

**THE TRANSLATABILITY OF HADHRAMI PROVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS:
CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC TRANSFER
FROM ARABIC INTO ENGLISH**

ADEL SALEM ABDULQADER BAHAMEED

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

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by

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LIST OF TRANSLITERATION SYMBOLS

Consonants

' = ء
 b = ب
 t = ت
th = ث
 j = ج
 H = ح
 kh = خ
 d = د
 th = ذ
 r = ر
 z = ز
 s = س
 sh = ش
 S = ص
 D = ض
 T = ط
 Z = ظ
 ? = ع
 gh = غ
 f = ف
 q = ق
 k = ك
 l = ل
 m = م
 n = ن
 h = هـ
 w = و
 y = ي

Vowels and Diphthongs

a = َ فتحة
 i = ِ كسرة
 u = ُ ضمة
 aa = آ الألف الممدودة
 ii = ي الياء الممدودة
 uu = و الواو الممدودة
 a: = أو as in arm a:m
 o: = أو as in saw so:
 ai = أي as in five faiv
 au = أو as in now nau
 ei = أي as in play plei

Based on Hatim (1997: XI), Al-Ani (1970: 20, 30), and Hornby (1974: vi-vii)

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Map of South Arabia, showing the relationship of Hadhramaut to the Indian Ocean and neighbouring countries

KEBOLEHTERJEMAHAN PERIBAHASA HADHRAMI: PEMINDAHAN BUDAYA DAN LINGUISTIK DARI BAHASA ARAB KE BAHASA INGGERIS

ABSTRAK

Jalanan perumpamaan Hadhramaut dengan budaya tempatan yang rapat menimbulkan proses penterjemahan yang sangat sukar dan mencabar. Kajian ini bertujuan menyiasat cara perumpamaan sub-budaya Hadhrami ini boleh diterjemah dengan niat menuaikan dan menerangkan proses terjemahan tersebut dengan menggunakan protokol *think-aloud* dalam analisis data. Kajian mendapati bahawa perumpamaan Hadhrami boleh diterjemah melalui aplikasi tiga teori persamaan yakni fungsional, *ideational* dan formal dengan persamaan *ideational* paling kerap digunakan. Kajian ini disimpulkan dengan suatu teori terjemahan ideografik yang merangkumi strategi subjektif yang menumpukan perhatian pada proses-proses kognitif yang mempengaruhi keputusan-keputusan penterjemah dan strategi objektif yang menawarkan sembilan kaedah ke arah penyelesaian praktikal bagi masalah-masalah penterjemahan perumpamaan Hadhrami.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Arab Hadhrami, Bahasa Inggeris, Perumpamaan/Peribahasa Hadhrami, terjemahan, penterjemahan, persamaan

THE TRANSLATABILITY OF HADHRAMI PROVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS: CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC TRANSFER FROM ARABIC INTO ENGLISH

ABSTRACT

The Hadhrami proverbial expressions being deeply immersed in local culture have made translating these fixed expressions challenging. This study aims at investigating how these subcultural Hadhrami proverbial expressions could be translated, with the view to describe and explain the translation processes utilizing think-aloud protocols for data collection and analysis. The findings are that Hadhrami proverbial expressions are translatable by applying three equivalence theories and these are functional, ideational and formal with the ideational equivalence being the most applicable. This study concludes with a translating idiographic 'theory' comprising, a subjective strategy, which focuses on the cognitive processes that influence the translator's decision-making. It also comprises an objective strategy, which offers nine formulae as practical solutions for the problems of translating the Hadhrami proverbial expressions.

Key words: Hadhrami Arabic, English, Hadhrami proverbs, translation, translating, equivalence.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

Proverb is a concise statement in general use, expressing a shrewd perception about everyday life or a universally recognized truth. Most proverbs are rooted in folklore and have been preserved by oral tradition. Proverbial expressions¹ are appealing because they are succinct and because they use simple rhyme, irony, metaphor, among other aesthetic things. This study highlights a variety of issues pertaining to the possibility of translating subcultural expressions of this type. The study corpus has been selected from the particular environment of Hadhramaut. The challenge here is in handling deeply localised data, which has been kept raw and ‘untouched’ and has not been studied and analysed from a translation perspective. This makes the translator’s task to be more challenging to the extent that the translatability of such expressions becomes uncertain. Thus the issue of translatability and others are addressed in this study.

This chapter focuses on introducing, firstly, the background of the study and the statement of the problem. It presents the linguistic characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic as well as discussing issues pertaining to the coinage, characteristics, and purposes of the Hadhrami proverbial expressions and their relations to the society. Secondly, a sizable number of Hadhrami proverbial expressions is analysed and translated in order to touch and highlight the areas of difficulty in translation. These proverbial expressions have been classified in a way that makes them a means reflecting the mentality, behaviour and interaction of the Hadhrami man towards most of the social, economic, religious, political and ecological aspects surrounding his life in the past and mostly practiced at present. Thirdly, the rationale and methods of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

