN AGAMA *THE DA VINCI CODE* OLEH DAN BROWN

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini memberi fokus terhadap penyelidikan berkaitan prosedur yang digunakan oleh penterjemah bagi menterjemah butiran-butiran keagamaan yang terkandung dalam novel *The Da Vinci Code* oleh Dan Brown. Kajian ini dijalankan berdasarkan teori '*descriptive translation studies*' yang diperkenalkan oleh Toury yang bertujuan untuk 'memberi gambaran dan penerangan fenomena empirik berkaitan terjemahan bagi tujuan menghasilkan teori terjemahan yang sebenar. Prosedur terjemahan yang digunakan dalam kajian ini ialah kombinasi prosedur terjemahan Newmark. Kajian ini dijalankan berdasarkan 100 butiran keagamaan yang dikumpul secara manual daripada novel *The Da Vinci Code*. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa penterjemah menggunakan 11 prosedur terjemahan yang berbeza untuk menterjemah butiran-butiran keagamaan dalam novel tersebut. Daripada keseluruhan 11 prosedur terjemahan ini, terdapat lima prosedur utama yang lebih kerap digunakan berbanding prosedur yang lain. Prosedur-prosedur tersebut ialah 'terjemahan literal', 'terjemahan yang telah dikenal pasti', 'persamaan deskriptif', 'persamaan budaya' dan 'prosedur kuplets'. Prosedur-prosedur terjemahan ini diaplikasikan dengan cara yang berbeza dalam menterjemah butiran-butiran keagamaan. Analisis data yang dijalankan secara manual ini juga menunjukkan bahawa penterjemah menggunakan kombinasi kecenderungan prosedur ke arah bahasa sumber dan bahasa sasaran bagi menterjemah butiran keagamaan yang terdapat dalam novel tersebut. Keadaan ini menghasilkan terjemahan yang bukan secara sepenuhnya cenderung kepada bahasa sumber atau bukan secara sepenuhnya cenderung kepada bahasa sasaran.

ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSLATION INTO ARABIC OF RELIGIOUS ITEMS OF *THE DA VINCI CODE* BY DAN BROWN

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on investigating the procedures used in translating the religious items in the American novel *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown. The present study is based on Toury's descriptive translation studies theory. The translation procedures that are used in this study are a combination of Newmark's translation procedures. The present study is conducted on 100 religious items collected manually from *The Da Vinci Code* novel. The findings of this research indicate that the translator used 11 different translation procedures to translate the religious items in the selected novel. Out of the 11 different translation procedures there are five main procedures, which are used more frequent than the other. The five most dominant procedures are literal translation, recognized translation descriptive equivalent, cultural equivalent and couplets procedure. These procedures are applied using different patterns when translating the religious items in the selected novel. The manual data analysis indicates that the translator used a combination of SL tendency procedures and TL tendency procedures to translate the religious items in the novel. This resulted in producing a TT that is neither SL oriented nor TL oriented.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1   Background of the Study.

Cultural translation can be considered an important tool in cross cultural communication. Rendering cultural elements in texts into a different language is one of the most challenging tasks for all translators. Indeed, much attention has been paid to this problem by translation scholars.

According to Newmark (1981:7) "translation is a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language". The meaning which lies behind this kind of expressions is always strongly linked to the specific cultural context where the text originates or it is linked to the cultural context it aims to re-create. According to Nida (1964: 157), "words only have meaning in terms of the culture in which they are used, and although languages do not determine culture, they certainly tend to reflect a society's beliefs and practice", which Nida as cited in Delisle (1988: 132) explains as, knowing only the language is not considered enough to be able to translate, being familiar with the culture is vitally important as well such as, religion, civilization, customs and mores of those who speak the language. In other words, the translator must know and be familiar with the target readers, regarding their knowledge of the subject matter and their relationship with the attitude to the events referred to in the text. As well as taking in consideration the differences between the source text and the target text audiences. Vermeer, the influential of the "skopos" theory, when asked in January 1998 in Ljubljana about the ideal translator he said the ideal translator within the "skopos" theory is a bilingual, bicultural person. Nida (1964: 130) believes that

"differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure".

Cultural translation has a vital importance because it deals with translating one culture into another. According to Van Leeuwen (2004:14), literary translation is very important because it touches some sensitive issues such as cultural identification and self-representation. Moreover, he added "literary translation and cultural exchange as well as religion are all tightly linked to power relations and to hierarchic divisions between hegemonic and dominated societies" (Van Leeuwen 2004:14). In other words, literary translation, culture and religion are all connected in a way that makes it impossible to separate them, and since religion and beliefs are considered a very important part of any culture, special attention should be paid to the way religious items are translated from one language to another specially if those languages are spoken by societies that have a different cultures

Halverson (1999:6) argued that the concept of translation must go beyond the classical system that defines translation as a communicative process or as a semiotic process. She believes that "the status of interlingual translation within such a system of related concepts remains central" in order to determine the relatedness of various concepts that make use of the same model. Moreover, Sapir (1949:39) claims that accessing and understanding other cultures of different nations can be possible through the tool of translation. Many can consider translation as a way of communicating and understanding other cultures and societies.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

When translating from English to Arabic, the translator should have a full knowledge and understanding of the target reader. According to the CIA online fact

book (2012) the percentage of Muslims is different in each Arab country. The table below illustrates some of the Arab countries and the percentage of Muslims in each country.

Table 1.1 Religions in the Arab World

Arab Countries	Religion Percentage
Bahrain	Muslims: 81.2% Christians: 9% Others: 9.8%
Egypt	Muslims: 90% Christians: 10%
Jordan	Muslims: 92% Christians: 6% Others: 2%
Kuwait	Muslims: 85% Others: 15%
Lebanon	Muslims: 59.7% Christians: 39% Others: 1.3%
Oman	Muslims: 75% Others: 25%
Qatar	Muslims: 77.5% Christians: 8.5% Others: 14%
Saudi Arabia	Muslims: 100%
Syria	Muslims: 90% Christians: 10%
United Arab Emirates	Muslims: 96% Others: 4%

The statistics in Table 1.1 clearly shows that Islam is the dominate religion in the Arab world. Therefore the translator should bear in mind and understand that when translating into Arabic, Muslims would be the main target readers.

Islam and the Qur'an have had a great impact on the Arabic language and the Muslim society and the way of living. Holt (2004: 72) believes that the strong relation between religion and language is clearly expressed in the relation between Arabic and the holy Qur'an. For example; the phrase *as-salam alaykum* (السلام عليكم), an Arabic greeting that means "Peace be upon you", is often used by Arabs, Muslims and non-Muslims, and Muslims around the world. Moreover the phrase *alhamdulillah* (الحمد لله), an Arabic phrase that means "Praise to God" used by Arabic speakers of all religions; due to the centrality of this specific phrase within the texts of the Qur'an and the words of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, this phrase is most used by Muslims. The examples mentioned above are phrases that come from the Qur'an and are used in everyday life by Arabic speakers and Muslims in general. These examples clearly show the influence that Islam and the holy Qur'an had on the Arabic language.

Islam's great influence on the Arabic language and the Arab society and culture created a big distance between the Arab culture and the western culture that is dominated by Christianity. Therefore, the translator is expected to encounter more problems and difficulties when translating from Arabic to any western language and vice versa. According to Nida (1964: 130), "where the linguistic and cultural distances between source and receptor codes are least, one should expect to encounter the least number of serious problems". In other words, the translator should have full knowledge and understanding of both cultures regarding similarities and differences.

Islam and Christianity are similar in some points such as "God", "paradise", "hell" and "life after death". They also differ in a number of basic points such as

"redemption", "trinity" and "original sin" which are not found in Islam; therefore, the spiritual element of many Christian concepts may be lost when translated into Arabic. For example, terms such as "the miter", "the altar" and "the doxology" are all religious items that have a spiritual meaning in Christianity but do not hold any meaning for Muslim readers. Religious items translation constitutes many obstacles for translators; such terms seem to have incompatible understandings and multi-equivalents which might lead to vagueness. Furthermore, the attitude toward religion can also cause complications when translating religious items. For instance, topics that might be considered innocent to a western non-Muslim reader might be unacceptable to a Muslim reader. For example the term "redeem" reflects a big part of the Christian faith. However, there is no such thing as redeem in Islam and to some extent some Muslims might consider it unacceptable. Therefore, appropriate translation procedures should be applied by translators to translate those religious elements.