1.2 Background to the study

The new political, economical and social aspects have altered significantly the importance of the Arabic and English languages in the world. With increased movements of peoples on the globe, there are more English speaking people going to the Middle East now than before. Yemen is one of the Middle Eastern countries which is not only considered a promising country in agricultural and mineral resources and offers substantial market opportunities for exporters, but it is also rich in literature and local folkloric cultural traditions (Fadhel, 1995). The diversity of people that come to Yemen annually traverses from the general population of over 71000 people mostly from non-Arabic speaking countries (Fadhel, 1995). Thus, the people who come to Yemen need to appreciate the local culture in the advent of globalisation. This puts proverbial expressions in the limelight as one source of cultural appreciation and socialisation. In order to appreciate and get socialised into Hadhramaut culture, visitors and immigrants could benefit greatly if proverbial expressions were translated from Hadhrami Arabic into English. This is because: first, proverbs are effective and aesthetic verbal devices by nature and persons, both native and foreigners, should have opportunity to access them so that they can participate in meaningful communication. This is suggested by Lestari (2000) who spent about 15 years in the Middle East working as a technical translator/interpreter. He states, "A long time ago, during my first days spent in Arab countries, I noticed—as did everyone from the Arabic translators' tribe—the great importance of knowing the colloquial language of the region". Secondly, translation is considered an important means to document, publicize, and exchange cultural values among nations. Therefore by translating them, these expressions with the contained accumulative human experiences and wisdom of the people inhabiting the remote area of Hadhramaut can be made accessible to the other nations all over the world. At the present time, foreigners are not delighted with

the current situation. Lestari (2000) states, "As an admirer of folk traditions, I was badly disappointed. There are only a few collections prepared for scientific purposes and a few others compiled by non-Arabs and translated into English". By this statement, Lestari appears to be strongly suggesting that it is about time for Arab folklore to be collected and translated. Thus, his statement is indicating a call for gathering and translating Arab folklore.

In addition, English is the language that is worthwhile and well-qualified for such local expressions, among other things, to be transferred into. The fact that English is an international language renders the learning of English inevitable for prospective researchers and Yemen's linguists in order to access the world's culture and science as well as to communicate Yemen's culture and science in return. The availability of a large body of linguistic publications in English facilitates the retrieval of information from various written sources that researchers could benefit from so as to update academic research and development in related field of specialisation. Keeping abreast with the latest scientific and cultural developments requires efficient access to such information, which is mainly available in English. This is not the case for Hadhrami wise expressions because no retrieval forms in English exist. Visitors to Yemen who are interested in its culture and language, particularly that of historically famous district of Hadhramaut, have no means to acquire them but through the native language.

For this reason, it seems important that proverbial expressions being one of the basic elements of culture to be translated into English. This, in essence, requires accurate transfer of knowledge. Thus, the acquisition of appropriate translation skills and strategies is essential to manage efficient renderings of texts from the source language (SL) which is Hadhrami Arabic into the target language (TL) which is English. This scenario brings us to the contentious issue of translation between cultures, which will be discussed later (cf. 2.5.3 *Cultural Problems*).

1.2.1 Yemen and Hadhramaut: Statement of the Problem

The Republic of Yemen, which occupies the Asian southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, is located between 42.50 - 52.50 longitudes and 12.50 - 17.50 latitudes in the subtropical zone between the northern tropic and the equator. It is bounded on the west by the Red Sea and on the south by the Gulf of Aden (an arm of the Arabian Sea, which is part of the Indian Ocean), and is separated from Africa by the narrow strait of Bab El-Mandeb. The Red Sea to the west and the Gulf of Aden to the south make up 2000 km long coastline. To the north and northeast lies Saudi Arabia and to the east is Oman. These two countries are Yemen's only contiguous neighbours. Yemen covers about 527,970 sq km. Sana'a is Yemen's capital city. The unification of the North and South made it the second largest country on the peninsula after Saudi Arabia.

Hadhramaut (see the map p. xv) is a coastal district forming a large part of the southeastern Republic of Yemen, extending along the Gulf of Aden to Oman on the east. In addition to the coastal plain, about 48 km wide, Hadhramaut contains an interior plateau. Although barren for the most part, the area has a number of fertile valleys that yield vegetation. The main crops are dates, wheat, and tobacco. Archaeological researches disclose that Hadhramaut, called Hazarmaveth in the Bible, was the site of a highly developed ancient civilization. Between 1934 and 1967, Hadhramaut formed successively part of the Aden Protectorates and the Federation of South Arabia, under the control of Britain. Its area is about 155,400 sq km with population of 718,008 (1994).

Yemen has long been considered a crude cultural material because, up to the moment, very little effort has been exerted to maintain and excavate the diversified

branches of the rich intellectual heritage hidden there. Yemeni researchers, let alone the others, have not shown much interest to work and explore this heritage. Many human aspects have, therefore, remained a mystery and have not received the deserving record, review, and criticism; hence they have been kept inaccessible to the outside world. Such phenomenon might be ascribed to the hard environmental and political circumstances that Yemen has witnessed throughout its long history. It lived in a rather complete seclusion quite apart from contemporary effects of the modern life. Consequently, it could not keep up with the new various scientific and literary developments as supposed. Therefore, Yemen has culturally been lost in itself whereas its cultural reservoir of knowledge and experiences has been kept rather unknown to the world for along time. If Yemen is mentioned, it will only be for the sake of its past being the cradle of some ancient civilizations² which held the reins of control for a while and then went to extinction.

Presently, Yemen has somewhat managed to break the bars and get out of its seclusion. However the world still knows only its political face while the major part of its literature, science, life ingredients, customs, and traditions are still buried. Therefore much work is required to explore, document and disseminate the originality, creativity and wealth of knowledge that it has (see Al-Sabban, 2001:5).

It is undeniable reality that there is a small number of Yemeni writers who pay praiseworthy endeavors to investigate some historical and literary manuscripts. This is most probably a reaction of the recommendations of the Arab Folklore Symposium held in March 1977 in Baghdad entitled: "Encouragement of translating vital selections of the Arab folklore into foreign languages and publishing them all over the world for the purpose of greater divulgation and to help prevent plagiarism and falsification." But their work to date is too little and can only be regarded as a drop in the vast ocean of the tremendous intellectual heritage that Arabs possess. Yemeni proverbs, for

instance, witness just meagre scattered attempts of compilation (cf. 1.11.1) despite the fact that these proverbs are huge in number. The same thing is true in respect of the other folkloric heritage such as local Arab tales:

Year after year I was greatly amazed to find out that throughout the Arabs' homeland there was not a single compilation of folk tales written in their original dialects and published for general audience reading...I myself have gathered some of them and was enchanted. Little children all over the world—and the children hidden in all of us grown-ups as well—ought not to be prevented from reading them

(Lestari, 2000).

Moreover, Yemenis are known for having innate natural prudence and wisdom throughout history. Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) says:

الإيمان يمان والحكمة يمانية

'al-'iimanu yamani wa 'al-Hikmatu yamaniyyah

[Faith][Yemeni][and][wisdom][Yemeni]

Faith is Yemeni and wisdom is Yemeni (mentioned in Al-Nisabari, 1999)

This wisdom is evidently captured in the great comprehensive number of proverbs they compose and transmit from one generation to another. Thus, one can hardly find a certain aspect of life without being handled with a number of proverbs (see appendix VII). Therefore an urgent need then arises, in the face of modernity and globalisation, to maintain and record this heritage lest it should be lost as what has happened to some of the Hadhrami historic sources. In this regard Al-Sabban (2001: 217) states, "While we were moving in the caravan of our way of research, it was made clear to us that Hadhramaut historic sources of the period between AH129-901 have been lost or disappeared. This was the direct reason for putting the curtain and the obscurity of the important aspects of the Hadhrami history of that period".

This being the case, proverbs as one of the basic elements composing the culture of a nation should be rescued from erosion or drowning in the sea of oblivion.

When a nation forgets a proverb, it means that this proverb dies. This, in turn, signifies that this nation has lost part of its wisdom. The more the dead proverbs are, the less wisdom the people will have and if this process continues, its effect will extend to all the other human generations that follow. Therefore, one can feel that time is ripe for Hadhrami proverbs to move from the dark to the light so that the local and foreign people with all the following generations can utilize from their wisdom. Since translation is said to be a window through which people can have a chance to look at other nation's cultures, let's open the window this time at the culture of Hadhramaut so that Hadhrami proverbial expression can come to the light spot to be discussed and analysed from a translation perspective, as such, translating these expressions will make Arabic or non-Arabic speaking people appreciate and delight in the eloquence, wisdom, and beauty contained.

Moreover, it is quite interesting that most proverbs play the role of the helm of life. As a living oral collective memory of old experiences of human being, proverbs work like a gear that must lead people to the right path in order to correct misbehaviour or to remind others of how well mannered deeds look like. They provide succinct utterances showing or expressed with clarity and brevity. People quote them instead of being too long in explaining or commenting on an event, act, or behaviour. Some of these proverbs bear years of trying endeavour and experience. Thus a measure of thankfulness is owed to the old generations who transmit their experiences in short concise expressions to teach us the skill of living, good manners and conduct to set up a harmonious society. The least effort to show credit to the old generations is to reward them by preserving their work; hence translation is considered a favourable way to achieve this goal in this study.

It is also worth noting that proverbs play a significant role in the history of the Yemeni people especially in the regions dominated by tribalism like Hadhramaut. A

man is strongly linked to his tribe and can only act in accordance with its norms. Proverbs organize the relations and behaviours of man within his tribe and environment. Besides, proverbs constitute something very dear and precious to him through which he smells special scent strongly connected to his root. He is, thus, viewed as extremely keen to memorize and use these proverbs in his community where proverbs instructions and recommendations are highly respected to the extent of becoming as powerful as law (Al-Akwa?, 1984). Translating Hadhrami proverbial expressions into English is therefore of much concern.

In fact, the unavailability of the proverbs of Hadhramaut in English so far is due to the fact that the process of translation of Hadhrami proverbs is hindered by the following reasons:

- (i) Translation as an independent higher academic major is unavailable at Yemeni Universities, resulting in translation specialists to be relatively few.
- (ii) Translation of local expressions into English in Yemen is not attracting attention among translators because they mostly aspire for opportunity to get a well-paid career in one of the neighbouring Arab gulf countries since Yemeni average income is comparatively very low.
- (iii) Those well-qualified hesitate to take the risk, as they know that they will suffer from translation problems as a result of remoteness of linguistic and cultural history between Arabic and English as “in reality, the act of re-working a text is much more complex, and a number of issues, largely connected with aspects of the process of translation, have to be accounted for” (Hatim, 2001: 62).
- (iv) Hadhramaut as the largest and a principal administrative and business district of Yemen is experiencing tremendous migration³ with a net out flux of Yemenis departing from their homeland to other more economically attractive locations. In return, the number of Yemenis who come back is

small and what one sees is a progressive loss of Yemeni culture that is carried by its language. Translating Hadhrami proverbial expressions into English is therefore of great concern since without translation they would remain undiscovered. Documenting in the TL the communication that the SL contains is a solution to resist this loss and maintain accessibility to this cultural heritage at all local and international levels of readership including the Hadhrami subsequent offspring who are no longer Arabic speaking in virtue of bringing up in non-Arabic areas to which their ancestors have emigrated long ago.