One might argue that translating a book or an article that address the religion topic in a direct way might be easier than ones that include some religious topics in its content. This is due to many reasons but the major reason is the target readers. Books or articles that address the religion topic in a direct way are usually intended and read by people who are interested in this topic and has background knowledge about the subject matter or are keen to do some researches to understand the parts they cannot understand.

However, books or articles that do not address the religion topic in a direct way might cause some confusion or vagueness because readers of these kinds of books or articles might not be familiar with the religious content. For example '*the Da Vinci Code*' novel by Dan Brown is a mystery novel that contains religious items from the Christian faith. The novel is not only intended for Christian readers, which might lead

readers from other faiths, such as Muslims, Jews or Hindus, to find it difficult to understand some of the Christian faith terms in the novel.

'The Da Vinci Code' which is an English novel that was first published in 2004 can be considered one of the most controversial novels because of its religious content that speaks about Jesus and Christianity. Darrell L Bock (2009). A research professor of New Testament studies wrote on '*The Da Vinci Code'* saying:

> What has made it so controversial is the author's claim that the backdrop to the novel is rooted in historical fact. Dan Brown made such claims on American morning television in November 2003, a point documented in his book by a note on page. 1. His web site originally claimed that he was a believer in the theories the book. He said he came to these views after much detailed research (He has since backed off this claim to a degree, simply saying he wanted to get these ideas out in the public square). This left the impression that the book is a kind of "tweener" genre, a cross between fiction and non-fiction, that is, fiction with a solid non-fiction skeleton

A flurry of articles and books rebutting the novel, most authored by Christian scholars and journalists, have flooded the Internet and bookstore shelves; such as, *Breaking The Da Vinci Code: Answers to the Questions everybody's asking* by Darrell L. Bock, and *Secrets of the Code: The Unauthorized Guide to the Mysteries Behind 'The Da Vinci Code'* by Dan Burstein. In addition, a website was launched to discuss and answer some of the questions that '*The Da Vinci Code'* raised which is called *the truth about da Vinci*.

This research, therefore, attempts to investigate the way those religious elements are translated from English into Arabic in the selected data, bearing in mind that most of the target readers have different religious beliefs. In addition, it attempts to investigate the procedures the translator used in translating those terms and whether

employing those procedures made the target text clear and easy to read and understand by the target reader.

1.3   Research Objective

The objectives of the study are:

I.   To identify the procedures used to translate the religious items in '*The Da Vinci Code*'.

II.   To determine the frequency of using each procedure to translate the religious items in '*The Da Vinci Code*'.

III.   To examine if the translator keep the source language culture or converted it to the target language culture.

IV.   To develop guidelines and recommendations to benefit future studies and translators involving the translation of religious items of English into Arabic.

1.4   Research Questions

In attempt to find out if the translator of '*The Da Vinci Code*' was able to translate the novel in the best possible way, this research will attempt to answer the following questions:

i.   Which translation procedures did the translator use to translate the religious items in '*The Da Vinci Code*'?

ii.   How frequently did the translator use each procedure to translate the religious items in '*The Da Vinci Code*'?

iii.   Did the translator keep the source language culture or converted it to the target language culture?

iv.   What lessons can be learned for future translations involving the translation of religious items of English into Arabic?

1.5   Scope of the Study

This research is based on the descriptive translation studies (DTS) theory presented by Toury (1980: 6), which aims to "describe and study the phenomena about translation". Therefore, this study will show the way the translator translated or transferred the religious items and elements in '*The Da Vinci Code*' into Arabic rather than criticizing them, taking into consideration the resources available. This research will probably raise questions than provide answers to the problem.

This research deals with translating religious items from English into Arabic within a non-religious book; the study is only limited to cultural religious items. Other cultural forms such as clothes, food or politics are considered very important as well; however this research will not take these aspects into consideration because it is neither possible nor plausible to deal with all cultural aspects in one research, so this research will deal only with religious items because religion is considered one of the main aspects of any culture. According to Robinson (1996: 55) "the question of translation has always been fundamental to religions such as Christianity or Islam which are exoteric, that is, expanding churches and belief systems which must be open to all believers and in all human languages".

The data used in this research is taken from the famous American novel '*The Da Vinci Code*' (2003) and the Arabic translation of the novel by Abedrabbo (2004). The religious items that might benefit this study will be chosen to be analyzed (see Section 1.8).

Moreover, the main aim of this study is to highlighting the transfer of the religious content, rather than focusing on the translation shortcomings, if any.

The cultural translation procedures that were classified by Newmark (1988) which he adapted from Nida's (1964) will be used in analyzing the data collected.

1.6   Significance of the Study

Throughout history Christianity was translated into many languages including Arabic. However, when reading from a book or a novel that has been translated from English into Arabic contains some religious items but does not address the religion topic in a direct way, such as '*The Da Vinci Code',* Muslim readers will encounter some Christian terms; therefore, it is vitally important to understand how these terms are presented to the Arabic reader?. It is the translators' duty to translate these terms in a way that is acceptable to the target reader and be faithful to the original text, taking in consideration the big gab in the religious and cultural background between the Western and the Arab reader. Therefore, understanding how Christian terms are translated into Arabic is important because Arabic is a language that is influenced by Islam, and Arabs have different beliefs and understandings. The gab in the religious background can be considered a big challenge for the translator. A descriptive study is one in which information is collected without changing the environment, which means nothing is manipulated. It is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe 'what exists' with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. Therefore, this research will try to study the process of the translation which will benefit future translators on understanding and improving the quality of such translations. The main contribution of this research is providing a quality assessment of how the religious items were translated within '*The Da Vinci code'* into Arabic, and

how those items are presented in the translated text, which will help the researcher come up with guidelines and recommendations to benefit future studies and translators.

1.7   Theoretical Framework.

This research is based on the 'descriptive translation studies' (DTS) model of assessment. DTS will be discussed further in Chapter two.

Newmark suggested Procedures for translating cultural elements will be used in this research. The following procedures are combined of those presented by Newmark (1981: 75-76) and (1988: 81-90):

1. Transference / Loan.
2. Naturalization.
3. Cultural equivalent.
4. Functional equivalent.
5. Descriptive equivalent.
6. Componential analysis.
7. Synonymy.
8. Through-translation.
9. Shifts or transpositions.
10. Modulation.
11. Recognized translation.
12. Notes.
13. Deletion and Expansion.
14. Label translation.
15. Paraphrase.
16. Couplets.

These procedures will be discussed further in Section 3.1.3.2.

The religious items cannot be simply classified because Conservative Christian faith groups often define terms very differently than other faith groups and secular movements. Therefore, the terms will be determined using the *Catholic Encyclopedia* and websites such as *Religious Tolerance* which specializes in religious topics. These sources contains a glossary of Christian spiritual and religious terms, which will be used to classify religious items in '*The Da Vinci Code*'.

1.8   Research Methodology

This part includes the data collection and analysis and information about the source text and the target text. The methodology will be discussed further in Chapter Three (Section 3.2).

1.8.1   Data Collection and Analysis

This research is a descriptive translation study. The method used in this research is a qualitative because the findings were deduced through a textual analysis. Certain parts that contain religious items will be chosen; the parts that are chosen will be the ones that reflect the purpose of this research. Religious terms, concepts and names that have either a sacred or a spiritual meaning will be chosen in this research. Words and phrases that refer to a religious group or a religious ritual and practices will also be chosen. The data collected will be arranged into 3 different categories: 1) items referring to religious groups, 2) items referring to religious concepts and 3) items referring to terms and concepts of the Christian faith.

1.8.2 Data

The data of this research will be collected from the American novel '*The Da Vinci Code*' and its Arabic translation.