- (v) The absence of empirical research model dealing with the processes of translating subcultural proverbial expressions is one other problem. "There is a clear need for research that can provide empirical data on the problems encountered by the translator and the mechanisms the translator uses solving them" (Melis and Albir, 2001: 281). Thus, there should be a sufficiently comprehensive theory or model that can guide handling the subcultural legacies of nations so that translators can systematize their work accordingly.
- (vi) The older intellectuals who have repository knowledge of cultural pool of Hadhrami culture become less in number and they are mostly incapable to provide the data and guidance required to the young generation due to their advanced age.

This being the case, it is important to direct work towards translating just a small segment of this semi-neglected Hadhrami legacy. The translation of this small segment (i.e. proverbial expressions) seems to be a reliable means for future widespread translations through which the world will know an idea about the ecological, social, and religious aspects of this historically renowned area of Hadhramaut and the wisdom of its people. Furthermore, the Hadhrami proverbs,

being culturally and linguistically distinct, would collectively exhibit unique characteristics and challenges to translation. That being so, if there is no theory or holistic model is developed, so many proverbial expressions as an essential part of this Hadhrami heritage will be susceptible to oblivion since there will be no model to guide translation to document them in another language and there will be no way of retrieval back. Thus, the outer world will remain unfamiliar with this part of human culture forever.

1.3 Transliteration

In an attempt to solve the orthographic difficulties in reading the Arabic examples presented in this study, the phonemic inventories of Arabic consonants and vowels are given in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2 respectively. The transliteration gives one-to-one representation of the graphological units, and consequently can represent precisely the Arabic orthography, and preserve the visual relatedness between forms. This is to assist the non-Arabic reader as the transcription, which represents phonological units could not fully achieve. Transliteration of Arabic orthography has been taken from Hatim (1997: XI) while the transcription of Arabic phonetic symbols is based on Hornby (1974: vi-vii) and Al-Ani (1970: 20, 30). Hyphen is used to indicate those Arabic phonological units, which are nonexistent in English.

Table 1.1: Transliteration and Transcription Inventories of Arabic Constants

Arabic	Transliteration	Transcription	Description	Category
أ		A	Short central low unrounded	Vowel
ب	b	B	Voiced bilabial	Stop
ت	t	T	Voiceless alveolar	Stop
ث	th	Θ	Voiceless interdental	Fricative
ج	j	J	Voiced palatal	Affricate
ح	H	-	Voiceless pharyngeal	Fricative
خ	kh	-	Voiceless velar	Fricative
د	d	D	Voiced alveolar	Stop
ذ	th	Ð	Voiced interdental	Fricative
ر	r	R	Voiced alveolar	Trill
ز	z	Z	Voiced alveolar	Fricative
س	s	S	Voiceless alveolar	Fricative
ش	sh	ʃ	Voiceless palatal	Fricative
ص	S	-	Voiceless pharyngeal alveolar	Fricative
ض	D	-	Voiced velarised	Stop
ط	T	-	Voiceless velarised	Stop
ظ	Z	-	Voiced pharyngealised interdental	Fricative
ع	ʔ	-	Voiced pharyngeal	Stop
غ	gh	-	Voiced uvular	Fricative
ف	f	F	Voiceless labiodental	Fricative
ق	q	Q	Voiced uvular	Stop
ك	k	K	Voiced velar	Stop
ل	l	L	Voiced alveolar	Lateral
م	m	M	Bilabial	Nasal
ن	n	N	Alveolar	Nasal
ه	h	H	Voiceless laryngeal	Fricative
و	w	W	Bilabial	Glide
ي	y	Y	Palatal	Glide

Arabic linguistic system has six vowels. They are three short vowels with three long counterparts. The Arabic symbols for short vowels are diacritics which are placed over or under the consonants.

Table 1.2: Transliteration and Transcription Inventories of the Main Arabic Vowels

Arabic	Transliteration	Transcription	Description	Category
اَ	a	ə	Short central low unrounded	Vowel
آ	aa	æ	Long central low unrounded	Vowel
إِ	i	ɪ	Short front high unrounded	Vowel
يِ	ii	i:	Long front high unrounded	Vowel
أُ	u	ʊ	Short back high rounded	Vowel
وُ	uu	u:	Long back high rounded	Vowel

1.4 The Characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic

As a matter of fact, Arabic has a variety of dialects. Each of which has its own distinctive phonetic, morphological, lexical and semantic properties. “Diglossia in Arabic is almost indescribable. Numerous vernaculars are related to classical Arabic (al-'arabiyya al-fushaa) in the same way as modern Romance languages are related to Latin, and they differ from each other as much as these latter languages differ from each other” (Lestari, 2000). This variation might be attributed to the long distance and geographical barriers separating the inhabited places and its speech communities.