The Source Text (Refer to 2.2.2.1):

Title:	'*The Da Vinci Code*' (DC)
Author:	Dan Brown.
Publisher:	The Doubleday Group (United States) & Bantam Books (United Kingdom)
Year:	2003
Language:	English
Pages:	593
Genre:	Thriller, Crime, Mystery, Fiction

The Target Text (Refer to 2.2.2.2):

Title:	شيفرة دافنشي
	'*Sheefrat Da Vinci*' (ShD)
Translator:	Sima Mohammed Abd Rabbuh.
Publisher:	Arabic Scientific Publishers (Beirut)
Year:	2004
Language:	Arabic
Pages:	494

1.9 Definition of Terms

i. **Culture**: According to Newmark (1988: 94) culture is: "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression".

ii. **Religion:** According to Connelly (1996: 1): "a number of modern scholars of religion have commented on the difficulty of defining what religion is". However he defines religion as follows:

> Religion originates in an attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imaginings and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual. As this attempt expands in its formulation and elaboration, it becomes a process that creates meaning for itself on a sustaining basis, in terms of both its originating experiences and its own continuing responses.
>
> (Connelly, 1996: 1)

iii. **Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS):** According to Toury's (1980: 6), DTS is "target-(rather than source-), solution-(rather than problem-) oriented", Toury believes that the main aim of DTS is to: "describe and explain empirical phenomena about translation, and come up with a pure theory of translation" (Toury, 1980: 6). Pym (2010: 3) asserts that DTS "theories aim to identify how people actually do translate, no matter what the supposed quality"

1.10 Organization of the Study.

The present study will be divided into six chapters. The first chapter of this study will introduce the problem statement and describe the statement of problem addressed in the study as well as providing the research questions and objectives. Furthermore, Chapter 1 will provide an introduction to the methodology used in this research as well as providing a scope for the study.

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Chapters two will address the literature review and relevant research associated with the problem addressed in this study. This chapter will provide detail discussion with detailed review over researches and studies that are related to this research and its problem.

The third chapter is divided into two main sections, which are the theoretical framework and the research methodology. The first section will discuss the theoretical framework that this study is based on, providing detailed discussion on previous studies and researches. The second section of this chapter will discuss the methodology that this research will be carried on, providing detailed discussion on every step in that data collection and the data analysis. This chapter will also provide brief discussion regarding the novel, the author and the reaction that surrounded the publication of this novel.

Chapter four will be devoted for the manual data analysis. This chapter will present the main analysis carried out on the data collected, providing detailed discussion with examples for the data selected. In this chapter the 100 religious items collected from the ST will be divided into three categories 1) items referring to religious groups, 2) items referring to religious concepts and 3) Items referring to Concepts and terms of the Christian faith. Each category will be discussed in details highlighting the procedures used in translating these items. Examples will be provided to explain each procedure used in translating the religious items from the ST. The final section of this chapter will be dedicated to discuss the tendency of the procedures used in translating the selected data.

Chapter five will present the results of the data analyzed. This chapter will highlight the main findings in Chapter 3, providing a detailed discussion about the main

findings. This chapter will be the key in answering the research question, thus meeting the research objectives of this study.

Finally, Chapter six will focus on providing a conclusion and a discussion of the researcher's findings, as well as answering the research questions. Moreover, Chapter 5 will provide guidelines and recommendations for future researches and translators.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Literature Review.

This section focuses on the literature review providing a discussion about the associated literature that is related to this study.

2.1   Definition of Culture and its Categorizations

Larson defines culture as "a complex of beliefs, attitudes, values, and rules which a group of people share" (Larson 1984: 431). Sapir (1949: 79) maintained that "culture is technically used by the ethnologist and culture historians to embody any socially inherited element in the life of man, material and spiritual." Lado (1957: 111) defined culture as "structural systems of patterned behavior" and Bennett (1968: 10) stated that "culture is the reflection of the total behavior of a society". Rohner (1984:111) tried to define culture in a non-behaviorist way, as "a system of symbolic meanings that shape one's way of thinking". Furthermore Bloch (1991) defined culture as "what needs to be known to operate effectively in a specific environment."

The American ethnologist Goodenough (1964) defines culture as follows:

> A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge, in a most general, if relative, sense of the term. By this definition, we should note that culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organizing of these things. It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them. As such, the things people say and do, their social arrangement and events, are products or by-products of their culture as they apply it to the task of perceiving and dealing with their circumstances.

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> To one who knows their culture, these things and events are also signs signifying the cultural forms or models of which they are material representations.
>
> (Goodenough, 1964:39-40)

In other words, culture is the ideas, believes and understandings that people have on their mind, and how they choose to act and perceive or deal with these ideas in a way that is suitable with their circumstances in which that makes them unique from other societies or cultures.

Nida and Newmark have two different definitions of culture. Whereas Nida (1964:157) defines culture as: "the total beliefs and practices of a society". However, Newmark (1981:94) believes that culture is "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression". In these two detentions it is clear that Nida and Newmark agree that a culture is something that can be seen through practices or manifestations, however, Nida also defines culture as part of what people believe which is in their minds that often cannot be seen.

Culture can be defined as something that is shared by a group of people that live in the same area or region; it can be their beliefs, religion, practices, attitude, values or anything that makes them unique from other cultures and societies.

Newmark (1981: 95) categorized culture into 5 main categorize, which he adapted from Nida. Newmark (1981:95) categorized cultural words as follows:

i.   Ecology: Animal, plants, mountains, etc.

ii. Material culture (artifacts): Food, clothes, houses, towns, transport.

iii. Social culture.

iv. Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts: Political, social, religious, artistic, legal.

v.   Gestures and habits.

According to the list above by Newmark, culture is categorized into five main outlines. All of the cultural categorizations are considered equally important. However one in particular will be discussed in this research which is religion. Some might argue that religion can be considered a huge part of any culture, and people to some extent tend to defend their religion or beliefs more than any other part of the culture.

Every aspect of any society's life is affected by culture, how people think, learn and teach and what they consider right and wrong. However, people are usually unaware of some aspects of their own culture and will only know about it when experiencing another (O'Neil 2012). In addition, people usually don't think about their own culture until someone violates their culture or they violate other cultures. Some aspects of the culture are considered very important to the people of that culture, such as values and beliefs. Therefore, Conflicts and misunderstanding of cultures usually arise when interoperating these important aspects. Conflicts and misunderstanding of cultures usually arise when interoperating norms, values and beliefs.

Schneider (1997) cited in Groseschl and Doherty (2000) visualize the concept of culture as an iceberg; one-ninth of the iceberg is visible above the surface (explicit), whereas eight-ninth is invisible (implicit).

An example of the cultural iceberg can be found in the Figure 3.1, the iceberg in the Figure is modified from Weaver(1998):

EXTERNAL
• Explicitly Learned
• Conscious
• Easily Changed
• Objective Knowledge

SEE
HEAR
TOUCH

INTERNAL
• Implicitly Learned
• Unconscious
• Difficult to Change
• Subjective Knowledge

BELIEFS

VALUES

THOUGHT PATTERNS

MYTHS
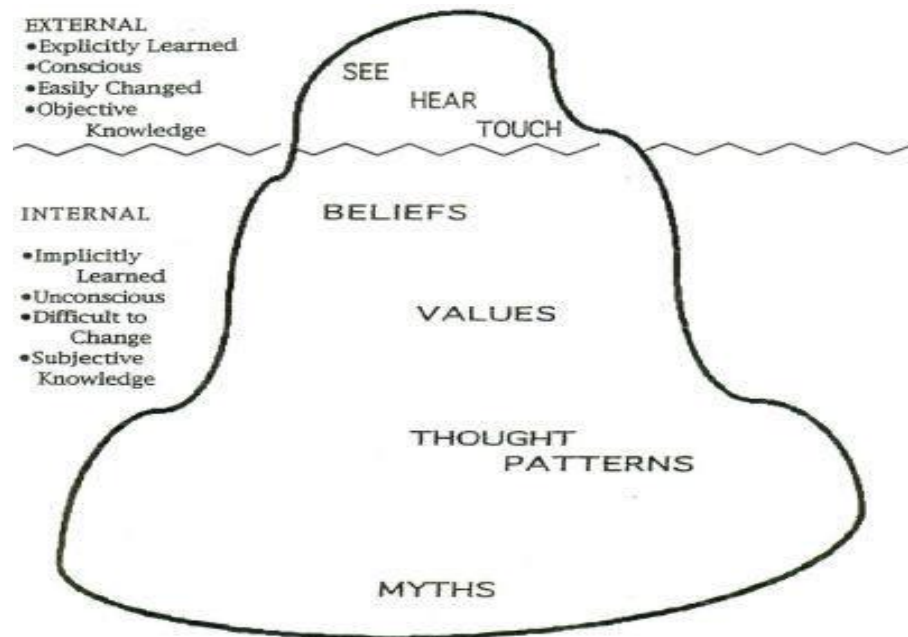
[1]**Figure 2.1: Cultural Iceberg**

When looking at the cultural iceberg figure one can acknowledge that only a small portion of the culture is explicated into observable behavior and artifacts, and this small portion is easier to adapt to some extent compared to the invisible part of the culture, for example it can be considered easy to adapt a new type of food or listen to a new kind of music.