Politically, Yemen used to be two different independent countries. The one in the north was called the Yemen Arab Republic. The one in the south was called the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Due to political reasons, travel between the northern areas to the southern ones was not allowed until these two countries united in 1990. This political and physical separation of the Yemeni people, which lasted for 128 years (1839-1967), has inevitably resulted in the birth of northern dialect in Sana'a with different linguistic peculiarities when compared to the one used in Hadhramaut in the south. Since the city of Hadhramaut is important to the focus of this

study, it seems beneficial at the outset to have a pause on some outstanding linguistic characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic. These characteristics are purposely displayed, as they will be applied in comprehending and analysing the Hadhrami texts later. They have significance for the selection of the study respondents who are supposed to be Hadhrami Arabic speakers, as this will aid towards the awareness and comprehension of all the Hadhrami text in the study questionnaire.

In such a manner, this section focuses on the linguistic characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic. The matter of concern covers what are the linguistic characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic, which later led Hadhramis to generate the dialectal popular wealth from which proverbial expressions have emerged. These characteristics have been generally discussed by Bamatraf (1984) and Al-Akwa? (1984). The researcher, however, has given this transliterated and tabulated summary of the characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic when compared to Classical or Standard Arabic⁴ as shown below.

1.4.1 Phonetics

Hadhrami Arabic is a current dialect derived from standard Arabic. It has developed and owned specific phonological features. This unintentional linguistic development characterizes the folkloric wealth that includes the local Hadhrami poetry and proverbial expressions. The main features are shown in the table below.

Table 1.3: Phonetic Features of Standard Arabic and Hadhrami Arabic

Standard Arabic	Hadhrami Arabic	Meaning in English	Remarks
دَجَاجَةٌ <i>dajaaajatun</i>	دَيَّيَّة <i>dayaayah</i>	Hen	The standard consonant j is replaced by y in Hadhrami Arabic (see 1.5.3, proverbs 19 and 21).
زجاج <i>zujaajun</i>	زَيَّيْ <i>zuyaay</i>	Glass	
مَشَيْت <i>mashaitu</i>	مَشَيْت <i>masheit</i>	I walked	The diphthong ai in standard Arabic is replaced by ei in Hadhrami Arabic. Besides, the standard final vowel u is completely missing in Hadhrami speech (see 1.5.1, proverb 5).
رَأَيْت <i>ra'aitu</i>	رَأَيْت <i>ra'eit</i>	I saw	
حَمَيْت <i>Hamaitu</i>	حَمَيْت <i>Hameit</i>	I protected	
هَذَا حَقَّكَ <i>haatha Haqquki</i>	هَذَا حَقَّشْ <i>haatha Haqqish</i>	This is your right	The standard addressee pronoun ki is replaced by sh in Hadhrami Arabic when addressing females.
أَعْطَيْنِي مَنْدِيلَكَ 'a?Tiini <i>mandiilaki</i>	أَعْطَيْنِي مَنْدِيلَشْ 'a?Tiini <i>mandiilish</i>	Give me your handkerchief	

These prominent features indicate that people tend to make replacements as shown in the remarks column of Table 1.3 above. These features can be observed in the people everyday talks. A person is directly known that he is from Hadhramaut if these phonological features are apparent in his speech.

1.4.2 Morphology

Hadhrami Arabic has the following distinctive morphological features in comparison with these of the standard Arabic. They are illustrated in the table below.

Table 1.4: Morphological Features of Standard Arabic and Hadhrami Arabic

Standard Arabic	Hadhrami Arabic	Meaning in English	Remarks
يقرأ <i>yaqra'u</i>	بيقرأ <i>bayaqra</i>	He is reading	The consonant ba is added to the standard imperfect verbs referring to the continuity of the action.
يكتب <i>yaktubu</i>	بيكتب <i>bayaktub</i>	He is writing	
سيقراً <i>sayaqra'u</i>	با يقرأ <i>baa yaqra</i>	He will read	A consonant and a vowel baa are added before the standard imperfect verbs referring to the futurity of the action (see appendix VII, proverb 44).).
سيكتب <i>sayaktubu</i>	با يكتب <i>baa yaktub</i>	He will write	
سارقون <i>saariquuna</i>	سرقان <i>sirqaan</i>	Thieves	The standard infix vowel aa is dropped and the marker of standard sound masculine plural noun uuna is replaced by aan in Hadhrami Arabic.
رؤوس <i>ru'uusun</i>	ريسان <i>riisaan</i>	Heads	New plurality form is used in Hadhrami Arabic instead of the standard broken plural nouns.
عيون <i>?yuunun</i>	أعيان <i>'a?yaan</i>	Eyes	
أسماء <i>'asmaa'un</i>	أسام <i>'asaami</i>	Names	
يكتب <i>yaktubu</i>	يكوتب <i>yko:tib</i>	Write	Additional o: is regularly added in Hadhrami Arabic between the first and second syllables of the standard imperfect verbs when referring to exaggeration.
يضحك <i>yaDHaku</i>	يضحك <i>yDo:Hik</i>	Laugh	
يبكي <i>yabki</i>	بيوكي <i>ybo:ki</i>	Weep	

Table 1.4 indicates that Hadhrami Arabic has adopted morphological features different from those used in standard Arabic. These features can be observed in the people everyday common usage. These features have also become the hallmarks through which a Hadhrami person can be distinguished from other Arabic-speaking people.

1.4.3 Lexis

Great similarity is observed between the lexis of Hadhrami Arabic and standard Arabic. However, the former has coined few new lexical items that are not lexicalised in the standard Arabic dictionaries. These are shown in the table below.

Table 1.5: Lexical Features of Standard Arabic and Hadhrami Arabic

Standard Arabic	Hadhrami Arabic	Meaning in English	Remarks
يدرس لأجل النجاح <i>yadrusu li'ajli</i> 'an-najaaHi	يدرس لميد النجاح <i>yadrus limeid</i> 'an-najaaH	He is studying for success	The new lexical item limeid is used in Hadhrami Arabic despite the existence of its equivalent li'ajli in standard Arabic (see 1.5.1, proverb 3).
سأضربك حتى تعترف <i>sa'aDribuka</i> Hatta ta?tarifa	با اضربك لمان تعترف <i>baa 'aDribak</i> lamma:n ta?tarif	I will beat you until you confess	The new lexical item lamma:n is used in Hadhrami Arabic despite the existence of its equivalent Hatta in standard Arabic (see 1.5.1, proverb 4).
التاني أحسن 'at-t'anni 'aHsan	الراضنه أحسن 'al-ra:Dah 'aHsan	Deliberateness is better	The new lexical item al-ra:Dah is used in Hadhrami Arabic despite the existence of its equivalent at-t'anni in standard Arabic (see appendix VI, questionnaire proverb 4).
أين القلم؟ 'aina al- qalamu	فين القلم؟ fein al-qalam	Where is the pen?	The new interrogative lexical item fein is used in Hadhrami Arabic despite the existence of its equivalent 'aina in standard Arabic.
مازال يقرأ maazaala yaqra'u	عادوه يقرأ ?aaduuh yaqra	He is still reading	The new lexical item ?aaduuh is used in Hadhrami Arabic despite the existence of its equivalent maazaala in standard Arabic.

These prominent features seem to indicate that Hadhrami Arabic has lexical variations despite the existence of the equivalents in standard Arabic as shown in Table 1.5 above. These lexical variations can be observed in the people everyday talks distinguishing Hadhramis from non-Hadhramis.

1.4.4 Semantics

It is noted that Hadhrami Arabic has adopted some words already lexicalised in standard Arabic, but with different semantic treatment. Prominent examples are clarified in the table below.

Table 1.6: Semantic Features of Standard Arabic and Hadhrami Arabic

Standard Arabic	Hadhrami Arabic	Meaning in English	Remarks
لَمْ يَغَادِرْ الْمَنْزِلَ لِأَنَّ السَّمَاءَ كَانَتْ تُمَطِّرُ <i>lam yughaadir</i> <i>'al-manzila</i> <i>li'anna as-</i> <i>samaa'a kaanat</i> <i>tumTiru</i>	لَمْ يَغَادِرْ الْمَنْزِلَ يَوْمَ السَّمَاءِ كَانَتْ تُمْطِرُ <i>lam yughaadir</i> <i>'al-manzil yo:m</i> <i>as-sama kaanat</i> <i>tumTir</i>	He did not get out because the sky was raining	An already existent standard lexical item yo:m “day” is used in Hadhrami Arabic with a different meaning i.e. li'anna “because”.
هَلْ عِنْدَكَ مَالٌ <i>hal ?ndaka</i> <i>maalun</i>	شَيْ عِنْدَكَ مَالٌ <i>shi ?ndaka</i> <i>maal</i>	Do you have money?	An already existent standard item shi “thing” is used in Hadhrami Arabic with a different meaning i.e. the standard interrogative word hal “Do”.

These distinctive features indicate that people occasionally make semantic substitutions. An already existent standard item is used in Hadhrami Arabic with a different meaning as shown in Table 1.6 above. This might cause problem in translation in case the translator is unaware of these Hadhrami semantic substitutions.

Based on this, these linguistic features have given a conception that Hadhrami Arabic possesses special phonetic, morphological, lexical and semantic features that have uniquely characterized and distinguished it from Standard Arabic as well as from other Arabic dialects. However, the author has observed that some of these features are also found in some other Arabic dialects especially those used currently in Arab Gulf countries. The use of the colloquial *y* in Hadhrami Arabic instead of the standard Arabic *j*, for instance, is so commonly used in Kuwaiti and Bahraini Arabic among

others (Holes, 2004: 76). This linguistic phenomenon might be ascribed to the geographical neighbourhood as well as the effect of Hadhrami emigrants who have made the Gulf their home.

1.5 Translation and Hadhrami Arabic Proverbs

1.5.1 A Proverb: Definition and Characteristics

A proverb is not more than a mere sequence of some lexical items. However, it has a unique privilege, which lies in the special force, and a psychological impression felt when its components are uttered together. Actually, there is no specific definition for a proverb. It has been differently defined as, “a short and memorable saying which expresses a piece of experience, often in a vivid language” (Trask, 1997: 179). According to Wilson (1970: vii), a proverb is “a crystallized summary of popular wisdom or fancy”. Freyha (1974: ix) believes that proverb is an expression to teach people something. He defines it as “a terse didactic statement”. In his definition, Simpson (1998: ix) agrees with the advisory elements of proverb saying that it is “traditional saying which offers advice or present a moral in a short and pithy manner”. Some see the proverb from social perspective as “short traditional ‘out of context’ statement used to further some social end” (Seitel, cited in Qassas, 1990: 1). Others, especially the Arabs, consider the proverb as an expression of great value and look at it as the top of rhetoric and eloquence of the language. Thus it is “the height of eloquence of pure Arabs and the distillation of all that is rare and precious in their speech.” (Al-Zamakhshari, cited in al-Rumi and Kamal, 1978: 15).