While most of the building block of culture are internalized in people's minds (values, beliefs, thoughts and assumptions), from the iceberg above we can notice that Shnieder mentioned that the internalized parts of the culture are difficult to change. This part of the culture is considered the outline of any culture, and people usually face a bigger problem trying to change this portion of the culture. For example the way elder people are treated is different from each culture to another and it can be considered very hard to change that.

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[1]Modified from Gary R. Weaver, "Understanding and Coping with Cross-cultural Adjustment Stress" in Gary R. Weaver, editor, Culture, Communication and Conflict: Readings in Intercultural Relations, second edition (Simon & Schuster Publishing, 1998) Picture copied from: http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/iceberg.htm (Accessed on December 19th, 2012).

The present research is dealing with religious translation. Religion can be classified in the previous iceberg under beliefs and as Newmak classified it under Organizations, customs, activities, procedures and concepts.

Moreover, it is also believed that cultural conflicts and misunderstanding happened when the two cultural icebergs clash under the surface. Therefore the translation of beliefs, values and thoughts is considered very important.

2.2   Cultural Translation.

Lotman (1978:211-32) states that: "no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its centre, the structure of natural language". In other words, culture cannot exist without its own language to carry it. This means translating any language means translating the culture within. According to Nida and Taber (1969/1982: 199), cultural translation is "a translation in which the content of the message is changed to conform to the receptor culture in some way, and/or in which information is introduced which is not linguistically implicit in the original". This statement shows that cultural translation has to be modified to be acceptable for the target culture. Moreover, Shuttleworth and Cowie argue that:

> Such sensitivity might take the form either of presenting TL recipients with a transparent text which informs them about elements of the source culture, or of finding target items which may in some way be considered to be culturally "equivalent" to the ST items they are translating.

(Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997: 35)

That means that Shuttleworth and Cowie believe that cultural translation can take different forms because it is sensitive to cultural and linguistic factors. In addition Larson believes that each society will translate a message in terms of its own culture:

> The receptor audience will decode the translation in terms of his own culture and experience, not in terms of the culture and experience of the author and audience of the original document. The translator then must help the receptor audience understand the content and intent of the source document by translating with both cultures in mind.
>
> (Larson 1984: 436-7)

Difficulties arising out of differences of cultures constitute the most serious problems for translators and have produced the most far-reaching misunderstanding among readers. Each language contains elements that are derived from its culture and cannot be found in languages that do not share the same culture, for example, "boyfriend and girlfriend" are commonly used in western societies but when trying to translate it into Arabic, no equivalence can be found. Newmark (1988: 86) called these elements 'cultural words'. Baker (1992: 21) refers to these concepts and called them "cultural-specific items". She points out "abstract or concrete, it may relate to religious beliefs, a social custom, or even a type of food." (Baker, 1992: 21). Moreover, Gambier refers to such concepts as "cultural-specific references":

> Culture-specific references connoting different aspects of everyday life such as education, politics, history, art, institutions, legal systems, units of measurement, place names, foods and drinks, sports and national pastimes, as experienced in different countries and nations of the world.
>
> (Gambier 2004: 159)

Translating a text that contains cultural elements is never a constraint-free process. According to Wei (2009:154) "any work of literature is nurtured by culture. The subject matter, the topic, the way the author reveals himself, is products of certain circumstances of a certain age". Therefore, the translator will face challenges from both the culture of the source text and the culture of the target text. Culture itself has its own limitation in transferring the source text into target text. Each society or group of people based on their historical background, local situations, and religion with their specific

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language, construct their own culture which is respected, performed and accepted along with its limitations. Lastly, the translator should always bear in mind three main points when translating cultural words, which is always less context-bound than ordinary language, the motivation, the cultural specialist and linguistic level of readership (Newmark 1988: 96)

2.3   English-Arabic Cultural challenges.

English and Arabic belong to different settings and different language families. Arabic is classified as a member of the Semitic family of languages, English as a member of the Indo-European language family. Syntactically, Arabic and English exhibit different word orders. Arabic is, for the most part, a synthetic language. Al-Hassnawi (2010:6) discussed the differences in language structure between English and Arabic. The differences are discussed below:

Table 2.1: Difference between Arabic and English adapted from Al-Hassnawi (2010)

English	Arabic
Only a few grammatical items are compound structures	Majority of grammatical items are compound structures
Rigid word order	Flexible word order
Very few inflections	Highly inflectional
Uses abbreviations, acronyms, formulae, and idioms	Rarely uses abbreviations, acronyms, formulae and idioms
Narrow range of gender distinction	Wide range of gender distinction
Tense-aspect is very clear-cut and distinct	There is no clear-cut tense aspect distinction
No dative nor dual	Contains *dative* (indicates indirect object of a verb) and *dual* (of, relating to, or being a number category that indicates two persons or things)
Scientific and technical terminology covers all relevant fields	Shortage of scientific and technical terminology that may cover all fields
Archaic expressions are nearly obsolete	Archaic expressions are still in use

Many compound lexical structures are used	Compound lexical structures are rare
Metaphor and other forms of figurative language are reserved for poetic use, literature and related fields	Metaphor and other forms of figurative language are frequently used, even in Modern Standard Arabic
Capitalization is occasionally used for semantic implication (e.g. Mosaic, Nativity)	Dos not use any form of capitalization
Adverbs are usually formed by adding (ly) to adjectives	Adverbs are formed by prepositional premodification of nouns and adjectives; English prepositions such as *before, after, above, over, below, under, behind* and *between* are adverbs in Arabic
Does not use vocalization (Vocalization = to change a consonant into a vowel during articulation.)	Vocalization has a semantic function
Punctuation affects the interpretation of text	Punctuation has little, if any, bearing on interpretation of text
Apart from such suffixes as –ling and –ette there is no paradigmatic diminutive in English	Paradigmatic diminutive exists
There are about 20 configurations of vowel sounds	Few vowel sounds; used mainly in vocalization

The table above shows that English and Arabic have many differences on the structural level. However, the real challenge that faces the translator when translating from English into Arabic is the distance between Arabic culture and English culture.

Lefevere (1992: 128) states that "Translation can be, and is still seen as a threat to the identity of a culture", and as a result some "cultures may resist translation because it is felt to threaten their self-image". One must acknowledge the complexity and difficulty of cultural translation really depends on whether the languages involved are close or remote culturally. Ilyas, (1989: 123) states:

> This implies that translation between languages of disjunct cultures is more difficult than carrying out translation between languages that are culturally related or similar. This does not imply, however, that translation between languages that are culturally related or similar is a straightforward activity. In fact,

> it embodies some serious pitfalls from the translators as well, though to a lesser degree compared with translation between languages of different cultures.

<div align="right">(Ilyas, 1989: 123)</div>

Khataya (2001) is one of the Arab scholars that has studied and discussed the differences in cultural backgrounds and values between Arabic and English – speaking societies. Khataya (2001) as cited in Al-Sarrani (2011:54) argues that exposing Arab readers to a foreign cultural medium could result in making readers feel alienated because they will neither understand the foreign text nor will they be fully exposed to their own culture, which might cause some confusion.

As I have previously stated in Section 1.2, Islam and the Qur'an had a great impact on the Arabic language, which will make the job of Arab translators even harder because they need not only deal with the cultural gab but have to face and deal with the religious challenges as well. Religion is a big part of the Arabic society, Arabs as all other Muslims believe in one God, and any translated work that suggest otherwise is prohibited for the Arab reader. Topics like individuality and breaking from the society is most likely to be rejected, because the Arabic culture is, to a certain extent, a conservative one, and any topic that might free the society from certain cultural constraints is prohibited.

aL-Sarrani (2011:57) presented four main challenges and obstacles that the Arabic culture could present when translating into Arabic:

i. Translation of the subject matter. Such as anti-religion topics, which are totally prohibited by the Arab culture.

ii. Translation of culture-bound words. Culture-bound words could be found in practices, idioms, puns, etc.