Despite the many definitions offered to the proverb, none can be regarded as satisfactory and comprehensive. This might be due to the overlap in the numerous life scopes treated by proverbs. Freyha mentions that none of the proverb definitions

holds true of every proverb. The complication lies in the nature of proverbs, which contain ideas touching upon diverse human experiences (Freyha, 1974: ix-x).

Proverbs are described of being lexically and syntactically inflexible. They enjoy much stiffness and stability. This means that their linguistic components are not susceptible to any sort of addition, deletion, substitution or even modification. However, such dominantly linguistic phenomenon might have a function. It is probably for the sake of being more effective, easily memorized, or to have a poetic touch. In this regard, Crystal (1980: 179) states, "From a syntactic viewpoint, the words often do not permit the usual variability they display in other context." (also see Lyons (1968: 77-78); Bamatraf (1982: 55); Duff (1981: 89); and Kane (1983: 366)). For instance, the English proverb "Strike while the iron is hot" does not allow the following forms.

Strike while the iron is **very** hot (addition).

Strike while iron is hot (deletion).

Strike while the **copper** is hot (substitution).

While the iron is hot, strike it (modification).

As seen above, the last four forms sound rather odd and strange to listeners. Any attempt to change the proverb genuineness will surely lead to partial, if not complete, loss to its eloquent emotiveness. Consequently, like idioms, proverbs ought to be dealt with as fixed⁵ utterances used presumably as they are in their proper and typical occasions. Phillips (1915: 20-45) says, "the right use of these is a must because they are so colourful and enliven the whole system of the language as no other device can." Thus, it is suggested that an entire avoidance to use proverbs is better than using them inaccurately. This is a decisive step to maintain the proverbs against distortion as they represent an integral part of the very original cultural and intellectual legacy of a nation.

Furthermore, proverbs are mostly spoken rather than written expressions. They are depicted as “conversational” (Norrick, quoted in Emery, 1997: 39). Truthfully, it is seldom that we find people using proverbs in their written, or rather printed works especially the scientific ones. This might be attributed to the fact that proverbs utterance should be accompanied by certain subtle gestures or harmonious intonation at the moment of speaking which may play a role in the increase of their force. This is rarely achieved satisfactorily in writing.

Proverbs are noticeably existent more in the everyday speech of ignorant laymen and those semi-educated people who lack knowledge as they yearn for a way to adorn their speech, whereas those well-versed and conversant figures speak more confidently using their large store of knowledge with relatively little or less need to resort to such proverbial adornments.

In addition, proverbs have diverse ends. They mostly personify wisdom and sagacity. In the researcher’s view, these properties are more attached to old rather than the young people in the society, simply because the former are supposed to have experienced plenty of the different practical life facets throughout their long lifetime. Thus, it is commonly believed that the older the person is, the wiser he becomes.

It is worth mentioning that people do not usually pay deliberate effort to keep these proverbs by heart. They just acquire them from their daily usual chats with their fellowmen exploiting the proverb characteristics of applicability and generalization. Applicability, on the one hand, refers to the proverb (internal) validity to be used again in the same context producing the same result and effect. Generalization, on the other hand, refers to the proverb (external) validity that the application of a proverb idea can be generalized to many other contexts and situations of similar circumstances. These two characteristics manifest the readiness of every proverb to be used many times

and heard repeatedly in man's life. Such recurrence permits those people to unconsciously pick up these proverbs and save them in their memories. Therefore, old people's store of memories often becomes full and compressed with a considerable number of ready-said wise sayings and proverbs. Each of which is discharged in its proper situation achieving its goal on time.

Proverbs are also distinguished from the other multi-word units of having the dominantly figurative nature. Using a proverb figuratively means that it is said in some way other than the main or usual meaning to suggest a picture in the mind or to make a comparison. They always embody or portray an image constituting simile, metaphor or metonymy. This characteristic arises essentially from the link the speaker establishes between the abstract literal meaning and the connotative proverbial interpretation. This being the case, it can be said that one of the basic sources of the language figures of speech lies in proverbs among others.

Proverbs are also believed to possess the feature of universality in the sense that they exist among almost all human groups and communities on the one hand, and comprise, if not exactly the same, approximating notions, effects, and issues on the other hand. Indeed, since proverbs reflect the accumulative experience of human being, no wonder, then, they contain general or universal themes whereas, irrespective of the distance, Man enjoys fixed human properties no matter where he comes from or what culture he belongs to. Al-ʿamad (mentioned in Qassas, 1990: 8) says that all the experiences, which were shown in the proverbs, can be considered as one regardless of the language, the special cultural types, the psychological frames and the anthropological, physical, and geographical differences.

Thus, terms have been previously classified into two types: "cultural-universal" and "cultural-specific" (Makhlouf. 1996: 1). The first type refers to those concepts,

which deal with well-known ideas, found in most cultures of the world. To illustrate, consider the following proverb:

Proverb (1):	يُعرف المرء بأقرانه
Transliteration:	<i>yu?raf al-mar'u bi'aqraanih</i>
Gloss:	[is known][the man][by his company]
Translation:	A man is known by the company he keeps.

This type is proved to be translationally manageable because it has a ready-made equivalent expression in the TL culture, hence can be functionally rendered into the TL.

The second type deals with the cultural-specific terms, which belong to a nation including the population of a country or more that use the same language such as these terms related to Malay language or Arabic. Consider the following Arabic example:

Proverb (2):	رجع بخفي حنين
Transliteration:	<i>raja?a bikhuffii Hunain</i>
Gloss:	[came back][with shoes][Hunain]
Translation:	He came back with Hunain shoes (empty handed).

In terms of translation, this type is difficult in comparison with the first type (see Awaad, 1990: 66) because, mostly, there is no ready-made equivalent expression in the TL culture and the translator may feel the necessity to add few lexical items to give clarity to the meaning.

The researcher adds a third type, namely “local-specific” terms, which will be the core concern of this study. This type concerns the local-specific terms, which are exclusively found and used only within the borders of a certain country, district, or city such as those shown in the following sample of Hadhrami proverbs:

(3) حبلت لميد العصيد

Hiblit limeid al-?aSiid

[She became pregnant][for][the porridge]

She became pregnant for the porridge (Used when great deeds are performed for trivial ends).

(4) تمسكن لمان تتمكن

tamaskan lamma:n titmakkan

[be humble][until][become decision-maker]

Be humble until you become a decision-maker (said to show the policy of someone who humbly behaves just to get a position but his behavior and attitude change as soon as he gets the position and becomes a decision-maker).

(5) الضيف له ملا عينه

'aD-Deif luh mala ?einuh

[The guest][for him][eyeful]

The guest for him eyeful (Indicating hospitality and the variety of food that the guest's eyes should see when invited).

Unlike the previous two types of “Cultural-universal” and “Cultural-specific” (Makhlouf. 1996: 1), the third type of “Local-specific” is elucidated by the three examples above (3), (4), and (5) which are uniquely found in the proverbial wealth of the Yemeni district of Hadhramaut. They are not available in the proverbial collection of the other Arab countries. This is underpinned by the point that proverb (3) has the lexical item لميد *limeid* (for), which is only used in the Hadhrami Arabic. It is used by the Hadhrami people in their Hadhrami Arabic instead of the word لأجل *li'ajli* (for), which is lexicalised in the Standard Arabic (See lexical characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic, Table 1.5). Similarly, proverb (4) has the lexical item لمان *lamma:n* (until), which is used in the Hadhrami Arabic. It is used by the people in their Hadhrami Arabic instead of the word حتى *Hatta* (until), which is lexicalised in the Standard Arabic (Table 1.5). In addition, proverb (5) contains the words الضيف *'aD-Deif* (the guest) and the word عين *?ein* (eye). Phonetically, both of these words have the diphthong *ei*, which is a

common phonetic feature in the speech of the Hadhrami people replacing the diphthong *ai* of the Standard Arabic (See phonetic characteristics of Hadhrami Arabic, Table 1.3). In terms of translation, this type is more difficult in comparison with the first two types because it mostly has no ready-made equivalent expression in the TL culture and the translator may feel the necessity of adding more lexical items to give clarity to the proverbial meaning. The degree of difficulty of translating a proverb from one language to another can be predicted as shown in Figure 1.1 below:

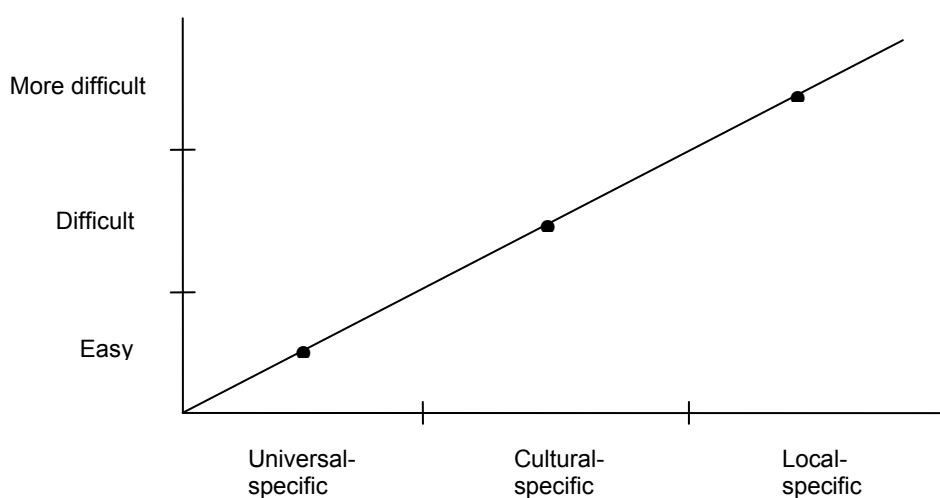


Figure 1.1: The relationship between the degree of difficulty and the types of proverbs

From Figure 1.1, one can comprehend the fact that rendering the second type is actually more difficult than the first one. It is, however, easier than the third. This indicates that the more specific the term is, the more difficult the translator's task will be (see Awwad, 1990; and Makhoul, 1996).

1.5.2 Main Characteristics of Yemeni Proverbs

Naturally, the aforesaid general characteristics of proverbs are certainly applicable to the Yemeni ones. However, investigation of the Yemeni proverbs gives an idea that they enjoy some extra special features. This is mostly determined by the